

The Nazz – Nazz III (1970)

Written by bluesever

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Side one 1. *"Some People"* - 3:38 2. *"Only One Winner"* - 3:02 3. *"Kicks"* (Barry Mann/Cynthia Weil) - 3:47 4. *"Resolution"* - 2:44 5. *"It's Not That Easy"* - 2:36 6. *"Old Time Lovemaking"* - 2:29 7. *"Magic Me"* - 3:04 Side two 8. *"Loosen Up"* (Antoni/Mooney/Rundgren/Van Osten) - 1:24 9. *"Take the Hand"* - 2:15 10. *"How Can You Call That Beautiful"* - 3:39 11. *"Plenty of Lovin'"* (Carson van Osten)- 3:43 12. *"Christopher Columbus"* (Carson van Osten) - 3:20 13. *"You Are My Window"* - 6:00

Robert "Stewkey" Antoni: keyboards, vocals Thom Mooney: drums Todd Rundgren: guitar, backing vocals, lead vocal on *"You Are My Window"* Carson Van Osten: bass, vocals

Fungo Bat was scrapped for a variety of reasons, among them Todd Rundgren's insistence on singing lead vocals on his newer songs. Nazz Nazz was released instead, leaving the second half of the proposed LP temporarily in the vaults. Rundgren left the group before it was released. Taking hold of uncontested leadership of the group, lead vocalist Robert "Stewkey" Antoni erased Rundgren's lead vocals, replacing them with his own and releasing the entire project as Nazz III. This is, at the very least, sour grapes, but the situation is made all the more peculiar since much of the material finds Rundgren's songwriting moving toward the signature pop style that dominated his first solo records. Stewkey has publicly stated his distaste for Rundgren's Laura Nyro infatuation, so it's a little odd to hear him sing such finely crafted songs as *"Only One Winner"* and *"Some People."* That aside, Nazz III is an impressive effort that, if taken in conjunction, would have resulted in a very good double record. Sure, there's some clutter, but such detours as *"Loosen Up,"* a po-faced parody of Archie Bell & the Drells' *"Tighten Up,"* reveal the snotty side of Rundgren's humor. More importantly, the bulk of the record indicates how rapidly he was developing as a songwriter and a producer. Where he proved himself as a gifted mimic on Nazz, the group's second two albums found him assimilating those influences and developing a signature style. If anything, Nazz III demonstrates that better than its predecessor, which often seemed a little disjointed. There still isn't anything as immediate and indelible as *"Open My Eyes,"* yet the best moments easily provide the road map for Rundgren's solo career. Even if he doesn't sing on it. [Originally released in 1970, Nazz III was reissued in 2006 and included bonus tracks.] --- Stephen Thomas Erlewine, allmusic.com

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