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## The Muffins - *Double Negative*



Released: 2004

Label: [Cuneiform Records](#)

Cat. No.:

Total Time: 79:10

Reviewed by: [Marcelo Silveyra](#), July 2005

If the members of The Muffins were supposed to sit still and rest on their laurels after their great comeback *Bandwidth*, someone forgot to tell them. In fact, while that someone was contending with the unfortunate effects of advanced Alzheimer's, some insidious commie was telling them instead to go balls out with their sophomore reunion album. Thomas Scott, Dave Newhouse, Billy Swann, and Paul Sears listened. Sort of. While they went light years beyond what their previous album had to offer, they didn't just create a nonsensical ball of chaos to turn the capitalist world on its back and kill it; they actually made sure that they were making good music. So the Alzheimer's dude didn't win, and neither did the commie, but the rest of the world sure as hell did.

*Double Negative* might not be as satisfying a general experience as its predecessor was, but if there has ever been a case of experimentation being worth it, this is it. True, the most enjoyable tracks are also the most traditional, particularly the hilarious brass powerhouses of "Choombachang" and "Exquisite Corpse," both incredibly exciting with their surf rock and spy music quotations, but the more unexpected stuff usually pays off as well. There is, for instance, the macabre string commencement of "They Come On Unknown Nights," which reminded yours truly of Celtic Frost's forays into the string realm. Yes, Celtic Frost, the metal band. And it works. In

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fact, the only instrumental of a little more avant-garde doesn't really work is "Metropolis." In a seventeen-pie which roughly half the stuff belongs to that area, that's track record.

And the other half keeps up in pretty much the same r only complaints to be made are that some keyboard s overly cheesy, that a couple of softer tracks get to be t for their own good (particularly "Childhood's End"), an other pieces seem to lose their sense of larger structu points. Otherwise, one better be ready for stuff such th attitude that unexpectedly closes "Writing Blind" and t dissonances of "Stethorus Punctum;" the fire and fines the members of The Muffins play their instruments; an array of contrasts to be experienced like a delightful v stuff indeed. Goes to show what a man with Alzheimer commie can do.

Similar artists: Hatfield and the North, Soft Machine, C Davis

Rating: 4/5

*More about Double Negative:*

Track Listing: The Highlands (6:04) / Writing Blind (5:54) / Choombachang (2:45) / The Ugly Buttlng (3:39) / The M Skin-Painted Suit (2:44) / Childhood's End (6:15) / Exqui (6:52) / They Come On Unknown Nights (4:18) / Cat's G: Stethorus Punctum (4:01) / Dawning Star (5:20) / 5:00 S Metropolis (3:35) / Angel From Lebanon (6:55) / Frozen / Maya (4:24) / The Two Georges (5:19)

**Musicians:**

Thomas Frasier Scott - Sax, flute, clarinet, keyboards, programming  
 Dave Newhouse - Keyboards, sax, bass clarinet, flute,  
 Billy Swann - Bass, guitar  
 Paul Sears - Drums, guitar

**Guest musicians:**

Doug Elliot - Trombone  
 Amy Taylor - Violin  
 Laura Dent - Cello  
 Kristin Snyder - Viola  
 Marshall Allen - Alto sax  
 Knoel Scott - Alto and baritone sax  
 Okorie Johnson - Cello

**Contact:**

*Website: [www.themuffins.org](http://www.themuffins.org)*  
*Note: will open new browser window*

**Discography**

- *Manna/Mirage*

- [Open City](#)
- [185 \(1981\)](#)
- [Bandwidth \(2002\)](#)
- [Double Negative \(2004\)](#)

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