

B I O G R A P H Y

STYX

As America's most popular rock and roll band, Styx is usually written about in terms of sold-out concert tours and their long string of platinum albums. Impressive facts, certainly, but they tend to cloud a more basic issue. More than sales figures, musical consistency has been the greatest factor in the band's fifteen-year career.

"*Kilroy Was Here*" is Styx's eleventh and most ambitious album to date. Recorded in Chicago over a period of six months, the LP follows the conceptual story of Kilroy, the last rocker, imprisoned in the near future when rock is banned from a techno-society. An accompanying 11-minute film, produced by Styx, was recently completed by British director Brian Gibson (*Breaking Glass*), with the group acting in character roles. Styx's live performances of "*Kilroy Was Here*" will begin with the film, and then explode into the group on-stage.

The first Styx album, "*Styx I*," was released in 1970. The Chicago-based band had already been together several years. Vocalist-keyboardist-synthesizer player and Styx leader Dennis DeYoung heard the neighborhood jamming of twin-brothers Chuck (bass) and John Panozzo (drums). DeYoung joined in, and the core of Styx, along with guitarist-vocalist James "J.Y." Young, has been together ever since.

"*Styx 2*" yielded the hit single, "Lady," a song that would influence more than a few bands to follow. Styx's style of hard-edged rock, technical prowess and superior-songwriting built up an early reservoir of fan support. After several albums for an undernourished regionally-based label, the band signed with A&M Records in '75.

"*Equinox*" began the next phase for Styx. The album contained more early Styx favorites, like "Lorelei" and "Suite Madame Blue." The band instituted a hard rock schedule, and it paid off in growing success.

Guitarist-vocalist Tommy Shaw joined in time for the next album, "*Crystal Ball*," and his addition was quickly felt as a musician and songwriter. Shaw's on-stage energy also fueled the band's live reputation. By 1977, many were waiting to see what the new Styx line-up would produce next.

"*Grand Illusion*," the band's seventh album, was an important breakthrough. The hit single, "Come Sail Away," broadened the group's audience even more, and songs like James Young's "Miss America" and Tommy Shaw's "Fooling Yourself" helped make the album Styx's most listened-to yet. As the band's success mounted, the group's early audience stayed aboard, too. The platinum-selling "*Grand Illusion*" meant larger halls, more exposure and more pressure. Again, Styx lived up to the challenge.

"*Pieces Of Eight*" and "*Cornerstone*," which featured the change-of-pace smash hit, "Babe," also went platinum. The musical contributions of DeYoung, Shaw and Young stretched into newer areas, and the band wasn't afraid to approach such issues as drug abuse and social decay in their songs. With "*Cornerstone*," Styx had gracefully broken from the rock-me-baby tradition of most crowd-pleasing bands.

"*Paradise Theatre*," Styx's tenth album, was the first culmination of the group's career. In an attempt to reach beyond the limits of most rock records, Dennis DeYoung settled on a musical metaphor — the now-closed Paradise Theatre in Chicago. Originally built for perpetuity in the 30's, the once-beautiful showcase grew run-down and was finally torn down in 1958. DeYoung thought it a fitting example of latter-seventies America; and the resulting theme grew into "*Paradise Theatre*." Coming on the heels of being voted America's favorite rock band in the national Gallup poll, Styx's "*Paradise Theatre*" album and tour was the group's biggest achievement to date. Songs like James Young's "Half Penny, Two Penny" and DeYoung's "The Best Of Times" became radio standards.

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"*Kilroy Was Here*," the newest album, also began with a concept by Dennis DeYoung. Fascinated by the Moral Majority's much-publicized lobbying for censorship in the arts, DeYoung conceived of a musical fantasy set in a time when rock had been banned from a robot-oriented society by a group called the Majority for Musical Morality — led by a crusading zealot named Dr. Everett Righteous. Kilroy, a rocker imprisoned some years earlier, rekindles his fervor for the music. "*Kilroy Was Here*" is about his struggle to bring back rock and roll.

The group spent many long hours writing and recording "*Kilroy*," and the result is an album they've been aspiring towards since those early beginnings in Chicago some twenty years ago. At a time when many groups might be resting on past success, Styx continues to grow with each album. "*Kilroy Was Here*" is the next step.

STYX A&M DISCOGRAPHY

<i>Equinox</i>	November 11, 1975
<i>Crystal Ball</i>	September 24, 1976
<i>Grand Illusion</i>	July 7, 1977
<i>Pieces Of Eight</i>	September 17, 1979
<i>Paradise Theatre</i>	January 6, 1981
<i>Kilroy Was Here</i>	February 22, 1983

