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Abba greatest hits album

© 1996-2014, Amazon.com, Inc. or its affiliates © 1996-2014, Amazon.com, Inc. or its affiliates ©2020 Walmart Stores, Inc. Complete catalogs of almost every artist popular enough to deserve such a collection are available through any streaming service, organized by algorithms, and easy to sort by game number, which means that labels have little reason to waste time and energy in a task that machines have already mastered. Even when the indie rock band Spoon released a record hits earlier this year, the band acknowledged that its passion for form exceeded what was a proposal almost certainly losing businesswise. This love exists because of the real power the greatest hits albums once had: They threw open doors for curious new listeners, solidified the place of artists in the canon, and turned the reputation that fell into disrepair. In his 2016 eulogy for his biggest hits, anthologies and similar reissues, Stephen Thomas Erlewine noted that Bob Marley could have stagnated in relative obscurity had it not been for Legend's 1984 release. Focusing on hits, they crystallize the essence of each star. Erlewine wrote, touching compilations of works by Elton John, Billy Joel and Tom Petty. Over time, the biggest album hits - bought as a package, repeated incessantly on the radio - have formalized the conventionally accepted canon of each act and, in turn, cemented their long-lasting public figures. If the ideal greatest collection hits captures the fundamental truth about an artist, stitch them into a lasting place in our cultural fabric, and sell enough copies to fund the purchase of a minor island, then ABBA Gold-a 79-minute buffet of schlock ballads, elegant pop delicacies, and disco-heat rocks is the definitive example of the format. The 1992 compilation racked up all the Swedish pop band's international hits in a refined package with a surprising emotional range. She capitalized on a simmering, subcultural interest in ABBA's work and triggered a full-blown revival, one that culminated in Meryl Streep and Pierce Brosnan belting and grunting their way through the S.O.S. in the movie version of Mamma Mia! And it has become one of the best-selling albums of all time, with children continuing to leak out of stores in shocking numbers to this day. Thanks to Gold, ABBA has become an integral part of the world around us, their music floating through common spaces around the world as the lingua franca of a music fan; without it, the band could have remained a curious, kind of half-forgotten treasure must look for rather than stumble over. Just over a decade separated Gold's launch from the unceremonious end of his recording career Band. After a delirious rise to the global superstar in the second half of the 1970s, ABBA finally began to lose steam. His two constituent couples: Björn Ulvaeus and Agnetha Faltskog, and Benny Andersson and Frida Frida either separated or divorced by the release of their final album, The Guests, in 1981. And while all four members continued to work together with an impressive level of professionalism, it remained that Ulvaeus and Andersson were writing music and lyrics, including post-parting ballads and hurt domestic dramas, for their ex-wives to sing. The band got tired of touring and promotion after enduring some of the most frenetic appearances on this side of Beatlemania, and fatigue appeared in their music: I'm tired of everything/When I called you last night from Glasgow, Lyngstad sighed on the 1980 super-troupe title track. All I do is eat and sleep and sing/Wish every show was the last show. And after conquering the pop charts in dozens of countries around the world, everyone was ready for a new challenge: Andersson and Ulvaeus dreamed of a detour in the musical theatre, and Faltskog and Lyngstad were curious to revive their latent solo careers. Boring aside, ABBA's commercial tip was clearly in the rearview mirror of the early 1980s. The Visitors was their smallest album since the beginning of their careers, and the band's core audience began to walk in new spaces. Children who grew up with ABBA ubiquitous on radio swept into punk, rap, and new wave; adults who enjoyed their light-hearted melodic hits were less interested in minimally arranged character studies. Studio sessions in the spring of 1982 gave a little more than a few singles, and at the end of that year, it was clear that ABBA's time had come. Andersson and Ulvaeus collaborated with Tim Rice at Chess, a musical about a chess tour (and love triangle) set against the backdrop of the Cold War; Lyngstad made an album with Phil Collins; Faltskog scored several solo hits and duets before largely retiring from public life. From a distance, it must have seemed unlikely that ABBA would explode back into the popular consciousness and remain there indefinitely. However, Gold was perfectly positioned to take advantage of changes in technology, business music, and culture in general, all of which crested alongside the launch of the compilation in 1992. In the decade since the collapse of ABBA, CDs have become the dominant form of physical media and have been accelerating towards them since the beginning of the peak century. While the CD market has grown steadily since the late 1980s, reededs covering the ABBA catalogue have clearly become absent from the shelves of record stores around the world, a consequence of business decisions made near the beginning of the