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MAGAZINE

Jewel

SHAGGY

Barry Kerch of
SHINEDOWN



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Gina Adams
CEO/Publisher



RKW Designs
Design Director



Bill Kopp
Contributing
Journalist



Jason Kincade
Contributing
Photographer



Tony Contini
Contributing
Journalist/
Photographer

Gina Adams - CEO/Publisher | 949.337.0246 | gina@rockonmagazine.com
ROCK ON MAGAZINE 630 E. Plumb Ln, Reno, NV 89502

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A Story of Friendship, Surviving, and Thriving in South Lake Tahoe and Tasty Charbroiled Burgers

By Karin Priou

That glorious aroma of charbroiled burgers coming from Izzy's Burger Spa, which signified your arrival in South Lake Tahoe or, for locals, a feeling of being home, closed in the Fall of 2023, leaving the community with a loss after 50 years.

Enter Tahoe Bros, reinvigorating and keeping the tradition of tasty, charbroiled burgers at a reasonable price alive just across Highway 50. Rock on caught up with the "brothers" (three very good friends who have been in the South Lake Tahoe area for decades) to discuss the opening of this new business and the spirit of local community and its resiliency.

What inspired you to open Tahoe Bros?

We (Ricardo Luquin, Andres Delgadillo, and Gabriel Robles) have lived and worked in South Lake Tahoe for decades. We have been through big winters, smoky summers, and the desolate shoulder seasons. Not to mention the 2008 recession, the pandemic, and the Caldor Fire evacuation. All the while, our love for Tahoe and our community has been unwavering throughout.

"I started my career at the Fresh Ketch, a very popular restaurant in the Tahoe Keys Marina, that is now closed and spent the majority of my career at Izzy's Burger Spa, where I met Gabriel", Ricardo said.

When it closed in the Fall of 2023, it was devastating. "It's like a piece of South Lake Tahoe closed."

The owner of Izzy's was very gracious and Gabriel and Ricardo, who had run Izzy's for the past couple decades, who worked with the family for that same amount of time moved on to other locations that she owned.

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Andres, friends with both Gabriel and Ricardo, owned a lease of former businesses who was currently subleasing to another business.

The space became open, and when he ran into Gabriel at the store, a light bulb went on: He asked Gabriel if he wanted to start their own business—do you want to work for me or be partners?

Gabriel then approached Ricardo, and they spent a couple of days strategizing. The rest is history. Tahoe Brothers Burgers opened on May 16, 2024.

With Izzy's Burger Spa being a "landmark" in the South Lake Tahoe area, what was the reason for the closing?

The closest to the truth that we know is that the landlords didn't want to renew the lease and wanted the owner to update the structure and raise the rent.

How did the name "Tahoe Bros" come about?

We were brainstorming ideas for a name, and it just seemed fitting that we three guys opening a burger restaurant would be "Burger Brothers"—turns out there are many brothers who run burger places! (Ha.) We liked the branding to have the name "Tahoe" in it, and our business license name is Tahoe Burger Brothers.

Given your experience at Izzy's, what lessons or traditions are you bringing to your new venture?

We really respect how the family of Izzy's Burger Spa owned and operated their business. They were very good to their employees, and although they knew they were a tourist destination of South Lake Tahoe, they really valued the locals.

Although we do have a bigger kitchen that lends itself to an easier workspace and more organization, we brought the charbroiled burger concept with us because everything is tastier over an open flame.

How does your menu differ from Izzy's?

The menu is almost identical, and we brought the same standards over from Izzy's and continue to charbroil our burgers to this day. Tahoe Bros is very passionate about the ingredients: fresh, never-frozen beef and locally sourced (Reno—as close as we can get) produce.

What is the most popular item on your menu? And why do you think your customers love it?

The Bacon Cheddar Burger: how could you go wrong with the combination of beef and pork?

The Bacon Cheddar Burger is a fresh single patty charbroiled with cheddar cheese, crispy bacon with mayo, sweet relish, tomatoes, onions, and ketchup.

Do you only serve charbroiled burgers?

We also serve a variety of specialty all-beef hot dogs, marinated chicken sandwiches, wings, tenders, and sides: fries, onion rings, and pretzel bites. Guests can accompany their meal with a variety of beverages, including a vanilla, chocolate, or strawberry milkshake.

How much of your experience did you bring with you to Tahoe Bros?

We have all worked in restaurants our whole lives and it's not just a career but a passion to make quality food at a reasonable price. Andres also owns another restaurant, Los Mexicanos, and a market called Plaza Tapatia. So, the three are well versed in the front and back of the house operations.

Izzy's was a staple for tourists. How do you plan to attract both locals and visitors to your new location?

We love tourist traffic but are mostly concerned about the locals. We like to keep prices low to maintain customer loyalty. It's the same issue we will always have in Tahoe: Balancing the busy months with the shoulder seasons. The locals help all businesses stay afloat year-round.

What's your favorite part of owning Tahoe Bros?

We have always been passionate about good quality food at economical prices, and we love to share that with our customers.

Also, we are working for ourselves, which inspires us to get out of bed every day and build for our families, leaving a legacy that will hopefully one day be as great as Izzy's Burger Spa.



Do you have any plans for expansion or new offerings in the future?

It is too soon to say, but of course, we always have our eyes on the horizon.

Anything you would like to add or want Rock on Magazine to share?

Thank you very much to all those who have frequented our establishment and continue to do so! And Thank you Rock on Magazine for thinking of us. ...

Tahoe Brothers Burgers is at 2660 Lake Tahoe Boulevard Unit 11 in South Lake Tahoe, California 96150.

