

The Beatles

From Liverpool To San Francisco

★★★★

Liberation LIB 6112

John & Yoko

Give Peace A Song

★★★★★

Fabulous FHED 2043

Hitting the headlines in North America

Apple may have snapped up almost all available film footage containing Beatles music, but news organisations are providing rich pickings for documentary makers. *From Liverpool To San Francisco* attempts to tell the group's entire story in 100 minutes, from the point of view of ITN, Reuters and Pathe camera crews, focusing on the conquering of America. Each incident is covered with frustrating brevity, although a separate bonus feature goes into great detail over the "bigger than Jesus" controversy. Here a British film unit interviews the great and good of Birmingham, Alabama, including the first radio DJ to ban Beatles records, a pastor and a KKK leader. A second, lighter bonus feature sees the Fab Four interviewed alongside fellow Liverpudlian Ken Dodd.

The John & Yoko title brings together the couple's home movie footage with the Canadian Broadcast Corporation's archive of the infamous Montreal "bed-in" of 1969, and the subsequent recording of Give Peace A Chance. Several participants recall the mayhem, seemingly unaware they were about to be part of history. There's also fascinating footage from six months later, when Pete Seeger led hundreds of thousands of demonstrators in a rendition before the White House. An engrossing account of arguably the most famous protest song of all time. *Terry Staunton*

David Bowie: The Plastic Soul Review

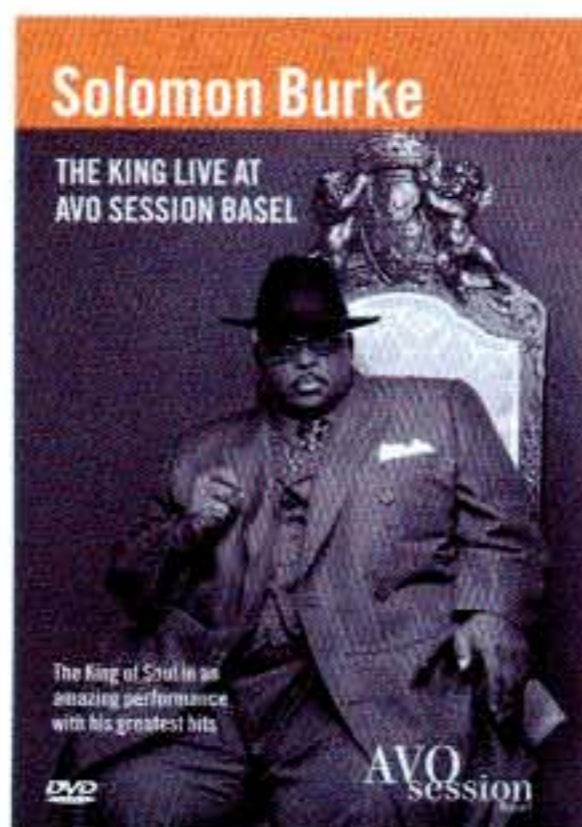
Chrome Dreams/Sexy Intellectual SIDVD 523

Bowie gets awkwardly funky, invents the 80s, slags off the US

First RC does the feature, then EMI reissue the album. Now Chrome Dreams give us an *Under Review*-style DVD to celebrate *Young Americans* being back in vogue. Without re-telling the story too much here, there's the preamble (*Diamond Dogs* signalled glam's death knell; Bowie needed to prove his longevity), the 'what makes plastic soul?' discussion, longtime Bowie keyboardist gives his insight into working with The Dame and Steve Strange looks slightly bitter and annoyed to be there at all.

Young Americans isn't without moments, but it seems to mostly provoke confusion here. The editor pits talking heads against each other too bluntly (Fame is a great/crap song; soul music is/isn't

political), which doesn't spark debate, is irritating to watch and somewhat undermines the authority of the whole. There's some overlap with Chrome Dreams' Berlin years overview, which prompts a comparison. Glaringly, there isn't such an extensive use of audio interviews from Bowie, though the material certainly exists (even if just from the infamous *Dick Clark Show* appearance, from which they've taken live clips). Otherwise, there haven't been many ch-ch-ch-changes in nine months. It seems the series needs to make a Bowie-like abrupt shift if it's to remain appealing, or else fans with a decent grasp on their idols may turn and face something else. *Jason Draper*



