DYLAN REVIEW, SUMMER 2019

MASTHEAD

CO-EDITORS

Raphael Falco, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Lisa O'Neill Sanders, Founder DR, Saint Peter's University

Nicole Font, Assistant to the Editors

EDITORIAL BOARD

Mitch Blank, New York City

Michael Gilmour, Providence University College (Canada)

Nina Goss, Fordham University

Charles O. Hartman, Connecticut College

Jonathan Hodgers, Trinity College, Dublin

Robert Reginio, Alfred University

Richard Thomas, Harvard University



DYLAN REVIEW 1.1, SUMMER 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

REVIEWS 2

JONATHAN HODGERS, *MORE BLOOD, MORE TRACKS* 2

KENNETH DALEY, *BOB DYLAN: ELECTRIC,* AMERICAN WRITERS MUSEUM, CHICAGO 14

NICK SMART, *THAT THIN, WILD MERCURY SOUND* 17

LISA O'NEILL SANDERS, *MONDO SCRIPTO*, HALCYON GALLERY, LONDON 22

THE DYLANISTA 25

ARTICLES 29

RICHARD THOMAS, "MEMORIZE THESE LINES, AND REMEMBER THESE RHYMES": NEW YORK SESSIONS OF *BLOOD ON THE TRACKS* 29

INTERVIEWS 41

JOAN OSBORNE 41

MITCH BLANK ON DYLAN'S APPEARANCE IN NEW YORK 44

LETTERS 51

CONTRIBUTOR INFORMATION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 52

Reviews

The Bootleg Series Vol. 14: More Blood, More Tracks **[Deluxe]**

REVIEW BY Jonathan Hodgers, Trinity College Dublin

More Blood, More Tracks (2019) fulfills many fans' wishes for broad access to the recording of one of Dylan's most revered albums. The set's pleasures are many, not least the complete New York sessions recorded in September 1974 (even those takes Dylan wanted to erase), but also remixes of the versions familiar to us from *Blood on the Tracks* (1975). The five tracks recut by Dylan in Minnesota that December are also present, but outtakes and demos from these sessions are lost. Nonetheless, *More Blood, More Tracks* is a cornucopia from the more fabled September stint that was represented by five songs on *Blood on the Tracks*. The New York recordings approximate chronological order on discs 1–6, with the Minnesota remakes closing the set on disc 6.

More Blood, More Tracks affords us an ideal forum to pore over Dylan's choices. Looking at the New York takes, it is perhaps surprising that changes to most of the songs were relatively subtle between 16–19 September. The approach to "Buckets of Rain", although revisited quite often, remains consistent. Others, such as "Lily, Rosemary and The Jack of Hearts" and "Shelter from the Storm" are achieved in remarkably few takes. Dylan revisits the songs to find the right performance, rather than explore their harmonic or melodic possibilities.

The set makes clear that Dylan had the songs' musical scaffolding more or less set down in New York and carried it with him to Minnesota. Even the songs more radically altered in Minnesota retain their harmonic blueprints. Kevin Odegard has attested to this, barring Chris Weber's input on the Minnesota "Idiot Wind" and the key change for "Tangled Up in Blue."[1] That said, Dylan does take the opportunity in December to tweak some of the chord progressions, and in

[1] Kevin Odegard, in conversation with the author, May 2019.

turn, alter the songs' overall effect. Part of the pleasure of *More Blood, More Tracks* is the chance to compare all of Dylan's options.

The set traces Dylan's development of the songs from solo acoustic numbers to full band renditions, before his settling on a more spartan accompaniment featuring Tony Brown on bass, Paul Griffin on keys, and Buddy Cage on steel guitar. The sojourn on the 16th into full band renditions is noteworthy. This material on the second disc brings into focus how *Blood on the Tracks* evolved from contemporaneous Dylan albums. Although the links have always been there, it's obvious from disc 2 that *Blood on the Tracks* initially had qualities in common with *Planet Waves* (1974), and even *Nashville Skyline* (1969). The guitar on early takes of "Simple Twist of Fate" recalls Robbie Robertson's contributions to *Planet Waves*. In the second disc's outtakes of "You're Gonna Make Me Lonesome When You Go", Dylan allowed country to color the arrangements. Country reappears in the final *Blood on the Tracks*, particularly on the Minneapolis "Lily." But from the sessions, we can hear how the musical language of country had always been present.

More Blood, More Tracks makes it clear that the album's initial musical palette moved from a Greenwich Village template into a country rock style not dissimilar to its immediate studio predecessor. Dylan fast abandoned this style on the second day of recording, but clearly was game to give it another go after some months had passed. The decision to re-record certain tracks in Minnesota resulted in five new takes to replace their New York equivalents originally chosen for the album's running order. The most significant changes then occur between New York (NY) and Minnesota (MN), and a great deal of the set's interest lies in the contrasts (and similarities) between them. Lyrical adjustments notwithstanding, Dylan made some structural changes to the songs in MN that bear comparison with their NY predecessors. What follows is a consideration of this musical evolution, followed by a brief reflection on the *More Blood* remixes and The Bootleg Series more generally. For convenience, the NY versions refer to the "test pressing"

takes[2] originally earmarked for the album but shelved in favor of their MN namesakes.

Harmonically, "Tangled Up in Blue" is a touch more nuanced in NY, with more changes occurring in the fourth, eighth, tenth, and twelfth lines ("If her hair…"; "Papa's bank book…"; "Rain fallin'…" and "Lord knows…" respectively). Dylan streamlined these in MN, dropping either one or two chords. Yet, the harmonic conceit of the song remains consistent, with six of the first nine lines seesawing between the tonic and an anomalous chord (D in NY, G in MN). In initially avoiding chords with any conventional harmonic relationship, Dylan affords us conditions which contrast with one another, yet that establish a connection within a field of tension. It's easy to see this dichotomy as representative of the fated romance found in the lyrics. As each line expands on the couple's deepening connection, the mysterious chord eventually vanishes in NY, replaced with chords endemic to the song's key. The process repeats for each verse.

The NY and MN versions diverge subtly in this regard, however. In NY, Dylan doesn't revisit the mystery chord when the verse comes to an end. The words "Tangled up in blue" are accented with an Emaj7 (an embellishment of the E major chord), the dominant (a B11 here, technically conflating the dominant and the subdominant) and finally the basic root chord on "Tangled." In an interesting quirk, Dylan makes one final revisit to the mystery chord in MN, on the ideal word: "tangled." There's nothing especially noteworthy in Dylan's (straightforward) use of an A and G together in MN; it's interesting, however, that Dylan retained the same tonal distance found in the NY take where he moves from E to D. Dylan clearly intends this chordal relationship.

Curiously, Dylan may have intended an even more streamlined version of the song in MN. In his chord chart,[3] the last line reverses the dichotomous pattern

[2] Please see appendix below for the track numbers of these takes on *More Blood, More Tracks*.
[3] Steve Wosahla, "Interview: More Blood, More Tracks…More Bob Dylan Stories", *Americana Highways*, November 20, 2018, https://americanahighways.org/2018/11/20/interview-more-blood-more-tracks-more-bob-dylan-stories/.

found at the start of the verse (with the song originally in G, the last line initially progressed from F to G). Keyboard player Gregg Inhofer transposed these to the key of A for the band's benefit. Dylan initially used an Em that Inhofer transposed to Fm; in the take that made the album, the band play F#m to conform to the vi of the A scale. Inhofer also deviates from Dylan's template in the last two lines. It's here we see written the familiar progression for the verse's final line. In the key of A, the line moves from the anomalous G to the subdominant D, and finally the tonic A. It's possible Dylan initially considered a starker transition for the line "tangled up in blue." In the key of G, the move from F to G would have afforded an interesting counterbalance to how the verse opens (G to F). Conceptually, it mirrors the chords' earlier relationship, feeding into the album's Escher-like quality. This is something of an intellectual conceit, however, and it's difficult to argue with the musical appeal of the finished product, whose chord changes complement the trochaic thrust of the line ("*Tang*led *up* in *blue*"). This preserves the approach found in the last line of the NY version, and also offers a more pleasing, poppier progression than Dylan's mooted F to G ending.

Other features add interest once Dylan relocated to MN. In NY, bassist Tony Brown cleaves to the roots of Dylan's chords, resulting in a folkier sound altogether in keeping with the neo-coffee house approach taken throughout the initial sessions. In contrast, Billy Peterson in MN plays against Dylan's chords. He often plays an A bass note against a G chord. This was a purposeful decision made by Peterson,[4] and it meshes well with the tension established by Dylan's alternating between A and G. Enhancing this is Dylan's use of suspended chords in MN. After opening with an A major, he alternates it with an Asus4, indicative of travel and instability. He repeats this at the end of the verses, enlivening the lyrics' frequent evocations of restlessness and movement.

[4] Andy Gill and Kevin Odegard, *Simple Twist of Fate: Bob Dylan and The Making of Blood on the Tracks* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2005), 128.

The key change similarly has an impact. All of the NY sessions found Dylan using open E tuning. In MN, Dylan had originally wanted the song in G, before being persuaded by guitarist Kevin Odegard to try it instead in A. This energised the song's performance; in Odegard's words, "we went from Appalachia to Mississippi in changing that key from G to A",[5] capturing the transition from folk to folk blues between NY and MN.

This adjustment to the album's musical language indicates a broader shift in the *Blood on the Tracks* sessions from a *Freewheelin'* (1963) bent to a more multi-colored sound suggestive of a number of Dylan eras. Odegard viewed the MN "Idiot Wind" as Dylan reconnecting with his "Like a Rolling Stone" or "Positively 4th Street" persona.[6] Once again, the broader sound palette of the MN sessions suggests a range of pasts co-mingling and overlapping, furthering the lyrics' themes at an album-wide level.

