

# *Singer Finds That Success Is a Summer Festival*

## *Joan Toliver Named U.S. Entrant in Sopot Event*

By JOHN S. WILSON

A girl who made her debut as a professional singer only last summer will represent the United States next month at the Fourth International Festival of Light Music Songs at Sopot, Poland.

The singer, Joan Toliver, currently appearing at The Bitter End, will compete against singers from 35 countries. Miss Toliver was selected from a list of American singers submitted by the State Department at the festival's request.

Last year's American entry at Sopot was Lulu Porter, who was cited as "best liked singer" at the festival. Sopot is a resort city on the Bay of Danzig.

Miss Toliver is a perky, dark-haired, snub-nosed girl with a rich contralto voice and a warm, unaffected personality. At 32, she is trying to find her proper meter as a singer.

### **Began as Folk Singer**

She was started off last year as a folk singer more through necessity than choice. She had been brought up in Berea, Ky., on pop music and jazz and did not discover folk music until she was 19.

"A pop singer needs arrange-



Joan Toliver

ments, accompaniment and money," she pointed out. "If you're poor, you're a folk singer."

A year ago while she was working as an editorial assistant at McGraw-Hill, the publishers, an agent arranged an audition with Hary Belafonte and the singer took her on tour with his troupe.

## *Only a Year After Debut, She Gets a Big Chance*

This engagement led to a record album and four appearances on the television program, "Hootenanny."

### **Booked Into Club**

The program's talent coordinator, Fred Weintraub, owns The Bitter End. He booked her into his club last January, became her manager and advised her to forget folk singing and choose "other styles."

The other styles have proved to be pop material and old music hall songs that she has developed during appearances at The Bitter End during the last six months (it is the only club she has played).

For Sopot, Miss Toliver must prepare one of her own compositions ("It's sort of a gospel song"), a Polish song chosen from a group sent to her by the Festival (her selection has been translated for her by "a marvelous man from Radio Free Europe who insists on being anonymous") and a song of her own choosing (Harold Arlen's "When the Sun Comes Out").

The festival is held for three days, beginning Aug. 6. On its completion, the contestants will tour 10 Polish cities.

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