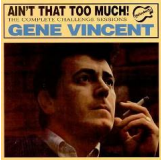


Gene Vincent - Ain't That Too Much! The Complete Challenge Sessions 1966-1967 (1994)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 08 November 2011 19:28 - Last Updated Tuesday, 13 March 2018 22:45

Gene Vincent - Ain't That Too Much! The Complete Challenge Sessions 1966-1967 (1994)



1. Gene Vincent - Bird Doggin' [03:30] 2. Gene Vincent - Born To Be A Rolling Stone [02:19] 3. Gene Vincent - Poor Man's Prison [02:24] 4. Gene Vincent - I'm A Lonesome Fugitive [03:47] 5. Gene Vincent - Love Is A Bird [02:24] 6. Gene Vincent - Hi-Lili Hi-Lo [02:15] 7. Gene Vincent - I've Got My Eyes On You [01:50] 8. Gene Vincent - Ain't That Too Much [02:52] 9. Gene Vincent - Hurtin' For You Baby [02:28] 10. Gene Vincent - Words And Music [02:42] 11. Gene Vincent - Am I That Easy To Forget [02:25] 12. Gene Vincent - Born To Be A Rolling Stone [02:35] 13. Gene Vincent - Poor Man's Prison [03:45] 14. Gene Vincent - Love Is A Bird [02:36] 15. Gene Vincent - Hi-Lili Hi-Lo [02:42] 16. Gene Vincent - Hurtin' For You Baby [02:39] 17. Gene Vincent - Ain't That Too Much [02:58] 18. Gene Vincent - Lonely Street [02:11]

Faced with a career that was going nowhere fast on a treadmill of gigs, booze and oldies, Gene Vincent re-grouped in 1966 and with the help of an all-star team of Southern California studio whizzes, recorded a batch of songs that stand out as some of his best work. Challenge Records assembled some top-notch session cats like Glen Campbell, Al Casey, Jim Seals, Dash Crofts and David Gates, rounded up some good songs, and let Gene loose. The songs aren't rockabilly, though, not even a little. Instead they are solid mid-'60s fare with a folk-rock-meets-garage sound. He is in fine voice throughout, sounding tough and ready on hard rockers like "Bird Doggin'," "Ain't That Too Much" and "Words and Music," sensitive on sweet ballads like "Hi-Lili, Hi-Lo," and heartbroken and blue on desperate songs like "Hurtin' for You Baby" and "Am I That Easy to Forget." He shows off his country side on a rock-solid cover of Merle Haggard's "I'm a Lonesome Fugitive," gets loose and swinging on a boppy "Poor Man's Prison," and on what may be the album's best song, the chiming folk-rocker "Love Is a Bird," which sounds very much like Gene Clark. In fact at times the record sounds like (with some 12-string guitar added) the Byrds, but mostly the results are not too far from what the Everly Brothers were doing around the same time. Sadly, Vincent had even less commercial success than the Brothers, as his Challenge singles sank without a trace and were never collected as an album in the States. Many labels have quasi-legally released the Challenge sessions on CD

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over the years, too but it took until 1994 for a package to be assembled that showed the songs off in their best light. Sundazed's Ain't That Too Much: The Complete Challenge Sessions has all 11 songs that were recorded plus six alternate takes and an early version of the bluesy "Lonely Street" (the finished version of which was left off the collection for some reason). The liner notes are by Billy Miller of Kicks magazine, the sound is great and the little snippets of studio chatter before and after the songs are fun to hear. Sundazed does a fine job of rescuing some great music by one of the true heroes of rock & roll. ---Tim Sendra, AllMusic Review

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