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Issue No. 53
DECEMBER 2000



*Hercules is a registered member
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Fan Clubs*

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FAN CLUB INFORMATION

Annual membership fee for the UK is £14 if paid by Standing Order/VISA/Mastercard. By Cheque/Postal Order it is £15. For the rest of Europe it is £14, and for the USA it is 17£/US\$30. Please note that your renewal date is printed on your address label in European format day/month/year.

Membership passes are available from your local HERCULES department: send a small photo of yourself when requesting your pass.

Please don't send enquiries or **fan mail** to the Elton John management, but to HERCULES Coordination. Letters will be passed on if necessary.

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**Live at
Madison Square Garden**



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FROM THE EDITOR...

Hello and welcome to the last issue of 2000 and my first as Editor.

It's been a very busy time as always for Elton - and for us fans.

In this issue we have reports from surely the most eagerly anticipated Elton concert ever at Madison Square Garden and the Hercules fan event at New York's Hard Rock Café. A live CD released in record time, TV broadcast, video and DVD release to come, six duets and his retirement announced and withdrawn - it could only be Elton! Kevin Schwartz tells us about a very special weekend.

We have the second part of our exclusive and fascinating interview with Elton's sound engineer Clive Franks.

As we went to press the first dates of another Face to Face Tour with Billy Joel in 2001 were being announced. Currently this is only in the US but hopefully other parts of the world will be included later. Either side of this there are further solo dates in the US and Europe - see page 27 for details.

There has also been a gripping court case involving Elton who is suing his former management company and accountants. Again, timing of publication is against us but we bring you the most up to date report we can on page 4.

Stephan Heimbecher has revamped the Hercules website. He brings us up to date with developments on page 21 and you can see it for yourself at www.eltonfan.net.

Hercules member Rob Cargill attended a very special evening at Wembley Stadium - Elton performed at the final event before the bulldozers move in. Read about Rob's experience in Kicked Off The Moss on page 24.

I hope my first issue lives up to Tammi's high standards. Tammi was editor for three years and took The Mag forward immeasurably and deserves thanks from us all for what has become, and I hope will continue to be, an informative and professionally produced source of news and information on all things Elton.

Please keep your letters coming in. We welcome your input and suggestions.

Wishing you all a great holiday season and Happy New Year from all at Hercules.

Cheers!



Photo: S Kalinoski

HERCULES ELTON/LENNON WEEKEND *Cavern Club, Liverpool March 24-25, 2001*

Don't make this an Empty Garden, as Hercules celebrates Elton's birthday and recalls John Lennon's memory 20 years after his tragic loss. We're at The Beatles famous haunt, the Cavern Club, Liverpool. Breaking with the London tradition, Elton's birthday convention is on the road for the first time ever for this Elton/Lennon Weekend. The convention is free to all from noon-5pm on March 24, and The Beatles-related tours are available on Sunday March 25, through a special deal with Cavern Club Tours in association with Hercules UK.

Special weekend accommodation & tour packages are available direct from Cavern Club Tours. Please phone Ray Johnson at Cavern on: +44 151 236 9091 for details, or see their website at www.Cavern-Liverpool.co.uk First come, first served. No enquiries to Hercules about package terms please.

Elton tribute acts and special guests are being booked. More details of line-up coming soon. Check our website regularly, or sign up to free Hercules eNewsletters for email news.



Full details of the following news items have appeared on our Website and Hotline

LEGAL BOYS: HAS THE CASE GOT TEETH?

By George Matlock

The much-trailed Elton John "missing millions" court case opened in London's High Court on Oct. 30. As Hercules went to press, the case was half-way through an 8-week session. Elton is suing Andrew Haydon, former managing director of Elton's one-time management company, John Reid Enterprises (JRE), and Elton's former accountants who warned him of excessive spending in 1998, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC).

Elton alleges Haydon was negligent in allowing JRE to charge him US tour expenses - including booking agents, accountants and producers. Elton's case is that the "several millions" (reportedly £20m) which he paid out in touring expenses 1984-98 should have been borne by JRE under a renegotiated management agreement signed in 1986. PwC are accused by Elton of negligence in managing his affairs. Both defendants are vigorously contesting Elton's legal action.

We cannot draw any conclusions from the case until the trial ends. We have noted people making comments on the Internet about the likely outcome, and we find this reproachable to both Elton as well as the defendants in the case. Such remarks are prejudicial to a fair trial.

More amusingly, one fan already made their view known, handing Elton a toothbrush at the Antwerp solo show after Elton had spent his daytime sensationally bringing up ex-manager John Reid's criminal record, to which Reid, in Court 17 to hear evidence, shook his head in disbelief. The citation was irrelevant to the case.

Mr Reid was jailed for a month for punching a woman journalist in New Zealand in 1973 as is well documented. Mr Reid is not the subject of legal action, following a £3.4m settlement by Mr Reid to Elton after they parted company in 1998. PwC believe the compensation covered settlement for all parties.

Elton was in court November



Elton and David arrive at court



A smiling John Reid

15 to 17, and on the third day, apologised for his comments the day before. Elton explained: "It was a very passionate response and a very irresponsible remark for me to make at that time. I regret saying that. I was very tired. It was a long day of badgering questions."

And what was it Elton said? Andrew Fletcher, barrister for Haydon, suggested to Elton it was highly improbable Mr Reid had deliberately tried to "swindle" the musician.

Elton had replied: "Why would someone with a criminal record be incapable of doing something like that?"

Apologising, Elton still accused Mr Reid of betraying him over touring costs. He doubted Mr Reid had made an "honest mistake" about what was agreed between them over tour expenses in St Tropez in 1984. That contract boosted JRE's earnings from Elton. JRE had increased its commission to 20% of Elton's pre-tax earnings (previously it had been after-tax earnings) together with publishing income, ratified in 1986.

Elton said: "It was a contract verbally between two people who had lived together for five years. He was a huge part of my life. He was my partner for five years. When I did a deal with him I didn't have to write anything down, or so I thought."

At the start of trial, Elton's lawyers tried to block evidence of Elton's lavish spending being made in court by PwC. But in cross-examination, those issues bubbled

up anyway.

Mark Hapgood QC, barrister for PwC, suggested to Elton he went "spending mad" following a £42m deal with recording company Polygram in Feb 1996.

Elton said: "I'm not a nest-egg person".

A Reuters reporter told me out of court: "We all latched onto one comment Elton made. He said he had no one to inherit the money. That must have been difficult for David Furnish, in court, to take." We cannot make any comment on that, although it does not in fact impinge upon the trial's determination.

There were light-hearted moments too. In court, Elton took another chance to quash his MSG concert "quit" outburst.

"There was never any question of me retiring."

Mr Fletcher suggested: "We all have to retire at some stage." Elton retorted: "Do we? Why can't I drop dead on stage? Lots of other people do. I have no intention of retiring."

Cheerily, Elton said outside court: "I think I got very fair treatment from all the QCs." About cross-examination: "I knew the spending thing would come up." And the verdict? "We shall just have to wait and see what the judgment is," Elton said.

The case continues.

Hercules' court reporters will bring you the outcome of this trial on our website. In March we hope to publish a chronology of the case in *The Mag*, together with analysis.

EJ NEWS BULLETS...



RECORD MAKER, RECORD BREAKER!

Elton smashed the world record for the fastest album ever made!

Released on November 13 in Europe and 8 days later in the US, new album *One Night Only*, was taped live at two sell-out shows at New York's Madison Square Gardens on October 20 and 21.

It hit the shops just 22 days after recording, meaning *One Night Only* breaks the record for the fastest-ever turn around for an album. The previous record holder was Plastic Ono Band's *Live Peace* album, released within four months.

NO RETIREMENT IN 2001, OF COURSE!

Elton fans were in shock after Elton announced he's to retire at end 2001. "Next year will be a lot of fun," he said during his show at New York's Madison Square Garden on Oct 20, "but at the end of 2001 ... that's it for me!" The next night's show, he took it back: "I said I'm gonna retire next year, but of course I'm full of shit!" was his introduction to the encores.

JOHN JORGENSEN JOINS HERCULES

John Jorgenson of Elton's band popped in on the Hercules Convention at Hard Rock Café, New York, ahead of the Madison Square Garden show Oct. 21.

"FACE TO FACE" RETURNS IN 2001

Piano duellers Elton John and Billy Joel will continue their "Face to Face" tour with some shows on the US West coast between mid-Jan and mid-Feb 2001. Details are not yet known at this point in time, but the tour is likely to include concerts in Seattle, Portland (OR), San Francisco, and the LA area as well as San Diego.

FIRST GLIMPSES OF NEW

STUDIO ALBUM

According to Billboard.com, Elton John unveiled one of the 15 songs already completed for the new studio album, which is expected to be released in spring 2001. He played it to his live band members during rehearsals at Madison Square Garden on Oct 20. The song, *American Triangle*, is about the 1998 murder of Matthew Shephard, a Wyoming college student who was brutally killed in a gay hate crime. While the live recordings at MSG included well-known band members such as Davey Johnstone, John Jorgenson, Guy Babylon, Bob Birch, and even returning drummer Nigel Olsson, none of these have been part of the recordings for the studio album. Producer Pat Leonhard has no interest in Elton's current live band. Even new drummer Curt Bisquera, who came into Elton's band for "The Road to El Dorado" by Leonhard's choice, has been shut out of the new project.

ELTON ROCKS WILKES-BARRE

Elton and the band rocked the First Union Arena at Wilkes-Barre, PA, on October 18, with a set list of 27 songs. The show was a pilot for the two *One Night Only* concerts at New York's Madison Square Garden days later. Among fresh material that night: *Funeral for a Friend/Love Lies Bleeding*, *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road*, *Little Jeanie*, *Tiny Dancer*, *Can you Feel the Love Tonight*, *Don't Go Breaking my Heart*, *Club at the End of the Street*, *I Don't Wanna go on with you like that*, *The Bitch is Back*, *Sad Songs (Say So Much)*, and *Beatles' Come Together*.

ONE NIGHT WITH LITE

Elton John was a special guest at *One Night with Lite* presented by Toyota at New York's Madison Square Garden (Theater) on Oct 23. Also appearing: Natalie Cole, Kathi Lee Gifford, Lara Fabian, Bruce Hornsby, LeAnn Rimes, and Bruce McKnight.

ELTON WANTS TO ROCK

Feeling inspired from a recent collaboration with Collective Soul with whom he recorded piano and vocal on a track called *Perfect Day*, Elton reported the experience was so much fun that he can't wait to take it to the next level. "I've always wanted to be in a rock band," he says. "I've always wanted to smash a guitar over someone's head. You just can't do that with a piano."

SONG FOR GUY - DANCE VERSION

Hurley & Todd have used Elton's instrumental, *Song For Guy*, and turned it into a modern dance/trance version - titled *Sunstorm*. A Maxi CD has been released in Germany (featuring seven different mixes) and the UK (featuring three different mixes).

NIGEL OLSSON TO RECORD

NEW ALBUM

The Official Nigel Olsson Fan Club told Hercules that Elton drummer Nigel Olsson started recording his new album for the Japanese label 81 Records on October 30, in California. Elton band members Davey Johnstone and Guy Babylon will be producing. Kiki Dee is scheduled to do a duet with Nigel, and Elton has given Nigel a new song to record. The album is slated for release only in Japan.

