

The cover of Rockkon Magazine features a photograph of Kesha. She has long, wavy blonde hair and is wearing a black jacket. She is holding a black sign with gold lettering that reads "ENGELBERT HUMPERDINGCK". The background is a light grey wall with a string of colorful Christmas lights at the top. The magazine title "ROCKKON" is at the top in large, colorful letters, with the letter 'O' replaced by a vinyl record. Below it, the word "MAGAZINE" is in a black, blocky font. The name "KESHA" is written in large, black, outlined letters across the middle of the image. Below "KESHA", the words "pink Martini" are written in a pink, cursive font. At the bottom, the text "ENGELBERT HUMPERDINGCK" is written in a blue, outlined font, with a small crown icon above the letters "EH".

ROCKKON

MAGAZINE

KESHA

pink Martini



ENGELBERT HUMPERDINGCK



ISSUE 72

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Issue 72

KESHA

Pink Martini



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January 26th Stephen Lord Music 7:00-10:00 PM

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ROCKOn
MAGAZINE

Pink Martini

A TOAST TO THE WORLD'S RICH MUSICAL VARIETY

by Bill Kopp



Founded in 1994 by Thomas Lauderdale, Pink Martini has carved out a unique niche for itself in the world of music. The large and ever-expanding group combines many genres of music – from pop to classical to ethnic styles – and delivers it all in an exuberant, engaging and multilingual manner. A Pink Martini concert experience is a musical travelogue, taking the audience on a trip that celebrates the varied musical character that defines the human race. The band stays very busy, but in a brief moment between shows – and ahead of the group's December 7 date at the Grand Sierra Resort's Grand Theatre – band leader Lauderdale took time to chat with Rock On about the group's vision, its past and its future.



If you had to describe Pink Martini in the form of a mission statement, what would you say?

Thomas Lauderdale: Well, I have said many times that I'd like to think that if the United Nations had a house band in 1962, we would've been that band. And I mean that in terms of aesthetics, and also in terms of the ethos of the band. So I guess that is sort of our mission statement. What we do is to bring people together through music by a band made up of people from multiple countries and backgrounds, both cultural and musical. Our music blends many genres and styles and even eras, and that comes through in both what you hear and what you see on stage.

Pink Martini plays shows both as a self-contained unit and accompanied by an orchestra. In terms of arrangement, how does preparation differ between those performances?

In terms of preparation, there's a lot more that goes into it when we perform with an orchestra than when we do a regular Pink Martini show. At this point, we're almost 29 years into the band; we have some original members and many others who have been with the band for many, many years. So we really do know what we're doing on stage without a ton of prep for each individual show or tour, beyond soundcheck.

But when we perform with an orchestra, I have to get set lists in advance to the orchestra. They almost always have a librarian on staff to get the music ready for their musicians to practice. That's actually very challenging for me, because I am usually really "in the moment," thinking about each show based on what feels right and fun, how the last night went, and things like that.

When we are prepping for a tour, and I'm on a break in between, I'm wedging interviews (like this one) in between multiple shows and tour dates, trying to get things done for my own personal life or for boards that I'm on or other things. And then it's back on the road. So the set lists get made before soundcheck. But when we perform with an orchestra, I have to think about the shows weeks before we've even left for tour.

That said, I really do love performing with orchestra. There's something really special about that for both the audience and the band. Being backed by an orchestra really adds another dimension to our music.

The multilingual nature of Pink Martini show is a key to its appeal. Was singing in many languages part of the original concept, or is that something that developed later?

You know, I am glad that you also think that it's key to the appeal. I feel that very strongly. It was not something I explicitly set out to do, but I also have never shied away from songs beyond the U.S., outside of what's currently popular and is in other languages than English. In fact, I have always gravitated towards songs in other languages, songs from other cultures, songs that are almost completely unknown in the United States.

Of course, our biggest hit "Sympathique" is a song in French. I have always loved the romance and sexiness of French music. Even before I started the band, I took French in high school and college, and I loved Edith Piaf. So to the extent that we are a multilingual band – and I think we're up to 26 languages at this point – that has certainly evolved over the last three decades. But it has always been part of the fabric and the DNA of Pink Martini, and of my musical aesthetic.

Other than personnel changes, how has Pink Martini changed in the years since you began?

In some ways now we are getting back to one of the roots of band. I originally envisioned Pink Martini as a sort of variety show inspired by the brilliant Paul Reubens, who passed away recently. I absolutely loved Pee-wee Herman's Holiday Special. It was a total variety show of various characters, and that was something that I wanted to emulate in Pink Martini. In fact I got the Del Rubio triplets, who were in Pee Wee's special, to join for some of those very first thrown-together Pink Martini shows. The band moved away from that as we became more professional and developed our own repertoire and style, but I've brought just a bit of that variety show feel to certain shows in recent years. And that's been really fun for me.



In your experience, when people come to a Pink Martini show, what surprises them the most?

I think the incredible Edna Vazquez and Jimmie Herrod consistently blow people away. The fantastic China Forbes is still our lead singer, and she's the main draw for a lot of people, as she absolutely should be. As is the whole Pink Martini experience.