The NY "You're a Big Girl Now" switches initially back and forth between the I and V, until the third and fourth line, where Dylan introduces the IV. He uses an Emaj7 on the first two lines and transitions to a straight E major for lines 3 and 4. In MN, the first two lines alternate between the ii and iii, before transitioning to the I and IV in lines 3 and 4. This is an instance of Dylan making a sizeable change to the harmonic logic from the NY to the MN version. In NY, there's something propulsive between the opening Emaj7 and the B11. With its blend of dominant and subdominant notes, the B11 asks for resolution more urgently and compels the returning tonic more emphatically. In MN, Dylan eases this by opening with two minor chords (Bm and Am), creating an unsettled quality, but without the same drive. As with "Tangled Up in Blue", Dylan also sands away a few chord changes, streamlining the progressions.

In both NY and MN, Dylan lands on the tonic on the word "back" (for the phrase "back in the rain"), creating a pleasing synergy between the narrator's

[5] Kevin Odegard interviewed by Jason Verlinde, *Fretboard Journal*, podcast audio, February 2019, https://www.fretboardjournal.com/podcasts/podcast-237-kevin-odegard/, 00:39:54.
[6] Kevin Odegard, in conversation with the author, May 2019.

return to the rain-drenched outside that somehow constitutes for him a home. He repeats the trick in the next line, returning to the tonic on "land." It's a neat gesture, demonstrating musically that the natural states for these two people are very different.

"Idiot Wind" is the most harmonically restless of the songs, befitting its mood. The song follows a sequence of two musically identical verses, followed by the chorus. Dylan herds the minor chords into the verses, mostly saving the majors for the chorus. The irony is palpable, with the confident movement between the I, IV and V in the latter sounding resolutely triumphant and assertive next to the minor chord shifts in the preceding verse. The directness of the lyrics in the chorus befits the approach, while circling around the ii, iii and vi in the verses encapsulates the lyrics' confusion and indignation.

While Dylan ameliorates the chorus with IVs, each verse in both NY and MN opens with a sour minor chord and an unstable V before finding the tonic—capturing something of the song's overall drive towards self-realization that characterizes the song's progression as a whole. The NY features an additional gesture in this direction by including a suspended chord before the V. The song thereafter sticks mostly to the template laid down in NY, save for substituting a iii–IV progression for a iii–ii progression in the third and fourth lines, mirroring the MN opening of "You're a Big Girl Now."

In an amusing decision, *More Blood, More Tracks* does not exactly provide us with the test pressing's "Idiot Wind." The same take is included, but with a different organ overdub than the one originally mooted for the album. One hopes someone at the Dylan office was purposely trolling us trainspotters ("It's still not complete!")

In MN, "Lily, Rosemary and the Jack of Hearts" is in D, but in NY, the song is in open E like the others. Harmonically, the song remains almost identical, with a mostly similar progression around I, IV and V. The big changes are in tempo and instrumentation. Most seem to approve of the MN version, adding as it does some

dynamism and momentum. *More Blood, More Tracks* also affords us with the excised NY verse long teased in lyric collections.

"If You See Her, Say Hello" from NY keeps to traditional E major chords. Dylan reshuffles a few of them and embellishes them in MN. With the song now in D major, Dylan includes a striking C for the long "hear" that ends the second line. C, not featured in the key of D, is conspicuous. It shares two notes with both the ii and vii° of the scale, giving it an unsettled quality. It works effectively to convey the sudden disquiet in Dylan's voice. After a quick reorientation towards the V, he shifts to the vi chord (Bm). This chord opens the two subsequent lines (the pained "Say for me that I'm…" and "She might think I've forgotten…"). In tandem with Dylan's vocals arching upwards, this vi chord lends much poignancy to the lyrics' understatement.

In NY, Dylan uses the B11 for the "hear" pivot. Functioning as part dominant, part subdominant, it's a notable voicing, found frequently in the NY versions. Dylan clips the "hear" in NY, however, whereas in MN, the word and its sequels ("chill", "free", "town" and "fast" in verses 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively) are purposely elongated. The slightly ambiguous C in MN offers more of a twist on these words, before the shift back to A.

Unavoidably, the release is an occasion to further consider the relative merits of the two sets of sessions. Far from attenuating NY's innovation, it's apparent that the trip to MN found Dylan still alert to the possibilities of the songs. He continues to develop ways of exploring the songs' central conceits and finds new ways to enrich the lyrics.

The Bootleg Series has increasingly become a space to experiment with Dylan's mixes, and in a manner of speaking to de-historicize them and present the music in something approaching a natural state. Producer Phil Ramone's reverb has been stripped from the songs, and the multitracks (where available) mixed into a new master. *More Blood, More Tracks* co-producers Steve Berkowitz and Jeff Rosen deliberated over this and ultimately decided on presenting the

music sans various production decisions made at the time, including speeding up the songs by approximately 2– 3%.[7] Previous Bootleg Series releases have taken a similar approach (including 2008's *Tell Tale Signs* and 2015's *The Cutting Edge*), attenuating the producer's original stamp and aiming at a new presentation of the music. As with much of the series, an ideology of purity, "access", closeness and naturalness coalesces around the material.

The *Bootleg 14* takes then sound unlike any of their previous releases. The remix, for all the debate it inspires, is more than welcome. In hindsight, the sporadic releases of the NY takes on various collections have been of less-than-ideal quality; the *Jerry Maguire* "Shelter From the Storm" (1996) now sounds a generation or two away from what *More Blood, More Tracks* gives us. On this set, Dylan's vocals are startlingly present from the very first track. The music overall perhaps has greater warmth and intimacy than the original *Blood on the Tracks*. Ramone's reverb has a spacious, nocturnal ambience of its own, and has been an integral part of *Blood on the Tracks* since its release. It's a delight nonetheless to hear how bright some of the songs sound in their new iteration. The MN "Tangled Up in Blue", long since internalized by Dylan fans, has taken on a sweeter quality, with the guitars now mixed higher and clearer.

Making no claims on being definitive, these remixes that conclude the set are yet another series of possibilities—further pieces of a shifting puzzle. Part of the set's coherence stems from the relevance of alternatives to *Blood on the Tracks*, and how much their presence feeds into the album's world. Much as the album seems to be both flashforward and flashback all at once, *More Blood*'s alternatives and remixes offer flashsideways—parallel, simultaneous permutations—wholly fitting for an album concerned with time, cycles, eternal return and

[7] Michael Fremer, "Bob Dylan's 'More Blood, More Tracks The Bootleg Series Vol. 14' Review + Exclusive Interview With Co-Producer Steve Berkowitz", *Analog Planet*, November 2, 2018, https://www.analogplanet.com/content/bob-dylans-more-blood-more-tracks-bootleg-series-vol-14-review-exclusive-interview-co.

predeterminism, but also whose release history has always elicited doubleness and alterity.

Given the expectations around the set, it's edifying that *More Blood, More Tracks* has a narrative that satisfies in its own ways apart from simply being a compendium of ingredients for the eventual *Blood on the Tracks*. This is down to both Dylan's working process and the compilers' faith in its appeal; the latter's decision to show the sessions' linear progression happily offers a pleasing sense of journey and a satisfying dénouement in the MN remakes. Yet, the material's release in this form was not inevitable, and the set's "completist" mentality is itself worth pausing over in closing.

One gets the impression that the Dylan office is moving towards more comprehensive overviews of entire sessions that led to epochal albums. With something of a trilogy in place (2014's *The Basement Tapes Complete*, *The Cutting Edge*, and now *More Blood, More Tracks*), and more if one counts the 50th Anniversary collections (2012–14), Dylan's studio chronicles are being made to parallel and offer alternative experiences to the albums that finally emerged from them. In tandem with the insight to be garnered from Tulsa's Dylan Archive, process is taking a place alongside the finished product. Having proved itself both commercially and artistically viable, it is sure to be given further exposure.

With greater access also comes greater volition on the part of the listener. However cogent the process documented on *More Blood, More Tracks* is, one is not constrained by the tracklisting, and re-assemblage and playlists are inevitable with this set. For music taken to have such personal resonance with the artist, the set facilitates the listener's capacity to personalize it, and in effect compile their own version of the album. Once up to me, *Blood on the Tracks* looks increasingly up to us.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to express his gratitude to Mark A. Davidson and Gavin Wynne for their many helpful comments during the drafting of this work. Special thanks go to Kevin Odegard for sharing his experience of the *Blood on the Tracks* sessions and for his invaluable contributions to "Tangled Up in Blue."

References

Dylan, Bob. *The 50th Anniversary Collection: The Copyright Extension Collection, Volume 1*. Sony Music – no catalogue number, 2012, CD-R.

Dylan, Bob. *The 50th Anniversary Collection 1963*. Columbia – 88883799701, 2013, vinyl.

Dylan, Bob. *50th Anniversary Collection 1964*. Columbia – 88875040861, 2014, vinyl.

Dylan, Bob. *Blood on the Tracks*. Columbia – 512350 2, 2003, compact disc. Originally released in 1975.

Dylan, Bob. *The Bootleg Series Vol. 8: Tell Tale Signs: Rare and Unreleased 1989–2006*. Deluxe Edition. Columbia – 88697 35797 2, 2008, compact disc.

Dylan, Bob. *The Bootleg Series Vol. 12: The Cutting Edge 1965–1966*. Deluxe Edition. Columbia – 88875124412, 2015, compact disc.

Dylan, Bob. *The Bootleg Series Vol. 14: More Blood, More Tracks*. Deluxe Edition. Columbia – 19075858962, 2018, compact disc.

Dylan, Bob. *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*. Columbia – 512348 2, 2003, compact disc. Originally released in 1963.

Dylan, Bob. *Nashville Skyline*. Columbia – 512346 2, 2003, compact disc. Originally released in 1969.

Dylan, Bob. *Planet Waves*. Columbia – 512356 2, 2003, compact disc. Originally released in 1974.

Dylan, Bob, and The Band. *The Bootleg Series Vol. 11: The Basement Tapes Complete*. Columbia – 88875016122, 2014, compact disc.

Fremer, Michael. "Bob Dylan's 'More Blood, More Tracks The Bootleg Series Vol. 14' Review + Exclusive Interview With Co-Producer Steve Berkowitz." *Analog Planet*. November 2, 2018. https://www.analogplanet.com/content/bob-dylans-more-blood-more-tracks-bootleg-series-vol-14-review-exclusive-interview-co.

