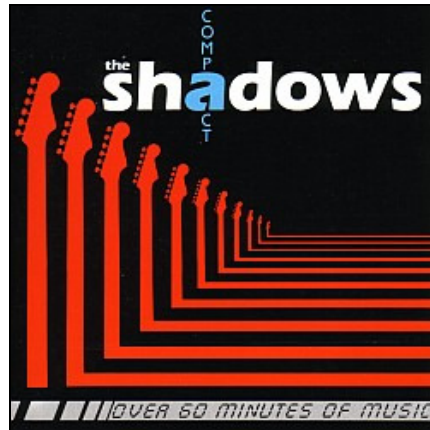


## 1984



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1984 was the year that the first Shadows CD appeared, the compilation *Compact Shadows* from Polydor, released in August. It was also the year of *Guardian Angel*, released in November (in a first for the group, it was issued on vinyl and CD concurrently, the latter however in very limited quantities). The Introduction by RB to this Album (see main entry below) expresses one perception of the Album. There is another. The topic, which merits the space assigned to it here on the ground that it touches on one of the most contentious issues in the group's recorded work, is discussed in detail in MC's book *The Shadows At Polydor*, pp. 20ff. The following comments summarise briefly the arguments advanced there, and add one or two fresh considerations.

(i) Is it the case that the 1984 *Guardian Angel* interrupted the "usual formula of cover versions"? Hardly. *Hits Right Up Your Street* (1981) and *XXV* (1983) can be so described, in broad terms at any rate. But *Change Of Address* (1980) and *Life In The Jungle* (1982) cannot. In reality, it was only the next Album to appear, the 1986 *Moonlight Shadows*, that established the principle that 'covers rule'. It proved to be a 'cover' Album with a vengeance, 100% derivative in its choice of material: it was marketed undisguisedly as such, and surely with the group's blessing, considering that it promised to restore their high profile in the world of music (a promise amply fulfilled). Not surprisingly, now that the publicity machine had got things just right, *Moonlight Shadows* was followed up with three Albums that were also essentially 'cover'-orientated.

(ii) It is commonly stated, or implied, that (a) The Shadows worked hard to give the fans what they wanted; and (b) that the fans gleefully accepted what they were offered ("The fans loved it", it has been claimed). It is wholly impossible to reconcile this picture with what actually happened. In the first place, it has been noted that once the group made the Album, they themselves proceeded to act as if it had never been released. Fans attending any of the numerous 1984 concert appearances were barely made aware of a new Album. Publicity was practically non-existent; if there was any enthusiasm among group members, it was nowhere in evidence until the next decade. Second, there were far fewer Shadows fans around by 1984 (whether because they were disillusioned, or had just lost interest in 'pop', or had family and other commitments to occupy their time and drain their wallets), and a very large proportion

of the residue would not give *Guardian Angel* the time of day: in the perception of many, this particular Album had moved further away, to an unacceptable degree, from the basic three guitars + drums sound of the glorious 1960s. In the words of one review of the time, there was “a wall of keyboard and synthesiser sound ... the whole album seems to have been recorded in Echo Canyon”.

(iii) In fact, during the 1980s, and indeed in the closing years of the 1970s too, listeners reared on 1960s music found it hard or plain impossible to come to terms with what they regarded as the black sheep of the music-making armoury, “keyboards and synthesisers”: they were artificial, alien to what was perceived (bizarrely) to be an age of musical purity and innocence! But of course they were here to stay, and The Shadows themselves continued to make use of them, both in the studio and on stage, regardless. Nowadays, in contrast, many fans have come to terms with this aspect of their music-making, mainly, one suspects, because they have become habituated to them over a period of time. What sounded strange and outlandish in 1984 or thereabouts has come to appear much more innocuous, or less threatening, now. By the same token, the *Guardian Angel* Album, which was to a very great extent ignored or vilified in 1984, now appears to be regarded as one of the gems of the Shadows’ corpus, the saving light of their 80s recorded work!

(iv) The distinction drawn between ‘original’ and ‘cover’ Albums has resulted in a blanket dichotomy, implausible in itself, which commonly heaps extravagant praise on the former and unqualified scorn on the latter, without any serious attempt in either category to differentiate between what is good and bad, or good in one respect, not so good in another. Sometimes, when the disreputable covers are the subject of discussion, group members are quoted to play down the element of creativity that went into producing them. The problem here is that different group members, quizzed long after the event, have said different things at different times, and just as many cases can be adduced of unequivocal statements to the effect that enormous care was taken over such material. In any case, as will be seen on a couple of occasions in the track analyses of the Album which follows this discussion, there are examples of group members summarily dismissing original compositions too (see notably on [393] TURNING POINT below).

The policy adopted in this book with regard to heavy concentrations of cover versions is not to dismiss them in a body out of hand, but to assess each one individually, bypassing completely the often conflicting pronouncements from those directly involved. To draw a more extreme but essentially germane comparison: the many uncomplimentary, vitriolic or downright savage judgements passed on their music-making by one or other member of The Beatles after the disbanding of the group (more particularly John Lennon and Paul McCartney) may be intrinsically interesting and may throw light on the music-making process. What such remarks do not do is entitle the music critic to base judgements about a given composition on what is essentially assertion or hearsay (much of it, uttered at different times, in different places, and no doubt in different moods, self-contradictory) rather than on the music itself.

(v) That all original material (broadly defined) in the more favoured Albums is of a uniformly high standard is a proposition that the present writer is unable to accept. *Guardian Angel* is a creditable set, but it has its less assured moments. [387] THE SATURDAY WESTERN has all the hallmarks of pale imitation, evocative of nothing in particular. The title song [391] seems to me an unmitigated disaster, an overblown extravaganza: nice tune, nice Mark Knopfleresque guitar (the whole thing sounds like a Dire Straits pastiche), shame about the (at times atrociously incoherent) lyrics,

riddled as they are with a risible tone of self-importance. Now, change the words, and give it to Mark ... Finally here, the pronounced and often convoluted “keyboard/synth” parts on [388] LOOK BACK ON LOVE must surely have induced many Shadows fans of the time to conclude that this level of experimentalism and sophistication, verging at times on the avant-garde, was not for them.

A different scenario for the sorry story (as it has been represented) of *Guardian Angel* suggests itself. In the following decade, when the group was no more, and interviewers came looking for explanations for all kinds of things, the grim sales figures of *Guardian Angel* called for investigation and comment. An explanation, essentially a single, uncomplicated explanation, was advanced to explain why it was such a flop. The group, it was averred, suspended the well-worn formula for selling records to give the fans originals; it did not work; back they went willy-nilly to their old ways. It has been seen that the group did no such thing. *Guardian Angel* fared poorly not solely because of the lack of cover versions, but from other causes too, as outlined above, not least of which was, ironically enough, the perceived un-Shadows-like nature of the sound. Most fans, yearning for a return to a past long beyond recall, simply did not like it, not in the 80s anyway.

August 1984 A-Single, Polydor POSP 694

**[384] ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS**

(John David)

{B: **[341] THING-ME-JIG**

from September 1981 LP *Hits Right Up Your Street*}



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The picture cover of this, their only Single of the year (a bathing costume clad female lying on a lilo in a swimming pool), reflects the then commonplace practice of letting artwork departments loose on product without regard for aptness; the title is minuscule into the bargain! The A-side is a pleasant, catchy song; easy on the ear; it romps along in a delightful fashion. This rousing country-rock vocal delivered by Bruce Welch with support from Tony Rivers (the second, and the last, vocal Single put out by Polydor on The Shadows' behalf), was produced by Stuart Colman, who had become Shakin' Stevens' producer in 1980. Composer John David too, formerly bassist with Dave Edmunds' Rockpile, was associated with the Welsh rocker. Stevens

though had four successive Top 10 Singles in the course of 1984, The Shadows had none. The track, which reappeared on the November Album, enjoyed quite a bit of airplay, but just missed being a chart hit. The attempting of something different frequently met with a hostile response from long-term fans. A correspondent in *New Gandy Dancer* (21 [1984], p.20) wrote: “Bruce doesn’t like the new Single ... particularly the mix. To me, the 45 sounds like a Shakin’ Stevens reject ...”

