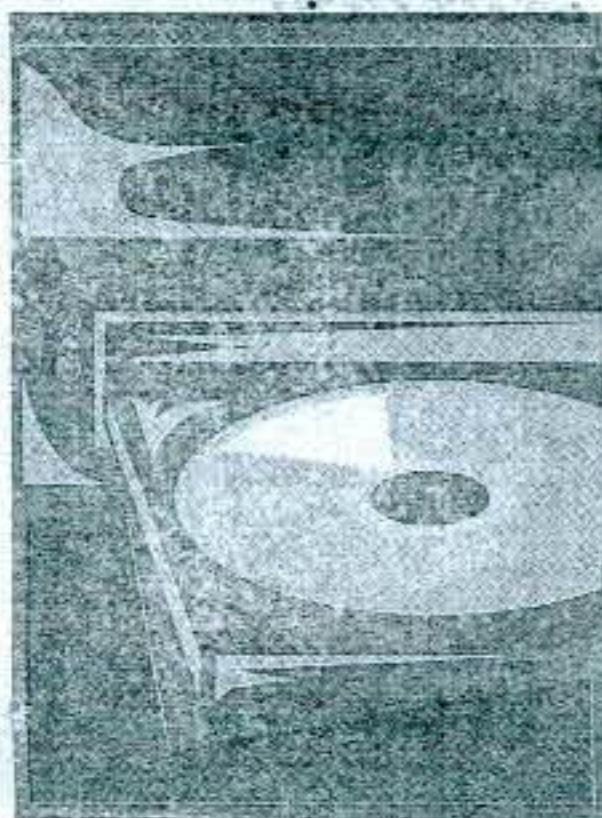


videos!



Queen DVD puts band's pioneering artistry in better focus

Queen: Under Review 1973-1980

★★★½ (out of four)

Chrome Dreams. Not rated.

Enormously popular in its time, Queen is today remembered as much for what it was — a flamboyant British arena band led by singer Freddie Mercury, one of rock's most charismatic showmen — as for its significant musical achievements.

Granted, it's not always easy to separate Queen, the regal representative of excess and kitsch, from

its sound — a well-amplified pastiche of hard rock and vaudeville/music hall, operatic grandiosity and progressive-rock flash, equal parts macho and fey, bombastic and dynamic, campy and cool.

During its reign (1975-1980), Queen made some of rock's most popular and distinctive music. An appraisal of its enduring singles — "Killer Queen," "Somebody To Love," "Bohemian Rhapsody," "We Are The Champions," "We Will Rock You," "Under Pressure," "Crazy Little Thing Called Love," "Another One Bites The Dust" — reveals the depth and reach of songs that are too often dismissed as tongue-in-cheek celebrations of compositivity.

Plenty of articles and videos have tracked the arc of the band's career and its colorful antics — an admittedly entertaining proposition. But a new DVD, *Queen: Under Review 1973-1980* — one in a series of British DVDs that offers in-depth analysis of notable bands — focuses less on Queen's personality and more on its creativity, a welcome diversion from the usual Saturnalian tales of debauchery.

Some of England's top critics, young and old, take viewers through an honest album-by-album assessment of the band's defining years.

All opinions are wryly articulate and impeccably informed. Anecdotes combined with observation trace the development of the band's music and bring perspective to what it faced in a fickle and ever-evolving marketplace.

There is archival footage aplenty within the DVD's two-hour running time. Much of it will be fresh to American audiences, and all of it

has a distinct purpose — to shore up analysis and fact. Several commentators were friends of the band, but that doesn't impede frank examinations of its work. All things Queen are neither loved nor equal as differing opinions are freely bantered about.

The disc's most fascinating facet is the examination of guitarist Brian May's groundbreaking contributions to the group. Guitarist and Queen biographer Simon Bradley takes in hand an exact replica of May's homemade guitar and his odd choice of guitar pick (a honed British shilling), then plays it through the same brand of vintage amplifier and effects pedals used by May.

