



dttox - music & arts

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Biography – Howard Jones March 2008

Headline

On October 10th Howard Jones received a standing ovation at New York's Carnegie Hall when he performed at a special charity concert for 'Music For Youth'. Each artist was asked to perform one Elton John song. Other artist's included Roger McGuinn, Shawn Colvin, Phoebe Snow and Aimee Mann. Fox News reviewed the concert and gave special mention to Phoebe Snow and Howard for their outstanding performances. Howard performed 'Tiny Dancer'.

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,301064,00.html#1>

Biography

It was in 1983 that Howard Jones released his first single 'New Song' in the UK. The expectation was that it might sell a few thousand copies and introduce his fresh new music to an unsuspecting world. The reality was quite different. The single steadily climbed the UK chart to peak at No. 3. Then came the second single 'What Is Love?' which reached No. 2 in the UK and the third single ...the enigmatic 'Hide and Seek' which showed the spiritual side of Howard Jones' writing. This was followed by the first album 'Human's Lib' which came straight in at No. 1 in the UK in April 1984, eventually going platinum and which took the synthesiser and Howard to a new plateau. This success spread across the globe with

'Human's Lib' going gold in USA, Japan, Germany, Italy and Australia.

The second album 'Dream Into Action' was even more successful spawning a series of hits including 'Like To Get To Know You Well', 'Look Mama', 'Things Can Only Get Better' and the classic 'No One Is To Blame' which reached No.1 in the U.S. singles chart and has since had over 3 million radio plays in USA. Dream Into Action went platinum in USA and lived in the US top 20 album chart for the best part of a year making Howard Jones one of the very few British artists to have comprehensively 'broken' America in the past 25 years. In 1986 Howard was voted Keyboard Player of the Year in Rolling Stone magazine, and in 1987 and 1989 he toured the world extensively headlining Madison Square Garden in New York, the Forum in LA and The Budokan in Tokyo. He performed 'Hide and Seek' at Live Aid in 1985 which has since been featured on the Live Aid DVD released in 2006.

There were three more albums on Warner/Elektra 'One To One' (1987), 'Cross That Line' (1988) and 'In The Running' (1992) all three of which were accompanied by successful world tours. The 1992 single 'Lift Me Up', taken from 'In The Running' album went top ten in USA. In 1993 the 'Best Of Howard Jones' was released which, together with the Howard's other albums have seen his worldwide album sales to date exceed eight million.

He also released an album 'Working In The Backroom' on his own dTox label with the idea that the album would only be available at live concerts and on the Howard Jones website [HYPERLINK](http://www.howardjones.com/)

"<http://www.howardjones.com/>" www.howardjones.com. This continues to be the case. In the true Howard Jones pioneering tradition, this album has never been sold in shops and never will be.

Being a classically trained piano player, Howard now decided to take a completely unexpected path and in 1996 without a synth in sight he embarked on 'The Acoustic Tour' which featured Howard on grand piano accompanied only by Carol Steele on percussion. This proved to be a huge success and was recorded live at the Variety Arts Theatre in Los Angeles and was later released as 'Live Acoustic America'. This album has to rate as one of the best live albums ever recorded.

This was followed in 1999 by a new highly acclaimed studio album 'People' which many true Howard Jones fans regard as his best ever album.

Always one to present the unexpected Howard then formed a full band which featured Nick Beggs (Kajagoogoo/Ellis Beggs and Howard) on bass

and Chapman stick, Robin Boulton on guitars and the legendary Kevin Wilkinson (China Crisis/The Waterboys/Squeeze) on drums. This superb band toured the world throughout 1998 and the first half of 1999 which included a major tour of the USA with Culture Club and the Human League. It was with enormous sadness that the news was received on 18 July 1999 that drummer Kevin Wilkinson had taken his life. Kevin was one of the most respected and sought after drummers and was a wonderful caring human being. He has been very greatly missed.

In 2000 Howard appeared on the infamous 'Night of the Proms' tour of Europe with a 72 piece orchestra and a 50 piece choir. This was followed in the summer of 2001 with a huge Ringo Star tour of USA and Canada. The band featured Greg Lake on bass, Sheila E and Ringo on drums, Ian Hunter and Roger Hodgson on guitars and Howard on keyboards. Apart from playing his three biggest US hits 'No One Is To Blame', 'Things Can Only Get Better', and 'Everlasting Love' each night, Howard also got to fulfil a lifetime ambition by playing Emerson Lake and Palmer's 'Karn Evil 9' with Greg Lake and Sheila E. Keith Emerson's classic keyboard arrangement is regarded as one of the most difficult contemporary keyboard pieces ever written.

In September 2001 Howard set off once more into uncharted waters. He formed a new touring band with Robin Boulton on guitars, Shaz Sparks (from dba) on backing vocals and Robbie Bronnimann (from dba) on programming and mixing. Howard had the idea of doing a tour wherein each gig was recorded and digital photographs would be taken at each concert. Then on the same night CD's would be burnt, and artwork produced from the photographs taken that night, and the finished CD's would then be sold all on the same night! Incredibly it worked and 19 different CD's were produced and sold during the tour which sent Howard Jones collectors into a tailspin. At the end of the tour a best of was compiled under the title 'The Peaceful Tour Live' which has been licensed to various labels around the world. In 2002 Howard co-wrote and co-produced 'Blue' with the Sugababes which turned out to be track two on their UK platinum album 'Angels with Dirty Faces'.

In the last months of 2002 he again surprised everyone by recording an album of intimate piano solos entitled Piano Solos for Friends and Loved Ones which is at present only available from Howard's website www.howardjones.com. This album has had wonderful reviews from Howard Jones fans all over the world and apart from demonstrating what a superb piano player he is, it also expresses a soundscape of deep and

tender emotion.

