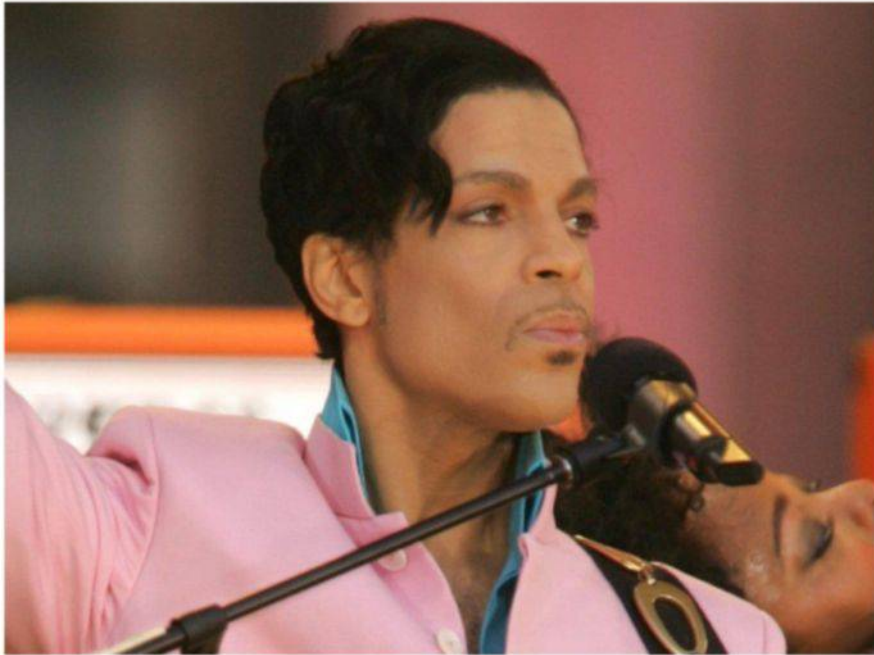




Prince



Prince (musician)

Prince Rogers Nelson (June 7, 1958 – April 21, 2016) was an American singer, songwriter, musician, record producer and filmmaker

Born and raised in Minneapolis, Minnesota Prince was known for his electric work, flamboyant stage presence, extravagant fashion sense and use of makeup, and wide vocal range. His innovative music integrated a wide variety of styles, including funk, rock, R&B, new wave, soul, psychedelia, and pop. He sold over 100 million records worldwide, making him one of the best-selling music artists of all time.^[1] He won eight Grammy Awards,^[2] six American Music Awards,^[3] a Golden Globe Award,^[4] and an Academy Award for the 1984 film *Purple Rain*.^[5] He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2004.^[6]

Prince developed an interest in music as a young child and wrote his first song at the age of seven.^[7] He signed a recording contract with Warner Bros. Records at the age of 17, and released his debut album *For You* in 1978. His 1979 album *Prince* went platinum, and his next three records—*Dirty Mind* (1980), *Controversy* (1981), and *1999* (1982)—continued his success, showcasing his prominently explicit lyrics and blending of funk, dance, and rock music.^[8] In 1984, he began referring to his backup band as the Revolution and released *Purple Rain*, the soundtrack album to his film debut. It quickly became his most critically and commercially successful release, spending 24 consecutive weeks atop the *Billboard 200*^[9] and selling over 20 million copies worldwide.^[10] After releasing the albums *Around the World in a Day* (1985) and *Parade* (1986), The Revolution disbanded, and Prince released the double album *Sign o' the Times* (1987) as a solo artist. He released three more solo albums before debuting The New Power Generation band in 1991.

In 1993, while in a contractual dispute with Warner Bros., he changed his stage name to an unpronounceable symbol (♏), also known as the "Love Symbol", and began releasing new albums at a faster rate to remove himself from contractual obligations. He released five records between 1994 and 1996 before signing with Arista Records in 1998. In 2000, he began referring to himself as "Prince" again. He released 16 albums after that, including the platinum-selling *Musicology* (2004). His final album, *Hit n Run Phase Two*, was first released on the Tidal streaming service on December 2015. Five months later, at the age of 57, Prince died of an accidental fentanyl overdose at his Paisley Park recording studio and home in Chanhassen, Minnesota

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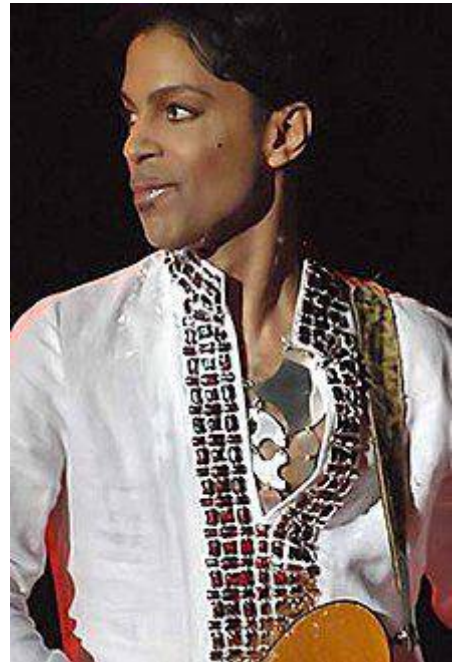
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1975–1984: Beginnings and breakthrough

1984–1987: The Revolution, *Purple Rain*, and subsequent releases

1987–1991: Solo again, *Sign o' the Times*

Prince



Prince performing in April 2008

Born	Prince Rogers Nelson June 7, 1958 Minneapolis, Minnesota, U.S.
Died	April 21, 2016 (aged 57) Chanhassen, Minnesota, U.S.
Cause of death	Accidental fentanyl overdose
Other names	♏ ("Love Symbol") · Alexander Nevermind · The Artist · The Artist Formerly Known as Prince (TAFKAP) · Camille · Christopher Tracy · Jamie Starr · Joey Coco · Tora Tora · The Kid
Occupation	Singer ·

