

= The Electric Prunes =

The Electric Prunes are an American psychedelic rock band , formed in Los Angeles , California , in 1965 . Much of the band 's music was , as music historian Richie Unterberger described it , possessed of " an eerie and sometimes anguished ambiance " , and , early on , mainly consisted of material by songwriters Annette Tucker and Nancie Mantz , though the group also penned their own songs . Combining elements of psychedelia and electronic rock , the band 's sound was marked by innovative recording techniques with fuzz @-@ toned guitars and oscillating sound effects . In addition , guitarist Ken Williams ' and singer James Lowe 's concept of " free @-@ form garage music " provided the band with a richer sonic palette and exploratory lyrical structure than many of their contemporaries .

The band was signed to Reprise Records in 1966 and released their first single , " Ain 't It Hard " , in the latter part of the year . Their first album , The Electric Prunes , included the band 's two nationally charting songs , " I Had Too Much to Dream (Last Night) " and " Get Me to the World on Time " . With the appearance of their second album , Underground , the band was more free to create their own material . However , the original group disbanded by 1968 when they proved unable to record the innovative and complex arrangements by David Axelrod on the albums Mass in F Minor and Release of an Oath . Both albums were released under the band 's name , the rights to which were owned by their record producer David Hassinger , but were largely performed by other musicians . Several of the original band members reconvened and recorded again after 2001 .

= = History = =

= = = Origin = = =

The band originated from a surf rock @-@ influenced garage rock group , the Sanctions , in 1965 . The Sanctions , which included James Lowe (vocals , guitar) , Mark Tulin (bass guitar) , Ken Williams (lead guitar) , and Michael " Quint " Weakley (drums) , recorded 12 cover songs on an acetate disc on March 27 , 1965 , in a home studio owned by Russ Bottomley . For their next set of recordings on September 29 , 1965 , the group , then known as Jim and the Lords , was joined by keyboardist , Dick Hargrave , who left shortly after to pursue a career in graphic arts . The songs went unreleased until Heartbeat Productions distributed the 2000 album , Then Came The Electric Prunes , which was commended for its good sound quality , considering the circumstances in which it was recorded . Back to a quartet , the band , while rehearsing in a garage , met a real estate agent named Barbara Harris . Harris had connections in the music industry , and introduced the group to Dave Hassinger to record demos at Sky Hill Studios . Hassinger , who had been working as the resident sound engineer at RCA Studios , recently completed development for The Rolling Stones ' album , Aftermath , and expressed a desire to produce a record . He suggested to the group that they change their name , and they considered a list of alternatives . According to Lowe , the name Electric Prunes started off as a joke , but he eventually convinced other band members , saying , " It 's the one thing everyone will remember . It 's not attractive , and there 's nothing sexy about it , but people won 't forget it . " As a result of the recordings , a single , featuring a cover of the Gypsy Trips ' folk rock tune , " Ain 't It Hard " , and the Lowe @-@ penned song , " Little Olive " , was released in early 1966 , but failed to chart .

= = = Early success = = =

Despite the commercial failure of " Ain 't It Hard " , Reprise Records was encouraged by the group 's effort , and signed the band to a recording contract that left them under Hassinger 's authority . Weakley departed the band after the single , and was replaced by Preston Ritter , and rhythm guitarist James " Weasel " Spagnola was recruited to make The Electric Prunes a quintet . Although the band was composing their own material , Hassinger called upon songwriters Annette Tucker and

Nancie Mantz to write the majority of the group 's songs . The new line @-@ up recorded six demos at American Recording Studio and Leon Russell 's studio . These mainly comprised cover songs and Tucker @-@ Mantz compositions . According to Lowe , while at Russell 's recording studio , " Dave cued up a tape and didn 't hit ' record , ' and the playback in the studio was way up : ear @-@ shattering vibrating jet guitar . Ken had been shaking his Bigsby wiggle stick with some fuzztone and tremolo at the end of the tape . Forward it was cool . Backward it was amazing . I ran into the control room and said , ' What was that ? ' They didn 't have the monitors on so they hadn 't heard it . I made Dave cut it off and save it for later . " The fluttering buzz sound was utilized for the opening to the Tucker @-@ Mantz song , " I Had Too Much To Dream (Last Night) " , which also included a heavily @-@ textured psychedelic guitar motif . The song was chosen to be released as The Electric Prunes ' second single in November 1966 . It peaked at number 11 on the Billboard Hot 100 and reached number 49 on the UK Singles Chart . The success of the single prompted immediate touring , and earned the group a promotional contract with musical equipment makers Vox . Williams recorded an advert , demonstrating the use of Vox 's wah @-@ wah pedal in early 1967 , and the band was featured in magazines such as Vox Teen Beat .

