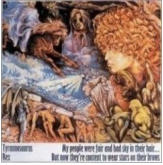


Tyrannosaurus Rex - My People Were Fair and Had Sky in Their Hair (1968)

Written by bluesever

Friday, 28 October 2011 08:23 - Last Updated Tuesday, 29 January 2019 21:14

Tyrannosaurus Rex - My People Were Fair and Had Sky in Their Hair (1968)



01. *Hot Rod Mama* – 3:11 02. *Scenescof* – 1:39 03. *Child Star* – 2:49 [play](#) 04. *Strange Orchestras* – 1:45 05. *Chateau In Virginia Waters* – 2:37

[play](#)

06. *Dwarfish Trumpet Blues* – 2:45 07. *Mustang Ford* – 2:58 08. *Afghan Woman* – 1:57 09. *Knight* – 2:37 10. *Graceful Fat Sheba* – 1:27 11. *Weilder Of Words* – 3:17 12. *Frowning Atahualpa (My Inca Love)* – 5:53

- Marc Bolan - vocals, guitar - Steve "Peregrine" Took - vocals, bongos, Chinese gong, assorted percussion, pixiephone

My People Were Fair and Had Sky in Their Hair... But Now They're Content to Wear Stars on Their Brows is the album that finds Bolan at his least self-conscious. Matching his his swooping, screeching voice and guitar-flaying playing to the zoned-out bongos of Steve Peregrine Took, it's a suitably freaky folk record, rich in tranced-out atmosphere.

Whilst the instrumentation is theoretically skeletal —just acoustic guitar and hand percussion— Bolan and producer Tony Visconti build evocative arrangements by multi-tracking Bolan's voice. On "*Strange Orchestras*" —the most Banhart-esque moment— Bolan's voice barks, squeals, hiccups, and carols all over itself; whereas, on "*Dwarfish Trumpet Blues*," the many layers of vocal work in harmony, building broad walls of wailing. "*Child Star*" finds the song —a tale of a self-destructive piano prodigy who dies on the cusp of adolescence— ebbing and flowing on tides of Bolan; his sinuous singing wildly swinging through meter and pitch.

But his voice —and the whole album— never sounds better than on "*Frowning Atahualpa (My Inca Love)*," a triptych in which Bolan becomes possibly the first person to introduce Hare Krishna chants to Western secular music, climaxing a rollicking love-song with devotional Vaishnava mantras; before employing John Peel to read his unironic Kenneth-Grahame-on-acid

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woodland-storybook writings; then signing off with a minute-long title-track that laments the Fall of humans from mystical spirit-creatures to work-a-day, office-desk drudges. --- Anthony Carew, About.com Guide

The early T Rex albums are an interesting lot. While the full-blown electric sound that was to develop on later albums such as *Electric Warrior* had yet to appear on these records, T Rex's first five albums are all remarkably consistent and well worth picking up. The sound on this record (and its follow-ups) is stripped down and simple, but still very effective. Not much more than Marc Bolan's acoustic guitar, some percussion and a few added "psychedelic" effects here and there. But that's really all you need. Marc Bolan always had a way with writing catchy songs with ridiculous, wonderful lyrics, and *My People Were Fair...* doesn't stray away from that model. It blows my mind to think that this album was recorded over 35 years ago because it's aged remarkably well.

Contrary to what a previous reviewer has stated, Bolan's vocals are not terrible on this record. His voice is less developed here than it would be on the later T Rex recordings (I noticed more of a quaver in his voice), but he sounds far from being a "retarded kid making a pathetic attempt to sing". In fact, I think he sings quite fine here if you ask me. His voice is admittedly a bit of an acquired taste, but then again so is T Rex in the first place.

At times *My People Were Fair...* sounds remarkably similar to some of the "freak-folk" artists (Devendra Banhart, Joanna Newsom) who are currently all the indie rage. While this may not be the best entry point into T Rex's early work (*A Beard of Stars* is hands down the best from this period), it's still an excellent record. --- Justin L. Baumgartner, amazon.com

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