



The Yardbirds are examined on a musical DVD biography. (Photo by MVD Entertainment Group)

**The Story of the Yardbirds (Hi-Q DVD, 67 min.).** While on the subject of Jeff Beck, fresh out is this documentary of the Yardbirds, covering the years 1963-1968. The band created hard rock out of 12-bar blues, then expanded into electric guitar-driven rock, experimenting with feedback, sustain and fuzz tone. The core trio was Keith Relf on vocals and harmonics, Chris Dreja on guitar and bass and Jim McCarthy on drums, while the revolving guitar slot was filled by Eric Clapton, Beck and Jimmy Page. There is more of Beck and Page here, but Clapton is heard on live 1964 versions of "Louise" and "I Wish You Would." Paul Samwell-Smith latter played bass. There are 13 songs in all, as well as a bonus performance (14:18) from 1967 German TV with Page on guitar performing "Happenings Ten Years Ago," the classics "I'm a Man" and "Shapes of Things," and "Over, Under, Sideways, Down." The DVD comes with a 20-page booklet that includes a fine essay on the band, as well as Dreja's notes on the song. **Grade: A-**

An interesting historical follow-through shows that after Beck left the Yardbirds and released two singles, he formed The Jeff Beck Group with vocalist Rod Stewart, Ronnie Wood on bass, Nicky Hopkins (associated with the Beatles and he played on the original "Beck's Bolero") on keyboards and Mickey Waller on drums. The band created two classic albums, "Truth" (1968) and "Beck-ola" (1969), before dissolving with bad feelings among the members. Beck wanted to continue to work with Stewart and enlisted the Vanilla Fudge rhythm section of bassist Tim Bogert and drummer Carmine Appice, but head injuries from a car crash sidelined Beck for a year and Stewart and Wood went on to form the Small Faces (later Faces) and Bogert and Appice formed Cactus. When Cactus broke up in 1972, Beck finally was able to record with Bogert and Appice and another classic album resulted, "Beck, Bogert & Appice," with a wonderful cover of Stevie Wonder's "Superstition." However, Beck left the band during rehearsals for a second album and began his long and successful solo career (at least 13 albums, with a couple collaborations).