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**Shared Darkness** 

A Communal Life in Film and DVD, Examined



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#### '60s Rock 'n' Roll Jukebox



This entry was posted on 7/30/2007 12:15 AM and is filed under DVD Reviews.

America does nostalgia quite well, and the emergence of new technologies allows us to continue to perpetuate this unrelenting packaging of yesteryear. Presenting eight cherrypicked acts each jamming through two tunes, the concert compilation '60s Rock 'n' Roll Jukebox does a good job of that, even if its material is somewhat uneven.

Recorded live at The Rock 'n' Roll Palace in Orlando, Florida, the big glasses, helmet hair and awkward crowd dancing mark this title a kitsch delight of sorts. Erstwhile teen heartthrob Bryan Hyland kicks things off — he of the chart-toppers "Sealed with a Kiss" and "Itsy Bitsy," that rather cloying tune currently getting some commercial run pegged to that yogurt ad about the girl who works up the courage to finally sport her bikini at the beach. Del Shannon follows, working through the utterly pedestrian "Hats Off to Larry" before more or less still approximating the high notes of the solid bop ditty "Runaway," which also features a wicked synth keyboard pattern.

The middle portion of the disc is its undeniable highlight. Spencer Davis — whose top 10 hit "Gimme Some Lovin" Shared Darkness Page 2 of 4

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helped bring British rock to the rest of the world — plays that tune and "Keep on Runnin'," while ex-Byrd Roger McGuinn offers forth lilting versions of "Mr. Tambourine Man" and "Turn Turn," which the audience doesn't really seem to recognize until about halfway through its first choral pass.

Famous deejay Wolfman Jack, the master of ceremonies for the rock 'n' roll generation, grabs a stool to massacre "Old Time Rock 'N' Roll" and "Shake Rattle & Roll" in sweaty, obese fashion, while the goofily earnest John Sebastian reveals himself a one-trick pony with the very similar-sounding "What a Day For a..." and "Welcome Back Kotter" (yes, the TV theme for the show of the same name). Rounding out the disc are Johnny Tillotson — who charted 26 hits between 1958 and '65, and here plays "Dreamy Eyes" and "Poetry in Motion" — and Ray Peterson, who contributes "Goodnight My Love" and the maudlin "Tell Laura I Love Her."

Housed in a regular Amray keepcase, '60s Rock 'n' Roll Jukebox is presented on fullscreen on a region-free disc. Its soundtrack is pretty solid, though definitely not given to a lot of rear channel differential. There are some nice, quite extended text bios for most of the acts (Spencer Davis also plugs his own web site), but this title runs only 38 minutes, despite the hour-long running time advertised on its back cover. Additionally, a few of the numbers end abruptly, giving off a very choppy, unprofessional vibe. B- (Concert) C-(Disc)

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