

CARPENTERS COLLECTION



TIME
LIFE
MUSIC

The Carpenters—sister Karen and brother Richard—emerged from Downey, in Southern California, singing pop songs at a time when rock and psychedelic music were heavily favored on top-40 airwaves. With Karen's timeless alto, overdubbed vocal harmonies and Richard's ability to write and arrange, the Carpenters became one of the most successful acts in pop music history, achieving worldwide fame and selling upwards of 100 million recordings.

Before they became known as the Carpenters, Karen and Richard played together in Spectrum, a pop group formed in 1967 by Richard, Karen and John Bettis, a lyricist Richard had met in college, and who became his song-writing partner. Spectrum, of course, foreshadowed the Carpenters sound, and in 1967 that meant "too soft" to most record industry personnel. After Spectrum disbanded in mid-1968, Karen and Richard continued on their own. With Joe Osborn, a prominent west coast studio bassist, as recording engineer, Karen and Richard recorded a demo of three Carpenter-Bettis compositions in Osborn's garage studio. After a string of rejections, the demo ended up with A&M Records'

co-founder Herb Alpert. Alpert was impressed and in April 1969 his partner Jerry Moss signed Karen and Richard.

In October of that year, A&M released the Carpenters' first single, Richard's ballad arrangement of Lennon and McCartney's **Ticket to Ride**. Although it received quite a bit of airplay in some markets, the single never caught fire and ultimately peaked at No. 54 in early 1970.

(They Long to Be) Close to You was a Burt Bacharach-Hal David song originally recorded by Dionne Warwick in 1963. Bacharach became a Carpenters' fan after hearing their version of *Ticket to Ride*, and asked them to build a medley of his songs to sing at a benefit concert at which he would be performing. Alpert thought *Close to You* would be good for the Carpenters and gave Richard, who was not familiar with the song, a lead sheet. Richard put together an arrangement, but, not particularly taken with the song, opted against it for the medley. At Alpert's subsequent urging, however, Karen and Richard recorded the song in its entirety. Alpert had been right, and *Close to You*, released in May 1970, was a perfect summer record and in six weeks' time occupied the No. 1 position, where it

stayed for four weeks.

Songwriters Paul Williams and Roger Nichols, who were signed with A&M's publishing arm, wrote **We've Only Just Begun** for a bank commercial targeted at newlyweds. Richard heard it on television one night and the following day got a demo and went to work. A perfect song for Karen's voice and the Carpenters' sound, the record became their second consecutive hit and remains the Carpenters' signature song.

As a result of the success of *Close to You*, *We've Only Just Begun* and the *Close to You* album that contained those songs, Karen and Richard were caught up in a whirlwind of television and concert appearances. As *Begun* peaked at No. 2 in November of 1970, the Carpenters, who had not found time to record any new material, were worried about a follow-up recording.

Having arrived in Toronto to open for Engelbert Humperdinck, Karen and Richard decided to relax and see the movie *Lovers and Other Strangers*, where-in they heard **For All We Know**. Immediately impressed with the song, they recorded it upon returning from their tour. The single became their third consecutive

million seller, peaked at No. 3 in early 1971 and won an Oscar for Best Song of 1970. Also in 1971, Nichols and Williams pitched them **Rainy Days and Mondays**, which the Carpenters took to No. 2. That was followed by Leon Russell and Bonnie Bramlett's haunting **Superstar**, which Richard had heard Bette Midler sing one night on Johnny Carson's *The Tonight Show*. The recording—featuring a first-take lead vocal by Karen—also reached No. 2. **Hurting Each Other** had originally been recorded by Ruby and the Romantics. Richard heard their version of *Hurting* when released by A&M in 1969, and believed it to be a hit. When this failed to happen, Richard filed the song for future use. Changing the original arrangement from Bossa Nova to rhythm ballad, the Carpenters released *Hurting Each Other* in early 1972. It peaked at No. 2 and became their sixth consecutive million seller. **It's Going to Take Some Time** was co-written by Carole King and Toni Stern. While remaining one of Richard's most favored Carpenters' recordings, he does not believe it was one of his stronger choices as a single. Released after *Hurting Each Other*, it reached No. 12.

In the summer of 1972, **Goodbye to**



Love became the first Carpenters single written by the team of Richard Carpenter and John Bettis. *Goodbye* was a bit of a departure for the Carpenters, as Richard's arrangement called for a melodic fuzz guitar solo. Played by ex-Raider Mark Lindsay's guitarist Tony Peluso (who soon became the Carpenters' guitarist), the solo alienated some fans, who accused Karen and Richard of selling out. Conversely, the recording attracted some listeners who had previously thought the Carpenters too bland. When all was said and done, however, *Goodbye to Love* returned Karen and Richard to the top 10 where it reached No. 7.