EJ NEWS BULLETS...



Full details of the following news items have appeared on our Website and Hotline

SUN RECORDS TRIBUTE...I'M READY

Musical legends including Paul McCartney, Bob Dylan, Elton and The Who will rock 'n' roll for a 50th anniversary film and soundtrack tribute to pioneering rock 'n' roll label Sun Records. They're performing the music of Elvis Presley, Roy Orbison, Johnny Cash, and other pioneers from the famous label. PBS will broadcast a two-hour tribute in Dec 2001. It will be released through Sire label. Sam Phillips launched the Memphis-based Sun label in Feb 1952, drawing on the gospel, blues and country styles of that region of the US.

THE BOX IS BACK

The 4-CD box set "To Be Continued..." was re-released in the US on Oct 31.

THE DUST SETTLES -

ELTON TRIBUTE TO DUSTY

Elton contributed to tributes in liner notes of Simply Dusty, a 4-CD anthology of vocalist Dusty Springfield. The box set, from Mercury Records, was released Sept 25. Memories of the singer, who died in March 1999, are included in a 64-page booklet.

ELTON JOHN RECEIVES

HUMANITARIAN AWARD

Elton was presented with a special award by the American edition of GQ magazine. The US GQ "Men of the Year" Awards took place in New York on Oct 26. Elton received the David Yurman Humanitarian Award for his work with EJAF.

The GQ "Men of the Year" Awards will air in the US on Fox Network on Dec 9.

ELTON VOTED BRITAIN'S

FAVOURITE ENTERTAINER

At the BBC Peoples Awards Oct 8 at London's Royal Albert Hall, Elton John was voted by the British people their favourite entertainer. Elton was up against stiff competition from co-nominees Robbie Williams, Travis, and sexbomb Tom Jones.

Singer Lulu was on stage to announce Elton as the winner. But Elton, recording his latest album in Los Angeles, appeared only on screen. He said he was surprised to win: "Especially since Robbie is 45,000 years younger!" Elton paid tribute to fans, for making his career possible. Presenter Michael Buerk asked: "Will you return to the UK?" Elton replied: "Maybe to borrow Lulu's outfit!"

I CRY AT NIGHT

Elton was moved at the movies by performances from Julie Walters and new talent Jamie Bell in a preview of their film Billy Elliot, Sept 18. The acting chemistry led Elton to break down. It's an emotional British drama. Walters plays a dancing teacher while Bell plays a striking miner's son who dreams of joining the Royal Ballet.

IN AN ENGLISH COUNTRY GARDEN

Elton says he wants to become a producer and actor in films. But an animated film about garden gnomes? Daily Express of September 27, reckons Elton's new film production project sees Elton teaming up with Disney to make the extravaganza. Elton has gnomes in his spacious gardens in England.

NEW ELTON JOHN DVDS

"The Road to El Dorado" is released on VHS and DVD on December 12. Released as a Special Edition DVD, The Road to El Dorado features a multitude of exciting interactive entertainment extras. The DVD features a DVD-ROM component offering an interactive PC Game demo, "Aztec Adventures," a brain teaser trivia game; letter and number learning activities; and downloadable colouring pages, mazes and a surprise screen saver. The DVD also includes Elton's music video for Some Day Out of the Blue (Theme From El Dorado); a special behind-the-scenes featurette, cast and crew bios; production notes; theatrical marketing materials. In Europe Elton John live in Barcelona was released on DVD on Aug 21. Besides live tracks from the 1992 show, the DVD also contains a 55-minute special tour report that was not included with the VHS released. From Sept. 4, The Very Best Of Elton John was also released on DVD.

ELTON ON DAVID LETTERMAN'S

"LATE SHOW"

Elton John was a guest on David Letterman's Late Show on CBS Nov 30.

ELTON IN SOUTH PARK

Three new "South Park" videos with exclusive bonus footage hit stores Nov 7. Christmas in South Park, Best of South Park, and The Chef Experience (including Chef Aid and Chef Aid: Behind the Menu, which features interviews with Elton et al.



"THE LION KING"

EATS HOLLYWOOD

Disney's *The Lion King* began preview performances in Hollywood on Sept 28 at the restored Pantages Theatre. The Los Angeles limited engagement has been extended to Oct 1, 2001 due to the overwhelming demand for tickets. In its 3rd year of sold-out performances on Broadway at the New Amsterdam Theatre, and a smash hit in London, performances for the Los Angeles production are Tuesdays-Fridays at 8:00 pm; Saturday's at 2:00 pm and 8:00pm and Sunday's at 1:00 pm and 6:30 pm. (There will be occasional Weds. Matinees). Tickets are available at the Pantages Box Office, by calling Ticketmaster at +1-213-365-5555 or +1-714-703-2510. You can also obtain tickets online at www.lionkingla.com.

TINY DANCER ALMOST

FAMOUS AGAIN

Elton saw a tune he penned 30 years ago head north in the US charts. The song, *Tiny Dancer*, features heavily in the US hit movie "Almost Famous" and was tipped a chart topper. US Music channels have picked up on the 1971 song and FM stations gave it heavy play.

AND A CLINTON FUNDRAISER

Elton appeared Oct. 22 at a fundraiser in aid of Hillary Clinton's campaign to be elected to the American Senate. 200 tickets each cost \$6,000 at New York City's Hudson Theater. Elton is also said to have written a song for Mrs Clinton, *First Lady of the United States* and wife of incumbent President Bill Clinton.

AIDA BEGINS US TOUR

MARCH 2001

The countrywide tour of Elton and Disney's musical, *Aida*, begins at Minneapolis' Orpheum Theatre March 27, 2001 until April 22, 2001. The production will then move to St. Louis, Seattle, Portland, Oregon, and Denver. As with the New York edition, the tour will be directed by Robert Falls, with Wayne Cilento working choreography, and sets and costumes by Bob Crowley (see tour list p. 27).

PELL PROGRAMME PULLED

A programme documenting the antics Benjamin Pell (also known as Benjy the bin-man) the was shelved by UK television station Channel 4 Television "for legal reasons" a spokesman for Channel 4 told Hercules September 11. Scandal in the Bins was an hour-long documentary about Pell, widely believed to have been behind the sensational press in late 1997 and early 1998, which included a leaked letter depicting Richard Branson's spat with Elton over the non-inclusion of *Candle in the Wind* 1997 on a Diana, Princess of Wales album, as well as publication in tabloids of Elton's bank statements. Channel 4 declined to comment who had instigated the shelving of the programme, and whether it was done on legal advice from television lawyers, or on the strength of an injunction. If the latter, the injunction might not have been imposed by Elton or his management company as other celebrities were also to feature in the programme.

LONELY OUT IN SPACE

Elton John may face legal action by organisers of a Portuguese concert after he walked out half an hour before he was due to perform. Elton was scheduled to appear at the Estoril Casino near Lisbon September 13 but, according to the venue's spokesman, 30 minutes before the show Elton appeared concerned the theatre was only half full. Casino manager Mario Assis Ferreira told Portuguese radio the venue is planning to sue Elton for several tens of thousands of dollars. "He said he was going out to get some air but then he jumped into his car and went to the airport to catch his private jet. He never said goodbye or anything to anyone," said a Casino spokesman. Elton was reported to have flown back to Nice.

However, an audience of 1,250 people who had each paid 50,000 escudos (£154) per ticket for dinner and show were in fact there. In all, 1,500 tickets had been sold. The unamused and unentertained crowd included government ministers, bank presidents and national newspaper editors. They were apparently slow at moving from the dining room to the concert hall, leaving it to the last minute to enter the music chamber.

PRADA PARTY

Luxury goods maker Prada's fundraising gala at the Royal Academy of Arts Sept 30, was visited by Elton and Courtney Love. It was held to coincide with the launch of the controversial *Apocalypse* show at the world-famous arts gallery. Elton wore a polka-dot three-piece suit – see the back page!

EJ NEWS BULLETS...



Full details of the following news items have appeared on our Website and Hotline

AL GORE FUNDRAISER

Elton performed at a fundraiser for US presidential candidate Al Gore Sept 19. In the San Francisco Bay Area, Elton's 45-minute show was the main event apart from a Gore speech at a wealthy benefactor's mansion. Donations were \$25,000 per table, \$50,000 near the stage! Elton was campaigning for Gore because "I do not want this country to have to live under George W Bush." About 300 people paid up attended. Wearing a black brocade jacket, Elton played nine of his hits, including Your Song, Daniel, Rocket Man, Philadelphia Freedom and Crocodile Rock. Organisers had expected him to do only four songs but he kept going. Gore and his wife swayed to the music and joined guests on their feet as the beat picked up with Benny and the Jets. The Gores broke into a jitterbug next to their table. Members of the audience held candles for the final song, Candle in the Wind. British citizen Elton has never before given a political fundraiser.

MUSICAL BIOGRAPHY OF

ELTON JOHN

Hercules member Liz Rosenthal has announced her musical biography of Elton John, His Song: The Musical Journey Of Elton John, to be published in the US autumn 2001 by Billboard Books. Liz is seeking photos taken by fans that would be suitable for publication. She hopes to publish 40 photos, representing a cross-section of Elton's career. She hopes to find at least a few taken by fans in the early 1970s. Anyone who can help should email EJRose@aol.com as soon as possible.

DOG'S IN THE KITCHEN

Elton took a photo for an AIDS charity auction. Others among 50 snappers included Britney Spears, Kylie Minogue and Bryan Adams, who were each given an Olympus camera to use. One is by his partner, David Furnish, of Elton's "star", on Hollywood Boulevard. Elton snapped his own dog. Some of the photos were on display at Mulberrys, New Bond St, London, from November 6, and will be exhibited at Harrods in December. Last bids Dec. 31 to: Fashion Acts, 30 Elgin Crescent, London W11 2JR, England. Email: fashion.acts@virgin.net

IT'S ALL JUST GREEK TO ME

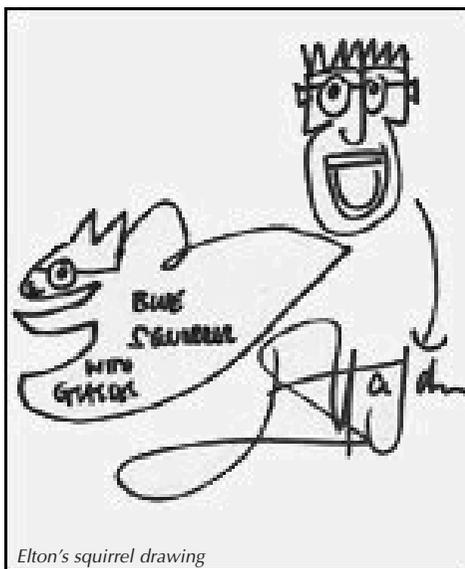
Elton John joined the ranks of commuters making their way to and from Athens over the weekend - though his daily journey was nearly 2,000 miles. Elton gave back-to-back concerts at the 2,000-year-old Herod Atticus amphitheater September 9 and 10 at the foot of the Acropolis in Athens. But he did not stay in Athens overnight, preferring instead to shuttle to and from his home in Nice.

