

1964



TIME
LIFE
MUSIC

The
ROCK'N'ROLL
♦ERA♦

Digital Remaster

1964

- 1. Where Did Our Love Go** (2:31) The Supremes
- 2. Rag Doll** (2:54) Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons
- 3. Under the Boardwalk** (2:42) The Drifters
- 4. It Hurts to Be in Love** (2:33) Gene Pitney
- 5. The Little Old Lady (from Pasadena)** (2:21) Jan and Dean
- 6. You Don't Own Me** (2:18) Lesley Gore
- 7. Oh, Pretty Woman** (2:55) Roy Orbison
- 8. My Guy** (2:49) Mary Wells
- 9. Keep Searchin' (We'll Follow the Sun)** (2:07) Del Shannon
- 10. C'mon and Swim** (2:43) Bobby Freeman
- 11. Last Kiss** (2:20) J. Frank Wilson and the Cavaliers

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- 12. Dancing in the Street** (2:37) Martha and the Vandellas
- 13. G.T.O.** (2:25) Ronny and the Daytonas
- 14. Suspicion** (2:30) Terry Stafford
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- 17. Hi-Heel Sneakers** (2:47) Tommy Tucker
- 18. Chapel of Love** (2:46) The Dixie Cups
- 19. Louie Louie** (2:41) The Kingsmen
- 20. Goin' out of My Head** (2:30) Little Anthony and the Imperials
- 21. The Shoop Shoop Song (It's in His Kiss)** (2:11) Betty Everett
- 22. Surfin' Bird** (2:17) The Trashmen

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COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

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1964

When the Beatles landed at Kennedy Airport in New York on February 7, 1964, a pop-culture renaissance began whose energy and excitement recalled the rock 'n' roll revolution of the mid-'50s. Two new TV shows, ABC's *Shindig* and NBC's *Hullabaloo*, brought the sight and sound of the latest British bands into America's living rooms, causing record and guitar sales to surge dramatically. Guitar-based groups sprang up across the nation, as the acceptance and emulation of the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and the Kinks began a process of transatlantic cross-fertilization that continues today.

And yet, while this British Invasion clearly signaled a second revolution and the Beatles were the year's biggest hit-makers, English acts did not dominate the record charts in 1964. Nearly three quarters of the year's top-10 songs were by American artists. Although 1964 was the last big year for the girl-group sound and the surf and hot rod genres, other American styles flourished. The hit-making brilliance of Motown had a substantial impact, as three of the Detroit label's greatest groups, the Supremes, the Four Tops and the Temptations, scored their first big songs.

When the Primettes released their first Motown record in 1961, no one could have guessed that these three teenagers from a Detroit housing project would become the most successful female act in pop-music history as the Supremes. Although their first six singles went nowhere, their fortunes changed in 1964 after they began working with the song-writing and production team of Brian and Eddie Holland and Lamont Dozier. Featuring Diana Ross's breathy vocals, **Where Did Our Love Go** was just the first of six No. 1 hits the Supremes created in the next 18 months.

Motown scored another chart topper with Mary Wells's **My Guy**, penned and produced by Smokey Rob-

inson. At 21, Wells was the first star to leave Motown when she signed a half-million-dollar contract with 20th Century-Fox in 1964. Perhaps the year's most memorable Motown record was **Dancing in the Street** by Martha and the Vandellas. (The song was successfully revived in 1985 by the unlikely duo of David Bowie and Mick Jagger.) This galvanic dance record was propelled by the passionate singing of Reeves (who began her Motown career as a secretary) and a powerful beat reinforced by Motown's characteristic banging tambourines.

It was a strong year for female vocalists, among them Lesley Gore, who was able to combine a successful singing career with undergraduate studies at Sarah Lawrence College. Gore's fourth top-10 hit, **You Don't Own Me**, was a dramatic declaration of female independence that anticipated Helen Reddy's liberationist anthem, *I Am Woman*, by nearly nine years. More traditional was Betty Everett's **Shoop Shoop Song**, in which Betty fills in her girlfriends on the litmus test of true love (i.e., "it's in his kiss").

Along with Phil Spector's Philles label, Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller's new Red Bird label became a major source of girl-group hits. Red Bird's first release and No. 1 song was **Chapel of Love** by the Dixie Cups, a New Orleans trio managed by Joe Jones of *You Talk Too Much* (1960) fame. Phil Spector, one of the writers of *Chapel*, had already recorded but not released versions by the Crystals and the Ronettes.

Red Bird's most successful act was the Shangri-Las, composed of two sets of sisters from Queens (only three of the singers toured). The group specialized in teen-age minidramas wherein lead vocalist Mary Weiss was caught between the temptations offered by "bad boys" and peer-group and parental pressures. In **Leader of the Pack**, Mary's love affair with a motorcycle ace

Roy Orbison in the late '50s



is cut short by a smash-up, stunningly conveyed by producer Shadow Morton's sound effects. The Detergents parodied the song's histrionics later in 1964 with their *Leader of the Laundromat*.

