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Quote

"Personally, I think it is time for us to request abolishing the [Coliseum] Authority." -- Augusta Commissioner Don Grantham

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"Bob Dylan's Jesus Years" and "The Beach Boys and The Satan"

BY DWIGHT BEMISDERFER

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"Bob Dylan's Jesus Years" and "The Beach Boys and The Satan"

AUGUSTA, GA - MVD Visual has two "rockumentaries" now available on their Web site (musicvideoistributors.com) that are, comparatively speaking, polar opposites. Both feature iconic rock legends, sure, but a quick perusal of the titles gives you a hint of just how different the subject matter of each one is: "Inside Bob Dylan's Jesus Years: Busy Being Born...Again!," which is two hours in length, and "The Beach Boys and The Satan," which is barely under an hour. Despite its considerable length, I happen to prefer the longer of the two.

In "Bob Dylan's Jesus Years" the audience is introduced to close associates of Dylan during his Christian-influenced period, circa 1978-1981. Director Joel Gilbert travels across the country, from the church in California that Dylan attended after he had allegedly "found the Lord," to the legendary Muscle Shoals recording studio in Alabama, interviewing a plethora of interesting folks who give crucial insight into the creative era which garnered Dylan his first-ever Grammy award (for the song "Gotta Serve Somebody" from 1979's "Slow Train Coming" album). It's a fascinating glimpse into what, at the time, was a critically lambasted juncture in Dylan's career, but has ultimately gained some well-deserved respect and hard-won approval.

"The Beach Boys and The Satan" offers a satisfying sampling of archival footage of the southern California surf-rockers, alongside relatively recent interviews with music industry insiders. Problem is, it barely touches on what the title purports to address, which is the apparently vague connection between The Beach Boys (mainly via their drummer, Dennis Wilson) and Charles Manson (the infamous, mass-murdering cult leader of the late-Sixties). Manson is, in fact, hardly mentioned until nearly 40 minutes into the program, and is then relegated to a terse 10-minute exposition. It leaves the viewer scratching his head and wondering if the link between the two parties was ever truly worth investigating. You be the judge...

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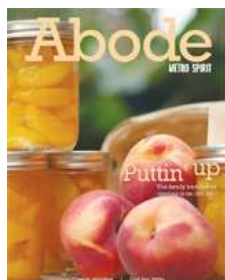
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