



TIME
LIFE
MUSIC

SOUNDS OF THE SEVENTIES • FM ROCK

- 1. All the Way from Memphis**
Mott the Hoople
- 2. Going to Mexico** Steve Miller Band
- 3. Gypsy Wedding** Moby Grape
- 4. Gone Dead Train** Crazy Horse
- 5. Willin'** Little Feat
- 6. The Shape I'm In** The Band
- 7. Sugar Magnolia** Grateful Dead
- 8. (Is Anybody Going to) San Antone**
Doug Sahm and Band
- 9. Empty Pages** Traffic
- 10. Satellite of Love** Lou Reed
- 11. Jewel Eyed Judy** Fleetwood Mac
- 12. The Harder They Come**
Jimmy Cliff
- 13. Every Picture Tells a Story**
Rod Stewart
- 14. Chestnut Mare** The Byrds
- 15. The Story in Your Eyes**
The Moody Blues
- 16. Do the Strand** Roxy Music
- 17. Jeepster** T. Rex
- 18. Rockin' down the Highway**
The Doobie Brothers
- 19. Sail Away** Randy Newman

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1. All the Way from Memphis
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Until 1967, Top 40 was the sole radio vehicle for rock; the very concept had developed in the early '50s. But the hippie explosion gave rise to a body of music that took pride in being anti-commercial and anti-establishment, and was thus inappropriate for what had become the big business style of AM radio. This music was often either too long or too experimental to fit into tight formats; sometimes the lyrics contained obscenities, or expressed radical political thoughts. The musicians invariably presented images that could not be marketed to mainstream teen America. But there was no denying that the new music had power, and many teens would listen to nothing else.

So in 1967, Tom Donahue (himself a former AM DJ who helped usher in the hippie era) hit the airwaves on tiny KMPX-FM in San Francisco to play all the

music that nobody else would touch. That marked the birth of FM or "free-form" radio, and the idea caught on so quickly that by the early '70s FM had itself become a cornerstone of the rock industry. FM played mostly album cuts, while AM stuck to singles.

Bands tailored their music to the hip new format, which allowed them to think of their albums as unified bodies of work rather than a couple of hit singles interspersed with other material. Record companies promoted "alternative" artists to FM stations without even worrying about their hit potential.

In this time of great flux, long-established acts were breaking up, splintering into new configurations, or fading to make way for new ones—but they all seemed to have a shot at making it onto FM radio. The Byrds were a perfect example, having started as an AM group before evolving into progressive FM artists whose album cuts were as significant



as their hit singles. By 1970, the only original Byrd left was Jim McGuinn (who today goes by the name Roger). He had branched out into a number of side projects, including *Gene Tryp*, a country and Western adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, which he was writing with New York therapist Jacques Levy. That project was never completed, but **Chestnut Mare**, one of their collaborations, wound up on the Byrds' *Untitled* album. Significantly, it was the first Byrds single to fail to chart in America, and signaled the band's eventual breakup.

One of the emerging L.A. bands influenced by McGuinn's sense of Americana was Little Feat, led by frontman Lowell George, who established much of its reputation by writing the trucker's ode **Willin'**. Little Feat was even more in the mold of the Band, whose landmark 1968 debut had presented a resonant vision of America based very much on traditional values. The Band's emphasis was on age and experience, neither of which the '60s generation had held in high esteem before then. At the time, the Band was known only for having backed Bob Dylan when he first went electric. They didn't start touring on

their own until 1969, and by 1970, they were uneasily describing their feelings on *Stage Fright*, the album that yielded the weary, disillusioned **The Shape I'm In**.

San Francisco bands continued to benefit from FM. The Grateful Dead, whose extended, spacey improvisations had been ideally suited for the medium, started concentrating on more commercially oriented songs such as **Sugar Magnolia**, which was closer to the country-folk music they played in their formative years. The Steve Miller Band, known for combining blues with Beatlesque production values, was similarly returning to their roots with tracks such as **Going to Mexico**. Doug Sahm, bouncing back and forth between San Francisco and his native Texas, took the hippies' back-to-the-country movement even further when he covered **(Is Anybody Going to) San Antone**, a 1970 C&W hit for mainstream country singer Charley Pride. Moby Grape, which had broken up in 1969 after a brief, tumultuous career, regrouped in 1971 just long enough to squeeze out **Gypsy Wedding** and *20 Granite Creek*, the LP named after the

house where it was recorded. The Grape flew apart again six weeks after finishing the album.