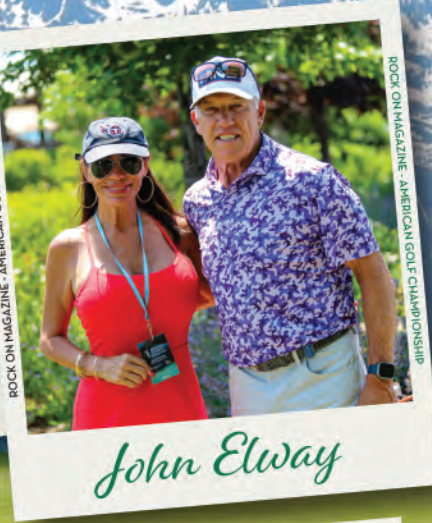
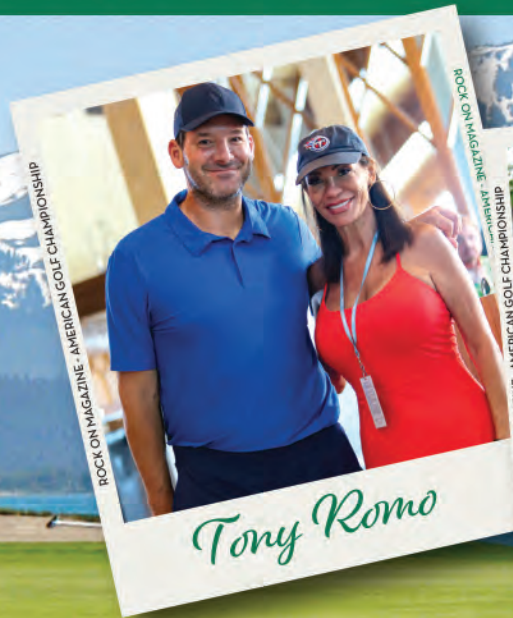
Tahoe Bros is available to order in-person, by phone, or via DoorDash. For more information on Tahoe Brothers Burgers, call **530.600.0896** or follow them on Instagram **@tahoebrosharbroiledburgers**

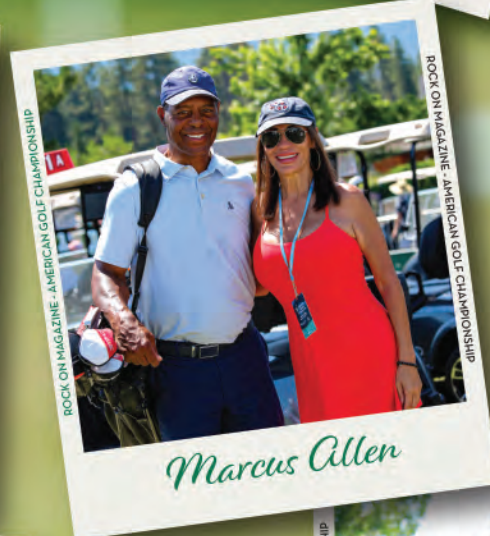
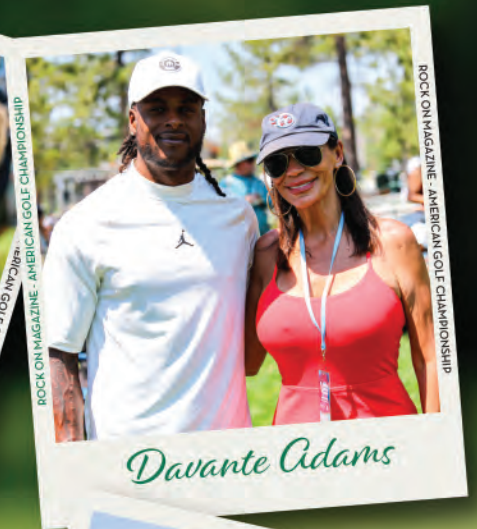


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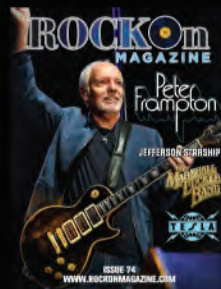
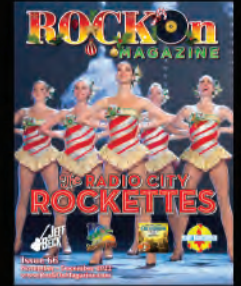
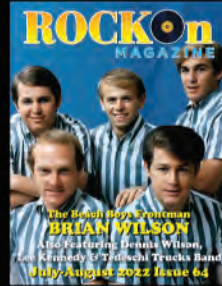




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By Bill Kopp

SHAGGY

is an international superstar. The dancehall reggae sensation has earned blockbuster album and single sales in the U.K. and beyond with his strong voice and inimitable style. Born in Jamaica but a longtime U.S. resident, he has been landing hits on the charts since 1993. While he easily holds his own as a performer, these days he's as likely to embark upon a collaborative project, helping younger artists gain a foothold in the music industry. He's currently on tour across North America, but found time to sit down for a conversation with Rock On.



I get the sense that for you, reggae is a canvas that you paint on. Instead of coloring inside the lines, you use reggae as a foundation, adding other elements to create the finished pieces. Would you agree, and if so, how did you develop that approach?

I would agree with that. Look at music overall: Do-re-mi-fa-so-la-ti-do. We're not inventing the wheel here, bro. You know what I mean? It's really your experience to something that's already been there. You could talk about different melodies, but there's only so much you could do. What you bring to each recording is based on your feeling, your journey. If you asked me to make music that I was making in the early '90s, I can't make that right now because I'm not in that place. I could duplicate what I've made, but I can't really make it. With technology now, anybody could sound good. But can everybody make you feel? Can they evoke an emotion out of you? And that comes, I think, with pain, whatever situations and pains you go through.

I was a kid when I did Boombastic (1995). You might be asking, "What kind of pain are you really singing about in that song?" Because it's really not about the subject matter of the song; it's really about what the song is doing to my life at that point, and the opportunity that I'm bringing into singing. So if I say "Mr. Boombastic," I might have talking about being romantic, fantastic, the greatest lover and all of that. But at that point, I was a kid who wasn't getting laid! And when I got famous I was like, "I can't believe this!" So you're hearing the pain of that, of me basically saying, "Wow, I have actually peaked. I have struggled to where now I actually get laid!" So sometimes it's not really the subject matter, but it's the pain of what you've gone through.

I remember the first time I got dropped from Virgin Records. There was a young lady that used to do promo for me. I've eaten at her house. When her kid was born, and I bought her kid jewelry. She was in the trenches with me every day, doing these interviews.

