

## QUINCY JONES

### Biography

An impresario in the broadest and most creative sense of the word, Quincy Jones' career has encompassed the roles of composer, record producer, artist, film producer, arranger, conductor, instrumentalist, TV producer, record company executive, magazine founder and multi-media entrepreneur.

As a master inventor of musical hybrids, he has shuffled pop, soul, hip-hop, jazz, classical, African and Brazilian music into many dazzling fusions, traversing virtually every medium, including records, live performance, movies and television.

Celebrating more than 50 years performing and being involved in music, Quincy's creative magic has spanned over six decades, beginning with the music of the post-swing era and continuing through today's high-technology, international multi-media hybrids. In the mid-50's, he was the first popular conductor-arranger to record with a Fender bass.

His theme from the hit TV series *Ironside* was the first synthesizer-based pop theme song. As the first black composer to be embraced by the Hollywood establishment in the 60's, he helped refresh movie music with badly needed infusions of jazz and soul. His landmark 1989 album, *Back On The Block*--named "Album Of The Year" at the 1990 Grammy Awards-- brought such legends as Dizzy Gillespie, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan and Miles Davis together with Ice T, Big Daddy Kane and Melle Mel to create the first fusion of the be bop and hip hop musical traditions; while his 1993 recording of the critically acclaimed *Miles and Quincy Live At Montreux*, featured Quincy conducting Miles Davis' live performance of the historic Gil Evans arrangements from the *Miles Ahead*, *Porgy and Bess* and *Sketches of Spain* sessions, garnered a Grammy Award for Best Large Jazz Ensemble Performance.

As producer and conductor of the historic "We Are The World" recording (the best-selling single of all time) and Michael Jackson's multi-platinum solo albums, *Off The Wall*, *Bad* and *Thriller* (the best selling album of all time, with over 46 million copies sold), Quincy Jones stands as one of the most successful and admired creative artist/executives in the entertainment world.

His 1995 recording, *Q's Jook Joint*, again showcased Quincy's ability to mold the unique talents of an eclectic group of singers and musicians, in what resulted in a retrospective of his broad and diverse career from that of a seasoned Jazz musician, to skilled composer, arranger, and bandleader, to acclaimed record producer.

A reference to the backwoods club houses of rural America in the 1930's, 40's, and 50's, the platinum selling *Q's Jook Joint* featured performances by artists such as Bono, Brandy, Ray Charles, Phil Collins, Coolio, Kenny "Babyface" Edmonds, Gloria Estefan, Rachele Ferrell, Aaron Hall, Herbie Hancock, Heavy D., Ron Isley, Chaka Khan, R. Kelly, Queen Latifah, Tone Loc, the Luniz, Brian McKnight, Melle Mel, Shaquille O'Neal, Joshua Redman, the Broadway musical troupe Stomp, SWV, Take 6, newcomer Tamia, Toots Thielemans, Mervyn Warren, Barry White, Warren Wiebe, Charlie Wilson, Nancy Wilson, Stevie Wonder, Mr. X, and Yo-Yo, among others, and garnered seven Grammy nominations. His recording, *From Q, With Love*, featured a collection of 26 love songs that he recorded over the last 32 years of his more than 50 year career in the music business.

Quincy Jones was born on March 14, 1933, in Chicago and brought up in Seattle. While in junior high school, he began studying trumpet and sang in a gospel quartet at age 12. His musical studies continued at the prestigious Berklee College of Music in Boston, where he remained until the opportunity arose to tour with Lionel Hampton's band as a trumpeter, arranger and sometime-pianist. He moved on to New York and the musical "big leagues" in 1951, where his reputation as an arranger grew. By the mid-50's, he was arranging and recording for such diverse artists as Sarah Vaughan, Ray Charles, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Big Maybelle, Dinah Washington, Cannonball Adderly and LeVern Baker.

In 1957, Quincy decided to continue his musical education by studying with Nadia Boulanger, the legendary Parisian tutor to American expatriate composers such as Leonard Bernstein and Aaron Copeland. To subsidize his

studies he took a job with Barclay Disques, Mercury's French distributor. Among the artists he recorded in Europe were Charles Aznavour, Jacques Brel and Henri Salvador, as well as such visitors from America as Sarah Vaughan, Billy Eckstine and Andy Williams. Quincy's love affair with European audiences continues through the present: in 1991, he began a continuing association with the Montreux Jazz and World Music Festival, which he serves as co-producer.

Quincy won the first of his many Grammy's in 1963 for his Count Basie arrangement of "I Can't Stop Loving You." Quincy's three-year musical association as conductor and arranger with Frank Sinatra in the mid-60's also teamed him with Basie for the classic *Sinatra At The Sands*, containing the famous arrangement of "Fly Me To The Moon," the first recording played by astronaut Buzz Aldrin when he landed upon the moon's surface in 1969.

When he became vice-president at Mercury Records in 1961, Quincy became the first high-level black executive of an established major record company. Toward the end of his association with the label, Quincy turned his attention to another musical area that had been closed to blacks--the world of film scores. In 1963, he started work on the music for Sidney Lumet's *The Pawnbroker* and it was the first of his 33 major motion picture scores. In 1985, he co-produced Steven Spielberg's adaptation of Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, which won eleven Oscar nominations, introduced Whoopi Goldberg and Oprah Winfrey to film audiences, and marked Quincy's debut as a film producer. In 1991 Quincy helped launch NBC-TV's hit series, *The Fresh Prince Of Bel Air*, for which he acts as an executive producer.

