



Radiohead

Ok Computer: A Classic Album Under Review

By Debbie Wolgelerenter

September 29, 2006

The back cover of *Ok Computer: A Classic Album Under Review* claims that it is “a documentary film which reassesses and offers new insight” on “a masterwork amongst rock records and that decade’s peak of musical achievement.” While that kind of hyperbole is inevitable when discussing one of the great albums of the ’90s, it’s not exactly news to anyone who’s been following Radiohead’s career even remotely, i.e., the target audience for this exercise in middle-aged white male rock criticism. Coming off as a more highbrow, UK version of VH1’s popular *Classic Album* series, the main difference, aside from it being a bit more cerebral, is that the creators have less access to live footage (most concert scenes seem to be taken from the same Amnesty benefit) and there is no input from the artists. The critics, including ex-Mojo editor Barney Hoskyns and famed Melody Maker and Wire contributor David Stubbs, are all very articulate, but the only contributor with anything fresh to offer is musicologist Dai Griffiths. Instead of pondering whether *Ok Computer* is a concept album reflecting the dehumanising effects of modern culture or not, he focuses solely on the tunes, pointing out unexpected details like the Beatles influence on “Karma Police” (go listen to “Sexy Sadie”). If you haven’t heard *Ok Computer* yet, do so post-haste. If you’ve heard the album but haven’t picked up a music magazine at all in the last ten years, this DVD might tell you something you didn’t already know. Extras include “The Hardest Interactive Radiohead Quiz in the World Ever” and full contributor biographies. (MVD/Sexy Intellectual)