



A Great, Silly Grin: The British Satire Boom Of The 1960s

Humphrey Carpenter

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A Great, Silly Grin opens at the 1960 Edinburgh Festival, where a staggeringly inspired satirical revue called *Beyond the Fringe* startled a public steeped in the polite, bland banality of the 1950s. From there it is a short trip to the coffee bars of London, where the appearance of a scruffy yellow pamphlet calling itself *Private Eye* overturned the way Britons looked at their world. The apotheosis of the satire boom, and the progenitor of so many American comedy acts, was the groundbreaking BBC television program "That Was the Week That Was," which combined elements of sketch comedy and evening-news broadcast to produce something essential, hilarious, and, on occasion, scandalous. Humphrey Carpenter's history of this tumultuous and exciting era introduces us not only to the people involved in its creation--Peter Cook, Dudley Moore, Michael Frayn, Jonathan Miller, Alan Bennett, and David Frost--but also their routines and sketches.

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