

DVD SHOWS BARRETT AS GENIUS, NOT ACID CASUALTY

Syd Barrett
Under Review
Music Video Distributors
★★★★ out of ★★★★★

Syd Barrett is a man whose mythology will always overshadow or at least heavily cloak his musicianship.

While his former bandmates in Pink Floyd have become global superstars, Barrett remains an enigma and a complete recluse. But it was Barrett who originally formed the band, immediately becoming its chief songwriter and lead guitarist, as well as the driving force behind much of the material on the band's famed album *Piper at the Gates of Dawn*.

Under Review paints a glorious picture of the singer and songwriter as founder of one of the '60's pinnacle psychedelic acts, but the DVD also reveals insights into Barrett's battle with mental illness.

Barrett has long been labeled as one of the great acid casualties of the '60s, with rumors of a severe breakdown due to his use of LSD. (My favorite rumor is the one that he was so disturbed that he had to be placed in a mental hospital, complete with straight jacket, after trying to peel himself like an orange.)

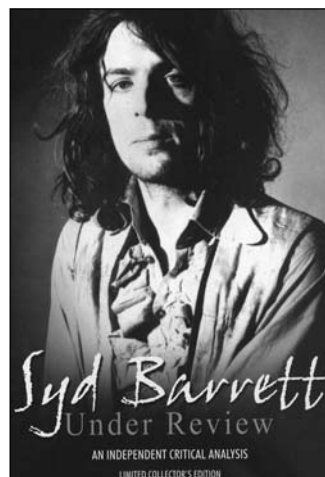
But *Under Review* reveals a different side of the

story, with biographers and close friends saying that it was mental illness, in and of itself, that led to Barrett's mental decline, odd song structure and eventual departure from Pink Floyd in 1968.

The DVD follows Barrett from his creative prime, with *Piper* material such as "Arnold Layne," "See Emily Play," "Bike" and "Interstellar Overdrive," through embarrassing moments like the Spinal Tap-esque "Apples and Oranges," and concludes with an overview of Barrett's obscure solo work, produced by former bandmate Roger Waters and his Floyd replacement, David Gilmour.

All in all, *Under Review* is best viewed as documentary of Pink Floyd's earliest recordings and a snapshot of what could have been, had Barrett stayed around long enough to see it all materialize.

— Brian F. Johnson



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