

SOUL MUSIC

Fromm Institute

Week Six: Blue-Eyed and Brown-Eyed Soul

Recommended Listening:

The Animals, *Absolute Animals 1964-1968* (Raven, 2003). The finest R&B-oriented British band from outside London, this Newcastle combo was most distinguished by Eric Burdon's soulful vocals and a far greater reliance on organ than the usual British Invasion guitars. Most known for their electrification of the folk standard "House of the Rising Sun," which is here along almost a dozen other mid-'60s hits, as well as some psychedelic hits Burdon sang with a different Animals lineup in the late '60s.

The Box Tops, *The Best of the Box Tops: Soul Deep* (Arista, 1996). This boils the Memphis band's uneven output down to 18 songs, featuring the prematurely husky voice of teenaged Alex Chilton. This includes their huge hit "The Letter," as well as their big follow-up "Cry Like a Baby."

Wayne Cochran, *Get Down With It! The White Knight of Soul 1959-72* (Raven, 2005). Although he never had a hit, Cochran was a fine blue-eyed soul singer who also mixed in some blues and rock. This wide-ranging compilation concentrates on his 1960s work, including a good number of covers of hits by other people, but also a fair amount of quality originals.

Joe Cocker, *20th Century Masters: The Millennium Collection: The Best of Joe Cocker* (A&M, 2000). Though on the brief side, this includes the British soul-rock singer's big early hits "With a Little Help from My Friends," "She Came in Through the Bathroom Window," and "Feelin' Alright." His 1969-70 albums *With a Little Help from My Friends*, *Joe Cocker*, and *Mad Dogs & Englishmen* remain his best.

The Spencer Davis Group, *Somebody Help Me: The Best of 1964-1968* (Raven, 2011). They really should have been called the Stevie Winwood group, as his pre-Traffic voice, keyboards, and standout compositions are what made this soul-rock-oriented band special. This 26-song compilation has their big hits "Gimme Some Lovin'" and "I'm a Man," along with British hits that didn't make it in the US and standout album tracks.

Kiki Dee, *The Fontana Years 1963-1968* (RPM, 2011). Long before Dee had hits in the mid-1970s on her own and with Elton John, she was recording generally worthwhile, but always unsuccessful, discs somewhat in the style of Dusty Springfield, for whom she sometimes sang backup. This 33-song CD has almost everything she did between 1963 and 1968, and like Springfield's work, often shows the influence of American girl group and soul acts.

Delaney & Bonnie, *Best of* (Rhino, 1990). As Delaney & Bonnie, the (then) husband-wife duo of Delaney & Bonnie Bramlett, don't conveniently fit into other categories, they're listed here. Their brand of soul-rock was more popular among critics than record buyers, but heavily influenced Eric Clapton, who toured with them and used some musicians from their band on his records in his early solo career. This collection focuses on their most popular work, in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Dr. John, *Gris-Gris* (Collectors' Choice Music, 1968). New Orleans R&B goes psychedelic on this brilliant one-of-a-kind album, a fusion of the New Orleans Mardi Gras with voodoo mysticism. Dr. John's rasping, bluesy vocals are complemented by soulful backup singers, and eerie melodies on flute, sax, and clarinet, as well as odd Middle Eastern-like chanting and mandolin runs.

Georgie Fame, *On the Right Track: Beats, Blues and Ballads: A Complete Hit Collection 1964-1971* (Raven, 2004). Fame was the premier exponent of the jazz/blues-oriented side of the British Invasion, though he had only a couple sizable hits in the US. This 28-song CD has both of them (1964's "Yeh Yeh" and 1968's "The Ballad of Bonnie & Clyde"), as well as a lot of good UK hits and obscurities.

Roy Head, *Treat Her Right: The Best of* (Varese Sarabande, 1995). He had only had one big hit (1965's "Treat Her Right"), but this Texan made quite a few fine blue-eyed soul records with a bluesy flavor in the mid-1960s, many of which are on this compilation.

Lulu, *Shout! The Complete Decca Recordings* (RPM, 2009). Remembered in the US mostly for her #1 1967 single "To Sir with Love" (also the theme to a popular movie in which she starred), Lulu was a highly underrated singer who did some surprisingly raunchy blue-eyed soul in the mid-1960s. These (as well as some poppier and less impressive efforts) are on this two-CD compilation of 1964-67 recordings. What this *doesn't* have is "To Sir with Love," which is on *From Crayons to Perfume: The Best of Lulu*, which concentrates on her more pop-oriented post-Decca work.

Malo, *The Best of Malo* (GNP, 1992). The line between Latino rock and Latino soul can be a thin one, as Santana and many groups playing in a Santana style proved. Carlos Santana's brother Jorge led this group, which leaned more toward R&B than the band Santana did.

