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Harmelody Reviews "Brian Wilson - Songwriter 1962-1969"

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Brian Wilson is a musical genius. There isn't any doubt about this former Beach Boy's contribution to music during the 20th century. Over the last several years, there have been several DVD releases covering Brian's work and of the Beach Boys. However, the bulk of these do tend to cover the same exact time period and aspects of his seminal and influential career.

Where is the definitive documentary? Something comparing to the fascinating Keith Badham book, THE BEACH BOYS: THE DEFINITIVE DIARY OF AMERICA'S BAND ON STAGE AND IN THE STUDIO, or Peter Garlin's book, CATCH A WAVE: THE RISE, FALL, REDEMPTION OF THE BEACH BOYS, BRIAN WILSON.

I'm still waiting for a new documentary, about the making of such under-rated, now - in recent years re-discovered Beach Boy classic albums such as, Friends, Sunflower, Surf's Up, Holland, and Love You. I'm waiting for a definitive documentary about Brian's controversial time with now-defunct psychotherapist, Dr. Eugene Landy. Where's the documentary, just about the three Wilson brothers?

This new release, BRIAN WILSON: SONGWRITER 1962-1969 treads NO new ground. It continues with the NOW standard Beach Boy/Brian Wilson DVD formula - covering the exact same time period, as all previous DVD's.

Astoundingly ambitious (*clocking in at 3 hours*), BRIAN WILSON: SONGWRITER 1962-1969 simply polishes up the mythos with excellent technical filmmaking, intergrating Wilson's essential 'Smile' era home demo recording of 'Surf's Up' as the main motif and continous theme for this release. The film features an almost completely cast of one time Beach Boy insiders and music critics that openly discuss Wilson's musicianship, songwriting, and personailty.

Quickly, the film does give mention to the production of one of Beach Boy's most under-rated albums, Friends. It's just enough to get you interested then it leaves. The key stand-out here is on screen commentary from perhaps, the ultimate Beach Boys expert, Dominic Priore. Beach Boy die hards will appreciate his poignant comments on Wilson's career. Priore has been writing about Wilson and the Beach Boys for perhaps the longest, with his work going back the late 80's with his uber important print release covering the lost 1966-67 'Smile' album sessions, buzz, speculation and press coverage, 'LOOK, LISTEN, VIBRATE, SMILE.'

The packaging in which the film comes with is wonderful. A gatefold DVD, cardboard print that features classic images of Wilson in studio, during production of the greatest album of all time, 1966's Pet Sound's .

Overall, while this presentation features nothing new, it's a fresh reminder of Wilson's enigma that will hopefully keep him on the hearts and minds of his fans. BRIAN WILSON: SONGWRITER 1962-1969 is a great place for Wilson newbies to start their music education, and provide die hard Wilson collector's another DVD for their Wilson/Beach Boy's library. Buy it.

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