

RALPH

of the **arb**

City Lights
Southern Town
Game
Hard Times
Cool
It's Been on my Mind
I Wonder
Castles in the Sky
Changes
Denny's Paradise
Satellite



best of studio sessions 87-89



RALPH

of the **arb** 1982-93

Personnel: **1982-83** Mark Joslin - Guitar, Julian Watts - Bass, Pat Joslin - Keys/ Sax, James Cann - Drums **1984-85** Mark Joslin - Guitar, Julian Watts - Bass, Pat Joslin - Keys/ Sax, Dave Patrick - Guitar, Phill 'Pod' Stamp - Vocal, James Cann - Drums **1985-86** Pat Joslin - Vocal/ Keys, Dave Patrick - Guitar/ Backing Vocal, Julian Watts - Bass, James Cann - Drums **1987-1988 (No More Than a Lie)** Mark Joslin - Guitar, Julian Watts - Bass, Dave Patrick - Guitar/ B.Vocal, Phill Stamp - Vocal, James Cann - Drums **1988** Mark Joslin - Guitar, Julian Watts - Bass, Pat Joslin - Keys/ B.Vocal, Dave Patrick - Guitar/ B.Vocal, Phill Stamp - Vocal, James Cann - Drums **1988-89 (Southern Town)** Julian Watts - Bass, Pat Joslin - Keys/ B.Vocal, Dave Patrick - Guitar/ B.Vocal, Phill Stamp - Vocal, James Cann - Drums **1989-93** Julian Watts - Bass, Pat Joslin - Keys/ B.Vocal, Dave Patrick - Guitar/ B.Vocal, Phill Stamp - Vocal, James Cann - Drums, Pete Popert - Guitar

This compilation features the best of the **Ralph of the Arb** studio sessions from 1987-1989. Tracks on this album were initially released from 1987's 'No More than a Lie' and 1989's 'Southern Town' respectively. All song credits for the sake of argument go to the entire band. This is not really the case but its far too long after they were written to go into specifics. This CD is testament to the vision and dedication of Pat and Mark Joslin, James Cann, Julian Watts, Dave Patrick, Phill 'Pod' Stamp and Pete Popert. More importantly to Ralph - wherever you are this CD is your fault.

Nearly ten years after the oddly named **Ralph of the Arb** stopped the traffic in Exeter high Street and lo, a mere six years since the demise of probably the greatest band in the World (albeit from Exeter) comes this best of compilation. But that isn't anywhere near the whole story - as far as the band's creative output goes it was nearly spent by the time these sessions were over. Arguably Ralph were at their best when Pat Joslin was producing the creative output between the years of 1985 to the end of 1986 when they moved up to London - well, Crawley to be exact. Most of the best stuff was actually never properly recorded. Experimental - certainly, eclectic - absolutely, but what is for sure is that the best time to catch the band was always live. Songs like 12.30, Bon Voyage, War Factory, Quiet Life, Dry and Caravan were sadly never produced in any decent way and most of the demo tapes were lent, lost and destroyed from that time. However that's not to say that what is on this collection is worthless, far from it and the extra CD of four track recordings and demos goes to show the creative potential of the band in their prime. Also included here are two tracks recorded after Ralph split: Dave Patrick's elongated version of 'City Limits' and the Otis version of 'Trouble' which featured on the recent Otis single 'Pictures of Home' - both of these were recorded in 1995.

So who were ROTA? Well, if you lived in Devon throughout the 80's you may well have caught the band on one of their many 'South West Overkill' tours. ROTA were formed in 1982 by accident, Ralph was a small rabbit with a waistcoat and a watch and the Arb was a large area of land behind the local Village Church. OK so far?

As goes Studio offerings, Ralph had two albums in their long and drawn out history: the hideously named, **'No More than a Lie'** in 1987, and the more airwave friendly follow up, **'Southern Town'** in 1989, from which the bulk of the photography on the cover is taken. With such successes as airplay on Radio Devon and the A&R man at Virgin saying, "Not bad", the band finally decided to call it a day after their final gig at the Beer Engine, New Years Eve 1993.

The Digital mastering was done from old tapes and master CDs produced (unfortunately not brilliantly) by K.G. Engineering - affiliated to Tricky Sound Studios. In many cases, mostly on the extra CD, there are dropouts and tape hiss due to wear and tear on the master tapes. Don't let that detract though - overall the sound is still great on the Studio recordings. Ralph were always a live band, producing in their history well in excess of 100 songs. This compilation is a tribute to the band, the writing ability and the potential. Given another set of circumstances and above all a different location from the 'Southern Town' they were born, it could have been an entirely different story. They nearly made it - Enjoy.

