

The Kinks - Classics: The Best Of The Kinks (2014)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 11 November 2014 09:33 - Last Updated Wednesday, 30 May 2018 19:47

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01. *You Really Got Me* (2:12) 02. *I Need You* (2:24) 03. *I Gotta Move* (2:22) 04. *Tired of Waiting for You* (2:30) 05. *Stop Your Sobbing* (2:05) 06. *See My Friends* (2:45) 07. *Till the End of the Day* (2:18) 08. *Sittin' On My Sofa* (3:05) 09. *Dead End Street* (3:22) 10. *Where Have All The Good Times Gone* (2:49) 11. *Dandy* (2:11) 12. *Sunny Afternoon* (3:34) 13. *Too Much On My Mind* (2:28) 14. *David Watts* (2:37) 15. *Waterloo Sunset* (3:16) 16. *Death of a Clown* (3:10) 17. *Wonderboy* (2:49) 18. *Days* (2:52) 19. *Picture Book* (2:34) 20. *Drivin'* (3:20) 21. *Victoria* (3:38) 22. *Lola (Remastered)* (3:59) 23. *Strangers (Remastered)* (3:18) 24. *This Time Tomorrow (Remastered)* (3:22) 25. *God's Children* (3:17)

What can you say? The Kinks never got the recognition or success they deserved, possible because they were too adventurous in their song writing and performances. A great compilation on this album. --- Michael A. Shields, amazon.com

The Kinks are recognised as one of the most important and influential British groups of all time, with millions of record sales and countless awards and accolades to their name. From their explosive beginnings as part of the British Beat movement to forays into concept albums, stadium rock and acoustic balladeering, The Kinks have left an unimpeachable legacy of classic songs, many of which form the building blocks of popular music as we know it today.

Hailing from Muswell Hill in north London, The Kinks were formed by brothers Ray and Dave Davies. Calling themselves The Ravens, an early line-up saw them playing a combination of R&B and rock and roll with friend Peter Quaife on bass. A self-produced demo tape reached

record producer Shel Talmy who helped the band land a contract with Pye Records in 1964. Before signing, the group replaced their drummer with Mick Avory and renamed themselves The Kinks.

With the classic line-up in place, music history was about to be written when the group's third, *You Really Got Me*, stormed to the top of the UK charts. Written by Ray in their parents' front room, the song has since been cited as the inspiration for garage rock, punk, heavy metal and on contemporaries The Who. An album, *The Kinks*, was hastily assembled in the aftermath of the monster hit and was, in turn, swiftly followed by a second Top 10 single, *All Day and All Of the Night*.

Between 1965-1967, The Kinks enjoyed their first commercial peak, scoring nine British and seven US chart hits. 1965's *Tired Of Waiting For You* displayed Ray's world-weary vocal style while Dave came up with a then innovatory Indian style drone guitar on *See My Friends*. As Ray's songwriting developed, he emerged as a witty, compassionate social commentator, chronicling the absurdities and aspirations of English life. He took stabs at fashion victims with *Dedicated Follower Of Fashion* and his fellow nouveau rich pop star peers on *Sunny Afternoon*. He even created a hymn to the Thames on the peerless *Waterloo Sunset*.

Despite the Kinks' commercial success at home, an unresolved dispute with the American Federation of Musicians during a 1965 tour, led to a ban on US appearances which lasted until 1969. So, with most UK bands looking to America's burgeoning flower power revolution for inspiration, Ray looked no further than his back garden for his own concept album, 1968's *Village Green Preservation Society*. On the album Ray developed the major themes of his work, a lament for the traditions of a near-mythical England lost among modernity. The album was overlooked by the British record-buying public and one of the Kinks' most artistically successful albums slipped away. Fortunately, subsequent years have seen it grow in stature and it's now recognised as one of the most important British albums ever released.

The loftily named follow up, *Arthur – The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*, addressed similar themes, portraying an English family looking back over their experiences before emigrating to Australia featuring the oft-covered *Victoria*. The mood lightened a little with the monster 1970 hit single *Lola*. 1971's *Muswell Hillbillies* album echoed *Village Green*'s collection of storybook vignettes and the single *Supersonic Rocketship* from *Everybody's In Showbiz* went Top 20 in 1972 while *Celluloid Heroes* from the same album became a live favourite. The remainder of the '70s found our heroes tackling a dazzling array of real-life themes and situations with the bands four concept albums, *Preservation Act 1*, *Preservation Act 2*, *Soap Opera* and *Schoolboys in Disgrace*. While the UK hits dried up, their sizeable following in the

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US brought them commercial rewards and, in 1977, a Top 30 album in the form of Sleepwalker.

Two years later the band released the hard rock Low Budget album and became belated rock stars in America, gaining a sizeable chunk of the stadium rock circuit, selling out Madison Square Gardens. The Americans also lapped up early 80's albums Give The People What they Want and State Of Confusion which featured the hit singles Better Things and Destroyer. The Kinks even found themselves back in the UK charts with 1983's, Come Dancing. For many years The Kinks had been receiving reverential nods from the rock fraternity, all of which increased their cachet with wave after wave of new bands and musicians. In 1978 The Jam had covered David Watts while The Pretenders had their first UK hit with a version of Stop Your Sobbing. Biggest of all was Kirsty McColl's breathtaking take on Days.

Through the 90s, The Kinks garnered a whole new generation of fans as yet another wave of British musicians paid tribute to the band. Blur's Damon Albarn in particular acknowledged Davies as a key influence as did Noel and Liam from Oasis. With The Kinks on hiatus since 1996 Ray and Dave Davies continued to record and tour their own acclaimed solo albums.

Despite intermittent rumours to the contrary throughout the late 1990s and 2000s, ill-health scuppered plans for a reunion of the original line-up. Sadly, Peter Quaife, who had been receiving kidney dialysis for more than ten years, died on 23rd June 2010. Ray Davies dedicated his June 27th performance at the Glastonbury festival to his honour, telling the crowd, "I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for him". --- thekinks.info

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