WHO WEARS THESE SHOES?

"Rock Style", the acclaimed New York exhibition celebrating music's influence on style and fashion came to the Barbican Centre, London, October 5. Over 100 original costumes modelled by the world's music icons went on display, including Elton's platform shoes, and the Union Jack jacket made for David Bowie by Alexander McQueen.

THE SQUIRRELS ARE OUT TODAY

Sir Elton John, Sir Paul McCartney, and Sir Michael Caine were among a number of stars to take part in a drawing campaign in aid of the endangered red squirrel. Although prevalent in continental Europe, the red squirrel is outnumbered in England, where the American grey squirrel has adapted to life more successfully. It's feared the red squirrel could become extinct in England in 10 years. "Scribble a squirrel" sketches were auctioned on the Internet from Sept 23, to raise money. Elton drew a blue squirrel with glasses!



Elton's squirrel drawing

EJ NEWS BULLETS...



ROCKET MAN -

THE ELTON JOHN STORY

Kiki Dee presented Rocket Man - The Elton John Story - 3 one-hour programmes on BBC Radio 2. The series started October 31. Contributors included Tim Rice, Long John Baldry, Jools Holland, Phil Collins and Ray Cooper.

LENNON LINKS

A collage compiled by John Lennon in 1974 and unearthed in Dick James Studios has gone at a Sotheby's auction for £23,000. The collage was found by a small business record producer Gerard Smythe, who moved into DJM's old offices in London in June 1999. The item, believed to have been presented to Elton John at a dark time in Lennon's life when he was separated from wife Yoko Ono, and was likely re-presented to Dick James some years later, Smythe said, talking in a feature on the BBC's National Lottery Live programme, Sept 6.

MJI Broadcasting presented John Lennon: A 60th Birthday Celebration, a three-hour syndicated radio special October 6-9. It featured rare interviews with Lennon, Elton John, and others.

SMASH HITS 2000

The US Smash Hits tournament benefiting the EJAF takes place at Atlanta's Philips Arena on Dec 14. Elton and Billie Jean King will participate in a celebrity set and will coach two WORLD TEAM TENNIS teams. Andre Agassi and Pete Sampras confirmed to play. The event is expected to raise over \$500,000

WRITING

Elton John recently signed on as a pop-music critic. He shared his views in a monthly column in Interview magazine. In four columns so far, he has championed Macy Gray, Moby, Groove Armada and Travis. But he saved his highest praise for Eminem's controversial The Marshall Mathers LP, which has been criticised in some quarters as being anti-gay. "It feels like the nuclear bomb has just hit," Elton writes of the album. "Rap records are often full of shit, and this is really hard-core stuff, but it's intelligent hard-core stuff — it's funny, it's clever, it's poetry, and it's also musically interesting."

ELTON LEADS IN DIRECTOR'S PAY

Elton John remains the top-paid director of a show-business company, according to UK trade union journal Labour Research, published on September 1. Elton earned £25m, through his companies Happenstance and J. Bondi, the research showed. Next in line was theatre impresario Sir Cameron Mackintosh, on £7.3m. Third was guitarist Eric Clapton, with £6.3m. Press reports of the accounts did not detail what the accounting periods were, although implied they were annual accounts for year ending 1999. However, Elton's accounts were specified as being for 18 months. A 12-month crude estimate for Elton would put him well in front on £16.6m.



2 of EJ's Roadies Backstage

JUST FOR FUN

LYRIC QUIZ

Have a go at our popular lyric quiz. We give you a line - see if you can name the song! (Answers on page 27)

- 1 Drive your roller up to Bond Street
Where royalty and sheiks meet
- 2 Well I'm a man of convenience, I work a long hard day
After twelve long hours ain't I got the right to play
- 3 Bearing the crosses i hung - I hung on my lonely wife
- 4 And I can still recall wet afternoons
When we were small and simply childish
- 5 Here in the late great capital
We burned a bonfire for you
- 6 Well, if she would only slow down for a short while
I'd get to know her just before she leaves
- 7 She is harmless and empty of anything bad
For she once had something that most of you had
- 8 Those crocodile tears
Ain't tears of pain
- 9 I'm taking a turn in the right direction
By leaving his soul in the lost and found
- 10 We live in the woods but we hate the trees
We kill off the jungle but we save the leaves
- 11 baby your mother's eyes, look straight through me
Whenever we meet
- 12 Insomnia attacks
Watching flies with my eyes.



A personal review of the two historic shows at New York's Madison Square Garden, by Hercules Member Kevin Schwartz

FRIDAY 20TH OCTOBER 2000

My first ever concert at Madison Square Garden was good, but a little disappointing as the crowd was tamer than I thought they were going to be and the fact that I didn't have a great seat. But the sound was outstanding, the band was very tight, and Clive made sure the drums boomed throughout the arena.

Before the show, I wandered around the MSG outer lobby and talked with other fans who were picking up their eltonjohn.com tickets and it seemed like most people were disappointed, as I was, to be sitting near the middle of the main floor. My ticket was the first row to start out the section half way back on the main floor. It's too bad that ej.com wouldn't tell us where the tickets would be prior to purchase, because many of us might be able to do better on our own, especially if one was purchasing a single.

The merchandise for the show was disappointing - there were a few selections of t-shirts, including one that read "One Night Only - October 20th and 21st 2000" which obviously got some laughs.

We decided to go in right when the doors opened at 7:00 in order to look at the stage setup and take in the arena for the first time. We took a close look at the stage and noted all the cameras that were there for the filming of the TV special. There were at least 3 boom cameras; there was also a track along the main floor half way back that slid back and forth together with several hand-held cameras.

**MADISON SQUARE
GARDEN
CONCERT REVIEW**

one
weekend
only...

I wandered down to my seat around 8:00 and it was disappointing to see so many fellow diehard Elton fans in the same lousy ej.com section as I was including Elizabeth, Joe Wissler, Paul Smith, Gro, Joan and Rick, and others who had flown in for the show. We were all together, but we all had the look of "this sucks". There was a barrier right in front of me and a large gap in front of the barrier which was an aisle and a place for the camera to roll along the track.

The show started at 8:20 with Funeral For A Friend. There wasn't any smoke or big buildup. Basically they just started into it and Elton walked out. Elton was looking good in a red and black outfit, but unfortunately he was wearing tinted red glasses which made it hard to see his eyes. The first thing that struck me about the show was how cool it was having two drummers and a percussionist. Clive really had the drums turned up in the mix and when Nigel and Curt got going on Funeral for a Friend, it was very exciting. The disappointing part was looking around at the MSG crowd. People have told me how much better it is to see Elton in the Garden versus other arenas, but after seeing most of the crowd in the lower level sitting down for nearly the entire show, I have to say the Garden is overrated, at least in terms of the crowd.

However, I did notice right away

how good the sound was and how tight the band sounded. Even with the poor vantage point on the floor, I definitely was enjoying the show with the great, crisp sound. However, it did feel like I was a bit out of the concert being so far back and having a TV camera and open aisle right in front of me. I was looking for a way to move up to the front section, but it seemed like security had all the entrances covered.

There were video screens on either side of the stage and I watched those on occasion when I wanted to see Elton's hands. But when you have so many people onstage with the band, Elton's piano performance can actually get lost in the mix many times. That's one of the things that is nice about the solo shows is that you can fully concentrate on his playing the entire show.

The 9-piece band consisted of Bob, Davey, John J, John Mahon, Guy, Billy Trudel, Ken Stacey on vocals and guitar for some reason, Nigel on drums and backing vocals and Curt.

The stage was more elaborate than a normal Elton show due to the taping of the TV special. There were curtains all along the upper back of the stage which were used to show pictures of Elton's albums based on which song was playing. There were also huge banks of lights that formed a canopy over the back of the stage and blocked the view of the curtains from my vantage point. So for this show I thought the curtains were a waste because I could barely see them through the lights.

After Love Lies Bleeding, Elton then said they were going to do the first side of the Goodbye Yellow Brick Road album on vinyl in running order. Unfortunately, it would have been a lot cooler to just have done the first side straight through without saying you are going to do it. I always prefer a strong boom-boom-boom opening or medley to start the show to blow people away. Candle in the Wind was nice with the band and I love the backing vocals that they do on the song. Bennie and the Jets was an abbreviated version because of the need to keep the songs to reasonable lengths for the live album.

The roadies then brought out another 9 foot piano on the right side of the stage to be set up for Billy Joel to come out. Someone next to me had spotted Billy's piano before the

show so it wasn't that big of a surprise and I knew there was rumors that he would be there. Billy definitely got the biggest cheer of all the special guests of both nights when he was announced. Billy and Elton played Goodbye Yellow Brick Road like they have done on the Face to Face tour and the song was a definite highlight of the night.

Someone Saved My Life Tonight was next and was another highlight. It's such a great song and Nigel's drums were so loud and crisp it gave me a sharp and wonderful jolt on every fill. I looked through the binoculars at Nigel sometimes and other times just looked at the floor with a smile on my face and misty eyes. Then Elton introduced Little Jeannie saying it was one they haven't played on a tour before which I'm not sure is true or not. The only version I know of is at the 1980 Central Park show, but needless to say, it was a treat to hear this rarely-played song.

Kiki Dee was introduced and got a nice cheer as she came out to join Elton on Don't Go Breakin My Heart. The piano player from Aida (and the Broadway Cares show) was on piano as Elton waddled with Kiki in the middle of the stage. It was a fun song and it's always great to see Elton trying to figure out what to do when he's not at the piano. Daniel was nice to hear with Nigel on drums. Rocket Man was also abbreviated for the live album.

Elton introduced Club at the End of the Street saying it wasn't technically a hit, but they would try to sneak it in. It's hard for diehards to judge how well-known a song is to casual Elton fans. The crowd seemed to be up and dancing and enjoying the song. The band did a nice stop just before the "You can't sit still" on the bridge which added a little excitement going into the sax solo by John Jorgenson.

Blue Eyes did not seem to be a good selection after the crowd was into Club at the End of the Street. The band then went right into I Guess That's Why They Call it the Blues without stopping. Following these songs, Elton announces that he has "just finished recording 15 tracks with Bernie, and that he's going to be touring with Mr. Joel next year, but at the end of 2001, that's it for me." Now, I really didn't take the retirement announcement that seriously since it seems like Elton

changes his mind on things 2 months from now, and announcing a retirement decision one year from now didn't seem very believable.

The One was good and I Don't Wanna Go On With You Like That was outstanding as expected. The band even made it better with a nice brief stop at the end of the bridge that allowed Elton to play a little piano before going back into the chorus. I just love new stuff like that and I should make sure to encourage Davey sometime to do as much of that kinda stuff as possible because we love it. Elton did some great piano work at the end. The sad part is that they followed it with Sorry Seems to Be the Hardest Word. The crowd is up ready for more and he follows it with a very slow song. The crowd in my part of the main floor sat down during some of the slow songs all around me so I had to sit down as well. Sacrifice was then played with Elton once again trying to explain how the song was his first number one in England but it wasn't over here.

Come Together was the cover of the night and the band sounded tight on it. John Mahon on percussion added nice little touches to fill out the song. Elton then introduced Ronan Keating who he said was big in Ireland. Ronan is in the boy-band called Boyzone there and I'm sure 99% of the people in the place, including myself, have never heard of him.