In September 2003 Howard celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the release of his first single 'New Song' with a special concert at The Shepherd's Bush Empire in London. This concert was in four parts. The first was acoustic with accompaniments by Robin Boulton on acoustic guitar, Nick Beggs on Chapman Stick and Andy Ross on sax. This was followed by a special retro set in which Howard recreated his original 1983 synth rig which involved live programming between songs. Howard was joined on stage by mime artist Jed Hoile on two songs 'Equality' and 'Bounce Right Back' much to the delight of the crowd. The third part featured the 2003 Howard Jones electronic band comprising Howard on synths, Robbie Bronnimann on mixing, effects and keyboard, Shaz Sparks on backing vocals and Robin Boulton on electric guitars. The final part of the evening featured the Howard Jones big band in which the electronic band was augmented by Roy Jones on vocals, Phil Jones on keyboards, Greg Leppard on drums and Nick Beggs on bass. This set also included guest appearances by Nena and Midge Ure. This was Nena's first UK appearance in 20 years. The whole concert was released as 'The 20th Anniversary Concert DVD'. To tie in with this 20th Anniversary celebration Warner Music UK released a special double CD entitled 'The Very Best Of'. This includes a limited edition special CD of Howard Jones single B sides which collectors and fans have been demanding for years.

During 2004 Howard recorded a new studio album 'Revolution of the Heart'. Produced by Howard and Robbie Bronnimann the album includes the tracks 'Revolution of the Heart' and 'Just Look at You Now'. Remixes of both these tracks have already been released on vinyl in the UK. 'Revolution of the Heart' reached No.17 in the UK's Club Chart and 7 in the UK's DMC chart. 'Just Look at You Now' reached 19 in the UK's Club Chart and No 14 in the DMC Chart. Also on the dance front Eric Prydz mixed a sensational version of 'Things Can Only Get Better' which was re-titled 'And Do You Feel Scared'. This track is yet to be released but did find its way on to the 2006 FIFA World Cup video game released by Electronic Arts, as well as dance floors all over the world as a bootleg. In February 2005 Howard did a special one-off acoustic show in Chicago's famous Pump Room with Jackson Browne.

Howard appeared on ITV's 'Hit Me Baby One More Time' in the UK on April 2 2005 which was the biggest UK TV appearance for 15 years. Howard performed 'What is Love' with his electronic band and Dido's 'White Flag' which he performed on piano accompanied by guitarist Robin

Boult. He also appeared on the US version of Hit Me Baby One More Time which aired primetime on NBC across the US and Canada. In the NBC on-line viewers poll Howard was voted No 1 on the show. The howardjones.com website had over 45,000 hits in the 24 hours following the US show which almost brought down the server.

In August 2005 Howard appeared on the UK Channel 4 news and the BBC Radio 4 programme Today (with Keith Emerson) talking about the death of Robert Moog and the important influence he had on electronic music. On 9 September he played the world premiere of the new Revolution of The Heart Album at one of the venues where it all started the old Friars Aylesbury venue, Aylesbury's Civic Centre in England

In January 2006 Howard Jones embarked on a major acoustic US tour featuring himself on piano and vocals and Robin Boult on acoustic guitars. This was so successful that an even longer acoustic tour took place in January/February 2007 and again in September/October 2007. Electronic Arts asked Howard to record a special Simlish version of 'Things Can Only Get Better' using Simlish words. This is featured on the best selling computer game in the world 'Sims 2'.

In August 2006 he fulfilled a lifetime ambition when he played 4 acoustic dates titled The Acoustic Nights at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival's Gilded Balloon from Aug 9-12 and throughout the autumn of 2006 played a 15 date electric tour in the UK interspersed with 7 acoustic dates in the US and Canada.

In November 2006 Howard went straight in at No 1 on the worldwide podcast countdown chart. The track 'Building our own future' remained at No 1 for 3 weeks and has had over 0.75 million downloads. No other artist has ever been No 1 on this chart for 3 weeks and no other artist has come straight in at No 1 first week.

In 2007 there were no less than three Howard Jones CD releases. The first was the second in his piano instrumental series entitled 'Piano Solos Volume Two' This also featured a bonus CD in 5.1 surround sound. The second release was 'Revolution Remixed and Surrounded' which featured dance mixes of tracks from Revolution of the Heart and again a bonus audio DVD in 5.1 surround sound which includes specially created visuals from Stephen Tayler, and remixes from John B, Sharooz, The Young Punx, DJ Strobe, dba, Robbie Bronnimann, Richard Dekkard and Stephen Tayler.

In November 2007 he released the long awaited live acoustic album

entitled 'Live in Birkenhead' which was recorded at Birkenhead Pacific Road Arts Theatre on 13 April 2007.

Howard Jones continues to tour extensively all over the world. In 2007 he performed over 60 concerts. In addition to the now traditional January/February US tour there was a highly successful tour of Australia in March. This was the first time Howard had been back to Australia for 22 years. There were also dates in UK, Germany, Italy, Denmark, Sweden and Dubai.

2008 will also see a special 25th Anniversary concert in London in September and the release of a brand new studio album.

With a large and loyal fanbase and album sales now exceeding eight million this consummate musician and writer has maintained an admirable independence, writing, recording, performing and touring in the way only he knows how. He has proved that he is one of the most talented writers and performers out there. His independent attitude and his ability and willingness to take risks ensure that he continues to operate on the cutting edge of today's music.

The Official Howard Jones Website: www.howardjones.com

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