And once I got dropped, she wouldn't answer my call. I was like, "Oh, shit!" For her, it was a job. For me as a young kid, she meant something to me. She was my family, but I quickly learned, "Okay, well, I guess this is what it is." So on my next journey, I'm looking at things totally from a different angle. So you will express all of these pains that you've gone through these compositions that you've made.

So you're right: it is a canvas that I'm actually painting, but I'm painting the picture of my life as I move through it.



Obviously we're going way back here. But on "Angel" from 2000's Hot Shot, you used a familiar sample, something that is widely recognized, and took it someplace very different. When you were doing things like that, would you start with the sample and build on that?

My early producer was a guy by the name of Sting International. Not Sting of The Police; different guys. I was lucky enough to have Sting International as a producer, but he was also a deejay and avid vinyl record collector. His whole house was filled with vinyl. He literally could be producing and say, "This needs something, and I'm taking this from a James Brown record from 1965." He knew his records like that. He knew how to arrange because he knew how records are supposed to sound. But he used to give me these CDs filled with different samples, because he had a great ear. I might get 30 samples, I might get ten samples. I would listen, and whatever spoke to me, I went with. And I heard Steve Miller's "The Joker" as a sample. And the first thing I said was, "This riff sounds like a reggae riff." At that point, I fell in love with that sample. I didn't even know the original song! I was young at the time [it was released]. But I could hear something that was speaking to me, something I liked.

We came up with the verses first. "Life is one big party when you're still young, but who's gonna have your back when it's all done?" And Rick Rock walked in to the studio in Jamaica. He just started to sing, "Girl, you're my angel, you're my darling," which is from Juice Newton. And I was like, "That fits really good. Let's change some of the words to peeps and shorty." And then we had something that sounded really cool.

About two days after that, I ended up doing the second verse and the bridge; then we had a song. We turned it in to Sting International, and he started to add all the guitars and things around it. Then we had a record that we thought sounded special.

My manager told me the other day, "Inspiration is a luxury; you'll find inspiration if you gotta pay your bills." And those bills ain't waiting for inspiration, bro. So you better find it.

I think as you get success, you get less inspired because you're not forced. So you've got to keep the hunger. Which is why I rarely do records with big superstars. Recently I did "Habibi (I Need Your Love)" with Mohombi and Faydee, two unknown guys. I did "Banana" recently. Over a billion streams with Conkarah, an unknown guy. And I did "Go Down Deh" recently with Spice, who's certainly not a big superstar. And now I have a new record called "Move" with another unknown artist by the name of Lavinia.

And the reason for doing this, it's not strategic in any way. For one, it's how inspired I am by these people; Lav, here's a girl that is really a dancer. She holds a note good, so I'm like, "Okay, but I could make her sound great." And her voice compliments mine. So that is inspiring to me. When you get people that are in the trenches with you, it's the inspiration that you get from them that makes you do these things. All I want to do at this point is to stay inspired.

These artists don't have the same name recognition as you. There have been quite a few singles. At this point, are you focusing on these self contained projects, singles rather than albums?

You know, if I listen to my manager, it'd be like, "You really need to do a Shaggy album because it helps your touring, it ignites your fan base." You got to understand; I'm doing Shaggy for the last 30 years. If I'm doing a Shaggy album right now, I have to be saying something. It's gotta move me. And right now I'm getting most of the inspiration from these people. So I'm looking for the inspiration that is going to make me find something that is special. And to me, if you're not going to go for greatness, then why do it?



The single "Peligroso," that also takes things in a little bit of a different direction.

Maffio is a great producer. He does a lot of these Latin artists. He sent me just a beat, and he says, "I'm doing something. Could you give me a verse?" I spit a verse. Sometimes the inspiration will come through, maybe from the track, maybe from a joke, maybe from a person in the room. I take it from anywhere and any place. I don't have to be in any particular place, you know? And I'm not the guy that's like, "Okay, it's three in the morning. I gotta get up because I'm inspired." No, I'm not that guy. I go into the studios from seven to ten, and between seven to ten, you're gonna get the song. Now, the trick is whether I like it or not. I write a lot of shit I don't like, and I don't care if anybody else likes it. I make music selfishly.

If you create something you don't like, do you set it aside with the possibility of using it later?

I'll finish it even if it's not moving me, because that's my work ethic, I was in the military for four years, and I'm just that kind of a guy. It's very rare that I'll go back to it, but I have done that before where I go back to something, take a piece of it, or parts of it, or the idea of it, or maybe the subject matter of it and flip it again. On a good day, I'll write an average of four songs. I could sit down and knock four of them out. But nobody wants to do that because first of all, it's boring as fuck. I'm clearly good at it, but I find it the most tedious fucking thing ever. No, I do not enjoy the process. That's why I surround myself with a lot of people; it has to be a room full of jokes. Because it is so boring. And you're just sitting here with your thoughts, and I'm not that guy. I'm a stage guy. I want to be on stage. I will sing the same song 30 times as long as I get 30 different reactions.

I've been listening to Come Fly Wid Me: The Sinatra Songbook Inna Reggae Style. It's an inspired album concept. Those songs sound like they were written to be arranged the way that you do them. Is that something that had been gestating in your mind for a long time?

