



Jimi Hendrix

THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE



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Al Hendrix

- 1 All Along The Watchtower** (4:00) (Bob Dylan)  
Produced by Jimi Hendrix at Olympic Sound Studios, London, 1/21/68.  
From *Electric Ladyland*.
- 2 Purple Haze** (2:42) (Jimi Hendrix) Produced by Chas Chandler at Olympic Sound Studios, London, 1/11/67. From *Are You Experienced?*
- 3 Hey Joe** (3:23) (Billy Roberts) Produced by Chas Chandler at De Lane Lea Music Ltd, London, 10/23/66. From *Are You Experienced?*
- 4 The Wind Cries Mary** (3:16) (Jimi Hendrix)  
Produced by Chas Chandler at De Lane Lea Music Ltd, London, 10/23/66.  
From *Are You Experienced?*
- 5 Angel** (4:15) (Jimi Hendrix) Produced by Jimi Hendrix, Mitch Mitchell and Eddie Kramer at Electric Ladyland, New York City, 7/23/70.  
From *The Cry Of Love*.
- 6 Voodoo Child (Slight Return)** (5:12) (Jimi Hendrix)  
Produced by Jimi Hendrix at The Record Plant, New York City, 5/3/68.  
From *Electric Ladyland*.
- 7 Foxy Lady** (3:13) (Jimi Hendrix) Produced by Chas Chandler at CBS Recording Studios, London, 12/13/66. From *Are You Experienced?*
- 8 Burning Of The Midnight Lamp** (3:34) (Jimi Hendrix)  
Produced by Jimi Hendrix at Mayfair Recording Studio, New York City, 7/7/67 and 7/20/67. From *Electric Ladyland*.
- 9 Highway Chile** (3:28) (Jimi Hendrix) Produced by Chas Chandler at Olympic Sound Studios, London, 4/3/67. From *War Heroes*.
- 10 Crosstown Traffic** (2:12) (Jimi Hendrix)  
Produced by Jimi Hendrix at Olympic Sound Studios, London, 12/20/67.  
From *Electric Ladyland*.
- 11 Castles Made Of Sand** (2:43) (Jimi Hendrix) Produced by Chas Chandler at Olympic Sound Studios, London, last week October, 1967.  
From *Are You Experienced?*
- 12 Long Hot Summer Night** (3:25) (Jimi Hendrix)  
Produced by Jimi Hendrix at The Record Plant, New York City, 4/18/68.  
From *Electric Ladyland*.

- 13 Red House** (3:52) (Jimi Hendrix) Produced by Jimi Hendrix at CBS Recording Studios, London, 12/13/66. From *Are You Experienced?*
- 14 Manic Depression** (3:35) (Jimi Hendrix)  
Produced by Chas Chandler at De Lane Lea Music Ltd, London, 3/29/67.  
From *Are You Experienced?*
- 15 Gypsy Eyes** (3:41) (Jimi Hendrix)  
Produced by Jimi Hendrix at The Record Plant, New York City, last week April, 1968, or first week May, 1968. From *Electric Ladyland*.
- 16 Little Wing** (2:22) (Jimi Hendrix) Produced by Chas Chandler at Olympic Sound Studios, London, 10/26/67. From *Are You Experienced?*
- 17 Fire** (2:37) (Jimi Hendrix) Produced by Chas Chandler at Olympic Sound Studios, London, 2/3/67. From *Are You Experienced?*
- 18 Wait Until Tomorrow** (2:59) (Jimi Hendrix)  
Produced by Chas Chandler at Olympic Sound Studios, London, 10/26/67.  
From *Are You Experienced?*
- 19 Star Spangled Banner** (Live) (4:03) (Trad., Arr. by Jimi Hendrix) Produced by Alan Douglas, recorded live at Woodstock Music and Arts Fair, 8/18/69. From *Jimi Hendrix at Woodstock*.
- 20 Wild Thing** (Live) (6:54) (Chip Taylor)  
Produced by Alan Douglas, recorded live at Monterey Pop Festival, 6/18/67.  
From *Jimi Plays Monterey*.

