Elton John

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Sir Elton Hercules John, CBE (born Reginald Kenneth Dwight; 25 March 1947),[1][2] is an English singer, pianist, and composer. He has worked with lyricist Bernie Taupin as his songwriting partner since 1967; they have collaborated on more than 30 albums to date. In his five-decade career Elton John has sold more than 300 million records, making him one of the best-selling music artists in the world.[3] He has more than fifty Top 40 hits, including seven consecutive No. 1 US albums, 58 Billboard Hot 100 Top 40 singles, 106 Billboard Hot 100 Top All-Time Artists (third overall behind Elvis Presley and the Beatles) and the second-highest number of RIAA-certified gold, platinum, and multi-platinum albums of all time. He has also composed music, produced records, and has occasionally acted in films. John owned Watford Football Club from 1976 to 1987, and 1997 to 2002. He is an honorary Life President of the club, and in 2014 had a stand named after him at the club's stadium.

Raised in the Pinner area of London, John learned to play piano at an early age, and by 1962 had formed Bluesology. John met his songwriting partner, Bernie Taupin, in 1967, after they had both answered an advert for songwriters. For two years they wrote songs for other artists, including Lulu, and John also worked as a session musician for artists such as the Hollies and the Scaffold. In 1969 his debut album, Empty Sky, was released. In 1970 a single, "Your Song", from his second album, Elton John, reached the top ten in the UK and the US, his first hit single. After decades of commercial chart success, John has also achieved success in musical theatre, both in the West End and on Broadway, composing the music for Aida and Billy Elliot the Musical.

He has received five Grammy Awards, five Brit Awards – winning two awards for Outstanding Contribution to Music and the first Brits Icon in 2013 for his "lasting impact on British culture", three ARIA Awards, a World Music Award, a Record Industry Award for Sustained Excellence, a BRIT Award for Outstanding Contribution to Music, two American Music Awards, five Ivor Novello Awards, a Disney Legend Award, and the Kennedy Center Honors in 2004. In 2004, the US Library of Congress bestowed its Gershwin Prize for Popular Song on John, the first artist so honored. In 2007, he was named a Commander of the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II. He has also received more awards and nominations than any other artist in the Billboard awards system. In 2008, John was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. In 2009, he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and in 2013, he was ranked number 49 on Rolling Stone magazine's list of 100 greatest artists of all time. In 2014, he was ranked number 16 on the Rolling Stone list of the 100 greatest singers of all time.

Elton John was born Reginald Kenneth Dwight on 25 March 1947, in Pinner, Middlesex, England, United Kingdom.

Early life

Elton John's parents both had a strong musical background. His father, Reginald Dwight, played trumpet in several bands and his mother, Sheila, came from a pub pianist family. He was born at home in the Pinner family home, and his parents did not want him to have a Christening, as they believed in being non-conformists. Their attitudes were later to have an influence on his music. His parents, who were not married, had met at a swimming pool in Hertfordshire. When John was 14, they divorced. His mother then married a man named Wally, with whom she had one child, a daughter named Ann Orson. His mother then married a man named Wally, with whom she had one child, a daughter named Ann Orson.

When John was 15, with the help of his mother and stepfather, Reginald Dwight became a weekend pianist at a nearby pub, the Northwood Hills Hotel, playing Thursday to Sunday nights.

In 1960, he was educated at Pinner Wood Junior School, Redford School and Pinner County Grammar School, until the age of 17, when he left just prior to his A-Level examinations to pursue a career in the music industry.[4] He was ranked the 14th greatest male solo artist on the Billboard Hot 100 Top All-Time Artists chart.

When he began to seriously consider a career in music, Elton John's father was serving as a flight lieutenant in the Royal Air Force, and tried to steer him toward a more conventional career, such as banking.[5] John has stated that his wild stage costumes and performances were his way of letting go after such a restrictive childhood.[6] John's parents were musically inclined, his father having been a trumpet player with the Bob Miller Band, a semi-professional big band that played at military dances.[7] The Dwights were keen record buyers, exposing John to the popular singers and musicians of the day, and John remembers being immediately hooked on rock and roll when his mother brought home records by Elvis Presley and Bill Haley & His Comets in 1956.[8]