1991–1994: The New Power Generation*Diamonds and Pearls* and name change
 1994–2000: Increased output and*The Gold Experience*
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Early life

Prince Rogers Nelson was born on June 7, 1958 in Minneapolis, Minnesota the son of Mattie Della (*née* Shaw; 1933–2002) and John Lewis Nelson (1916–2001). His parents were both African American and his family ancestry is centered in Louisiana, with all four of his grandparents hailing from that state.^[12] His father was a pianist and songwriter, and his mother was a jazz singer. Prince was given his father's stage name, Prince Rogers, which his father used while performing with his mother in a jazz group called the Prince Rogers Trio.^[13] In 1991, Prince's father told *A Current Affair* that he named his son Prince because he wanted Prince "to do everything I wanted to do".^[14] Prince was not fond of his name and wanted people to instead call him Skipper, a name which stuck throughout his childhood.^{[13][15][16]} Prince has said he was "born epileptic" and had seizures when he was young. He stated, "My mother told me one day I walked in to her and said, 'Mom, I'm not going to be sick anymore,' and she said, 'Why?' and I said, 'Because an angel told me so.'^[17]

Prince's younger sister, Tyka, was born on May 18, 1960.^{[18][19]} Both siblings developed a keen interest in music, which was encouraged by their father^[20] Prince wrote his first song, "Funk Machine", on his father's piano when he was seven.^[20] Prince's parents divorced when he was 10, and his mother remarried to Hayward Baker, with whom she had a son named Omarr; Prince had a troubled relationship with Baker, causing

	songwriter · musician · record producer · filmmaker
Years active	1975–2016
Spouse(s)	Mayte Garcia (m. 1996; div. 2000) <p>Manuela Testolini (m. 2001; div. 2006)</p>
Children	1
Relatives	John L. Nelson (father) <p>Tyka Nelson (sister)</p>
Musical career	
Genres	Pop · funk · rock · R&B · soul · Minneapolis sound
Instruments	Vocals · guitar · keyboards · piano · bass · drums
Labels	Warner Bros. · Paisley Park · NPG · EMI · Columbia · Arista · Universal
Associated acts	94 East · The Time · Vanity 6 · The Revolution · The Family · Wendy & Lisa · Mazarati · Sheena Easton · Sheila E. · Madhouse · The New Power Generation · Chaka Khan · 3rdeyegirl
Website	officialprincemusic.com

him to repeatedly switch homes, sometimes living with his father and sometimes with his mother and stepfather.^{[20][21]} Baker took Prince to see James Brown in concert, and Prince credited Baker with improving the family's finances. After a brief period of living with his father, who bought him his first guitar, Prince moved into the basement of the Anderson family, his neighbors, after his father kicked him out. He befriended the Andersons' son, Andre, who later collaborated with Prince and became known as André Cymone.^{[22][23]}



The Minneapolis house where Prince stayed with André Cymone's family, pictured in August 2017^[11]

Prince attended Minneapolis' Bryant Junior High and then Central High School, where he played football, basketball, and baseball. He was a student at the Minnesota Dance Theatre through the Urban Arts Program of Minneapolis Public Schools.^[24] He played on Central's junior varsity basketball team, and continued to play basketball recreationally as an adult.^{[25][26]} Prince met Jimmy Jam in 1973 in junior high, and impressed him with musical talent, early mastery of a wide range of instruments, and work ethic.^[27]

Career

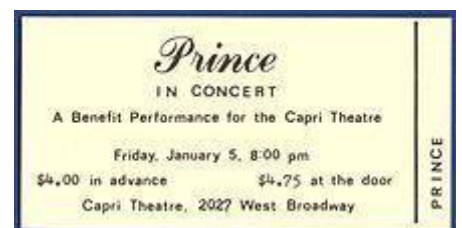
1975–1984: Beginnings and breakthrough

In 1975, Pepe Willie, the husband of Prince's cousin Shauntel, formed the band 94 East with Marcy Ingvaldstad and Kristie Lazenberry, hiring André Cymone and Prince to record tracks. Willie wrote the songs, and Prince contributed guitar tracks, and Prince and Willie co-wrote the 94 East song, "Just Another Sucker". The band recorded tracks which later became the album *Minneapolis Genius – The Historic 1977 Recordings*.

In 1976, Prince created a demo tape with producer Chris Moon, in Moon's Minneapolis studio. Unable to secure a recording contract, Moon brought the tape to Owen Husney, a Minneapolis businessman, who signed Prince, age 17, to a management contract, and helped him create a demo at Sound 80 Studios in Minneapolis (with producer/engineer David Z). The demo recording, along with a press kit produced at Husney's ad agency, resulted in interest from several record companies including Warner Bros. Records, A&M Records, and Columbia Records.^[28]

With the help of Husney, Prince signed a recording contract with Warner Bros. The record company agreed to give Prince creative control for three albums and ownership of the publishing rights.^{[29][30]} Husney and Prince then left Minneapolis and moved to Sausalito, California, where Prince's first album, *For You*, was recorded at Record Plant Studios. The album was mixed in Los Angeles and released on April 7, 1978.^[31] According to the *For You* album notes, Prince wrote, produced, arranged, composed, and played all 27 instruments on the recording, except for the song "Soft and Wet", whose lyrics were co-written by Moon. The cost of recording the album was twice Prince's initial advance. Prince used the *Prince's Music Co.* to publish his songs. "Soft and Wet" reached No. 12 on the Hot Soul Singles chart and No. 92 on the Billboard Hot 100. The song "Just as Long as We're Together" reached No. 91 on the Hot Soul Singles chart.

