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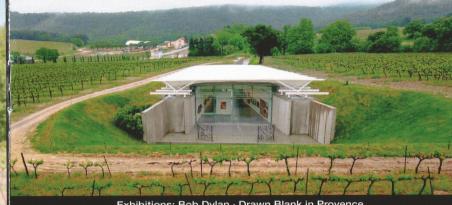
Thu. 29 June 2023, L'Amphitéâtre, Centr<sub>e de</sub> Congres, Salle 3000, Lyon, France.

Disc 1, 69,11









Exhibitions: Bob Dylan · Drawn Blank in Provence 9 May – 9 Nov. 2022 · Château La Coste, Provence, France









IT WAS ONCE AGAIN a great experience. I found it very intense to simultaneously follow the six great musicians and absorb the long lyrics of the seventeen songs, which were perfectly understandable. Amazing with what intensity Dylan and band play. He played constantly alternating between sitting and standing at the small grand piano. There were beautiful recitative passages with bowed or plucked double bass and then again incredible moments where he hammered heavily into the keys and drove the two guitarists to ever new heights. "West L.A. Fadeaway" was a nice surprise and an absolute highlight.

It's more like a jazz concert. The musicians are very concentrated and don't pose one bit. After the band introduction he asked, "These songs aren't easy to play, what do you think?" The audience answered in the affirmative with increased applause. There never seems to be a routine. At my last concert in Krefeld, he did a lot of free improvising on the piano and contrasted the band's playing with wild accents. This time he didn't play so rhythmically, but accompanied the songs mostly melodically. It was lovely to see Tony Garnier take a thieving delight in Dylan's surprising playing on several occasions. It was a wonderful evening in a very pleasant concert hall and I hope to see the band again in Germany soon.

by Joachim Meckel

## THE CHARM OF THE VOID Bob Dylan live at the Amphitheatre of Lyon (France)

Regardless of whether you see the current concert tour as a "never ending" Rough & Rowdy Ways tour or as a "Rough & Rowdy Ways Never Ending Tour", for me it is just another chapter in the long history of an incomparable tour format of an incomparable popular music artist with an unmistakable unique selling point. In the last three decades, this "lifetime tour" has only been interrupted by the pandemic. Just as the pandemic slowed down the world and imposed restrictions on its inhabitants, such as mandatory masks and vaccinations, it also brought Bob Dylan's concert tour, once titled "never ending tour", to a standstill. The Japan and US tour planned for 2020 has been cancelled. Bob Dylan didn't go on tour again until the end of 2021 and didn't owe anything. He then labeled the revival of his concert activities as a so-called "Rough & Rowdy World Tour 2021-2024". First he made up for the US concerts in 2021/2022 and toured Europe and again the USA in 2022. In the spring of 2023, he made up for the Japan tour. In the summer of 2023, he began a tour of southern Europe (Portugal. Spain, France, Switzerland, Italy) on June 2 in Porto, Portugal. He omitted the north from his planning. Before becoming one of



the headliners of the 57th Montreux Jazz Festival on 1 July, Dylan did two concerts on 29 and 30 June 2023 in the 2000-yearold and third largest French city after Paris and Marseille. When I read after announcing the tour dates that Dylan was performing at "L'Amphitheatre", I was somehow looking forward to one of those Gallic-Roman amphitheatres high above the city of Lyon in Mount Fourvierea, where the festival "Nuits de Fourviereâ" also takes place. But that was a fallacy. The L'Amphitheare is a convention center on the outskirts of Lyon, modeled on the Centre Pompidou in Paris. It houses a 3000-seat concert hall modeled on an amphitheater. Dylan gave two concerts there. The second surprise: I have rarely experienced a concert hall that was

only 60 percent full, in which a Bob Dylan performed. Maybe it was because of the 33 degrees Celsius outside temperature, so that the spontaneous ones stayed away. The third surprise: Dylan seems to continue to cultivate his love for "The Grateful Dead". After playing "West L.A. Fadeaway" live for the first time since 1999 in Aix-en-Provence the night before, he performed the song from the 1987 Dead album "In The Dark" again in Lyon.

After the admission was set for 7:00 p.m., shortly before the start of the concert at 8:00 p.m., all those who originally had tickets for the upper tiers stormed onto the empty seats and rows. After that, the location looked even emptier. But the emptiness had its charm and it was all the more clearly recognizable: "Things Have Changed" again, since the last tour in 2022, and was even the void has its charm

and yes, even the void has its charm.

The stage light was darker. Bob barely moved behind his "baby grand piano". He rarely got up, but never walked to the center of the stage. The exception was a farewell lasting about 20 seconds after the 17th song "Every Grain of Sand". Bob didn't say a single word to the audience. He only introduced the musicians of his band after "Key West". This adapted to the statics of Bob's performance. The band placed herself around the "Bobness", the king in the middle. All wear black suits.

Dylan seemed to be in a good mood, but

was more than usual taciturn. He concealed his visible fragility by sitting at the small piano.

To his left (from a stage point of view) Bob Britt on guitar, Donnie Herron (violin, electric mandolin, pedal steel, lap steel), Tony Garnier on bass and Jerry Pentecost on drums behind him and Doug Lancio on guitar to the right. Everyone focused on the master. He, in turn, concentrated on his performance of the nine out of ten songs of the "Rough & Rowdy Ways" album as if he were playing them only for himself. The subtle stage lighting gives the stage, on which at times only the shadows of the musicians can be seen. something dramatic. The dramatic begins with a "Watching The River Flow" that is almost unrecognizable as such. It's only with "I Contain Multidues" and "False Prophet" that you can hear how much Mr. Dylan enjoys the fact that his audience is increasingly getting involved with his songs. Nothing distracts, thanks to "Yondr". Not a single smartphone flashes. The atmospheric density of the evening reaches its first climax in "Black Rider", whose lyrics Dylan recites in a well-accentuated manner and his words are amplified with an echo reverberation. Before that, "When I Paint My Masterpiece" features a small acoustic guitar solo as well as a violin insert. Bob play on a Smal Grand Piano on every song. no harmonica at this show. Many of the

Rough And Rowdy Ways songs featured new arrangements. The musicians took a step back on all the songs. They watched their boss closely to see what they had to react to. Solos couldn't be too long, the drums could never get too loud.

