



Van Morrison

"Under Review"

By Joe Milliken

The legendary Van Morrison has worn many musical hats over the years and this particular documentary looks at the early part of his career from 1964-1974. Originally from Northern Ireland, Under Review looks at the George Ivan Morrison's humble beginnings as leader of the band Them, before emerging into a solo career that has endured for more than 40 years.

Always following his own musical path, the documentary discusses Morrison's earliest influences taken from his father's own record collection, and how he has incorporated these influences (blues, American jazz, gospel, traditional Celtic and country and western) into his own style throughout his career.

The documentary delves into his early musical dabbles in skiffle music, the early 60's London scene and then traditional blues music, which led to the formation of the band Them in which Morrison's song writing skills and vocal style led the group to early moderate success, which ultimately led to Van's departure into a legendary solo career.

As a solo artist, the period of the late 60's and early 70's is widely considered by many Van fans to be the most important phase of his career, producing such memorable albums as *Tupelo Honey*, *Astral Weeks* and *Moondance*. The documentary touches upon several aspects of these influential albums and how many of Morrison's early influences come into play throughout this time period.

In fact, many listeners might not realize that not only is Van an exceptional song writer and unique vocalist, but also an accomplished multi-instrumentalist. Guitar, piano, bass, saxophone, percussion, you name it Van plays it.

Although not officially authorized by the artist himself, Under Review features plenty of insight from various insiders, journalists and fellow musicians who have worked with Mr. Morrison through the years, making this an informative and worthy addition to any Van fan's music collection.