

THE BEATLES

The Capitol Albums Vol. 2
(Capitol / Apple)

The four 'America only' 1965 releases reissued in Capitol Records 4 CD 2006 box set—entitled *The Beatles - The Capitol Albums Vol. 2*—provided the soundtrack of a lifetime for much of America's youth back in 1965. Although the early '60s Vee Jay label released early Beatles singles Stateside back in 1963, Capitol finally legitimized pre-Beatlemania era classics like "Twist And Shout", "Love Me Do", "Please Please Me" and "Do You Want To Know A Secret" and more with the early '65 release of *The Early Beatles*. But it was to be the group's first all new album for '65—and possibly greatest mid '60s pop album ever, *Beatles IV*—that truly perfected the AM radio Beatlemania pop sound that began here with "I Want To Hold Your Hand" and "She Loves You." It's true that the rest of the world heard these songs on different Beatles Lp releases, but still, nothing then or since tops *Beatles IV*. A few months later, in Summer '65, *Help!* hit American shores. Compared to the *Help!* released in the rest of the world, the US only version of *Help!* was a true soundtrack—a cinematic gatefold Lp extravaganza—pairing all new Lennon / McCartney/ Harrison originals with a batch of dazzling orchestral tracks by the band and **Ken Thorne**. If Beatlemania was over by the end of '65, then in it's place *Rubber Soul* instantly transformed the Fab Four into the U.K. equals of Bob Dylan and The Byrds. An essential four CD box set featuring "American only" Lp artwork, *The Beatles - The Capitol Albums Vol. 2* features all four of these album classics in both mono and stereo mixes along with a cool write-up from **Bruce Spizer**, who adds "Because these were the albums I grew up with, I have a special fondness for them. It was both a pleasure and great honor to serve as a consultant and write the essay for this special Beatles release." www.thebeatles.com

RICKY NELSON

Ricky Nelson Sings
(Capitol / EMI)

Along with Buddy, Chuck, Elvis and Carl, Ricky Nelson made a ton of great music in the late '50s, the best of which is recalled on an early 2006, 24 track best of CD called *Ricky Nelson: Greatest Hits*. With 17 top ten hits and three number ones, this CD is another great tribute to Nelson as culled from the vaults of Capitol Records. Released by Capitol at the same time is a vital DVD from Nelson entitled *Ricky Nelson Sings*. An eye-opening documentary on Nelson and the

impact he had on rock and roll history, the DVD features vintage b&w performance footage by Nelson's group, featuring his great guitarist **James Burton**, from those classic Ozzie & Harriet shows. Newly filmed segments with Burton, Kris Kristofferson and Nelson's kids, Gunnar, Matthew, Sam and daughter Tracy makes the DVD a great opportunity to revisit the magic Ricky Nelson brought to America during the magical early '60s. www.capitolrecords.com

LEO KOTTKE

Home & Away Revisited
(MVD)



A true living legend of the 6 and 12 string acoustic guitar, Leo Kottke is the subject of a fabulous 2006 DVD release available from **Music Video Distributors**. Entitled *Home & Away Revisited*, the DVD captures Leo's original 1988 performance at Toronto's Bathurst St. Theater and is expanded to feature previously unseen footage of Leo's life on the road from that period including amazing performance footage of Leo with the late, great fingerstyle guitarist **Michael Hedges** as well as incredible performance footage with **Michael Johnson** and a three way guitar jam with Leo with both **Chet Atkins** and **Doc Watson**. In addition to the '88 Toronto concert, *Home & Away Revisited* also highlights intriguing segments of Leo and banjo wiz **John Hartford** playing beautiful vintage guitars at Gruhn Guitars in Nashville. At 106 minutes, the DVD provides more than a few reasons as to why Leo Kottke is still considered the finest acoustic guitarist of a generation. www.mvdb2b.com

FRED NEIL

Fred Neil
(Water)

Buzzy Linhart knew how cool Fred Neil was. Buzzy did a brilliant cover of Fred's "The Bag I'm In" on his fabled *Music* CD. And who can forget Nilsson's definitive take on Neil's all time most famous pop composition "Everybody's Talkin'" back in '68. Find out how cool Fred Neil still is on the 2006 reissue of his 1967 self titled Capitol Records album, just reissued on the San Francisco based Water label. Although he sadly passed away on July 8, 2001 at his Florida home, Neil's legacy as a brilliant singer-songwriter lives on. His self-titled 10 track CD on Water—with detailed liner notes and classic cover art—is a great place to rediscover one of rock's most valued originals. www.runtdistribution.com/water.html

MUSIC LABEL SPOTLIGHT

BLAZZ - With his group's 2006 CD, *Welcome To Instrumental Asylum*, guitar ace **Ben Rogers** brings the rock instrumental sound solidly into the now. Guitar instrumental music is and always was huge in Australia and interestingly, over the past decade, original Aussie instro rockers The Atlantics, Kim Humphreys and other up and coming bands are out there keeping the R.I. sound alive down under. *Welcome To Instrumental Asylum* is a real treat for '60s guitar freaks. www.blazz.com.au

BLINKING LIGHT RECORDS - Mixing genres like Brit-pop, Irish folk to jazz and ragtime, singer songwriter **Joel Kraft** cites a number of influences like Nick Drake and Paul Simon on his very diverse 2006 solo CD. The suitably titled *Big Ideas* is just that. A colorfully packaged, well recorded piece of quality pop, the eleven track CD is filled with a wide, appealing cross-section of tracks that range from '60s folk-rock to a darker sound reminiscent of the quirky anti-prog style of Peter Hammill. Handling vocals, acoustic guitars and more, Kraft is backed by bunch of fine side players. www.blinkinglightsrecords.com

CAPITOL RECORDS - With his revered legacy of tropical instrumental music, it's hard to believe that **Martin Denny** was born in New York City in 1911, moving to LA before settling in Hawaii in 1954. Denny's forte was an uncanny ability to fuse a wild mix of Polynesian-style exotica and space age instrumental pop that still fascinates 50 years on. Sad to say Denny passed away in 2005, albeit at the ripe old age of 94. Even at 94, two