In January 1973, the Carpenters, Sandy Duncan, Arte Johnson and a group of children appeared on an ABC Television special *Robert Young with the Young*, which featured the infectious **Sing**, written earlier by Joe Raposo for *Sesame Street*. Karen and Richard recorded their own version with the Jimmy Joyce Children's Choir; it hit No. 3 in early 1973. Carpenter and Bettis wrote **Yesterday Once More** to bookend side two of the Carpenters' 1973 album *Now and Then*, which featured eight oldies segued into a radio show format, with

Tony Peluso as the DJ. With its beguiling melody and its lyric speaking to the new-found affection for nostalgia, *Yesterday Once More* was a smash worldwide, reaching No. 2 in the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as becoming a phenomenon, along with *Now and Then*, in Japan. Carpenter and Bettis also penned **Top of the World**. Included in the June 1972 album release *A Song for You*, Karen and Richard initially perceived *Top of the World* as "just a pleasant little album cut," but they began to think differently after it became an American country hit for Lynn Anderson and was culled by the Japanese, becoming a hit there as well. Some American top-40 stations were charting *Top of the World* based on requests alone and fan mail urging its release as a single arrived non-stop. Karen and Richard finally released it as a single, but not before Karen recut her lead, as she was never happy with the original. Richard also changed the steel guitar parts and added electric guitar, after which the recording was remixed. When the single finally came out, about 13 months after the song first appeared, it shot to No. 1.

I Won't Last a Day Without You was



crafted for the Carpenters by Nichols and Williams; it had been in release almost two years on the LP *A Song for You* before it finally hit in 1974. **Please Mr. Postman**, No. 1 for the Marvelettes in 1961, exceeded Richard's expectations to become the duo's third No. 1 single in the United States and their biggest international hit ever.

In 1975, the Carpenter-Bettis composition **Only Yesterday** presaged Richard's move into more complex arrangements and followed *Postman* into the top 5, while the next year's **There's a Kind of Hush (All Over the World)** successfully revived a Herman's Hermits' oldie. **I Need to Be in Love**, which Albert Hammond co-wrote with Carpenter and Bettis, was as close as Richard and John got to confessional song writing. "Our love lives at the time were close to nonexistent due to career pressures," Richard recalls. With a strong melody and lyric, the song became "Karen's favorite of all our songs."

Richard considers his 1977 version of Klaatu's **Calling Occupants of Interplanetary Craft** perhaps his finest production achievement. Klaatu was a group of Canadian studio musicians who produced music that was well-made and

sounded similar to the Beatles. "Klaatu used mostly synthesizers and I thought we'd turn it into an even larger production with symphony orchestra and chorus, in addition to fuzz guitar solos and singing aliens."

Karen got the Juice Newton-Otha Young-Kay Judy tune **Sweet, Sweet Smile** from Newton's manager, a onetime associate of the Carpenters' manager. The Carpenters' version just missed the top 40 in 1978, but Karen and Richard came back strong in 1981 with **Touch Me When We're Dancing**, their last top-20 single.

Karen died on February 4th, 1983, at the age of 32, of complications due to anorexia nervosa, an eating disorder with which she had been struggling for eight years. The Carpenters' popularity, however, did not die with her. Several posthumous collections have proven very successful, and in 1989, a highly-rated CBS *Movie of the Week* introduced a new generation of listeners to the timelessness of both Karen's voice and the Carpenters' music.



16. (They Long to Be) Close to You *Music by Burt Bacharach, lyrics by Hal David. Casa David/New Hidden Valley. ASCAP. A&M 1183 (1970). No. 1**

17. Please Mr. Postman *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Robin Bateman and Freddy C. Gorman. Jobete Music Co., Inc. ASCAP./Stone Agate Music. BMI. A&M 1646 (1974). © 1975 A&M Records, Inc. No. 1**

18. Sing *Music and lyrics by Joe Raposo. Jonico Music, Inc. ASCAP. A&M 1413 (1973). © 1973 A&M Records, Inc. No. 3**

19. All You Get from Love Is a Love Song *Music and lyrics by Steven Paul Eaton. BMG Songs, Inc. ASCAP. A&M 1940 (1977). © 1977 A&M Records, Inc. No. 35**

20. I Need to Be in Love *Music by Richard Carpenter, lyrics by John Bettis and Albert Hammond. Almo Music Corp./Hammer and Nails Music. ASCAP. A&M 1828 (1976). © 1976 A&M Records, Inc. No. 25**

21. Yesterday Once More *Music and lyrics by John Bettis and Richard Carpenter. Almo Music Corp./Hammer and Nails Music. ASCAP. A&M 1446 (1973). © 1973 A&M Records, Inc. No. 2**