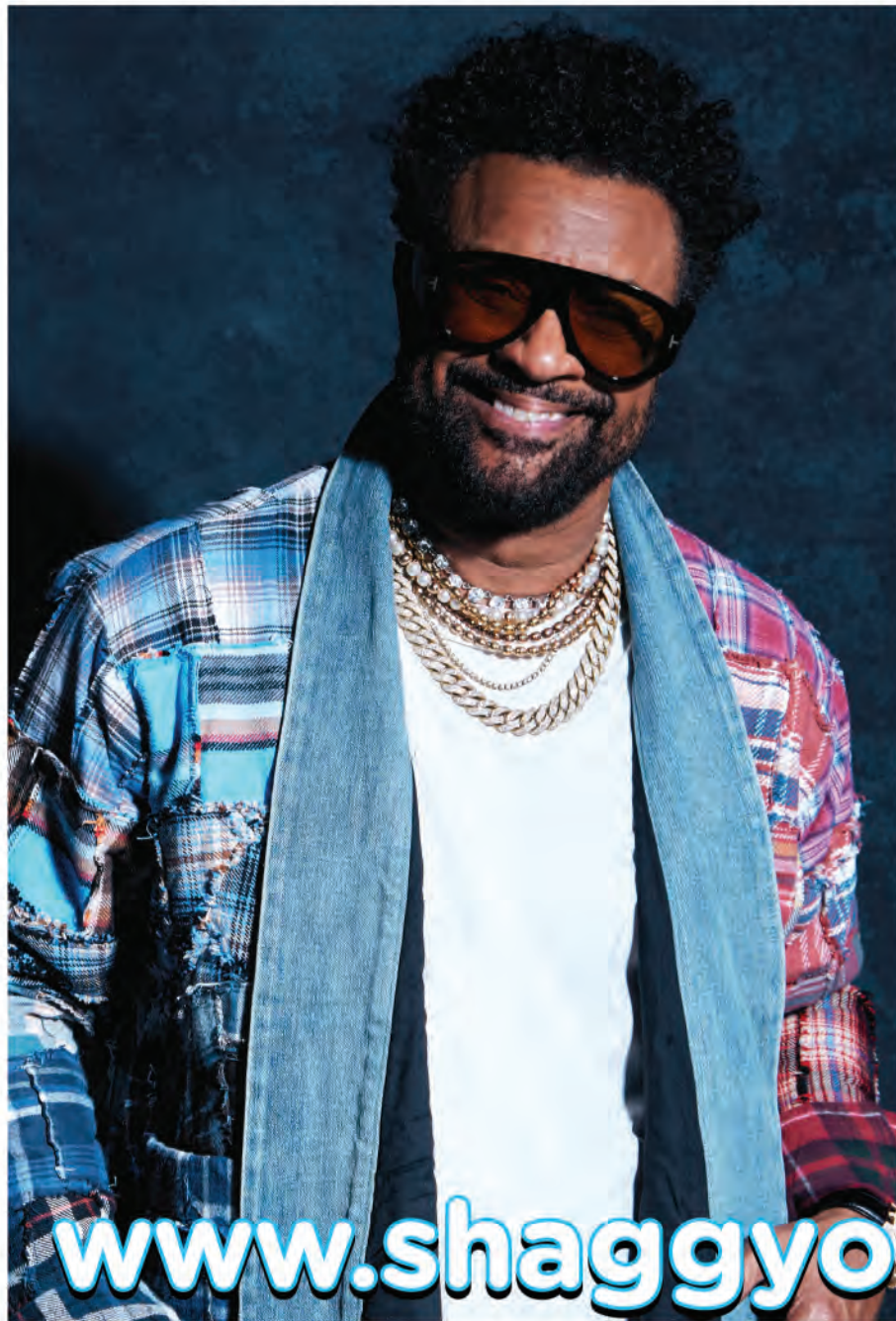
What if I tell you that is my favorite album that I've ever done? First of all, it was the most challenging thing forever because Sting [this time, the former Police man - ed.] saw something in me that I couldn't see. We're on the fjords in Norway and we're doing the tour in support of our album 44/876 at the time. We had a day off and he's like, "Let's get a boat!" We went out there and he's jumping in this water. It's freezing! You know, I'm from Jamaica; I'm not gonna jump in that shit. He's like, "Oh, come jump in, Shaggy." I'm like, "No, I don't feel like freezing my ass off." He's over there in his little Speedo. And I'm like, "Yo, fuck that." So I put my phone on some Bluetooth. And I have a Sinatra playlist. You know, what a lot of people don't know is radio stations in Jamaica didn't start playing reggae music on the radio 24/7 until around the '70s. Before that, it was a lot of American music: people like Bing Crosby and Nat King Cole, and a lot of country music. And Sinatra was a big part of my household growing up.

But anyway, Sting heard me sing along with one of the songs. He just cocks his head and says, "Oh, my God, do that again." And I kept singing. It was like, "That's your key." I'm like, "What are you talking about?" He says, "Your voices are so similar." He's always just heard me do dancehall reggae things. And Sting's like, "Wouldn't it be great if we would do a cover of that?" And then he said, "Wouldn't it be great if we do it in reggae?" Then we start talking. Of course we're having a couple of drinks at this point. And we're like, "Well, maybe we do an album of it."

This thing sat around for two years. The world went through Covid, done with Covid, Sting's playing a residency. I came to see him, and he takes up the guitar, and he started playing a couple of chords from "Come Fly With Me." I just started singing with him. And he's like, "We should really do this." It was about Christmas time. He says, "We should do it in January."

Sting showed up in Miami at my house and says, "Come, Shaggy; let's do this." And so now I'm scrambling, trying to get musicians. We flew a couple people in from Jamaica for the rhythm section, and I was like, "Okay, let's see what we come up with." Sting picked the songs that were gonna do, and now we had to figure out how to make those chord changes work in reggae to where it sounded cool and not corny.

And that was where the challenge was, and where the magic came. We averaged about two songs a day on vocals. And within about six weeks, we had the whole project all wrapped up as far as the making of the songs. It was just incredible; we did a couple of shows together, him and me.



Was Come Fly With Me: The Sinatra Songbook Inna Reggae Style pressed on vinyl as well?

No, but we did 44/876 on vinyl. Funny enough you're saying this. A couple of weeks ago I was over at Sting's house. He has this wonderful record player and he looked around and it was like, "Yo, we should get this on vinyl." So that's probably something that we'll end up doing.

You've got two Grammy awards, and at least six other nominations. Beyond the honor of getting them, do awards, make any real difference in your career?

I don't think it makes any real difference. But, listen: it feels good when you win, man. I'm not even gonna lie. It's gonna be hard for a guy like me. You see, I will be nominated six or seven times, but I won't be the guy getting it because I am not your traditional guy.

And your voters are traditional people, you know, and they're going to be voting on that Bob Marley style reggae that I don't particularly make. You know, I represent the genre and I'm from that genre and I respect it and I love it, but I'm not inspired to make it. And the reason is that I look at these guys as masters of their craft. Now, would I be thinking that I could make a record just like Bob Marley and do it better than him? Who am I to think I could be doing it better than Dennis Brown?

