

Traffic - Best Of Traffic (1969)

Written by bluesever

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01 - Paper Sun (S. Winwood - J. Capaldi) 02 - Heaven Is In Your Mind (S. Winwood - J. Capaldi - C. Wood) 03 - No Face, No Name And No Number (S. Winwood - J. Capaldi) 04 - Coloured Rain (S. Winwood - J. Capaldi - C. Wood) 05 - You Can All Join In (D. Mason) 06 - Hole In My Shoe (D. Mason) 07 - Medicated Goo (S. Winwood - J. Miller) 08 - Forty Thousand Headman (J. Capaldi - S. Winwood) 09 - Feelin' Alright (D. Mason) 10 - Shanghai Noodle Factory (Winwood - Capaldi - Fallon - Miller - Mason) 11 - Dear Mr. Fantasy (J. Capaldi - S. Winwood - C. Wood) Jim Capaldi - Composer, Drums, Keyboards, Percussion, Vocals Dave Mason - Bass, Composer, Guitar, Mellotron, Vocals Steve Winwood - Bass, Composer, Guitar, Harpsichord, Keyboards, Organ, Percussion, Piano, Vocals Chris Wood - Composer, Flute, Organ, Saxophone, Vocals, Wind Release Date - 14 November 1969

Though Traffic broke up at the start of 1969, the band was on a commercial ascent, which led Island Records, their U.K. label, and United Artists, which licensed their product for the U.S., to assemble a posthumous album, Last Exit, released in April 1969, that, like its predecessor, Traffic, peaked in the American top 20. Meanwhile, former band member Steve Winwood formed Blind Faith, which produced a debut album that topped the charts on both sides of the Atlantic. No wonder Island and UA determined that the fall of 1969 was a good time for a Traffic compilation. The release was especially needed in Britain, where the singles sides "Paper Sun," "Hole in My Shoe," and "Smiling Phases" had not yet appeared on an LP. Since Traffic had moved away from being a singles band after its first year, the album was not dubbed a hits collection, though all its tracks had been released on one side or the other of a single on one side or the other of the Atlantic. As a selection of the best and most popular material from the group's first three albums, the result is hard to fault, though it's worth noting that the missing "Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush," the theme song from the 1967 movie of the same name, was a Top Ten hit in England. Also missing, on the British version of the LP, anyway, was "You Can All Join In," a song that had enjoyed popularity in continental Europe. (The American version did include "You Can All Join In," which replaced "Smiling Phases.") The group's U.K. hit singles, "Paper Sun" and "Hole in My Shoe," were already beginning to sound like quaint bits of psychedelia by 1969, but the entire second side of the LP, comprising "Medicated Goo," "Forty Thousand Headmen," "Feelin' Alright," "Shanghai Noodle Factory," and

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"Dear Mr. Fantasy," was the kind of progressive rock that would define Traffic and give it its place in the rock pantheon. Who could have known when this disc was first released that the band's story was far from over? ---William Ruhlmann, AllMusic Review

This album is an early compilation of songs taken from the first three TRAFFIC albums - "Mr. Fantasy", "Traffic" and "Last Exit". It is a solid collection of the first phase of the band when they explored typical psychedelic and folk-rock textures of the British scene 1967-69. Seven songs are taken from the first album, and two songs each from "Traffic" and "Last Exit", giving a final picture of the band's abilities. Completists would probably go for individual albums, but as an introduction, "The Best of Traffic" serves its purpose. If you like this period of music, it is a nice addition to your collection if you don't own original three albums. ---Seyo, progarchives.com

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