

D129.su MEDFORD, 9 OCTOBER 2001

AUDIO Superb, especially the drum-sound so often compromised ([D284.su](#), [D458](#), others) but here crisp and punchy. Spot on.

VIDEO Tonight's taper occupies a left-of-centre position at the back of the floor and his camera is a good one, capable of delivering quality footage fit to please the eye rather more than the slightly tired screenshots (below) would suggest. We've a [D449](#)-like set-up, then, and, all being well, might expect a film equally dazzling? Sadly not, for our lensman manages, by constant fiddling and jiggling, to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory such that watching his night's work proves less pleasure than purgatory, less treat than trial. Camera control is, by and large, poor (there may well, of course, have been valid reasons why, but the result is the same) and, if you come to view this film, be sure to bring plenty of patience. Returns improve through the second half of disc one, and Cineman's now-familiar patchwork helps too, but the only songs captured to anything like full potential are Visions (a sound but subdued performance), Sugar Baby and (best of all) closer Blowin', a decidedly bittersweet, too little too late adieu.



RUNNING TIME Disc One, 71:10. Disc Two, 51:25. Audio complete. For video restoration details (provided you've half an hour to spare) toggle blue link below the DVDylan set-list.

COMMENT *Love & Theft* was released, inauspiciously, on 11 September 2001 (an infamous day, better known since as 9/11) and Bob's first tour afterwards - his fifth and last of another busy year - was a 35 date October / November spin through twenty US states plus one hit and run foray into Canada. Fourth stop *en route* - Medford, Oregon - is the show [D129.su](#) recalls. It features five picks (some later crowds got six) from the new album. All sound fresh, as well they might, and none more so than live debutant Mississippi. The song, arguably *L&T*'s most commercial, will be played a dozen times more before year's end. This, though, is the only one of those performances (or virtually any other*) to make it to DVD and if you want to see it without acquiring [D129.su](#), catch it instead on [D671](#). Kemper's percussion (or maybe it's just this audio's exceptional fidelity) makes tonight's Tweedles (so often dull) a revelation and Sugar Baby is, for possibly the first time though - [D068.su](#), [D190.su](#), [D555.su](#) - not the last, magnificent. Otherwise? North Country Girl, Pill-Box Hat and Love Sick all hit the spot, and listen out in Drifter's for Charlie's waggish lightning bolt that strikes Larry (though not, apparently, Bob) as a particularly jolly jape.

Before the tour's through, eleven of *L&T*'s twelve tracks will have been outed live, with only *Bye And Bye* (debuted on 17 October 2002) left untried. Considering the high form Bob had rediscovered as the millennium turned, 2001 is probably the least well-represented NET year in the catalogue. Having said that, a choice clutch of top-hole corkers - [D197.su2](#), [D638.su](#), [D068.su](#), [D188.su](#), [D190.su](#) - are listed that, between them, beat 30 or 40 more mundane efforts. That [D129.su](#) fails to join their ranks is a shame, but so it sometimes goes. And should we all be truly thankful for what we have already? You figure.

MORAN TAING Sir John of Lanark



STARS Audio and performance are five-star but video falls well short. In fact, if you listen to this without bothering to watch it at all, you'll probably find to your surprise that you enjoy it all the more. But don't take my word for it - cue up footage-free *Soldier's Grave* and decide for yourself. Four.

* See also [D646](#) (though beware it's not very good) or [D813](#).

