

inside this issue:

EXCLUSIVE
interview with
Gus Dudgeon

Elton speaks
about the
current music
scene

How TV
appearances
have influenced
Elton's career

New Elton
candles

European tour
report & set list

What does EJ
think of the
fans?

Plus
News, Lyric Quiz,
Your letters,
Small Ads,
Cartoons, Photos,
Tour Dates
and more!



Issue No. 59
JUNE 2002



*Hercules is a registered member
of the National Association of
Fan Clubs*

FAN CLUB INFORMATION

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO MEMBERS

From 1st January 2002, membership rates will be charged in Euro. Fees will be:

Europe: Euro 20 Rest of the World: Euro 35

Please be sure to change any standing orders accordingly if you are paying into one of our accounts.

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.

HERCULES is a quarterly publication released in March, June, September and December. In event of circumstances beyond our control, there is no guarantee for punctual shipment. It is published in English and German.

Printed articles do not necessarily reflect the editors' opinions. All information is based on the best of knowledge and belief. Reproductions permitted only by prior arrangement with HERCULES.

Member participation is always welcome. We are thankful for your submissions of any kind: reports, articles, photos, drawings, and suggestions. Please send them to the Editor, Tammi Law. Please understand that we cannot always publish all contributions. All photos will be returned.

Web site
<http://www.eltonfan.net>

COPYRIGHT: HERCULES

Deadline for Issue No. 60 is 10 August 2002

No. 60 will be released September 2002

Front cover pic:
Elton shares a relaxed moment as he prepares to address the US Senate with a ground breaking speech regarding funding for AIDS research, April 11 2002

HERCULES Chief Editor
Tammi Law
49 Horseshoe Crescent
Peatmoor
Swindon SN5 5AX
UNITED KINGDOM
HerculesEd@eltonfan.net

Editorial Assistants:
Barbara Turner, Michael S English

Design: Turnstyle Design

Translations:
Sabine Asenkirschbaumer
Mireille Mölbert

For subscription details, please write to your local HERCULES department or to HERCULES Coordinator:

HERCULES Coordination
c/o Stephan Heimbecher
Berg-am-Laim-Str. 87
D-81 673 München,
GERMANY
Tel. +49 (0)89 48900369
Fax +49 (0)89 48900370
stephan@eltonfan.net

HERCULES Fan Adviser
c/o Mireille Mölbert
Albrechtstr. 32
D-80636 München,
GERMANY
Tel. +49 (0)89 3244146
HerculesFA@eltonfan.net

HERCULES USA/Canada
Barb Crowley
PO Box 692392
ORLANDO
FL 32869-2392
HerculesUSA@eltonfan.net

HERCULES U.K.
c/o David Wright
100 Winkworth Road
Banstead
Surrey SM7 2QR
UNITED KINGDOM
HerculesUK@eltonfan.net

HERCULES Benelux
c/o Tim Blezer
Pastoor Pendersstraat 8
6262 PA banholt
NETHERLANDS
Tel. +31 (0)43 4571703
Herculesblx@eltonfan.net

HERCULES Italy
c/o Luca Zerbinì
Via Scheiviller n.9/A
I-20139 Milano, ITALY
HerculesIT@eltonfan.net

HERCULES Nordic
Urpu Kallio
Uudenklänpolku
05200 Rajämäki
FINLAND
email: urpu@eltonfan.net

CONTENTS

FEATURES

Gus Dudgeon
talks to Hercules14

Lunch around the world23

Newsnight Interview18

St Petersburg Times
Face to Face revue13

Tell me what the papers say21

TV camera never lies....10

What does he really think of us20

When the rain set in...
Verona concert review9

REGULARS

Club Information2

News Bullets4

Lyric Quiz21

Membership Matters24

Letters to the Editor.....26

Small ads27

Tour Dates27

PLEASE REMEMBER...

ALWAYS state your membership no. 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.



FROM THE EDITOR...

Hello and
welcome to the
summer issue of *The
Mag*, number 59.

The big news this quarter is Elton's tour with the band, which started in Australia and received rave reviews for the 9 sell-out arena gigs. The tour is currently heading across Europe, see page 27 for details of the dates. On page 9 we have a review of the first European show, with details of the set list.

As most of you will know, the fanzine will be finishing later this year. Please read the details of your remaining membership fee details, and how the changes at Hercules will be affecting you, on page 24.

Elton often seems to be involved in many areas of current affairs these days, not just the music industry. His interest in fashion and art is well documented, and recently he addressed the US Senate as his interest in fund raising for Aids research and politics grows. As a result of these many interests, he is often seen on our TV screens. We have a light hearted look back over Elton's many TV appearances in the US over the years, and how television helped launch his career, in our specially written article on page 10.

We are very excited that Gus Dudgeon, who had such an influence on Elton's early career, chose to speak to Hercules recently. Read part one of our exclusive interview on page 14, where Gus reveals what Elton's famous temperament was like in the early days. Part two of this fascinating interview will follow in our September issue.

Thanks for all your letters and please continue to send them in. I look forward to seeing many of you at Elton's forthcoming UK shows later this summer. I hope that those of you lucky enough to be seeing Elton and the band during their current tour have a fantastic time!

Veronica



Photograph: J Young

EJ NEWS BULLETS...



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

ELTON AND BAND KICK OFF

EUROPEAN SUMMER TOUR 2002

After a short holiday to recover from the success of both the Face to Face AND the Australian tour, Elton and the band kicked off their European summer tour 2002 in Benidorm, Spain, on May 22. The tour will continue with shows in Italy, France, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, the UK and Ireland. Surprises in the set list included Holiday Inn and Have Mercy on The Criminal. See report on page 9 for more details of the set list.

QUEEN'S JUBILEE CONCERT

ON VIDEO

Don't worry if you missed Queen Elizabeth's jubilee concerts, you'll still be able to see Elton's performance on video. "Party at the Palace" on June 3, celebrated the 76-year-old monarch's 50 years on the throne. Held at Buckingham Palace, the concert included a pre-recorded performance by Elton, who was unable to attend the live show due to touring commitments. He was the first ever pop star to perform at Buckingham Palace when he went there to record his contribution in May.

The official video of the event will also include performances from Brian Wilson, Eric Clapton, Paul McCartney, Phil Collins, Rod Stewart, and Bryan Adams, who all performed on the day of the concert. The video will be released on July 2.

ELTON SLAMS UK GOVERNMENT

OVER AIDS

Elton has said the UK Government should be "ashamed" of its record on Aids spending. He appealed to the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, to pile more cash into the fight against the disease. Elton turned on the Government and said: "They should be thoroughly ashamed of themselves. I did vote for them, but I'm disgusted with the way the health service in England is operating and to someone who is passionate about Aids, every year seeing the amount of aid money allocated to Aids go down is not good."

Speaking in Vienna on May 19th, where he was attending the fundraising Life Ball, Elton said: "I would appeal to the Government and Tony Blair to say, come on, we had a great record on Aids when we first started. That record is now not as good as it was under the Thatcher government. You should be ashamed of yourselves - you're socialists, or so you're supposed to be."

A Department of Health spokesman defended the Government's funding record, insisting that spending on HIV/Aids treatment has actually increased year on year.

CINEMA AGAINST AIDS

Elton joined Elizabeth Taylor as they co-hosted a fund raising dinner for the American Foundation for AIDS Research's Cinema Against AIDS, on May 23. The other hosts at the dinner in Cannes, France, were Sharon Stone, David Lynch and Iman. Elton helped raise more than \$1.6 million at the annual gala, leading revellers in full black-tie regalia in a rousing finale of Twist and Shout.

ELTON QUILTS WATFORD

Elton has resigned as chairman of Watford, ending a 25-year association with the English first division club. "With the huge changes taking place in football, it is obviously necessary for the board to be led by a chairman who will be able to devote more time to the club than I have been able to," Elton said in a statement on the club's Web site.

"The directors will now commence their search for a successor and I am sure that they will find the right person who will be able to devote time and energy to leading the club through these difficult times," added Elton. Elton, who returned to Watford five years ago, has also resigned as a director of the club.

Watford's chief executive Tim Shaw thanked the singer for his role in overseeing Watford's rise from the old fourth division in the late 1970s to the upper reaches of the first division. "On behalf of the club and all its supporters, I want to thank Elton for everything he has done," Shaw said in a statement. "There is no doubt that, without his vision, energy and investment, the club would never have made the progress that it has over the last 25 years."

ELTON A WINNER ON BROADWAY

The League of American Theatres and Producers announced the winners of the Second Annual National Broadway Theatre Awards (NBTAs) at a gala event on May 20, in Manhattan. The Best Musical award went to Elton's Aida, which received a total of five awards, including Best Actor Musical (Patrick Cassidy), Best Actress in a Musical (Simone): Aida led the pack with nine nominations in total.



ELTON AND DAVID

AT CANNES FILM FESTIVAL

Elton and David Furnish made the short trip down to the Chopard party in Cannes from their villa in Nice on May 17. The couple told *The Mirror* over dinner at the Majestic Hotel how they usually avoid the packed Cannes Film Festival but wanted to pop into the jewellery firm's bash for a couple of hours.

"We're so pleased to see you," Elton told Jessica Callan. "I have been reading all about you girls in *Heat* magazine and I have one thing to say - I want to hear more gossip about you!" David let us in on Elton's favourite bit of the night at Posh and Becks's World Cup party last week. He said: "Elton loved meeting all the footballers. They're his favourite guys."

THIS IS YOUR NEW SONG

Elton has re-recorded his classic hit *Your Song* as the official song of Sport Relief, sister charity campaign to Comic Relief. Elton has teamed up with opera star Alessandro Safina to perform the rousing duet, released in the UK on July 1. The song - recently voted Elton's all-time best song by fans - was recorded in New York in early May. Elton commented: "I first recorded *Your Song* in 1969 and it has always been one of my most popular. I know some purists will think it wrong to re-record it, but I think this version with Alessandro Safina is inspiring. Sport has the power to change people's lives and, hopefully, people like me who live for music and sport can use their passion to help make real changes to the lives of others."

ELTON PRAISES QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Elton admitted he doesn't know whether Queen Elizabeth II will like the music that he and other rock stars perform for her Golden Jubilee, but he's sure of one thing: she won't let on if she doesn't. "I don't know how much the queen likes pop music," Elton said in an interview on BBC television on May 17. "She grins and bears it. She is probably the best in the world at grinning and bearing it at every occasion, whether it's Maori dancing or pop music. I feel so sorry for her when she goes to all these different countries, has to stand there and watch things, and she must be bored out of her mind half the time." But, he said, she never shows that "because she is such a professional."

