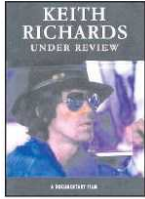


'Under Review' tackles Richards, Springsteen; 'All My Loving' seems dated



"Keith Richards: Under Review" (Sexy Intellectual/MVD Visual) ★★☆☆ out of five — As a casual fan of the Rolling Stones (I enjoy most of their hits, but haven't immersed myself in their entire catalog) I didn't know much about Keith Richards until this fascinating documentary came across my desk.

The latest in the outstanding "Under Review" series, the two-hour film provides a detailed look at the man responsible for much of the Stones' best music. Keith Richards, I'm happy to report, is far more than the swaggering rock & roll bad boy that Johnny Depp aped on his way to an Oscar nomination for "Pirates of the Caribbean."

Through a distinguished panel of journalists and industry professionals (plus archival footage of interviews with Richards himself), we learn so much about the life and times of the man many consider "the human riff."

From his first fateful pairing with Mick Jagger as a schoolboy to the ascendance of the Rolling Stones to superstar status, to the drug-addled down years and the triumphant recovery, "Under Review" pulls very few punches.

We see how Richards develops from a painfully shy teenager who's willing to play third fiddle in the band to Jagger and Brian Jones into the driving force behind a songwriting

duo that deserves mention alongside the likes of John Lennon and Paul McCartney, or Bernie Taupin and Elton John.

Bonus features include an extended interview with journalist/DJ Kris Needs, an interactive quiz and biographies of the panelists.

He has lived the mythical rock star life for more than 40 years — abusing his body with gallons of booze and unheard of amounts of drugs along the way — yet Keith Richards remains vibrant as he inches closer to 70 years of age. Simply amazing. (Jeffrey Sisk)



"Bruce Springsteen — Under Review: 1978-1982: Tales of the Working Man" (Sexy Intellectual/MVD Visual) ★★☆☆ — Bruce Springsteen was on top of the musical world in 1975 with the release of his groundbreaking "Born to Run" album. After toiling on the fringe of mainstream success the

record made Springsteen and his E Street Band mates international stars.

Rather than churn out an immediate follow-up, Springsteen took a couple years off from recording (he toured relentlessly during this time, however) until returning in 1978 with the much less anthemic "Darkness On the Edge of Town."

The latest winner in a seemingly endless series of top-notch "Under Review" documen-

taries, this film examines the years between "Born to Run" and the Boss' commercial juggernaut "Born In the U.S.A." During this time, Springsteen released "Darkness," "The River" and "Nebraska" and demonstrated his remarkable growth as a songwriter, lyricist and performer.

Through archival interview footage with Springsteen and a panel of industry professionals and fellow musicians, the film dissects the three albums on a track-by-track basis. The consensus is that the material — especially on "Darkness" and "Nebraska" — is some of the most personal and haunting of Springsteen's career.

They are albums now widely regarded as masterpieces that didn't get their just due at the time from a record-buying public expecting another "Born to Run."

Though many advised The Boss to reconsider releasing "The River" as a double album (most such projects are doomed to critical backlash), Springsteen came through with an excellent, though imperfect, record. It spawned his first major radio hit ("Hungry Heart") alongside sprawling story songs, such as the title track, and was a precursor to "Born In the U.S.A.," which spawned seven hit singles en route to dominating pop radio and MTV for more than a year.

Bonus features include biographies of the panelists, an interactive quiz and "The Phases of Springsteen," author Larry David Smith's theory on the Boss' career arc. (JS)

"All My Loving" (Isolde Films/MVD Visual) ★☆☆ — When "All My Loving" first



aired on the BBC in 1967, it was no doubt groundbreaking. It provided artists such as Frank Zappa, Cream and Jimi Hendrix their earliest exposure or British television and was one of the first documentaries to examine the blossoming pop music phenomenon of the time.

Forty years later however, "All My Loving" seems heavy-handed and hopelessly naive. Director Tony Palmer's breakthrough work deserves its place in history but it hasn't aged well.

The re-released film is surprisingly graphic with disturbing images of the Vietnam War juxtaposed alongside interviews with the musician and extended musical performances by Pink Floyd, Cream, the Who and Hendrix.

In their interviews, Paul McCartney and Donovan come across as especially naive with their assertions that pop music would end all wars and resolve all the world's problems. Their sincerity and conviction are admirable, but their overly simplistic world view is almost comical.

The highlight of "All My Loving" is an extended interview with Palmer conducted earlier this year. His anecdotal remembrance of the project (John Lennon was a driving force behind getting the film made) are fascinating — much more so than the film he's talking about. (JS)