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Record review

Summer just would not be summer without the sound of the Beach Boys churning out of radios and cassette-machines on our beaches.

And there are two wonderful new CD releases in the shops featuring some of their finest recorded work.

Firstly "Summer Dreams" features 28 of their greatest hits packed on to a single CD. Eveyone will have their own special favourites, but my favourite tracks include some of their original B-sides and lesser hits like "Don't Worry Baby" with its scorching vocal-harmonies, "You're So Good To Me" with its pounding accompaniment, and the melodic "I Can Hear Music". The second CD features two of the Beach Boys' original albums on one disc, namely "Surfer Girl" and "Shut Down, Volume 2".

This obviously represents exceptional value-for-money, especially in view of the fact that all the tracks have been digitally remastered bringing those awesome vocal-harmonies to the forefront.

If you listen to gems like "The Surfer Moon", "In My Room" and "Your Summer Dream" on this package it soon becomes apparent just why the Beach Boys were America's closest answer to the Beatles in the 1960s.

The yearning for Sixties nostalgia is continuing in this new decade with "Sixties Mix 3" and "The Northern Beat" both performing strongly in the compilation album charts during the summer. The latter features 22 digitally-remastered recordings from the mid-1960s from the hit groups of our Northern cities such as Liverpool, Manchester and Newcastle. It is a very uplifting disc to listen to including some of the best songs of the period like "I Think Of You" (The Merseybeats), "You've Got Your Troubles" (The Fortunes), "The Game Of Love" (Wayne Fontana) and "Juliet" by the Four Pennies.

At a time when so many compilation-albums are being released the best of the batch is "Now Dance 92", and I would go further than that by saying it is the best compilation for a very long time. The singles chart in 1990 has been littered with brilliant dance records, and this double-CD represents the cream of the crop, from the rhythmic, singalong "Dirty Cash (Money Talks)" by Stevie V to the spine-tingling ballad "Joy And Heartbreak" by Movement 98 which is certainly my favourite song of the year.

Other highlights include "Close To You" by Maxi Priest and "Thinking Of You" by Maureen Walsh, and all the tracks are presented in their full (12-inch) six minute versions.

These were positions 61 to 80 best-selling albums of the 1980s on Independent Network Radio:

61. Rumours (Fleetwood Mac) 1977.
62. Let's Dance (David Bowie) 1983.
63. Super Trouper (Abba) 1980.
64. Like a Prayer (Madonna) 1989.
65. So (Peter Gabriel) 1986.
66. True (Spandau Ballet) 1983.
67. The Kids From Fame – 1982.
68. Zenyatta Mondatta (Police) 1980.
69. Complete Madness (Madness) 1982.
70. Hello, I Must Be Going (Phil Collins) 1982.
71. Guilty (Barbra Streisand) 1980.
72. Enjoy Yourself (Kylie Minogue) 1989.
73. The Collection (Ultravox) 1984.
74. Promise (Sade) 1985.
75. The Collection (John Lennon) 1982.
76. Hunting High and Low (A-Ha) 1985.
77. The Raw And The Cooked (Fine Young Cannibals) 1989.
78. The Unforgettable Fire (U2) 1984.
79. Synchronicity (Police) 1983.
80. Bat Out Of Hell (Meat Loaf) 1978.

Bob Woodhead

The Beach Boys: great sounds