



Comet Gain

Radio Sessions (BBC 1996-2011)

16 February 2024

CD / LP / digital



The second release in our great series of radio sessions are the collected BBC recordings of COMET GAIN, the rough diamond of the International Pop Underground, the indie punk monkeys, the noise pop collective Numero Uno! RADIO SESSIONS BBC 1996 - 2011 contains three John Peel sessions from 1996 and 1997 as well as a Marc Riley session from 2011. One thing is for sure: a world in which such a great, anarchic, idiosyncratic band, simply perfect in its imperfection, is invited to Abbey Road Studios for radio sessions by the country's biggest broadcaster, among others, can't be that bad. All those who are already fans of COMET GAIN should have this album, and everyone else too.

BBC Sessions Sleeve notes

Session 1

John Peel! Abbey Road! The Fabs! The Fall! what are we doing here? Did they make a terrible mistake? Young, eager, dumb, like an indie punk Monkees - Sam is Nesmith - talented and sarccy, Phil is Pete Tork - wide eyed and excited, Sarah a smiling Davy Jones, I'm a more sullen, inept Dolenz and Jax is Jax - stoic and beyond monkeehood, 3 songs! Why? I dunno... big white room, men in lab coats, school canteen vibes, "will they tune our instruments for us?", wandering St. Johns Wood in awe - is that David Hemmings eating a sandwich with some sherry on the bench? I think I saw Marianne Faithfull poke her head round when you did that guitar solo, 'Say Yes' becomes 'Say No'... "is the guitar supposed to sound like that at the start? The laboratory man says "uh...yeaaa...I guess" - I wonder what Peelite will say after our songs - (all these years later I totally forget even though this was such a part of it - yet I recall his "that young man certainly has some rum thoughts running through his head" (or something) after a Julian Cope song. Well, we made Peel Session at Abbey Road and half of us are signing on and I have no idea what these chords are called and how to tune this bastard thing. Thank fuck for punk rock!

Session 2

We're supposed to be pop contenders now? I think the label thinks so - shit, we know more chords too, Sam and Sarah's songs stretch out and flower, mine hide in my grouchy beatnik cave, Subway Sect! Dub basslines! Oh, we're in a smaller studio now, no Beatles for us contenders, the hippy engineer takes us to the pub for rock advice, I hummed 'Borsal Breakout' to myself and missed it all - shit! Our second LP's done and it's gonna be a hit! Except it never comes out and we break into 2 groups instead, small whiffs of squabbling kids permeate the BBC air but it's all good now,' songs we never released - that's good right? That's what Peel sessions are supposed to be! 'Love And Hate On The Radio' wrote the day before and not heard again by me for 20 years, I wonder what clothes we were wearing, did we make a BBC effort? Did we go to blow up afterwards and drink champers with all the other pop-stars-in-waiting? Did we hear the sound of one door closing and another collapsing. Brit Pop. New Mod. Riot Grrrl. International Pop Underground. New wave of new wave. Romo. Mojo. Skol. Mad Dog 20/20. What are we? What should we do? It's funny that something that started in an arc of almost always falling apart comes together so wonderfully just to fall apart this time from the heart. But good, solid, golden, eager, yearning, learning times for weekend groovers like we was.

Session 3

Hey kids its - a new Comet Gain! This time let's make it jagged and randomly ripped, our moment's gone so fuck it! Sweet skinhead Blair our secret weapon - he knows how to play his guitar! Darren, Rachel, Kay and me are learning on the job, although Kay is already some kind of immovable fuzz bass machine, one old(ish) song and 3 new ones written in a midnight speed trial, stretch em out or rush to the finish, was Jon there? Jon was always there but sometimes he wasn't, y'know, actually there, or he'd turn his amp off so he could just hang out onstage looking like a young lion, I don't remember the session at all, perhaps we got drunk in the nearest old pub first, sure we'd be all nervous, the nervousness of pouring out all that eager electricity in one burst of ragged YEAH, "we don't need to rehearse - it'll sound better", we kept to that method forever, 'back to the restart' that one goes out to chrisser and the peechees, new friends new family found in an unexpected insane US tour, reignited, full of purposeless purpose, ok guys, it'll never happen for us now thank god, so let's enjoy the amble into beautiful obscurity! Upwards, onwards and down, down, down! Yeah!

Session 4

Ah so much time has passed, so, we have a 'body of work' now, they put the word 'cult' in front of our name now (I THINK that's the spelling) so many stories, so many rings on that tired old tree, who are we now? Most of the faces have changed yet again, James, Woodie, Ben, Anne-Laure though they've been here forever pretty much, we have to go to MANCHESTER?! and play a gig the same night! Whose idea was...oh was it... oops, Marc Riley! The Fall again, nice dude, cheap pints in the beeb, we are professional now, well I'm not but standards need to be maintained, the birth and death of groovy Tony, I didn't know we had to TALK! And not swear? Oh shit, we are so ingrained in the rock behemoth machinery now we actually 'play songs from our new album' and a golden oldie with a side order of the seeds, I can't hear my guitar but I'm not allowed to turn it up to ear destroying levels this time, its the BBC doncha know, all in a circle waiting for the Riley nod, then a quick 'seeya mate' - 'yeh seeya mate' and its off for fish n chips and a gig then a bottle of baileys in the back of the van back home, next stop Coney Hatch Lane and sleep - working in Soho tomorrow, see you guys the next time the rock gods call 'yeh seeya mate', is this what it's come to? Almost acting like a normal band, we could even tune our guitars ourselves, well I say let's not do THAT again.

My recollections of all these pivotal points in the ever winding road of shame that is Comet Gain are as you can see sparse and pointless, we lived in those small moments, those fast and scorched afternoons pouring our ashes into the BBC air, I mean it's not like anyone is ever gonna want to put this shit out on a RECORD, ha! No, let's leave these precious lost days and spontaneous exhortations where they are buried, never to bother those nice people out there...

Ah wait, I've just got an email from Tapete - I'll be with you in a minuteoh bugger...

DAVID CHRISTIAN, LACANAU, MAY 2023

Tracklisting

- A1) Say Yes Kaleidoscope Sound (Radio Sessions 1996-2011)
- A2) Stripped (Radio Sessions 1996-2011)
- A3) Pier Angeli (Radio Sessions 1996-2011)
- A4) Strip Poker (Radio Sessions 1996-2011)
- A5) I Can't Believe (Radio Sessions 1996-2011)
- A6) Chain Smoking (Radio Sessions 1996-2011)
- A7) Love And Hate On The Radio (Radio Sessions 1996-2011)

- B1) Emotion Pictures (Radio Sessions 1996-2011)
- B2) Tighten Up (Radio Sessions 1996-2011)
- B3) Young Lions (Radio Sessions 1996-2011)
- B4) We Are All Rotten (Radio Sessions 1996-2011)
- B5) Working Circle Explosive! (Radio Sessions 1996-2011)
- B6) Thee Ecstatic Library (Radio Sessions 1996-2011)
- B7) After Midnite, After It's All Gone Wrong (Radio Sessions 1996-2011)
- B8) Saturday Night Facts Of Life (Radio Sessions 1996-2011)



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