

Elton: The Biography

David Buckley

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One of music's true global superstars and most admired figures, Elton John has sold an estimated 200 million albums worldwide to date, and continues to appear regularly in the singles charts, thanks largely to a series of high-profile collaborations with new faces.

But he is loved as much for his outrageous personality and witty outspokenness as for his music: recent memorable outbursts have included a public comment that "people who charge £75 and lip-sync should be shot" and calling some pushy photographers "rude, vile pigs." He has even admitted that, in one of his more comedic cocaine-fueled moments, he phoned one of his management team "to tell him to do something about the wind outside my hotel room." Such shamelessness and sheer silliness rivals anything uttered by punk rockers, yet it is so typically Elton: honest and wittily intemperate.

Tragedy and heartbreak have played a large part in his life too. Behind the parties, the hedonism, the lavish stage costumes and silly glasses lies a more somber story. There have been disputes with managers, legal wranglings, splits with partners, and a divorce. Added to that there have been serious health problems, a very public battle with his expanding waistline and receding hairline, drug addictions, and spells when he wanted to quit the music business altogether.

But now, at 60 years old, Elton enjoys a stable relationship with his husband David Furnish. His demons have been overcome. His commercial and critical stock is rising. With popular acts like the Scissor Sisters sounding more like Elton than Elton himself, Elton John is finally cool again.

Drawing on many firsthand interviews with his associates and musical collaborators, this page-turning story of high drama and prodigious talent traces Elton's astonishing journey through life as the colossus of camp, while also offering a critical history of his work and analyzing afresh his contribution to popular music.



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