Elton John started playing the piano at the age of three, and within a year, his mother heard him picking out "In Love" by Garzoni.[9] After performing at parties and family gatherings, at the age of 7 he took up formal piano lessons. He showed musical aptitude at school, and was given opportunities to compose melodies, and gained some notoriety by playing "Jerry Lee Lewis at school. At the age of 11, he won a junior scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music. According to one of his instructors, John promptly played back, like a "gramophone record", a four-page piece by Handel that he heard for the first time.[10]

For the next five years, he attended Saturday classes at the Academy in central London, and has stated that he enjoyed playing Chopin and Bach and singing in the choir during Saturday classes, but that he was not otherwise a diligent classical student.[11] "I kind of resented going to the Academy", he says, "I was one of those who could just about get away without practising and still pass, scrape through the grades."[12] He even claims that he sometimes skipped classes and just ride around on the Tube.[13] However, several instructors have testified that he was a "model student", and during the last few years, he was taking lessons from a private tutor in addition to his classes at the Academy.[14]

Elton John's mother, though also strict with her son, was more vivacious than her husband, and something of a free spirit. With Stanley Dwight unhappy in his son and often physically absent, John was raised primarily by his mother and maternal grandmother. When his father was home, the Dwights would have terrible arguments that greatly distressed their son.[15] When John was 14, they divorced. His mother then married a local painter, Fred Farebrother, a caring and supportive stepfather whom John affectionately referred to as "Derf", his first name in reverse.

Pub pianist to staff songwriter (1962–1969)

At the age of 15, with the help of his mother and stepfather, Reginald Dwight became a weekend pianist at a nearby pub, the Northwood Hills Hotel, playing Thursday to Sunday nights.[16] Known simply as "Reggie", he played a range of popular standards, including songs by Jim Reeves and Ray Charles, as well as songs he had written himself.[17] A stint with a short-lived group called the Corvettes rounded out his time.

In 1962, Dwight and his friends formed a band called Bluesology. By day, he ran errands for a music publishing company; he divided his nights between solo gigs at a London hotel bar and working with Bluesology. By the mid-1960s, Bluesology was backing touring American soul and R&B musicians like Lulu, Joe Tex, and as Ray Charles's tour pianist. In 1966, the band became music director Long John Baldry's supporting band, and played 16 times at the Marquee Club.[18]
Debut album to Goodbye Yellow Brick Road (1969–1973)

On the advice of music publisher Steve Brown, John and Taupin started writing more complex songs for John to record for DJM. The first was the single “I’ve Been Loving You” (1968), produced by Caleb Quaye, former keyboard player with Joss Stone. The album Goodbye Yellow Brick Road, released the following year, was a significant career boost, aided by his biggest hit in four years, “Little Jeannie” (number 3 US), with the lyrics written by Roger Hodgson and bassist Dee Murray, as producer and Gus Dudgeon as musical arranger. Elton John was released in April 1970 on DJM Records/Pye Records in the UK and Uni Records in the US, and established the formula for subsequent albums – gospel-chorded rockers and poignant ballads. The first single from the album, “Border Song”, made into the US Top 100, peaked at Number 92. The second single, “Your Song”, reached number seven in the UK Singles Chart and number eight in the US, becoming John’s first hit single, reaching number one on the US Billboard 200 and number five on the UK Albums Chart.[45][46]

Backed by former Spencer Davis Group drummer Nigel Olsson and bassist Dee Murray, Elton John’s first American concert took place at the Troubadour in Los Angeles in August 1970, and was a success.[27] The concept album Goodbye Yellow Brick Road, released in October 1970, and reached number two in the UK and number five in the US.[28] The live album 11-7-70 ([17]–[17]–[17]) in the US was recorded at a live show aired from A&R Studios on WABC-FM in New York City. Sales of the live album were heavily hit in the US when an east-coast bootlegger released the performance several weeks before the official album, including all 60 minutes of the concert, not just the 40 minutes selected by Dick James.[31]

The album Don’t Shoot Me I’m Only the Piano Player debuted at the start of 1973 and reached number one in the UK, the US, Australia among others.[29] The album produced the hits “Crocodile Rock”, his first US Billboard Hot 100 number one, and “Daniel”, number two US, number four UK.[35] Both the album and “Crocodile Rock” were the first album and single, respectively on the consolidated MCA Records label in the US, replacing DJM’s other label interest, Chrysalis.[40]

