BOB
DYLAN
AND His
BAND
VOX

Mon. 24th Nov, 2003, Hammersmith Apollo, London, England

Disc 1 78:49

1. Intro 0,54
2. Drifters Escape 4,40
3. You Ain´t Goin´ Nowhere 4,34
4. Cry A While 5,38
5. Girl Of The North Country 5,41
6. Romance In Durango 7,04
7. Dear Landlord 5,58
8. High Water (For Charley Patton) 6,35
9. Tough Mama 4,48
10. Floater (Too Much To Ask) 7,34
11. Million Miles 7,33
12. Jokerman 6,27
13. Honest With Me 6,49

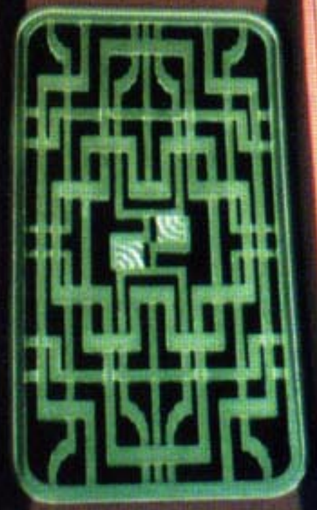
Disc 2 77:52

1. The Lonesome Death Of Hattie Carroll 5,55
2. Summer Days 6,29
3. Cat´s In The Well 4,14
4. Like A Rolling Stone 6,34
5. All Along The Watchtower 5,27
6. Never Gonna Be The Same Again 6,05
7. Saving Grace 3,52
8. Lay, Lady, Lay 4,15
9. I´ll Be Your Baby Tonight 6,30
10. Everything Is Broken 3,28
11. I Don´t Believe You (She Acts Like We Never Have Met) 6,05
12. Knockin´ On Heavens Door 4,39
13. It Ain´t Me, Babe 6,22

Bob Dylan - piano, harp, guitar
Larry Campbell - guitar, slide guitar, cittern, pedal steel
Freddy Koella - guitar, slide guitar,violin
Tony Garnier - bass
George Recile - drums

Bonus Tracks dics 2:

6. 18 apr. -03, Dallas, Texas, Granada Theater
7. 30 apr. -03, Louisville, Kentucky, Jillian's Parking Lot
8. 4 may -03, West Palm Beach, Florida, SunFest 2003, Washington Mutual Stage
9. 5 may -03, Orlando, Florida, Hard Rock Live
10-11. 6 may -03, Charleston, South Carolina, North Charleston Coliseum
12. 10 aug. -03, Holmdel, New Jersey, PNC Bank Arts Center
13. 26 oct. -03, Graz, Austria, Eishalle Liebenau



VOX

I could write the shortest review I have done this tour right now, and just type in Romance in Durango. Enough said! You had to be there! I would run out of superlatives.

However, let me add a bit more. After last night's amazing setlist and the full experience at the Shepherds Bush Empire, I like many others, was wondering what Bob would do next. Would he revert to the Arena setlist or delve further into his treasure trove of songs with another glittering display of different songs for the crowd. He must have been aware that many in each night's audience have followed him around the country as best they could and might welcome a further change of songs, and the evidence of last night showed just how much they appreciated the astonishing range of songs he produced at that wonderfully intimate venue. In the event tonight was a mix of the arena-familiar and the wonderful surprises.

Hammersmith held much promise - it has been a regular on Bob's circuit in the UK in the past, and has seen a mixture of good shows and not-so-good. For me tonight was probably the best Dylan show I have ever seen, and that one song in particular, Romance in Durango, was the finest thing of this tour so far without any doubt. Into the theatre, quite a way back in the queue, we found ourselves really well placed some ten deep from the barrier and with excellent views, and after the usual inaudible introduction, the wondering and discussions about possible setlists were certainly further stimulated by the opening Drifter's Escape. Yet another new start in these past three shows, and a reallly good arrangement of the song, but what a treat was to follow as Larry moved, for the only time of the evening, to the pedal steel for a superb performance of You Ain't Goin' Nowhere. I've always loved this song, with its crazy surreal lyrics, and Bob's singing tonight was mesmerisingly good and the crowd loved it. It was clear too that the sound tonight was lovely sharp, a fact that continued to be evident in every number, whether hard and rocky or soft and gentle. Huge thanks are due to Pablo on the back sound desk for this.

