



Trailing Moss In Mystic Glow: Bob Dylan's 2001 US Love & Theft Tour

The circus is back in town. After some excellent shows in Europe during the summer (especially the Scandinavian concerts were fabulous!) Bob took a well deserved break to start promoting his brand new album *Love And Theft*. The album got a very scary release date. On September 11th New York shook on its grounds while Columbia distributed the first new album of originals since 1997 *Time Out Of Mind*. Critics were even more enthusiastic than with his previous masterpiece, as the American magazine *Rolling Stone* rated *Love And Theft* with no less than five stars, the first album to get a maximum quatum since REM's *Automatic* cd from 1992. During an Italian press conference Dylan spoke to the entire European music world and reacted with both integrity and humour. Meanwhile his management booked a massive

US tour in the biggest arenas across the country. From October 5th, Bob was on the road for 42 shows culminating with sell-out gigs in Madison Square Garden (New York) and The Staples Center (Los Angeles). This national tour is quite in contrast with the slow start of the *Time Out Of Mind* tour four years ago. This time Dylan had assembled a unique group of musicians around him who had accompanied him already for more than two years. And if the last two concert seasons proved to be the best ones since his tour-de-force with The Band things were about to change... Indeed, Dylan and his band feel extremely confident about both the new album and the new tour. For the first time since 1978 (*Street Legal*) Bob had recorded an album with his touring band. The recordings took place in May, shortly before he headed for Europe. When



the tour premièred in Spokane Dylan had a very clear mind about his new songs and how he would enlarge them on the road. His band was no longer a bunch of hired employees to showcase his new album. While it took Dylan a month to play more than one song live from *TOOM* in 1997, things look quite different these days. No less than four *Love & Theft* songs get their première in Spokane. It doesn't take him a long time to warm up as the first shows are fabulous from the start. Reviews in all national papers are raving the old troubadour for his musical route in history. And one can not forget that the events on September 11th gave many of his songs a special meaning. Songs like *Masters Of War*, *Hard Rain*, *Blowin' In The Wind* and *Searching For A Soldiers Grave* are cheered by the fans as a response to the tragedy in New York City. So here we come to one of the centrepieces of the tour, right in front of the US Cellular Arena in Milwaukee, while the tour is halfway. A sold out crowd of 11.000 fans

welcomes Dylan shortly after eight. Starting with a new traditional, *Wait For The Light To Shine*, the 60 year old maestro sets the arena on fire with his cripes clear howling vocals. The first acoustic set includes two favourites: the ever welcome addition of *My Backpages* (with Larry Campbell on violin) and a superb beat-driven *Desolation Row*. If you ever doubt the Chicago blues drenched style of *Lonesome Day Blues* on the new album, than listen to this magnum opus on this release. Both guitarists Larry and Charlie Sexton get the chance to fire their instruments after each verse. And the highlight being of course *Highwater*, the tribute to Charley Patton. Much better than the studio-version. The second acoustic set features a tender *Hattie Carroll* while *Masters Of War* gets one of the biggets cheers of the night. A perfect example of the rich sound the band creates can be heard on the fifties pastiche *Summerdays*, a song that could be heard if Elvis was still alive. Dylan calls his musicians "best band in the land" during the



introduction, no further explanation is needed. When the encores roll out of the P.A. it is *Honest With Me* that sets the arena on fire. Driven on a very *Highway 61* alike slide, the song evokes in something meaner, deeper and spiritual. After almost half an hour of encores Dylan returns for a furious *All Along The Watchtower* that sounds very Hendrix, spitting out the words till there's no breath left. We have included some very interesting bonus-tracks from St. Paul, Minnesota, where the first snow fell and the audience pumped Dylan and his band to a seldom heard level. Although the sound quality is a little less crisp than during the main show, take a bow for the definitive version of another take on *Summerdays*, where the arena explodes with Bob's crazy duck-walks. The Stray Bobcats Marc, Cathérine and Valérie brought back much more than those souvenirs. Please check out two more *Love & Theft* premières: the pleasant electric opener *Tweedle Dee & Tweedle Dum* and the slow, majestic *Sugar Baby*, right there in the

grand finale. And what about the two oldies *I Don't Believe You* and a spectacular *Positively 4th Street*, both proving that Bob takes further risks, night after night. We hope you will enjoy these recordings as much as we do, being made from the very best ones of the whole tour, digitally remastered for your ultimate pleasure. Pretty soon the European dates will be announced for a March-April 2002 tour, so we'll be seeing you down the road, when the circus is back in town.

Meanwhile, stay warm.

The Gentlemen's Club Of Spalding Treasurer