In 1979, Prince created a band with André Cymone on bass, Dez Dickerson on guitar, Gayle Chapman and Doctor Fink on keyboards, and Bobby Z. on drums. Their first show was at the Capri Theater on January 5, 1979. Warner Bros. executives attended the show but decided that Prince and the band needed more time to develop his music.^[32] In October 1979, Prince released the album *Prince*, which was No. 4 on the Billboard Top R&B/Black Albums charts and No. 22 on the Billboard 200, and went platinum. It contained two R&B hits: "Why You Wanna Treat Me So Bad?" and "I Wanna Be Your Lover" sold over a million copies, and reached No. 11 on the Billboard Hot 100 and No. 1 for two weeks on the Hot Soul Singles chart. Prince performed both these songs on January 26, 1980, on American Bandstand. On this album, Prince used *Ecnirp Music – BMI*.^[33]



Ticket to Prince's first performance with his band in January 1979

In 1980, Prince released the album *Dirty Mind*, which contained sexually explicit material, including the title song, "Head", and the song "Sister", and was described by [Stephen Thomas Erlewine](#) as a "stunning, audacious amalgam of funk, new wave, R&B, and pop, fueled by grinningly salacious sex and the desire to shock."^[34] Recorded in Prince's own studio, this album was [certified gold](#), and the single "[Uptown](#)" reached No. 5 on the *Billboard* Dance chart and No. 5 on the Hot Soul Singles chart. Prince was also the opening act for [Rick James](#)' 1980 *Fire It Up* tour.

In February 1981, Prince made his first appearance on *Saturday Night Live*, performing "Partyup". In October 1981, Prince released the album, *Controversy*. He played several dates in support of it, at first as one of the opening acts for the [Rolling Stones](#), on their US tour. He began 1982 with a small tour of college towns where he was the headlining act. The songs on *Controversy* were published by *Controversy Music*^[35] – [ASCAP](#), a practice he continued until the *Emancipation* album in 1996. By 2002, MTV News noted that "[n]ow all of his titles, liner notes and Web postings are written in his own shorthand spelling, as seen on 1999's *Rave Un2 the Joy Fantastic*, which featured 'Hot Wt U.'^[36]

In 1981, Prince formed a side project band called [the Time](#). The band released four albums between 1981 and 1990, with Prince writing and performing most of the instrumentation and backing vocals (sometimes credited under the pseudonyms "Jamie Starr" or "The Starr Company"), with lead vocals by [Morris Day](#).^{[37][38]} In late 1982, Prince released a double album, *1999*, which sold over three million copies.^[39] The title track was a protest against [nuclear proliferation](#) and became Prince's first top 10 hit in countries outside the US. Prince's "[Little Red Corvette](#)" was one of the first two videos by black artists (along with [Michael Jackson's](#) "[Billie Jean](#)") played in heavy rotation on [MTV](#), which had been [perceived as](#) against "black music" until [CBS](#) President [Walter Yetnikoff](#) threatened to pull all CBS videos.^{[40][41]} Prince and Jackson had a competitive rivalry, not just on musical success, but also athletically too.^[42] The song "[Delirious](#)" also placed in the top ten on the *Billboard* Hot 100 chart. "[International Lover](#)" earned Prince his first [Grammy Award](#) nomination at the [26th Annual Grammy Awards](#).^[43]

1984–1987: The Revolution, *Purple Rain*, and subsequent releases

During this period Prince referred to his band as [the Revolution](#).^{[44][45]} The band's name was also printed, in reverse, on the cover of *1999* inside the letter "I" of the word "Prince".^[46] The band consisted of [Lisa Coleman](#) and [Doctor Fink](#) on keyboards, [Bobby Z.](#) on drums, [Brown Mark](#) on bass, and [Dez Dickerson](#) on guitar. [Jill Jones](#), a backing singer, was also part of the lineup for the *1999* album and tour.^[46] Following the *1999 Tour*, Dickerson left the group for religious reasons.^[47] In the book *Possessed: The Rise and Fall of Prince* (2003), author [Alex Hahn](#) says that Dickerson was reluctant to sign a three-year contract and wanted to pursue other musical ventures. Dickerson was replaced by Coleman's friend [Wendy Melvoin](#).^[44] At first the band was used sparsely in the studio, but this gradually changed during 1983.^{[46][47][48]}

According to his former manager [Bob Cavallo](#), in the early 1980s Prince required his management to obtain a deal for him to star in a major [motion picture](#), despite the fact that his exposure at that point was limited to several pop and R&B hits, music videos and occasional TV performances. This resulted in the hit film *Purple Rain* (1984), which starred Prince and was loosely autobiographical, and the [eponymous studio album](#), which was also the soundtrack to the film.^[45] The *Purple Rain* album sold more than 13 million copies in the US and spent 24 consecutive weeks at No. 1 on the *Billboard* 200 chart. The film won Prince an [Academy Award](#) for Best Original Song Score^[49] and grossed over \$68 million in the US (\$160 million in 2017 dollars^[50]).^{[51][52]} Songs from the film were hits on pop charts around the world; "[When Doves Cry](#)" and "[Let's Go Crazy](#)" reached No. 1, and the [title track](#) reached No. 2 on the *Billboard* Hot 100.^[53] At one point in 1984, Prince simultaneously had the No. 1 album, single, and film in the US;^[54] it was the first time a singer had achieved this feat.^[55] The *Purple Rain* album is ranked 72nd in *Rolling Stone's* [500 Greatest Albums of All Time](#);^[56] it is also included on the list of *Time* magazine's All-Time 100 Albums.^[57] The album also produced two of Prince's first three Grammy Awards earned at the [27th Annual Grammy Awards](#)—Best Rock Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal and Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media.^[43]

"When Doves Cry" (1984)



▶ 0:00

A lead single from *Purple Rain*, "[When Doves Cry](#)" became a [signature song](#) of Prince's. It features an [intro to a guitar solo](#) and a [Linn LM-1 drum machine](#), followed by a [looped guttural vocal](#).

