



**BOBBIE GENTRY
'THE DELTA SWEETE'**

**2 CD & DELUXE EDITION LP WITH 10 BONUS TRACKS
FEATURING A NEW STEREO MIX**

**CD FEATURES ORIGINAL MONO MIX
LP NOT ON VINYL SINCE 1972**

Released by UMC on 31 July 2019

2018's Grammy nominated *The Girl From Chickasaw County* Box Set reacquainted the world with the beguiling work of enigmatic singer-songwriter, Bobbie Gentry. Universally acclaimed, the Box Set housed all seven of the studio albums she recorded for Capitol, including the one which has over the years become recognised as her brilliant conceptual masterpiece: *The Delta Sweete*.

On 31st July, UMC will release an expanded edition of 'The Delta Sweete' on 2 CD and deluxe 2-disc vinyl. The expanded CD edition features a new stereo mix of the album (sourced directly from the surviving four-track and eight-track tapes) by Producer/Compiler Andrew Batt, alongside the original mono mix making its debut on CD. There are a total of 10 bonus tracks to treasure, including a previously unreleased original demo 'The Way I Do' and a special instrumental version of 'Okolona River Bottom Band' featuring the great Shorty Rogers on bass trumpet. The deluxe vinyl is the first official repress of the album since 1972 and features the new stereo mix on disc 1 and the 10 bonus tracks on disc 2.

Released in February 1968, barely six months after Bobbie Gentry's debut LP, 'The Delta Sweete' may not have contained anything as career-defining as the song 'Ode to Billie Joe', but it represented a definite step forward in its musical ambition: A multi-faceted, quasi-concept album, where each track blurred, dream-like, into the next, the songs evoked the melancholy adolescent world of Bobbie's childhood in Chickasaw County while further deepening her fascination with loss, illusion and the often comic absurdity of the conventions of everyday life. Even the album's name was pure Gentry, the 'Sweete' in the title punning on both Bobbie's Southern-belle good looks (a pretty girl in the South might be referred to as a sweete) and the album's musical song structure. The artwork also poetically evoked the music it contained, featuring a double exposure of a contemplative black and white image of Bobbie in tight close-up, superimposed onto a colour photo of a run-down shack taken on her grandparents' farm where she grew up.

West Coast jazz pioneer Shorty Rogers was a notable addition to the Gentry sound, helping to move 'The Delta Sweete' away from the largely acoustic feel of her debut, and together they opened up her songs to a broader pallet of instrumentation. The strings were once again orchestrated by Jimmie Haskell whose memorable arrangement on 'Ode to Billie Joe', would win him a Grammy in the spring of '68. The great Elvis TCB band leader James Burton features on guitar and Hal Blaine is socking it on drums. The resulting production gave Bobbie a unique and distinctive sound that merged country, soul, chamber-pop and psychedelia, quite unlike anyone else. The album begins back "in Chickasaw land" with the swampy southern groove of 'Okolona River Bottom Band' and progresses through a mixture of originals such as 'Reunion', 'Jessye' Lisabeth', 'Refractions' and 'Mornin' Glory', entwined with some carefully chosen covers like Mose Allison's 'Parchman Farm' and two of Willie Dixon's – 'Big Boss Man' and session outtake 'The Seventh Son'. Other bonus tracks included Bobbie's beautifully laid-back demo of the Anthony Newley / Leslie Bricusse classic 'Feelin' Good', and an alternate version of her own 'Mississippi Delta' that was originally intended to close out the LP's second side.

Whilst the album flopped commercially upon its original release, today 'The Delta Sweete' is considered by fans and critics alike to represent the pinnacle of Bobbie's artistry; recently placed 4th in Uncut Magazine's 'Ultimate Genre Guide' to the top 40 singer-songwriter albums of all time, the LP is justly acknowledged as one of the great previously unsung masterpieces of the 60's. Just over 50 years after its release, US indie rock band Mercury Rev with special guests that included Hope Sandoval, Beth Orton, Vashti Bunyan, Laetitia Sadler and Lucinda Williams paid homage with their re-recorded tribute album *The Delta Sweete Revisited* helping a whole new audience to discover the brilliance of Bobbie's Delta soul. Mercury Rev frontman Jonathan Donahue described Bobbie's original LP as "a gem of an album. It feels like an island that someone left off a map. It was always flourishing and is still vibrantly alive... It's just that people didn't know to sail over there to see it". 'The Delta Sweete' is now firmly back on the map, and many more will be ready to make that journey - if you haven't already, it's time to set sail.

For full product info, tracklisting & more: <http://bobbiegentry.org.uk>
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