Bryan Adams was then introduced to a big cheer and sang practically the whole version of Sad Songs. I'm Still Standing was solid as always and the main floor crowd really showed their stuff with arms

going up in the air on the "Yeah, Yeah, Yeah" part. This is an example of how the main floor at MSG was better than at other arenas. Crocodile Rock was a good choice to follow I'm Still Standing, but Elton pauses too much between the songs and does his slow trills of the chords before going into the song. I felt the famous moving of the main floor at MSG during some of these songs and it was noticeable, but not really severe. But given the fact I've never felt something like that at an arena before, it was pretty cool.

The floor really seemed to vibrate as the band went into the beginning of Saturday Night's Alright for Fighting but then stopped when Elton called things off and said he had a guest to introduce and the band got a bit carried away. So Elton then brought out Anastacia who is a female singer that nobody has heard of to start into a song that has just been stopped as the crowd was getting into it. Talk about taking the wind out of the arena. I definitely had to cringe at these turn of events. The Bitch is Back was next and with the tight band, I got into it by the end of the song with all the guitars, drums and great sound. The playing of Sad Songs/I'm Still Standing/Crocodile Rock/Saturday Night/Bitch is Back in order was a good idea.

Elton didn't seem happy with the way things went and said they were just going to go straight through and not have an encore. We later found out there was technical problems and Elton was stressed because of the long day of rehearsals and the pressure of the TV special taping. So Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me



was played right after the Bitch is Back instead of stopping for an encore. It was great as always. The song is so much more powerful with the band than solo.

With no encore, the show at MSG ended awkwardly even at 2 hours 25 minutes and it made for a slightly disappointing feeling as I walked out the back of the arena. I enjoyed the show a lot, but when you have very high expectations, there is a chance for feeling a little disappointed. However, Elton shows are always very exciting and top notch for me in comparison to other shows, so even though this show didn't reach my high expectations, it was still a very satisfying night of music.

SATURDAY 21ST OCTOBER

The second night of the two-night stand at Madison Square Garden will definitely go down as one of the best concert experiences I have ever had with the unlikely outcome of getting to stand at the stage in front of Elton for the whole show. Elton seemed to be in a better mood at this show vs. the first night and it was thrilling to be able to look up at him 15 feet away with Nigel up above him on drums and often a picture of a young Elton on the banners behind Nigel.

After spending a great day with fellow fans walking around Greenwich Village and Central Park, and attending a great Hercules fan gathering at the Hard Rock Cafe, we made it down to the Garden early once again to take in all the NY atmosphere. My seat for this show was on the far left side of the main floor which was in the front section, so I didn't have to worry about any barriers between me and the stage. I had talked with some people who had made it to the stage on the previous night, and it sounded like all of them got there right when the lights went out. I saw a friend standing in front of the piano about 6 rows from the stage so I decided to go hang up there by the stage and have a conversation with her in the hopes of staying there as the lights went down.

I basically just tried to keep

starting conversations with anyone up there to look like I was supposed to be there as I looked at my watch hoping the lights would go out soon. I then just sat in an open seat about 8 rows back on the aisle and at 8:15 the lights went out and immediately everyone sprinted to the stage. I have never seen so many people rush the stage so quickly and forcefully in my many years of attending concerts. I was able to manoeuvre my way to a perfect spot right in front of Elton that let me see both his hands and face perfectly.

Elton came out again in a not very dramatic opening to wave to the crowd and sit down at the piano to the opening organ sounds of Funeral for a Friend. Things really kicked in for me during Little Jeannie - I think this is because the song was more new to me compared to the live versions of the hits from Goodbye Yellow Brick Road that have been engrained in my head over the years. About midway through the first verse of Little Jeannie is when I thought 'this is sooo cool to be here' and felt the tingling feeling. The great feeling on Little Jeannie carried over into the next 3 songs starting with Philadelphia Freedom. It was funny watching Curt starting the song because he gets all worked up and starts pumping his shoulders up and down as he taps the drumsticks together to start the band on the fast songs.

Someone Saved My Life Tonight was once again one of the biggest highlights of the night. Every moment of the song is just so tasty and the version with the backing vocals of the band is clearly the best. It was so exciting watching Nigel on this one; it was great to be able to share through his facial reactions the excitement he felt of being onstage with Elton again doing the parts he contributed on these famous songs. The other thing that amazed me was how confident and cool he looked the entire night. I'm not sure what I was expecting, but I guess I thought he would look more rusty or at least like have a look of concentration instead of being so loose and the look of this is so easy. One of my favorite parts is on the bridge when

Nigel has series of fills while Elton is singing "someone saved my life tonight" over and over. And then the band moves into the final chorus and I just scan the entire stage with the beautiful backing vocals on "sugar bear", Nigel on drums, Elton singing "you nearly had me roped and tied", and everything sounds so clear and I end up just standing there still, taking in all the sounds and the color of the stage with a half smile on my face and watery eyes. It doesn't get much better than that.

Still in the glow of Someone Saved My Life Tonight, it was wonderful watching Elton play the beautiful opening notes of Tiny Dancer on the piano. The pedal steel was nice again by John Jorgenson. Can You Feel the Love Tonight gave me a chance to look around the arena a little bit. Some fans just to my left held up cards that said Can You Feel the Love Tonight Elton or something like that.

Elton introduced Daniel saying it was one of his 10 favorites. John Jorgenson played the mandolin nicely on the instrumental part between the two choruses.

Club at the End of the Street was one of the highlights again and the stop at the end of the bridge again created even more excitement. It was so much fun to sing along on this rousing song and everyone got into it. Elton introduced Mary J Blige who joined Elton for I Guess That's Why They Call It The Blues. She stood at the piano as she exchanged verses with Elton and both did the first two verses in subdued fashion. On the last two verses, Elton and Mary really got it going with them singing soulfully back and forth and I loved watching the excited look on Elton's face as he jumped in vocally to compliment Mary. Mary then dramatically leaned in and pointed at Elton across the piano as she stepped it up a notch, and Elton sort of bounced up and backwards in his seat taken aback by the moment and at the same time having a huge smile on his face as he attempted to keep his mouth at the microphone while responding to Mary's soulful singing.

Right after the last line of the verse was sung, the excitement level

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN SET LIST:

Funeral for a Friend/Love Lies Bleeding
Candle in the Wind
Bennie and the Jets
Goodbye Yellow Brick Road
(with Billy Joel on Friday only)
Someone Saved My Life Tonight (Friday)
Little Jeannie
Philadelphia Freedom
Someone Saved My Life Tonight (Saturday)
Tiny Dancer
Can You Feel the Love Tonight
Don't Go Breaking My Heart (with Kiki Dee, Friday)
Daniel
Rocket Man
Club at the End of the Street
Blue Eyes
I Guess That's Why They Call it the Blues
(with Mary J Blige Sat only)
The One
I Don't Wanna Go on With You Like That
Sorry Seems to Be the Hardest Word
Sacrifice
Come Together (Beatles cover)
Your Song (with Ronan Keating)
Sad Songs (with Bryan Adams)
I'm Still Standing
Crocodile Rock
Saturday Night's Alright for Fighting
(with Anastacia Friday only)
The Bitch is Back

Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me
Don't Go Breaking My Heart (with Kiki Dee, Saturday)

in the crowd was unbelievable and you just get so caught up in the moment between the verse and the buildup to the final chorus. It would be cool to see what the crowd looks like in the front of the stage at this moment, because it was an uncontrollable feeling of excitement and definitely one of the coolest concert moments I have ever had. The final chorus was great and Mary definitely went off the stage to a bigger cheer than she got when she was introduced before the song. Elton said that they have just finished recording a version of that song for a single which I assume is the last hope to keep the 30-year top-40 streak alive.

I did really enjoy the curtains behind the stage at this show because I could see them right behind Elton from my view. They changed the picture on the curtains on every song and would either show the album cover or a picture of Elton.

Come Together was exciting and the crowd enjoyed it. Elton introduced the song describing how the crowd at the Garden cheered for 10 minutes straight in 1974 when John Lennon was brought out as a special guest. Elton then brought out Ronan Keating again to sing Your Song which seemed to go smoother than the first night, but it still seems like a waste to have a duet on this special song. Bryan Adams then came out again for Sad Songs.

I'm Still Standing was awesome as always and it was great to see this one up close. The MSG crowd was pretty lame on Crocodile Rock as some people in the lower level didn't even stand up for this one. Saturday Night's Alright for Fighting was thankfully done without Anastacia.

When Elton came out for the encore he sat down at the piano and said he was having a great time and that "last night, I'm said I'm going to retire, but of course I'm full of shit." Nigel laughed real hard when he heard this and Elton smiled back at him. Elton had some very nice words for Nigel when he did his introduction of the band members and he said he was happy to have Nigel back onstage and called him one of the greatest drummers around.

Some of the other things I noticed throughout the night was how much Elton seems to enjoy Bob Birch onstage. Those two definitely make faces at each other a lot during the show. One unique thing that went on was how much Elton looked into the hand-held camera that was directly in front of me. He did a lot of poses into the camera and made faces or blew a kiss to give the cameraman some good shots.

Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me opened up the encore and was thoroughly satisfying as always when it is done so wonderfully with the band. Elton then brought out Kiki Dee for the finale of Don't Go Breaking My Heart which the crowd loved. There was even a funny moment when John and Davey were

playing a guitar part at the front of the stage and barely got out of the way in time as Kiki and Elton came back together for their vocal parts. The rest of the band got a kick out of that and had a good laugh pointing at John and Davey. Don't Go Breakin My Heart was a great way to close out the show and left the crowd in a good mood as they walked out of the arena.

Overall, this was one of the most satisfying concert experiences that I have ever had and I had just an exhilarating feeling after the show. It was truly a show that I'll never forget.

See also - Fan meeting article, page 18.

Clive, who was preparing to travel to Liverpool the next day for a special Elton concert, gave our UK manager George Matlock a full 2 hour interview on 12 July 2000:

It's easy to understand why Clive is genuinely loyal to Elton after nearly 30 years working together. Elton has always been a great help to Clive, professionally and privately, and Clive has had a lot of fun delivering the goods.

Clive Franks: Elton's such a perfectionist. He hates to lose. We used to play backgammon all the time. If he lost, he would not give up until he had won more games than his opponent.

The bond Clive and Elton formed has dissuaded Clive from many temptations.

CF: I've had so many offers of work over the years, I've never had to go looking, but I'll always be there for Elton. There was a period a few years ago (late 1980s) when Elton wasn't touring, and I was concerned 'I've been with him so long, can I do anything else?' I had a month off and then the phone started ringing. It was actually very good for me to experience some change. The first thing I got into was working for Peter Gabriel. I was a fan of his music. It was similar to Elton's stuff, but with a lot more dynamics, and very emotional. I loved that tour! He came to an Elton show, and then I got work. After that, Robert Plant came along to a Peter Gabriel show, and I got working for him! Then I was with Elton again, but I got a call from The Who, reforming for a 25th anniversary tour in 1989. I kept calling the office to speak with Elton. Eventually he said 'go ahead and do it. I'm not touring for a while.' About two or three days into the tour after weeks of rehearsals I got a call saying Elton's decided to tour again! I thought 'now what am I gonna do?' I'd not missed a tour apart from when my son was born in

1983. So I recommended an engineer from Clair Brothers, the sound company we always use in America since day 1. He did a good job, but Elton was very happy when I came back.