Problems playing this file? See [media help](#).

In late 1984, pop artist Andy Warhol created the painting, *Orange Prince (1984)*. *Vanity Fair* reproduced Warhol's portrait to accompany an article *Purple Fame* in the November 1984 edition, and claimed that the silkscreen image with its pop colors captured the recording artist "at the height of his powers". The 1984 *Vanity Fair* article was one of the first global media pieces written as a critical appreciation of the musician, which coincided with the start of the 98-date Purple Rain Tour.^[58]



Prince performing in Brussels during the Hit N Run Tour in 1986

After Tipper Gore heard her 11-year-old daughter Karenna listening to Prince's song "Darling Nikki" (which gained wide notoriety for its sexual lyrics and a reference to masturbation), she founded the Parents Music Resource Center.^[59] The center advocated the mandatory use of a warning label ("Parental Advisory: Explicit Lyrics") on the covers of records that have been judged to contain language or lyrical content unsuitable for minors. The recording industry later voluntarily complied with this request.^[60]

In 1985, Prince announced that he would discontinue live performances and music videos after the release of his next album. His subsequent recording, *Around the World in a Day* (1985), held the No. 1 spot on the *Billboard* 200 for three weeks. From that album, the single "Raspberry Beret" reached No. 2 on the *Billboard* Hot 100, and "Pop Life" reached No. 7.^[53]

In 1986, his album *Parade* reached No. 3 on the *Billboard* 200 and No. 2 on the R&B charts. The first single, "Kiss", with the video choreographed by Louis Falco, reached No. 1 on the *Billboard* Hot 100.^[53] (The song was originally written for a side project called Mazarati.) In the same year, the song "Manic Monday", written by Prince and recorded by the Bangles, reached No. 2 on the Hot 100 chart. The album *Parade* served as the soundtrack for Prince's second film, *Under the Cherry Moon* (1986). Prince directed and starred in the movie, which also featured Kristin Scott Thomas. Although the *Parade* album went platinum and sold two million copies,^{[61][62]} The film *Under the Cherry Moon* received a Golden Raspberry Award for Worst Picture (tied with *Howard the Duck*), and Prince received Golden Raspberry Awards for Worst Director, Worst Actor, and Worst Original Song (for the song "Love or Money").^{[63][64]}

In 1986, Prince began a series of live performances called the Hit n Run – Parade Tour. After the tour Prince disbanded the Revolution and fired Wendy & Lisa.^[45] Brown Mark quit the band; keyboardist Doctor Fink remained. Prince recruited new band members Miko Weaver on guitar, Atlanta Bliss on trumpet, and Eric Leeds on saxophone.^[47]

1987–1991: Solo again, *Sign o' the Times*

Prior to the disbanding of the Revolution, Prince was working on two separate projects, the Revolution album *Dream Factory* and a solo effort, *Camille*.^[65] Unlike the three previous band albums, *Dream Factory* included input from the band members and featured songs with lead vocals by Wendy & Lisa.^[65] The *Camille* project saw Prince create a new androgynous persona primarily singing in a sped-up, female-sounding voice. With the dismissal of the Revolution, Prince consolidated material from both shelved albums, along with some new songs, into a three-LP album to be titled *Crystal Ball*.^[66] Warner Bros. forced Prince to trim the triple album to a double album, and *Sign o' the Times* was released on March 31, 1987.^[67]

The album peaked at No. 6 on the *Billboard* 200 albums chart.^[67] The first single, "Sign o' the Times", charted at No. 3 on the Hot 100.^[68] The follow-up single, "If I Was Your Girlfriend", charted at No. 67 on the Hot 100 but went to No. 12 on R&B chart.^[68] The third single, a duet with Sheena Easton, "U Got the Look", charted at No. 2 on the Hot 100 and No. 11 on the R&B chart,^[68] and the final single, "I Could Never Take the Place of Your Man", finished at No. 10 on Hot 100 and No. 14 on the R&B chart.^[68]

It was named the top album of the year by the Pazz & Jop critics' poll and sold 3.2 million copies.^[69] In Europe it performed well, and Prince promoted the album overseas with a lengthy tour. Putting together a new backing band from the remnants of the Revolution, Prince added bassist Levi Seacer, Jr., keyboardist Boni Boyer, and dancer/choreographer Cat Glover^[70] to go with new drummer Sheila E^[71] and holdovers Miko Weaver, Doctor Fink, Eric Leeds, Atlanta Bliss, and the Bodyguards (Jerome, Wally Safford, and Greg Brooks) for the Sign o' the Times Tour.

The Sign o' the Times tour was a success overseas, and Warner Bros. and Prince's managers wanted to bring it to the US to promote sales of the album,^{[72][73]} Prince balked at a full US tour, as he was ready to produce a new album.^[72] As a compromise, the last two nights of the tour were filmed for release in movie theaters. The film quality was deemed subpar, and reshoots were performed at Prince's Paisley Park studios.^[72] The film *Sign o' the Times* was released on November 20, 1987. The film got better reviews than *Under the Cherry Moon* but its box-office receipts were minimal, and it quickly left theaters.^[73]

The next album intended for release was *The Black Album*.^[74] More instrumental and funk- and R&B-themed than recent releases,^[75] *The Black Album* also saw Prince experiment with hip hop on the songs "Bob George" and "Dead on It". Prince was set to release the album with a monochromatic black cover with only the catalog number printed, but after 500,000 copies had been pressed,^[76] Prince had a spiritual epiphany that the album was evil and had it recalled.^[77] It was later released by Warner Bros. as a limited edition album in 1994.

