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Hard Vision

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The Beatles
"Magical Mystery Tour Memories"
Weiner World Productions
by Jonathan Mariante

It's been over forty years since the Beatles released their legendary album and accompanying movie, "The Magical Mystery Tour". This DVD gives us the inside story on that Magical Mystery Tour. It features interviews and commentary from many people who involved with the tour and film, from legendary musicians and people who worked closely with the Beatles, to ordinary folks and fans who just happened to be there when the movie was being made, and were lucky (or unlucky, depending on what happened) enough to get a piece of the action. They discuss it from its origins to its completion, giving the complete story. Paul McCartney came up with the idea as a way of keeping the band together after the death of Brian Epstein. Paul was afraid the band would drift apart when their famed manager had died, so to prevent that from happening, Paul came up with the idea of the Magical Mystery Tour, even though the Beatles had decided not to tour anymore. Paul's idea was a success, as was the tour itself. The whole thing is chronicled in this DVD. The whole film was totally spontaneous, filmed with no script, just as it happened, as the Beatles traveled through England on the tour. Kind of a "day in the life" (no pun intended) kind of thing. There are many funny, entertaining, and interesting stories. Many wild shenanigans happened on the Magical Mystery Tour, including the Beatles' tour bus getting stuck on a bridge and causing a gridlock! There was never a dull moment. Many people, who were much younger at the time, are interviewed, and they all have their own stories to tell, about how the Magical Mystery Tour touched their lives and/or their careers. There are even excerpts of interviews included, that were conducted at the time, with the Beatles and others. The Beatles were the biggest musical sensation (or sensation of any kind) at the time, so of course there was a lot of reaction from fans wherever they went on this tour. The Beatles always caused a stir anywhere they went. One particular story that stood out for me was, when the Beatles were filming in the Bahamas one time in the 60s, they discovered a cabin on the grounds they thought was abandoned, but turned out to be filled with sick, starving people. They lived inside that cabin in filth, and the Beatles and their crew were shocked. Later that day, they were invited to have dinner with the country's president, who lived in an absolutely luxurious palace. This disgusted John Lennon even more, that the leader of the country could live like this while other citizens lived in horrible conditions. John asked the president about this, and the president responded by saying he did his work voluntarily and was not paid.

John clearly found this hard to believe. The next day, the media viciously attacked the Beatles, printed newspaper headlines that the Beatles had insulted the country's president. This experience ended up being an inspiration for the Lennon song "Imagine". Whether you're a Beatles fan or not, this DVD is a fun and interesting look at the Magical Mystery Tour, the Beatles, and the whole era it took place in.

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