

DVD & Blu-ray Reviews

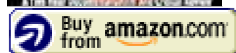
Bob Dylan 1966-1978, After The Crash (2013)

An informative documentary about the ultimate rock and roll recluse.



Three breathtaking cello concertos
on 180 gram audiophile quality vinyl

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Studio: Chrome Dreams Media/ Pride Productions Special Edition 2-Disc Set PGDVDCD155/ MVD

Video: 4:3, Color & B&W

Audio: English PCM Stereo

Subtitles: English

All regions

DVD Chapters: To The Heart Of The Country; Hard Rain; Garbage; A Man Called Alias; Carnival Days; A New Morning

CD: Full recordings of the Classic A.J. Weberman Tapes

Length: DVD (116:52); CD (49:35)

Rating: ****

As Bob Dylan enters the sixth decade of an illustrious musical career, his mystique seems to grow by leaps and bounds. Recalcitrant and popular, his snarling persona captured the imagination and adoration of several generations. Folk singer, spiritual messenger, religious apostle and rock 'n' roll icon are a mere introduction to this artistic chameleon. Throughout his incarnations, he has drawn and alienated the media. Equal parts manipulator, recluse and iconoclast, Dylan remains an enigmatic star.

Bob Dylan 1966-1978 After The Crash begins at a pivotal moment: the Woodstock, New York motorcycle accident (which like much of the singer's biographical details is debated at great length). Interviewing musicians, journalists and friends, the film attempts to "fill in some of the gaps" regarding the events surrounding this period. In 1967, Dylan produced two significant albums, *The Basement Tapes* (with The Band...although not released for another decade), and the starkly abbreviated *John Wesley Hardin*. Critics and fans (who expected another *Blonde On Blonde*) were perplexed. Dylan returned to the stage for the 1969 *Isle Of Wight* which did not go well.

Later that year, Dylan set a rock precedent and traveled to Nashville. Recording *Nashville Skyline* with country musicians (including Johnny Cash), he re-invigorated the country/western association with rock music. Ensuing works

(*New Morning* and *Self Portrait*) were disappointing. An interview with A.J. Weberman introduces a new breed of clandestinely taping, stalking journalism, which alienated the singer even more. The seventies returned Dylan to iconic status, as he appeared at *The Concert For Bangladesh*. There is a snippet of a performance of *Just Like A Woman* with George Harrison and Leon Russell singing the chorus. Another highlight is the back story behind Sam Peckinpah's *Pat Garrett and Billy The Kid*. Dylan would ascend the summit of rock and roll with his record-breaking 1974 tour with The Band, and the release of *Blood On The Tracks* and *Desire*. Not without controversy, this "middle period" ended with his controversial embrace of Christianity.

The CD (which consists of taped video interviews) offers an unflinching glimpse into the interactive relationship between a rock musician and a reporter (A.J. Weberman). To underscore Dylan's inherent dichotomy with popular culture fame, he engages Weberman, yet dishes out profane verbal abuse. There are several hilarious confrontations between the two men. Dylan derides the reporter for contextual misrepresentation, while Weberman rips Dylan for "selling out" and cutting his hair. Interesting subjects like Dylan's relationship to Johnny Cash, the suddenly emerging school of "garbology journalism" (the reporter went through this celebrity's trash can for material), and relative merits of other popular songwriters like Gordon Lightfoot are examined through the lens of combative dialogue. Dylan is angry, but is still concerned about future perceptions of his image. Forty years ago, there were no media consultants, press liaisons or cease and desist orders. Musicians talked directly to the press, regardless of potential debacles. Sadly (especially for die-hard fans), this form of journalism would dissipate and never return to form.

The video quality is reasonably crisp. The stereo audio quality is clear, including the interviews. The sound of the CD is distorted and barely intelligible at times. However, the gist of the exchanges between Dylan and Weberman is captured. Considering the dysfunctional nature of Bob Dylan, this is an interesting and enlightening documentary.

—Robbie Gerson



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