Prince went back in the studio for eight weeks and recorded *Lovesexy*. Released on May 10, 1988, *Lovesexy* serves as a spiritual opposite to the dark *The Black Album*.^[78] Every song is a solo effort by Prince, except "Eye No", which was recorded with his backing band at the time. *Lovesexy* reached No. 11 on the *Billboard* 200 and No. 5 on the R&B albums chart.^[79] The lead single, "Alphabet St.", peaked at No. 8 on the Hot 100 and No. 3 on the R&B chart,^[67] it sold 750,000 copies.^[80]

Prince again took his post-Revolution backing band (minus the Bodyguards) on a three leg, 84-show *Lovesexy World Tour*; although the shows were well-received by huge crowds, they failed to make a net profit due to the expensive sets and props.^{[81][82]}



Prince performing during his Nude Tour in 1990

In 1989, Prince appeared on Madonna's studio album *Like a Prayer*, co-writing and singing the duet "Love Song" and playing electric guitar (uncredited) on the songs "Like a Prayer", "Keep It Together", and "Act of Contrition". He also began work on several musical projects, including *Rave Unto the Joy Fantastic* and early drafts of his *Graffiti Bridge* film,^{[83][84]} but both were put on hold when he was asked by *Batman* (1989) director Tim Burton to record several songs for the upcoming live-action adaptation. Prince went into the studio and produced an entire nine-track album that Warner Bros. released on June 20, 1989. *Batman* peaked at No. 1 on the *Billboard* 200,^[85] selling 4.3 million copies.^[86] The single "Batdance" topped the *Billboard* Hot 100 and R&B charts.^[67]

The single, "The Arms of Orion" with Sheena Easton, charted at No. 36, and "Partyman" (also featuring the vocals of Prince's then-girlfriend, nicknamed Anna Fantastic) charted at No. 18 on the Hot 100 and at No. 5 on the R&B chart, while the love ballad "Scandalous!" went to No. 5 on the R&B chart.^[67] Prince had to sign away all publishing rights to the songs on the album to Warner Bros. as part of the deal to do the soundtrack.

In 1990, Prince went back on tour with a revamped band for his back-to-basics *Nude Tour*. With the departures of Boni Boyer, Sheila E., the horns, and Cat, Prince brought in keyboardist Rosie Gaines, drummer Michael Bland, and dancing trio the Game Boyz (Tony M., Kirky J., and Damon Dickson). The European and Japanese tour was a financial success with a short, greatest hits setlist.^[87] As the year progressed, Prince finished production on his fourth film, *Graffiti Bridge* (1990), and the 1990 album of the same name. Initially, Warner Bros. was reluctant to fund the film, but with Prince's assurances it would be a sequel to *Purple Rain* as well as the involvement of the original members of the Time, the studio greenlit the project.^[88] Released on August 20, 1990, the album reached No. 6 on the *Billboard* 200 and R&B albums chart.^[89] The single "Thieves in the Temple" reached No. 6 on the Hot 100 and No. 1 on the R&B chart,^[67] "Round and Round" placed at No. 12 on the US charts and No. 2 on the R&B charts. The song featured the teenage Tevin Campbell (who also had a role in the film) on lead vocals. The film, released on November 20, 1990, was a box-office flop, grossing \$4.2 million.^[90] After the release of the film and album, the last remaining members of the Revolution, Miko Weaver and Doctor Fink, left Prince's band.

1991–1994: The New Power Generation, *Diamonds and Pearls*, and name change

1991 marked the debut of Prince's new band, the New Power Generation. With guitarist Miko Weaver and long-time keyboardist Doctor Fink gone, Prince added bass player Sonny T., Tommy Barbarella on keyboards, and a brass section known as the Hornheads to go along with Levi Seacer (taking over on guitar), Rosie Gaines, Michael Bland, and the Game Boyz. With significant input from his band members, Diamonds and Pearls was released on October 1, 1991. Reaching No. 3 on the *Billboard* 200 album chart,^[91] Diamonds and Pearls saw four hit singles released in the United States. "Gett Off" peaked at No. 21 on the Hot 100 and No. 6 on the R&B charts, followed by "Cream", which gave Prince his fifth US No. 1 single. The title track "Diamonds and Pearls" became the album's third single, reaching No. 3 on the Hot 100 and the top spot on the R&B charts. "Money Don't Matter 2 Night" peaked at No. 23 and No. 14 on the Hot 100 and R&B charts respectively.^[92]

In 1992, Prince and the New Power Generation released his twelfth album, bearing only an unpronounceable symbol on the cover (later copyrighted as "Love Symbol #2") as its title.^[93] The album peaked at No. 5 on the *Billboard* 200.^[94] The symbol was explained as being a combination of the symbols for male (♂) and female (♀).^[93] The label wanted "7" to be the first single, but Prince fought to place "My Name Is Prince" in that slot, as he "felt that the song's more hip-hoppery would appeal to the same audience" that had purchased the previous album.^[95] Prince got his way, but "My Name Is Prince" reached No. 36 on the *Billboard* Hot 100 and No. 23 on the R&B chart. The follow-up single "Sexy MF" charted at No. 66 on the Hot 100 and No. 76 on the R&B chart. The label's preferred lead single choice "7" reached No. 7.^[92] The album, which would later be referred to as *Love Symbol*, went on to sell 2.8 million copies worldwide.^[95]

After two failed attempts in 1990 and 1991,^[96] Warner Bros. released a greatest hits compilation with the three-disc The Hits/The B-Sides in 1993. The first two discs were also sold separately as The Hits 1 and The Hits 2. The collection features the majority of Prince's hit singles (with the exception of "Batdance" and other songs that appeared on the Batman soundtrack), and several previously hard-to-find recordings, including B-sides spanning the majority of Prince's career, as well as some previously unreleased tracks such as the Revolution-recorded "Power Fantastic" and a live recording of "Nothing Compares 2 U" with Rosie Gaines. Two new songs, "Pink Cashmere" and "Peach", were chosen as promotional singles to accompany the compilation album.

