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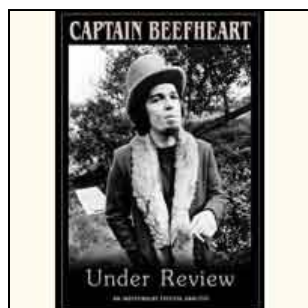
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Captain Beefheart

Under Review

Sexy Intellectual

Great treatment of a true legend

Firstly, if you are at all into rock music of any kind, reading this review and have no idea who Captain Beefheart is, stop reading, and go get your ears round some of the man's music immediately. A central figure of the 60's rock revolution alongside his contemporary Frank Zappa, Beefheart's music, from his incredible debut "Safe As Milk" to the sublime "Trout Mask Replica" shaped modern rock music every bit as much as the likes of The Beatles, The Who and Jimi Hendrix. The spirit of experimentalism which ran through his work has been hugely important in paving the way for everyone from Sonic Youth to Radiohead.

Of course, when profiling such an iconic (yet relatively underground) figure, particularly when as here the film is unofficial and does not feature an interview with Beefheart himself, it is very easy to strike the wrong tone. Fortunately, "Under Review" avoids every possible pitfall. Featuring interviews with most of the original Magic Band as well as several well-chosen and incisive rock writers of the time, it draws out some wonderful anecdotes and stories behind the music. But the real treasure trove here is the wealth of filmed and live material from throughout Beefheart's career. And while an interview with the main protagonist would have been fantastic, given that he retired from music in the

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'80's and now, aged 65, he lives a hermits existence in the south of the USA, no fan would expect one.

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“Under Review” scores particularly highly in two respects. Firstly, it examines its subject in great depth and always with great intelligence. Secondly, it is clearly a labour of love, and the time and effort taken to track down all those involved pays dividends. In the final analysis, it is brilliant film which should be seen by every Beefheart fan.

<http://www.beefheart.com/>

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By **Eddie Thomas**

This release was published on 01 May 2006.

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