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## The Rolling Stones – Music In Review DVD Review

December 11, 2009 by [Christina](#)Filed under [DVD Reviews](#)[Leave a Comment](#)

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**The Rolling Stones – Music In Review (1963-1969)** (Chrome Dreams 2005 & 2007/Pride Publications 2009) is the most comprehensive historical DVD documentary I’ve ever come across, chock full of vintage photo and video footage! The Stones themselves never speak to us (except in their songs) in it, but musical experts (music journalists, biographers and old friends) lead us through the importance of the years 1963-1966 (Disc One) and 1966-1969 (Disc Two). Narrated by Mandy O’Neale (Disc 1) and Thomas Arnold (Disc 2) and ending up at 208 minutes all-told, that’s a lot of information!

“The ying to the Beatles’ yang” and “offending parents by seducing their offspring” as the narration states, during the 60’s the Stones were part of the Beatles/Bob Dylan/The Rolling Stones great triumvirate. Music journalist and good friend Keith Altham tells us that “they brushed away everything else that had come before – like matchsticks!” Promoted as the bad guys in the black hats, since villains are more interesting, they were often asked to emphasize sex and bad language to appear in stark contrast to the Beatles’ clean “peace and love” image. Mick Jagger, asked by Keith Altham how they achieved their own unique sound, told him that they tried to sound like Chuck Berry but couldn’t, since they were from Dartford, England, and that’s how it all began!

The Stones were very interested in the black rhythm and blues sounds of Chuck Berry, Howlin’ Wolf, [Muddy Waters](#), Bo Didley and [James Brown](#) (too many fans don’t realize and credit the Stones with their intense study of early black Americana roots music). Their first single was a cover of an obscure [Chuck Berry](#) song, “Come On,” with their uniqueness added to it. They continued doing cover songs but were upset that they couldn’t capture the quality of their live performances in the studio until one day they left Studio 51 in depression and came across John Lennon and Paul McCartney out in the street. Lennon and McCartney went back to the studio with them and showed them how to play one of their own songs, “I Want To Be Your Man,” and then gifted them with it. According to Dick Taylor, an early Stones bassist, this was also when Mick Jagger began “swaggering” and “dancing” (adding much to their performances!) and he did this whenever he sang, causing Dick’s mother to chuckle when she peeked around a corner of their home and saw him singing and dancing by himself! They were also successful with a cover of a Buddy Holly song, “Not Fade Away” (and Buddy Holly himself was great friends with many black musicians, especially Little Richard).

As Dick Taylor says, “They brought the music that they liked to the attention of more people throughout the world,” beginning with their first American tour in 1964. Alan Clayton, a well-spoken Rolling Stone Magazine biographer, notes that they destroyed the English idea of being “a gentleman, on paper only when they were born, being married or died.” Terry Rawlins, a Stones biographer, tells us “I don’t think Mick Jagger is a great singer but you can’t fail to know it’s Mick Jagger’s vocals, humble but good.” Finally in 1966 (selling their cover singles like crazy before then) they came out with their first original song, “The Last Time” (although Alan Clayton believes that it was a personal triumph but derivative of a song by The Five [Blind Boys](#) Of Mississippi, who were gospel singers). It seems that the Stones had a great eclecticism, taking, as Nigel Williamson, from Uncut Magazine, notes, “a little from here and a little from there and making it their own,” culminating in their huge original hit “Satisfaction” in 1965 – “You walked around the cities of the world in 1965 and all you could hear was Satisfaction playing. Probably their finest hour.”

Many experts take us through all the Stones stories of the decade and the release of all the Stones singles and albums and let us know what was happening socially at the time. Disc 2, besides a continuation of their musical history, centers on the Stones’ drug bust (Brian Jones was handing out pills in bars and talking wildly and the police mistook him for Mick Jagger and made the bust at Mick’s apartment, and Mick told the judge that although he might have to be a role model for youth onstage, he was only responsible for himself in his private life); the tragic drowning death of Brian Jones after he was fired by the Stones (although appreciated for initiating the band and bringing musical experimentation to it with instruments like lutes and sitars – music journalist and DJ Chris Neels

says he could have brought in a food mixer and made it sound special!); and the tragic murder of 18-yr.-old Meredith Hunter by the Hell's Angels at their concert in Altamont, California.

Dick Taylor tells us sincerely that the Stones were reflective of their times (and thus we gain a historical perspective too) as "They held up a mirror to the audience and they reflected back to each other. That's what rock music does." Never dry or boring through the great editing of Elliot Middle and Tom O'Dell and filled with every song you'd ever want to hear by the Stones plus videos of their performances, along with knowledgeable analyses by well-chosen experts, this is the definitive Rolling Stones DVD! Buy it and you'll never have to buy another!

**Grade:** A

**Running Time:** 208 minutes on two discs

Edited by Elliot Middle and Tom O'Dell

Narrated by Mandy O'Neal and Thomas Arnold

With extra features and interviewed experts Dick Taylor, Keith Altham, Alan Clayson, Nigel Williamson and many others

*DVD Review by Christina of Music Room Reviews*

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