In 1993, in rebellion against Warner Bros., which refused to release Prince's enormous backlog of music at a steady pace,^{[97][98]} Prince officially adopted the aforementioned "Love Symbol" as his stage name.^[93] In order to use the symbol in print media, Warner Bros. had to organize a mass mailing of floppy disks with a custom font.^[99] At this time, Prince was alternatively referred to as "The Artist Formerly Known as Prince" or simply "The Artist".^[100]

1994–2000: Increased output and *The Gold Experience*

In 1994, Prince began to release albums in quick succession as a means of releasing himself from his contractual obligations to Warner Bros. He also began appearing with the word "slave" written on his face.^[101] The label, he believed, was intent on limiting his artistic freedom by insisting that he release albums more sporadically. He also blamed Warner Bros. for the poor commercial performance of *Love Symbol*, claiming they had marketed it insufficiently. It was out of these developments that the aborted The Black Album was officially released, seven years after its initial recording. The "new" release was already in wide circulation as a bootleg. Warner Bros. then succumbed to Prince's wishes to release an album of new material, to be entitled Love.

Prince pushed to have his next album The Gold Experience released simultaneously with *Love Symbol*-era material. Warner Bros. allowed the single "The Most Beautiful Girl in the World" to be released via a small, independent distributor, Bellmark Records, in February 1994. The release reached No. 3 on the US *Billboard* Hot 100 and No. 1 in many other countries, but it did not prove to be a



Prince's Yellow Cloud Guitar at the Smithsonian Institution Building



The unpronounceable symbol (later dubbed "Love Symbol #2")

model for subsequent releases. Warner Bros. still resisted releasing *The Gold Experience*, fearing poor sales and citing "market saturation" as a defense. When released in September 1995, *The Gold Experience* reached the top 10 of the *Billboard* 200 initially. The album is now out of print.

Chaos and Disorder, released in 1996, was Prince's final album of new material for Warner Bros., as well as one of his least commercially successful releases. Prince attempted a major comeback later that year when, free of any further contractual obligations to Warner Bros., he released *Emancipation*, a 36-song, 3-CD set (each disc was exactly 60 minutes long). The album was released via his own NPG Records with distribution through EMI. To publish his songs on *Emancipation*, Prince did not use *Controversy Music* – ASCAP, which he had used for all his records since 1981, but rather used *Emancipated Music Inc.*^[102] – ASCAP.

Certified Platinum by the RIAA, *Emancipation* is the first record featuring covers by Prince of songs of other artists: Joan Osborne's top ten hit song of 1995 "One of Us";^[103] "Betcha by Golly Wôw!" (written by Thom Bell and Linda Creed);^[104] "I Can't Make You Love Me" (written by James Allen Shamblin II and Michael Barry Reid);^[105] and "La-La (Means I Love You)" (written by Thom Bell and William Hart).^[106]

Prince released *Crystal Ball*, a five-CD collection of unreleased material, in 1998. The distribution of this album was disorderly, with some fans pre-ordering the album on his website up to a year before it was shipped; these pre-orders were delivered months after the record had gone on sale in retail stores. The retail edition has only four discs, as it is missing the *Kamasutra* disc. There are also two different packaging editions for retail; one is a four-disc sized jewel case with a white cover and the Love Symbol in a colored circle while the other contains all four discs in a round translucent snap jewel case. The discs are the same, as is the CD jacket. The *Newpower Soul* album was released three months later. His collaborations on Chaka Khan's *Come 2 My House* and Larry Graham's *GCS2000*, both released on the NPG Records label around the same time as *Newpower Soul*, were promoted by live appearances on *Vibe with Sinbad* and the NBC Today show's Summer Concert Series.

In 1999, Prince once again signed with a major label, Arista Records, to release a new record, *Rave Un2 the Joy Fantastic*. A few months earlier, Warner Bros. had also released *The Vault: Old Friends 4 Sale*, a collection of unreleased material recorded by Prince throughout his career.^[107]

The pay-per-view concert, *Rave Un2 the Year 2000*, was broadcast on December 31, 1999 and consisted of footage from the December 17 and 18 concerts of his 1999 tour. The concert featured appearances by guest musicians including Lenny Kravitz, George Clinton, Jimmy Russell, and The Time. It was released to home video the following year

2000–2007: Turnaround, *Musicology*, label change, and 3121

On May 16, 2000, Prince stopped using the Love Symbol moniker as his name, after his publishing contract with Warner/Chappell expired. In a press conference, he stated that, after being freed from undesirable relationships associated with the name "Prince", he would revert to using his real name. Prince continued to use the symbol as a logo and on album artwork and to play a Love Symbol-shaped guitar. For several years following the release of *Rave Un2 the Joy Fantastic* Prince primarily released new music through his Internet subscription service, NPGOnlineLtd.com (later NPGMusicClub.com).^[108]

In 2002, Prince released his first live album, *One Nite Alone... Live!*, which features performances from the One Nite Alone...Tour. The 3-CD box set also includes a disc of "aftershow" music entitled *It Ain't Over!*. During this time, Prince sought to engage more effectively with his fan base via the NPG Music Club, pre-concert sound checks, and at yearly "celebrations" at Paisley Park, his music studios. Fans were invited into the studio for tours, interviews, discussions and music-listening sessions. Some of these fan discussions were filmed for an unreleased documentary, directed by Kevin Smith.

