

## Bob Gibson – Bio

Born in Brooklyn, New York City on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1931 and died Portland, Oregon on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1996. At the time of his birth Bob's mother was visiting an aunt. The Gibson's actually lived on Jane Street, Greenwich Village, which seems appropriate considering Bob's subsequent career. His father Sam "Gibby" Gibson was a chemical engineer. Prior to World War I, Gibby had his own radio show so performing was in the Gibson genes. Raised in Peekskill, by his mid teens Bob's had fallen in love with music through performing in the local church choir. In the late forties he joined the Merchant Navy and sailed coastal tankers from New Jersey to Texas for a while. Later, he went into business marketing a speed-reading programme, The Reading Laboratory. In 1953 Bob accompanying his friend, Dick Miller, a journalist, to the Hudson Valley home of Pete Seeger. Although the proposed interview never materialised, after they were fed, Seeger played them "The Leather Winged Bat" and other songs. Whether that event was Bob's salvation or his downfall, you can judge for yourself. Two days later, he purchased a five-string banjo, much to his wife's consternation. A year later he recorded some demos that later surfaced on the Stinson label as **"Folksongs Of Ohio,"** but only after Bob started making records for the Riverside label in 1957. Bob's initial albums were a mix of traditional songs and self-penned originals, and his sophomore album featured what became one of his signature songs "Abilene." Between 1957 and 1961 Bob lived in Apsen, although he regularly performed in New York at The Bitter End, in particular. Having instituted a Tuesday night hootenanny at Fred Weintraub's Village venue, Bob became the host of the television show **"Hootenanny."** In 1960 he signed with Jac Holzman's Elektra label and the percentage of original songs featured on Gibson's albums increased dramatically. Of the four-albums he cut for Elektra, **"At The Gate Of Horn"** recorded during April 1961 in Chicago, marked the beginning of a lifelong, occasional working partnership with actor/singer Bob "Hamid" Hamilton Camp. By that time, Chicago had become Bob's operational base. It was Gibson who brought a young Judy Collins from Colorado, for her 1960 Chicago folk club debut. She subsequently signed a recording deal with Elektra. By 1967, burned out, Gibson dropped out of the folk scene for a number of years. In 1970 Gibson recorded his only album for Capitol, a self-titled effort, cut on the West Coast. The support players included Roger McGuinn, who was raised in Chicago where he had witnessed Bob perform many times. For the remainder of his career Bob mostly made his own recordings, leased them to labels or issued them himself, and such was the case with the live solo album **"Funky In The Country,"** his appropriately titled reunion with Camp, **"Homemade Music"** and other releases. Following a spell living in Mendocino, Bob moved back to Chicago in the eighties where he resided for much of the remainder of his life. He became involved with children's music and produced **"A Child's Happy Birthday Album."** It's fitting that Bob's final recording, **"Makin' A Mess, Bob Gibson Sings Shel Silverstein,"** was made with Shel Silverstein, since the pair had been co-writers for over thirty years. Originally a cartoonist, Silverstein co-wrote his first song "The First Battalion" with Camp in 1960. Shel subsequently met Bob, and the rest is history. Of course Silverstein subsequently became the non-performing brains behind Doctor Hook. In the mid nineteen-nineties Bob was diagnosed as suffering from Progressive Supranuclear Palsy, a degenerative condition that saw Gibson confined to a wheelchair in his final year.

Selected Discography : **"Offbeat Folksongs"** [1956] ; **"I Come For To Sing"** [1957] ; **"Carnegie Concert"** [1957] ; **"Folksongs Of Ohio"** [1957] ; **"There's A Meetin' Here Tonight"** [1958] ; **"Ski Songs"** [1960] ; **"Yes, I See"** [1961] ; **"Bob Gibson & Bob Camp At The Gate Of Horn"** [1961] ; **"Where I'm Bound"** [1964] ; **"Bob Gibson"** [1970] ; **"Funky In The Country"** [1974] ; **"Gibson & Camp, Homemade Music"** [1978] ; **"The Perfect High"** [1980] ; **"Courtship Of Carl Sandberg"** [1984] ; **"Uptown Saturday Night"** [1984] ; **"Gibson & Camp, The Gate of Horn Revisited I"** [1986] ; **"A Child's Happy Birthday Album"** [1988] ; **"Bob Gibson 5/91"** [1991] ; **"Stops Along The Way"** [1991] ; **"Bootleg Gibson"** [1994] ; **"Makin' A Mess, Bob Gibson Sings Shel Silverstein"** [1995] ; **"Joy, Joy ! The Young And Wonderful Bob Gibson"** [1996].

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