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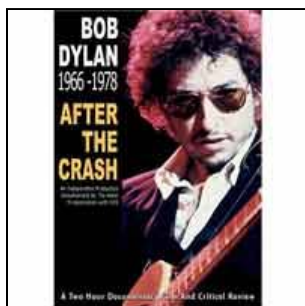
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## Bob Dylan 1966-1978 After The Crash

*Chrome Dreams Media*

Impressive if unauthorised rockumentary hits the spot

Given Bob Dylan's status as an icon of popular music, his tendency to avoid excessive publicity and the recent release of his number one album, "Modern Times", it's almost inevitable that he is currently being made the subject of a slew of unauthorised documentaries. Here we have another such film, concentrating on the period immediately after the creative summer of his career when he released the "holy trilogy" of "Bringing It All Back Home", "Highway 61 Revisited" and "Blonde on Blonde".

Unlike the recent ["Rolling Thunder And The Gospel Years"](#), fortunately, this one hasn't been made by an overzealous uberfan / impersonator and as such retains a decent distance from it's subject, taking a more impartial approach. This angle reaps rewards, particularly when reinforced by their excellent research, which brings together a vast array of rare footage and interviews with friends, enemies, collaborators and cultural commentators – in fact, almost everyone but the man himself.

As the name suggests, it covers the twelve years from 1966, starting with the motorbike accident which could have stopped him in his tracks, the subsequent release of the seminal "John Wesley Harding" and his involvement in the 1968 tribute show to his

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mentor and greatest influence, Woody Guthrie. Some of the tales reveal unexpected sides to Dylan, including the fact he snubbed Woodstock, only a few miles from his home, to play the smaller Isle of Wight festival as he felt it was a more credible stage for his new country direction. Later, the stalker and self-styled “Dylanologist” A.J. Weberman is interviewed, and they include the recording of the phone call Dylan made to Weberman to question his activities, a quite and fascinating unique artefact in music history (Dylan eventually had to beat him up after Weberman scared his family while going through his bins, and the latter admits he got what he deserved). Later, his appearance at the Concert for Bangladesh and involvement in the Sam Peckinpah’s cowboy film “Pat Garrett and Billy The Kid” are dissected. In addition to playing the part of gang member Alias, the film inspired him to write one of his most well-known (and covered) songs, “Knocking On Heavens Door”.

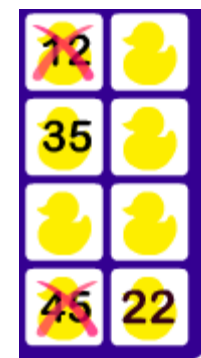
As the narrative progresses through the ‘70’s, we hear the story of the “Blood On The Tracks” and “Desire” records, including interviews with many of his musical collaborators, and then the story of two further films he was involved with – the Martin Scorsese-directed concert film “The Last Waltz”, and Bobs’ poorly-received film “Ranaldo and Clara”. It was around this time when his creative powers began to wane, and he looked to be entering a period of artistic, critical and commercial decline with 1978’s “Street Legal”. The film leaves Dylan shortly after he became a born-again Christian at the end of the ‘70’s.

If you’re a Dylan fan, there will be plenty of interest to you in this documentary. The research is first-class and the high production values lend a sheen to a concise, well-constructed story. If you’re not a fan but curious, I’d have to recommend “No Direction Home” as a far better starting point, but this should be on your list if the Scorsese-directed biopic but fuels your interest.

<http://www.bobdylan.com/>

By **Eddie Thomas**

This release was published on 26 Sep 2006.



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