I think the other thing that people consistently say is that while few of the songs are in a language they speak or understand, they still love it. A lot of audiences – particularly in America – are not exposed to music in other languages. But they're always surprised how much they still enjoy it. Even if you don't speak French, Farsi, Hebrew or Arabic, it's there for you. The music is truly a universal language, and people come away from concerts feeling that.

What do you find most rewarding about the group?

The opportunities that it has given me to see the world, to meet incredible and interesting people, and to do something that I love. I respect and love everybody in the group; their contributions are amazing as well.

Does the group tailor its performances – e.g. change the set list, etc. – to specific countries or regions?

We have been on tour in Europe several times this year, in Greece, Turkey, Spain, Portugal and France. And those audiences absolutely go wild for hearings songs in their languages, songs that they can sing along with. And they do! This past week we definitely played more of our songs in French.

I will often look up a song in the language where we are touring, usually an old song or a well-known classic. When we traveled to South Korea in 2011, China learned "Sang Gaak," a popular Korean song. Earlier this year we were in Alaska, where our PR and Marketing director was born and raised. We opened up our concert with the Alaska State Flag song, and the whole crowd stood and sang it with the band. That's not something we would do at any other concert. Things like that are really fun, and local audiences really appreciate them. So sometimes it's a new or different song just for that concert, like in Alaska.

And sometimes a new song can end up in the Pink Martini repertoire, which is what happened in South Korea, or learning "Askim Bahardi" in Turkish, which we then recorded on *Je dis oui!*

If you could go back in time and give some advice to the 1990s version of yourself, what would you say?

I'm not sure. I never thought I was going to be in a band, much less the leader and founder of a group that toured for almost 30 years. I wanted to be the mayor of Portland! This is such an unlikely and improbable path, and it's worked out. So I don't think I could warn my past self towards or away from it. I think it just had to happen, and here we are!



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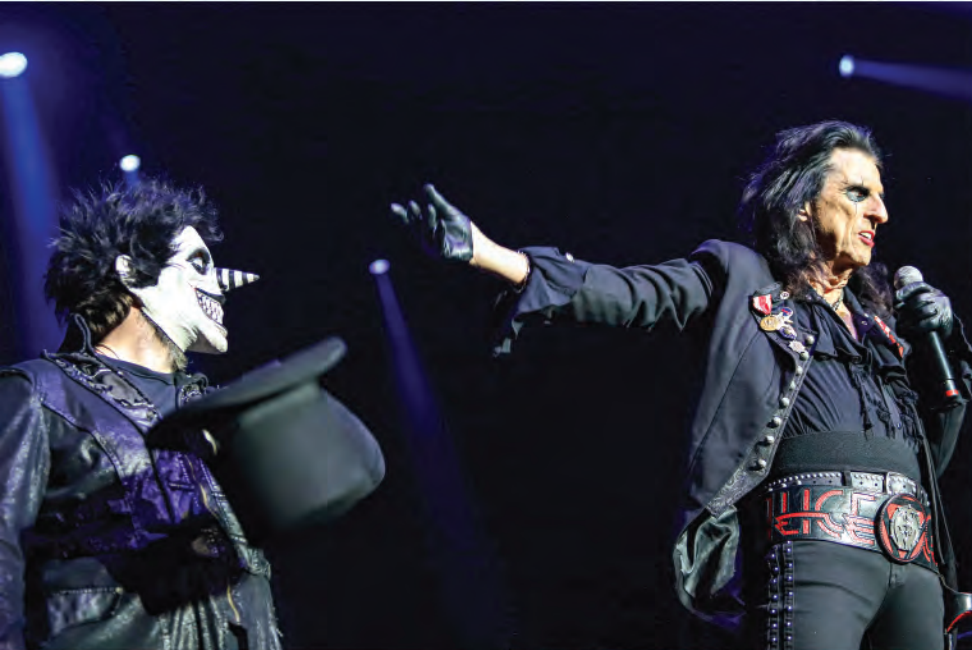
Which Wolf Wins? The one You Feed Most

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I want to thank everyone for their support and community love. I love to help businesses succeed, and I am always available to brainstorm new and innovative ideas.

Sincerely,
Gina Adams - CEO - Rock On Magazine





ROCKOn MAGAZINE

Alice Cooper in Reno was a Hauntingly Spectacular Performance

By Jason Kincade

Venue: *Grand Sierra Theatre, Reno, Nevada*

Alice Cooper, the legendary shock rocker, brought his signature blend of theatrics, hard rock, and macabre storytelling to the Grand Sierra Theatre. With a career spanning over five decades, Cooper proved that he still reigns as the master of shock rock, delivering a performance that was equally thrilling, nostalgic, and visually stunning.

The show kicked off with an energetic performance of "Welcome To The Show," which had the audience singing along to every word. Cooper's signature stage antics were on full display as he moved across the stage, interacting with the crowd and keeping them engaged throughout his performance.

Highlights of the night included classic hits like "Feed My Frankenstein" and "No More Mr. Nice Guy," which had fans, young and old, rocking out in unison. The energy during "Poison" was contagious, with the audience singing the chorus at the top of their lungs.