Musicians: vocals and lead guitar Jimi Hendrix, bass guitar Noel Redding, drums Mitch Mitchell, except (1) as above plus 12 string acoustic guitar Dave Mason; (2) as above plus piano overdubs Jimi Hendrix, backing vocals Dave Mason; (3) as above plus keyboards R. Kasper; (17) lead guitar Jimi Hendrix, bass guitar Billy Cox, drums Mitch Mitchell. ALL SONGS PUBLISHED BY BELLA GOODWIN MUSIC (ASCAP) EXCEPT SONG (1) Dwarf Music (ASCAP), (2) Third Story Music, Inc. (BMI), (20) EMI Blackwood Music Inc. (BMI)

Jimi Hendrix quotations compiled by Michael Furchick.

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"IMAGINATION IS THE KEY TO MY LYRICS. THE REST IS PAINTED WITH A LITTLE SCIENCE FICTION"

The music never grows old. It bursts with sheer electricity, a rich palette of sonic noise immune to the transient demands of fashion and trend.

There can be only one Jimi Hendrix. The demons informing his music were personal and intense; impossible to emulate. Hendrix, however, has irrevocably changed the course of popular music. In the two decades since his death Hendrix's legacy can be heard across an extraordinary range of musics, from funk to jazz, rap to soul, blues to rock. Hendrix is a cornerstone of modern music; his work remains a living inspiration, the lasting testament to a compelling talent.

All this was achieved in four years, from 1966 to 1970. During his lifetime he recorded four albums, a collection since embellished by a reservoir of live recordings together with work-in-progress studio cuts. His intended future moves are open to speculation. Hendrix was always at the cutting edge; the very core of the man was imbued with an addictive musicianship. To understand that compulsion it is important to recognise its source.

The vivacity of Hendrix's work can never disguise its roots in that most fundamental of black musics, the blues. He knew the music's structures but, more crucially, Hendrix was immersed in the blues' broad emotional vocabulary. That quality is impregnated in every note of his music.

Hendrix was born in Seattle on 27 November, 1942. His parents divorced in the early Fifties, after which Hendrix was brought up by his father, Al. Jimmy was obsessed by the classic blues and jazz records in Al's collection. A little later Hendrix, in his teens, was also consumed by the pure magic of rock 'n' roll and r&b on the local radio stations.



Ron Kufwell / Michael Ochs Archives

His musical ambitions were properly focussed, however, when he reached New York. Hendrix discovered Greenwich Village, where he was exposed to a vast explosion of new music: the influence of English beat groups, for instance, the New Jazz experiments of John Coltrane and Ornette Coleman and the lyrical possibilities epitomised by Bob Dylan.

In 1966 Hendrix formed a band and elected to sing for the first time. The group had a regular spot in Greenwich Village. One night Chas Chandler checked the show. He had been the bass player with The Animals but quit to form a business partnership with the band's manager Mike Jeffery.

Chandler was overwhelmed. By the time the set was over he invited Hendrix to London. It was an extraordinary turn in Hendrix's career. After five years the breakthrough had come.

On 24 September, 1966, Hendrix arrived in London. The spelling of his first name had been changed to 'Jimi'; it would be, so he and Chandler reasoned, much more memorable. Hendrix, however, hardly needed a spelling change to make an impression. His effect on London was electrifying.

Al recognised his son's obsession and bought Jimmy a cheap guitar. He learned the instrument by playing along to the hot tunes of the day. Pretty soon Hendrix was also playing with a variety of local bands.

In May 1961, however, he quit Seattle to enlist in the army, only to be discharged after an injury the following year. Hendrix returned to music, becoming a sideman for any band playing the chitlin circuit, the black touring network of bars, theatres and clubs. Through the early Sixties Hendrix was the pick-up guitarist for Little Richard, The Isley Brothers and Sam Cooke.



