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The Rolling Stones: Under Review 1962-66

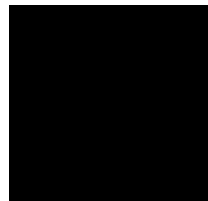
By Allan Tong
September 14, 2006

Lately, Britain has spawned a cottage industry of "critical analysis" rock DVDs whereby educated fans and genuine rock critics examine the albums and songs of a particular band. This release covers the Rolling Stones in their formative period when they matured from a gang of white English boys playing black American blues into mythical rock stars. I didn't expect much from this release, so I was gladly surprised to discover the depth of criticism and the rarity of the old TV clips. The talking heads include Chris Welch, the rock critic from The New Musical Express of the '60s, Tom Keylock, a Stones insider, and Dick Taylor, the band's original bassist and later guitarist of the Pretty Things. Thankfully, the critics avoid hagiography and take pains to explain the social context of the turbulent '60s and pinpoint the evolution in the Stones' music from single to single. The consensus is that the early Stones were a singles band and made "rubbish albums" until 1966's groundbreaking Aftermath (the UK version of course). While clips of The Ed Sullivan Show have been shown to death, this DVD scores points for unearthing a rare TV performance of the Lennon and McCartney cover, "I Wanna Be Your Man," excerpts of their 1964 New Musical Express Pollwinners Concert set and some amazing clips from a German concert, circa 1965. The Ready Steady Go! performance of "Little Red Rooster" illustrates that Jagger was starting to find his demonic rock persona, which would come into full bloom with "Jumpin' Jack Flash" four years later. The extras are thin. They include a few innocuous anecdotes from Keylock and a trivia quiz that only diehard fans would pass. Otherwise, this DVD would serve as a fine introduction to new fans and a respectable artefact to Stones freaks. Plus: Interview outtakes with Tom Keylock; trivia quiz. (Sexy Intellectual)

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