**Trainspotter’s Note** Tony Hoffman reports: “The Shadows recorded another track for producer SC ... when they cut ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS. It was a vocal called ‘It’s Too Late’ written by John David. Both a 7-inch and 12-inch mix were prepared but the song remains unissued”.

November 1984 LP/ CD  
Polydor POLD 5169/ 823 797 2  
*Guardian Angel*

SEE INTRODUCTION TO 1984 ABOVE



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This Album was particularly noteworthy because almost all of the material was original. The Shadows wrote several tracks themselves, but they also commissioned other writers and sought out tracks from assorted music publishers. In short, they abandoned their tried and trusted (also ‘safe’ and very successful) formula in order to give the fans just what they wanted. It was something that they really wanted to do and they poured all of their respective talents and energies into the project. Of course, from PolyGram’s point of view they couldn’t pursue their usual TV advertising campaign. It was relatively easy to launch a campaign based around big chart hits (past and present) that the general public would be familiar with. It simply wouldn’t have worked with titles such as [394] OUR ALBERT, [393] TURNING POINT and [387] THE SATURDAY WESTERN. Perhaps the outcome was both predictable and inevitable. Without the PolyGram publicity machine fully behind it, *Guardian Angel* bombed in commercial terms. It appeared briefly in the Album Charts at No.98 and sold c.50,000 copies — the bulk of those sales being on vinyl. The experiment was not to be repeated. The next Album, *Moonlight Shadows*, reverted to the usual formula of cover versions. It rose to No.6 on the Album Charts and sold c.500,000 copies. The Shadows were victims of their own success. In retrospect, *Guardian*

*Angel* was a magnificent artistic achievement. The quality of the compositions and the performances does not dip and remains uniformly high throughout.

**[385] HOW DO I LOVE THEE**

(Eddie Phillips)

With a title borrowed (not for the first time in popular music) from the well-known 19th century poem by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, this is a classic instrumental in the time-honoured Shadows tradition. For all that, it is a very contemporary sound. A medium-paced performance features dense, lush layers of sound with Hank's (sometimes double-tracked) keening guitar work well to the fore. Composer Phillips was lead guitarist (noted for playing his instrument with a violin bow) with 60s band The Creation, which would reform in the mid-80s/ 90s and give its name to the Creation record label.

**[386] HAMMERHEAD**

(Dick Plant)

Latter day Shadows' engineer and sound man Dick Plant is also an accomplished guitarist and occasional composer; he has since joined forces with Warren Bennett to form popular instrumental outfit The Vibratos. In 1992, Hank recorded Dick's 'Steel Wheel' for his Album *Into The Light*. In 1984 he wrote HAMMERHEAD, which could be a reference to the deadly shark or the James Mayo novel (and film of the same name). It has elements of a film type theme running through its structure. The music is dramatic, heavy and dark toned. Very appropriate for the 1980s and it provides Hank with a good workout.

[According to Brian & Warren Bennett (communication to RB August 2006) Dick Plant remarked of the title: "Hank came up with it. I don't know if he was thinking of sharks, James Mayo or items in his toolbox – he just didn't say." BB opined that it was "highly likely" that Hank had either read the James Mayo novel or seen the film as they were all big fans of James Bond and spy/thriller books/films etc.]

**[387] THE SATURDAY WESTERN**

(Tim Renwick)

Those of us of a certain age will recall the thrill of the Saturday morning outings (usually unaccompanied) to the local cinema. There were cartoons, but the main attraction was the cliff-hanging episodic main feature. If it wasn't Flash Gordon, then it was usually a Western (frequently involving Hopalong Cassidy, Roy Rogers or Gene Autrey). By the end of the 60s, this era had vanished forever. Tim Renwick's THE SATURDAY WESTERN perfectly captures the style and nostalgia of those innocent times — thanks to the magical playing of The Shadows. Tim was formerly the guitarist with The Sutherland Brothers & Quiver; he had been one of the guitarists on Cliff Richard's 1978 'Green Light' Album sessions, which had involved among others Brian Bennett, Alan Jones and Alan Tarney, and he has since worked with artists as diverse as Paul McCartney, Pink Floyd and Mike & The Mechanics.

**[388] LOOK BACK ON LOVE**

(Brian Bennett)

This is actually a special arrangement for The Shadows of the main theme from the (then) forthcoming 1985 hospital-based Canadian horror film ‘Terminal Choice’, for which Brian Bennett was commissioned to provide the complete score (released in full in his 2005 box set *Works*): his own dramatic and ‘edgy’ version of the tune is constructed entirely from synth layers. It’s a very complex item with many shifts of time signature, variations of tempo and a wide dynamic range. It’s a fine piece of writing and an outstanding group performance.

**[389] JOHNNY STACCATO**

(Hank Marvin/ Bruce Welch/ Brian Bennett)

JS was an American jazz pianist (Barney Kessel was one of the sidemen featured) turned detective, the subject of a 25m TV series in 1959 which was outshone by Blake Edwards’ more sophisticated ‘Peter Gunn’. The music was by Elmer Bernstein, whose brash, rasping ‘Staccato’s Theme’ was a UK No.4 that year. The Shadows’ track is not in the same vein, being a contemporary rocky guitar workout with tasty licks. It would be used as a B-Single in April 1986. For severely pruned versions of the number (1m 20s loss) see *CD Guide* 2005 p.380.

**[390] I WILL RETURN**

(Philip Cordell)

With its rippling keyboards and haunting guitar sounds, this piece stokes up tremulous emotion and builds to a huge guitar climax. A more refined, controlled version of a richly textured 1971 UK No.5 instrumental from Springwater, in reality multi-instrumentalist Phil Cordell; it was picked up the following year by Apollo 100 of ‘Joy’ fame as an opener for their Album *Melodies With A Beat*: see Colin MacKenzie, *New Gandy Dancer* 14 [1979] pp.10–11. More background from Ray Steer in *Pipeline* 62 (2004) p.66 & 70 (2006) p.64; admirers of Cordell are unlikely to be disconcerted by the claim voiced at the time that his hit “plagiarized W.H. Monk’s famous melody ‘Eventide’, better known as the setting of the hymn ‘Abide With Me’”, with which it has undoubted affinities.

**[391] (I’M GONNA BE YOUR) GUARDIAN ANGEL**

(Kevin Fitzpatrick)

A fantastic song, very much of its era. It was the first time a vocal had been used as the title track for a Shadows’ Album. Since Biblical times, people have believed in the existence of celestial beings watching over them. In the 1970s, an organisation dedicated to protecting innocent travellers on the New York metro from thugs and hoodlums was formed. They were known as Guardian Angels, and by the 1980s there was a branch in London, with its members patrolling the Underground. (They can still be found there today, albeit not in such great numbers.) This is a powerful, dramatic vocal which boasts a great arrangement, perfectly enshrining elements of tension and romantic devotion, a song which delivers its message with great power, beauty and sincerity — without becoming bathetic or histrionic. The story of how the writer

(from Doncaster, England) sent in the song to Bruce Welch is recounted in *Shadsfax*, 24 [1999], pp.19–20.

**[392] CAN'T PLAY YOUR GAME**  
(Keith Wilkinson/ Anthony Wimshurst)

A very up-tempo and very upbeat number penned by noted guitarists Wilkinson and Wimshurst, the former a one-time member of Squeeze. Quite simply, it's a very classy straightforward 'pop' song. A real story of unrequited love; in places, cod Asiatic riffs contrast with Hank's phased guitar solos — pitted against a backing which simply rocks out in enjoyable fashion.

