

THE WHO

Fromm Institute

Week Two

Essential Listening:

1. *A Quick One* (Universal, 1966). The Who's second album was a bit of a letdown in both energy and consistency after the explosiveness of *The Who Sing My Generation*, especially as a strange publishing deal split the songwriting among all four members. Pete Townshend still contributed more songs than anyone else, and these were strong, especially the nine-minute "A Quick One, While He's Away," which stakes a claim as the first rock opera. John Entwistle emerged as a songwriter of note with a comic bent on "Boris the Spider" and the less heralded "Whiskey Man," and Keith Moon contributed a bit of instrumental marching-band lunacy with "Cobwebs and Strange," though this was an uncredited adaptation of British jazz musician Tony Crimbie's "Eastern Journey." The expanded edition adds four of the five tracks from their fall 1966 UK EP *Ready Steady Who*; the B-sides "Doctor, Doctor," "In the City," and "I've Been Away"; and a few outtakes, including a cover of the Everly Brothers' "Man with the Money."

2. *The Who Sell Out* (Universal, 1967). The Who's best pre-*Tommy* album was structured like a fake British pirate radio show, breaking up actual Who songs with commercials for fictional and actual products, also performed by the Who. Unfortunately the concept, such as it was, wasn't followed through for the entire album, the commercials suddenly disappearing a little way into side two of the original LP. The songs themselves were excellent power pop with some touches of psychedelia, including their big hit single (in both the US and UK, for the first time) "I Can See for Miles," "Relax," "Armenia City in the Sky," and "Our Love Was." Townshend's increasingly philosophical bent started to surface in "I Can't Reach You," and songs based around odd characters and confusing situations continued to be a hallmark on "Tattoo," "Mary Anne with the Shaky Hand," and John Entwistle's "Silas Stingy." The record concluded with another mini-opera, the five-minute "Rael," which contained some riffs and themes that would resurface in *Tommy*. The two-CD expanded edition presents the album in both stereo and mono versions. Of more importance, it also has the John Entwistle B-side "Someone's Coming"; a bunch of fine outtakes, including songs by Keith Moon and Roger Daltrey; an early version of "Summertime Blues"; a strange instrumental heavy rock treatment of the classical standard "In the Hall of the Mountain King"; and even some unused commercials.

Recommended additional recordings by the Who, 1966-1967:

1. From *Meaty Beaty Big & Bouncy* (MCA, 1971): Though (like all their other pre-1967 singles) they weren't hits in the US, the 1966 British singles "Substitute" and "I'm a Boy" were major lyrical and musical advances for the group. "Substitute" is the definitive example of power pop, and though couched in terms of a flawed relationship, introduces

some of Townshend's key themes of illusion vs. reality; "I'm a Boy," a condensed version of his first rock opera, introduces uncertain identity into the mix, as well as Beach Boys-type harmonies. These are both on *Meaty Beaty Big & Bouncy*, a collection of 1965-70 hits and popular LP tracks, as well as other greatest hits-type anthologies. So is "Pictures of Lily," a major power-pop portrait of confused adolescence,

2. *Ready Steady Who EP* (Reaction, UK, 1966): Strange five-song British EP included a first-rate Townshend original ("Disguises") with his frequent theme of shifting identity and trademark ringing power chord guitars; an inferior remake of "Circles"; and three goofy cover versions (of "Batman," "Barbara Ann," and the obscure Jan & Dean song "Bucket T"). Only a couple of these were issued in the US in the 1960s, but they all eventually became available worldwide, all but "Circles" appearing as bonus tracks on the expanded CD reissue of their second album, *A Quick One*. That expanded CD also includes the Beach Boys-like B-side of "I'm a Boy," "In the City."

3. A bunch of other tracks from 1966-67 singles only show up on various more obscure compilations good for draining your wallet, like the 1967 UK-only single "The Last Time"/"Under My Thumb," rushed out to support the Rolling Stones when Mick Jagger and Keith Richards were briefly jailed on spurious drug charges, and John Entwistle's morbid "Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde."