In October 1973, Elton John caused controversy when he broke the United States Tour Anti-Flag Act, as well as one of the first in Australia. The album 21 at 33 (1974–1979) is a significant career boost, aided by his biggest hit in four years, “Little Jeannie” (number 3 US), with the lyrics written by Roger Hodgson and bassist Dee Murray, as producer and Gus Dudgeon as musical arranger. Elton John was released in April 1970 on DJM Records/Pye Records in the UK and Uni Records in the US, and established the formula for subsequent albums – gospel-chorded rockers and poignant ballads. The first single from the album, “Border Song”, made into the US Top 100, peaked at Number 92. The second single, “Your Song”, reached number seven in the UK Singles Chart and number eight in the US, becoming John’s first hit single, reaching number one on the US Billboard 200 and number five on the UK Albums Chart.[45][46]

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The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum inducted John in 1994, the year after he released the album Greatest Hits Vol. 3. The second single from the album was “Levon”, the latter reaching number eight in the US and producing the hit songs, “Levon”, and the album’s opening track “Tiny Dancer”. In 1972, Davey Johnstone joined the Elton John band on guitar and backing vocals. Released in 1972, Honky Château became John’s first US number one album, spending five weeks at the top of the Billboard 200, and began a streak of seven consecutive US number one albums.[47] The album reached number two in the UK, and spawned the hit songs “Rocket Man” and “Honky Cat”, both of which were recorded at Trident Studios in London.

The 1975 autobiographical album Captain Fantastic and the Brown Dirt Cowboy debuted at number one in the UK, the first album ever to do so, and stayed at the top for seven weeks.[48] Elton John revealed his previously ambiguous personality on the album, with Taupin’s lyrics describing their early days as struggling songwriters and musicians in London. The lyrics and accompanying photo booklet are infused with a specific sense of John in his movie guise.

In 1975, Elton John received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. In 1976, the live album Here and There was released, featuring “Don’t Go Breaking My Heart” with Kiki Dee that topped both the UK and US charts. In 1977, Elton John became one of the first Western artists to tour the Soviet Union, as well as one of the first in Israel.

In 1979, John and Taupin reunited, though they did not collaborate on a full album for 1983’s Too Low For Zero. At 21 at 33, released the following year, was a significant career boost, aided by his biggest hit in four years, “Tiny Dancer” number three US, with the lyrics written by Rod Stewart.[44]

The Fox to Sleeping with the Past (1980–1989)

His 1981 album, The Fox, was recorded during the same sessions as 21 at 33, and also included collaborations with Tom Robinson and Jude Tuzko. On 13 September 1980, Elton John, with Olsson and Murray back in the John Band, performed a free concert to an estimated 400,000 fans on The Great Lawn in Central Park in New York.[30] His 1982 hit “Empty Garden” (Hey Johnny!), came from his Jump Up album, his second under a new US recording contract with Geffen Records.

With original band members Johnstone, Olsson and Murray together again, he started working on the tracks for the 1983 hit album Too Low For Zero, which included “I’m Still Standing” no. 4 UK and “I’ve Never Been to London” no. 3. On his 1983 album, Elton John caused controversy when he broke the United Nations cultural boycott on apartheid-era South Africa by performing at the Sun City Casino. He married his close friend and sound engineer, Renate Blauel, on Valentine’s Day 1984 — the marriage lasted three years.

In 1985, he was one of the many performers at Live Aid held at Wembley Stadium.[31] John played “Bennie and the Jets” and “Rocket Man”, and then “Don’t Go Breaking My Heart” with Kiki Dee for the first time since the Hammersmith Odeon on 24 December 1982; and introduced his friend George Michael, still then of Wham!, to sing “Don’t Let the Sun Go Down on Me” in 1985, he released Breaking Hearts which featured the hit song “Sad Songs (Say So Much)”, No. 5 in the US and No. 7 in the UK.[19] Elton John also recorded material with Millie Jackson in 1985. In 1986, he played the piano on two tracks on the heavy metal band Saxon’s album Rock the Nation.
In 1999, he achieved his first No.1 UK single hit, with "Sacrifice" (coupled with "Healing Hands") from the previous year's albumSleeping with the Past at the top spot for six weeks.[7][6]

The following year, John's "Basic Instinct" Grammy for Best Instrumental, and a guest concert appearance at Wembley Arena he had made on George Michael's tour of "Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me" was released as a single and topped the charts in both the UK and the US.[7][8] At the 1991 Brit Awards in London, Elton John won the award for Best British Male.[9]

