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All My Loving [DVD]

Various Artists

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**Artist**

Various Artists

Album

All My Loving [DVD]

Rating

★★★★☆

Release Date

Sep 18, 2007

Label

MVD Visual

Type

Various Artists, Video

Genre

Rock

AMG Album ID

R 1111918

Corrections to this Entry?

Review

by Richie Unterberger

Lasting nearly an hour, **Tony Palmer's** 1968 made-for-television film *All My Loving* was the first documentary about rock music ever broadcast on the BBC. For that matter, it was the first time some of the major rock stars in the film had been seen playing live or frankly speaking their minds on the BBC. For those reasons, it's a landmark of sorts, but it's not without its flaws as a television program. Without a narrative thread or context, it jumps rather willy-nilly between brief performance clips, interview snippets, and footage of late-'60s youth gatherings and violent political disturbances. As a consequence, no one's really allowed to go on at enough length to make cogent points, though the most articulate interviewees -- **Frank Zappa** telling a disturbing story about Marines ripping up baby dolls in a **Mothers of Invention** concert, **Paul McCartney** discussing how seriously some people analyze **the Beatles'** songs -- come close. Some of the juxtapositions -- for instance, of loud rock music with some authority figure claiming how much it damages ears or tacky commercial campaigns -- are vaguely pretentious, arty contrasts that demonstrate nothing. The use of footage of bodies being dumped into graves while **the Beatles'** "Money (That's What I Want)" plays on the soundtrack crosses the line into the pointlessly (and tastelessly) absurd. Some of the soundbites with non-rock-musicians (including publicist **Derek Taylor**, **Who** co-manager **Kit Lambert**, and author **Anthony Burgess**) are so brief and devoid of explication that it's hard to say what they're doing here, other than to provide some sort of contrast to the featured rock musicians. So why watch it, decades later? Well, it does have some exciting performance footage of the **Who** (a particularly destructive American gig), **Jimi Hendrix**, **Cream**, **Pink Floyd**, and **Eric Burdon**, some of whom add the odd insight in interview segments as well. **Donovan's** proclamations add some gentle optimism to the mix, though on the whole it favors the most aggressive brand of 1968 British rock. Whether the alternations of footage of those acts with various atrocities being committed around the world is meant to intimate that the music is a reflection of or an antidote to its times is hard to say. It does not so much attempt to explain rock music, though that was **Palmer's** original brief, as reflect some of its impact and images, ending up as a reflection of the turbulence of the year in which it was made, 1968. The Voiceprint DVD adds a surprisingly lengthy (40-minute) 2007 interview with **Tony Palmer** in which he details the genesis of the film (which largely came from a suggestion by **John Lennon**) and the BBC's reluctance to air it. As a far more marginal bonus, there are also a handful of cartoons by **Ralph Steadman**, some of which relate to the times and topics of *All My Loving* and some that don't.

Releases

Year	Type	Label	Catalog #
2007	DVD	MVD Visual	z

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