Ira Cohen

Chandler introduced him to England. Following an impromptu jam with Cream, Hendrix was a rising currency in London. The first priority, however, was a band. After hastily convened auditions Hendrix settled on a trio featuring Mitch Mitchell on drums and bass player Noel Redding.

The Jimi Hendrix Experience was formed on 6 October, 1966. Three weeks later they had recorded *Hey Joe*. It was released at the very end of 1966 and, by February, was number four in the singles charts. Jimi Hendrix was the hottest new name in Britain.

His creative impulse was running in overdrive; on 11 January the band cut *Purple Haze*, written the previous month. An album was also urgently required. Hendrix became immersed in frantic bouts of writing and recording.

*Purple Haze* - and the follow-up *The Wind Cries Mary* - were massive hits. They created maximum anticipation for the album *Are You Experienced?*, released in May. It took quality opposition to stop the album from reaching number one: The Beatles' *Sergeant Pepper* took top place while *Are You Experienced?*, was number two in Britain

through the summer of 1967.

The time had come to introduce America to the Jimi Hendrix Experience. In June the band played the Monterey Pop Festival. It was a vast open-air concert, a celebration of the Summer of Love. Hendrix produced one of his finest performances; the band ran through their hits, added a little Howlin' Wolf and Bob Dylan and generally stole the night. The finale was a stage trick perfected in London some months before; Hendrix torched his guitar before smashing it to pieces. For America, first base had been secured.

After a hastily arranged U.S. gig schedule, Hendrix returned to Britain. A new single, *The Burning of the Midnight Lamp*, was released and the band embarked on a ball-breaking schedule of live dates, studio sessions and media commitments.

On 1 December, 1967, the Jimi Hendrix Experience unveiled a new album, *Axis: Bold As Love*. Hendrix's sonic experiments had become married to a rich vein of lyrics, performed with the purest expressive quality of the blues.

The following February the band was back in



Michael Ochs Archives

America. *Are You Experienced?*, had sold over a million copies in the U.S. and the newly-released *Axis* was rising in the Top 20. A few weeks after the tour Hendrix was virtually based in New York, his restless creativity frustrated inside the rigid trio line-up of the Experience. He embarked on sessions for a new album; although credited to the Jimi Hendrix Experience the eventual album, *Electric Ladyland*, also included contributions from Jack Casady of Jefferson Airplane, Al Kooper, Buddy Miles and, from Traffic, Steve Winwood, Dave Mason and Chris Wood.

*All Along The Watchtower* was issued as a single on 18 October, 1968. Although a Bob Dylan song, Hendrix's version is definitive; an epic interstellar performance which came as the prelude to *Electric Ladyland*, released the following week. The album, recorded in Britain and America, represents an extraordinary moment of creativity. It burns with energy; high on ambition and experiment.

The start of 1969 was spent in Europe. The Jimi Hendrix Experience gave their last British performance at London's Royal Albert Hall on 24 February. Then came the band's final American tour ending at the Denver Pop Festival in June.

The internal frictions proved too much. Noel Redding left for England. Mitch Mitchell also quit but soon returned to take his place among the pool of musicians Hendrix was assembling. Jimi, meanwhile, had contacted an old friend, the bass player Billy Cox whose solid, more funky, style was to be a crucial part of Hendrix's new music.

Around the same time Hendrix was introduced to the producer Alan Douglas, who soon became a close friend. Through the course of the year they worked on various projects including the musical collective, Band Of Gypsies.

In August 1969 Jimi Hendrix appeared at the Woodstock Music & Art Fair in upstate New York. It was the biggest celebration of the counter culture, billed as "three days of peace and music". Hendrix's Woodstock Band Of Gypsies was a new

six-piece band. The highpoint of the set was *The Star Spangled Banner*, Hendrix's poignant deconstruction of the American anthem. Delivered at the height of the Vietnam War and civil rights unrest, it was a compelling statement.