In 1992, he released the US number 8 album The One, featuring the hit song "The One"[7][9]. He also released "Runaway Train", a duet he recorded with his long-time friend Eric Clapton, and with whom he played on Clapton's World Tour. John and Taupin then signed a music publishing deal with Warner/Chappell for an estimated US$39 million over 12 years, giving them the largest cash advance in music publishing history.[8][10]. In April 1992, John appeared at the Freddie Mercury Tribute Concert at Wembley Stadium, performing "The Show Must Go On" with the remaining members of Queen,[8] and "Bohemian Rhapsody" with Axl Rose of Guns N' Roses and Queen.[7][8]

In September, John performed "The One" at the 1992 MTV Video Music Awards, and closed the ceremony performing "November Rain" with Guns N' Roses.[9]. The following year, he released a live album called 'Rarities' featuring a collaboration with Kim Wilde and Rufus. This included a new collaboration with Kiki Dee, entitled "True Love", which reached the Top 10 of the UK charts[8][10]. The same year, the album 'Bamboozled' saw the multi-artist charity album released, which was the soundtrack to the British animated television series of the same name.[8]

In 1993, he released his 27th album, "Duets", which featured duets with stars of the 1980s, such as Dionne Warwick, Rod Stewart, Sting, Stevie Wonder, Linda Ronstadt, and Bette Midler. "Love Songs" was released in 1996.[8][10]. In early 1997, he held a 50th birthday party, costumed as Louis XIV, for 500 friends. He performed with the surviving members of Queen in Paris at the opening night (17 January 1997) eły Presbytire Na Rê Ndou Perë Du Son Charne Ni Le Jardin De Son Écût, a work by French ballet legend Maurice Béjart which draws upon AIDS and the deaths of Freddie Mercury and the company's principal dancer Jorgen Domm. In 1997, two close friends died: designer Gianni Versace was murdered; Diana, Princess of Wales in a Paris car crash on 31 August.[8][11]. In early September, he contacted his writing partner Bernie Taupin, asking him to revise the lyrics of his 1973 song "Candle in the Wind" to honour Diana, and Taupin rewrote the song accordingly.[8][11]. On 6 September 1997, John performed "Candle in the Wind 1997" at the funeral of Princess Diana in Westminster Abbey.[11]. The song became the fastest and biggest-selling single of all time, eventually selling over 33 million copies worldwide,[8][12][13] and was the first single ever certified Diamond in the United States - the single sold over 1 million copies in the US.[8][12][13]. The Guinness World Records 2009 states that the song is "the biggest-selling single since US and UK singles charts began in the 1950s, having accumulated worldwide sales of 33 million copies."[8][12][13]. The song proceeds of over £15 million were donated to Diana's charities via the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund,[8][12][13]. It won Elton John the Grammy Award for Best Male Pop Vocal Performance at the 37th Annual Grammy Awards in 1998.[8][12][13]. After the release of the The Lion King soundtrack, the album remained at the top of Billboard 200 for nine weeks. On 10 November 1999, the RIAA certified The Lion King"Diamond" for selling 15 million copies.[8][12][13]. In 1994, Elton John was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame by Guns N' Roses frontman Axl Rose.[8][12][13]. In 1995, he released Made in England (number 3, 1995), which featured the single "Believe".[8][12][13]. John performed "Believe" at the 1995 Brit Awards, and picked up the prize for Outstanding Contribution to Music.[8][12][13]. A duet with Luciano Pavarotti, "Live Like Heroes", reached number nine in the UK in December 1995.[8][12][13]. A compilation album called The Road to El Dorado (number 16, 1988) placed in the top 20 in the US.[8][12][13]. Along with Tim Rice, Elton John wrote the songs for the 1994 Disney animated filmThe Lion King. At the 67th Academy Awards ceremony, The Lion King soundtrack provided three of the five nominees for the Academy Award for Best Song, which he won with "Can You Feel the Love Tonight."[8][12][13]. Both that and "Circle of Life" became hit songs for John.[8][12][13]. Can You Feel The Love Tonight also won Elton John the Grammy Award for Best Male Pop Vocal Performance at the 37th Annual Grammy Awards in 1998.[8][12][13]. For "The One" the album remained at the top of Billboard 200 for nine weeks. On 10 November 1999, the RIAA certified The Lion King"Diamond" for selling 15 million copies.[8][12][13]. The album 'Beautiful' was also released and featured the duets, "Written in the Stars" with LeAnn Rimes, and "I Know the Truth" with Janet Jackson.[8][12][13].

