

## THE MOODY BLUES

Title: Caught Live & 5

Label: London

Release Date: 1977

Medium: Double Album

Availability: Very Good

Venue: Royal Albert Hall, London, England

Recording Date: December 12, 1969

Lineup: Justin Hayward - Guitar, vocals  
John Lodge - Bass, vocals  
Ray Thomas - Flute, vocals

Graeme Edge - Drums  
Mike Pinder - Keyboards, vocals

Set List: Gypsy  
The Sunset  
Dr. Livingstone, I Presume  
Never Comes The Day  
Peak Hour  
Tuesday Afternoon  
Are You Sitting Comfortably?

The Dream  
Have You Heard (Pt. 1)  
The Voyage  
Have You Heard (Pt. 2)  
Nights In White Satin  
Legend of a Mind  
Ride My See-Saw

The Moody Blues were a fixture in rock music for nearly fifty five years between their formation in 1964 and final breakup in 2018. During that time, they were one of the most important groups in rock history.. They were one of the first bands to combine rock with classical music, one of the first to record a concept album, one of the first to use a mellotron, one of the first to form their own label, and have sold millions of records in the process. After going on an extended hiatus in 1973, they resurrected themselves in the late seventies, updated their sound, and released three platinum albums through 1986.

Overall, they placed twenty albums on the American pop albums chart. Six of their albums have been certified platinum in the United States, with eight more certified gold. Their success also transferred to the U.S. pop singles chart, with twenty one chart singles, thirteen of which cracked the U.S. pop singles top forty.

The band has also been extraordinarily successful in England, with eighteen chart albums and fourteen chart singles. Their total worldwide record sales are estimated at 70 million copies, with certified U.S. album sales of 10 million copies. The band was inducted into the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame in 2018 and was inducted into the Vocal Group Hall Of Fame in 2006. They have been cited as an influence by Yes, Genesis, ELO, and Deep Purple. Their best material seems timeless, and they are still in constant rotation on classic rock stations.

With the retirement of Graham Edge in 2018, the band quietly disbanded. Since Edge passed away on November 11, 2021, the last two surviving original surviving members of the band (Denny Laine and Mike Pinder) have also passed away. In addition, John Lodge died unexpectedly on October 10, 2025 leaving Justin Hayward as the only surviving member of the sixties lineups who is still alive.

The earliest version of The Moody Blues was not a progressive rock giant. In fact, they were one of England's best r&b groups in the mid-sixties. The band evolved out of an early sixties band called El Riot and the Rebels, which included Ray Thomas (born Raymond Thomas on December 29, 1941 in Stourport-on-Severn, England), John Lodge (born John Charles Lodge on July 20, 1945 in Birmingham, England) and Mike Pinder (born Michael Thomas Pinder on December 27, 1941 in Erdington, England).

Thomas was born in an emergency maternity ward during WWII in Worcestershire, England. He first learned to play harmonica when he was nine years old, then joined his school choir the following year. He then learned to play the flute from his grandfather. After leaving school at the age of 14, he became a toolmaking apprentice but left at the age of 18 to pursue music full time. He was a member of the Birmingham Youth Choir in the early sixties, then began to sing with various area bands including The Saints and Sinners, as well as the Ramblers. Thomas then formed a new band, El Riot and the Rebels with bassist John Lodge.

Lodge had listened to American fifties rockers like Buddy Holly and Jerry Lee Lewis when he was growing up. When he was 13 years old, he got his first guitar and learned how to play it by the following year. He had met Thomas at school and the two decided to form a new band, which they called El Riot and the Rebels. At this point, he began to get interested in the bass, realizing how the instrument anchored all those fifties songs that he loved to listen to as a child. After a couple of years, Mike Pinder joined the band.

Pinder began to play various instruments as a toddler. He eventually settled on the piano and was a fan of American blues music. He joined El Riot and the Rebels a couple of years after it was formed but the group fell apart when Pinder joined the British Army, where he remained for a little over one year. Meanwhile, Lodge enrolled at Birmingham College Of Advanced Technology to study engineering. While in school, Lodge formed his own band, The Carpetbaggers, and started to write his own songs.

When Pinder got out of the Army, he tracked down Thomas and they formed a new band, the Krew Cuts, in 1963. The band played the Hamburg, Germany circuit but quickly ran out of money and had to return to England. They only lasted a few months. Once back, they decided to form yet another band made up of veteran Birmingham based band members. Through sheer luck, they found three new members all at one time.

The first was guitarist Denny Laine (born Brian Frederick Hines on October 29, 1944 in Birmingham, England). He had first taken up guitar when he was a boy, inspired by gypsy jazz guitarist, Django Reinhardt. By the time he was 12 years old, he had played his first solo show, then formed Denny Laine and the Diplomats, which included drummer Bev Bevan. He had changed his name to Denny Laine because it sounded better in a band name than his real name. In April, 1964, he teamed with Graeme Edge and Clint Warwick to form the R&B Preachers.

Edge was born Graeme Charles Edge on March 30, 1941 in Rocester, England. His parents were both musicians, with his mother proficient on keyboards and his father a singer. When he was nine years old, he played a snare drum in the Boy's Brigade. That led to a lifelong fascination with drums and before long he convinced his parents to buy him a full kit. He then took a couple of lessons but did not like his teacher. So, he taught himself how to play by listening to American rockers like Elvis Presley, Gene Vincent, and Buddy Holly. He then augmented his style by listening to African American artists like Sister Rosetta Tharpe and Sonny Boy Williamson. He then got into jazz, becoming a huge fan of Basil Kirchin and Gene Krupa.

Edge joined The Silhouettes and the Blue Rhythms before joining Gerry Levene and the Avengers. He recorded a single and appeared on television with the Avengers. In April, 1964, he formed The R&B Preachers with Laine and bassist Clint Warwick. Warwick was born Albert Eccles on June 25, 1940 in Aston, England. He was drawn to music during the skiffle boom in the late fifties. His first band was Danny King and the Dukes, who played throughout Birmingham, where he met Laine and Edge. At that point he changed his name to Clint Warwick, combining the names of his favorite singer, Dionne Warwick, and actor, Clint Walker.

The R&B Preachers never really got off the ground. Thomas and Pinder knew about the group and contacted the three of them to see if they might be interested in joining their new band. The five musicians met on May 2, 1964 and decided to give it a go. The new band was initially called The M&B 5, which was named after a local company named Mitchells & Butlers Brewery, who owned a number of Birmingham bars. The group had hoped that the company would sponsor them but that never came through. However, they played their first live show two days later on May 4 and started to land bookings. They continued to fiddle with their name until early July, when they became The Moody Blues 5.

The new name came largely from Pinder. His favorite song as a child was Duke Ellington's "Mood Indigo". He saw that music could dramatically affect someone's mood and wanted to incorporate the term into the band name. Since they were playing blues music at the time, they became The Moody Blues 5. By mid-August, they had dropped the 5 and were now The Moody Blues.

During those early days, the band quickly gained a sizeable audience through a residency at the Carlton Ballroom and forays outside of Birmingham. They also backed various American blues artists as they toured England, including Sonny Boy Williamson and Memphis Slim.

After moving to London in the summer of 1964, the band signed a deal with Ridgepride Management Company, which was started by ex-Decca A&R man, Alex Wharton (also known as Alex Murray). He had a recording division which had a licensing deal with Decca. He immediately put the band in the studio and they released a cover of Bobby Parker's "Steal Your Heart Away" (1964) on Decca's London subsidiary in September. The B side was a Laine/Pinder original called "Lose Your Money (But Don't Lose Your Mind)". They played the B side during an appearance on *Ready Steady Go!*, but the single did not chart. However, the exposure landed them a high profile residency at the Marquee Club in London immediately after the release of the single.

After meeting Island producer Denny Cordell, the band decided to hire him to produce their second single. Laine had heard a recent single called "Go Now" by singer Bessie Banks that was written for her by her former husband, Larry Banks, and his songwriting partner Milton Bennett. While getting some airplay, it did not do well on the charts. However, Laine knew that it would be perfect for the Moody Blues and insisted that they record their own version. Cordell produced it and was released on November 13, 1964 under the slight revised title, "Go Now!" (#10-1964).