{[384] ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS August 1984 A-Single}

**[393] TURNING POINT**  
(Hank Marvin/ Bruce Welch/ Brian Bennett)

A superb instrumental in the great Shadows time-honoured tradition. A majestic original, with a huge, expansive melody enveloped in a dense, lush, richly textured musical swathe of sound. Two takes on this from band-members: Brian Bennett (not actually saying, well over a decade further on, that the title had anything to do with the make-up of the Album, the "original" nature of which is in any case overstated): "I suppose the *Guardian Angel* project was a kind of turning point for us, in that they allowed us to do a complete Album of original material. I don't think that we'd ever done that before. Who knows what may have happened had it been a great success?" Bruce Welch: "It was just another one of those pieces that we knocked up during the sessions for *Guardian Angel*." The Shadows themselves do have a tendency to be quite dismissive of the quality of many of their own compositions during the latter stages of their career. The fans are in no doubt though. To them, many of these original tracks bear the hallmark of taste, class and style. The number would be used in September 1986 on 7-inch and 12-inch Singles, and again in April 1989 as the third track of a 3-track CD Single.

**[394] OUR ALBERT**  
(Hank Marvin/ Brian Bennett)

Another track which Hank, Bruce and Brian all agree was "just knocked up in the studio". That said, it is a gentle, yearning track, delicately played and beautifully poignant.

BB (communication to RB, August 2006): "In the 1980s we had a little team of caterers who would look after us on tour. Albert was a lovely guy who was part of that catering team. His speciality was tea. We were great tea drinkers and each of us preferred it in a slightly different way. He had a lovely turn of phrase. I always remember him saying 'Mr Bennett, is your tea of the correct consistency?' Lovely. He was a real character and the title was dedicated to 'Albert The Master Tea Brewer'!"

## 1986

The year of *Moonlight Shadows*, and an upturn in chart fortunes. See Introduction to the Album below.

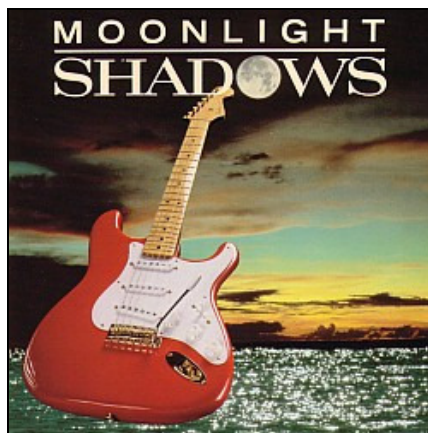


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April 1986 A-Single, Polydor POSP 792  
**[395] MOONLIGHT SHADOW**  
(Mike Oldfield)  
{B: **[389] JOHNNY STACCATO**  
from November 1984 LP *Guardian Angel*}

A truly dynamic, not to say electrifying rendition of a piece with a ready-made allusion just crying out for use as a slogan from the inventive Mike Oldfield with Maggie Reilly on vocals, a UK No.4 in 1983; there is a dazzling display of Marvin guitar wizardry from 2:11 on. The number (unsurprisingly) reappeared (as the LP side 2 opener) on the similarly titled May Album, next entry.

May 1986 LP/ CD  
Polydor PROLP 8 ~ 829 358 1/829 358 2  
***Moonlight Shadows***



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The Shadows returned to the scene after a year's break. Their next step was to throw their energies into the making and promotion of a new Album which truly broke the mould. To the evident dismay of many fans, a significant proportion of whom ironically enough had not bothered to equip themselves with a copy of *Guardian Angel* with its battery of 'originals', or had not bothered to listen to it much if they had, this new all-instrumental set, consisting of twelve new recordings (one already a Single: see [395]) and four drawn from previous Albums ([334] [340] [372] [380]), had not a single group or group-commissioned original to its name.

Moreover, as a taste of things to come, no fewer than nine of the twelve fresh tracks stemmed from very recent chart material, spanning the years 1983–1986; of the twelve, five had made UK/ USA No.1, two UK No.1, and one USA No.1. Plainly the choice of material for this new TV-advertised Album, with Polydor market researchers busy behind the scenes, was determined to a large degree by identifying and prioritising relatively recent material that the general public knew and loved.

Here, in the case of hard-core/long-term Shadows fans, there was an immediate, generational, problem. Musical tastes are developed to a large degree in the formative years; there is an inbuilt resistance in most listeners, often intensifying with age, and often vociferous in its expression, to giving the time of day to 'modern' music, music not of 'their' era — the 'things ain't what they used to be' mindset that extends of course far beyond musical likes and dislikes. (See on all this *The Shadows At Polydor*, Introduction, esp. p.26.) This Album was not really for them, and was never meant to be.

In the event, whether or not the group lost any sleep over the nature of the target audience, the marketers did not: this was the most successful Polydor Album yet, making No.6 and staying on chart for nineteen weeks. It was advertised as the group's 'unique interpretations of classic tracks', and as such, though some of these classic tracks suffered from excessively scaled-down or otherwise unsatisfactory accompaniment in comparison with the originals, it fulfilled its purpose pretty well, putting on show their well-proven mastery of music in a wide variety of styles. There is an interesting and eloquent review of the set by Phil Davey in *SCOFA* 13 [1986] pp.2–3.

**[396] EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE**

(Sting)

A superbly crafted 1983 UK/ USA No.1 for The Police, earning them an Ivor Novello Award; from their high-performing Album *Synchronicity*. Like [379] AFRICA on XXV, this is an apt Album-opener, with Hank driving effortlessly ever onwards, mirroring perfectly the insistent tone of the original's portrayal of a disturbingly obsessive love-relationship.

**[397] HELLO**

(Lionel Richie)

A sentimental ballad from accomplished performer Lionel Richie, which in 1984 took him to the top of the charts both in the USA and the UK. The elegance and beauty of the original is well captured here, with a finely judged accompaniment and a deft solo-break from Hank at 2:47.

**[398] THE POWER OF LOVE**

(Candy De Rouge/ Gunther Mende/ Jennifer Rush/ Mary Susan Applegate)

Commercial success was, increasingly, a crucial criterion in determining what songs to cover, and when. This powerhouse of a number from Jennifer Rush, her debut Single, had to be a prime contender. Featured in the blockbuster film 'Back To The Future', it secured a UK No.1 in October 1985, stayed in the charts for 32 weeks, and was the first UK million-seller from a female artist, as well as proving the year's biggest-selling Single. With no regard for the original's emotional intensity, The Shadows' version is uncomfortably laid-back overall and positively feeble in places; and the outro seems unduly spun out.

**[399] HEY JUDE**

(John Lennon/ Paul McCartney)

This Ivor Novello Award-winning anthemic long-distance Single, which gave The Beatles a UK/ USA chart-topper in 1968, and is judged by many to be one of their very finest pieces, combined an eminently singalong chorus with a weighty 36-piece orchestra. The Shadows' scaled-down version amounts to little more than a catchy tune, and an excessively ornamented tune at that. The Ventures had provided it with significantly more oomph on their (2LP) *Tenth Anniversary Album* of 1970, with the brass accompaniment in this case working rather well.

**[400] AGAINST ALL ODDS**

(Phil Collins)

Phil Collins' passionately delivered Ivor Novello Award-winning song 'Against All Odds (Take A Look At Me Now)', commissioned for the movie of the same name, was a 1984 chart-topper in the USA (his first) and a No.2 in the UK. The lead guitar work on this cover is impressive enough, but no importance seems to have been attached in the arrangement to the awesomely imposing scale of the Collins' accompaniment, admittedly a pretty hard act to follow (potent piano and percussion, swirling synths).

