

Bob Martin – Bio

Bob Martin was born during 1942 in Lowell, Massachusetts and currently resides there. Lowell is, of course, the birthplace of Jack Kerouac [1922 - 1969] a writer, novelist, poet whom Martin acknowledges as one of his major artistic influences. During his teens Bob was a member of a multi-racial group [two white and two black males] called The Preludes, and they performed at local record hops lip syncing to hit records by Clyde McFatter, Billy Ward and The Dominoes and others. Specialising in four-part harmony the quartet would often perform, for their own enjoyment, in one of the town's old abandoned mills.

Following graduation from high school, Bob enrolled at Boston's Suffolk University just as the 1960's folk scene was reaching its peak. Cambridge was of course home to the venerable Club 47 [now Club Passim]. Other local clubs where Bob performed included the Nameless Coffeehouse. Signed by the RCA Victor label, Bob travelled to Nashville where he recorded his eleven song, debut solo album "**Midwest Farm Disaster.**" Produced by Herb Hendler, the session players included David Briggs [keyboard], Norbert Putnam [bass], Ken Buttrey [drums] and Bill Sanford [dobro, guitar]. With nothing added or taken away, Bob's debut album was re-issued during November 2007 on Martin's own label, Riversong Records.

Martin went on to share concert stages with Richie Havens, John Sebastian, John Prine, Odetta and others. RCA failed to adequately promote the album, plus Bob soon tired of being 'sharked' by club owners and promoters. In 1974, disillusioned with the music business, Martin purchased a farm in the mountains of West Virginia and settled there with his wife and two children. In West Virginia, Bob became friendly with musician Tex McGuire [d. 1992], and sometimes performed with him. Bob assisted with the making of a documentary film on Tex's life directed by Boston filmmaker Bo Zabierek. The film premiered at the 1990 Virginia Festival of American Film.

While living on the farm, Martin wrote songs and poetry, and worked on novels. For a time, alongside McGuire, Bob was an instructor at Mountain Heritage School in Union, WV. The school, founded by Harris Sussman, was state and federal financed with the aim of preserving Appalachian culture. In 1982 Bob self-produced his sophomore album for the Whitesburg, Kentucky based independent label, June Appal Recordings. The ten song album, "**Last Chance Rider,**" was subsequently nominated for a National Association of Independent Record Distributors [NAIRD] award. A decade and a half elapsed before Bob released his third song collection "**The River Turns The Wheel.**" Released on Bob's own label, Riversong Records, production of the album was credited to Anne Marie Martin. The support players included father and son, Taylor Armeding [dobro] and Jake Armeding [fiddle], while Bill Morrissey and Cormac McCarthy supplied support vocals. The album went on to reach number sixteen on the Gavin Americana Chart. Martin had moved back to Lowell soon after "**Last Chance Rider**" was released, and although he recommenced being a touring/performing musician for a time, for around a decade he variously worked as a school teacher, carpenter, house painter and truck driver.

At the dawn of the new millennium Riversong Records released the Bob and Anne Marie Martin produced recording "**Next To Nothin'.**" The session players were Jake Armeding [fiddle], Ray Brunelle [drums] and Kent Allyn [bass].

Discography : "**Midwest Farm Disaster**" [1972] ; "**Last Chance Rider**" [1982] ; "**The River Turns The Wheel**" [1997] ; "**Next To Nothin'**" [2000] :

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