In the summer of 1999, while Elton faced heart pacemaker surgery, Clive's loyalty was tested by his own health.

CF: Ridiculous! I had an accident with a finger! We'd had a two-month break after what had originally been planned to be a six-week solo tour in 1999 (!) I was excited we were coming to Europe in May, Leeds Castle, and Harewood House. Two days to go, I had my plane tickets, and I was running upstairs at home, slipped, and trying to catch myself I thought I'd broken a finger. It was worse: I tore the tendon right out of the bone. I had to have surgery, and stay home for 8 weeks' therapy. Unfortunately, it hasn't healed at all well. It being on the left hand, and me being left-handed, I didn't do the mid-summer shows. My assistant took over. But it was great to be back for September.

George Matlock: There is a group of people who have been close to Elton over the years.

CF: Yes, apart from me, his personal assistant Bob, and also Brenda, Elton's late-50s male valet whose been with him 25 years. We all have girls' names from Elton. I won't tell you mine, ha! Like Rod Stewart is Phyllis. Elton always feels comfortable to see familiar faces. There are always people who try to get close to the boss, and who later get sussed out and eventually leave. The rest of us love what we do.

GM: Occasionally things go wrong. On September 5, 1999, during Ticking the Police PA sound effect didn't echo.

CF: Maybe I just forgot to push it up, or I got a call from the stage, like when Elton's hearing some frequency which is

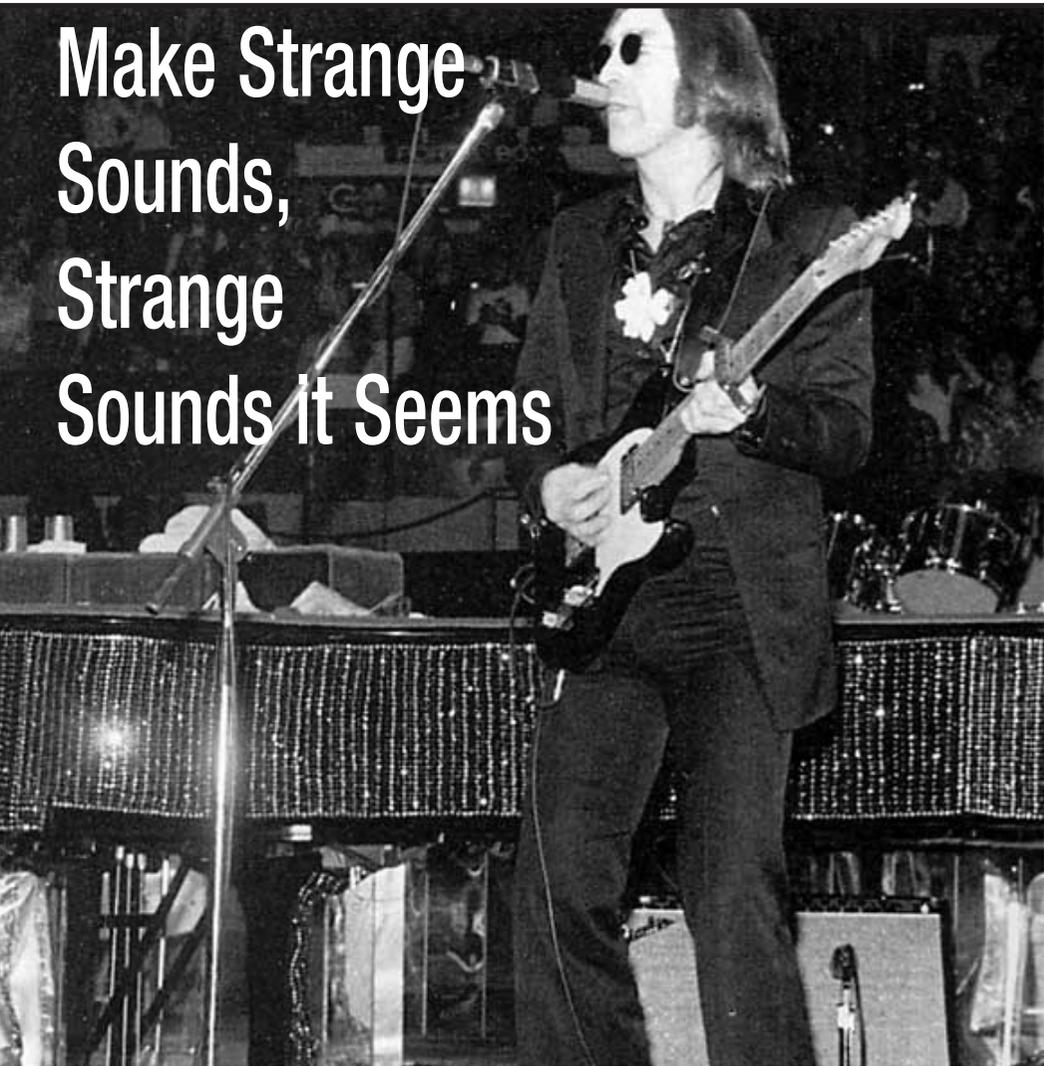


putting him off. But what's perhaps unusual is that Elton rarely tells me to do anything. I'm left to my own devices, and to decide on the effects. A lot of other bands will listen to tapes, get really involved. I quite like that.

GM: What are your fondest moments?

CF: I have two or three. For

Make Strange Sounds, Strange Sounds It Seems

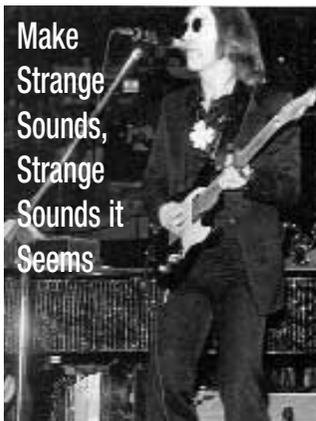


Elton and John Lennon at Madison Square Garden on that historic night in 1974

Elton and me it must be the moment John Lennon came on stage at Madison Square Garden (MSG, 1974). I'm tingling now, as I speak about it. I was at rehearsals at some studio in New York. It was amazing just to be in the same room, even though as an engineer at Dick James Music, I would see The Beatles, on Northern Songs label which Dick

published, regularly. I was even on one of their Christmas records as a party-goer. Every year they produced these silly little floppy singles for the fan club, ha! For some reason they switched from EMI and did the fan thing at Dick James', a tiny demo studio! They needed a dozen people to create a party scene. I was called in as a

spoons, plates, to make a noise! I can actually hear my voice as I deliberately yelled something, knowing it would get picked up. In 1974 I never told Lennon that I had spoiled his song! Well anyway, Lennon was petrified, because he'd not been on stage since The Beatles disbanded in 1970. He only agreed to it because of the deal he and Elton



Make
Strange
Sounds,
Strange
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Seems

brokered if Whatever Gets You Through the Night got to number one in US. When Lennon walked out on stage, I've never heard a roar go on as long, or as loud. It must have lasted 10 minutes! They played three songs, and that must be the best all-time moment for me.

Clive's best moment is also allied with the worst, however.

CF: We did eight or nine nights at The Garden (MSG), Lennon came on only the first night. I was on The Beatles nostalgia kick that week and would put on Beatles songs as walking music before and after the show. I had a compilation of Beatles cassettes. I remember the third show we got to the point where we always did Funeral For A Friend, which sadly we cannot really do on the current solo tour. Anyway, in those days (1974) we couldn't reproduce all those amazing wind sounds at the start of the song. So I used to play the opening from the album on cassette. The stage went totally dark, and the dry ice would pour out. It worked for years. Well on this occasion the lights went down. I hit the tape, and nothing happened! My first reaction was 'maybe it's not loud enough, maybe it is playing' which is ridiculous because I could see where my faders were. So I hit the fader to the top in panic mode, and suddenly, at full volume, so deafening was the start of Hello, Goodbye by The Beatles! I'd forgotten to take out

the walking music and put in the correct tape! I just wanted the ground to open up, it was so bloody loud, you couldn't disguise it. It actually got as far as 'You say yes, I say ...' and I pulled it out. Now I'm in overload panic mode because the house lights and stage are dark, and I'm trying to find the right cassette! Which I did find. Luckily, Caleb Quaye, who was then in the band and had one of the loudest laughs, cracked up laughing. I could hear him acoustically offstage, which set off Elton and the band, and which helped me marginally. I shook through the rest of that show. Probably the biggest mistake I ever made.

GM: So Elton forgave you.

CF: Well, I'm still here.

GM: I think you have a lot to thank Caleb for, he broke the ice.

CF: Yeah, so now I triple-check everything! Good job I'm not an airline pilot, ha!

There have been other great moments for Clive. Dodger Stadium in 1975. The first night, "60,000 people going mental! Brilliant show."

CF: A third amazing moment was in 1973 at the famous Hollywood Bowl concert. In those days everything was over-the-top. It was opened by Linda Lovelace, from the controversial film Deep Throat, and then she introduced various look-alikes, who had come to see Elton. The Pope, The Beatles, Batman & Robin, the Marx Brothers, The Queen of England, all came to the front of the stage. On stage were five mock grand pianos spray-painted in a rainbow from one to the other. Then the celebrities lifted up the piano lids, and dozens of doves flew out of the pianos. They were trained to circle the audience and fly back, which they did. That was the show where a crocodile would come out and play

Crocodile Rock on the Farfisa electric organ. That was me!

GM: That was you?

CF: That was me in a crocodile suit. I played the keyboard live. I had done that for a year leading up to that. It was a bizarre routine, in the encores. I would run down from the mixer, someone would take over, just before that song. I was using one of Elton's old three-quarter length silver lame Teddy Boys jackets with a suede collar, I would try to slick back my (then) long hair to look like a Teddy Boy, and come out to play the organ behind Elton on Crocodile Rock, and then run back to the audience and carry on mixing. That was before Elton had a keyboard player. When we did Crocodile Rock in rehearsals, he tried playing the Farfisa and missed the piano, and then played the piano and missed the Farfisa! Well we all knew how over-the-top this Hollywood Bowl show would be, and the costumier had a crocodile head but the body was all torn. So they draped a black cape around my body, the audience concentrating on the head. The hardest part was that when you put the head on and stood upright, the jaws pointed to the sky! So I had to lean at a 90 degree angle. I looked a total twit, but it had the desired effect! During that show, we did a song which I don't think he's done since, but wish we would, High-Flying Bird. I loved that song.

GM: Great song, but if you don't play it again, you should sell it to an airline commercial!

CF: There you go! I wasn't aware that one of the doves didn't return to the stage. More than an hour into the show, well after the doves had returned, and after Crocodile Rock if I remember rightly, we played High-Flying Bird. And this one dove came from nowhere, and circled the audience for the

whole song! The lights pointed it out and everyone thought this was amazing choreography! But it was not planned! Then when the song reached its final chord, the dove came to the stage! A true story.

