Sir Elton Hercules John, CBE (born Reginald Kenneth Dwight; 25 March 1947) is an English singer, pianist, and composer. He has worked with lyricist Bernie Taupin as his songwriting partner since 1967; they have collaborated on more than 30 albums to date. In his five-decade career Elton John has sold more than 300 million records, making him one of the best-selling music artists in the world.[3] He has more than fifty Top 40 hits, including seven consecutive No. 1 US albums, 58 Billboard Top 40 singles, 27 Top 10, four No. 2 and nine No. 1. For 31 consecutive years (1970–2000) he had at least one song in the Billboard Hot 100. His tribute single, re-penned in dedication to the late Princess Diana, “Candle in the Wind 1997” sold over 33 million copies worldwide and is the best-selling single in the history of the UK and US singles charts[28][30]. He has also composed music, produced records, and has occasionally acted in films. John owned Watford Football Club from 1976 to 1987, and 1997 to 2002. He is an honorary Life President of the club, and in 2014 had a stand named after him at the club's home stadium.

Raised in the Pinner area of London, John learned to play piano at an early age, and by 1962 had formed Bluesology. John met his songwriting partner, Bernie Taupin, in 1967, after they had both answered an advert for songwriters. For two years they wrote songs for other artists, including Lulu, and John also worked as a session musician for artists such as the Hollies and the Scaffold. In 1969 his debut album, Empty Sky, was released. In 1970 a single, “Your Song”, from his second album, Elton John, reached the top ten in the UK and the US, his first hit single. After decades of commercial chart success, John has also achieved success in musical theatre, both in the West End and on Broadway, composing the music for The Lion King and musicals Aida and Billy Elliot the Musical.[11][12]

He has received five Grammy Awards, five Brit Awards – winning two awards for Outstanding Contribution to Music and the first Brits Icon in 2013 for his “lasting impact on British culture”, an Academy Award, a Golden Globe Award, a Tony Award, a Disney Legends award, and the Kennedy Center Honors in 2004. In 2004, Rolling Stone ranked him Number 49 on its list of 100 influential musicians of the rock and roll era.[13] In 2013, Billboard ranked him the most successful solo artist on the Billboard Hot 100 All-Time Artists (third overall behind Madonna and The Beatles). He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1994, is an inductee into the Songwriters Hall of Fame, and is a fellow of the British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors. Having been named a Order of the British Empire in 1996, John was made a Knight Bachelor by Elizabeth II for "services to music and charitable services" in 1998.[11] John has performed at a number of royal events, such as the funeral of Princess Diana at Westminster Abbey in 1997, the Party at the Palace in 2002 and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Concert outside Buckingham Palace in 2012.

He has been heavily involved in the fight against AIDS since the late 1980s. In 1992, he established the Elton John AIDS Foundation and a year later began hosting the annual Academy Award Party, which has since become one of the highest-profile Oscar parties in the Hollywood film industry. Since its inception, the foundation has raised over US$200 million.[15] John, who announced he was bisexual in 1976 and has been openly gay since 1988, entered into a civil partnership with David Furnish on 21 December 2005, and after same-sex marriage became legal in England and Wales in 2014, wed Furnish on 21 December 2014.

Life and career
Early life
Elton John was born Reginald Kenneth Dwight on 25 March 1947, in Pinner, Middlesex, the eldest child of Stanley Dwight (1925–1991) and only child of Sheila Eileen (née Harris; 1925–2017),[16][17] his father having been a trumpet player with the Bob Millar Band, a semi-professional big band that played at military dances.[18] The Dwights were keen record buyers, exposing John to the popular singers and musicians of the day, and John remembers being immediately hooked on rock and roll when his mother bought home records by Elvis Presley and Bill Haley & His Comets in 1956.[19][20]

When he began to seriously consider a career in music, Elton John's father, who served as a flight lieutenant in the Royal Air Force, tried to steer him toward a more conventional career, such as banking.[21] John has stated that his wild stage costumes and performances were his way of letting go after such a restrictive childhood.[22] Both of John's parents were musically inclined, his father having been a trumpet player with the band, and his mother a private tutor in addition to her classes at the academy.[23]

Elton John started playing the piano at the age of three, and within a year, his mother heard him picking out the song ‘In Love’ by Riccardo Drigo. At the age of five, he started composing music, produced records, and has occasionally acted in films. John owned Watford Football Club from 1976 to 1987, and 1997 to 2002. He is an honorary Life President of the club, and in 2014 had a stand named after him at the club's home stadium.

