

cue

[cd reviews]

More Morris magic

ROCK

The Real Thing

Russell Morris

(Rouseabout Records)

★★★★★



In short//A long wait over

● AT first this appears a worthy anthology covering Morris's career from his earliest days with *Somebody's Image* (*Hide And Seek*), but there is more to it.

Buried unannounced at the end of CD1 is his debut album *Bloodstone* in its entirety.

It is a landmark recording from an era when Australian artists finally looked beyond the amiable impotence of Tin Pan Alley and threw off stifling thoughts of inferiority.

It is telling that inside a few months of 1971, Daddy Cool emerged alongside Spectrum, Chain, Blackfeather and, of course, Russell Morris.

Sweet Sweet Love took Morris to the top of the local charts, but only dragged *Bloodstone* part the way with it. The country's best musi-



cians of the day — Mark Kennedy, Duncan Maguire, Phil Manning and the brilliant Brian Cadd — worked magic as they helped shape the stories Morris had written into songs.

It should have established him as one of the leading singer-songwriters. His contemporaries at the time — James Taylor, Carole King, Joni Mitchell, Cat Stevens — would have been happy to have produced an album as consistently strong. CD2 fea-

tures similarly overlooked songs from two "lost" albums Morris recorded in New York a couple of years later with the cream of East Coast studio talent.

Rounding it off are the best tracks from his last three studio albums and few odd gems, including Neil Young's *After the Goldrush*.

It goes without saying that *The Real Thing* is here in all its dizzying, pompous glory.

PETE BEST

Hidden gems:

A new double CD anthology includes a "lost" Russell Morris classic — and the ubiquitous *The Real Thing*.