Throughout the show, Cooper kept up the theatrics, performing songs while decked out in various costumes, from his iconic black leather jacket and top hat to the white straight jacket in which he performs "The Ballad Of Dwight Fry."

The set design was fantastic, with giant props, including dolls and balloons, adding to the ominous yet playful atmosphere. The lighting was equally impressive, with a mix of moody, dim-lit moments and vibrant, strobing effects.

As the show ended, Cooper ended with "Schools Out" with an interlude to "Another Brick In The Wall," which was complete with a dazzling light show with large balls full of confetti that rained down on fans when popped. It was the perfect ending to an unforgettable night.

#alicecooper #rockonmagazine #stinkeyeimages



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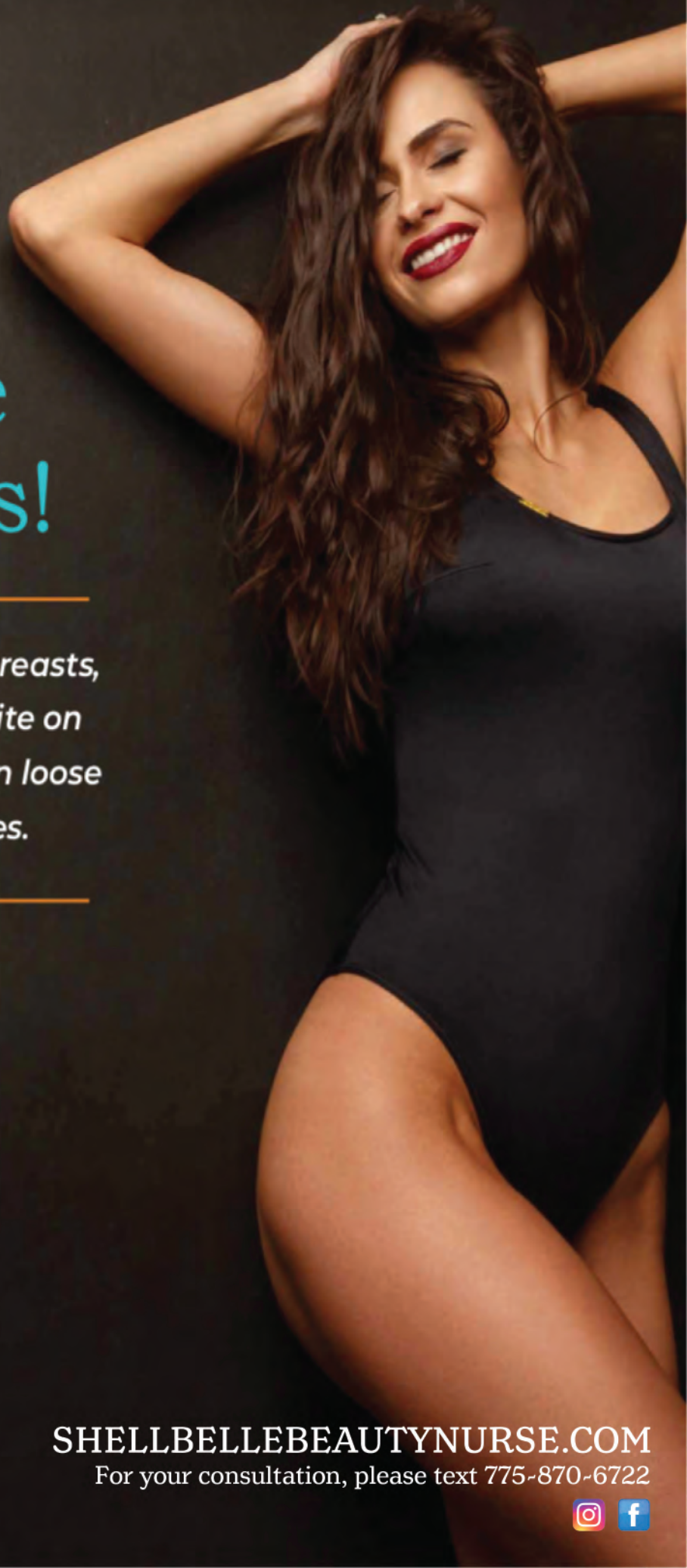
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Kesha's journey from 'Animal' to 'Only Love'

by Bill Kopp

Starting out as a pop singer with a savvy sense of the zeitgeist, over the course of more than a decade in the public eye, Kesha (formerly Ke\$ha) has grown into a nuanced artist who deftly combines dancefloor rhythms with deeply introspective lyrics.

Los Angeles-born Kesha Rose Sebert grew up in the music tradition. Her mother, Rosemary "Pebe" Sebert, is a singer-songwriter who achieved some success on her own. Pebe co-wrote "Old Flames Can't Hold a Candle to You." Released as a single by Joe Sun in 1977, the tune performed well on Billboard's Hot Country chart, reaching #13. Superstar Dolly Parton took notice of the song, recording it less than two years later for her 1980 album *Dolly, Dolly, Dolly*. Parton's cover of Pebe's song soared to the #1 spot on the Hot Country singles chart, doing nearly as well on Canada's Country Tracks chart (#2).