I think what's a better legacy to me is the barriers that I've broken down over three decades. "Oh Carolina" was the first dancehall record to ever go #1 in the British chart. "Mr. Boombastic" was the first reggae or dancehall record ever to debut at #1 in the British chart. I debuted again at #1 with "It Wasn't Me." And I debuted again with "Angel" at #1 in the British chart. And the Hot Shot album debuted at number one in the British chart. To this day, I'm the only reggae dancehall artist from Jamaica that has a number one Billboard album. No one else has.

We have sold 40 million records. And I was the guy that was responsible to take it to mainstream. And by the way, I did all of this without ever having great executives. You look at great artists, from Springsteen to anybody: They all had great executives who believed in them. This guy don't. The point I'm trying to make to you is that I have done all of this without having that Tuesday morning conversation, "Let's put \$10 million behind this artist."

And why would they? There was no track record of reggae being played on radio in that kind of rotation. I am the first. I think that's a bigger legacy than any award. I rather go for the reward than the award.

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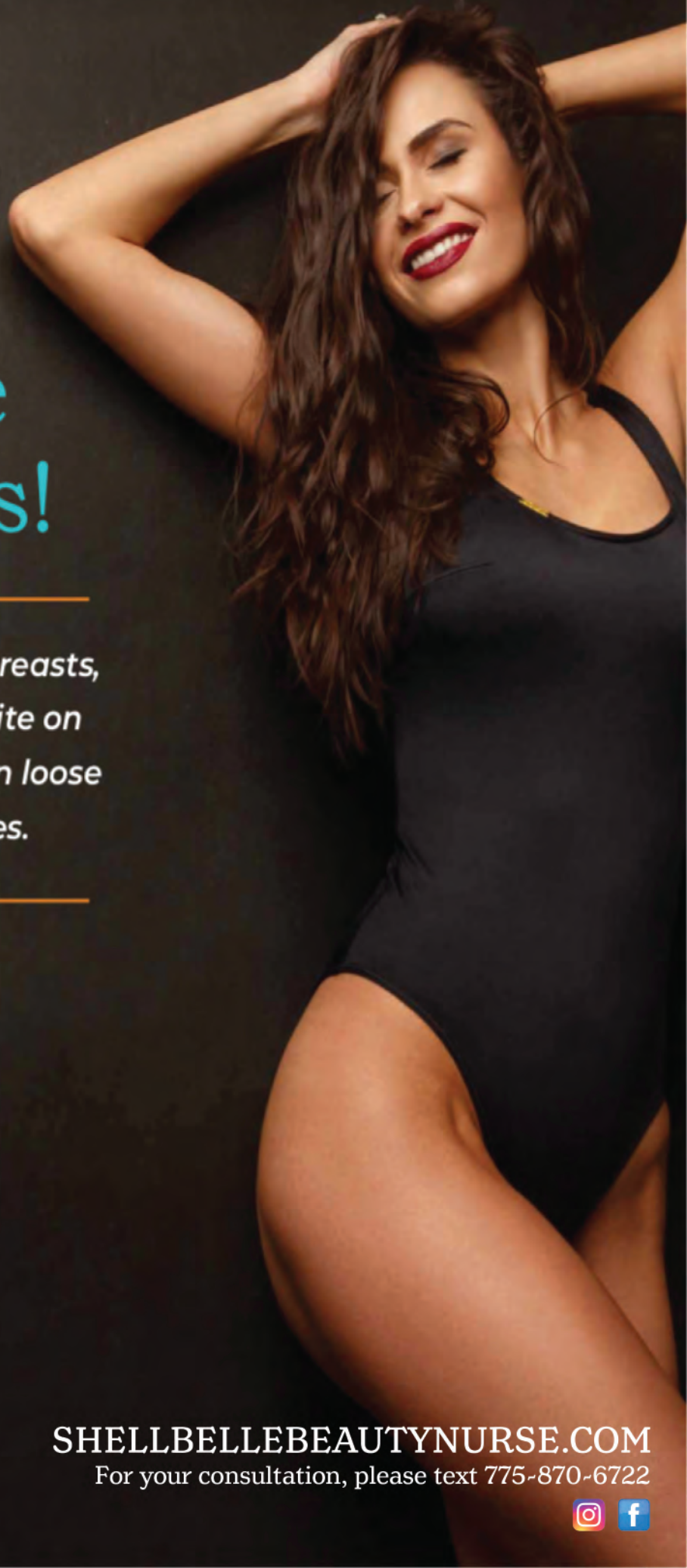
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defined success
on her own terms.**

With a fascinating and unusual backstory, the Alaska native sailed against the prevailing musical tides of '90s grunge, proving that there's always a place for sensitive singer-songwriters (one of her early songs even bore the title, "I'm Sensitive"). At the height of her fame, after a pair of blockbuster-selling albums, she took a break, and when she returned, she did what she had always done: make the kind of music that she wanted to make.

Now, nearly 30 years after releasing her debut album (1995's *Pieces of You*), Jewel is embarking on a co-headlining tour with another musical star, Melissa Etheridge. That tour includes a July 20 concert at the Grand Sierra Resort & Casino in Reno. In this *Rock On* interview, Jewel talks about her beginnings, her fame, and the lessons she has learned along the way.



I grew up listening to country music. I grew up listening to Loretta Lynn and Dolly Parton.

I get chill bumps saying those two women's names; two heroic women. Those are two women to model a life after.

You started out playing in Anchorage. When you were young, what kind of lessons did you learn from that experience that you find are still useful today?

I learned a lot. I started singing with my dad when I was five, for dinner shows for tourists. So I learned to be professional by the time I was eight. I knew I had the bug. I didn't think that would lead to a career, but I knew I loved it. It was intellectually fascinating; it was like a puzzle: "How do I get my voice to do this? How do I get it to change?" I learned to yodel at the time, and then my dad and I became a duet, and we started singing in bars. Those were five-hour sets with a lot of cover songs. My dad was a songwriter, so we did his originals mixed in there.