Cordell and Wharton had the band significantly rearranged the song, adding baroque elements, lush instrumentation, and a I-VI-IV-V chord progression, which was typically used in doo wop songs of the fifties. Laine delivered a gritty performance on lead vocals and the band's harmonies were pristine. In addition to sounding unique, the single was augmented with a promotional film produced and directed by Wharton. It was one of the first times that a cross media approach was used to market a single, predating even the Beatles.

The song took off, entering the British pop music singles chart on December 16 and by late January, 1965, it reached number one. The single was then released in the United States in January, 1965 and immediately began to get airplay. By the end of March, it had cracked the U.S. pop singles top forty and rose to number 10 during an eight week top forty chart run. It also peaked at number 2 in Canada and charted throughout Europe.

In support of the single, The Moody Blues appeared on various British television shows and suddenly found themselves on everyone's A list. However, their second single, a cover of the Drifters' "I Don't Want To Go On Without You" (1965) only reached number 33 in England in February and things quickly turned. The single was released before the band had finished it as Decca wanted to immediately capitalize on the success of "Go Now!".

In April, 1965, Decca then released a four song EP called *The Moody Blues*, which included the two chart singles along with "Steal Your Heart Away" and "Lose Your Money". It peaked at number 12 on the British pop singles chart, where EPs were tracked but the last song would become strangely prophetic. The band's next single, "From the Bottom of My Heart (I Love You)" followed in May, 1965 and charted, reaching number 22 in England. Two months later, Decca released the group's debut album, *The Magnificent Moodies* (1965).

The album was released with much fanfare, with George Harrison, Paul McCartney, and Marianne Faithful attending the Decca launch party. While the British version of the album included "Go Now!", it did not include the two recent chart singles in lieu of a series of covers and three original songs written by Laine and Pinder. The American version was retitled as *Go Now: The Moody Blues #1* and did include both singles and was released by London Records at the same time. Both versions also included a poem written by Donovan on the cover art that recommended the band.

The day after the release party, the band was asked to show up at Ridgepride and discovered that things were very wrong. The offices were empty and it was clear that the firm had shut down. In fact, Wharton had left a couple of months earlier and the company was now bankrupt. Not only were The Moody Blues left in a lurch with several bills to pay and all their money was gone. Fortunately, Decca signed them directly and Brian Epstein agreed to sign them to his NEMS management company. Things got even worse when the album got lost in the British Invasion shuffle on both sides of the Atlantic and did not chart in either country.

While all this was going on, the band had maintained a torrid touring schedule, playing over two hundred shows in 1965 alone. They were booked to open for the Kinks in the United States in June, 1965 but had to drop out when their work permits were not issued in time for the tour. However, they continued to tour in England and released their fifth single, "Everyday" (1965), in the fall. It only reached number 44 in England and would be the last British chart single from this incarnation of the band. In early December, the group opened for The Beatles during their last tour of the U.K., supporting them on nine shows.

The band finally landed in America in December, 1965 and had television appearances set up on Ed Sullivan and Shindig! on December 19 and 23 respectively. They were also booked as one of the artists on Murray The K's Christmas Show run at the Fox Theatre in Brooklyn. When the band landed, they immediately got into a Visa issue once again. While they were allowed to do the live shows, they were not permitted to appear on American television, killing the main reason why they had come over in the first place.

Worse yet, the Murray The K shows were not an effective way to break a band in America. On Christmas day, they played live for the first time as part of Murray The K's Christmas Show at the Fox Theatre in Brooklyn along with ten other bands! That only allowed them time to sing two songs. Worse yet, they had to sing the same two songs four times a day all the way through January 3, 1966. In the end, they never performed anywhere but the Brooklyn Theatre and returned to England frustrated and depressed.

Upon returning to their home country, the band continued to tour but was growing increasingly frustrated with the lack of chart success and the seemingly never ending live shows. Their next two singles, "Stop!" (#98-1966) and "This Is My House (But Nobody Calls)", did not chart in England, although the first did make the bottom of the U.S. pop singles chart, peaking at number 98. By July, 1966, Warwick was so burned out that he literally left music and became a carpenter. He was replaced by Rod Clark (born Rodney Clark on November 23, 1942 in Norfolk, England). Fortunately for Clark, the band appeared on the *Beat Club* in late August, forever documenting his short contribution to the band.

The group continued to record and tour into the fall. On October 1, they were shocked when Denny Laine announced that he was leaving the group to focus on a solo career. A short time later, Epstein and NEMS dropped them from their roster. Clark left shortly after to join The Rockin' Berries and just like that, the band's future was seriously in doubt.

The transition period between Laine's departure and the advent of the new lineup was awkward at best. Decca had two new singles ready to go and the band was recording their second album. Decca did release the first single, "Boulevard de la Madeleine" (1966), a few days after Laine left. The new album was shelved and Epstein and NEMS poured gasoline on the fire by dropping the band. The second single, "Life's Not Life" (1967), may or may not have been released, depending on your source. While many publications refer to it as being cancelled, physical copies do exist.

Meanwhile, Pinder, Thomas, and Edge had to put together a new version of the band. Their first recruit was easy and they asked John Lodge, who had played with Pinder and Thomas in El Riot & the Rebels, if he wanted to join. The timing was right and he immediately agreed, joining in October, 1966.

Replacing Laine seemed like a much more daunting task but they caught a break when Eric Burdon recommended singer/guitarist Justin Hayward. Hayward was born Justin David Hayward on October 14, 1946 in Swindon, England. When he was only five years old, his grandfather gave him a stack of old albums which fascinated him. He soon learned how to play a ukulele, which soon became a guitar. By his early teens, he began playing with local bands like All Things Bright and gained invaluable experience.

When he was 17 years old, he auditioned for Marty Wilde's backup group and passed. Wilde took him under his wing and encouraged him to begin writing songs. He also introduced him to the recording studio and taught him how to play large venues like the London Palladium. Around the same time, Hayward signed an eight year publishing contract as a songwriter for Lonnie Donegan. It seemed like the right move at the time but it would prove to be very costly, as Donegan retained all the rights to the Moody Blues songs Hayward wrote until 1974.

The Moody Blues found out about Hayward through Eric Burdon, who had auditioned him for the Animals but did not think he was right for his band. However, he gave a glowing endorsement to Pinder, who contacted him. While Pinder was driving him to meet the other members, Hayward played him his solo single, "London Behind Me" (1966), which had been released the previous January and the keyboardist was impressed. Consequently, Hayward aced the audition and also joined in October.

It was clear right from the start that Hayward was nothing like Laine. He loved to write melodies and folk inspired lyrics instead of r&b and blues songs. While he could play guitar with the best of them, he was more focused on chord progressions than fast riffing and had a gorgeous God given voice. After adding Hayward and Lodge, the band relocated to Belgium, where “Boulevard de la Madeleine” had become a number three hit single and they could find live work.

However, when they returned to England in February, 1967, they could not book any gigs and were reduced to playing the cabaret circuit to pay their bills. Even that was problematic and the five band members knew that without Laine, they were not good at playing songs from their old catalog. No one in the existing lineup could sing “Go Now!” with anywhere near the effectiveness of the original version and they would need to abandon r&b if they were going to survive.

Ironically, one of the catalysts for the change was already in place. Long before Pinder became a full time member of the band, he had worked with a Birmingham Electronics Company called Melody Electronics, which was owned by Les, Frank, and Norman Bradley. Pinder began working for them in 1964, just as they were collaborating with Harry Chamberlin of California to invent the first mellotron.

Pinder’s job was to test the new instrument and as such, he was one of the first musicians to actually play a mellotron. When he joined the company, they were working on a second version of the instrument called the Mark II. Wanting to promote their new instrument, the company let Pinder take a Mark II when he left to join the Moody Blues on a full-time basis.

At first, Pinder could not find a use for the instrument in a r&b band but continued to tinker with while the band was touring and releasing their first records. Pinder recognized just how powerful the instrument could be in a rock band and began to record his own bank of sounds. He knew that he had to make it more reliable to play live gigs and he did just that, replacing the problematic AC motors with DC motors, and the pre amplifier tubes with a transistor based system.

