

Imagine

A treat for Lennon fans

By Dal Jiordani

What can be said about John Lennon, a man whose talents, creativeness and vision has touched the hearts and lives of millions, that has not already been said? This review, focused on the film *Imagine* — *John Lennon* and the accompanying soundtrack, is not an attempt to pass judgement on a person whose life is both well-documented and

mysterious. That job will be left to the historians and the people who remember what he was and what he stood for. Instead, I will comment on the living epitaph his work has become and how some of these recent forms are presented.

Capitol Records has released a compilation of Lennon's music and performances in conjunction with the film biography, both



Photo: Courtesy BMI

Lennon: peace for the next generation

press of that time, was not ignored, but neither was it elaborated on, as if the filmmakers were saying "Yeah, he had a little problem. So what? Don't judge his whole life by one bad habit."

In the mid-Seventies, Lennon's absence from the public spotlight and his separation from Yoko led to a great deal of speculation on the direction his life was headed, though it is true that his personal problems at this point were greater than any previously experienced, they were not as terrible as what was publicized. This section of the film and the last one detail his fall from grace and his recovery. The feeling one gets is that while his problems lead to a great deal of introspection and suffering, they also led to him becoming a person who was finally at peace with himself. It seemed that he had finally gotten his life back on track once and for all when his existence was so tragically ended.

The film's soundtrack highlights some of Lennon's greatest works from the Beatles era and beyond, as well as two previously unreleased tracks, "Real Love", taken from a demo cassette, and a rehearsal version of "Imagine". In addition to the soundtrack, a book showcasing the movie, written and edited by the film's director, Andrew Solt, is also available.

As with the soundtrack and the book, the film is but a brief look at the vision of a performer whose career was ultimately cut short. As a musician, a poet, and a philosopher, his work will remain to be enjoyed for years to come. But as a dreamer, he will best be known for asking people to do nothing more than *imagine*.

authorized by Yoko Ono. The movie, a more positive look at Lennon than Albert Goldman's recent book, attempts to present the life of John Lennon as that of an energetic young musician, a powerful peace activist, a lost hero and returned, loving father.

Directed by Andrew Solt and produced by David Wolper, the film makes use both of well-known shots of Lennon and a great deal of rare documentary-style footage, a treat for Lennon fans as much of it was previously unreleased. Also featured are several interview clips with Len-

non's sons, Julian and Sean, his first wife, Cynthia, and Yoko Ono. The first portion of the film looks at Lennon in the process of maturing as a songwriter and an individual. The shots range from backstage at concerts with the Beatles, to recording sessions, to private scenes of home life. In this section, as throughout the film, extensive use is made of music Lennon either wrote or performed.

In the post-Beatles period, Lennon grew increasingly active in the peace movement, a phrase that was highlighted by the song "Imagine". While the first section of the film focused on a young man who was thrust into position of overwhelming success and managed to survive nicely, this section emphasized that John Lennon was a peace-loving person who was simply a little eccentric in his method of presenting his vision. Lennon's drug use, highly documented by the

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