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**Barry Manilow – Singer And Songwriter Extraordinaire Returns To The Stage**

**By Jay Nault**

For generations, Barry Manilow has been singing his way into the hearts of millions of people from every corner of the globe. His songs are anthems for couples in every time zone, and his songwriting acumen is legendary. Fans will be thrilled to know that Manilow is returning to the stage in Las Vegas in 2006. Manilow will be playing regular shows at the Las Vegas Hilton, and his appearance is just another reason to visit the biggest oasis in the world. Below is a look at how Manilow became "Manilow".

**Early Life**

Barry Alan Pincus was born in Brooklyn, New York on June 17, 1943. His father was of Russian and Jewish descent, and his mother was Irish. His parents split up when Barry was only two, and he was raised by his mother and maternal grandparents. He was introduced to music when he was seven, when he began to learn the piano and accordion.

Prior to his Bar Mitzvah at age 13, Barry began to sing. It was also at this time that he changed his name to match that of his mother's maiden name – Manilow. In several ways, 1956 was the year Barry Manilow was "born".

**Budding Career**

He continued singing through high school, and upon graduation, he was accepted to the prestigious Julliard School of Music. He paid his tuition by working in the CBS mail room. This proved to be a fortuitous school-time job. Manilow advanced at CBS, and wound up serving as the musical director for the CBS show Callback.

For the next few years, Manilow made his way by writing and performing advertising jingles, including the now-famous song for State Farm Insurance. His work got him noticed, and in 1971 he was hired by Bette Midler as her pianist and music director. He accompanied her on several bath house performances in New York City before Midler herself gained fame and fortune. His work with Midler helped her rise to the top, and as a result, Manilow landed his first record deal in 1973.

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### Potential Reached

Although Manilow's first album, *Barry Manilow*, was not a huge success, his follow-up, *Barry Manilow II*, contained what became his first smash hit, the single, *Mandy*, which climbed to number one in both the US and UK. From there, an incredible run of commercial success ensued. Manilow's next six albums all reached the Top 10 on the US Album charts, and some of the singles he produced during this time have remained popular to this day, including *I Write The Songs* in 1975 and *Looks Like We Made It* in 1977.

In all, Manilow has released over 30 albums, and 13 of them have risen to number one on the US Album charts, which is an unbelievable rate of success. Manilow's style has transformed over the years as well. His early works were almost exclusively love songs and ballads. However, in the early 1980's, Manilow began to focus more on smooth jazz and worked with such legends of the genre as

Mel Torme and Sarah Vaughan.

Overall, though, Manilow is best known for his romantic singing and sometimes crooning ways on stage, and his shows have been sold out in nearly every venue for decades. His fans number in the millions and his act is imitated by many.

Manilow has won two Grammy Awards during his career for his singing performances, and in 2002, he was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame. *Rolling Stone Magazine* called him the best performer of his generation. His charitable works are too numerous to list in one volume.

Generally, there are many reasons to take in a Barry Manilow show. We've listed a few, but a trip to Las Vegas would be well worth your time to see one of the true icons of musical performance.

Written by Jay Nault sponsored by

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**The Good Times Are Guaranteed By The Wedding Singer**

**By Kirsten Hawkins**

There are three things that all wedding receptions must include to turn out as memorable and successful events. The three "G's" of good food, good times, and good entertainment will make your wedding reception into an event enjoyed by all who attend. Generally taking care of the first and third of these concepts will guarantee the second. Good food is generally attained by hiring a competent caterer and not serving okra. Good entertainment brings with it a number of options and, unfortunately, none are ever ensured to be as good as they purport. One entertainment option for wedding receptions is the wedding singer. For far less than you'd pay a band and a bit more than you can expect to pay a DJ, you can get an entertainer that is a master of ceremonies, singer, and comedian all rolled into one.

Popularized by Adam Sandler's 1998 film *The Wedding Singer*, the person fulfilling this role at your reception will entertain you and your guests from start to finish. The wedding singer keeps the "show" aspect of the reception rolling along smoothly by providing music for dancing, and introducing various aspects of the reception such as the throwing of the bouquet/garter, and the unwrapping of wedding gifts. A good wedding singer will be the life of the party, keeping everyone in a good mood and having a good time by filling the lulls with witty comments and by singing his heart out. Some wedding singers will also have the guests sing, making parts of the reception a kind of karaoke party. Everyone loves karaoke. Even those who claim to despise it actually have a tiny Mel Torme, David Lee Roth, or Richard Cheese deep inside them just aching to get out. The wedding singer will bring this out in people.

Finding a wedding singer to hire for your reception is often as easy as looking through the telephone directory or searching the Internet. You'll find that there are all types of wedding singers available to perform at your reception. Wedding singers will generally have a variety of musical styles to offer in their repertoire. Some offer general services which include a number of popular songs that they can perform at your wedding. Others are more specialized and offer "tribute" performances to famous singers like Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Tony Bennett or even the likes of Barry Manilow or Burt Bacarach. Most will be more than happy to discuss your musical tastes with you and gear their performances accordingly. Whatever musical style suits your particular tastes, you're sure to be able to locate a wedding singer willing to perform it for you.

Wedding singers can do it all for you and the good ones can make for a truly entertaining experience. When you're planning the entertainment for your wedding reception, consider hiring a wedding singer to help make sure your event fulfills the requirement of the three "G's" and is a memorable occasion for you and your guests.

Kirsten Hawkins is an event planner from Nashville, TN. Visit

<http://www.wedding411.net/>

for more

event planning tips, strategies, and resources.



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