

In Tune

The Daily News

THURSDAY, JULY 10, 2008



VARIOUS ARTISTS, "The Best of Bob Dylan's Theme Time Radio Hour, Volume 2" (Chrome Dreams) ☆☆☆

— Don't be misled by a cover that features a prominent photo of Bob Dylan and his name in bold print. The living legend doesn't make an appearance on "The Best of Bob Dylan's Theme Time Radio Hour, Volume 2," a two-disc collection of tunes gleaned from Dylan's XM Satellite Radio program. The "Theme Time" gimmick consists of Dylan selecting and spinning some of his favorite all-time tunes, most recorded before 1960, by other (often long-forgotten) artists.

This exhaustive album follows the same blueprint. It contains 52 tracks, clocking in at well over two hours, but is without Dylan's gravel-voiced input. At least one song from each of his first 50 shows are included, with artists ranging from Johnny Cash, Buddy Holly, Little Richard and Hank Williams to Titus Turner, Amos Milburn, Boozoo Chavis and Babs Gonzalez.

There are some wonderful tracks gathered here, including "Hoo-Doo Say" by the Sly Fox, "Hungry Man" by Louis Jordan and His Tympany Five, "3 x 7 = 21" by Jewel King, "Must Have Been the Devil" by Otis Spann, "Shotgun Boogie" by Tennessee Ernie Ford and "Water, Water" by Effic Smith and the Squires.

Among the more recognizable entries are Cash's "Folsom Prison Blues," Williams' "My Son Calls Another Man Daddy" and Holly's "Peggy Sue," but I'll bet most of these old tunes will be new to the majority of the listeners. And that, I suppose, was the point. (*Jeffrey Sisk*)