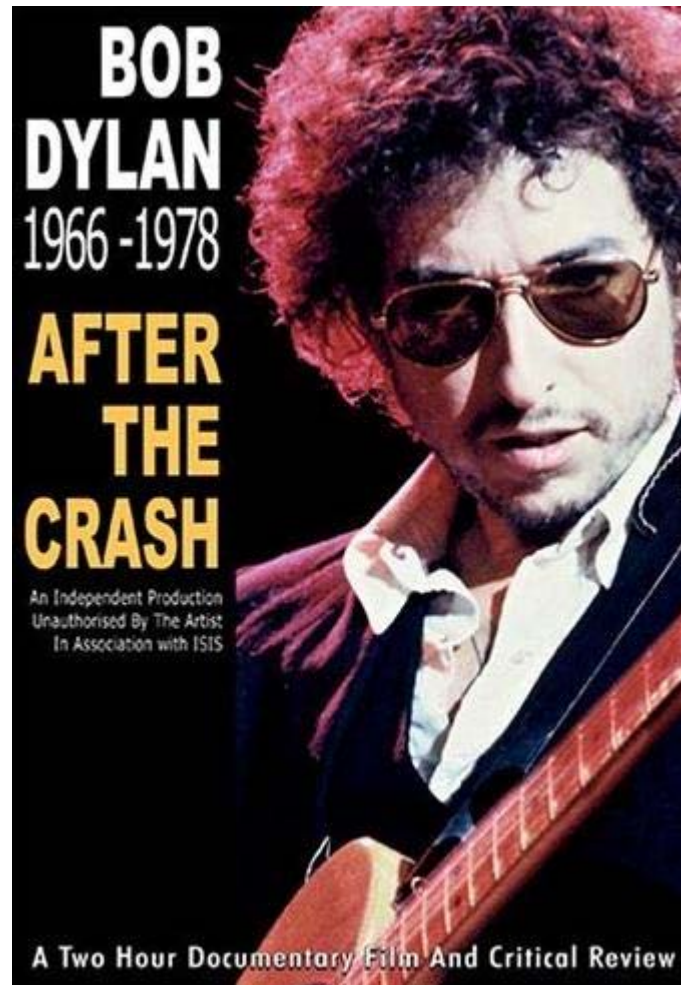

Flickhead

DVD Review
By Nelhydra Paupér



Who Has Fell and Who's Been Left Behind?

Bob Dylan 1966-1978: After the Crash

Available on DVD from [MVD Entertainment Group](#), \$19.95.

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*"You think I'm over the hill,
You think I'm past my prime,
Let me see what you got,
We can have a whoppin' good time"*
—Bob Dylan,

“Spirit on the Water” (2006)

There was a time, many years ago, when two young lads named Flickhead and Paupér shared two obsessions (well, three if you count girls): movies and Bob Dylan. In fact, the friendship the two developed was solidified after an especially glorious experience, seeing Bob Dylan and the Band in 1974 at the Madison Square Garden matinee show. It was a huge deal—Dylan’s first tour after eight relatively reclusive years.

It was, I, Paupér, who had actually gotten the tickets. Initially I tried to scheme out all sorts of ways to parlay the ticket into obtaining the sexual favors of some lass or other; one so desperate to see Dylan she’d gladly submit to my wicked desires. Preferably an older woman, say, nineteen or twenty. Any woman who idolized Dylan—and there were lots back then—would have done just about anything for a ticket. *Anything.*

Instead I took Flickhead. Swaggering, wheet-wahing, penis-toting Flickhead. And after the show he didn’t so much as hold my hand.

Now, thirty-two motherfucking years later, Bob Dylan is still around. He’s almost constantly touring, so the novelty’s worn a bit thin. Half the Band is dead, the other half not speaking. (Note to Band fanatics: I know the half and half thing doesn’t work with five members. Call it an attempt at subtle humor.) But Dylan is still writing, less prolifically, but still often brilliantly.

The proof of that was his 2001 release, *Love and Theft*—a masterpiece. Johnny Cash said it was Dylan’s best writing ever—then the man died, at peace with a world that could bring a seemingly spent master back to his highest levels of greatness. Dylan’s most recent album, *Modern Times*, premiered at number one last month on the Billboard Albums Chart (it’s *not* a masterpiece, but there are a few great songs). It was his first number one album since the 1976 *Desire*, an album coveted at the time by Flick and Paup, material we’d heard at a different enthralling Garden concert in 1975, the *Night of the Hurricane*.



Paupér, Flick and Kogo LeBogo, circa 1974, way before the flood

But El Flicko has lost that lovin' feeling. He no longer cares for Zimmy as he once did. Indeed, Dylan kinda gives him the creeps now. So he handed me the job of reviewing a Dylan DVD, one which would have been right up the alley of the younger lads we once were. Seesh, some people get old fast.

His loss. *Bob Dylan 1966-1978: After the Crash* is a blast and absolutely essential for anyone who (like I, Paupér) still loves Dylan. While certainly not on the same level as Scorsese's *No Direction Home*, it's a better made and far more knowledgeable video bio than the crappy two-hour hack job done on the Biography Channel a couple of years back. And since it was clearly made by fanatics who've spent their lives poring over lyrics, album credits, liner notes, interviews, bootlegs, newsreels, etc., and who can probably recite thirty-year-old Zimmerman references in *Rolling Stone's* Random Notes from memory, even ex-obsessives will find it fascinating.

What Dylan buff, current or otherwise, could turn down the opportunity to see a slightly porcine, fifty-something Scarlett Rivera (a former object of lust for us lads), sometime co-writer Jacques Levy (who died soon after the interview) and an elderly version of legendary whacko A.J. Weberman (to those not in the know, Weberman *invented* celebrity-stalking), along with ex-friends and former backup musicians? The fact that this low-budget documentary is well thought out with a coherently told story seems like a plus. Let's face it—those qualities are sorely lacking from most films made

these days, documentary or otherwise.

The addition of “serious” critics’ commentary on Dylan’s work during this period is helpful, though sometimes a bit grandiose. I personally have no doubt that Dylan is among the most important artists of the 20th century—he re-invented an entire art form and has had tremendous influence on literature as well. But somehow I wince a bit when the professors enter the room (and British critics all sound like professors, especially since most of them seem to have attended Cambridge). Still, a good pace is maintained throughout. The documentary absolutely never seems rushed (how rare is that these days?) but it also never really drags. The life it’s covering is too unusual and interesting to ever be a bore.

Not to oversell it—this is mainly for Dylan fanatics or Psych majors interested in fanaticism’s celebrity-related manifestations—but it’s smart and fun and interesting and ridiculous and insightful and definitely—definitely—well worth the price of admission. Even for an over-the-hill Flickhead.

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