OH BOB WHERE ART THOU?

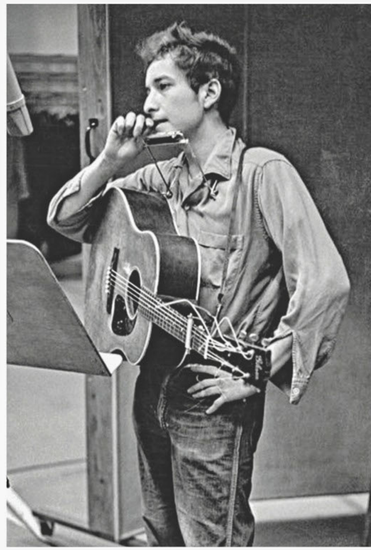
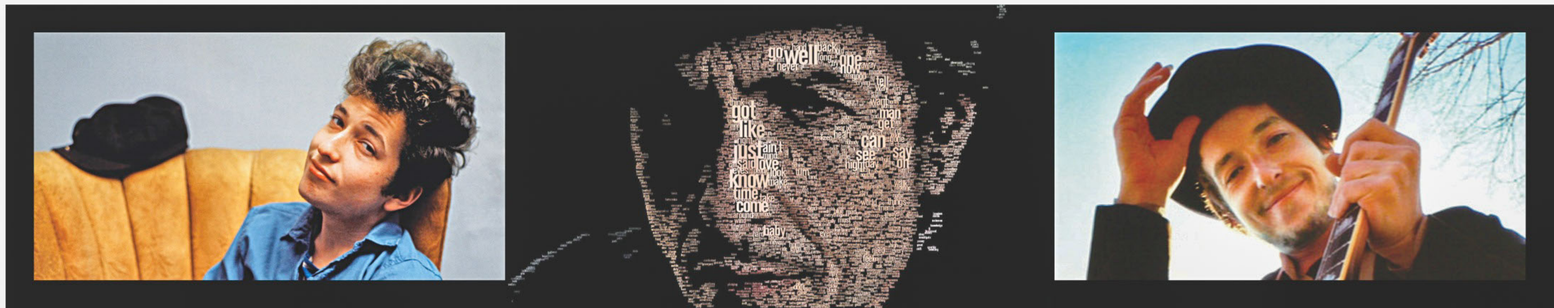
COVERSTORY

Bob Dylan is undeniably one of the most influential figures in music and culture for more than five decades. His contribution to the society is unmatched of; his songs spread out in every corner of America and some of them became anthems for the American Civil Rights and anti-war movements.

Dylan is more renowned for his lyrical styles than his musical styles. Defying social convention, his songs appealed to the burgeoning counterculture of the 1970s. He has been honoured with many awards and accolades, but none of those were as big as the Nobel Prize, which was given to him this year. However, the singer-songwriter refused to acknowledge the prestigious award, which threw critics and fans to their dismay. It took the singer a week to acknowledge that he had been honoured with the Nobel Prize in literature, and even then only in the most indifferent way. He went as far as removing the Nobel Laureate stature from his personal website. But the main issue in all of these is the fact that Nobel Prizes can not ever be returned or rescinded. Jean-Paul Sartre is the only known winner of Nobel Prize for literature to have declined the honour voluntarily, who had written a letter to the committee for not being considered at all, but the committee decided to give it anyways. Sara Danius, permanent secretary of the Swedish Academy stressed the fact that Bob Dylan won the award, regardless of whether he acknowledges it or not. This means that the award is still listed in his name and whether or not he appears at the ceremony, at which he will be asked to give a brief lecture, he will forever be known as the winner of the 2016 Nobel Prize for literature. The Nobel Prize ceremony will take

place in Stockholm on December, and Dylan has been invited to collect his prize from King Carl XVI, but he is yet to confirm his attendance alongside 2016's other Nobel Prize winners.

Even though many have described him as "impolite" and "arrogant" for his lack of recognition, Dylan's apathy towards the prize perhaps refers to the dream of the '60s; he never cared for any award he received. Even during his acceptance speech for winning the 2001 Golden Globe, he made it very brief and lacklustre. Comedian Tim Heidecker made a parody track of this phenomenon titled "Talkin' Nobel Prize", which featured the lyrics "take your medal and throw it away... See how I despise the prize". This line perhaps sums up the true essence of Dylan's sentiment towards the Nobel Prize and awards in general.

Another probable reason for his refusal could be because of the fact that the Nobel prize's founder, Alfred Nobel, was an armaments manufacturer, and Dylan despised the idea of weaponry. Whatever may be the reason, Bob Dylan is truly an enigmatic presence who is simply unpredictable. Perhaps, his mysterious temperament is the source for all his poetic works that have emanated among the hearts of the millions and made us fall in love with the ambiguous legend.

By **Syed Ahnaf Sadeed**