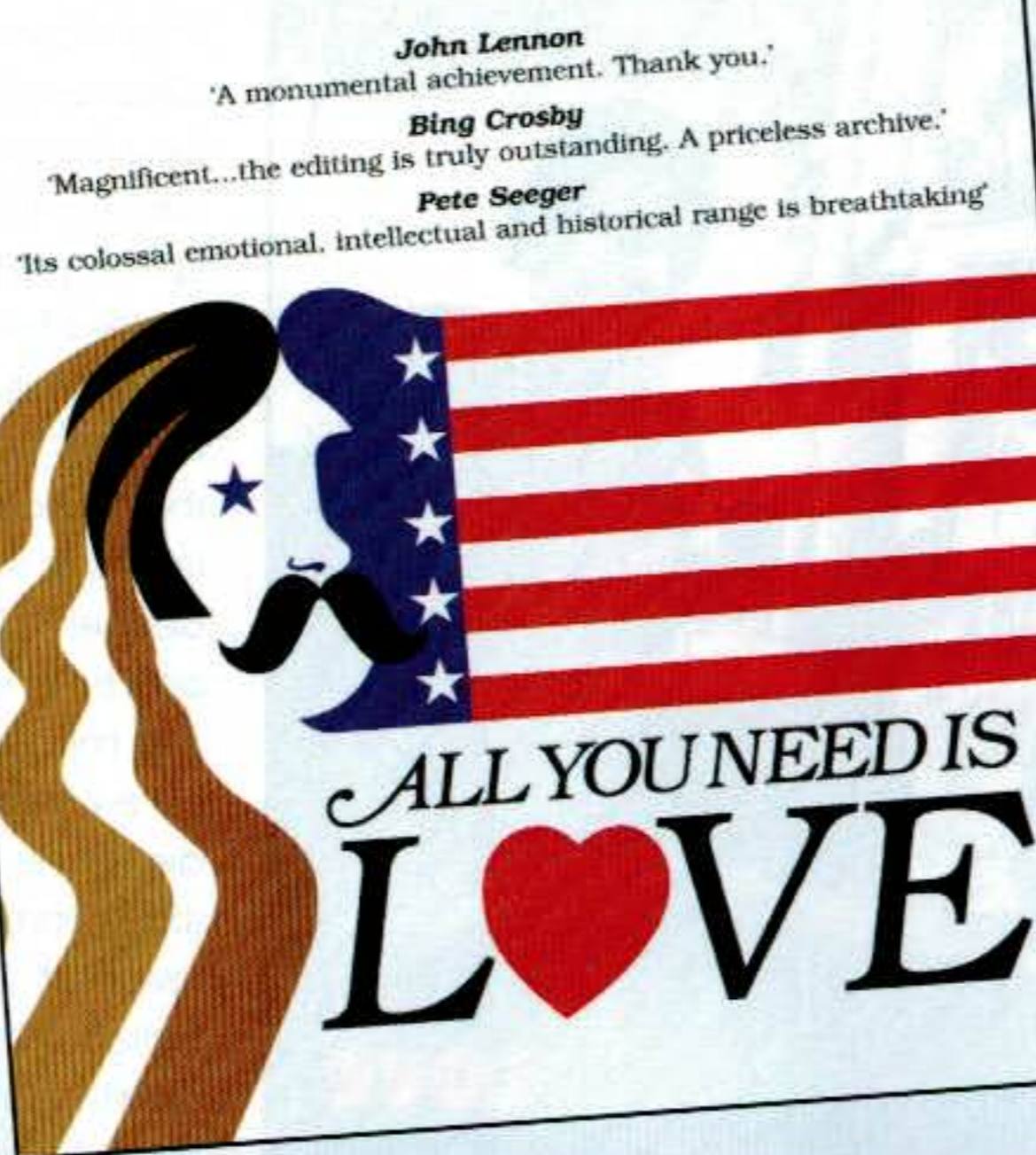


single "Irene" and turned more than a few heads with its self-titled debut album in 1980 on Epic Records. Scoring the number-four slot on the British charts, the band was thought to be the heir apparent to Blondie's throne in the female-fronted pop arena. But alas, front woman Wendy Wu possessed little of the charisma or style that made Miss Harry so alluring, and the band would eventually wither into obscurity over the next couple years, releasing just a few failed singles to keep its name on the radar. Nevertheless, the album still has a few perky power pop gems like "Do You have Fun?" and "Barbarellas." There are also a couple of cutesy, faux-reggae numbers that are emblematic of so many other UK new wave acts of the day who fancied themselves as worldly (The Police, anyone?). This reissue has it all—loads and loads of bonus tracks, pictures and an essay on the band.

