

REVIEW**DVD Review: *Syd Barrett Under Review***

February 22, 2006
El Bicho

This DVD provides an overview of the recording career of Syd Barrett, Pink Floyd's main songwriter and lead guitarist, through the interviews of music journalists and clips. There is some great archival video footage of Barrett and the band, but there are only snippets of songs, which pique the listener's interest. This can get frustrating if you don't have easy access to listen to the tracks in their entirety, but you can get a sense of how the songs sound.

Pink Floyd played in the London underground music scene in the mid to late '60s and released a couple of successful singles, "Arnold Layne" and "See Emily Play", both of which reached the UK Top 20, before they released their first album, *The Piper at the Gates of Dawn*, whose name is taken from a chapter in Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*. The album reached #6 on the UK charts and is a great example of the London psychedelic scene with its surreal yet playful lyrics and eclectic soundscapes.

Barrett showed a talent for creating psychedelic pop songs, but it was something he could not sustain. Whether through his prolific use of LSD or some mental health issue he had, his erratic behavior took its toll on him and the band. It is reported that he would strum one note, detune his guitar, and sometimes just stare off into space while playing. David Gilmour was brought in to play guitar, and there was hope that Barrett would stay in Pink Floyd and contribute creatively in the studio while the rest of the band went out and performed gigs, similar to an arrangement that Brian Wilson had with The Beach Boys; however, this didn't work, and Barrett was dismissed from the band.

But Pink Floyd didn't break its ties with Barrett completely. On their next album, *Saucerful of Secrets*, his song "Jugband Blues", which might provide clues to his mental state at the time, was included. Roger Waters and Gilmour produced part of his first solo album *The Madcap Laughs* and Richard Wright and Gilmour produced his second album, *Barrett*. There are also references to Barrett's work on Pink Floyd's work, most specifically "Shine On You Crazy Diamond" from *Wish You Were Here*.

DVD extras include a trivia quiz about Barrett, bios about the contributors, and interviews with the band members.

about a lost tape recently discovered that is considered to be Barrett's last pub appearance on stage in 1972.

A good biography is created from what the producers have to work with, but it deeper than the surface of what is known about Syd because no one close to h interviewed. It would have been great to hear from someone who had worked Pink Floyd or from a friend or family member. Soft Machine bassist Hugh Hopp on *The Madcap Laughs*, but he has very little screen time. You can hear his infl musicians like Robin Hitchcock and Love and Rockets so their thoughts would r interesting as well. A more thorough biography of Syd is deserved, but this will then.

Edited: [!--GH--]

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- » Published on February 22, 2006
- » Type: [Review](#)
- » Filed under: [Music](#), [Video: Performing Arts](#), [Video: Music](#), [Video: Documentary](#), [Music: Video](#), [Music: Rock](#), [Music: Progressive Rock](#), [Music: Classic Rock](#) and [Oldies](#).

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