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Syd Barrett Under Review

Chrome Dreams Media/MVD

An intense delve into the mind and songwriting of former Pink Floyd main man and legendary "lost talent", Syd Barrett...

Syd Barrett, I think we all know, was the founding member of Pink Floyd. Only a few years and one album into their career it was decided by Roger Waters, Rick Wright an Nick Mason that due to his increasingly erratic behaviour Syd would no longer feature Pink Floyd. After a fairly low key solo career Syd then becomes the reclusive, LSD addled legend that we hear of today. Well that's the story we all know and love. This DVD doesn't particularly concern itself with the myth and legend, rather billing itself as *"The ultimate review and critical analysis of the music of Syd Barrett"*.

The music that it does analyse is not what is now associated with Pink Floyd. Flitting between videos and rare live performances, it shows the band in their formative years where an experimental bent sees them happily mix the childlike innocence of 'See En Play', with the space rock of 'Interstellar Overdrive'. Close scrutiny of the Barrett songwriting is provided by ex-Melody Maker journalist and all round 60's expert, Chris Welch, and Uncut Features Editor, Nigel Williamson. And close scrutiny it is; if anythir the fine tooth comb investigation of the songs is tiring and laboriously hard going at times.

While the music is the centre point of the DVD, a picture of the man is sketched in, inevitable, concentrating on Syd's drug intake. The argument over whether Barrett's LSD use was so excessive comes into doubt, with one contributor claiming that it was the "copious amount of marijuana" rather than acid that powered his beguiling lyrics. Quite suitably, the best moment of the DVD comes in the shape of the strangest description of songwriting I've ever heard from Total Rock DJ, Malcolm Dome: "it's like he's fishing; and then just throwing the fish straight onto the paper."

Ardent fans apart, this DVD is not going to appeal to many people. Even the extras ar biased towards real "Floyd-ies", being the "hardest Syd Barrett interactive quiz in the world ever" and some "famous lost records". Informative 'Syd Barrett - Under Review' may be; entertaining on the whole it isn't.



By Liam McGrady

This release was published on 13 Feb 2006.



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