Musically, I was singing and listening to my dad sing. I sang harmony mostly, on some of the best songs of all time. I wasn't raised listening to the Eagles or Elvis or the Rolling Stones, but I grew up singing harmony to their songs. I grew up hearing my dad. And having sung that many songs caused me to inherently understand storytelling and song structure. It taught me to be good with crowds. My dad never wrote a set list; he just read the audience.

But that taught me to improvise and to not be too precious. It taught me to read a crowd, and [how] to deal with drunks, which is a really critical part of our job. It taught me a lot of professionalism, to work very hard. Doing long sets like that teaches and trains your voice to have a lot of stamina. And it really taught me what I still think of as a blue collar attitude toward this job. I'm an entertainer. I'm not curing cancer. I am hired to do a job. And I think that has always kept me very grounded.

Tell me about how those experiences informed your adult career.

When I became a professional at 18, I had to start opening for Bauhaus and Belly and Catherine Wheel; I remember opening for the Ramones, too. I was a solo acoustic folk singer with a guitar in front of some unkind fan bases that did not want to hear songs like “I’m Sensitive” and “Pieces of You.”

All of that bar background made sure that I fought for people listening to me. You know, even street singing taught me that I am not background music. I want your attention. I am unwilling to let you walk by or talk while you eat. I have to have your attention, and that means I have to earn it. And so I will try a million tricks and strategies, like holding a long note out for a really long time or stopping in the middle of a song because you’re losing their attention and you stopping makes them say, “Did she just stop in the middle of a song?”

And if it comes down to it, just flat out tell the audience to be quiet; kick people out of the audience, saying, “I get that you’re here not to see me. I understand. You may all go out in the lobby. I will wait for all of you to leave. And if there’s three of you left, I will sing for three of you.” I was opening for Bob Dylan, and that ended up being what made him mentor me, when he heard I was kicking people out of his shows.



Some artists are dilettantes. They dabble in this, they dabble in that. Your forays into sort of different styles – folk, pop, Americana, country – have felt more authentic. Do you have an omnivorous approach to music?

I am a very curious person. And if I'm not growing, I'm dying. That's just how I am. Now, there are people and artists that are iterative. They have one thing and one style, and they hone it their whole lives. And it is so authentic to them. That just isn't what I am in my life in any way, shape, or form. I am very adventurous, and I'm always wanting to learn and grow and change. Now, that's hard on a career, financially. The smartest thing is not to switch genres. The smartest thing is to make "You Are Meant for Me" [over and over].

But I realized that I wanted to move into other genres. I knew that was going to happen; I knew it was authentic to me. I knew I would pay a price; maybe nobody would like it. And I knew that it would take years between albums, and I would kill my momentum every time.

I grew up listening to country music. I grew up listening to Loretta Lynn and Dolly Parton. I get chill bumps saying those two women's names; two heroic women. Those are two women to model a life after. And Johnny Cash and Merle Haggard were such a part of my ethos that I knew I wanted to make those [kinds of] albums.

So I had to switch labels. I had to build relationships in a whole other radio category. It shouldn't be that painful. You would have thought I was murdering children because I made pop music or because I made a country album! But it's gotten easier now. I watched Taylor [Swift] go from country to pop, and I was like, "Good!"



"I am a very curious person. And if I'm not growing, I'm dying. That's just how I am."



Tell me about the upcoming tour.

I guess it's different just because I'm touring. I don't tour that much. I took a good seven years off when I had my son and became a single mom, and then toured with Train two years ago. I wanted tour again and was looking for the right fit for multiple reasons, and I was really convinced that Melissa Etheridge and I are going to be a really wonderful bill together.

I almost did a tour with a very famous band, and I would have [only] broken even after four months. It's just not a real appealing thing. That's just not a great proposition as a single mom, and who wants to spend four months of their time breaking even? But I get it. I had a price to pay because I don't have the same ticket power as I had before. So that's fine, but you have to find a way to solve things that work for you. So I pitched Melissa on this idea: let's split everything. Let's split the band. Let's use the same band and crew. And it's allowed me as a single mom to tour less, but to still make some money. I'm pretty excited about that.

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38 Special: **Rockin' Into the Future** By Bill Kopp

38 Special started out like many other bands in and around Jacksonville, Florida in the late '60s and early '70s, with a Southern rock sound and attitude to match. But over time, the more nuanced and melody-leaning characteristics of the band came to the fore, giving them a hit single just in time to save them from being dropped by their label. And from there, working with a world-class songwriting collaborator, things only got bigger. 38 Special became a hit attraction, with blockbuster-selling albums and singles, MTV videos and high-profile tours.

But the band co-founded by Don Barnes never forgot where they came from, and Barnes is still rocking today, fronting the band's current lineup. As 38 Special celebrates its 50th anniversary, the group is currently on a North American tour. Don Barnes gets into conversation with Rock On about the band's early days, its biggest successes, and what the future holds.



When you and Donnie Van Zant started the band, his brother Ronnie was in the process of finding massive success with Lynyrd Skynyrd. How much of an influence were they upon what 38 Special was doing?

Greatly influenced. We were all from the same city. Jacksonville is a Navy town, so a lot of these groups – Molly Hatchet, Skynyrd, The Allman Brothers Band – everybody came from that same area because of the Navy bases that we all played as young guys. We all played sailors' clubs; at 15 and 16 years old, you'd make \$100 a week. So all of those guys – Ronnie Van Zant, Duane Allman – everybody played the enlisted men's clubs because there was a venue there for young guys to put a little band together and actually go make a little money. It's kind of like the Liverpool thing, a port city.

And then, of course, they had the proms, teen clubs and dances. Ronnie and all those guys were the best band in Jacksonville; they were called The One Percent. They would win the Battle of the Bands. And, of course, when they changed their name, we thought, "Oh, you gotta be kidding! Lynyrd Skynyrd?" But we looked up to those guys and we saw them improve every day, every week. You'd see Allen [Collins] and Gary [Rossington] and just watch them develop. And we were influenced by them.

The band took a while to find major success. You changed your sound after a few albums in a Southern rock style. How did that come about?

