

My Life In Music

Al Jardine

The Beach Boys mainstay on the records that have him hoisting up the sails: "It just takes me back to a really innocent time"



THE KINGSTON TRIO String Along CAPITOL, 1960

I had already heard The Kingston Trio's version of "The John B Sails" – the original title of "Sloop John B" – when *String Along* came out in 1960. It was their fifth album and the last one with original member Dave Guard. I just loved every song on it. At the

time, nothing beat their folk sound and perfect harmonies. It's still one of my all-time favourites and really takes me back to my early days when I was in my own folk trio called The Islanders. I liked their striped shirts too, ha-ha!



GEORGE GERSHWIN "Rhapsody In Blue" VICTOR MACHINE TALKING CO, 1924

This is probably my all-time favourite song, and it's so amazing that a song that's almost 100 years old is still so powerful – it literally knocks me out every time I hear it. I also enjoyed Brian's *Brian Wilson Reimagines Gershwin* album that features all of our

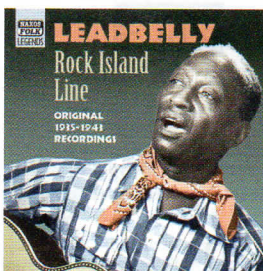
current Brian Wilson band members: Darian Sahanaja, Probyn Gregory, Paul Von Mertens, Mike D'Amico and Gary Griffin, plus the late Nicky Wonder – RIP – and also Jeffrey Foskett. If there's a George Gershwin Music Hall Of Fame, Brian should be in it!



FRANKIE LYMON & THE TEENAGERS Why Do Fools Fall In Love GEE, 1956

I think Frankie Lymon was only 12 when he joined [the band that would become] The Teenagers and [not much older when] they released their big hit "Why Do Fools Fall In Love". I loved that doo-wop sound in the late-'50s, but this song in particular really hit

me with its catchy melody and expressive vocals. The Beach Boys recorded it in early 1964 and then we released it as the B-side to "Fun, Fun, Fun". We still love playing it live – it just takes me back to a really innocent time in the early days of rock'n'roll and I still have the 45 in my own personal jukebox.



LEAD BELLY Cotton Fields (The Cotton Song) FOLKWAYS, 1953

Huddie Ledbetter (aka Lead Belly) first recorded "The Cotton Song" in 1940 and I first heard it in the mid-'50s. I loved Lead Belly's vocals and of course his 12-string felt guitar sound but it was really his heartfelt emotional lyrics written during the Great

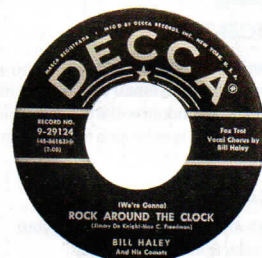
Depression that affected me. I was determined to record a new version for The Beach Boys at a time when we were going off in quite a few different musical directions. We released "Cotton Fields" on our 20/20 album and it ended up being our last single released in mono and on Capitol at the time.



THE BEATLES Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band PARLOPHONE, 1967

Of course it's tough to pick just one Beatles album but this is definitely the one that had a big influence on me, in terms of sheer production, the unique and creative instrumentation and the songs themselves. Coming off the creative highs of *Rubber Soul*

and *Revolver*, *Sgt Pepper's* really took it to the next level and I've always loved the friendly competition we had with The Beatles, it was so inspiring. I'd like to add that "All You Need Is Love", also released in 1967, is the one song I wish I had written!



BILL HALEY & HIS COMETS "Rock Around The Clock" DECCA, 1954

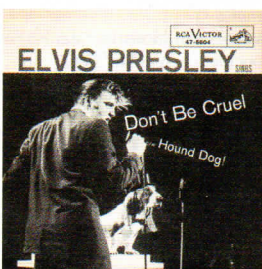
What can I say? Bill Haley literally invented rock'n'roll and "Rock Around The Clock" is the song that really started it all. I never got to see them live but I don't think any other band rocked the joint like Bill Haley & His

Comets. "Rock Around The Clock" has the best snare sound, the best bass and the best guitar solo. Plus who can hear this song and not immediately think of Mel's Drive-In and the beginning of *American Graffiti*? It's timeless... pun intended!



THE MOODY BLUES Days Of Future Passed DERAM, 1967

They are an incredible live band that have seriously stood the test of time. Their 1967 classic *Days Of Future Passed* is a psychedelic rock masterpiece! From sunrise to sunset, every track on this album is a gem and beautifully woven into the next one thanks to Peter Knight's orchestration and Mike Pinder's Mellotron. "Tuesday Afternoon" is still my favourite track from the album and *Days Of Future Passed* is the first album I recently played on my new turntable – it sounded just as epic now as it did in the late-'60s.



ELVIS PRESLEY "Don't Be Cruel" RCA VICTOR, 1956

There are so many great Elvis Presley songs but "Don't Be Cruel" is the one that resonates with me the most, and seeing Elvis perform it on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in 1956 was a life-changing event. I'm really looking forward to seeing the new *Elvis* movie by Baz Luhrmann – our [Beach Boys] manager Jerry Schilling just told me it's pretty amazing after seeing an advance screening with Priscilla. Elvis might have left the building but he'll never leave our lives. 🐕

An expanded version of *Sounds Of Summer: The Very Best Of The Beach Boys* is released by Capitol/UMe on June 17
Uncut's *Deluxe Ultimate Music Guide to The Beach Boys* is in shops now or available from Uncut.co.uk/single