Kesha's mom taught her the mechanics of songwriting, and as a teenager Kesha received formal training in the craft as well. Mother and daughter wrote their first song together when Kesha was 16. Quitting school and moving to Los Angeles, she had signed publishing and recording deals by the time she was 18. In her first few years in L.A., Kesha scored a number of accomplishments: she co-wrote 2008's "This Love" for Australian pop twins The Veronicas; the song reached #10 in the twins' home country.

That same year, Kesha provided background vocals on a modestly charting Britney Spears single ("Lace and Leather," pop #100). She could also be seen in the music video for Katy Perry's Grammy-nominated smash "I Kissed a Girl." While her initial solo recording contract didn't yield any released material, Kesha continued to write songs. By the time she landed a higher-profile deal with Warner Brothers in 2009, she reputedly had a backlog of some 200 songs upon which to draw.

Released on the first day of 2010, Kesha's debut album *Animal* was an almost immediate success. Leveraging the artist's high profile on social media, the album's first single "Tik Tok" soared to the top spot on digital download charts before being released to radio; it eventually amassed more than 15 million downloads globally. Prominent guest spots on talk shows across the U.S. and a prime time performance of "Tik Tok" on *American Idol* only increased Kesha's hard-won (but seemingly overnight) success. Three more singles from *Animal* followed; each rose to the Top Ten on U.S. singles charts.



Avoiding the so-called sophomore slump, Kesha's second proper long playing album, 2012's *Warrior* received positive notices for its eclectic and stylistically wide-ranging character. It sold briskly, going Gold within months of its release. Between the releases of *Animal* and *Warrior*, a Kesha EP and remix album both appeared in stores; with so much product on the shelves, Kesha was essentially competing with herself.

Perhaps as a result of that surfeit of released material, it would be nearly five years before Kesha returned with a third album. But she was in no way idle; the *Warrior* tour took her to some 60 cities on four continents. Taking only a few months off, Kesha launched another tour of concert venues, including more than 40 dates.

A few weeks after that tour's last date, Kesha released *Rainbow*, an album conceived and recorded over the previous three years.

Her crossover appeal would be underscored by the album's roster of musical guests: members of soul singer Sharon Jones' backing band (Dap Kings Horns), Eagles of Death Metal and Dolly Parton all made appearances on the record. The album soared to Billboard's #1 spot on the day of its release, and critics seemed to appreciate the album as much as did Kesha's loyal and massive fan base: the record would receive a Grammy nomination. Two tours – a two-part run as a headliner and another tour co-billed with rapper Macklemore – followed in short order, keeping Kesha busy late into 2018.

Less than a year and a half later, Kesha released *High Road*, her fourth studio album. Focusing more than its predecessor upon classic rock, country and pop styles, it sold well, giving the artist her fourth Top Ten album. With a planned concert tour cut short by lockdowns associated with the Covid-19 worldwide pandemic, Kesha turned to promoting her newer songs by emphasizing television appearances and music videos. She returned for a modestly-scaled tour in 2021.

Behind the scenes, protracted legal battles between Kesha and her former producer Dr. Luke consumed much of the artist's attention. But turning the turmoil to her creative advantage, Kesha wrote the songs for what would become *Gag Order*, her pointedly-titled fifth album. The last to be delivered under the terms of her original contract (signed when Kesha was a mere 18 years old), *Gag Order* is no tossed-off, contract-fulfilling trifle. Conceived more as a work of personal expression than a commercial enterprise, *Gag Order* sounds like the album Kesha felt she had to make.

Critics tended to take into consideration the circumstances surrounding the creation of *Gag Order*, and the reviews reflected that nuanced view. Characterizing the album as "a twisted ball of fury and sorrow," Allmusic's Stephen Thomas Erlewine lauded the artist's "keen performance." But in the same review he suggested that *Gag Order* "delivers catharsis without much consideration for the audience."



But discussing the album's context – Kesha's accusations of abuse at the hands of her former producer, and a judge's dismissal of the case on technical grounds – Alex Hopper, writing for American Songwriter, called *Gag Order* "a natural next step... an effort that takes big risks to find equal rewards." Even the notoriously critical Pitchfork gave the album a positive review, underscoring the confessional and visceral qualities of the album. The review quoted an example from "Fine Line," the album's closing track: "There's a fine line between what's entertaining and what's exploiting the pain / but hey, look at all the money we made off me." Many critics noted Kesha's skill in writing about personal matters while (due to legal constraints) doing so in an oblique manner.

Despite the album title's implication, Kesha has gone on the record to discuss it. In fact, the artist went so far as to pen a manifesto of sorts for *Nylon*. Published in April 2023 – just three weeks before *Gag Order*'s release – the artist explained the motivation for creating such a nakedly forthright record. "Without the darkness there is no light," she wrote. "So I let my darkness have the light. I can't fight the truth. Life is difficult and painful. It is for everyone." Elsewhere in the piece, she asserted that "an artist doesn't exist to make others happy. I believe an artist gives voice, motion, color to the emotions we all have. The good emotions, and the unmanageably fucking miserable ones."

