



BOB DYLAN

BIRMINGHAM NEC ARENA
Friday 10 May. 8:00pm!

★ In Show & Concert! ★

BOB DYLAN

And
His
Band!

IN PERSON!

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Fri. 10th May 2002, NEC Arena, Birmingham, England

Disc 1 66:59

1. Intro 1:47
2. Maggie's Farm 3:39
3. You're A Big Girl Now 5:55
4. It's Alright, Ma (I'm Only Bleeding) 6:17
5. Tomorrow Is A Long Time (harmonic) 5:10
6. Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues 7:51
7. Tweedle Dee & Tweedle Dum 5:09
8. Moonlight 4:35
9. Cry A While 5:35
10. Fourth Time Around 3:48
11. Masters Of War 5:07
12. Tangled Up In Blue 9:12

Disc 2 67:12

1. Summer Days 7:08
2. Sugar Baby 7:16
3. The Wicked Messenger (harmonic) 6:24
4. Rainy Day Women #12 & 35 (harmonic) 7:20
5. Love Sick 5:40
6. Like A Rolling Stone 7:37
7. Forever Young 6:02
8. Honest With Me 6:10
9. Blowin' In The Wind 4:47

Bob Dylan - vocal, guitar, harmonic

Charlie Sexton - guitar, backup vocals

Larry Campbell - guitar, mandolin, violin,
pedal steel guitar, electric slide guitar, gittern,
backup vocals

Tony Garnier - bass

Jim Kellner - drums



7:30 arrives with Aaron Copland's Fanfare for the Common Man, loud and clear, played to an audience still arriving by the thousand, no real interest. The black drapes display in white the huge all-seeing eye with crown and flames, staff merchandising is available. Anticipation is high, incense is high, will it break the rut of excellent gigs? How long will he keep us waiting? Hundreds still to enter, no real interest, he is always late, the house-lights go out.

7.45 The ludicrous "L&G please welcome Columbia Recording Artist ...", and immediately we are away. The band (black insects) in smart pale blue-grey suits (confederate you might say), hard to be sure from this distance under the lighting, the song and dance man in black with the large white Stetson. Certainly more country or lounge than R&R. The acoustic set opens, but not with a sound check, what is happening here, he is not working on Maggie's farm any more, Larry is excellent on mandolin. The concert has started. Hundreds more decide to find a seat. So, a real song and into You're A Big Girl Now. Actually, the singer-songwriter is having fun with us here, I suspect that he is in really good health, rude health even. So those all important Dylan lyrics are reworked, into whatever you want with "and you in somebody's room, but I don't care to LOOK, just put my order in with the COOK, - pause - hang my coat up on a HOOK", lots of genuine smiles and laughter sets the early tone, Bob playing about with "gum" later. It's alright, lets gets its sad cheer for a naked president, and we move on smoothly to mouth-organ (lots of cheers, before it is played that bit and a beautiful, tender, deeply felt Tomorrow is A Long Time, sung straight by Larry (note) with Bob's harmonies over (a highlight). An excellent, opening acoustic set, nothing to fault, lots to enjoy. Hundreds still to enter, security - well it is more than my jobsworth etc.

The next surprise after Maggie's is the choice of the "so-called" electric set (we are keeping strictly to the 15-5 pattern readers will know about), but this is electric folk, and certainly no Fender party. There is no R&R here, a nod towards R&B, but much more Blonde-on -Blonde and electric folk. So we are lost in the rain, and it is past Easter time, lets not get on any aims, Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues was clear and moving. It was really well delivered, perhaps this was tonight's real treat. 5 down, nothing new, then T Dee & T Dum continues to keep us smiling, loud, long, well performed, still good clarity, at this distance our hopes are in the sound system. So lets do songs from the new LAT album, lets take a walk in the (lounge like) moonlight together, the lava lamp effect on the backdrop. Actually, I've cried for you baby, so now its your turn to. Excellent work on the double-bass, more of this later, and the slide guitar are prelude of enjoyment soon to come. Some leave for the bar.

The black-back school-curtains are dragged aside to reveal the pleated grey school curtains on which the lighting can play. The second acoustic group starts with an awesome Fourth Time Around, ask here for some-Jamaican rum, spit out your gum, you have a crutch, don't ask for mine, this was another highlight. Bob has serious fun leaning and questioning "gum", more laughter. Then a deeply felt, powerful Masters of War. Red and yellow beams flood the stage, the singer-songwriter is still going strong. There have been those pleas in those pages to put Tangled Up in Blue to rest, well its re-invention is now complete. Tonight, Larry takes a spot front and centre WITHOUT Bob, he plays entirely through Tangled Up in Blue if you know the chords and the tune line, only then is he joined by Bob in a 2nd spot, each in a single shaft of light, everything else pitch black, one plays, the other sings, right through the first verse, and then the stage floods with blue, the band jump in, and we are really rocking.

Summer days in golden light, but pure R&B, spits out Sugar Baby. A brief mention here for Tony Garner who spins around his double-bass to show that acoustic R&B has roots close to jazz. The strong 7-beat downward progression, (one-two-three-four, double-time five-six, long seven), it is mouth-organ in the Wicked Messenger, well delivered as a good example of R&R, but with compound (of German) nouns, compound sentences. Immediately recognized chords for a beautiful blues version of Rainy Day Women with lovely harmonica by Bob and Larry on steel, Jim Keltner working closely with Tony, Bob almost sings the name checks, cheers for each, away they go it is 9.22.

Away for 3 long mins, 9.25 the encores/second set start, we have really cheered for them. I'm sick of love, I'm love-sick. Then Like A Rolling Stone, tonight not the usual "only a crowd pleaser", but a much more animated singer-songwriter. As often at Birmingham, Forever Young, lots of crowd pleasure, some sing-along, genuine applause. Some of the silly three words to one note and then a very high almost falsetto riling, re-interpreting for some, Forever Young. Well, I've been honest with you (Larry excellent on slide), and then Blowin' in The Wind and its close harmonies and a new stop us in: the answer my friend is -pause- Blowin' in The Wind - There were only a few boring one- or two-note guitar solos (don't you just love "re-interpretation", but when standing next to Larry and Charlie, please) generally lots of good guitar work. At the back, un-sung hero Tony works constantly hard with signals to Jim Keltner, who has nicely used brushes, and underplayed rather than the reverse. We yell, but not enough, and they are away to the two black coaches and off to the hotel. Tonight 20 songs in 3 hours - with 6 off LAT, more lounge and R&B, less R&R. In S. Blagbrough