In the musical theatre world, The Lion King musical debuted on Broadway in 1997 and the West End in 1999. In 2014, it had grossed over $6 billion and became the top-earning title in box-office history for both stage productions and films, surpassing the record previously held by Andrew Lloyd Webber's 1968 musical The Phantom of the Opera.[8][14]. In addition to The Lion King, John also composed music for a musical production of Aida in 1999 with lyricist Tim Rice, for which they received the Tony Award for Best Original Score at the 54th Tony Awards[8][14] and the Grammy Award for Best Musical Show Album at the 43rd Annual Grammy Awards[8][14]. The musical was given its world premiere in the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta and went on to Chicago and eventually Broadway. John released a live compilation album called Elton John One Night Only – The Greatest Hits from the show he did at Madison Square Garden in New York City that same year. A concept album from the musical titled Elton and Tim Rice's Aida was also released and featured the duets, "Written in the Stars" with LeAnn Rimes, and "I Know the Truth" with Janet Jackson.[8][12][13].

Elton performed "The One" at the 1994 Cannes Film Festival, where he received the Lifetime Achievement Award.[8][12][13]. He placed other hits throughout the 1980s, including "I'm Gonna Love Me Again", which reached number two in the UK in 1986, a live orchestral version of "Candle in the Wind", No. 6 in the US, and "Don't Wanna Go on With You Like That", No. 2 in the US in 1988.[8][12][13]. His highest-charting single was a collaboration with Dionne Warwick, "That's What Friends Are For" which reached No. 1 in the US in 1985; credited as Dionne and Friends, and the song raised funds for AIDS research.[8][12][13]. His albums continued to sell, but of those released in the latter half of the 1980s, only Rarities Back to Back (number 16, 1988) placed in the top 20 in the US.[8][12][13]. Life Songs was released in 1996.[8][12][13].

In 1997, he re-purchased the club from Petchey and once again became chairman. He stepped down in 2002 when the club needed a full-time chairman although he continued as president of the club.

the First Division to Liverpool in 1983 and reaching the FA Cup Final at Wembley Stadium in 1984. He sold the club to Jack Petchey in 1987, but remained

On 26 January 2017, it was announced that John would be composing the score for a Broadway musical adaptation of the critically acclaimed novel and film The Devil Wears Prada along with Kevin McCollum as the producer and Paul Rudnick writing the lyrics and story. The timeline for the musical will be announced later. [110]

Musiсianship

Elton John has written with his songwriting partner Bernie Taupin since 1967 when he answered an advertisement for talent placed in the popular UK music publication, New Musical Express, by Liberty records A&R man Ray Williams.[111] The pair have collaborated on more than 30 albums to date.[112] The writing style that Elton John and Bernie Taupin use involves Taupin writing the lyrics on his own, and John then putting them to music, with the two never in the same room during the process. Taupin will write a set of lyrics, then set them to music, or John will write the music, and then ask Taupin to write the lyrics. [112]

In 1993, he began a relationship with David Furnish, a former advertising executive and now filmmaker originally from Toronto, Ontario, Canada. On 21 December 2005 the day that the Civil Partnership Act came into force, John and Furnish were among the first couples in the UK to form a civil partnership, which was held at the Windsor Guildhall. [113] After gay marriage became legal in England in March 2014, John and Furnish were married in Windsor, Berkshire, on 21 December 2014, the ninth anniversary of their civil partnership. They have two sons. Their oldest, Zachary Jackson Levon Furnish-John, was born to a surrogate mother on 25 December 2010 in California.[116] His voice was once classed as tenor; it is now baritone.[117] His piano playing is influenced by classical and gospel music.[118] He used Paul Buckmaster to arrange the music on his studio albums during the 1970s.[119]

Personal life

Sexuality and family

In the late 1960s, Elton John was engaged to his first lover, secretary Linda Woodrow, who is mentioned in the song “Someone Saved My Life Tonight”. [119] He married German recording engineer Renate Blauel on 14 February 1984, in Darling Point, Sydney, with speculation that the marriage was a cover for his homosexuality. John came out as bisexual in a 1976 interview with Rolling Stone[168] but after his divorce from Blauel in 1988, he told the magazine that he was “comfortable” being gay.[162]