At the turn of the year the Band Of Gypsies, by now an all-black trio, played four shows in New York. They were recorded and resulted in the *Band of Gypsies* album, released in April 1970.

Jimi was also working overtime in the studio. He was planning another album, *First Ray of the New Rising Sun*. At the same time Hendrix and Douglas were working on a jazz collaboration with the arranger Gil Evans, whose work with Miles Davis provided many of the landmark albums of contemporary music. They agreed to start the project after Hendrix's European tour that autumn.

Hendrix, with the Cry Of Love band, arrived in England at the end of August. The tour opened at the Isle of Wight Festival, followed by a week of European concerts during which the bass player Billy Cox fell ill. Hendrix brought Cox back to London where he could recover away from the pressures of touring.

Hendrix stayed in London with a girlfriend, Monika Dannemann. On the night of Thursday 17 September, Jimi decided to take some sleeping pills. The idea was to sleep through the next day and leave for America after the weekend.

Early the next morning Dannemann noticed Hendrix had vomited during the night. He seemed to be breathing normally, however, and she felt no reason to panic. A little later she tried to wake him but Jimi remained unconscious. This time Dannemann was alarmed. She called an ambulance. By the time it arrived Jimi's body was so affected by the pills he died of suffocation. The night before Hendrix had been working on a new song. It was called *The Story of Life*. The closing lines were:

*The story  
of life is quicker  
than the wink of an eye  
The story of love  
is hello and goodbye  
Until we meet again*



Martin Munich/Star



Monobus

Jean-Louis Rancurel

### All Along The Watchtower

It is the pared down quality and understatement of Jimi's mature, haunting version of this Bob Dylan song that turns it into one of the great interpretations in popular music: Jimi took Dylan's lyrics and mated them with his guitar-work with such singular authority that initially many people did not even realise it was a cover.

Although the song had been recorded in January, 1968, almost as soon as Jimi had heard it on the John Wesley Harding album, its release was delayed by his anxiety about releasing a version of what he considered to be a Dylan masterwork. He had first heard the number at a party he was at with Dave Mason of Traffic; Jimi's response was instantaneous: "We gotta record that, I gotta do that." And the same night he recorded the song at Olympic in Barnes, south-west London, with Dave Mason playing acoustic guitar and Brian Jones hanging out at the session.

When the song finally came out as a single, in October, 1968, it reached number 5 in the UK charts; and Jimi's mystique moved up a couple of



levels, the enigma around him increasing with his transcendent reinterpretation of a Dylan work.

"I felt like Watchtower was something I had written but could never get together. I often feel like that about Dylan," said Jimi. Meanwhile, in the liner notes for his *Biograph* set, Bob Dylan himself has this to say: "It's not a wonder to me that he recorded my songs but rather that he recorded so few because they were all his."

(*All Along The Watchtower* is a classic example of Hendrix's bass-playing, on Noel

"MY GOAL IS TO BE ONE WITH MUSIC. I JUST DEDICATE MY WHOLE LIFE TO THIS ART"

Graham Howe

Ron Rafaeili / Michael Ochs Archives

Ed Caraeff



Redding's righthanded bass. "I think Noel got pissed off and was in the pub - but the track didn't suffer," remembers Mitch Mitchell.)

### Purple Haze

*Purple Haze* may not have been as instantly commercial as *Hey Joe*, but it was a stronger showcase for Jimi's talents. Not only had Jimi written the song, but it showed how he could be both lead and rhythm player at the same time.

*Purple Haze* was recorded on 11 January, 1967 - Jimi had written the lyrics in the dressing-room of the Upper Cut Club in London on Boxing Day, 1966, where the group had played an afternoon show. Neither Mitch Mitchell nor Noel Redding had previously heard the song until Jimi came into the studio and hummed them the riffs and showed Noel the chords and changes. "I listened to it and we went, 'Okay, let's do it.' We got it on the third take, as I recall," said the bass-player.



