

Pam Baldwin

From: bounce-6000555@emailenfuego.net on behalf of Dreamtime - Commentary on Bob Dylan's Theme Time Radio Hour [fhbals@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 02, 2008 2:21 PM
To: Stevenramm@aol.com
Subject: Dreamtime

Dreamtime

Inside Bob Dylan's Jesus Years - DVD

Posted: 02 Oct 2008 11:09 AM CDT



If you're making a list of "*Why it must be strange to be Bob Dylan*," one of the reasons would be the gray market cottage industry that has accreted around the man and his work. Not quite bootlegs, not quite blessed with the Dylan *imprimatur*, that material includes books, CDs, videos, tribute bands, and to acknowledge the obvious, the *Dreamtime* blog and podcast.

Inside Bob Dylan's Jesus Years, which I'm going to shorten for the remainder of this review to *IBDJY*, is one of those artifacts. Produced by musician and Dylan tribute artist, Joel Gilbert, the 120-minute documentary looks into Dylan's so-called "Born Again" period which ran roughly - sometimes very roughly - from the late '70s into the early '80s.

Given that Gilbert had no access to Dylan or to his music, and that it's self-evident that *IBDJY* was a modestly funded film, he does a fairly good job covering that period, although you'll probably find no revelations here. What you will find is many, many talking head interviews with various people involved with Dylan during that period, including *San Francisco Chronicle* reporter, Joel Silver, who labeled Dylan's Fox Warfield Theater performances "God-awful" in a notorious review, keyboardist Spooner Oldham, Jews for Jesus advocate, Mitch Glaser, and background singer Regina McCary.

Dylan's Bible Class teacher at the time, Pastor Bill Dwyer, leads off in an interminable interview about the background of the Los Angeles evangelical Christian movement and the Vineyard Christian Fellowship church, which will make you wish Gilbert had had a crueller hand in the edit suite. The story doesn't really pick up until almost an hour in, when Gilbert travels to Muscle Shoals, Alabama, and meets up with the late, great Jerry Wexler, in what may be the legendary producer's last interview. Wexler is alternately hilarious and informative as he talks about the *Slow Train Coming* recording sessions, and his interview is the highlight of *IBDJY*.

Although never reaching the peak of the Wexler interview, the following segment on the Fox Warfield Theater concerts in San Francisco is also strong and interesting - a news clip of a fan leaving the theater and screaming at a reporter, "*I paid \$8 for this? He's awful, terrible*" and throwing his ticket away. Reporter

Silver relates that Dylan called his wife and said Silver had "*lost his license to review*" after the "godawful" article appeared in the *Chronicle*. Mitch Glaser tells a very funny story about Bill Graham's concern for Dylan, "*do you think he's going to calm down after awhile?*" Unfortunately, Gilbert also includes the odious A.J. Weberman as part of the interview crew. While Weberman is generally able to keep a cap on his insanity at the start of his interview, by the end he's in his standard fantasies about Dylan's supposed addictions, all but frothing at the mouth.

All in all, *IBDJY* might have been a good short documentary - or better, a short segment of a larger overview of Dylan's career - but at two hours is way too long. In fact, much better than *IBDJY* are both of the two short featurettes included on the disc - *Bob Dylan's 1978 World Tour* - which takes a fast, fascinating look at Dylan's "Big Band" phase, and *Dylan and "Hurricane" Carter in Prison 1976* - which includes both an interview with Carter and what appears to be a home movie of the Rolling Thunder performance at Clinton State Prison.

Inside Bob Dylan's Jesus Years also includes mp3s of the soundtrack, performed by *Highway 61 Revisited*, Gilbert's Dylan tribute band that is quite good, and includes Bruce Langhorne, Scarlet Rivera, and Regina McCary. With that music, the two featurettes, and at least some of *Inside Bob Dylan's Jesus Years*, the package is worth the \$14.95 Gilbert asks. If nothing else, *Inside Bob Dylan's Jesus Years* made me reflect on one of the more dramatic of Dylan's reinventions of self, a period where - as usual - he refused to compromise with fan expectations, but went his own way. As he always has.

Inside Bob Dylan's Jesus Years will be released on October 28, 2008. **The web site is here**, where the DVD can be purchased.


◆ [Email this](#) ◆ [Email the author](#) ◆ [Technorati Links](#) ◆ [Save to del.icio.us](#) ◆ [Digg This!](#)

◆ [Share on Facebook](#) ◆ [Stumble It!](#) ◆ [Discuss on Newsvine](#) ◆ [Submit to Reddit](#)

You are subscribed to email updates from [Dreamtime - Commentary on Bob Dylan's Theme Time Radio Hour](#)

Email Delivery powered by
FeedBurner

To stop receiving these emails, you may [unsubscribe now](#).

Inbox too full?  [Subscribe](#) to the feed version of Dreamtime - Commentary on Bob Dylan's Theme Time Radio Hour in a feed reader.

If you prefer to unsubscribe via postal mail, write to: Dreamtime - Commentary on Bob Dylan's Theme Time Radio Hour, c/o FeedBurner, 20 W Kinzie, 9th Floor, Chicago IL USA 60610