

The Call

- 1982 **THE CALL**
1.War Weary World 2.There's a Heart Here 3.Doubt 4.This is Life 5.Fulham Blues
6.Who's That Man 7.Upperbirth 8.Bandits 9.Flesh and Steel 10.Unbearable
11.Waiting for the End
- (orig lp) US Mercury 4037 [lyrics]
(orig cs) US Mercury MRC4-1-4037
- 1982 A1.WAR WEARY WORLD
12PRO: US Mercury MK-198
- 1982 A1.THERE'S A HEART HERE B1.Upperbirth
12PRO: US Mercury 187
- 1983 **MODERN ROMANS** US.84
1.The Walls Came Down 2.Turn a Blind Eye 3.Time of Your Life 4.Modern Romans
5.Back from the Front 6.Destination 7.Violent Times 8.Face to Face 9.All About
You
- (orig lp) US Mercury 810 307, CAN Mercury 4072
- 1983.04 A1.THE WALLS CAME DOWN US.74 [5.7.83-5w]
7PRO: UK Trouser Press 16 [blue flexidisc]
B1.Upperbirth
7": US Mercury 811 847-7 [ps], UK Mercury LON-28 [ps]
B1.Destination
12PRO: US Mercury MK-229
- 1983 A1.TIME OF YOUR LIFE B1.All About You
12PRO: US Mercury MK-242
- 1984 **SCENE BEYOND DREAMS**
1.Scene Beyond Dreams 2.The Burden 3.Tremble 4.Delivered 5.Heavy Hand
6.Promise and Threat 7.One Life Leads to Another 8.Apocalypse 9.Notified
- (orig lp) US Mercury 818 793 [lyrics]
- 1984 A1.HEAVY HAND
12PRO: US Mercury 303
- † Below with guests Peter Gabriel, Jim Kerr, Robbie Robertson, Jimmy Bralower.
- 1986 **RECONCILED** US.82
Produced by Michael Been and The Call
A1.Everywhere I Go A2.I Still Believe (Great Design) A3.Blood Red (America)
A4.The Morning B1.Oklahoma B2.With or Without Reason B3.Sanctuary B4.Tore the
Old Place Down B5.Even Now
- (orig lp) US Elektra 60440, UK/CAN/GER Elektra 960 440

3 stars. I bought this album because Peter Gabriel sang backing vocals on the opening track, "Everywhere I Go." Can't even hear him. Great call, that. The consensus seems to be that Reconciled is one of The Call's better albums, so I shouldn't complain. There's not a hit single on here like "The Walls Came Down," but a pair of tracks (Everywhere, I Still Believe) consistently turn up on their greatest hits albums, so it's probably essential Call (should such an animal exist). Since it's the elephant in the room, I'll usher it out early. U2. That's what The Call most reminds me of, but I can't help thinking that's a lazy assessment. I'm as likely to hear traces of Ian McCulloch and David Byrne in Michael Been's voice, Simple Minds in the music. Now comparing a band to U2 is always dangerous, since few bands do what they do so well. Playing like U2 requires a commitment that The Call seem unwilling to make; Bono flies over the edge without a care, but Been is restrained by something (perhaps his religious faith) and ends up sounding less like a man on fire (Bono) than a man touching a hot stove. I know that sounds catty, even cruel, but when you listen to this album you'll know what I'm talking about. When he burns a little cooler, as on "Sanctuary," Been finds a complementary comfort zone for his voice. As for the melodies, they're occasionally very good, requiring a little time to grow on you like latter-day Echo & The Bunnymen. Mind you, the Bunnymen were a better band; Scott Musick's drums here are U2 101, Jim Goodwin's keyboards occasionally register a cheese-factor-9. As a period piece, Reconciled is engaging, but ultimately a better candidate for the cut-out bin than the

time capsule. And, yes, I mentioned U2 four times (five times now), so I'm just as lazy as everyone else.