On February 8, 2004, Prince appeared at the 46th Annual Grammy Awards with Beyoncé.^{[109][110]} In a performance that opened the show, they performed a medley of "Purple Rain", "Let's Go Crazy", "Baby I'm a Star", and Beyoncé's "Crazy in Love".^[111] The following month, Prince was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.^[112] The award was presented to him by Alicia Keys along with Big Boi and André 3000 of OutKast.^[113] As well as performing a trio of his own hits during the ceremony, Prince also

participated in a tribute to fellow inductee George Harrison in a rendering of Harrison's "While My Guitar Gently Weeps", playing a two-minute guitar solo that ended the song.^{[114][115][116]} He also performed the song "Red House" as "Purple House" on the album Power of Soul: A Tribute to Jimi Hendrix^[117]

In April 2004, Prince released Musicology through a one-album agreement with Columbia Records. The album rose as high as the top five on some international charts (including the US, UK, Germany, and Australia). The US chart success was assisted by the CDs being included as part of the concert ticket purchase, thereby qualifying each CD (as chart rules then stood) to count toward US chart placement.^[118] Three months later, Spin named him the greatest frontman of all time.^[119] That same year, Rolling Stone magazine named Prince as the highest-earning musician in the world, with an annual income of \$56.5 million,^[120] largely due to his Musicology Tour, which Pollstar named as the top concert draw among musicians in the US. He played 96 concerts; the average ticket price for a show was US\$61 (equivalent to \$79 in 2017). Musicology went on to receive two Grammy wins, for Best Male R&B Vocal Performance for "Call My Name" and Best Traditional R&B Vocal Performance for the title track. Musicology was also nominated for Best R&B Song and Best R&B Album, and "Cinnamon Girl" was nominated for Best Male Pop Vocal Performance. Rolling Stone ranked Prince No. 27 on their list of the 100 Greatest Artists of All Time.^[121]

In April 2005, Prince played guitar (along with En Vogue singing backing vocals) on Stevie Wonder's single "So What the Fuss", Wonder's first since 1999!^[122]

In late 2005, Prince signed with Universal Records to release his album, 3121, on March 21, 2006. The first single was "Te Amo Corazón", the video for which was directed by actress Salma Hayek and filmed in Marrakech, Morocco, featuring Argentine actress and singer Mía Maestro. The video for the second single, "Black Sweat", was nominated at the MTV VMAs for Best Cinematography. The immediate success of 3121 gave Prince his first No. 1 debut on the Billboard 200 with the album.

To promote the new album, Prince was the musical guest on Saturday Night Live on February 4, 2006, 17 years after his last SNL appearance on the 15th anniversary special, and nearly 25 years since his first appearance on a regular episode in 1981.^[123]

At the 2006 Webby Awards on June 12, Prince received a Webby Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his "visionary use of the Internet to distribute music and connect with audiences", exemplified by his decision to release his album Crystal Ball (1998) exclusively online!^{[124][125]}

In July 2006, weeks after winning a Webby Award, Prince shut down his NPG Music Club website, after more than five years of operation.^{[126][127]} On the day of the music club's shutdown, a lawsuit was filed against Prince by the British company HM Publishing (owners of the Nature Publishing Group, also NPG). Despite these events occurring on the same day, Prince's attorney stated that the site did not close due to the trademark dispute.^[126]

Prince appeared at multiple award ceremonies in 2006: on February 15, he performed at the 2006 Brit Awards, along with Wendy & Lisa and Sheila E.,^[128] and on June 27, Prince appeared at the 2006 BET Awards, where he was awarded Best Male R&B Artist. Prince performed a medley of Chaka Khan songs for Khan's BET Lifetime Achievement Award.^[129]

In November 2006, Prince was inducted into the UK Music Hall of Fame;^[110] he appeared to collect his award but did not perform. Also in November 2006, Prince opened a nightclub called 3121, in Las Vegas at the Rio All Suite Hotel and Casino. He performed weekly on Friday and Saturday nights until April 2007, when his contract with the Rio ended. On August 22, 2006, Prince released Ultimate Prince. The double-disc set contains one CD of previous hits, and another of extended versions and mixes of material that had largely only previously been available on vinyl record B-sides. That same year, Prince wrote and performed a song for the hit animated film Happy Feet (2006). The song, "The Song of the Heart", appears on the film's soundtrack, which also features a cover of Prince's earlier hit "Kiss", sung by Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman. In January 2007, "The Song of the Heart" won a Golden Globe for Best Original Song.^[130]

2007–2010: Super Bowl XLI, Planet Earth, and Lotusflower

On February 2, 2007, Prince played at the Super Bowl XLI press conference, and the Super Bowl XLI Halftime Show in Miami, Florida on February 4, 2007, on a large stage shaped like his symbol. The event was carried to 140 million television viewers, his biggest ever audience.^[131] In 2015, Billboard.com ranked the performance as the greatest Super Bowl performance ever^[132]



Prince's stage set for the Earth Tour in 2007

Prince played 21 concerts in London during mid-2007. The Earth Tour included 21 nights at the 20,000 capacity O2 Arena, with Maceo Parker in his band. Tickets for the O2 Arena were capped by Prince at £31.21 (\$48.66). The residency at the O2 Arena was increased to 15 nights after all 140,000 tickets for the original seven sold out in 20 minutes.^[133] It was then further extended to 21 nights.^[134]

Prince performed with Sheila E. at the 2007 ALMA Awards. On June 28, 2007, the Mail on Sunday stated that it had made a deal to give Prince's new album, Planet Earth, away for free with the paper, making it the first place in the world to get the album. This move sparked controversy among music distributors and also led the UK arm of Prince's distributor, Sony BMG, to withdraw from distributing the album in UK stores.^[135] The UK's largest high street music retailer, HMV, stocked the paper on release day due to the giveaway. On July 7, 2007, Prince returned to Minneapolis to perform three shows. He performed concerts at the Macy's Auditorium (to promote his new perfume "3121") on Nicollet Mall, the Target Center arena, and First Avenue.^[136] It was the first time he had played at First Avenue (the club appeared in the film Purple Rain) since 1987.^[137]

From 2008, Prince was managed by UK-based Kiran Sharma.^[138] On April 25, 2008, Prince performed on The Tonight Show with Jay Leno, where he debuted a new song, "Turn Me Loose". Days after, he headlined the 2008 Coachella Festival. Prince was paid more than \$5 million for his performance at Coachella, according to Reuters.^[139] Prince cancelled a concert, planned at Dublin's Croke Park on June 16, 2008, at 10 days' notice. In October 2009 promoters MCD Productions went to court to sue him for €1.6 million to refund 55,126 tickets. Prince settled the case out of court in February 2010 for \$2.95 million.^{[140][141]} During the trial, it was said that Prince had been offered \$22 million for seven concerts as part of a proposed 2008 European tour.^[142] In October 2008, Prince released a live album entitled Indigo Nights, a collection of songs performed live at aftershows in the IndigO2.