For her efforts, Kesha landed her fifth album on the charts yet again, albeit in more modest fashion than before. While *Gag Order* stalled on the mainstream Billboard 200, reaching only #168, it may well have found her a new, more discerning audience, one less concerned with singles and open to more serious, album-length work. The album climbed to the #14 spot on Billboard's Top Alternative Albums chart.

Against the backdrop of *Gag Order*'s raw and honest lyrical content (weeded to dance beats and with production by Rick Rubin), Kesha announced the upcoming *Gag Order* Tour in May. But after reaching a settlement with Dr. Luke in June, by September Kesha had re-branded the tour in more upbeat fashion, dubbing it the Only Love Tour. Serving up anthemic smash hits like "Tik Tok," "Your Love is My Drug," "We R Who We Are" and "Die Young" alongside new tracks from *Gag Order*, concert dates showcase the Kesha of yesterday and today, and provide a glimpse of where this compelling artist is headed next.



**Kesha plays the
Grand Sierra Resort & Casino
on November 25.**

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FOREVER GONE BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN

Raquel Welch

September 5, 1940 – February 15, 2023

Welch first won attention for her role in *Fantastic Voyage* (1966), after which she won a contract with 20th Century Fox. They lent her contract to the British studio Hammer Film Productions, for whom she made *One Million Years B.C.* (1966). Although Welch had only three lines of dialogue in the film, images of her in the doe-skin bikini became bestselling posters that turned her into an international sex symbol.



Suzanne Somers

October 16th, 1946 - October 15th, 2023

Suzanne Marie Somers was an American actress, author, and businesswoman in the health and wellness industry. She played the television roles of Chrissy Snow on *Three's Company* and Carol Foster Lambert on *Step by Step*.

Tina Turner

November 26, 1939 – May 24, 2023

Tina Turner was a singer, songwriter and actress. Known as the "Queen of Rock 'n' Roll", she rose to prominence as the lead singer of the Ike & Tina Turner Revue before launching a successful career as a solo performer. She was noted for her "swagger, sensuality, powerful gravelly vocals and unstoppable energy", along with her well-publicized history with ex-husband Ike Turner and her famous legs.



Jim Hines

September 10, 1946 – June 3, 2023

James Ray Hines OLY was an American track and field athlete and National Football League (NFL) player, who held the 100-meter world record for 15 years. In 1968, he became the first man to officially break the 10-second barrier in the 100 meters, and won individual and relay gold at the Mexico City Olympics.



Jimmy Buffet

December 25, 1946 - September 1, 2023

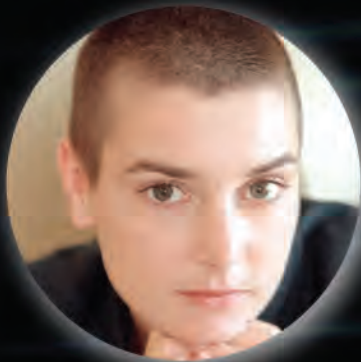
James William Buffett was an American musician and singer-songwriter. He was best known for his tropical rock music, which often portrayed a lifestyle described as "island escapism" and promoted enjoying life and following passions. Buffett recorded hit songs known as "The Big 8": "Margaritaville". He formed the Coral Reefer Band in 1975.



Sinead O'Connor

December 8, 1966 - July 26, 2023

Sinéad Marie Bernadette O'Connor was an Irish singer, songwriter, and activist. Her debut studio album, *The Lion and the Cobra*, was released in 1987 and achieved international chart success. Her 1990 album, *I Do Not Want What I Haven't Got*, was her biggest commercial success, selling over seven million copies worldwide.



Tony Bennett

August 3, 1926 - July 21, 2023

Anthony Dominick Benedetto, known professionally as Tony Bennett, was an American jazz and traditional pop singer. He received many accolades, including 20 Grammy Awards, a Lifetime Achievement Award, and two Primetime Emmy Awards. Bennett was named an NEA Jazz Master and a Kennedy Center Honoree and founded the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts in Astoria, Queens, New York. He sold more than 50 million records worldwide and earned a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.



Rudolph Isley

April 1, 1939 - October 11, 2023

Rudolph "Rudy" Bernard Isley was an American singer-songwriter and one of the founding members of The Isley Brothers. Following "Shout", the brothers recorded for other labels with modest success with exceptions including the top 40 hit, "Twist & Shout" and the Motown hit, "This Old Heart of Mine (Is Weak for You)". In the 1960s, Rudy and his brothers founded the T-Neck Records label to promote their recordings.



Lisa Marie Presley

February 1, 1968 - January 12, 2023

Lisa Marie Presley was an American singer and songwriter. She was the child of singer and actor Elvis Presley and actress Priscilla Presley, as well as the sole heir to her father's estate after her grandfather and her great-grandmother died. Her musical career consisted of three studio albums: *To Whom It May Concern*, *Now What* and *Storm & Grace*, with *To Whom It May Concern* being certified gold by the Recording Industry Association of America. Presley also released non-album singles, including duets with her father using tracks he had released before he died.



