



**SOUND** Very nice upgrade.

**IMAGE** The cameramen that shoot these films for us all must set out for the show never quite knowing how the night will go, whether the rewards will be rich or poor, whether Bob and the band will be on fire or on furlough, whether conditions will prove favourable or adverse on a sliding scale from trying ([D239.su](#)) to challenging ([D133.su](#)) to impossible ([D646](#), [D149](#), first chapter). Some films are head-troubled ([D736.su](#), [D280.sse](#), though both succeed anyway), some wavery ([D233](#), [D396.su](#)), some excessively dark ([D183.su](#), [D335.su](#)). Some are continuous, others stop / start, maybe a little ([D164.su](#)) or a lot ([D157](#)). Given that this unlucky Milan taper drew a very short straw indeed, his effort is a worthy and ultimately well watchable one, though flawed, as, to some extent, most such fan-made projects inevitably are. His position is decent - unimpeded, raised, right side - not near enough for very close or revealing pics but well-placed for pleasing all-band footage (see screenshots). With one notable exception that gives us all 8:30 of a start-cut Pill-Box Hat played by an invisible sub-screen band, camera control is impressively good. But the major spanner in tonight's works comes courtesy of a *very* cranky (even by his own idiosyncratic standards) Mr D. For more, see COMMENT below.

**RUNNING TIME** 107:55. There are a few short edits near the start of Mobile and a few seconds lost from the end of VoJo. More substantial cuts occur at the start of both Pill-Box Hat and Watchtower, with all other songs complete.

**PERFORMANCE** A strange, subdued gig, though with much - LMZ, 4th Street, Visions, you choose - to enjoy. Heaven's Door is the same exquisite arrangement as heard on [D178.su](#), though Charlie nails that take much better than this one.

**COMMENT** There's an enduring "cigarette" fable concerning this show that appears to derive from a comment written (obviously in good faith) by archivist Olof Björner. Beneath its set-list in his 2002 record comes this:

*Someone threw a lighted cigarette at Bob as he walked out on stage at the beginning of the show. Bob was visibly upset and had the house lights turned on. Larry and Charlie hummed at the start of the first song but Bob refused to sing, surprising even the band. Throughout the show Bob stood close to the drums and Tony's position rather than at the front of the stage. The house lights remained on the entire show.*



*I wanna know, man! WHO THREW THIS CIGARETTE!?!?*

[D175.su](#) shows those words to be less than fully accurate. Here are two possibly more reliable eye-witness accounts (adapted) from fans Michele Ulisse (MU) and Duncan Hume (DH):

*MU: The cigarette story is to me a fake affair. I was in the front row. When the lights went down, someone did throw a lighted cigarette on the stage. It fell on the side where Larry stands, though not very close to his position **but at this time the stage was still empty**. Then the band came on, Bob last of all, and I don't think anyone even saw the cigarette.*

*DH: Given the number of flashes, beeps, red blinking lights and luminous digital screens on display in the front section of the crowd, it was more like being at an electronics gizmo convention than a Dylan show. Bob was less than pleased and, in an attempt to show his disgust, yanked his microphone back as far away from the front of the stage as possible and pointedly refused to join in the vocal of opening song *Humming Bird* such that all we got of it was the tail feathers and perhaps a beak.*

*MU: During *Humming Bird*, Bob talked to Tommy [Morrongiello, guitar roadie]. Soon after, Jim [Callahan, head of security] appeared in that empty space between gate and stage and began trying to stop people flashing with their cameras - and there were many. I told Jim there was a smoking cigarette on the stage, but he said that wasn't a*

*problem and continued to try and stop the flash photography. **That** was the problem ... In Innsbruck [two shows later] I spoke with Jim, who told me that Milano could have been a better concert if people who don't respect the rules didn't use those f\*\*king flashes. Now we know that Bob's management is asking fans to stop using cameras because they're distracting to Bob ... For sure the problem in Milano wasn't that f\*\*king cigarette.*

Once again, [D175.su](#) fails to support all details of these accounts, though clearly it was some aspect of crowd behaviour that nettled Bob rather than any phantom smoke. So what *does* [D175.su](#) show?

We start with *Columbia Recording Artist Bob Dylan!* announced to a dark hall, after which the stage lights come up to reveal everyone on stage and in position except D. The band pitch immediately into Humming Bird with Charlie and Larry doing the *whoo-oo* intro standing either side of a conspicuously empty centre mike. Bob then ambles on, comes up to and touches his mike, then, clearly uninterested in singing, goes back to stand beside Tony for the remainder of the song, which struggles on for nearly five minutes.



During its course Bob and Charlie twice converse and towards its end Charlie talks earnestly to Tony. With the tune finally folded (other than the initial *whoo-oo*s, no vocal at all) the house goes dark for a full minute and when the lights come back on, D's mike has been moved about eight feet back. Soon after the start of a very muted Times, Tommy M is seen for the first time, re-positioning Bob's mike-lead and then *picking up and tossing something small off the front of the stage* - quite possibly a cigarette, which may be how the cig-story came into being. At the end of Times, a number of very bright spotlights shining straight out into the crowd from above the stage are switched on, one of which blazes straight into our poor taper's face (and lens, of course). Though he continues to shoot beneath it, the footage he blags now takes on a milky, pallid look as though filmed (second pic above) through hazy mist. During lights-out after third song It's Alright Ma, Bob's mike is moved back to its forward position. Before starting LMZ, Bob can be seen speaking to Tommy. He then starts the song but, after just three lines, pulls back from the mike then steps forward again to grab it and drag it back up-stage, away from the crowd, at whom he twice points an accusing finger. In the darkness after LMZ, the mike is moved forward yet again, this time to stay, though for the remainder of the show, Bob steps back from it at every

opportunity, whether between lines, between verses, or to play extended instrumental breaks, of which tonight there seem more than usual. The middle of 4th Street sees him bending Charlie's ear again and it's only my opinion, it may be right or wrong, but it sounded to me as though he took especial pleasure in delivering that song's caustic last two lines. Visions, though generally well-received, is punctuated by insistent whistles from sections of the crowd unimpressed by the churlish blinding-spot policy and after next song Pill-Box Hat, thankfully, they're turned off. Stage lighting thereafter is muted though not for the most part as bad as the first screenshot below would suggest (though *Wind is* excessively shady). From Not Fade Away on, film is just barely coloured (lots of bottle-green) but okay and a distinct improvement on the milky mist.



So I'm going with the camera theory, though D's petulant, peevis, prima-donna behaviour may itself really be the most influential factor at play this night. As for the phantom fag, as *Self Portrait* Bob himself discovered back in 1970, a myth is a notoriously difficult dragon to slay and the 2002 tab-tale, whatever anyone may say now, will probably outlive us all.

**THANKS** Black Cat

**STARS** Another example ([D032.su](http://D032.su) and [D045.su](http://D045.su) are others) of Bob's interaction with his paying public leaving more than a little to be desired. Musically sweet, visually sour, temperamentally mean-spirited. Three and a half.