In 1962, Dwight and his friends formed a band called Bluesology. By day, he ran errands for a music publishing company; he divided his nights between solo gigs at a London hotel bar and working with Bluesology. By the mid-1960s, Bluesology was backing touring American soul and R&B musicians like the Isley Brothers, Major Lance and Patti Labelle and the Bluebelles. In 1966, the band became musician Long John Baldry's supporting band, and played 16 times at the Marquee Club.[24]
the team of Elton John and Bernie Taupin wrote what would become the first Elton John/Bernie Taupin song: “Scarecrow”. Six months later Dwight was going by the name “Elton John” in homage to two members of Bluesology: saxophonist John Lennon

The team of Elton John and Bernie Taupin wrote what would become the first Elton John/Bernie Taupin song: “Scarecrow”. Six months later Dwight was going by the name “Elton John” in homage to two members of Bluesology: saxophonist John Lennon and singer-songwriter George Michael. In 1975, Elton John and Bernie Taupin enlisted Gus Gudjonsen as producer and Paul Buckmaster as musical arranger. Elton John was released in April 1970 on DJM Records/Pye Records in the UK and Uni Records in the US, and established the format for subsequent albums—gospel-chorded rockers and poignant ballads. The first single from the album, “Border Song”, made it to the US Top 100, peaking at Number 92. The second single, “Your Song”, reached number seven in the UK Singles Chart and number eight in the US, becoming John's first hit song as a single artist. The album soon became his first hit album, reaching number four on the US Billboard 200 and number five on the UK Albums Chart.

Debut album to Goodbye Yellow Brick Road (1969–1973)

On the advice of music publisher Steve Brown, John and Taupin wrote starting more complex songs for John to record for DJM. The first single was the song “I've Been Loving You” (1968), produced by Laye Quey, former drummer of the London rock band The Tons. John recorded the single in October 1970, and reached number two in the UK and number five in the US (1969–1970) album in October, which contained the single “Sorry Seems to Be the Hardest Word”. His biggest success in 1976 was “Don't Go Breaking My Heart”, a duet with Kiki Dee, which reached number one in the UK, and number two in the US (January 1977). It was released as a stand-alone single in November 1973, and appears in the album's 1995 remastered re-issue.

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

Named Rock The Record Company (distributed in the US by MCA and initially in the UK and/or by Island Records in the UK) and signed acts to it— notably the guitarist Brian May, future Queen frontman. Before being the most commercially successful period, 1970–1976 is also held in the most regard critically. Within only a three-year span, between 1972 and 1975 John saw seven consecutive albums reach number one on the UK Albums Chart, with his 1973 album, “Goodbye Yellow Brick Road”, ranked highest at number 91; similarly, the three Elton John albums given five stars by Allmusic (1970, 1972, and 1976) are all from this period.

In 1975, Elton John released his autobiographical album Captain Fantastic and the Brown Dirt Cowboy, which featured the hit singles “She's Too Free”, “Don't Go Breaking My Heart”, and “Your Song”. The album was a commercial success; it reached number one in the UK and number two in the US, and established John as a major rock star. It also temporarily established John as a glam rock star, and it was during this period that John's stage wardrobe now included ostrich feathers, $5,000 spectacles that he wore for the rest of his career, and elaborate costumes designed by Westwood. The album is considered one of the most important rock albums of all time, and is often cited as one of the defining albums of the glam rock era.