4. From *BBC Sessions* (Universal, 2000): A half-dozen tracks the Who did for the BBC in 1967 are here, all of them from the *A Quick One* album except "Pictures of Lily."

Notable unreleased Who material, 1966-1967:

1. 1967 Pete Townshend solo demos that have shown up on his official demo collections *Scoop* and *Another Scoop*, and on bootlegs like *The Genuine Scoop*. These include solo demos of numerous officially released Who songs (like "Call Me Lightning," "Pictures of Lily," and "I Can See for Miles") and some pretty interesting ones the Who apparently never tried in the studio ("That Motherland Feeling," "Politician"). Of most interest is a much longer version of the mini-opera "Rael," chopped down to five minutes for the version on *The Who Sell Out*.

Recommended Books:

Roadwork: Rock & Roll Turned Inside Out, by Tom Wright with Susan Van Hecke (Hal Leonard, 2007). Wright met Pete Townshend when both were art students in the early 1960s, and traveled with the Who on late-'60s as a tour photographer. This large-size book has quite a few pictures of the band from the period, along with his memories of their colorful on-the-road behavior. It's also interesting for some accounts of his early-'60s time with Townshend, during which Wright's extensive (for the era) record collection helped expose Pete to a wealth of rock, blues, and jazz music. There are also quite a few photos and stories of other bands he worked with (such as the Faces), assembled in a chronologically rambling fashion that doesn't make it the smoothest start-to-finish read.

Recommended DVD/videos:

Blow-Up (Warner Brothers, 1966). There is only one rock song performed in this classic, but it's memorable, showing the Yardbirds storming through "Stroll On" (actually "The Train Kept a-Rollin'" with different lyrics) with both Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page, climaxing with Beck destroying his guitar. Aside from that, it's a good if jaded document of Swinging London in 1966, in which rock music played a very strong part. Why is it listed here? Because although the part went to the Yardbirds, it's been reported/speculated that director Michaelangelo Antonioni actually wanted the Who. And certainly Beck's destruction of the guitar was a page ripped right out of Pete Townshend's book.

Monterey Pop (Criterion, 1968). The Who's appearance at the Monterey Pop Festival in June 1967 was the single most important event in helping to increase awareness of the band throughout the United States – as it was for several other major performers at the festival, including Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, and Otis Redding. The original documentary includes just one song, their instrument-smashing finale "My Generation." The expanded three-DVD edition, however, includes three other songs: "Substitute," "Summertime Blues," and a full version of "A Quick One While He's Away."

Notable people:

Karen Astley: After meeting Pete Townshend in art school, married him on May 20, 1968. They had two daughters and a son, eventually divorcing in 2009 after many years of separation. Daughter of film composer Ted Astley; her younger brother, Jon Astley, became a record producer, eventually co-producing the Who's 1978 album *Who Are You* and working on the sound of many of their reissues.

Murray the K: Famed New York radio disc jockey became the first figure to present the Who in concert in the US when they played as part of shows he produced at the RKO Theater in New York in late March 1967.

Jimi Hendrix: After a dispute as to who should go on first, followed the Who (with the Grateful Dead between them) at the Monterey Pop Festival. Signed to the Who's British record label of the time, Track Records.

Speedy Keen: Wrote "Armenia City in the Sky" on *The Who Sell Out* – the only instance in which the Who did a previously unreleased song not written by a member of the group. A chauffeur for Pete Townshend at the time, he soon became part of the band Thunderclap Newman, who had a big hit in 1969 with Keen's composition "Something in the Air," produced by Townshend.

Kim Kerrigan: Married Keith Moon in 1966; divorced him in 1975. They had one daughter, Mandy.

Eddie Phillips: Lead guitarist in another mod rock band produced by Shel Talmy, the Creation, also using feedback and electronic effects. It's been reported he was asked to join the Who as second guitarist, though this has never been confirmed beyond a doubt.

