

Knights of the Blues Table is truly a labor of love. Originally conceived as a tribute to the "Godfathers of British Blues," Cyril Davies and Alexis Korner, the album ended up as a more general celebration of the genre's origins and rich history. The record includes uniformly great performances from members of virtually every important blues-influenced British rock group, including Humble Pie, Cream, Fleetwood Mac, Savoy Brown, John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, the Rolling Stones, Manfred Mann, and scores of others. The disc is a rock family-tree lover's dream, as it reveals the incestuous nature of the scene. What makes Knights of the Blues Table truly stand apart from other tribute records, though, is the obvious love and enthusiasm apparent in every performance. There's no musty musical grave robbing or label politics here. These guys love this music, and it's easy to forget that they once had to buck convention and risk ridicule just to play it. There are so many highlights it's hard to pick just a few, but obvious treats include great harmonica work from Mick Jagger on Lonnie Johnson's "Racketeer Blues" (with brother Chris Jagger on vocals), a rare vocal performance by Cream lyricist Pete Brown on Leroy Carr's "Rocks in My Head," an absolutely blistering take on "Blind Man" by ex-Stone the Crows vocalist Maggie Bell, and a sandpaper-voiced version of Robert Johnson's "Traveling Riverside Blues" by the legendarily reclusive and rarely recorded Peter Green. To top it all off, the album also includes a 1954 home recording of "KC Moan" performed by Cyril Davies himself. In short, Knights of the Blues Table is a recording of extreme historical and cultural importance, a must-have treasure trove for lovers of British blues, and a damn good listen to boot.