band's career - all managed by the group's famous manager, Stig Anderson - and a string of contracts, renegotiations and acquisitions that followed. Many in the music field raised their eyebrows when Stig signed with various record labels around the world, instead of let a major record label handle the group globally, wrote Magnus Palm in his essential biography ABBA Bright Lights, Dark Shadows: The Real Story of ABBA. But that was the point. Stig's theory was that no company can be strong in every territory in the world, and ABBA's interests would be better served by working with the label that had the most impressive sales presence in every market. Anderson's decision to set up a network of international distributors meant that, with the band's disappearance, the ABBA catalogue could be treated differently according to the needs of each country; the compilation slapped on madrid's shelves would not necessarily be the same as that stored in Melbourne. When Anderson's Polar Music Group (and consequently ABBA's songs and masters) were acquired by Polygram (now part of Universal Music Group) in 1989, the label had to wait for the polar mosaic of licensing chords to expire before designing a coherent strategy with which to approach ABBA's hit library. Plans for a set of boxes were pared back to a single disc, a conservative game intended to evaluate the market for the band's catalog before investing any more resources. The label surveyed its offices around the world in terms of song selection, the market tested the album's cover - its classic, minimal black-by-gold, far from the kitsch of ABBA's studio album artwork - with potential British buyers, and made sequencing decisions based on fan feedback rather than on timeline. Even though Polygram devoted reasonable amounts of time and money to revitalizing ABBA, they still underestimated the amount of latent interest in the band's music until the early 1990s, in part because that enthusiasm was rooted in marginalized communities. For gay men around the world, ABBA's mix of naïve camp - consider the outfits they wore on stage, which ran the range from High Elven couture to sets of white silk kimonos-matching indelible melodies, and the truly harrowing melodrama proved captivating. They wrote hymns for dance queens and men after midnight, accidentally adopting language that would become essential to gay life. And as much as the gay community loved ABBA, the band turned the favor: In the 1980s, especially in the first half, it was like ABBA had been forgotten, Ulvaeus said in a 2019 interview for Gay Times. We thought it was, we'll go ahead and do other things and ABBA will be forgotten. Then it was the gay community that was the basis of the comeback... We felt that we had all the support and it mattered a lot. Goofy cover bands, would be outfit Australian Björn Again built on this enthusiasm for ABBA music and became authentic sensations at clubs around the world, forming kitsch with even more bizarre attire and inter-song banter delivered in Swedish accents. And if ABBA music was not already obvious, it became impossible to ignore in mid-1992, when the cover of Esafe's ep-abba-esque reached the top of the charts in Great Britain and continental Europe. So came the perfect storm around Release: Assembled at an up-time in the music business by a label that approached the ABBA catalog with an unprecedented level of coordination and thinking, delivered to an audience desperate for a convenient way to hear his band's hits. It's a fascinating story, but it still doesn't explain why millions of people around the world were ready to embrace ABBA once again with feeling. What about the music of this band that has spoken, and

continues to speak, to listeners from all languages, cultures and borders? Unlike the vast majority of contemporary hits, the Abba version of pop music is completely divorced from the influence of R&B, hip-hop, soul, funk and Latin music – in short, by non-white musical traditions. Ulvaeus summed up their rather neat approach in a 1981 interview: Our musical roots are European – we love French and Italian songs. Ulvaeus said. This is probably why our songs work well in Latin American countries... in the United States, pop music is strongly influenced by blues, soul, and the gospel—not in ABBA's heritage. Ulvaeus and Andersson grew up on traditional Swedish folk music and schlager music, a sappy, simple pop strain with a clear continental European flair. And when their tastes began to develop as teenagers, they developed a network of influences that remained almost exclusively white: the Golden Hymns of the Beach Boys, Phil Spector's Wall of Sound, Lennon and McCartney about Rubber Soul, classical music and musical theatre. It is no wonder that, as mature composers and songwriters, they have come to favour crystalline melodies, stunning arrangements and counterpoints, and exaggerated emotional gestures. This mix of influences helped create the band's reputation as suppliers of unrefined schmaltz. The songs on the Gold that have aged the worst are the cuts that carry the greatest schlager influences, songs such as Chiquitita and Fernando and I Have a Dream. Even the gorgeous hooks withers against the unelegant English lyrics, the Germanic martial pump and the Faux-Italian ballad. Rare misses aside, hearing the impeccable voices of Faltskog and Lyngstad tinged through riffs, bells and whistles of a battalion is a relentless source of ecstasy. Listening to