**[401] DANCING IN THE DARK**

**Album Version**

(Bruce Springsteen)

This storming song, taken from the multi-platinum blast of an Album *Born In The USA*, was a Stateside No.2 for rock star Bruce Springsteen in 1984 (No.28 in the UK, but No.4 when re-promoted in 1985). The original's driving percussion is taken over to fine effect in this Album version; but the remixes issued on Single (see entries below: [407/408]) are punchier still.

**[402] THREE TIMES A LADY**

(Lionel Richie)

The second hit penned by Richie on this Album, this is a captivating love-song written as a romantic gesture towards its composer's wife (inspired by the recent 37th

wedding anniversary of his parents), well suited to Hank Marvin's masterly ballad technique. From Motown's The Commodores (lead vocalist Lionel Richie), it ascended to the top of the charts either side of the Atlantic in 1978.

**[403] I JUST CALLED TO SAY I LOVE YOU**  
(Stevie Wonder)

A 1984, Academy Award-winning chart-topper on both sides of the Atlantic for Stevie Wonder (proving to be Motown's biggest-selling UK Single); it was featured in the Gene Wilder movie 'The Woman In Red'. Melodic as it is, there is arguably too much repetition to carry a lengthy instrumental. And lengthy The Shadows' offering is at over four and a quarter minutes, with a degree of variation surfacing rather belatedly, at the 3:30 mark.

**[404] I KNOW HIM SO WELL**  
(Benny Andersson/ Tim Rice/ Björn Ulvaeus)

Polydor and group between them had a good eye for material with an appeal extending beyond devotees of the three guitars and drums setup. It is hard to fault this captivating instrumental interpretation (which imitates to a degree the original's effective use of Abbaesque synths) of the Ivor Novello Award-winning song from the musical 'Chess'; a duet recorded in separate studios by Elaine Paige and Barbara Dickson was taken jointly to the top of the UK Singles chart in 1985.

**[405] NIGHTS IN WHITE SATIN**  
(Justin Hayward)

From The Moody Blues, bolstered by The London Festival Orchestra, an overblown and self-indulgent sign of the times, taken from the Album *Days Of Future Passed*, that secured them a No.2 in the USA (1972), and no less than three chart entries on their home ground (1967/68: No.19; 1972: No.9; 1979: No.14). The Shadows' version is far less bustling and not at all grandiose: in fact the scaling-down throws the enchanting melody into sharp relief.

**[406] WALK OF LIFE**  
(Mark Knopfler)

From the hugely successful Dire Straits' Album *Brothers In Arms*, 'Walk Of Life' was a UK No.2/ USA No.7 in 1986. More noted for its lyrics than its tunefulness, this is not an obvious choice for an instrumental, which surely accounts for the fact that Hank soon leaves what melody there is behind and goes into free flight, with the result that an Album of 'cover' material closes with something of an improvising flourish.

I

September 1986 7-inch Single, Polydor POSP 808

**[407] DANCING IN THE DARK**

**7-inch Mix**

{B: **[393] TURNING POINT**

from November 1984 LP/CD *Guardian Angel*}

II

September 1986 3-track 12-inch Single, Polydor POSP X 808

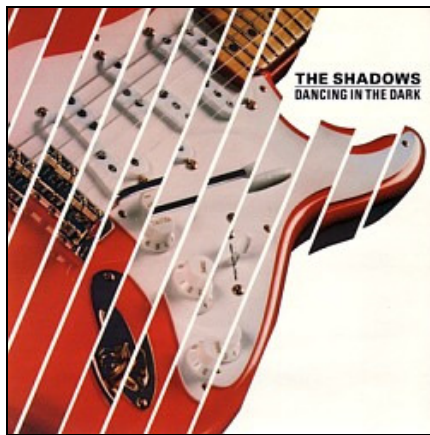
**[408] DANCING IN THE DARK**

**12-inch Mix**

{B: **[401] DANCING IN THE DARK Album Version**

from May 1986 LP/CD *Moonlight Shadows*}

{C: **[393] TURNING POINT** see previous entry }



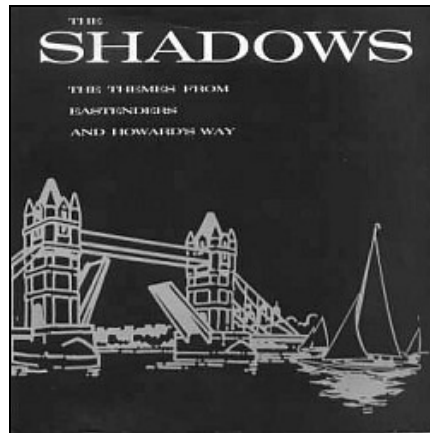
**281 282**

The first of these is a briefer mixing in comparison with the Album version (see under *Moonlight Shadows* above, entry [401]): 3:33 long as opposed to 3:44, it is related more to the 12-inch Single mix than the Album mix. This version (shortened for air-play purposes) was released as a UK 7-inch Single.

Also on offer was the lengthier 12-inch Single version prepared by specialist DJ dance floor mixer Murray Munro: at 5:30 it has an extended beginning and different sound mixing to other versions, being possessed of far greater edge, dynamism and clout. This 12-inch was not issued in any quantity: it is said that less than 1000 copies exist.

**Trainspotter's Note** The 7-inch mix is not yet available in CD. A hitherto unknown mix, **[504]**, 3:38 long, surfaced in the place of the expected 7-inch mix, on the 2001 CD *The Singles Collection* (available on two different labels).

December 1986 A-Single, Polydor POSP 847  
**[409] THEMES FROM  
'EASTENDERS' AND 'HOWARDS' WAY'**  
(Simon May/ Leslie Osborne)  
{B: **[353] NO DANCING!**  
from September 1982 LP *Life In The Jungle*}



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A blend of two TV-scored themes, charting in 1985/86: Simon May's Orchestra with the latter (No.21), which was transformed into a vocal 'Always There' for Marti Webb (No.13); and Anita Dobson (who played Angie Watts in the soap) with a vocal version of the Eastenders theme, 'Anyone Can Fall In Love' (No.4). Eastenders, appropriately enough, sounds like something you would hear in a fairground, and comes over as at best quaint in its new surroundings. The Howards' Way theme is a different matter: Hank's Fender rings out snatches of a superb melody, and this would have made an excellent stand-alone track. Since it is so brief, no account is taken of the striking change of tempo in May's orchestral version. The track reappears on the October 1987 Album *Simply ... Shadows*.

## 1987

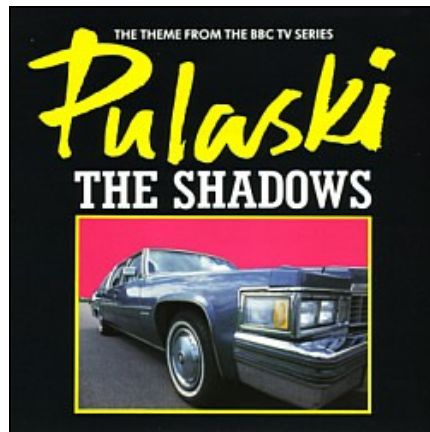
October 1987 A-Single, Polydor POSP 886

**[410] PULASKI**

(Brian Bennett)

{B: **[318] CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

from September 1980 LP *Change Of Address*}



284

PULASKI is simply but effectively structured: a gentle, lyrical central portion is framed by passages of energetic lead guitar and explosive synths. It was the title-theme from the BBC detective series for which Brian Bennett wrote the music, screened by BBC 1 in 1987, and was the first Polydor A-Single to feature a composition from within the group.

