



All My Loving

The tone of this documentary of '60s pop culture, originally aired on BBC Television in 1968, is set perfectly by the first shot: the lyrics to the Beatle's "Yellow Submarine" on screen juxtaposed against an ominous Vaughan Williams piece playing underneath, then cutting to an out-of-focus Donovan, walking around aimlessly, evidently unable to comprehend he's being filmed. The remainder of the film continues as a pastiche of seemingly unrelated clips, giving the film an odd sense of cohesion while

relentlessly making the viewer feel ill at ease.

Director Tony Palmer successfully keeps the viewer on edge by mixing not only disparate images but disparate sounds as well, never fully revealing whether he's intending to show the importance of the era's pop music or to show how little it mattered compared to a society set on its ear during the height of the Vietnam War. What we do know is that *All My Loving* is a powerful and often harrowing look at society, pop music, sex, drugs, war, violence and revolution.

The first band we see is Cream, with Jack Bruce's mic continually falling out of the stand during an amazing rendition of "I'm Glad," his mic problems adding to the movie's unrelenting tension. Cream pops up in the film from time to time playing the part of redeemer, with these being among the few times the viewer is given even a partial reprieve from the film's edge.

All My Loving contains an incredible collection of interviews ranging from a fairly lightweight but insightful interview with Sir Paul McCartney to a more-sardonic-than-usual Frank Zappa, recalling a run-in with some U.S. Marines during a Mothers' show. Other highlights include an almost surreal interview with George Harrison's mom and Eric Burdon's surprisingly eloquent take on post-LSD '60s culture.

Typical of the film is a shot of a concentration camp prisoner having his head shaved, fading out to a soft-focus image of an opulent chandelier, with that then coming into focus and the camera panning down to *A Clockwork Orange* author Anthony Burgess, appropriately discussing the disposable nature of both pop music and youth culture at a society gathering.

All My Loving is hard-hitting, edgy, and at times nearly unwatchable, ending up a remarkable movie, with its powerful imagery perfectly underlying both the passion and pretense of the late '60s. —JE

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