

Share Report Abuse Next Blog»

Create Blog Sign In

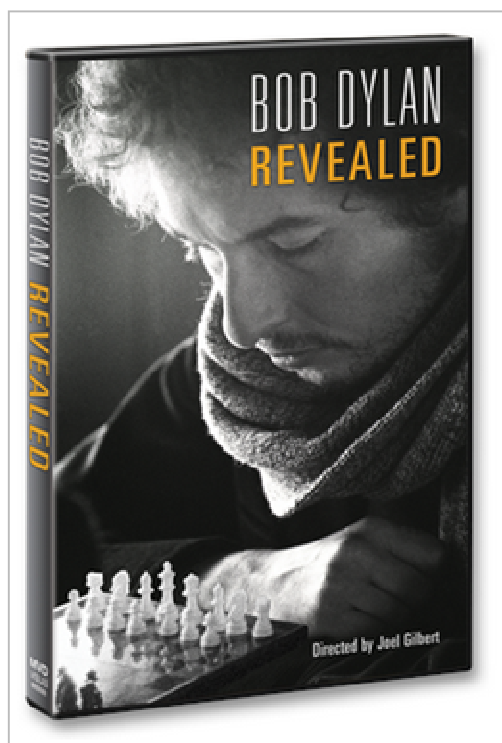
FFanzeen: Rock'n'Roll Attitude With Integrity

Through the writings and photography of Robert Barry Francos, a view of the arts and culture, including everyday life.

FRIDAY, JULY 8, 2011

DVD Review: Bob Dylan Revealed

Text © Robert Barry Francos/FFanzeen, 2011
Images from the Internet



Bob Dylan Revealed

Directed by Joel Gilbert
Highway 61 Entertainment
112 minutes, USD \$14.95
Highway61ent.com
MVDvisual.com

The last release I saw from Highway 61 was a pseudo-documentary about the alleged cover-up of the supposed death of Paul McCartney. It was ludicrous, but definitely imaginative. Then recently, this new Bob Dylan bio came into my hands, and I was wondering: real/fake? Imaginative/same-old-same-old?

Blog Archive

- ▼ 2011 (53)
 - ▼ July (8)
 - [Club Flyers and Invites from 1970s and 1980s: Part...](#)
 - [The Magic of WALL OF VOODOO](#)
 - [RANK & FILE: Not a Common Band](#)
 - [DVD Review: Bob Dylan 1990-2006: The Never Ending ...](#)
 - [DVD Review: Bob Dylan Revealed](#)
 - [Thank You, Media Ecology Association](#)
 - [PRIDE Saskatoon 2011: Part 2 - Fest, June 11, 2011...](#)
 - [PRIDE Saskatoon 2011: Part I - Parade, June 11, 20...](#)
 - ▶ June (3)
 - ▶ May (8)
 - ▶ April (11)
 - ▶ March (8)
 - ▶ February (8)
 - ▶ January (7)
- ▶ 2010 (152)
- ▶ 2009 (78)
- ▶ 2008 (70)
- ▶ 2007 (22)

About Me

[Robert Barry Francos](#)
Currently living in Saskatoon (email at RBF55@msn.com for address). From 1977-88, I used to publish a print version of a music

BD Revealed takes a slightly different slant on the whole bio of Dylan, and rather than the usual narrator with live clips and talking head experts, this is almost an oral history of BD from his humble beginning until the early '90's Never Ending Tour, just before it all fell apart for him.

Without narration, the only outside framework for the linear chronology is title cards presenting different sections, including chapters and sub-headings.

Most music-based documentaries, I find, are filled with authors who have written about the artist, which is all well and fine, but it's sort of like having the Cliff Notes of those who have already done the research. Here, however, the documentary is chock full of those who know or knew him, worked with him in the studio, and had some kind of relationship with him, such as musicians with whom he has toured. This is much more anecdotal than researchers positing opinions or hearsay about they have learned. In other words, it's first hand rather than once removed. This makes for a more dynamic telling. Do you want to hear from his childhood friend, or someone who had interviewed that friend? That's a rhetorical question.