Another huge "death" song was **Last Kiss**, a one-shot hit by J. Frank Wilson and the Cavaliers from Texas. Producer Sonley Roush had heard the original version of *Last Kiss* by Wayne Cochran (known as "the white James Brown") and, in desperate need of a singer, called in Wilson, who was working in a slaughterhouse. Three girls were pulled in off the street for backup vocals and, not surprisingly, by song's end they were hopelessly flat. The record became somewhat prophetic when, in a car crash near Canton, Ohio, Roush was killed and Wilson was seriously injured.

Interestingly, three of the era's top male vocalists, Roy Orbison, Del Shannon and Gene Pitney, all had connections to the emerging British groups. Orbison had toured England with the Beatles in 1963, and it was there that he first began wearing his trademark sunglasses on-stage. Like *Claudette*, the hit Orbison composed in 1958 for the Everly Brothers, **Oh, Pretty Woman** was inspired by his wife Claudette, who was killed in a motorcycle accident in 1966.

Del Shannon had also toured England with the Beatles, and in 1963 he released his version of *From Me to You*, marking the first U.S. chart appearance of a Lennon-McCartney composition. Shannon in turn wrote *I Go to Pieces*, a top-10 song for England's Peter and Gordon in 1965. Shannon's last major hit was **Keep Searchin'**, the saga of a couple's terror-stricken flight to freedom, which showcases his fierce falsetto.

Like Orbison and Shannon, Gene Pitney was a vocal dramatist whose songs traded heavily on romantic suffering. None of his hits was more anguished than **It Hurts to Be in Love**. Early in 1964, Pitney played a little piano on the first Rolling Stones album and became the first





artist to place a Jagger-Richards song on the American charts when he had minor success with their song *That Girl Belongs to Yesterday*.

Along with these solo singers, the Drifters, the most successful vocal group in rock 'n' roll, had their last big year in 1964. Since their original producers, Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, were now running Red Bird Records, the group turned to Bert Berns, whose fondness for Latin rhythms is displayed in **Under the Boardwalk**. On the morning of the recording session lead singer Rudy Lewis died, and Johnny Moore stepped in to handle the lead vocals on what has become one of the all-time great summertime songs.

It was appropriate that Chuck Berry would return to the charts in 1964 after a four-year absence, due in part to a prison term stemming from an alleged violation of the Mann Act. There was hardly a single British band that had not played and recorded Chuck Berry's songs; his most notable followers were the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. The success first of *Nadine* and then of **No Particular Place to Go** allowed Berry to tour the United Kingdom, where his many imitators and idolaters could study the duck-walking guitar master firsthand.

On the West Coast, the surf craze gave way to another obsession of Southern California's affluent teenagers — cars, especially hot rods. The Beach Boys' *Fun, Fun, Fun*, the Hondells' *Little Honda*, Ronny and the Daytonas' *G.T.O.* and Jan and Dean's *Dead Man's Curve* all sang of the pleasures and perils of life in the passing lane. In **The Little Old Lady (from Pasadena)**, Jan and Dean brought a comic touch to the fad by having Granny cruise in a shiny new superstock Dodge.

The Dixie Cups (background); Little Anthony and the Imperials (Anthony, second from right)

Southern California had clearly become America's pop-culture mecca, even for such landlocked bands as Minneapolis's Trashmen, who scored a surf-style hit with the unforgettable **Surfin' Bird**. The group took two doo-wop hits by the Rivingtons, *Papa-Oom-Mow-Mow* and *The Bird's the Word*, fused them with a surf beat, and created one of the goofiest sing-alongs ever.

As for three-chord party classics, the Kingsmen's version of **Louie Louie** rode high on the charts in late 1963 and early 1964. Since then, the song has become a standard performed by artists as diverse as the Sandpipers, Julie London, Barry White and Blondie. The song's near-icon status was confirmed in the early 1980s when West Coast radio stations began holding *Louie Louie* marathons, the longest being a program on KFJC, Los Altos Hills, California, which aired more than 300 different versions.

The success of *Louie Louie* derived partly from the single's crude recording quality. A rumor spread in late 1963 that buried within singer Jack Ely's garbled vocals were outrageous and obscene lyrics. Governor Matthew Walsh of Indiana banned air play in his state, and the FBI and FCC held investigations at which Ely and the song's composer, Richard Berry, testified. After deliberating and playing the record at every speed, the FCC announced: "We found the record to be unintelligible at any speed we played it."