GM: *And was it clean?*

CF: It was, but some of the audience had little white patches on their heads. We often talk about that amazing incident. All those early shows were memorable, because they were so outrageous, like the Donald Duck suit in 1980. Musically, there are so many highlights it's hard to remember.

Having known Caleb from Dick James Music days, he has fond memories of that period which was called 'The Gaff' (more on that next instalment of this interview serial). For now Clive recalls:

CF: 1967 to 1972 (at DJM) was a great time, which later led to my involvement with Elton. In 1972 I got a call from Elton saying 'we need an engineer, we've been having problems on this European tour.' They were picking up local engineers and doing one-off shows in Europe. The sixth one was the biggest show of the six, in a town hall in Amsterdam, Holland, and they said they really need a good sound. They were obviously playing small venues, as this one was for an audience of 3,500. I'd never done a live show in my life, but it was just fun to get out of the studio routine. I did the show but thought the sound was a disaster. But Elton said it was the best show they'd done! He asked me to join the team! I was overjoyed. He said we were going to America in a month! But I was also concerned because I was now studio manager and chief engineer (DJM) and had a secure job earning a steady wage. You couldn't be sure that a singer or musician's career would last beyond one hit. But now I'm

obviously glad I said yes.

GM: *You play some musical instrument, apart from the Farfisa, don't you?*

CF: Bass as well as keyboards. The first album I co-produced with Elton for him *A Single Man* we talked about who to use. The bassist wasn't available. Elton said 'You play bass don't you?' I said 'yes, but not seriously. I'm producing and engineering the album, I can't play the bass as well', he said 'yes you can!' I was s**tting myself. So, I played bass on all but one song, *Shooting Star*, where we needed a double bassist and hired Herbie Flowers.

Turns out Clive has other musical skills, his mother still a pianist. He plays piano and guitar to make it four instruments.

CF: I would sneak into the studio when the band's not around and try out a few instruments. I would never be a Jimi Hendrix or Keith Jarrett, but play enough to strum chords at a party.

GM: *Ex-Northwood Hills publican George Hill famously told Elton not to give up his (non-musical) day job. When you first met Elton in 1966, did you think he would make it?*

CF: It was early days, and he hadn't met Bernie (Taupin) but I liked him from the off. He was different, and very likeable, easy to get on with. But the songs he was writing didn't appeal to me! I was never all that much into lyrics. I get off on the feel of a song. At one stage Elton and Bernie were writing under Dick James for Lulu and Engelbert. It was weak, I was one of the doubters. One of my friends, Stuart Epps, who also worked for Dick James, said he'll be a star one day. I said 'not with these songs!' When Steve Brown joined DJM he asked Elton 'why are you writing this stuff, write for yourself'. And upset the apple-cart. But even then I wasn't

100% convinced. He wasn't rock star material, being a piano player. There were some nice songs but nothing wow until *Skyline Pigeon*.

GM: *What are your favourite songs?*

CF: I love *Rocket Man*, working on that. *High-Flying Bird*, *Ticking*. Before I produced for Elton, I engineered *Caribou*. Some brilliant stuff. But we all know that the *Troubadour 1970* was when Elton's career took off. Then at Phil Ramone's studio they did the 17 November 1970 radio event, Elton, Nigel and Dee. I was the remix-engineer. The tapes were sent back to the UK for me to check they were okay. I thought they were unbelievable! Then Gus Dudgeon came in and we mixed it together. The original mixes were released for the UK market. Then they decided to redo it for the US market. Gus and engineer David Hentschel did that for the American market. Dave was the genius who played note by note the opening of *Funeral For A Friend*. That was in the days before you could play two keys together on the same keyboard. But there are several copies of 17.11.70 which have my name on them!

Clive was staying at a hotel near Elton's Windsor home for the UK shows during this interview.

CF: It's convenient at only 10 minutes from Elton's home, and when we use the plane also only 25 minutes from a private airport. I have usually stayed with the band in central London and with security. But I like it here, it's quiet, and I have a car.

Part 3 Two Rooms at the End of the World, a review of how Clive lives when he's not on tour, will follow on the Hercules website in January 2001 and in The Mag in March.



one weekend only... the fan meeting

By *Stephan Heimbecher*

On Saturday October 21 more than 80 Elton John fans - most of them Hercules members - got together at the Hard Rock Cafe on 57th Street for an extended lunch and fan meeting.

We were very lucky that a private room upstairs had been available at the Hard Rock Cafe that day, as many hungry tourists were lining up for lunch outside when the first Elton fans arrived.

The idea of the meeting was for Elton fans to get to know each other and to be able to put faces to the many names they have been hearing for a while. From what I have been told by many attendees after the convention, that part went very well.

Another objective of the fan meeting was to warm up for the second show at the Garden, and we did that by eating some of the great food as well as by an Elton raffle with the first prize being a hand-painted Elton cell (kindly donated by Hercules

member Reggie Zippo from Cartoon Creations).

Gro Mathisen was our first prize winner that afternoon, and some 25 meeting participants went home with other Elton goodies that Hercules US manager Sharon Kalinoski had brought from her "archives".

The highlight for many attendees that afternoon was band member John Jorgenson showing up for a surprise visit on his way to the sound-check. He could only stay a few minutes, but he still took the time to sign autographs and pose for pictures with fans. And

in the end, many fans were giving him a hard time leaving, however, he made it to the Garden just in time for rehearsals.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank everybody involved with the preparations of this event: Thanks to the Hard Rock Cafe for the great room, thanks to Sharon Kalinoski for all her support, a big thank you to John Jorgenson for his surprise visit, and thanks to everybody for showing up! I promise you that we will arrange a similar event again as soon as possible.



BETWEEN 17 AND 20 · BETWEEN 17 AND 20

ANOTHER VERSE OF OUR REGULAR COLUMN FEATURING TRIVIA AND

HERCULES

Did you know that in 1969 Elton auditioned as lead singer with group 'King Crimson' but was turned down.

Elton told 'Architectural Digest' (May 2000), "If I weren't a musician, I would love to be a decorator."

HERCULES

Did you know that the Australian comedy duo 'Supergirly' famous for satirising pop bands, proved so popular at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 1999 that they've since given private performances for Madonna and Elton.

HERCULES

Did you know that Elton will be celebrating his 35th anniversary as a recording artist this month.

There's nothing more relaxing than an afternoon of shopping", Elton once said. "It's the only addiction I have left."

HERCULES CALENDAR 2001 - THERE'S STILL TIME!

There's still time to order your 2001 Hercules Calendar. This limited edition desk-top CD-case calendar is packed with original colour photos and artwork, not seen anywhere else. On the reverse of each card, important dates in Elton's and Hercules diary are noted, leaving you plenty of space to write in your personal appointments too.

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BETWEEN 17 AND 20 · BETWEEN 17 AND 20

GOSSIP ABOUT ELTON - FOUND OF COURSE, BETWEEN PAGES 17 AND 20!!

HERCULES

Did you know that when the 'Goon Show' scripts were auctioned by Spike Milligan in 1987, Elton bought them.

Did you know that Elton has 13 dogs at his 'Woodside' house in Old Windsor.

HERCULES

The track 'I think I'm going to kill myself' on the 'Honky Chateau' album has tap dancing on it. Elton performed this track at his first appearance on the Royal variety Show at the London palladium in 1972 with Legs Larry Smith doing the tap dancing.

HERCULES

Rupert Cavendish, Elton's favourite antique dealer of Biedermeier and Art Deco pieces, helped Elton design a new bed with muslin drapes gathered into the talons of an antique eagle for his London home. Cavendish warned Elton, "No swinging on the bed curtains".

A PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF ELTON'S SOLO SHOW IN MARBELLA, SPAIN, ON SEPTEMBER 16. BY TAMMI LAW

a word in Spanish

After attending 14 Solo shows in the UK this summer, I couldn't believe my luck when Elton announced one Solo concert in Marbella, Spain, when I already had plans to be there for that week. I had already persuaded my husband to book a late summer holiday for us this year, so I could attend all the UK concerts. So "imagine my surprise" when the announcement came through, only two weeks before the show, that there was going to be ONE concert in Spain. Not only in the same country, but in the same town!

Elton performed a very similar Solo show in Spain to that of the UK shows. However, this was a very different concert for a number of reasons.

At all of the outdoor UK venues, seating had been erected for all ticket holders. I was lucky enough to have bought tickets in the front 3 rows each night, so I knew before arriving at each of the concerts I was sure of a great seat. However, in Spain, the concert was in the Marbella Football Stadium, with no fixed seating, and standing-only on the football pitch. This meant that we had to arrive at the venue early in the day to start queuing outside, to ensure a stage-side position. The ticket stated that the concert was due to start at 10pm. We arrived at the stadium at about 12.30 mid-day, and there was no-one else there! We found a small administration office in the stadium, and asked where we were supposed to start queuing. No-one knew. I asked to see the manager

of the stadium; he didn't know either.

I then found a policeman outside, who was roping off the street to stop people from parking outside - but he didn't know either. We walked around the entire outside of the stadium, in the very hot sun, but could find no ticket barriers or doors. With still no sign of any other fans, we decided to stand outside a closed wooden door.

After 3 hours of standing in the hot Spanish sun, two more fans appeared and stood with us. Another hour, then 2 more. The worst part: at 8pm the crowd-control barriers arrived! By this time, we had been queuing for 7 hours, and the queue

behind us was of about 2000 people, stretching all down the street. We still didn't know for sure if we were in the right place. A Spanish security guard said "Right", now I'm going to put up these barriers so you can all queue properly. Everybody to my left go to the BACK of the queue, because there is no room for you now the barriers are here." And yes, that's right, WE were standing to his left!! I was so angry and started to argue but he told me to go to the back of the queue way down the street or I wouldn't be allowed in. Luckily, the people who were at the front of the right-hand section said we were with their party, so we were allowed to stay. But the organisation of the whole thing was just outrageous, with people shouting and arguing with the ridiculous crowd-control guards, who simply hadn't bothered to put the barriers out any earlier which would have avoided all the confusion.

To add to the poor organisation, they opened the doors at 9.30pm, only half an hour before Elton was due on stage. They had to get 14,000 people through the barrier in half an hour! The stage was at the far end, so we sprinted the length of the football pitch to get a good position.

At this point, I would like to offer a personal apology to Clive Franks, who was busy doing a "One, two, one, two" test from his sound tower in the middle of the pitch. I had collected a few September issues of The Mag from the printers on my way to the

airport, and I had wanted to give Clive a copy as it contained Part 1 of our interview with him. However, if I had stopped to make polite conversation with him, I would have ruined my chance of a decent position for the concert. So, as I sprinted past, I yelled "Clive! You're in the Hercules Mag!" and threw a copy at him, and carried on running at top speed. In the process, I totally put him off what he was doing. So, I'm sorry I didn't behave more graciously Clive, but after reading my "queuing nightmare" I hope you now understand!!

When Elton came out on stage, he was obviously in a bad mood. We had heard that only two days before, Elton had walked out of the Casino in Portugal just minutes before he was due to go on stage. My first concern when I heard this was for Elton's health; and he really didn't look happy in Spain. As he sat down and went into the first familiar bars of Your Song, the spotlight attracted what must have been nearly every flying insect in the south of Spain. They were flying into Elton's mouth, into his eyes, and bombarding his face. He started shouting at his crew in the wings, while attempting to continue singing, and I remember thinking "He's not going to stand this; he'll be off." But it got better - they must have changed the filter on the spotlight, because soon the insects disappeared. The crowd were hugely appreciative of Elton, and they were much more enthusiastic than the UK crowds had been.

