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## The Small Faces: Under Review



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Get your parka on and rev up your Vespa. Don't forget to pocket that copy of *Scooter Girl* and hurry up coz the dance party's already started. It's Northern Soul night don't you know and the DJ digs himself some Steve Marriott.

That would be my voice over to any ads for **Under Review's** latest installment in which our intrepid heroes, British rock journalists all, bravely explore the oft-forgotten and entirely underrated records made by The Small Faces. In their time **The Small Faces** were considered on a par with The Kinks and The Who, but history hasn't been nearly as kind to them as to their British Invasion brethren.

Much more of a down'n'dirty soul band, The Small Faces were ill-suited for the teenybop radio market that their management tried to squeeze them into. Though this method of programmatic pop landed them with their big hit Sha-La-La-La-Lee such appeals to thirteen-year-old girls and their budding sexuality rankled the band. The Small Faces preferred old-school Solomon Burke and laced their best records with that same fiery gospel passion.

The Small Faces changed their sound during the Summer of Love and due to Marriott's head full of acid the imagery to their songs got weirder and their arrangements became denser. Piling on sound effects, odd

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instrumentation, and recording breaks backwards gave the music a new trippy feel. The most famous record resulting from this new phase was *Itchycoo Park* with its notorious cal and response chorus of "*I got high!*" which somehow slid past the ears of the BBC censors.

Once again the assembled critics ably provide contextualization for the band under review. The picture and Dolby Digital 2.0 Stereo sound are just above average as the Queen and Syd Barrett installments (both reviewed elsewhere on this site) were. This is a fine series and worth the time and consideration of fans new and old.

- Kristofer Collins

Kristofer Collins is an editor at The New Yinzer and the owner of Desolation Row CDs in Pittsburgh, PA. Visit Desolation Row at [www.myspace.com/desolationrowcds](http://www.myspace.com/desolationrowcds) for more.

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