The second musical highlight for me was "Key West", storytelling at it's best. This was followed by a short band introduction as well as an absolutely devastating "Gotta Serve Somebody", in which Bob stretched the ends of the lines so wonderfully. It almost seemed as if Dylan loved the charm of emptiness in the theatre a little and sank into the expressiveness of his words from song to song.

The darkness on stage and in the audience does not reveal any facial expressions. Very rarely flashing smartphone lights are immediately recognized as such by the security service and discreetly warned. From song to song, the applause increases. The audience stands up again and again to applaud. After "Every Grain Of Sand" and almost 100 minutes, it's suddenly over. Bob steps up to the stage wall for the first time. A few seconds later, he leaves the stage in the even darker black of the stage background. The hall lights come on, the work is done, every hair is counted like every grain of sand. The last lines "I am hanging in the balance of a perfect finished plan/Like every sparrow falling, like every grain of sand" resonate. by Christof Graf

## RAIL CAR – EXHIBITIONS by Bob Dylan

installed at Château La Coste in Provence

Bob Dylan's largest-ever sculpture, of a railway freight carriage, has been unveiled on a French vineyard, Chateau La Coste in Provence. The monumental piece, entitled Rail Car, is built from about seven tonnes of iron and installed on train tracks at Château La Coste in Provence, Exposed to the elements, it features motifs of ladders. wheels and tools. Dylan said the artwork "represents perception and reality at the same time ... all the iron is recontextualised to represent peace, serenity and stillness." He heralded the work's "enormous energy ... It represents the illusions of a journey rather than the contemplation of one." Rail Car continues Dylan's sculptural artworks in welded metal that were first shown publicly in 2013, with a set of iron gates entitled Mood Swings that were exhibited at London's Halcyon Gallery. Other metal works include Portal, an iron archway created for a casino in Maryland, Another gate piece was bought for \$84,375 by the US state department in 2019, to install in its embassy in Mozambique - the high expenditure was criticised, with an official at the department describing the purchase as "excessive". Railways are a repeated feature of Dylan's painting, and he wrote about them in his memoir, Chronicles:

Volume One: "I'd seen and heard trains from my earliest childhood days and the sight and sound of them always made me feel secure. The big boxcars, the iron ore cars, freight cars, passenger trains, Pullman cars. There was no place you could go in my home town without at least some part of the day having to stop at intersections and wait for the long trains to pass." Iron, too, has a link with Dylan's past, "I've been around iron all my life, ever since I was a kid," he said in 2013, "I was born and raised in iron ore country, where you could breathe it and smell it every day," Railway imagery appears in songs such as 1979's Slow Train, as a symbol for impending change and judgment, and 1962's Train A-Travelin': "There's an iron train a-travelin' / that's been a-rollin' through the years / With a firebox of hatred and a furnace full of fears / If you ever heard its sound or seen its blood-red broken frame / Then you heard my voice a-singin' and you know my name." Rail Car joins another high-profile project away from music for the 81-year-old songwriter this year: 2022 in November he will publish The Philosophy of Modern Song, a 60-strong essay collection celebrating songs by

BOB DYLAN HAS UNVEILED his largest sculpture to date at Château La Coste in Provence, France, Rail Car, the new site-

musicians including Little Richard, Hank,

Williams and Nina Simone.

specific ironwork sculpture, has been created for permanent installation in the Château's outdoor art estate, to be displayed alongside works by leading contemporary artists and architects such as Louise Bourgeois, Ai Weiwei, Tracy Emin and Tadao Ando.

RAIL CAR - an immersive, ironwork freight car installation set on train tracks - engages prominent motifs in Dylan's art, as well as relating to aspects of his past. As Dylan describes in his Chronicles: Volume One. 'I'd seen and heard trains from my earliest childhood days and the sight and sound of them always made me feel secure. The big boxcars, the iron ore cars, freight cars, passenger trains, Pullman cars, There was no place you could go in my hometown without at least some part of the day having to stop at intersections and wait for the long trains to pass.' The repurposed freight car that Dylan has integrated into the sculpture is a WIIX 723 double-door boxcar used to transport paper rolls for Willamette Industries, a timber and paper company based in Oregon.

Work began on Rail Car in the summer of 2019, involving engineering teams in both France and the United States. The artwork was first created in Los Angeles, then disassembled, crated and shipped to France to be installed onsite at Château La Coste. 'The car has been placed in the



most magical setting on the old Roman road that meanders through the forest here [at Château La Coste]. It is incredibly moving that Bob personally chose the location for his masterpiece to be on this trail that was trodden for hundreds of years by weary travellers. When I first met him in

Los Angeles something obviously clicked – perhaps it was because both of us love the unique Provencal landscape – or Bob wouldn't have embarked on his incredible journey to create Rail Car. Since his piece is all about travel, Rail Car miraculously fuses road and rail into one.' Paddy McKillen,

Founder and Owner, Château La Coste. The unveiling of Rail Car coincides with an exhibition featuring 23 of Dylan's paintings, entitled Drawn Blank in Provence, running 9 May until 9 November, 2022, in Château La Coste's Renzo Piano-designed art gallery.