



JUST FOR THE RECORD

by Dennis Barker



Jimi Hendrix: *Purple Haze*

“Scuse me while I kiss the sky”. Unless you’ve surrendered your soul to the tea party, if you’re pushing 60, I defy you to listen to Hendrix “Purple Haze” without playing a little air guitar. For those who were not making the scene in 1967, the phrase means to get high, and any discussion of rock & roll during that period will eventually turn to the drug culture that permeated the 1960’s youth movement, and Jimi Hendrix was the crown prince of psychedelic’s. Depending on one’s point of view, Hendrix was either archangel or devil of electric guitar. As Dylan is our generation’s poet laureate, and the Beach Boys our summer romance, Hendrix is our favorite bad boy. He doesn’t sneak a cigarette in the high school bathroom, he smokes it on the front steps, his transgressions excused by his genius.

Considered by most to be rock’s greatest electric guitarist, Hendrix got his chops playing in Tennessee in the early 60’s. Having faced a decision between prison and the army in 1961, Hendrix chose the obvious. Jimi slept on duty, couldn’t shoot straight and required constant supervision, and the army would give him the boot in less than a year. With his discharge in hand and army friend Billy Cox, Hendrix formed a band, and moved to Tennessee. Hendrix would later remark “down there you have to play with your teeth or else you get shot. There’s a trail of broken teeth all over the stage”. Jimi was on his way. Later in the decade, Hendrix would work as a session musician in New York City, where in 1966 he was introduced to Chas Chandler (former Animal’s bassist), who took Jimi to London where the “Experience” was formed with English musicians, Noel Redding and Mitch Mitchell. Although ignored by the American market, The Experience toured widely throughout England and Europe, scoring 3 solid single hits with *Hey Joe*, *Purple Haze* and *The Wind Cried Mary*.

1967 brought the UK release of “*Are You Experienced*”, an all new material album, which was only kept from the #1 spot by the bad luck of being released at the same time as the Beatles *Sgt. Peppers*. Later that year, Reprise would release the US/Canadian version of *Are You Experienced*, with a new cover, and modified to include the first 3 Hendrix singles. Where the UK version kicked off with *Foxy Lady*, the US release started with *Purple Haze*. Jimi was going home.

Burning and smashing his guitar, Hendrix would from 1968 into 1970 mesmerize the American youth counter culture. He would tour and record in the U.S., including groundbreaking appearances at the 1968 Monterey Pop Festival and Woodstock in 1969. Hendrix would also record 2 studio albums, *Axis: bold as love* and *Electric Ladyland*, both released in the U.S. during 1968. The live *Band of Gypsy’s* album was released in 1970. The balance of Hendrix discography consists of unreleased live & studio work or compilations.

Bright flames burn out fast. Widely known for his use of psychedelic drugs, Jimi Hendrix would die unceremoniously from a drug overdose in London on September 18, 1970. Jimi was 27 years old.

Jimi Hendrix Experience: Purple Haze

Label: Reprise #0597 (U.S. RELEASE - MARCH 17th 1967)

Goldmine Record Album price guide, Values original copies of *Purple Haze*, in near mint condition, with original cover & sleeve, at \$25.00

One song’s just not good enough for Jimi. So we’ve posted 3 of our favorites.

To give them a listen, visit our website at:

<http://newcenturycollector.com/records>