

From: *Shadsfax* Issue 47 (2005) 5

The Shadows
"Specs Appeal / Tasty"
Magic Records (France) 3930416 [2CD]
Released June 2004



CD1 Album 'Specs Appeal', 12 tracks, plus: *Run Billy Run* / *No No Nina** (instrumental version) / *It'll Be Me Babe* / *Love Is Falling In Love Again* / *We'll Believe In Loving* / *Love Deluxe* / *Please Mr Please* [Bruce Welch]

CD2 Album 'Tasty', 11 tracks, plus: *Black Is Black* / *The Air That I Breathe* / *Sweet Saturday Night* / *Rusk* / *God Only Knows** ('Abbey Road CD' version, mono!) / *Song Of Yesterday** [Bruce Welch]

Between 1998 and 2003 Magic Records gave us a succession of top-notch Shadows CDs focusing on the 1960s, keying them to a number of distinctively French releases of the period. Here they plug the most obvious gap in the group's output over the following decade, since the UK CDs 'Specs Appeal Plus' and 'More Tasty' (both released August 1992) have long been deleted and are much sought after by collectors. (Quite why EMI UK opted to stop at 'Rockin' With Curly Leads' in their series of Shadows Digipaks, I do not know). They are sought after with good reason: on 'Specs' there were a couple of outstanding tracks among the the six songs for Europe, together with some very fine instrumentals, while the 'Tasty' album boasted a number of superb compositions, particularly the group-originals *Return To The Alamo*, *Another Night*, *Montezuma's Revenge* and *Creole Nights*.

All the additional ingredients from the 1992 CDs are included here and four more besides, asterisked in the listings above. There are good tracks and there are bad tracks among the extras: none more polished in my view than *Sweet Saturday Night*; and none worse surely than the abysmal vocal *Run Billy Run*, which is outclassed even by the dire Eurovision-hopeful *This House Runs On Sunshine*.

Sound (advertised as "High Definition 24-bit") is on the brightly-etched side, while presentation is as usual exemplary, with an abundance of colour shots of French albums and singles, together with Magic Shadows product, and those attractive vinyl-record-styled compact discs. Bernard Broche provides a page of annotation in French, with facing English translation (and not bad English at that for the most part), taking us through the main events and the recording highlights of the 1970s, and contriving to work in a reference to the (at the time of writing) imminent Final Tour, "concerts not to be missed"! The same has to be said about this latest Magic offering.

MC