

The Donovan Concert: Live In L.A.

Donovan

MVD Visual, 2007

<http://www.donovan.ie>

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Watching this concert is like being caught in a time warp, or at least an episode of the original *Star Trek*.

David: Scotty, beam me up! I'm caught in the flower-power 60s!

Scotty: Captain, we've lost main power. It'll be an hour before we can get the transporter back online!

David: That's about all the Donovan I can take. Help!

Some artists produce music that is eternal and remains relevant and listenable as the years pass. Donovan does not fit into that category. His classic songs are products of their time and remain artifacts of the era. What seemed creative and interesting 40 years ago is now quaint.

Donovan Concert: Live In L.A. was recorded January 21, 2007 at the Kodiak Theatre in Hollywood. Proceeds from this DVD of the concert are being donated to the David Lynch Foundation for consciousness-based education and world peace. In short, the foundation establishes stress reduction transcendental meditation programs for inner city youth at risk. Good luck with that.

Donovan strums his acoustic guitar throughout the performance and is backed by bass and percussion. Donovan also keeps up a constant patter between songs that ranges from historically interesting to self serving. The self-serving part is especially true when talking about transcendental meditation with the Beatles, in what seems like an attempt to make Donovan seem more relevant and cool than he actually is.

"Catch The Wind," "Colours" and "Universal Soldier" are performed well. The lyrics are straightforward, unlike some Donovan material. His themes of love and protest can still strike a receptive chord today. These songs are re-produced just about note for note and word for word live and are pleasant reminders of a bygone era.

But the psychedelic stuff comes off poorly. A lack of instrumental backups hurts, but the worst part is the lyrical content; what sounded profound in the 60s seems awfully quaint and makes little sense today. As such, formerly decent songs like "Jennifer Juniper," "Hurdy Gurdy Man" and "Sunshine Superman" are poorly done and just don't matter anymore. The only redeeming song from this part of the concert is a folkish rendition of "Season Of The Witch."

For the encore (yes, there is one), Donovan brings out Mike Love of the Beach Boys to sing "Mellow Yellow" with him. Love looks good but apparently doesn't know the words ...and so he stands there for several minutes looking embarrassed and a little foolish. As would anyone in line at Best Buy with this DVD in hand, I might add.

Scotty: Captain Dave, the transporter is fixed. Ready to beam you back to the present.

David: Roger, Scotty. On my count. (Whew!)

Rating: C-

User Rating: Not Yet Rated

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