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MissDustyFanatic

Where am I going?



Posted - 23/09/2009 : 07:27:13



USA
2606 Posts

A little background: this was Miss Dusty's first album for ABC/Dunhill, and her first album after her contract with Atlantic had been terminated. It was recorded in the fall of 1972 in California, around the time 'See All Her Faces' was being prepared for release. It also turned out to be her only album for ABC/Dunhill, as 'Longing' was never finished.

This album has always been a curiosity of mine. When I first started getting into Miss Dusty's music 3 or 4 years ago, it seemed relatively easy to find copies of all her albums on CD (as I hadn't yet succumbed to my vinyl addiction) *except* for 'Cameo'. The only one I ever saw was on Amazon.com listed for \$125. Though I now realize it was easy to think it was very rare since I was new to her music, I've since discovered eBay and it seems to pop up there from time to time for relatively normal prices. That being said, it IS one of her harder albums to find; I've never read nor heard anything about publicity for it at the time it was released-it seems there WAS no publicity for it, though I know she sang 'Mama's Little Girl' and 'Of All The Things' on US television shows. About the only things I've ever heard about it during the early 70s were that it was produced by Brian Potter and Dennis Lambert, who had written about half the album, and four songs exclusively for Miss Dusty ('Who Gets Your Love?', 'Breakin' Up a Happy Home, 'Mama's Little Girl and 'Comin' and Goin'.')

For me, much of the album sounds quite dated. I particularly feel that way from the first few opening bars of 'Who Gets Your Love', with the VERY artificial sounding electric piano. That has always rubbed me the wrong way. I do love the songs, and really, the production becomes secondary when she starts singing. *That Voice!*

Speaking of which, most of the album seems to be done in a perfect blend of her head and chest voices- both seem to compliment, rather than compete with, each other during a song. I do miss the echo on her voice that was more prevalent in the 60s, but times were changing, and she had less and less control over production. Would it have sounded different if she'd been at the production helm? I'd like to think so.

I really quite like 'Breakin Up a Happy Home'. The alternating tempos between the music in the chorus and the verses keeps the song refreshing, and I like that the key seems to change (I'm not a musical person, so correct me if I'm using the wrong terms) and the song gets warmer as she goes into the chorus. It's as if she's pleading in a way that's reminding the subject of the song that times are still good and worth working for. I don't sense the desperation of an "oh no you're leaving, oh NOOOOOO!!!" kind of a song.

'Easy Evil' is a nice return to her more sensual side (ala 'Breakfast in Bed'), though again, the electric piano somewhat dampens the effect by sounding so artificial against a backdrop of seduction. She sounds more at ease in this song than on many of the others though admittedly, subject matter has a lot to do with that.

I think 'Mama's Little Girl' was the first 'Cameo' track I'd ever heard. Honestly...I wasn't terribly impressed with it. It's grown on me, but still

isn't a favorite. Again, some of the instrumentation is sort of distracting and detracts from the rest of the song.

'The Other Side of Life' is a particular favorite from the album; it's just a gentle song, with matching accompaniment...just strings and wind instruments, and one of the most appealing vocals on the album. It's just natural and flows easily the whole way through.

'Comin and Goin' is a nice song, though I would have preferred a real piano opening. Miss Dusty gives a good reading, and truly captures the to and fro emotions one feels in a relationship.

As some of the lyrics are in my signature quote, it's pretty obvious that I'm in love with and want to marry 'I Just Wanna Be There'. 🎵 When I finally got 'Cameo' on CD, I put it on while I was cleaning my room. I thought most of the songs were pleasant, a few pretty good, but I was hoping for more oomph in the songs. Well, once the opening bars of IJWBT came on, I froze and got a HUGE grin on my face. A few lines in I remember thinking "Now THAT'S the kind of performance I was hoping for!" And when she hits that high note in the bridge "Baby baby babe babe babe, I wanna be THERE, YEAH!" I laughed and thought "**Sing it!!**" She was *bringing* the happy; if I've heard one description of the song that fits it to a T, I believe it was Paul Howes who called it "supremely joyful". I felt a little of the 'old' 60s Dusty back again, having a ball and singing her heart out. I simply adore this song; I can play it back to back to back to back and NEVER tire of it. Though the subject matter is slightly different, it has the same bouncy happy feel of 'I Only Want To Be With You'. I think it would have made an excellent single, and wish it had been released as one.

'Who Could Be Loving You Other Than Me' feels much more organic than a lot of the other songs, not least because the instrumentation and production sounds so much warmer than 'Who Gets Your Love' for instance, and really allows Miss Dusty to shine. One of my favorites.

'Of All The Things' wasn't a song that struck me on first listen, but has turned out to be one that has really grown on me. It's tender and quite touching without being maudlin.

I'm not sure how I feel about 'Tupelo Honey'. Wait....I take that back. I feel about this song as I do with 'In The Winter'. Both are near universally praised and endlessly praised...but I'm sorry to say I don't understand why, or rather, I don't feel the same way. Admittedly, ITW has some pretty melodramatic lyrics and instrumentation, but 'Tupelo Honey's lyrics have always seemed to be a random collection of pleasant rhymes. They don't seem to be ABOUT anything; at least the verses don't. It's never been a favorite of mine, and not one I listen to often-I just can't relate to it at all.

'Learn to Say Goodbye' closes the album and is another heart-rending performance. One of the things I love about this and many of Miss Dusty's songs is it can be interpreted more than one way. This could be a song about saying a permanent goodbye to a loved one (though I don't believe death is the end), or a goodbye to a romantic relationship or even a friendship that's over.

At first glance, 'Cameo' seems to be of it's time, but the more I listen, the more I appreciate it. It really is a gem, though it takes some refining listens to really start to 'get' it. It's not my favorite album, but it is one I'm glad I spent the time and energy to track down. Over and over and over... as many of you know, I probably have more copies in more formats than any of her other albums; probably because of the initial rarity factor.

One last thought; I seem to sense an undercurrent of sadness or the mild beginnings of a depression running through it. I know she later claimed to be unhappy with how the album was produced, and I think it shows in places, mostly during the first half of the album. Beginning with 'I Just Wanna Be There', the songs have a warmer feel to them, and flow better. It makes me wonder though if this wasn't the start of her downhill direction.

So what do you think of 'Cameo'? What songs would have made good

singles besides 'Who Gets Your Love' and 'Mama's Little Girl' (the only singles from the album)? What do you think of the cover art (personally I love it and think it's distinctive)?

memphisinlondon

Where am I going?



United Kingdom
3565 Posts

Posted - 23/09/2009 : 09:22:24

Just to say...I've been waiting....and finally we have the Taylor I remember so well....back in style! YaaaY!

I haven't got time to read the book you've written and no doubt I will write one myself later. This was my first Dusty album and it's what made me realise that Dusty was a quality album artist too. Dusty had a bad time recording this. She was on her slippery slope. Those break up songs reflect a real break-up in her life. I didn't know all this when I got the album. I loved it from the first listening session. It was a WoW session...*Wow I never knew Dusty sang these kind of songs...and she's so totally fine..Wow!*

Memphis
Ever since we met...

Edited by - memphisinlondon on 23/09/2009 09:23:01



ErgoFergo

I'll try anything



United Kingdom
1047 Posts

Posted - 23/09/2009 : 17:32:32

This is highly serendipitous, Taylor. Having not played this album for ages (ie three or four weeks), I teed it up in the car just this morning. I'll be listening to it on the way home tonight...

I'll post something soon - although I doubt I'll match your tour de force. (I think I might need a dictaphone to take notes, Kyle-McLachlan-in-Twin-Peaks stylee.😁)

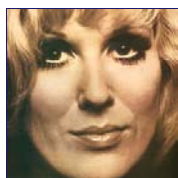
Vicky
X

Edited by - ErgoFergo on 23/09/2009 17:38:38



memphisinlondon

Where am I going?



United Kingdom
3565 Posts

Posted - 23/09/2009 : 22:31:08

I was listening mainly to new wave and rock and brand new music at the time I bought this album - around 1978-79. David Bowie was my favourite and he was in his prime at this time and still releasing really interesting albums that I bought as soon as they were released. I was also listening to Dionne Warwick, Sandie Shaw, and Cilla Black - I have always been into 1960s pop music. I had a growing Elvis collection. I was also listening to reggae; John Peel played great reggae tracks on his show and my brother used to boom out his own reggae collection, and Bob Marley was becoming a super-star.

