



AUDIO Overall very good - some annoying mic noise here and there (Oh Babe, T Man and Maggie's most notably), also a few partial drop-outs, but pleasing still.

VIDEO Our taper tonight is well back from and left of the stage with this view:



Of the evening's seventeen songs, he films eight live as performed and another eight second hand off the big screen shown on the left side of the pic above. Closer Not Fade Away is, barring its first half minute, not caught at all, though its audio plays to a conclusion under stills in Cineman's now familiar style. In comparison to the off-screen pro footage, the direct haul is cleaner, better coloured (see below), more inclusive, less

inert - more compelling, that is, in all respects. But the other serves a purpose too. A little waver now and then, the odd fuzzy out-of-focus interlude, but in all a nicely rendered, highly watchable effort.



↑Above: direct film

Below: second-hand off-screen pro-shot ↓



COMMENT In April 1999 Edna Gundersen invited Bob and Paul, fresh from rehearsals, to speculate on what they might sing together on their forthcoming tour. Simon responded:

When we were playing together earlier today, I was surprised by how much repertoire we had in common. He has a vast repertoire. He's really a great collector and studier of songs ... We're looking to do some

things acoustically together - I like To Ramona, he likes Homeward Bound. We went through quite a menu, from deep folk stuff to the Everly Brothers to Johnny Cash to country to blues ...

And D:

There's a whole lot to pick from. I don't know what we'll do, but I'm pretty flexible. I always liked Only Living Boy In New York and other songs from Bridge Over Troubled Water. When I played with the Grateful Dead, we were doing Boy In The Bubble ...

In the event, in respect of their own songs, Simon went with Sound Of Silence all through the Summer Tour and The Boxer all through the Fall Tour, while, after two attempts at Forever Young (see [D811.su](#) and [D790.su](#)) Bob stuck throughout with Heaven's Door. There was no Ramona or Homeward Bound - indeed, Heaven's Door / FY apart, no self-penned acoustic two-hander of any description - and, sadly, no Only Living Boy either.

As for [D082.su](#), though it might seem slightly odd to go straight into an encore, that's what we do - into Paul's, at the close of his set, and after he brings on Bob the pair struggle in front of Simon's band through the obligatory Silence - zero rapport, a laboured and unconvincing trial.

Some readers will have noted President Obama's recent remarks concerning D's Feb 2010 appearance at the White House:

That's how you want Bob Dylan, right? You don't want him to be all cheesin' and grinnin' ... You want him to be a little skeptical about the whole enterprise.

Watch (courtesy of the big screen) D repeatedly crack up as Simon hams his way through The Wanderer to see yet another side of Bob Dylan. After a sterling Des Row* comes the night's highlight in the comely form of a gorgeous North Country Girl. Bob's "Thank you, friends!" at its close betrays his own artless pleasure at its and his success. Tony lays down his bow and applauds. Through Tangled's interminable guitar break see D, animated by the music he's ever chock full of, dance - awkward, disarticulate, skewed legs awry - a cross between a newborn foal, a drunk on ice and Roderick Smith's [D519](#) marionette.

The electric set kicks off with a suitably crackling Watchtower. What remains to be said about this enigmatic song, this "fable" (HA), this "scorpion song that stings itself to death" (Ricks), this song that, of all his considerable canon, D chooses to perform more often than any other? (Having been first past the 1,000 post in April 1997, at the time of writing Watchtower is closing in on the 2,000 career outings mark, currently just 74 short.) Does he perform it so much because he thinks it the song that people most want to hear? That would probably be true of #2 - #6 on his Most Often list, for LARS (1789 performances), H61 (1548), Tangled (1080), Wind (1057) and Maggie's (1051) are all arguably more strongly identified with D than is Watchtower. (Incidentally, of that top six, note that only Wind was *not* played here at Wantagh - though offered 64 other opportunities to hear it this touring year, fans surely had no

call to feel cheated. And if the Greatest Hits cast of tonight's set-list disappoints, it's worth remembering that this crowd - many Simonites and so-called baby-boomers pulled in by "the summit meeting of the folk-poets" (Rogovoy) is not his norm, so due allowance must be made.) Are the fans sick of Watchtower? Is Bob? And what does it *mean*? For much more on the song, see [D482](#) review.



Shelter (the first of five in a row off the big screen) is another winner, with an unseen Larry's steel guitar and Kemper's stately beat carrying the song effortlessly up, away and home. After D spends most of Not Dark's intro in a no holds barred struggle with his guitar strap, he fronts up in the nick of time to give a masterfully understated reading of arguably his best nineties song (Standing In The Doorway its rival for gold). By way of balance, the first three lines of H61 are a series of random sounds made while D decides whether or not to trouble himself with the lyric. LARS is crowd-pleasing hokum, Me Babe - one of his most durable standbys - insistent and strong. Then, all too soon, in spite of the last tune's swaggering assertion to the contrary, we're done. Or, as Bob declares at band intro's end: "That's it!"

RUNNING TIME 103:40, complete

THANKS Yer man K, all tapers

STARS Despite minor flaws, much to enjoy, thus four and a half. If you fancy this show but are not keen on the idea of recycled pro-shot footage, note that an edit that omits the big screen numbers circulates as [D082.ed](#) (see review). I remember liking that one *a lot*. Only downside is no Shelter or Not Dark Yet* so you'll need to decide which way to jump for yourselves. [D855.1](#) from Albany is recommended too.

** The moon is almost hidden, the stars are beginning to hide and It's not dark yet but it's getting there: same thought, different time, different Dylan.*