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PETE ATKIN

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Beware Of The Beautiful Stranger

Driving Through Mythical America

Both Edsel CDs

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Pete Atkin had been a member of Cambridge Footlights with the now infamous Clive James. DJ Kenny Everett was a huge fan and tried to push the geeky

singer towards the big time but music so thoughtful and enigmatic was just too far from the hit parade, prog rock or even singer songwriters to catch on with anyone other than the critics who adored his singular approach.

Although Australian, James' broad range of subjects topped off by his incisive lyrical wit was the perfect adage to Atkin's quintessentially English voice. Just like Kevin Ayers, Syd Barret, David Bowie and the wonderful Barry Booth (who had *Monty Python's* Michael Palin and Terry Jones doing for him what James did for Atkin) there was no doubting the singer's origin.

Beware Of The Beautiful Stranger (1970) and *Driving Through Mythical America* ('71) musically traversed acoustic folk-tinged accompaniments, baroque orchestration, music hall, and on the second, a cool rock backing (performed by members of Blue Mink and a whole host of top players including Chris Spedding). 'Sunlight Grate' (from *Driving Through Mystical America*) has that same carnivalesque tone as Tim Buckley's early work or the immense narrative landscape of the Gibb brothers' most haunting pieces. For an artist who considered himself unfashionable these tunes have a suitably timeless cool about them.

This brilliant partnership's remaining LPs from '73-75 are also available on Edsel. Each CD is packed with informative track-by-track notes by the protagonists themselves, press quotes and pics.

Jon 'Mojo' Mills

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