



The Mugwumps “**The Mugwumps**” Collectors’ Choice Music

This nine-song album, recorded during August 1964, first saw the light of day three years later when three quarters of this quartet went on to find fame in other aggregations. Two grasped the ‘golden ring’ as members of The Mamas And The Papas - I’m talking, of course, about Maryland bred Cass Elliot and Nova Scotia’s Denny Doherty. Meantime, Doherty’s fellow countryman, Zal Yanovsky had joined John Sebastian in the hit making machine The Lovin’ Spoonful, while the fourth and, these days, only surviving Mugwump, James Hendricks, makes his home in Nashville and in the ensuing decades has accrued a catalogue of some fifty solo albums. As a means of avoiding the draft, Hendricks married Elliot when they were still members of The Big Three, a band that preceded the Mugwumps.

Produced by the band’s managers Roy Silver and Bob Cavallo, if you pay close attention to the small print that follows that credit you’ll find the words “*in association with Alan Lorber.*” In truth the latter took the helm in the studio during the two days of recording sessions, and also advised the quartet on the material that was recorded. John Phillips coveted his role as leader and principle composer in The Mamas And Papas, so I guess it’s no surprise that the band never cut an Elliot composition. The Mugwumps’ disc however features two band-composed originals, namely, the Elliot/Hendricks collaborations “Here It Is Another Day” and “Everybody’s Been Talkin’” – both love themed numbers. The seven remaining tracks on “**The Mugwumps**” were cover songs.

“Searchin’,” the Lieber & Stoller penned opening track, had been a 1957 U.S. # 5 Pop hit for The Coasters, and during 1963 it peaked at # 12 U.K. Pop for The Hollies. Here, and throughout this collection, anyone familiar with the Mamas and Papas catalogue will easily pick out the distinctive voices of Messrs. Doherty and Elliot. “I Don’t Wanna Know” was penned by two Brits, John Michael Beecham and David Rowberry, one time members of the trad. jazz and later rock/blues band The Mike Cotton Sound. Chris Andrews, a prolific writer of hit songs for British groups and solo artists during the 1960’s, penned “I’ll Remember Tonight” – vocally Mama Cass shines on the cut, while the up-tempo Felix Pappalardi [Mountain] song that follows “Do You Know What I Mean” became a 1971 U.S. # 6 Pop hit for Lee Michaels. Completing the trio of British composers Alan Hawkshaw [Emile Ford, The Shadows] penned the love song “Do What They Don’t Say.” The Mugwumps dip into the R&B genre with the Willie Dixon standard “You Can’t Judge A Book By The Cover,” and the album closes with Johnny Otis’ “So Fine.”

As a historic document it’s good to see “**The Mugwumps**” back in circulation.

Folkwax Score 7 out of 10

Arthur Wood.

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