In 1976, the live album Here and There, released in May, contained the single “Tiny Dancer”. The album reached number one in the UK and number two in the US, and was among the first and few white artists to appear on the black music series Soul Train. It was released in October, which contained the single “Sorry Seems to Be the Hardest Word”. His biggest success in 1976 was “Don't Go Breaking My Heart”, a duet with Kiki Dee, which reached number one in the UK, and number two in the US (January 1977). It was released as a stand-alone single in November 1973, and appears in the album's 1995 remastered re-issue.

The Fox to Sleeping with the Past (1980–1989)

His 1981 album, The Fox, was recorded during the same sessions as 21 at 32, and also included collaborations with Tom Robinson and Judie Tzuke. On 13 September 1980, Elton John, with Olsson and Murray in the back-up band, performed a free concert to an estimated 400,000 fans on The Great Lawn in Central Park in New York. His 1982 hit “Empty Garden (Hey Hey Johnny)”, came from his Jump Up! album, his second under a new US recording contract with Geffen Records.

With original band members Johnstone, Murray and Olsson together again, he was able to return to the charts with the 1983 hit album Rock of the Westies (1969–1973), released in October 1970, and reached number two in the UK and number five in the US (1969–1973) album in October, which contained the single “Sorry Seems to Be the Hardest Word”. His biggest success in 1976 was “Don't Go Breaking My Heart”, a duet with Kiki Dee, which reached number one in the UK, and number two in the US (January 1977). It was released as a stand-alone single in November 1973, and appears in the album's 1995 remastered re-issue.

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In 1999, he achieved his first solo UK number one hit, with " Sacrifice" (coupled with "Healing Hands") from previous year's album Sleeping with the Past it stayed at the top spot for six weeks.\[7x242\]

The following year, John's "Biscuits" (a Grammy for Best Instrumental, and a guest concert appearance at Wembley Arena he had made on George Michael's cover of "Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me" was released as a single and topped the charts in both the UK and the US.\[7x211\]

At the 1991 Brit Awards in London, Elton John won the award for Best British Male Artist.\[7x206\]

In 1992, he released the US number 8 album The One, featuring the hit song "The One".\[7x170\]

Along with Tim Rice, Elton wrote the songs for the 1994 Disney animated film The Lion King. At the 67th Academy Awards ceremony, the Lion King soundtrack provided three of the five nominees for the Academy Award for Best Song, which he won with "Can You Feel the Love Tonight".\[7x190\] Both that and "Circle of Life" became hit songs for John.\[7x190\] "Can You Feel the Love Tonight" also won Elton John the Grammy Award for Best Male Pop Vocal Performance at the 37th Annual Grammy Awards.\[7x227\]

After the release of The Lion King soundtrack, the album remained at the top of Billboard 200 for nine weeks. On 10 November 1999, the RIAA certified The Lion King Diamond for selling 15 million copies.\[7x269\]

In 1994, Elton John was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame by Guns N'Roses frontman Axl Rose.\[7x281\]

In 1998, he released Live 1970–2000: The One and Only, a collaboration with 15 artists including Timbaland and Róisín Murphy. This included a new collaboration with Kiki Dee, entitled "True Love", which reached the Top 10 of the UK chart.\[7x318\] The Bubba Trim (multi-artist charity album) was released, which was the soundtrack to the British animated television series of the same name. Up: The Return was Elton's track; alongside contributions from Love Songs was released in 1996.\[7x359\]

In early 1997, he held a 50th birthday party, costumed as Louis XIV, for 500 friends. He performed with the surviving members of Queen.\[7x111\]

In early September, he contacted his writing partner Bernie Taupin, asking him to revise the lyrics of his 1973 song "Candle in the Wind" to honour Diana, and Taupin rewrote the song accordingly.\[7x70\]

In 2006, he told GQ magazine, John said: "I'm going on the road again next year", referring to "Face to Face", a series of concerts featuring both musicians. The tour began in March and will continue for at least two more years.\[7x153\]

In 2009, John performed "Candle in the Wind 1997" at the funeral of Princess Diana in Westminster Abbey.\[7x160\]

