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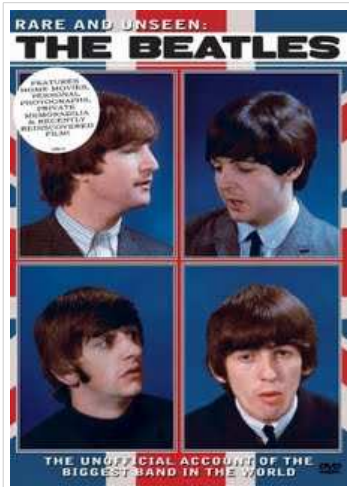
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MONDAY, AUGUST 10, 2009

## The Beatles Rare And Unseen: Unofficial Account Of The Biggest Band In The World DVD Review (MVD)



*The Beatles Rare and Unseen* is a new documentary that comes out on DVD tomorrow. This disc combines rare and previously unreleased film footage and photos of The Beatles with an insider's commentary that traces the history of The Beatles; from The Quarrymen through the breakup of the band.

The narrative is provided by a host of characters that include Allan Williams (former manager), Colin Hanton (their first drummer), Sam Leach (tour manager), Tony Barrow (press officer 1962-1968), Tony Bramwell (roadie) and musicians Phil Collins, Norman "Hurricane" Smith, Mickey Jones, Gerry Marsden and Sylvie Varten. There is sufficient focus on the band's pre-American tour embryonic days which shows the band evolution from from their pre-suit wearing days in

Liverpool (with the earliest known concert footage from February 1962) to their tightly honed live act in 1964 (with footage from Paris' Olympia Theatre, January 1964 and Caird Hall, Dundee, Scotland October 1964). All of the film footage is fully restored so you get the best possible visuals of the band as they evolved in both look and sound.

The interviews that overplay on top of the films and photos add a new dimension to the band's story as you hear both the thoughts and decisions of Beatles insiders who helped shape the band's career along with the impressions of musicians who played with and shared the stage with The Beatles. The Olympia Theatre footage was shot by drummer Mickey Jones (from Trini Lopez's band) who talks about The Beatles as 'unknowns' prior to seeing them play and as friends afterward. In addition to sharing his impressions as a fan watching The Beatles perform for the first time, he also tells stories of bonding over the drums with Ringo and driving John's car.

In addition to the "insider's" narrative, there is also footage from a mid-70's French TV interview with John Lennon (some of this same footage was used in "Anthology") interspersed throughout the documentary that helps set the stage for some of the archival 60's footage. Complementing the concert footage, there are home movies of The Beatles on vacation in the Channel Islands and on-the-set footage from the filming of *Help!* (Bahamas, 1965) and *Magical Mystery Tour* (Newquay, 1967).

As the majority of the stories and anecdotes were new to me, I really enjoyed this film. Long-time Beatles' collectors may be familiar with these stories but the newly uncovered concert footage make this disc a 'must-have' for Beatles collectors as well.

POSTED BY BROOKLYN MIKE AT 10:25 PM

LABELS: COLIN HANTON, DVD REVIEW, KEN DODD, NORMAN HURRICANE SMITH, PHIL COLLINS, RARE AND UNSEEN, SAM LEACH, STEVE HARLEY, SYLVIE VARTEN, THE BEATLES, TONY BARROW, TONY BRAMWELL

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