The band 's follow @-@ up single , " Get Me to the World on Time " , which put distorted sound effects to a psychedelic @-@ tinged Bo Diddley beat , was released in May 1967 . The song managed to chart at number 27 in the US and number 42 in the UK , and was the most electronically experimental composition by the group thus far . When it came time for The Electric Prunes to record songs for their first album , they were limited musically due to the predominate presence of Tucker and Mantz 's (also Jill Jones) songwriting partnership , which composed the majority of the album 's material . The group 's debut album , The Electric Prunes possessed exotically @-@ combined effects , and violin @-@ like guitar riffs , mixed with a diverse , and somewhat uneven , selection of pop songs , with only " Train For Tomorrow " and " Luvins " being penned by the band . Tracks such as the soft rock tune , " Onie " and " Toonerville Trolley " suggest inconsistency in an attempt to produce a commercially viable sound . Reflecting on the album , Tulin said , " Consequently there are definitely songs that I believe do not belong on the album and were , in fact , a waste of our time and energy . There were several other ideas we were working on , but [we] realized there was no use pursuing them because they too would have been ' too weird . ' "

In July 1967 , the band released their fourth single , one of the more unusual compositions to come from the pen of the Tucker @-@ Mantz songwriting duo , " Dr. Do @-@ Good " . The song , which featured Williams playing a prototype steel guitar , and childlike to maddening vocals , was described by music historian Richie Unterberger as " sounding more like a horror movie theme run amok than a radio @-@ ready hit " , and consequently the single bubbled under the Hot 100 at number 128 . The Electric Prunes reconvened at American Recording Studios to record their second album , Underground , though Hassinger was not as involved in the band 's activities , which allowed much more creative freedom to the group to write their own material . For the album , the band wrote seven of the twelve tracks , and expanded upon the experimentation of the first album , with inventive guitar reverb and oscillation , in a unified effort . However , in the middle of the recording sessions the line @-@ up went through changes when Ritter departed for musical differences , and was replaced by original drummer Weakley , who appeared on five tracks . Spagnola left near the conclusion of recording to address medical concerns , and Mike Gannon was recruited to finish the album . Gannon was included on just two songs as well as the non @-@ album track , " Everybody Knows You 're Not In Love " . In August 1967 , Underground was released , but , without a hit @-@ ready single , did not fare as well on the Billboard 200 , where it peaked at number 172 . After a U.S. tour in the latter half of 1967 , the new line @-@ up embarked on a European tour and this led to appearances at high @-@ profile venues such as The Roundhouse , The Speakeasy Club and Middle Earth . On the final leg of the tour , The Electric Prunes ' performance was recorded in Stockholm by the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation . The recordings were issued in 1997 on the live album , Stockholm ' 67 .

= = = The Axelrod period = = =

At the suggestion of manager Lenny Poncher and Hassinger , The Electric Prunes agreed to record a concept album that integrated Gregorian music into psychedelic pop , with the belief it would launch them into commercial success . Poncher recruited David Axelrod , a formally neo @-@ classically trained musician , to compose all of the material for the project . The result , Mass in F Minor , was a complex arrangement of religious @-@ based rock , which was sung entirely in Latin . Although the band did record the songs " Kyrie Eleison " , " Gloria " , and " Credo " , the intricate orchestration proved to be too difficult and time @-@ consuming for the group . As a consequence , Hassinger enlisted the Canadian group , The Collectors , among other session musicians , in completing the album , although Lowe , Tulin , and Weakley did contribute to every track . Mass in F Minor was released in January 1968 and reached number 135 on the Billboard 200 . An eerie version of the opening track , " Kyrie Eleison " , became somewhat of an underground favorite when it appeared in the soundtrack for the counterculture film , Easy Rider . The Electric Prunes performed with the new songs in concert just once , at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium , which Tulin described : " From the outset the performance was a disaster . We missed the intro on the first song and it never got any better . Amp speakers blew , charts fell off music stands and everyone was , in general , in a complete state of confusion . Ended up each song turned into one long jam . I think we were , at times , all in the same key . I made my way over to the four celli and four French horns and told them to ' jam in E. ' Somehow we would hit a break and James would manage a vocal " . As a result of financial and musical issues , Weakley and Lowe left the group in early 1968 . Tulin and Williams finished a tour with a line @-@ up that also included Kenny Loggins and Jeremy Stuart , but by mid @-@ 1968 they too departed the group .

