

Bob Dylan: Never Ending Tour Diaries
Drummer Winston Watson's Incredible Journey
(Highway 61 Entertainment)

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Anyone who saw Bob Dylan perform from 1992 to 1996 will remember the energy and free-flying, shoulder-length hair of the drummer Winston Watson. Now, in *Bob Dylan: Never Ending Tour Diaries* (Highway 61 Entertainment), the latest DVD from the documentarian Joel Gilbert, Watson speaks.

Subtitled "Drummer Winston Watson's Incredible Journey," the 100-minute film is both an anecdotal exposé of the chaos of non-stop touring and a first-hand account of what it's like to go from being an anonymous bar-band drummer in Arizona one night to playing before thousands of the world's most demanding rock-and-roll fans the next.

With ebullience and a gift for vocal mimicry (and with recourse only to a smattering of PG-13 language), Watson relives his amazement at finding himself in the backstage company of his heroes (Carlos Santana, Jerry Garcia, Levon Helm), the challenge of responding to Dylan's oblique onstage cues, and the times he was moved to tears by a heartfelt compliment or word of encouragement from Dylan himself.

Not every superstar encounter was pleasant. Although Dylan did not take the advice, Van Morrison's recommendation that he "get rid of [the] drummer" cut Watson to the quick.

He is discreet about drugs and groupies, although he does mention buying pot in Denmark (then having most of it smoked by the Rolling Stones' Keith Richards and Ron Wood) and that "there were always women around." But he also says, "Rock-and-roll ain't what it used to be" and implies that it wasn't debauchery but his long absences from home that led to the end of his marriage.

Watson's only other regret is that, despite the hundreds of Dylan songs he got to perform, two that never made the set lists were the Rubin Carter tribute "Hurricane" and the apocalyptic "Slow Train." "That train," he says, laughing, "never came."