POSH & BECKS THROW CELEBRITY PARTY

Elton and David were guests at their close friends' party, when England soccer captain David Beckham and his pop singer wife Victoria threw a celebrity-studded dinner on May 12, to raise money for a children's charity. Dozens of stars attended the lavish Japanese-themed garden party at the couple's mansion in the UK countryside, nicknamed Beckingham Palace. Guests, who were asked to dress in "white tie and diamonds" included many of England's World Cup soccer squad, tennis star Greg Rusedski, designer Vivienne Westwood and actress Joan Collins. Elton and David joined the Beckhams on the top table, and Elton was asked to deputise for them by greeting the 300 guests at the door.

THE GUINNESS BOOK OF BRITISH HIT SINGLES

To tie in with the publication of the latest edition of *The Guinness Book of British Hit Singles* on May 24, a poll of 31,000 people was commissioned. *Candle in The Wind 97/Something About The Way You Look Tonight* came 21st. The list was headed by *Bohemian Rhapsody*, *Imagine* and *Hey Jude* in the top 3 places.

BENEFIT SHOW IN ERFURT

Elton has decided to donate the royalties of his forthcoming concert in Erfurt, Germany, on June 16th to the victims of the school massacre. He got the news about the tragic event while he was on tour in Australia. "I was deeply shocked when I saw the coverage on CNN," Elton said. "It is hard to imagine the emotions of the people on site if you are so far away, on a different continent. I wanted to show my solidarity with the victims and their families when me and my band come to Germany, especially as we will be coming directly to Erfurt."

ELTON HOSTS WEDDING

Elton made himself at home at the glittering wedding of Sun columnist Jane Moore - after all, it was in his own house. The singer hosted the ceremony as Jane tied the knot with Sony music chief Gary Farrow at his mansion at Old Windsor, on May 4. Later Elton and David joined the couple and 200 guests for the reception at top London hotel Claridges.

EJ NEWS BULLETS...



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

AN AUDIENCE WITH LULU

Lulu's new album *Together* was released on May 20 on Mercury Records, and includes a track named *Teardrops*, a duet with Elton. Other artists who appear on the album, a collection of duets, include Paul McCartney and Sting. A TV special, "An Audience With Lulu" was shown on ITV1 on May 18; Elton joined the Scottish singer on stage to perform *Teardrops*, and the pair performed a fantastically energetic live version.

THE BODYGUARD

One of Elton's former employees has made a career change. Alf Weaver is the author of "The First Rock'n'Roll Bodyguard". Rod Stewart, Jimi Hendrix, Liza Minnelli, David Bowie, Sonny and Cher, and Marc Bolan were among his other clients. Weaver discusses drug dealers, the press and Live Aid as well. Although hardly comprehensive - and Elton doesn't feature - the book is still an entertaining read.

EMINEM THE JOKER

The duet between Eminem and Elton at the Grammy Awards show last year all started as a joke, according to the rapper. The two performed Stan, Eminem's song about a deranged fan. Eminem tells "Access Hollywood" he had considered boycotting the Grammys because of the controversy over the alleged anti-gay sentiments in his lyrics. He told an executive for his record label that he wouldn't go to the Grammys unless Elton John went too. Eminem called the remark "a stab in the dark," to get out of going. But Eminem said the record executive called back and said "We can get him" - and the rest is Grammy history.

ELTON ADDRESSES US SENATE



Elton told a U.S. Senate panel on April 11 that the world's richest nation must do more to stop the world's worst epidemic. Elton had never addressed a political body before and he said in an interview before the hearing that he was quite nervous. But he testified eloquently about the global scourge, which has already claimed some 25 million lives. "This is the government of the richest nation in history and I'm here asking you for more money to stop the worst epidemic in history," he told the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions committee. You can see the transcript of Elton's speech on our website www.eltonfan.net

OLD VIC THEATRE CHIEF

Elton has taken over as chairman of the Old Vic Theatre Trust. The formation of the trust has ensured the future of the historic West End venue. Elton replaces Lord Bernstein in the key position. Elton said: "I am proud to join the Old Vic Theatre Trust as the new chairman. I am immensely excited about contributing to the future of this great theatre."

VIRGIN MEGASTORE IN

MELBOURNE

Fireworks, an LA-style fanfare and a brief appearance from Elton marked the opening of the Virgin Megastore in Melbourne, Australia. Elton flew into Melbourne from New York on the morning of April 16, 2002, for the start of his Australian Tour. Flanked by bodyguards, he said nothing as he walked on to a specially built stage to join Sir Richard Branson in officially opening the South Yarra store. A bemused Elton waved to the crowds while Sir Richard sprayed champagne, which nearly hit the musical superstar.

FASHION GODS BY DAVID

FURNISH

According to UK newspaper reports, Victoria and David Beckham have allowed film cameras inside their Hertfordshire mansion for David Furnish, who is making a documentary about the fashion industry for Channel 4. With a working title of *Fashion Gods*, it is described as a sequel to *Tantrums* and *Tiaras*. Behind-the-scenes access to the fashion houses of Versace and Gucci has already been filmed and is expected to feature spectacular displays of prima-donna behaviour by some famous names. David has already filmed backstage at the Oscar night party held by Elton: "Elton was supposed to be dressed for the bash by Donatella Versace, but she kept him waiting for three hours while he wandered up and down in his dressing gown getting more and more upset. It's apparently very funny indeed," said a Channel 4 source.



ELTON PLAYS "FANTASY HIT LIST" GAME

Elton enjoys playing an imaginary game show in which the people he hates are shot dead. The singer plays the fantasy game with friends. He told Heat magazine: "We discuss who we'd like to kill. We have this game called Culling. It's like an imaginary TV show where the host has a loaded gun and he tracks down someone we nominate and kills him."

Asked to disclose who is on his imaginary hit list, Elton said: "No! I'll get into trouble. I'm advocating killing people here!" But he admitted: "There are a few tabloid journalists I could mention. That's all I'll say. Some of them don't deserve to live."

Elton also said he never uses the internet - despite starring in a Royal Mail advert last Christmas to promote online shopping. In the interview, Elton gives a rare insight into his relationship with David. Despite having five homes packed with works of art, Elton says his most treasured possession is a photograph, "It's a picture of David when he was a little boy and it's by my bed," he said. "It's not worth anything, but to me it's worth everything."

ELTON RECALLS TEEN YEARS

Elton says that he was hardly a catch in high school. When he was a teenager he was "nerdy, obsessed with music and overweight. Nothing's changed!" he says. Eventually, though, the preoccupation with music led to his career and to fame. Elton says that along with that came the autograph seekers. He says he enjoys giving autographs but thinks there are some times when a fan should perhaps hold back, like when he is at the movies or in the men's room.

SHOPPING DOWN UNDER

The Sun newspaper reported on April 22 that Elton has gone on one of his legendary spending sprees during his sell-out tour of Australia. He spent £350,000 on artwork in Adelaide and Melbourne including £50,000 on a single painting.

AIDA BIRTHDAY ON BROADWAY

Aida celebrated its second birthday on Broadway on March 23. To help celebrate the show's anniversary, Elton visited the company backstage. He also stayed to watch the musical and received a standing ovation from the audience during intermission. Aida is being performed at the Palace Theatre which is located at Broadway and 47th Street.

NEW MUSICAL?

The New York Post reported on April 25, that Elton is considering a musical production of the box-office hit movie "Billy Elliot" for the financially troubled Old Vic in London.

ELTON AND BERNIE TO BE HONOURED

Elton John and Bernie Taupin will be honoured in Britain with the Music Industry Trusts' Dinner Award 2002 in recognition of the duo's vast contribution to music in the UK. The award will be presented at the 11th Music Industry Trust Dinner at London's Grosvenor House on November 4, 2002, when more than 1,000 guests from the worlds of music and entertainment will be on hand to honour and celebrate the pair's achievements.

ELTON LIKES "MALLS AND MOVIES"

Don't be surprised if you run into Elton at your local mall or movie theater. That's where he likes to spend his free time when he's performing on tour in the USA. "I go to the mall or the cinema and see a movie or see two movies," Elton told People magazine for its March 11 issue. "To me, that's a luxury - to go to the cinema in America at 1 pm."

He said he also tries to keep fit while he's on the road. "I put on weight very easily," he said. "I play tennis maybe four or five times a week, and I take a tennis pro on the road because I get bored in a gym and I don't like the treadmill very much - but I'll do it under pressure."

OSCAR-NIGHT BENEFIT PARTY

Elton hosted his 10th Oscar-night benefit party at Moomba in West Hollywood on March 24, to benefit his Aids Foundation. "We're not taking over from the Vanity Fair party," Elton said. "The Vanity Fair party is the party to go to. We raise money for a good cause as well. They spend millions on their party. We don't spend anything on ours." This year's event raised a record \$500,000, aided by a \$175,000 donation from M.A.C. Cosmetics' AIDS Fund.

BLUESOLOGY'S STEWART BROWN

We are sad to report that Stewart Brown died in April after suffering from a heart condition for some years. Stewart performed at the Hercules convention at The Cavern in Liverpool last year which saw the reunion of Elton's old band for the first time in 33 years. All at Hercules would like to express our sympathies to Stewart's partner, Suzy, and all his friends and family.

EJ NEWS BULLETS...



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

BITE YOUR LIP!



American cosmetics company, M.A.C., has featured Elton in their latest AIDS fund campaign, which also features Garbage frontwoman Shirley Manson and Mary J. Blige. In March, the company launched their Viva Glam IV lipstick at stores across the USA. All proceeds from the Frosted Rose And Gold Shimmer lipstick will benefit services for men, women, and children affected by AIDS/HIV.

RAINFOREST FOUNDATION BENEFIT CONCERT

Elton, Sting, James Taylor, and Ravi Shankar were just some of the performers for the annual Rainforest Foundation Benefit Concert at New York's Carnegie Hall on April 13. The event is produced yearly by Rainforest Foundation co-founder (and Sting's wife) Trudie Styler.