In 1992, he was inducted into the Songwriter’s Hall of Fame. He is a fellow of the British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors (BASCA). His voice was once classed as tenor; it is now baritone.[117] His piano playing is influenced by classical and gospel music.[118] He used Paul Buckmaster to arrange the music on his studio albums during the 1970s.[119]

In 2013, Elton John resisted calls to boycott Russia in protest at the Russian LGBT propaganda law, but told fans at a Moscow concert that the Russian laws were “inhumane and isolating” and he was “deeply saddened and shocked over the current legislation.”[115] In January 2014, Russian President Vladimir Putin spoke of John in an attempt to show that there was no gay discrimination in Russia, stating: “Elton John – this is an extraordinary person, a distinguished musician, and millions of our people sincerely love him, regardless of his sexual orientation.”[114]

By 1975, the pressures of stardom had begun to take a serious toll on him. During “Elton Week” in Los Angeles that year, he suffered a drug overdose. [175] In 2014, he claimed Jesus would have been in favour of same-sex marriage. [177] John responded by offering to introduce the President to Russians abused under Russian legislation banning “homosexual propaganda”. [177] On 24 September 2015, the Associated Press reported that President Putin called John and invited him to meet in the future about LGBT issues in Russia.[176] Putin’s call came just a few days after another phone pranks sent to Elton John, pretending to be Putin and his spokesman, and causing John to erroneously thank Putin for the call on the singer’s Instagram account.[177]

Wealth

In April 2009, the Sunday Times Rich List estimated John’s wealth to be £175 million ($265 million), and ranked him as the 322nd wealthiest person in Britain.[178] John was estimated to have a fortune of £195 million ($240 million) by the Sunday Times Rich List 2011, making him one of the 10 wealthiest people in the British music industry.[179] Aside from his main home “Woodside” in Old Windsor, Berkshire, John owns residences in Atlanta, Los Angeles, Nice, Holland Park in London, and Venice. John’s property is based in Nice on Mont Boron mountain.[179] Elton John is an art collector, and is believed to have one of the largest private photography collections in the world.[180]

In 2000, he admitted to spending £300 million in just under two years—an average of £1.5 million a month. Between January 1996 and September 1997, he spent more than £9.6m on property and £293,000 on flowers.[180] In June 2001 John sold 20 of his cars at Christie’s, saying he didn’t get the chance to drive them because he was out of the country so often.[180] The sale, which included a 1933 Jaguar X200, the most expensive at £243,750, and several Ferraris, Rolls-Royces, and Bentleys, raised nearly £2 million.[185] In 2003, John sold the contents of his Holland Park home—expected to fetch £800,000 at Sotheby’s—to modernise

AIDS Foundation
John has said that he took risks with unprotected sex during the 1980s and considers himself lucky to have avoided the AIDS epidemic.[197] In 1986, he joined with Dionne Warwick, Gladys Knight and Stevie Wonder to record the single "That's What Friends Are For", with all profits being donated to the American Foundation for AIDS Research. The song won John and the others the Grammy Award for Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals. In April 1990, John performed his 1968 ballad "Skyline Pigeon" at the funeral of Ryan White, a teenage haemophiliac he had befriended.[198]

Elton John became more closely associated with AIDS charities following the deaths of his friends Ryan White in 1990 and Freddie Mercury in 1991, raising large amounts of money and using his public profile to raise awareness of the disease. He founded the Elton John AIDS Foundation in 1992 as a charity to fund programmes for HIV/AIDS prevention, for the elimination of prejudice and discrimination against HIV/AIDS-affected individuals, and for providing services to people living with or at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. This cause continues to be one of his personal passions. In 1993, he began hosting his annual Academy Award Party, which has become one of the highest-profile Oscar parties in the Hollywood film industry, and has raised over US$200 million.[199] In early 2006, John donated the smallest of two bright-red Yamaha pianos from his Las Vegas, Nevada show to auction on eBay to raise public awareness and funds for the foundation.