Gill, Andy, and Kevin Odegard. *Simple Twist of Fate: Bob Dylan and the Making of Blood on the Tracks*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2005.

Odegard, Kevin. Interviewed by Jason Verlinde, *Fretboard Journal*. Podcast audio. February 2019. https://www.fretboardjournal.com/podcasts/podcast-237-kevin-odegard/.

Odegard, Kevin. Conversation with the author, May 2019.

Various. *Jerry Maguire: Music from the Motion Picture*. Epic Soundtrax – 486981 2, 1996, CD.

Wosahla, Steve. "Interview: More Blood, More Tracks…More Bob Dylan Stories." *Americana Highways*. November 20, 2018. https://americanahighways.org/2018/11/20/interview-more-blood-more-tracks-more-bob-dylan-stories/.

Appendix

The test pressing takes on *More Blood, More Tracks*.

Disc 1, track 11: "Lily, Rosemary and the Jack of Hearts"

Included on the test pressing, and the single disc edition of *More Blood, More Tracks*.

9/16/74: Take 2

Disc 2, track 5: "Meet Me in the Morning"

Edited version included on the test pressing, and previously released on *Blood on the Tracks*.

9/16/74: Take 1

Disc 3, track 3: "You're a Big Girl Now'"

Included on the test pressing, and previously released on *Biograph*.

9/17/74: Take 2, Remake

Disc 5, track 3: "Tangled Up in Blue"

Included on the test pressing, and previously released on *The Bootleg Series Volumes 1–3 (Rare & Unreleased) 1961–1991*.

9/19/74: Take 3, Remake 2

Disc 5, track 10: "Idiot Wind"

Included on the test pressing, with caveats.

9/19/74: Take 4, Remake (with organ overdub)

***Bob Dylan: Electric*. American Writers Museum, Chicago, November 16, 2018-April 30, 2019.**

REVIEW BY Kenneth Daley, Columbia College, Chicago

As its title suggests, the primary focus of *Bob Dylan: Electric*, the exhibit currently on display at Chicago's American Writers Museum, is 1965, Dylan at Newport and the electric songs of the '65 albums, *Bringing It All Back Home* and *Highway 61 Revisited*. Dylan's '64 Fender Stratocaster, captured in Diana Davies' iconic photo of Dylan playing Newport 1965, hangs in the center of the exhibit, encased in plastic like a religious relic. Underneath the guitar lies a copy of the '65 festival program, illustrated by Jonathan Shahn, son of the social realist, and opened to Dylan's absurdist short story, "Off the Top of My Head." To its right, headphones offer the exhibit goer a recording of the Newport performance of "Maggie's Farm," the song from the newly released *Back Home* that Dylan chose to open the electric set.

The exhibit is relatively small, mounted in a 100-foot long corridor connecting two sides of the Writers Museum, and organized into six sections: Highway 61 Revisited; Influences; Newport Folk Festival, 1965; *Don't Look Back*; Dylan's Impact; Nobel Prize. Curated by rock critic Alan Light, with photos and objects on loan from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Bill Pagel, James Irsay (the guitar), and others, the exhibit brings together an entertaining collection of historical artifacts, among them, studio logs, job sheets, and photos from Dylan's 1965 Columbia recording sessions; a "fair copy" manuscript of Dylan's hand-printed lyrics to "Tom Thumb's Blues"; Dylan's playfully annotated/illustrated copy of J.D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*; a beautiful 1965 painted handbill in orange, blacks, and blues, by Eric Von Schmidt, announcing Joan Baez and Dylan in concert; the opening pages from the original transcript of D.A. Pennebaker's 1967 film, *Don't Look Back*. Each section of the exhibit includes audio or audiovisual components.

Unfortunately, none of this constitutes, in the words of the Museum's promotional materials, "an unparalleled display of Bob Dylan's contribution to

American music and literature." That Dylan's embrace of rock altered American culture is an oft-told tale (two recent attempts, Elijah Wald's *Dylan Goes Electric!* (2015) and Greil Marcus's *Like a Rolling Stone: Bob Dylan at the Crossroads* (2005), sit at the entrance to the exhibit), and the telling here is only superficial, an introduction to the uninitiated as opposed to anyone even reasonably well acquainted with Dylan's life and career. Most disappointing is the concluding section of the exhibit devoted to "Dylan's Impact," consisting of an oversized selection of banal quotations from well-known musicians (and a few writers) speaking to Dylan's genius and achievement. "It almost makes me furious sometimes, how good his lyrics are," says the inspired Dave Matthews from somewhere far on desolation row. "Bob's songs seemed to update the concepts of justice and injustice," Joan Baez helpfully chimes in. Headphones are lined up along the lower portion of the wall offering audio clips of various artists covering Dylan songs, in case you've missed Hendrix's *All Along the Watchtower*, or find Miley Cyrus's rendition of *You're Gonna Make Me Lonesome When You Go* compelling evidence of Dylan's vital contribution to American music.

Even weaker is the exhibit's treatment of Dylan's contribution to American literature. The Nobel Prize section is merely an exercise in hagiography, a collection of newspaper headlines and a gold-embossed invitation to the award ceremony. The script of Dylan's lecture and the full twenty-seven-minute recording that he cannily set to music are made available absent any analysis of Dylan's place in the vernacular American tradition of songwriting, or any interrogation of the relationship of song to literature. Copies of *Moby-Dick*, *The Odyssey*, and *All Quiet on the Western Front*, classic literary texts that Dylan singles out as having informed his music, dutifully sit on a shelf along the wall. So nearby sit copies of the 2016 edition of *The Lyrics: 1961-2012*, and *Chronicles: Volume One* (2004). *Tarantula*, Dylan's 1971 collection of prose poems, is represented only by a picture of its front cover. The out-of-print 1973 *Writings and Drawings* is not represented at all, nor any of Dylan's other early publications — "11 Outlined Epitaphs," the prose

poems printed on the back of the 1964 *The Times They Are A-Changin'*; "Some Other Kinds of Songs…Poems by Bob Dylan," printed in the jacket notes of the other 1964 album, *Another Side of Bob Dylan*; the columns Dylan penned for the short-lived, folk-song magazine, *Hootenanny*; the open letter to friends in *Broadside*.

Except for "Tom Thumb's Blues," the exhibit includes no manuscripts, correspondence, notebooks, or any other archival materials that would lend insight into Dylan's composing process or literary contributions. There is nothing here on loan from The Bob Dylan Archive in Tulsa, the resource most likely to provide the materials necessary to craft the definitive display of Dylan's contribution to American music and literature. But if you find yourself in Chicago, *Bob Dylan: Electric* offers a pleasant enough hour among Dylan memorabilia and photographs, some of which you very well may never have seen before.

Daryl Sanders. *That Thin, Wild Mercury Sound: Dylan, Nashville and the Making of Blonde on Blonde*. Chicago, IL: Chicago Review Press, 2019. xvi + 240 pp. $26.99

REVIEW BY Nick Smart, The College of New Rochelle

That Thin, Wild Mercury Sound: Dylan, Nashville, and the Making of Blonde on Blonde (2019) is not a commentary on or mere history of the making of *Blonde on Blonde* (1966). The book's experiential re-creation of the making of the record manages to improve upon the primary pleasure of listening to Bob, and that's not an easy trick.

By most standards *Thin, Wild Mercury* probably won't rank among the most important Bob Dylan books in the catalog. Sanders relies on sources well known to Dylan criticism for much of the material he marshals, and his intimate connections are mostly with the Nashville musicians who played on the record; he can't tell you anything you don't know about Bob Dylan and Edie Sedgwick. There is no gossipy or erudite currency to be gained from this book. But if you'd like to hear more of songs you've played a zillion times, or if for some reason you haven't yet understood why the release of *Blonde on Blonde* is such an inescapable moment in the history of music, then you'd better call your librarian.

With its title, *Thin, Wild Mercury* certainly provokes the skeptical Dylan reader. This phrase, Dylan's own, is so well known to enthusiasts that it seems foolhardy at first for author Daryl Sanders to claim he can contribute to anyone's understanding of what thin, wild mercury means (no, not what it means, what it sounds like, because its meaning is only its sound) and how Dylan conceived and delivered it. But this guy Sanders, he pulls it off. The distillation of his experience with Nashville's people and sound, and all the impressions of Dylan he's collected from first- (and second-) hand witnesses, results in the proof that *Blonde on Blonde* meets the Wild, Mercury standard to which Dylan retroactively holds it.

For better or for worse (mostly better), Daryl Sanders is a lifer, a Nashville music journalist who has covered Music City scenes and players since the late '70s. His feel for the town is put to good use when he recounts anecdotes like Al

Kooper's run-in with street toughs on his way back to the studio from a record shop or an effort to have illegal liquor brought to Studio A as a lubricant for the recording of "Rainy Day Women #12 & 35." These tasty details, gleaned from interviews with the musicians and made immediate by Sanders's experience of the scene, give much of the book a gritty and honest atmosphere. Of course, Sanders is also a writer who likes the marquee value of his subject, and has interviewed many major figures including Robert Palmer, Joan Baez, and Tom Petty. Perhaps it is this nearly epic sense of scope that makes him want to fit his take on *Blonde on Blonde* into more arenas than it should play. Occasionally the density of what Sanders knows deprives the book of focus (like a great song with too many verses?).

Both aspects of this book (unchecked recitation of record label names, locations of minor gigs, antipathies of industry executives, and spot-on storytelling once tape starts rolling in Studio A) are necessary. Together, as in novels and life, the banal and the brilliant create the effect. If you don't know how old drummer Kenneth Buttery was when he started playing Tennessee roadhouses, your jaw won't drop far enough at the sound of his brushwork many years and chapters later.