By the time Lodge and Hayward joined the band, Pinder had gotten the Mark II to the point that he could use it within the band. Knowing that Hayward was fascinated with melodies and orchestral sounds, Pinder had a way to make the Moody Blues sound completely unique in the music world.

In May, 1967, the music world was shocked when an unknown band named Procol Harum released a song called “A Whiter Shade Of Pale”. It was the first song to incorporate a classical motif in a traditional rock song, contained psychedelic lyrics, and was paced like a folk song. When it soared up the charts all over the world, reaching number one in several countries including England and the United States, every recording musician at the time was influenced by it, including The Beatles.

At the time of its release, the Moody Blues had been introduced to producer Tony Clarke, who agreed to work with them on their next single. Clarke was interested in exploring new sounds and was particularly fascinated with the new psychedelic sounds that were emanating out of San Francisco at the time. He pushed the band to move in that direction, which resulted in a new single, “Fly Me High” (1967), which included both folk and psychedelic elements. It was written by Hayward and released around the same time as “A Whiter Shade Of Pale”.

While the song did not chart, the massive success of the Procol Harum single convinced Clarke and the band that they were moving in the right direction. Their next single, the Pinder written “Love and Beauty”

(1967) was the first song to feature a mellotron. It was released in September, 1967 and also included Thomas on flute instead of harmonica, which gave the music a more psychedelic feel. It also did not chart but once again was an important building block for the group's new sound.

While the band was establishing their new sound, they hardly played live throughout 1967, in part because they did not have the time nor a booking agent. In total, they played less than twenty live but did make a number of television appearances. Not touring meant little income and by the fall of 1967, things were getting desperate within the band.

Their Decca deal was expiring and they were still seriously in debt to the label, which was also getting frustrated with their lack of commercial progress. Despite the recent chart problems, Decca A&R head Hugh Mendl still believed in them. He assigned them to a new Decca subsidiary called Deram Records and offered them the use of the label's new audio format called Deramic Stereo Sound. To highlight the system, he gave them the opportunity to record a rock and roll version of Antonin Dvorak's *New World Symphony* and the band jumped at the opportunity.

Initial recording sessions did not go well but the band came up with an idea that would satisfy Deram's objectives and also help their own career. They offered to record a concept piece that they had already written that incorporated orchestral themes over an extended suite format. Deram agreed and teamed them with conductor Peter Knight, who assembled a makeshift orchestra. The resulting album was *Days of Future Passed* (#3-1967), which was released in November, 1967. It was produced by Clarke, and engineered by Derek Varnals, who would continue to work with them for many years to come. .

The record entered the British pop albums chart in early January, 1968 and rose to number 27 during a sixteen week chart run. The lead single, "Nights In White Satin", was written by Hayward and released concurrent with the album and was a hit in England, initially reaching number 19 on the British singles chart. Interestingly, it initially did not do well in the United States, where it failed to crack the pop top one hundred singles chart.

However, the album gradually got airplay and entered the American pop albums chart in early May, 1968. It would remain on the chart for 106 weeks and eventually hit number three. The album was certified gold in the U.S. in October, 1970 and eventually reached platinum sales in 1990. "Nights In White Satin" (#2-1972) was reissued in 1972 and nearly topped the U.S. pop singles chart. It was certified gold in the U.S. for one million copies sold in late 1972.

Part of the surge in the sales of the album was the second single, "Tuesday Afternoon" (#24-1968), which was also written by Hayward released in the United States on July 19, 1968. It entered the U.S. pop singles top forty in late August and rose to number 24 during a six week top forty chart run. In a weird reversal of fortune, the single did not chart in England, where "Nights In White Satin" was the hit and "Tuesday Afternoon" went nowhere, but it gave the band hit singles on both sides of the Atlantic..

It is fair to say that *Days of Future Passed* was the first progressive rock album. The combination of rock and classical elements had been done before, but never to this extent. The concept nature of the album, based on events occurring in a single day, was also fairly unique. The integration of the band and a full orchestra was seamless and the sound quality was amazing. The album put the band on the map in a way that none of their r&b natured recordings ever did. The Moody Blues were true trendsetters, a fact that would be conveniently ignored for decades by their critics.

Just as the single and album was gaining major traction in the United States, the band had already released their next album, *In Search of the Lost Chord* (#23-1968), on July 26, 1968. The lead single, "Voices In The Sky" (1968), was written by Hayward and released one month before the album and reached number 27 on the British pop singles chart. The second single from the album, "Ride My See-Saw" (#61-1968), was penned by Lodge and released in October, 1968. It reached number 42 on the British pop singles chart and number 61 on the U.S. pop singles chart, while becoming a staple of their live sets.

The album was a huge hit in England, peaking at number 5 during a thirty two week chart run. It also reached number 23 on the American pop albums chart during a twenty nine week chart run and was certified gold in the U.S. in late 1970. During 1968, the band resumed touring on a regular basis. They played 84 shows during the year, including their first actual tour on North America, where they played 27 shows between October 26 and December 13.

The band released their next studio album, *On The Threshold Of A Dream* (#20-1969), in April 25, 1969 in England and May 30, 1969 in the United States. It topped the British pop albums chart during a seventy four week chart run and reached number 20 on the American pop albums chart during an incredible 136 week chart run. It was certified gold in the U.S. in late 1970 and passed the one million sales mark in 1994. While the album did not yield any British chart singles, "Never Comes The Day" (#91-1969), was a minor American hit, peaking at number 91 on the U.S. pop singles chart. It was written by Hayward.

Riding their momentum, the band worked out a deal with Decca Records to launch their own label, Threshold Records. While they were not successful in having any success with signing other bands, they laid the framework for other bands like The Rolling Stones and Led Zeppelin to do exactly the same thing. The label was distributed by Decca. Their debut album on the label was *To Our Children's Children* (#14-1969), which was released on November 21, 1969.

It peaked at number two in England during a forty four week chart run and reached number 14 on the American pop albums chart during an identical forty four week chart run. It also was certified gold in the U.S. in 1970. The band toured less during the year in support of the two albums, playing only 61 shows. They returned to the U.S. in early August, to play two festival dates, the Singer Bowl Music Festival on August 2 and the Atlantic City Pops Festival on August 3. They were invited to play Woodstock but turned down the opportunity to play a show in Paris on the same weekend. They returned in early November for a full tour consisting of 19 shows during the month.

The band was riding high as they entered 1970. On April 24, 1970, they released a new single, "Question" (#21-1970). The Hayward written song reached number 2 in England and cracked the U.S. pop singles top forty in late March, peaking at number 21 during a seven week chart run. The associated album, *A Question Of Balance* (#3-1970), was not released until August 7, 1970. It immediately topped the British pop albums chart, but dropped off after nineteen weeks. It reached number 3 on the American pop albums chart, where it remained for seventy four weeks. It was certified gold in the U.S. in 1970 and passed the one million sales mark in 1994.

With all five of their albums enjoying long stays on the U.S. pop albums chart and the timing of when Deram submitted sales numbers to the RIAA, each of the five albums were certified gold between July and December, 1970, when each of them officially reached the 500,000 sales mark. If someone was living in a cave and hadn't heard about them, the subsequent gold sales announcements came fast and furiously, validating to the general public that they were indeed one of the hottest groups in music. Three of those albums would eventually be certified platinum when Deram released updated sales numbers to the RIAA in the nineties.



The band returned to the United States in late March, 1970 for their first shows at the Fillmore East. Then, on August 30, the band performed at The Isle Of Wight Festival for the second consecutive year. The Moody Blues had played the festival in late August, 1969 but their appearance was overshadowed by the return of Bob Dylan to the stage. The band played the day before Dylan on August 30 in front of an estimated audience of 150,000 people.

However, the 1970 festival was an entirely different experience. First, it was huge, attracting as many as 600,000 people, which overwhelmed the site's infrastructure and the island's transportation system. By the time they took the stage on the last day, sandwiched between Pentangle and Jethro Tull, the audience was exhausted and unruly, causing an air of palpable tension on the festival site. It would be the last time they would play in front of such a large crowd.

