

From: *Shadsfax* Issue 53 (2008) 7

**The Shadows**  
**"Somethin' Else!!"**  
**Magic Records (France) 3930609**  
**Released August 2006**



*Lonesome Fella/ Saturday Dance / Quatermasster's Stores / Back Home / The Breeze And I / I Want You To Want Me / All Day / It's A Man's World / This Hammer / Dear Old Mrs Bell / Trying To Forget The One You Love / Tomorrow's Cancelled* Bonus Tracks: *Apache/ The Frightened City/ Foot Tapper* [album version with faded ending] / *Atlantis/ Dance On!/ The Rise And Fall Of Flingel Bunt/ Theme For Young Lovers/ Somewhere/ The Miracle/ All Day* [AV] / *Atlantis* [AV]

'Somethin' Else!!' was The Shadows' first low-cost compilation album to hit UK shops, in November 1969. It was on the Regal Starline label (sporting a sticker with the price, '19/11', emblazoned on a white star set against a red background), a label offering not only established artists (as Cliff Richard with 'It'll Be Me'), but also some of the more recent successes, The Animals, The Hollies, Manfred Mann. 'Budget' is written all over this release: three A-singles (but not high-performing ones), the rest flip sides (including a number of excellent examples of the group's artistry) spanning the years 1959 to 1968. In fact, this was a significant issue for UK fans. All tracks were made available to them in stereo for the first time (in the case of the opening two tracks, actually reprocessed stereo), as record companies, spurred on to a large extent by dynamic Japanese hi-fi firms such as Sony, Pioneer and JVC who were marketing a stream of visually attractive and sonically impressive components which were emphatically distanced from single-channel reproduction, were at last beginning to wake up to the fact that stereo was in real demand: in fact, the future.

The stereo complexion of the set needs to occupy us a little longer: most of the tracks indeed were appearing in stereo for the first time anywhere (for details refer to *A Pocket Guide To Shadow Music*, p.415 item 221). Then there are the two mock stereos already mentioned, treating the original mono masters to a none too appealing makeover. Both of these are reproduced in that guise here, taken from a vinyl source. But there is a snag of monumental proportions, not for the first time in compilations released by the French Magic label. The entire collection has the stereo channels reversed, to an extent paralleled among Shadows CDs only by the 1996 reissue of the Australian 'Another 20 Golden Greats' (see on that *CD Guide*, 2005 edition, pp.90-91). Of the 23 components of this Magic issue all but *Quatermasster's Stores*, *Foot Tapper*, *Atlantis* and *The Miracle* (previously tampered with on issues from Australia/ UK/ South Africa and Australia respectively) are new to CD in this form; *Theme For Young Lovers* reels under the impact of a novel double whammy (channel reversal combined with the mismastered start that appeared for the first time in 1991), while one of the two 'Abbey Road' borrowings closing the selection, *All Day*, also has its initial studio banter unceremoniously removed.

So: this issue most certainly looks the part in its slipcase with the vibrant colours of the vinyl parent release well mirrored, but sound-wise it has to be counted an unmitigated mess. Is it maybe

something they're putting in the wine over there?

**MC**