Elton still seemed subdued though. It took until Daniel, and the line "They say Spain is pretty, though I've never been" which brought a huge roar from the crowd, before he cheered up. His head snapped up when he heard the cheer, and a big grin appeared on his face as he acknowledged and responded to the crowd for the first time. After that, he was in a great mood, and the show went really well. The only change to the set list from the UK shows was 'Ticking' which was dropped, and not replaced with anything. We were unable to enjoy the usual 'autograph sweep' or shake hands with EJ, as we were all behind a barrier about 1.5 metres away from the stage. However, Elton did acknowledge my Hercules banner,

and gave me a wave.

Overall, Elton was brilliant, but the Spanish organisation of the whole thing was really bad; it made me realise just how well the UK tour promoters had done with those difficult outdoor venues in 2000. And I also wonder whether Elton himself really realises the effort and discomfort involved in attending a show like that. We queued for 9 hours in the baking hot sun, without a drink or toilet break, and then he was in a bad mood.....

All in all, I'm glad I went to the concert, because seeing Elton perform with only his piano is breathtaking, and it doesn't get any better than that.

set list

Your Song

The Greatest Discovery

Someone Saved My Life Tonight

Border Song

Daniel

Harmony

Honky Cat

Rocket Man

Tiny Dancer

Philadelphia Freedom

Nikita

Sacrifice

Sorry Seems To Be...

I Guess That's Why They Call It...

Carla/Etude

Tonight

Burn Down The Mission

The One

Blue Eyes

Empty Garden

Take Me to the Pilot

Crocodile Rock

Don't Let The Sun Go Down...

Circle of Life

Bennie And The Jets

Candle In The Wind



NEW HERCULES WEBSITE

BY STEPHAN HEIMBECHER

Most Elton fans with Internet access will probably have noticed that our often announced new Hercules website is now finally available since early October.

Under www.eltonfan.net (and www.eltonfan.com as previously known) we tried to not only compile all the information about our fan club. At the same time we wanted to create an Elton John portal which links together the various official sites and the uncounted unofficial sites dealing with Elton John.

Of course, the new Hercules website still is a reliable source for all news related to Elton John - the same thing that fans are used to from our previous websites. We think that our news pages have become more lucid, and the full text search as much as the automated archives make it easier to find even older news.

Furthermore, we now offer the electronic Hercules eNewsletter which is free of charge for every fan who has a permanent e-mail address - whether you are a Hercules member or not.

Many other features have improved upon moving to the new Website, such as the Hercules Message Board (previously known as: Bulletin Board) which is now much easier to use. We have also improved the Hercules Poll. We plan to do a new online poll every two months, as well as Hercules Trivia which has turned out to be the secret hit in the first few weeks after the launch of the new Hercules Website.

But there are lots of new features, too. Those are first introduced with the launch of the new Website:

The Hercules Auction allows visitors of the Hercules Website to offer their Elton John rarities in an online auction. Contrary to eBay, this service is entirely free of charge, and we even provide your target group - about 500 Elton fans which visit our Internet pages every day.

Also new are the Hercules eCards - electronic postcards which can be e-mailed. Aside from a choice of different Elton pictures there are also a number of midi tracks of Elton John songs which can provide the musical background for your eCard.

An important modification regarding security is the fact that all online forms are now processed in SSL Format via a so-called Secure Server. Thus, it is absolutely no risk anymore to send us important data like your credit card number online.

This paves the way for another addition to our online content which will be opened as the next step: the Hercules Online Shop. At the moment, we are still in negotiations with potential partners because Hercules itself does not offer any merchandise - except articles that are produced exclusively by us, e.g. the Hercules Calendar.

And while talking about (e)commerce, we should not forget to mention the banners now gracing many of our pages. The tiny revenue from those is just enough to cover the costs for server and programs. We took an effort not to plaster the pages with any adverts but only with Elton relevant banners. So, please click them from time to time because in the end you will benefit since we plan to further improve our website.

Finally, we should not forget to say sorry for the substantial delay. It took much longer to put together the new Hercules website than we initially planned. Attentive readers of The Mag will remember the one or the other announcement of the new Website. Well, it simply turned out, that such a huge project cannot be realized overnight - at least not if you only have your so-called spare time to spend on it.

Thanks for your patience! We sincerely hope that waiting was worthwhile.

We would welcome feedback regarding the new website. Just write to feedback@eltonfan.net

www.eltonfan.net

the camera



Elton gives US media a candid (camera) interview about his photo collection, and about his technophobia

Elton has decided to

display his growing passion for photography at an exhibition in his adopted second home of Atlanta, Georgia, in the USA.

"I wanted this collection to

be shown in Atlanta," Elton told US media at a packed lecture at Symphony Hall on October 24, 2000, near the new exhibition "This collection evolved from my being here. ... If people want to see it, they can come to the High."

Chorus of Light:

Photographs from the Sir Elton John Collection is on display at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta. It contains about 320 images by photographers like Richard Avedon, Diane Arbus, Walker Evans, Tina Modotti, Norman Parkinson, Irving Penn, Man Ray, Edward Steichen, Alfred Stieglitz and Edward Weston.

In addition, a small exhibit of 70 images of artists and other celebrities by photographers like Andy Warhol, Stieglitz, Avedon, Penn and Bob Willoughby – opened November 6, 2000, at the High's Folk Art and Photography Galleries.

Michael Shapiro, the director of the museum, introduced Elton, who was dressed all in black, as a collector of a broad range of photographs that cover early modernists, still-lives, nudes and fashion images.

Elton said he started collecting photographs about the time that he made Atlanta his home in America, and said that he managed to triumph over a different kind of compulsive addiction, alcoholism, about the same time.

"I sold almost everything in

the camera

1989. It's amazing the crap you buy when you're stoned," he said. "When I did sober up, life looked different."

Late friend Gianni Versace gave him some advice that he follows: "He told me to go out and see beauty. Take time to go to a gallery or go to a church and look at the stained glass and the mosaics on the floor."

At first, Elton collected mostly black-and-white fashion photography and portraits, but soon he diversified.

"It's an exciting time for colour photography," he said. "Photographers tend to go further in colour."

Elton's also beginning to collect photographs with a "harder edge." "Those we have to take down when the relatives come," he said, chuckling.

He has expanded his US penthouse apartment from 2,200 square feet to 18,000 square feet, "and it's still not enough room," he joked. Slides of his apartment shown to convened media displayed floor-to-ceiling panels filled with photographs.

"Oh, that's between my bathroom and the closet," he said, looking up at one slide of wall-to-wall photographs.

Elton said between his collection of photographs, glass sculptures and antiques, he's filled up his homes in Atlanta; Nice, in France; and Windsor, England.

In Atlanta alone, he has 900 images on his walls and

on the special display panels. Elton sorts the photographs by subject or by the photographer.

He treats his photographs much like paintings, making sure the matting and framing are just right. "If they are in a better frame and are treated more respectfully," he said, "people will stop and stare at a photograph."

Elton claims to be a technophobe, and doesn't take photos himself. Interestingly for a man who has launched his namesake on the www, Elton said: "I'm Internet ignorant. I don't even have a portable phone. I'm ignorant about technology, but I don't hate it."

In fact, he's amazed with technology, especially as it applies to photography. With digital imaging and computer-aided processing, photography

has changed, he said.

Still, he doesn't care to know all that much about how a photo was taken: "I don't care how (photographers) do it," he said. "I'm really nosy. I want to know who they live with. These people (photographers) are so interesting. I like to read about their lives and the times they live in. It's wonderful to read about these people."

Solid Walls of Photos

Because he has about 400 photographs on display at the High Museum's two gallery spaces, he says he has "holes" in his walls. "Sick person that I am, I have about 2,000 more."

It has come to the point, however, that whenever he buys a photograph he wonders, "Where the hell am I going to put it? But I'll buy it and worry about where to put it later," he said. "I'm rather an insane kind of person."

The one thing he does worry about is where to leave his photographs when he's gone: "I have no heirs," Elton said. "Photography deserves to be seen. What concerns me is what happens when I'm not here. I want the public to be able to enjoy them."



Hercules
Member Rob
Cargill gives a
personal account
of a special, and
expensive, evening
- tickets were from
£1,200.

Arriving at Wembley Stadium from my Hotel in a shuttle service specially laid on for the event, I found myself being photographed by a huge band of photographers as I stepped out of the limo. I had no idea who they were trying to photograph - looking behind me I discovered that it was me! Quite who they thought I may have been I have no idea - it was hilarious.

There were 2000 guests housed in a specially built 'see-through' marquee. Hundreds of 'celebs', mainly from all aspects of UK sport, major TV Shows and music.

Another Elton John fan Emma (aka Lady Sam), who I met at Castle Ashby earlier in the year, won a competition organised by the BBC. Having found her we agreed we would 'get down to the stage area' for Elton's set. I tried to work out a 'plan' because this was by no means a normal Elton Show.

The compere for the evening came on stage and said "We have a very special guest for you this evening and they don't come much bigger than this - he will be coming on stage in about 5 minutes."

Emma and I decided to pretend to be heading towards 'our' table close by the stage at the edge of the dance floor. Amazingly, no-one seemed bothered about our foray into the 'expensive' bit (these tickets were £1800.00 each).

Between the nearest tables and the raised stage there was a dance floor. I noticed there were people milling around the Restroom area to the right - we headed off in that direction by way of an excuse!

The house lights went down and the compere came back on stage: "Ladies & Gentlemen, our first guest this evening is big - and I mean big THIS is Sir Elton John!" More than



Elton meets footballing legend Pele and performs for the select audience



ON 2nd NOVEMBER ELTON PLAYED AT THE LAST EVER EVENT AT WEMBLEY STADIUM BEFORE IT IS DEMOLISHED TO MAKE WAY FOR A NEW STADIUM

polite applause - but people remained seated at their given tables.

The curtains opened and Elton was already seated at his Piano and began Your Song. I said to Emma "OK listen - here's the plan - what we do is to start waltzing on the dance floor."

I must have had too much to drink but we began getting nearer and nearer to Elton. By the way it was completely obvious to all and sundry that we could not waltz but it was the only thing I could think of to get us closer!

Well the next thing was - other couples started to waltz too! In no time - we had waltzed our way right in front of Elton the closest anyone was during the performance - we had done it!! By this time, Elton was in full swing and it felt more like an Elton concert. The dance floor had by now completely filled up - but everyone was all very polite and everyone left about 1 ft of space between them and the next person. All very civilised - not like the mad scrum at normal Elton Concerts.

Elton went on to sing Nikita, which Elton dedicated to Pele. Elton said how pleased he was to have met Pele and have his photograph with him - so Elton does now know how it

feels for us to have our picture taken with him!

Other standards were Daniel, Philadelphia Freedom, Crocodile Rock and finally Candle in the Wind.

Elton soon had it feeling more like an EJ concert though - as he did the piano solo Philly the crowd started to become a bit more loosened up.