I would go on to collect the 5th Dimension. Two older gay male friends would introduce me to Babs Streisand. I was dancing to the latest disco 12" records from the USA. So that's my back-drop. I was becoming a musicologist and was soaking up all sorts of music. I started collecting 2nd hand records when I wasn't earning and then when I did earn I spent nearly all my money on music and hi-fi. I also bought and sold records. You could buy classic stuff in jumble sales in those days and I would sell them on to my local collector's record shop.

I had only heard Dusty on her classic singles and some album tracks on the radio by then I think. I think this is right. I played 'Cameo' in my bedroom at my Mum's place. I hadn't left home yet. I think by the time I had Dusty's Greatest Hits I was living in No. 5 Liberty Street, my first address after I left home. This means I probably didn't have any Dusty records at all at the time I bought 'Cameo' so this was my first Dusty record. It would take until after Dusty's death for me to gather a comprehensive collection of her musical art works.

I bought this remaindered record brand new for around £1-£2. I can actually remember putting it on the turn-table and hearing that electric piano, clear as day coming out of my speakers and then the drums,

strings and guitars and then...Dusty. I was gob smacked as we say here in the UK. I was immediately entranced. It really was a WoW moment. I had discovered Dusty Springfield! I loved the music. I loved the clarity of the production. The percussion and every thing and of course Dusty's Voice. This was such an easy record for me to listen to all the way through. To this day if an album gets tedious I take it off – doesn't matter who it's by. But not this one. It didn't sound dated. It didn't sound generic. It was only when I played it for my friend, and he immediately knew it was a Lambert and Potter production, that I knew there was more of this sound to be found particularly on the later tracks by the Four Tops.

My favourite tracks from the first time I heard them that magical evening in my attic bedroom are '**Who Gets Your Love**' and '**Breaking Up A Happy Home**'. I still play them back to back. They would have made a great single. These are the two tracks that hooked me. Made me realise that Dusty was a potent musical force and couldn't be defined by just her 60s singles. This was a different Dusty and I couldn't get enough of her! These tracks are full of drama. These are adult songs whereas the 60s power house drag my heart in the dirt songs are sometimes too dramatic and over-blown for me. These songs are about something more real. Those rumours like on 'I Don't Want To Hear It' but Dusty is a little less of the victim. She just wants to know who gets her lover's love. She's going to leave but it's such a shame. Then she tells us more on 'Happy Home'. True love has been eroded and turned into a soul destroying masquerade, it's chaotic and betrayal and duplicity play a large part in this break-up. If only they could sort things out but it's too late, Baby, it's too late. These two are on the road to a sad and damaging break-up. Those awful needles and pins that prove that the feeling isn't totally gone...

Easy Evil – This is such a master-class. The song was originally about drugs but Dusty sings it like it's about a lover. I'm a puppet for you, Baby. So groovy. Um..maybe Dusty was a betrayer too... well, we know she was...

Mama's Little Girl – Jolly. Too pop and without much seriousness. That school yard lilt grates with me. Dusty was a grown woman not a teen-ager. Later I listened again and thought, yes, this is Dusty breaking away from the UK including from her parents so she can be herself. She's just seen Venus rising. Such a great line. And I bet she did many times!

The Other Side Of Life: One of those Dusty songs that make me float off in relaxed happiness even though there is sadness in this song.

Comin' and Goin' : Ditto. Taking off a wrinkled dress without her lover to do it for her. What a waste! Complicated man? What a fool!

I Just Wanna Be There: So happy! But maybe the music drowns Dusty out a bit. But... I wanna be there too!

Who Could Be Loving You Other Than Me: One of my favourite Dusty songs ever. One of the rare Dusty songs that means something personal to me. A break-up of course. I can remember playing this over and over on a flight back from Senegal. 'Now I can give up material things.....but when it comes to giving up, the only love I've ever known...' This wasn't my only love but I can remember feeling all ripped out about it. At the end when Dusty ad libs I always thought she was saying 'Bitter, sweeter, softer than me...' It was Nancy that told me it was 'Better, Sweeter'. I still prefer 'Bitter, Sweeter' because this is a BREAK-UP song and I felt the ad lib was about the disappointment and mixed up angst of breaking up. And I love the electric sitar on this.

Tupelo Honey: I know Van Morrison's original. I prefer Dusty's version. Just like Honey, Baby, from the bees. Just like Honey. Just like 'Some Of Your Lovin'. This is a sensual marvel.

Of All The Things: Another favourite Dusty song. It's just gorgeously lovely. And there's some personal stuff in there for me too. It's about the past for me and hopefully about the future too.

Learn To Say Good-Bye : I remember skipping this song because this sounded generic and not a true Dusty song because it's from a TV

sound track. That was my prejudice cutting in. I like this song now but I still think it's one of the weaker songs on this album. It's like a bonus track that doesn't really belong to the album.

So, I've grown up and grown older with this album. When I first heard this not much had happened to me. Now I listen to this album and I'm in there and many times Dusty is speaking to me and soothing me and just having fun with me. This album means a tremendous lot to me. I love it with all my heart. It's a personal thing so I can't be too objective about it. But, as I said at the beginning, this album hit me as soon as I heard it. I was totally objective back then. I had no luggage. I didn't know anything about Dusty. This is a great Dusty album in my book. Always has been. Always will be. The 'Beautiful Soul' CD and 'Dusty In Memphis' are my ultimate Dusty treasures.

Thank you again, Taylor, for giving me one of your USA copies of this album (the gate-fold version I wanted). I sold my original record. I really, really wish I hadn't. I'll always keep your record. It's one of my Dusty jewels. And thank you for your review of the album. I guess we met this album very differently so we will have different takes. And that's fine. Thank you so much for this thread. At last!

And I've thought about this for a while...many months...it's time we looked at 'Dusty In Memphis'. I hope you don't mind if I start that one off after we've exhausted the lovely 'Cameo'.

Memphis
Ever since we met...

Edited by - memphisinlondon on 24/09/2009 20:32:58



MissDustyFanatic

Where am I going?



USA
2606 Posts

Posted - 24/09/2009 : 04:44:52

Yay! I'm glad you were the first to thoroughly comment on 'Cameo', Memphis. It's great to hear your take as an immediate fan of the album, and it does help me look at it differently than before. That's why I'm glad there are differing opinions on it 😊. And you're very welcome for the gatefold copy! It's always pleasing to know a gift is well-loved.

'Who Gets Your Love' actually WAS a single, in both the US and the UK, with 'Of All The Things' on the B-side. I've only got the Philips release of it though. Did you mean you wished 'Breakin' Up A Happy Home' had been the B-side? I think it actually would have worked very well as an A-side, as well. It's pleading, yet determined and demanding, yet tender. Such a beautiful song!

I have to agree with you about IJWBT. Sometimes, the music- as enthusiastic and uplifting as it is- does drown Miss Dusty out, just a touch. I was very pleased to read in the Dusty bible that IJWBT is "earmarked for future release" on a compilation with a longer, previously edited-out intro and a stronger mix. I can only imagine how I'll fall off my chair or run around the house several times when I hear it. It's my absolute favorite on the album.

I do think DIM is a good choice for our next album discussion, though I hope 'Cameo' takes a while and many more join in to discuss it! It's really underrated and quality all the way through.

One last thought/question though...what the h**l is 'Tupelo Honey' ABOUT? "You can take all the tea in China, put it in a big brown bag for me, sail right 'round the seven oceans, drop it straight into the deep blue sea" Those lyrics make NO SENSE to me, and if someone can explain them, I would be delighted to change my opinion of the song.

"...Promise not to ever try and change you...I love you for yourself.."



Carole R.

Where am I going?



Posted - 24/09/2009 : 13:51:11

For all the fans of Tupelo Honey.. 😊



2242 Posts

Its recently been posted on You tube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EEt8K5AkVmY>

I like Dusty's take on the song...Although I have no idea what its about, Dusty makes a very souful effort here, and as usual,she wins thru' 😊

Carole R xx



Cas19

Wasn't born to follow



8313 Posts

Posted - 24/09/2009 : 14:36:15

I'm a fan of the song Carole, so thanks for that, for one minute I thought it was going to be on video 😊

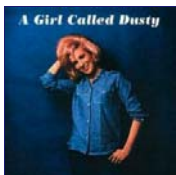
Casx

'Something in your eyes'



Cardiff Bluesgirl

I'll try anything



United Kingdom
1809 Posts

Posted - 24/09/2009 : 17:19:38

oh my oh my, the lovely "tupelo Honey" so smooth and inviting. 😊

"every day I find you're in my heart and on my mind"

liz.



