

Film Review: An Experimental Experience in Non-Biopic ‘Jimi: All is By My Side’

Submitted by [NickHC](#) [1] on September 26, 2014 - 5:06pm

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CHICAGO – “Jimi: All Is by My Side” shows the Jimi Hendrix experience without having the rights to the Jimi Hendrix Experience. It’s an unofficial rumination that doesn’t have any Hendrix songs, and it focuses on a more day-in-the-life perspective of the rock star, albeit in a career period that would be scooted over through montage in any other film. The endeavor is ambitious in its desires, and stands out most of all for its experimental nature than it does for trying to achieve a truth higher than fact.



Rating: **3.0/5.0**

The time is between 1966 and 1967, before Hendrix stormed Monterey Pop Festival, and the place is London. Jimi (played by André Benjamin, known as André 3000 in Outkast) has been discovered by a girlfriend of Keith Richards named Linda Keith (Imogen Poots), who sees the potential in a guitarist one night that is only adding color to a soul band. She is able to get a departing bassist from The Animals to manage him, and in time, Jimi arrives in London. While trying to make a name for himself in the same pool as Eric Clapton and a “Sgt. Peppers” Era Beatles, he meets a new girlfriend, Kathy (Haley Atwell) of which he has a destructive relationship with, and interacts with different individuals outside of the industry who want Jimi to influence the world with his music in different ways.

Because this is a film that distinctly uses the Hendrix name but can’t even evoke an original song he wrote, debut writer/director John Ridley’s film breaks the rules of the usual biopic and gives his take on this Hendrix chapter its own context. “Jimi: All Is by My Side” doesn’t function literally within the history of Hendrix, so much as reflect upon attitudes and episodes that aren’t worthing fact-checking. It’s best to take the character as a separate being, as if this were the Hendrix of a different dimension, created by a fan geeking out over the real thing.

“Jimi: All is By My Side” continues its release at Chicago’s Music Box Theater on September 26th. Featuring André Benjamin, Imogen Poots and Hayley Atwell. Written and directed by John Ridley. Rated “R”



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André Benjamin in ‘Jimi: All is By My Side’

Photo credit: Darko Entertainment



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