Jon Skaggs

"YOU HAVE TO FORGET ABOUT WHAT OTHER PEOPLE SAY, WHEN YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO DIE, OR WHEN YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE LOVING. YOU HAVE TO FORGET ABOUT ALL THESE THINGS. YOU HAVE TO GO ON AND BE CRAZY. CRAZINESS IS LIKE HEAVEN"

Ron Barlett / Michael Ochs Archives



The sound of Jimi's guitar is muddled up through the use of a Fuzz Face distortion pedal; and there is a second guitar heard during the solo that's played through an Octavia, the invention of Roger Mayer, an electronics whizz who was a friend of Jimi's.

Jimi: "I had this thing on my mind about a dream I had that I was walking under the sea. It's linked to a story I read in a science fiction magazine about a purple death ray.

"Put it another way. I met this girl, she was really outasight. I said, 'Baby, what you doin'?' She said, 'Well, you know, I'm alright. How are you?' I said, 'Well, everything's the same old thing, just a big drag. I was just wonderin', what is this that you got in that little sack there?' She said, 'This?' And she opened it up and it went like this (feedback). I said, 'WHEW!! Close it! Close it! Baby, look out!' She put her little thumb in. So I stuck my fingers in and FPUUFFF!!! a big 'Purple Haze'!"

The single got to number 3.

### Hey Joe

*Hey Joe*, the first single from The Jimi Hendrix Experience, was an explosion of primal sound and new rhythmic possibilities; "underground rock" was just beginning, and the record set the Experience up as the standard bearers for this new musical movement.

*Hey Joe* had been a hit for The Leaves in the United States: it was in New York that manager Chas Chandler first heard Jimi playing a slowed down version of the tune, which was recorded on

23 October, 1966, at De Lane Lea Studios in Kingsway, London, shortly after the trio returned from four dates in France.

"Lots of people have done different arrangements of it, and Timmy Rose was the first to do it slowly," remembered Jimi. "I like it played slowly. There are probably 1,000 versions of it fast by The Byrds, Standells, Love and others. It was the first time I ever tried to sing on a record. I was too scared to sing. Chas made me sing serious. I just wish I could sing really nice, but I know I can't sing. I just feel the words out. I try all night to hit a pretty note, but I'm more like an entertainer and performer than a singer."

According to Mitch Mitchell, the version of *Hey Joe* that was released was the very first version that was recorded. As he would for many of the trio's recorded tracks, Jimi thought up the "walking bass part"; he showed it to Noel in the studio, and it was immediately recorded in this form.

The song "took forever", recalled Mitch Mitchell. "*Hey Joe* is a very difficult song to do right. The Marshalls were too much for the mikes and Chas and Jimi rowed over recording volume.



Ron Barlett / Michael Ochs Archives



© Videography

That 'loud', full, live sound was nearly impossible to obtain, especially for the bass, without the distortion which funnily enough became part of our sound."

*Hey Joe* was released on 16 December, 1966, in the UK, its release coinciding with the band's debut on the second to last edition of the influential television show, *Ready, Steady, Go!* By February, 1967, it had reached number 4 in the charts.

### The Wind Cries Mary

A sudden change of style, from *Purple Haze*'s innovative rocking to this evocative ballad; *The Wind Cries Mary* was recorded on 11 January 1967.

"I explained to Noel and Mitch what I had in mind," said Jimi, "and we played it halfway through so that Chas could get the balance in the studio. Then we played it through once. Six minutes later the song was ready to be mastered and pressed."

Was that Jimi's memory being selective? For when this version first was played back, the track

sounded so ragged to the group and Chandler that it could have been a demo. After playing some gigs over the weekend, the Experience went back into the studio a couple of weeks later to record a further version, one technically far more proficient. But it lacked the power of the first, rougher version. "So the original was released, warts and all. Thank goodness - it's one of my favourites," said Mitch Mitchell.

