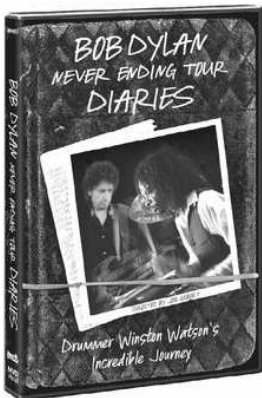




## DVD REVIEWS



**Bob Dylan**  
*Never Ending Tour Diaries: Drummer Winston Watson's Incredible Journey*  
 MVDVisual (MVDV 4855)

The back cover blurb tells only part of the story. Yes, Winston Watson performed more than 400 shows with Dylan during the 1990s. And yes, he is an "ordinary guy who experienced the extraordinary." But this 100-minute documentary is a lot more than that, as Watson tells us more about "life on the road" than anybody who hasn't experienced it (and a lot of people who may have) could ever imagine.

Dylan is a hard taskmaster, after all, and even when he appears to be cruising, as critics of the Never Ending Tour have often accused him of doing, he still expects his band to be on top form — and so they should be, because history long



### Find it online

Watch the World's Forgotten Boy blog for more on Dylan documentarian Joel Gilbert and his new DVD.

ago taught us that even 50 percent commitment from Bob is most people's 110.

There's little here in terms of actual musical content; for obvious reasons, it's difficult to document a concert when you're onstage playing drums. But imaginative graphics and a well-planned interview, interspersed with period news footage, accompany Watson's own home-video-camera work; and, however you view the Dylan of the 1990s, you come out of Watson's Diaries with renewed respect for his commitment — and that of the people who journeyed alongside him.

— Dave Thompson

### Hawkwind *Winter Solstice 2005*

Voiceprint/Hawk records (HAWKVP44DVD)

There are now almost as many Hawkwind concert DVDs on the racks as there used to be live LPs, faithfully documenting almost every major phase the band has moved through since the early 1980s. Which means, of course, that the stuff we really want (the fabled "Space Ritual" tour film, for a start) remain locked away deep in the vaults. But there's at least a handful of newer films to tide us over, and this is one of them.

Fifteen songs strong, and boasting better

sound than a lot of the Hawks discs out there, "Winter Solstice" is essentially a static view from the back of the hall — an odd approach but a surprisingly successful one. After all, how many gigs have you been to where you're forever running from one spot to the other, before focusing all your attention on the bass player's thumb?

No close-ups, no fancy angles, no "camera work" at all. "Winter Solstice" escorts you to your seat, checks your sightlines, hands you a box of popcorn and lets you get on with it. Occasional cutaways do bring up the band's back projection, but the light show and the stage set are the stars here, and if the musicians seem a little insignificant... well, how many times do we really need to see a player playing his instrument? It's the show that matters, and that's what you get here. An excellent, career-spanning show.

— Dave Thompson

### Ladysmith Black Mambazo *Live!*

Heads Up International (HUDV 7149)

The South African vocal group Ladysmith Black Mambazo's a cappella Christian messages of compassion, love and global harmony — balanced with native musical traditions and political context — are effective wherever they're heard, from London's Royal Albert Hall to the University of Akron's E.J. Thomas Hall.

This low-budget 95-minute concert filmed last year in Ohio includes both the earliest ("Nomathemba") and most recent ("This Is the Way We Do It") recordings from LBM, which currently boasts nine males with extremely musical voices. Renowned for their quirky high-kicking choreography and traditional isicathamiya vocals with distinct tongue clicking as much as for their gospel-influenced songs, Ladysmith Black Mambazo treats viewers to colorful dancing, dry wit and even a history lesson or two. Additionally, a 40-minute interview with founder Joseph Shabalala retraces LBM's significant history from the late 1950s and includes comments from other members of the multigenerational group, including four of Shabalala's sons.

— Michael Popke

### Various Artists *Beat Beat Beat*

MVD (ABCPV102DVD-ABCPV111DVD)

Adding to the glut of British Invasion-era live performances comes a still-welcome series

of DVDs culled from the archives of German TV. "Beat Beat Beat" aired between 1966 and January, 1969, a measly 26 shows in all, but of the bands that appeared, and the performances those bands gave.

The series currently runs to 11 DVDs and includes three compilations featuring groups not included in the rest of the series. They're an eclectic lot. Vol. 1, for example, bundles up 13 songs and seven artists: Herman's Hermits; The Easybeats; Casey Jones; and Brian Auger, Trinity and Julie Driscoll amongst them. Think that's an odd coupling? Vol. 2 runs from Cat Stevens to Wayne Fontana, and The Creation to PJ Proby. Which makes Vol. 3 seem positively sensible — The Move, The Searchers, The Smoke and The Tremeloes.

A further two discs brings together two bands; The Troggs make uneasy bedfellows for Dave, Dee, Dozy, Beaky, Mick & Tich, while Ian Gillan's pre-Deep Purple band Episode 6 shares space with Eric Burdon & The New Animals. The Hollies, Kinks, The Small Faces, The Spencer Davis Group and The Yardbirds all get DVDs of their own. At nearly \$10 and running to four songs each, the last trio seem particularly pricey, but the footage is fabulous. Spencer Davis Group is sheer emotion, while The Small Faces are so boisterous one can believe they ignited punk single-handedly. As for The Yardbirds, they're on fire; Jimmy Page obviously felt he still had something

to prove to Europe and determinedly burns the house down. His playing on "Over, Under, Sideways, Down" is absolutely spectacular.

Filed in black and white in front of enthusiastic crowds, the show proved less popular than the more famous "Beat-Club," but as these DVDs prove, it was still don't-miss TV.

— Jo-Ann Greene

