

Beggars Banquet

anon.

a review of
“Beggars Banquet”
The Rolling Stones
(London)

The Rolling Stones are in the same class as many other groups whose albums are beyond comment. There are people who like the Stones and those who don't and I very much doubt if anyone ever changes sides.

The first cut on “Beggars Banquet” is set to what most glossy mags would call a “driving beat”—you know, the kind of rhythm you can make love to.

“Help Me Dear Doctor” is a pitiful attempt at Hank Snow...“I'm only a guitar and everyone picks on me”...style of tune about some guy whose gal has stole his heart and will the doctor please help him. There is a section on this and the preceding cut where someone sings Arthur Brown falsetto almost as badly as Arthur Brown only without the excitement.

The next cut (I don't have titles for most of the cuts—legally I shouldn't even have the tape) is a repeat of “King Bee,” and the only cut on the album which is instantly identifiable as the Stones.

There is nothing really worth saying about the next cut other than it sounds again like someone decided to release waste material from earlier Stones albums. This (side one, cut four) has what Dan Carlisle would call Dylanesque lyrics with a very heavily overworked slide guitar droning and whining in the background. Actually the majority of this album seems to suffer from this unimaginative backing.

The rest of the album will be reviewed as a whole for several reasons. Firstly it is difficult to do each cut without knowing the titles, and 'secondly, no one cut is worthy of specific mention.

The air which the remainder of the cuts have is one of “well, we've made our bread and so we'll just prove that we can still be just as raunchy and bluest' as we were when we started!” which would usually be fine. Most groups can return to their original sound very effectively. However, in this case, although the Stones are as Bohemian and untalented a “blues” group as they were when they first started, they don't have the ugly freshness which made them so unbelievably unique and scream-overable in those days.

Later in the album someone plays a fiddle or a like instrument, but unfortunately whoever plays it just copies what the slide player played before him.

I hope that the cover for this album is as creative as someone, somewhere, must think it is because the album is as progressive as Herman's Hermits. Maybe somebody' blundered because these eight new cuts (the rest of the album will be re-issued singles and “B” sides) sound like laughable memories. If the Stones spent less time getting busted and more time producing then...?

“We shouted out ‘Who killed the Kennedys?’

“When really it was you and me.”

It wasn't me, Mick!

fifth Estate

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<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/66-november-14-27-1968/beggars-banquet>
Fifth Estate #66, November 14-27, 1968

fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net