In England, FM rock remained more arty, though not exclusively so. T. Rex was the band name for Marc Bolan, who brazenly billed himself as the next Elvis-sized teen idol, and maintained the hype tirelessly in interviews. **Jeepster** was typical of his output. "T Rextasy," as the phenomenon was called in echo of "Beatlemania," never caught on in the States like it did in Merry Olde England. Rod Stewart did much better, thanks to mature rock material like the autobiographical **Every Picture Tells a Story**, which detailed his Bohemian wanderlust days prior to entering the music biz. **Jewel Eyed Judy** was pulled from a back-to-basics rock album (*Kiln House*) Fleetwood Mac—then still a British guitar band—recorded shortly after losing their blues-crazed leader Peter Green.

Traffic was perhaps the most adventurous of the British FM-rockers, though critical success far outstripped their sales, and the band broke up in '69 after a disappointingly short run. Leader Steve Winwood went on to the super-group Blind Faith, which collapsed

even quicker, and then he began a solo project. That work, *John Barleycorn Must Die*, instead turned into a Traffic reunion, with **Empty Pages** helping it to become the group's biggest American album. The younger and more basic Mott the Hoople had also been on the verge of breaking up in 1972, when a reprieve came from David Bowie. He wrote and produced Mott's *All the Young Dudes*, giving the band credence on the British glam-rock scene. This led to extensive touring, which in turn became the basis for **All the Way from Memphis**, recorded on a thematic album detailing Mott's quest for, and mistrust of, success. Roxy Music both embraced and critiqued the glam-rock scene with an image based on head-spinning irony. **Do the Strand**, taken from the *For Your Pleasure* LP (the last keyboardist Brian Eno cut with the group) helped solidify their U.K. stardom, though comparable chart success in the U.S. was years away. And with **The Story in Your Eyes**, FM kingpins the Moody Blues continued to carry the torch for old-line British art-rock.

Jimmy Cliff, a star in England since 1969, was the first major reggae singer

to attract attention in the States, albeit belatedly, and **The Harder They Come** was the title song to the thrilling, semi-autobiographical Jamaican outlaw film that made him a cult hero. Back in the U.S., Lou Reed had gone solo from the Velvet Underground, the primal New York anti-art-rockers who proved the biggest influence on the punk era of the late '70s. Reed was consorting with Bowie while flirting with the glam-rock scene, and **Satellite of Love** was one of his standards from this era.

Crazy Horse, best known as a backup band for L.A. singer-songwriter Neil Young, had a spunky debut album highlighted by **Gone Dead Train**, written by the band's co-producer Jack Nitzsche (another Young colleague) and Russ Titelman. The song, which lifted its title from an ancient country blues by King Solomon Hill, had first been sung the year before by Randy Newman, on the sound track to *Performance*, a frightening 1970 British film directed by Nicolas Roeg and starring Mick Jagger. Newman himself was proving to be the best kind of FM artist, one whose vision, though skillfully wrapped in pop-sounding trappings, was too genuinely quirky for AM radio. For the

oft-covered **Sail Away**, the L.A. singer-songwriter assumed the persona of a 19th-century slave-trader making a pitch to black Africans to come to America. With the music bathed in a romantic, nostalgic glow, Newman's smart, angry irony went right past many listeners, even on FM, but at least he got a little air play. *Sail Away* would have been unimaginable just a few years earlier.

