



**Photo Contest**  
Click Your Pic @ CarLocate.com



[Home](#) · [Reviews](#) · [Interviews](#) · [Contests](#) · [Blog](#) · [Forums](#) · [Follow Us On Twitter](#)

## ADVERTISEMENT

CLEAR 4G  
4x faster  
than 3G mobile internet.  
Compare now  
4xfaster.com

## CONTESTS



### CD Giveaway - The Mary Dream, "This Kind of Life"

Ends Jan 17, 2010

Enter our contest for a chance to win The Mary Dream's latest album.



### CD Giveaway - Manifest, "Citizens Activ"

Ends Jan 17, 2010

If you're not intrigued by the concept of a white Christian rapper from Canada, well, then, you won't want to enter our contest. But it's free, and if you get caught listening to it by your friends, you can boast that you won it at The Trades!



### The Lovely Bones - Book Giveaway

Ends Jan 17, 2010

Alice Sebold's #1 bestseller is transitioning to the movie screen. Now The-Trades is giving you the opportunity to read the book.

## ARTICLE

## DVD Review: The Beatles: Rare and Unseen

by [Chelsea Johnson](#)

Published: December 29, 2009

Almost fifty years after Beatlemania first washed ashore in America, there's still no shortage to the unending supply of Beatles-related media and memorabilia. The year 2009 saw a particular onslaught with the much-anticipated release of the remastered catalogue and the equally exciting videogame, *The Beatles - Rock Band*. Unfortunately, not everything associated with the four this year was fab (sorry, I had to). "Rare and Unseen: Unofficial Account of the Biggest Band in The World" was released for North American distribution this past summer. The documentary runs a little over 45 minutes and features the rare footage (as advertised) as well as photos and interviews with their friends, colleagues, other musicians and, randomly, Phil Collins who just happens to be a big fan.

I most enjoyed the interview with The Quarrymen's first drummer, Colin Hanton, who was able to name the original lineup, explain how the band evolved, and describe the first meeting between Paul and John. It's an important first-hand account much appreciated as a Beatles enthusiast. One of the "rare" clips features John Lennon in an interview for a French television program. The clips of John are some of the better sound bites used and the film could certainly have benefitted from more of that interview and less from some of the other "talking heads." Another honorable mention is the interview with Norman Smith, a long time sound engineer for the group who gives a great first impression of the boys and their haircuts upon their first introductions. While there are some solid and relevant interviews on the DVD, some of the other people used had me scratching my head. Phil Collins is given far too much screen time for someone whose only real reason for being there is to add a famous name (but very little information) to the bill. Another questionable choice was Len Goodman (a *Dancing With The Stars* judge) who is barely relevant aside from being around when the Beatles first broke and having a British accent. He supplies us with this gem of a quote: "It's a bit like a beautiful ham sandwich ... Lennon and McCartney are the filling in the thing and the couple of slices of bread are George and Ringo." (No comment.)

The footage is, admittedly, exciting to see. Most is silent film taken from early gigs, personal video from the Beatles themselves, and out-takes from their films. I particularly enjoyed the moments captured by Ringo while they were on holiday. It's a delightful look at their playful nature and a refreshing break from the more expected concert footage. The film clips are clearly not enough to make an entire feature out of. They are looped at least twice during each chapter and none have sound, aside from the John Lennon interview. Chapter 4, covering the Beatle's stint at the Paris Olympia Theatre with Sylvie Vartan and Trini Lopez, I could have done entirely without. It is about 6 minutes too long. Mickey Jones and Sylvie Vartan tediously recollecting their personal opinions of the Beatles' personalities is not at all necessary or historically relevant. It's like the whole thing comes to a screeching halt; the first 20 minutes are rapidly paced until it hits a wall during this segment.

My biggest gripe with this documentary is the shoddy production. The talking heads were filmed with bad lighting in front of green screens with footage and photos playing behind them during the interviews. It's distracting and busy. The production didn't remove the segues in and out of where I assume commercial breaks would be, leaving each chapter awkwardly disjointed. The whole documentary is jumpy and distorted. There is even an *Unsolved Mysteries*-esque reenactment with guys dressed in mop top wigs and sepia tone film. Chronology is all but lost; there's very little reference to any sort of timeline and the whole thing skips right from Ed Sullivan to 1967. Did nothing happen in between?

This documentary has a lot to compete with when it comes to The Beatles branded items, and unfortunately falls short. It's an amateurish production filled with too many cliché's and not enough focus on what really is fun footage to watch. Some of the most interesting content can be found in the Special Features section of the disc where they have uncut and extended versions of the interviews that are much more successful in their unedited states. While it certainly wasn't a complete failure, it is safe to say that this is not a must-have for every Beatles collector.

Print this article  
E-mail this article  
More articles by this author

Digg submit

Facebook Twitter YouTube

**Rating:** UNRATED

**Country:** United Kingdom

**Release Date:** July 14, 2009

**Distributor:** Music Video

**Distributors**

**Director:**

• Chris Cowey

**Cast:**

• Phil Collins

• Steve Harley

• Norman Hurricane Smith

• Colin Hanton

• Sam Leach

• Tony Barrow

• Tony Bramwell

• Ken Dodd

• Tony Booth

• Gerry Marsden

• Len Goodman

• Sylvie Vartan

**Grade:** C-