MissDustyFanatic

Where am I going?



USA
2606 Posts

Posted - 24/09/2009 : 18:08:01

Ooh, thanks for the link, Carole! It's nice to see some of her more obscure songs pop up on YouTube.

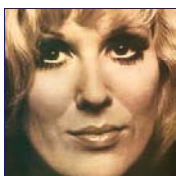
I do wonder though Cas, Liz, Carole...what do YOU three think of the album? Not everyone has to write novels like me 😊

"...Promise not to ever try and change you...I love you for yourself.."



memphisinlondon

Where am I going?



United Kingdom
3565 Posts

Posted - 24/09/2009 : 19:28:12

Tupelo Honey is about Van Morrison's wife at the time. 'Not for all the tea in China' is just an old saying. Tea is still a valuable commodity and back in the old days China produced the best and the most. So Van is saying you can take all the tea in China and throw it away for all I care. I just want to be with the woman I love because she's all I need.

Then he starts talking about freedom and that it will come for sure. And in Manhatten his number is going to come up. I'm not sure why these references are in there. Maybe he's free associating and maybe he's just full of hope now he's totally in love which is what the song is really about. He also wrote the lovely song 'Crazy Love' for his wife too.

Here's Dennis Lambert's version of his own lovely song:

'Of All The Things'

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uhsyp7WJ5ws>

'Mama's Little Girl' (Lambert/Potter) by a pretty good YouTuber dmaurice1964. She calls this a song of freedom and liberation: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjROqn3ahvI>

'Who Could Be Loving You Other Than Me' - Al Wilson (Dusty out interprets Al all the way but this is fine)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PIHx3N-s_4E

'Breaking Up A Happy Home' - Barbara Jean English
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XTE52a_fQ6k

And here's the superb Dusty with 'Easy Evil'
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LLDaGnphvOo>

Whenever I hear other versions of Dusty songs it's like where's the magic, where's the emotion, haven't you guys listened to the lyrics?! But Dennis and dmaurice1964 do great jobs here I think. I even like dmaurice1964's version a little more than Dusty's tonight 😊

Memphis
 Ever since we met...

Edited by - memphisinlondon on 24/09/2009 19:51:43



daydreamer

Moderator
 ★★★★★



United Kingdom
 5404 Posts

Posted - 24/09/2009 : 20:12:20



Cameo contains two of my long time favourite Dusty tracks, both would be in my top 10. I can't remember back to when I first heard the album and it was probably not played very often over the years until the release of Beautiful Soul. I don't have strong feelings about some of the songs, I do like Easy Evil, Who Gets Your Love and The Other Side of Life, but I love, love, love Learn to Say Goodbye and Of All The Things. LTSG, even with the lyric change, is for me a song about losing someone through death, as in the film. I found it extremely hard to listen to after Dusty died and after the death of a friend who also loved Dusty. I don't know why the song wasn't huge in the UK when it was released as a single, except for the fact that Dusty didn't promote it, because if it had have been heard more, I'm sure the words and poignancy of the song would have great meaning to so many people. I don't think the fact that it was from a movie, belittled it in any way, it's just such a beautiful song. Of All The Things just makes me gooey 😊 Dusty's soft and touching opening and the way the song builds to come back to the gossamer vocals at the end, it's just so lovely. And the words are pretty nice too.

Memphis, I wonder why you think Easy Evil was originally about drugs. I was given a quote by the writer Alan O'Day saying "I wrote the song loosely based on a hot relationship I was having with a rather experienced & creative young lady, who pretty much played me like a violin!" Did you read the drugs thing somewhere?

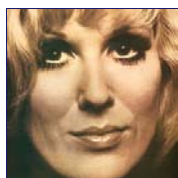
Carole x

"There's a part of you that's a part of me..."



memphisinlondon

Where am I going?
 ★★★



United Kingdom
 3565 Posts

Posted - 24/09/2009 : 20:45:56



Hello Carole 😊 Yes, I read somewhere that Easy Evil was about hard drugs but maybe that was just the drugged out article writer's interpretation! I'm glad to know of your own quote from the writer. It surely fits better and it fits Dusty's take which I hear just as the writer describes. I'll try to find my reference but goodness knows where it is now...

I like 'Learn To Say Good-bye' a lot more nowadays. It's much more poignant now. Now that I'm a total Dusty fan so many Dusty songs have taken on a lot more importance. It's interesting to me to compare what I thought then, when I didn't know anything about Dusty, and what I think now. 'The Other Side of The Life' means a lot more to me nowadays as well. Of course, now I'm getting older and hopefully wiser, I can relate more to what Dusty is saying in her songs. Dusty was only 34 (that age seems so young to me now but I guess I was pretty old at that age!) when she chose these songs. That's interesting to me too.

Memphis
Ever since we met...

Edited by - memphisinlondon on 24/09/2009 20:54:44



Clive
I'll try anything
★★



1455 Posts

memphisinlondon
Where am I going?
★★★

Posted - 24/09/2009 : 20:54:16

Memphis, if Cameo gets a CD re-issue, your main post above on the album should be the liner notes, unedited.



Posted - 24/09/2009 : 20:55:44

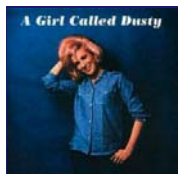
🙄 Thanks so much, Clive. 🙄

Memphis
Ever since we met...



United Kingdom
3565 Posts

Cardiff Bluesgirl
I'll try anything
★★



United Kingdom
1809 Posts

Posted - 24/09/2009 : 22:24:08

Taylor, I couldnt possibly do the analysis some of you do on here as I said when I started the AVFL. review/discussion, I just know what I like. anyway as far as Cameo is concerned I dont have it as a stand alone album I bought Beautiful Soul and so the songs are all mixed up in that and it isnt then the same as the album when you listen to it. however I do like T.Honey LTSG. WGYL. and OALT. I agree it should have had far more impact as it has some good songs on it and she was in fine voice. I agree with Carole though that as we all know she didnt ever seem to promote her work that well over so many years of her career. Obviously some of it was her responsibility but I think we all agree that she had so many managerial changes etc that she often just didnt get promoted properly. I regret that I dont have it on its own as I think its much better to get the feel and quality of an album when it is a stand alone version.

"every day I find you're in my heart and on my mind"

liz.



Graham
Little by little
★



United Kingdom
119 Posts

Posted - 24/09/2009 : 22:33:06

I think Dusty was impressed with the fact The Four Tops had signed with Dunhill and produced by Lambert and Potter.

In reality it was a case of Dusty turning up to do vocals on already prepared backing tracks in predetermined keys.

I do not think Dusty had much input into arrangements etc and to me some of the arrangements sound a little "manufactured" and of a format of the time.

However, Dusty puts in some excellent vocal performances although lacking the unique quality of DIM.

Thus there are some stand out tracks and overall this is still a very good album. Interestingly what would have been the follow up Longing / Elements could have been a great album if Dusty had finished it and redone some of the vocals The production is not "manufactured" and if Dusty had been 100% fit and well at the time who knows what the end result could have been.

So Cameo is a very good Dusty album but not the greatest in my opinion.



MissDustyFanatic

Where am I going?



USA
2606 Posts

Posted - 24/09/2009 : 23:00:03



quote:

Originally posted by Graham

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So Cameo is a very good Dusty album but not the greatest in my opinion.

Graham that is so interesting to know, I'd never understood that the songs had already been pre-arranged and backing vocals done. I think that had to have been very off-putting to Miss Dusty, who was used to being able to tweak a song until she got it how she liked it. I know Lambert and Potter have been quoted as saying that the reference vocals she'd do were much looser and natural, and that she'd then go in and redo and redo them until the end result sounded like it had been thought about too much.

I do have to agree with you about some of the arrangements sounding a bit too manufactured. That being said, her vocals more than make up for that.

And Liz!! I'm **so glad** you commented on it. As I said, not everything has to be a novel or super in-depth. It's nice to get such a wide variety of responses and ideas and feelings about an album. Often it's the shorter responses that are gems as well. 😊 As for not having the Cameo album proper, it IS just the first 11 tracks of Beautiful Soul, in the same order as the album. Just turn it off after LTSG 🎧 Unless you're in the mood for the heartbreak and devastation of 'Longing'. 🌧️

And Memphis, thanks for explaining 'Tupelo Honey' to me. I have never been able to figure it out. Always thought it was okay, but now that I know what it's about, it makes a lot more sense.