HONEY MAN FINALLY RELEASED

On October 30, Universal Records released a 4 CD box set of Cat Stevens songs, which included the very rare Honey Man duet with Elton. For years, Elton John fans have been listening to the substandard version of Honey Man on various bootleg releases. The audio quality of the bootleg version was very grainy with a lot of static. The version on this box set, however, is superb, superior, and far out shines all previously unauthorized releases. Although Universal's press release only mentions that Elton provided piano for Honey Man, he in fact sings the lead vocals during all of the verses and joins in on the Chorus.

ELTON & RYAN



Elton and Ryan Adams, rockers separated by a generation, mingled their country and rock 'n' roll influences in April as they paid homage to their heroes and to each other's music at an intimate Nashville performance in the Grand Ole Opry House's Studio A. The show was a taping for Crossroads, a new show on country video network CMT that teams a country artist with a rock artist to explore common influences and make new, largely unpredictable music. The set featured a striking Adams vocal lead on Tiny Dancer. The two also collaborated on classic country songs such as Jim Reeves' He'll Have To Go and the rock'n'roll classic Jerry Lee Lewis' Great Balls of Fire.

LIZA MINELLI'S WEDDING

On March 13 Elton spoke of his excitement at attending Liza Minnelli's wedding, despite admitting that he prefers funerals. He was among a host of stars including Sir Anthony Hopkins, Michael Douglas and Elizabeth Taylor at the New York nuptials when Liza wed American music producer David Gest. "I can't wait for the wedding. It will be fantastic, absolutely amazing. It's unusual for me to look forward to a wedding, normally I hate them," Elton said on GMTV. "I would normally rather go to a good funeral than a wedding. At least then you are paying a tribute to someone's life rather than a depressing wedding where you know it won't last more than a year and a half. Some are different though and special and this one will definitely be that".

F2F SHOWS POSTPONED

Elton and Billy Joel cancelled all remaining USA "Face to Face" shows in March and April on the strict order of Billy Joel's doctor. The shows have been re-scheduled for September and October 2002. Please see page 27 for details.

Elton John and band perform a wet show at Verona's arena on May 25, 2002

Report and photos by Stephan Heimbecher



It was a hot day in Verona, but the rain set in approximately 90 minutes before the show started at 9.00 pm sharp. Although it had stop raining by the time Elton and the band came onto the stage, it came back an hour later during I Guess That's Why The Call It The Blues. And it didn't stop until the show was over.

Just before Elton kicked off a set of solo songs with Candle In The Wind members of his crew had to wrap the piano and all other band instruments in order to keep them dry. Elton was already wet at that time, as was the keyboard of his piano, and most parts of the stage. Later in the show he ironically dedicated Original Sin to "the people who built the stage". "This is the wettest I've ever been", Elton said when returning for the first

encore, Don't Let The Sun Go Down On Me.

As far as the musical highlights of the evening are concerned, one has to mention Ballad Of The Boy With The Red Shoes and the wonderful version of Holiday Inn. The Ryan Adams cover Oh My Sweet Carolina sounded like it was written by Elton himself. From a musical point of view, it was great to hear American Triangle ending with the same note that started Have Mercy On The Criminal, although it seemed kind of odd to combine these two songs that way when looking at the lyrics.

Elton was in a great mood, as was the band who he introduced as "The Subterrainers". And it was like so many times before: The wetter the weather, the better the show was.

Funeral For A Friend/Love
Lies Bleeding
Bennie And The Jets
Daniel
Someone Saved My Life Tonight
Ballad Of The Boy With The Red Shoes
Philadelphia Freedom
The Wasteland
Rocket Man
I Guess That's Why They Call ...
I Want Love
This Train Don't Stop There...
Take Me To The Pilot
Candle In The Wind
Sacrifice
Sorry Seems To Be The Hardest
Oh My Sweet Carolina
American Triangle
Have Mercy On The Criminal
Holiday Inn
Tiny Dancer
Original Sin
I'm Still Standing
Crocodile Rock
Don't Let The Sun ...
Your Song



The audience take cover from the rain under plastic!



EJ's piano is covered as he continues to perform CITW

TV CAMERA NEVER LIES

By Reggie Zippo



After television was introduced to the masses in 1939, musical entertainers from all corners of the globe have utilized this medium in the USA to promote, jump start, enhance, and otherwise display their varied talents to a hungry viewing audience. From Liberace to ABBA, Elvis to Madonna, and The Beatles to U2, the giants and undiscovered talents of the music industry have all had the opportunity to gain popularity and credibility through the small screen we all call TV. And, Elton John is no exception!

Some critics say that Elton was born to be on TV as a great musical talent, in part because of the outrageous, funny, animated, and flamboyant way his stage persona attracts fans of all ages. In addition, his heartfelt contributions to charity events, the controversial issues he embraces, and the keen sense he has to present himself as fresh each time he ventures out into the public eye are all qualities that ensure a leading success. But, most fans will argue that it is simply his pure musical talent that has kept Elton in the forefront of TV since his USA debut on *The Andy Williams Show* in 1971.

On January 16, 1971, Elton captured the nation's heart with a solo version of *Your Song*, which was his first number one hit in the USA. There were no antics, no strange costumes, and no band. It was just a bare bones approach that mesmerized all who tuned in to watch the program that evening.

This was a very smart move on Elton's part. Following in the footsteps of Liberace, Elton's first priority was to gain a fan base for his music. His off-the-wall stage personality would be gradually introduced to the public in years to come. Although Elton would later admit that he was extremely nervous during this particular performance, he appeared flawless and quite confident to the watchful eye of the TV studio camera.

In England, Elton continued to win fans over on TV in much the same manner as he did in the USA. On December 7, 1971, he appeared on the popular "Old Grey Whistle Test" musical program to perform *Tiny Dancer*, which was not yet a major hit for Elton. He later recalled that he enjoyed this TV program in particular because of its approach in allowing the guests to perform any song of their choosing. The song didn't have

to be a hit. In fact, non-hit songs were encouraged.

This gave Elton the unique opportunity to let the TV audience in on what they were missing if they had not yet purchased the album. In this case it was "Madman Across The Water". The only requirement to be on the show was to have no less than two albums already released. By this time, Elton more than satisfied that requirement with six albums under his belt.

Jumping forward to 1975 and many costume changes later, the "Cher" variety show introduced a side of Elton that was rarely seen on TV up to that point. Along with Cher and the talented Bette Midler, Elton joined forces as a trio to sing a string of songs, some of which were Elton's own hits. However, when Elton came rolling out in an electric wheel chair dressed up as an aging old man to participate in a comedy sketch about elderly rock stars, fans could hardly believe that he was the same Rocket Man they had previously adored on stage. Who was this convincing old codger that kept Cher and Bette laughing uncontrollably all through the entire skit? He was just Elton being his funny self!

In 1977, he would repeat this expression of funny antics on the popular *Muppet Show*. Dressed up as a colorful, flamboyant chicken, Elton bopped his way through "Crocodile Rock" while surrounded by many Muppet characters, including a crocodile of course. Elton said that this was the most fun he had ever had on a TV variety show, but he was quite intimidated when it came time to sing a duet of "Don't Go Breaking My Heart" with Miss Piggy. At first, Elton forgot the words to the song and Miss Piggy stormed off after saying that she was not used to working with amateurs (she was joking of course), but after several takes the pair pulled it off

with much success.

While giving a September 1980 concert in Central Park, New York, TV viewers once again witnessed how well Elton could poke fun at himself while dazzling everyone with his own brand of unique showmanship. Donned in a Donald Duck costume, Elton confidently waddled out on stage to thunderous applause. He could barely contain himself from laughing, though, as he attempted to sing both fun and serious songs. It was quite a memorable event for everyone involved and Elton would later say that this event marked the first time that he had ever required a police escort in New York. The sheer volume of fans that had gathered in Central Park that day made it impossible for him to use his own security force.

The fun side of Elton would take an about face two years later, however, when he appeared as the guest singer on the hit US TV show *Saturday Night Live*.

Long before Elton chose to shed his wild side image during his "Reg Strikes Back" period, Elton accepted the role of guest performer on *Saturday Night Live* in New York without the aide of any gimmicks or clothing props. On April 17, 1982, Elton exposed his serious side to American viewers with a heart-wrenching rendition of *Empty Garden*, the classic tribute to his late friend, John Lennon.

This performance was significant in many ways. Lennon's death hit Elton very hard, and since Lennon was a resident of New York at the time of his murder, Elton felt it quite fitting to perform this emotional song with every ounce of talent packed into each note and syllable. Although the TV network (NBC) gathered a whopping 16.8 million viewers that evening, this would be

Elton's only appearance on SNL.

Elton did not totally abandon his lighter side, though. He continued to wear outlandish costumes for his concert performances. Following his stint with SNL, Elton released the classic video of *I'm Still Standing*. In April 1983, the world was literally exposed to this very camp video creation that featured an assortment of nearly naked young men dressed in body paint from head to toe.

Elton later confessed that he was primarily drunk for most of the video production and that he was extremely apprehensive about dancing in front of the cameras. His video acting has always been a bit stiff and unpolished, but at least he was able to complete this video with FANTASTIC results.

On July 13, 1985, the Live Aid awareness concert was beamed into the living rooms of 2 billion viewers world wide, and with it brought a who's who music event filled with a spirit of goodwill that has gone unmatched by any means. For his contribution to help save the world from famine and despair, Elton provided 5 songs. Always the crowd pleaser, he sang 3 of his hits and a cover tune, but his crowning glory came when Kiki Dee joined him on stage to sing their trademark duet, *Don't Go Breaking My Heart*.

Speaking of crowns, Freddie Mercury would later say that Elton looked more like the Queen Mum on stage rather than a rock star because of the hat Elton chose to wear. The hat is indescribable, but Freddie was right on target.

Furthering his stance on relief efforts and causes, Elton again graced the TV stage for yet another Aid event on April 7, 1990. The fourth annual Farm Aid concert brought 70 artists together with farmers, environmental and consumer advocates to Indianapolis,

Indiana for an event that sold out in 90 minutes. The concert was televised live on The Nashville Network, and a two-hour highlight was rebroadcast to 10 million viewers on CBS. Elton sang *Daniel and I'm Still Standing*, but it was his *Candle In The Wind* that brought tears to everyone who witnessed the event.