To raise money for his AIDS charity, he annually hosts a glamorous White Tie & Tiara Ball in the grounds of his home in Old Windsor in Berkshire to which many famous celebrities are invited.[201] On 28 June 2007, the 9th annual White Tie & Tiara Ball took place. The menu consisted of a truffle soufflé followed by Surf and Turf filet mignon with Maine lobster tail and a giant Knickerbocker glory ice cream. An auction followed the dinner held by Stephen Fry. A Rolls Royce "Phantom" droptop coupe and a piece of Tracey Emin's artwork both raised £800,000 for the charity fund, with the total amount raised reaching £3.5 million.[202] Later, John sang "Deedle" with Tom Jones and "Big Spender" with Shirley Bassey.[203] The 2011 guests included Sarah, Duchess of York, Elizabeth Hurley and George Michael (who performed "Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me") in a duet with John, and the auction raised £5 million, adding to the £45 million the balls have raised for the Elton John AIDS Foundation.[196]

Honours and awards

Elton was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility in 1994. He and Bernie Taupin had previously been inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1992. John was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 1995.[204] For his charitable work, John was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II on 24 February 1998. In October 1975, John became the 1,662nd person to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.[206]

He was awarded Society of Singers Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005.[207] He became a recipient of a Kennedy Center Honor in 2004, and a Disney Legends Award in 2006. In 2000, he was named the MusiCares Person of the Year for his artistic achievement in the music industry and dedication to philanthropy.[208] In 2010, he was awarded with the PPS for Music Heritage Award, which was erected on The Namaste Lounge Pub in Northwood, London, where John performed his first gig.[209]

Music awards

Academy Awards

• 1995: Best Original Song (won) for "Can You Feel The Love Tonight" from The Lion King
• 1995: Best Original Song (nominated) for "Circle of Life" from The Lion King
• 1995: Best Original Song (nominated) for "Hakuna Matata" from The Lion King

Grammy Awards

• 1971: Best New Artist (nominated)
• 1971: Album of the Year (nominated) for Elton John
• 1971: Best Contemporary Male Vocalist (nominated) for Elton John
• 1972: Best Original Score Written for a Motion Picture (nominated) for Tom Jones
• 1974: Best Male Pop Vocal Performance (nominated) for "Daniel"
• 1975: Album of the Year (nominated) for Caribou
• 1975: Record of the Year (nominated) for "Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me"
• 1975: Best Male Pop Vocal Performance (nominated) for "Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me"
• 1976: Album of the Year (nominated) for Captain Fantastic and the Brown Dirt Cowboy
• 1976: Best Male Pop Vocal Performance (nominated) for Captain Fantastic and the Brown Dirt Cowboy
• 1977: Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal (nominated) for "Don't Go Breaking My Heart" with Kiki Dee
• 1980: Best R&B Vocal Performance - Male (nominated) for "Mama Can't Buy You Love"
• 1983: Best Male Pop Vocal Performance (nominated) for "Blue Eyes"
• 1985: Best Male Pop Vocal Performance (nominated) for "Restless"
• 1987: Record of the Year (nominated) for "That's What Friends Are For", performed by Dionne Warwick & Friends (award shared with Dionne Warwick, Gladys Knight & Stevie Wonder)
• 1987: Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal (won) for "That's What Friends Are For", performed by Dionne Warwick & Friends (award shared with Dionne Warwick, Gladys Knight & Stevie Wonder)
• 1988: Best Male Pop Vocal Performance (nominated) for "Candle in the Wind" (live)
• 1992: Best Instrumental Composition (won) for "Busaquin", performed by James Galway
• 1993: Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal (nominated) for "Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me" with George Michael
• 1993: Best Male Pop Vocal Performance (nominated) for "The One"
• 1995: Song of the Year (nominated) for "Can You Feel the Love Tonight" from The Lion King
• 1995: Song of the Year (nominated) for "Circle of Life" from The Lion King
• 1995: Best Male Pop Vocal Performance (won) for "Can You Feel the Love Tonight" from The Lion King
• 1995: Best Song Written Specifically for a Motion Picture or for Television (nominated) for "Can You Feel the Love Tonight" from The Lion King
• 1995: Best Song Written Specifically for a Motion Picture or for Television (nominated) for "Circle of Life" from The Lion King
• 1995: Best Male Pop Vocal Performance (nominated) for "Believe"
• 1997: Best Male Pop Vocal Performance (nominated) for "Candle in the Wind 1997"
• 1999: Grammy Legend Award
• 2001: Best Musical Show Album (won) for Elton John & Tim Rice's Aida (award shared with Guy Babylion, Paul Bogaev & Chris Montan (producers), Tim Rice (lyricist) and the original Broadway cast with Heather Headley, Adam Pascal, and Sherie Rene Scott)
• 2002: Best Pop Vocal Album (won) for Songs from the West Coast
• 2002: Best Male Pop Vocal Performance (nominated) for "I Want Love"
• 2003: Best Male Pop Vocal Performance (nominated) for "Original Sin"
• 2005: Best Pop Collaboration with Vocals (nominated) for "sorry Seems to Be the Hardest Word" with Ray Charles
• 2011: Best Pop Collaboration with Vocals (nominated) with Leon Russell for "If It Wasn't for Bad"

