

Bee Gees - In The Mood Of Love (2015)

Written by bluelover

Wednesday, 10 April 2019 15:11 -

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01. *To Love Somebody* (3:01) 02. *Massachusetts* (2:24) 03. *Words* (3:16) 04. *I've Gotta Get A Message To You* (3:04) 05. *I Started A Joke* (3:08) 06. *First Of May* (2:49) 07. *How Can You Mend A Broken Heart* (3:58) 08. *Run To Me* (3:07) 09. *Stayin' Alive* (4:44) 10. *Night Fever* (3:31) 11. *More Than A Woman* (3:14) 12. *How Deep Is Your Love* (4:01) 13. *Love So Right* (3:33) 14. *Too Much Heaven* (4:56) 15. *Love You Inside Out* (4:09) 16. *Our Love Don't Throw It All Away* (4:06) 17. *For Whom The Bell Tolls* (3:55) 18. *Closer Than Close* (4:36) 19. *Emotion* (3:38) 20. *Tragedy* (5:03)

Just about every Bee Gees fan who starts talking about the band starts all of his monologues with more or less the following phrases: 'Nowadays, the Bee Gees are unfairly associated with the late-Seventies disco movement, gold medallions on hairy chests, leisure suits and Saturday Night Fever. But how fair is this unjust association? We should not blame the Bee Gees for disco. They only had some disco albums, and they weren't the worst of the lot'.

This is not completely true, of course. We should blame the Bee Gees for disco; after all, it wasn't their promoter who penned 'Stayin' Alive' and 'Night Fever'. And alas, whatever lies in the future, the Bee Gees will be associated with the disco craze and the disco craze only for millions of years to come; so far, few albums have beaten the Saturday Night Fever soundtrack saleswise. But then again, many people associate the Beatles with 'Yesterday', the Who with 'Pinball Wizard', and Rod Stewart with 'Do Ya Think I'm Sexy'. Are all these songs the artists' best achievements? Definitely not, even if 'Pinball Wizard' is a magnificent composition and 'Sexy' is a very so-so exercise in Latino-disco hybridizations. It's up to the considerably more wise and rational public to sort out things, and I hope that this page will do the Bee Gees a favor, because they are certainly a band to be reckoned with.

The Gibb brothers (along with the Wilsons, probably the most famous 'family combo' in the

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world of pop music) weren't big innovators in the world of pop, sure enough. Then again, neither was David Bowie. What the brothers always had for them, and to a certain extent, have preserved up to the present day, is an incredible knack for writing solid pop melodies (something which the above-mentioned David Bowie never had, by the way). This is a plus. Another plus is the brothers' vocal talents: while their harmonies leave a lot to be desired, both Robin and Barry had tremendous singing voices, and were undeniably in the same league with Britain's (not to mention Australia's) best vocalists of both the Sixties and the Seventies... until, of course, they traded everything in for the irritating falsettos on their disco records.

Yet another plus is the brothers' chameleonic nature, a thing that, this time around, really unites them with David Bowie. They didn't have any inspiring musical ideas of their own, but they were excellent at imitating every other genre available and beefing it up with their melodic instincts. It's obvious that the brothers' strongest talents were always in writing melodramatic balladry - and at their peak (the 1967-71 years) they were probably the only band in the world that could get away with including sweeping string arrangements on every second song on an album and not end up sounding completely corny. But they also tried their hand at many different styles, ranging from psychedelia to bluesy roots-rock, and their mimicry was so perfect you could hardly tell it from the real thing.

Which brings us to the point - what was the Bee Gees' 'real thing'? The brothers are often accused of 'faux-soul' singing and cheap fakery, but I find all these accusations unjust. For one, the Bee Gees aren't any more 'faux-soul' than the entire Motown scene, and their composing skills were always holding up to, and often surpassing, those of the best Motown songwriters. And they were certainly more real than the usual soul scene, simply because they were writing all their compositions themselves, a point that's often missed. They hardly ever did covers - on the other hand, they served as prolific 'cover deliverers' themselves, as early as 1967-1968, and in the sheer number of occasions of their material's coverage by other artists stand more or less in the same row with the Beatles and Dylan. Maybe their work lacks sincerity; it certainly does, because aping and sincere composition rarely go hand in hand. But, like I said, similar accusations can be thrown at David Bowie and God knows who else.

So let's just cut the crap and admit the following points. The Bee Gees were prime composers and singers, even if they preferred to work within given formulas rather than create their own ones. The Bee Gees often demonstrated stupid lapses of taste, but that's only to be expected if you're working within such a dangerous genre as lush pop balladeering. The Bee Gees are sleazy, slick and phoney, but they compensate for it with incredibly catchy melodies and a great entertaining instincts: even the worst Bee Gees records are still pretty interesting to listen to.

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And what about the disco horrors? Well, for starters, one must remember that the Bee Gees didn't exactly 'jump on the disco bandwagon', as they say. It has been rightly pointed out that if Saturday Night Fever had never taken off and 'Stayin' Alive' hadn't turned out to be played every ten minutes on every radio station, the Bee Gees might have been glorified, not anathemized, for disco. Before 1977, they were its 'underground heroes' (yeah, that's right, there was a period when disco was underground. Those were the days, eh?), and were actually one of the very first bands to try their hand at a then new and exciting genre. And, like it happens oh so often, a genre might be horrendous, but its forefathers are often genial; some of the Bee Gees' disco stuff has aged far better than your average heavy cock rock of the mid-Seventies like Aerosmith, if only because it was kinda, well, you could say 'groundbreaking' for the time. I am, of course, not a big fan of the brothers' disco compositions, and I sure wish they'd diversify their singing at that point instead of chiming in that abominable falsetto on all the tracks, but, like I said, some of the stuff is well worth trying at least once.

After the disco period, the band had reverted to its AOR formulas, putting out loads of crap interspersed with some good material, but, of course, it was sorta late - from now on, they would only be 'Stayin' Alive'. A pity, because in that way it turned out that many of their excellent early albums are out of print and hard to find. They're well worth hunting for, though.

I'm not sure if I'm going to review the band's entire catalog - after all, such occupations can get a bit nauseating - but I'm glad to have a big chunk of their early records. So if you're willing to give the lads a try, just buy the Bee Gees' First and proceed carefully from there. Good luck to you.

Lineup: Barry Gibb - guitar, vocals; Maurice Gibb - vocals; Robin Gibb - vocals; Vince Melouney - guitar; Colin Peterson - drums. Melouney and Peterson quit by the end of the Sixties, leaving the brothers to go on as a trio. Robin fell out in the end of 1969, leaving Barry and Maurice as a duo, then returned in 1971 after a briefly successful couple of solo albums. Geoff Bridgeford on drums and Alan Kendall on guitar also formed part of the band for a brief while in the early Seventies. After that, the Bee Gees went on steadily as a trio and, as far as I know, are still going steady. ---starling.rinet.ru

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