The book provides backstory for anybody who played a note, called a take, snapped a photo, or rode along in a limo with Bob Dylan between July 1965 when Dylan resumes work on *Highway 61 Revisited* to the day in in 1967 when the layout of *Blonde on Blonde*'s inner sleeve is reconfigured because an Italian starlet doesn't want her picture in the montage of faces that are mostly Bob's. It's possible to feel too carried away by this bloodhound approach, but it will all be worth it when Sanders displays his spellbinding mastery of minutiae by uncovering the shape of the lyrics and the sound of the songs.

This description of some of the takes of "Most Likely You Go Your Way (and I'll Go Mine)" is a good example of the payoff:

> "The second and third verses and the bridge all underwent significant changes between the first take and the sixth, the only complete takes—none of the other four made it past the first verse and the chorus. Dylan also made a key lyrical change in the bridge between the first and final takes, adding "the judge" who "holds a grudge." The introduction of the judge underscored the reckoning awaiting the woman for what she had done to the man when "time will tell just who has fell and who's been left behind."

The up-tempo arrangement (in the key of G) developed fairly quickly—it was mostly together on the first take. Between the first and the second takes they settled on the primary melody line, a catchy bluesy riff suggested by McCoy that was repeated in unison by a number of instruments throughout the song.

"There was a little figure after each chorus that he [McCoy] wanted to put in on trumpet, but Dylan was not fond of overdubbing," Kooper recalled in his memoir. "It was a nice lick, too, Simple, but nice. Now Charlie was already playing bass on that tune. So we started recording, and when that section came up, he picked up the trumpet in his right hand and played the part while he kept the bass going with his left hand without missing a lick in either hand. Dylan stopped in the middle of that and just stared in awe." (154-155)

These paragraphs show you all of the book's strength, and another, forgivable, weakness. If you read *Thin, Wild Mercury* with your headphones on, as I did, Sanders's detailing of each track's development will bring you to moments of genuine exhilaration when each song's full sound is realized. While reading the chunk of *Thin, Wild Mercury* quoted above, I played "Most Likely You Go Your Way (And I'll Go Mine)" over and over, reveling in those trumpet flourishes that showed me the contortion of Charlie McCoy, the band leader who kept all the Nashville musicians working toward the realization of Dylan's sound, and also Dylan's face registering McCoy's sublime contribution. What had once been an undifferentiated aspect of a song I really liked, became a moment of creation I felt in my

bones. The palpability of this rendering is a great accomplishment, and it happens often.

Robbie Robertson's "blistering lead" on "Leopard Skin Pillbox Hat" might have remained for me just the sound of good guitar playing had I not read *Thin, Wild Mercury* and overheard the arch-Southern McCoy, telling Robertson (such a Northerner he's Canadian), "'Robbie, the whole world'll marry you on that one'" (167). Sanders reanimates the recording sessions by listening to every scrap of raw tape available, reading every book that mentions *Blonde on Blonde* (that great McCoy line is sourced to Sean Wilentz's *Dylan in America* [2011]), and interviewing those Nashville musicians we hear on the record (McCoy insists he never played the trumpet with one hand, but Sanders, with due respect, provides enough evidence that he might have to allow a reader's startled impression to linger).

So that's what the section under review, and the book as a whole, do so well, take us to Nashville by way of New York and drop us in the studio with Dylan and the bands. What isn't as wonderful about the book is apparent in the last line of that first quoted paragraph. Anyone who follows the Never Ending Tour hoping to hear Bob drop a new couplet into "Tangled Up in Blue" is going to love the way Sanders keeps track of Dylan's on-the-spot revisions. Anyone who does not love to have other listeners tell them what Dylan meant, especially when the proffered meanings are standard and somewhat sexist, is going to take exception with this book from time to time.

Glossing lyrics is not Sanders' best skill. After he shows how each track of *Blonde on Blonde* ends up in the can, he often strays from listening and reads the words for an obligatory paragraph or two. His notes rarely improve the experience of the record the way his sterling stories of social and sonic convergence always do. The "fever down in my pocket" on "Absolutely Sweet Marie" refers as well to musical pockets and spiritual containers as to hard evidence of sexual urgency. But because Sanders, like so many explicators of *Blonde on Blonde*, can't resist imagining Dylan's feelings for Edie, Nico, Sarah, or Joan, meanings are frequently

overdetermined. But this trap's jaws catch everyone who writes about Dylan; some struggle more often and less gracefully than others. Sanders quotes many unsatisfactory critical attempts to reduce Dylan songs to stable meanings, or prove they mean nothing. Knowing that Lester Bangs and Clinton Heylin and Jann Wenner don't deserve the last word on any of this stuff should allow us to just ignore Sanders's unremarkable effort to render *Blonde on Blonde* a record about women delivered via the thematic twin engine of "waiting and gates."

Thin, Wild Mercury does not need to be regarded and shouldn't pose as the sort of Dylan book in which one available version of some of the songs backstops an author's view of Dylan as activist, poet, or profligate. No, this book is an example of what English professors call performative rhetoric, an act of speech or writing that enacts the very thing it also describes. Eulogies bury and vows marry and *That, Thin Wild Mercury Sound* reveals its sonic referent by reverently turning our ears to *Blonde on Blonde*.

***Mondo Scripto, Lyrics and Drawings, Bob Dylan*. Halcyon Gallery, London, UK, October 9, 2018 – December 23, 2018.**

REVIEW BY Lisa Sanders, St. Peter's University, NJ

Situated in the heart of one of the poshest spots in Europe, the foundation of the most important American song catalog of the twentieth century hangs uniformly among fifty similarly created and framed pieces. The contrast between Bond Street elegance, and the collection of the most *American* of American songs is striking, and the contrast proliferates throughout the exhibit. The juxtaposition of simplicity and complexity, of the temporary and the permanent, and of the ordinary life and the posh life are just a few examples.

Dylan quotes are painted on the deep red gallery walls. His view of the nature of art and its defining purpose in life expressed in the 1978 interviews with *Rolling Stone* and *Playboy* magazine, an excerpt from the Nobel speech regarding the nature and purpose of songs, and a quote from his autobiography *Chronicles* regarding his experience of looking for the singers he heard on records, illustrate the depth of some of his ideas. Indeed, the feeling of rich depth is exactly what is captured by the lighting and color inside the gallery. One feels ready to think. And Dylan helps us with our considerations by the uniformity of presentation. Each piece is presented on cream colored paper. Dylan's handwritten song lyrics are on the left, and on the right, an illustration in pencil. One is immediately drawn to get up close and focus. What's revealed in doing so is nothing short of astounding.

The exhibit is organized on two floors. Upon entering the ground floor of the gallery, two center columns, one on the left, and one on the right, display seven and nine pieces respectively. These center columns feature masterpieces such as "Subterranean Homesick Blues", "Love Minus Zero - No Limit", "Don't Think Twice, (It's All Right)", "Masters Of War", "Song To Woody", "Blowin' In The Wind", "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall", "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue", "Like A Rolling Stone", "Mr. Tambourine Man", "It Ain't Me Babe", and others. Seven works are hung on the left outer wall

and five pieces are hung on the right outer wall. "Leopard-Skin Pillbox Hat", "Stuck Inside Of Mobile With The Memphis Blues Again", "Visions Of Johanna", "Just Like A Woman", "The Times They Are A-Changin'", "Positively 4th Street", "Ballad Of A Thin Man", "It's Alright Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)" and "Rainy Day Woman #13 & 35" are some of the featured works. Twenty-three pieces are displayed on the lower ground floor, all hung along the perimeter, including "Hurricane", "Every Grain Of Sand", "Highway 61 Revisited", "Jokerman", "Gotta Serve Somebody", "Tangled Up In Blue", "Simple Twist Of Fate", "Knockin' On Heaven's Door", "I Shall Be Released", and "Forever Young". The "Knockin' On Heaven's Door' series" and "Isis" are hung toward the back of the gallery. Some viewers might prefer having those pieces hung closer to the other masterpieces.

Although the pieces are displayed according to a consistent theme, the interpretation is anything but. And we should expect that --it is Dylan's art after all. Twenty-nine of the pieces have at least two illustrations, one in the catalog and a different one on display. Some of the songs with multiple illustrations reflect a consistent interpretation. The two illustrations of "Blowin' In The Wind", for example, are consistent with the lyrics. The catalog illustration depicts a man on the side of a road staring at a signpost with signs pointing to Wyoming, Iowa, Kansas, Nevada and Montana. The illustration hanging in the gallery depicts a man sitting near a window, covering his ears with his hands, staring straight ahead. Both illustrations make sense. The illustrations for "Hurricane", on the other hand, are more challenging. The catalog illustration is of a right hand holding a smoking gun with the first finger on the trigger. The illustration on the gallery wall is of a baseball pitcher having just released a pitch. He is in perfect form and the ball is coming directly at us. Baseball and guns, both as American as apple pie. The invitation to dig into the depictions, scratching the surface of the sketches to reveal powerful ideas relating to the interpretation of the songs is compelling.

Mondo Scripto provides an opportunity to explore a new aesthetic of song. As one of the most influential twentieth century philosophers of language, Ludwig

Wittgenstein, wrote in his seminal work, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* , "A gramophone record, the musical idea, the written notes, and the sound – waves, all stand to one another in the same internal relation of depicting that holds between language and the world (4.014)." Through *Mondo Scripto*, Dylan offers us a translation of his experience of that internal relation, where powerful modes of thought, music, and art are realized into a language that is uniquely his, but one that forcefully relates to our individual worlds. The variations in the *Mondo Scripto* drawings underscore how Dylan's art straddles permanence and challenges us to recognize the kind of "waves" Wittgenstein describes. The labile nature of the *Mondo Scripto* project seems to be Dylan's reflection on how art functions in giving meaning to human life.

THE DYLANISTA

I know something is happening, but, honestly, I don't know what it is. This is quite a moment, a climacteric in Dylan studies. Thanks in large measure to the imprimatur of the Nobel Prize, the academic institutionalization of Bob Dylan has begun in earnest. A transition is underway from the unshored fragments of the old tribalism toward—perhaps—the dream of a new cohesion. After twenty centuries of stony sleep, a Bob Dylan bureaucracy seems to be gathering force. The carpet is moving. Can a Bob Dylan Society, with a President and elected officers, be far off?

