

# MUSIC STARS



## CAT STEVENS

WED 27TH DEC - 7:00PM

One of pop's most prolific talents. He's sold over 40 million records but turned his back on fame, changed his religion and his name. Yusuf Islam resurrects the ghost of Cat Stevens.

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### BIOGRAPHY

#### CAT STEVENS

born: **21-07-1948**

birth place: **London, England**

Cat Stevens was born Stephen Demetre Georgiou in 1948, to a Greek Cypriot father and a Swedish mother. The family owned a restaurant on Shaftesbury Avenue, in the west End of London, and Stevens and his older brother and sister waited tables from an early age.

Although he was brought up within the Greek Orthodox religion, Stevens' parents sent him to a Roman Catholic school, where he developed a strong moral conscience.

After learning to play the piano in his parents tiny flat, Cat Stevens' talent was soon spotted by record executives, and he released his first hit single at the tender age of eighteen, entitled 'I Love My Dog'.

As Cat Steven's, Stephen enjoyed chart success with classic tracks such as 'Morning Has Broken', 'Here Comes My Baby', 'Father and Son' and 'The First Cut Is The Deepest'.

When he was nineteen Stevens contracted tuberculosis, and was hospitalised. He claims that it was this period of illness and recovery that forced him to re-evaluate his lifestyle.

Stevens eventually decided to convert to Islam, despite the fact that his father's nationality had meant that he was raised to view the religion with suspicion. He changed his name to Yusuf Islam, and withdrew from the world of entertainment.

A scandal broke out in 1989 when Yusuf was asked by a radio presenter to give his opinion on Salman Rushdie's controversial book 'Satanic Verses'. Although he stated that he thought the book to be blasphemous to the Islamic faith, he also declared that he did not condone the views of Ayatollah Khomeini, who had called for the death sentence for Rushdie. However, Yusuf Islam was misrepresented in the press and his music was subsequently blacklisted by a number of radio stations.

In the decades that followed, Yusuf presented lectures on cosmic and religious themes.

1995 saw the release of Yusuf Islam's first album in eighteen years, titled 'The Life of the Last Prophet'.

He continues to write music and study religion. He released a charity track with Ronan Keating in late 2004, and his most recent appearance was an impromptu live set at the concert for Darfur refugees at the Royal Albert Hall,

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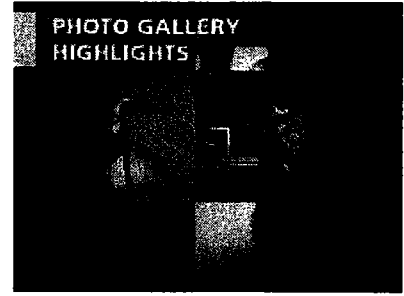
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