



# BOB DYLAN

© 1994 Capitol Music Group, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

**LONDON DOCKLANDS ARENA**  
— Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May 8.00pm! —

★ **In Show & Concert!** ★

**BOB DYLAN**

**And  
His  
Band!**

**IN PERSON!**

The arena is the only venue in the world to host a Bob Dylan concert.

Sat. 11th May 2002, London Arena, Docklands, London, England

Disc 1 72.04

1. **Intro** 1.00
2. **I Am The Man, Thomas** 2.49
3. **The Times They Are A-Changin'** (harmonica) 6.56
4. **It's Alright, Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)** 6.16
5. **It's All Over Now, Baby Blue** (harmonica) 6.54
6. **Solid Rock** 4.40
7. **Floater** 6.09
8. **Subterranean Homesick Blues** 4.16
9. **Lonesome Day Blues** 7.20
10. **Mr. Tambourine Man** (harmonica) 6.25
11. **Visions Of Johanna** 9.09
12. **Don't Think Twice, It's All Right** 6.36

Disc 2 61.01

1. **Blind Willie McTell** 6.38
2. **Summer Days** 6.55
3. **Cold Irons Bound** 5.35
4. **Leopard-Skin Pill-Box Hat** 6.21
5. **Like A Rolling Stone** 7.57
6. **Honest With Me** 6.21
7. **Blowin' In The Wind** (harmonica) 5.50
8. **All Along The Watchtower** 6.07

**Bob Dylan** – vocal, guitar, harmonica

**Charlie Sexton** – guitar, backup vocals

**Larry Campbell** – guitar, mandolin, violin,  
pedal steel guitar, electric slide guitar, cittern,  
backup vocals

**Tony Garnier** – bass

**Jim Keltner** – drums





# London Arena

The indomitable toreador rides again.

THE PA in this grim, dispiriting venue – outright winner of the industrial-estate self-storage-unit-impersonating-Ikea-during-the-sales lookalike contest – has started, somewhat disconcertingly, to blare out Fanfare For The Common Man. A startled pigeon falls from the rafters, straightens itself up and swoops above the stage. The band amble on nonchalantly – five of them including the slight-looking figure in the tight, black gaucho suit and big, white cowboy hat – and take up position on the far left side, leaving a big bare space between them and the sound-man in the wings (who, if my eyesight's not mistaken, is Augie Meyers). The common man, meanwhile, is still struggling to gain entry through the Arena's sole open door, and a constant stream of seat-hunting humanity passes before your eyes as the band play on, oblivious to anything but the music they're making.

They clearly have their own thing going on up there. Their engagement with each other – eye contact, nods of the head – is in reverse proportion to their lack of engagement with the audience. Until the encores, any crowd-pleasing is inadvertent. Not a word is spoken until Dylan rattles off their names in the set-closer – Tony Garnier on electric, acoustic and stand-up bass, Charlie Sexton on guitar, Larry

Campbell on guitar, slide, steel and mandocello, Jim Keltner on drums. Bar the addition of Keltner, it's the same band as on his last UK

visit – beyond question one of the two best bands he's had. With musicians like that, talking is superfluous. Hell, it even makes a giant Spam can seem like one of the better places a person could be on a damp Docklands Saturday night.

The two and a quarter hour performance (with no support act) starts out in acoustic country – I Am The Man, Thomas made all the more bucolic by the reappearance of the pigeon – and stays there much of the time, veering off into rockabilly and electric blues. Dylan seems more than relaxed with this. Doesn't smile much, but looks very contented, bopping on the spot in a shuffling variation on the Tom Petty bounce, and trading leads with his compadres (his guitar playing one of the highlights). The anger seems to have gone from his voice, replaced by a snagged growl that sounds like a cocksure old blues alpha male (confident, even sexy, on Lonesome Day Blues) or a dusty death-rattle (pretty scary on Cold Irons Bound). On the less frequented material he's in fine voice – lean and unforced on Blind Willie McTell; insouciant glue-and-gravel on old-time country swing Floater (Too Much To Ask).

For his old songs, the ones that have been calcified over time into public statuary, he opts for an approach that, depending on your out-



look, is fascinating or perverse. Mostly it's a rapid-fire rush of words, all on one level, followed by a momentary pause and a leap up to the eighth note of the octave, right at the end of the phrase. Back down for another lyrical sprint, and up he goes again, like a hurdle-race. Maybe it's his take on the high, lonesome sound. More likely it's as if the words – their familiarity and import to so many, many people – are an obstacle he has to surmount to reach his goal. Which tonight – as for some time now – appears to be playing as part of a band.

The musicianship is exceptionally good: the three acoustic guitars and unhurried harp on swaying country waltz The Times They Are A-Changin'; the driving, rockabilly rhythm of It's Alright, Ma; the superb acoustic interaction on Visions Of Johanna, Don't Think Twice, and It's All Over Now, Baby Blue, with its subtle pedal steel and the lyric changed to (more suitable for a sexagenarian?), "I suppose it's all over now Baby Blue".

The one concession to the arena rock game comes in the encore – the lights on the audience for a sing-along-able Like A Rolling Stone; the dense, melodramatic rock of All Along The Watchtower. Crowd-pleasers certainly, but they seem out of place, slick.

Elsewhere the old, familiar words roll together like an avalanche of marbles; cheers rise up from the crowd when a recognisable line stands out – president standing naked, vandals



taking handles, Mona Lisa's highway blues.

One emotional

woman seems to take Dylan's admonishment in Don't Think Twice (excellent playing, slowing to an extended country-blues instrumental ending) that it ain't no use in calling out his name as a hidden message for her to scream "Bob! Bob! Bob!" blood-curdlingly, over and over. All of which would seem to attest that, whatever efforts Dylan might take to prevent things slipping into a comfortable nostalgia-fest, you're going to take what you want from the show, and there ain't nothing the showman can do about it.

Postscript: an eavesdropping poll of the Docklands Light Railway carriage afterwards found 10 per cent bemoaning that he hadn't "sung them like on the records", five per cent doing a laudable impersonation of Dylan's vocal high-vault and the remaining 85 per cent glowing with satisfaction.

Sylvie Simmons

## CROWD-PLEASER

"She screams 'Bob! Bob!' blood-curdlingly over and over again."