

REVOLVER USA

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THE BETTER BEATLES

Mercy Beat

Hook or Crook • HOOK012

Street Date: November 19, 2007

LP \$7.00



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- First reissue of songs from the rare 1982 7" plus 8 unreleased songs
- The "Penny Lane"/"I'm Down" 7" was a favorite of John Peel and was played often by him in the years after its initial release.
- For fans of esoteric early 80s minimal synth/wave, D.I.Y., Hyped to Death's Homework and Messthetics series.

HOOK OR CROOK records

A REVOLVER EXCLUSIVE

Historians, record nerds and armchair musicologists are just now extensively excavating the dark crannies of American do-it-yourself whatsis that emerged from the bloom of punk in the late seventies and early eighties. Some of the treasures found in mildeewing crates and from deceased moms' closets speak volumes about the energy and inventiveness of the USA's bored youth at the time, giving rise to a sub-subculture that found its calling in twisted, art-infused noise & jagged-edge rock, not in "punk" per se - all original, all cleanly cleaved from the past, and often capturing a strange zeitgeist that popular media reckonings of the era seemed to have missed.

Then there was Omaha, Nebraska's Better Beatles. They sported no originals - just savagely wacked, detuned, deadpan readings of Beatles material in a manner than no one save The Residents could have imagined in 1980. Sure, bands all over the US and the UK were making oddball 45s out of analog synthesizers, primitive recording techniques and decidedly arty leanings at the time, but few approached the deconstructivist beauty of The Better Beatles' one and only single, the self-released "Penny Lane/I'm Down". To hear this glorious single in the 21st century, as an increasing number of partisans have (a number sure to blossom with the release of the disc you're holding), is to still stand agog that a group could go to such unforced, random-sounding lengths and not come off in the least as some dumb-ass, Dr. Demento-lite yuk band. The Better Beatles single isn't even "funny". It's dark and at times transcendent, and it simultaneously lifts the Beatles' unparalleled songcraft to new and even better heights, while destroying the mythos around the band just the same, in as snotty & underhanded a manner as the rottenest rotten punk you can conjure

And to think - there was a whole tape's worth of weirdo recordings of this ilk just sitting around all this time! You'll probably be the best judge of whether the Beatles' legacy can survive these covers intact, because different aural cavities are going to hear these unique sounds in all sorts of funny and ultimately polarizing ways.

-JAY HINMAN

TRACK LISTING

Side A

1. Penny Lane
2. I'm Down
3. Can't Buy Me Love
4. Lady Madonna
5. Paperback Writer

Side B

6. Hello Goodbye
7. Baby You're A Rich Man
8. Eleanor Rigby
9. With A Little Help From My Friends
10. Get Back

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