In the months leading up to Farm Aid, Elton revealed his generosity as an artist by becoming a surrogate father to AIDS victim Ryan White, who was in the final stages of the disease by the time Elton had agreed to perform at the concert. He dedicated the song to Ryan, but was shattered to learn that Ryan had succumbed to the disease the very next day. This tragic news, along with his bloated physique and white hair appearance as he sang *Skyline Pigeon* during Ryan's funeral, famously sparked Elton to finally shape up and get his personal life in order by shedding most of his pounds and vices.

Several months later, MTV viewers were treated to a special Elton John event titled *MTV Unplugged* on August 5, 1990. Originally video taped on May 17, 1990, Elton was brought in to perform without the aid of any electric guitars or synthesizers. It would just be Elton and his grand piano. Although he still looked overweight and aging with white hair, Elton gave a splendid performance nonetheless.

The following is an excerpt from the *MTV Unplugged* book that best describes Elton's appearance on the series: "Somewhere near the end of *Don't Let The Sun Go Down on Me*, it became obvious that Elton was enjoying himself. There can be no other explanation for the fact that the song's ending actually times out longer than the tune itself. Elton's voice vacillated from falsetto to baritone and then drifted into

gospel tones. It was a startling, awe-inspiring moment that demonstrated that careers like his don't happen by accident. Elton then asked if he could stay and do some more songs, giving us our first hour long show."

This brought him full circle back to the basic bare bones approach he had exhibited nearly 20 years before on The Andy Williams Show.

Throughout the 90s decade and into the next century, Elton continued to amaze TV viewers in the USA and abroad. There was the 1992 Freddy Mercury tribute concert, which shockingly paired Elton with Heavy Metal rocker Axel Rose. Then the 1997 death of Princess Diana and Elton's record breaking tribute song Goodbye England's Rose, which he sang during the televised funeral, endeared him to millions. That alone was an amazing feat.

Appearing in such TV shows as The Nanny and Ally McBeal, which helped record sales skyrocket, Elton once again donned his acting cap to show the world that he was more than just a rock superstar. In 1998 and 1999, Elton volunteered to be animated in the true sense of the word when he was turned into cartoon characters for both South Park and The Simpsons respectively. Elton does admit that he stays up late at night just to watch South Park on the Comedy Central cable channel.

In December 2000, 10 million TV viewers tuned in to witness Elton's fantastic, hit filled One Night Only concert at Madison Square Garden, which was video taped to coincide with the album release in November of that year.

At the beginning of 2001, Elton teamed up with the controversial rap star Eminem to sing Stan during the Grammy Awards ceremony in Los

Angeles. It was a critic's dream come true, but those dreams were shattered when the pair effortlessly shined as the darlings of the entire evening. Also that same year, the tragic World Trade Center catastrophe brought Elton back to the Madison Square Garden stage, but this time to honor the many lives lost and for those who had tried in vain to rescue the missing people. As 16 million TV viewers witnessed rock's finest superstars giving their best, Elton and Billy Joel offered their Face To Face version of Your Song, while Elton individually sang I Want Love and the New York laced Mona Lisas And Mad Hatters.

The year 2001 also marked another special event in Elton's career. For the first time ever, Elton chose not to act in one of his music videos. It has been well documented that he has always loathed making music videos, but this time he decided to do something about it by not participating in front of the camera at all. While actor and friend Robert Downey JR. lip-synched to Elton's new hit, I Want Love, Elton was on holiday in France. This formula would repeat itself again in 2002 when the video for This Train Don't Stop There Anymore was released with NSYNC's Justin Timberlake providing the action in place of Elton.

Even though he admits that he is no longer the "main express", Elton has proven that he is still in sync with his fans and the general public during every TV event that he has ever become involved. He has shocked us, moved us, and made us laugh, but through it all, Elton has shown just how important TV can be to a rock star's career because the camera never lies!



Photograph: S Heimbecher



St Petersburg Times revue of Face to Face

As members of Elton's fanclub, we all knew that the recent Face To Face tour was sure to be a winner. But it's nice when the local journalists think so too.....! The St Petersburg Times had this to say about Elton and Billy's show in Tampa, USA on March 9th.....

"Joel, John delicious together"

By Gina Vivinetto (Times Pop Music Critic)



The Face To Face tour starring pop icons Elton John and Billy Joel may have reminded some in the sold-out Ice Palace crowd of more than 19,400 on Saturday of those old Reese's Peanut Butter Cup television commercials where two unique flavors blend to form one surprisingly yummy result.

Joel and John are so delightfully different. The flamboyant John wore a turquoise suit at Saturday's 3 1/2 hour show but acted far less campy than we've seen him. In fact, the dapper Brit was downright reserved. It was New Yorker Joel, dressed in a conservative dark suit, who mugged for fans and milked lyrics for comedy.

One thing shared by the duo, now on their fourth Face To Face tour since 1994 - with Saturday's show the first of two dates at the Ice Palace - is dozens of piano-driven pop hits.

The show kicked off with Joel and John hamming it up to Yankee Doodle beneath images of the American flag and the Union Jack. The pair sat at two grand pianos, Joel singing the first lines to John's smash Your Song, then trading verses with his partner. The two launched into Joel's Just The Way You Are, followed by John's Don't Let The Sun Go Down On Me before Joel left the stage to give John his 70 minutes in the spotlight.

It takes at least that much time to showcase John's three-decade career filled with hits. His set began with the synth-heavy instrumental Funeral For A Friend, which sounded very 1970s and looked the part thanks to John's stuck-in-a-time-warp backing band, musicians he has played with since the Honky Chateau days, including guitarist Davey Johnstone - he of the long hair and prog rock arpeggios -

and drummer Nigel Olsson. (Later Johnstone even pulled out that classic rock staple, the double-necked electric guitar.) That song morphed into the rollicking Love Lies Bleeding.

One after another, John delivered the hits, with fans rising out of their seats and boogying to Philadelphia Freedom. Wisely, he dipped into material from Songs From The West Coast, his superb new CD that critics are heralding as a return to form after years of sentimental Disney soundtrack fare. The current hit I Want Love went over well with fans, followed by the swirling harmonies of the 1970s smash Rocket Man, featuring John's dazzling keyboard flourishes during a lengthy jam that inspired a standing ovation.

John sang a heartfelt I Guess That's Why They Call It The Blues, perhaps one of the finest pop songs ever written. John's band gave the song extra oomph with their soaring, soulful harmonies. It brought another standing ovation. Next came Levon, I'm Still Standing, and a zippy sing-along Crocodile Rock, his set's closer.

Joel's set was filled with surprises. He began with Scenes From An Italian Restaurant, Allentown, then teased fans with a vote for his third song, which he ignored and performed Don't Ask Me Why.

Joel on Saturday ranted about AC/DC being considered as nominees to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Then he shocked the audience by introducing AC/DC lead singer Brian Johnson, a resident of Sarasota, and bassist Cliff Williams, who performed the raucous Highway To Hell with Joel's band.

Fans' cheers grew even louder when the two stars came together again for a final set of combined hits, including Joel's My Life, You May Be Right, and Piano Man and John's Bennie and the Jets.

Copyright St. Petersburg Times 2002.

Reprinted by kind permission of the St. Petersburg Times, St. Petersburg, Florida.

Thanks to Gina Vivinetto and Barbara Oliver.

Gus Dudgeon

talks to Hercules

PART ONE OF A THREE PART INTERVIEW, BY DAVID WRIGHT

Gus Dudgeon is arguably one of the most important people behind Elton John's rise to superstar status in the early 1970s. In April he kindly invited Hercules into his lovely Surrey home where, in his study surrounded by awards and gold discs from a successful career, Gus tells how he started in the music business.

Gus with some of the gold disks on his walls at home, from his time working with Elton



DW: How did it all start? Were you musical at school?

GD: No, I've never been a musician and I'm still not one today.

DW: How did you get into the studio side of the music business?

GD: Total fluke, I'd had 11 jobs in 4 years and I got the sack from every single one. In fact at one point my P45 was 3 jobs behind me, trying to catch up, because some jobs only lasted a week. We're talking about the 60s, a different era, a time when if you wanted a job you just went in and got it. There was always a vacancy somewhere....in fact everywhere. I remember going into to buy a Whoopee cushion, or some stink bombs or whatever, from The Magic And Fun Shop, which was opposite the Dominion Theatre in Tottenham Court Road, (London), and suddenly thought it would be fun to work in there. So I asked "Have you got a job?". The guy said, "Not here in the shop, but we have a vacancy at the factory", which he told me was in Moorgate, and he said I could start tomorrow. I was there for precisely a week, working in a conjuring trick factory, how ridiculous is that? That's how it was in the 60s, you can't do it nowadays.

I had no idea what career I was going to have, but I had always bought a lot of records. Records and clothes were my 'Achilles' Heel'..... and still are to this day.

DW: What was your first job in music?

GD: I just stumbled into a job at Olympic Studios, which was off Baker Street at the time. I used to have two EPs of Lonnie Donnegan, I've probably still got them, and they were cheap and cheesy sleeves. It was the same photograph on both, a head and shoulders shot, with a microphone in front of him, and they kept reproducing it with a different tint on it for this series of EPs. Behind him, on the wall, were these old-fashioned acoustic tiles with

these little holes drilled in them. As soon as I walked into reception at Olympic for the interview, I saw these same acoustic tiles behind the receptionist, and the minute I saw them a little light-bulb in my brain went on, and I thought "Shit, this really is a recording studio!". It had never crossed my mind that this was even a remote possibility as a job for me. By the time I'd walked up through the control room to meet the boss I was hooked. Anyhow, I somehow got that job and told myself, "Gus, this is it. This is what you have to do. Don't lose this gig."

The other jobs I couldn't have cared less. I just used to get bored and f**k off, and sometimes they didn't even realise I'd gone! They must have thought, "Hang on, we haven't seen him for a month, he must have left!" This was around 1961.

DW: *Who was the first artist you produced for?*

GD: Well, after about two years I'd left Olympic, and I'd eventually become a recording engineer at Decca Studios. My first production, after about three years there, was for a Swedish band called Ola & The Janglers. Ola now runs one of the biggest labels in Sweden, he's a very successful man in the record business. They were just a funny little pop band. They didn't speak particularly good English and the producer for some reason didn't bother to deal with that. He'd say something, and you could see from their faces that they hadn't taken on board what he was saying. And when they didn't do exactly what he'd wanted, he'd get irritated. I was thinking "You can't do this. The poor buggers are Swedish, and they haven't understood a word you've said". He just wasn't looking in their eyes to make sure they understood what he was saying. For me, eye contact is crucial in a recording studio, particularly with new artists and musicians. So after the sessions I got talking with them and they were really disappointed about the way it had been handled, and they asked me to go over

to Sweden and help them out. They flew me over and I did a couple of sessions with them, which weren't great, but at least we got on like a house on fire, and we made a record which was a hit over there, so they were happy.

