

The Beach Boys —'100%'

"The Whole World
Is Just a Great Big
California"

MEL BOCHNER

Brian, Dennis and Carl Wilson, their cousin Mike Love and neighborhood pal Al Jardine are the Beach Boys. They all grew up together in Hawthorne, California. It was Dennis, the sportsman of the family, who suggested to Brian and Mike (neither of whom have ever surfed) that they write a song about surfing. The result was "Surfin'."

"Insiders called their early material 'pimple music'—that is simpleminded sounds for the pubescent mind."—R. Goldstein.

The Beach Boys sing the fun sound. They have "somehow transmuted the sun, sand, sea and sensuality of Southern California into musical terms acceptable all over the world." Some of their early hits include:

"Surfin'"
"G.T.O."
"I Get Around"
"California Girls"
"When I Grow Up to Be a Man"
"Fun, Fun, Fun"

"From San Diego to Malibu, the Beach Boys are as well received as a long rolling breaker."

Of course, some people don't take California-style hedonism seriously. California culture is thought of as pretty artificial.

"People ask me sometimes how I come up with my ideas," reports Brian. "Sometimes I don't know. The feeling you get from going to school, being in love, winning and losing in sports—these are my inspirations. A sociologist might say I am trying to generate a feeling of social superiority."

"Another reason for their normality is the tremendous intelligence within the group, individually as well as collectively. Each member has a balanced view of his place in the scheme of things."

"Says Carl: 'Without each other we'd all be dead. And going way back, without our parents' support we'd never have gotten off

the beach.' Which is true enough, and modest too."

BRIAN
Birthdate: June 20, 1942
Birthplace: Hawthorne, Calif.
Hair: Dark Brown
Eyes: Hazel-blue
Height: 6'2"
Weight: 190 lbs.

DENNIS
Birthdate: Dec. 4, 1944
Birthplace: Hawthorne, Calif.
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Blue
Height: 5'9"
Weight: 145 lbs.

CARL
Birthdate: Dec. 21, 1946
Birthplace: Hawthorne, Calif.
Hair: Dark Brown
Eyes: Blue
Height: 5'10"
Weight: 175 lbs.

MIKE
Birthdate: Mar. 15, 1941
Birthplace: Los Angeles
Hair: Blonde
Eyes: Blue
Height: 6'1"
Weight: 165 lbs.

AL
Birthdate: Sept. 3, 1942
Birthplace: Lima, Ohio
Hair: Blonde
Eyes: Blue
Height: 5'5"
Weight: 135 lbs.

Today a widespread re-evaluation of the Beach Boys is occurring. Gone are those "leaping, lilting, bounding, boundless harmonies" of "Little Honda," "Noble Surfer" and "She's Not the Little Girl I Once Knew." The release within a year of two new records, "Good Vibrations" and "Pet Sounds,"

with the promise of a new album, "Smile," has caused many to sit up and take notice.

Jonathan King says: "With justification, comments are being passed that 'Good Vibrations' is an inhuman work of art. Computerized pop, mechanized music. Take a machine, feed in various musical instruments, add a catch phrase, stir well and press seven buttons. It is long and split . . . analyzed this is A, X, Y and Z (fast), followed by B, C, D and L (slow) followed by R, P and Q (voices or machines made to sound like voices) impressive, fantastic, commercial—yes. Emotional, soul-destroying, shattering—no."

Brian calls "Pet Sounds" (sounds to pet by) an "evening album." The new songs have a melodic yet melancholy air:

"That's Not Me"
"God Only Knows"
"Don't Talk"
"Caroline No"
"Let's Go Away for Awhile"
"I Just Wasn't Made for These Times"

The influence of early electronic music, especially Les Paul and Mary Ford, can be noted in the intricate cutting into and over of separately recorded tracks of voices and instruments.

"Brian Wilson may be a genius; it's hard to say because the meaning of the word is elusive. But it takes a special word to describe the rare, mindblocking, blinding talents of this 24-year-old."

"Good Vibrations" is a three-minute and thirty-five second record. It took seven months to record.

"I've used a lot of musicians on the track—twelve violins, piano, four saxes, oboe, vibes, a guitar with a coke bottle on the strings for a semi-steel guitar effect, also I used two basses and percussion. The total effect is . . . 'Let's Go Away for Awhile,' which is something everyone in the world must have said at some time or other. Nice thought. Most of us don't go away but it's still a nice thought."

"Of course some people don't take California-style hedonism seriously." The Beach Boys. Courtesy William Morris Agency.

