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[DVD Review: All You Need Is Love – Tony Palmer](#)

Posted on May 9th, 2008

by [Simon Barrett](#) in [Movie Reviews](#), [Music Reviews](#), [Reviews](#)

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TONY PALMER'S CLASSIC SERIES THE STORY OF POPULAR MUSIC

Award winning film maker Tony Palmer has created quite the opus with this 17 part series about popular music. It comes in a 5 DVD boxed set, and is an absolute must have for any music fan.



Today's music map encompasses a seemingly endless mixture of styles, from a cappella (unaccompanied) to zydeco (A Cajun Louisiana style), and all of the other letters of the alphabet. Yes there are even styles that begin with the letter Q, Quan ho is a style of Vietnamese vocals! Yet when you explore the roots of the popular music styles you find some common ancestry.

This series was originally broadcast between 1976 and 1980 and is spectacular both in its content and breadth. With a total running time of just under 15 hours, this is a DVD set that you likely will need a few days to watch. From a reviewer's standpoint this is hell on earth! 15 hours? Who the hell has 15 hours? Well apparently I did, because the series is so good I was hooked. I have no idea how many CD's I have reviewed in the past year, but

I know it is several hundred. I thought I was pretty knowledgeable about music, its history, and the styles. How wrong I was, I know nothing!

All Along The Watchtower – Sour Rock is episode 15, and takes a long hard look at the bands that were at the cutting edge of the rock world in the 70's, The Stones, The Who, Frank Zappa, Jimi Hendrix, and the inflatable pig toting Pink Floyd. By the way, the remnants of Floyd, Roger Waters played at the recent Coachella Valley Arts and Music Festival and managed to lose his pig, a \$10,000 reward was offered, but alas by the time the pig was found it had been shredded.

The video footage is magic, The Who are captured mid concert trying their best to destroy their instruments,

and a damn fine job they do.

Floyd are featured playing the haunting Set The Controls For The Heart Of The Sun, from Ummagumma (I think). This band was at the forefront of Progressive Rock, in fact they were likely the creators of the genre, yet even the very staid and conservative BBC used this song as an audio backdrop for their highly successful documentary series 'The Ascent Of Man' (Jacob Bronowski) in 1973.

Episode 16 is aptly titled Glitter Rock, and all that glitters is not glam. Yet the genre is well known as Glam Rock. Glitter became the realm of the music worlds superstars of the time. Davis Bowie, Kiss, Jethro Tull, ELP, while they had widely divergent music styles, they shared the common theme of being outrageous. Clothes, make up, stage act, everything was completely over the top! Glam ruled for several years, but it wasn't just the ancillary attributes, it was also the high level of music composition. I guess I am at odds with Tony Palmer on this aspect. He maintains that it was all superficial, and the visual makes up for the music. He is particularly critical of Emerson Lake and Palmer, and captures some great footage of Keith Emerson destroying a Hammond Organ on stage. I take a different view, yes the visual aspect added a new dimension, but the music still stands the test of time.

I could write an entire book about this wonderful series. This is without doubt the best DVD set I have seen. This review only scratches the surface. I am going to ask my wife (A Cajun Gal) to review a couple of other episodes that look at Country (what happened to the western?) music.

Tony Palmer filmed over 1000 hours, and interviewed hundreds of people to create this incredible DVD set. [Buy it now!](#)

Simon Barrett

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BloggerNews.net would like to thank and congratulate our Blogger of the Month for the month of May 2008 – [The Stiletto](#) for her fantastic political coverage over the past month!

The Stiletto comes from a broken home. Not broken in the commonly understood sense, but broken in the red state-blue state sense.

Like many Americans, The Stiletto's family is a mixed bag: Multicultural, multiracial, multiethnic, multinational, ecumenical, and includes members who are gay (in-laws, but still).

The Stiletto loves them all – albeit, at a distance in election years – so anyone who disagrees with her opinions had better refrain from recklessly lobbing accusations of racism, homophobia, jingoism or imperialism.

The Stiletto blogs about politics and ... you name it, since these days everything has become politicized at <http://thestiletto.com>.

[Click here for more information on The Stiletto](#)

UPDATE: [Simon Barrett](#) interviews [The Stiletto](#)... [Click here to read the interview.](#)

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