



June 1, 2012

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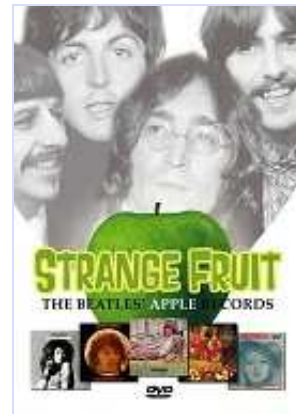
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## Strange Fruit: The Beatles' Apple Records - DVD

This is an excellent documentary about the formation of the Beatles' Apple Records label. The label was set up primarily as a place to invest the Beatles growing fortune and shelter it from excessively high British taxes. But the Beatles also had an ulterior motive for starting the label. They wanted to give new bands the opportunity to deal with a label that was actually interested in music and the development of the band. The label made its start at the famous Baker Street address with a "Western Communism" philosophy of allowing artists to sign on and leave whenever they felt they were not being represented well. This artist friendly record company was far different from the major record labels like Decca and EMI, where artists often had little control over their creations. The band later moved to Savile Row and opened its own stores, filled with paraphernalia from the Beatles and other artists, much in the same way today's modern Apple stores provide loads of marketing for its products.



Some of the famous people and bands that made up this label include, James Taylor's first album, Mary Hopkins, The Ivey's, (later to become famous as Badfinger). However, the label missed the opportunity to sign such famous bands as Yes, Grace Slick, Fleetwood Mac, and Crosby, Stills, and Nash, because all new artistic talent had to be approved by at least one of the Beatles, and they were too busy with their own success and later solo careers.

Hearing and watching "Those Were the Days", and "Goodbye" performed by Mary Hopkins again, were worth the price of admission alone for me. I thoroughly enjoyed those songs when I was a kid and it was great to hear the stories behind each of them. Likewise, the story of

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the Ivey's change to Badfinger, as well as Paul Mc Cartney's gift of "Come and Get It" held the most interest for me, and finally proved the worth of the label as an artist promotion vehicle.

If you're a Beatles fan or missed some of the history of this label that never lived up to its initial calling and concept, this is a great way to catch up fast. Well documented with contributions from members of the Iveys/Badfinger, rock journalists and label members. You hear the story from the first person, from people who were there and watched the label and climb and fall. The videos and clips of songs covered in the narrative again make this an essential DVD possession of anyone who lived through or appreciates this era of music.

**Added:** May 28th 2012

**Reviewer:** **Mark Johnson**

**Score:** ★★★★★

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