

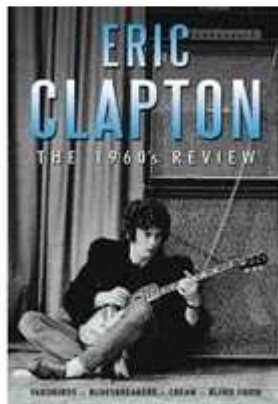
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## **DVD Review: Eric Clapton "The 1960s Review"**

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**Sexy Intellectual**

**All Access Review: B-**



The deification of Eric Clapton didn't happen overnight. Hours and hours of obsessively studying the blues – at the expense of everything else - as a merely mortal teenager gave him an encyclopedic knowledge of the subject. Just about every note the greats ever put to record, Clapton could replicate.

Building off that self-taught education, Clapton grew increasingly more fluid as a guitarist and his phrasing was so authentic and so uniquely brilliant at the same time that a discipleship was forming, even as he toiled in relative obscurity with acts like The Roosters, his first band, and then the sort of goofy Casey Jones & the Engineers, an outfit that, according to a new Clapton documentary titled "The 1960s Review," used to jump on a trampoline on stage.

It wasn't long before "Clapton is God" graffiti could be found on industrial ruins and railroad overpasses everywhere. And "The 1960s Review" explains, in great detail, how Clapton became divine. Long-winded and lacking any real excitement, with the exception of some rare and classic live performance footage, although much of it isn't exactly fresh or new –that familiar clip of Cream playing "Strange Brew" that everyone has seen a thousand times is rolled out once again – "The 1960s Review" does just what the title indicates. It traces Clapton's activities throughout the decade, following his work with bands like The Yardbirds, John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, Cream and Blind Faith and detailing how and why Clapton joined and then left each of them.

Deeply analytical and following a linear timeline, "The 1960s Review" looks at the '60s British blues boom and explains Clapton's role in igniting it. It's an impressive historical accounting of Clapton's most creative era, with plenty of discussion of his growth as a player and how his deep understanding of the blues carried over into his own work. A good deal of attention is paid to how Clapton embraced psychedelia and his time with Cream, while probing interviews with people like Mayall, the Yardbirds' Chris Dreya and Top Topham, Cream producer Bill Halvorson, Neil Innes and other British '60s rock luminaries paint a complex picture of an artist grappling with his duty to blues and his desire for innovation.

Dry and academic, what "The 1960s Review" lacks in cinematic ingenuity and thrilling new footage, it more than makes up for it by telling the Clapton story with vintage interview material from the man himself and newer talks with those who either played with him or closely watched his ascent. There's a lot to

digest in the more than two hours it takes to tell this tale, but to those wanting to drink in everything they can about Clapton and his messianic drive to stay true to his belief in the blues and become the kind of guitarist Robert Johnson would admire, this film is treasure trove of information and insight.

- Peter Lindblad