

Colin Hay Biography

In 1967, Colin Hay was 14 years old, traveling by ship through the Suez Canal from Scotland to Australia. He played some acoustic guitar, sang a song, and told some stories. He did that then, and he does that now. This is the thread that runs through all his work for the last 25 years - from the multi-platinum award-winning Men At Work, to the beloved solo acoustic release "*Going Somewhere*", and his soon to be released electric CD "*Company Of Strangers*".

Playing solo plants his feet, connects him to his audience, and lets them connect to him. An acoustic evening with Colin Hay means rediscovering the bare essentials--one guitar (sometimes two), and one voice. Transporting when he sings, hilarious when he talks, he expresses what we all share, the peaks and valleys of our lives.

In 1978, Colin Hay and Ron Strykert formed the nucleus of what was to become Men At Work. No one could have predicted that this Australian rock band would sell 10 million copies of one album and win the 1982 Grammy Award for Best New Artist. From that album --*Business As Usual*, "Who Can It Be Now" topped the charts in Australia, Europe, Canada, Japan, South and Central America, and the USA. The single "Down Under" hit #1 in dozens of countries, and has become one of the most iconographic Australian pop songs of all time. "I have played that song with all kinds of musicians, in all kinds of configurations, it always works, as ultimately, it is a song of celebration." This single and its album stayed at #1 on the American charts for 16 weeks until they were dethroned by Michael Jackson's "*Thriller*". The success of "*Cargo*", their next CD, overlapped with the first and kept them in the spotlight through 1983-84. It spawned the hits "Overkill," "It's A Mistake," and "Dr. Heckyll & Mr. Jive." "Two Hearts", released in 1985, went gold in the US and included the hit "Everything I Need". In 1994, Men At Work were inducted into the ARIA Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

In 1987 Colin released his debut solo album, "Looking For Jack". The title track was inspired by a brief meeting with Jack Nicholson and still enjoys airplay worldwide. Looking For Jack's lead single, "Hold Me," hit the US Top 100. The fine music continued with the Celtic-influenced Wayfaring Sons, featuring the single "Into My Life", which was a huge hit in Brazil, resulting in Colin being invited in 1991 to play at the now legendary Rock in Rio, alongside Prince and Joe Cocker, to 150,000 people. Then came the acclaimed solo acoustic record "Peaks & Valleys". Colin formed his own label, "Lazy Eye Records" in 1994, and released his 4th solo CD, "*Topanga*". This return to the full band sound was further developed on "Transcendental Highway", and released to much acclaim in 1998, nominated for an ARIA award, and was supported by tours of the U.S., Canada, Germany and Australia. Songs from the well-received 2001 acoustic CD "*Going Somewhere*" are featured on the TV shows *Dawson's Creek*, *Judging Amy*, and the new hit show *Scrubs*. Both "Beautiful World" and "Overkill" (acoustic version) are featured on the *Scrubs* soundtrack, set for a September 2002 US release (Hollywood Records). Of

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the acoustic CD "*Going Somewhere*" Colin says, "I received so many requests to record an album that's as close to my live show as possible. So here it is."

Traveling the world, Colin continues to win audiences with moving lyrics and hilarious insights into an absolutely unique career and life. Complementing his live performing, Colin has been based in Los Angeles for the past ten years, and regularly works as an actor. Throughout the 1980's he appeared in numerous Australian films. He's played a drugged-out musician in Mark Joffe's *Cosi*, acted alongside Russell Crowe in *Heaven's Burning*, and appeared in *The Craic*, starring the Irish comedian Jimeion.

Since 1996, Men At Work's Colin Hay and Greg Ham have toured extensively throughout South and Central America, the USA, Canada, and Japan. Their fan base continues to grow to this day. A performing peak would have to be Men At Work's show at the 2000 Olympics to an estimated audience of 3 billion worldwide. When asked if he gets confused as to whether he's playing a solo or a Men At Work show, Colin replied "I throw a pick into the audience. If the front row fights for it, I know it's a Men At Work show. If one person picks it up and hands it to me, I know I'm on my own."

"What I am most excited about is my new album, "*Company of Strangers*", due for imminent release, and my new electric band. In many ways it feels like it's the first album I've ever made. It's not, but it feels like it is. The title track came from the realization that on a nightly basis the audience and I share time, space, and secrets. Then we move on with our lives. But, the good ones stay with me, and give purpose to what lies ahead."

Colin Hay has cemented his legend in the realms of songwriting and performing. Of his imminent return to Australia as a solo acoustic guitarist/singer/songwriter he observes, "I started off playing acoustic; it's my natural game, if you will. It's a point I started from and may well be the point I end with. It's always the point I return to."