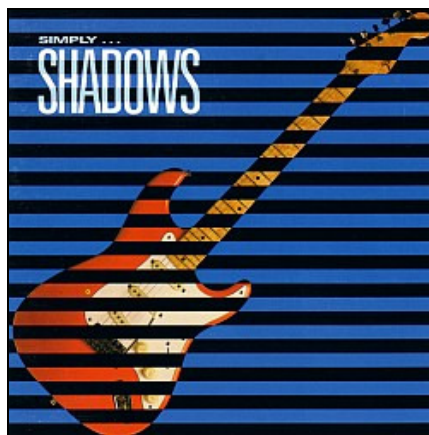
The background to the series is of some interest. Chosen carefully, the name 'Pulaski' held important associations for the American psyche and thus potentially for their market place. Pulaski was a patriot and an immigrant hero of the American Revolution. He formed the 'Pulaski Division' in 1778, a band of men noted for their guerrilla tactics against the British. Fort Pulaski (now a National Monument) in Georgia was founded near the spot where the man was wounded and died. The name is also given to a County in Arkansas and a town in Tennessee — notoriously the town became the birthplace of the Ku Klux Klan.

The convoluted series was short-lived — only eight episodes were screened even though this 'adult' show was broadcast on prime-time TV at 9:30pm directly after the flagship 'Nine O'Clock News' each Friday evening during October to November 1987.

The Single's picture cover illustrated the car (a blue Cadillac) used in the title scene during which The Shadows played the theme music. They were credited at the end together with Brian for his composing. PULASKI reappears on the October Album, next entry.

October 1987 LP/ CD  
Polydor 833 682 1 (SHAD 1)/ 833 682 2  
*Simply ... Shadows*

The sleeve to this heartily vilified Album proclaimed “Over 60 minutes of today’s classic hits”, indicating at once that we were back in *Moonlight Shadows* territory, with the important difference (“today’s”) that the emphasis now was firmly on covers of recent chart material: the fourteen chart items in fact all stem from the 1980s, ten of them from 1985-1987. Prospective purchasers with any awareness of music as it was in the real world out there would have no excuse for failing to recognise nearly all of the tracks on offer, and that of course was the precise aim of Polydor’s marketing machine. Sped on its way by a £300,000 TV promotion campaign, *Simply ... Shadows* ascended to No.11, and stayed on chart for seventeen weeks.



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Shadows commentators and long-term fans of the group have since subjected this Album to a pretty comprehensive mauling. There is some ground, often considerable ground, for adverse criticism. Leaving aside the brand of criticism that simply dismisses covers of this nature as complete non-starters on the ground that contemporary music is an abomination, the overall tone of the set is rather sombre and at times positively leaden, too much darkness and not a great deal of light, as if the package was put together piecemeal without anybody pausing to consider it in its totality. (Indeed it might be argued that the problem stemmed from the fact that Hank had decamped to Perth, Australia at the end of 1986 and that this was the first long-distance Album/promotional tour labouring under the constraint of the jet-set lead guitarist ‘hankering’ to go home! At that time, all the recording work would have had to be completed in the UK at Brian’s established Honeyhill facilities as Hank’s studio was embryonic – there could be few adjustments once he left the country. The same underlying reasons/tensions might well be advanced for the total inactivity of 1988!)

In addition, as with *Moonlight Shadows*, the accompaniment at times seems at best poorly judged and/ or executed. The analyses below on the other hand suggest that there is much to commend certain numbers, the two non-chart items certainly and a good half dozen of the remainder, with two or three deserving a place of honour in any decent Shadows Polydor compilation.

**[411] I KNEW YOU WERE WAITING (FOR ME)**

(Simon Climie/ Dennis Morgan)

Two very different, and very distinctive, soul singers, Aretha Franklin and George Michael, teamed up to produce this choice USA/ UK No.1 in 1987. Hank's guitar work is at its most fluent and vibrant here, and (not for the first time with Polydor product) somebody has made a judicious choice of Album-opener.

**[412] WE DON'T NEED ANOTHER HERO**

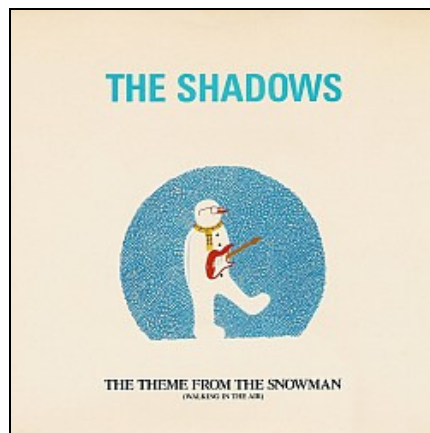
(Graham Lyle/ Terry Britten)

From the soundtrack of the movie 'Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome', an Ivor Novello Award-winning USA No.2/ UK No.3 for Tina Turner in 1985. A brooding intensity building to an explosive climax is the name of the game here, and The Shadows' interpretation does not disappoint.

**[413] WALKING IN THE AIR**

(Howard Blake)

The York boy treble chorister Peter Auty's theme from the 1982 25-minute TV cartoon 'The Snowman'; the most commercially successful version proved to be the vocal interpretation by Aled Jones, a UK Christmas No.5 in 1985. Here is one cover version that does not make the grade: the sound is thin and the accompaniment leaden, a pale reflection indeed of Jones' soaring lines and the imposing orchestral support. After [410] PULASKI failed to chart, Polydor rush-released this track with little or no promotion as an A-Single in November under the more seasonal title of 'The Theme From The Snowman', backed with [318] CHANGE OF ADDRESS. Clearly aimed at the Christmas market, it suffered the indignity of being ignored even at that charitable time of the year.



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**[414] CARELESS WHISPER**

(George Michael/ Andrew Ridgeley)

A superlative example of 'white soul', notable for its saxophone and acoustic guitar parts, this Ivor Novello Award-winning number earned George Michael a UK chart-



topper in 1984, and (marketed under “Wham! Featuring George Michael”) a USA No.1 too the following year. In this reading, piano and guitar work effectively together throughout, and Hank is in top form, particularly during the second half.

**[415] DON'T GIVE UP**  
(Peter Gabriel)

The original is a sombre, densely textured Ivor Novello Award-winning duet (subject: the depressing/ demoralising effects of unemployment and an effort to instil self-respect) from Peter Gabriel and Kate Bush, peaking at No.9 in the UK in 1986 (though the parent Album *So* was a UK No.1/ USA No.2). The Shadows' version captures the brooding atmosphere well, but in the absence of a developing dialogue its five and a half minutes running-time seems a shade overextended.

**[416] I GUESS THAT'S WHY THEY CALL IT THE BLUES**  
(Elton John/ Bernie Taupin/ Davey Johnstone)

A hit for Elton John in fine form (supported by Stevie Wonder on harmonica, and some notably fine backing vocalists): UK No.5 in 1983/ USA No.4 in 1984. The Shadows' accompaniment seems uninspired in comparison with that of the original, though Hank's wonderfully chiming guitar, as so often, lifts the whole performance.

**[417] A HEART WILL BREAK TONIGHT**  
(Pierre Teodori)

One of two fine contributions from French musician Pierre Teodori (see also [431] FAREWELL MY LOVELY under 1989). This outstanding composition (working title, 'New French Instrumental In C'!) boasts a gorgeous melody, unlike the Tarney/ Spencer song of the same name with which it should not be confused (on their Album *Run For Your Life*; that number was also recorded by Cliff Richard, but with the 'Tonight' element dropped). Hank freewheels to stunning effect from 2:39 on.

Pierre T. provides some background: “The number was composed in 1978 ... In April and May 1985, I recorded ten instrumentals as an Album, among them this, under its original title 'You're The Face Of Love' (later named 'A Heart Will Break Tonight' by Bruce). I played all the instruments except drums, which were played by the drummer of the studio where I often worked. Later, I sent a copy (on audio tape) to Bruce's office, to get his opinion and see if he could do something. Some months later, Bruce phoned me (as he had a cold, I didn't recognize his voice at first and thought it was a joke by a friend). He told me he liked my tunes very much and he would see what he could do. Maybe two or three weeks later, he called me again and told me The Shadows wanted to record one tune ... which appeared on *Simply ... Shadows*.”