"...Promise not to ever try and change you...I love you for yourself.."

Edited by - MissDustyFanatic on 24/09/2009 23:08:58



Clive

I'll try anything



1455 Posts

Posted - 25/09/2009 : 13:20:28



Taylor, I am so pleased you started another of your album discussion threads, I have been mulling this one over and reading all the contributions with interest.

Like Liz, I first heard *Cameo* in its entirety when the *Beautiful Soul* CD was released. I played it all the way through every evening when I came home from work for a week after I bought it. This was something I hadn't done with an album for years.

I feel that if Dusty had reason to be unhappy with Philips in the US in

the sixties, I think she did with Philips UK later.

I don't feel they ever really liked or understood her American work. I think they messed up with DIM and BNM waiting months to release them and losing their impact. Not even bothering to release many of her 1970/71 US singles in the UK.

I think by the seventies Philips UK executives were very much stuck in the sixties. (was anyone having UK hits on Philips in 1973?)

I can just imagine the listening session for *Cameo* and executives impatiently skipping from track to track looking for a typical Dusty ballad, I can imagine the sighs of relief when they got it with the last track *Learn to Say Goodbye*

Nothing against the track, I love it, it's just I think her UK record label were still waiting for another YDHTSYLM. (the recent singles choices were traditional Dusty ballads (How Can I Be Sure, Yesterday When I Was Young)

I just don't think they were interested in promoting a more contemporary Dusty



ErgoFergo
I'll try anything
★★

Posted - 25/09/2009 : 18:13:32



United Kingdom
1047 Posts

Here's my tuppenny ha'penny. (I wrote this without reading others' responses so that I wouldn't be influenced, so apologies if it looks like I've ignored the discussion!)

I was a *Cameo* virgin when I first listened to the album. I'd even abstained from the disc 3 of the *Simply Dusty* set so that I could hear those *Cameo* tracks unadulterated and together, just as they'd been intended.

The whole album oozes quality to me; all of the tracks are rich and sensuous. It's of its time, but I don't feel that it's dated. I love the combination of the synths and strings. I must have bought *Cameo* at a rainy time of year because whenever it's a wet and grey, it's always my first listening choice (and when I played it on Thursday in the car on the way home, right on cue it started tossing it down!).

Who Gets Your Love is one of my favourites and a great starter track. I love the dramatic opening bars leading Dusty into her introductory lines.

Stop Breaking up a Happy Home: I agree with Taylor - this has always seemed to be a bit of a contradictory song - an upbeat hopeful tune coupled with an impassioned plea not to leave!

Easy Evil: Dusty at her sensuous and hypnotic best. She slinks through the song like a panther through the garden of Eden, captivated by the snake - such a sensuous sin...

OK, it's hard to imagine a 33-year-old Dusty taking the ribbons from her hair and letting it all hang down, but **Mama's Little Girl** is quite possibly my favourite track on the album. Forget rainy days - this is a wind-your-windows-down, crank-the-volume-up and drive-off-to-the-beach belter for any hot summer afternoon!

At the end of the track, my finger always hovers over the repeat button but then the ethereal opening strings of **The Other Side of Life** emerge and there's no going back. I love this airy and delicate song and it's the perfect come-down track to take you away from MLG and into the rest of the album.

Comin' and Goin': an easy laidback toon. Love the Yooooo-ooooos at the end.

I Just Wanna Be There: a stonking Ashford and Simpson number that Dusty delivers with energy and passion, like the main source of power making the wheels turn, and the wood in the furnace making the fire burn!

Who Could Be Loving You Other than Me: The lines in the first verse - "And I'll be left with nothing but the thought of you, oh so clearly, I can see that day coming..." - just make me melt. (I wish we were all in the same room so I could stick the CD on and say "This bit!" I know you'll know what I mean though.) Of course, it's all in the delivery with our Dust.

Of All the Things : I love the lyrics and the sentiment of this song (oh and the oboe!). I briefly considered it as the first dance at our wedding (I'd have never have got it passed Mo though - we had to choose something that we *both* knew and loved. Sheesh).

Tupelo Honey: not one of my favourite Dusty tracks, although I'm not averse to the slightly abstract lyrics: you can take all the tea in China and you can shove it - my guy is as sweet as tupelo honey!

Learn to Say Goodbye: I'm always slightly bemused by the fact that this is credited as the title track of the ABC movie of the week Say Goodbye, Maggie Cole. Has anyone actually seen this movie? Is a made-for-TV number? I do enjoy the song though. 😊

Vicky
x

Edited by - ErgoFergo on 28/09/2009 09:25:22



ErgoFergo

I'll try anything



Posted - 25/09/2009 : 18:33:06

I've caught up now. This is an interesting thread, guys. Now I'm off to Amazon to look for some Four Tops stuff...

Vicky
x



United Kingdom
1047 Posts

MissDustyFanatic

Where am I going?



Posted - 25/09/2009 : 20:06:58

Vicky, I think 'Say Goodbye, Maggie Cole' was an ABC Movie of the Week...in the US. We also have an ABC (American Broadcasting Company, though I think it's officially just ABC now). As it came out 4 years before I was born, I've never seen it. 🙄

"...Promise not to ever try and change you...I love you for yourself.."



USA
2606 Posts

dancer8595

Little by little



Posted - 25/09/2009 : 20:27:12

I've just had the most challenging, exciting, exhausting and fascinating week I've ever had in my life (I've been in my pyjamas since 5 o'clock, and it's Friday night), but when Memphis (I'm going to have to stop calling you that at some point. It seems silly now) told me that Taylor had started a Cameo thread I knew I just had to be here. I shouldn't say this but I seem to be able to pick up the local pub's wifi at the moment, so I will be able to check in now and then until I get properly reconnected!

I've really enjoyed reading everything that you've all written so far. Memphis, even though you and I have talked so much, you still have the capacity to amaze me with stories from your musical history that tell me something I haven't heard before; everything that you write about Dusty is informed by years of very sophisticated and critical engagement with music, and an experience of music that is deep and rich and textured. There can't be anything else that she knows, I think, and yet the insights and revelations keep coming! Anyway. I shall rein in my superlatives now and write something about Cameo, which is what I came here to do.



United Kingdom
690 Posts

It's interesting that at some point – and exactly where that point comes is open to debate, but for me it starts somewhere around *Where Am I Going* – Dusty's albums start to both reflect and reveal her emotional state at the time, or at least to become associated with particular things that were going on in her personal life when they were recorded. There's a certain edge of anxiety, of things not going quite as they should while still being just about ok, to both *Where Am I Going* and *Dusty*...Definitely; *Dusty In Memphis* is, of course, a revelation in terms of her vulnerability and fragility; *From Dusty With Love* and *See All Her Faces* might be great albums, but they are also the sound of somebody who is lost, without direction and trying to re-establish a musical identity; by the time we get to *Cameo* there can be no argument that we are listening to a woman who is coming undone, and trying desperately to maintain some measure of control in the face of an approaching crisis. Although for me there is no Dusty album more moving than *Longing*, it could be argued that *Cameo* is somehow more emotionally unsettling because it so poignantly signals the collapse that eventually happens with such devastating effect on the later album. You don't have to know that the recording sessions were 'punctuated by fits of crying' (© Memphis); you can see and hear the tears, even on the soaring, uplifting *I Just Wanna Be There* and in the way she looks at us with those shameless bedroom eyes on *Easy Evil* (I know it's supposed to be about drugs, but come on, if a record can peel its underwear off very slowly, this one does).

Who Gets Your Love has emerged as my favourite track in recent weeks. It has light and shadows and places where she's revealing herself and places where she's hiding in secret corners. She's suspicious and anxious without ever giving in to the high drama – melodrama, even – of her 60s recordings. The record has a cinematic quality somehow; it's very visual, suggesting creeping and hiding, waiting and watching, being on the cusp of a discovery you don't want to make; it's also sensual and alluring in a dark, velvety, blue-black kind of way.

I am about to run out of steam so I shall terminate this post forthwith. My life has utterly changed in every respect this week and I don't really feel like myself if I don't post an essay here for a while. So normality is restored. Thank you and good night.

Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."



trek007
I'll try anything
★★



United Kingdom
1100 Posts

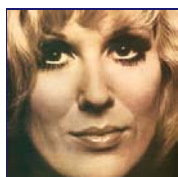
Posted - 25/09/2009 : 22:15:37

To me her album do not reflect what was going on in her personal life. The albums just contain wonderful singing by a talented woman called Dusty. 😊

Trek.
often called Carole.



memphisinlondon
Where am I going?
★★★



United Kingdom
3565 Posts

Posted - 26/09/2009 : 01:16:19

Whereas I hear Dusty's albums as the story of her life - not totally biographical but certainly in term of her anxieties, and the emotional roller-coaster her life became for a range of reasons.

