

FACT SHEET

Soft rock artists (1970s)

Elton John

Pianist Elton John rose to prominence in the 1970s and has remained a best-selling artist, thanks to his ability to vary his style. His most successful album was *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road* which included the hits 'Candle In The Wind', 'Bennie And The Jets' and the title track 'Goodbye Yellow Brick Road'. He also enjoyed huge success in the US with 'Crocodile Rock'.

The Carpenters

Featuring the siblings Richard and Karen, The Carpenters had a string of easy listening songs such as 'Close To You', 'Only Just Begun', 'Yesterday Once More', 'Sing', 'Goodbye To Love' and 'Top Of The World'. Their songs featured lush, close harmonies and orchestral backing.

Billy Joel

Pianist Billy Joel was classically trained and rose to prominence from 1973 with the successful album *Piano Man*. Further hits included the songs 'Just The Way You Are' and 'My Life'. He remained popular into the 1980s with 'Goodnight Saigon' and 'Uptown Girl'.

Chicago

Named for the city of Chicago where they were formed, the band had a strong jazz-rock flavour and featured a brass section. Chicago played punchier songs, and their hits include 'Does Anybody Really Know What Time It Is', 'Beginnings', and 'If You Leave Me Now'.

Carole King

Originally a 1960s Brill Building songwriter, King wrote numerous hits for others before commencing a solo career. *Tapestry*, released in 1971, generated hits with 'I Feel the Earth Move', 'It's Too Late', 'Smackwater Jack', '(You Make Me Feel Like A) Natural Woman' and 'You've Got A Friend'.

Carly Simon

Beginning with the album *Anticipation* in 1971, Simon enjoyed further success with 'You're So Vain', 'The Right Thing To Do', 'Mockingbird' and 'Nobody Does It Better', used as the title song for the James Bond film *The Spy Who Loved Me*. Simon began composing film music in the 1980s.

Soft rock artists (1980s)

Michael Jackson

A founding member of the Jackson Five at the age of four, Michael enjoyed a phenomenal solo career in contrast to his shy personality. He modelled his dance moves on James Brown, and starting with 'Ben' and 'Rock With You' in the 1970s he enjoyed massive success with the albums *Thriller* in 1982 and *Bad* in 1987. However, his private life became increasingly bizarre, and successive albums never recaptured the *Thriller* success. His hits include 'Thriller', 'Billie Jean', 'Beat It' and 'We Are The World', which he co-wrote to benefit famine relief in Africa.

Madonna

Madonna rose to fame in 1980 from a background in dance music. Her 1980s hits include 'Like A Virgin', 'Material Girl', 'Crazy For You', 'La Isla Bonita' and 'Like A Prayer'. An astute business woman, Madonna generated interest through her provocative image, raunchy publications and constant style changes. Success continued into the 1990s and 2000s with 'Justify My Love' and 'Ray of Light'.

Bryan Adams

From Canada, Bryan Adams specialised in full-scale ballad songs. He had success with 'Heaven', 'Heat Of The Night', '(Everything I Do), I Do It For You', 'Please Forgive Me' and 'All For Love'. He had the distinction of being the first Western artist to tour Vietnam in 1994.

Lionel Richie

Originally the lead singer and saxophonist with The Commodores, Richie left the group in the early 1980s to pursue a solo career. Moving towards adult-orientated rock, he had hits with 'Endless Love', 'Truly', 'All Night Long', 'Hello' and 'Say You, Say Me'.