

58 Years A Fan

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Subscribed to Disney Plus to watch the three-episode series *The Beatles Get Back*. Sublime, revealing, toe-tapping-clapping on a London roof, fascinating.

Academicians watch carefully! Surely you'll learn something about the creative process, which is tedious, amazing, plodding, exhilarating, random, mundane, spectacular—all in minutes.

Symbolism? Depth? Allusion? Nah. A riff, beat, basic idea, words that fit together and rhyme, sound right to band members, and mean something different to everyone.

Many contrasts. Beatles arriving in chauffeur-driven Rolls, leaning their guitars against amps with no stands or hooks, sitting on the floor, setting drinks and ashtrays on any flat surface, eating box lunches in a drab, institutional studio, cords running "Here, There, and Everywhere." How did ethereal songs such as "Across The Universe" and so many others emerge from these jet-set-pop-star-millionaires in their lunchroom environment?

Yoko is just one of many hangers-on and hardly says a thing but does some typically abrasive screeching-wailing. John looks on lovingly. Linda Eastman and Ringo's wife Maureen appear. Saffron-clad-whacked-out hare krishnas, introduced as friends of George, lean against a wall.

Throughout The Beatles make fun of articles about them in the press. *They've seen this crap since they hit it big!* At first they loved any coverage! Now...

Commentators have pointed to conflicts and frictions since the original 1969 *Get Back* with its ubiquitous cameras came out, but I saw none of more than momentary consequence. Mainly, the mop-tops are madcap and fun-loving, and not likely to take themselves or anything all that seriously.

Things are a little awkward early when they decide to play together "live," which they hadn't done in years because of multitrack, but the arrival of prodigy organist-pianist Billy Preston gives them the up they need to proceed. Billy's a natural and fits right in. (Wikipedia reports on the miserable life he went on to live, including time in prison—much of it INSANE drug war related.)

When they finally go full tilt on the roof with "Get Back," "Two Of Us," "Don't Let Me Down," and "Dig A Pony" their brilliant musicality shines like the Sun they often sang about.

Everything about the film is high fidelity and presentationally excellent. Director Peter Jackson succeeds but how could anyone go wrong with The Beatles as stars? Billing himself first seems hopelessly pretentious. All he did was arrange the diamonds.

Sometimes it's slow-moving but that's revealing more than boring. Writing lyrics and music, perfecting performances are difficult, ponderous pursuits. Watching is less fun than doing and having done is best.

John mentions Ricky And The Red Streets, George helps Ringo with "Octopus's Garden," Paul breaks into "The Long And Winding Road" alone at the piano. "Maggie May" is mentioned.

They seem to have a completely cohesive blast on the roof and how it could all end only months later remains a mystery.

I wish they had chosen another way to make the series available. Disney seems completely wrong and is a money-grubbing pain in the butt to deal with. When I went to cancel my account it was more complicated than it should have been.

But The Beatles have always been merchandised like the Byrds' "plasticware." Probably the production got the biggest buck from Donald Duck and company.

The Beatles Get Back is excellent all the way through, but then, I'm 58 years a fan.

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