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Music Review

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Reviews by - [Lindsay Planer](#)

This week we're spinning a pair of 'must-own' packages featuring insight into the rarely illuminated saga of Syd Barrett and Pink Floyd.

DVD -- The Pink Floyd and Syd Barrett Story (Voiceprint/Zeit Media Ltd.)



There are several videos currently available claiming to uncover the 'real' or 'authoritative' story on the formation of Pink Floyd. The major difference between all of those and this highly recommended biopic is that director John Edginton goes straight to the source for his in-depth, no-holds barred video chronology. He sits down for extended discussions with surviving Floyd members David Gilmour, Nick Mason, Roger Waters, Richard Wright, as well as short-lived pre-fame member Bob Klose.

These participants are among those who provide first person accounts of the band during what was arguably their most innovative period. There are also comments from mid '60s manager Peter Jenner and Joe Boyd. The latter not only owned London's infamous psychedelic UFO Club, but produced the Floyd's inaugural single "Arnold Layne" b/w "Candy And A Currant Bun" as well.

At the heart of this two-disc DVD package is the roughly hour-long *Pink Floyd And Syd Barrett Story*, which aired on the BBC in 2002 and more recently on the VH1 Classic cable network. The documentary is presented here unedited and with Dolby 2.0 Digital Stereo, 5.1 Surround or DTS 5.1 Digital Surround audio playback options.

Disc Two contains close to three additional hours of extras, including off-the-cuff acoustic performances of solo Barrett sides by Robyn Hitchcock ("Dominoes" and "It Is Obvious") and Blur's Graham Coxon ("Love You") -- both of whom participated in the main program as well. However, the real bonuses are unedited candid interviews with messieurs Gilmour, Mason, Wright and -- clocking in at nearly an hour and 45 minutes -- is a very emotive and profoundly personal conversation with Roger Waters.

The Pink Floyd And Syd Barrett Story is recommended particularly for the uninitiated, as it offers an unadulterated look and listen into their unique blend of psychedelic rock.

Pink Floyd -- The Piper at the Gates of Dawn (EMI Records)



Few debuts have had the cultural significance or impact of *The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn* (1967). Four decades on, it is still one of the most innovative and least dated projects to have been issued during the 'Summer Of Love'. To mark its 40th anniversary, EMI have put together this triple-disc box set. Disc One and Two contain newly remastered versions in mono and stereo -- which are distinctly different throughout -- and a third disc of rarities that we'll breakdown in a moment.

The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn remains an epic for numerous reasons. Not the least of which is its status as the only Pink Floyd project with full involvement from Syd Barrett -- who practically wrote the album by himself.

Demonstrating Barrett's undeniable gift are songs that vacillate from the childlike innocence of "Mathilda Mother," "The Gnome" and "Bike" to the sonic insanity of "Astronomy Domine," "Pow R Toc H" or the peaceful piety of the I Ching-inspired "Chapter 24".

Disc Three houses over half an hour of bonus tracks, commencing with the Pink Floyd singles "Arnold Layne," "See Emily Play," "Apples And Oranges," "Candy And A Current Bun" and "Paintbox". Even more desirable are the rare French EP edit of "Interstellar Overdrive," and previously unavailable versions of "Apples And Oranges," "Matilda Mother" -- with different lyrics and vocals -- and take six of "Interstellar Overdrive".

The CDs are encased in a beautiful cloth covered hard-bound book that was designed by the Floyd's longtime visual artist Storm Thorgerson. Inside are archival photos, complete lyrics and a separate 12-page reproduction of a vintage drawing pad owned by Syd Barrett. It is strewn with fascinating handwritten poems, doodles, cartoons and caricatures.

Interested parties should make haste as *The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn 40th Anniversary Edition* is limited and once it is sold out, it will not be re-issued ...at least not in this format.

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All comments and questions are encouraged and can be sent to
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"Even though most of the people I knew in my youth are gone, I still reach out to them..." Norman Maclean - Paraphrase

"...we should enjoy every sandwich." -- Warren Zevon

"Buy the ticket, take the ride." -- Hunter S Thompson

