

The Philadelphia Folksong Society

Presents

BOB DYLAN

In Concert

Friday, May 3, 8:30 P.M.

Ethical Society Auditorium - 1906 Rittenhouse Sq.

Donation: \$1.75 Members: \$1.50

TICKETS AVAILABLE:
Gilded Cage, 261 S. 21 St. and at the door

Dylan Plays Philly

Back in 1963, I was a string-bass poppin', banjo-pickin', Philadelphia folkie. The folk scene was small then, and Philly was just a two-hour drive from New York, so what went on in the Apple was known soon and known well in the City of Brotherly Love.

Bob Dylan was what was going on in New York. *Sing Out!* magazine tracked Dylan's rise from early on, and everyone in town was talking about him, though most of us had never seen him.

Back then, the folk music scene had its camps. The bluegrass boys, old-timey folks and traditional balladeers often hung in the same circles. The ragtime fans and blues folks seemed to share an affinity. And certainly the political singers and ethnic music fans seemed to be into their own worlds.

But Dylan, it was said, was none of these.

Dylan, it was said, was something else.

Everyone, in every corner of the Philly folk scene, was looking forward to his first local gig.

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On May 3, 1963, Dylan arrives for his first Philly concert, just weeks before his second album comes out.

Some testify that he arrives on his motorcycle, a pre-release copy of his new album tucked under his black leather jacket. His girlfriend Suze rides pillion, her arms wrapped around him like a circle 'round the sun.

And some say that they themselves drive to the 30th Street Station to pick him up. He's alone, no album.

Dylan's gig is at the Ethical Culture Society hall on Rittenhouse Square in downtown Philadelphia. The seating is 300; that's what the sign over the front door says.

And even at a ticket price of \$1.50 for Philadelphia Folksong Society members, and \$1.75 for the general public, Bob has that hall filled.

But the 8:30 show time comes and goes, and Dylan has not stepped on stage. Having arrived early, I have a front row seat. There's a door ten feet in front of me that leads backstage. So I decide to see what's happening, where Dylan is. I step through the door, into the Ethical Culture Society's backstage area.

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