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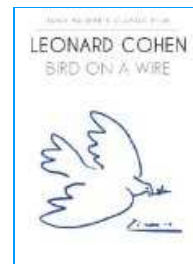
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Leonard Cohen - Bird On A Wire

MVD Entertainment Group / Tony Palmer's Classic Film

Tony Palmer Tony Palmer
Year: 1974
Rating: NR
Length: 106 minutes
Ratio: 1.78:1
Anamorphic: Yes
Language: English (DDST)
Subtitles: English, French
Number of chapters:
Number of discs: 1 (DVD-5)
Bar Code (UPC): 604388737000



This DVD is available at: Amazon.ca

According to Sébastien Cassou

December 2, 2010

The songwriter and poet Leonard Cohen has always been wary of the media. Often discrete or downright invisible to the press and cameras, he has always maintained an integrity in the shade of the spotlight. This is perhaps because his actual popularity and international recognition came relatively late in his career and that he therefore saw the storm coming and wisely, or simply that he had a rebellious personality who was wary of de facto establishment of henchmen. Still, very few documents exist which shed light in depth on the man and his work.

That is why the DVD release of the documentary by British director Tony Palmer, "Bird on a Wire," will be like a gift from heaven for fans of the singer. This film was shot in 1972 during a tour of the artist in a score of European cities with more that two Israeli cities. We follow Cohen and his band and entourage to Paris, Dublin, Berlin, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and other cities of the old continent. The renowned director, used to these intimate portraits of musicians (see his excellent series [All You Need Is Love](#)), delivers a kind of travel journal about the artist. No narration, no interviews, just moments captured with the artist in his immediate environment.

Many of the images captured on stage - whole songs in fact - in quiet moments backstage before the concert, others more hectic after the performance when the groupies and other leeches invade the living space of the singer and flirt and socialize shamelessly candid moments sometimes where Cohen faces the media circus - radio, TV, newspapers - travel by bus or plane, rehearsals and other events that populate a tour. Many moments like almost riot in Tel Aviv or the police trying to prevent the camera from Palmer to capture the atrocities and where we hear the voice of Cohen's attempt to calm the spirits or the artist reciting a poem in the quiet of his hotel room.

In short, a beautiful print of this period of life of the singer, or attend one event instead of hearing them tell. Lovers of biography will be disappointed because there is nothing approaching the traditional portrait here, but fans will love the troubadour to regain their natural idol. Pensive, laid, hired and sometimes dark. We hear from others throughout this movie full performance of several masterpieces by the author as "Suzanne," "Sisters of Mercy," "The Partisan" and the title song.

The presentation of the DVD is also the height of the film quality. It has included a nifty booklet with newspaper clippings of the time related to the artist as well as a reproduction of a poster of the time.

Audiovisual quality is generally acceptable, though the film carries the weight of his years. Shot on 16mm film, you will notice some aging equipment over 35 years later. Slight discolouration of some sections, grain ubiquitous in darker sequences and softness are the most serious defects. Fortunately, the cleaning and preparation for transfer has been done correctly, what is the overall visual quality. The audio track has also enjoyed a fine job of transfer more body to the soundtrack visibly aging. There is no surcharge on this DVD.

Odds

Film	8
Presentation	9
Supplements	-
Video	7
Audio	7