1986 A1.EVERYWHERE I GO
7PRO: US MCA 7-69546 [ps]
12PRO: US Elektra ED-5125
B1.Tore the Old Place Down
7": US Elektra 69546 [ps], CAN Elektra 96 95467, GER Elektra 969 546
B1.?
7": UK Elektra EKR-40
12: UK Elektra EKR-40T, GER Elektra 966 846-0

-> I've met people who were fascinating for five minutes but dull over an entire evening. Reconciled wore we down after a while, but "Everywhere I Go" in isolation is almost wonderful. I say "almost" because the cheesy synthesizer at the end nearly lets the air out of it. Still, for four minutes it's the very modern model of edgy, more Bunnymen than U2 come to think of it. The B side is a slow march through the past, "Tore The Old Place Down," which again benefits from being alone. It may be that The Call works wonder in small dollops but (like Big Country) can seem so much sloganeering or musical soldiering in bigger batches. Also, the bearded Been has no business making those impassioned-for-an-instant "eeh" and "aah" sounds since, to my knowledge, Barry White is the only bearded singer who could pull off sexy.

1986 A1.I STILL BELIEVE (GREAT DESIGN) (Edit)
7PRO: US Elektra 7-69521
B1.I Still Believe (LP Version)
12PRO: US Elektra ED-5128
B1.Blood Red (America)
7": FRA Elektra 969 548-7
B1.Tore the Old Place Down
7": SAF Elektra EKS-740

1986 1.OKLAHOMA 2.Oklahoma (Live) 3.I Still Believe (Live)
12PRO: US Elektra ED-5168

1987 **INTO THE WOODS** US.123
1.I Don't Wanna 2.In the River 3.It Could Have Been Me 4.The Woods 5.Day or
Night 6.Memory 7.Too Many Tears 8.Expecting 9.Walk Walk

(orig lp) US Elektra 60739, UK/GER Elektra 960 739-1, CAN Elektra 96 07391
(orig cs) UK Elektra 960 739-4, BRA Elektra 6700 071
(orig cd) US Elektra 60739
(reiss cd) February 15, 2005: US Wounded Bird 739

1987 A1.I DON'T WANNA (Edit) B1.Day or Night
7": US Elektra 7-69461 [ps], UK Elektra EKR-60 [ps]
B1.I Don't Wanna (LP Version)
12PRO: US Elektra ED-5234

-> I ain't here to tell you what a great song this is, because it ain't. U2 and Big Country did this sort of thing so much better. "I Don't Wanna" doesn't even have a discernible melody, just a little keyboard line that sounds like OMD's "ABC Auto-Industry" which gets built upon by bass, drums and guitar. The whole thing leads up to a cheesy keyboard solo that could have been played on an \$80 Casio for all I know (I'm pretty sure there's a sour note in the solo too). Big Country and U2 made timeless music; The Call made music of the times. History, I suspect, will forget them. I'm not trying to be cruel, I just don't see anybody unearthing this stuff fifty years hence and going "Eureka!" ("A-Ha!" maybe, but that's a different story). The B side is "Day or Night" from the same album (Into the Woods) and (in my hoary oculi) is the better of the two tracks.

1987 A1.IN THE RIVER
12PRO: US Elektra ED-5250
B1.The Woods
7": UK/GER Elektra 969 444-7 [ps]

1987 A1.WALK WALK (CD Version) B1.Walk Walk (LP Version)
12PRO: US Elektra 5271

1989.05 **LET THE DAY BEGIN** US.64
1.Let the Day Begin 2.You Run 3.Surrender 4.When 5.Watch 6.For Love
7.Jealousy 8.Same Ol' Story 9.Closer 10.Uncovered

(orig lp) US MCA 6303
(orig cd) JPN MCA 22P2-3019

1989.07 A1.LET THE DAY BEGIN Bl.? US.51 [7.22.89-9w]
7": US MCA 53658
Bl.Uncovered
CSS: UK MCA MCAC-1362
3.For Love
12: UK MCA MCAT-1362
CDS: UK MCA DMCAT-1362, UK MCA DMCA-1362

1989 1.WHEN
CDS: US MCA 18002

1989 1.YOU RUN Bl.Watch
7": UK MCA 1390 [ps]
3.Jealousy
12: UK MCA DMCA-1390
CDS: UK MCA DMCAT-1390
4.You Run (Version)
CDS: UK MCA DMCA-1390

† Below song with guest Bono on backing vocals.

