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Anything Phonographic – (In The Groove magazine)

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Well we're now in the "dog days" of summer and it's a good time to catch up on some reading and watching DVDs. Some offbeat items arrived recently and I'll try to give you some recommendations on a wide variety of subjects this month.

A new (2005) and unusual documentary on Louis Armstrong on the British Quantum Leap label is now available in the US from Music Video Distributors. ***Louis Armstrong: The King of Jazz*** was produced and directed by Jordi Vall Escru and is narrated, in a very low key style, by Sterling Wilson. Using archival stock film footage and stills, and adding creative colorization and visual effects, backed by recordings (which are identified on the screen) , Escru covers Satchmo's full career to show how he changed styles and the size of his bands. There's no actual sound performance footage, only records. The historic information appears to be correct (though Wilson pronounces Sidney Bechet's name as "Bet-chet") and the colorful graphics might attract a younger MTV generation to Armstrong's talents (though that may be defeated by the dull black and white packaging). (www.musicvideodistributors.com).