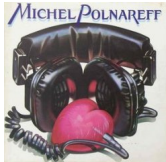


Michel Polnareff - Michel Polnareff (1975)



01. *Fame à la Mode* (Michel Polnareff/Jacob Brackman) - 4:37 02. *No No No No Not Now* (Michel Polnareff/Toni Stern) - 2:29 03. *Wandering Man* (Michel Polnareff/Jacob Brackman) - 3:33 04. *So Long Beauty* (Michel Polnareff/Jacob Brackman) - 5:07 05. *Come On Lady Blue* (Michel Polnareff/Toni Stern) - 2:29 06. *Rainy Day Song* (Michel Polnareff/Jacob Brackman) - 3:17 07. *Jesus For Tonite* (Michel Polnareff/George Clinton & Jacob Brackman) - 3:37 08. *Holding On To Smoke* (Michel Polnareff/Jacob Brackman) - 3:33 09. *Since I Saw You* (Michel Polnareff/Greg Prestopino & Michel Polnareff) - 2:49 - Michel Polnareff - vocals, electric & acoustic guitar, piano, keyboards, trumpet (01), arranger, producer - Lee Ritenour, Andrew Gold, Steve Cropper, Gary Stovall - electric guitars - Fred Tackett, Donnie Dacus - acoustic guitars - David Hentschel - keyboards - Lee Sklar, David Hungate, Reiny Press, Willie Weeks - bass - Nigel Olsson, Jimmy Gordon, Jim Keltner, David Kemper - drums - Russ Kunkel - congas - Stan Richards - saxophone - Ellen Kearney, Leah Kunkel, Jennifer Warnes, Valerie Carter, Brooks Hunnicutt, Eugene Garfin, Andrew Gold, Lewis Furey, Bobby King, Terry Evans, Cliff Givings - backing vocals

Known for his eccentric nature, French pop songwriter Michel Polnareff created a buzz for himself in the early to mid-'60s when his debut single, "La Poupée Qui Fait Non," rocketed to the top of the French charts, but it was his early-'70s release, *Polnareff's*, that cemented him a place as a legend in French pop. Polnareff was raised in Paris somewhat as a child of the arts, his mother, Simone Lane, being a dancer and his father, Leib Polnareff, a musician who played sideman to many, including Edith Piaf under the name Léo Poll. The two surrounded young Polnareff with music, shaping his ambitions, so it is no surprise that he had learned piano by only five years of age and was writing music by the age of 11.

After a short stint in the French Army and a few menial jobs, Polnareff embraced his passions and busked the city streets with his guitar to moderate success. In 1965, he refused a recording contract with Barclay, a prize that he won in a songwriting contest, in one of his earliest displays of his now-famous aversion to conformity, but eventually signed to AZ under the direction of his

new manager and Radio 1 musical director, Lucien Morisse. "La Poupée Qui Fait Non" was released in the summer of 1966 and rocketed him up the charts not only in France, but in Germany, Britain, and Spain. The song was the first of a string of hits for Polnareff, but before long, the French press focused almost entirely on his garish stage presence. Being under the scrutiny of the conservative press didn't seem to stop the hits, however, and Polnareff garnered praise from celebrities such as Charles Trenet, but the consistency of attacks began to weigh heavily on him.

By 1970, his stage costumes had become more flamboyant. The French press began questioning his sexuality, and the constant controversy around the singer came to a head when he was physically assaulted while performing. Not surprisingly, Polnareff canceled the rest of his tour, and shortly after checked into a hospital for depression when he learned that Morisse, his manager, had committed suicide. After five months of treatment, Polnareff bounced back and resumed his hectic recording and touring schedule, but scandal soon followed when he ended up in court due to a campaign for his 1972 tour that was centered around publicity posters bearing Polnareff's naked behind. Polnareff was found guilty of gross indecency and charged 60,000 francs.

The touring continued through mid-1973 with stops in Polynesia and North America, but upon his return to France, Polnareff found his bank account had been drained by his financial advisor. Polnareff's debt to the French government was over one million francs in unpaid taxes, and with little money in his name, he fled from France to the United States. Unknown in a new country, Polnareff was safely out of the limelight and the reach of the French authorities. He spent more than a decade in the United States before he cleared up his monetary issues with the French government, while in the meantime he recorded for Atlantic and composed movie scores.

Despite his absence from France, Polnareff's new music remained present in French popular culture and continued to chart through the mid-'80s, until he removed himself entirely from the public eye and quietly returned to France to work on a new album. Kama Sutra finally appeared in the summer of 1990, and the album garnered three French hits. Polnareff remained in France for five more years before returning to the U.S. to perform at the Roxy in Los Angeles. Through the '90s and into the 2000s, he continued to release new material and play occasional shows while residing in the United States. --- Gregory McIntosh, allmusic.com

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