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In November 1997, John, along with Elton John's Greatest Hits Volume II and Elton John's Greatest Hits Volume III, were awarded the Best Selling Albums of the Year award by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA).\[7x117\]

In the musical theatre world, The Lion King musical debutted on Broadway in 1997 and in the West End in 1999. In 2014, it had grossed over $6 billion and became the top-earning title in box-office history for both stage and screen.\[7x117\]

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He released The Union on 19 October 2010. John says his collaboration with American singer, songwriter and sideman, Leon Russell marks a new chapter in his recording career, saying: "I don't have to make pop records any more."[132]

He began his new show The Million Dollar Piano at the Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas on 28 September 2011.[133] John performed the show at Caesars for the next three years. He performed his 3000th concert on Saturday 8 October 2011 at Caesars.[134] In 2011, John performed vocals on Snow in at Wheeler Street with Kate Bush for her 50 Words for Snow album.[135] On 3 February 2012, Elton John visited Costa Rica for the first time when he performed at the recently opened National Stadium.[136]

On 4 June 2012, he performed at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Concert at Buckingham Palace, performing a repertoire including "Your Song", "Crocodile Rock" and "I'm Still Standing".[137] On 30 June, John performed in Kiev, Ukraine at a joint concert with Queen + Adam Lambert for the Elena Pinchuk ANTIAIDS Foundation.[138]

An album containing remixes of songs that he recorded in the 1970s called Good Morning the Night was released in July 2012. The remixes were conducted by Australian group Pnau and the album reached No. 1 in the UK.[139] At the 2012 Pride of Britain Awards on 30 October, Elton John, along with Michael Caine, Richard Branson, Simon Cowell and Stephen Fry, recited "f*ck-your-liping's poem "It—" in tribute to the 2012 British Olympic and Paralympics athletes.[140]

In February 2013, John announced his first duet with singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran at the 55th Annual Grammy Awards.[141] Later in 2013 he collaborated with rock band Queens of the Stone Age on their sixth studio album ...Like Clockwork, contributing piano and vocals on the song "Fairweather Friends". He stated that he was a fan of frontman Josh Homme's side project, Them Crooked Vultures, and had contacted Homme via phone call, asking if he could perform on the album.[142]

In September 2013, John received the first Brits Icon award for his "lasting impact on UK Culture".[143] His Rod Stewart presented him the award on stage at the London Palladium before the two performed a duet of "Sad Songs (Say So Much)", which had been announced in March 2012 that John had completed work on his thirty-first album, The Diving Board. The album was produced by T-Bone Burnett and was originally set for release in autumn 2012.[144] The album's release date was pushed back, but on its release in September 2013 it reached No. 1 in the UK and No. 4 in the US.[145]

In October 2015, it was announced Elton John would release his 32nd studio album, Wonderful Crazy Night, on 5 February 2016. As with its last album, it was produced by T-Bone Burnett.[146] The album's first single, "Looking Up", was released that same month. This album marked John's first full album recorded with his touring band since 2006's The Captain & The Kid.[147] He also had a major role, playing himself, in the action sequel Kingsman: The Golden Circle, which was released in September 2017.[148]

On 26 January 2017, it was announced that John would be composing the score for a Broadway musical adaptation of the critically acclaimed novel and film The Devil Wears Prada along with Kevin McCollum as the producer and Paul Rudnick writing the lyrics and story. The timeline for the musical will be announced later.[149]

Musiсianship

Elton John has written with his songwriting partner Bernie Taupin since 1967 when he answered an advertisement for talent placed in the popular UK music publication, New Musical Express, by Liberty records A&R man Ray Williams.[150] The pair have collaborated on more than 30 albums to date.[151] The writing style that Elton John and Bernie Taupin use involves Taupin writing the lyrics on his own, and John then putting them to music, with the two never in the same room during the process. Taupin will write a set of lyrics, then set them to music, with John then putting them to music, with the two never in the same room during the process. Taupin will write a set of lyrics, then set them to music, with John then putting them to music.

