

Sun. 5th Oct. 1997. Wembley Arena, London, England

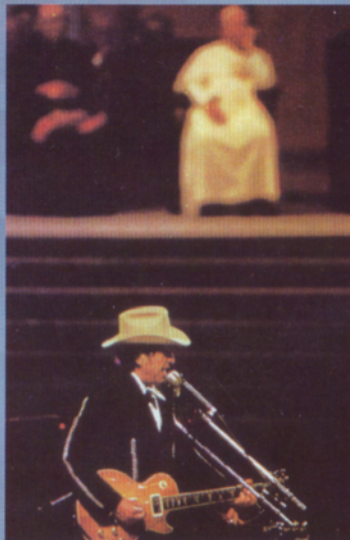
Disc 1 75.20

1. Absolutely Sweet Marie 4.35
2. Señor (Tales Of Yankee Power) 4.46
3. Tough Mama 4.40
4. You Ain't Goin' Nowhere 4.01
5. Silvio 6.01
6. One Too Many Mornings 4.59
7. Tangled Up In Blue 7.25
8. Rank Strangers To Me 3.57
9. Stuck Inside Of Mobile With
The Memphis Blues Again 7.03
10. Blind Willie McTell 6.37
11. Highway 61 Revisited 5.28
12. Like A Rolling Stone 7.52

Disc 2 72.57

1. Don't Think Twice, It's All Right 6.32
2. Love Sick 5.30
3. Rainy Day Women #12 & 35 5.18
4. Cocaine Blues 4.37 1 oct 1997
5. I Want You 4.55 3 oct 1997
6. I'll Be Your Baby Tonight 5.35 3 oct 1997
7. Stone Walls And Steel Bars 3.00 3 oct 1997
8. It's All Over Now, Baby Blue 8.08 3 oct 1997
9. My Back Pages 5.32 3 oct 1997
10. Knockin' On Heavens Door 4.18 27 sep 1997
11. A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall 8.08 27 sep 1997
12. Forever Young 5.26 27 sep 1997

track 4 = 1 oct 1997, Bournemouth, Windsor Hall at Bournemouth int. Center
5 - 9 = 3 oct 1997, Cardiff, International Arena
10 - 12 = 27 sep 1997, Bologna, Italy, World Eucharistic Congress (In front of the Pope)



Dylan and his touring band habitually play between 100 and 150 shows a year, year in and year out, all around the world. This itinerary has somehow attracted a title, the Never-Ending Tour, but he can't understand why. After all, touring is what working musicians did long before just making videos and appearing on chat shows became a promotional option — and it is as a working musician that he defines himself, not a recording artist. "And it's easier that way. When you go and play live, you just do the show and it's over and done with. Then you're gone, on to some place else. The strain is more physical than mental, and that's why I choose to do it. Writing can be harder.

"I don't ever really feel like I'm on or off of tour. I simply work a certain amount of days each year, which puts me in the category of someone just making their living by a trade. I don't make a record every three years, then go and tour so that audiences will buy it as a souvenir. I'm

not that kind of artist and never wanted to be; I don't approach music so dispassionately. And consistent touring is less of a hardship. You don't have to keep assembling and rehearsing a new team; there's less upheaval and dislocation in your life. The Never-Ending Tour? I don't know where that came from. I didn't name it that. Crosby, Stills & Nash play the same sort of number of dates as I do and they're not on a never-ending tour. Lots of other people too."

Equally, he finds it meaningless to speculate about whether a more authentic music, his own included, is coming back into vogue again. "I just plough my own furrow, regardless. The people I listened to — still listen to — were never fashionable, as far as I'm aware. Woody Guthrie. Was he ever fashionable? I don't think so. Or Leadbelly? Or the great Robert Johnson? How many records did he sell in his lifetime? Very few. Whereas Al Jolson, he was fashionable . . . And what happens? In every era, fashionable people go out of fashion as soon as the prevailing wind changes."

