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Led Zeppelin - The Origins Of the Species (Under Review series)

Picture: C+ Sound: C+
Extras: C+ Documentary: B

Maybe the biggest secret to why Led Zeppelin is such an enduring success is that they were an innovative British Rock band who redefined the genre, took it into wilder territory, knew how to run with their influences and in all this managed to sound as

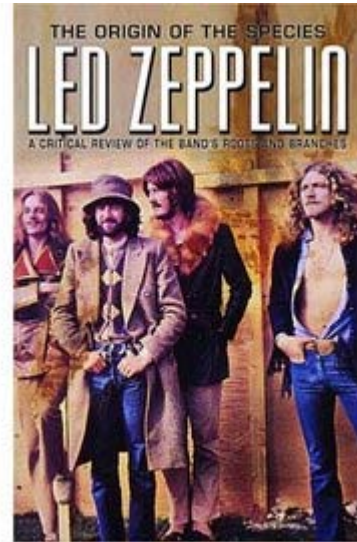
American as they ever sounded British. To talk to many of their fans today, you'd never think they were ever from another country. However, they were not just formed out of nowhere and the **Under Review** music documentary series installment **Led Zeppelin - The Origins Of the Species** traces the band from the members early origins to the success of their first two albums.

The main focus of the first half of the loaded 70 minutes deals with the early success of Jimmy Page, from child prodigy onward. We learn about his childhood, life and early success as a very sought after studio musician. Then this builds into the early years of The Yardbirds with the great Jeff Beck, how beck left, how The New Yardbirds formed, what the music influences were throughout and how fateful meetings and connections finally created the band we now know as Led Zeppelin.

As The Yardbirds take off, we also learn of the early recording of Robert Plant, influenced by the liked of Sandy Denny (who has her own **Under Review** program reviewed elsewhere on this site) and we even get to hear is early version of a record by his earlier band named Listen, singing *You Better Run*. The song later became a huge hit for Pat Benatar as a huge early hit Music Video on MTV and the second clip they ever played.

We then see how the band cut their impactful classic self-named debut album in only days and how despite heavy touring and sudden success, turned out their seconds album only nine months later. The story is as remarkable as anything and can compete with the **Hammer Of The Gods** novel surprisingly well. Once again, the **Under Review** series proves what a vital, must see series it is and anyone serious about music or especially the subject of the music act being covered has to consider this yet another must-see winner.

The letterboxed 1.78 X 1 is not bad, though too bad it was not



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DVD)
 > Led Zeppelin - The Origins Of the Species (Under Review series)
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 > The Rolling Stones: Under Review 1962 – 1966 (Documentary)
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anamorphically enhanced. Yes, some of the footage is older and detail is an issue, but there is footage here even diehard Zep fans may have never seen, have not seen for years, or can finally be happy they have on DVD versus VHS or Beta. Dolby Digital 2.0 Stereo sound is adequate, including many of the band's original hits, those cuts before the band formed and those obscure cuts this series is so good at coming up with. Extras include the hardest Zeppelin Quiz Ever, text contributor bios, a Beyond DVD bit and fine section giving us the story of The Yardbirds. Fine work all around yet again.

- Nicholas Sheffo



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