Let's just concentrate on Tulsa, Oklahoma, the New Bethlehem of Dylan studies. Established in 2016, and still growing, The Bob Dylan Archive is housed at the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa. The Archive librarians are cataloguing thousands of items, including song manuscripts, personal notebooks, recordings, photographs, and films. Scholars (who must make appointments in advance and justify their interest in written applications) are lining up to use the reading room. Has a new anthropological era dawned? So it would seem. All the hunter-gatherers who have tracked and chased down Dylan material across the savanna for all these past years can now settle down to a bottomless trove collected in a single place. But caveat emptor. The Presidential Library aspect of the The Bob Dylan Archive gives the misleading impression of completeness. And I'm not referring to *completism*, that abhorred disease, merely to a delimitation, and if I can quote Spinoza without seeming too pedantic, *Omnis determinatio est negatio* ("every definition is also an exclusion"). There's no question the Archive's collation will be an indispensable resource, but I hope it never becomes the exclusive definition of Dylan studies. May we stay forever (a bit) Neolithic.

Back to Tulsa. The Tulsa University Institute for Bob Dylan Studies, according to their website, "is one component of a three-part collaboration that includes The Bob Dylan Archive at the Helmerich Center for American Research and the George Kaiser Family Foundation." The Kaiser Family Foundation, we are told, is

"in the process of designing and building the Bob Dylan Center, which will be located in downtown Tulsa's vibrant Arts District. It will be the outward-facing dimension of this partnership." Bristling with bureaucratic ambition, and with deep pockets to boot, this tripartite collaboration seems tantamount to a Bob Dylan hegemony *in statu nascendi*.

Am I the only one amused by the words "institute" and "Bob Dylan" in the same title? Or should I wipe the smile off my face? Maybe I'm missing the warning signals, a falconer out of earshot of his falcon. Maybe we're all witnessing a rough beast shifting across the Oklahoma hills to be born.

As the poet says, "Time will tell who has fell and who's been left behind." This new journal, the *Dylan Review*, should take that lyric to heart—not as a creed but as an aspiration. We should let the others go their way while we go ours, determined neither to be left behind nor to move in tandem with the academic bureaucratization.

The *Dylan Review* is only the most recent of many magazines and journals on Bob Dylan. We honor those who came before and recognize our debt. Yet things have changed and are changing. Our scholarly mission grows from the organized academic interest in Dylan that has spread during the last few years. International, well-funded Dylan conferences pop up regularly in Europe—in Berlin and Lisbon, for instance—and, like the TU Institute for Bob Dylan Studies' "The World of Bob Dylan Symposium," these gatherings have attracted hundreds of participants. Scholarly papers and thematic sessions have multiplied exponentially, demonstrating all the nuanced criticism and theoretical analysis expected of a large-scale 21st-century academic meeting. And this efflorescence of sophisticated criticism, this mania for organizational parity between Dylan and other major figures of the curriculum, has profited a host of neglected disciplines, not least musicology, ethics, versification, and even classics. Apropos of the last, however, let's not abandon what used to be called connoisseurship (or less pretty names) and find ourselves, like Aeneas, sailing away from Carthage with

puzzlement. As you probably remember, Aeneas and his crew looked back at the great fire on the shore and wondered what could kindle such a light. The reason was hidden from them—*quae tantum accenderit igna causa latet* (*Aeneid* 5.4-5)—but what they were seeing were the flames of Queen Dido's pyre.

This may be a climacteric in Dylan studies, but it is also a departure. We don't want to look back from where we are only to realize we've left a burning body in our wake. Because something is happening *and* something is missing too--the *frisson* we used to feel adding Dylan to the conventional syllabus, the pride of resistance and loyal nonconformity, along with that sense of being partisans dropped behind the lines. We seem to have won the war after losing (almost) every battle.

F. Scott Fitzgerald once quipped, "To the spoils goes the victor." The resonance of this remark echoes down the corridors of the academy as Dylan studies, freshly legitimized, claims its laurel crown. The controversy over the Nobel has melted back into the night, replaced by seminars on Dylan on campuses everywhere. We now list our Dylan courses with the secret glee of staunch haruspices who saw the future laureate in the entrails—and conspicuously without attracting supercilious glances from colleagues.

But is it naïve to ask if Bob Dylan will survive the victory? Shakespeare didn't, nor did Dante, which is why we have Shakespeareans and Dantista(s) to recover what we can of their achievements. This is not to compare great things to small nor to beg the question of Dylan's place in literary (and lyrical) history. But the act of recovery is always already a death certificate. Can Dylan's lyrical charisma—the voice and timbre and timing that make him what he is—survive its systematic study and routinization? Performance and improvisation are of the moment, spontaneous experiences of shared intimacy. Can a song lift out of an archive?

Maybe this is a crossroads. Part of me hopes it isn't, because you never know who, with tract oblique, might arrive at the crossroads offering too much knowledge.

Part of me, on the other hand, hopes this truly is a crossroads. Not a place of pacts or glozing promises, however, and not the diminished site of future quibbles. Instead, part of me hopes for a crossroads of opportunity and exchange, a crossroads of scholarly disciplines and coeval interpretative languages—a marketplace where nothing is sold, nothing bought, and everything is delivered. But that isn't up to me.

RF

ARTICLES

"Memorize these lines, and remember these rhymes": New York Sessions of *Blood on the Tracks*

Richard F. Thomas, Harvard University

This contribution is deliberately limited in scope, though I hope of interest in the broader implications about how a great work of art comes to be, even in the final, or penultimate, moments of its perfecting. Out of all the various stages of composition of the songs of Bob Dylan's mid-1970s classic *Blood on the Tracks* (hereafter *BotT*) that are emerging from the Bob Dylan Archive in Tulsa, Oklahoma, out of all the changes that occur in the Minnesota sessions that gave us the studio album, and all the changes in performance that followed as Dylan began presenting songs in concert, starting with "Simple Twist of Fate" on November 8, 1975 at Patrick Gymnasium at the University of Vermont—out of all of these transformations I am here focused on only one aspect, what happened to the lyrics, that is the words, of the songs in A&R Studios in New York City between September 16 and 19 of 1974. With the issuing of the six-CD release *More Blood More Tracks* (hereafter *MBMT*) on November 2, 2018, we were provided with the eighty-seven takes from those four days that lead to the making of the album that famously did not come out till Dylan rewrote and rerecorded five of the songs in Minneapolis on December 27 and 30 of the same year. The now official bootleg of that album, its songs in the same order as on *BotT*, can be reconstructed from the six CDs: 5.3, 5.5, 3.3, 5.10, 4.2, 2.5, 1.11, 4.13, 3.15, 4.12. The only material extraneous to the four days that I include comes from what is acknowledged as the closest to a final draft, the 5 x 3 inch red notebook (hereafter *RN*) housed in the George Heckscher Collection of the Morgan Library in New York City, whose contents are reproduced in *Stories in the Press*, one of the two booklets issued with *MBMT*. At times *RN* agrees with initial takes of the songs, at other times with later takes against those initial ones.

The changes across the four days are generally small, slight changes that help the meter, emphasis or tone, while others reveal Dylan's restless desire to get it right, even when it already seems just right, like the first two solo takes of "You're a Big Girl Now." What they show is an artist creating verbal and lyrical perfection in the midst of getting the music and accompaniment to the right place. I take no account of Ellen Bernstein, who may have helped here and there. My interest is Dylan and the artist working in his own head. I more or less ignore the changes in accompaniment (acoustic to "Deliverance" band to Dylan and bass), though do notice Dylan's interactions with the various musicians, for which, as for much else, readers should consult Clinton Heylin, *No One Else Could Play That Tune* (Route 2018). I leave out "Up to Me" and "Call Letter Blues," focusing only on the album that Dylan gave us.

"Tangled Up in Blue"

The first take of the song (I use "take" to indicate any attempt, corresponding to the track numbers of each of the discs), with Tony Brown on bass, came at the end of the first day (Disc 3.1). Dylan made it right through the song and after four more takes (3.5, 3.11, 5.1, 5.2), the song is where he wanted it, 5.3. For this song the lyrics changed very little between 3.1 and 6.3, but what changes do occur show Dylan working to get it right, even after it is hard-wired:

3.1	5.3
he was lyin' in bed (*RN*)	he was layin' in bed
this can't be the end (*RN*)	this ain't the end
and offered it to me	and handed it to me (also *RN*)
pourin' out of every page	pourin' off of every page *(RN*)

The first person verses 1–3 of the *BotT* version ("I was layin;" etc.) are consistently in the third person on all takes of *MBMT* ("he was lyin'", "their folks", "their lives", "as far as they could", "he was alone", etc.). The complexity of the song's pronouns twice causes Dylan to stop as he gets the gender wrong. On 6.2 he gives

us "…bankbook wasn't big enough / And she wa…," just stopping where he should have sung "And he was standing…" At 5.2 he begins the second verse "He was married" stops playing, and in frustration says "Oh, *she* was married." But generally the song was where he wanted it, including the completely different first nine lines of the penultimate verse, with no sign of Montague Street or revolution in the air: "He was always in a hurry … And when it all came crashing down." All but one version give "He thought they were successful, she thought they were blessed" (*RN* "He thinks … she thinks"), only version 5.3 giving an interesting variant, presumably just a slip of the tongue, "She thought they were successful, he thought they were blessed."

"Simple Twist of Fate"

The lyrics of this song went through some small but meaningful changes, with five takes on the first day, two solo (1.5, 1.6) and three with the band (2.1, 2.2, 2.3) then two on the last, Dylan with bass (5.4, 5.5), the second of these becoming the final *BotT* version. This was the first song accompanied by the band, and the difficulties show when in 2.2 Dylan stops in the middle of the second verse, noting "the drummer seems to … the drums are, uh, one second behind." Uniquely, on this version he had also sung the second line "a little mixed up, I remember well", though the previous solo versions have the clearly superior "a little confused." In *RN* we find "mixed up" with superscript "shy."