Then there was a weird album project with a bloke called Zoot Money, and his Big Soul Band. Brass section and all. Andy Summers was the guitarist. Zoot was a big act on the London circuit. This was at the time when the Flamingo was going strong, with acts like Georgie Fame and Graham Bond. I used to do all those kind of acts....any R&B, and lots of Blues when I was at Decca. Anyway, Zoot said he wanted to do a 'live' album from Klooks Kleek, which was a gig in a pub a couple of hundred yards from the studio. He asked if I could help him to do it. He'd actually left Decca, after doing a couple of singles for them, with me engineering, and wasn't on the label anymore. But I knew the Decca Studio people wouldn't know that, because Decca's Head Office was at Albert Embankment in London, and the Studios were in West Hampstead. So, for geographic reasons, very often the right hand didn't know what the left hand was doing.

I had a great boss at Decca, probably the best boss I had, and he was kind of loose about things. He didn't mind people doing a few little things on the side, so I used to do little favours for people and come in over the weekend when nobody else was in. I worked with David Bowie once doing stuff, over a weekend, which they never knew about – and they're still unreleased! I've got them in the loft. I should mix them some day, they'd be pretty valuable I would imagine.

Anyhow, so I did this 'live' album. Decca didn't have a Mobile Truck, but because the club was close, I figured if I could make the leads long enough for the mics, I could run them out of the studio window and into the club. It was really weird, because I was in the control-room at Decca, all on

my own, recording an album, with nobody on the other side of the glass, but with all this music pouring out of the monitors. And we didn't have closed circuit TV then, so I had no idea what was going to happen next. Anyhow, I recorded this album, mixed it, it went out on EMI, and got my first English credit as a producer. Plus I wrote the sleeve notes, and charged them £25!!

After 5 years at Decca I was getting a bit bored with it. I thought about what to do next as I had never considered myself as a great engineer, although I had had easily 40 big hits with people from Marianne Faithfull, to John Mayall, to The Zombies, and The Small Faces, while doing the job. There would be the odd session that would turn out really well. I had my moments.

I'm not really interested in the mechanics of recording. I don't care why a desk works, as long as you can push a fader up and hear something. I was always interested in the music itself, not the business of why it got on tape.

DW: *That surprises me. I thought that when you said you were not a musician you were an expert in the technical and electronic side of things.*

GD: No, not at all. I'm just a music fan. I had a lot of hits going just by my ears, I didn't really know what it all meant. Half the time when I was twiddling knobs trying to find a frequency, I didn't know what these numbers meant, I just twiddled them until I found something good.

Or if I was in someone else's session, or wandered in and heard a great bass sound, I'd go and see how it was done and remember it, and next time I would record a bass I would try it out.

It was just watching and learning.

DW: *So how did the Elton John connection come about?*

GD: I had done 'Space Oddity'. They had already hired Paul

Buckmaster to do the arrangements because of his work on that record. Apparently they went to see George Martin about production, and George put his foot down and said he would like to produce it, but also wanted to do the arrangements. He wanted a much bigger involvement than just production and amazingly enough they turned him down, which I can't believe. In those days George was 'IT'.

DW: This was at the end of The Beatles.

Lo and Behold, God presented me with Elton

GD: Somehow they'd decided they wanted him to only produce it, because they were so keen to use Bucko doing the arrangements. Obviously Paul was falling over himself to work with George, so he was very disappointed I would imagine.

Paul said, "If you like Space Oddity, why don't you go and see Gus?" I suppose it was pretty obvious really but it didn't dawn on them, so they came to see me and I heard the first demo tape, and was like "Thank you God!"

I had had 4 hits with 4 different artists by then and I wanted one artist to get into a long situation with. Lo and Behold, God presented me with Elton.

DW: Can you remember the first session, the first song you recorded with him?

GD: The first song, no. It would have been one of the ones done on 8 track in order to accommodate the budget. There was a whole furore about the budget and my advance because I want carte blanche for planning the budget, and Steve Brown, who had originally phoned me and asked me if I wanted to work with Elton, said I couldn't have carte blanche, Dick's never spent that kind of money. I said, "You don't know what carte blanche is until I've actually planned it all out". I

wanted to know that if I wanted 24 strings I could have 24 strings and not have to settle for 6 or something half-arsed. I wanted to be able to do this thing properly, not cut any corners.

Steve said he'll never agree to that, then I told him my advance and he said "Christ, he's never paid that kind of money". It was pathetic, it was £250. In fact, even on the last few albums I did with him I was still only getting a £250 advance 'cos there wasn't any point in cranking it. I was earning decent money anyway from the royalties. So I used to get this joke cheque through for £250!

For some reason Dick gave in on all fronts. He must have thought that Elton had a really good shot. And he paid me more and gave me a bigger budget than he'd ever done before.

DW: Would that have been because of the strength of the material? Presumably the songs were already written.

GD: Of course. The point is that DJM was a publishing company, not really a bona-fide record company. It had the record label, but that was really only a spin-off, that hadn't had any really big successes. Well, certainly nothing on the scale of Elton.

DW: Obviously Empty Sky didn't do anything dramatic commercially. I was wondering if for the second album they then thought "Wow this is the business!"

GD: Maybe, certainly Caleb had pushed very hard on behalf of Elton to get Dick to take him seriously as an artist and not just as a writer. But the album was never made as a potential vehicle to launch Elton as an act, it was like "Let's do fabulously good versions of his songs and hopefully somebody else will cover them". It was really a fabulously glamorous demo. They thought he would get a certain amount of recognition, and people hopefully would want to record his songs and it would go from

there, because that was Dick's publishing head thinking that way.

DW: So even into the second album they were still thinking of Elton as a songwriter rather than a performer?

GD: Oh yeah. It was only because the American record company were so insistent that he went over to play there, which he didn't really want to do.....he was fed up with playing live. He'd been doing it for years on crappy little pianos and backing soul singers, the whole Bluesology thing.

DW: And now he never stops touring 30 years later!

GD: They had to talk him into going, and when he got there he didn't really want to be there.

DW: Elton's temperament is well known, he's even put out his own film about it. What was he like in those days? Is his temperament a product of his success and ego or was he quick-tempered then?

GD: It's difficult for me to comment but I get asked about it a lot. I only had one serious argument with him, it didn't last very long. It was over the most idiotic thing and after we'd had the argument, he'd stormed out of the room, but came back in laughing his head off 'cos it was a stupid thing to be arguing over. I've seen him pull all kinds of stunts, but what it's the result of I don't know.

I remember Steve Brown told me that Elton had always been like that. He told me a time when they were catching a train, Steve, Bernie and Elton. Elton was carrying a big heavy suitcase up the platform and it looked like they wouldn't catch the train so he gave his case to Bernie and said "Come on, you f**king carry it!" So Bernie takes the case and the train starts to move and Elton runs and gets on the train, Steve does as well, and Bernie's still running along the platform carrying Elton's bloody case as well as his own, and Elton's shouting "Come on for f**k's



sake, get on the train! What's wrong with you?!" Steve said he was always like that, he always expected people to do things for him.

You have to take into consideration that his personal life has been in turmoil for years and years. In fact as soon as he started becoming a big star it was even more of a turmoil. He was living a lie because he wasn't admitting to anybody that he was gay. In fact when he did admit he was gay, the record sales took a tumble, as we all thought they might.

Crazy that they should have....but there you go.

The problem was he had this major internal turmoil that would throw him through a loop sometimes. It's very difficult, when you become successful, it's impossible to distinguish between someone who really likes you and wants to get on with you as if you were just the guy next door, and the guy who is after something.

DW: *Especially when you have a former lover cash-in and write a book.*

GD: Yes, but he always knew that kind of thing could happen. He must have known that if you're a big star and you pull someone in a gay club there's a good chance he's going to make some money out of it. I've seen people who were supposedly his "boyfriend" who were quite obviously on the

make. But in a way, I don't think it really bothered him, I think he used to think it was kind of sad. He knew he was taking advantage of these people, and that in turn would have given him the internal question "What am I doing?" And if you can't find a life partner, you're always looking, always hoping, which puts you at a disadvantage. It doesn't make your life rooted in anything very much. And if you're that successful you want to share it with someone, I think that's why he's always been so generous. He loves to share the success he's had and he is incredibly generous.

So I think his temperament has always been there. If you make a lot of money it gives you a lot of power, and a lot of power can give you the facility to become corrupt, or to even corrupt other people. You're able to indulge your wildest fantasies....and your worst behaviour. And I've seen it happen many times, I don't think it's a unique situation.

DW: *What was the process for recording an Elton John album? The wonderful Goodbye Yellow Brick Road DVD described you all going into the studio, writing and recording it all as part of the same process. Was that usually the case?*

GD: That was from Honky Château onwards.

DW: *So you didn't turn up with 15 to 20 songs to work on?*

GD: No, up until then there were always demos. He'd write songs, record them as demos, and we'd work on the album from there.

DW: *It's been well documented but it seems an unusual way of writing an album.*

GD: It was because of his confidence in his ability to come up with something good in a short space of time, which is something he's always made a big thing of. And also it was because he said if he ever had to go to court.....he's a hopeless liar, he goes red if he lies and looks really uncomfortable, you can see it a

mile away –

He was advised by his legal people that it would be very advantageous for him not to pay English tax, and the only way to avoid English tax on his earnings as a writer was to write the material abroad. So I was asked to find a studio in France and I finally came up with the Château.

The plan was, he would arrive in France and write the songs when he got there, and then send his Mum a letter about the songs he'd just written, which would give him the proof if he ever had to go into court to defend it, that he wrote them in France. So he was writing letters to his Mum to tell her how things were going but also to give himself documentary proof that the songs were written abroad. So effectively it became the way we worked, by default. If the situation hadn't arisen that he needed to write abroad to save the tax, he would have written and recorded more albums in England. But I guess if you discover that you're perfectly capable of writing a hit song in half an hour, why not do it that way on a regular basis?