—Joe Sasyf

The Shangri-Las



DISCOGRAPHY

* Indicates highest Billboard chart position

- 1. Where Did Our Love Go** (2:32) The Supremes • *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Original issue: Motown 1060. Courtesy Motown Record Corp. No. 1**
- 2. Rag Doll** (2:54) Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons • *Music and lyrics by Bob Gaudio and Bob Crewe. Original issue: Phillips 40211. Produced under license from the Four Seasons Partnership. No. 1**
- 3. Under the Boardwalk** (2:41) The Drifters • *Music and lyrics by Artie Resnick and Kenny Young. Original issue: Atlantic 2237. Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp. No. 4**
- 4. It Hurts to Be in Love** (2:33) Gene Pitney • *Music and lyrics by Howard Greenfield and Helen Miller. Original issue: Musicor 1940. Courtesy of Gusto Records. No. 7**
- 5. The Little Old Lady (from Pasadena)** (2:21) Jan and Dean • *Music and lyrics by Roger Christian and Don Altfeld. Original issue: Liberty 55704. Courtesy of EMI America Records, a Division of Capitol Records, Inc. No. 3**
- 6. You Don't Own Me** (2:18) Lesley Gore • *Music and lyrics by John Madara and David White. Original issue: Mercury 72206. You Don't Own Me by Lesley Gore produced under license from PolyGram Special Projects, a Division of PolyGram Records, Inc. No. 2**
- 7. Oh, Pretty Woman** (2:55) Roy Orbison • *Music and lyrics by Roy Orbison and Bill Dees. Original issue: Monument 851. Courtesy of Monument Record Corp. No. 1**
- 8. My Guy** (2:49) Mary Wells • *Music and lyrics by William Robinson. Original issue: Motown 1056. Courtesy of Motown Record Corp. No. 1**
- 9. Keep Searchin' (We'll Follow the Sun)** (2:07) Del Shannon • *Music and lyrics by Del Shannon. Original issue: Amy 915. Courtesy of Bug Records. No. 9**
- 10. C'mon and Swim** (2:43) Bobby Freeman • *Music and lyrics by Thomas Coman and Sylvester Stewart. Original issue: Autumn 2. Courtesy of Rhino Records. No. 5**
- 11. Last Kiss** (2:20) J. Frank Wilson and the Cavaliers • *Music and lyrics by Wayne Cochran. Original issue: Josie 923. Courtesy of Dominion Entertainment Inc. No. 2**
- 12. Dancing in the Street** (2:57) Martha and the Vandellas • *Music and lyrics by William Stevenson and Martin Gaye. Original issue: Gordy 7033. Courtesy of Motown Record Corp. No. 2**
- 13. G.T.O.** (2:25) Ronny and the Daytonas • *Music and lyrics by John Wilkin. Original issue: Mala 481. Courtesy of Arista Records, Inc. No. 4**
- 14. Suspicion** (2:30) Terry Stafford • *Music and lyrics by Doc Pomus and Mort Shuman. Original issue: Crusader 101. Courtesy of Celebrity Licensing, Inc. No. 3**
- 15. No Particular Place to Go** (2:42) Chuck Berry • *Music and lyrics by Chuck Berry. Original issue: Chess 1898. © 1986 MCA Records, Inc. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 10**
- 16. Leader of the Pack** (2:50) The Shangri-Las • *Music and lyrics by Jeff Barry, Ellie Greenwich and Shadow Morton. Original issue: Red Bird 014. Courtesy of Shelby Singleton Enterprises, Inc. No. 1**
- 17. Hi-Heel Sneakers** (2:47) Tommy Tucker • *Music and lyrics by Robert Higginbotham. Original issue: Checker 1067. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 11**
- 18. Chapel of Love** (2:46) The Dixie Cups • *Music and lyrics by Jeff Barry, Ellie Greenwich and Phil Spector. Original issue: Red Bird 091. Courtesy of Shelby Singleton Enterprises, Inc. No. 1**
- 19. Louie Louie** (2:41) The Kingsmen • *Music and lyrics by Rich and Berry. Original issue: Wand 143. Courtesy of Gusto Records. No. 2**
- 20. Goin' out of My Head** (2:30) Little Anthony and the Imperials • *Music and lyrics by Teddy Randazzo and Bobby Weinstein. Original issue: DCP 1119. Courtesy of EMI America Records, a Division of Capitol Records, Inc. No. 6**
- 21. The Shoop Shoop Song (It's in His Kiss)** (2:11) Betty Everett • *Music and lyrics by Rudy Clark. Original issue: Vee-Jay 585. Courtesy of Vee-Jay Records. No. 5**
- 22. Surf'n' Bird** (2:17) The Trashmen • *Music and lyrics by Al Frazier, Carl White, John Harris and Turner Wilson. Original issue: Garrett 4002. Courtesy of Dominion Entertainment Inc. No. 4**

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The Author: Joe Sasy is a regular contributor to the *Washington Post* and the *City Paper* of Washington, D.C., and his articles have also appeared in *Musician*, *Country Music* and *Dream*.

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