Philly changed the mood somewhat and then Elton said "This next one I'm gonna need your help with" and played Crocodile Rock. After this Elton came over and shook hands with us all.

Before each of the songs, Elton talked about his experiences of Wembley Stadium. He said that his most memorable and touching

experience there was in 1984 when Watford met Everton in the FA Cup Final.

It is at this match each year that the hymn "Abide with Me" is sung. Watford were to lose to Everton and the rolling credits to end the live BBC broadcast pictured Elton, tears rolling down his face to the tune "Sad Songs" - which was Elton's single at the time. Elton told us that even though he had played Wembley seven times it was this football match of which most memories remained.

Elton was followed on stage by Chris de Burgh, Jools Holland and The Bootleg Beatles - 4 look-alikes who thanked Elton for supporting them tonight! The evening was rounded off by a truly spectacular fireworks display which would have put Disney to shame.

Emma and I had an absolute Ball!! It was just the most amazing thing, there were we, and Elton just right there in our own personal space - not being jostled - like it was just a private concert - we were absolutely bowled over by it.

Was it worth the £1200 ticket? Yes!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send or email your letters to David Wright, Editor (address on page 2)

A SMALL PRIZE
WILL BE SENT TO THE
WRITER OF EACH LETTER
PUBLISHED.

Dear oh dear - could there be an inaccuracy or two in gossip and trivia? I remember the following from interviews with Elton and Gus Dudgeon -

Don't Let The Sun Go Down On Me

You would probably be aware that the recording of the Caribou album was fraught with problems and Elton could not get used to being in an American studio after the Chateau. At a time when Elton was, let us say, at one of his most tired and emotional stages (going through the final stages of leaving DJM and setting up Rocket), the recording of DLTSGDOM was particularly painful and almost caused major upsets between Elton and Gus, who kept Elton re doing the vocals time and again - Gus did this because he knew Elton had the

performance in him that ultimately appeared on the album.

Holiday Inn

The third verse contained something within it that the Holiday Inn company would have found objectionable and lawyers apparently advised Elton's team that the third verse should be dropped (I can let you have the lyric if you wish - it does exist on some old recording / bootlegs)

Well done for the others - I didn't know them

How about asking Clive Franks (great to see him - how about more Roger Pope?) why the 17.11.70 album was remixed and reduced twice, once by Clive in DJM studios London and once by David Hentschel at Trident?

Cliff Sinclair

Ed:

Thanks for the info

Cliff, George Matlock asked Clive Franks about this and the answer is: "I mixed the album with Gus at Dick James' studio which was really only a demo studio with very basic equipment. Gus recorded most of Elton's earlier albums at Trident studios which had a state of the art console and loads of limiters, compressors and effects etc, and a much tighter sound. He felt that he could get a cleaner, punchier sound there which would be more suited to the US market. Dave Hentschel was the resident engineer who Gus had worked with before.

So there you have it! I think both versions sounded great but the real magic was in the performance from Elton, Dee and Nigel."

Just walked in the door from his Madison Square Garden concert.

Billy Joel, Kiki Dee. Best ever.

But what a downer. Elton actually told the audience that after his 2001 concert tour "that's it" for touring. Boooooooooooooo!

I sure hope he changes his mind. In the meantime we have the Greatest Hits Concert CD and the CBS special to look forward to.

Thanks for listening

Frank D'Agostino, Hillside, NJ

Ed: But he took it all back the following night!

Great work with The Mag.

Thanks especially for the exclusive interview with Clive Franks. I look forward hugely to the next instalments. I have been an Elton fan since 1971 when I first heard Your Song. My pleasure and appreciation has not faltered for one second. This year I saw him on stage, solo at Castle Ashby, Northampton. We all braved the cold English summer, but I had brilliant 4th row seats and it was fantastic. After a superb performance of Ticking, Sir Elton pointed and thanked me for my applause. The show was of course, incredible. Elton to me remains genius, timeless, ageless and unique. Thank you Sir Elton for all those years.

Richard Youngman, Norfolk, UK

Thank you for all your hard work providing us with information about Elton. This is just a reminder to everyone that December 1st is World Aids Day, and although I realise that day will have passed by the time most people receive their December issue of The Mag, I think as EJ fans we should all do our bit. I'm sure everyone could do something and send the proceeds to EJAF. Every little bit helps and our contribution could make a difference to someone's life.

Elton is such an inspiration to us, how could we not support such a worthy cause. I was cheeky enough to introduce myself to Elton at his Barbie Ball last December. He is a lovely man and certainly worthy of our admiration and support. So come on everybody, do your bit and send a donation to EJAF.

Diane Strauther, Nottingham, UK

Just wanted to let you know (as if you didn't know already!!) that eltonfan.net is MUCH MUCH better than eltonjohn.com. You have much more news - and the news you offer is on-line far quicker than eltonjohn.com.

It must be really hard to maintain it such a way that it's still very "personal" and friendly, yet informative and professional.

Well done.

Kind regards,

Amanda Lucas

Dear Hercules,
Thanks for the great seats to see Elton at Broadlands this summer in the UK.

What a lot of fans probably don't know is HOW good the seats were. On June 6, I was seated with the Hercules grouping - and to my right was the owner of the stately home himself, Lord Montagu. Nice to be in the midst of such VIPs eh?

Nigel Coleman, UK member

The weekend that I joined Hercules was one of my favorites. It took place in New York--when Elton John played Madison Sq. Garden 2 nights in a row. He looked and sounded so young and vibrant. The addition of "Club at the End of the Street" was unexpected but welcome. With all this so fresh in my mind, I could really appreciate the UK solo tour review in Sept's The Mag. And I thought that seeing him solo three times in 7 months was pretty good? A pittance compared to the 13 noted here!

Cheryl Herman, U.S.A.

Photo: S Kalinoski



LYRICS FOR AMERICAN TRIANGLE

Seen him playing in his backyard
young boy just starting out
so much history in this landscape
so much confusion so much doubt
I've been there drinking on that front porch
angry kids mean and dumb
looks like the pain(t)? in that blue skyline
God hates fags where we come from
Western sky, don't make it right
home of the brave, don't make no sense
I've seen a scarecrow wrapped in wire
left to die on a high ridge fence
it's a cold cold wind
it's a cold cold wind
it's a cold wind blowing
Wyoming

See two coyotes running down the (deer) ?
they (knew) ? what we don't understand
you pioneers give up your children
but it's your blood that stains their hands
Western skies, don't make it right
home of the brave, don't make no sense
I've seen a scarecrow wrapped in wire
left to die on a high ridge fence
it's a cold cold wind
it's a cold cold wind
it's a cold wind blowing
Wyoming

Somewhere the road forks up ahead
to ignorance and innocence
three lives drift on different winds
two lives ruined one life spent
western sky, don't make it right
home of the brave, don't make no sense
I've seen a scarecrow wrapped in wire
left to die on a high ridge fence
it's a cold cold wind
it's a cold cold wind
it's a cold wind blowing
Wyoming

SMALL ADS

Free to Hercules members. Send yours to David Wright, Editor, 100 Winkworth Rd,

ELTON 2000 CANDLES

Still available & in stock now: Deluxe \$35, Gel \$20. Older versions available as special order. Also, have some Hercules T shirts in USA at \$10 each, and Hercules polo shirts in USA at \$20 each, for USA/Canada shipments only. All prices are PLUS shipping.

To order candles or shirts email sharonk@maxi-signal.com or write Sharon Kalinoski, P O Box 398, LaGrange IL 60525 USA.

WERE YOU AT STUTTGART?

Calling all EJ fans that have been to Elton's show in Stuttgart on July 1, 2000: My friend, who is in a wheel chair, and myself got to the stage during the show, and Elton laid down flat on his face in order to shake my friends hand. Did anybody take a picture of this? We are desperately looking for a photo (even if it's just poor quality). Please contact Elke Middelhaue & Eddi Kadner, Hindenburgplatz 5, D-74385 Pleidelsheim, Germany, phone/fax +49 7144 209745.

PLEASE REMEMBER...

ALWAYS state your membership number if you send a cheque to Hercules, or pay into one of the Club accounts.

ALWAYS let us know the expiry date of the card, and the cardholders name.

Please note that if you have paid your Membership Fee by Credit Card, your card will automatically be charged again for the renewal fee, at the end of your membership year. If your card has expired in the meantime, or if you have switched companies, please forward your new Credit Card details to Hercules Coordination in time for your next renewal.

TOUR DATES

Banstead, Surrey SM7 2QR, UK,
or e-mail him at HerculesEd@eltonfan.net

POSTAL FANS

Looking for Worlwide Elton John Fans to exchange postal letters. Reply guaranteed.

Robert Webster
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LIMITED EJ PHONECARDS

World-Phoncards.com has issued a limited edition of Elton John phoncards which are now available at £15 each. Hercules has negotiated a special offer for its members: If you order a set of all three Elton John phoncards, the price will be reduced to £40 (instead of £45) - that's a discount of more than 10%!

But hurry, this special offer will only last for one month! Visit the www.world-phoncards.com order your set today!

LYRIC QUIZ ANSWERS

- 1 Cartier
- 2 Act of War
- 3 All Across the Havens
- 4 Chameleon
- 5 Lord of the Flies
- 6 Rock 'n' Roll Madonna
- 7 Lady Samantha
- 8 L'il Refrigerator
- 9 Chasing the Crown
- 10 Love is a Cannibal
- 11 Too Young
- 12 Too Low for Zero

ELTON JOHN US SOLO TOUR 2000 (CONT.)

02-Dec-2000	Bossier City, LA	Centurytel Center
03-Dec-2000	Tulsa, OK	Convention Center
05-Dec-2000	Johnson City, TN	Freedom Hall
06-Dec-2000	Wheeling, WV	Civic Center
08-Dec-2000.....	Macon, GA	Centreplex
09-Dec-2000.....	Albany, GA	Civic Center
10-Dec-2000.....	Montgomery, AL	Garrett Coliseum

ELTON JOHN & BILLY JOEL FACE TO FACE TOUR 2001

19-Jan-2001	San Diego, CA	Cox Arena
22-Jan-2001	Vancouver, BC	GM Place
24-Jan-2001	Tacoma, WA	Tacoma Dome
26-Jan-2001	Portland, OR	Rose Garden Arena
29-Jan-2001	Salt Lake City, UT	Delta Center
31-Jan-2001.....	Sacramento, CA	Arco Arena
02-Feb-2001	Oakland, CA	Oakland Coliseum
04-Feb-2001	San Jose, CA	San Jose Arena
06-Feb-2001	Los Angeles, CA	LA Forum
13-Feb-2001	Phoenix, AZ	America West Arena
17-Feb-2001	Las Vegas, NV	MGM Grand

ELTON JOHN TOUR 2001

01-Apr-2001	Lyon, France	t.b.a.
03-Apr-2001	Paris, France	Bercy
04-Apr-2001	Nice, France	S.A. Nikaia

Please note: This is not an official Tour Schedule, as it contains unconfirmed dates at time of going to press.

2000/2001

"Anyone for Twister??"



For up-to-the-minute news about Elton,
callers in the UK can phone the

HERCULES Hotline on 0906 888 20 20

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