The band returned to North America for another tour in April, 1971, playing 18 shows. This time they played 18 shows to promote their upcoming studio album, *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour* (#2-1971), which was released on July 23, 1971. It nearly topped the American pop albums chart, peaking at number 2 during a forty three week chart run and was their fourth number one album in England. It was certified gold in the U.S. in less than two months.

The album yielded their fourth U.S. pop singles top forty hit, "Story In Your Eyes" (#23-1971), which was written by Hayward and entered the top forty in early September, peaking at number 23 during a seven week chart run. Surprisingly, it did not chart in England where it did not get much airplay. The group supported the album and singlet with another tour of North America, playing 15 shows in late September and early October. One of them was a headlining slot at Madison Square Garden. They finished the year with six shows in England.

The band returned to the studio in January, 1971 and began work on their next album, *Seventh Sojourn* (#1-1972), which was not released until October 23, 1972. The lead single was the Lodge written "Isn't Life Strange" (#29-1972), which was released on April 21 and was a hit on both sides of the Atlantic. It peaked at number 13 in England and reached number 29 during a seven week U.S. top forty chart run in late spring.

Decca then made a brilliant move and reissued "Nights In White Satin" (#2-1972) during the summer. This time it was a massive hit single on both sides of the Atlantic. It reached number 9 on the British pop singles chart, ten slots higher than the first go around, but the big change was in the United States. It entered the U.S. pop singles top forty in early September and rose to number 2 during a fourteen week top forty chart run. It also topped the pop singles chart in Canada and reached number 8 in Australia. The song sold over one million copies in the States by the end of the year.

The success of the two singles was the perfect set up for *Seventh Sojourn*, which was released in late October, 1972. It was their first number one album in the U.S., occupying the number one slot for five weeks during a forty four week chart run. It essentially shipped gold in the United States and peaked at number 5 in England.

The album included "Isn't Life Strange" and a second chart single, "I'm Just A Singer (In A Rock and Roll Band)" (#12-1973), again written by Lodge. It was released in January, 1973 and peaked at numbers 36 in England, 39 in Australia, 16 in Canada, and 12 in the United States. It entered the U.S. pop singles top forty in mid-February, 1973 and reached number 12 during an eight week chart run.

The process of recording the album had taken its toll on the band members. Hayward had just lost his father and was disturbed that so many young men were losing their lives in Vietnam. Thomas had just gotten divorced, which did in a strange way inspire his love song, "For My Lady", which dealt with finding the perfect partner. Lodge wrote "I'm Just A Singer (In a Rock and Roll Band)" in response to the group's many fans who considered them to be visionary gurus with answers for all the world's problems.

But the overriding problem was pretty simple. Each band member was exhausted and to a major extent, prisoners of their own fame and fortune. The album took forever to finish and no one was enjoying the creative process. They knew that they needed a break from one another and needed to connect with the real world, not the superficial world they were living in as rock stars.

The band toured in 1972 in support of the two singles and the album. They played twenty one shows in the first four months of the year, including another leg in the United States. They returned to the road in late October and played twelve more shows in the States. However, when they tried to begin work on a new album in early 1973, they realized that the creative spark was gone. They quickly abandoned it and set out on a world tour in September, 1973. The tour included forty nine shows and ended with a February 4, 1974 show at the Cow Palace in San Francisco. No one could have guess that it would be their last live show in the U.S. with Pinder.

After completing the final leg of the tour in Asia, the band members decided to take a lengthy sabbatical. The individual members all released solo projects over the next five years. The most successful of these projects involved Justin Hayward. He collaborated with John Lodge on *Blue Jays* (#16-1975). He then followed with the solo *Songwriter* (#37-1977). John Lodge also released a solo album, *Natural Avenue* (#121-1977).

Mike Pinder released *The Promise* (#133-1976). Ray Thomas released two solo albums, *From Mighty Oaks* (#68-1975) and *Hopes Wishes & Dreams* (#147-1976). Finally, Graeme Edge formed the Graeme Edge Band with Adrian and Paul Gurvitz. They released *Kick Off Your Muddy Boots* (#107-1975) and *Paradise Ballroom* (#164-1977). While these albums all charted, none of them were burning up the charts and an eventual reunion was clearly in the cards.

During this four plus year sabbatical, Decca released their first compilation, *This Is The Moody Blues* (#11-1974), on October 8, 1974. It immediately made the American pop albums chart and peaked at number 11 during a twenty five week chart run. It also reached number 2 in Canada and number 14 in England. It was certified gold in the States by the end of the year.

They also released their first live album, *Caught Live + 5* (#26-1977). It combined a full live show recorded on December 12, 1969 at the Royal Albert Hall with five previously unreleased studio recordings from 1967 and 1968. The album reached number 26 on the American pop albums chart.

In the fall of 1977, the group assembled again in Los Angeles to work on a new album. It was clear right from the start that Pinder had reservations about the project but wound up playing on the entire album. The new album, *Octave* (#13-1978), was released on June 9, 1978. It would be their last with producer Tony Clarke, who decided to stop working with them after the release.

While there were serious question whether the 1978 version of the Moody Blues would be relevant in a world dominated by punk music in England and disco in America, there was no need to worry. The band's core audience remained intact and supported the album in a big way.. It peaked at number six in England

and reached number 13 on the American pop albums chart, where it remained for thirty weeks. It essentially shipped gold in the United States and would be certified platinum in January, 1979.

The album yielded two more U.S. pop chart singles. The Lodge written “Steppin’ In A Slide Zone” (#39-1978) just cracked the top forty in early September, peaking at number 39 during a two week chart run while the Hayward written “Driftwood” (#59-1978), also made the chart but stalled at number 59. However, neither of the songs wound up charting in England, where punk and new wave music was dominating.

While Pinder refused to tour behind the album, not wanting to be away from his family, the other four members wanted to hit the road and began to search for his replacement. They wound up recruiting ex Yes keyboardist Patrick Moraz (born Patrick Philippe Moraz on June 24, 1948 in Morges, Switzerland) to replace him.

Moraz was born into a musical family. His father worked for Polish pianist and composer Ignacy Jan Paderewski and as a child, he studied violin, piano, and percussion. He was such a prodigy that he was writing piano compositions when he was only five years old. Moraz’ budding classical career was almost derailed when he broke four fingers in a rolling skating accident when he was 13 years old. However, it wound up making him even more ambidextrous.

When Moraz was sixteen years old, he won the Best Soloist Award at the Zurich Jazz Festival. He would appear at the same festival over the next five years, garnering even more awards. Moraz’ exposure to jazz and rock took place in his late teens when he studied with French jazz legend Stephane Grappelli. He also spent time performing in Africa, England, and throughout Europe through the mid and late sixties.

Now wanting to focus on rock music, he formed his first rock band, Mainhorse, in England in 1969. They released one album, but when it did not do well, he turned to film composition before winding up in another band called Refugee. It included former Nice members Keith Lee Jackson and Brian Davison. They released a self-named album in 1974 and toured in support. When Rick Wakeman decided to leave Yes, Moraz auditioned with the band during the first week of August and played on their next studio album, *Relayer* (#5-1974). It was completed in the autumn and released on November 28, 1974.

After touring with Yes in support, the band members worked on individual solo albums. Moraz’ solo album, *The Story Of I* (#132-1976), reached number 132 on the American pop albums chart but did not chart in England. Yes decided to tour in support of the five individual albums and their past catalog but after the tour was completed, Moraz was suddenly fired. It turned out that Wakeman wanted to return before the group began work on their next studio album.

Moraz bitterly left the band but did not go away quietly. He later claimed that the band had never paid him for the 1976 tour and that he had contributed to three songs that would appear on Yes’ next studio album. In the end, he did not receive any writing or performance credits on the album. Moraz’ management team had some connections with the Moody Blues and arranged an audition in England. Clearly, the classically trained keyboardist could handle anything the band could throw at him and was invited to join the group as a touring member.

