

Johnny Mann

Wrote about this artist a few years ago and last week he left this world for a far better one, so I thought it would be good to take a look back at a friend and fellow artist.
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His name is Johnny Mann. Johnny was born in Maryland and spent his childhood there. His mother raised him and his siblings on money received from teaching music, so one would have to believe that Johnny would at some point follow the path of music set by his mother, and follow he did. He learned music as a child and carried that over to his military days by playing in the Air Force Band. This was not just any band but was commissioned to play at special events around the country.

After his military tenure, he went back to Maryland and played some locally but soon realized that if he was to pursue his dream he would have to go to New York or Hollywood. When I had the opportunity to spend some time with Johnny a few weeks ago he said that he decided to go to Hollywood since it was the warmer of the two climates. His thought process was that if he was not successful it would be better weather conditions in Hollywood being broke than in New York. As you will see, as we continue the article, not being successful was not to be an issue.

Johnny is best known for his thirty-nine albums that he arranged and conducted for his Johnny Mann Singers resulting in five Grammy Award nominations and two Grammy Awards. When I told Johnny that he won more Grammy's than Elvis, he smiled and said, yes, but he died.

He is a composer, arranger, conductor, entertainer and recording star. His group of super talented young singers appeared with him in Chevrolet's weekly syndicated series, "Stand Up and Cheer," which enjoyed a three-year run on national TV and many tours around the country.

Johnny's start in Hollywood was arranging scores for seven full-length motion pictures for Warner Brothers, Twentieth Century Fox and Columbia Studios. He then became the choral director of the "NBC Comedy Hour," which led to the formation of The Johnny Mann Singers and a record contract. Along with being musical director of the original 'Alvin and The Chipmunks' TV series, he sang the voice of 'Theodore.'

Mann has worked over the years with George Gobel, Johnny Mathis, Nat King Cole, Dean Martin, Frank Sinatra, Julie London, Steve Allen, and was Danny Kaye's conductor on a twelve-week tour.

With limitless energy and enthusiasm, Mann sincerely espouses the positive and good of America through his entertainment. He was invited to perform at The White House twice during President Nixon's reign to entertain Imelda Marcos and first-time Russian visitor to the U.S., Leonid Breschnev, General Secretary of The U.S.S.R.

Mann's devotion to his country has made him the recipient of four consecutive awards from The Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, top awards from The Disabled American Veterans, The Medal of Honor from The National DAR, The Silver Helmet Award from the AMVETS, The National Honor Medal from The Veterans of Foreign Wars, and numerous citations from The American Legion.

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Mann has appeared twice as Guest Conductor of the world famous United States Air Force Band and Singing Sergeants in Constitution Hall, Washington, D.C.
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Johnny has composed, arranged and produced hundreds of radio and TV product commercials, and is well-known for his original radio station LD. Jingle Packages such as 93 KHJ 'Boss Radio,' KFWB Channel 98, K-EARTH 101 in Los Angeles, and a multitude of other stations in cities around the United States, as well as Canada, Taiwan, Honolulu and Australia. Recently he produced jingles for The ABC Radio Network and the 145 affiliated "Oldies" format stations.

Now for a different side of Johnny. He is active in many charities, hosted eight celebrity golf tournaments. He is frequently invited as a speaker and emcee for local charity events. He has produced a CD for The National Senior Olympics Games, "Let The Games Begin," followed by "Glorify His Name In Quiet Time," "Nearer My God To Thee," "We Wish You A Merry Christmas," and "The Best of The Johnny Mann Singers."

Johnny and his wife Betty live in the upcountry where they are active in their church. The CD project "Glorify His Name In Quiet Time" was to help a ministry entitled Catherine Martin and Quiet Time Ministries. His project not only has many of the standard hymns but also Johnny wrote the song, which is the title of the project.

I found it very interesting that Johnny through all his success stayed focused on the spiritual values that we all should have in our life.

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