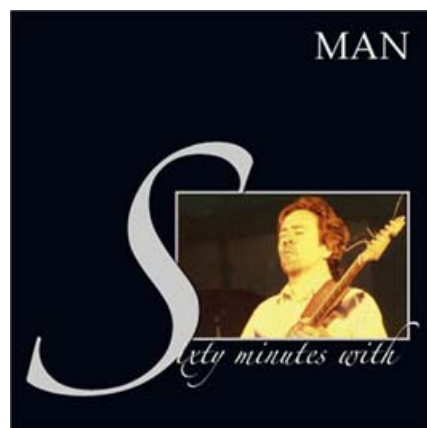




## MUSIC STREET JOURNAL

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### Man – Sixty Minutes with Man



By Gary Hill

### Overall Review

Man is an intriguing band that really defies categorization. Certainly a lot of their music fits into the realm of progressive rock, but they've never been completely tied to that style. This disc, showcasing a cross-section of the group's music, really demonstrates this. Just look at the contrast between the opening "Romain" with its faithful blues approach and the follow up "Many Are Called..." with its prog meets psychedelia stance to see what I mean. Call them what you like, but this CD will really give you a good introduction to the band.

### Track by Track Review

**Romain:** This comes in with a distinctly blues feel and they rock out like some electric blues artist, complete with slide guitar solos. This doesn't wander far from its origins, but in general rocks out quite well. Late in the number, though, they do include a short Cream meets Hendrix section.

**Many Are Called But Few Get Up:** A sedate and intricate segment that reminds me in some ways of Yes opens this. This motif holds the track for nearly a minute. Then they launch into a series of minor changes and alterations as the new prog rock motif is born. A new hard edged jam takes it and the vocals come in with a psychedelic meets prog approach. This track moves through a number of different motifs and at times even feels a bit like Booker T. and the MG's. This moves after a time into an expansive sort of prog approach that has plenty of psychedelic tendencies in it. Then they wander out to more traditional prog territory, feeling a bit like King Crimson at times. They work this out into a killer jam from there. Crimsonian noisy chaos takes this later. It crescendos

and then leaves just percussion behind. A chugging guitar texture is added and then bass rises up. It feels like the cut is ready to take off again, but instead they work it through a series of weird more textural changes until they finally crank up the speed to end it. The actual conclusion is very abrupt.

**Bananas (parts 1 & 2):** A live recording a short classic rock styled jam serves as the starter. Then they drop it way down for a new fast paced excursion. This is powered up by the entrance of the rest of the band and we're off. After running through a chorus they shift out to a new playful rock motif. This then gives way to a keyboard dominated version of itself. This almost has a bit of a country texture as they move it forward. From there we get an odd little start and stop segment that feels a bit like Yes meets Fly By Night era Rush. This gives way to a more full on prog excursion with retro keys running all over the top of this. You might hear traces of the Doors on this section. It moves out to a segment that feels a bit more like The Allman Brothers before settling in for the vocals. Eventually this moves out to an expansive and powerful instrumental section. A new, pounding motif is introduced, but serves as a connecting corridor to another classic rock journey. In a bit of annoyance the recording fades down here. They bring it back up (I couldn't find a reference in the liner notes, but my guess is that when originally released on live album this was divided between two discs. If so, you'd think they could have gone back to the masters to get an unmarred recording) and continue on their way with this powerhouse jam. This thing stays on a pretty straight course, but really packs a lot into this trip. They move it out later to a space rock sort of motif. This eventually shifts out to give the impression that they are about to launch into a rock ballad. As the space elements go away what we get is another hard rocker to take us to the conclusion. At over fifteen minutes in length this is the epic of the CD. Other than that technical issue it's also one of the highlights.

**The Welsh Connection:** Starting off acoustically, this quickly becomes a killer jazzy groove that makes it one of the standout numbers here. They do slip a few changes into the mix, but it's more constant than some of the other stuff here. That's because most of those alterations involve reworkings of the central musical themes. The mellower excursion mid song is a great touch. It's perhaps even stronger when they gradually ramp it back up through some jazzy motifs. The killer fusion like soloing segment late in the track is also a nice touch. It's an extended instrumental motif that really cries and screams.

**C'mon:** This one has a fast paced tempo and some definite fusion sounds to it. When the vocals enter it takes on some serious blues tones. This isn't the proggiest tune on show here, especially through this blues rock movement, but they take it mid-song into a new jam that has more prog elements. It also feels rather fusion-like through this portion. A guitar solo takes it after this and they work there way back up to the song proper from there.

**The Wings Of Mercury:** Fans of Pink Floyd should like this one because in some ways this track feels like that band. Mind you the arrangement (and particularly the vocals) has a lot more triumphant, positive feel to it, but the overall musical themes remind me a lot of Floyd. This has an almost metal structure to it, but is still definitely prog rock. This is probably my favorite cut on this set.

**Call Down the Moon:** This has more of a guitar dominated fusion approach. It does drop down for a piano solo mid-song, but the guitar really steals the show on this one. It's a killer hard rocker, although perhaps a bit less prog than some of the others.

**Diamonds And Coal (radio edit):** This is a shortened version of the opening title cut from Man's latest disc. I've reviewed that album in this issue, so I'm going to point you to [that review](#) for a more thorough treatment of this song. Suffice it to say you get some Yes and Floyd leanings in a mix that is pure Man.

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