We were really behind the eight ball there. We had three albums that basically went straight over the cliff. Today people think that "Hold On Loosely" was on our first album. That was our fourth album! But, you know, it just shows you conviction and fortitude to keep yourself together. And a band is like a marriage: you're a support group there, and you're kind of married to five other guys. There are some guys who would get a little down and think, "This is not working out. I've got to get a regular job. I've got a family." But we would always be holding each other up and saying, "It might be right around the corner; we don't know. We got a few steps forward here, so let's keep at it."

The band's peak began and sustained once you started writing with Jim Peterik. How did that relationship come about?

Our label at the time was A&M Records; they're very artist oriented. That's why we went with them, because they would have patience. They'd have an A&R [Artists and Repertoire] department that would try to help you out, bring you material.

John Kalodner had resurrected the career of Aerosmith and several other bands. Well, the band Survivor – who no one had heard of yet – had done an album, and they had a song called "Rockin' Into the Night" that they didn't put on their album. But John said, "This song, it's got some legs. It might have some potential. Do you think that 38 Special might be willing to try it out?"

We were desperate, so we went to the studio and put "Rockin' Into the Night" together, and it worked out enough. It was a Top 40 song; it didn't change our life or anything. But it did open the door to radio a little bit. So that was the beginning of a little road to success.

And then our manager said, "Would you like to write with Jim Peterik, the guy who wrote 'Rockin' Into the Night'?" Sure! We flew up to Chicago. Jim asked us, "What's going on with your lives?" I was going through a bad time in a marriage relationship. I had been thinking, "What is it about people that can't seem to tolerate their differences? They try to change the other one or keep them under their thumb, or they're jealous of what they're trying." I had my little notebook of song lines and titles, and I had written down a title.

So I said to Jim, "What do you think about this title: 'Hold on Loosely.'"

And he said, "...But don't let go." And that's the first thing that came out. I thought it was an absolutely perfect couplet for that piece of advice. And we were off to the races. Two hours later, we had written our first song together, and it turned out to be the biggest anthemic song of this band's career. Two hours later!



Does that songwriting partnership continue to this day?

Yes! I was just at his house about a month ago. We've got some new songs. The chemistry is still there all these years later. We sat around, went to dinner and had a lot of laughs. We were cranking them out; we've got some good stuff coming up here. We're putting together a legacy package for our 50th anniversary next year. It's going to be a box set with one CD of all the hit songs over the years, and then the other CD has new songs and some previously unreleased ones.

What will the shows on this tour be like?

We've lined up all these songs; we bang them up against each other. We take the audience for a ride. We start with an explosive opening, and we keep climbing and climbing. We've always gone after it like a football team: we're out there to win. And when we were an opening band, god help who had to follow you because we were going to throw down. We were going to put everything we got. It means everything to us. And we still go out there like a team, to win.

Years from now, when people talk about the band, how would you like 38 Special to be remembered?

As guys that gave 110%. We always have tried to be the best at what we do. You've gotta think you are the best band in the world; that's what your attitude has to be, and that's how we always approach it. It's funny. We'll play some of these big fairground grandstands. There'll be 10,000 people out there. And [in the audience] you'll see a guy probably my age, and he's letting himself get old. He brought his wife to the fair, and he's sitting there with his arms folded.

I'm playing to that guy. Those guys, those naysayers? I play to them.



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Barry Kerch of SHINEDOWN HOT SAUCES AND SIZZLING ROCK

by Bill Kopp

Launched 23 years ago in Jacksonville, Florida, Shinedown makes its own brand of passionate, high-energy alt-rock. With seven albums to its credit (2022's Planet Zero is the latest), Shinedown is both a consistent chart success and a hot concert attraction. Fronted by singer, songwriter and guitarist Brent Smith, the group holds the record for the most #1 singles on Billboard's Mainstream Rock chart (19 to date). In fact every single one of Shinedown's singles has made it into that charts Top 5.

And rocking isn't all that the group is up to these days. Drummer Barry Kerch has recently taken the lead in developing a line of Shinedown custom-branded hot sauces. Working with Torchbearer, Kerch has applied his hot sauce expertise – he has grown peppers at home for his family – the whip up three unique flavors. The flagship flavor is Symptom Garlic Chipotle Sauce; it features a subtle kick, a hint of smokiness, just the right amount of thickness, and a lovely finish. Two additional varieties will debut this year.

Ahead of Shinedown's July 27 concert date at the Nugget Event Center, Barry Kerch was happy to speak with Rock On about his band. Those delicious hot sauces certainly came up in the conversation, too.





Let's go way back to the beginning. How did you find out about the audition opportunity for Shinedown?

That came about through my brother. He's a radio deejay here in Jacksonville. And he had gotten a CD at the station of this Brent Smith demo project, and heard that they were looking for drummers. Brent already had the original bass player and guitar player. I had just moved up here to Jacksonville from Orlando for a job. And I said, "Man, I love this guy's voice. Let me go to audition." I called them. Brent said, "Let's have a meeting first. And we met at a Hooters, of all places. We had a couple of beers and he said, "All right, let's try you out." The next day I worked my way into the position I'm in now.

I read that you were the seventh drummer to try out! Did you know that going in?

I knew that they had tried out a few. At the time I didn't know that I was the seventh, because we were still establishing that relationship. But I knew one of my good friends had also auditioned, a guy named Matt Brown. And he's a fantastic drummer, so I knew that. But seven is my lucky number. I was born in the seventies on the August 7. So it's kind of been my thing.

When you joined, what did you understand as the vision or goal for the group?

When they said, "Okay, let's audition," we went to their little practice space. I played the song "45," and I played a song called "Lacerated," because they wanted to see what I would do with that. It went great, and they said, "How about tomorrow, we're going to go into the studio and we'll record '45,' because we want to see if you can record in the studio." Because some people get "red light fever."

I went in, we recorded "45." They said, "This is great. You're with us." Fast forward, we finally come up with a band name. We get the approval from Atlantic. We're in L.A., recording the first record, we do this grandiose version of "45" with orchestra and all this stuff, and it was great. We turn everything into the label. And our A&R guy says, "Man, there's just something about that original demo version." So that version you hear on the record is actually my audition.

