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## The DVD Collector's Box U2



If you do the voodoo that U2 do, then there are bound to be lots of fans and critics who will weigh in with their opinion. The phenomenally successful Irish quartet has been around since the late 70s, and is now considered one of rock's most stalwart acts. **The DVD Collector's Box** attempts to expose the band's popularity with two documentaries — one about the band and one about their messiah-like lead singer, Bono.

The documentary about the band is a solid film, covering their history as well as their current status as Dublin's favorite sons. Yet it is a little short on any actual performance footage and band interviews (when the members of the band are interviewed, the snippets come from other sources. This an *unauthorized* set after all). Full of the genuflecting you'd expect from a tribute like this, we are told over and over again of U2's humble beginnings and how they are ever-conscious of keeping their roots — as well as a handful of businesses — in the Irish community. Most of the subjects interviewed are Irish — friends, associates, critics and musicians who regale us with stories of U2's philanthropic efforts as well as their ethics. I would have preferred some more live footage here, but the documentary does cover a good amount of U2's early days and delves deep into what it's like being based in Dublin.

As one expects but maybe hopes will be to the contrary, the second DVD is all Bono. I'm not sure there has been a front man in recent rock history quite like Bono, and I give the guy his due. He is a charismatic singer, activist and all-around interesting fellow. I actually had the pleasure, back when "Mysterious Ways" was hitting the airwaves, of literally walking right into Bono when I was vacationing in Venice (man, what a selfish name dropper I am, huh?). The point of the story is this: he was as nice a guy as you will ever want to meet. Later I saw him taking time in the always-busy St. Peter's Square to sign autographs and talk with fans, all while holding tightly to his wife Ali who was pushing their child in a stroller. And how can you fault a guy who puts his money and popularity where his mouth is when it comes to world affairs and humanist causes? But as this collation makes plain with giving Bono a DVD all his own, the guy does overshadow the group at times. We get plenty about Bono in the documentary — from growing up to the present day. I would have preferred a longer DVD about the band, with some bootlegged performance footage. But then again, I don't want to review something this DVD is not; I'm reviewing what it is.

If you're a U2 fan, **The DVD Collector's Box** is a fine set. If you're a casual fan, you might find the band documentary fun and interesting, while the one about Bono is a bit long. But then again, Bono himself has been heard to remark: "Even I get sick of Bono."

~ Ralph Greco, Jr.

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