

NEW YORK POST

THAT 'LOVING' FEELING

By LARRY GETLEN



September 16, 2007 -- IN 1968, filmmaker Tony Palmer made a documentary, at John Lennon's request, featuring interviews and exclusive performances by the likes of The Beatles, Pink Floyd, The Who, Frank Zappa and Jimi Hendrix - the biggest artists in rock at the time.

This film, titled "All My Loving," has never been seen in the United States before this year. But what's really surprising is why.

"My previous film had been on the Bell Telephone Hour, which was on NBC," recalls Palmer. "They received a copy of this film, and a letter came back saying, 'We see that Hendrix is very interesting, but can you take out all that stuff with the guitar?'"

This sort of thinking is exactly why John Lennon wanted "All My Loving," out on DVD this Tuesday, made.

Palmer met Lennon in 1963 when, as a student, he covered a Beatles press conference and didn't ask any questions. When Lennon asked him why and he replied, "because this is silly stuff," a friendship was born.

Several years later, Lennon was frustrated that so many of rock's greatest talents couldn't get on British television.

"He twisted my arm to do something about it," says Palmer. "He gave me a list of groups and said, 'I'll make the introductions, you make the film.'"

"All My Loving" is a hodgepodge of clips, interviews and perspectives touching on all aspects of the day's "pop" music, including what musicians hoped to accomplish, and the music's effect on proper society.

Between rare performances, we hear Paul McCartney expressing "a desire to get power in order to use it for good"; Frank Zappa describing how a group of Marines gleefully depicted the killing of a Vietnamese baby on his stage; and a bashful Hendrix - who Palmer said irritated him by always calling him "sir" - saying how encounters with groupies threw him for a loop.

Palmer expected the British press to deride the film as the adventures of drugged-out youth. Instead, the U.K. press hailed it as a revelation.

"Overnight, rock music, and what the people involved in it wanted to achieve, was suddenly taken very seriously," says Palmer. "It pleased John enormously."

The most striking aspect of "All My Loving" today is how these musicians, who are now looked on as gods (or, by some, dinosaurs), were so obviously grateful for that respect.

"The [musicians of the day] were so fed up with people not noticing that they really were good musicians," says Palmer. "I remember Jimmy Page endlessly telling me that he thought he'd scream at the next person who didn't acknowledge that he actually knew what chords were."

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