

CHAMBERS OF ROCK

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Gary John Barden - Rock 'n' Roll My Soul album review

[Gary John Barden - Rock 'n' Roll My Soul album review](#)

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Gary Barden has been the frontman for some of the **Michael Schenker Group** best known and loved releases and after he left **MSG**, back in the 80's, he started **Statetrooper**, wanting to do his own thing. Sadly that really never came to very much and then he formed the band, **Silver** who got some great reviews along the way and put out five albums, before he then hooked up once more with **Michael Schenker**.

After a couple of **Schenker / Barden** collaborations, the **MSG** singer decided to get with **Michael Voss** who was also heavily involved with the **Schenker / Barden** acoustic release '**Gipsy Lady**,' to play on, record and produce this album with **Gary Barden**.

In fact, as on '**Gipsy Lady**' **Michael Voss** plays a huge part here, providing most of the drums, Keys, Guitars and backing vocals and does a truly excellent job all round.

I for one would love to hear what **Michael Voss** will put out next as a solo album, as I'm sure it will impress!

The thing is though, **Gary Barden's** voice is sometime not everyone's cup of tea and my wife has never gravitated towards it, but that could be because it's become a little raspier these days, who knows?

Opening with the old **Fleetwood Mac** blues number, '**Oh Well**,' **Gary Barden** and band have taken this to a completely different level. It rocks! Great guitars, certainly giving **Peter Green's** work a new look and sound!

The Moody Blues, '**I'm Just a Singer (In a Rock 'n' Roll Band)**' is covered next and likewise, I'm stunned as it again it is rocked up and presented very well. Strings are there too and I just love the job that **Michael Voss** has done on here with the mix. Great stuff mate!

I was well pleased to see the inclusion here of **Deep Purple's** '**Never Before**' as it's one of my personal **Purple** fav's too, a much ignored track. Go on, give this a listen, it's a great interpretation. Yes, it's different, but I love it! Nice job!

Really love the big orchestra jam towards the end and Gary is also joined by **MSG** band mate **Wayne Findlay** on Hammond and piano and does a grand job here too. Songstress **Pearl** is also present here on backing vocals.

By the way, she pops up on two other tracks here as well. She is a serious talent that people should investigate further when you get the chance.

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Who'd have thought Mr. **Barden** would then have another **Purple**

track straight after! It's actually my all-time favourite *Deep Purple* track, '*When A Blindman Cries*' and that may surprise some of my friends as it's a ballad, but it just moved me so much all those years ago when I first heard it.

Not so sure about Gary's opening vocal here but it works better for me after the guitar solo, which by the way is absolutely stunning, perfect!

The *Canned Heat* classic '*Let's Work Together,*' is next and it gets that good old rock 'n' roll touch, with some fine honky-tonk piano too, another good fun one.

A little funky rock with lesser known British rockers *Stretch's* '*Why Did You Do It*' probably a track that inspired '*Play That Funky Music,*' although since both tracks were originally from 1975, I wonder who got the vibe first?!

A good steady rocker, nicely done by Gary and the guys here, with some nice guitar work from *Tommy Denander!*

'*I'm A Man*' originally by *Spencer Davis Group*, later also a popular hit for *Chicago*, is next and it's just so full of so much going on, almost in like a *Santana* style here. Seriously a great groove and fellow vocalist *Pearl* helps out on backing vocals here too.

I loved '*Stay With Me*' originally by *The Faces*, this starts a little different and then we get some great, prominent early vocals from yes, it's that girl again, *Pearl* who backs up Gary throughout the track. This keeps the same kind of pace as the original, but there's so much more going on here. It almost gets too busy, but it's still good to hear again.

Always loved how the song picks up toward the end and this is no different, a little fun with the '*Black Night*' riff on the bass on the outro, great jam at the end.

A little *Creedence Clearwater Revival* next with the old standard '*Travellin' Band*' and it rocks along like a good 'un! *Gary Barden* is straining a little here though, without doubt. It almost sounds like '*Good Golly Miss Molly*' though! Too funny!

The Beatles classic ballad '*The Long and Winding Road,*' is next with *Don Airey* supporting with classy piano and orchestra arrangement and Gary gives it a pretty good shot, although it doesn't really suit his voice, but I understand that he just wanted to record his all-time favourite songs, so I get it.

I really have nothing to say about next track, '*Zeit macht nur vor dem Teufel halt,*' except knock yourself out Gary!

Final track here is the self-penned title track '*Rock 'n' Roll My Soul,*' where Gary briefly tells us about listening to *Tommy Vance* (RIP) *Friday Rock Show* and his growing up and getting into rock 'n' roll and then the song fades out ... Ah well. That's rock 'n' roll as they say!

A good mix of covers, some fun was clearly had along the way and some great songs redone well, in a new style.

I enjoyed this album and you often wonder who certain singers' influences were and I guess we now know some of *Gary John Barden!*

Rating: 3.75 out of 5

Album Tracklisting:

- *Oh Well*
- *I'm Just a Singer*
- *Never Before*
- *When A Blind Man Cries*
- *Let's Work Together*
- *Why Did You Do It*
 - *I'm a Man*
 - *Stay With Me*
 - *Travellin' Band*
- *The Long and Winding Road*
- *Zeit macht nur vor dem Teufel halt*
- *Rock 'n' Roll My Soul*

Editor's note - *Would've loved to have added a weblink for Gary Barden, but sadly it seems the guy keeps himself to himself. I've found no active website for the guy, his MySpace is unofficial too and his Facebook reference, is simply from Wikipedia?! Anyone else know of anything official?*



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