

"MASTERFULLY CRAFTED, INFECTIOUS, MELODIC POP WITH VINTAGE 60'S AND RETRO UNDERGROUND INFLUENCES"
- **INDIE ROCK CAFE**

"INDIE ROCK WITH A DISTINCTIVE ANTHEMIC EDGE"
- **BLURT**

"OVERALL A BRILLIANT AND IMMENSELY SATISFYING ALBUM"
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Watch: Robert Plant "Blue Note" DVD

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Just out via Chrome Dreams, it's a career-spanning documentary that, though unauthorized, still manages to get the subject himself on camera.

By Lee Zimmerman

At 2 ½ hours in duration, *Robert Plant's Blue Note* seems long. *Very* long in fact. It takes 45 minutes before Led Zeppelin even enters the picture, for gosh sakes. Then again, considering the fact that this narrative, which covers the evolution of Bobby Plant's musical journey, sets out to survey nearly 50 years of the tawny-haired singer's stylistic evolution, 155 minutes could otherwise seem like a somewhat scant compendium. Better to have spread it out over a multi-disc set, one to cover each decade of his career.

As the creators of this epic have envisioned it, Plant's coming of age parallels the evolution of pop music itself. Indeed, at times especially early on, the viewer forgets that it's Plant's tale being told. Rather, it could be lesson 101 on Rock's Evolution in the 20th Century. There's Elvis, wiggling his hips and driving America's teens into a frenzy. There's the giants of the Blues, with Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf and Son House bringing the

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voices of the Mississippi delta and Chicago's urban environs to white audiences who were previously unawares. The '60s are represented in the sounds of West Coast rock... and folk rock... and British Blues, all part of the palette from which the young Plant would glean his influences. Zep of course gets some screen time, but with its singer's ambitious explorations of Arabic and North African tradition, the film offers the inevitable conclusion that Plant is indeed a musical chameleon, one whose eagerness to embrace the fickle dictates of his nomadic instincts make him every bit as much an iconoclast as Bowie, Byrne, Eno or the other artistic adventurers who earned that distinction years before.



"Robert just bends to every trend," Jimmy Page is quoted as saying, and indeed, of all the talking heads gathered to comment on the course of Plant's career - journalists and fellow musicians alike -- it would seem he'd know best. Fortunately, Plant himself is given ample opportunity to weigh in, and while the cover sleeve points out that this is an *unauthorized* documentary, clearly someone managed to coax him to the camera in order to speak for himself. It's nice after all, to have the subject's own input. Trivia buffs will relish the occasional factoid tossed in at infrequent intervals - the fact that singer Terry Reid was Page's first choice to helm Zeppelin and that even after their eponymous debut, Plant's future with the band was far from certain. The archival footage is also intriguing - Messers. Wolf, Waters and House captured in full blazing glory, a clip of Buffalo Springfield performing "For What It's Worth," even a rare fragment of a latter day Arthur Lee and Love concert appearance. Less mesmerizing are the promotional videos of Plant parlaying his '80s wares, given that his blow-dried coif and a dapper outfit that looks as if it was lifted from Don Johnson's wardrobe locker find him looking helplessly dated. Likewise, the cursory glance at Plant's solo outings seems to go by in a blur, up-staged, as it were, by Plant's increasing pilgrimages to areas that would later become the ignition points of the recent Arab spring.

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It's remarkable then, that by the time Plant alights in Nashville and reaches ground zero in his musical quest - or at least the geographical juncture for all the disparate influences that informed his initial progression - his shift towards Americana becomes almost a seamless segue way. His union with Alison Krauss and the resurrection of his Band of Joy branding (which fell into disuse after he and John Bonham abandoned it in favor of Led Zeppelin) is made to seem inevitable, although when it initially transpired, many diehard Zep fans found it somewhat perplexing. Likewise, those who follow the film from start to finish may find themselves shaking their head at the amount of enthusiasm Plant's able to muster for each and every indulgence. Yet, it's also hard not to appreciate the dedication he devotes to straddling his music with his muses, many though they may be. Now it seems Bob's come full circle, but it's been a long time indeed.

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 Twitter Updates

- You will like the new Tommy Keene video for his kickass song Deep Six Saturday... <http://t.co/BQUr7Ux> @secondmotion @conqueroo1 about an hour ago
- Cheesecake alert! new Lana Del Rey video unveiled, watch it and 2 others here. <http://t.co/xN6t2wd> about an hour ago
- Watch the new film trailer for the #U2 documentary, which premiered at @TOFilmfest last night. <http://t.co/5Iv8oQ4> about an hour ago
 - New MP3 from Comet Gain - just killer, like Springsteen meets Go Betweens: <http://t.co/ActM2Kk> @whatsyrapture about an hour ago
- Yes, it's a "toy" but the tongue's not for what you think. KISS plush dolls to be released next week. <http://t.co/U4HcZV2> @kissofficial about an hour ago

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We're coming up on a clusterf**k, with WAY too many albums scheduled for release. Who are you looking forward to?

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