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## All You Need Is Love [Zeit]

Various Artists

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**Artist**

Various Artists

**Album**

All You Need Is Love [Zeit]

**Rating**

★★★★★

**Release Date**

May 13, 2008

**Label**

Zeit

**Type**

Various Artists, Video, Box Set

**Genre**

Rock

**AMG Album ID**

R 1348495

**Corrections to this Entry?**

### Review

by Lindsay Planer

*All You Need Is Love* (2008) is a massive audio-visual documentary produced by award-winning filmmaker **Tony Palmer**. The 17 volumes -- totaling nearly 15 hours in all -- originally aired on the ITV Network Saturday nights at 10:30 p.m. for 17 weeks starting February 12, 1977. The series presents a roughly chronological breakdown of the history of popular music. However, it goes infinitely further than that. **Palmer** has unprecedented (remember this is the mid-'70s) access to the minds and thoughts of several consecutive generations of those who made and were influenced by all genres of pop songs be they sacred, secular, country, western, rhythm, blues, rock and or roll. Apart from the wide-ranging "Introduction" on disc one, the remaining 16 shows provide critical analyses with an emphasis on the vastly underrated importance and influence of the popular song in everyday life. Particularly fascinating are the parallels to the societal upheavals that took place during the mid- to late 20th century, in addition to an examination of how it has become an industry that controls all forms of communication. To give an idea of the sheer star power, the "Introduction" contains footage -- performance, interview, and occasionally both -- from the likes of **Aretha Franklin**, **Billie Holiday**, **Bing Crosby**, **Bo Diddley**, **Buddy Rich**, **Dizzy Gillespie**, **Duke Ellington**, **Dusty Springfield**, **Edith Piaf**, **Eric Clapton**, the **Everly Brothers**, **Glen Campbell**, **Hoagy Carmichael**, **Jerry Lee Lewis**, **Joan Baez**, **Judy Garland**, **Liberace**, **Muddy Waters**, **Paul McCartney & Wings**, **Richard Rodgers**, **Ruth Etting**, and members of the **Beatles**, the **Bee Gees**, and the **Rolling Stones**. Each of the remaining volumes houses four further complete, unedited episodes.

Disc two's titles include "God's Children," which busts the myths about the origins of American popular music. "I Can Hypnotise 'Dis Nation" is the story of ragtime with the oldest known piece of film (1898) showing dancers of the day doing a real cakewalk. "Jungle Music" introduces viewers and listeners to jazz -- a truly American art form that defies all racial boundaries. "Who's That Comin'?" deals with the introduction of the blues -- as a cornerstone of popular music and an "emotional response, through music to a variety of oppressive social conditions" -- according to producers. Disc three picks up the story with "Rude Songs" that emanated from the oft bawdy and definitely adult vaudeville and music hall traditions. "Always Chasin' Rainbows" introduces the pop for profit mentality that drove Tin Pan Alley composers to write "made-to-order" hits for any and all occasions. Then it is onto the Great White Way and the silver screen for "Diamonds as Big as the Ritz." Here the sum is shown to become bigger than its respective parts as disparate theatrical forms fuse to create the multi-million dollar art form it would evolve into. The final entry on disc three is "Swing That Music!" as jazz became packaged for the masses. "Good Times" commences disc four in the segregated world of race music and its struggle out of the ghettos and onto the airwaves. The introduction of rural country comes in with "Making Moonshine." The organic sounds that were being discovered throughout America's South and heartland were the story of every man, woman, and child who ever lived there. To much the same end, "Go Down, Moses!" digs further into Americana to expose other oral traditions, via folk. Not to mention its vital role in politics, dating back to pre-colonial times, and with a name like "Hail! Hail! Rock 'n' Roll," viewers can safely anticipate the youthful uprising that started in Memphis, TN's Sun Records' studio before enveloping the world.

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The fifth and final DVD is dedicated to discussing four sub-variants of rock: "Mighty Good" is the story of how **the Beatles** became worldwide musical icons. "All Along the Watchtower" is subtitled "Sour Rock" as the decadence and hedonism of the era began to leave a trail of talented partiers in its wake. "Whatever Gets You Through the Night" submits to the age-old show biz adage that "the show must go on" as the DVD heads to the stage to view '70s excess take the form of glitter rock, pompous prog rock, and predictable arena rock. The 17th and concluding installment, "Imagine," looks away from the dollars and screaming fans and into the realm of the spirit. As music is, at its core, a spiritual connector, **Palmer** chooses an apt destination to conclude *All You Need Is Love*. Had work on this undertaking been continued, the D.I.Y. punk and new wave scenes could have offered an alternate ending. However, considering its time and breadth of scope, it is difficult to find fault with the overall concept or its long, winding, and ultimately entertaining implementation.

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