1990.09.12 1.WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU
CDS: US MCA 1008

1990.09.18 **RED MOON**
Produced by Michael Been, The Call and Jim Scott
1.What's Happened to You 2.Red Moon 3.You Were There 4.Floating Back 5.A Swim
in the Ocean 6.Like You've Never Been Loved 7.Family 8.This is Your Life 9.The
Hand That Feeds You 10.What a Day

(orig lp) US MCA MCA-10033
(orig cs) US MCA MCAC-10033
(orig cd) US MCA MCAD-10033

4 stars. What happened to The Call? Red Moon is red belly roots revival music and not the anthemic U2 too of Reconciled. This despite the fact that U2's Bono makes an appearance on the opening track. (You won't spot him any more than Peter Gabriel; The Call seem to have perfected the art of the invisible cameo.) The album is a departure and a revelation. Michael Been sounds ragged and re-energized at the same time, more Van Morrison than anything you'd find in new wave's angry undertow. And the rest of The Call give it their all too, dropping palpable guitar licks, battle-worn beats and robust keyboard accompaniment. Red Moon is so real, so genuine, you have to wonder why they didn't make music like this in the beginning. Then you notice that it didn't chart, and you have your answer. Michael Been may have dropped the mask, but the walls didn't come tumbling down in reaction to his emergence as a mature, serious and (yes) spiritual artist. Albums like this are called principled, and the radio wasn't ready to be lectured by The Call. Had the radio been ready, it would have learned something from "What's Happened To You," "You Were There" and "Family." Instead, it ignored Red Moon, and The Call slipped back (still kicking) into the great gray beyond known collectively as the '80s. Critics have taken a kinder view, calling it some of the best music of their career (I agree). It's not new wave or Christian rock or alternative folk-rock, but an amalgam of them played with an intensity and honesty too often missing in rock and roll. Let the records show that at last call, the band stood tall.

1991.06.11 **THE WALLS CAME DOWN: THE BEST OF THE MERCURY YEARS**
1.War Weary World 2.There's a Heart Here 3.Doubt 4.Upperbirth 5.Flesh and
Steel 6.Waiting for the End 7.The Walls Came Down 8.Turn a Blind Eye 9.Modern
Romans 10.Back from the Front 11.Destination 12.Violent Times 13.All About You
14.Scene Beyond Dreams 15.Tremble 16.Delivered 17.Heavy Hand 18.One Life Leads
to Another

(orig cd) US Mercury 848 741

1997.07.08 **THE BEST OF THE CALL**
1.Let the Day Begin 2.Everywhere I Go 3.I Still Believe (Great Design) 4.I
Don't Wanna 5.Memory 6.What's Happened to You 7.You Were There 8.Become
America 9.To Feel This Way 10.Us 11.All You Hold on To 12.We Know Too Much
13.The Walls Came Down 14.Uncovered

(orig cd) US Warner Resound 46488

1997 **TO HEAVEN AND BACK**
1.Soaring Bird 2.Criminal 3.Love is Everywhere 4.World on Fire 5.Think It Over
6.Musta Been Outta My Mind 7.All You Hold on To 8.Compromise 9.Become America
10.What Are You Made Of 11.Confession

(orig cd) US Fingerprint 9701

2000.10.10 **LIVE UNDER THE RED MOON**
1.Floating Back 2.A Swim in the Ocean 3.This is Your Life 4.I Don't Wanna
5.You Run 6.Family 7.Same Ol' Story 8.Even Now 9.Red Moon 10.Oklahoma 11.You
Were There 12.I Still Believe (Great Design) 13.Let the Day Begin

(orig cd) US Conspiracy 0009

2000.10.31 **THE BEST OF THE CALL: THE MILLENIUM COLLECTION**
1.Let the Day Begin 2.The Walls Came Down 3.War Weary World 4.Turn a Blind Eye
5.Modern Romans 6.Scene Beyond Dreams 7.Everywhere I Go 8.I Don't Wanna 9.You
Run 10.Surrender 11.What's Happened to You 12.I Still Believe (Great Design)
(Live)

(orig cd) US Hip-O 560825