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Elton John – A Musical Icon Hits The Stage Once Again

By Jay Nault

Elton John, over time, has proven to be one of the most influential musicians of his time. His "time" spans several decades, and his legion of fans spans several generations. John has been performing for more than 30 years, and this summer's tour is bound to attract millions of followers around the United States.

Early Life

Elton John was born Reginald Kenneth Dwight in England in 1947, and his early childhood was shaped primarily by the women in his life. His father, Stanley Dwight, was a Squadron Leader in the RAF, which meant that he was rarely around his son, as his military duty kept him on tour for years.

John proved to be something of a child prodigy, as by the age of four, he was able to play piano melodies by ear after hearing them either on the radio or record player. He continued to hone his love for music, and he won a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music when he was 11.

John studied at the Academy for six years, but left before he graduated because he felt he was ready to concentrate on his professional music career. John played in his share of bands while he was a student, and it was during this time that his professional attitude and style were formulated in such a way that they would serve him throughout his career.

Early Career

John's first band was formed when he was 13, and it was called The Corvettes. The Corvettes ultimately changed their name to Bluesology, which experienced some success as a backup band for such R&B artists as the Isley Brothers and Patti LaBelle. This exposure led to Bluesology being signed to serve as Long John Baldry's supporting band, and they would tour and play small shows throughout England during this time.

John soon became disillusioned with the tight-fisted control that Baldry exerted over Bluesology and left the band soon thereafter. Even though there were initial failures, as John auditioned for lead singer

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roles with King Crimson and Gentle Giant without being hired, this part of his life led him to a partnership that exists to this day.

Career Success

John once again failed in an audition with Liberty Records, but as he was leaving the audition, he was given a group of lyrics without music that were written by Bernie Taupin, who has also tried out for a role with Liberty Records. John wrote music to support the lyrics, and the two began corresponding. John and Taupin met six months later, and it was during this time that John changed his name to what it is today. After a couple of years of writing music together, the partners were ready to encounter the 1970's, which was a decade where they experienced a level of success that was unmatched in history.

Taupin and John began releasing singles with moderate success, and formed a band of musicians that would lead to John's first number one album, *Honky Chateau*, in 1972. The album contained such hits as "Rocket Man" and "Honky Cat," and spent five weeks at number one.

The following year, John started his own label, Rocket Records, and his string of success was amazing. His next nine albums all climbed to the top of the US Album charts, and his 31 releases since his first have sold hundreds of millions of copies around the world.

Awards/Acknowledgements

John is revered by millions, both inside the music industry and by the public in general. He has been recognized in several ways. John has won five Grammy Awards, although this is just the "tip of the iceberg" in terms of his recognition. In 1995, John won an Academy Award for Best Music, Song for "Can You Feel the Love Tonight," featured in *The Lion King*. He won a Golden Globe Award that same year for Best Original Song – Motion Picture for the same score. In 1996, he was appointed a Commander of the British Empire (C.B.E.), and in 1998, he was Knighted by Queen Elizabeth for his contribution to music and fund-raising for AIDS charities. Finally, in 2000, John won a Tony Award for Best Original Musical Score for his work with *Aida*. John was also inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1994.

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The Lion King Roars While Bringing South Africa To Broadway

By Al Terry

The hit Disney musical Broadway show The Lion King opened in the famous theater district of New York City on November 13, 1997. The production's home has been the New Amsterdam Theatre located at 214 West 42nd Street. The show runs about two hours and forty-five minutes with one intermission. The Lion King will be moving to a new Theatre as Mary Poppins is set for a run at the New Amsterdam in 2006.

The Lion King is an original musical tells the story of a young lion cub who is learning that his role will soon be the king of the jungle. Based on the hit Disney movie which won over the hearts of adults and children alike, with the struggles of Simba, the young lion cub who is realizing the challenges and responsibilities as the king of the jungle.

The Broadway show adds huge production values with forty actors lavished in unbelievable costumes, to recreated all the animals of the African jungle. The musical score is just as impressive with the classic Elton John hit "Can You Feel The Love Tonight", which also won an Oscar.

The theater version of The Lion King also includes some great musical rhythms from the South African composer Lebo M., who makes you feel you are in the heart of the jungle at times, it really adds a nice touch to the experience.

The Lion King is quickly reaching it's 10th year on stage and continues to dazzle everyone who sees the fascinating show. The New Amsterdam Theatre holds 1747 seats which sell out often, Broadway Show Ticket The Lion King average about eighty-five dollars with the ticket high at about two hundred and dollars.

Al is the owner of

Broadway Show Ticket The Lion King

A New York entertainment site with news,

history reviews and Broadway show ticket The Lion King information and links.



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