

Humble Pie - Smokin' (1972)

Written by bluesever

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A1 Hot 'N' Nasty 3:22 A2 The Fixer 5:00 A3 You're So Good To Me 3:53 A4 C'mon Everybody 5:11 A5 Old Time Feelin' 5:05 B1 30 Days In The Hole 3:58 B2.1 Road Runner B2.2 Road Runners 'G' Jam 3:42 B3 I Wonder 8:53 B4 Sweet Peace And Time 5:49 - Steve Marriott - vocals, rhythm guitar, harp, keyboards, producer - Greg Ridley - bass, vocals - Jerry Shirley - drums, keyboards - Clem Clemson (David Clemson) - lead guitar, keyboards, vocals + - Alexis Korner - vocals, mandolin-type Martin Tipple guitar (A5) - Stephen Stills - organ, backing vocals (A1) - Doris Troy, Madeleine Bell - backing vocals (A3)

After a couple of years of relentless touring, Humble Pie capitalized on their loyal U.S. following to capture the market with this, their fifth studio album. Although lead guitarist Peter Frampton was replaced by Clem Clemson -- an excellent player -- the band remained essentially the same. Led by singer/guitarist Steve Marriott's soulful wail, the group enjoyed a huge hit from this record, "30 Days in the Hole" -- the track which defined the Pie's not-so-subtle appeal. The rest of the record is equally funky and intriguing. Stephen Stills guests on "Road Runner 'G' Jam," playing some nasty Hammond organ fills. In the end, though, the group defined themselves as the undisputed leaders of the boogie movement in the early 1970s, as a band. ---Matthew Greenwald, AllMusic Review

Humble Pie was one of those 70s bands that struggled to capture their magic in the studio before scoring big with a live album. But following the success of the essential *Performance: Rockin' The Fillmore* they were then faced with the challenge of coming up with a satisfactory studio follow up. An even more daunting prospect given that the supergroup was now rendered considerably less "super" following the departure of founding member Peter Frampton.

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Frampton felt that the audience had decided the heavy blues rock direction that The Pie had to go in and that meant the pastoral acoustic diversity that he contributed to previous albums was no longer required. The accepted narrative is that the band's first post-Frampton outing, 1972's *Smokin'*, is a harder rocking affair but that's only partly true. The whole album is more consistently rooted in soulful, bluesy rock but there's still plenty of mellow diversity. So for every hard-riffing track like *Fixer* you get an *Exile On Main Street*-style rootsy outing like *Old Time Feelin'*.

But the standout moments of *Smokin'* are undoubtedly the louder tracks. The smouldering boogie of *Hot N' Nasty*, a fat riffing cover of *C'Mon Everybody* and the superbly greasy rocker *30 Days In The Hole* are all brilliant showcases for the peerless vocal power of Steve Marriott and the guitar chemistry he forged with new recruit Clem Clempson. The mellow tracks aren't as exciting or memorable but tracks like the Zep-blues of *I Wonder* impress and add crucial depth and variety.

Smokin' lives up to its name. It's a rockin', feel-good time with a loose and natural production and delivery that successfully captures the band's live prowess. A gradual, coke-fuelled decline in quality on subsequent albums makes this Humble Pie's studio peak and ensured that the band would remain overlooked and under-rated, especially in their native UK. But fans of rootsy rockers like The Stones, The Faces and Cream (as well as more modern acolytes like The Black Crowes) should definitely check out The Pie and *Smokin'* is the perfect place to start: a great band and legendary frontman at the top of their game, proving that they could rock in the studio just as well as they could in the Fillmore. ---heavymetaloverload.com

Czy ktoś pamięta Steve'a Marriotta? Naprawdę warto zaznajomić się z twórczością tego pana. Znakomity muzyk –żywiółowy i szczerzy do bólu artysta, utalentowany gitarzysta. Rewelacyjny, charyzmatyczny wokalista to podstawa tej skądinąd super grupy Humble Pie. *Smokin'* to w dorobku zespołu najbardziej dojrzały i jednocześnie przekonujący studyjny album grupy. Ukazuje zespół w okresie apogeum twórczym. Co ważne, daje się odczuć szczerzy entuzjazm w relacjach między muzykami podczas pracy nad materiałem (fajne te naturalne śmiechy między utworami). Mamy tu wszystko: od kipiącego energią „30 Days in the Hole”, powalające riffy w „The Fixer” aż po rewelacyjny kawałek w postaci „I Wonder”, który należy postawić w jednym szeregu z takimi dokonaniem Led Zeppelin jak epicki „Since I've Been Loving You”.

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Ktoś powie, że ale to już było, może i tak, ale z takim uczuciem, mocą i zaangażowaniem robiło to niewielu muzyków. Dość wspomnieć, że sam lider kapeli zasłabł (nie tylko przez wszechobecne w tamtej epoce używki) w czasie sesji z wyczerpania, gdyż bez reszty zaangażował się w budowę tego dzieła.

Twórczość grupy dwie dekady później inspirowała w sposób dobitny takich artystów jak The Black Crowes. Ktoś może powiedzieć, że Stones i The Faces z Rodem Stewartem podobni, bardziej pożądani, brzmieniowo przystępni, a może lepiej lansowani i poprzez to bardziej znani szerokiej publiczności. Muzycy - Steve Marriott, Clem Clempson dający swoją grą na gitarze niezłego kopa tej płycie, Greg Ridley, Jerry Shirley oraz gościnnie, ojciec brytyjskiego bluesa Alexis Korner i Stephen Stills, a także dziewczyny w chórkach plus wspaniale dobrane kompozycje, składają się na to bezkompromisowe dzieło. Dzieło jak dla mnie najlepsze w dorobku zespołu. I co warte zaznaczenia całkowicie samodzielnie wyprodukowane przez Marriotta. Dające grupie szczególną popularność w Stanach Zjednoczonych.
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