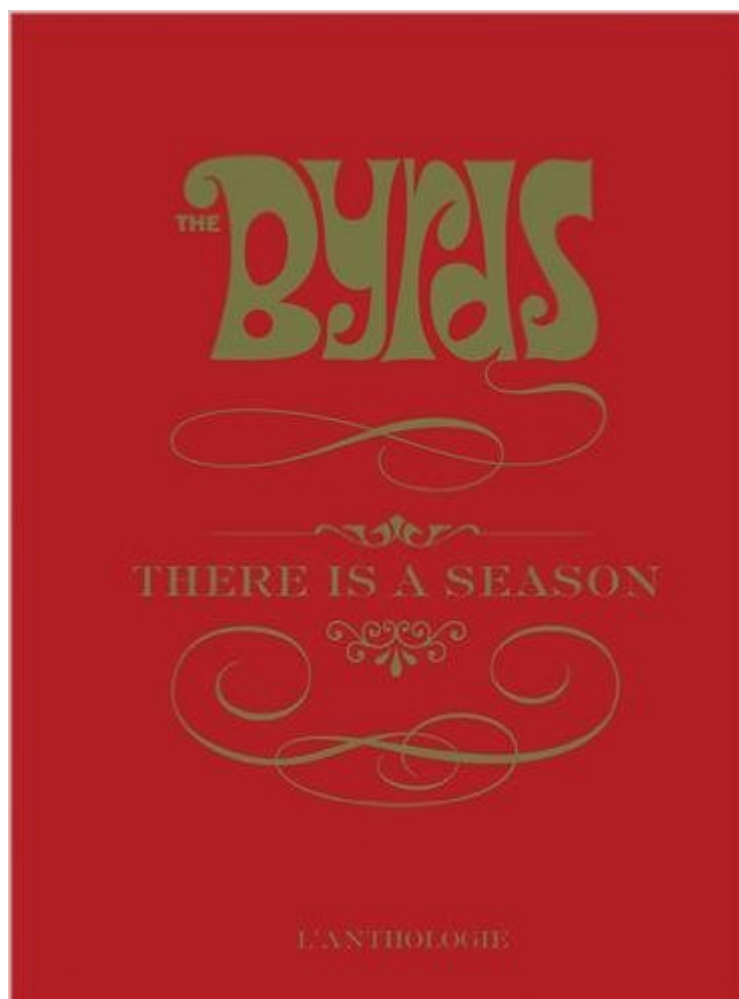


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The Byrds: There Is A Season



Book Information

Audio CD

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Customer Reviews

During the Byrds' all too brief career (less than 10 years in all its various incarnations through their 1973 reunion), they didn't enjoy the kind of commercial success of the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, or even the Kinks or the Who for that matter. (Even Chad & Jeremy had as many Top 40 singles as the Byrds!) But history has rightly bestowed the status of legends on one of America's most influential bands. Does this justify a second box set? The answer is an unqualified, yes. While the 1990 BYRDS box set is an equally essential collection, THERE IS A SEASON includes 37 songs not on the first box set and an additional 15 songs presented in different versions (alternate takes, mono, or live). So nearly half the tracks here are new to this box set. And the bonus DVD (although brief at under 30 minutes) is a treasure trove of full song performances--all lip-synched--from a variety of TV sources. Here's the complete rundown on what's new to the THERE IS A SEASON box set: Disc One (64:51) - Where THE BYRDS box set began with "Mr. Tambourine Man," this set begins with six tracks from 1964. The first track is the folky "The Only Girl I know," written by McGuinn and Clark and recorded as The Jet Set. The next two tracks, "Please Let Me Love You" and "Don't Be Long," were recorded as The Beefeaters. The next three tracks, "The Airport Song," "You Movin'" and "You Showed Me," still showed the Byrds still looking for their own distinct voice, experimenting with blending folk, pop and rock. In addition, the compilers have put more emphasis on Gene Clark's songwriting this time. "You Won't Have to Cry" (co-written with McGuinn), "Here Without You," "I Knew I'd Want You," "She Has a Way," "Set You Free This Time," "The Day Walk" and "If You're Gone" are all Clark tunes.

When the Byrds first box set was released in 1990, it boasted an unbelievable collection of material

from the band's career from 1965 through 1971. Over the years, that box set has earned a reputation as the definitive career overview for arguably the most important American rock 'n' roll band in history. Fast-forward to 2006, we have seen all of the Byrds' eleven studio albums re-released in expanded editions with bonus tracks, and the original box set is long out of print. Recognizing that a lot more material has surfaced in the vaults since 1990, Columbia Records decided to compile a new box set, *There Is a Season*, instead of simply doing another print run of the 1990 box. Most die-hard fans - the people who are most likely to be interested in *There Is a Season* - probably have all eleven of the expanded edition re-issues and the 1990 box set and will be questioning why they should drop more money for material they already have. For starters, there are five new live tracks that are previously unreleased in any form. There are also many tracks that are making their debut on CD. For those who own the eleven album re-issues and the 1990 box set, there are ten key reasons why you need the new box set.

1. Both sides of the Elektra Records single put out by Roger McGuinn, David Crosby and Gene Clark as The Beefeaters, "Please Let Me Love You" b/w "Don't Be Long", are making their official debuts on CD. You can finally throw away that crackly vinyl rip that you got from a friend of a friend.
2. The original mono single version of "Why?" is making its CD debut here. The single version of "Why?" first appeared on the 1990 box, but in a modern-day stereo remix. And before you say "The mono version appeared on *Original Singles 1965-1967!*"

I bought "*There Is A Season*" even though I already owned all of the Byrds CDs and the 1990 box set. Why? Because the group has meant a lot to me, and this new box set was clearly inspired by a record label wanting to set the record straight on the Byrds -- probably without any expectations of making much money on the set. Any box set is going to be a compromise between creating an ideal listening experience and commercial considerations. For a group with as complex a history as the Byrds and as many personnel changes, personal politics will likely enter in as well. The 1990 box set did a great job of presenting the Byrds, rightly highlighting Roger McGuinn's central role, David Crosby's innovative contributions, and Gram Parsons' lost vocals. But, it downplayed the wonderful contributions of Gene Clark, gave too much weight to the McGuinn-led Byrds following the departure of Chris Hillman and Gram Parsons, ignored anything pre-Mr. Tambourine Man, ignored the 1973 reunion album, ignored the 1971-72 solo tracks that included all five original Byrds, and ignored the McGuinn-Clark-Hillman albums. In short, it took a narrow view of the Byrds -- in contrast to some other box sets, such as the ones on the Beach Boys and Eric Clapton, as examples, that took a more inclusive view. The McGuinn-led Byrds produced some great songs after Parsons and

Hillman departed, but were they really the Byrds any more than McGuinn-Clark-Hillman? Any Byrds fan can nitpick with the selections on the new box set.

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