Nonetheless , Hassinger still owned the rights to The Electric Prunes 's name , and was encouraged by the success of Mass in F Minor , which prompted him to assemble a new line @-@ up . He was steered toward the Colorado group , Climax , by Rich Fifield . Fifield had worked in fellow Colorado band , Hardwater (previously the surf rock band The Astronauts) , which was managed by Poncher , and produced an album with Axelrod . The new Electric Prunes line @-@ up included Climax members Richard Whetstone (vocals , guitar) , John Herron (organ) , and Mark Kincaid (guitar) with Brett Wade (bass guitar) , who was recommended by The Collectors . With the group restructured , Axelrod , again , composed all the material for their next album , in the same vein as the previous effort , and centered it around the Jewish prayer , Kol Nidre . The album , titled Release of an Oath , utilized several session musicians including Howard Roberts , Carol Kaye , and Earl Palmer , and saw Whetstone as the only band member to contribute to the recordings . Although the album was considered more cohesive and progressive than its predecessor , it failed to chart upon its release in November 1968 . Afterwards , Axelrod returned to his past position at Capitol Records , and The Electric Prunes toured as a supporting act for bands such as Steppenwolf , Canned Heat , and New Buffalo Springfield .

= = = The " New Improved " Electric Prunes = = =

The band 's final album , Just Good Old Rock and Roll , was released in June 1969 with the cover describing the group as The " New Improved " Electric Prunes . Herron left the group before they completed recording of the album , though he was still credited as the keyboardist . He was replaced by Ron Morgan , who had been the guitarist of Three Dog Night , and an essential session musician for the first three albums released by The West Coast Pop Art Experimental Band . With the exception of " Finders Keepers , Losers Weepers " , which was co @-@ written by Jimmy Holiday , all the songs on Just Good Old Rock and Roll were composed solely by the band . In addition , Wade composed " Flowing Smoothly " , the B @-@ side to the non @-@ album single , " Hey , Mr. President " . The album was much more straightforward than past works , consisting of funk @-@ influenced hard rock , though " So Many People to Tell " and " Silver Passion Mine " also exhibit a late @-@ psychedelic sound . As Whetstone explains , " We were fairly naive in terms of guidance ; we had none , so we were experimenting with a lot of musical styles . If you listen to the album , you 'll hear a lot of diversity , feel and tempo changes ... That was our learning curve . " In early 1970 , Whetstone and Wade departed the band and moved to Canada where they formed Stallion

Thumbrock . Morgan and Kincaid constructed another line @-@ up of The Electric Prunes that included Michael Kearns , Clay Groomer , Huey Plumeigh , and Galen Pugh ; however by mid @-@ 1970 the band dissolved .

= = = Revival and reformation = = =

Although the band broke up in 1970 , their material continued to be circulated through reissues and compilation albums . Following the inclusion of " I Had Too Much to Dream (Last Night) " as the first track on the seminal Nuggets : Original Artyfacts from the First Psychedelic Era , 1965 ? 1968 in 1972 , a slow return of interest in the band 's music began . On the 1998 release of the album , " Get Me to the World on Time " was included as well . In Europe , the band 's albums were re @-@ released , with 1986 seeing the reissue of Underground , Release of an Oath , and , essentially The Electric Prunes 's first greatest hits album , Long Days Flight . This was the first album to include their first single , " Ain 't It Hard " , the non @-@ LP track " You Never Had It Better " , and the first to be released on the compact disc format in 1989 . By 1997 , all of the group 's albums were available via compact disc . Following the release of the 1997 live album , Stockholm ' 67 , on Heartbeat Records , the original line @-@ up of Tulin , Lowe , Williams , and Weakley (now known as Fortune) reconvened , in 1999 , to record new material for the first time in 31 years . After the success of the 2001 compilation album , Lost Dreams , the band began to perform live again along with new members .