Golden Rules

**Reno's hard rocking
Greg Golden and
a life with guitars**

by Bill Kopp



The Greg Golden Band recently released their latest album, *Storyteller, Vol. 1*. The band's specialty is melodic hard rock featuring guitarist Golden and singer/multi-instrumentalist Joe Retta. The group has played with some of the biggest names in the business, including Sebastian Bach, .38 Special, Great White, Y&T and many others. After years on the road, Golden eventually settled down at home in Reno, where he and his band are based. Golden also owns and operates Bizarre Guitars, a guitar shop with a massive inventory. Those twin passions – his band and his business – both center around the guitar. Golden spoke with Rock On about his life in music.

How did you get your start as a musician?

We lived in Las Vegas. My mom was a country and western singer when I was a kid; she sang in the club. She actually sang here in Reno in a couple of big nightclubs for about 25 years. My dad played a little guitar, and my sister sang pretty good too.

On December 22nd of 1958, I was six years old. My dad bought me a guitar and amplifier from a neighbor. I never took a lesson; I'm completely self-taught. But I was gifted with super long fingers, which is an advantage when you're playing guitar. I caught onto it pretty quick, and I could pick up melodies pretty well on it, so I've always been a lead guitar player, because I could hear a melody and play it.

My father owned a casino, so we played in there with the other casino owners' kids; they're still my friends to this day. So I've been playing for 65 years.

When did your band start?

I started playing in Las Vegas, but my first real rock band was Axe, here in Reno. We won a national Battle of the Bands in 1967 and got to record at Studio 10 in San Francisco. We won a cash prize, and got to record with Johnny Mack. That started us, and then we had an agent here in town, so we were booked constantly. It seemed like we played all the time.

I was in Floyd Rose's band. Floyd got signed by a record company, and we played all kinds of gigs. The first Floyd Rose [guitar tremolo system] was made for me; I have it in my vault.



I was on the road, on and off for three or four years. I went to different towns, and I bought guitars. But I wanted to stay local; I got my fill of sleeping in a different bed every night for three or four years. I opened my guitar shop, Bizarre Guitar, when I came back, and I also played with Chuck Ruff from the Edgar Winter Group.

Now, we're centralized at my store, and we have a really amazing practice place there. Frank Hannon, the guitar player for Tesla, is my best friend. He and I have been friends since he was 16. He has mastered and produced all of my records. I have two CDs, two EPs, and a DVD. My music's getting played on Sammy Hagar's internet radio show, which reaches a ton of people.

Over the years, what about your band has made you most proud?

I feel that my singer Joe Retta is the best singer in rock and roll today. There's no one better. When Ronnie James Dio died, Joe took over in Dio Disciples. And when Ronnie Montrose died, that band kind of fell apart, and I got the bass player. We had four former Montrose guys in my band at one time!



We've had opportunities to play in Nashville and all over the place, but we decided we really didn't want to go on the road. We're all pretty close to my age, and traveling is kind of out. We've all been there, done that. But we've opened for some of the bigger bands. We opened up for Tesla in 2017. And Frank plays with us all the time.

My sound man and partner in the store passed away last December; it was the most shocking thing that's ever happened to me in my life. He was more than a brother. We raised each others' kids, did everything together. He had a recording studio, and during the pandemic, he ran all the cords from his building to my 18,000 square foot building. We recorded for six months straight! Then we sent it to Frank Hannon to be mastered. And it sounds incredible.

What do you think explains the appeal of the kind of melodic hard rock that you play?

For starters, the lack of anybody [else] doing it like we do it. I have a very unique style of playing, and Joe's singing is amazing. We have thousands of covers that we can do, but we've got 58 originals. I've written [the music], and Joe has written the vocal parts on about a third of them. Frank wrote the vocals on about a third, and Randy Scoles wrote some vocals [on our 2015 album].



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But what makes us endure is the fact that we are extremely tight, we have really good harmonies, and we have our own unique sound. We're not copying Lynyrd Skynyrd or Blue Öyster Cult or Journey just like everybody else's worthless band that plays all over the place. I don't mean to cut down the tribute bands, but it doesn't take a whole lot of creativity to copy. We're pretty much an original sound and original band.

What do you most enjoy about running Bizarre Guitars?

I've met an amazing amount of people through the store. I've dealt with Van Halen, Doobie Brothers, Garth Brooks, B.B. King, Carlos Santana... if you name a rock or country band, they've been to my store one time or another.

I love playing guitar. It's just my thing, and I know a lot about guitars. I can fix and refinish them. I was a repairman for the first five years in the store. I've always had a great stock of old and new guitars. We stock just about every Gibson guitar they make.

This is my 49th year owning that business. I'm into old guitars; I have a museum in my store. It's called the vault; we bring people down and show them around.

You've been in music nearly your entire life. Where do you see music going in the future?

The future of music is originality. Cover bands? "Oh, let's see how much we can sound like Journey. Let's see how much we can sound like Lynyrd Skynyrd." I don't believe in that. I think that people are so used to not hearing good music that they go back to things that they did like. They'll listen to a tribute or remakes of that stuff versus new music, because most of the new music isn't written that well.

I'm not tooting my own horn, but my albums are incredible. Great guitar, great vocals, great harmonies, great hooks, a great theme. And so our future is to keep writing good music, and to keep playing it.