The *Octave* tour began on October 19, 1978 in Kohn, Germany. After five warm up shows, the band headed to the U.S. for an appearance on *Don Kirscher’s Rock Concert* on October 29, then played thirty two shows throughout North America through mid-December. The tour resumed in early May, 1979 and

included eighteen more shows throughout North America. The group took another break and played several more shows in the U.K. and Europe to end the year.

In February, 1980, the band members, including Moraz, entered the studio to record a new album. This caused a huge problem with Pinder, who believed that he was going to continue to work with the group on studio recordings. He sued the band to prevent any new releases but lost the suit and was permanently booted out of the band.

The resulting album, *Long Distance Voyager* (#1-1981), was released on May 15, 1981. It was produced by Pip Williams, who had been a noted session guitarist and had worked with Graham Bonnet and Status Quo. It entered the American pop albums chart immediately and worked its way to number one during a thirty nine week chart run. It also topped the Canadian pop albums chart and reached number 7 in England.

The album yielded two U.S. pop chart singles. The Hayward/Lodge written "Gemini Dream" (#12-1981) entered the U.S. pop singles chart in mid-June and reached number 12 during a nine week chart run. The Hayward written "The Voice" (#15-1981) followed in mid-August and rose to number 15 during an eleven week top forty chart run. A third single, the Lodge written "Talking Out Of Turn" (#65-1982), also hit number 65 on the same chart. While the album peaked at number 7 in England, none of those singles charted.

The band played seventy one live shows in support during 1981, including two long legs in North America. In between the two legs, the album was certified platinum in the U.S. in August, 1981. After the tour wrapped up, the band returned to the studio in March, 1982 and began work on their next studio album. That record, *The Present* (#26-1983), was released on August 28, 1983. The album made the American pop albums chart quickly and reached number 26 during a relatively short fifteen week chart stay. It also peaked at number 15 in England. But it was their first new album since the new lineup was formed not to be certified gold in the States.

The album yielded two American chart singles. The Lodge written "Sitting At The Wheel" (#27-1983) cracked the U.S. pop singles top forty in mid-September and reached number 27 during a six week chart run. Hayward's "Blue World" (#62-1983) hit number 62 on the same chart but was their first chart single in England in several years, reaching number 35.

For the supporting tour, the band played twenty nine more shows throughout North America at the end of the year. Midway through the tour, Thomas spent one night in the hospital suffering from dizziness and nausea. The tour resumed with a seven date Australian leg in February, 1984, followed by a thirty four date leg in North America during the summer. They finished 1984 with a fifteen show leg in the United Kingdom, with all proceeds donated to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

The poor sales of *The Present* resulted in some significant changes. First, Threshold signed a distribution deal with Polydor Records, ending their long time association with Decca Records. A new Threshold/Decca compilation, *Voices In The Sky: The Best Of The Moody Blues* (#132-1985), was released in March, 1985. It made the lower levels of the American pop albums chart, peaking at number 132 during a nine week chart run. Second, the band began to work with producer Tony Visconti, who had worked with T. Rex, David Bowie, Gentle Giant, Wings, Argent, Thin Lizzy, Rich Wakeman, and Hayward on his solo recordings.

The band's debut Threshold/Polydor release was *The Other Side Of Life* (#9-1986), which was released on April 9, 1986. Buoyed by the hit single, Hayward's "Your Wildest Dreams" (#9-1986), which entered the U.S. pop singles top forty in late May and rose to number 9 during a twelve week top forty chart run, the album surged into the American pop albums top ten, peaking at number 9 during a forty two week chart run. It also hit number 24 in England and number 46 in Canada.

A second single, the Hayward written "The Other Side Of Life" (#58-1986), peaked at number 58 on the U.S. pop singles chart. The album was certified gold in the States in July, 1986 and hit platinum sales in November, 1993. The massive success of the album seemed to confirm that the band's new synthesizer based modern sound was highly commercial and they were as popular as ever.

The supporting tour was their longest in years. All together, they played ninety six shows in North America and the United Kingdom. They followed with forty three more shows in North America, Australia, and the United Kingdom in 1987. Another new Decca compilation, *Prelude* (1987), was released in late October, 1987. It included non-album singles and rarities from the late sixties.

Their next studio album, *Sur La Mer* (#38-1988), was released on June 6, 1988. While recording the album, Visconti made the head scratching decision to drop Thomas' vocals completely from the final mix. In their early days, one of the things that made the band stand out was their lush, four part harmonies. They had lost one fourth of that when Pinder left and now had lost Thomas. It was too much of a change and one that Moraz was incensed over. He openly criticized Visconti and the band in a 1989 newspaper article.

The album peaked at number 21 in England but did not sell as well as expected in America, stalling at number 38 during a nineteen week chart run. While it was not certified gold in the States, it did yield one last U.S. pop singles top forty hit, "I Know You're Out There Somewhere" (#30-1988), which was written by Hayward and entered the top forty in late July, rising to number 30 during a four week top forty chart run. The song also charted in England, peaking at number 52. It would be their last chart single in either country. The supporting tour included sixty shows in North America during 1988.

In 1989, the band signed a deal with Caesar's Palace and Tropworld and did their first casino stands in Lake Tahoe, Nevada and Atlantic City, New Jersey. In total, they played twenty one shows in the two cities. On November 21, 1989, they released a new compilation, *Greatest Hits* (#113-1989), on Polydor. It reached number 113 on the American pop albums chart during a sixteen week chart stay.

They supported the compilation with a forty one date tour in 1990, then reissued it under a new title, *The Story Of The Moody Blues. Legend Of A Band* in connection with a documentary film of the same name. It was certified gold in the U.S. in November, 1993.

While American and British music tastes were shifting away from the lush, indulgent work of bands like the Moody Blues, the group continued to be a major concert draw, selling out arenas across the world to the dismay of critics who hated the new material and felt that the band had peaked with *Seventh Sojourn*. However, the backlash was significant and sales for their next studio album, *Keys of the Kingdom* (#94-1991), cratered. It was released on June 25, 1991 and barely cracked the American top one hundred, stalling at number 94 during an eleven week chart run. It also only peaked at number 54 in England.

During recording sessions, Moraz was interviewed by Keyboard Magazine and for the second time in two years, criticized the band. When he began to miss rehearsals, the band fired him and opted not to replace him. . Since the mid-eighties, the band had added a second keyboardist to their tour lineup, along with

backup singers. Their touring keyboardist at the time was Bias Boshell (born Tobias Boshell on July 20, 1950 in Kent, England). He wound up playing on some of the *Keys of the Kingdom* tracks, along with session keyboardist Paul Bliss. Moraz only played on three tracks and was subsequently listed in the credits as an additional musician.

The final dismissal of Moraz had immediate and long term repercussions. In September, 1991, he sued the band for \$500,000, citing wrongful dismissal. Bizarrely, the case was tried on Court TV. While he eventually won the case, he was only awarded \$77,175 in back pay, far less than the \$400,000 the band had offered him as a pre-trial settlement. The band retaliated for the bad press by essentially erasing the keyboardist from the group's history. Compilations released after the lawsuit either downplayed his contribution to the band, listing him as an additional keyboardist, or did not mention him at all. He was airbrushed out of photos and would never work with the band again.

After bombing with *Keys of the Kingdom*, the Moody Blues pivoted. They did not release another new album for eight years, focusing instead on touring. In 1991, they played eighty five shows followed by 114 in 1992. On September 8, 1992, they filmed a show at the Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Colorado for a DVD and new live album. Accompanied by the Colorado Symphony, the band gave the performance of their lives.

The new live album, *A Night At Red Rocks* (#93-1993), was released on March 9, 1993 and reached number 93 on the American pop albums chart. However, it sold steadily and was certified gold status in the States in December, 1996. It featured Boshell and Bliss on keyboards, second drummer Gordon Marshall, and backup singers June Boyce and Sue Shattock.