On October 31 , 2001 , the band released the album , Artifact , which included several guest musicians , most notably former Moby Grape guitarist , Peter Lewis . Deemed the " one we never got to make " , the album was a cohesive take on the band 's psychedelic sound . In August 2002 , the group toured Europe for the first time since 1968 , with concerts in the UK and Greece , and , in 2003 , a DVD looking into the UK portion of their European tour , called Rewired , was released . Additional albums were released over the years , including the concept album , California , in 2004 , and their most experimental album since The Electric Prunes 's reformation , Feedback , in 2006 . On February 26 , 2011 , Tulin died aged 62 from a heart attack while volunteering at the University of Southern California Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber . After Tulin 's death , the band went on hiatus , but returned to touring in 2013 . On May 22 , 2014 , the band released WaS , which featured new material inspired by the group 's tour in Tokyo , Japan . The album includes the last recordings with Tulin , and the two live tracks , " Smokestack Lightning " and " Bullet Thru the Backseat " .

Preston Ritter died in 2015 , aged 65 .

= = Band members = =

= = = Current members = = =

James Lowe ? lead vocals , harmonica , percussion , theremin , guitar , autoharp (1965 ? 1968 , 1999 ? present)

Steve Kara ? lead guitar , backing vocals (2003 ? present)

Jay Dean ? rhythm guitar , backing vocals (2004 ? present)

Walter Garces ? drums (2006 ? present)

Rocco ? bass , backing vocals (2013 ? present)

= = = Former members = = =

Mark Tulin (1965 ? 1968 , 1999 ? 2011 ; died 2011) - bass , keyboards

Ken Williams (1965 ? 1968 , 1999 ? 2003 , 2006) - lead guitar

Michael " Quint " Weakley (1965 ? 1966 , 1967 , 2001) - drums , percussion

Steve Acoff (1965)

Dick Hargraves (1965) - keyboards

Preston Ritter (1966 ? 1967 ; died 2015) - drums , percussion
 James Spagnola (1966 ? 1967) - rhythm guitar , backing and lead vocals
 Joe Dooley (1967 ? 1968 , 2001 ? 2005) - drums
 Mike Gannon (1967 ? 1968) - rhythm guitar
 John Herron (1968 ? 1970) - keyboards
 Mark Kincaid (1968 ? 1970) - guitar , backing vocals
 Brett Wade (1968 ? 1970) - bass , backing vocals , flute
 Dick Whetstone (1968 ? 1970) - drums , lead vocals , guitar
 Kenny Loggins (1968)
 Jeromy Stuart (1968)
 Ron Morgan (1969 ? 1970) - guitar
 Cameron Lowe (2001 ? 2003) - keyboards
 Mark Moulin (2001 ? 2003) - lead guitar
 Glen Bostic (2007)

= = Discography = =

= = = Studio albums = = =

The Electric Prunes (1967)
 Underground (1967)
 Mass in F Minor (1968)
 Release of an Oath (1968)
 Just Good Old Rock and Roll (1969)
 Artifact (2002)
 California (2004)
 Feedback (2006)
 WaS (2014)

= = = Live albums = = =

Stockholm ' 67 (Heartbeat BMRO39) , 1997
 Return to Stockholm Live at Debaser 2004 (PruneTwang 8 @-@ 69691 @-@ 13) , 2012

