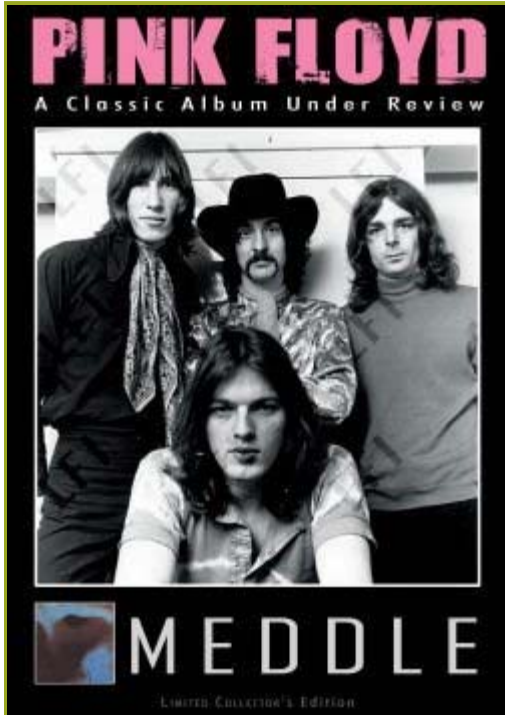


:: 4.10.2007

## Review: Pink Floyd -- Meddle: A Classic Album Under Review [DVD]



In our opinion, the music of **Pink Floyd** was at its most exciting between Syd Barrett's departure and the release of *The Dark Side Of The Moon*, when bassist Roger Waters became the dominant voice in the band (to grossly oversimplify the band's output from the mid-'70s through *The Final Cut*). The stretch of albums and soundtracks from the vastly under-appreciated *More* to the also vastly under-appreciated *Obscured By Clouds* captures the band casting about for direction and re-inventing itself several times over, embracing acid rock ("Nile Song"), orchestral psych ("Atom Heart Mother") and piano-driven balladry ("Stay") all between 1969 to 1972. Some compelling ideas from the era, such as the heavy concept piece *The Man & The Journey*, were never recorded and exist only as bootlegs.

In late 1971 **Pink Floyd** issued *Meddle*, its first album that -- based on the hundreds of music collections we've inspected over the last 25 years -- enjoyed fairly broad acceptance among mainstream music fans. Interestingly, that appeal seems heavily based on the strong and continued affinity FM radio has for the album opener "One Of These Days," a track considered by some in the band to be the most collaborative composition it ever recorded. *Meddle* as a collection flows but is far from homogenous. From the "Dr. Who"-ish space rock of the opener, Floyd leads listeners through the peaceful, pastoral mirror world of "A Pillow Of Winds;" the slow campfire strum of "Fearless" (which memorably closes with Liverpool soccer fans singing "You'll Never Walk Alone;" the cosmopolitan and hedonistic bounce of "San Tropez;" the weird dead-dog blues sketch "Seamus;" and finally the Homeric psych symphony "Echoes." Granted, none of it is overtly challenging to casual music fans, but little of it is Top 40 fodder either. And yet the album reached No. 3 on the U.K. charts.



:: Jay Breitl

:: Cambridg

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All of which leads to us to the recently issued DVD "Pink Floyd -- Meddle: A Classic Album Under Review," which will be released by MVD Entertainment April 24. We were skeptical of how much we would enjoy this, because we found another video in the series, "Joy Division -- Under Review," very dull. The expert commentary contained there, while credible, offered little compelling analysis or insight (particularly when compared against the relatively gripping Ian Curtis biography "Touching From A Distance" written by Curtis's widow Deborah). Without input from actual band members, there seemed to be little meaningful raw material, making "Joy Division -- Under Review" fall flat under the weight of the sort of musings you hear from dudes with too much time to kill in the record store. And while "Meddle: A Classic Album Under Review" also relies exclusively on talking heads at best offering personal opinion, analysis and insight, and at worst just plain speculating about stuff, the result is much more satisfying. Perhaps it is the tighter narrative or the higher quality of the archival footage.

But also the analysis seems significantly more pithy. The film devotes most of its first half to background about the band, and then gradually contextualizes the album within the Floyd continuum against milestones including "Set The Controls For The Heart of The Sun" and "Atom Heart Mother." There follows a reasoned discussion of whether Pink Floyd should be called a progressive rock band; the importance of that single processed piano note as a jumping off point for "Echoes." The filmmakers also use strong examples to make interesting points, including isolating the two dueling bass parts of "One Of These Days" to contrast the abilities of Waters and guitarist David Gilmour and showing live footage of the actual dog Seamus howling along with the (nice) pair as evidence of the silliness of the track. The DVD is likely too academic for casual music fans, but those with a strong affinity for the Floyd will get something out of watching it.

[Buy Pink Floyd -- Meddle: Classic Album Under Review from MVD [here](#)]  
[Stream Meddle for free at Rhapsody [here](#)]

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posted by jbreitling @ 4/10/2007 08:24:00 PM

### 2 Comments:

At 4/11/2007 08:55:02 AM, Ric thus spaketh...

Is it unreasonable that I can never get interested enough to watch one of these discs that has no actual involvement of the artist it deals with? Though in this case, given current output, perhaps the less the better. This raises a significant question -- where is the gutting of the Pink Floyd vault proportional to its classic rock contemporaries? Why is there not a box set reissue of *Meddle*?

At 4/11/2007 09:17:26 AM, jbreitling thus spaketh...

It's not unreasonable. Without artist input, I don't think most of these things have any credibility, and offer little more than does a good conversation at the bar with music-minded folks. That said, this Floyd item was substantially better than others I have seen, and I actually learned things. That wasn't the case for the Joy Division disc.

I expect Floyd box sets haven't been released because of the rift with Waters. But perhaps there is also a feeling that so much of the extras from the band was already heavily bootlegged (Dark Side Of The Moo!, etc.). That said, I don't have any of those boots digitized and I expect there aren't a lot of guys out there ripping their vinyl boots. I could be wrong. I know I certainly would like to have all that stuff on CD, but besides The Man & The Journey from Amsterdam, I don't. Hell, I don't even have all of the proper Floyd records on CD yet.

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