

THE ROLLING STONES

BEGGARS BANQUET

ALBUM NOTES

Release Date: November, 1968

Top Chart Position: No. 5, reached January 11, 1969

Standout Tracks: "Sympathy for the Devil," "Street Fighting Man," "No Expectations" and "Salt of the Earth"

Significance: Signified a return to the band's blues roots, forsaking psychedelic experimentation; included songs with social and political commentary that reflected the political turbulence of 1968; incorporated world music elements such as African rhythms in "Sympathy for the Devil."

Milestone: Considered among the greatest blues-based rock albums of all time.



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FOREWORD

At the time of its release at the end of 1968, *Beggars Banquet* was widely hailed as a return to form for the Rolling Stones. Their *Satanic Majesties Request*, released the previous year, was thought to be a noble, but not entirely successful, experiment. Leaving the ethereal and psychedelic behind, the band first entered London's Olympic Studios in March with American producer Jimmy Miller, who had previously worked with The Spencer Davis Group and Traffic. *Beggars Banquet* would be Brian Jones' last hurrah with the band prior to his departure and subsequent death. His role in the band had been diminishing, but he is heard playing slide guitar on "No Expectations," harmonica on "Dear Doctor" and "Prodigal Son," tamboura on "Street Fighting Man," and Mellotron on "Stray Cat Blues."

The album's undisputed and eternal touchstone is its first track, "Sympathy for the Devil." Together with track one ("Street Fighting Man") on the original vinyl album's second side, "Sympathy for the Devil" encapsulated the political and social turbulence that swept through Western Europe and Britain at the time. The African rhythms and overtly satanic lyric content of "Sympathy" were the perfect musical underbed for the era. "Street Fighting Man" became the battle cry of the student uprisings that swept the European continent, the United States and Mexico; the Stones had provided the soundtrack for a revolution, it seemed.

Acoustic blues resonate through the album with the poignant "No Expectations" and anthemic "Salt of the Earth." The only non-original on the album is "Prodigal Son"—a rootsy, honest reworking of Reverend Robert Wilkins' song that was first recorded in Memphis in 1929. It's an earthy delight that includes guitar work from Ry Cooder. "Stray Cat Blues," with its sleazy theme of underage cheap thrills, reinforces the band's bad boy image in a most shocking and, perhaps, tongue-in-cheek way.

From a visual perspective, the album has resonated through the decades. The sessions were documented by French new-wave director Jean Luc Godard in the film *One Plus One* that was retitled *Sympathy for the Devil* in recognition of the power of the song. The album cover became almost as big a cause célèbre as the provocative songs it was meant to package. The band's choice was a shot of a raunchy toilet stall festooned with graffiti (one note reads "BOB DYLAN'S DREAM," with an arrow pointing to the flush handle). Both the U.K. (Decca) and U.S. (London) labels rejected the art and a standoff ensued with the band that delayed the release. Ultimately, a simple mock invitation in a florid script was used but the rawness of the music powered through the sanitized cover art.

Beggars Banquet proved to be a career landmark for the Rolling Stones. The songs confirmed the Jagger/Richards team preeminence in the field of primal, blues-based rock that would stand for all time.

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Moderately slow ♩ = 92

E

9fr.

31114

Acous. Gtr. 1

mf

4/4

*Acous. Gtr. 2 in Open E tuning: ⑥ = E; ⑤ = B; ④ = E; ③ = G[#]; ② = B; ① = E

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STREET FIGHTING MAN

All gtrs. in Open D tuning:

⑥ = D ③ = F#

⑤ = A ② = A

④ = D ① = D

Words and Music by
MICK JAGGER and KEITH RICHARDS

Moderate rock ♩ = 126

Intro:



Acous. Gtr. 1 (w/dist.)

mf hold throughout

T	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
A	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
B	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10

T	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
A	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
B	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10

T	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
A	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
B	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10

Acous. Gtr. 2

mf

T	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
A	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
B	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11