Cameo and *Beautiful Soul/Longing/Elements* are two important albums in the cycle of Dusty's life and I can hear a lot in them with the benefit of a lot of Dusty knowledge and lots of hind-sight. As Rosie noted in her fab post I've already told a little of what I know about the *Cameo* sessions. Dusty was in a poor, emotional state and was probably becoming dependant on drugs/alcohol by this time (perhaps for good reasons). The album is full of patched in vocals because she couldn't

get through the sessions very well. We know Dusty liked to record very carefully almost word by word - but these sessions were also hampered by her emotional state. It's credit to the producers that I don't notice this patch work at all. Dusty would go on to dis-credit the producers but it must have been a difficult project for both Dusty and the producers.

On some tracks the music almost drowns Dusty out and Dusty sounds strained while on others Dusty is at her perfect best. It makes me wonder if these differences are down to the circumstances of the recording and Dusty's state in different sessions (and why were those backing tracks pre-recorded without Dusty at the controls too?). On Beautiful Soul we can hear the same differences a lot more especially because we have some tracks that Dusty would never have released even though here, we know, that BS was a proper collaboration as far as it could be. We now know somethings were going wrong for Dusty at the times both albums were made. I can hear anguish, strain and stress and then I can hear the glory of Dusty's perfect voice just as it always was - on both albums but more on BS.

We've got some great posts here. I found Clive's very interesting. It's the years between Memphis/DD and Longing that I'd like to know much more about in terms of Dusty's business dealings and relationships with the record companies. The state of these must have had a big impact on Dusty. My Cameo album was brand new and shrink wrapped. Remastered and sold in a supermarket. I bought See All Her Faces the same way in the same supermarket at the same time (maybe a day or so in between). I almost think these albums were held back somehow and put into storage - maybe by Philips or maybe by the record stores. I'd like to know a bit more about how Philips dealt with these records at the time of release and how long it took to delete them.

It's about time Rosie came back with one of her delightful, richly written and astute posts. 😊 Of course I agree with her. I just couldn't say it so articulately.

Memphis
Ever since we met...

PS The closest I can get to tracking down the Easy Evil = hard drugs reference is, so far, an Amazon customer review! 😊

Edited by - memphisinlondon on 26/09/2009 02:51:18



MissDustyFanatic

Where am I going?



USA
2606 Posts

Posted - 26/09/2009 : 06:23:55



quote:

Originally posted by trek007

To me her album do not reflect what was going on in her personal life. The albums just contain wonderful singing by a talented woman called Dusty 😊

Trek.
often called Carole.

I love that you pointed that out, Trek. We can (and often do) analyze albums quite in depth, but at the end of the day and the end of a track or album, we've heard a great performance, regardless of how it came to be. That's one thing I absolutely love about Miss Dusty's music is that it can be enjoyed on so many different levels. Thanks for posting that. 😊

"...Promise not to ever try and change you...I love you for yourself.."



MissDustyFanatic

Where am I going?



Posted - 26/09/2009 : 06:47:59



quote:



USA
2606 Posts

Originally posted by memphisinlondon

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Memphis
Ever since we met...

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As far as I understand, Memphis, the sessions for 'See All Her Faces' began in 1970, shortly after 'A Brand New Me'/'From Dusty...With Love' was released. They continued off and on through 1971 (and the recording of 'Faithful') and perhaps early into 1972, though I don't have the bible handy to check. Philips is directly responsible for SAHF being something of a hodgepodge of tracks. They chose only the songs recorded in her 1970 attempt at a UK-market album, along with a 1969 B-side, a 1971 US A-Side, etc. This is how 'What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life?' and 'Wasn't Born to Follow' ended up unreleased for the next 24 years. Some record executive thought they could put together a better album than Miss Dusty. What a load of (insert favorite epithet here)!!

Since Miss Dusty chose to sign with ABC/Dunhill, I can only assume that she though she'd have a little more creative control. Like Rosie pointed out, I can hear a sense of anxiety in many of the songs, which is why I didn't love 'Cameo' straightaway save for 'I Just Wanna be There', which still tickles me every time I hear it. She must have gotten through the 'Cameo' sessions and then felt too stressed to have done more than minimum publicity for it. I know she sang on a few US chat shows, but don't know anything at all about any UK publicity for it.

I think Philips released 'Cameo' intact because it was a relatively easy proposition- ABC/Dunhill had spent the money to produce it, and her contract with Philips must have allowed them to release any American output under their own label. If 'Longing' had been finished, I imagine the same thing would have occurred. I know when Miss Dusty left A/D

in 1975 after her contract with them was up, she took some reels of tape with her, as well as the rights to and the tapes of the 'Longing' album, but some of those tapes were destroyed. It's been speculated that they contained tracks she'd recorded during the 'Cameo' sessions but that weren't used for the album, as the songs ('When the Boys Come Out to Play', 'Ben', 'It's All Been Said Before' and 'I Can See Clearly Now') were known to have been recorded, per the album's producers. What I'm not clear on is *who* destroyed them, Miss Dusty or ABC/Dunhill. My guess is the record company, because the 'Longing' tapes survived, and we know they weren't finished.

I'll stop rambling for now (it's quite late), but there's some nuggets to chew on. 🍷

"...Promise not to ever try and change you...I love you for yourself.."



Clive
I'll try anything
★★



1455 Posts

Posted - 26/09/2009 : 10:26:01 🗨️

Taylor you mentioned in your opening post that you liked the cover art for Cameo which is interesting as I think a lot of Dusty fans don't like it. Personally I am a bit disappointed with it but I only have it on CD so perhaps it looks better on an LP sleeve.

I just think that Dusty was so photographable I like an photographic image on her album covers. (- If I had designed it my idea would have been to photograph Dusty waiting on a bench in an American bus station, b/w cover and colour gatefold inside!-)

The designer of the actual album cover Ruby Mazur (who I initially assumed was a woman but is a man) also did a lot of other album artwork.

<http://www.rubymazurgallery.com/>

He is looking for scans so if anyone has a scanned sleeve of Cameo he could put it on his site, he only has a small image of it on the site at the moment.

Just wondering about the album title Cameo and why that was chosen? Perhaps Dusty felt that with Lambert & Potter making all the decisions she only had a cameo role on her own album!

Edited by - Clive on 26/09/2009 10:33:00



ErgoFergo
I'll try anything
★★



United Kingdom
1047 Posts

Posted - 26/09/2009 : 12:01:20 🗨️

It's not one of my favourite album covers. Aside from the fact that it's not a photograph, I find the colours a bit insipid. They don't reflect the richness of the music.

I found a shrink-wrapped copy of Cameo in a record shop while I was on holiday. It was slightly over my budget and I decided not to buy it in favour of Brand New Me and ECUD. I really hope I don't regret that decision.

I'd always assumed that perhaps the title was lead by the illustration - although your explanation certainly rings true, Clive!

Vicky
x



memphisinlondon
Where am I going?
★★★



Posted - 26/09/2009 : 13:05:25 🗨️

Hi Taylor

That's not a ramble! That's important information about the making of SAHF and how Philips put the compilation together (it's not a true album). I know this. I'm more interested in the business side.



United Kingdom
3565 Posts

From Wika:

In 1972, Philips along with German Electronics giant Siemens merged their record operations with Deutsche Grammophon to become PolyGram. That same year PolyGram brought Mercury from N.A.P.C.. corporate name was changed to Phonogram, Inc. named after its UK sister label, operated under the Mercury label name.

So, right on time as usual maybe Dusty's output got chewed up in record industry changes just like White Heat would later. She slid down the priority list. I'd like to know how many copies of SAHF and Cameo were printed and distributed. Dusty couldn't be around to promote these albums so I would guess the record company made little effort in any case.

Dusty's record sleeves also tell us things too. She is absent from Cameo, Longing and SAHF. We have art work and approximations of Dusty instead. On IBA she's doing everything by the book and the album is full of images of Dusty. Not as much attention is paid to LWYL and then she starts to disappear again at least on her album covers. Singles fared better.

Cameo is a bit of an odd title. Like 'Elements' it could have a few meanings. I'll go for:

To portray (Dusty) in sharp, delicate relief, as in a literary composition.

