

Rolling Stones – Could You Walk On The Water (1966)

Written by bluesever

Friday, 15 April 2011 09:20 - Last Updated Wednesday, 26 December 2018 21:54

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01. 19th Nervous Breakdown
02. Sad Day [play](#)
03. Take It Or Leave It [play](#)
04. Think
05. Goin' Home
06. Mother's Little Helper
07. Sittin' On A Fence
08. Doncha Bother Me
09. Ride On, Baby
10. Looking Tired
11. Goin' Home (Edit)

Musicians:

Mick Jagger - vocals

Keith Richards - guitar

Brian Jones – guitar, harmonica

Bill Wyman - bass

Charlie Watts - drums

This reconstruction gathers all of the best sounding masters of the source material and is presented all in mono, as it was meant to be heard.

By 1965, The Rolling Stones had become one of the biggest rock bands in the world, proving their value with innovative British interpretations of American R&B music. In an attempt to keep up with their contemporaries— self-contained bands that wrote their own songs—manager Andrew Loog Oldham pushed the band to compose their own material. Specifically focusing

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on creating a song partnership between Mick Jagger and Keith Richards, the tactic proved successful as Jagger/Richards-penned singles “(I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction”, “Get Off Of My Cloud” and “As Tears Go By” were all major hits. But what of their albums? Up until then, the Rolling Stones’ albums had been a mixed bag of rock and blues standards with only a sprinkling of their own material. Possibly taking a cue from The Beatles, The Rolling Stones set out to record an album by the end of the year consisting of all original material.

While on their fall North American tour in 1965, the band filed into Hollywood’s RCA Studios in December to record the new material they had been composing. At least nine songs were finished during these fruitful sessions, including: “Doncha Bother Me”, “Goin’ Home”, “Mother’s Little Helper”, “19th Nervous Breakdown”, “Ride On Baby”, “Sad Day”, “Sittin’ On A Fence”, “Take It Or Leave It” and “Think”. Not only was the band impressed they were able to record nearly a full album of solid, original compositions in a week, but the songs themselves featured impressive exotic adornments by guitarist Brian Jones. Growing bored of simply playing guitar, Jones literally picked up a number of unusual instruments to contribute, such as an autoharp, harpsichord and koto, giving the songs a colorful, proto-psychedelic flavor. Finally “Goin Home” was noteworthy as one of the longest continuous performances in recorded rock music thus far, spanning over 11 minutes! Two tracks from the sessions were selected as a single to be released in February, “19th Nervous Breakdown” b/w “Sad Day”.

Marveling at the results of the RCA sessions, Oldham and the band vied to rush-release all nine finished songs plus a tenth track (the quaint Out Of Our Heads outtake “Looking Tired”, recorded three months prior) in March as Could You Walk On The Water. Featuring entirely original compositions—as well as the current hit “19th Nervous Breakdown”—the album was supposed to feature cover art from a California reservoir photo shoot and a deluxe gatefold with pictures taken from their recent American tour. Unfortunately, Decca Records balked at the title, afraid that the name of this decidedly American album would offend the American religious, allegedly stating, “We would not issue it with that title at any price!” As Oldham negotiated the release of the album, The Rolling Stones continued to tour relentlessly while continuing to compose new material. As the proposed album release date of March 10th began to close in, it was obvious Could You Walk On The Water would not rise above its own title; with Oldham finally giving in to Decca, it was decided the compilation Big Hits (High Tide and Green Grass) would be released in its place in the United States and The Stones reevaluated the shelved album.

Fortunately, there was a silver lining in the failure of Could You Walk On The Water to launch, as the day before its scheduled release date the band returned to RCA Studios to cut another batch of original material. This second set was more impressive than the first, which included: “Flight 505”, “High and Dry”, “I Am Waiting”, “If You Let Me”, “It’s Not Easy”, “Lady Jane”, “Long Long While”, “Out Of Time”, “Paint It Black”, “Stupid Girl”, “Under My Thumb” and “What To

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Do". Brian Jones again adorned The Stones' brand of rock with such exotic instruments as a dulcimer, marimba and a sitar. Now with 21 new songs in total, The Stones combined the best of the December 1965 and March 1966 sessions into one 14-track album. With "Paint It Black" the lead single in the US market and "Mother's Little Helper" the lead single in the UK market (both backed with "Lady Jane"), the album—now titled *Aftermath*—was released in April to critical and commercial acclaim, marking The Rolling Stones' first masterpiece. *Aftermath* not only became one of the greatest albums from the British Invasion era, but stood head-to-head against other legendary rock albums of the time, including *Highway 61 Revisited*, *Rubber Soul* and *Pet Sounds*. But is it possible to resurrect *Could You Walk On The Water*, the album that was 'passover' by both Decca and ultimately The Stones themselves?

Luckily the tracklist of *Could You Walk On The Water* has been published and nearly all of the tracks have been released, allowing many listeners to reconstruct the album. The difference here is that we will exclusively be using the original mono masters for all songs, as the stereo mixes of the material leave much to be desired, featuring an antiquated soundstage. Side A opens with "19th Nervous Breakdown" taken from *Singles 1965-1967*, since The Rolling Stones in Mono boxset used an inferior master with excessive noise floor in-between vocal lines. Following is "Sad Day", taken from the *Stray Cats* discs of the *In Mono* box set. "Take It Or Leave It", "Think" and "Mother's Little Helper" close out Side A, all taken from the *Aftermath* disc of *In Mono*.

Side B opens with the full-length mix of "Goin Home" from *Aftermath*. Although some sources claim there would have been an edited version of the track on the actual *Could You Walk On The Water* album, I chose to include the full 11-minute version, making Side B about 6 minutes longer than Side A. While that may seem in err, remember that Side B of the US version of *Aftermath* was also 6 minutes longer than its side A! Next is "Sittin' On a Fence" taken from the *Flowers* disc of the *In Mono* box, followed by "Doncha Bother Me" from *Aftermath*. "Ride On, Baby" again from *Flowers* follows, with the album concluding with the as-yet-unreleased "Looking Tired" taken from the bootleg *More Stoned Than You'll Ever Be* but collapsed to mono and EQ'd to match the rest of the album. ---albumsthatneverwere.blogspot.com

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