When we were doing the Ice On Fire album I just casually commented to him, 3 or 4 songs into recording his vocals, that he had done the last four master vocals in only three takes. He thought about it, and then said, "Oh well, I might as well keep doing that on every vocal", and immediately gave himself a new challenge.

He made a point of continuing to do that all through the vocals. The first take would be a basic run through, mostly for making sure the cans were OK, that he was happy with balance, I'd record it, just in case, and there would always be some great lines in there. Then the next three takes would be a full-on attempt to get the vocal absolutely the way he wanted it, and he would consistently nail it.

END OF PART ONE
Part two will be published in the
Sept. 2002 issue of The Mag

Newsnight

INTERVIEW

In a heartfelt interview with the BBC's Newsnight programme at the end of February, Elton tells us why he regrets making the One Night Only album, and laments all that is wrong with the music industry...



MADELEINE HOLT: *This week, Sir Elton John topped the American charts for the highest grossing live performance, playing with Billy Joel: \$1.5 million for a night. These days, only a handful of people can pull that off. In 35 years in the music industry, Sir Elton has seen it change dramatically, and, he believes, for the worse.*

ELTON: Nowadays, record companies want the quick buck from the Backstreet Boys, from the N'Syncs, from the Britney Spears, from the S Club 7s, from the Steps. They've always been around, I'm not knocking the music perhaps, but it's like packets of cereal. There are too many of them, and too many of them are just average and mediocre. I think it damages real people's chances, real talent, of getting airplay. It's just fodder. It has no distinguishing marks. A lot of it, you couldn't tell one from the other. There's much too much of it.

MH: *But the record industry is under more pressure now than ever. Latest figures show global sales of recorded music dropped last year by 5%, the biggest single fall. Sales of CD albums fell for the first time by almost as much. And overall sales in the biggest market of all, America, echoed the trend. The demand for short-term profits is intense.*

Elton: Nowadays, they think more about their quarterly earnings. There's no longevity, thinking, "We want this artist to be around in ten or 12 years". It's kind of heartbreaking, because you see most of the emphasis placed on instant success.

Where are those people (the artists) going to be in two, three years? They're going to be on the scrapheap because someone else newer and younger has come along, and the record company won't care about what's happened to that act that they've made a fortune out of. It's kind of disgusting really.

MH: *Not that the music industry has ever been exactly benevolent. But Sir Elton says when he started out, you had more of a chance to develop your talent. He played countless gigs before getting a contract. If his second album hadn't sold, he reckons his label would have stuck by him. Contrast this with the industry's latest, and highly lucrative, new phenomenon, TV talent shows where viewers choose an instant star, and some of the judges will make more money than any of the stars.*

Elton: For the guy who won it, I just hope someone's looking after them. They're on cloud nine at the moment, but in three or four years, what's going to happen to them? But good luck to them, they're probably very talented. I hope the record company looks after them and doesn't discard them.

MH: *In Britain, Sir Elton's comments aren't entirely at odds with some senior thinking in the music business. The new head of Britain's only major record company, EMI, has said the industry is failing because it lacks big global stars. Instead, it's turned music into a three-minute commodity. EMI is right to worry, it has issued two profit warnings in the last six*

months, and blown millions buying Mariah Carey out of her contract. Sir Elton has one solution.

Elton: If it was me, I'd ban every single video being made by a new band. I'd get them on the road, put the money that's put into making a video, because it all comes out of their royalty statement anyway, at the end of the day. Put it into their equipment, put it into putting them on the road, playing second on the bill to people. That's how I started in America.

MH: Breaking into America is a British problem. In the mid '80s, British stars took 32% of the market. That's now fallen to 0.2%. Why?

Elton: To break America, you've got to do what Craig David has done, you've got to do every radio station, you've got to get up at 7am and do 12 radio stations. You've got to do go there and play, you've got to do everything, like I did in the first five years of my career.

MH: Robbie William's latest album, "Swing When You're Winning", spent seven weeks at number one in the UK, but wasn't even released in the States.

Elton: Robbie is clever enough to know that if he wants to break America, his next album has to sound more beefy, more American. They just play their own bands on the radio.

MH: It puts some perspective on the annual celebration of the British music industry, the Brits. Sir Elton was up for best male solo artist and best video, alongside Robbie. He takes an active interest in the current scene. He buys records every week, and

knowing how much he enjoys shopping, perhaps he is partly responsible for one good bit of music news. Sales in Britain are up more than 5%. But much of that growth is down to greatest hits collections. Four years ago, they made up one in ten of the top 100 best selling albums. That's now one in four. Even Sir Elton was forced, two years ago, to record a live album of his biggest hits.

Elton: I squirmed and kicked and screamed, and then I had to do it. It was successful, it sold over two million copies world-wide. It is the record company eyeing Christmas and thinking, "We're going to make a quick killing here, so let's put the pressure on". **I shouldn't have done that album in a million years, and I did, and I regret doing it.**

MH: At a concert in the US three months ago, sir Elton kicked up about the music industry. He said he was sick of it, and was giving up. That's all he said, until now.

Elton: I said I was retiring because I was having a bad night on stage, but there are some nights where you think "Is it bloody well worth it?". And then, of course, it is, because I just feel that I do have a duty to speak out, and say it is about time some of these younger acts were nurtured and given the time, but there certainly is the talent out there. There is as much talent out there now as when I was doing it. It's just that people aren't prepared to nourish it, cuddle it like a baby, breastfeed it, and put it into childhood and adulthood. It doesn't happen very much any more, and it is terrible.

MH: Sir Elton seems more passionate about the music business than ever. Will that keep him at the heart of it, or is it time to find some distance?

Elton: I shall carry on. I think, and this is the first time I've said it publicly, my Achilles heel in the last few years when making records is that I have had pressure from record companies to make singles, have singles on albums, and so you follow. I am influenced by so many sorts of music, but I try and copy things or just say, "Oh, I'll try something like this". Therefore, you don't stay true to yourself, and I have probably been guilty of that. I will put my hand up and say so. I am not going get the airplay that I did when I was 23 or 24 and I could do no wrong. But I still feel so young at heart that I expect to, and it's just not realistic. In a way it's a relief. It's like, it's over, Elton, you had 31 years when you had a record in the American top 40 every year. That can't realistically happen any more.

MH: But it's not over quite yet. He's carrying on with a gruelling touring schedule until July. When he does choose a quieter life, it may be good for Sir Elton's creativity, but it can only be bad for an industry experiencing its worst decline in 20 years. For his millions of fans, he is a genuine pop idol, apparently working double time to keep the money rolling in, while the one-hit wonders come and go. Maybe Elton had it right 30 years ago.

**Edited highlights
from interview with
Newsnight Feb 2002**



WHAT DOES HE REALLY THINK OF US?

By Tammi Law

Ever wondered what Elton really thinks of the fans? He rarely, if ever, mentions us in interviews. However, in a recent interview with UK magazine Heat, Elton gave us a brief insight into what he thinks of us, and also talks about his favourite hobby, shopping. We reproduce a few extracts from the interview here, and we'll bring you more extracts in the next issue of The Mag.

When you're so into shopping, don't you ever run out of new stuff to buy?

No, there's always something! Clothes for example. Fashion designers fascinate me because it's extraordinary the amount of new stuff they have to come up with. Every season there's a new collection.

Do you find it easy to relax? Don't you have that compulsive ordering thing that David Beckham has?

Well I am totally anally retentive; everything has to be in its right place. I do go

around making sure all the pictures are hanging absolutely straight. But I can relax.

Before you arrived I was just lying there reading a book; I've learned to relax and switch off. I enjoy just sitting here ordering DVDs and CDs... I'd make a very good secretary.

Do you order them using the internet then?

No, I'm a Luddite. I don't have e-mail. I don't even have a mobile phone. I order through the office. On Monday the office faxes me a list of all the new releases and when I get Heat magazine I look at the upcoming releases.

Really?

Oh yes! I have three notebooks full of lists – one for DVDs, one for books and one for CDs – all in alphabetical order and I cross them off when I get them in.

Is there anything about you that your fans don't know?

No. Nothing. It's terrifying. They know what plane I'm catching, what hotel I'm staying at. It's astonishing; I have a hard core of fans who live their lives through mine. I see the same faces in the front row of most of my gigs."

Well, it's this last answer that we find a bit puzzling, and it hasn't gone down well with some of you.

Andy, a long-time Elton fan in the UK, phoned me to say "I've got tickets to see all but one of Elton's forthcoming UK shows later this year, but now I'm wondering whether I want to go. I get the impression that he doesn't want to see us there. As for "living my life through his", well, it's just not true, and even if it was, I simply couldn't afford to do it! I do actually work for a living for the rest of the year!"

And after reading the interview, David, another fan in the UK, wrote to me saying "Unfortunately, I've always thought that Elton has a fairly low opinion of us fans, ever since I saw Tantrums & Tiaras, where Elton flicked the V sign when it was suggested to him that he waves at the fans. I've been waiting for another mention ever since, to see if my impression was correct. Unfortunately, this latest comment just backs up what I thought."

It is understandable that Elton sometimes feels frightened if fans really do know details of his flights and hotels, and we don't blame him for that. None of us want to make him feel terrified.

Personally, I have never known which hotel EJ is staying in during a tour, and I would never take the effort to find out. It's just not relevant, and I know all the fans I've met over the years feel the same. It's just about appreciating the music, and enjoying seeing Elton, the man who wrote such beautiful beautiful songs, performing them for us.

It's true that many of us enjoy seeing more than one EJ show when he visits our home countries. Over the years, we have become friends and enjoy meeting up with other Hercules and Rocket members. We often recognise familiar faces in the front rows of gigs as well. But it is often those "same faces" which are the ones enjoying themselves the most, and appreciating the music more than anyone.

So, do we think that Elton's comments indicate a low opinion of the fans? Well, it largely depends on the tone of his answer, which of course is impossible to tell when it is reproduced in print, and we don't always know that the answers given are reproduced in the exact context.



We'll leave you to make up your own minds....

Tell me what the papers say

By David Wright



Most Elton fans will remember the infamous series of false stories The Sun newspaper printed in the UK back in 1987.

Kelvin Mackenzie was editor of The Sun at the time. Private Eye, a satirical UK magazine, reports that he recently reminisced about his involvement.

