

All Back to Vinyl – Oasis – Be Here Now

The voice of a generation is one of the most overused terms in rock n' roll but in the case of Oasis at their peak it was true.

The rush for tickets with every gig announcement in the mid-90s was nothing short of a social phenomenon that reached its peak with the band's two nights at Knebworth 26 years ago. The album that followed was Be Here Now which enjoyed critical acclaim by magazine and newspaper titles who had been previously out of touch with the band's first two albums. It was not a hit with many in the band's core fanbase. 25 years on an anniversary reissue allows us to listen with fresh ears away from the hype that was generated by Creation Records back in August 1997.

Oasis vinyl has become highly collectable since they split 13 years ago, a less celebrated August anniversary among a new generation of fans who are unlikely to experience the exhilaration of an Oasis live show. The records continue to contain an innate power of their own all these years on and Be Here Now has no shortage of magic moments. A new picture disc celebrates the 25th anniversary, an impressive double album it features an image of the Gallagher brothers how they once were, having a lark in high spirits while enjoying every minute. The opening cut and No.1 hit record D'You Know What I Mean? remains a stone-cold Oasis classic. It manages to maintain itself as a pop/rock record while still sounding other-worldly and strange with its backwards guitars, nonsense lyrics and sonic guitar assault.



My Big Mouth follows in a similar style, it's easy to forget that Oasis were a heavy band, Noel Gallagher created a monstrous guitar sound on the track but the version recorded at Knebworth captures the best vinyl version of the song. Side two opens with Stand By Me, we've all been reminded of how considerable this track is as it has featured on a bank advert since last year. While many fans don't want to see Oasis licence one of their classic singles out to a bank company it remains one of their most streamed tracks.

Some songs remain a bit of a plod It's Gettin' Better (Man!!) just still sounds like a lazy rehearsal while All Around The World needs an edit. The Noel-fronted Magic Pie is a good idea that never really takes off. That said there are still stand-out album tracks hidden among the obvious singles. I Hope, I Think, I Know has an off-the-cuff charm about it while the

title track reminds us why Oasis were one of the greatest rock n' roll bands of all time that stomped all over the ephemera of Brit-pop. Another timeless ballad Don't Go Away has lost none of its pathos and power over time. The subject of the song was the passing of guitarist Bonehead's mother Delia Arthurs and the record is dedicated to her memory. It was a nice touch by the band, raised by Irish mothers on two Manchester council estates.

This would be the last album to feature original members Paul "Bonehead" Arthurs and Paul "Guigsy" McGuigan, when they left Oasis would become a different beast. Be Here Now undoubtedly has some of the magic of the first two long-players but to this day there's much conjecture among fans about this record more than any other. It remains a favourite for some and anathema to others.

That's the magic of Oasis; even their average songs were better than the majority of what was going on elsewhere at the time. The 90s started strong with Nirvana and Oasis while The Verve would soon soundtrack the end of the decade. Rock n' roll would never enjoy the same kind of mainstream success in the new century and Be Here Now was part of that era drawing to a close. Other formats include a silver-coloured double-heavyweight LP and cassette available exclusively from the band's online store.