If we accept that, by dint of his annual touring schedule, he is a tradesman, we must insist on according Dylan the status of master craftsman as a composer and lyricist. His canon of work is almost certainly the best and most significant to have been amassed in the second half of this century by any one non-collaborative songwriter. He him-

self acknowledges only that it is out of respect for his own back-catalogue that he so assiduously avoids what, in her song *Free Man In Paris*, his nearest rival Joni Mitchell termed "the star-maker machinery behind the popular song". Turning his head so that, for once, he is looking directly at me, he says: "I cannot do anything that would be demeaning to my songs.

"If I wasn't working live and had no other avenue of expression, maybe there would be some kind of sense to it [the courting of a wider popularity]. But I have no great need to appeal to people who are still in high school. I wouldn't want to seem as if I were going fishing for a younger set. A certain crowd of people come and see me play, and I'm assuming that they're the ones who naturally relate to what I sing about. And that they're there seems to be enough for me."

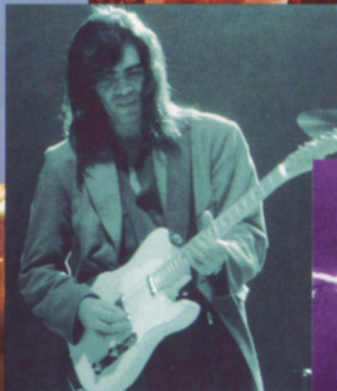
Although I believe him, I wonder also if that part of his heart which might hope and look forward to still being loved and admired by the whole listening world hasn't just closed itself down, out of self-protection perhaps.

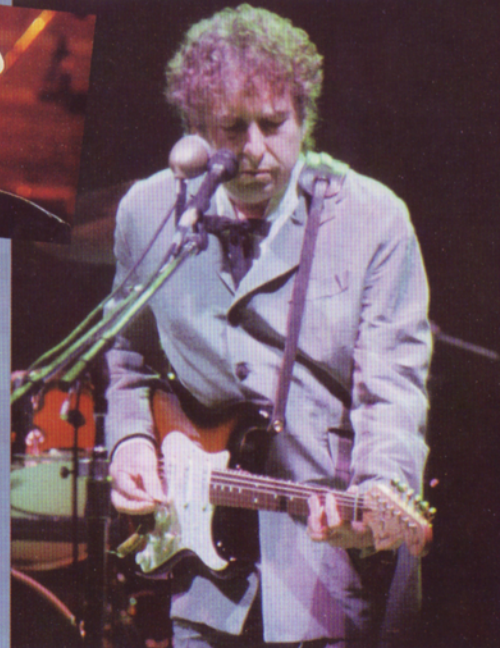
I wonder this particularly when he says that yes, to have critical praise and commercial success again is gratifying, but, "I'm not used to it any more and, having gravitated instead towards bringing my work alive again night after night on stage, I find that to be what's important to me now. I can't say that it's never been my turn commercially, and that I've never known the feeling of having a record top the charts, because it wouldn't be true. But to have it again? I'm not really counting on it, 'cos I don't want to set myself up for a disappointment. I'm used now to just a certain amount of people buying my albums and then them falling out of sight. And I'm aware that the record market belongs to much younger people these days. As it should, as it should."

We are about to be parted, but he draws me back to him for a final observation. "I'm just so glad that you like this particular record," he says of my enthusiasm for *Time Out of Mind*. "In fact, I'm very overwhelmed. I'm used to my records just being slagged off and my shows misrepresented. That's what I'm used to. You get used to it. You have to. If you expect to go on, you have to get used to being slagged off and misrepresented in all kinds of ways. I'm no longer used to the acceptance of a record. I think it would take me a while to get used to it. So, thank you."



BOB DYLAN
vocal, guitar
BUCKY BAXTER
Pedal Steel and el.
slide guitar, backup voc.
LARRY CAMPBELL
guitar, backup voc.
TONY GARNIER
Bass
DAVID KEMPER
drums





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