—John Morthland

DISCOGRAPHY

**Indicates highest Billboard chart position*

- 1. All the Way from Memphis** Mott the Hoople • Music and lyrics by Ian Hunter. PolyGram International Publishing, Inc. ASCAP. Columbia LP 32425 (1973). © 1973 Sony Music Entertainment, Inc. Under license from Sony Music Special Products, A Division of Sony Music Entertainment, Inc. Did not chart.
- 2. Going to Mexico** Steve Miller Band • Music and lyrics by Steve Miller and Boz Scaggs. Sailor Music. ASCAP. Capitol LP 11114 (1972). Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. Did not chart.
- 3. Gypsy Wedding** Moby Grape • Music and lyrics by Robert Mosley. James R. Mosley Music. BMI. Reprise LP 6460 (1971). Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. Did not chart.
- 4. Gone Dead Train** Crazy Horse • Music and lyrics by Russ Tittelman and Jack Nitzsche. Warner Bros. Inc. ASCAP./Warner-Tamerlane Publ. Corp. BMI. Reprise LP 6438 (1971). Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. Did not chart.
- 5. Willin'** Little Feat • Music and lyrics by Lowell George. Naked Snake Music. ASCAP. Warner Bros. LP 2600 (1972). © 1978 Warner Bros. Records Inc. Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. Did not chart.
- 6. The Shape I'm In** The Band • Music and lyrics by J. Robbie Robertson. EMI Music Publishing. BMI./Fourth Floor Music Inc. ASCAP. Capitol LP 425 (1970). Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. Did not chart.
- 7. Sugar Magnolia** Grateful Dead • Music and lyrics by Robert Hunter and Bob Weir. Ice Nine Publishing Co. ASCAP. Warner Bros. LP 1893 (1970). Produced

under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. Did not chart.

- 8. (Is Anybody Going to) San Antonio** Doug Sahm and Band • Music and lyrics by Dave Kirby and Glen Martin. Sony Tree Pub. Co., Inc. BMI. Atlantic LP 7254 (1973). © 1973 Atlantic Recording Corp. Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp. Did not chart.
- 9. Empty Pages** Traffic • Music and lyrics by Steve Winwood and James Capaldi. Island Music, Inc./Warner-Tamerlane Publ. Corp. BMI. United Artists 50692 (1970). Courtesy of Island Records, Inc. No. 74*
- 10. Satellite of Love** Lou Reed • Music and lyrics by Lou Reed. Oakfield Avenue Music Ltd. BMI. RCA Victor LP 0611 (1974). © 1973 BMG Music. Courtesy of BMG Music/The RCA Records Label, under license from BMG Direct Marketing, Inc. Did not chart.
- 11. Jewel Eyed Judy** Fleetwood Mac • Music and lyrics by Danny Kirwan, Mick Fleetwood and John McVie. CMINOR Music. BMI. Reprise LP 6408 (1970). Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. Did not chart.
- 12. The Harder They Come** Jimmy Cliff • Music and lyrics by Jimmy Cliff. Island Music, Inc. BMI. Mango LP 9202 (1975). © 1973 Island Records, Inc. Courtesy of Island Records, Inc. Did not chart.
- 13. Every Picture Tells a Story** Rod Stewart • Music and lyrics by Rod Stewart and Ron Wood. Unichappell Music, Inc./Warner-Tamerlane Publ. Corp. BMI. Mercury LP 609 (1971). Courtesy of PolyGram Special Products, a Division of PolyGram Group Distribution, Inc. Did not chart.
- 14. Chestnut Mare** The Byrds • Music and lyrics by Roger McGuinn and Jacques Levy. EMI Blackwood Music Inc./Jockeye Publishing Company, Inc./Patian Music. BMI. Columbia LP 30127 (1970). Under license from Sony Music Special Products, A Division of Sony Music Entertainment, Inc. Did not chart.

15. The Story in Your Eyes The Moody Blues • *Music and lyrics by Justin Hayward. TRO-Cheshire Music Inc. BMI. Threshold 67006 (1971). Courtesy of PolyGram Special Products, a Division of PolyGram Group Distribution, Inc. No. 23**

16. Do the Strand Roxy Music • *Music and lyrics by Bryan Ferry. EG Music Inc. BMI. Warner Bros. LP 2696 (1973). © 1973 EG Records Ltd. Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. Did not chart.*

17. Jeepster T. Rex • *Music and lyrics by Marc Bolan. Tro-Essex Music Inter'l., Inc. ASCAP. Reprise LP 6466 (1971). Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. Did not chart.*

18. Rockin' down the Highway The Doobie Brothers • *Music and lyrics by Tom Johnston. Warner-Tamerlane Publ. Corp. BMI. Warner Bros. LP 2634 (1972). © 1972 Warner Bros. Records Inc. Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. Did not chart.*

19. Sail Away Randy Newman • *Music and lyrics by Randy Newman. WB Music Corp. ASCAP. Reprise LP 2064 (1972). © 1972 Warner Bros. Records Inc. Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. Did not chart.*



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