Arranged by Richard Carpenter
Tracks 1-7, 9, 10, 14, 16 produced by Jack Daugherty; all other tracks produced by Richard Carpenter
All vocals by Karen and Richard Carpenter
Remix Engineer: Roger Young

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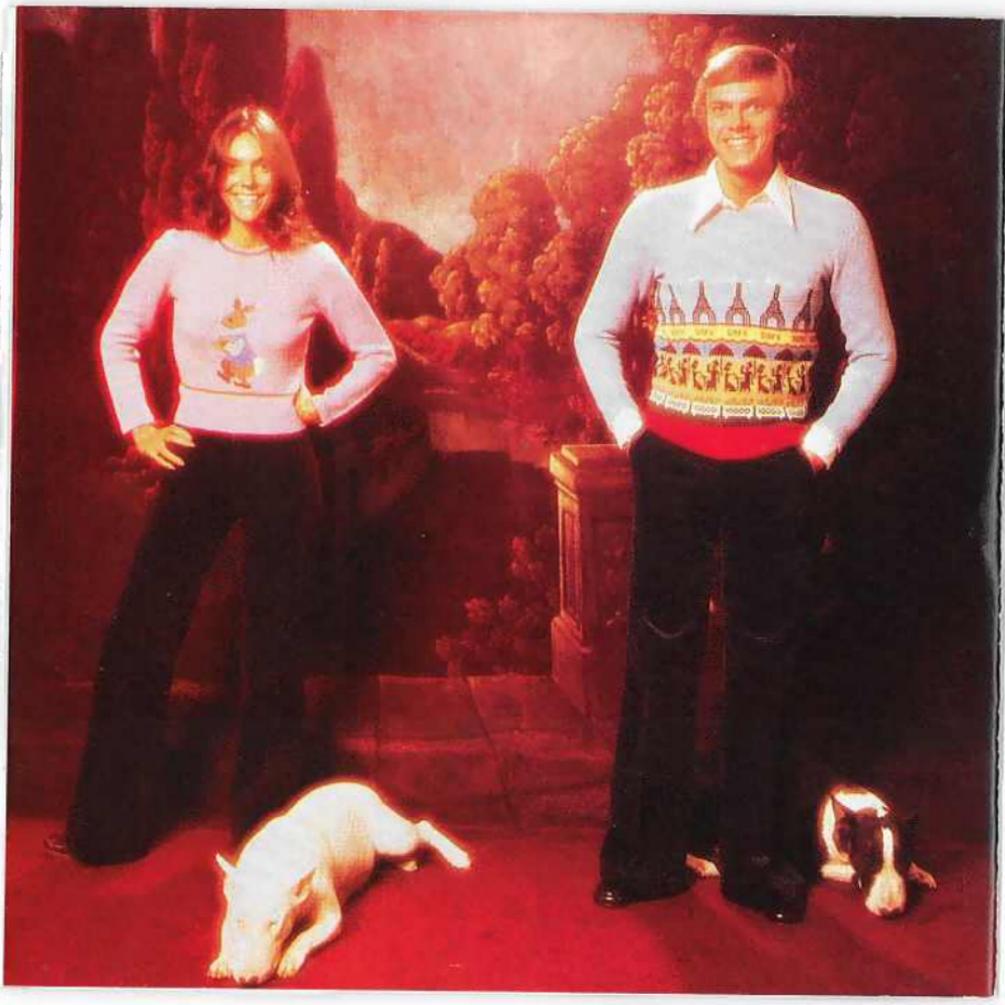
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SUD-21

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

TIME
LIFE
MUSIC

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A&M
RECORDS

1. We've Only Just Begun
2. Superstar
3. Rainy Days and Mondays
4. Top of the World
5. Ticket to Ride
6. Goodbye to Love
7. It's Going to Take Some Time
8. Sweet, Sweet Smile
9. I Won't Last a Day Without You
10. Hurting Each Other
11. There's a Kind of Hush
12. Calling Occupants of Interplanetary Craft
13. Only Yesterday
14. For All We Know
15. Touch Me When We're Dancing
16. Close to You
17. Please Mr. Postman
18. Sing
19. All You Get from Love Is a Love Song
20. I Need to Be in Love
21. Yesterday Once More

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9. I Won't Last a Day Without You
10. Hurting Each Other
11. There's a Kind of Hush
(All Over the World)
12. Calling Occupants of
Interplanetary Craft (The
Recognized Anthem of World
Contact Day)
13. Only Yesterday
14. For All We Know
15. Touch Me When We're Dancing
16. (They Long to Be) Close to You
17. Please Mr. Postman
18. Sing
19. All You Get from Love Is
a Love Song
20. I Need to Be in Love
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