A few music DVDs have come my way recently that you might want to know about. Eagle Entertainment has been releasing its *Classic Albums* series for the past few years. Each DVD focuses on an album from an individual artist or band in a documentary format, featuring

TONY PALMER'S CLASSIC SERIES
THE STORY OF POPULAR MUSIC

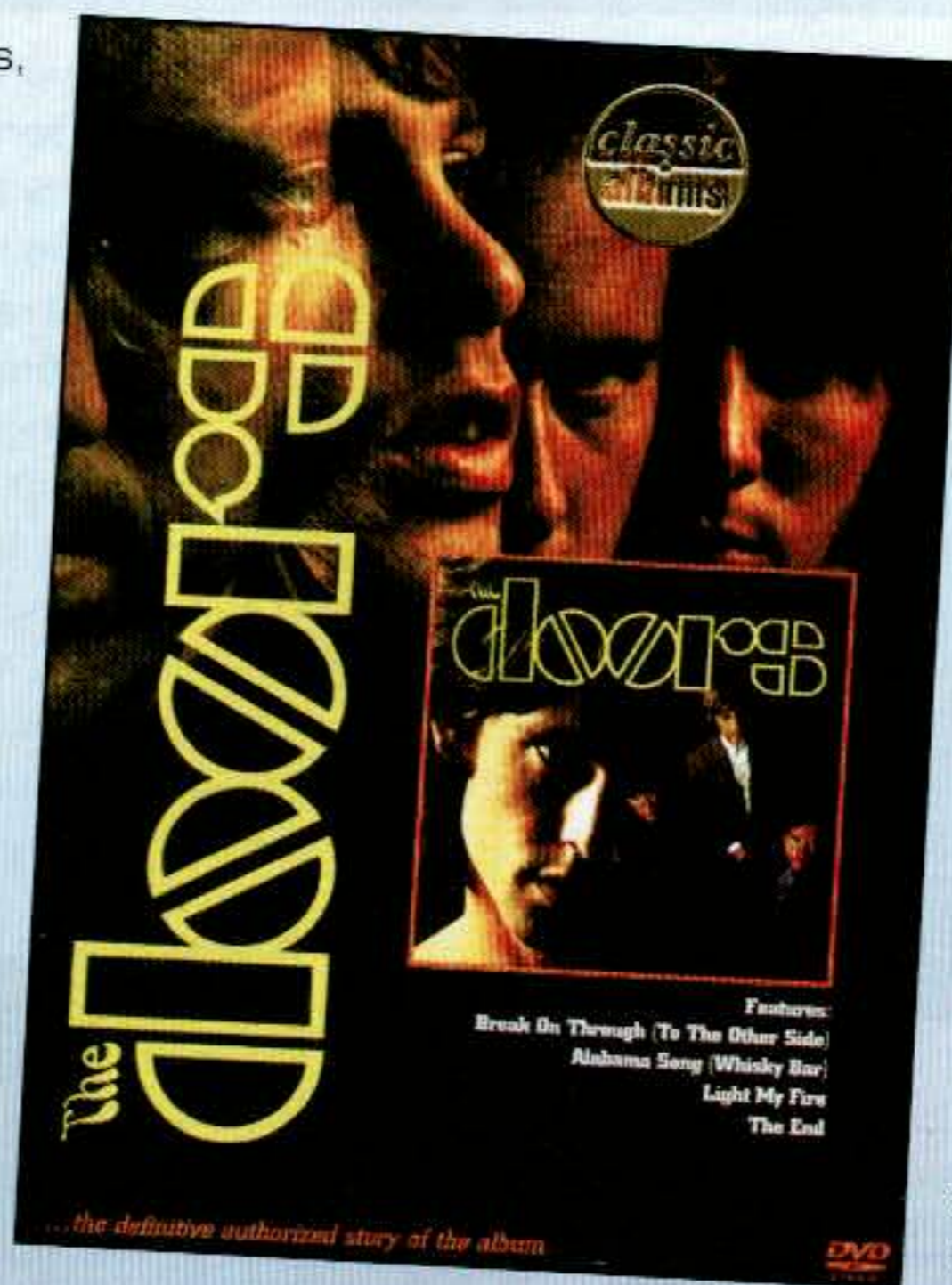
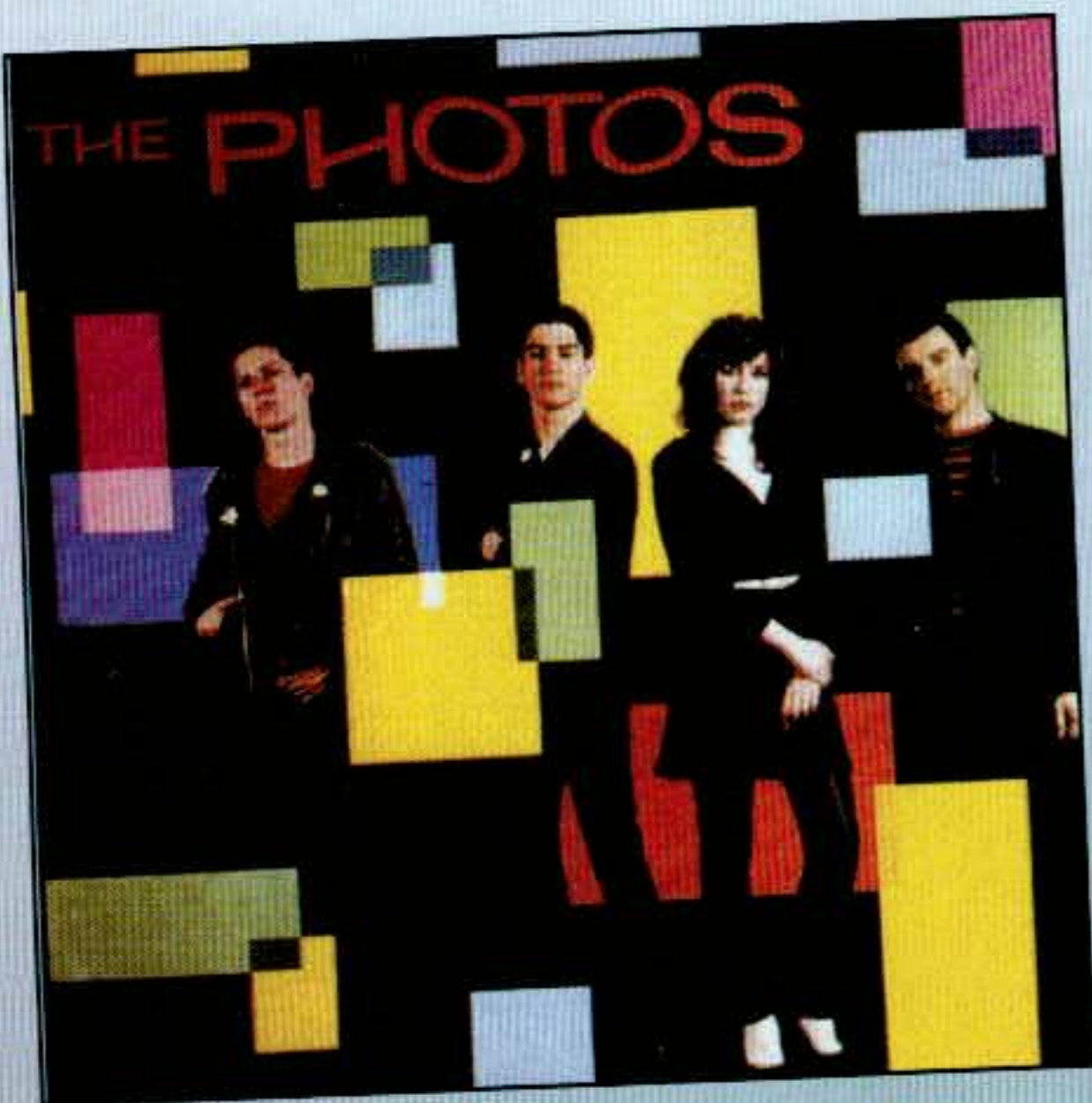


