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Bob Dylan: American Troubadour (Tempo: A Rowman & Littlefield Music Series on Rock, Pop, and Culture)

Donald Brown

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Tempo: A Scarecrow Press Music Series of Rock, Pop, and Culture offers titles that explore rock and popular music through the lens of social and cultural history, revealing the dynamic relationship between musicians, music, and their milieu. Like other major art forms, rock and pop music comment on their cultural, political, and even economic situation, reflecting the technological advances, psychological concerns, religious feelings, and artistic trends of their times. Whether you are a professional musician or regular listener, diehard fan or music student, titles in the **Tempo** series are the ideal introduction to major pop and rock artists and the music they produced and their cultural and musical impact on society.

With each year, new books appear on Bob Dylan, attesting to his continuing importance as a major figure in American music and culture. *Bob Dylan: American Troubadour* is the first book on Dylan to look at his entire career, from his first album to his most recent, *Tempest*, released 50 years later in 2012. In a brief compass, Brown provides insightful critical commentary on Dylan's entire corpus, placing full scope of Dylan's career in the context of its times in order to assess the relationship of Dylan's music to contemporary American culture.

Each chapter addresses a particular phase of Dylan's career, taking its cue from events in Dylan's life and from the collective experiences that shaped the times. As the artist who famously proclaimed "the times, they are a-changin'," Dylan was never static as an artist, his music altering as the times changed. In *Bob Dylan: American Troubadour*, Donald Brown follows the shifting versions of Dylan, from his songs of conscientious social involvement to more personal exploratory songs; from his influential rock albums of the mid-'60s to his adaptations of Country music; from his three very different tours in the 1970s to his "born again" period as a proselytizer for Christ, to his frustrations as a recording and performing artist in the 1980s; from his retrospective importance in the Nineties to the refreshingly vital albums he has been producing in the 21st century.

Bob Dylan: American Troubadour will engage not only Dylan fans and students of his work but those interested American popular music, history, and culture. Anyone who has been touched, challenged or surprised by a Dylan song, who would like to know more about this long and fascinating career, who wants to discover Dylan within his context will find in *Bob Dylan: American Troubadour* a concise and informed critical overview of Dylan's music and his place in the American musical landscape.

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