"Looking back at 20 years, it was never given to us, and it was never easy..."

Brent was previously in a band called Dreve. They were signed to Atlantic, and made an album that never got released. But at that time, Ahmet Ertegun was still the head of Atlantic, and he was known for developing artists back when they actually did artist development.

So Ertegun said to Brent, "I know you have something, but you're not there yet." And that's when Brent ended up down here and started forming what is now Shinedown. Brent made it very clear early on to Atlantic: "I do not want to be a solo artist. I will not be a solo artist. I want to be in a band. That's my goal." And that was the vision: "We're going to be in a band, and we're going to try to take over the world."

Looking back at 20 years, it was never given to us, and it was never easy, and we never rose to the top real quick, like a lot of the bands did... ones that are no longer here. And I'm so thankful.

**"We're always hungry.
We're always working hard.
We never take a break."**



It took so much hard work and really taught us a lot of life lessons, because in those early days, if we would have shot to the top, we'd be gone.

With Brent being sober for quite a few years now, we've re-energized ourselves and really come together as a group. It's better now than it's ever been with the four of us. And with that, the mission is even stronger. We've never been a band that looks back and thinks, "Oh, look at what we accomplished." Instead, we go, "That was cool. What's next?" We're selling out 20,000 people in arenas here in the states and in the UK. We can do the same in the rest of the world. We've got a lot more to do, and we want to be in stadiums. So we're just getting started, and that's the way we always look at it. We're always hungry. We're always working hard. We never take a break.



www.shinedown.com

Let's shift from talking about music to hot sauce. The Shinedown hot sauces are really good. How did that new enterprise come about?

It was kind of organic and kind of by chance. Torchbearer, who we partnered with, approached us and said, "Do you think you guys might be interested in this?" And I went, "Yep, I'm your guy! It's me. I love hot sauce." Half of my fridge is hot sauce. Literally. I make my own, I grow my own peppers. I am a hot sauce nerd and have been since I was a little kid. So then the main guy at Torchbearer and I started going back and forth: "What flavor profiles do you like?" We started spitballing ideas, and he said, "Okay, let me make up some samples." He'd send me a bunch, and then I'd say, "I like this, I don't like this, and maybe this one needs this."

Torchbearer has been around for about 20 years, so they really know what they're doing. They have a huge selection of sauce. He's like, "Should we add a little more arrowroot to make it a little thicker?" We got into those levels, and we spent about five, six months on it. And we finally came up with three products that we really were proud of, that fit both of our ideas.

The Symptom Garlic Chipotle is the first one released; the other two are coming soon. It was fun to do, and I would absolutely do it again. But what was really nice about it is that it's a true passion. Shinedown didn't slap their name on some hot sauce that was given to us: "Here you go, here's a hot sauce." We worked hard on that, and it's something I'm proud of. I would never put Shinedown's name – or my own personal name – on something I didn't believe in.



www.shinedown.com/tasteofmadness

FOREVER GONE BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN

TOBY KEITH

July 8th 1961 - February 5th 2024

Toby Keith Covel is an American country music singer, songwriter, record producer, actor, and businessman. Keith released his chart-topping debut single, "Should've Been a Cowboy", in 1993. During the 1990s, Keith released his first four studio albums, each earning gold or higher certification.



RICHARD LEWIS

June 29th, 1947 - February 27th 2024

Richard Philip Lewis was an American stand-up comedian, actor, and writer who became prominent in the 1980s and known for his dark, neurotic, and self-deprecating humor.



MATHEW PERRY

August 16, 1969 - October 28, 2023

Matthew Langford Perry was an American and Canadian actor. He gained international fame for starring as Chandler Bing on the NBC television sitcom Friends. Perry also appeared on Ally McBeal and received Primetime Emmy Award nominations for performances in The West Wing and The Ron Clark Story.



CARL WEATHERS

January 14th 1948 - February 1st 2024

Carl Weathers was an American actor, director, and gridiron football linebacker. His roles included boxer Apollo Creed in the first four Rocky films, Colonel Al Dillon in Predator, Chubbs Peterson in Happy Gilmore, and Combat Carl in the Toy Story franchise.



ANGUS CLOUD

July 10th, 1998 - July 31st 2023

Conor Angus Cloud Hickey was an American actor. He was best known for portraying Fezco in the HBO drama series Euphoria. He also had minor roles in the independent films North Hollywood and The Line and appeared in music videos by Noah Cyrus, Juice Wrld, Becky G, and Karol G.



DAVID SOUL

August 28th, 1943 - January 4th 2024

David Soul was an American-British actor and singer. His career spanned five decades, and he rose to prominence for portraying Detective Kenneth "Hutch" Hutchinson in the American television series Starsky & Hutch from 1975 to 1979.



DICKEY BETTS

December 12th, 1943 - April 18th 2024

Forrest Richard Betts was an American guitarist, singer, songwriter, composer and founding member of the Allman Brothers Band. He assumed sole lead guitar duties during the peak of the group's commercial success in the mid-1970s and was the writer and singer on the Allmans' hit single "Ramblin' Man". Betts was inducted with the band into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1995.



Louis Cameron Gossett Jr.

May 27, 1936 - March 29, 2024

was an American actor. He made his stage debut at the age of 17. Shortly thereafter, he successfully auditioned for the Broadway play Take a Giant Step. Gossett continued acting onstage in critically acclaimed plays including A Raisin in the Sun (1959), The Blacks (1961), Tambourines to Glory (1963), and The Zulu and the Zayda (1965). In 1977, Gossett appeared in the popular miniseries Roots, for which he won Outstanding Lead Actor for a Single Appearance in a Drama or Comedy Series at the Emmy Awards.



Glynis Johns

October 5, 1923 - January 4, 2024

Glynis Margaret Payne Johns was a British actress. In a career spanning seven decades on stage and screen, Johns appeared in more than 60 films and 30 plays. She received various accolades throughout her career, including a Tony Award and a Drama Desk Award as well as nominations for an Academy Award, a Golden Globe Award, and a Laurence Olivier Award. She was one of the last surviving stars from the Golden Age of Hollywood and classical years of British cinema.



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