I say this because some of the songs were written for Dusty and some of the other songs are complementary. I've just gone back to Paul Howes book after a long time away. Three of the written for Dusty tracks are:

Who Gets Your Love
Breaking Up A Happy Home
Comin' And Goin'

And Vicky will be glad to know that 'Mama's Little Girl' (I have to assume this was also written for Dusty too because it fits her so well) was Dusty's favourite from the album.

For those who have the Paul Howes book page 70 (Comin' and Goin') is interesting. Lambert and Potter spent about a month with Dusty just talking to her and preparing. Paul notes that it therefore seems bizarre that Dusty went on to criticize them. She said they didn't bother to find out what key she sang in. [I have learned to take some things Dusty said with a pinch of salt]. The songs that were written for Dusty were therefore tailored for her and the subject matter would've been relative to her. I can imagine L&B starting out by asking 'Well, Dusty, tell us about the important things that have happened to you recently, and how do you feel about settling in California and what's on your mind right now...?'

The songs they wrote for her are about a love breakdown and about being free at last. I was thinking about 'Who Gets Your Love'. It's full of suspicion; enough of it to drive anybody half mad. I can't resist another Dusty/Elvis mention. Here are the lyrics to 'Suspicious Minds' as a response to 'Who Gets Your Love'. This would make a good double A side single!

First Dusty:

In your sleep you've been talkin'
Callin' every other name but mine
And that's not a very encouraging sign
In my arms, you've been restless
Thinkin' 'bout somebody else while holding me
Well, if you want me to set you free
You don't have to ask for my permission
I don't wanna live in a broken home
I can do without an explanation
You don't have to spend tonight alone

Oh, tell me

Who gets your love when I'm gone?
Will she kiss you with her eyes
Choose your ties, keep your pillow warm?
Baby, baby, who gets your love when I'm gone?
When I move into the house
Down the street where I started from?
Oh, who gets your love?

Oh, people talk, I hear rumours
My imagination, it runs away with me
Gonna lose you eventually
So I'll go, I'll make it easy
Give you back the need that I don't satisfy
Maybe she will better than I

You gotta tell me
Who gets your love when I'm gone?
Will she let you stay in bed
Rub your head, take the pain away?
Baby, baby, who gets your love when I leave?
When I've said my last goodbye
You'll know why I just couldn't stay
I just couldn't stay

Tell me who gets your love when I'm gone?
Will she love you, love you, love you
And will she keep your pillow so warm
Tell me who, when I go, when I leave?
When I'm walking down the street
And I ain't coming back
'Cause you treated me so badly
And you lost what you had baby
Tell me who get's your love...?

Now, Elvis:

We're caught in a trap
I can't walk out
Because I love you too much baby

Why can't you see
What you're doing to me
When you dont believe a word I say?

We can't go on together
With suspicious minds
And we cant build our dreams
On suspicious minds

So, if an old friend I know
Drops by to say hello
Would I still see suspicion in your eyes?

Here we go again
Asking where I've been
You cant see these tears are real
I'm crying

We can't go on together
With suspicious minds
And we can't build our dreams
On suspicious minds

Oh let our love survive
Dry the tears from your eyes
Let's don't let a good thing die

When honey, you know
I'd never lie to you

But you know, when Elvis says he'd never lie, I just don't believe him!

Memphis
Ever since we met...

Edited by - memphisinlondon on 26/09/2009 13:59:31

**daydreamer**

Moderator

United Kingdom
5404 Posts

Posted - 26/09/2009 : 16:16:07

For some reason I'm unable to search on YouTube today (anyone else having a problem?), but you can access the clips that feature LTSG, with the slightly different words, on the first video below.

<http://new.music.yahoo.com/maggie-cole/>

Carole x

"There's a part of you that's a part of me..."

**memphisinlondon**

Where am I going?

United Kingdom
3565 Posts

Posted - 26/09/2009 : 20:20:21

Yes, Carole, the YouTube search function isn't working.

One of my favourites by the Four Tops - produced and written by Lambert and Potter....

I Just Can't Get you Out Of My Mind
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9RboB7EHdM>

Memphis
Ever since we met...

**dancer8595**

Little by little

United Kingdom
690 Posts

Posted - 26/09/2009 : 20:49:03

Memphis - do you have comprehensive notes on your record-buying habits since sometime during the 70s?! It's amazing how you can remember so clearly the location and circumstances of every record purchase you've made. Thank you for your kind comments. 😊 I loved, loved, loved your Dusty/Elvis comparison: classic Memphis, I thought - you could show me a hundred thousand music-related online forum posts and I'd be able to identify that one as yours. 😊 One of the many reasons I love Michael Jackson's *Billie Jean* is because I detect something similar in it: suspicion, paranoia, anxiety - that sense of being on edge and unsettled in that insistent, nagging, keeping-you-awake-at-3am, getting-under-your-skin kind of way. Lovely to see some epic writings from Vicky also, and the lovely Taylor back to his old self - excellent.

I think we all experience Dusty's music in different ways; that's evidence of how much depth and substance there is to her singing and to her body of work as a whole. I agree with you wholeheartedly Taylor that all responses are equally valid and that it's fascinating to have so many different responses. Trek - I hear wonderful singing too - of course I do. Heaven knows I've written enough about how enraptured I am by her singing. I just can't separate her songs and her singing from her as a person - her personality, the events in her life, the various events that happened at the time that each of these her albums was being recorded and produced. Dusty's singing is so compelling and so moving and has such a devastating impact precisely because - and this is just my opinion - it is so emotional. To me that suggests that when she was singing she was being affected by what she was experiencing at the time, or recalling experiences that she had had in the past, and putting all of that emotion into what she was doing in the booth with the headphones on.

This is where, extremely controversially, I disagree with Simon Bell a little bit. Of course I think a lot of Simon and hold him in high esteem, and I completely respect the fact that he knows more about Dusty as a person than almost anyone else, but while I agree with very nearly everything he says about her strengths as a singer, there's one thing he keeps saying that puzzles me a little. What I mean is this: he insists - and he says this very plainly on the new DVD - that Dusty is just a great actress, and that she is able to make you believe anything.

I don't quite go along with this. I don't wholly buy into the idea that she is just pretending and acting. There may have been an element of great acting ability in her vocal work, but to me, a lot of that emotion is completely genuine. She was a very emotional person, and when she sang *I Don't Want To Hear It Anymore* or *Beautiful Soul* or *I've Been Wrong Before* she experienced those feelings for real. Nothing will dissuade me from the opinion that she got very emotional when she sang songs like this; she drew on painful memories, she thought of relationships she had, she got very affected by things and she *really did get upset*. That is my response to Dusty's music. I can't give any credence to the idea that you can listen to something like *Longing* and not plainly hear her wretchedness. I'm sorry but there is no acting on this album. It's real. And while I absolutely agree that sometimes people write very interesting things in short posts, I just don't write short posts, at least not in threads like this. 😊

Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."



memphisinlondon

Where am I going?



Posted - 26/09/2009 : 21:04:38



United Kingdom
3565 Posts

Aaah Rosie! When I saw your post I thought what a treat...before I'd even read it!

I agree. I do think that Dusty was a great actress but in terms of a Method actress. She digs deep down into her 'emotional memory' - she's straight out of Stanivlasky and Lee Strasberg and the Actors Studio! And she chose songs that meant something to her; that even made her cry. Sometimes I call her songs 'performances' because she really could sing the phone book and make it mean something. But her greatest performances have an astonishing reality to them that must come from deep down in her soul. And that's why she's a true soul singer and one of the truest soul to soul singers ever.

It really annoys me that people that were close to her continue to call her a mimic or an actress without qualifying what they say with any depth. It actually makes me think they knew her or knew parts of her but they didn't understand her in any profound way. Or they are so subjective they can't offer any decent analysis of her greatness. But sound bites aren't always accurate. Her friends have offered great tributes to her artistry too.

Simon is on record saying Dusty's records can make him stop in his tracks. I think he may be speaking from his own experience of being a singer - what it takes to make a song live and therefore how amazing Dusty was (and of course some songs have a profound, personal poignancy for him) . I also think Dusty in the studio and Dusty on stage are two very different personas. In the studio, Dusty bares her soul almost to a fault - which is what makes her so very special. On stage, more often than not, she performs.

Well, next time we meet I'll bore you to tears about my record purchases! 😊 I just think it's great that I can remember this Dusty purchase from down The Cut in Waterloo. And I really do remember hearing the album for the first time and thinking 'WoW! It was the start of a very gentle drawn out love affair that made me go and see Dusty in concert (thank the gods) and it eventually brought me here...

