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Bio

DVD review: 'Cliff Richard: Rare and Unseen'

Friday, August 20, 2010 - [Riffs](#) by John Haydon

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WASHINGTON — "Cliff Richard: Rare and Unseen" (MVD Visual and Wienerworld, \$14.95) takes an inside look at the British pop star who was billed as the "British Elvis" and dominated the British music scene in the late 1950s and 1960s. The DVD release is a collection of rare black-and-white footage featuring original rare film and videos of the singer, newsreels and photographs from private collections. Many of the interviews focus on Richard's faith.

"Christians should make themselves known in all walks of life," Richard says at a Newcastle City Hall religion special. "It's sad we don't have a few committed Christian politicians."

At one point in the concert, Richard talks about the possibility of walking away from music and becoming a religious education teacher.

"I can leave the fame and money," he says, "but I don't think God wants me to."

Born Harry Webb in India in 1940, Richard is still performing and will celebrate his 70th birthday in October at six sold-out shows at London's Albert Hall.

Richard has recorded more than 130 singles, including 14 No. 1 UK singles. He has sold 120 million singles worldwide. But Richard never made it big in America.

"I'm hardly known in America," he says. "They never caught on. They don't like my records. I have the best holidays there [in the U.S.], because no one knows me. They always ask me, what do I do for a living?"

Because of the outspokenness about his faith, Richard is often forced to defend his wealth. He is said to be worth more than \$70 million, with houses in England and New York, a vineyard in Portugal and a \$10-million mansion in Barbados, visited by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

"There's nothing abnormal about being wealthy," he says on the South Bank Show, after being pressed about his money and the fact that he has not lived a "normal life" since he was 18. "I don't live for show business, so, if I have disappointments, I don't go and jump in the first lake I find."

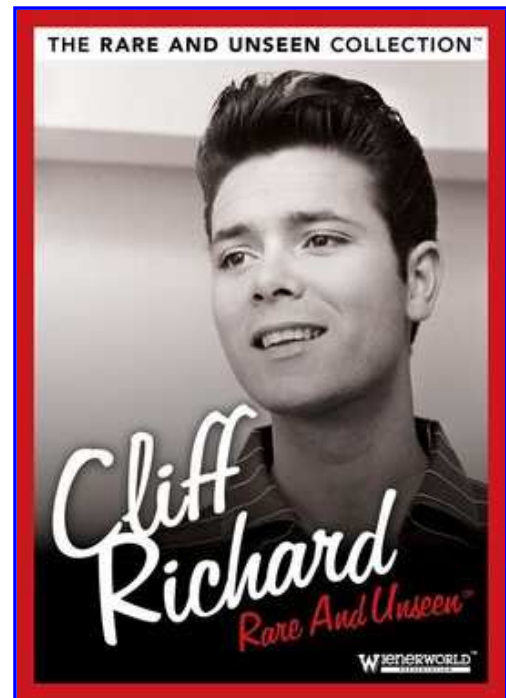
Later he says: "If I feel pain when I see the problems in the Third World, God must burn up with pain."

Many of the interviews are from "The Russell Harty Show."

"If Christianity offers just one thing, it's to grow up inside," he tells the late Harty.

When asked by Harty if it is easy for a wealthy pop star to enter the kingdom of Heaven, Richard responds: "I've dealt with the love and lust for it [money], and I could live without it."

In his 52-year career, Richard has had No.1 hits in the UK in six different decades (1950s to 2000s).



Cliff Richard: Rare and Unseen

In a 1970s interview, Harty presses Richard on his comments about David Bowie's androgynous performances being "dubious."

"Man is a man, and woman is a woman," says Richard, who never married and now lives with a former Roman Catholic priest.

There are few songs on the DVD. Richard does sing a number of Christian hymns. As always, he comes off as a genuine, nice person.

There are interviews with Richard and his longtime backup band the Shadows, who last year performed to massive crowds in Europe on their 50th reunion tour.

There's a nice clip of Richard talking about his 50 years as a pop star on a famed red double-decker London bus, identical to the one from his breakout movie "Summer Holiday" in 1963.

There's some really old holiday camera footage of Richard visiting Elvis Presley's army barracks in Germany, but Elvis was in Paris at the time.

If Elvis had lived, he would be 75 today. Richard will never be as famous as Presley, but he is still performing at 69 and probably will for a few more years.

-AH-

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John Haydon has covered soccer for The Washington Times for two decades. He has reported on international soccer events in Germany, South Korea and Spain.

John hails from Birmingham, England and has lived in the Washington D.C. region for over twenty years.

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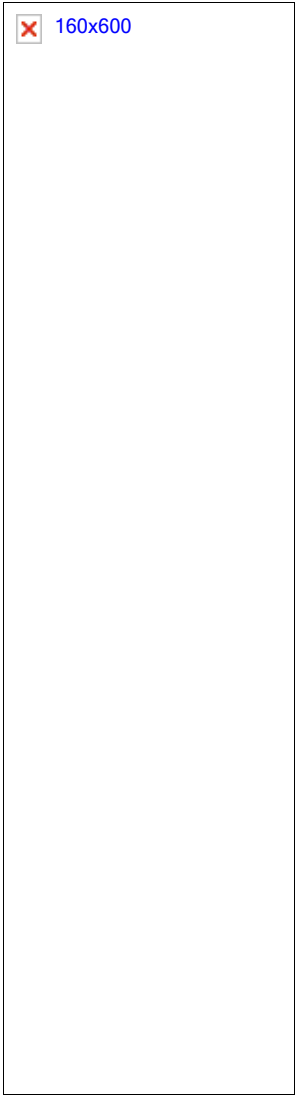


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