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Music Reviews



The Beatles "Anthology 2" Apple Records Grade: A

The Beatles' "Anthology 2" is a trip into the wonderland of the Beatles' psychedelic period. It allows the listener a journey further

into the looking-glass minds of the creators and their artistic process than ever before. This compilation covers the progression from the experimentation and departure from pop norms in "Rubber Soul" to the impenetrable peak of "Sgt. Pepper."

The tracks on "Anthology 2" show different roads and avenues in the distinct worlds that the Beatles crafted for the songs of this period. The best example is the collection of takes from "Strawberry Fields Forever," which begins with the first recordings of John tinkering with the song in his home.

This humble arrangement fades into the incomparable unreleased first take with a brilliant alternate vocal. This vocal casts an entirely new emotional feel to the song. Eerie slide guitar gives the track a "Space Oddity" ambience that is

perfectly complementary to the spacey sense of John's vacuousness.

This first take is followed by the familiar take seven that makes up half of the released version of the song. It has the complete ending with Ringo's drum solo and John's nonsense ramblings, revealing clearly the hidden phrase "cranberry sauce," not the "I buried Paul" line heard by straining fans for decades.

In a similar way, "A Day in the Life" is a majestic compilation of the many takes of the song in the studio and recordings of the studio itself. The song is like a jigsaw puzzle of Bauhaus art pieces. The section that later contains the first orchestra passage bears only John's distorted count and Paul's dissonant piano. The orchestra comes in at the end, but the final chord is

replaced by Paul's commentary on the song's evolution.

Many of the first takes of songs on this compilation rival the released takes for emotional resonance. Besides the first take of "Strawberry Fields," the first run-throughs of "Norwegian Wood," "Tomorrow Never Knows" and "I'm Only Sleeping" are in many ways better than the well-known versions.

There is not much more a Beatles fan could ask for from the unreleased takes of this period. The tracks are remixed and restored and by far superior to the Beatles boot-legs that have kept fans' interest alive for so many years until the coming of "Anthology."

— Jason Gildow

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Hollywood scramble leaves Oscar tickets hard to find

By Constance Sommer
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES—Hollywood's workaday scramble can become a frenzy around Oscar time, when tickets to the big show are hard to come by.

Things are better every third year, when the Academy Awards are staged at the 5,800-seat Shrine Auditorium. But because that venue is more expensive, the ceremony usually is held at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, which has half the seats.

Nominees and presenters can attend, of course—along with one guest. And studios get block ticket allotments. Academy members—all 5,900 of them—may submit applications to a lottery. About 450 to 600 lucky ones win a pair.

The man caught in the middle is Otto Spoerri, financial controller of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. He gets to decide ticket allotment, run the lottery and assign seats.

"I get the nasty phone calls because I send the letter out in my signature that you didn't get tickets," Spoerri said. "I don't discriminate. I have sent back some big names, believe me. If I start choosing and picking, it wouldn't be fair."

Limited seating and the lust for tickets means headaches for others, too.

"It's a mess. It's a big mess," said Hollace Davids, a Universal Pictures executive given the unhappy task of assigning the paltry 28 seats the studio received for Monday night's ceremony.

Universal has four films accounting for 20 Oscar nominations, meaning scores of people involved with the movies deserve to attend.

"There are people who are disappointed, let's put it that way," Davids said.

But there are only so many tickets to go around. There's the usual allotment to the Academy's Board of Governors and "honored guests" like county supervisors, the press and industry guild representatives.

ABC gets 96 tickets for televising the show. Those tickets are divided among network executives and commercial sponsors.

And then the studios get theirs. At one of the smaller studios, one executive turned in desperation to scalpers, who sometimes purchase tickets from Academy members.

Speaking on condition of anonymity because of strict Academy rules prohibiting such sales, the executive said a scalper offered to sell an orchestra ticket—which the Academy prices at \$200—for \$4,500.

If she was willing to take the balcony—usually priced at \$50 a seat—she could go for a mere \$2,600.

"I said, 'I could have a fair amount of plastic surgery for that and win an Oscar myself,'" said the executive, who refused to buy at those prices.

Picks

Continued from Page 9
BEST PICTURE

Jeff: First, I'll pose a question. How can two films ("Leaving Las Vegas" and "Dead Man Walking") be nominated for Best Actor, Best Actress and Best Director without being nominated for Best Picture? Hello, Academy, are you there? All right, I'll go against my personal preferences on this one and give it to "Apollo 13" because every person over 30 that I know loved it (I hated it, by the way). For the record, I'd like to see "Babe" win. Hey, if "Leaving Las Vegas" isn't in it, the whole category can go down in flames, as far as I'm concerned.

Gerry: "Babe" is bacon. "Sense and Sensibility" was good but too boring to win "Best Picture." "The Postman" is both dead and a foreign film and "Apollo 13" was too widely appealing. Thus, it's "Braveheart" all the way. I must agree with Jeff on the sad absence of "Leaving Las Vegas" and "Dead Man Walking" in this category, which would have made this category a difficult choice. Isn't a pig film's nomination for Best Picture one of the signs of the Apocalypse?

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