Jeff Beck: Top British guitarist, rising to stardom with the Yardbirds in the mid-1960s. Beck, Moon, Jimmy Page, Nicky Hopkins, and future Led Zeppelin bassist John Paul Jones play on the May 1966 recording "Beck's Bolero," which was eventually issued on a Beck single in March 1967.

Reaction Records: The Who were briefly on this label, run by Robert Stigwood, in 1966 before Kit Lambert and Chris Stamp got Track Records established.

Cyrano Langston: Who road manager who co-wrote an outtake from *The Who Sell Out*, "Early Morning Cold Taxi," with Roger Daltrey. They were planning to start a songwriting partnership, but it didn't get off the ground.

Al Kooper: Plays organ on "Rael." Famed keyboardist from the Blues Projects and the first lineup of Blood, Sweat & Tears; also a renowned session musician for Bob Dylan, the Rolling Stones, and many others.

Tommy Smothers: Compere of perhaps the most famous Who film clip, when they destroyed their instruments at the end of "My Generation" on their first American national television performance on *The Smothers Brothers* in September 1967.

Herman's Hermits: Wholesome British Invasion stars to whom the Who served as the support act when the Who made their first US tour in 1967.

Mick Jagger & Keith Richards: Singer and guitarist of the Rolling Stones who were briefly jailed in mid-1967 for flimsy drug charges stemming from a February 1967 police raid on Keith Richards's countryside home. As a gesture of support, the Who recorded and rushed out a single of two Rolling Stones songs (written, like almost all of that group's material, by Jagger and Richards), "The Last Time"/"Under My Thumb," vowing to put out more Rolling Stones covers until Jagger and Richards were freed. Some people have speculated this was a publicity stunt as much as it was a humanitarian gesture of solidarity, but in any case there would be no more need for the Who to put out Stones covers, as Jagger and Richards' sentences were overturned.

John's Children: British group, including a young Marc Bolan/T. Rex in the lineup, who supported the Who briefly on a spring 1967 Germany tour before managing to get thrown off for being too rowdy.

Wes Montgomery: Great jazz guitarist whom Townshend specifically cited as an influence on "Sunrise" from *The Who Sell Out*.

Tony Crombie: British jazz drummer whose 1960 recording “Eastern Journey” was the obvious model for the Who’s “Cobwebs and Strange,” though Keith Moon was credited as the composer for that.

The Small Faces: The Who toured with this other famous British mod band in Australia in early 1968 (on a bill also including ex-Manfred Mann lead singer Paul Jones). The tour did not go too well for the Who or the Small Faces, the bands getting attacked in the press for their behavior, and the Who not returning to the country while Keith Moon was alive.

Dave King: Designed (with Roger Law) the famous cover for *The Who Sell Out*.

Notable Landmarks:

RKO Theater: New York theater where the Who played their first US shows in late March 1967, as part of a week-long series of concerts also featuring Cream, the Blues Project, Wilson Pickett, Mitch Ryder, the Blues Magoos, and the Rascals.

Monterey County Fairgrounds: Site of the 1967 Monterey Pop Festival, the Who’s first US appearance to get major media attention, and help increase their American impact when a clip was used in the *Monterey Pop* documentary.

The Fillmore: The Who’s performances at this famous San Francisco venue in mid-June 1967, right before Monterey, were their first prestigious shows in the US, and ones where the group felt they had a better and more mature audience than they’d ever had before, challenging them to play better and longer sets.

The Queen Elizabeth: Because John Entwistle was honeymooning on this famed boat in mid-1967, he could not play on the Who’s “The Last Time”/“Under My Thumb” single, on which Pete Townshend played both bass and guitar.

