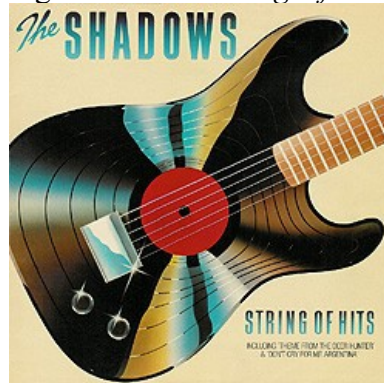


CLASSICAL GAS

(Mason Williams)

Ventures: 1969 LP *More Golden Greats*

Shadows: August 1979 LP *String Of Hits* (UK No.1)



'Classical Gas' has deservedly become a classic of the genre, and Mason Williams' imposing opus has attracted a number of fine imitations, among which The Ventures' and The Shadows' deserve a place. The Ventures' version, much admired by followers of the group, captures much of the variegated texture and bouyancy of the original and indeed enriches it. It was a stage favourite with The Ventures from the 70s on, and recordings of a number of these concert performances have been preserved (in highly elaborate form in the hands of Gerry McGee on the 2000 CD *In Japan – Live 2000*); a fresh studio version – spirited in its delivery but perhaps rather short on charm – was cut for the 2002 CD (Japan) *Hyper-V Gold*. The Shadows' recording (hardly mentioned if at all in Shadows circles) is drier, sparer-sounding but has an appealing sense of drive and urgency.