Theatre awards

Tony Awards

• 1998: Best Original Musical Score (nominated) for The Lion King
• 2000: Best Original Musical Score (won) for Aida
• 2009: Best Score (Music and/or Lyric) (nominated) for Billy Elliot the Musical
• 2010: Best Play (nominated) for Next Fall

Elton John Band

Since 1970, John's band, of which he is the pianist and lead singer, has been known as the Elton John Band.[208][209] The band has had multiple line-up changes, but remains with Steve Load...
Previous band members
- Guy Babylon – keyboards
- Bob Birch – bass guitar, vocals
- Tom Costello – drums
- David Hentschel – synthesiser
- Tony Murray – bass
- Roger Pope – drums, percussion
- Fred Mandel – keyboards, guitars
- David Paton – bass guitar, vocals
- Dee Murray
- Fred Mandel – keyboards, guitars
- Ray Cooper
- Bob Birch – bass guitar, vocals
- James Newton Howard – conductor, keyboards, orchestrations
- Caleb Quaye – guitar, drums, percussion
- John Lennon (credited as Dr. Winston O’Boogie) – guitar
- David Sanborn – saxophone
- Chicago – vocal groups
- The Temptations – vocal groups
- Tower of Power – horns
- Tammy Wynette – vocals
- Gladys Knight – vocals
- Paul Young – vocals
- Bonnie Raitt – vocals
- Bruce Johnston
- Carl Wilson – vocals, background vocals
- Toni Tennille – vocals, background vocals
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- Live in Australia with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (1986)
- Duets (1993)

Discography

Solo studio albums
- Empty Sky (1969)
- Elton John (1970)
- Tumbleweed Connection (1970)
- Madman Across the Water (1971)
- Honky Château (1972)
- Don’t Shoot Me I’m Only the Piano Player (1973)
- Goodbye Yellow Brick Road (1973)
- Caribou (1974)
- Captain Fantastic and the Brown Dirt Cowboy (1975)
- Rock of the Westies (1975)
- Blue Moves (1976)
- A Single Man (1978)
- Victim of Love (1979)
- 21 at 33 (1980)
- The Fox (1981)
- Too Low for Zero (1983)
- Ice on Fire (1985)
- Leather Jackets (1986)
- Rag Strikes Back (1988)
- Sleeping with the Past (1989)
- The One (1992)
- The Big Picture (1997)
- Songs from the West Coast (2001)
- Peachtree Road (2004)
- The Captain & theKR (2006)
- The Diving Board (2013)
- Wonderful Crazy Night (2016)

Collaborative albums
- Live in Australia with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (1986)
- Duets (1993)
...The Rolling stone encyclopedia of rock & roll.2001


"David Grissin - The Lion King became the most successful stage show of all time!". The Telegraph. Retrieved 23 July 2014.


"Sir Elton John, one of the world's most famous and successful entertainers, is the recipient of the 2012 Virgin Media Music Awards...". NME. Retrieved 27 September 2014.


"Sir Elton John returns to Las Vegas". Billboard. 27 September 2014.


"Elton John Finishes New Album, Eyes September Release Date". Rolling Stone. 27 September 2014.


"Elton John: 'My new album is my most exciting record in a long time...". The Daily Telegraph. 27 September 2014.


"Stars perform at Diamond Jubilee concert". The Daily Telegraph. 27 September 2014.


Elton John wrote material for various artists, among them Roger Cook and Lulu. Taupin would write a batch of lyrics in under an hour. If Elton John deemed them good enough, he would give it to John, who would write music for them in half an hour.

Sir Elton Hercules John CBE (born Reginald Kenneth Dwight; 25 March 1947) is an English singer, songwriter, pianist, and composer. He has worked with lyricist Bernie Taupin since 1967; they have collaborated on more than 30 albums. John has sold more than 300 million records, making him one of the world’s best-selling music artists. He has more than fifty Top 40 hits, as well as seven consecutive number-one albums in the United States, 58 Billboard Top 40 singles, 27 Top 10 singles, four of which...