

The Remains – Live 1969 (2018)

Written by bluesever

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1 *Intro/Hang On Sloopy* 2 *Route 66* 3 *All Day And All Of The Night* 4 *Like A Rolling Stone* 5 *Why Do I Cry* 6 *Johnny B. Goode* 7 *She's Nineteen Years Old* 8 *La Bamba/Empty Heart* 9 *Diddy Wah Diddy* Barry Tashian - guitar, vocals Billy Briggs - electric piano Chip Damiani - drums Vern Miller - bass

In New England, few bands of the '60s are remembered with greater awe than the Remains. A garage rock outfit led by singer and guitarist Barry Tashian, the Boston-based group made a handful of outstanding records (including an album for Epic), appeared on The Ed Sullivan Show, and even opened for the Beatles on the Fabs' final American concert tour. But the Remains had trouble making an impression outside of New England, and they broke up in 1966. They had a reputation as an incendiary live act, but that legend lacked documentation until the 2000s. In March 1969, the Remains' original lineup played a one-off reunion show at the Boston Tea Party, Beantown's leading psychedelic ballroom, and after being lost for years in Tashian's archives, a tape of the show has surfaced and it confirms the Remains were as great on-stage as they were on their records. Live 1969 begins with the Remains tearing into "Hang on Sloopy" with an almost feral intensity, and for the rest of the set, they rarely let up, with Tashian's tough, defiant vocals and elemental guitar work matched by the stripped-down boogie of Bill Briggs' electric piano while the energetic rhythm section of bassist Vern Miller and drummer Chip Damiani pushes the music into overdrive. Even when they slow down for an improvised blues jam on "She's Nineteen Years Old" and a cover of Bob Dylan's "Like a Rolling Stone," this band sounds muscular and tightly focused, playing no-frills rock & roll informed by classic R&B and played with the passion of true believers. (The fury and sweaty joy of the performance are all the more impressive when one learns that the band hadn't been able to arrange a practice session before the gig, and went on-stage without having played together in close to three years.) The sole disappointment of Live 1969 is that the Remains only included one of their original tunes, "Why Do I Cry," in the nine-song set (their classic "Don't Look Back," which Lenny Kaye included on the 1972 compilation Nuggets, doesn't make the cut). But if you want to hear an approximation of what these guys laid out at teen clubs and off-campus beer joints in 1965 and 1966, this does the job and then some. Among garage rock obsessives, the Remains have long been the stuff of legend, and if anything, this live disc raises their standing among

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American bands of the mid-'60s. ---Mark Deming, AllMusic Review

The Remains were the undisputed kings of the mid-'60s Boston rock scene. Using the Rathskeller club in Kenmore Square as their home base, they delivered raucously energetic shows night after night. Such was their reputation that the line to get into the Rathskeller often stretched from the Square all the way to Fenway Park! Their instrumental, vocal and songwriting prowess were all well above typical garage rock status, drawing comparisons to the Rolling Stones among others. Music critic (and future Bruce Springsteen manager) Jon Landau wrote in *Crawdaddy!* magazine that "They were how you told a stranger about rock 'n' roll."

Scoring a local hit with a cover of Bo Diddley's "Diddy Wah Diddy," the band signed with Epic Records and recorded their debut LP, *The Remains*. Comprised almost entirely of self-written songs, it contained their initial hit along with subsequent singles "Why Do I Cry?" and "Don't Look Back." They appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show, performing the explosive "Let Me Through" (a performance captured on Sundazed single's 231) and were selected for the coveted opening slot on the Beatles' final U.S. tour. All signs pointed to huge success for the future.

Perplexingly, that success never happened. They were unable to chart a national hit and their debut wound up being their sole LP released during their original tenure. Dubbed "America's great lost band," their renown grew through the decades as progressive generations of intrepid collectors rediscovered them. Much belated recognition has been given to the band, notably in *America's Lost Band*, the 2008 documentary of their improbable story. They have been the subject of a stage musical, *All Good Things*, and they have returned to performing periodically, having lost not a bit of their legendary live power. About a recent show, *The Nashville Scene* wrote, "There was no audible way of differentiating between the Remains circa '66 and the Remains circa '11. They ripped it up like they had just walked off the set of *Hullabaloo*. It was amazing and inspiring and just a boatload of pure rock 'n' roll fun." Sundazed Music, ever in search of deserving music for discerning fans, has painstakingly remastered their debut album, adding a full LP of bonus tracks. Sundazed has also combed the vaults for additional releases from this phenomenal group. Add these treasured titles to your music library and help transform the Remains into America's greatest FOUND band! ---sundazed.com

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