= = = U.S. singles = = =

" Ain 't It Hard " / " Little Olive " (Reprise 0473) , 1966
 " I Had Too Much to Dream (Last Night) " / " Luvin " (Reprise 0532) 1966 (US # 11 , UK # 49)
 " Get Me to the World on Time " / " Are You Lovin ' Me More (But Enjoying it Less) " (Reprise 0564) , 1966 , (US # 27 , UK # 42)
 " Vox Wah @-@ Wah Ad " (Thomas 08 @-@ 000132 @-@ 0) , 1967
 " Dr. Do @-@ Good " / " Hideaway " (Reprise 0594) , 1967 (US # 128)
 " The Great Banana Hoax " / " Wind @-@ up Toys " (Reprise 0607) , 1967
 " Everybody Knows You 're Not in Love " / " You Never Had it Better " (Reprise 0652) , 1968
 " I Had Too Much to Dream (Last Night) " / " Get Me to the World on Time " (Reprise 0704 ? Double A @-@ side) , 1968
 " Shadow " (Reprise PRO 287) , 1968 , one @-@ sided single
 " Sanctus " / " Credo " (Reprise PRO 277) , 1968
 " Help Us (Our Father , Our King) " / " The Adoration " (Reprise PRO 305) , 1968
 " Hey ! Mr. President " / " Flowing Smoothly " (Reprise 0756) , 1969
 " Sell " / " Violent Rose " (Reprise 0833) , 1969
 " Love Grows " / " Finders , Keepers , Losers , Weepers " (Reprise 0858) , 1969

" Hollywood Halloween " (Birdman Records BMR1313) , 2001 , Peter Lewis (Moby Grape)
backed by The Electric Prunes)

" Get Me to the World on Time " (Live) (Birdman Records BMR037) , 2002 (recorded at Voxfest
III in June 2001)

" Left in Blue " (original by Azure Halo)

= = = European singles = = =

" I Had Too Much to Dream (Last Night) " / " Luv'n " (Reprise RS 20532) , 1966 , UK

" Get Me to the World on Time " / " Are You Lovin' Me More (But Enjoying It Less) " (Reprise RS
20564) , 1967 , UK

" The Great Banana Hoax " / " Wind @-@ Up Toys " (Reprise RS 20607) , 1967 , UK

" Long Day's Flight " / " The King In His Counting House " (Reprise RS 23212) , 1967 , UK

" I Had Too Much To Dream (Last Night) " / " Luv'n " / " Little Olive " / " Ain't It Hard " (Reprise
RVEP 60098) , 1967 , France

" Everybody Knows You're Not In Love " / " You Never Had It Better " (Reprise RS 20652) , 1968 ,
UK

" Long Day's Flight " / " Dr. Do @-@ Good " / " The Great Banana Hoax " / " Captain Glory " (Reprise
RVEP 60110) , 1968 , France

" Everybody Knows You're Not In Love " / " You Never Had It Better " (Reprise RV 20149) , 1968 ,
France

" Hey Mr President " / " Flowing Smoothly " (Reprise RV 20198) , 1969 , France

" I Had Too Much To Dream (Last Night) " / (" Lies " by the Knickerbockers) (Elektra K 12102) ,
1973 (from the Nuggets compilation) , UK

" I Had Too Much To Dream (Last Night) " / " Luv'n " (Radar ADA 16 ? picture sleeve reissue) ,
1979 , UK

= = = Compilation albums = = =

Long Day's Flight (Edsel Records / Demon Records) , 1986 , UK

The Singles (Gone Beat) , 1995 , Israel

Lost Dreams (Birdman Records / Heartbeat Records) , 2000 , US

The Sanctions / Jim and the Lords - Then Came the Electric Prunes (Heartbeat Productions) ,
2000 , UK (pre @-@ Electric Prunes recordings)

Too Much To Dream - Original Group Recordings : Reprise 1966 @-@ 1967 (Rhino Records /
Reprise Records) , 2007 , UK & Europe

The Original Albums Series , 5 @-@ CD box set , released 2012

= = = Various = = =

Easy Rider , 1969 (includes " Kyrie Eleison ")

Nuggets : Original Artyfacts from the First Psychedelic Era , 1965 ? 1968 (includes " I Had Too
Much To Dream (Last Night) ") , 1972 , Elektra , reissued 1976 Sire

Pebbles , Volume 2 , 1979 (includes " Vox Wah @-@ Wah Radio Ad ") , BFD Records , reissued
1992 on CD by AIP Records

Rarities , 1981 (4 songs from a 1967 concert in Stockholm plus the Vox ad , split with Count Five) ,
Great Live Concerts label

= = = DVDs = = =

Rewired (Snapper Music) , 2002 , UK