

ERIC CARMEN

Even stars rave about him

Eric and his group Magic in action: George Sipl, Eric, Dwight Krueger, Michael McBride, Dan Hrdlicka and Steve Knill

In one year, a top LP, two hit singles and a third, "Sunrise", is on the way. Eric Carmen has become a superstar at an incredible pace...

David Cassidy (far right) and Gerry Bleckley from the group America couldn't stay in their seats when Eric (far left) did his show at the Roxy Theater - they jumped on stage

Eric Carmen was already toddling to music lessons at the age of two and a half. At five, he was the mascot of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra. His violinist aunt Muriel always took him to rehearsals. He hid in cello cases and the musicians had to look for him. So classical music became everything to the growing Eric. Until the age of 15, he studied classical piano, harmony, violin and viola. At some point, he wanted to become a concert pianist. Then he saw the Beatles in the movie "A Hard Days Night", and that's when it clicked for him: "From then on, I wanted to be a rock'n'roller," says Eric. He abandoned his piano and learned the guitar. In 1970, he founded his own group, the Raspberries. We wanted to revive the golden days of rock'n'roll." But they were only misunderstood, the record company forced them all into the same suits. Eric: "We looked like the Osmonds and nobody took us seriously."

Eric was unhappy and dissatisfied. On their third and fourth albums, they introduced a new musical direction. Now they were praised by the critics, but they weren't selling any more records: Back then I could have torn my hair out. Everyone in the band blamed the other for the failure. All we did was argue. We split up in 1975."

Eric went back to Cleveland. He revelled in his regained freedom. Nobody told him what to do, he could write songs according to his own taste. When he played them to record boss Clive Davis in his living room, he spontaneously hired him off the couch.

Shortly afterwards, he was in the recording studio recording his first solo record. Producer Jimmy Lenner, who recently supervised the new Bay City Rollers LP, remembers: "Eric didn't even know how much he had in him. He had to sing the song All by myself over and over again until it finally sounded like Eric Carmen and no longer a little bit like the Beatles and a little bit like the Beach Boys. Eric has his own sound."

His first LP "Eric Carmen" reached the top ten in America and two singles from it, "All by my-self" and "Never gonna fall in love again", were also hits here. And the third single, "Sunrise", also seems to be a hit.

When Eric Carmen performed at the Roxy Theater in Los Angeles a few months ago, Shaun and David Cassidy were in the audience. Eric stayed on the piano for the first half of the performance. In the second part, he picked up the guitar. David Cassidy jumped on stage for the song "Be my Baby". The two had known each other for a few months. David, a great admirer of the Beach Boys, attended a concert by the Beach Boys in Florida. Eric Carmen was the opening act. From then on, David was also a fan of Eric. They've been friends ever since. Shaun sat quietly in the audience - until the song That's Rock'n'Roll. I could hardly contain myself. It was such a great song, like it was written on my soul," says Shaun. "The next day I bought the record and listened to it for hours. Then I spoke to Eric on the phone. He gave me permission to release it as a single. I hope it will be a hit for me." Eric himself is more into ballads, romantic rock songs.

Shaun and David haven't seen Eric since. The shy Eric lives in complete seclusion in his home town of Cleveland, not even his closest friends are allowed to visit him. He is busy working on new hits. He wants to go into the studio this fall to record his second LP...

Eric Carmen was born on August 11, 1949 in Cleveland (Ohio). He is 1.69 m tall, has brown hair and brown eyes