

# Biography

## TIM CURRY

**A**s those who have followed Tim Curry's career closely can attest, expecting less than the unexpected from him could prove hazardous to your mental health. He is a young man of prodigious talent, tremendous energy and rare originality.

With his stunningly successful portrayal of Dr. Frank N. Furter, "a crazed transvestite from outer space," in the landmark underground hit film "The Rocky Horror Picture Show,"—which is still playing on the midnight/weekend circuit in some 80 U.S. cities—he emerged as a major cult star. He next appeared in both the London and Broadway productions of Tom Stoppard's "Travesties," in the role of Tzara, a Dadaist poet and sculptor. The play went on to win the coveted Tony away as Best Play of the Year. Tim then tackled an extraordinarily ambitious project: he stars in the forthcoming BBC-TV 6-hour mini-series "The Life Of Shakespeare," playing the bard from 25 to 50. And what would one expect from Tim next? His debut A&M album, *Read My Lips*, as powerful, eclectic and remarkable a creation as we're likely to hear this year.

Working closely with ace producer Bob Ezrin (Kiss, Lou Reed, Aerosmith, Alice Cooper) and Ezrin's partner Michael Kamen (New York Rock Ensemble, Music Director for David Bowie, author of filmscores and ballets), Tim Curry has created what amounts to a potent sendup of nearly every major musical style of the last 50-odd years, a compelling, musically valid, wonderfully funny rich *tour de force*, that, not unexpectedly, adds another dimension to his already extensive creative repertoire. *Read My Lips* may well establish Tim Curry as one of the strongest and most original recording artists of our times, a fact that will come as a surprise only to those who have yet to be exposed to his special genius.

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The players who appear on *Read My Lips* offer a clue not only to the ambitiousness of the project but to its overall excellence: keyboard contributions were

made by Lee Michaels, Michael Kamen and producer Ezrin himself; guitarists include Richard Wagner who is related to *the* Richard Wagner and who helped put Alice Cooper and Lou Reed on the map, John Tropea and Robin Miller, both outstanding New York sessionmen; Philly International A-line drummer Charles Collins and Allen Schwartzberg (Roberta Flack, Alice Cooper), percussionist Jimmy Maelin, and Bob Babbitt, the leading studio bass player on both coasts. Guest artists included Nils Lofgren, fiddle-player extraordinaire Joe Venuti, Dixieland trumpeter, Max Kaminsky, and the entire bagpipe and drum regimen of Toronto's 48th Highlanders.

From the heraldic magnificence of Scottish bagpipes on the epic "Wake Nicodemus," an old folk song given a zesty new rock arrangement, to the reggae kicker of the Beatles "I Will," right through to the funky rock-cum-30's reading of Irving Berlin's "Harlem On My Mind," Tim manages to cover just about every musical waterfront. (Do The) "Brontosaurus" is a delicious sendup of the heavy metal rockers, and on "Sloe Gin," a song written by Ezrin and Kamen, he takes on (and delivers) the blues. "Birds of a Feather," a song written by Toronto's Carol Pope, manages to convey an ambiguous sexual message in a quasi-sleezy sendup that gives Afro/latin rock a run for the money. "Alan" has been described as "a beer & sausage love song that could have been played by a cafe orchestra in Vienna in the 30's;" Joni Mitchell's "All I Want" is given a total facelift. The classic "Anyone Who Had A Heart" is rendered with Wagnerian bravado that tugs at your heart while it tickles your funnybone.

And it all works, both as solid music and as light, right-on-target humor. Or as Tim puts it: "It covers a lot of bases, it's relentless rock, and it's a pretty pushy album."

True, music may never be quite the same again, but then considering the source, who could expect anything less?

—Jason McCloskey

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