"*The Wind Cries Mary* is nothing but a story about a break-up, just a girl and a boy breaking up, that's all. There's no hidden meaning," said Jimi. However, the song does have a background story, according to Kathy Etchingham, Jimi's then girlfriend, whose middle name was Mary. The "girl and a boy", she claimed, were herself and Jimi, and the song was written after a furious row between them over one of the most mundane details of domestic life - Kathy had been accused by Jimi of cooking with dirty pots, and had hit him with a frying-pan. After a furious row she stormed out. When she returned the song was written.



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David Hoffmann / Exhibit A

"THE TIMES I BURNED MY GUITAR IT WAS LIKE A SACRIFICE. YOU SACRIFICE THE THINGS YOU LOVE. I LOVE MY GUITAR"



Ron Rafaelli / Michael Ochs Archives

### Angel

In the lyrics of *Angel*, truly a celestial song, Jimi is yet again saved by his idealised image of woman. Mitch Mitchell was brought in to Electric Lady to salvage *The Cry Of Love* sessions, on which he'd originally played and which *Angel* was part of - the posthumous album was released in March, 1971. "Angel was the most difficult and jigsaw-like track to put together and yet it became the most covered of Jimi's songs," said Mitch. When additional drum parts were required Steven Stills, a friend of Jimi's who was working next door, kept a tight eye on Mitch's overdubs.

### Voodoo Child (slight return)

The traditional healing power of the guitar is not all that is invoked in this visionary version of a Delta blues tune: Jimi the higher being draws on the Voodoo of sounds, as he casually reveals, through a stream of extraordinary imagery, the cosmic weight of the metaphysics and mythology of his African roots.

Later there were those who claimed that a Ghanaian high priestess had performed a ceremony to provide Jimi's career with divine assistance. Was this true? If so, what was the effect of the blending between such a practice and the Cherokee blood running in Jimi's veins?

In the version simply called *Voodoo Child* (no slight return) Jimi makes dense, intensely poetic

allusions to the source of a mythic warrior's powers. Here instead he speaks of such a superhero's abilities: *I stand up next to a mountain and chop it down with the edge of my hand. And adds a warning rendered more stark with time: If I don't meet you no more in this world/Then I'll see you in the next one. Don't be late.*

### Foxy Lady

Sexy? Wily? Is it about one specific woman or about womankind in general? At the time that *Foxy Lady* came out, as the opening song on the *Are You Experienced* album, it was claimed the song was inspired by one Heather Taylor, who later became Mrs Roger Daltrey.

Whatever, Jimi claimed that the song was about the only number that he had written that he was satisfied with. "I write a lot of words all over the place, on matchboxes, or on napkins, anywhere. Sometimes the music comes across to me when I'm sitting around doing nothing, and then the music makes me think of a few words I might have written. So I go back to those few words, if I can find them. I'm not ashamed to say I can't write happy songs. *Foxy Lady* is about the only happy song I've written. I don't feel very happy when I start writing." *Foxy Lady* was recorded at CBS on 13 December, 1966, the same day as *Red House* and *3rd Stone From The Sun*. It became an underground classic.



Bill Seward/eweraz

### The Burning Of The Midnight Lamp

The *Burning Of The Midnight Lamp* is a song of extraordinary beauty and power, with the strongest, most insidious, melody of all the group's releases up until then.

"I really don't care what our records do as far as chart-wise. *The Burning Of The Midnight Lamp*, which everyone around here hated, only made number eleven in the charts. They said that was the worst record, but to me that was the best one we ever made. I don't think that people really understood it.

"I wrote part of that song on a plane between LA and New York. There are some very personal things in there. I was feeling kind of down. But really I have to catch myself and find out. You go into different moods, and when you write your mood comes through. You can go back and listen to your records and know how you were feeling then.

"But I think that everyone can understand the feeling that when you're travelling, no matter what your address, there is no place you can call home. The feeling of a man in a little old house in the

middle of a desert where he is burning the midnight lamp. You don't mean for things to be personal all the time, but it is..."

