



Bob Gibson “Where I’m Bound” Collectors Choice Music

This fourteen-track recording, the last of a trio of discs Gibson cut for Elektra Records, was originally released in 1964, at the height of the *great folk music scare*. Sadly we lost Bob in late September 1996, a victim of Progressive Supranuclear Palsy, a degenerative condition caused by damaged nerve cells in the brain.

Based out Chicago, Illinois, itself, as much a folk haven as Greenwich Village, I’ve always viewed Gibson as *the link* between the fifties performer of traditional folk material and the contemporary school of songwriters that surfaced early the following decade. Ever *the pioneer*, when Gibson made his solo debut in 1956 on the Riverside label with “**Offbeat Folksongs**,” the nineteen tracks featured seven penned by Bob. The Stinson label issued Bob’s “**Folksongs of Ohio**” on a number of occasions [1957/1963]. The latter disc was a collection of traditional songs that Gibson had gathered during a field trip through the state. In 1960 Bob’s first Elektra collection “**Ski Songs**” only featured material written or co-written by Gibson, the foregoing being something of a phenomenon forty years ago. So there you have it, it’s my contention that Bob thoroughly understood the folk process, how it had evolved, and he had a major hand in the direction it took post 1960. That’s why I’ve always believed, even though he’s gone, that this particular Bob was and is *the man*.

Produced by the Elektra label owner, Jac Holzman, and Mark Abramson, and recorded in New York, apart from contributions from Art Davis’ bass, “**Where I’m Bound**” only features Gibson’s voice and twelve-string guitar. Sometimes, basic works best. As for the folk and folk/blues tinged material contained therein, it’s appropriate that the disc includes the first collaborations between Bob and poet/cartoonist/composer/singer, Shel Silverstein. We lost Silverstein three years after Bob. In 1995 Elektra/Asylum issued Gibson’s final studio work “**Makin’ A Mess: Bob Gibson Sings Shel Silverstein**.” So Shel was there at the end, and also at the beginning, with seven songs on this disc being collaborations by the duo. Lyrically “The Waves Roll Out” is based on a lifestyle much favoured by folk writers – that of the mariner, who, in plying his trade, may endure raging seas, witness gory scenes in Davy Jones locker, or even survive a shipwreck. “The New Frankie And Johnnie Song” reprises the old blues standard, while subjectively “Baby, I’m Gone Again” draws upon the perspective “*so long, I’ll see you some other time*.” There’s also couple of contributions from Bob’s career long on/off singing partner, Hamilton Camp, including “Stella’s Got A New Dress.”

Six years after his passing, apart from the total reissue of his catalogue of recordings, what we are also seriously lacking is a tribute album to *the man* – Bob Gibson. Is anyone out there listening????

Folkwax Rating 8 out of 10

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