As Kelvin recalled, while the paper was already facing libel writs from Elton for false claims about teenage rent boys, it then compounded the offence in style.

Mackenzie: "One of the Sun's finest (journalists) had come up with an absolute belter: The story was that Elton was having difficulty sleeping at night because of the barking from guard dogs that patrolled the perimeter of his mansion outside London. So he had decided to have the voiceboxes of the dogs removed..."

This was pure fiction of course, so why was it printed?

Mackenzie blames it all on the reporter and news editor, who promised the story had been thoroughly checked and failed to warn him that a journalist at the gates could hear barking. But those who were there on the day remember it rather differently.

Sun journalist John Askill had not originally filed the story but merely sent a memo to the newsdesk following a conversation with an unreliable informant. The following Sunday the deputy news editor mentioned the memo to Mackenzie. Despite Elton's libel case Mackenzie ordered Askill to run the story.

Shortly after 6pm, the night news editor arrived and asked one of the day shift if anyone had actually gone to Elton's mansion. The man said he didn't know, so a reporter was dispatched who rang back to say he could clearly hear barking. This information was passed to Mackenzie – but he decided to run the story nevertheless.

The rest is history. Elton issued a further writ for this story which was the first case to come to court. The Sun settled out of court for a record sum of £1m and printed a grovelling front-page apology.

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 Just across from Friday
The weekend circus rolls
- 2 He said it with devotion
He sounded so sincere
- 3 So keep your auditions for somebody
Who hasn't got so much to lose
- 4 Through the soft brown earth
That holds him forever always young
- 5 Gonna go West to the sea
The Greyhound is swaying
- 6 Trying to make wages that weren't even there
Taking hell from a foreman with the build of a bear
- 7 Looking for an island
In our boat upon the sea
- 8 I can't take any more bad water
I've been poisoned from my head down to my shoes
- 9 I never learned why meteors were formed
I only farmed in schools that were so worn and torn
- 10 Sitting in the temple
Right between your eyes
- 11 From boyhood to man
Strangers have found themselves fathers
- 12 Why I'm a juvenile delinquent
In an East End gang

LYRIC QUIZ



Photograph: J Young

lunch around the world

Congratulations to Nancy Case, from USA, who earlier this year had the terrific idea for fans to host lunches to raise money for the Elton John Aids Foundation

Elton fans all around the world organised the fund-raising get-togethers during the weekend near Elton's birthday, 25th March.

In total, more than US\$6,000 was raised for the Elton John Aids Foundation.

The events took on many different forms; some were held in restaurants, some in theatres, some were parties at home, and one was even in the food court of a shopping mall! Nancy, the creator of the idea, said of her party "We all ate too much, including an "Elton" cake with a photo of him on it, and sang along to some Elton songs. We had a great time with the raffle prizes and the silent auction, I kept trying to outbid my friend Peter Trappen on an autographed photo of Elton but at last I knew I really should not be the winner, he was the highest bidder on the photo, it brought in \$90.00. I hope in the years to come this event

continues and with each year grows and matures."

Hercules members in the UK spent the afternoon at a country pub, enjoying early spring sunshine on Saturday March 23. Around 20 fans gathered at Elton's local pub, The Union Inn at Old Windsor, for their contribution to Lunch Around The World. A total of £349 was raised for the Elton John Aids Foundation. This was a gathering of some old friends and we were delighted to be joined by four guests from eltonjohn.com. There was a raffle and an auction. Thank you to

all who attended, particularly to Laura Croker at eltonjohn.com for donating some exciting items for the auction. And congratulations to Nigel Coleman and John Michie who won the difficult lyric quizzes!

Hercules would like to congratulate Nancy on this great idea; we too hope it will become an annual event.



Nancy Case and her niece



A Single Man?! UK fans very own version of the album cover, taken in front of Windsor Castle, 25 years after the original!

Fans meet at Elton's local pub, The Union Inn at Old Windsor



APRIL FOOL!

by David Wright

Those readers who don't follow our website will have missed the story that read, "it has already been decided that Look Ma, No Hands will be the next single release."

Nothing too dramatic there, but then this: "Your picture can be on the cover of the single! Elton has decided to feature a collage of fan pictures in "Look Ma, No Hands" pose on the cover."

We were then encouraged to "have someone take a picture of yourself in "Look Ma, No Hands" pose, e.g. riding your bike without holding on. Be original!"

No doubt some fans were spurred into action only to find out that it was an April Fool joke dreamt up by our Stephan Heimbecher.

And the fans weren't the only ones to be taken in by this – we noticed some other Elton-related websites "borrowed" the story from us, and reported the story thinking it was real news!

Anyone who was disappointed may be pleased to know that this writer was planning a trip to a local relative with a digital camera and in the middle of home improvements – "I'm a handy man" – and our Editor, Tammi, called her boss over the weekend to get him to bring his digital camera into work. Needless to say the matter was quietly dropped on Monday morning!

THE FUTURE OF HERCULES

On May 8th 2002, our fan club celebrated its 14th birthday. This year will see many changes for Hercules, and we wrote about how these changes would affect you and your membership fee in our March 2002 issue. Here's a quick reminder:

More and more Elton John fans, and over 80% of Hercules members, are gaining access to Elton news via the internet. Our website www.eltonfan.net is receiving more than 500 unique visitors each day. Hence, the fanzine is old news for many of its readership in today's world, where communication has become so fast that we are able to bring you a review and complete set list of a concert within minutes after Elton leaving the stage.

In other words, the fanzine is no longer able to compete with the Internet, and also costs more to produce than it generates in revenue. It is no longer possible for us to produce the fanzine economically without a huge increase in subscription rates.

Therefore the Hercules fanzine will cease to be published, with the final edition being No. 60 (September 2002). Meanwhile, the Hercules Team has decided to additionally publish a "Farewell" issue in December 2002.

With the fanzine no longer being available, all Hercules memberships will end on December 31, 2002. If your renewal date is on July 1, or October 1 this year, we kindly ask you to adjust your renewal fee according to the following spreadsheet:

Renewal Date	Europe	World
July 1, 2002	euro 10.00	euro 17.50
	or £ 7.00	US\$ 17.50
October 1, 2002	euro 5.00	euro 8.75
	or £ 3.50	US\$ 8.75

If you are paying by credit card or direct debit, we will automatically adjust the membership fee for you.

Attention UK members: The bank has advised us that you must cancel existing Standing Orders individually. If you are currently paying by Standing Order, please cancel it and arrange for a one-time payment according to the above spreadsheet.

We are sorry to disappoint some of you by the above announcements, but we would like to assure you that they are the result of a very long discussion about the future of the Hercules fan club within the Hercules Team. Speaking of which, it has been impossible for us to find successors for any of the Hercules positions which also causes us to cut down on some parts of our services.

If you have any queries on this, please contact your country/department manager who will be happy to help you (see addresses on page 2).

idol
by Reggie Zippo



Say, what are you reading?
The Mag! I found it on the web!

video announcement

Cavern Club Video...

...regretfully cancelled

As you may remember, Hercules held a very successful convention in March 2001 at the Cavern Club in Liverpool, UK, which saw the first reunion of Bluesology for several decades. We had hoped to be able to bring you a video of this event, so those of you who had been unable to attend could enjoy this fun occasion as well.

Our former UK Manager George Matlock was handling this project but following the launch of his new venture he can no longer commit to producing this despite the Cavern event taking place some 15 months ago. With copyright issues unlikely to be resolved we have no alternative but to refund those members who have paid for the video. We are sorry for any disappointment this may cause.

idol

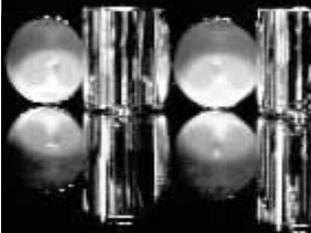
by Reggie Zippo

It ain't gonna be easy to slow down Georgie in this town of plenty tonight because I don't trust that woman to go it alone in heavy traffic. I need you to turn to the high flying bird just like Belgium did because the camera never lies. Did he shoot her? I don't care because nobody wins. I guess that's why they call it the blues. Don't let the sun go down on me or I'll shoot down the moon out of the blue. I fall apart with bitter fingers. So, bite your lip, take me to the pilot, then tell me when the whistle blows for the candle in the wind.

No, Sylvia, he's not a babbling freak. He's just a genuine, certified, typical Reg Head, commonly known as an ELTON JOHN FAN!



SPECIAL OFFER NEW ELTON CANDLES



BRAND NEW line of Elton candles made by Slatkin and Co. has just been released. All three of the original scents are available in new modern packaging, with another new scent to be available soon. These candles are packaged in black boxes and the wax is in a silver-coloured cylinder with lid.

#1 original scent of the Elton I candle, blend of four flowers; new candle is hot pink

#2 original ginger mango scent of Elton II candle, it is orange in color.

#3 scent like the Elton 2000 candle (pineapple leaves/myrtle/peony/musk), medium blue

#4 NEW: orchid, licorice, amber, fig. Candle is black.

We can offer these to you at \$10 BELOW RETAIL PRICE.

They are \$24 (US \$) each, plus shipping. Email your order to me at

HerculesUS@yahoo.com so that I can compute shipping cost, or write to me: Sharon Kalinoski, P O Box 7745, Romeoville, IL 60446, USA



YOUR LETTERS

We always love to hear from you; after all, it is YOUR Elton John fan-club. If you have anything you would like to share with other Elton fans, then please send your letters to the Editor, Tammi Law (address on page 2), or e-mail tammi@eltonfan.net

"I'D BUY A BIG HOUSE ..."

Except for "Elton John's Flower Fantasies" and "Architectural Digest," few publications have delved into the star's domiciles. So it was a nice surprise to find TWO profiles in the March Mag. The "Atlanta Journal" reprint was especially amusing, with its description of the designers' struggle to "saddle up" equine sculptures for Elton's annex. Perhaps the team should have called upon a Brown Dirt Cowboy!

Cheryl Herman
U.S.A.

ELTON SENDS CARD

I heard an interesting little anecdote whilst in the car listening to DJ and comedian Danny Baker on BBC Radio London. Someone phoned in with a story that involved South Audley Street, London. Once the caller had gone Danny said, "I used to work in a record shop around there, and Elton John, who's offices were opposite, used to come in each week to make his purchases. I was 15 at the time, it was before Elton was out (of the closet), and the press, suspecting, were sniffing around. Express journalists visited me in my digs that I shared with 2 mates. They were saying, you know Elton don't you, and suddenly came out with, "You lived with him for a year didn't you?" My mates, straight faced, went along with it and said "Yeah, that's right he did." Danny went onto say that he got a card from Elton saying, "Sorry about all the trouble Danny, but you know all the press are *****". He has still got the card!"