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ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK

After the Lovin' ... There's Still More Lovin'

All about Engelbert Humperdinck,
ballad singer for the ages

by Bill Kopp

Romantic singer Engelbert Humperdinck is one of the most beloved singers in modern times. He's also one of the most prolific, with more than 100 albums released between his 1967 debut and today. His latest release, 2023's *All About Love* shows that time has not diminished the skills nor appeal of the Madras-born and London-raised singer. Today at age 87, Humperdinck still maintains a busy concert touring schedule, and there's a new documentary film chronicling his life and career. Ahead of a North American tour that takes him back and forth across the continent (including a January 13 date at the Nugget Casino Resort in Sparks, NV, Humperdinck spoke with Rock On about his enduring passion for music and performance.



On All About Love, you manage the neat trick of sounding contemporary without pandering to trends. Do you personally choose the songs?

Well, I'll be honest with you: no. My producer [Jurgen Korduletsch] brings the songs to me, and he asks me, "Do you think you'd like this?" He says, "I think these are going to be good for you," and I listen to them, because he's the man who's making it happen for me. And I say, "Well, some of them." There are some that he brings to me that I throw out. I pick the songs I think that would be appropriate, and we work together on it.

On this particular one, all the arrangements were done in Nashville with Nashville musicians, and I wasn't there. I would have loved to have been there. It worked all right, but I'd rather have been there with him. As I do with everything that I do in life, I like to put my little input in every now and again. I like to have my finger on every project, but this particular one, [Jordan] did it on his own. And it worked out.

When there's a song that's suggested and you decide for one reason or another that you don't care to do it, what kind of reasons figure into that equation?

If I listen to it, and I don't think it suits my style, I just say, "It's a 'no' on this one, but this one looks good." I'm very particular.

When you sing a song that has already been a hit for another artist – which is the case with several of the songs on this new album – how much notice do you take of the style in which the song was cut before?

I just give it my own stamp. And it's very hard to do, mind you. It's very hard to do after somebody else [puts their] stamp and style on it, but I do.

I'm singing a lot differently now than I did when I first began; my style has really changed a lot, because I'm growing rather than standing still. And the way I read into a lyric now is differently than I did before, because a lot of things have transpired in my life that have been a bit hard. For instance, I lost my wife [Patricia, in 2021]. And so, when I read a lyric now, it's a lot different. Her image always comes into my head and my heart. So it comes out a lot differently.

With regard to music, I sometimes think of method actors, even though that's a very different thing from singing. They immerse themselves in the character that they're playing. And I wonder if that approach would have value for a ballad singer. Your songs always seem to completely convey the mood that they contain. When there's a session, do you do any kind of emotional preparation ahead of singing a particular song to get into that headspace?

I consider myself a thespian of song. Because I think you have to be. Like an actor, you have to read your lines the way it's written. And like an actor, it comes through your eyes and through the expression of your face and your body language and all those things that go along with portraying your subject matter.

And that's what I do on stage now. I live the part, and then you can see it in my expression. You don't have to move a lot. An actor, if he moves like this, he goes out of the shot. And it's the same thing when you're on stage. You have to let [the audience] recognize your moves, and the more you are steady, the more you get across, I think. When you're moving around, it's for a different kind of song; not for a ballad, not for something you're telling a story with.

Following on from that, do you ever find yourself overcome by the emotion of a particular song?

Many times, yes. As a matter of fact, I wrote a song for my wife about 30 years ago called "Everywhere I Go" [on 1993's *Yours* – ed.] If you look it up and listen to it, you'll understand what I mean with the lyrics, and it's a wonderful arrangement by Bebu Silvetti. He did all these wonderful string arrangements for me – he did about six albums for me – and he did the arrangement for that particular one.

Since my wife has been gone, I sing "Everywhere I Go" in my show. I dedicate the song to her, and there's many a night that I don't get through it. It's one of those things.

I would imagine that you take the audience with you on that emotional journey...



Yeah, I do see people weeping in the audience. And it's something you can't put on. It just happens, you know? There are nights when it won't happen, but the majority of shows that I do, it does get me, because it was written for her. And it gets me.

You've been on stage countless times. To what degree are you able to get a sense of how the audience is reacting to your performance, and how does that factor into what you're doing in real time?

Well, you can see the front rows. You can [see] what's happening in the first few rows, and you can judge from that, what is happening throughout the audience.

Sometimes it's rather surprising to the performer, like me, who sees the reaction of what takes place in an audience. Sometimes, when I'm singing a particular song, I can look down and see somebody reach over and touch the person's hand and squeeze them, or put their arm around them. And it's just amazing to see what transpires during a performance. It's rather wonderful to think that you are responsible for that, actually.

There's a new documentary, *Engelbert Humperdinck: The Legend Continues*. What can you tell me about it?

Well, I haven't watched many documentaries in my life, but I watched this one because it's about me! I did it a few years ago, and it was rather shocking, actually, because there were many touching moments in it that made me cry.

And I also was shocked at the fact that I must've been going through some trauma at that particular time, because I was 40 pounds heavier than I am today. It's shocking to watch myself in that state, you know? When I look at myself today, I'm 200 pounds. At that particular time, it was in the middle of my wife's illness and having to deal with doing my work plus the worry of what's going on at home, you know? It was a hard time.



