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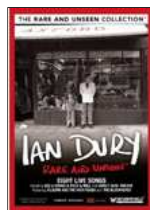
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## DVD &amp; Blu-ray Video Reviews

**Ian Dury – Rare And Unseen (2010)***An important british figure in rock unknown to many in the U.S.*

Published on September 12, 2010

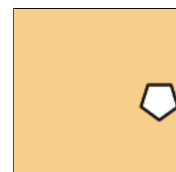
**Ian Dury – Rare And Unseen (2010)****Live performances from Kilburn and the High Roads and The Blockheads Studio: Wienerworld WNR02488****(7/27/10) [Distr. by MVD]****Director: Paul Clark****Video: 1.33:1****Audio: English PCM Stereo****All regions****Length: 75 minutes****Rating: \*\*\*\*1/2**

It is a rarity when an artist is transcendental. Ian Dury, art teacher turned rock star, possessed a "Dickensian" persona. Growing up somewhere in London's East End (there is a self-created misunderstanding of his actual hometown), Dury would be influenced by the working class mores of this culture, including the vaudeville music halls. A teacher at an art college until the age of twenty-nine, his venture into rock and roll culture would be cataclysmic. A brilliant lyricist, he would front Kilburn and the High Roads, and the seminal new wave Blockheads, inexorably changing an obsolescent late 1970s music scene. With groundbreaking songs like "Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll" (he is credited for introducing this phrase into popular lexicon), "Sweet Gene Vincent" and "Hit Me With Your Rhythm Stick", he brought an articulate fury to an emerging punk scene. Despite a nearly lifelong affliction with polio, Dury was a frenetic performer, invoking equal parts of East End music halls, American Rock and Roll and abstract jazz phraseology.

*Ian Dury Rare And Unseen* is revelatory in the exploration of this charismatic individual. Eschewing the chronological framework, the narrative is freewheeling, creating a mosaic that manages both introspection and humor, two abundant traits of Dury. Conversations about affliction, music, and social issues are straightforward, with enjoyable results. He answers questions about polio with comical retorts and eloquence. The subject of jazz is touched upon with a recitation of Charlie Mingus' "Freedom", using two edited performances. Cultural identity becomes an improvisational riff of "Cockney Rhyming Slang". This is an individual of perspicacity, whose poignancy, (now as a working actor), is delivered in a strange graveyard interview. With an assortment of unpredictable dialogues (including Mancunian broadcaster, Tony Wilson), a complex individual with little conceit (Dury acknowledges the success of the Blockheads as a result of their musical acumen), and an eternal connection to his roots becomes accessible.

Fortunately, the concert footage is incandescent. Even with lapses in pitch, Dury's stage presence and delivery is irresistible. A funky groove-based version of "Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll" is a gem, as the singer struts around the stage with a cane on his arm. "Sweet Gene Vincent" offers the viewer a "bouncing dot" to follow the colloquial vocals. A tongue-in-cheek version of "England's Glory" gives a rare look at Kilburn and the High Roads. Fans will be enthralled with eight songs, all memorable and exultant.

Ian Dury would succumb to cancer in 2000, lending his struggle to a publicized campaign for fellow patients. Incredibly, in an interview conducted in the midst of this battle, he boldly gave the television audience an impromptu demonstration of his chemotherapy apparatus.



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