

COUNT ME IN

Celebration of the unsung drummer

The passing of Charlie Watts in August inspired an overdue appreciation of the drummer – the member of any band who copes with the least recognition, the tightest margins for error and (not infrequently) the most mockery.

Watts is unsurprisingly much cited in this special celebration of unsung timekeepers: contributors include specialists in metal (Jack McBrain), prog (Nick Mason), and jack-of-all-trades (Jim Keltner). A hefty roster of punk rockers – Rat Scabies, Pepper Headon, Clem Burke – reminds that even the most wilfully ramshackle outfits need someone to hold everything together. “They got lost,” says Headon, “they’d come to me.” **ANDREW MUELLER**

PEAKSCENE: THE STORY OF DINOSAUR JR

VIDEO FILMS

7/10

Turbulent tale well told

Jim Mascis is not regarded as one of rock’s more expansive raconteurs: accordingly, a Dinosaur Jr documentary might loom as something of a chore. However, Philipp Reichenheim’s film tells Dinosaur Jr’s turbulent story well, deftly balancing Mascis’s somnolent deadpan with the more loquacious recollections of his bandmates Lou Barlow and Murph. Kim Gordon, Henry Rollins, Kevin Shields and Bob Mould are among a distinguished chorus of fan-contributors fleshing out what becomes a heartwarming fable of the triumph of the otherwise willfully unemployable. **ANDREW MUELLER**

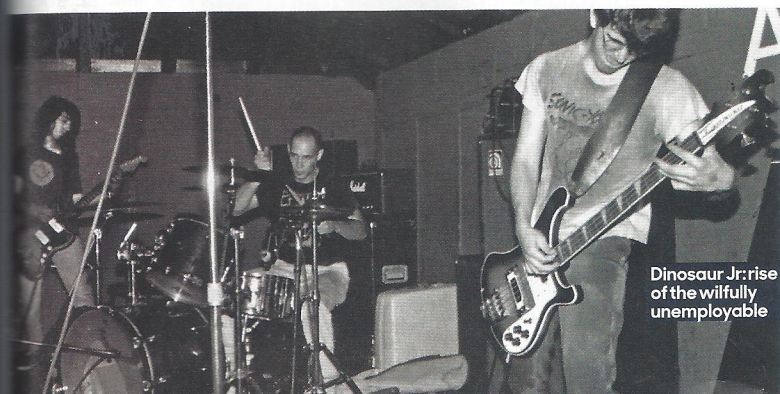
OASIS KNEBORTH 1996

WELSH GARRELEASING

7/10

Archive footage, Britpop memories, impeccable swagger

A quarter of a century on, this two-hour doc offers up a giddy fans’-eye view of the shows that came to define not just the Gallagher brothers’ impeccable brand of swagger, but the Britpop era itself. Through archive



Dinosaur Jr: rise of the wilfully unemployable



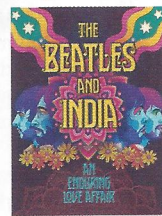
Fabs, WAGs and a guru: The Beatles in Rishikesh

THE BEATLES AND INDIA

101.FILMS

7/10

The Maharishi, Magic Alex and some myths unravelled. By Pete Paphides



AS spiritual and musical reawakenings go, it has to be said that The Beatles’ Indian love affair got off to a shaky start. In Richard Lester’s 1965 film *Help!*, we see the Fabs become embroiled with a sinister Eastern cult who set out to sacrifice a female Beatles fan to their goddess. While hindsight hasn’t been kind to *Help!*, it also allows us to get the full measure of the chain of events it would trigger on the musicians at the centre of the enterprise.

As with his 2005 book *The Beatles In India*, Ajoy Bose’s directorial debut [co-director Peter Compton] suspends current censoriousness to catapult us to a world where it wasn’t unforgivable to get things wrong about other cultures as long as you were trying to get it right. Early on, it’s the blossoming friendship between George Harrison and Ravi Shankar that provides the main source of warmth. What started with George picking up an unattended sitar on the *Help!* set fast-forwards to a momentous encounter when Asian Music Circle Founders Ayana and Patricia Angani invited The Beatles for dinner with Shankar at their Hampstead home. Decades later, their son Shankara recalls it was Paul McCartney who seemed out of his depth in comparison to George – who, Pattie Boyd noted, must have known Shankar “in a past life”.

Perhaps for George, Indian music offered a space well away from what must have sometimes felt like John and Paul’s musical fiefdom. Certainly, it massively increased his cultural stock, both within and without The Beatles. Had George not spearheaded The Beatles’ rebirth as spiritual seekers, it’s impossible to conceive of the ‘White Album’, most of which was written at the Rishikesh retreat where the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi taught transcendental meditation. Bose manages to locate fellow disciples for vivid recollections set amid the ruins of the once-thriving Ashram, among them teacher Nick Nugent, who excitably recalls a rooftop concert on the Ashram bungalow that predated the more famous one on the Apple building a year later.

Elsewhere, there’s a welcome corrective to pernicious inaccuracies that permeate most accounts of The Beatles’ sudden departure from Rishikesh, with eminent Fabologists Mark Lewisohn and Steve Turner both emphasising the Machiavellian machinations of hanger-on “Magic” Alex Mardas, who persuaded Lennon that the Maharishi was guilty of sexual impropriety towards a young woman in the Ashram. And even though Lennon wrote “Sexy Sadie” as they waited for their taxis, subsequent interviews with McCartney and Harrison revealed that both were regretful of the manner in which their retreat ended – Harrison even seeking the Maharishi’s forgiveness.

But perhaps the most pleasing harmonic balance established by *The Beatles And India* only truly reveals itself near the end, as an array of Indian musicians try to express just how the group’s music impacted upon them. What begins problematically doesn’t have to end that way. Over 50 years later, what survives is gratitude on all sides that The Beatles and the Indian musicians, teachers and fans they met got to be part of each other’s story. Others may put it in more florid terms, but none manage to do so quite as resonantly as musician Neil Mukherjee, who attempts to explain the effect that The Beatles had on him thus: “The world would have been, like, so shit without them.”

footage and the occasional reenactment, it conjures up a forgotten world of live music in a pre-internet age – from queuing for tickets at record stores to recording gigs off the radio – with myth-making commentary from those in the crowd as well as deadpan memories from Noel.

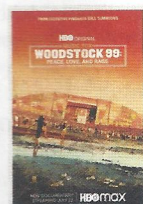
Extras: Cinema release from September 23 followed by live album and DVD/Blu-ray in November. **LEONIE COOPER**

WOODSTOCK '99: PEACE, LOVE, AND RAGE

HBO

7/10

A festival where the bad vibes couldn’t get any worse



It’s tempting to blame Woodstock ‘99 on Limp Bizkit and other nu-metal pinheads who exacerbated the event’s toxicity. But director Garret Price’s documentary presents the iconic festival’s flameout as the apotheosis of its era’s most putrid aspects, from the greed epitomised by the \$4 water bottles to the cynicism suggested by the sight of attendees revelling in human excrement as Kid Rock struts in a white fur coat. Add riots, arson and multiple sexual assaults and deaths, and you have a thoroughly horrific weekend even without Fred Durst.

JASON ANDERSON

COLINHARR-JOSEPHENDERSON