Bradley's step-by-step dissection of May's sonic and technical wizardry reveals the evolution of one of the most distinctive sounds in rock history.

It's great entertainment, but it's also enlightening and educational, so much so that even a die-hard Queen fan will come away with fresh perspective and renewed, if

not new, appreciation of the band's music.

Syd Barrett: Under Review

Chrome Dreams. Not rated.

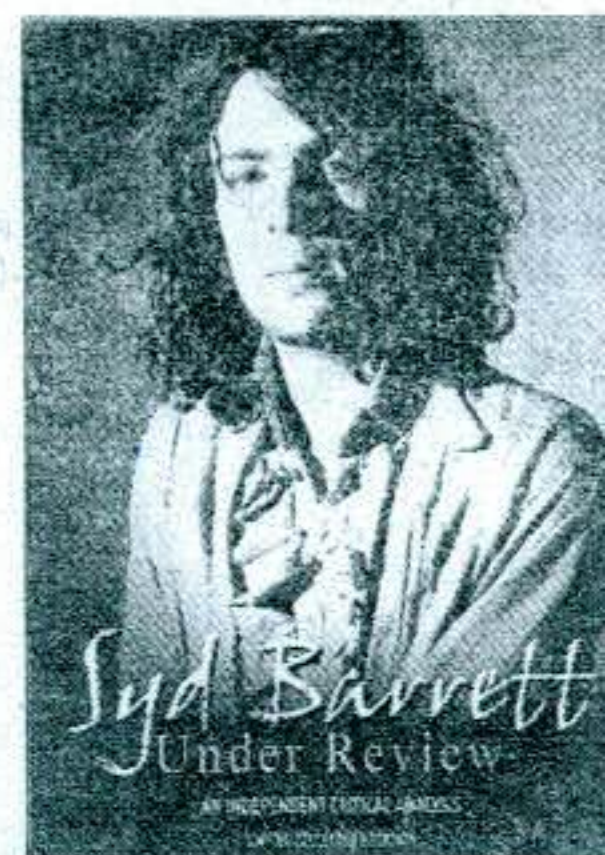
★★½

Syd Barrett: Under Review is not as successful of an endeavor as the like-minded *Queen: Under Review*, largely because its subject is neither as famous nor as accessible as Queen.

Barrett is best known as the psychedelic architect of Pink Floyd. He was a pioneering musician whose fleeting but wondrous contributions to the band (he was aboard for only one entire album) became amplified after his drug-fueled descent. As such, much of Barrett's fame is more akin to infamy, as his burnout and retreat into seclusion has been steadfastly glorified through the years.

The attending panel of critics do their best to separate myth from fact, madness from self-destruction, using archival interviews with Barrett and band members in an attempt to bring light to shadow.

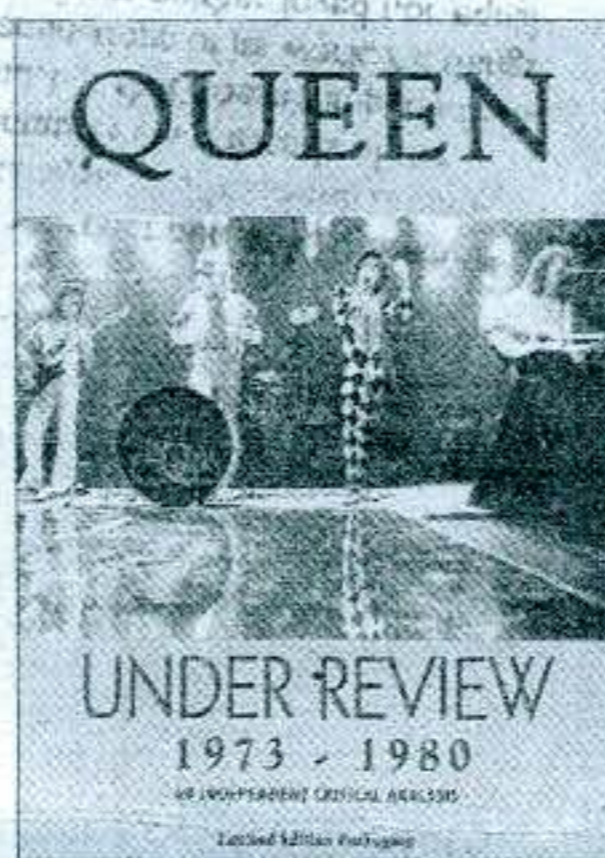
Still, the overwhelming desire to transform Barrett into a mythological character proves too strong for all but a few of the critics, who