In 1990, Quincy Jones formed Quincy Jones Entertainment (QJE), a co-venture with Time Warner, Inc. The new company, which Quincy served as CEO and chairman, had a broad ranging, multi-media agenda which encompassed programming for current and future technologies, including theatrical motion pictures and network, cable and syndicated television. QJE produced NBC Television's *Fresh Prince Of Bel Air* (now in syndication), and UPN's *In The House* and Fox Television's *Mad TV*. Quincy Jones, is also the publisher of *VIBE Magazine* (as well as founder), *SPIN* and *Blaze Magazines*.

In January 1992, Quincy Jones executive produced the *An American Reunion* concert at Lincoln Memorial, an all-star concert and celebration that was the first official event of the presidential inaugural celebration and drew widespread acclaim as an HBO telecast.

On March 25, 1996, Quincy Jones, executive produced the most watched awards show in the world, the *68th Annual Academy Awards*. The show received widespread acclaim as one of the most memorable Academy Award shows in recent years.

In 1997, Quincy Jones formed the Quincy Jones Media Group. QJMG's feature film projects in development include such highly anticipated films as the adaptations of the Ralph Ellison novel *Juneteeth*, David Halberstam's *The Children* for Home Box Office in association with producers Kathleen Kennedy and Frank Marshall, a bio-pic on the 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian poet *Alexander Pushkin*, *Pimp* and *Seeds of Peace* for Showtime, among others. For television, QJMG is developing the sit-com *The White Guy*. QJMG is also active in live entertainment, direct response marketing, and cross-media projects for home entertainment and educational applications. Jones is currently collaborating with Leslie Bricusse on the libretto and songs for a Broadway play based on the life of Sammy Davis, Jr. and recently, along with Harvard University and MicroSoft, produced the complete encyclopedia of African and African-American culture, *Encarta Africana*.

As a record company executive, Quincy remains highly active in the recording field as the guiding force behind his own Qwest Records, which currently boasts such important artists as New Order, Tevin Campbell, Andre Crouch, Gregory Jefferson and Justin Warfield. New Order's album, *Substance* earned Qwest a gold album in 1987. Tevin Campbell's *T.E.V.I.N* was both a critical sensation and major commercial success, and the label's release of the *Boyz N The Hood* soundtrack album was among the most successful soundtrack recordings of 1991. Qwest Records has also released soundtrack albums from the major motion pictures *Sarafina!* and *Malcolm X*.

In 1994, Quincy Jones led a group of businessmen, including Hall of Fame football player Willie Davis, television producer Don Cornelius, television journalist Geraldo Rivera and businesswoman Sonia Gonsalves Salzman in the

formation of Qwest Broadcasting, a minority controlled broadcasting company which purchased television stations in Atlanta and New Orleans for approximately \$167 million, establishing it as one of the largest minority owned broadcasting companies in the United States. Quincy served as chairman and CEO of Qwest Broadcasting. In 1999, taking advantage of the rapid escalation of broadcast station values, Jones and his partners sold Qwest Broadcasting for a reported \$270 million.

The laurels, awards and accolades have been innumerable: Quincy has won an Emmy Award for his score of the opening episode of the landmark TV miniseries, *Roots*, seven Oscar nominations, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award, 27 Grammy Awards, and N.A.R.A.S.' prestigious Trustees' Award and The Grammy Living Legend Award. He is the all-time most nominated Grammy artist with a total of 79 Grammy nominations. In 1990, France recognized Quincy with its most distinguished title, the Legion d' Honneur. He is also the recipient of the French Ministry of Culture's Distinguished Arts and Letters Award. Quincy is the recipient of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music's coveted Polar Music Prize, and the Republic of Italy's Rudolph Valentino Award. He is also the recipient of honorary doctorates from Howard University, the Berklee College of Music, Seattle University, Wesleyan University, Brandeis University, Loyola University (New Orleans), Clark Atlanta University, Claremont University's Graduate School, the University of Connecticut, Harvard University, Tuskegee University, New York University, University of Miami and The American Film Institute. Most recently, Jones was named a 2001 Kennedy Center Honoree, for his contributions to the cultural fabric of the United States of America.

In 1990, his life and career were chronicled in the critically acclaimed Warner Bros. film, *Listen Up: The Lives of Quincy Jones*, produced by Courtney Sale Ross, a film which helped illuminate not only Quincy's life and spirit, but also revealed much about the development of the African American musical tradition. Reflecting on the changes in pop music over the years, Quincy says, "If there are any common denominators, they are spirit and musicality. I go for the music that gives me goose bumps, music that touches my heart and my soul." Over the years, Quincy Jones has reached the essence of music and art: the ability to touch people's feelings and emotions.

In 2001, Quincy Jones added the title "Best Selling Author" to his list of accomplishments when his autobiography "*Q: The Autobiography of Quincy Jones*" entered the New York Times, Los Angeles Times and Wall Street Journal Best-Sellers lists. Released by Doubleday Publishing, the critically acclaimed biography retells Jones' life story from his days as an impoverished youth on the Southside of Chicago through a massively impressive career in music, film and television where he worked beside legends such as Billie Holiday, Ray Charles, Dizzy Gillespie, Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald and Michael Jackson, among many others. In conjunction with the autobiography, Rhino Records released a 4-cd boxed set of Jones' music, spanning his more than 5 decade career in the music business, entitled "*Q: The Musical Biography of Quincy Jones*."

The audio recording of "*Q: The Autobiography of Quincy Jones*," (Simon & Schuster) recently earned Jones his 27<sup>th</sup> Grammy Award, in the Best Spoken Word Category, while "*Q: The Musical Biography of Quincy Jones*" garnered him a 15th NAACP Image Award, in the category of Outstanding Jazz Artist.