John Michie, UK

ELTON ROCKS AUSTRALIA

I think I must have Elton John batteries because I have just been recharged! Monday 29 April at the Sydney Entertainment Centre. It was fan-bloody-tastic and left my wife and I feeling on top of the world. We could have ripped the chairs out and danced right through the entire performance. Opening with Funeral for a Friend some of the songs I can't get out of my head include Holiday Inn, Rocket Man (of course), Someone Saved My Life Tonight, Ballad of the Boy in Red Shoes and This Train.

I recall seeing a much younger Elton in Brisbane many years ago sliding across the top of his piano. Well the acrobatics may have mellowed but the showmanship is awesome. Needless to say, the Elton John albums are still going around and around on our turntable. It was a real surprise to see Nigel Olsen back on drums after being absent for so long. If there had been an election in Sydney Elton would have won! What a night, this guy is a wizard.

Bob Oscar, Australia
(sent to our website
www.eltonfan.net)

MEGA FAN ANDY THORPE

from London has bought a new car. Nothing unusual in that, but take a look at his new registration plate! AT51 ELT. Nice pic Andy!



Photographs: J Young

SMALL ADS

...are free to Hercules members. Send yours to the Editor, Tammi Law (address on page 2), or e-mail her at tammi@eltonfan.net

VINYL SINGLES AND ALBUMS

FROM EJ

- they are still around. For a free list write to bruno.kohli@access.ch or Bruno Kohli, member of Elton John Fan Club HERCULES, Roessliwiese, CH-8854, Siebnen, Switzerland

REGGIE ZIPPO'S AMAZING COLLECTIBLES

You are invited to browse through Reggie Zippo's Amazing Collectibles at <http://reggiezippo1.tripod.com>. Reggie has a lot of cool and unusual movie, TV, music, sports, and various collectible memorabilia for sale. Of course, there are Elton John items as well. Be sure to see the 16 Elton John Celebrity Cels available. To contact Reggie by snail mail, send inquiries to Reggie Zippo, PO Box 894, Lebanon, Ohio 45036, USA. He is looking forward to hearing from you soon!

PLEASE NOTE...

Eltonjohnworld.com tells

Hercules that it is now fully booked for the June 1-3 Ultimate Elton John Tour of UK places of interest for Elton and Bernie fans in London and Lincolnshire. If fans are interested in future events, please email: EltonEvents@eltonjohnworld.com.

The Hercules UK Hotline, which was suspended last year, is being reopened from June 2002. Now administered by eltonjohnworld.com, the Hotline is still at 0906 888 2020.

LYRIC QUIZ ANSWERS

- 1: Suit of Wolves
- 2: A Word in Spanish
- 3: I've Seen That Movie Too
- 4: One More Arrow
- 5: Blues for My Baby and Me
- 6: Screw You
- 7: Harmony
- 8: Border Song
- 9: Grey Seal
- 10: Pain
- 11: Grimsby
- 12: Street Kids

TOUR DATES 2002

DATE	CITY	VENUE
ELTON & BAND TOUR 2002		
22-May	Benidorm, Spain	Football Stadium
25-May	Verona, Italy	Arena (open air)
26-May	Pesaro, Italy	Sport Palace
28-May	Paris, France	Bercy
29-May	Antwerp, Belgium	Sportpalaïs
31-May	Copenhagen, Denmark	Parken Stadium
01-June	Oslo, Norway	Oslo Spektrum
02-June	Oslo, Norway	Oslo Spektrum
04-June	Helsinki, Finland	Hartwell Arena
05-June	Helsinki, Finland	Hartwell Arena
07-June	Gothenburg, Sweden	Scandinavium
08-June	Stockholm, Sweden	Globen
10-June	Frankfurt, Germany	Festhalle
11-June	Rotterdam, Netherlands	Ahoj
13-June	Kiel, Germany	Ostseehalle
14-June	Berlin, Germany	Max-Schmeling-Halle
16-June	Erfurt, Germany	Messehalle (Benefit Show)
17-June	Innsbruck, Austria	Neuer Tivoli (open air)
19-June	Riesa, Germany	Sachsenarena
20-June	Duesseldorf, Germany	Rheinhalle
22-June	Stuttgart, Germany	Schleyerhalle
23-June	Munich, Germany	Olympiahalle
25-June	Vienna, Austria	Schloss Schönbrunn (open air)
29-June	Zurich, Switzerland	Hallenstadion
30-June	Zurich, Switzerland	Hallenstadion
02-July	Birmingham, UK	NEC
03-July	Birmingham, UK	NEC
05-July	Newcastle, UK	Telewest Arena
07-July	Killarney, Ireland	Fitzgerald Stadium
09-July	Liverpool, UK	King's Dock waterfront
12-July	Divonne, France	Hippodrome
28-Aug	Kelowna, Canada	to be confirmed
30-Aug	Calgary, Canada	to be confirmed
31-Aug	Edmonton, Canada	to be confirmed
01-Sep	Saskatoon, Canada	to be confirmed

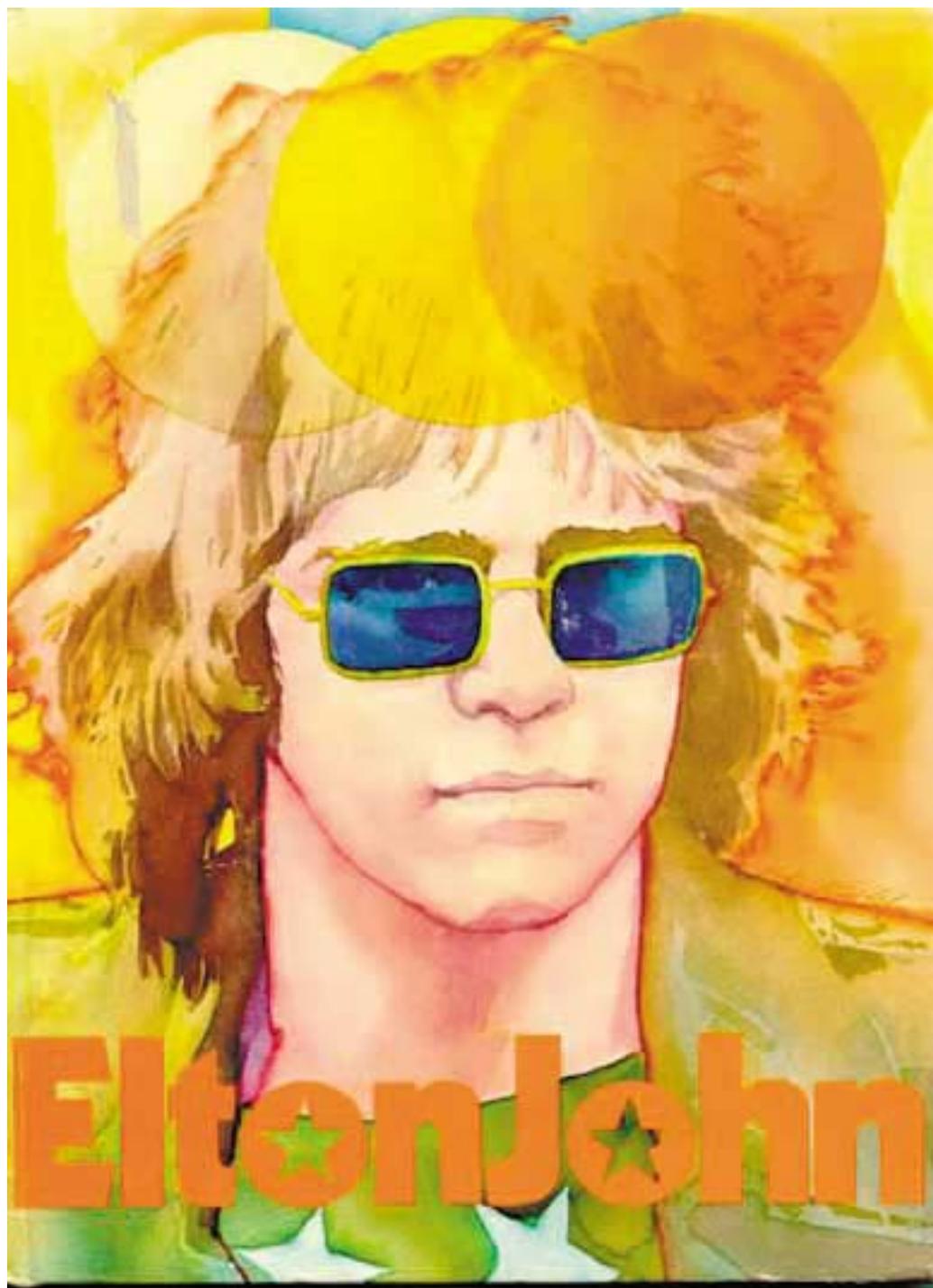
ELTON JOHN & BILLY JOEL TOUR 2002

13-Sep	Tampa, FL	Ice Palace
17-Sep	Atlanta, GA	Philips Arena
20-Sep	Boston, MA	Fleet Center
23-Sep	New York, NY	Madison Square Garden
25-Sep	Uniondale, NY	Nassau Coliseum
27-Sep	Uniondale, NY	Nassau Coliseum
02-Oct	Rutherford, NJ	Continental Airlines Arena
04-Oct	Rutherford, NJ	Continental Airlines Arena
08-Oct	Rutherford, NJ	Continental Airlines Arena
11-Oct	Uniondale, NY	Nassau Coliseum
13-Oct	Uniondale, NY	Nassau Coliseum

ELTON & BAND TOUR 2002 (CONTINUED)

03-Dec	Manchester, UK	M.E.N. Arena
05-Dec	Belfast, Ireland	Odyssey Arena
07-Dec	Glasgow, UK	S.E.C.C.
08-Dec	Glasgow, UK	S.E.C.C.
09-Dec	Sheffield, UK	Arena
11-Dec	London, UK	Wembley Arena
12-Dec	London, UK	Wembley Arena
13-Dec	London, UK	Wembley Arena

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



Elton John