Pucho & the Latin Soul Brothers, *The Best of* (BGP, 1993). Excellent compilation of 1966-70 tracks that favors the most soulful, adventurous material of this group, which mixed soul with jazz and Latin music.

The Rascals, *The Very Best of the Rascals* (Rhino, 1993). The most popular blue-eyed soul group, who after "Good Lovin'" and other early hits moved into soul-rock informed by psychedelia and social commentary on songs like "Groovin'" and "People Got to Be Free."

The Righteous Brothers, *The Definitive Collection* (Polydor, 2009). There are a number of Righteous Brothers best-ofs. This is recommended for its good value (21 songs on one disc) and concentration on the blue-eyed soul duo's peak, including the hits "You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'," "(You're My) Soul and Inspiration," "Ebb Tide," and "Unchained Melody."

Mitch Ryder, *Rev-Up: The Best of Mitch Ryder & the Detroit Wheels* (EMI, 2007). One of the top blue-eyed soul singers, more interesting for his high-octane delivery than the material, but raw and energetic soul with a touch of Detroit rock nonetheless.

Dusty Springfield, *The Very Best of Dusty Springfield* (Mercury, 1998). Twenty of the most popular 1960s recordings by the most outstanding woman singer of the British Invasion, from Phil Spector/girl group-influenced productions like "I Only Want to Be with You" to soul like "Son of a Preacher Man."

Dusty Springfield, *Stay Awhile/I Only Want to Be with You* (Taragon, 1997). Though Springfield had a good deal of fine tracks besides her hits, these are scattered unevenly throughout her LPs. Her first two US albums are pretty good, though, and the ones that owe the most to British Invasion melodies and arrangements. They're combined onto one CD on this release, which in addition to the hit tracks in the title have obscure standouts like "Summer Is Over" and "Something Special," as well as excellent versions of American hits like "Twenty-Four Hours from Tulsa," "You Don't Own Me," and "Anyone Who Had a Heart."

Dusty Springfield, *Dusty in Memphis* (Rhino, 1969). The British soul-rock singer recorded her most critically esteemed blue-eyed soul album in the US, which includes the hit "Son of a Preacher Man." A deluxe edition on Rhino offers a lot of bonus cuts from the same era.

Thee Midneters, *Greatest* (Thump, 2002). The leading so-called "brown-eyed soul" group, and the finest Latino rock band of the 1960s, though most of their success was confined to the Los Angeles area. Thee Midneters were perhaps too eclectic to be categorized as a soul act, but did some great soul ballads, along with raunchier Rolling Stones-influenced rock.

Them, *The Complete Them 1964-1967* (Exile/Legacy, 2015). Their commercial success was largely limited to the hit singles "Here Comes the Night," "Baby Please Don't Go," and "Mystic Eyes," but Belfast's Them were one of the greatest British Invasion bands. In addition to featuring a young, snarling Van Morrison on lead vocals, they played vicious R&B/rock with gnarly guitar and haunting organ, whether playing Morrison's songs or covering American blues, soul, and rock tunes. This three-CD compilation has virtually everything they did, and has little filler, with concise and insightful liner notes by Morrison himself.

Various Artists, *Soul Shots Vol. 6: Blue-Eyed Soul* (Rhino, 1988). It's long out of print, but this LP (which never made the transition to CD) is a good 14-song survey of 1960s

blue-eyed soul. Besides some big hits in the style (Roy Head's "Treat Her Right," the Soul Survivors' "Expressway to My Heart," Tony Joe White's "Polk Salad Annie"), it has some smaller hits by artists who only had one or two (Bob Kuban, Bill Deal), and some songs by well known names and no-names that are hardly known by anyone.

Recommended Books:

Animal Tracks: The Story of the Animals: Newcastle's Rising Sons, by Sean Egan (Askill Publishing, 2012). The best and most thorough of the few Animals books (including a couple of autobiographies by their lead singer Eric Burdon), although the author holds the unusual opinion that their psychedelic-era music was better than their earlier British Invasion R&B/rock.

The Complete Dusty Springfield, by Paul Howes (Reynolds & Hearn, 2001). There have been several biographies of Dusty Springfield, none of them too satisfactory. This isn't a biography, but a detailed alphabetical assessment of all the tracks she recorded and the stories behind them. Therefore its appeal is limited to serious fans, but if you are one, it's quite well done and informative.

Dusty: An Intimate Portrait of a Musical Legend, by Karen Bartlett (Lesser Gods, 2017). Like some other books on Springfield, this focuses more on her (largely gay) sexuality and less on her music than is optimum. But it does pay more attention to her music and recordings than those other volumes, with detailed descriptions of many (yet not all) of her best singles and albums. Some key musical associates weigh in with pretty detailed first-hand recollections too.