In 1992, John was inducted into the Songwriter's Hall of Fame. He is a fellow of the British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors (BASCA). His voice was once classed as tenor; it is now baritone.[152] His piano playing is influenced by classical and gospel music.[153] He used Paul Buckmaster to arrange the music on his studio albums during the 1970s and 1980s.

Personal life

Sexuality and family

In the late 1960s, Elton John was engaged to be married to his first lover, secretary Linda Woodrow, who is mentioned in the song "Someone Saved My Life Tonight".[154] He married German recording engineer Renate Blauel on 14 February 1984, in Darling Point, Sydney, with speculation that the marriage was a cover for his homosexuality. John came out as bisexual in a 1976 interview with Victoria Beckham his son Brooklyn and Romeo, Elizabeth Hurley's son Damian, and the daughter of Seymour Stein.[160]

In 2010, John was criticised by some Christian groups in the US after describing Jesus as a "compassionate, super-intelligent gay man who understood human problems". William Anthony Donohue, president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights and opponent of gay marriage, responded: "To call Jesus a homosexual is to label him a sexual deviant. But what else would we expect from a man who previously said, 'From my point of view, I would ban religion completely.'"[170]

In 2008, John stated he preferred civil partnerships over marriage for gay people.[155] But by 2012 John had changed his position and become a staunch supporter of same-sex marriage in the United Kingdom. He was quoted: "There is a world of difference between calling someone your 'partner' and calling them your 'husband'. 'Partner' is a word that should be preserved for people you play tennis with, or work alongside in business. It doesn't come close to describing the love that I have for David, and he for me. In contrast, 'husband' doe's..."[171] In 2014, he claimed Jesus would have been in favour of same-sex marriage.[172]

In 2013, Elton John resisted calls to boycott Russia in protest at the Russian LGBT propaganda law, but told fans at a Moscow concert that the Russian laws were "inhumane and isolating" and he was "deeply saddened by the restrictions on gay pride in Russia".[173] John, who maintains a part-time residence in Atlanta, Georgia, became a fan of the Atlanta Braves baseball team when he moved there in 1991.[174] He described the occasion as "one of the greatest days of my life."[175]

AIDS Foundation

In April 2009, the Sunday Times Rich List estimated John's wealth to be £175 million ($225 million), and ranked him as the 322nd wealthiest person in Britain.[176] John was estimated to have a fortune of £195 million in the Sunday Times Rich List 2011, making him one of the 10 wealthiest people in the British music industry.[177] Aside from his main home "Woodsie" in Old Windsor, Berkshire, John owns residences in Atlanta, Los Angeles, Nice, Holland Park in London, and Venice. John's property in Nice is based on Mor Bon mountain.[178] Elton John is an art collector, and is believed to have one of the largest private photography collections in the world.[179]

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In 2000, he admitted to spending £30 million in just under two years—an average of £1.5million a month. Between January 1996 and September 1997, he spent more than £6.4m on property and £293,000 on flowers.[180] In June 2001, John sold 20 of his cars at Christie's, saying he didn't get the chance to drive them because he was out of the country so often.[181] The sale, which included a 1993 Jaguar X220, the most expensive at £243,750, and several Ferraris, Rolls-Royces, and Bentleys, raised nearly £2 million.[182] In 2003, John sold the contents of his Holland Park home—expected to fetch £800,000 at Sotheby's—to modernise the decoration and to display some of his contemporary art collection.[183] Every year since 2004, John has opened a shop called "Elton's Closet" in which he sells his second-hand clothes.[184]

Other

By 1975, the pressures of stardom had begun to take a serious toll on him. During "Elton Week" in Los Angeles that year, he suffered a drug overdose.[185] He also battled the eating disorder bulimia. In a CNN interview with Larry King in 2002, King asked if John knew of Diana, Princess of Wales' eating disorder. John replied, "Yes, I did. We were both bulimic."[186]

