

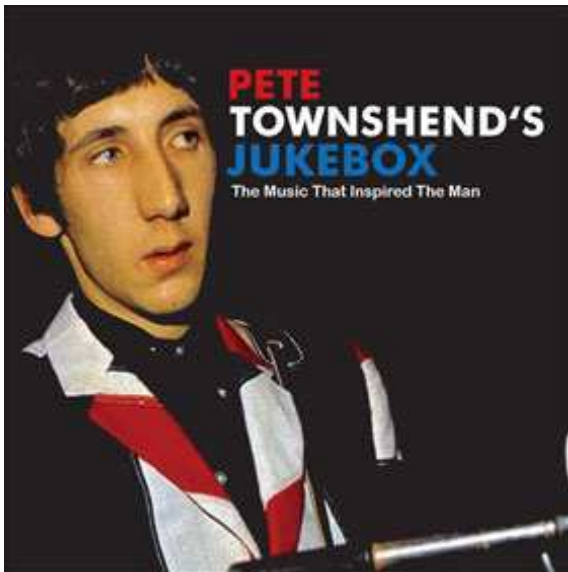
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## Album Review: Various — Pete Townshend's Jukebox



UK-based Chrome Dreams has released a number of these *Jukebox* titles over the last few years, including titles exploring the influences upon **Keith Richards**, **Bob Dylan**, [Paul McCartney](#) and even [The Grateful Dead](#). And while some of these artists have endeavored to do something similar themselves (McCartney's 1999 *Run Devil Run* comes to mind), the concept is a sturdy and often illuminating one.

At its simplest, *Pete Townshend's Jukebox* is a 28-song single CD survey of the songs that informed the musical sensibility of [The Who](#)'s primary composer and lyricist. **Townshend** himself – a rather chatty interview subject in his day – made explicit mention of many of the artists and songs now brought together on this set. And in fact The Who covered several of these tunes: **Sonny Boy Williamson**'s "Eyesight to the Blind" was the sole cover on *Tommy* (1969). And even back in the earlier 60s when The Who played **Murray the K**'s NYC showcases, Townshend championed **Mose Allison** as an influence (his "Blues" is included here).

Some of the selections are pretty obvious, having influenced most all of Townshend's contemporaries in one way or another. But listening to **Link Wray**'s "Rumble" in this context, it's clear that Townshend spent many hours letting the distorted jangle of Wray's guitar seep into his psyche. And The Who always made their soul roots explicit, so having a **James Brown** tune ("I Don't Mind") here is little surprise.

The bluesmen included here would enjoy a belated and mightily-deserved renaissance/re-evaluation in Townshend's 1960s Britain: **Howlin' Wolf** ("Spoonful") and [John Lee Hooker](#) ("Dimples") are thus represented here as well. But while the jazz influences upon Townshend might be less obvious, works from [Cannonball Adderley](#), [Ella Fitzgerald](#) and [Charlie Parker](#) fit smoothly into this collection.

Such a collection wouldn't be complete – or even taken seriously – if it didn't include some of Townshend's

rock'n'roll heroes; this set does, spotlighting **Johnny Kidd & the Pirates** (“Shakin’ All Over” and “I Can Tell”) and **Eddie Cochran** (“Summertime Blues,” of course). But despite the inclusion of **Otis Blackwell**’s “Daddy Rolling Stone” and **Bo Diddley**’s “Road Runner,” *Pete Townshend’s Jukebox* isn’t merely a here’s-the-originals-of-Who-covers set. The featuring of **Ray Charles** (the kinetic jump blues of “Mess Around”) and **Booker T & the MGs** helps remind listeners what was finding its way into Townshend’s ears while he was writing “Anyhow, Anyway, Anywhere” and “My Generation,” for example.

If there’s one shortcoming of this set, it’s the lack of any country-and-western tracks; Townshend cited **Jim Reeves** as an influence, and **Chet Atkins**-styled licks abound on early Who albums.


**Derek Barker**’s liner note essay draws upon quotes from the man himself to illustrate the connection each song has to Pete Townshend. And its context taken away, one can merely enjoy this CD as an eclectic collection of various (mostly but not exclusively American) music from the 1950s and 60s.

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Tags: [pete townshend](#), [the who](#)


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## 2 Responses to “Album Review: Various — Pete Townshend’s Jukebox”

1.  *porky* says:  
[November 26, 2013 at 2:42 pm](#)

what about the Raiders’ (first version) of “Louie Go Home?” I always wondered how both Bowie’s early band and the Who discovered that awesome tune to cover it.

[Reply](#)

2.  *Bill Kopp* says:  
[November 26, 2013 at 2:47 pm](#)

Spot-on! Good call. You’re right, of course. Didn’t The Who re-title it “Lubie” or something like that?

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