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Bowie, Dylan and the Band from MVD

Bv

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BOB DYLAN AND THE BAND

OK, just to nip any false excitement in the bud, no, I'm not writing about some lost oddity or new-fangled experiment in which David Bowie and Bob Dylan get together and get it on (musically or otherwise). Rather, I'm writing to alert you guys about a pair of new DVDs from Music Video Distributors. one is a real zoom-in on a particular, potent part of Bowie's career, and the other about Dylan and a landmark batch of musicians who were there as part of Dylan's fan-polarizing paradigm shift. So if you're a fan of Dylan, Bowie or The Band, then there's still reason to be excited. Now, one other thing to get out of the way. While, naturally, music from the artists in question appear in these videos, the DVDs are sporting documentaries, not concerts. You fans have the CDs anyway. Now you have a chance to learn more about artists you love through the audio-VISUAL medium. Rockumentaries are nothing new so I'm not going to go off on that tangent. What I will do is cut off any rambling at the root and head right into the meat of this PR material. BOB DYLAND AND THE BAND: DOWN IN THE FLOOD (ASSOCIATIONS AND COLLABORATIONS) - Dylan caused one hell of a ruckus when he went electric. For some fans, it was a revolution from an already revolutionary songwriter/musician. For others, it was nothing short of betrayal. A famous recording I once heard thanks to a hipster friend of mine catches a decidedly divided audience reacting to Dylan's acoustic-to-electric switchover. Bob was one of the gods of folk, man! How could he do this? Of course, if folk was revolutionary by nature, then Dylan's shift to electric, a revolutionary move in folk, should have been embraced as a new direction for folk. In the same way, there are elements in punk that reject deviation from the "punk" sound, whatever that means. Just like punk was about way more than sound, folk was about way more than not being plugged in. The only thing to worry about not being plugged into was the system, right? Besides, if Dylan rocked out a little, he was just participating in a musical field that was also built on rebellion and antiestablishment sentiments. Maybe not these days, but back when rock was ROCK, you know. Of course, it's still out there now - real rock, I mean - but you won't find much of it on the radio. But I digress, and I promised none of that shite. Or implied it. But ANYWAY ... While this whole ballyhoo was about, there was a group of musicians going through their own transition, a transition tied with Dylan's major shift. The Canadian band The Hawks rose like phoenixes from the ashes of all the fire that burned in rage and love around Dylan as his fingers found the dial on the amp. Playing for Dylan initially were The Hawks, but before all was said and done, the band transformed into The Band, one of the great rock groups of the day. Getting into another area of rock detail is DAVID BOWIE: THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM (UNDER REVIEW 1969-1971) -Bowie is undeniably one of musicdom's great iconoclasts and I'd wager anybody who's ever heard "Space Oddity" remembers it. It was, so far as I know, Bowie's first great hit. This is before the whole Ziggy Stardust thing (not that there's anything wrong with the Ziggy era). Sure, Bowie's actual debut album hit record stores in 1964 but things really got moving with his second album, "Space Oddity," whose titular song made waves as well as a name for Bowie. Interestingly, the album was initially to be called simply "David Bowie" but reason prevailed and it was decided not to give a sophomore album a debut record name. Two Bowies in a row? Title-wise, bad idea. Music-wise, great idea, particularly if you're a Bowie fan. If you are, you'll likely enjoy this dig into a very small frame of time in Bowie's early career. The documentary focuses in for a hard close-up on "Space Oddity" and its successor "The Man Who Sold The World", whose title track was famously covered by Nirvana in their "MTV Unplugged" special shot in New York. A small ramble (fuck you): I think that album was one of their best. Anyhoo, speaking of great and important albums, both "Space Oddity" and "The Man Who Sold The World" were landmarks in Bowie's career as well as in rock generally. They also helped lay the foundation for the quirky, androgynous and ostentatious personality with which Bowie would fill the stage (and his albums). Visit

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