Across the two days Dylan wrestles with some key lines, eventually getting it right. For verse 3 *RN* had "the light bust through the beat-up shade" (with subscript "cut-up"), then repeats the verse, writing "bust through the torn-up shade." But on the first solo take he sang "beat through a busted shade" (1.5), then "came through a beat-up shade" (1.6), before getting back to the sonorous "bust through a beat-up shade" (2.1ff). That sounds better, and as Dylan has said "you want your song to sound good" (Nobel Lecture). More than sound is involved in another set of revisions as the song's male subject "hunts her down by the

waterfront dock," the morning after. In *RN* the incomplete fifth verse ends with things as they should and would eventually be, giving the woman agency: "Maybe she'll pick him out again," though the following "How long must he wait" is not yet there. In 5.4 and 5.5 Dylan gets there, though in the preceding versions on September 16 he wanders: "maybe she'll spot him" (1.5) "maybe he'll pick her out" (1.6, 2.1) "maybe he'll spot her" (2.3). A final detail adds to the perfection of this song. In all but the final version guitar and harmonica riffs come between the second and third and the fourth and fifth stanzas, but by the final version Dylan has a final riff at the end of the song, and now for the first time in the very middle of the song, following the third verse in which she is leaving the strange hotel, and before the fourth in which he wakes to find her gone.

"You're a Big Girl Now"

On September 19, in the final attempts to get the song (6.1), Dylan stops after the fourth line: "Na," he says, "I can't get into it. I think we must have had it on the other one." "Want to do it?" he asks Tony Brown, and they start, this time only getting through the first two words ("Our conversation"), at which point he notes "it calls for a small transfiguration," interestingly uttering the word that he will use 38 years later in 2012 in a *Rolling Stone* interview in which he talks about his own "transfiguration" in connection with his interaction with literary figures, going back to classical antiquity, Aristotle, Julius Caesar, Dante, Shakespeare (see Thomas, *Why Bob Dylan Matters* 119–27). What he meant by "transfiguration" in 1974 we will never know, but he launches back into a third attempt, this time getting through the first line of the second verse, "Bird on the horizon, sittin' on a fence." At this point he concludes "No we ain't gonna do it better. I can just keep hearing that organ." This presumably refers to the two takes with which he opened the session on September 17 (3.2 and 3.3, the latter of which, test pressing for *BotT*, was released on *Biograph* in 1985). In the event, the earlier versions were not deemed satisfactory. For *BotT* he made minor changes to the lyrics, mostly in

the last verse: "can be extreme" becomes metrically superior in "is known to be extreme," and "What's the sense of changing horses in midstream?" is an improvement on "But it ain't like changing …" Dylan may have been unhappy with the order of the verses. In none of the complete takes (1.3, 1.4, 3.2, 3.3) is the order as it would come to be on *BotT*. In three of these, verse 4 precedes verse 3, and in the other verse 4 precedes verse 2.

"Idiot Wind"

The song that would undergo the most extensive changes between September and December of 1974 was relatively stable across the seven takes in A&R Studios, the last (5.10), with organ overdubs, released on *The Bootleg Series, Vols. 1–3*. On the first take (2.7) "Heading down the backroads going south" in verse 2, is found nowhere else, and is just a slip, corrected in subsequent takes to "Going down…headin' south." *RN* already has the ultimate "Blowing down." "Still can even breath" in verses 2 and 5 (2.7, 2.8) are already corrected to "still know how to breathe" (also *RN*) by the end of the first day. In the first take the priest "waltzed around on a tilted floor" (as in RN 1) the earliest take that gets that far into the song (2.8), but by the next take he "sat stone-faced while the building burned," while in *RN* 2 he "waltzed around while the building burned." Only the first version, and *RN* 1, have in the first verse "just don't know how to act" for "just can't remember," though *RN* 1 has an erasure of "know" with superscript "remember." In the next line both have the much less effective line "Their minds are filled with bad ideas/ideals, images and recorded fact", with "big" ideas and "distorted" facts soon taking their rightful place and painting a more complex picture of his adversaries. Understandably, this challenging song has some false starts. In the first take (2.7) Dylan sings, in verse 3 the lyric of verse 1, "every time you move your mouth" (which, unlike the correct "teeth", is not going to rhyme with "breathe' two lines later, so after singing the next line "you're an idiot, babe" he simply stops. On the fourth try (2.10) the song only makes it through "Someone's got it in for me," Dylan

interjecting "No, let's try it again, let's run that back," which he then successfully does. When he returns to the song on September 19, he restarts (5.8) in the middle of the first verse ("OK, one more time), then makes it through the first line of the third verse ("Woah. Let's start again. Wipe that off") before producing the version of the song that many consider its finest instantiation.

"You're Gonna Make Me Lonesome When You Go"

Another difficult song, with nine consecutive attempts on the first day (2.12–2.20) and with the initial take stopping after the first verse, as Dylan has problems with the band: "What's the matter? We're getting out of time." After a false start (2.13), on the next try he gets halfway through the third verse, humming after stopping following "…if you don't know." Ironically the next line would have been "Can't remember what I was thinking of." On another version (2.18) he stops after adding syllables to the lyric and losing rhythm "And it always has hit me from below." On another (2.17) he sings the fourth line of the fourth verse ("But there's no way I can compare") instead of that of the second ("This time round it's more correct"), expressing his annoyance, several takes in: "No! Let's try it again. Roll that tape back." Fortunately, that doesn't happen in spite of the response "OK, hang on" and the sound of a tape rolling back. After the first version that makes it all the way through (2.15) Dylan says "Let's do it again," perhaps because he transposed the two bridges, "You're gonna make me wonder what I'm doing …" preceding "Flowers on the hillside bloomin' crazy," perhaps because of another inversion leading to a slight lapse in the lyric: "Relationships have all been bad / Situations have ended sad." At 2.19 in the second verse he begins singing the fourth verse "All the way I" and stops with a disgusted "no!" "Chirping crickets talking back in rhyme" in earlier takes finally gets to the right place ("Crickets talking back and forth in rhyme") in 2.20. As much as with any song what comes across with this continuous run is the determination of Dylan to get it right. That

happens when he returns to the song the next day, the second of two versions (4.2) going onto *BotT*.

"Meet Me in the Morning"

RN does not include this relatively simple song, sung only once in performance, on September 19, 2007, the 33rd anniversary to the day after he sang it last, on September 19, 1974 (5.13). The changes across the five versions are all very slight, for the most part consisting of alternation of "Well you know," "Honey you know," and similar line beginnings. The first take, 2.5, was chosen for *BotT*, with the fourth verse, here audible, edited out, though printed in *Bob Dylan, The Lyrics 1961–2012*:

> The birds are flyin'low babe, honey I feel so exposed
> Well, the birds are flyin' low babe, honey I feel so exposed
> Well now, I ain't got no matches
> And the station doors are closed

On 5.13 he begins halfway through the first verse, his voice cracks on "snow begins", and he stops. At this point there is an exchange between Dylan and Mick Jagger about who can play slide. Following some discordant notes from Dylan, Jagger agrees with Dylan's "not me."

"Lily, Rosemary and the Jack of Hearts"

A true marvel of the sessions, Dylan sang the song twice (1.10, 1.11) on September 16, the first day. The two versions are the same—preferring, with *RN*, Jim's "I know I've seen that face somewhere" (*BotT* will prefer "before")—up to the middle of verse six when 1.10 stops after Dylan gets the start of third line wrong, "But then the houselight did dim .." and utters a pained "uh!" before going back to the beginning and doing all 16 verses, the ninth verse, "Rosemary started drinkin' hard…", coming before the eighth "The hanging judge came in unnoticed …" The omission of 1.11's twelfth verse, "Lily's arms were locked around…",

with words that make the Jack less enigmatic by giving us a glimpse into his head ("he felt she was sincere", "He felt jealousy and fear"), will be the only substantive change in lyrics in the Minnesota remake.

"If You See Her, say Hello"

The uncertainties of the song that will go through radical and utter changes in performance are already apparent in *RN*, which is incomplete and heavily edits the third stanza ("If you're making love to her…"). That verse of course will disappear altogether in performance and in the second (2004) and third (2016) official *Bob Dylan Lyrics* versions—bobdylan.com has the verse in its *BotT* manifestation ("If you get close to her…). But in A&R Studios Dylan seemed decisive about the entirety of the song, as he started out the first session with a pair of haunting solo versions (1.1, 1.2). He only needed one more take, with bass (4.13), to get it where he wanted, and only one change occurs between 1.1 and 1.2, the dropping of "both" (also absent from *RN*) in "I hear her name both here and there" thus allowing a lengthening and emphasis on "name." So, the song that would go through wild changes, here comes across with all the sadness at the core of how it all came down so hard, tougher than what we heard in January 1975, but essentially beautiful.

"Shelter from the Storm"

The song got where it needed to get in four takes on September 17. The first (3.9, the version in the film *Jerry Maguire*) is the odd one out of these, and Dylan seems to have done some revisions before doing versions of "Buckets of Rain" an "Tangled Up in Blue," then returning to "Shelter from the Storm" with three magnificent takes (3.13, 3.14, 3.15) getting to the master that would be released on *BotT*. In verse 3 "no risk involved" (3.9, 13, 14) reached its metrical ideal "little risk involved" (only in 3.15), and in the same verse 3.9 was not quite there: "Nothing up to that point had even been resolved" (for the much improved "Everything …

been left unresolved" in the three later takes). In verse 6 "uneventful morn" (3.9) changed to "non-eventful morn" (later "long-forgotten"), and in that same first take verse 6 ("Now there's a wall between us …") comes after verse 8 ("I've heard newborn babies wailin'), while the sixth spot is taken up with a verse that rightly disappeared in subsequent takes:

> Now the bonds are broken but they can be retied
> For one more journey to the woods, the holes where spirits hide
> It's a never-ending battle for a peace that's always torn
> "Come in," she said, "I'll give you shelter from the storm."