A longtime tennis enthusiast, he wrote the song "Philadelphia Freedom" in tribute to long-time friend Billie Jean King and her World Team Tennis franchise of the same name. John and King also co-host an annual pro event to benefit AIDS charities, most notably Elton John's own Elton John AIDS Foundation, for which King is a chairwoman. John, who maintains a part-time residence in Atlanta, Georgia, became a fan of the Atlanta Braves baseball team when he moved there in 1991.[191] In 2015, he was named one of GQ's 50 best dressed British men.[192]

On 22 April 2012, he was discharged from hospital after two nights of intensive care for contracting "a harmful and unusual" bacterial infection during his return flight home from a South American tour in Santiago, Chile. At the 2004 Cup Final, the song "Aidie with her" was played and that's why I cried. The song evokes my memory of childhood."[193]

—Elton John on his emotions during the FA Cup Final's traditional pre-match hymn.[194]
John has said that he took risks with unprotected sex during the 1980s and considers himself lucky to have avoided the AIDS epidemic. In 1986, he joined with Dionne Warwick, Gladys Knight and Stevie Wonder to record the single “That’s What Friends Are For”, with all profits being donated to the American Foundation for AIDS Research. The song won John and the others the Grammy Award for Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals. In April 1990, John performed his 1968 ballad “Skyline Pigeon” at the funeral of Ryan White, a teenage haemophiliac he had befriended.

Elton John became more closely associated with AIDS charities following the deaths of his friends Ryan White in 1990 and Freddie Mercury in 1991, raising large amounts of money and using his public profile to raise awareness of the disease. He founded the Elton John AIDS Foundation in 1992 as a charity to fund programmes for HIV/AIDS prevention, for the elimination of prejudice and discrimination against HIV/AIDS-affected individuals, and for providing services to people living with or at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. This cause continues to be one of his personal passions. In 1993, he began hosting an annual Academy Award Party, which has become one of the highest-profile Oscar parties in the Hollywood film industry, and has raised over US$200 million. In early 2006, John donated the smaller of two bright-red Yamaha pianos from his Las Vegas, Nevada show to auction on eBay to raise public awareness and funds for the foundation.

To raise money for his AIDS charity, he annually hosts a glamorous White Tie & Tiara Ball in the grounds of his home in Old Windsor in Berkshire to which many famous celebrities are invited. On 28 June 2007, the 9th annual White Tie & Tiara Ball took place. The menu consisted of a truffle soufflé followed by Surf and Turf (filet mignon with Maine lobster tail) and a giant Knickerbocker glory ice cream. An auction followed the dinner held by Stephen Fry. A Rolls Royce ‘Phantom’ drophead coupé and a piece of Tracey Emin’s artwork both raised £800,000 for the charity fund, with the total amount raised reaching £3.5 million. Later, John sang “Deedle” with Tom Jones and “Big Spender” with Shirley Bassey. The 2011 guests included Sarah, Duchess of York, Elizabeth Hurley and George Michael (who performed “Don’t Let the Sun Go Down on Me” in a duet with John), and the auction raised £5 million, adding to the £45 million the balls have raised for the Elton John AIDS Foundation.

Honours and awards

He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility in 1994. He and Bernie Taupin had previously been inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1992. John was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 1995. For his charitable work, John was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II on 24 February 1998. In October 1975, John became the 1,662nd person to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

He was awarded Society of Singers Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005. He became a recipient of a Kennedy Center Honor in 2004, and a Disney Legends Award in 2006. In 2000, he was named the MusiCares Person of the Year for his artistic achievement in the music industry and dedication to philanthropy. In 2010, he was awarded with the PPS for Music Heritage Award, which was erected on The Namaste Lounge Pub in Northwood, London, where John performed his first gig.

