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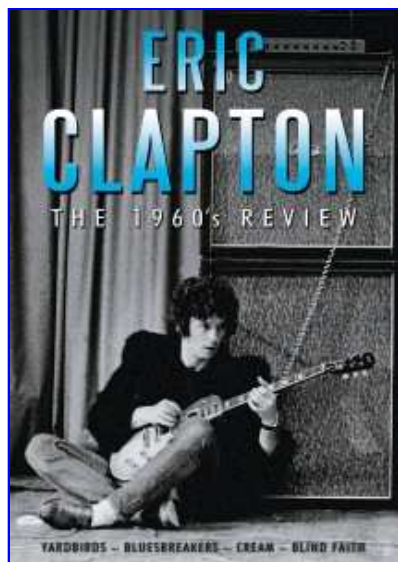
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PIGSHIT – God: The Early Years. Eric Clapton in the 1960s.

October 29, 2010 by [Gary Pig Gold](#)



Here's the thing:

A previously quiet and unassuming young lad, being raised by his grandmother in the equally sedate Southeast English county of Surrey suddenly hears, at the ultra-impressionable age of nine, that rippin' roar of Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee's "Whooping And Hollering" broadcast – as a joke, it seems – one morning during his favorite BBC Radio children's show.

As his peers enter their teens playing rugby (or the even more intriguing "kiss-chasing in the Fuzzies"), *this* particular young man remains locked instead within his bedroom alongside a Grundig tape recorder, struggling upon a second-hand guitar to replicate the exotic sounds of all the whooping, hollering American bluesmen he has since sought to learn more about ...and who now possess his every waking hour.

Soon he feels brave enough to venture with his guitar into local pubs, where he is surprised to encounter other similarly besotted young men carrying rickety guitars, harmonicas, and specially-imported Chess record albums. After being heaved out of art school in 1962, he joins his first semi-professional band, The Roosters, but leaves them after only six months to play with Casey Jones and the Engineers, a comparatively higher-profile outfit reproducing the commercial rock of the day and featuring a singer performing from atop a trampoline.

He remains with them for a mere seven performances.

In October of 1963 the guitarist next throws his lot in with another band already gaining attention as the, and I quote, "most blues-wailing, most yard-merizing" ...yes, most incredible indeed Yardbirds. Already having replaced the Rollin' Stones as house band at the legendary Crawdaddy Club, these most bird-merizing Yardies soon not only tour, but have the honor of actually *recording* with Sonny Boy Williamson himself, signing with EMI's prestigious Columbia label.

So utterly awe-inspiring is his electric guitar work both on stage and on record that graffiti begins springing up all over London's hippest alleyways claiming the young man to be none other than the Father of Jesus. Yet despite such hosannas, he soon departs from *this* band as well ...just as the first of many Yardbird classics-to-be, "For Your Love," hits the charts and their career explodes (with replacement guitarists Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page en tow).

Our hero now takes refuge beneath the wing (and roof) of that very Father of the English Blues, John Mayall. Availing himself not only of the man's guest room but his extensive vintage American record collection, he soon finds himself a bonafide member of Mayall's ultra-exclusive band of Bluesbreakers. The recordings he makes with them, a searing rendition of Freddie King's "Hideaway" especially, attracts the attention of musical connoisseurs the world over – including an up-and-coming Seattle guitarist by the name of James Hendrix.

Nevertheless, after only one year and one album with the Bluesbreakers he – you guessed it – leaves.

Do we detect a pattern developing here yet?

It is now the swinging hot Summer of '66, and alongside yet another rhythm 'n' blues section (this one comprised of former Graham Bond Organisation employees Jack Bruce and Ginger Baker) forms the first of several "super groups" he will occupy over the next decade. *Fresh Cream*, this latest band's first album, and their follow-ups *Disraeli Gears* and *Wheels Of Fire*, not only sell multiple-millions worldwide but forever establish the guitarist-in-question as a songwriter and vocalist of considerable renown as well.

Yet soon enough, after publicly denouncing Cream's career as a "hype" and castigating the very music industry which has made him, at age twenty-three, already an extremely wealthy man, the young kid with the SG from Surrey again retreats behind his bedroom walls ...only to reappear within a year with a *new* Robert Stigwood-managed, Polydor Records-"hyped," and even Ginger Baker-powered super group. This one most facetiously named Blind Faith.

They record one album, debut before 100,000 at a free concert in London's Hyde Park, conduct one tour of the United States and within one year ...you guessed it: their guitarist quits.

Despite being the decade during which *everything* took place at warp speed, it is somehow still hard to imagine all of the above events, Roosters to Blind Faith, taking place within the span of a mere seven years! But Sexy Intellectual's brand new *Eric Clapton: The 1960's Review* tells and shows it all, with the help of one Bonzo Dog / Rutle, two Manfred Mann's, two actual Yardbirds, head Blues Breaker John Mayall himself, and even all three

Creams. Their detailed and sometimes surprisingly candid interview segments are joined with a host of vintage clips to produce a film which, in its own often unassuming way, provides a quite illuminating ride through the birth and blossoming of the entire English blues movement's defining chapters.

But I *still* somehow wonder – often marvel, even – at the seemingly little-thought-out restlessness, near manic project-jumping and, yes, ill-regarding bridge-burning which seems to have launched and then propelled Eric Clapton's early life and career. Yet throughout *Eric Clapton: The 1960's Review*, as in his myriad interviews and even best-selling autobiography since, the man and in particular his motives remain as inscrutable as his Sixties swansong “Badge” itself.

Gods *do* work in mysterious ways then I guess, don't they?

To purchase your own copy: <http://mvd2b.com/s/EricClaptonThe1960sReview/SIDVD559>

<http://www.GaryPigGold.com>

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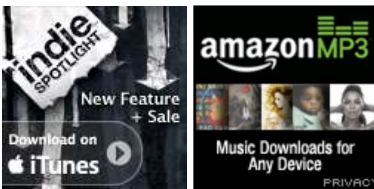
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