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Eric Clapton the 1960's Review

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The 1960s weren't all about psychedelics and hippies. The decade had a certain charm to it — magic that can be traced back to the emergence of the electric guitar.

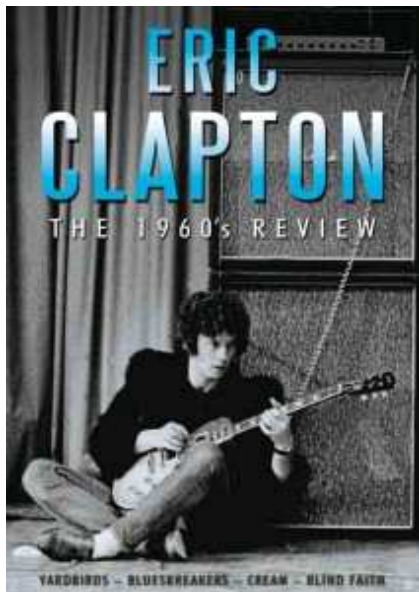


Photo courtesy of MVD Entertainment Group

The guitar symbolized freedom and rebellion for a generation seeking to escape from the political and social unrest of its time. Through improvisation and experimentation, guitarists reached a sense of reality that Americans hungered to be a part of.

To this day, many people feel a mysterious desire to pick up a guitar and shred. Eric Clapton is one of the leading figures that brought the electric guitar to the forefront of youth culture in the 1960s and was a huge innovator on how the instrument is played today. The documentary *Eric Clapton: The 1960's Review* explores what the decade was like for the young guitarist and reveals the story behind his rise to fame.

The bulk of the documentary details Clapton's involvement with The Yardbirds, John Mayall's Bluesbreakers and Cream and Blind Faith. It was with these bands that Clapton built a huge following and was propelled into stardom. Clapton was always known for his virtuosity and fluid style, but throughout his career he struggled to find the right band to properly showcase his talents.

Is it possible to capture the energy and feeling of the 1960s in two hours? This documentary makes a valiant effort. Clapton's story is told through interviews with former band members, experts on his career and of course the man himself. It features rare archived photos and footage of Clapton when he was just beginning to pursue music.

The documentary's story isn't anything new: it tells the tale of a musician just starting out, trying to make his way in the world. The movie shows Clapton at an early age, listening to records to try and find the sound he liked.

Yet, what makes the film unique is the man himself. Clapton's musical history, from his raw talent with the guitar to his involvement in many influential bands of the 1960s, makes the film intriguing. Were he a lesser musician, the movie might fail, but Clapton's charisma carries the documentary, particularly his search for musical identity.

During this time, musicians with similar tastes were able to communicate with each other through the albums with which they were most passionate. Often the connection that musicians had through music they loved was the catalyst for starting their own bands. In this period of growth for Clapton, he was essentially picking up the influences that would later define his sound.

For Clapton, it was all about the blues.

Clapton was attracted to the purity of blues music from artists Muddy Waters, John Lee Hooker and Robert Johnson, who provided the guitarist with the feeling he wanted to convey in his own way.

He dealt with many of the issues that plague musicians to this day. He had to find a way to buy a guitar, transport his equipment, find like-minded musicians to play with and figure out the best way to showcase his talents. Clapton was able to do this by joining what would become some of the most legendary bands of the generation.

Many people know Clapton from his hit songs, such as "Layla" and "I Shot the Sheriff." What a lot of people might not know is that he didn't start writing songs until later in his career. The *1960's Review* examines the very beginning of Clapton's career as a guitarist, leading up to who he would eventually become.

Being such a blues purist, Clapton found himself bouncing from band to band, looking for the right sound while still being regarded as one of the elite guitarists of the decade. This documentary features that struggle and how Clapton dealt with it throughout the period.

The documentary aims to be a historical and educational reference rather than entertainment. The DVD is 120 minutes of old footage and has narration comparable to a video that might be shown in a classroom setting, not a concert film.

Despite this, *Eric Clapton: The 1960's Review* is a detailed glimpse into the early stages of a legendary artist. It is an extremely informational film for any die-hard fan interested in diving deeper into the life of Clapton and some of the most formative years of his life.



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