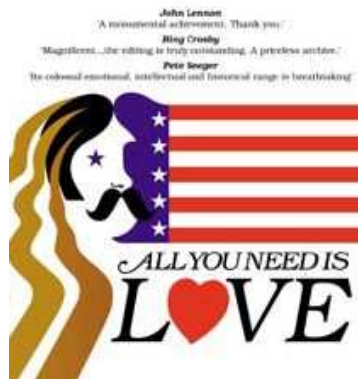


All You Need Is Love: The Story of Popular Music

TONY PALMER'S CLASSIC SERIES
THE STORY OF POPULAR MUSIC



Street Date: May 13

Official Synopsis:

Popular music is now an essential part of our lives - yet we know comparatively little about it - where it came from how it developed how it has influenced or been influenced by social change. Today the popular music industry controls billions of dollars; it has a greater revenue than the combined efforts of cinema theatre and sport and all the other entertainment industries put together. This critically acclaimed TV series originally broadcast worldwide between 1976-80 is featured here in its entirety - 17 episodes contained on 5 discs encompassing ragtime, blues, jazz, vaudeville, the musical, folk, swing, country and western, rock n' roll and beyond.

Our Take:

All You Need Is Love: The Story of Popular Music came out when I was just a wee child, so I had never even heard of it until it crossed my desk. Anthony Palmer's multi-part documentary epic is a stunning work, though, even if it hasn't held up well in terms of audiovisual quality.

Through 17 episodes (spread across five discs), this late 70's-early 80's series is basically a history of popular music, dating back to the turn of the century and working all the way through what were then the latest sounds. Starting off with vaudeville, ragtime, and jazz, the show eventually works its way through country, folk, rock and roll, and into the heavier leanings of hard rock that were emerging in the late 70's. For younger audiences, the lack of coverage of any hip hop, rap, metal, or electronica may be a let down, but this program should be equally as revered by a music aficionado as by a history buff.

What makes the show so stunning is that it's made up entirely of interviews and musical footage of the acts being discussed. In the episode devoted solely to The Beatles (and thank you for that; they don't need to share screen time with anyone), we hear from Paul McCartney, Neil Aspinall, Murray the K, and many other people

who were actually involved with the Beatles and the music scene at the time. It's not just a bunch of historians and boring narration talking about how important the music was, it's the people who lived the music telling their stories and putting it all in a historical context. Through that particular episode, there are also three concert numbers by the Beatles, so you actually get to see them perform. There's nothing I hate more than a documentary about a musical act where you never get to see them play or hear any of their songs. Every episode is like that; there are Rolling Stones songs, clips of Jim Morrison being interviewed, rare folk and jazz performance numbers... the list goes on.

There are no extra features in this five-disc set, but since the entire program is basically a huge making-of for music, I'm not really sure what would be needed. Plus, with over 14 hours of content, it's hard to complain.

The only downside to **All You Need Is Love: The Story of Popular Music** is that the audiovisual components are in pretty rough shape, but it seems as if they were like that at the time of production. You can see everyone and hear all the music, but none of it looks or sounds particularly great. Still, considering the age of the project and the condition that much of the rare footage that makes it up was probably in to begin with, it's an understandable issue.

All You Need Is Love: The Story of Popular Music is a really impressive program that covers all aspects of pop music up through 1980, and it should find its way into the libraries of any lover of music or history.

RECOMMENDED!

Overall Picture:

Movie: A-

DVD: B

- *Mike Spring*
Editor

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