Music awards include the Academy Award for Best Original Song for “Can You Feel The Love Tonight” from The Lion King (award shared with Tim Rice); the Golden Globe Award for Best Original Song in 1994 for “Can You Feel The Love Tonight” from The Lion King (award shared with Tim Rice); and the Tony Award for Best Original Score in 2000 for Elton John and Tim Rice’s Aida (award shared with Tim Rice). He has also received five Brit Awards, including the award for Best Male British Act in 1991 for his artistic achievement in the music industry and dedication to philanthropy. This cause continues to be one of his personal passions. In 1993, he began hosting his annual Academy Award Party, which has become one of the highest-profile Oscar parties in the Hollywood film industry, and has raised over US$200 million. In early 2006, John donated the smaller of two bright-red Yamaha pianos from his Las Vegas, Nevada show to auction on eBay to raise public awareness and funds for the foundation.

Elton John Band

Since 1970, John’s band, of which he is the pianist and lead singer, has been known as the Elton John Band. The band has had multiple line-up changes, but Nigel Olsson, Davey Johnstone, and Ray Cooper have been members (albeit non-consecutively) since 1970 (Olsson), 1972 (Johnstone) and 1974 (Cooper). Olsson left the band in 1984 but rejoined in 2000. Ray Cooper has worked on and off with the Elton John Band because he maintains obligations to other musicians as a session player and sideman as a road-tour percussionist.

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Honours and awards
John Mahon – percussion, vocals
Kim Bullard – keyboards
Matt Bissonette – bass
Ray Cooper – percussion

Previous band members
Guy Babylon – keyboards
Bob Birch – bass guitar, vocals
Tom Costello – drums
David Hentschel – synthesiser
Tony Murray – bass
Roger Pope – drums, percussion
Fred Mandel – keyboards, guitars
Dee Murray – bass guitar, vocals

Other notable contributors and guests
Leon Russell – piano, vocals
Gus Dudgeon – production
Paul Buckmaster – orchestrations
Lesley Duncan – acoustic guitar, vocals, background vocals
Dusty Springfield – background vocals
Rick Wakeman – organ
Jean-Luc Ponty – electric violin
Luther Vandross – vocals
Kiki Dee – background vocals
Bruce Johnston – vocals, background vocals
Carl Wilson – vocals, background vocals
Toni Tennille – vocals, background vocals
Tower of Power – horns
John Lennon (credited as Dr. Winston O’Boogie) – guitar
Labelle – vocals, background vocals
London Symphony Orchestra
London Philharmonic Orchestra
Melbourne Symphony Orchestra
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
David Sanborn – saxophone
David Paich – organ
Jeff Porcaro – drums
Pete Townshend – guitar
John Deacon – bass
Nik Kershaw – electric guitar
Freddie Hubbard – trumpet, flugelhorn
Eric Clapton – vocals
David Gilmour – guitar
k.d. lang – vocals
P.M. Dawn – vocals
Little Richard – vocals
Don Henley – vocals
Chris Rea – vocals
Tammy Wynette – vocals
Gladys Knight – vocals
Paul Young – vocals
Bonnie Raitt – vocals
Leonard Cohen – vocals
George Michael – vocals

Discography

Solo studio albums
- Empty Sky (1969)
- Elton John (1970)
- Tumbleweed Connection (1970)
- Madman Across the Water (1971)
- Honky Château (1972)
- Don’t Shoot Me I’m Only the Piano Player (1973)
- Goodbye Yellow Brick Road (1973)
- Captain Fantastic and the Brown Dirt Cowboy (1975)
- Rock of the Westies (1975)
- Blue Moves (1976)
- A Single Man (1978)
- Victim of Love (1979)
- 21 at 33 (1980)
- The Fox (1981)
- Too Low for Zero (1983)
- Iola on Fire (1985)
- Leather Jackets (1986)
- Rag Strikes Back (1988)
- Sleeping with the Past (1989)
- The One (1992)
- The Big Picture (1997)
- Songs from the West Coast (2001)
- Peachtree Road (2004)
- The Captain & the Kite (2006)
- The Diving Board (2013)
- Wonderful Crazy Night (2016)

Collaborative albums
- Live in Australia with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (1986)
- Duets (1993)