Memphis
Ever since we met...

Edited by - memphisinlondon on 26/09/2009 21:23:01



Chrispld
I'll try anything
★★

Posted - 26/09/2009 : 21:05:24



Thanks to all of you for those fascinating insights to Cameo.



Chris



United Kingdom
1075 Posts

MissDustyFanatic

Where am I going?



Posted - 26/09/2009 : 22:05:23



USA
2606 Posts

Clive I do like the 'Cameo' cover quite a bit. Yes, it's not an actual photograph of Miss Dusty, but I think it captures her knowing smile all very well. And I like the colors, because they're instantly recognizable and distinctive, not to mention highly contrasting.

Speaking of album covers, Memphis, as I understand it, the 'Longing' cover was actually created from a photograph of Miss Dusty which is in the Dusty bible somewhere. The final cover art, anyway. The original cover was supposed to have been an actual photograph of Miss Dusty on a chaise lounge, when the album was still with the working title of 'Elements'. Carole G told me that a while back on the 'Longing' thread.

And lastly I'll agree with both you and Memphis, Rosie, but also with Simon. I think Miss Dusty had to have put a lot of her own personal experiences into her songs. Great singers can draw emotion from their own lives and put it into their songs, even if they've never experienced the feelings specific to the song themselves. For instance, I can't imagine (though it could quite possibly have been) that Miss Dusty was ever with a man who then left her and married someone else, ala 'In The Winter'. I don't know any factual information from her life that would have supported that. So how can she sing about the devastation of seeing her old love with his new wife and how lonely she is when she never experienced it? By acting it. It's not hard to imagine that she could have felt to herself "How would I feel if this happened to me?" I feel things quite deeply, as I know Miss Dusty did, and although I've never been married, I can actually almost feel the pain a situation like that would cause if I think about it enough. I imagine she HAD to have been using a similar technique to have recorded ITW. And what I think supports my theory is the anecdote about Miss Dusty throwing a stray line about cats in "I'll live alone forever, not together, now...with cats". That can only be heard on the master tapes, though, as Paul Howes notes. She threw it in as a laugh. How, in the middle of a song as lyrically devastating as ITW could she throw in something lighthearted, if she was wrapped up in the emotion of the song? Because she was acting. Granted, I'm sure she was truly feeling some of that emotion, otherwise the recording wouldn't be as affecting.

I find it interesting that it's hard to discuss 'Cameo' without turning to discussing 'Longing'. I don't think it's because they were labelmates, but rather because in 'Cameo' we can hear the beginnings of her personal decline; whether it's because we're reading more of her personal struggles that we're aware of into her performances than SHE did or her performances show it is up to debate. 'Longing', and the fact that it was unfinished, rather serves to highlight the personal decline.

But at the end of the day, I think Liz and Trek say it best. We're listening to something we like, by our favorite singer, and it makes us happy. Couldn't put it better myself. 😊

"...Promise not to ever try and change you...I love you for yourself.."

Edited by - MissDustyFanatic on 26/09/2009 22:07:45



dancer8595

Little by little



Posted - 26/09/2009 : 22:13:22



Memphis - I'm extremely looking forward to hearing the entire unedited and unabridged history of your record-purchasing. I shall take notes. I shall possibly publish them, so that if you ever forget a little fact or two (though I concede this is highly unlikely), you will have an authoritative reference work to consult, and in your posts such as the ones here you can simply write, 'In reference to this topic, I refer you



United Kingdom
690 Posts

all to Chapter 836, sub-heading 42, paragraph vii of *Memphis - My Record Purchases in Their Complete Autobiographical, Historical, Social, Political and Environmental Contexts, 1978 - present.*' Actually, don't do this, because I very often think your posts are treats before I've even read them as well and I must therefore insist that you continue to write everything out in full. 😊

I'm glad you agree that the way those close to Dusty constantly talk about her as an actress and a mimic is a bit hard to fathom. She was both of these things, but in the sense that she could reproduce regional and international accents perfectly, and in her ability to be comfortable singing folk and soul and everything else in between. In terms of her emotional reading of songs, she MEANT IT. This. Was. Not. Acting. I would actually go as far as to say that it does her great disservice to suggest that her finest and most moving performances were acting. It's almost an insult to such a sophisticated, sensitive performer, as though she was doing something mechanical and formulaic, when it's abundantly clear that she was about as far away from mechanical and formulaic as it's possible to get. I'm beginning to feel very strongly about this.

Taylor - I've just read your post so have come back to edit. There is potentially a wider debate to be had here about the very nature of acting and what 'acting' actually means. I think the term can sometimes be misunderstood, i.e. that to 'act' does not necessarily mean to identify what feelings, emotions and personality traits are to be represented and then find the best way of artificially reproducing them through drawing on your pretending skills. I don't think for a second that this is what great actors and actresses do. They are also deeply emotionally intelligent people, like Dusty, and in their efforts to produce a convincing performance they *become* a character and thereby experience all those emotions and feelings either for real, or as though they were real.

I also don't think you have to take a literal interpretation of In The Winter as a starting point for her devastating and gut-wrenching performance. She may not have experienced the exact situation of the lyrics - her man leaving her alone to marry another woman - but she had probably experienced something very similar. The feelings she expresses quite genuinely in this song - loss, heartbreak, unrequited love, jealousy - are just about the most intense and hard to overcome that humans can experience. They're universal. And, regarding your reference to the 'with cats' line, I don't think that agony and humour are mutually exclusive. To me - and again, this is just what I think - her performance on this song is not acting.

I found your post fascinating and thought-provoking as you can see. I loved it. I'm just disagreeing slightly. 😊

Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."

Edited by - dancer8595 on 26/09/2009 22:26:34



MissDustyFanatic

Where am I going?



Posted - 26/09/2009 : 22:25:29



USA
2606 Posts

Rosie...really. You're not being very clear. Tell us how you really and truly, feel. 😊 I can understand how you feel, and do feel mostly that way by myself. But I also look at the acting world, as well. You can't tell me that most of the people who've won major acting awards for some of the finest acting performances have ever experienced what they were portraying on screen. Has Helen Mirren (LOVE. HER.) ever been the Queen of England? No, but she was fantastic in the role, and deserved her Oscar. While I'm not for a minute suggesting that Miss Dusty wasn't always putting her all into a moving performance (because she was), what I'm getting at is that she possibly hadn't experienced those specific situations she was portraying in her songs. She could, and always did, give her songs an emotional core that makes us believe and brings us to tears often times, but had she ever married, divorced, and seen her husband remarry? Nothing I've ever

seen says that. So while I think she brought a devastating emotional reading to ITW, I think she was probably using her own feelings of alienation and loneliness to bring the emotional punch of the song. She was using her own experiences and emotions to interpret (or act out) the *feeling* of the song, if not the actual lyrics. That to me is the mark of a fantastically talented singer. One who can take a song with lyrics that don't necessarily apply it to them and use their own emotional and artistic intelligence to turn something into magic. While I don't think Miss Dusty ever approached a song thinking "I'm going to sing it like this, and it'll have THIS effect"...she didn't think that much about the songs. She just had an innate gift for transforming words into magic.

I hope that makes SOME sense, because it's making my head hurt just re-reading it. 🤔

"...Promise not to ever try and change you...I love you for yourself.."

Edited by - MissDustyFanatic on 26/09/2009 22:28:11



dancer8595

Little by little



Posted - 26/09/2009 : 22:32:24



Taylor

We're posting on top of each other (erm, as it were 😊). You'll have to go back and read my edit. This is a fascinating debate we're in now though.

I think there is a big difference between a singer delivering an emotional sucker punch (three minutes available to make your impact: no visuals, just sound) and an actress such as Mirren playing Her Maj. They're completely different things. If you are inside a song - if you are inhabiting it completely, as Dusty did - it's surely a much more intense and intoxicating experience.

Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."



MissDustyFanatic

Where am I going?



Posted - 26/09/2009 : 22:35:00



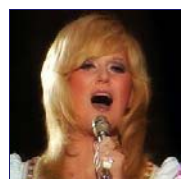
quote:

Originally posted by dancer8595

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I found your post fascinating and thought-provoking as you can see. I loved it. I'm just disagreeing slightly. 😊

Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."

No, I don't think her end performance IS acting. But her own emotions and experiences had to be a starting point, which I think is how it becomes so real and heartbreaking to hear. By the end of the song, she HAD lived those emotions. It's one of the things that makes Miss Dusty a genius is that she COULD get into a song as emotionally charged as ITW, though she'd never experienced the ACTUAL situation.

