

25/4/91



The Shadows

Four years after the original Beatles albums were released on compact disc, EMI has finally got round to issuing the original Shadows albums on the new format. It is perhaps a sign of the times that you can buy two original Shadows albums on one CD whereas in the "boom" of 1987 you had to pay the full price for a single Beatles album. So far four Shadows albums are available - one one disc there is "The Shadows" (1961) and "Out Of The Shadows" (1962) which both reached No 1, and on the other there is "Dance With The Shadows" (1964) and "The Sound Of The Shadows" (1965) which both reached the Top Five.

Being a lifelong admirer of the group I have to recommend both discs, but I much prefer the first on which Hank Marvin played a Fender Stratocaster lead-guitar. This was the instrument he used on most of the quartet's hits, but in 1963 he chanced to using a Burns Marvin guitar which gave a fuller but less distinctive sound. "The Shadows" features the original line-up of Jet Harris, Tony Meehan, Hank Marvin, and Bruce Welch, who was born locally in Bognor Regis and will be celebrating his 50th birthday - together with Hank - later this year. It features some accomplished jazzy pieces and awesome melodies like "Find Me A Golden Street".

"Out Of The Shadows" was always my favourite LP of the band and it features the line-up (pictured) of Jet Harris on bass, Brian Bennett on drums, Hank on lead and Bruce on rhythm-guitar. However, some of the tracks were recorded with Brian Locking on bass. Nearly 30 years on, these recordings are timeless and they still sound as good today as they did all those years ago. Producer Norrie Paramor sought perfection in his recordings, and the CD format provides adequate proof that he achieved just that. It is sad that he is not alive today to enjoy the fruits of his labour on the new technology.

There is not a bad track on "Out Of The Shadows" but the highlight has to be the beautiful instrumental ballad "Spring Is Nearly Here" written by Bruce Welch and Brian Bennett. Also worthy of a mention is "Little B", a five-minute drum solo by Bennett recorded in one take with no overdubs or edits. He performed another solo "Big B" on "Dance With The Shadows" which was not such a creative album. The group was in better form on "The Sound Of The Shadows" - the best track being "Blue Sky, Blue Sea, Blue Me" again composed by Bruce Welch. This time around he was in collaboration with new bass-guitarist John Rostill.

It has been good to see the talents of singer/songwriter Chris Isaak finally being recognised with large sales of his album entitled "Wicked Game". He wrote 11 of the 12 tracks on the CD - the exception being an inspired cover-version of the 1965 Yardbirds smash "Heart Full Of Soul". Apart from the innovative hits "Wicked Game" and "Blue Hotel", there are several other strong offer-

ings, and Chris's vocal style is not unlike that of the late Roy Orbison who has obviously influenced him greatly. The pick of the current compilations is "Now 19", a double CD that is littered with recent chart hits like Belinda Carlisle's "Summer Rain", Mas-

sive's "Unfinished Symphony" and "This Is Your Life" by the promising female duo Banderas. The inclusion of chart-topping favourites like "3 a.m. Eternal" by the K.L.F. and "Sadness" by Enigma should ensure healthy sales in the coming weeks. **Bob Woodhead**