The newborn babies of verse 8 are at first "cryin'" (3.9, 3.13) but end with exquisite initial-syllable rhyming "babies wailin'" in 3.15.

"Buckets of Rain"

Then there is the final song of *Blood on the Tracks*, like "Meet Me in the Morning" only performed once, in this case as the opener at The Fox Theater in Detroit on November 18, 1990. Seen as providing the album with a somewhat up-beat closing, it shows the most revision across the sessions of September 17 and 18, and of all the songs seemed most under construction during those days. This is borne out by the only evidence of the song in *RN*, a detached fragment embedded in the midst of rough drafts of "Idiot Wind":

> Little red monkey, little red bike
> I ain't no monkey but I know what I like
> Excuse me baby while I vomit out my load
> Your making me crazy, your putting on the road

The content of the throwaway lines 3 and 4 suggest that the song was barely begun, and the first take, on September 17 (3.10) along with subsequent attempts, confirms this suspicion. In the first two attempts (3.10. 3.12), there is no sign of the final verse that will close the song, and the album, with a note of resignation ("Life is sad / Life is a bust …"). Instead, 3.12 looks as if he meant to close the song

with repetition of the opening verse ("Buckets of rain /Buckets of tears…"), such ring composition being a venerable form of Dylan's art, as of folk songs and protestant hymns ("Girl from the North Country," "Arthur McBride," "Summer Days").

I suspect he found repetition on verse 1 a little *too* upbeat of a closer ("I got all the love, honey baby / You can stand"), so on the night of September 17 or morning of the 18th, added the final verse with its more tentative ending as it would stand on the multiple takes of that next day:

Life is sad
Life is a bust
All ya can do is do what you must
You do what you must do and ya do it well,
I'll do it for you, honey baby
Can't you tell?

Perfect, though perfection was reached only in the last take, perhaps because he was still writing. Successive versions of line 3 and 4 suggest not so much that Dylan was stumbling over the words, but rather that the words were still coming together: 4.3 "You must do what you do and do it well"; 4.4 "You must do what you do and you do it well"; 4.6 "Oh you do what you do …" stops and exclaims "Ow!"; 4.9 "All you can do is you must do it well"; finally 4.12 "You do what you must do and you do it well"; 4.20 "and do it well."

The material of verses 3 and 4 had also taken time to get to the final version, in a process that reveals the sensitivity and taste of the songwriter. At first verse 3 had "I like your lips / Like the way you move your hips / I like the way you love me strong and slow," a progression that may have seemed too sexually graphic. So "fingertips" would replaces "lips," "lips" replace "hips," and the third line ("I like … slow") moved to the fourth verse, where it followed the more playful "I ain't no monkey but I know what I like." On one try (4.11) Dylan slipped "I like your smile / And I like your hips / I like the way you move your lips." He stops, then says "Yeah,

this is hard making records like this. You've got to keep three or four things going at the same time—just like life."

And so to conclude, this may not be the greatest song on the album, but it is one that perhaps reveals most about his songwriting in the studio across the days and nights of the sessions.

Dating *RN*

When did Bob Dylan write the songs in the red notebook? It has been called the "fair copy" It is fairer by far than the orange and blue notebooks in the Tulsa Archive (Box 99, Folder 05 and 06 respectively), though much is still far from fair. From the evidence I have set out *RN* is exclusively neither prior nor subsequent to those days in September, and I would guess he had it with him at the time. But that remains a guess.

Editors' Note

For the **Articles** section of future issues of DR, the Editors invite submissions of full-length critical articles (not to exceed 7000 words) on any aspect of Dylan's oeuvre from, for example, music and performance to painting and sculpture. All submissions, with the occasional exception of invited authors, will undergo a standard peer-review process.

INTERVIEWS

Grammy-nominated singer and songwriter Joan Osborne spoke to DR *in January 2018 following the release of her album* Songs of Bob Dylan.

DR: Regarding Dylan's Nobel Prize, do you view it as valuable attempt to include songwriters in the literature category? Is it opening up a valuable interdisciplinary question?

JO: I don't know the motivation of the Nobel Committee. If a poet can win, why not a songwriter? When talking about someone like Dylan, his songs are poetry. It's hard to overstate his impact on culture.

DR: In an interview during your promotion of *Songs of Bob Dylan*, you said that one thing that draws you to him is his ability to "find the universal in the particular," that even his "political" songs are not "tied to a particular era." Could you, perhaps, elaborate on a particular image, moment, or lyric in a Dylan song that becomes universal, that you see speaking to all of us?

JO: If you hear a political song about a particular issue, the song will have power for as long as the issue lasts. "Masters of War" is about people profiting from war. Fortunes are made on weapons designed simply to kill people. Dylan is cutting to the chase, raises ethical questions: "I can see what you're doing" He's speaking about it in such a way that goes to the heart of the ethical dilemma. He is directly addressing the universal impact on humanity.

DR: You mention wanting to do something similar with this Dylan album (and through your performances of it) that Ella Fitzgerald did with her nine-album "Songbooks" series in which she honored various songwriters and lyricists. Indeed, Dylan himself has been doing the very same thing with his recent albums of standards and his tributes to singers like Frank Sinatra. This might seem an obvious question (what with five-decades of songs and hundreds of artists covering his work), but what is it that is important to translate and capture in Dylan's songwriting?

JO: When covering any song, it's the same regardless of the songwriter. The song lives through you. It takes possession of you. It lives in a way it never has. Each

version is a different incarnation allowing the songs to live in a new way for another day.

***DR**:* Why did you choose to cover those particular songs on your album *Songs of Bob Dylan*?

JO: We wanted to choose things from all different eras, songs from across the catalogue. Some of the songs are familiar to people, some are instantly recognizable. We wanted also to bring out material not as well-known such as "Dark Eyes". We asked ourselves, do we have a way to play/arrange the songs in a fresh way, a way to bring something unique to them, make them blossom, open up in a different way.

DR: In speaking of your recording a version of "Chimes of Freedom" with Dylan, you've spoken of experiencing his "restless intelligence", his continual desire to try different phrasings or approaches to a song. Your "restless intelligence" phrase being such a ripe, expressive one (especially with its echoes of Dylan's famous "Restless Farewell"), we wonder if you might revisit that collaborative moment and talk about how Dylan has inspired you in your musicianship, in your singing?

JO: Dylan's restlessness is a good thing. We did not rehearse before recording. Because Dylan changes the phrasing in a song every time he sings, I focused on his lips. We shared the same microphone. When dealing with restless brilliance, your job is to support him.

DR: In your recording of "Tangled Up In Blue", you sing "Then she opened up a book of poems, And handed it to me, Written by an Italian poet, From the fifteenth century" not "thirteenth century". Are you thinking about a particular fifteenth-century poet?

JO: No poet in mind. The song expresses an intimacy between two characters. The narrator is invited into her home to have an intimate moment, but he is connecting to a person he is not with. She only makes him think of the other person more. It is an example of the universal in an incredibly particular moment of opening a book of poems.

DR: You made a comment during your show at Roy's Hall expressing the thought that Dylan's music is so important now. Can you elaborate on that?

JO: His political songwriting is not dated. "Masters of War" is useful now – for society, the country, the world. Profiting on weapons designed to kill people. A song like that is a way to understand what's fundamentally human: is it OK with us, OK with me? A song like "What Good Am I" – What will I do when faced with someone who needs help? Sometimes it takes a poetic moment, a song to clear away what's bombarding us (we're being bombarded in life).

Music archeologist and collector, Mitch Blank, spoke to DR *about his long experience following Dylan's career and about Dylan's live performances in New York, July 2018.*

DR: You are an inveterate Dylan collector and a longtime aficionado of things Dylan. In fact, you recently donated your Dylan collection to the new Bob Dylan Archive in Tulsa. How many times, roughly, would you say you've seen Dylan perform? Does any performance or space stand out among others?

MB: I would say I've seen Dylan perform 243 times or 381 times, and I've seen him since about 1964. Does anything stand out in my head? You know what? I think the blend of footage I've seen and recordings I've heard stand out more in my head than anything that I've necessarily witnessed.

DR: Any particular pieces of footage?

MB: Well, if somebody has seen Bob Dylan perform "Ring Them Bells" with a giant orchestra at the World Music Experience in Nara, Japan, they'd understand what I'm talking about. I was nowhere near Japan, but I was lucky enough to have seen that on film.

DR: How many performances did you see at the Beacon Theater in New York last fall?

MB: This year Bob performed at the Beacon Theater seven times in nine days. I went to all of those shows this time, and while I can't say that there was great variation from show to show, as far as setlists go, for a few nights he did do a switch-out of his finale and included "It Takes a Lot to Laugh, It Takes a Train to Cry", which I thoroughly enjoyed. Other than that, I think when people go to these shows on a weekly basis, it becomes like going to church or synagogue on the high holy days. The shows differentiate themselves based on what you ate that day or how you're feeling that day, or maybe who you met in the lobby; that might have more of a bearing on your interpretation of a show. Also, your seat might give you a different perspective.

DR: Was the size of the space agreeable? How was the sound system, and could you see Dylan and the band clearly? Was it a spectacle with shifting spots and backgrounds, or was it more straightforward?

MB: It was lions and Christians. It was Diet Coke and popcorn. It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. I would say that, depending on where you're sitting at any given concert--say you're in the third or second row and you're on the right side of the stage where Bob is sitting with his piano and you look up and all you can see is a whiff of hair--that becomes your view of the entire concert. Or, you can be sitting in row 17 and have a full view of everything going on on the stage, and it gives you a whole different way of looking at it. I prefer seats that are back far enough that I can hear. I find that the Beacon sounds are exceptionally great though. I had no issues with the sound; it sounded great. The Beacon is a great place to see music in New York City.

DR: Was Dylan there for the Beacon performances—was he fully present in his singing and playing?

MB: I don't know if you can ask that of any human being other than yourself. How could you even know? If I interpreted that, it would be my own ego interpreting it. If you ask Bob, he's not going to give you an answer; he knows he was there because somebody got paid.