**[418] THE LADY IN RED**  
(Chris De Burgh)

This was the song, taken from the Album *Into The Light*, that established Chris De Burgh after a long waiting period, a romantic ballad written after he was stunned by his wife in her new dress; it proved to be a smash the world over (No.1 UK 1986/

No.3 USA 1987). A showcase for the Marvin ballad technique, Alan Jones' droning basslines lend extra distinction to one of the finest Shadows' cover versions of the decade.

{[410] PULASKI from October 1987 A-Single }

**[419] TAKE MY BREATH AWAY**  
(Giorgio Moroder/ Tom Whitlock)

This 1986 USA/ UK No.1 for Los Angeles trio Berlin was an Academy Award-winner from the soundtrack of the movie 'Top Gun', a big-production number in the distinctive style of co-composer Giorgio Moroder. Such grand creations sometimes make small-group imitations sound shrunken and lifeless (see three entries further on), but not this time: there is no lack of drive and intensity in any department.

**[420] THE MUSIC OF THE NIGHT**  
(Andrew Lloyd Webber/ Charles Hart/ Richard Stilgoe)

From 'The Phantom Of The Opera'; Michael 'Some Mothers' Crawford starred in both the British and the American production, the song earning him a UK No.7 in 1987. Hank's Morley tone pedal is put to good use in this reading of one of Lloyd Webber's peerless melodies.

{[409] THEMES FROM 'EASTENDERS' AND 'HOWARDS' WAY'  
from December 1986 A-Single }

**[421] I WANT TO KNOW WHAT LOVE IS**  
(Mick Jones)

The original is a gospel-tinged rock ballad (with a Mass Choir drafted in) from Foreigner, a USA/ UK No.1 in 1984, an egregious example of luxuriant Album-Oriented Rock. Scaled down, it does not amount to much, and The Shadows make little or nothing of it: the terms shrunken and lifeless adduced above readily spring to mind here.

**[422] THE SKYE BOAT SONG**  
(Trad., arr. Cliff Hall)

A traditional melody which Roger Whittaker and Des O'Connor had recently carried into the UK pop charts, peaking at No.10 in 1986. (Bruce Welch produced an Album for the former that same year; Cliff Hall, who arranged the piece for *Simply ... Shadows*, was one of the participants.) In the world of music-making what seems painfully mannered to one might strike another quite differently, as the present writer discovered when challenged by a listener (not from Scotland) who counted it among the wonders of the world.

**[423] JEALOUS GUY**

(John Lennon)

A version indebted to Roxy Music's 1981 UK No.1 interpretation of this poignant Lennon composition, notably in the incorporation of a saxophone part. This though seems overdone; there are too many embellishments for a piece which depends for its effect on its inherent simplicity; and the accompaniment is sorely lacking in sparkle.

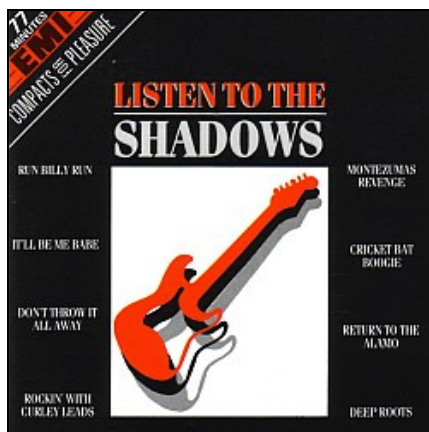
**[424] CHAIN REACTION**

(Barry, Robin & Maurice Gibb)

An Ivor Novello Award-winning UK smash (No.1, aided by an effective b/w video) for Diana Ross in 1986, a cleverly crafted throwback to the stomping/ bubbly songs she delivered when fronting the inimitable Supremes. The Shadows catch the mood perfectly; Hank in due course departs from the script and (as in the closing number on *Moonlight Shadows*) engages in some slick (but still effervescent) improvisation.

# 1989

After a year's break, the second since The Shadows' association with Polydor, a new Album appeared before 1989 was too far advanced, in the month of May. Unusually, a second Album would follow at year-end.



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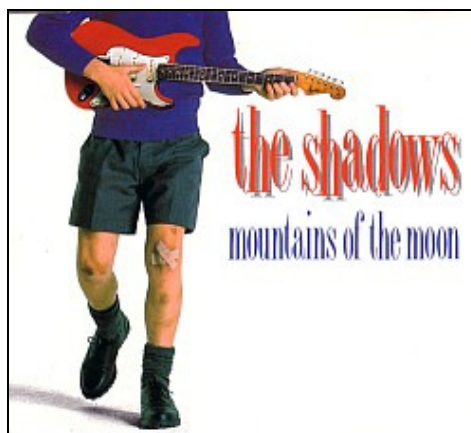
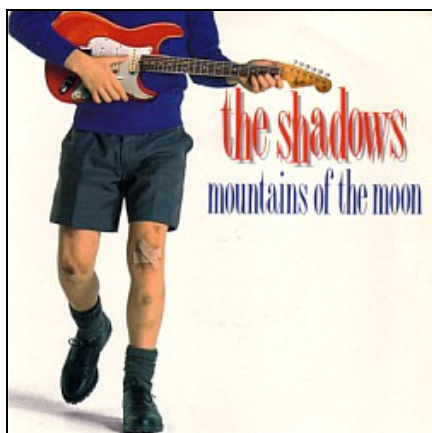
## I

April 1989 Single, Polydor PO 47  
[425] MOUNTAINS OF THE MOON  
(Brian Bennett)

[426] STACK-IT  
(Hank Marvin/ Bruce Welch/ Brian Bennett)

## II

3-track CD Single, Polydor PZCD 47  
[425] MOUNTAINS OF THE MOON:  
[426] STACK-IT:  
{[393] TURNING POINT  
from November 1984 CD/ LP *Guardian Angel*}



288 289

Both of these numbers would appear on the May Album, next entry.

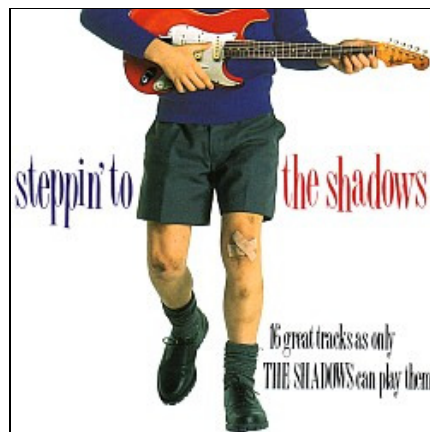
The powerful, dramatic MOUNTAINS OF THE MOON, which was chosen as something of an extravaganza with which to start the second half of the programme in the Final Tour of 2004/2005, started out life as a possible film theme for 'Gorillas In The Mist' amongst others. Brian Bennett narrowly missed the commission for the film about the explorers Burton and Speke, 'Mountains Of The Moon', as the Greek geographer Ptolemy (2 BC) named the Ruwenzori Mountains which provide a natural barrier between Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Deciding that the music was too good to waste, he offered it to The Shadows under that title.

Jim Nugent remarks: "Except for one (important) aspect, the 'Shadows' track 'Mountains Of The Moon' is identical to the track titled 'Mountains In The Sky I', the first track on the Brian Bennett library CD *Airscapes* (Bruton Music BRN24, published 1990). The only difference between the two tracks is the substitution of Hank Marvin's lead guitar for the synthesiser lead instrument on the library track. Since Bruce Welch, Alan Jones and Cliff Hall are not known to have taken part in the *Airscapes* sessions (and can safely be assumed not to have been involved), it seems that the only Shadows present on the 'Shadows' recording are Hank Marvin (lead guitar) and Brian Bennett (everything else)."

