



# JUST FOR THE RECORD

by Dennis Barker



## Dion (Dimucci): *Abraham, Martin & John*

*"Didn't you love the things that they stood for? Didn't they try to find some good for you and me?" .....*

Dick Holler

I was never a great fan of Dion, who along with his back band the Belmont's, reeled off a string of 1950's pop tunes, the likes of "Runaround Sue, Teenager in Love and The Wander". My biggest fascination was probably the twist of fate and lack of \$36.00, which put Ritchie Valens in Dion's airplane seat on that fateful flight chronicled in Don McLean's *American Pie*. It would be years later, when as a solo act, his career in rapid decent, Dion Dimucci would become part of my musical pantheon.

*I just looked around and he's gone.....* We had barely risen from the floor. The April 1968 murder of civil rights icon Martin Luther King, had left a stunned and deeply divided America gasping for breath, and on it's heels, the senseless assassination of Bobby Kennedy seemingly crushed the sanguine spirit of America's youth, leaving an eternal blemish on our hearts and souls. No song of the late 60's better captured the sense of America's loss than Dion's extraordinary recording of *Abraham, Martin & John*.

The stars were aligned. In 1968, appearing to be at the end of his career, Dion who had finally gotten his drug problems under control, took one more shot at a new recording contract with Laurie records, his old label from the Belmont's days. The label agreed to give Dion a contract, pursuant to his agreement to record a Dick Holler song they had. Holler, who's previous claim to fame had been a co-writing credit on the inane *Snoopy vs. the Red Baron*, had penned a song about the Kennedy & Martin Luther King assassinations. *Abraham, Martin & John*, would become the crown jewel of Dion's career.

The ballad, with its poignant content, recorded in folk rock style, using oboe, violin and harp instrumentation under Dion's classical guitar, was unlike anything he had done before. *Abraham, Martin & John* would encapsulate the nations grief, and articulate our feelings about the Kennedy-King tragedies. The record would reach #4 on the American charts, and #1 in Canada, revitalizing Dion's career. Although Dion would go on to record several singer/songwriter albums, he would never duplicate his earlier success.

In 2002, Dion Dimucci was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame, for *Runaround Sue*. Humm.... Who'da thunk it.

**Dion: Abraham, Martin & John**  
**Laurie #CS 3464 (RELEASED LATE 1968)**

Goldmine record album price guide values original copies of *Abraham, Martin & John*, with original cover & sleeve, in near mint condition, at \$12.00

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