

KENNY ROGERS

By now, **Kenny Rogers**, has become such a living legend that it's easy to forget how he got there. Having recorded more than 65 albums which have sold over 120 million records worldwide during his 52 years in show business, Rogers is an American Icon who is in the same league as The Beatles, Elton John and Elvis Presley. Rogers has received hundreds of awards for his music and charity work, including three Grammys, 11 People's Choice Awards, 18 American Music Awards, eight Academy of Country Music awards and five Country Music Association awards. Remaining a popular entertainer around the world, Rogers, voted the "Favorite Singer of All-Time" in a 1986 joint poll by readers of both USA Today and People, still loves touring and recording new music.

His long list of smash country and pop hits includes an impressive 24 #1's. He is the voice of such timeless classics as "The Gambler," "Lucille," "Coward Of The County," "Lady," "Through The Years," "She Believes in Me," "Islands in the Stream," and "We've Got Tonight." Two of Rogers' albums, *The Gambler* and *Kenny*, are featured in the About.com poll of "The 200 Most Influential Country Albums Ever." The sweetly raspy vocals are instantly identifiable as Kenny Rogers. He sounds like nobody else. More importantly, he inhabits each song, making it vivid and tangible. For five decades, Rogers has delivered memorable songs, drawing fans from many different backgrounds. "I really, really love what I'm doing," Rogers says. "People survive longer if they love what they're doing. Because you just don't quit."

Rogers is one of very few artists who have enjoyed successful careers in such a variety of genres – jazz, folk, rock, country and pop. Houston-born Rogers formed his first band while in high school in 1956 – a rockabilly group called The Scholars (they performed on American Bandstand) – and has never quit making music. He played stand-up bass in the jazz group the Bobby Doyle Trio, and later became a member of the popular folk group, The New Christy Minstrels. The spotlight started focusing on Rogers when his group, The First Edition, scored their first hit, "I Just Dropped In (To See What Condition My Condition Was In), which was followed by the pop and country chart success of "Ruby, Don't Take Your Love To Town." Rogers' solo career shot into the stratosphere with the #1 hit, "Lucille," which was named the CMA's Single of the Year and was certified Gold.

“Daytime Friends,” “Sweet Music Man,” and “Love or Something Like It” continued his run of success. Then came “The Gambler,” a story song so vivid it not only delighted country and pop fans, it also became a TV movie, starring Rogers himself in the title role. The movie spawned four follow-ups, making it the longest running miniseries franchise on television. The five Gambler mini-series have attracted over 100 million viewers nationwide and launched a second career for Rogers as an actor on television and movies.

Rogers consistently finds songs with universal appeal. “I’ve never considered myself a great singer, but I am a great storyteller,” Rogers told *Billboard* magazine, also noting that he feels his strength as an artist is in finding great songs. In the 1980s, Rogers’ romantic country hits “Through The Years,” “She Believes In Me,” “You Decorated My Life,” and “Lady,” the biggest song of his career, quickly became classics. “There are a lot of songs that may have initial success but don’t linger the period of time those songs have,” Rogers says. “They do take a different value in your heart when they have that kind of staying power that represents your success and represents a feeling and a thought. A song like that becomes a part of your soul.”

In 1999, after forming his own record company, Dreamcatcher Entertainment, Rogers returned to the charts in a big way with the hit, "The Greatest," and when the follow-up, "Buy Me a Rose," hit #1 in 2000, Rogers, at age 61, became the oldest artist in chart history to have a #1 solo record in any format, proving his talent was just as vibrant and meaningful as it was when he first started out. That same year, the Recording Industry Association of America awarded Kenny the prestigious Diamond Award celebrating sales of more than 10 million albums for his *Greatest Hits* album, which has sold over 24 million copies worldwide to date. He is currently the 8th Best Selling Male Artist of all time according to the RIAA, with 19 Platinum® albums and 31 Gold® albums.

KENNY ROGERS Fast Facts:

- The only artist to chart a record in each of the last six decades (50’s, 60’s, 70’s, 80’s, 90’s, 2000’s).
- At the height of his late ‘70s–early ‘80s success, Kenny Rogers sold more than one million records every month for a whopping 26 straight months.
- His big resurgence in music was in 1999 with the hit single “The Greatest” and again with the #1 chart-topping hit “Buy Me A Rose” – thus making him the oldest artist to reach #1 in the history of the country charts.

- He started out in a folk music trio, has been in a jazz group which led to him joining the New Christy Minstrels and then formed the First Edition (a pop group) before going solo and earning multiple successes, accolades and accomplishments.
- Kenny Rogers' Greatest Hits has sold over 12 million copies in the U.S. and 12 million copies internationally – solidifying his worldwide appeal.
- He has won the prestigious Horatio Alger Award in 1990 given to those who have distinguished themselves despite humble beginnings.
- He has 3 published photography books – having photographed 5 U.S. Presidents, numerous celebrities and gorgeous landscapes – several photographs were the last photos taken of some of the celebrities before they passed away (i.e. George Burns, Cary Grant, and John Houston to name a few).
- Rogers studied under the assistant of photography great Ansel Adams.
- He is the Chairman of Dreamcatcher Entertainment. He came up with the name, designed the company's logo and has gone on to make history as an independent label with #1 records and platinum success.
- He is an author – penning one of four books "The Toy Shoppe" based on the tour and hit musical which he also wrote.
- After the death of his friend Harry Chapin, Rogers assumed his position at the forefront of the movement to aid the hungry – leading to the World Hunger Media Awards. He was also a participant in the "We Are the World" performance which raised millions for famine relief in Africa.
- "The Gambler," one of Kenny Rogers biggest hits of his career spawned no fewer than 5 movies and was turned in to a five-episode mini-series, the longest running mini-series in the history of US television seen by 100 million people. Rogers starred as Brady Hawks.
- He is a father to six-year old twin boys Justin and Jordan. He also has a daughter and sons Kenny, Jr. and Christopher. Christopher co-stars with Rogers in his video for "I Can't Unlove You."