

Paul Anka Biography

Beginning his career by entering amateur contests and sneaking into clubs, Paul Anka has gone on to become one of the greatest songwriters in history. This year marks his 40th anniversary in show business, which he celebrates with a new album for his millions of fans around the world. He has achieved unprecedented success in every venue: stage, screen, television, and recording. His musical compositions are internationally known and have been recorded by the greatest names in the entertainment industry. Last year he set a milestone by being one of only a few artists in history to have a record on Billboard's Top 50 charts for five consecutive decades (Billboard statistic). Anka has also been named the 21st most successful artist in Billboard's history (Billboard statistic). He received the honor of being named one of Billboard Magazine's most successful artists in history, putting him alongside music greats Elvis Presley and the Beatles.

Since the inception of his career, Anka's songs have been performed well over 90 million times (BMI statistic) worldwide. His LP and single sales collectively number more than 42 million (BMI statistic). With well over 900 songs to his credit, Anka's most memorable are "Put Your Head On My Shoulder", "My Way" and the now famous theme from "The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson."

Anka's contributions to the entertainment industry have earned him numerous awards and special recognition. In addition to performing for heads of state, he has been honored by the French government, who awarded him the title: Chevalier In The Order of Arts and Letters. He is among only a handful of Americans to receive this prestigious award. Recently, the National Academy of Popular Music elected Anka into The Songwriter's Hall Of Fame.

An indication of his versatility shows in his most beloved song "My Way." It has been recorded not only by the likes of Elvis Presley, but also, Sid Vicious, and most notably: Frank Sinatra, who the song was written for. The list of performers recording Anka's songs is an honor role of some of the most talented artists of all time: Sinatra, Presley, Barbara Streisand, Buddy Holly, Tom Jones, and the Doobie Brothers. Anka has successfully collaborated with songwriters Davis Foster, Carol Bayer Sager, Richard Marx, Michael McDonald, Michael Jackson and many others.

Paul Anka's contribution to television is the most recognized theme song in history. When Johnny Carson made his debut as host of "The Tonight Show" in 1962, the Anka written theme was there too. Since the debut the theme song has been performed over 1,400,000 times. Many memorable film and television programs bear the hallmark of Anka's unmistakable musical signature. In addition to writing the theme music for "The Longest Day," Anka penned the theme music and the title song for Louis Malle's "Atlantic City" took top honors at the Venice Film Festival.

Throughout the world, the music of Paul Anka is loved and its creator admired, in no small part due to his own adaptability. In addition to a host of American hits abroad, Anka has recorded more than ten albums in Japanese, German, Spanish, French and Italian, composing songs culturally tailored to each country. Having lived in Italy from 1964 to 1966, Anka claims a special love for that country and its people. To date he has sold more than 15 million albums and over 3 million singles of the Italian song "Ogni Volta." Seen in this light, Anka's international celebrity is easily understood – a combination of his own hard work and his music's universal appeal.

Solidifying his position as a top name in the U.S. gaming entertainment industry, Paul Anka recently signed an unprecedented four-year deal with Bally's Grand Resorts in Atlantic City, and with Native American-owned Foxwoods Casino in Connecticut for over 6 million dollars. In an industry where two-year contracts are the norm, these contracts acknowledge the drawing power of the Anka name on the marquee.

Paul Anka has been married for more than thirty-five years to former model Anne de Zogheb and is blessed with five daughters: Amelia, Anthea, Alicia, Amanda and Alexandra. Alexandra gave birth to her first child in December 1997. Anka continues to have roots in his hometown of Ottawa as a co-owner of the National Hockey League franchise, The Ottawa Senators.

Anka's timeless musical career rolls on this year as Sony/Epic Music is releasing his 123rd album. The album of mostly duets will embody international hits as well as never released new material. Friends that lend a hand are All For One, Celine Dion, Barry Gibb, Kenny G., Frank Sinatra, Patti LaBelle, Peter Cetera and Tom Jones among others. However, closest to his heart must be daughter Anthea, joining him on a moving rendition of "Do I Love You" David Foster, Walter AfanasiEFF and Johnny Mandel are co-producing most of the tracks with Paul Anka.

Last fall, Anka appeared in his seventh film "Mad Dog Time" co-starring Richard Dreyfus and Gabriel Byrne. Also in the works is a sequel to the critically acclaimed documentary of Anka's early career, "Lonely Boy." As an actor, Anka made his motion picture debut in 1962 with the Academy Award winning movie "The Longest Day," in which he portrayed a GI. He then went on to appear in a variety of television programs including his initial return to the screen in NBC's "Perry Mason The Case Of The Maligned Mobster" for which he achieved critical acclaim.

Raised in Ottawa, Ontario, Anka developed a talent for songwriting through school courses in English and Journalism. His life would forever be altered, however, on a trip to New York with a song he had written for a girl four years his senior. Launching his career as an international teen idol at the age of sixteen with "Diana", with sales totaling over 20 million copies worldwide. Before he turned 18, Anka had five Top-20 hits. Influenced by great R & B performers of the day including Chuck Berry and Fats Domino, and by the welcome arrival of innovators Buddy Holly and Elvis Presley, Anka cut a distinguished musical niche filled with the wonders of romance. A roster of 1950's hits made him a household name with songs like "Put Your Head on My Shoulder", "You Are My Destiny", "Lonely Boy" and "Puppy Love." By the late 50's Anka established himself as a prolific and successful singer/songwriter, with appearances on "American Bandstand" creating further fame.

In the wake of the British Invasion, the music of Paul Anka remained timely, ushering in such classics as "A Steel Guitar And A Glass Of Wine" and "Love Me Warm And Tender." In the 70's Anka ushered in another wave of chart-topping hits: "(You're) Having My Baby", "I Don't Like To Sleep Alone" and "One-Man Woman." His success continued into the eighties with the David Foster produced hit "Hold Me 'Til the Morning Comes," in which he was accompanied by vocalist Peter Cetera.