The segment between 1962 and 1966 is pretty short, but includes the likes of producers Jerry Wexler and Al Kasha, and his childhood friend Barry Feinstein, who uses descriptors of early Bobby Zimmerman as "interesting," "magical," and "hard to make out the words." Kasha describes how he used the first low-selling album for fodder for other musicians, to help spread BD's songs. Dylan himself is heard in a press conference clip (there are a number of them included throughout the DVD), including him stating, "I don't know any college students."

The next section is from 1966, and concerns his Electric World Tour. Drummer Mickey Jones (he was hired by Albert Grossman) describes extensively on what it was like to be traveling with Dylan during that period, and how the band as they were booed across Europe and Australia. It's easy to see from the press conference clips that Dylan is exhausted, and also humorous to see him snap at the reporters, including one incident where he is asked about his songs being written to be contentious, to which he responds, "You've heard the songs, haven't you!?" Another time he states his first name is "Penizovich."

Another short segment that is full of impact is about 1967, when Dylan has his motorcycle accident. Jones describes what happened when the tour was cancelled and it's affects on the musicians, and both Feinstein and Wexler question the reality of the crash, with Wexler going so far as to state, "He's full of shit."

His big comeback tour in 1974 with the Band is legendary, and there is a wonderful montage of amazing tour pix. His next outing, 1975's Rolling Thunder Revue, has been viewed both as astonishing and a circus in its laid-back, anything goes style. Violinist Scarlet Rivera and

magazine in New York called FFanzeen, which dealt with the wide-ranging independent music scene. I also photographed many bands from the period (and since). Now I write this blog, and have a column at [jerseybeat \(dot\) com](http://jerseybeat.com) (slash) quietcorner (dot) html. And the beat goes on.

[View my complete profile](#)

Tom Bingham's blog

[My recent photos](#)

[My photos of "The Day"](#)

[Jersey Beat magazine](#)

[Life and Blog of Gary Pig Gold](#)

[Lethal Dose by Donna Lethal](#)

[Blitz! Magazine: Mike McDowell](#)

[Tom Bingham's blog](#)

[G-Mole: Bruce Farley Mowat](#)

[Suburban Voice: Al Quint](#)

[Blog of Lance Strate of General Semantics/Media Ecology Association](#)

[Who Really Cares blog of Craig Davison](#)

Rob Stoner describe both being on tour with him (and how that occurred in the first place), and their working on the *Desire* album (which was recorded in one night). The main crux of this section is setting up the tour, the rehearsals, and the tour itself, including the "Night of the Hurricane." Other interviews include Ramblin' Jack Elliot who was one of the musicians involved, and Rubin "Hurricane" Carter himself. Further descriptions include BD's involvement on the 5-hour long film, *Renaldo and Clara*.

With Jerry Weintraub (BD's new manager) in tow, we are introduced to The Entertainer tour of 1978. With the promoter wanting basically a greatest hits show, Stoner explains how "We did what we could to make it unrecognizable." Also interviewed is Joe Selvin of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, who includes his memories of attending the show.

For the section where Dylan becomes "Born Again" at the Vineyard Christian Fellowship Chapel," we hear from Pastor Bill Dwyer (who believes Christian revitalization came after the disillusionment of Viet Nam), Kasha, and AJ Weberman, who states, in part, that at Vineyard, "it was not Christianity, it was Jesus." The paradox of Dylan being brought up Jewish is dismissed by Dwyer who posits that Jews can be Christians (no, they can't, but I won't go into that now). However, Mitch Glaser, who represents the Jews for Jesus, states here that Jews are actually Christians because Jesus was a Jew, so it's the Gentiles who are the converts" (this makes no sense at all). Regina McCrary, a singer on Dylan's Being Born Again tour, explains her view of Dylan's acceptance in a positive light. Wexler, who worked with Dylan on *Slow Train Coming*, and describes himself as a "62 year old card carrying Jewish Atheist," comments about the "horror" of working with Dylan in this state.