John Lennon
'A monumental achievement. Thank you.'

Bing Crosby
'Magnificent...the editing is truly outstanding. A priceless archive.'

Pete Seeger
'Its colossal emotional, intellectual and historical range is breathtaking'

interviews, live and studio footage and insider insights on the making of said album. The



Doors' first album and John Lennon's first solo outing *Plastic Ono Band* are the most-recent subjects. The Doors DVD features interviews with the three remaining Doors, plus Henry Rollins, Perry Farrell and old-time Elektra Records executives who weathered the storm of

Jim Morrison—arguably one of the true original punk rockers. What unfolds is a fascinating look at the mechanics of the creation of one of rock's great albums, and how the band and production team dealt with one of the most volatile personalities to ever grace the stage. The Lennon DVD doesn't include any original studio footage, as there was none to speak of but does have bits from engineers who worked on the album. What's especially interesting is the tape playback of the sessions at Abbey Road Studios, where at one point, the engineer isolates Lennon's chilling lead vocals. It's too bad they just couldn't isolate the embarrassing and talentless Yoko Ono from the entire picture altogether. Oh well...it is, what it is. Of the two, *The Doors* DVD is the stronger one simply because there's more meaty stuff in there (i.e., all the excellent interviews), but both make for an insightful experience.

Another historical DVD documentary worth a view is *All You Need Is Love*. This 5-DVD set chronicles popular music's place

in the world over the past 100 years or so. Created by British director Tony Palmer, the documentary originally ran on primetime TV during the mid '70s for 17 episodes. With footage featuring interviews with John Lennon, Paul McCartney, Elvis Presley, Jimi Hendrix and scores of others, it charts popular music's rise throughout the last century—basically everything except classical and gospel. While I didn't completely relish sitting through several hours of grainy vintage footage, the filmmaker did a fine job in showing how it all connects in one way or another. For rock sociologists, this is one helluva comprehensive set.

With such an over-saturated marketplace, it's easy to lose track of stuff that's been out of sight for a while. With this installment, my aim is to do it all some justice. So make me proud and check out some of this shite. And as always, for questions, comments or things you want to see in future columns, hit me up at Retrohead77@yahoo.com. Cheers, JK. ◀