Holiday Inn, Flint, Michigan: Site of one of the notorious incidents in Who history, when Keith Moon supposedly drove a car into a swimming pool during his 21st birthday party on August 23, 1967. It turns out that Moon spent much of his time in Flint at a dentist after tripping and knocking out a couple of his teeth, and almost certainly didn’t drive a car into a pool. He and the Who almost certainly did damage hotel rooms and other property, as they had in numerous other hotels in their career, leading to them getting banned from staying at Holiday Inns. It also turns out that much of the damage in Flint might have been done by the clean-cut group they were supporting on this US tour, Herman’s Hermits. Flint, Michigan, incidentally, was one of the very first towns in the United States where the Who were popular; their debut single “I Can’t Explain” was a hit there, though it barely made the Top 100 nationally.

Track Records: UK record label formed by Who co-managers Kit Lambert and Chris Stamp. In addition to issuing Who records in the UK in the late 1960s and early 1970s, also issued records there by Jimi Hendrix and Arthur Brown.

Albums by Artists Who Were Influential on and/or influenced by the Who in 1966-67:

The Beach Boys, *Smiley Smile* (Capitol, 1967). In late 1966, Beach Boys leader Brian Wilson, fresh off the triumph of *Pet Sounds*, began work on a yet more ambitious (and far more experimental) album, *Smile*, with which he hoped to top the Beatles. *Smile* was never completed, in part because Wilson got discouraged by the triumph of the Beatles' own "Strawberry Fields Forever"/"Penny Lane" single and *Sgt. Pepper*, issued while he was still struggling to complete the Beach Boys' *Smile*. *Smile* was abandoned, and a much more modest, quirky, and low-key record, *Smiley Smile*, issued instead. For what it's worth, in the liner notes to *Scoop*, Townshend wrote this of a track he demoed around this time, "Goin' Fishin'": "I think I was trying to create the kind of atmosphere the Beach Boys had achieved on *Smiley Smile*."

The Beatles, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (EMI, 1967). Probably the Beatles' most famous album, and still considered the most representative musical document of the psychedelic era. Sound effects, exotic instrumentation, distortion, and grand orchestration were deployed on a remarkably eclectic set of songs that ran from anguished epics to vaudeville, Indian music, chamber pieces, and hard funky rock. Though sometimes described as a "concept album," the concept was loose and vague, and more related to the consistently kaleidoscopic mood of a set whose total effect was greater than the sum of its parts, rather than to any definite story or theme. While it didn't have a specific sonic influence on the Who, its popularization of the approach of basing an album around a loose theme undoubtedly influenced them and numerous other groups at the time.

The Creation, *Our Music Is Red with Purple Flashes* (Diablo, 1998). The best of the Creation's output, and in fact most of their output, on this 24-track compilation. Only mildly successful in the UK and unknown in the US, they were similar to the Who in their use of feedback, distortion, and power pop, the key difference being that their songwriting wasn't nearly as strong. As noted elsewhere, it's been reported, without 100% confirmation, that their guitarist, Eddie Phillips, was asked to join the Who (to augment Townshend, not replace him) at one point.

The Jimi Hendrix Experience, *Are You Experienced?* (MCA, 1967). Though American, Hendrix didn't start recording as a bandleader until he moved to London in late 1966, and rose to stardom in the UK before his band the Jimi Hendrix Experience first played the US at the Monterey Pop Festival in June 1967. His stunning debut album redefined the parameters of what was possible on electric guitar, incorporating feedback, sustain, fuzz, extreme volume, the works. He stunned the top guitarists on the London scene, including Townshend, and was signed to the Who's British record label, Track. Though accounts have varied as to what took place, Who and the Hendrix haggled over who should play first at the Monterey Pop Festival, Hendrix eventually following the Who (the two acts broken up by a Grateful Dead set).

John's Children, *A Strange Affair: The Sixties Recordings* (2013, Grapefruit, UK).