For the Spreading of the Word tour, keyboardist Spooner Oldham tells about crowd reaction on the road, such as in some places each song getting half clapping and half booing. There are some smile-inducing exit interviews of the audience from period newscasts, ranging from praise to "He stinks." The DVD also plays some of the audio track from one show where he tries a bit of preaching to audience ridicule.

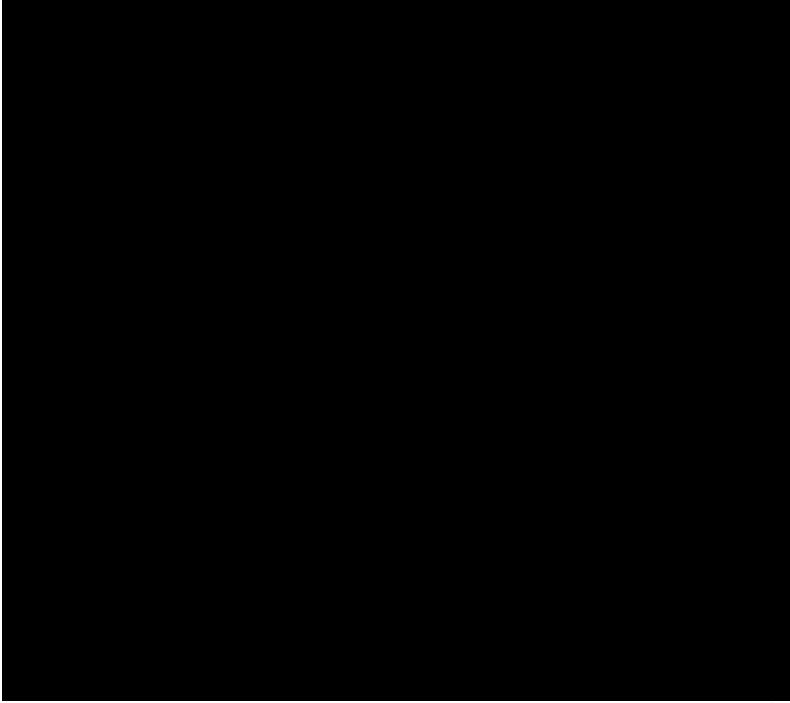
Of course, Dylan famously followed this by becoming Orthodox Jewish as he rebounded from his disconnect from Christianity. The clip of him appearing on a Chassidic Lubavitch telethon is nothing short of painful as he looks so lost.


The last section of the DVD is 1992's Never Ending Tour, told almost exclusively through the eyes of drummer Winston Watson who describes what it was like not only playing with Dylan, but hanging out with him and his host of celebrity friends and hangers-on (among them Neil Young, Al Kooper, and his opening act, the glorious Patti Smith... as a side-bar, that is a tour I would have definitely loved to have seen).

Never mind Madonna and Lady Gaga, Dylan is the original when it

comes to reinvention, and this documentary takes him through four decades of growth spurts, including the good, the bad, and yes, the ugly. The presentation here is riveting, between the interviews and the clips of the period, and whether you are immersed in Dylanology or a casual attendee, there is a lot of material here that makes this a find.

Note that there are no extras included with the DVD, other than all the amazing information.



Posted by Robert Barry Francos at 4:19 PM 

Labels: [1960s](#), [Al Kasha](#), [Bob Dylan](#), [Born Again Christian](#), [documentary](#), [DVD review](#), [FFanzeen](#), [Folk music](#), [Highway 61](#), [Jerry Wexler](#), [Joel Gilbert](#), [Judaism](#), [MVD Visual](#), [Robert Barry Francos](#)

Reactions: interesting (0) cool (0) informative (0)

0 comments:

Post a Comment

Comment as: Select profile...

Post Comment

Preview

[Newer Post](#)

[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)

Subscribe to: [Post Comments \(Atom\)](#)