

Blues Magoos – Electric Comic Book (1967)

Written by bluesever

Friday, 30 July 2010 13:13 - Last Updated Tuesday, 21 November 2017 12:26

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01. *Pipe Dream (Gilbert/Scala)* - 2:25
02. *There's A Chance We Can Make It (Gilbert/Scala)* - 2:12
03. *Life Is Just A Cher O'Bowlies (Gilbert/Scala/Thielhelm)* - 2:34
04. *Gloria (Van Morrison)* - 6:01
05. *Intermission (Esposito)* - 1:04
06. *Albert Common Is Dead (Gilbert/Scala)* - 1:47
07. *Summer Is The Man (Esposito/Gilbert)* - 2:58
08. *Baby, I Want You (Gilbert/Thielhelm)* - 2:41
09. *Let's Get Together (Jimmy Reed)* - 3:06
10. *Take My Love (Gilbert/Scala)* - 1:49
11. *Rush Hour (Daking/Gilbert/Esposito/Scala/Thielhelm)* - 2:35
12. *That's All Folks (Esposito/Gilbert/Scala)* - 0:08

Personnel:

- Ralph Scala - keyboards, vocals
- Emil "Peppy" Thielhelm – guitar, vocals
- Ronald Gilbert – bass, vocals
- Michael Esposito – guitar
- Geoffrey Daking – drums, percussion

The Blues Magoos' first album, *Psychedelic Lollipop*, earned the band a major hit single, "(We Ain't Got) Nothin' Yet," and in the grand tradition of striking while the iron was hot, the New York-based quintet were back with their second LP, 1967's *Electric Comic Book*, less than five months later. The sophomore effort is a noticeably more ambitious piece of work than the Magoos' debut, and while psychedelia was a catchphrase more than anything else on the first record, *Electric Comic Book* sounds trippier and a bit more expansive by comparison (the goofy "Intermission" tosses in some fairly obvious marijuana and cocaine references which would have been almost unthinkable in 1966, and the drug angle in "Pipe Dream" isn't exactly subtle).

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In addition, a few months of playing live had tightened up a combo who already sounded pretty good together, as well as bolstering the confidence in Ralph Scala's vocals and keyboard work and the fuzzy interplay of guitarists Mike Esposito and Emil "Peppy" Thielhelm. However, the blues and R&B elements that were a large part of Psychedelic Lollipop's strength have faded into the background here (except for a overdone cover of Jimmy Reed's "Let's Get Together"), and though the band could come up with a respectable pop tune, "Baby, I Want You" and "Take My Love" sound like throw-aways that were tossed together quickly to fill out a record not quite 30 minutes long (though "Take My Love" does have the very memorable line "Take my love and shove it up your heart"). Psychedelic Lollipop is well short of a classic, but overall it's a stronger and more coherent set of songs than Electric Comic Book, which sounds like the quickly recorded follow-up that it truly was, though it does have moments that suggest the band could have made another album as good as the debut with a bit more time and attention. --- Mark Deming, allmusic.com

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