strain to overplay Barrett's "genius" — despite strong evidence that the handful of extraordinary songs, and some iffy solo work, do not warrant sustained worship.

The rare archival film of Barrett, particularly the performance footage of him with Floyd, is rewarding. But the DVD's short running time (a little over an hour) underscores that, at the end of the era, there is precious little evidence to support Barrett's iconic status.

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Coming to video

Here is a partial list of movies scheduled to be released on video in the coming weeks. Dates are subject to change.

Tuesday: *Capote*, *Chicken Little*, *Dreamer*, *In the Mix* and *The Squid and the Whale*.

March 28: *Get Rich or Die Tryin'*, *King Kong*, *Memoirs of a Geisha* and *A Sound of Thunder*.

April 4: *Bee Season* and *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

April 11: *Fun With Dick and Jane* and *An Unfinished Life*.

— relish staff and wire report

also in stores this week

New releases

Domino: Keira Knightley plays the title role in director Tony Scott's loathsome, excessively violent chronicle of model-turned-bounty hunter Domino Harvey. (R) ★

Doom: There has never been a good movie inspired by a video game ... and this is no exception. Plenty of action and a few nifty visuals, but mostly dumb and dull. Memorable line: "Now let's see if we can find a body that goes with that arm." (R; also available in an unrated version) ★

Playmate DVD Calendar Collection: 2000-2005: Blondes, brunettes and redheads — more than 70 of them — are showcased in this expansive, comprehensive collection of *Playboy's* video calendars. Lisa Dergan, Jaime Bergman and Heather Kozar are among those who have since embarked on film and TV careers. (Not rated) (Not reviewed)



New Line photo

Keira Knightley plays the title role in *Domino*.

Saw II: Abundantly gory follow-up to the surprise 2004 hit offers more violence for fans. Others need not apply. Another sequel is in the works. (R) ★½

Separate Lies: Tom Wilkinson and Emily Watson play a troubled couple in Julian Fel-

lowes' adaptation of a Nigel Balchin novel. (R) (Not reviewed)

Yours, Mine & Ours: This painless remake of a 1968 comedy stars Dennis Quaid as a widower with eight kids who marries Rene Russo, a widow with 10. Predictability ensues. (PG) ★★

Re-releases

Chicago: A "razzle-dazzle" edition of first-time feature director Rob Marshall's box-office smash, based on a Broadway musical and inspired by actual events. Winner of six Academy Awards: best picture, supporting actress (Catherine Zeta-Jones), editing, sound, art direction/set decoration and costume design. Additional nominations for best director, actress (Renee Zellweger), supporting actor (John C. Reilly), supporting actress (Queen Latifah), adapted screenplay, cinematography and original song ("I Move On").

One of the best films of 2002. (PG-13) ★★½

Doctor Detroit: Nerdy college professor Dan Aykroyd poses as a pimp in Michael Pressman's 1983 comedy, which may be Aykroyd's worst film ever. But he met wife Donna Dixon on the set. (R) No stars

Dumb and Dumber: An expanded and unrated edition of the Farrelly Brothers' 1994 comedy, which stars Jim Carrey and Jeff Daniels as an utterly dim-witted buddy duo. Carrey later married (and divorced) co-star Lauren Holly. (Not rated) ★★½

Scary Movie 3.5: A special unrated version of this 2003 comedy, the third in the series, which marked director David Zucker's entry into the popular comedy franchise. (Not rated) ★½

— Mark Burger
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