Cry A While followed, a song that has grown on me as each time I've heard it, and tonight's version did it good justice. The first treat for me of the evening was to hear Girl of the North Country, my first time on this tour, again a song that has long been a favourite, and I could see why many have enjoyed this arrangement so much. But if these first four suggested good things, to follow everything we have witnessed at Wembley, the NEC and Shepherds Bush, all that was as nothing to the sheer beauty of Romance in Durango, which came up next. With the sound so clear, Dylan's vocals on this tune were quite magnificently evocative, and with a truly sympathetic back-up from the band members, this song was worth not just tonight's admission price, but that of all the other shows I've been to as well. If you get a chance to have this version on disc, please don't pass it up. This was for me, and it seems many others present to hear it, up there with the classics.

Dear Landlord continued the show, and I could easily have felt let down after the awesome high of Durango, but not a bit of it. Dylan's commitment remained steadfast, as he moved into Dear Landlord, reprising it from the night before. If anything this evening's version seemed an improvement on last night, perhaps because of the clearer sound, and when the next choice was High Water Everywhere (for Charlie Patton) I found it hard to believe what I was hearing. For me, this song, with its obvious country blues references, takes me back to my first interest in such music years ago, at the same time that I was also first listening to the new kid on the CBS block who was making waves in the "folk music" world. To hear this recently recorded song tonight was therefore an added pleasure.

Tough Mama is not a favourite song, but yet again with sharp vocals, I enjoyed it the more than usual tonight, and when Freddie Koella took up a fiddle for the next song, which turned out to be Floater, the enjoyment and pleasure just continued right along. This extra instrumental dimension was great to see, and the arrangement was a lovely, jazzy diversion from everything else on the night. Million Miles came next, and again this is one that has grown. By now, I was wondering just how good this man can get vocally, and Jokerman, in a slightly different tone from the Shepherds Bush version, maintained the fantastic levels. The band then moved easily into Honest With Me, which rocked effectively, before everything, but everything, calmed and quietened down for the other true highlight of the show and maybe of the UK leg of the tour. The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll was quite simply awesome. It may well be that the song is some forty years ago, that it treats of an incident from the 60s, but Bob's singing of it tonight was in its way as perfect, yet different a rendition as he made those many years ago, and it showed both what a powerful lyric it has, and just how powerful a song it remains today. Bob quite clearly was putting so much into the delivery of the words, and the soft playing from Larry, Tony and the others was the perfect backdrop to this critical story. And from the power yet softness of Hattie Carroll, suddenly the pace changed for what was to my mind the best version of the tour that I have heard of Summer Days. Even Freddie, about whom I have my doubts overall, was searingly good here. And then there was more of the Bob, that wonderful dance style that he has introduced to the world, and several shimmies back and forth across the stage to show his gratitude to the audience for their huge applause. I felt the crowd was the most responsive I've been in this time around, and throughout the show both Bob and the band seemed totally relaxed and having a great deal of fun.

To say that the encores were the standard Cats in the Well, like Rolling Stones and All Along the Watchtower is no criticism. Clearly Bob finds it hard to cast off this trio in his changing of all other areas of the setlist, but the whole show certainly engendered the loudest and longest applause, a sure sign that this was one concert that had been enjoyed by so many. We still have one more gig to go tomorrow before Thanksgiving beckons the Man home. Whatever they decide to play for us, it will be intriguing for sure, and hopefully wonderful, but as always with Bob Dylan, nothing is certain. Well, other than the fantastic Romance in Durango. Like I say, you had to be there tonight.

Graham Cole