



NOT SO SILLY AFTER ALL

MPL COMMUNICATIONS AND MIRAMAX FILMS

By Charles Apple | THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

After the breakup of the Beatles in 1969, Paul McCartney kept on writing, singing and releasing hit songs. He did this under various names: His own, as “Paul and Linda McCartney,” “Paul McCartney and Wings” and just “Wings.”

In the first decade after the breakup, McCartney would hit No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 seven times and would land 16 singles in the Top-10. His biggest hit, “Silly Love Songs” landed at No. 1 a half century ago, on May 22, 1976.

‘WHAT’S WRONG WITH THAT? I’D LIKE TO KNOW ...’

Paul McCartney wrote “Silly Love Songs” in response to music critics — and his former Beatles songwriting partner, John Lennon — who accused McCartney of writing lightweight love songs and sentimental slush.

“The fact is, deep down, people are very sentimental,” McCartney explained. “If they watch a sentimental movie at home, they cry. But in public, they won’t. We

don’t like to show our emotions. We tend to sneer at that.

“In the same way, people may not admit to liking love songs,” he continued, “but that’s what they seem to crave.”

McCartney gave Linda a co-writing credit on the song, despite having triggered legal action from his publishers for doing that with “Another Day” in 1971.



MPL COMMUNICATIONS

Paul and Linda McCartney and the rest of Wings hold a promotional event for their new single at Checkpoint Charlie in Berlin, West Germany.

‘... ’CAUSE HERE I GO AGAAAAAIN ...’

McCartney composed “Silly Love Songs” on a piano while on vacation in Hawaii. He then transposed the melody to bass, making it the lead instrument.

“We really pushed the bass and drums right out front,” McCartney said. But it pushed the song along quite nicely. Pushed it hard. We wanted to make something you could dance to.”

Music buyers noticed right away that the song had a bit of a disco feel, as well as cozy vocal interplay between McCartney and Linda on the chorus. The song utilized multiple vocal parts in counterpoint, like in the Beach Boys’ “God Only Knows,” which McCartney has often cites as his all-time favorite song.

“Silly Love Songs” kicked off with a sound effect similar to “Money” by Pink Floyd. McCartney used a conga, sandpaper, metal being hit and metal being scraped. McCartney’s colleagues referred to it as “the robot on the front.”

“Silly Love Songs” was released on April 1,

1976 and, by May 22, rose to No. 1 — becoming McCartney’s 27th No. 1 song as a songwriter.

It was knocked out of the top spot by Diana Ross’ “Love Hangover” but, after two weeks, reclaimed No. 1 and held it for four consecutive weeks, through July 10, when it was displaced by “Afternoon Delight” by the Starland Vocal Band.

On the U.K. singles chart, however, “Silly Love Songs” was blocked from No. 1 by a novelty song: “Combine Harvester” by a self-described “Scrupmy and Western” band, the Wurzels.

McCartney’s next single, “Let ‘Em In,” he had intended to offer to Ringo Starr. But he decided to keep it for himself. It would become the second single from their “Wings at the Speed of Sound” album.

Cashbox magazine’s rock critic would call it a “better, more substantial tune” than “Silly Love Songs.” “Let ‘Em In” would peak at No. 3 on the Hot 100 chart.



CAPITOL RECORDS

MCCARTNEY’S FIRST DECADE OF SINGLES, SOLO AND WITH WINGS

RELEASED	PEAK ON THE BILLBOARD HOT 100
Feb. 19, 1971	Another Day #5
Aug. 2, 1971	Uncle Albert/Admiral Halsey 1 week at No. 1 > #1
Feb. 18, 1972	Give Ireland Back to the Irish #21
May 19, 1972	Mary Had a Little Lamb #28
Dec. 1, 1972	Hi, Hi, Hi #10
March 23, 1973	My Love 4 weeks at No. 1 > #1
June 1, 1973	Live and Let Die #2
Oct. 26, 1973	Helen Wheels #10
Jan. 28, 1974	Jet #7
April 8, 1974	Band on the Run 1 week at No. 1 > #1
Nov. 1, 1974	Junior’s Farm #3
Nov. 1, 1974	Sally G #17
May 16, 1975	Listen to What the Man Said 1 week at No. 1 > #1
September 1975	Letting Go #39
Oct. 27, 1975	Venus and Mars/ Rock Show #12
April 1, 1976	Silly Love Songs 5 weeks at No. 1 > #1
July 23, 1976	Let ‘Em In #3
Feb. 4, 1977	Maybe I’m Amazed (LIVE) #10
May 31, 1977	Seaside Woman #59 <small>Written by Linda and credited to “Suzy and the Red Stripes”</small>
Nov. 11, 1977	Girl’s School #33
March 20, 1978	With a Little Luck 2 weeks at No. 1 > #1
June 16, 1978	I’ve Had Enough #25
Aug. 25, 1978	London Town #39
March 23, 1979	Goodnight Tonight #5
June 5, 1979	Getting Closer #20
Aug. 14, 1979	Arrow Through Me #29
Nov. 19, 1979	Wonderful Christmastime #26
April 11, 1980	Coming Up 3 weeks at No. 1 > #1

Sources: “Wings: The Story of a Band on the Run” by Paul McCartney, “Paul McCartney: A Life” by Peter Ames Carlin, “Lennon and McCartney: Together Alone” by John Blaney, “The Beatles: An Illustrated Record” by Roy Carr and Tony Tyler, Songfacts, Ultimate Classic Rock, the Beatles Bible