S.O.S. or Dancing Queen or Super Trouper for the first time can feel like hearing Good Vibrations or Born to Run in the same way: Your pleasure centers are overwhelmed until they explode like the Grinch's little heart, extending beyond their old dimension and becoming something new. Listening to gold with fresh, focused ears, I was struck by the wide variety of sounds under its dazzling Polish. ABBA's ground-zero, which is anchored in my head lies somewhere between Lay All Your Love on Me and The Winner Takes It All: cavernous, sprightly, desperate dance-pop confectionery built for crying in the club. (Robyn one of the heroes of this decade pop by fixing down this same sad-ecstatic balance and welding it to modern, muscular muscle And while this could have become their most distinctive way, it was far from them just one. Take a Chance on Me is best remembered because it's a cappella opening floating chorus, but its lyrics are purely Swedish honky-tonk; I hear them and think of Time Fragments by Daft Punk, a hidden jam on Random Access Memories, built on a warm country boogie. (Speaking of Random Access Memories: while the album's connection to Giorgio Moroder might have been more explicit, its primary sound - expensive, theatrical, continental European pop-is purely ABBA.) Money, Money, Money is the most successful of The Early Incursions of Ulvaeus and Andersson into Musical Theatre, a fantasy that digs gold that gave a real advantage through Lyngstad's dramatic performance. Hit One of Us is heartbroken, lilting reggae, and boasts one of Faltskog's most delicate voices for good measure; Glammy stomper Does Your Mother Know is stupid, fun clean, even if hearingUlvaeus takes the lead makes you wish you'd called them in Elton John for the extremely bitchy guest track spot worth it. Magnificent Knowing Me, Knowing You finds the band at the best and worst in 60 seconds: An elegant chorus with a masculine countermelody leads into a second verse spoiled by whispers, unintentionally pornographic. Skeptics showed the clock accuracy of each new ABBA hit as evidence of the band's lack of soul. In a 1993 TIME essay after Gold's American release, critic Richard Lacayo wrote that the band was always easy to enjoy, if you could put aside the misunderstood sense that they were hastening the decline of pop music in commercial computing and mindless buoyancy. But the level of quality represented on Gold arose from more than intriguing studio or bald ambition. Until ABBA won the 1974 Eurovision contest with Waterloo, Andersson and Ulvaeus enjoyed every decade of internal success as musicians, and Faltskog and Lyngstad worked solo artists. They played together thousands of touring meetings in Sweden, produced music for dozens of other artists, and spent untold hours working as a team of songwriting and performances. Their mastery and enthusiasm for their job was undeniable. Calling ABBA ice or without passion also conveniently elides the complicated balance between their craftsmanship and jelly writing. Take it from no less authority than Max Martin: I'm a sucker for melancholy, recognized the legendary pop producer in a 2001 interview for TIME Europe. I think that's one of the things that comes from [Sweden]. If you listen to ABBA... it's always a kind of melancholy. Ulvaeus and Andersson have been able to balance since S.O.S., ABBA's first major international hit since Waterloo. It looks like Faltskog is singing the first verse from the bottom of a well, her loneliness and despair are so thick, you can almost touch them. When the choir finally its warmth is palpable until, all of a sudden, it is not. When you are gone, Faltskog chirping, can I even try to move on? The contrast is strong, and it's irresistible. As the division of labour between Andersson and Ulvaeus became clearer later in the band's discography—the first manipulated most of the music, the second wrote most of the lyrics—the division between matter and sound became even more pronounced. The tumult of the band's personal life began to subtly flow into their art: Knowing Me, Knowing You and The Winner Takes It All are sweeping into decaying marriages, sung by adults who know they can't help but continue with their lives. Relatively stupid discounts as the future booty-call gimme anthem! Gimme! Gimme! (A man after midnight) are marked quiet emergency: Half-past 12 / And I'm watching the late show in my apartment alone / I don't like to spend the evening on my own, Faltskog moans. Even Dancing Queen, the band's happiest moment, can't fully surrender to pleasure. It's a celebration of the impermanence. You may be young and sweet now, but you won't be 17 forever. Erlewine wrote that the biggest hits have a way of removing artists' shards, and the same goes for Gold. Polygram's decision to detach the sequence of ABBA's career arc album makes it more difficult to assess the band's gradual transformation. The silly and glamy Swedes who galloped on to the Eurovision stage conquered the world, stormed the disco and finished their careers by making the saddest and strangest music yet. (The new ABBA music recorded at a 2018 meeting has reportedly not materialised). And yet Gold still conveys one thing you really need to know about the band: For about a decade, these four Swedes cracking the code on pop music. Buy: Rough Trade (Pitchfork can earn a commission from purchases made through affiliate links on our website.) Back home

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