A Man Called Destruction: The Life and Music of Alex Chilton, From Box Tops to Big Star to Backdoor Man, by Holly George-Warren (Viking). Well-researched, well-written biography documenting one of the strangest career trajectories in rock history. How did a guy who sang a classic #1 soul-rock song as a teenager end up in a cult band, and then doing lo-fi shambling projects that made that cult band (Big Star) seem slick? It's not all that easy to explain, but this makes a fair effort of at least filling in the steps along the path, properly de-emphasizing his less interesting twenty or so final years.

The Time of My Life: A Righteous Brother's Memoir, by Bill Medley with Mike Marino (Da Capo Press, 2014). Not a hugely in-depth read, the autobiography of Righteous Brother Bill Medley (that was his deep lead vocal on "You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'") is still a breezy ride from his roots in Orange County R&B bands to hits with Phil Spector.

Van Morrison: No Surrender, by Johnny Rogan (Vintage, 2005). Though most of this covers Morrison's solo career as a singer-songwriter, a large early section is devoted to his initial rise to prominence as the lead singer of the mid-1960s Belfast band Them. Clinton Heylin's *Can You Feel the Silence? Van Morrison: A New Biography* also covers the Them years with some detail.

DVDs:

The Spencer Davis Group, *Gimme Some Lovin' Live 1966* (Cherry Red, 2005). Live Finnish TV performance from early 1967, shortly before Stevie Winwood left the band, including the hits "I'm a Man," "Gimme Some Lovin'," and "Keep on Running." Note that the 1967 bonus documentary was filmed after Winwood left.

Dusty Springfield, *Once Upon a Time 1964-1969* (Reelin' in the Years, 2010). Hits and somewhat lesser-known tunes from the late Springfield's prime. In the absence of her availability for interviews, there are comments by some of her associates, including Burt Bacharach.

Dusty Springfield, *Reflections: 17 Classic Performances* (White Star). Not as good or long as *Once Upon a Time 1964-1969* (see above), this still has an hour of vintage Springfield clips from the '60s, though the settings tend toward the sterile.

Dusty Springfield, *Live at the BBC* (Mercury, 2007). In 1966 and 1967, Springfield had her own BBC television series. This rather amazing DVD has dozens of songs she performed, few of them hits, and some of them never to be released in any versions on her official records. Ranges from soul and pop-rock to less expected ventures into folk and international music, and adds a few bonus clips from other programs.

AV Clips:

The Righteous Brothers: You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin' (DVD)
Roy Head: Treat Her Right (DVD)
Mitch Ryder: See See Rider (DVD)
The Rascals: Good Lovin' (DVD)
The Rascals: I Ain't Gonna Eat Out My Heart Anymore (DVD)
Wayne Cochran: Goin' Back to Miami (DVD)
The Uniques: You Don't Miss Your Water (CD)
The Boxtops: The Letter (DVD)
Soul Survivors: Expressway to Your Heart (CD)
John Fred: Judy in Disguise (DVD)
Evie Sands: Take Me For a Little While (DVD)
Dr. John: I Walk on Guilded Splinters (CD)
Delaney & Bonnie: That's What My Baby's For (DVD)
Thee Midnites: Love Special Delivery (DVD)
Thee Midnites: It'll Never Be Over For Me (CD)
Cannibal & the Headhunters: Land of 1000 Dances (DVD)
Willie Bobo: Evil Ways (CD)
Santana: Evil Ways (DVD)
Malo: Sauvecito (DVD)
El Chicano: Viva Tirado (DVD)
The Beatles: Shout (DVD)
The Beatles: Twist and Shout (DVD)
The Beatles: You Really Got a Hold on Me (CD)
The Beatles: Money (DVD)
The Beatles: Please Mr. Postman (DVD)
The Beatles: Got to Get You into My Life (CD)
Aretha Franklin: Let It Be (CD)
The Rolling Stones: Pain in My Heart (DVD)
The Rolling Stones: Long Long While (CD)
The Animals: Bring It On Home (DVD)
The Spencer Davis Group: I'm a Man (DVD)
Georgie Fame: Get Away (DVD)
Joe Cocker: Feelin' Alright (DVD)
Them: Call My Name (DVD)
Van Morrison: Brown Eyed Girl (DVD)
Van Morrison: These Dreams of You (DVD)
Kenny Lynch: Up in Smoke (CD)
The Equals: Baby Come Back (DVD)
The Foundations: Baby Now That I've Found You (DVD)
Hot Chocolate: Brother Louie (DVD)
The Stories: Brother Louie (DVD)
Dusty Springfield: The Real Thing (DVD)
Dusty Springfield: Son of a Preacher Man (DVD)
Lulu: Can't Hear You No More (DVD)

Kiki Dee: I Can't Get Away from You (DVD)

Dusty Springfield & Martha & the Vandellas: Wishin' and Hopin' (DVD)