

GenEc DVD Review

Sunday, August 22, 2010

Paul McCartney Really Is Dead: The Last Testament of George Harrison (MVD)

Beginning in 1969, and lasting well into the 1970's, thousands of Beatles fans and critics pored over their Beatles LP's (both the discs and their covers), searching for clues which would "prove" that Paul McCartney died in an auto accident in 1966, and was replaced by a look-alike double. After a few years, "Paul is Dead" mania faded away, largely because few fans really believed it to be true.

Now, decades after the phenomenon seemingly became a distant memory, along comes a documentary DVD which would have us believe that Paul is indeed dead, and that the man who has continued to tour as Paul McCartney to this very day is actually a fellow named William Campbell. The major piece of evidence presented here is a narration supposedly recorded at the end of 1999 by George Harrison, while he was hospitalized after being robbed in his home by an intruder. I have to say that while the voice claiming to be George sounds vaguely like him, it sounds more like an imitator than the late Beatle himself. I'm also a bit leery that for a hospitalized man who claims to be in fear for his life, he gives a very cogent, detailed account of the whole "Paul is Dead" affair, neatly arranged and leaving out very little.

But these observations are merely impressions on my part. I have no access to voice-recognition technology to either prove or disprove that the voice is indeed George Harrison. As far as I'm concerned, you may choose to believe this truly to be a documentary presenting the real facts of the matter, or you may find it merely an ingenious ruse exploiting the fact that George Harrison is no longer with us to deny the veracity of the disc. In either case, this is still an entertaining and informative presentation of the many theories and elaborately uncovered "clues" which have become part of the "Paul is Dead" legend.

"George" describes the accident that killed Paul in gory detail, because so many of the hints that surfaced through the lifespan of the legend have to do with the condition of Paul's body after the accident. We are told that Paul had given a ride to a young lady named Rita, who later became Heather Mills, and that her screaming-fan behavior caused Paul to lose control of his car. (I might point out that Internet bios of Heather Mills have her being born in 1968, two years after the accident.) An MI5 representative

Blog Archive

▼ **2010** (3)

▼ **August** (1)

Paul McCartney Really Is Dead: The Last Testament ...

► **July** (1)

► **March** (1)

► **2009** (8)

► **2008** (7)

About Me

Tom Bingham

[View my complete profile](#)

named Maxwell informed the remaining Beatles of the accident, claiming that the government wanted Paul's death hushed up. If it were made public, the government feared, it would result in a rash of teen suicides. The three living Beatles were sworn to secrecy, and willingly went along with the deception at first, so as to keep the band going. Eventually, the band had second thoughts about their part in the cover-up, but Maxwell warned them they would be killed if they revealed that Paul was, in fact, really dead. "George" claims that the three Beatles began dropping hints and clues into song lyrics and on the LP covers as a hedge against public reaction should the truth ever become known.

If you accept this premise (and I have to confess, I find it far-fetched), the whole collection of clues and hints falls into place very neatly. William Campbell has plastic surgery to increase his resemblance to the dead Paul, and becomes known to the living Beatles as "False Paul", shortened to "Faul". The video includes an interview with the "real" George Harrison in which he seems to consistently refer to Paul as "Faul". We are told that the plastic surgery caused Campbell to also be called "Rubber Paul", which was proposed as the name of the Beatles' next LP; to make the clue less obvious to Maxwell, "Rubber Paul" was changed to "Rubber Soul". And on it goes, one convoluted clue (and explanation) after another in lyrics, in backwards recordings, in photos included on LP covers, in design elements, all explained in elaborate detail. The cover of "Sgt. Pepper" shows the people, dead or alive, whom Paul would have wanted to attend his funeral. The "Yellow Submarine" refers to a coffin, and so on and so forth.

One of the most intriguing aspects of the video is the examination of the audio clues, in particular those involving "backward masking", that is, sound bites dropped into the mix which cannot be distinguished while the LP is being played in real time, but which show up when the records are played backwards. These have always been one of the best known, but least-heard clues, because so few people have had the equipment to play vinyl records backwards. (Some have been presented in other documentaries, but not as many as presented here, in my experience at least.) But now, one can actually hear a whole collection of such legendary phrases such as "Turn me on, dead man" and "I buried Paul". Truth be told, not all the backwards clues sound to me like what they're supposed to sound like, but many do.

This would all be great fun, until we are told that John Lennon had had enough of the deception, and was ready to blow the whistle on the whole charade. Maxwell warned him not to do it, but then Mark David Chapman assassinates John. The disc attempts to make clear that this was a direct result of John's defiance of MI5.

Throughout the DVD, there is just so much "evidence" trotted out

and explained with such conviction that one can either laugh it off as a total hoax, become convinced that Paul McCartney is really dead, or simply be impressed by the massive amount of effort producer John Gilbert put into tying together so many factors of the Paul is Dead deception. It's a measure of how well Gilbert has put this together that there were moments when I was ready to buy into his story.

[< # Bloggers Over Forty ? >](#)

Powered by **WebRing**.

The program lasts 97 minutes. The bonus features include MP3's of the soundtrack music, and an only tangentially relevant 10-minute interview with the late music journalist Al Aronowitz, on how he introduced the Beatles to Bob Dylan and to marijuana. Not uninteresting, but it doesn't really fit into the story of "Paul".

Posted by Tom Bingham at **1:42 PM**

Labels: **"Paul is Dead", George Harrison, McCartney, Paul**

0 COMMENTS:

Post a Comment

LINKS TO THIS POST

Create a Link

Home

Older Post

Subscribe to: **Post Comments (Atom)**

WebRing®

Search for rings on any topic:

Search

Is this your site?

ID/U# has no memberships? Click for assistance.

Powered by **WebRing®**.