

The Beatles – Help! (1965)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Help!*
2. *The Night Before*
3. *You've Got to Hide Your Love Away*
4. *I Need You*
5. *Another Girl*
6. *You're Going to Lose That Girl*
7. *Ticket to Ride*
8. *Act Naturally*
9. *It's Only Love*
10. *You Like Me To Much*
11. *Tell Me What You See*
12. *I've Seen That Face*
13. *Yesterday*
14. *Dizzy Miss Lizzy*

Musicians: John Lennon – lead, harmony and backing vocals; rhythm, acoustic and 12 string guitars; electric piano and Hammond organ; percussion Paul McCartney – lead, harmony and backing vocals; lead, acoustic and bass guitars; electric and acoustic piano; guiro George Harrison – lead, harmony and backing vocals; lead, rhythm, acoustic and 12 string guitars; percussion Ringo Starr – drums and percussion; lead vocals on "Act Naturally" + George Martin – piano and producer John Scott – flutes on "You've Got to Hide Your Love Away" String quartet on "Yesterday", arranged by Martin in association with McCartney

Considering that Help! functions as the Beatles' fifth album and as the soundtrack to their second film -- while filming, they continued to release non-LP singles on a regular basis -- it's not entirely surprising that it still has some of the weariness of Beatles for Sale. Again, they pad the album with covers, but the Bakersfield bounce of "Act Naturally" adds new flavor (along with an ideal showcase for Ringo's amiable vocals) and "Dizzy Miss Lizzy" gives John an opportunity to flex his rock & roll muscle. George is writing again and if his two contributions don't touch Lennon and McCartney's originals, they hold their own against much of their British pop peers.

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Since Lennon wrote a third more songs than McCartney, it's easy to forgive a pair of minor numbers ("It's Only Love," "Tell Me What You See"), especially since they're overshadowed by four great songs. His Dylan infatuation holds strong, particularly on the plaintive "You've Got to Hide Your Love Away" and the title track, where the brash arrangement disguises Lennon's desperation. Driven by an indelible 12-string guitar, "Ticket to Ride" is another masterpiece and "You're Going to Lose That Girl" is the kind of song McCartney effortlessly tosses off -- which he does with the jaunty "The Night Before" and "Another Girl," two very fine tunes that simply update his melodic signature. He did much better with "I've Just Seen a Face," an irresistible folk-rock gem, and "Yesterday," a simple, beautiful ballad whose arrangement -- an acoustic guitar supported by a string quartet -- and composition suggested much more sophisticated and adventurous musical territory, which the group immediately began exploring with Rubber Soul. --- Stephen Thomas Erlewine, Rovi

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