"...Promise not to ever try and change you...I love you for yourself.."



MissDustyFanatic

Where am I going?



USA
2606 Posts

Posted - 26/09/2009 : 22:36:16

quote:

Originally posted by dancer8595

Taylor

We're posting on top of each other (erm, as it were 😊).

Don't tell your boyfriend. 🙄🙄🙄

"...Promise not to ever try and change you...I love you for yourself.."



memphisinlondon

Where am I going?



United Kingdom
3565 Posts

Posted - 26/09/2009 : 22:44:55

*but had she ever married, divorced, and seen her husband remarry?
Nothing I've ever seen says that.*

Um.. what are you talking about, Taylor. Are you saying you take Dusty's lyrics totally literally..like she's talking about imaginary men all the time? Like she didn't have full blown romantic relationships that broke her heart sometimes? And where does the 'remarry' thing come in?

I think you've got to interpret from Dusty's perspective and who she was loving. Yes, she did go through all those things..Listen to 'Who Gets Your Love' again and re-interpret. 'Will she love you...'

You have have just blown me away!

Memphis
Ever since we met...



MissDustyFanatic

Where am I going?



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Posted - 26/09/2009 : 22:56:34

I'm talking about one specific song, Memphis. Of all the songs she ever saaaaaaang... sorry... 'Cameo' moment there.. NO I don't take them all



USA
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literally. But I've noticed that later on in her career, her songs of love, loss and heartbreak had lyrics that were very specific. Janis Ian is very talented at writing a song with VERY particular lyrics. Miss Dusty didn't experience that situation herself, but what I'm saying is that her own feelings of love and abandonment and devastation certainly colored her interpretations of those songs. Earlier in her career, songs like 'I Only Want to Be With You' were much more universally applicable. 'Cameo' seems to have been the start of albums with more deeply personal lyrics(to Miss Dusty).

"...Promise not to ever try and change you...I love you for yourself.."

Edited by - MissDustyFanatic on 26/09/2009 22:58:42



memphisinlondon

Where am I going?
☆☆☆

Posted - 26/09/2009 : 23:27:47



United Kingdom
3565 Posts

Blimey!

Well, I wouldn't think Janis Ian really experienced that herself. Would you? She was about 23-24 years old when she recorded that great song; she was maybe writing about someone she knew or didn't know. Um...Janis is gay if you don't know already. But it's just about a bitter break-up anyway.

It's not the literal lyrics. It's nearly always the interpretation. What does that song mean to everyman/everywoman? What did it mean to Janis and Dusty? I think it probably meant more to Dusty than Janis!

'I Only Want To Be With You'? LOL! Yes, that was a pop song. No more, no less. As I said before I think Dusty's albums match the arc of her life so as we go on the songs are much more meaningful and the great songs start to reflect Dusty's life in a truer way than before. This is very apparent to me on 'Cameo'. Dusty wasn't often given songs to sing in any case, she wasn't a factory singer, she mostly chose her songs. On 'Cameo' we have some songs that were actually written for Dusty and this makes the album special.

What a thread! Groovy!

Memphis
Ever since we met...

Edited by - memphisinlondon on 26/09/2009 23:35:13



MissDustyFanatic

Where am I going?
☆☆☆

Posted - 27/09/2009 : 05:20:55



USA
2606 Posts

quote:

Originally posted by memphisinlondon

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What a thread! Groovy!

Memphis
Ever since we met...

I certainly didn't mean that Miss Ian had experienced them herself, no.

I simply meant her songwriting style is such that the vignettes she creates in songs are very detailed-there's a lot of lyrical imagery. And I think you're right-it probably did mean a lot more to Miss Dusty than to Miss Ian, seeing as how the latter has been quoted as saying that after she heard Miss Dusty's interpretation, she (Ian) could no longer do the piece justice-Miss Dusty's version was the definitive one.

I referenced 'I Only Want to Be With You' simply to point out that the lyrics and the interpretation can apply to anyone at all...the singer, the listener, whomever. Being in love and wanting to be with someone are universal things that can apply to anyone at all, gay, straight, bi, Thai. Starting in earnest with 'Cameo' and of course with 'Longing', the lyrics were crafted in such a way that they became very personal things, though universal themes such as love, loss, loneliness, etc are still present; It's simply to Miss Dusty's credit and immense talent that she could take a song such as 'In The Winter' or 'Who Could Be Loving You Other Than Me' and turn it into a life experience, rather than just someone singing the words on the page. She could take a song not written specifically for her and turn it into something that only She could do justice to from there on out.

"...Promise not to ever try and change you...I love you for yourself.."



dancer8595

Little by little



United Kingdom
690 Posts

Posted - 27/09/2009 : 07:58:54 

Taylor! You cheeky devil. 😜😄😄

This is a quite extraordinary thread. I have many LTD moments when I wish we were all together discussing a topic in person, but this really, really is one of them. I didn't know Janis Ian was gay. That gives the song an extra edge and possibly makes it even more devastating; it's more personal, in fact. I just can't hear *In The Winter* as anything other than a song based directly on very painful personal experience. That may well be down to Dusty's performance rather than the fact that Ian was writing from life: I don't necessarily think that she had been through the things that happen in the song at the time she wrote it (and I can't believe that's how young she was - what a hell of a song to have written at that age). Taylor - you're right that Ian's songs are full of imagery. They're very visual, in a particularly vivid and visceral way.

PS - Memphis - I meant to pick up on your Stanislavsky/Strasberg/Actors studio reference: I absolutely agree, and now I am really seeing lots of Dusty/Marilyn parallels... 😊

Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."

Edited by - dancer8595 on 27/09/2009 08:20:48



MissDustyFanatic

Where am I going?



USA
2606 Posts

Posted - 27/09/2009 : 08:35:24   

I don't quite understand how Miss Ian being gay makes the song any more devastating. Seeing the one you loved, happy, with someone else is heartbreaking no matter who you're attracted to. Although I'm on record as saying the song isn't one of my personal favorites, I absolutely LOVE Miss Dusty's interpretation.

And back on topic... 🙄 I am really starting to listen to the songs on 'Cameo' more closely and they're growing on me a lot more than they originally had. I've always liked them, but never really loved them with the obvious exception of 'I Just Wanna Be There'. I've no idea how that song couldn't inspire anyone to jump up and dance! it's just so full of life, and strength and sheer and utter J O Y! Definitely one of my absolute Miss Dusty favorites of all time.

Oh and Rosie? Cheeky? You've no idea, my dear. No idea. 🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄

"...Promise not to ever try and change you...I love you for yourself.."

Edited by - MissDustyFanatic on 27/09/2009 08:36:20



daydreamer
Moderator
★★★★



United Kingdom
5404 Posts

Posted - 27/09/2009 : 09:43:32

Although I would love to say that I believe Dusty sang every song totally from the heart and meant every word of the lyric, I can't say that. I never relate any of Dusty's songs to my life, I always think of them as her life.....but really I know that's not true. In the studio, she couldn't possibly have meant every word when she sang take after take, she just wanted to get it right with the best possible result, using all the emotion she could squeeze into the song. Someone once asked her on radio about If You Go Away. They'd heard her sing it (I think at the Talk of the Town) and wanted to know how personal it was to her as she seemed to live the song. She said that it hadn't been personal to her **then** as she hadn't experienced that sort of loss but she had experienced it since then. So she sang the song and made us believe because the actress in her was able to do that. The same with Sandra. "Lord, I love my husband and I love my kids", we know she never experienced that but when you hear her sing the words, she is Sandra. I don't think it's a bad thing to say that Dusty could act out her songs, she was a performer and she made you believe. The longing and yearning we talk about, were possibly real enough when she was going through bad times in the 70's but Dusty didn't have to understand the lyrics to feel the passion in a song, as proved by her hearing "Io che non vivo" at San Remo, she wouldn't have understood a word, but she heard the passion. And even with English lyrics she didn't care for, she produced a classic melodrama that pulled at the heartstrings....because she could. So, I do believe she used her acting ability in her performances but I also believe she could feel a song enough to leave the studio in tears as she did when recording I've Been Wrong Before. She did both things and did them beautifully.

Carole x

"There's a part of you that's a part of me..."



Carole R.
Where am I going?
★★★



2242 Posts

Posted - 27/09/2009 : 10:28:24

Brilliant post, Carole.
I agree with every word of it...

CR xx