

DETRITUS

QUEEN - DVD COLLECTOR'S BOX (DVD) (B, A) Chrome Dreams/MVD, 2007

DVD 1: RT: 61:43

DVD 2: RT: 103:01

[<http://www.queenonline.com/>]

[<http://www.chromedreams.co.uk/>]

[<http://www.mvdb2b.com/>]

This collector's set gathers two previously-issued, unauthorized Queen DVDs in a new box package: MAGIC MOMENTS (2004) and UNDER REVIEW 1973-1980 (2005). Though unauthorized, the content and production of both documentaries is well-done, informative, and professional quality. Both include snippets of archival interview footage -- with Freddie Mercury, Brian May, and producer Roy Thomas Baker -- and UNDER REVIEW 1973-1980 also features numerous clips of live performances and promo videos, but otherwise the discs center on stories, recollections, testimony, and musings from music journalists, industry experts, DJs, and some folks that are/were close to the band, including several of Mercury's friends. Both documentaries, naturally, spend a great deal of time on the inimitable Mr. Mercury, but the other band members do get a bit of the spotlight as well. MAGIC MOMENTS is a breezy overview of the band's entire career, with some funny and poignant stories, and UNDER REVIEW 1973-1980 is a far more detailed examination of the band's first eight albums, from the 1973 self-titled debut up to and including 1980's THE GAME. This latter disc is the better of the two (although both are good) because of its in-depth nature and discussions. Guitarist magazine's Simon Bradley (who actually appears on both discs) offers tons of detail on Brian May's gear, writing, and playing, often demonstrating critical elements of May's unique style; Paul Gambaccini -- music historian and BBC Radio DJ, sitting in his office amid shelves of thousands of CDs -- offers stellar insight; and the hyper-speed Malcolm Dome (from Kerrang and Total Rock, and wearing a Hades T-shirt!) and the wry Nigel Williamson (Uncut Magazine) pretty much have the viewer hanging on their every word. The best segment on either disc is an old interview with Mercury where he describes meeting The Sex Pistols' Johnny Rotten and Sid Vicious in a recording studio; Mercury sassed Vicious, calling him "Simon Ferocious," and even proposed trading guest appearances on each other's albums -- he was turned down. :) For bonus features, each disc has a (different) Queen quiz, a discography (UNDER REVIEW 1973-1980's is, of course, longer), and ads for other Queen products from Chrome Dreams. My only real complaint is the background music on MAGIC MOMENTS sometimes swells to levels high enough that the interviewees' voices are nearly drowned out -- a minor quibble to be sure. Good stuff.

- Tim Wadzinski (tsw512@...)

<http://launch.groups.yahoo.com/group/Detritus/message/734>