DR: How would you compare the New York performances to those that stand out in the past? [Often concert goers complain they can't even hear him, or that he doesn't seem interested in the performance.]

MB: It's further down that road. The things I saw on the country road are not the same things I'm seeing on the city road. Everything grows. Bob Dylan in the 21st century is an inspiration to anyone who witnesses what he does now and anyone who saw what was happening at another time; they would either be reinvigorated or not understand what they went to see.

DR: Which songs stand out as gems?

MB: That's very difficult. Certainly there's a lot of beauty in the Beacon show and a lot of things do stand out, but if it's more of a general question of what songs stick out in my mind it's a different song for every different part of that road; it depends on where I was on the road more than where Bob was on the road.

DR: Did Dylan improvise lyrics as he has often done? Which songs, and how well did it work?

MB: I can't say that my mind works like that; I probably wouldn't remember having realized it at the moment. I have colleagues with encyclopedic minds that could answer this question off the top of their heads in seconds, but my most memorable part of the Beacon shows was when I was sitting down and speaking to the person on my right and then suddenly looked to my left and found out my seating partner was Ringo Starr. Ringo and I had a short conversation about a variety of things, and it was my first Beatle encounter.

DR: Can you describe the audience? Pensive, middle-age (or older) fans? Young people, new fans? Did you see any of the fanatic worshippers who usually attend Dylan performances?

MB: Well the answer to that question is very simple: yes--all of that. I saw people that needed to be taken out with nets and some were. I witnessed people who have been coming to these shows for thirty or forty years that I see at every event like this. There were people who brought their children and grandchildren and both the children and grandchildren were enjoying the shows just as much as grandpa. I saw people who were seeing Bob Dylan for the very first time. There were people there who traveled from every corner of the Earth to see a cluster of shows at any given time. There were some of the great people behind the Bob Dylan networks that keep a lot of people intertwined, such as Bill Pagel of *Bob Links*, and Karl Erik Andersen from *Expecting Rain*. There were also some people there from nations that you wouldn't think have giant Bob Dylan fandoms, but it's all there, and it's a great opportunity to cross pollinate with people who have a variety of interesting journeys to this event.

Recently in Tulsa, Oklahoma even more of an international grouping showed up. There were five hundred academics and collectors from around the world and people who had not seen each other in thirty years. People made a million new friends and spoke to each other at lectures, in lobbies, in hotel rooms, and at group dinners. It's a great opportunity to have that community understand the importance of taking control of the known body of work in order to populate the future with the potential to teach what's come before.

DR: In the recent Scorsese film, Scarlett Rivera's chauffeur speaks of the audience-performer relationship at a Rolling Thunder concert as one battery charging another. Did you get a sense of mutual battery-charging at the Beacon?

MB: Of course. Anywhere you put a group of like-minded, common-loving people in an environment, you're going to have a better experience, and it's going to feed off of itself. Recently in Tulsa we had a screening of a lot of rarely seen Bob Dylan footage that had been compiled by the Bob Dylan archive to show to the very enthusiastic audience who watched it all together in one room. Joy experienced in a large environment with your people will only reinvigorate the experience. Now, a musician who's going to be receiving this kind of outpour while performing is of course going to respond to an audience like that. I can't think of any artist who doesn't. I can think of Miles Davis turning his back to the audience for his own reasons, but you could have a mediocre artist do a life changing performance if the audience is into what that person is doing and you can have a genius on stage performing to a bunch of assholes and nothing is gained.

DR: What did you think of the film in general?

MB: I don't know how much light I could shed on it, plus I don't want to be a spoiler. For someone reading this who didn't get to see the movie it would be like giving away some of the best punchlines and best things to discover on your own. Generally, this is a film that will make anyone who was alive during this period of time and anyone who is now alive to witness it leave smiling.

DR: What was Dylan wearing? Do you put any stock in his outfit, in the song-and-dance man aspect of the spectacle? Or does the music supersede its theatrical element for you?

MB: I have no idea what he was wearing, and I'm sure he changed every day. I would say his pants were great, he looked great, and the band looked great. It had no effect on the music. You know, in 1975 we had perfected the 60's which allowed us to let our freak flags fly. Perhaps in the 21st century, you don't need to wear neon clothing to draw a crowd anymore, if what you're doing is legitimate.

DR: You started out in the folk music movement, and you continue to play traditional music. Do you consider folk music a form of nostalgia?

MB: Okay well, I didn't start out in the folk music scene because I started out in 1950 and the number one songs of 1950 were "How Much Is That Doggie In The Window" and "Tzena, Tzena, Tzena." I listened to America's Hit Parade music growing up and once I was handed a transistor radio, I suddenly had a soundtrack. One thing leads to the next and the musical journey is very winding--anyone who is my age will tell you that they didn't get there by accident. I listen to everything now; I listened to almost everything back then. I listen to things now that I've never heard before, much like when I first started listening to music.

Nostalgia? Some people will tell you that nostalgia is a form of depression because you're not comfortable where you are, so you look back to a place where your involvement with the world around you was more cushioned and you felt more comfortable. It's certainly not nostalgia--I'd be happier if it was nostalgia--but it's just a comfort zone. I've often said that whatever you may have listened to when you were fifteen years old, no matter where you were, is always going to be the music that you will always feel most comfortable with. It'll always be your comfort zone, your body temperature water, that you could sit in without twitching. If you were fifteen when Motown exploded, you will always feel comfortable in a Motown environment. If you were fifteen when *Blonde on Blonde* came out then that's going to be a great zone for you, but you may have been

fifteen when Tempest came out and that might be the place that you feel the most comfortable. We don't have a clue what the next group of fifteen-year-olds are going to be listening to' let's just hope it's healthy music.

DR: Where do you stand on Dylan nostalgia?

MB: Well, I don't really know what that means, unless it means putting on a leather jacket and playing to a crowd who throws things at you. I don't really see anything as Dylan nostalgia. I listen to the music that he was recording before he had any musical contract and I find it a comfortable place to be; the music I hear today is just music that I'm acclimating to. It's not so easy to find places in your nervous system to store new music because of all the music you've already got living there.

DR: How many of the very old songs did Dylan play; songs that almost seem like traditional songs now?

MB: I have a sheet in front of me so I'm going to cheat. At the Beacon, he did some of the 60's songs: "It Ain't Me, Babe", "Highway 61 Revisited", "Like a Rolling Stone", "Don't Think Twice, It's All Right", "Blowing in the Wind", and "All Along the Watchtower". From the 70's he did "Simple Twist of Fate", and "When I Paint My Masterpiece". I mean, what is there to complain about?

DR: Were you able to gauge the audience's response to these supremely familiar songs as opposed to others from other eras of Dylan's career?

MB: The only time I ever notice the audience is when the guy in front of me takes off his shirt and spills beer on me.

DR: How would you characterize Dylan's attitude on stage that night (or those nights)? He never panders to an audience.

MB: I think on one of those nights someone had a scuffle in the third or fourth row and there was a bit of a moment where he stopped playing--I forget exactly what happened--but I could see that sort of disrupted his attention. Other than that I think he's completely focused all the time, he knows what he's doing, he knows what the audience is going to respond to before they even respond to it, and he

is always pleased--as any musician would be--to hear the positive response from an overwhelmed and joyful audience.

DR: Did he challenge you at the Beacon? Electrify you? Connect with you, or wall himself off from all those dark eyes?

MB: The only time I was challenged at the Beacon was economically.

DR: Is there anything else you would like to add?

MB: Don't follow leaders watch your parking meters.

LETTERS

THE EDITORS INVITE LETTERS AND COMMENTS FOR FUTURE ISSUES. AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, PLEASE CONFINE COMMENTARY TO TOPICS RAISED IN ARTICLES OR INTERVIEWS IN THE *DR*, AT LEAST AS A STARTING PLACE FOR YOUR REMARKS. THE EDITORS ENCOURAGE LIVELY DISCUSSION BUT WILL NOT TOLERATE, OR PUBLISH, LANGUAGE OR IMAGES WE CONSIDER OFFENSIVE.

Contributor Information and Acknowledgments

Kenneth Daley is Associate Professor of English at Columbia College Chicago. He is the author of *The Rescue of Romanticism: Walter Pater and John Ruskin* (Ohio UP, 2001) and other essays and book chapters. Currently, he is editing Volume 6, *Appreciations, and Studies and Reviews, 1890-1895*, for *The Collected Works of Walter Pater* to be published by Oxford University Press.

Jonathan Hodgers received his PhD in music from Trinity College Dublin, where he currently lectures in popular music. His core areas of interest are song lyrics, the music of the 50s and 60s, audiovisual aesthetics, and music in movies. *Dylan and Cinema*, his forthcoming monograph for Routledge, brings together these strands by taking a close look at Bob Dylan as a filmmaker.

Nick Smart is Professor of English at The College of New Rochelle and lives in New York City. He has written about Bob in Dylan in *Tearing the World Apart: Bob Dylan and the Twentieth Century* (2017) and in *The Journal of Popular Music and Society (2009)*. He is co-editor of *Dylan at Play (2009)*.

Richard F. Thomas is George Martin Lane Professor of Classics at Harvard University, where his teaching and research interests are focused on Hellenistic Greek and Roman poetry, intertextuality, translation and translation theory, the reception of classical literature in all periods, and the works of Bob Dylan. He has authored or edited a dozen volumes and over 100 articles and reviews. Publications on Dylan include *Why Bob Dylan Matters* (Dey Street Books, 2017), *Bob Dylan's Performance Artistry* (*Oral Tradition* 22.1 2007), co-edited with Catharine Mason, and the articles "The Streets of Rome: The Classical Dylan." *Oral Traditions* 22.1 (2007), "Shadows are Falling: Virgil, Radnóti, and Dylan, and the Aesthetics of Pastoral Melancholy." *Rethymnon Classical Studies* 3 (2007).

Acknowledgments

The *Dylan Review* would like to thank Nicole Font, Marina Pieretti, Clay Vogel, and Chris Walker for their contributions to this issue.