The Single (and The Shadows' very first CD Single release) caused consternation at the time when it was issued and deleted within the space of a week, though in fact record companies at the time habitually produced extremely short runs of less familiar product, and still do.

STACK-IT was the last track that Hank, Bruce and Brian ever wrote together. It has a really smooth, bluesy yet soulful groove to it. An immaculate exhibition of seamless phrasing from Hank, with emphatic but beautifully understated support from the other players.

May 1989 LP/ CD  
Polydor 839 357 1 (SHAD 30)/ 839 357 2  
***Steppin' To The Shadows***



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This follow-up to *Simply ... Shadows*, though it too peaked at No.11, and had its own share of mediocre cover versions, improved upon its predecessor in two main ways: there was greater diversity, as four rather than two of the sixteen tracks were not chart-related; and there was in any case greater tonal variety, from the lead guitar in particular. On the downside for many, particularly those who had lived through the 60s, with their antipathy to 80s chart-music, was the fact that all twelve could be related to commercial successes in the UK or USA or both between 1986 and 1988. Here was another Shadows' Album just begging to be binned. For such devotees, as we have seen, the start- and end-point of assessment (assuming that assessment entered into it) was the belief that the group had no business concerning themselves in the first place with anything as distasteful, vulgar and dispensable as a modern commercially successful pop song (concurrently, many younger admirers of the group were wondering why on earth not). In fact though, a number of fine mid- to up-tempo numbers graced the charts during these years, and The Shadows give a good account of some of them in this collection. In general, next year's *Reflection* would outshine *Steppin'*, but would not by any means put it to shame.

**[427] YOU WIN AGAIN**  
(Barry, Robin & Maurice Gibb)

The hammer-like blows of the percussive intro make way for the resonant tones of Hank's Fender, which powers its way through this anthemic, Motown-flavoured Ivor Novello Award-winning comeback Single from The Bee Gees (it topped the UK charts in 1987). Once again, a skilfully chosen Album-opener.

**[428] I WANNA DANCE WITH SOMEBODY (WHO LOVES ME)**  
(George Merrill/ Shannon Rubicam)

A 1986 USA/ UK No.1 for Whitney Houston; a very superior dance number penned by Boy Meets Girl duo Merrill & Rubicam, who were also responsible for the equally dazzling Houston hit from 1985 'How Will I Know'. The Shadows' rendition reflects much of the sparkle and exuberance of the original, with a notable piano intro and a virtuoso finale from lead guitar.

**[429] HE AIN'T HEAVY, HE'S MY BROTHER**  
(Bob Russell/ Bobby Scott)

Remarkably, the reissue of this Hollies' number featuring Elton John on piano after its exposure on a TV beer advert gave this highly accomplished group only their second (and last) spell at the top of the UK charts in 1988. In The Shadows' version there are no cascading strings, a conspicuous feature of the original, but the accompaniment is potent enough in its own terms and Hank plays with great fluency and expressiveness.

**[430] CANDLE IN THE WIND**  
(Elton John/ Bernie Taupin)

A live performance of this celebrated tribute ballad to screen goddess Marilyn Monroe (which would go on to become the world's biggest-selling Single ever under a different guise) had been taken into the charts by Elton John, with support from The

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, in 1988 (UK No.5/ USA No.6). Among the various Shadows' adaptations of hits of the 80s, this is one of the most idiosyncratic. The original, in keeping with the subject-matter, is relatively low-key and delicate in execution; the approach here is upbeat, flamboyant, even swaggering at times — a satisfying instrumental if the song's poignant associations are left out of account.

**[431] FAREWELL MY LOVELY**  
(Pierre Teodori)

One of two pieces successfully submitted to the group by French musician Pierre Teodori (the other is [417] A HEART WILL BREAK TONIGHT, see under 1987). This outstandingly tuneful and invigorating composition in particular makes one wish there had been more. The title recalls that of the celebrated 1944 film noir (remade in 1975). Pierre T. takes up the story from [417] above: "Between September and November 1987, I composed and recorded as demos three more tunes, among them 'French Rendez-Vous' (recorded in 1997 by Barry Gibson and The Local Heroes). The second tune (with no name) was the demo of 'Farewell My Lovely', and the third ... was called 'Ocean'. I sent these three demos to Bruce and in 1989, maybe around March, he called me and told me he had two pieces of news for me, one good, one bad. The good one was that The Shadows had recorded one of my new compositions, and the bad was that he had divorced Lynne. That's why he called my tune 'Farewell My Lovely'".

The composer's own versions of the two numbers have been made available on his CD *Influences* (2006).

{[425] MOUNTAINS OF THE MOON April 1989 A-Single}

**[432] NOTHING'S GONNA CHANGE MY LOVE FOR YOU**  
(Gerry Goffin/ Michael Masser)

Originally recorded by George Benson in 1985, this airless romantic ballad earned Hawaii-born Glenn Madeiros a UK chart-topper (and a USA No.12) in 1988. The Shadows do nothing to relieve the tedium of the original, and in fact it is hard to know what could have been done.

**[433] HEAVEN IS A PLACE ON EARTH**  
(Ellen Shipley/ Rick Nowels)

The embodiment of pure pop, Belinda Carlisle's singalong Single was an unsurprising 1987 USA/UK chart-topper. The Shadows enter into the spirit of things and turn it into a pretty creditable instrumental.

**[434] WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, THE TOUGH GET GOING**  
(Wayne Braithwaite/ Barry J Eastmond)

Featured on the soundtrack of the movie 'Jewel Of The Nile', this finely crafted pop/dance workout from Billy Ocean (a true master of his trade) reached No.1 in the UK and No.2 in the USA in 1986. The lead guitar in this adaptation sounds gloriously resonant and full-bodied, and there is plenty of punch overall. A first-rate cover.

**[435] ALONE**  
(Billy Steinberg/ Tom Kelly)

This power ballad, penned by the composers of such stellar pieces as Madonna's 'Like A Virgin' and Cyndi Lauper's 'True Colors', was a 1987 UK No.3/ USA No.1 for Seattle-founded rock band Heart, with lead vocalist Ann Wilson in great form. This is one that has not translated well: a leaden, languid approach is the opposite of what is required.

**[436] ALL I ASK OF YOU**  
(Andrew Lloyd Webber/ Charles Hart)

A song from the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical 'The Phantom Of The Opera', it was a 1986 UK No.3 for duettists Cliff Richard & Sarah Brightman (the latter appearing in the show), accompanied by The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Not an especially strong melody, but Hank Marvin's guitar technique here repays close attention, as he deftly varies the tone to mirror the male solo/ female solo duetting of the original.

{[426] STACK-IT April 1989 B-Single}

**[437] SHOBA**  
(Hank Marvin)

A superb original from the lead guitarist — a sweeping, elegiac melody couched amidst a big string 'n' synths arrangement from Cliff Hall. The track is dedicated to Hank's favourite Indian restaurant (now no more) in Perth, Australia.

**[438] YOU KEEP ME HANGIN' ON**  
(Eddie Holland/ Lamont Dozier/ Brian Holland)

A Supremes' classic brought bang up to date by Kim Wilde in 1986 (UK No.2; USA No.1 the next year). It is to the latter's turbo-charged cover naturally that The Shadows at Polydor direct their attention, and the result is a storming, no-holds barred instrumental which must be reckoned as one of their best latter-day efforts.

**[439] SOME PEOPLE**  
(Alan Tarney)

A UK No.3 for Cliff Richard in 1987; the Alan Tarney-produced parent Album *Always Guaranteed* climbed to No.5. There seems to be an element of routine in the group's rendition of this fine song: cold and clinical it is not, but that is how it comes over here.

