



Santa Claus Wants Some Lovin': The 10 Horniest Christmas Songs Ever



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Eyeballin': The Zombies, Odessey and Oracle: The 40th Anniversary Concert

By Bob Ruggiero in [Classic Rock Corner](#), [Eyeballin'](#), [Gift Guide](#)

Fri., Dec. 18 2009 @ 8:00AM

Here's a Classic Rock Math Query: Which British Invasion band, if you took the length of their career and amount of recorded output and juxtaposed it against the overall quality of their material, would end up as the "best" group? With all due respect to fans of the Beatles, Stones, Kinks, Who, Animals and even Herman's Hermits, the Zombies might take that title.

In less than four years and with just with two full-length records, an EP and a handful of singles, the Zombies tend to be a forgotten Union Jack-flying group. However, a dedicated cult of fans and the reactivation of the group as a recording/touring unit with original singer Colin Blunstone and keyboardist/singer Rod Argent - along with ardent admiration of 1968's *Odessey and Oracle* - has revived the Zombies' standing. And to think that the group's biggest U.S. hit, "Time of the Season," was only released at the insistence of keyboardist/A&R man Al Kooper, scoring a year after the band had broken up!

This wonderful live concert from 2008 is split into two parts. The first features the current lineup (Blunstone, Argent, ex-Kinks player Jim Rodford on bass, son Steve on drums, and Keith Airey on guitar) performing Zombies deep cuts ("I Love You," "Sticks and Stones"), Argent tunes ("Hold Your Head Up") and Blunstone solo material featuring a string quartet - the last of which is pretty, but a bit draggy. Throughout, Argent offers *Storytellers*-style illumination on several songs and the band's career.

The DVD kicks into gear, though, when Blunstone and Argent welcome surviving original members Chris White (bass) and Hugh Grundy (drums) to run through the entire *Odessey and Oracle*,


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eerie numbers in rock history.

At times augmented by backup singers, a horn section, and additional keyboardist to replicate the studio recording (Argent even plays an 1890's pump organ for chilling effect on "Butcher's Tale"), the *Odessey* portion of the show is, simply put, stunning. Argent's keyboard wizardry is peerless, and Blunstone - though time has understandably shaved off some of his top edge - is committed and passionate throughout. This is not a group shuffling remotely through the oldies.

After the album-ending "Time of the Season," the show concludes with high-energy takes on the Zombies two other U.S. hits ("Tell Her No," "She's Not There"). Extremely well shot and edited, and featuring excerpts from a documentary on the album as a bonus feature, this DVD is a joy for both fans of the group and the '60s British Invasion, offering a long-overdue Zombies resurrection.

MVD Visual, 121 minutes, \$19.95.

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