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Under Review series: The Byrds (Double Set)/Neil Young 1976 – 2006/Van Morrison 1964 – 1974 (MVD/Chrome Dreams DVD)

Picture: C+ Sound: C+ Extras: C
Documentaries: B- each

The **Under Review** series continues to be one of the most prolific of any music documentary series ever made. Rarely disappointing and often making you wish it could go on longer, but they are able to license the music in virtually all cases and leave no stone unturned. For a change, I figured that we would group together three like titles, all of whom are artists from the counterculture era in the late 1960s that left permanent, indelible marks on world music.

The Byrds set is longer than most DVD releases in the series, but sticks with the band only to the end of their Columbia Records years, skipping the infamous 1973 reunion album on Asylum Records that no one seems to like. It paints Dave Crosby as wilder than you might expect considering the sympathy he has received in recent years, shows the rise of the band, its experimental period where it took a dip and its final comeback before falling apart in a way they were never able to really repair.

I still think *8 Miles High* is their peak, no matter the psychedelic label and the idea that they may have been the originators of Country Rock a stretch. Still, the research and interviews are first rate and it is a good set.

The **Neil Young** installment covers the end of his original cycle of popularity, an experimental period where he famously clashed with David Geffen when he ran Geffen Records and his big recent comeback where he returns to what seems like familiar territory, yet offers much more than a retreat. What I liked about the program is it shows how uncompromising he always has been and will be, which has made him one of the music industry's all-time survivors. The Geffen Years finally get the credit they deserve and despite the controversy, **Trans** may prove ultimately how he was just more than a Rock/Country/Pop/Counterculture artist no matter how much some critics would like to write it off as his answer to Lou Reed's infamous **Metal Machine Music**. With music as bad as it is now, his legacy is greater than ever.

The **Van Morrison** installment shows why he is an artist to be reckoned with and even goes back to his early days with the band them. It is easy to forget for too many that he did amazing albums and was not just a singles' artist who has nearly been trivialized with the media obsession of mocking the 1960s. **Astral Weeks** is considered a masterwork to this day and in this age of brainless, ultra-low quality MP3s, the album is getting lost in the shuffle. This installment ends when he decides to take a break, ending his first unb4eleivable cycle of artistic and (fortunately) commercial success.

The 1.33 X 1 image on all three releases can have letterboxed moments, but looks good and all offer great interviews to go along with the generous selection of archival stills, video and film footage. The Dolby Digital 2.0 Stereo on all three releases is good as usual on these collections, but none are audiophile quality either. Fortunately, many of Young's albums have been issued in DVD-Audio editions, while several Super Audio CDs were issued of The Byrds early works. Wish Morrison would get the same treatment.



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- > **Howard The Duck (1986/DVD-Video/Umbrella Entertainment Australia/Region 0/Zero/PAL DVD)**
- > **Fortysomething (Acorn Media DVD/British TV Comedy)**
- > **Jayce & The Wheeled Warriors – Volume One (The First 33 Episodes/Shout! Factory DVD)**
- > **Sharkwater (2007/DVD-Video)**
- > **Enchanted (2007/DVD + Blu-ray/Disney)**
- > **Celine Dion – Live In Las Vegas: A New Day (Blu-ray Set)**
- > **Samurai Rebellion (1967/The Criterion Collection/DVD-Video)**

Extras on **Byrds** includes text contributor bios, text on John York, Gene Parsons' demonstrating the String Bender and Jerry Cole Recalls with stories on Phil Spector, Charles Manson and others. **Young** has a tough quiz and text contributor bios. **Morrison** has a tough quiz, text contributor bios and *Stories On The Road* by Jim Rothermel interview segment.

For more on these artists, try these links:

Byrds Greatest Hits Super Audio CD

[http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/6801/The+Byrds+Greatest+Hits+\(1967/Sup](http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/6801/The+Byrds+Greatest+Hits+(1967/Sup)

Neil Young – Heart Of Gold (Documentary DVD)


[http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/3835/Neil+Young+-+Heart+Of+Gold+\(DTS](http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/3835/Neil+Young+-+Heart+Of+Gold+(DTS)

Van Morrison – Live At Montreux 1980/1974 DVD

<http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/4631/Van+Morrison+-+Live+At+Montreux>

- Nicholas Sheffo

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