Traffic - On The Road (1973)



- 1 Glad/Freedom Rider (Capaldi, Winwood) 20:49
- 2 Tragic Magic (Wood) 8:30
- 3 (Sometimes I Feel So) Uninspired (Capaldi, Winwood) 10:20
- 4 Shoot Out at the Fantasy Factory (Capaldi, Winwood) 6:40
- 5 Light Up or Leave Me Alone (Capaldi) 10:30
- 6 The Low Spark of High Heeled Boys (Capaldi, Winwood) 17:35

Rebop Kwaku Baah / Percussion
Barry Beckett / Keyboards
Chris Blackwell / Producer
Jim Capaldi / Percussion, Drums, Keyboards, Vocals
Roger Hawkins / Drums
David Hood / Bass
Steve Winwood / Guitar, Piano, Vocals, Producer
Chris Wood / Flute, Saxophone

Reportedly released as an effort to undercut bootleggers following a world tour, Traffic: On the Road was the band's second live album in three years. The album chronicled a late edition of the band in which original members Steve Winwood, Jim Capaldi, and Chris Wood were augmented not only by percussionist Reebop Kwaku Baah, but also by a trio of session musicians from the famed Muscle Shoals studio, Roger Hawkins, David Hood, and Barry Beckett. The studio pros lent a tightness and proficiency to their characteristic free-form jams, and though they sometimes sounded like they couldn't wait to get the songs over with, the tunes went on and on, four clocking in at over ten minutes. That might have been okay if the choice of material had been more balanced across the band's career, but 1971's Welcome To the Canteen had treated earlier efforts, and the 1973 tour was promoting Shoot Out At the Fantasy Factory, from which three of the six selections were drawn. Unfortunately, that album was not one of Traffic's best, and the live versions of its songs were no more impressive than the studio

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ones had been. Traffic: On the Road featured plenty of room for soloing by some good musicians, but it was the logical extreme of the band's forays into extended performance, with single tunes taking up entire sides on the original LPs. It's not surprising that, after this, Traffic shrunk in size and returned to shorter songs. [Though best known in its two-LP version, Traffic: On the Road was initially released in the U.S. as a single LP containing only four tracks.] ---William Ruhlmann, AllMusic Review

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