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## DVD Review: Robert Plant's Blue Note

by [Chris Delloiacono](#)  
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I don't see any reason to spend time extolling the virtues of Led Zeppelin and all their achievements in the world of music. I have no patience for those with a penchant for stating the obvious. As examples of "well, that's obvious" moments: a close friend mentioned the amazing-ness of Guns and Roses "Sweet Child O' Mine" in the mid-90s then my brother-in-law offered me the tantalizing tidbit that "Back to the Future" was great sometime around 2001. Each is clearly a fair and true statement, but decidedly tardy in their broadcast. So, I won't bore you with a lengthy dissertation on what made Led Zeppelin one of the greatest rock bands ever. So let me tell you that "Robert Plant's Blue Note" should appeal to a variety of audiences, because it's not about tracing the lineage of Zeppelin or just charting Plant's career.

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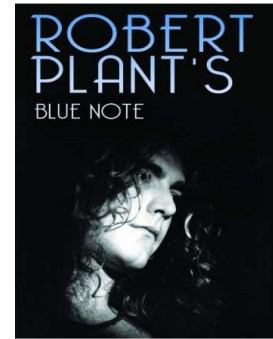
**Rating:** UNRATED  
**Country:** USA  
**Release Date:** August 23, 2011  
**Distributor:** Sexy Intellectual  
**Grade:** B

Don't get me wrong, there's plenty of material concerning Plant's early days and rise on the music scene. That, of course, blends into a hearty portion on the Led Zeppelin days. What the film does differently is that it also offers a substantial portion of its running time tracing Plant's influences. The section devoted to the Blues was my favorite part. The information about Robert Johnson, Howlin' Wolf, Willie Dixon, and other Blues legends was very enlightening. There are also distinct sections concerning Bluegrass, Indian, and Middle Eastern influences. These portions help illustrate Plant's own musical journey through life. Stepping away from the obvious can be a chancy, but when it works you are greeted with a product that exceeds expectations.

There is some animosity towards Plant these days. Many people find him responsible for cheating them out of the worldwide Led Zeppelin tour following the O2 reunion show at the end of 2007. I am 37 years old, so I was rather young when Zeppelin ended as a day-to-day entity with John Bonham's death in 1980. I understand the want for a reunion, and have certainly been unhappy with Plant's refusal to take Zep on the road again. I respect Plant's want to move on, but I sure as hell want that reunion. When watching this film, though, it kind of drives home the point it never is going to happen.

This is not an 'authorized' product from Robert Plant, but it's much better than most 'unauthorized' films. There are reminiscences from people that know Plant, chunks of a recent BBC interview with Plant himself, as well as older interview sources. I think it helps that this is not a negative piece or sappy "we love Robert" film either. This is mostly about Plant's career and the influences that caused him to make artistic decisions. With a running time greater than two-and-a-half hours you're getting a sizable piece with serious depth.

A lot of what Plant's done since leaving Zeppelin has no appeal to me, but there's no denying he's progressed as an artist. While the attempts at '80s pop were downright trite and the Bluegrass phase wasn't my cup of tea at least he was writing and performing new music. How many performers of his era are still working on new material? The focus on the music and the stages of Plant's career is a slightly different journey than most documentaries, but it offers a somewhat original narrative. Don't pick up this DVD looking for substantial bonus features as there's nothing more than text pieces and a few short tidbits to digest. The film itself is an entertaining journey that pulls together Plant's nomadic existence through differing musical phases. I may not like much of his solo output, but the documentary helps you respect the journey.



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