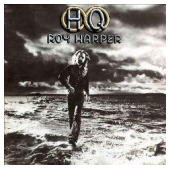
Roy Harper – HQ (1975)



01. The Game (Parts 1–5) - 13:41 02. The Spirit Lives - 4:15 03. Grown Ups Are Just Silly Children - 2:53 04. Referendum (Legend) - 3:46 05. Forget Me Not - 2:24 06. Hallucinating Light - 6:21 07. When An Old Cricketer Leaves The Crease - 7:11 08. The Spirit Lives (early mix, 23 March 1975) - 4:36 09. When An Old Cricketer Leaves The Crease (live in Exeter, 31 October 1977) - 7:50 10. Hallucinating Light (single version) - 7:32 - Roy Harper - vocals, acoustic guitar - Chris Spedding - guitar - Dave Cochran - bass - Bill Bruford - drums - David Gilmour - guitar (01) - John Paul Jones - bass (01) - Steve Broughton - drums (01) - The Grimethorpe Colliery Band - brass (07) - Ray Warleigh – saxophone

Released in 1975 (and known in the U.S. as When an Old Cricketer Leaves the Crease), HQ was the eighth solo album from Roy Harper, and a high-water mark for him commercially and critically (as well as a personal favorite). Harper was already coming off two stellar efforts in Lifemask (1973) and Valentine (1974), which marked yet another artistic peak and his introduction to American audiences. Previous settings of acoustic guitar and orchestration were supplanted by Harper's formation of Trigger, a relatively straightforward hard rock trio anchored by ace guitarist Chris Spedding and former King Crimson/Yes drummer Bill Bruford. (The unit disbanded after this album, however.) Pink Floyd guitarist David Gilmour and Led Zeppelin bassist John Paul Jones are among the other all-star contributors on this album, which gets off to a rousing start with "The Game"'s multi-part critique of modern society and features some hard-hitting guitar passages. "The Spirit Lives" upholds yet another long-running Harper theme of critiquing Christianity and its premises. "Hallucination Light" and "Forget Me Not" maintain the brooding romanticism associated with Harper's earlier work, but it's the last track that should stick longest with listeners. Harper's understated, elegaic ode to life's departures gains power from a blend of string and brass band lines; it remains one of his finest, most enduring compositions. Commercially, Harper's profile remains that of a cult artist, but he surely deserves wider recognition on his own merit. If you only know Harper as an associate of the '70s English rock aristocracy or the shadowy subject of Led Zeppelin's "Hats off to Harper," make this album one of your first starting points. --- Ralph Heibutzki, Rovi

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