### Highway Chile

The stomp B-side of *The Wind Cries Mary*. *Yeah, his guitar is slung across his back/His dusty boots is his Cadillac*. The words are Jimi's reflections on his long, tedious days of touring the southern r&b circuit. He makes a hero out of the guitar-playing gunslinger out on the road: there's a pride, a heroism, in his detailing of this gritty, funky life. The song is clearly autobiographical.

### Crosstown Traffic

After *Axis: Bold As Love* was completed, the group had time off before their second US tour. So they went into Olympic Studios in Barnes in West London and cut three tunes on four-track recording equipment; these were then transferred to 12-track at the Record Plant in New York.

"People, they don't give me inspiration except

"IN LITTLE WING WE PUT THE GUITAR THROUGH THE LESLIE SPEAKER OF AN ORGAN, AND IT SOUNDS LIKE JELLYBREAD"

Ron Rafaelli / Michael Ochs Archives Wessex Newspapers



*You're just like (Crosstown Traffic)  
So hard to get through to you (Crosstown Traffic)  
I don't need to run over you (Crosstown Traffic)  
All you do is slow me down, and I got better things on the other side of town.*

### Castles Made Of Sand

A sharply observed reflection on life's little ironic tricks;

the particular resonance for Jimi no doubt residing in one dramatically tricky verse: the poignant tale of the Indian brave who dreams of fighting his first battle the next day, but instead is killed in a surprise night attack.

"I like to write songs like *Castles Made Of Sand*, personally. When it's a time for a change, by all means put that thing into operation. I dig writing slow songs because I find it's easier to get more blues and feeling into them."

bad inspiration, to write songs like *Crosstown Traffic* and all that, because that's the way they put themselves in front of me, the way they present themselves," said Jimi of this song about clingy women.

*I'm not the only soul who's accused of hit and run. / Tire-tracks all across your back, I can, I can see you had your fun! / But - eh, darling can't you see my signals turn from green to red / and with you I can see a traffic jam, straight up ahead. /*



Rob O'Connor

"MUSIC MAKES ME HIGH ON STAGE, AND THAT'S THE TRUTH. IT'S LIKE BEING ALMOST ADDICTED TO MUSIC"

### Long Hot Summer Night

With Al Kooper's keyboards enhancing the sound, Jimi, who hates the phone, sits around waiting for a call from his sweetheart, who is scared of the phone: a technological version of call and response.

Recorded at the Record Plant in New York on 18 April, 1968, and mixed on 26 July of that year, the song was part of the *Electric Ladyland* set.

### Red House

*There's a red house over yonder/Yeah, that's where my baby stays.* Recorded in December 1966 *Red House* is a classic 12-bar blues, a paean to sensual love, that Jimi had written years before. Its form assured him of the support of the blues purists, a vocal and critically influential force.

For Jimi the song was like a womb into which he could retreat during a set whenever he needed its security. Onstage Jimi endlessly improvised on *Red House*, adlibbing and scattering lyrics where appropriate. The night of his Toronto bust, for

example, he played a sparse version of *Red House* that included the lines *Soon as I get out of jail/I want to see her.*

On all studio versions, including this on the Kiss *The Sky* album, Noel Redding plays the bass strings of a six string guitar.

### Manic Depression

"Manic Depression is so ugly you can feel it. It's a story about a cat wishing he could make love to music instead of the same old everyday woman. A frustrating type song for you, a today's type of blues." Essentially a waltz in 3/4 time, the song was a response to Chas Chandler telling Jimi at a press reception that he sounded like a manic depressive.