The following year, the group released *Time Travellers* (1994) on September 27, 1994. It included five CDs that focused on the period after Lodge and Hayward first joined the band through the Red Rocks concert. A four disc version was subsequently released on March 5, 1996, omitting additional new live material recorded at the same show. That live material was subsequently included on the 2003 two CD expanded edition of the album. *Time Travellers* was also certified gold in America in June, 1998. During that same year, the band placed a new compilation, *The Very Best Of The Moody Blues* (1996) on the British pop albums chart, where it peaked at number 13.

The band continued their torrid touring schedule in 1994, playing ninety one shows. While they cut back to mostly Casino appearances in 1995, performing thirty four shows, they picked the pace back up in 1996, playing seventy shows. During this period, the band continued to release compilations, including Polydor's *The Best Of The Moody Blues* (1997) and *Anthology* (1998). After playing forty eight shows in 1997, the band members entered the recording studio in December to begin work on a new studio album. Work on the album continued for the next eighteen months. The process took so long that they took a break and toured in 1998, playing forty five shows.

The new album, *Strange Times* (#93-1999), was released on August 17, 1999. Despite strong reviews, it did not sell well. It only stayed on the American pop albums chart for five weeks, peaking at number 93. It only did one slot better in England, hitting number 92. The album was released on Universal Records, which had purchased Polydor. It was also self-produced, a first in the band's history. The keyboardist on the recording was Danilo Madonia (born April 7, 1958 in Genoa, Italy), who would continue to work with the band for the next few years.

The supporting tour included sixty nine shows in 1999 and eighty two shows in 2000. On May 1, 2000, the band recorded a show at the Royal Albert Hall in London, accompanied once again by an orchestra. It resulted in a new live album, *Hall Of Fame* (#185-2000), which was released on August 8, 2000. It made the lower levels of the American pop albums chart, peaking at number 185 during a single week on the chart. Boshell and Bliss played keyboards on the album, which also featured second drummer Gordon Marshall and backup singers Tracy Graham and Sue Shattock. Graham had replaced June Boyce.

After the 2000 tour, Boshell, Graham, and Shattock left the touring band. Boshell was replaced by Bernie Barlow and Madonia filled in at times. The group decided to not replace the backing vocalists. The group continued to tour in 2001 and 2002, playing 111 shows. However, Thomas' health had been declining for years and at the end of the 2002 tour dates, he decided to retire. He was suffering from cerebella ataxia, which was increasingly affecting his balance and eventually made performing impossible.

He was replaced by Norda Mullen, who played on their last studio album, *December* (2003). The album also featured Madonia and was released on October 28, 2003 on Universal. The Holiday themed album reached number 10 on the Billboard Holiday albums chart.

The band continued to tour annually between 2003 and 2010, playing anywhere from thirty eight to seventy six shows a year. During that time frame, original bassist Clint Warwick passed away on May 15, 2004 at the age of sixty three. He was suffering from hepatitis and had just returned to his music career in 2002, after working as a carpenter since leaving the first version of the Moody Blues in 1966.

In 2006, the band added multi-instrumentalist/singer Julie Ragins to the band. During that time, a slew of compilations and live sets were released, but none of them charted. A new live DVD, *Lovely To See You Live* (2005) was recorded at the Greek Theatre in Los Angeles in 2005. It featured Hayward, Lodge, Edge, Mullen, Gordon Marshall, Paul Bliss, and Bernie Barlow. It was followed by a set of rarities called *Live At the BBC 1967-1970*, in 2007. The band toured England, Canada, and the United States every year between 2006 and 2010. In 2010, they added keyboardist Alan Hewitt to their touring band.

The band played fifty nine live shows in 2011, followed by fifty two in 2012. In 2013, they held their first Moody Blues Cruise, headlining six shows on the MSC Divana, with The Zombies and Lighthouse opening. They did their second cruise in 2014. During these two years, the band played a total of ninety five live shows. In 2015, the band appeared at the Glastonbury Festival on June 27, 2015, one of forty six live shows they played that year. The Glastonbury show was the last for long time second drummer Gordon Marshall, who had been playing in the touring band since 1991. He was replaced by Billy Ashbaugh.

The band resumed their Moody Blues Cruise in late February, 2016, appearing with John Waite, Vanilla Fudge, Ambrosia, and the Zombies. They wound up playing fifty seven shows throughout the year. To celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the release of *Days Of Future Passed*, the group started a new tour in June, 2017 which ran through early October, 2018. In total, they played around fifty shows, including another cruise that also featured Al Stewart, Frank Hannon, Richie Furay, Jefferson Starship, and the Zombies.

In the midst of the tour, the band was finally inducted into the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame on April 14, 2018. While critics had summarily dismissed them for 45 years, other organizations began to recognize them for their accomplishments. They were inducted into The Vocal Group Hall Of Fame in 2006 and into the Ultimate Classic Rock Hall Of Fame in 2014.

Readers of Rolling Stone Magazine voted for them to be inducted into the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame in 2013 and when influential music writers like Rob Chapman began to champion their cause, the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame induction committee finally relented and placed them on their 2017 ballot. They topped the fan vote and were finally inducted by Ann Wilson of Heart in early 2018. Denny Laine, Graeme Edge, John Lodge, Justin Hayward, Mike Pinder, and Ray Thomas were the inductees. The omission of Clint Warwick was criticized as an oversight.

Unfortunately, Thomas did not live long enough to attend the ceremony. He passed away on January 4, 2018 after battling prostate cancer for a number of years. However, the other members all attended and performed “Nights In White Satin” including “The Lament”, “I’m Just a Singer (in a Rock and Roll Band)”, “Ride My See-Saw”, and “Your Wildest Dreams” at the ceremony.

When Edge retired soon after, the group was placed on hiatus. With the drummer’s death on November 11, 2021, the group officially disbanded. He was the third original member to pass away, following Clint Warwick in May, 2004 and Ray Thomas in January, 2018. The fourth member, Denny Laine, passed away on December 5, 2023 at the age of 79 and was followed by last original member, Mike Pinder, on April 24, 2024 at the age of 82.

On October 10, 2025, John Lodge passed away unexpectedly. In 2019, he put together a solo band and participated in the *Cruise to the Edge* cruise. Later that same year, Yes invited him to be part of their U.S. Royal Affair Tour in the summer of 2019. In February, 2020, Lodge appeared on the *Rock and Romance Cruise* which ended on March 8, just before the concert industry was shut down by COVID-19. During the ensuing lockdown, Lodge wrote and recorded a new song called “These Crazy Times”, which was released in 2020.

In 2021, Lodge released a new live album, *The Royal Affair and After*, that was recorded in 2019. It featured guest performances from Graeme Edge and Jon Davison from Yes. Like Hayward, Lodge also toured with his solo band. They played seventeen shows in early 2022. In 2023, Lodge revisited the album on *Days of Future Passed – My Sojourn*. He also toured in 2024, playing the entire *Days Of Future Passed* album live, along with selected classic hits.

Now, Justin Hayward is literally the last man standing. He toured in 2019 and had planned to tour in 2020 when all the shows were postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.. However, he launched a solo tour in September 2021 and played twenty two shows through the end of the year.

He resumed the tour in May 2022 and played another twenty eight shows throughout the year. During that same year, he rejoined the cast of *Jeff Wayne’s War of the World* British tour and was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire. Hayward continued to tour throughout 2023, sometimes with Christopher Cross. He was very active in 2024, playing twenty seven live shows in England and both hosted and performed on the *On The Blue Cruise* between April 5 and 10 in Miami.

After playing live throughout the U.S. in April and May, 2025, he hosted another *On The Blue Cruise* in August, then set off on His Blue World Tour with Mike Dawes. As of October 2025, he is touring in England, with fifteen shows booked through November 3.

All of the compilations that feature the Moody Blues were released on Polygram Records in the nineties. For those who want the kitchen sink, there's 1994's *Time Travellers*, a four CD, 71 track monster. A less ambitious set is *Anthology* (1998), a two CD, 32 track effort. For more casual fans, there's *The Best of the*



*Moody Blues* (1997), a 17 track greatest hits set. *20th Century Masters-The Millennium Collection: The Best of the Moody Blues*, is an 11 track budget set. Finally, the 2005 set, *Gold*, includes 34 tracks recorded between 1967 and 2003.

