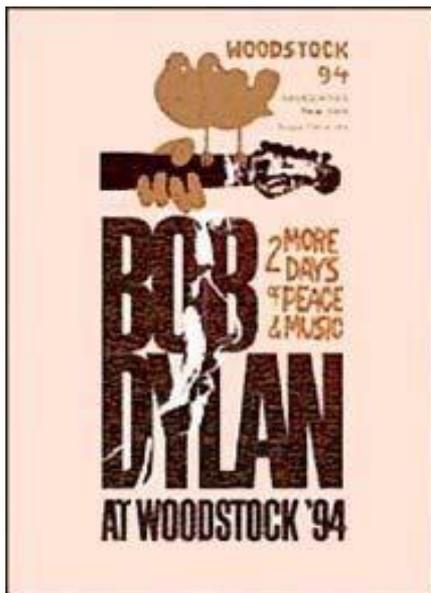


On DVDylan's Best Rated Pro-Shot chart, [D008.su](#) occupies a top ten slot, as well it might, for this disc is very fine indeed. Woodstock sound and vision are both extremely good, as are Bob and the band, as are the three bonus tracks. There's even a glorious natural pageant to savour as, during the first half of the gig, late afternoon passes into dusk then twilight then night in a sumptuous pastel blaze. As for his set, after opening solidly with Jokerman, D feeds his audience six sixties numbers on the spin, starting with powerhouse versions of JLAW, Watchtower and a gorgeous, bluesy Train To Cry in succession. Though Don't Think Twice carries a shade less conviction, Masters and Baby Blue, taken slow and understated, both come over wonderfully well. That these songs still endure after decades of repeated performance is testament to their strength - it's not hard to imagine, when we're all gone, them living on, still served up via the medium of the day and relished equally, as now, by artist and audience alike. Sadly, the same cannot be said of God Knows, only fly in today's Five Star ointment. Though the band give of their collective best, it remains a sub-standard bird. (God knows it's a turkey ... Oh for Red Sky or Simple Twist instead - asking too much, I suppose.) But the set finishes as strongly as it started with a dead-on RDW and sober, muted It Ain't Me Babe to close.



Woodstock '94 showcases nineties Bob at his most sublime, but, be warned - this DVD is likely to induce in the viewer a certain confusion. After recent encounters with a series of poor / awful nineties performances ([D623.su](#), [D006](#), [D120.su](#)) I found a bit of mental gymnastics necessary - for *can this be the same man??* Double-take all you like, but indeed it is. If on 8 December '97 I'd been sitting in Irving Plaza with my fingers in my ears trying in vain to keep out Silvio, what I'd surely have been thinking is this: *Where's Woodstock Bob when you need him?* A question, more's the pity, with no answer. The only other regret this marvellous outing induces concerns Masters Of War. Topical as it remains, still it's a shame that Bob feels moved, even now in 2005, to sing this song, for its take on war and warmongers, though potent, is oversimplistic; is that of a relatively unlearned 21 year-old. Meanwhile, his finest 21st century work, a rich, mature meditation on the same basic theme, is never sung. I'm

talking, of course, of the majestic Green Mountain. Masters, whilst effective in making its point, is preachy and one-dimensional. Mountain, on the other hand, shot through with grace, resignation, acceptance, wisdom, says volumes more. Which would you pick to sing? Or why not both? You don't know? Me neither.



The three song bonus here is also strong, though in the first two in particular, both from 2004, D's voice is in notably poor shape. His rendition of Sam Cooke's A Change Is Gonna Come is introduced by Ossie Davis who, in a dignified and eloquent address, reveals that the song was written by Cooke in 1964 as a response to the rhetorical questions (*How many times ... How many years ... etc*) asked in Blowin' In The Wind. This nugget adds an extra dimension to D's take on Sam's lyric, which he sings in suitably impressive, heart-felt style.

THANKS V

STARS Another genuine must-have. Five.