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## STRANGE THINGS ARE HAPPENING

### KATE BUSH - A LIFE OF SURPRISES DVD. Pride DVD.



You're probably familiar with those music DVDs that crop up in discount stores, where the fine print on the back tells you that there won't actually be any music by the act in question on the disc, but rather a mish-mash of old TV interviews and other footage, aimed presumably at the obsessive collector who wants everything. This double DVD set is, thankfully, not that sort of thing. Instead, here we have a pair of 'proper' (though unauthorised) documentaries about one of music's most enigmatic and astonishing artists.

The first disc is a full career biography of Kate (up to 2005's *Aerial*, anyway), with assorted talking head experts – Paul Gambaccini, Lucy O'Brien – discussing her work from the remarkable debut album *The Kick Inside*, through 'difficult' work *The Dreaming*, widely acknowledged masterpiece *Hounds of Love* and beyond. As a career documentary, it's well put together and the comments made are solid enough observations about her career, her influences, her fascination with experimentation and her exploration of sexuality and the dark side of life. You do wish the producers had gained access to more people who had actually worked with Bush, such as the likes of David Gilmour and Peter Gabriel – only session musician Morris Pert appears, and the five interviewees are stretched rather thin at times. But what makes this is the wealth of rare archive footage – not just clips from the promo videos and the *Live at Hammersmith* video that really, *really* need to be released on DVD, but also rare TV appearances and interviews. It's fascinating just how much TV Kate Bush did in her early years – I have about 9 hours of barely watchable VHS footage that includes TV specials, documentaries and painful interviews that will probably never be seen again (I was and am a big fan), so it's great to see some snippets of those appearances – and stuff I'd never seen before – included here. In the extras, you even get to see her collecting an award at The British Rock and Pop Awards, which were the Poundland version of The Brits and includes a hilariously barely conscious Gary Numan as an extra treat.

The second disc is a feature-length critical analysis of *The Hounds of Love* – the most important interviewee here being drummer Charlie Morgan, who gives good insight into the creation of the sound. It's probably unlikely that Kate will ever do a **Classic Albums** documentary, more's the pity, so this critical track-by-track study is most likely the best look at this brilliant album we'll get. With samples from every track (and the videos, including the extraordinary *Cloudbusting*), as well as plenty of footage of the influences (including movies like *Night of the Demon* and *Gone to Earth*, this is a pretty exhaustive study. Included as an extra here are extracts from a 1985 taped interview with the editor of *Zig-Zag*, which are unfortunately barely comprehensible.

While perhaps not of the quality of the music documentaries you'll find on BBC4 – I'm assuming this would have had a far lower budget than any Beeb-produced doc – this is nevertheless a solid pairing that more than holds up, and is an informative look at one of music's finest artists. If you are a fan, you'll be more than happy with this three hour collection; if you're not, this is a good way to show you why you are so very, very wrong.

DAVID FLINT

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