

# The Electric Review

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**BOB DYLAN: 1978-1989. Both Ends of the Rainbow. (Chrome Dreams/MVD)**

**By John Aiello**

Bob Dylan never ceases to amaze or captivate us, as decades-old segments of his career come to be memorialized on film in sleek and shiny packages. To this end, **Dylan 1978-1989** marks a brand new video-glimpse into the poet's Christian period (and post-Christian period).

To the casual fan, the years 78-89 were a barren farm, since Dylan failed to re-write "Like A Rolling Stone" or discover another "Band." However, these people have truly missed the point – drunk on nostalgia, unable to accept that artists grow and evolve (evolving beyond their former selves into brand new beings).

And that's really the point behind this film: It's about telling a piece of Dylan's story as he evolved beyond the mask of his early years into the meadows of these "middle" years. And in the midst of this process, he was able to create some truly stunning work – passionate and bloody and raw with emotion, this writer on a quest to remarry the muse of the soul and reconnect with the naked impulse of salvation.

Here, the viewer is offered a deep and introspective look into the period that produced records like "Infidels" and "Shot of Love." Accordingly, the people who were working beside him at the time (producer Chuck Plotkin; engineer Toby Scott; musician Ira Ingber; masters of rhythm Sly and Robbie; guitarist Mark Howard) discuss the essence of Dylan in relation to the way his studio-work seeks to capture the spontaneity of the moment on record.

Plotkin (who has also worked with Bruce Springsteen) is thoroughly engaging in his interview; listen close and you will learn bits and pieces about the demons that drive Dylan and keep him moving forward...asking questions and pursuing some higher plane of spiritual enlightenment.

Still, the most compelling segment of **1978-1989** comes by-way of Dylan's own words, as a snippet of an interview that was done with the poet in 1979 sheds light on his deep belief in Christ.

Make no mistake, Bob Dylan's Christian period wasn't some passing fancy or whimsical foray into gospel music. To the contrary, these years are as much a part of his artistic self as the trance-like poems "Chimes of Freedom" or "Tambourine Man" – this eloquent shard of his personal history that serious students of music ought not ignore. *Running time: 127 minutes.*