

D247 MADE IN FRANCE VOLUME TWO

- 01) 15 Mar 1982: Songwriter's Hall Of Fame, ABC (0:48)
- 02) May 1984: "Bob Dylan Tour Europeo 84" Verona (20:00)
- 03) June 1984: Roma - RAI report (1:20)
- 04) June 1984: Milano - RAI report (1:25)
- 05) May 1984: Hamburg - German TV coverage (10:00)
- 06) June 1984: Munich - For Ever Young (film) (9:45)
- 07) 3 June 1984: Basel - RTSF report (1:30)
- 08) 10 June 1984: Göteborg - TV report (1:50)
- 09) 6 July 1984: Slane - BBC Look North report (4:07)
- 10) 8 July 1984: Davy Hammond interview (1:47)

[D247](#) runs 52:32. Its easy-to-use two page menu lists the ten chapters above (ninth, misnamed Slane, is actually Newcastle) with individual timings as noted. And what do they offer? Well, once again (see [D249](#), [D290](#) reviews) expect a mix of clips you'll probably have come across before and others you'll wind up wishing hadn't come your way at all. Except ...

We open with a quickfire trip back to 1982 to catch Bob's induction (also on [D371](#)) into the Songwriters' Hall Of Fame. He tells his audience *I can't read or write a note of music and never will be able to ...* then, once off-stage, gushes uncharacteristically to a camera *Thrilling! Just thrilling!* From which point on, the remainder of [D247](#) concerns itself with 1984.



Let's dispense with the chaff first. Several of the items here are spoilt by studio commentary that all but obliterates the music beneath, which is in any case mostly just slivers and slices of song rather than the whole nine yards. Thus the Rome and Milan

chapters give nothing back to a non-Italian speaker (and precious little otherwise, I'd bet) while the Basel and Gothenburg footage is similarly unrewarding. The Newcastle Look North package is okay but previously available on [D027.asu](#) (see review) and elsewhere. Likewise, Bob's few riverside words about the Clancys (last chapter - see pic above) are also on [D371](#) and don't amount to a hill of beans anyway. *For Ever Young*, the near ten minute film about the 3 June Munich gig also appears (for more comment see its review) on [D365](#). The ten minute compilation of Hamburg-related footage here is part of a considerably longer package (eighteen minutes, including more music) on [D013](#) - again, see that disc's review for further comment. Which leaves but Verona standing. And, lucky for us, just as [D249](#) relied principally on one rich seam of Nara gold to augment fan-appeal, so too here with this twenty ripe minutes of pro-shot Verona film. But wait - this footage is on [D013](#) too, you may say - and so it is, but its video there is jaded and its audio poor, whereas here we're given video and audio equally fine, clearly much closer to master, and, for once relatively free of both cuts and voice-overs, thus some grade-A '84 Bob, starting with a 2:25 passage of Times that slips by a treat. (That lovely Washburn guitar - see [D383.su](#)'s screenshots or check out *Real Live*'s front cover - surely produced his best-ever in-concert acoustic sound.) Then comes a complete Watchtower - more choice pics, though shame about the song. Next, after a three minute press conference interlude that's pretty much buried in the Italian voice-over hail, another gem in the shape of a 5:25 just slightly front-end clipped LARS with, to close, a Santana-assisted Wind part overlaid with TV jabber. All in all, just the job.



[Verona press conference 1984](#)

Pay close attention to the press conference footage and halfway through you'll hear the casual mention of Sophia Loren's name. Bob hears it too - watch his reaction. Compare too his demeanour here (at the very start of the tour) to his body language at a similar gathering in Hamburg, further on down the road. Then recall to mind Robbie Robertson's *Last Waltz* words about the road being "an impossible way of life". How Bob has stuck it, how he's managed to prevail for so long is hard to imagine. Maybe that's why these words from a fan-written review of a very recent concert are vaguely disturbing:

(Bob) entered the stage with what appeared to be a slight limp and spent some time adjusting the back of his pants - I suspect he had on a back brace of some kind.

Suggestions that D suffers back problems are not new. Michael Gray claims (*BD Encyclopedia*, page 665) that as long ago as 1987 D performed on occasion in a brace. Through part of 1997, his favoured guitar (see [D158.su](#) screenshots, for example) was

a custom Gibson Les Paul, chosen not for its tone, feel or look, but (according to guitar tech Diaz) its *weight*. As for a 67 year old wanting, needing or using back support, there's surely nothing unusual in that. But what next - should he play seated? (Then again, why ever not? Because he's a *mover*, that's why.) And after that? I suppose it's just a reminder - a harbinger, a nod concerning what inevitably and inexorably lies in store for Bob, this strange business, us all. And if the future was ever uncertain, it's also true that the older you get the more uncertain it must get. And, in the face of that, whether you feel you really need [D247](#) or [D022.a](#) or [D236.su](#) in your life is maybe a moot point.



[Verona 1984](#)

Towards the end of a long open letter he sent to Sis Cunningham and Gordon Friesen at *Broadside* magazine, which they published in the issue of 20 January 1964, D mentions some mail he'd recently received:

I got a letter from Pete [Seeger] an he closed by sayin "Take it easy but take it". I thought about that for an hour or more an when I reached my conclusion of what it really meant I either cried or laughed (I cant remember which). I will repeat the same an add "give it easy but give it" ...

Let the last word lie with him.

KIND THANKS LH

STARS Verona fun scores four. (Note, though, that the uncut 31 minute source doc can be found in excellent quality on five-star corker [D725](#). Eight out of ten cats prefer it.)