Are there any surprises in the film for audiences?

Well, they'll see footage that they've never seen before about my children and growing up. They'll see me talk about my life in a way that I've never done before. You see my humble beginnings, you know? It takes me back to the place where I first began, when I lived in a flat in Hammersmith, London. It had no carpet, no curtains, no light bulbs or lamp shades, and very [few] chairs to sit on. And it took me back to that era. I remember those wonderful days.

"The Hungry Years," you know, which I had joy in singing, and it brought all sorts of memories back. If you listen to "The Hungry Years" [from 1976's *After the Lovin'*], which I had joy in singing, it's really my life story. I feel as though Neil Sedaka wrote it for me, but he didn't. He wrote it for himself, so he must've been going through the same thing in his beginning.

Plenty of artists who've had successful careers retire when they're 20 years younger than you are now. What motivates you to keep recording and performing?

It's the passion I have. I don't consider my job as work. When I walk on stage, it's just a passion. It's not hard work for me, not at all. I just love what I do, so therefore the passion strengthens my whole being. I just feel good about it.

If I didn't want to perform, I wouldn't get that feeling. But I love it. I love the performance, I love the reaction. And my audience feeds me with the passion that I love to portray.

Capricorn

December 22nd - January 19th

According to the Capricorn horoscope, profound changes are expected in January 2024. They will touch on work; there will be a chance to participate in an important project or go on a business trip. This will catalyze career growth—the ability to perfectly subordinate emotions to the mind Capricorn owns, which will be very useful. However, the prevailing calm can be deceptive. In the month of Capricorn, you can't let things take their course and need continuous control. Although the Wolf Full Moon in January will have such a warm atmosphere that Capricorn will slightly loosen its grip. You may have to cancel important meetings and negotiations. This is not evidence of weakness but a conscious choice in favor of the family.

Financial affairs in the first days of January will thrive, and pleasant surprises are expected. Although unforeseen expenses are ahead, it will stay in the black. According to the Capricorn horoscope, relatives will want to please with a good gift and present something valuable. You can also count on a bonus: the authorities decide to encourage labor enthusiasm. Since Venus in Sagittarius positively influences people, awakening compassion in their hearts, misunderstandings will be overcome. Let there be coldness in the relationship before; Capricorn should not step on the old rake. Dialogue with loved ones, colleagues, and partners is sure to develop; this is an excellent time to strengthen ties.

Career growth in the middle of the month will accelerate, and new prospects will open up. There will be an understanding of which direction to move and what kind of people can be helpful. The general Capricorn horoscope for January 2024 foresees profitable cooperation. It would be best if you used every opportunity to stand out to attract a high official's attention. As for the mood, Mercury in Capricorn rules here, which makes thoughts and plans clear. Separate fragments of life, like puzzle pieces, are folded into a single canvas. There is no doubt that Capricorn will be able to keep control of the situation. If longing eats the soul, you must go on the road; even a short trip will be refreshing.

The desire to extend the festive mood at the end of January can lead to problems. Married people should discourage making new acquaintances: flirting is not so harmless. The January horoscope for Capricorn foresees an increase in tension in relationships. The partner will feel unnecessary; dissatisfaction could result in a major scandal. In any case, luck will be on the side of Capricorns so the mood will be good. The answer is clear for those who do not like to indulge in thought—blind luck. The reason is the position of Mars in Capricorn, whose patronage guarantees excellent results. To enhance beneficial energy, it is helpful to wear silver jewelry.



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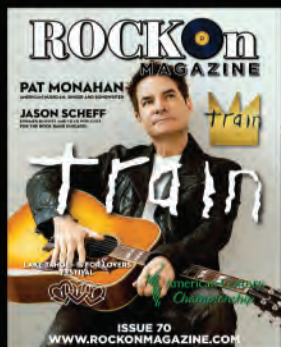
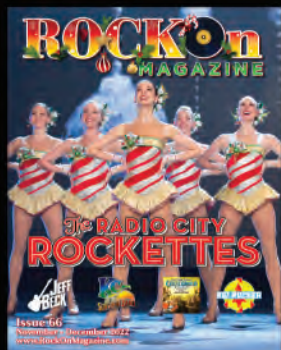
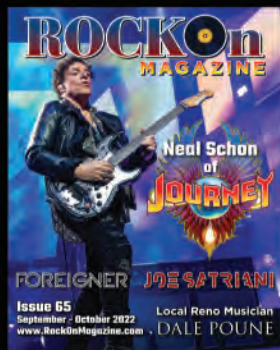
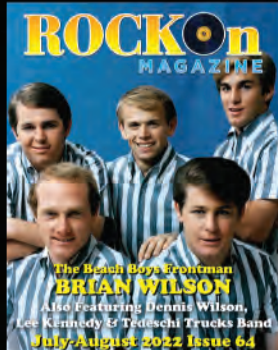
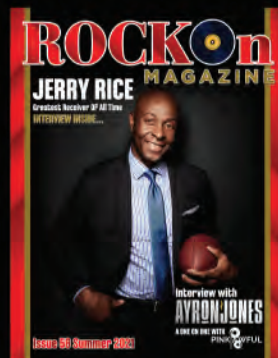


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