### Gypsy Eyes

This blues is reminiscent of versions by Hambone Willie Newbern, Robert Johnson and Muddy Waters. The song is a mysterious blend of joy and sorrow at the departure of a close female



Ron Miller / Michael Ochs Archives



Avano Tilly

"MY PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY IS MY MUSIC. NOTHING BUT MUSIC - LIFE - THAT'S ALL"

companion: *Do you still think about me, gypsy?*  
Finally the woman clears the air by giving her reason for why she'd had to go: *Two strange men fighting to the death over me today! I'll try and meet you by the old highway.*

### Little Wing

A song of immense delicacy and strength. Jimi's meaning number 1: "Little Wing is based on a very, very simple American Indian style. I got the idea when I was in Monterey and I just happened to be looking at everything around. So I figured that I'd take everything I'd seen and put it, maybe, in the form of a girl, and call it Little Wing. It'll just fly away. Everybody's flyin' and was in a nice mood, like the police and everybody was really groovy out there. And so I just took all these things and just put them in one very, very small little matchbox. Keep it just like that. It's very simple. I like it though. It's one of the very few ones I like."

Jimi's meaning number 2: "I get a lot of my inspiration for songs from girls. Little Wing is like one of those beautiful girls that come around

sometimes. They might be spaced, they might be kind of strung out on a certain this or that. You know, everybody has a right to their own releases or their own beliefs - if they want to believe that a star is purple or whatever. And these girls are like one girl to me. Little Wing was a very sweet girl that came around that gave me her whole life and more if I wanted it. And me with my crazy ass couldn't get it together, so I'm off here and off over there."

### Fire

Because it was such a hardhitting song, Fire was one of Jimi's favourite set openers. Its origins, however were almost banal: On New Year's Eve, 1966, The Jimi Hendrix Experience didn't even have a gig. However, Noel found them one in his home town of Folkestone, at the Hillside Social Club. It was a freezing evening and afterwards Noel's mum Margaret suggested they go back to her place. The journey there was unbelievably cold, as the wind blew off the English channel. When the group finally entered Noel's mother's small house, Jimi urgently pleaded, "Let me stand next to your fire." However,



Douglas Kent Hall

her German Shepherd dog was standing in the way. Hence the line: *Oh, move over Rover and let Jimi take over.*

### Wait Until Tomorrow

More problems with life's tricky twists in this song from Axis: *Bold As Love*; Jimi establishes a unique nasal sound with his guitar. Jimi wants to run away with his girl Dolly Mae. It's the Big Night: he has his ladder up against her wall. But her daddy shoots him instead. *And I hear you say, as I fade away! We don't have to wait til tomorrow.* Released on the Axis: *Bold As Love* album, the

song was recorded on 26 October, 1967, at Olympic Sound Studios in Barnes in south-west London.

### Star Spangled Banner

The performance of this tune at Woodstock marked the public debut of The Band Of Gypsies, when the group was a loose pool of musicians. Their impressionistic performance of the American national anthem was like the manifesto of the new time they were ushering in, ripping up the anthem's traditional values and re-shaping them with utopian passion. It seemed as though a coup had taken place in humanity's collective soul. It was an exciting pointer to the future, and the number became a reference point for guitar-players of the era keen to know just how much sound could be torn out of a guitar. "I'm American so I played it. They made me sing it in school, so it was a flashback, and that was about it. I thought it was beautiful," said Jimi.



### Wild Thing

A phenomenal version of a song previously associated with another act, The Troggs. The song, which Jimi had played in his set at New York's Cafe Wha?, was performed as the finale of the show at Monterey, and featured Jimi setting fire to his guitar

with lighter fluid - it was always calculated that once the lighter fluid had burned up, the guitar itself would be left relatively unscathed, although in this case Jimi smashed the instrument to pieces and tossed its charred embers to the audience. The performance of this song, as documented in D A Pennebaker's film of the festival, is one of the great moments in the history of rock, even though its effect was thoroughly calculated: "Make sure you've got plenty of film in your camera," Jimi advised photographer Jim Marshall before he went onstage. More than anything, it was this show, culminating in the performance of *Wild Thing*, that broke Jimi in the United States. Jimi walked out onto the stage unknown and walked off a legend.

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TO MOVE THESE PEOPLE TO ACT  
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