There's also plenty of live material around that features the band. The earliest recording is *Caught Live & 5* (London-1977), a 14 track live set recorded in 1969 with 5 bonus studio tracks. *A Night at Red Rocks with the Colorado Symphony Orchestra* (Polydor-1993) is a 15 track live set that includes many of their later day hits. A deluxe version of the CD contains 23 tracks. The 2000 edition of the band is captured live on *Hall Of Fame* (Ark 21-2000). It includes 14 tracks. Deram's 2007 set, *Live at the BBC 1967-1970*, contains 41 tracks recorded for the BBC at the start of their career. Image's 2005 release, *Lovely To See You Live*, includes 20 tracks recorded in June, 2005. Eagles' 2008 set, *Live at The Isle Of Wight Festival 1970*, contains 16 tracks. Finally, Eagle's 2018 release, *Days Of Future Passed Live*, includes 28 tracks recorded in 2017.

My earliest recording of the band is *Caught Live & 5*, a 14 track set recorded on December 12, 1969 at the Royal Albert Hall in London. While the Moody Blues are often identified with the lush, melodic songs of Justin Hayward, they started out as a somewhat typical British progressive/classical rock band. They experimented with classical themes and orchestration as early as 1967, two years before King Crimson was formed. Their concept album, *Days of Future Passed*, predates the Who's *Tommy* by over one year. At the time *Caught Live & 5* was recorded, Mike Pinder was already using the mellotron on-stage and was the first to use it in a song. The instrument would become an important part of King Crimson's sound and would remain popular with progressive bands into the eighties.

The mellotron allowed the Moody Blues to reproduce the orchestration from their studio recordings in a live setting. While this wasn't always a perfect process, it did set the Moody Blues apart from any other band performing at the time. And, while bands are able to reproduce virtually any sound through today's technology, you have to admire a group that was willing to try it in 1969, well before the technology was perfected.

At the time of this concert recording, the Moody Blues had just released their fourth album, *To Our Children's Children*. The 14 songs captured here include only one cut from that album, the set opener, "Gypsy". The rest of the set list comes from *Days of Future Passed* (4 cuts), *In Search of the Lost Chord* (3 tracks), and *On The Threshold Of A Dream* (5 cuts). The band does not use any side musicians or singers and all the material on this album was recorded during a single concert. Given that, this is performance art in its truest form and an archive of what the group truly sounded like in a concert setting in 1969.

Considering the complexity of the material being played, the set is remarkably well performed. While the record is far from perfect, it is close enough to studio quality that the songs are instantly recognizable. The set also showcases just how versatile this version of the Moody Blues really was while on stage.

For those of you who doubt that they could play progressive rock, there's a gritty version of "Peak Hour", complete with crashing drums, loud guitar, keyboard effects and complex musical passages. The group's version of "The Sunset" is more restrained, but definitely fits into the same genre. The group also evokes the pastoral, folk oriented themes of Fairport Convention on a five song sequence from *On The Threshold Of A Dream*.

The dominant instruments in this sequence are Ray Thomas' flute and Pinder's mellotron. While other bands struggled to keep the mellotron in tune while on stage, Pinder had made modifications to his

instrument that solved the problem. The instrument performs flawlessly, recreating the lush orchestral sounds found in the group's studio recordings. Pinder and Thomas also dominate the progressive rock piece "Legend of a Mind". Once again, Pinder is able to coax a variety of sounds from his mellotron, this time in a more rock like setting.

The same hold true for the bouncing "Dr. Livingstone, I Presume", which veers more towards rock, including a surprisingly gritty guitar solo from the talented Hayward. And, the band has a very definite rock side as demonstrated by "Gypsy" and "Ride My See-Saw". These songs are driven by the drum work of Graeme Edge. While he is not a particularly smooth drummer, he is good enough to provide the dynamic contrasts inherent in the pieces and has a nice feel for rock music.

Of course, the Moody Blues are best known for their four part harmonies, which are featured on the melodic hit oriented songs that Hayward has written over the years. Two of those are included here. Both "Tuesday Afternoon" and "Nights In White Satin" feature the slow paced, lush melodies that Hayward is known for. These songs offer the best vocal performances on the album. Hayward is outstanding on lead vocals and John Lodge sings the famous sweeping falsetto crescendos in both songs. Background harmonies are provided by Thomas and Pinder.

Hayward's other feature piece is "Never Comes The Day", perhaps the best performed song in the entire set. Again, the group's vocals are solid, with tight harmonies and strong leads. The only time the band misses is on "Ride My See-Saw", which suffers from some off key falsettos from Lodge that are exacerbated by the prominent position he has in the sound mix. However, that is the exception. For the most part, both the vocal performances and recording quality are good.

*Caught Live & 5* is a significant live recording in the Moody Blues' catalog since it is one of two recorded by the band's most famous lineup. The only other live material that is available from this time period is their 1970 Isle Of Wight set that was finally released in full in 2008 and will be discussed next.

While *Caught Live & 5* does not match the perfection of their studio releases from the same period, it does come pretty close and showcases the group's versatility and performance skills. The Moody Blues were more than studio recluses; they were also a real, functioning band who had their share of on stage chops. This is something that their critics tend to forget. *Caught Live & 5* should be considered an essential addition to your live music collection.

Title: Live at the Isle Of Wight 1970

Label: Eagle

Release Date: 2008

Medium: CD

Availability: Very Good

Venue: Isle Of Wight

Recording Date: August 30, 1970

Lineup: Justin Hayward - Vocals, guitar, sitar

Graeme Edge - Drums

John Lodge - Vocals, bass

Mike Pinder - Vocals, mellotron

Ray Thomas - Vocals, flute, percussion

Set List: Gypsy (Of a Strange and Distant Time)  
The Sunset

Are You Sitting Comfortably?  
The Dream

Tuesday Afternoon  
Minstrel's Song  
Never Comes The Day  
Tortoise and the Hare  
Question  
Melancholy Man

Have You Heard Part 1  
The Voyage  
Have You Heard Part 2  
Nights In White Satin  
Legend of a Mind  
Ride My See Saw

By the time the Moody Blues took the stage on the last day of the 1970 Isle of Wight Festival, they were literally on top of the music world, with a number one album and number 2 single on the British charts. They had missed the opportunity to play at Woodstock the year before and were thrilled to attend an event that would bring together so many members of their generation. They were given one of the prime spots in the lineup, playing on the last night right before Jethro Tull and Jimi Hendrix. Things were good and the band was anticipating a great performance.

By the time they took the stage just before sunset on August 30, the infamous concert had been going on for four days and the massive crowd was exhausted. The 600,000 attendees could not fit into the fenced off areas around the stage and tens of thousands set up on a nearby hill, without access to the site's infrastructure. They had also overwhelmed the island's entire transportation system so getting onto the island and then around it was a lengthy and nearly impossible process.

By the time they got to the actual site, those who had tickets were let in and treated fairly well while others were left to fend for themselves. This created a feeling of have and have nots, and with the encouragement of a group of about 200 anarchists who set up on the hill, tension grew on the site almost right from the start.

When the first artists took the stage on Wednesday, it quickly became clear that the sound system was inadequate. The organizers had placed the stage in a valley, creating a bowl like setting. As such, the prevailing winds blew the sound sideways and it was impossible to hear acoustic performers like Kris Kristofferson, who was literally booed off the stage and felt in physical danger. Fortunately, the Who agreed to augment the festival sound system with their own and the volume problems were largely fixed by the weekend.

There were also a series of stage intrusions, particularly during Joni Mitchell's set when she had to admonish the audience (surprisingly it worked) and the crowd was becoming more unruly as the festival continued. On Sunday morning, it was declared a free festival and the non-ticket holders stormed the site, tearing down the fences, lighting fires to the concession stands, and packing the area around the stage so tightly that no one could move. Right before the Moody Blues took the stage, there was another on stage intruder during Pentangle's set. I'm sure that the band members were wondering what would happen but to their credit they delivered a solid set.

