



DVD Review – ‘Nirvana: A Classic Album Under Review’

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Posted by **Collider**

Reviewed by Richard Toledo

Most documentaries have a tendency to overstay their welcome (hello, *March of the Penguins!*), so it's very refreshing that Chrome Dreams, the British company that produced *Nirvana: A Classic Album Under Review*, decided to keep this documentary short and to the point.

I was a bit wary of a Nirvana documentary being made by Brits because they don't exactly have a good track record when it comes to journalism. They have a tendency to err on the side of sensationalism, even more so than their American counterparts. Remember the incessant coverage of all things Princess Di before *and after* her death? Exactly. As it happens my trepidation turned out to be all for naught. *A Classic Album Under Review* turned out to be a well-researched and loving portrait on the making of the third and last Nirvana studio album, 1993's *In Utero*.

For those of you who don't know, Nirvana came to an end when lead singer and songwriter Kurt Cobain took his own life in April 1994. The sudden fame brought on by the unexpected success of their second album, *Nevermind*, was a bit more than Cobain could handle.

From their humble beginnings in the extremely depressing town of Aberdeen, Washington and onward, this film succinctly covers a lot of ground without appearing to rush or gloss over anything. It even manages to go over some of Nirvana's early influences and it's a full 20 minutes before it gets into the making of *In Utero*. There loads of great, little-seen photographs and audio of rehearsals so this is a must-see for any Nirvana fan.

Extras

There's only one worthwhile extra on this disc, a 2-minute featurette on the posthumously released *Nirvana: Unplugged in New York* which is widely considered their best album. Their songs are even more powerful when stripped down to their barest elements, mainly Cobain's vocals, lyrics and astonishingly beautiful melodies. I know it sounds strange to call Nirvana's songs beautiful, but just listen to "All Apologies" and tell me it doesn't rank right up there with the best of Lennon/McCartney's compositions. I dare you.

Final Words

Nirvana: A Classic Album Under Review is an enlightening and entertaining film exploring one of the definitive albums of my generation. Since the demise of Nirvana, rock music has slipped into a cesspool of mediocrity from which it has yet to fully recover. (Bands like the Killers, Radiohead and the Strokes offer some much needed respite from what's ruling the airwaves now.) I hate to sound like a geezer who says "music was much better in my day," but . . .music was much better in my day, and this film is a great testament to that fact.

