

# Bob Dylan rocks fans in Kingston

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He may be one of the world's greatest folk singers, but Bob Dylan showed Kingston fans on Saturday night that he knows how to rock.

The 67-year-old wowed the 4,200 people who packed into the K-Rock Centre with a blues-rock sounding concert that featured classic hits such as *Like A Rolling Stone*, *Highway 61 Revisited*, *Just Like A Woman* and *Lay, Lady, Lay*.



**Bob Dylan**

As Dylan kicked off the show (there was no opening act) with *Maggie's Farm*, the fans on the floor stood on their feet. After that, their butts didn't touch the seats for

most of the night.

"Wild horses couldn't keep me away from this concert, to quote another famous musician," said an emotional Matthew Back near the end of the show, referring to a famous Rolling Stones song. The 63-year-old has been a Dylan fan since he first saw the star when he was 17. "I swear to God I've almost been crying for the last hour."

Mark Batson, 44, brought his eight-year-old daughter, Evelyn, to the concert because he wanted her to see the legend in person.

"It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Evelyn. She'll probably never have a chance to see him again," Batson said, noting that Dylan, 67, may never perform in Kingston again.

Many fans used the term "icon" when talking about Dylan, and it's not an exaggeration to say he is as influential as Elvis Presley or The Beatles.

The singer's songs, such as *The Times They Are A-Changin'* and *Blowin' In The Wind*, were anthems of the civil-rights movement in the 1960s. He's a member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and has won numerous Grammy Awards and an Academy Award for the song *Things Have Changed* (from the film *The Wonder Boys*) that was the third song performed during Saturday's concert.

This year, he was awarded a Pulitzer Prize Special Citation for his "profound impact on popular music and American culture." Some literary experts are lobbying for Dylan to win a Nobel Prize for literature because they feel his song writing is so powerful.

Despite his legendary status, Bob Dylan is not known for having a silky smooth voice. It has gotten worse over the years and sometimes he sounds like he just gargled nails, making it difficult to understand his poetic lyrics.

On Saturday night, Dylan could usually be understood, but there were a few songs that were very monotone or too raspy.

Judging from other reviews of Dylan's concerts on this tour, Kingston heard Dylan on a good night. Other cities weren't as fortunate — including Calgary.

"This is an artist whose adoring public has long forgiven [Dylan's] vocal shortcomings ... but as the years have eroded his pipes, his monotone ramblin' has become even tougher to interpret," wrote Nick Lewis of the Calgary Herald about Dylan's Oct. 27 concert. "It was an annoyance to barely understand a bloody word he said."

For true Dylan fans, the voice is a non-issue. In fact, some feel it's part of the singer's charm.

"It doesn't bother me one ounce. I know most of the words [to his songs]," Brooke Gilmour said emphatically.

"He's an icon. Look around, there are so many different age groups and generations. Every-

body loves Bob Dylan."

Marilyn Armstrong had heard stories about Dylan's voice but decided she had to see Dylan in person.

"It was a good opportunity to see an icon that I'll never see again," Armstrong said.

Marilyn's husband, John, also wanted to hear the legend with his own ears.

"This goes back to high school. Dylan was it," the 59-year-old said. "His music is exceptional. That's why we are here."

Those looking for Dylan to strictly play nothing but classics were out of luck. He performed 17 songs, a mix of new (*Tweedle Dee & Tweedle Dum* from 2001's *Love And Theft*) and old, and even when he played a classic, he put a new spin on it.

Other songs featured electric guitar solos that had the crowd screaming and applauding after every song.

Considering Dylan started his career in the 1960s, it's appropriate that Saturday night essentially turned into a love-in, with Kingston fans enjoying almost everything Dylan did.

For most of the night, Dylan was behind his keyboard, but he would occasionally come out to play guitar or harmonica to the delight of the crowd.

Dylan changes his song lineup for every concert, but the encore on this tour has always been the same and Saturday night was no different. He finished with *Like A Rolling Stone* and *All Along The Watchtower*.

(Some classic songs Dylan performed during recent concerts that Kingston fans missed out on include *Blowin' In The Wind*, *Mr. Tambourine Man* and *Rainy Day Woman*).

The one disappointing aspect of the concert was Dylan never talked to the crowd on Saturday — not even an obligatory "Hello Kingston!" in between songs. He just got behind the mic and started singing and playing for two hours straight. The only time

## Play list

Here are the songs played at the K-Rock Centre on Saturday night.

1. Maggie's Farm
2. Lay, Lady, Lay
3. Things Have Changed
4. Spirit On The Water
5. Tweedle Dee & Tweedle Dum
6. Just Like A Woman
7. The Levee's Gonna Break
8. Make You Feel My Love
9. Stuck Inside of Mobile With The Memphis Blues Again
10. Ballad of Hollis Brown
11. Honest With Me
12. The Lonesome Death Of Hattie Carroll
13. Highway 61 Revisited
14. Nettie Moore
15. Thunder On The Mountain
16. Like A Rolling Stone
17. All Along The Watchtower

he spoke was when he introduced his band at the end of the night.

Kingston fans shouldn't take it personally because Dylan rarely chit chats during concerts.

(He only muttered nine words during his Nov. 4 show held in Minnesota on U. S. election night. It's quite a surprise that a man who was a champion for civil rights during the 1960s would only say, "It looks like things are going to change now" on the historic night America elected its first black president. It's sad he chose to basically ignore it and not share the experience with the crowd.)

Another Dylan quirk — he is one of the very few performers to not allow photographers to take pictures during his concerts.

It isn't a problem for people who attend the show, but any fan opening the *Whig-Standard* this morning hoping to see a concert photo of the icon in Kingston was disappointed.