The sixteen songs played included three songs from *Days of Future Passed*, two songs from *In Search Of The Last Chord*, six songs from *On The Threshold of a Dream*, one song from *To Our Children's Children's Children*, and four songs from *A Question Of Balance*. Recording quality is very good, especially considering the conditions at the festival.

As Justin Hayward later put it, it was fortunate that this set was being filmed and recorded as it one of the only live performances given by this version of the band, along with the material on *Caught Live*. This set

also captures them at their best just after the release of *A Question Of Balance*, which was perhaps their most accomplished album. All the tracks are well performed and the selection of songs works well.

The Moody Blues captured the middle ground between the folk artists at the festival and the heavier bands. They were very comfortable in that very spot and while this lineup could play the most delicate passages, they could also rock out as demonstrated on great versions of “Gypsy (Of A Strange and Distant Land)”, which begins the set on a high note and a pleasantly sloppy version of “Ride My See Saw” which ends the show. In between, they nail the up tempo and rocking passages in “Never Comes The Day” and “Question” and also pull off a rare live version of *A Question Of Balance* track, “Tortoise and the Hare”.

The set also vividly demonstrates how important Mike Pinder was to this band. Armed only with his mellotron, Pinder provides all the orchestral elements of their music and dominates songs like “Have You Heard Part 1 and 2”, and the instrumental “The Voyage” that sits in between. His drone at the beginning and end of the songs is super loud, showcasing the power of a mellotron when run through Hiwatt amplifiers. He also handles lead vocals on the same song as well as a particularly angry version of “Melancholy Man” and recites Edge’s poem, “The Dream” to introduce the “Have You Heard” suite.

The importance of Thomas is also demonstrated throughout. Aside from a great lead vocal on “Legend of a Mind”, he is the crucial middle part in their four part harmonies and his flute is everywhere. Edge’s drum work is delicate at times, then Keith Moon like at others. He places drum rolls in the most unlikely places and smoothly provides the transition between the group’s loud and quiet moments. Is famous “door knocking” sequence in “Question” is intact and one of my favorites moments in the show.

Of course, Hayward and Lodge are the stars of the show. Hayward is a fantastic rhythm and finger picking guitarist, but he knocks off sneakily effective hard rock solos on songs like “Gypsy”, “Tortoise and the Hare”, and “Ride My See Saw”. He is also one of the best lead singers in rock music history, absolutely nailing “Tuesday Afternoon”, “Nights In White Satin”, and “Question”.

Lodge provides all the high harmonies, takes the lead vocal on “Tortoise and the Hare” and “Ride My See Saw” which is mostly sung in four part harmony.. The band’s exceptional four part harmonies are evident throughout but they are especially tight on a great version of “Minstrel’s Song”, which is almost completely sung in harmony, with Lodge handling the few lead vocal lines in the song. He is also a very effective bass player, working perfectly with Edge and pulling off some lead bass runs in songs like “Question”.

All in all, the lineup gives a solid performance from start to finish. For those of you who only considered them a studio band, this set will prove otherwise, They could hold their own with any of their contemporaries in a live setting under circumstances as challenging as what they encountered at this festival. Since the group’s most famous lineup is only captured on two live recordings, my advice to pick them both up and include them in your live music collection.

Title: A Night At Red Rocks With The Colorado  
Symphony Orchestra

Label: Polygram

Release Date: 1993

Medium: CD

Availability: Very Good

Venue: Red Rocks, Colorado

Recording Date: September 9, 1992

Lineup: Justin Hayward - Guitar, vocals  
John Lodge - Bass, vocals  
Ray Thomas - Flute, vocals  
Graeme Edge - Drums  
Paul Bliss - Keyboards

Bias Boshell - Keyboards  
Gordon Marshall - Drums, percussion  
June Boyce - Vocals  
Sue Shattock - Vocals

Set List: Overture  
Late Lament  
Tuesday Afternoon  
For My Lady  
Bless The Wings (That Bring You Back)  
Emily's Song  
New Horizons  
Lean On Me (Tonight)  
Voices In The Sky  
Lovely To See You  
Gemini Dream  
I Know You're Out There Somewhere

The Voice  
Say It With Love  
The Story In Your Eyes  
Your Wildest Dreams  
Isn't Life Strange  
The Other Side Of Life  
I'm Just A Singer In A Rock and Roll Band  
Nights In White Satin  
Legend Of A Mind  
Question  
Ride My See-Saw

The Moody Blues performance at the Red Rocks Amphitheater in September, 1992 was notable since it was the first time the band recorded a live set accompanied by a full orchestra. Led by Conductor Larry Baird, the 100 piece Colorado Symphony Orchestra played a significant role in the show, contributing to nearly every song. By the time this set was recorded, the Moody Blues were clearly focused on documenting their legacy. Their last new album had been released within the last year but it would be seven years before they would issue another one. Instead, they released compilations and live recordings like this set.

Despite the fact that the 1991 studio release *Keys of the Kingdom* did not sell well, the band was still a popular touring attraction in the early nineties. They were particularly successful in filling outdoor "sheds" like the Red Rocks Amphitheater. This success confounded critics, who had reduced the band to the status of an oldies act. While it is true that this set has a greatest hits feel, it is unfair to label the band as an oldies act. The Moody Blues' singles catalog is so extensive that fans would be disappointed if any of the well-known hits were not played. This set does contain nearly all of them, but also captures material from all phases of their career.

There are three songs from *Days of Future Passed*, three songs from *In Search Of The Lost Chord*, one cut from *On The Threshold Of A Dream*, one song from *A Question Of Balance*, two songs from *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*, four songs from *The Seventh Sojourn*, two tracks from *Long Distance Voyager*, two tracks from *The Other Side Of Life*, one cut from *Sur la Mer*, and three cuts from *Keys of the Kingdom*.

The later day Moody Blues were, and remained until their last shows in 2018, dominated by the team of Justin Hayward and John Lodge. On this set, they wrote 19 out of the 22 songs, excluding the *Overture*. Hayward accounts for 13 of them himself. The only songs contributed by other core members are the spoken word "Lament", written by Graeme Edge, and Ray Thomas' two best known compositions, "For My Lady" and "Legend Of A Mind".

Fortunately, the group is in good hands. Hayward is absolutely dominant, with clear, strong vocals, and surprisingly punchy guitar work. Lodge also contributes lead vocals on two cuts, while singing tandem with Hayward on another. His falsetto harmonies still play an important part in the group's sound, despite his advancing age. Ray Thomas only sings lead on one cut, but does contribute to the band's harmony work, along with two female backup singers.

By this point, The Moody Blues also enhanced their live sound with additional musicians. While Hayward and Lodge handle all guitar and bass duties respectively, the role of the other two core members is greatly minimized when compared with *Caught Live & 5*. Thomas' flute appears where you expect it, but there are no long passages. Edge plays drums part of the time, but the real drum work is provided by Gordon Marshall.

The group's last full time keyboardist, Patrick Moraz, was gone by this time, replaced by two new keyboardists, Paul Bliss and Bias Boshell. And, there is the full 100 piece orchestra. The net effect of these changes is that the group is able to produce an incredibly full sound which virtually duplicates their studio recordings. The orchestra plays a dominant role on the older material and supports the band on the later day songs.

Highlights in the set include scintillating versions of "Lovely To See You", "The Voice", "The Other Side Of Life", and "Ride My See-Saw". The band also pulls off a surprisingly raucous version of "I'm Just A Singer (In A Rock and Roll Band)". I also like the eight additional songs on the *Deluxe Edition*, which include a *Seventh Sojourn* rarity, "New Horizons", a great version of "Gemini Dream", two missing tracks ("Legend Of A Mind" and "Voices In The Sky") from *In Search Of The Last Chord*, and John Lodge's "Emily's Song" from *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*.

While the presence of an orchestra forced the band to remain more on script than they were on *Caught Live & 5*, this set still has the punch of a live performance and is extremely well recorded. It is a fitting tribute to a remarkable band that offered more than they were given credit for. Since it also contains live versions of their best later day songs, *A Night At Red Rocks* is another essential recording in your live music collection. Again, I would get the deluxe version of the CD which is available at any large music retailer. It is also available in video format.