Though not exactly among the core purchases for this course, for those heavily into mod rock, this two-CD compilation of a band that met very limited success will be of interest. Heavily derivative of the Who (with whom they briefly toured Germany in spring 1967), their recordings nonetheless had some charm and went into early psychedelia at times. Although they're most renowned for including Marc Bolan prior to his stardom with T. Rex, note that Bolan's membership was very brief and only spanned a few of the tracks they recorded in 1966 and 1967.

The Kinks, *Face to Face* (Universal, 1966). After the Beatles, the Kinks were one of the first rock bands to see the possibilities of albums as standalone documents with a consistency that didn't depend on the inclusion of hit singles. This was their first such statement on LP, Ray Davies flowering as a satirical songwriter with debts to British music hall (and it did include one hit, "Sunny Afternoon"). Though the Kinks had moved into a lighter approach than the Who at this point, the bands had similarities in their use of humorous satire and commentary. A two-CD deluxe edition has mono/stereo versions and extra tracks.

The Kinks, *Something Else By the Kinks* (Universal, 1967). Though the Kinks were barely touched by the psychedelic revolution, they retained the utmost respect of fellow musicians like the Who with their well-crafted, highly British and tuneful witty tunes. They also continued to score British hit singles, although they virtually disappeared from the American radar after a dispute with the musician's union left them unable to tour in the US. This 1967 album includes the classic "Waterloo Sunset" and lead guitarist Dave Davies's big British hit "Death of a Clown." A two-CD deluxe edition has mono/stereo versions and extra tracks.

The Move, *The Best of the Move* (A&M, 1974). There's a good case for the Move as the best late-'60s British band not to make a dent in the United States, though they had numerous UK hits. Sometimes if not always psychedelically tinged, their sound had much of the Who's power chord attack and the Beatles' melodicism, but the witty observational satire of Roy Wood's songwriting gave them a sound distinctly their own. In their early career, they also sparked Who comparisons with their violent stage act, which included the smashing of television sets. This has all their late-'60s hits (the apparent "Penny Lane" spoof "Blackberry Way" being the best) and their entire self-titled debut LP, though for the best of their early-'70s work after Jeff Lynne joined, you'll need to get the entirely different EMI compilation *Great Move! The Best of the Move*.

Pink Floyd, *Piper at the Gates of Dawn* (EMI, 1967). The debut album by Pink Floyd was their most overtly psychedelic and pop-oriented, mostly due to the presence of original leader/singer/guitarist/songwriter Syd Barrett, who left the group shortly afterward and became an acid casualty. Barrett's songs were among the most enchanting British psychedelia mixtures of madness, childhood innocence, and reckless electronic experimentation. The expensive three-CD expanded edition is worthwhile for the great non-LP 1967 UK hit singles "See Emily Play" and "Arnold Layne." Townshend put early Pink Floyd down as too excessive and far-out in one interview, but no doubt he (like

other leading British rock musicians) were impressed by their early innovations, and the songwriting of Syd Barrett bore similarities to the Who's in their wry British approach to eccentric characters.

The Small Faces, *Small Faces* (Universal, 1966). The Small Faces were by far the biggest British band identified with the mod movement – except for the Who. Their 1966 self-titled debut album was the most forceful pure mod rock LP besides the Who's *My Generation*, though the approach was more soul-influenced and the songwriting more rudimentary. More than one expanded edition of this has been issued; the most comprehensive is the two-CD 2012 deluxe edition. Yet more odds and ends (some slightly later hit singles among them) from their early career came out on *From the Beginning*, also issued as a two-CD 2012 deluxe edition. Big in the UK, they were largely unsuccessful in the US, with the exception of their psychedelic 1967 hit “Itchycoo Park.”

The Small Faces, *Small Faces* (Snapper, 1967). Very confusingly, the Small Faces' 1967 album had the same title as their debut LP in 1966. The group had changed a lot by this time, however, adding a lot of very British whimsical psychedelia to their mod rock. This has come out in more than one expanded edition; just make sure the bonus tracks also include their one US hit single, "Itchycoo Park," and the 1967 British hits "Tin Soldier" and "Here Come the Nice."