Solomon Burke

The King Live At AVO Session Basel

★★★★★

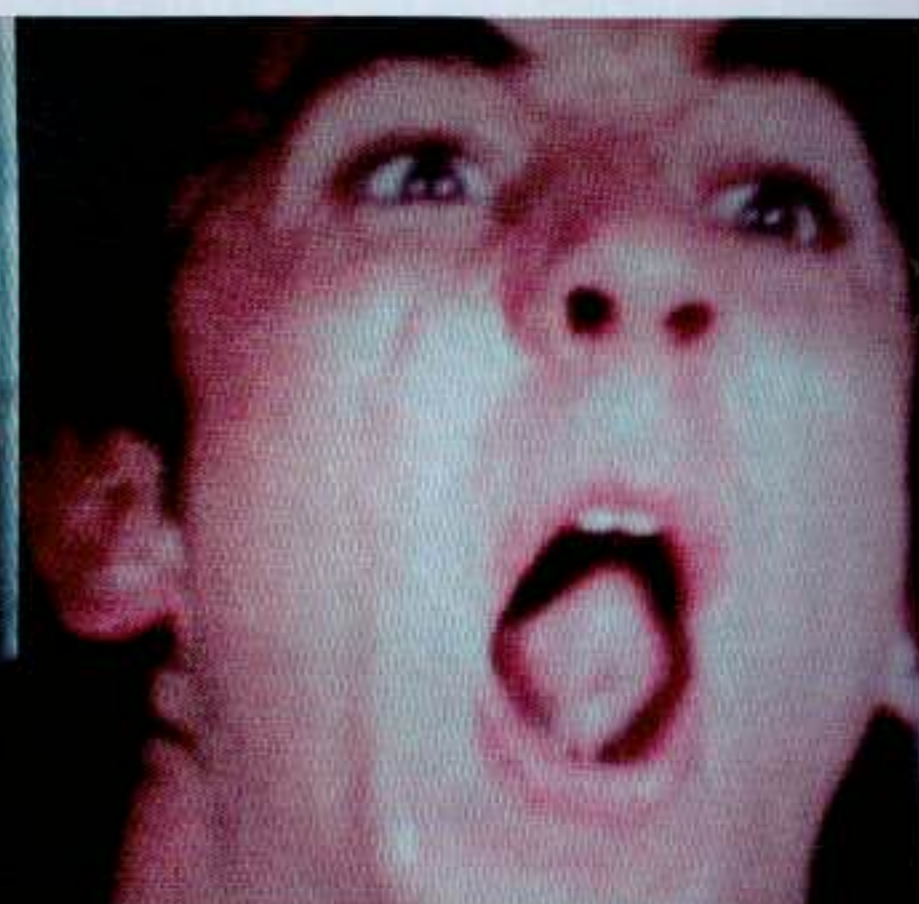
MVD Visual MVDV 4608

Everything comes up roses with King Solomon

Solomon Burke has always been big on presence. As if to prove the point, you hear his unmistakably rich voice before he makes his way on stage, as the band crank out the intro and get the show rolling on this live DVD. With its glossy TV broadcast style, *Live At AVO Session Basel* was shot in November 2003 when Solomon was riding the crest of a wave courtesy of his Grammy-winning comeback album *Don't Give Up On Me*. Backed by a super-slick, tuxedo-clad big band, the ever dapper Burke makes his entrance in his trademark robes, promising to sing "a little blues, a little rock'n'roll, a little gospel and a little country", taking his place on his throne surrounded by red roses (for all the ladies in the house, you understand).

Throughout, Burke walks in the footsteps of Redding, Pickett and Cooke, and even throws in a Little Richard medley for good measure. The real highpoints come with his reading of Tom Waits' *Diamond In Your Mind* and perennial crowd-pleaser *Cry To Me*.

Glitzy, schmaltzy and even a touch cheesy, as live DVDs go this is fine, but falls some way short of the superb documentary,



All My Loving

★★★★★

Voiceprint TPDVD 101

Groundbreaking 60s TV documentary finally makes it to DVD

Acclaimed at the time of its original 1968 broadcast on the BBC as "a psychedelic experience which 10 years from now will be the definitive document of its time", it's only now that Tony Palmer's (*Cream's Farewell Concert*, *200 Motels*) landmark film on the social and cultural significance of the then-emerging pop culture is getting its first commercial release.

Very much a product of its time, *All My Loving's* rapid cuts juxtapose interviews with Frank Zappa, Eric Burdon (who between them provide the most insightful comments), Paul McCartney, Pete Townshend, Donovan, and Jimi Hendrix with live, on the road and behind-the-scenes footage of The Beatles, Cream, Pink Floyd, The Who, Hendrix and, by way of a historic counterpoint, newsreel images of the Vietnam war. A supporting cast of music biz movers, shakers and personalities, including Lulu, George Martin, Manfred Mann, Kit Lambert, Anthony Burgess, George Harrison's mum and the Maharishi are also glimpsed.

On top of the original 55-minute film, bonus features include an interview with Tony Palmer and a gallery of vintage Ralph Steadman cartoons. *All My Loving* survives as a fascinating historical artefact, especially when viewed with the hindsight of the complete corporatisation of what was once considered the counterculture. *Grahame Bent*

Q&A Tony Palmer

The Stones are conspicuous by their absence. Was there any reason they weren't included?

There was no particular reason. It was just the way

it happened. I remember I got a really grumpy letter from Bill Wyman a few months later and he more or less said, "Where were we?" So, when we did *All You Need Is Love*, we did an entire episode about the Stones and Bill gave me a very moving interview about Brian Jones.

Did any of the musicians surprise you?

I'd never met Hendrix and I got to know him a little after we did the filming. I thought he was one of the gentlest, politest people I'd ever met. He called me "sir" all the time and he was absolutely charming, so I think that surprised me. All he kept saying was, "Do you really want to film me?" and that really took me aback.

Were you aware of the impact *All My Loving* had at the time of its original broadcast in November 1968?

When it hit the screens rock'n'roll only had two manifestations as far as the BBC was concerned: *Top Of The Pops* and *Juke Box Jury*. *Juke Box Jury* was hosted by David Jacobs and, about two months after *All My Loving* went out for the first time, I was at some party and this guy came over to me who I thought looked vaguely familiar. I realised it was David and he jabbed his finger at me and said, "You have ruined my career," and then walked off. Then some bright spark who was standing by me said, "My God, you've changed the world!"

It's odd David Jacobs should have thought that. About a month later *Juke Box Jury* was taken off the air because it was realised we had shown that this programme didn't represent what Hendrix, Cream and all the others were capable of or aspired to. Nor did *Top Of The Pops*, which was suspected of being a fix. It probably was, but we'll never be able to prove it. In a strange kind of way *All My Loving* prefaced the way rock'n'roll was suddenly taken very seriously as we rolled into the 70s. As told to *Grahame Bent*