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## SQUEEZE

**A**rgybargy, the third and newest album from Squeeze, marks the final stage of this young group's evolution to musical maturity. On it they have synthesized and jelled all of the diverse influences that made them THE group to watch in England since their first John Cale-produced ep, *Packet of Three*, in 1977. The brilliant, eccentric Cale went on to produce their first A&M album not long after. Among its tracks was the group's first Top Ten English hit, "Take Me I'm Yours." For their second album, Squeeze took on the production load themselves (with the help of John Wood) and began to more effectively focus their direction. The lp they turned in, *Cool for Cats*, gave them three more English hits: the title track, which reached number two in England, was A&M's biggest UK single ever, and went Top Ten in Holland and Australia; "Up the Junction" which also reached number two in England and gave them their second gold single; and finally "Slap and Tickle," which again took Squeeze into the Top Twenty. Buoyed by this success and the consistently enthusiastic reception the group received in its extensive tours of Europe, the U.K. and the United States, they set out to again top themselves. Just a few listenings to *Argy Bargy* will convince you how masterfully they have succeeded.

The nucleus of Squeeze—Chris Difford (guitars/vocals), Jools Holland (keyboards/vocals), Glenn Tillbrook (guitars/vocals) and Harry Kakoulli (bass)—banded together in South London in 1974. Two years later, Gilson Lavis, one of England's top session drummers came aboard and a chance meeting with Cale led to that first independently released ep. For *Argy Bargy*, bassist John Bentley has replaced Kakoulli.

The group's unprecedented string of hits from *Cool for Cats* in England drew public praise for the band and its songwriting from such diverse sources as Elvis Costello, Paul McCartney and Nick Lowe. Their consistently deft arrangements and good-humored, off-beat lyrics are in evidence on every cut. Difford, Tillbrook and Holland each bring a distinct flavor to Squeeze's broth. Difford delivers his quirky, intimate songs with Lou Reed-like inflection; Tillbrook moves them into the pop mainstream with heartthrob melodies; and Holland's infatuation with boogie-woogie piano sets the whole thing careening into a space that is Squeeze's own, a territory in the forefront of a whole new generation of British music. You could say they're gripping.



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