**[440] ONE MOMENT IN TIME**  
(Albert Hammond/ John Bettis)

The stirring title-track to the 1988 Summer Olympic Games (Seoul, South Korea) musical tribute, a UK/ USA No.1 for Whitney Houston. This was a big production number, to put it mildly, but despite the inevitable reduction in scale, The Shadows



succeed in conveying much of the original's grandeur (grandiloquence, some might say) and resounding finale.

December 1989 Single/ CD Single, Polydor PO 61/ PZCD 61

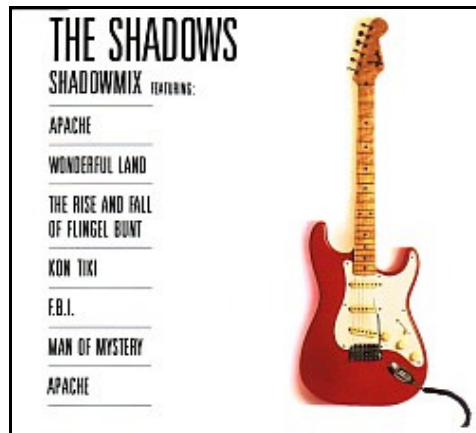
**[441] SHADOWMIX**

(Various)

{B: [321] ARTY'S PARTY

from September 1980 LP *Change Of Address*}

Snatches of the re-recorded classics considered in the next entry are strung together in rapid succession: [442] APACHE, [445] WONDERFUL LAND, [446] THE RISE AND FALL OF FLINGEL BUNT, [459] KON-TIKI, [453] FBI, [443] MAN OF MYSTERY, [442] APACHE. The introduction, with a heavily distorted/ sampled "Ladies and Gentlemen ...", draws on Cliff Richard's introduction to the group at the 'Thank You Very Much' concerts of 1978 (see under 1979, the year of its release), and the whole is underpinned by an overpowering drumbeat, presumably in an effort to inject some sort of vitality into the proceedings. The creator of this sorry farrago is not disclosed. It is astonishingly feeble stuff, quite artless in execution; one cannot even begin to compare it with the dynamic 12-inch remix of [408] DANCING IN THE DARK produced on The Shadows' behalf in 1986 (see the entry there).



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A full-blown psychedelic promo video accompanied the release — parts of which were aired on TV at the time. The offering showed the latest line-up (including Mark Griffiths) mixed in with reminders of 60s dancers and lifestyle icons such as Austin Minis, baby-doll nighties and hula-hoops! — For want of anything better, the Single was reissued to support the *Reflection* Album nearly a year later. Mirroring The Shadows' dismal Singles sales throughout the past decade and reflecting a general decline in that sector of the market anyway, it was still not a fitting end to the career of the group as UK Singles Pop Chart heroes; this damp squib turning out to be their final offering.

**Trainspotter's Note** In 2004 the 1980s [445] WONDERFUL LAND was given a more radical — and impressive — makeover in the 'Green Mountain Remix', a 4:49 recording incorporating a variety of 'disco' effects, aimed at DJs, available on an

expensive double CD from DMC Ltd. (after climbing the disco charts the number was also distributed by Universal PolyGram in the form of a one-track promo CD).

December 1989 LP/ CD  
Polydor 841 520 1/ 841 520 2  
*The Shadows At Their Very Best*



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[442] APACHE/ [443] MAN OF MYSTERY/ [444] SHINDIG/ [445] WONDERFUL LAND [see previous entry]/ [446] THE RISE AND FALL OF FLINGEL BUNT/ [447] THEME FROM 'THE DEER HUNTER'/ [448] THE BOYS/ [449] THE FRIGHTENED CITY/ [450] THEME FOR YOUNG LOVERS/ [451] DANCE ON!/ [452] THE SAVAGE/ [453] FBI/ [454] GUITAR TANGO/ [455] GENIE WITH THE LIGHT BROWN LAMP/ [456] ATLANTIS/ [457] FOOT TAPPER/ [458] DON'T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA/ [459] KONTIKI/ [460] GERONIMO/ [461] THE STRANGER

The Shadows had built up a sizeable body of recorded work since 1980. So far there had been relatively little in the way of compilation Albums issued through Polydor or licensees, but such product, with the opportunities afforded for variety of presentation and budget pricing, was surely something to which the group, its management and the record company aspired — particularly now that Compact Disc was firmly established as the music carrier of the moment and of the foreseeable future, with vinyl and cassette looking increasingly archaic, if not positively quaint, by the day. What compilations there had been had naturally lacked an essential ingredient from the marketing point of view, the classic tunes from the 1960s and beyond, APACHE and the rest, all of them firmly under EMI's control and put to work mercilessly in an everflowing stream of CDs from a staggering range of countries.

So, before the 1980s were gone, a newly recorded set of past masters was put on the market. Sixteen of the 1977 blockbuster *20 Golden Greats* were re-recorded; four were dropped ([117], [135], [154], [167]) in favour of two favourites from the 60s ([448], [461]) and two 70s hits [447], [458]). The Album did almost as well in chart terms as its predecessor, *Steppin' To The Shadows*, reaching No.12. As so often, this was not down to a Shadows' resurgence, with fans from way back forming queues at record shops on the (probably) cold December morning of release. Bruce Welch has

been quoted as saying: “To us, the re-cuts on this Album sound far better than the originals. They are in true stereo for the first time, and you can actually hear the bass drum. But to be honest, the dedicated Shads’ fans were never really happy with them.” (For opposing verdicts on the Album’s first appearance see Rob Bradford and Alan Taylor in *Pipeline 5* (1990) p.31.)

That about sums it up as far as fan-reaction generally was concerned. It could hardly have been otherwise. Short of cloning the originals and hoping that nobody noticed, it was wholly impossible in the course of a single session or set of sessions to come anywhere near emulating the originals, given that they were created over an extended period of time in various recording environments, with ever-changing equipment, in a diversity of styles, with or without distinctive accompaniment from Norrie Paramor — not to mention that magic, indefinable ingredient referred to by Bruce Welch himself as the “original feel” ...

Curiously, the ‘true stereo’ argument is one that Bruce Welch has put forward repeatedly in various contexts, but it is mistaken. Of course the originals, or at least all the originals that concern us here, were in ‘true stereo’, more often than not conspicuously so, with a carefully contrived differentiation between the respective instruments (see the thorough survey by Jim Nugent in *SCOFA 28* [1991] pp.14–17). Ironically enough, 1980s stereo has a much narrower soundstage, a characteristic that applies to most of the tracks on *At Their Very Best*, sometimes to the extent that it is not easy to pick out individual musicians (Bruce’s rhythm is often recessed, not at all clearly defined).

A further point made by Bruce Welch: “We decided to copy the originals note for note ...” That is an exaggeration. In general, the oldies are mimicked pretty closely as regards tempo (often on stage the pace was a bit brisker), and there are no really radical deviations in the solos and fills. However, from time to time clear differences do surface, three examples of which there is room to mention here: [450] *THEME FOR YOUNG LOVERS* sprouts a synth accompaniment, though there was no orchestral backdrop on the original; [455] *GENIE WITH THE LIGHT BROWN LAMP* is much more fluid and florid than the original, while on the outro to [461] *THE STRANGER* Hank really lets his hair down, reflecting as it happens his more adventurous playing on the closing tracks of certain other Polydor Albums.

In the last analysis, though, the overall performance is, inevitably, that of The Shadows at Polydor, not The Shadows of an era long gone. Those who had followed the group’s progress through thick and thin were happy enough to listen to *APACHE* or *FBI* in 1980s style on stage. With the recordings, they preferred to relive the splendours of yesteryear. Even today, more than fifteen years on, the majority of fans greet the re-recorded numbers with resigned tolerance rather than warmth.