

THE BEATLES' WITHDRAWN SESSIONS ALBUM

After the breakup of The Beatles in 1970, the EMI archives contained a number of complete songs which had never been released. These included songs like the excellent 'Goodbye', which has finally been released on the 50th Anniversary box set of *Abbey Road*.

However during the Seventies and the Eighties, EMI actively considered releasing an album of unreleased Beatles' recordings. At least 2 track lists were drawn up by EMI during the Seventies, but were not pursued, primarily because of litigation (and rancour) between the band members, at that time.

A more serious attempt was made during 1984 and 1985, when it was proposed to release an album to be called *Sessions*. This album, apparently produced by the late Geoff Emerick, contained 13 never before released tracks. There was some advanced/limited promotion of the proposed album, and embarrassingly it reached the production stage, before being withdrawn. An accompanying *Sessions* single, 'Leave My Kitten Alone'/'Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da', was also scheduled for release. Some copies of the album inadvertently escaped into the public domain (or were inappropriately acquired), and *Sessions* subsequently became very sought after on bootlegs.

At that time, many Beatle devotees (including myself) were very disappointed, and some frustrated fans lobbied EMI/Apple, for its release. This didn't happen, allegedly because Paul, George, Ringo, and probably Neil Aspinall, were not in agreement about the release. On reflection, perhaps this wasn't a bad decision, as a decade later the comprehensive and excellent

Anthology albums were released. They included 12 of the 13 *Sessions* tracks, and the 13th track, 'Christmas Time Is Here Again', appeared on the 'B' side of the 'Free as a Bird' single.

Notwithstanding this, the original *Sessions* album did constitute a very enjoyable collection of unreleased Beatles' songs, which I am sure would have been popular with fans, as a worthwhile stand-alone album, in its own right. The 13 tracks chosen (all of which have been released subsequently) are:

1. Come and Get It: see *Anthology 3* and *Abbey Road* 50th.
2. Leave My Kitten Alone: see *Anthology 1*.
3. Not Guilty: see *Anthology 3* and the *White Album* box set.
4. I'm Looking Through You: a different take, see *Anthology 2*.
5. How Do You Do It: see *Anthology 1*.
6. What's The New Mary Jane: see *Anthology 3* and the *White Album* 50th.
7. Besame Mucho: see *Anthology 1*.
8. If You've Got Troubles: see *Anthology 2*.
9. One After 909: see *Anthology 1*, an earlier (and better) version than the version on the *Let It Be* album.
10. That Means A Lot: see *Anthology 2*.
11. While My Guitar Gently Weeps: early acoustic demo (see *Anthology 3*), and re-recorded with an added orchestral score by Sir George Martin, for the *Love* soundtrack album to the absolutely stunning Las Vegas musical production with Cirque du Soleil.
12. Mailman Bring Me No

More Blues: see *Anthology 3*.

13. Christmas Time (Is Here Again): see B-side to 'Free as a Bird' single.

The *Sessions* CD version, had some extra tracks (see photo).

If you don't own one of the *Sessions* bootlegs, it is worth compiling your own version of this album, and sit back and play it. You will not be disappointed.

Robert Britton