Prince at the Coachella Festival in 2008

On December 18, 2008, Prince premiered four songs from his new album on LA's Indie rock radio station Indie 103.1.^[143] The radio station's programmers Max Tolkoff and Mark Sovel had been invited to Prince's home to hear the new rock-oriented music. Prince gave them a CD with four songs to premiere on their radio station. The music debuted the next day on Jonesy's Jukebox, hosted by former Sex Pistol Steve Jones.^[144]

On January 3, 2009, the new website LotusFlow3r.com was launched, streaming and selling some of the recently aired material and concert tickets. On January 31, Prince released two more songs on LotusFlow3r.com: "Disco Jellyfish", and "Another Boy". "Chocolate Box", "Colonized Mind", and "All This Love" were later released on the website. Prince released a triple album set containing Lotusflower, MPLSoUND, and an album credited to Bria Valente, called Elixer, on March 24,

2009, followed by a physical release on March 29.

On July 18, 2009, Prince performed two shows at the Montreux Jazz Festival, backed by the New Power Generation including Rhonda Smith, Renato Neto and John Blackwell. On October 11, 2009, he gave two surprise concerts at the Grand Palais.^[145] On October 12, he gave another surprise performance at La Cigale. On October 24, Prince played a concert at Paisley Park.^[146]

2010–2012: 20Ten and Welcome 2 Tours

In January 2010, Prince wrote a new song, "Purple and Gold", inspired by his visit to a Minnesota Vikings football game against the Dallas Cowboys.^[147] The following month, Prince let Minneapolis-area public radio station 89.3 The Current premiere his new song "Cause and Effect" as a gesture in support of independent radio.^[148]

In 2010, Prince was listed in *Time* magazine's annual ranking of the "100 Most Influential People in the World".^[149]

Prince released a new single on Minneapolis radio station 89.3 The Current called "Hot Summer" on June 7, his 52nd birthday. Also in June, Prince appeared on the cover of the July 2010 issue of *Ebony*,^[150] and he received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2010 BET Awards.^[151]

Prince released his album 20Ten in July 2010 as a free covermount with publications in the UK, Belgium, Germany, and France.^[152] He refused album access to digital download services and closed LotusFlow3rom.

On July 4, 2010, Prince began his 20Ten Tour, a concert tour in two legs with shows in Europe. The second leg began on October 15^[153] and ended with a concert following the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix on November 14.^[154] The second half of the tour had a new band, John Blackwell, Ida Kristine Nielsen, and Sheila E.^[155] Prince let Europe 1 debut the snippet of his new song "Rich Friends" from the new album 20Ten Deluxe on October 8, 2010.^[156] Prince started the Welcome 2 Tour on December 15, 2010.^[157]

Prince was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame on December 7, 2010.^[158]

On February 12, 2011, Prince presented Barbra Streisand with an award and donated \$1.5 million to charities.^[159] On the same day, it was reported that he had not authorized the television show Glee to cover his hit "Kiss", in an episode that had already been filmed.^[160]

Prince headlined the Hop Farm Festival on July 3, 2011, marking his first UK show since 2007 and his first ever UK festival appearance.^[161]

Despite having previously rejected the Internet for music distribution, on November 24, 2011, Prince released a reworked version of the previously unreleased song "Extraloveable" through both iTunes and Spotify.^[162] Purple Music, a Switzerland-based record label, released a CD single "Dance 4 Me" on December 12, 2011, as part of a club remixes package including the Bria Valente CD single "2 Nite" released on February 23, 2012. The CD features club remixes by Jamie Lewis and David Alexander, produced by Prince.^[163]

2013–2016: Return to Warner Bros., 3rdEyeGirl and HitNRun Tours and final years

In January 2013, Prince released a lyric video for a new song called "Screwdriver".^[164] In April 2013, Prince announced a West Coast tour titled Live Out Loud Tour with 3rdeyegirl as his backing band.^[165] The final two dates of the first leg of the tour were in Minneapolis where former Revolution drummer Bobby Z. sat in as guest drummer on both shows.^[166] In May, Prince announced a deal with Kobalt Music to market and distribute his music.^[167]

On August 14, 2013, Prince released a new solo single for download through the 3rdeyegirl.com website.^[168] The single "Breakfast Can Wait" had cover art featuring comedian Dave Chappelle's impersonation of the singer in a sketch on the 2000s Comedy Central series Chappelle's Show.^[169]

In February 2014, Prince performed concerts with 3rdeyegirl in London titled the Hit and Run Tour. Beginning with intimate shows, the first was held at the London home of singer Lianne La Havas, followed by two performances of what Prince described as a "sound check" at the Electric Ballroom in Camden,^[170] and another at Shepherd's Bush Empire.^[171] On April 18, 2014, Prince released a new single entitled "The Breakdown". He re-signed with his former label, Warner Bros. Records after an 18-year split. Warner announced that Prince would release a remastered deluxe edition of his 1984 album Purple Rain in 2014 to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the album. In return, Warner gave Prince ownership of the master recordings of his Warner recordings.^{[172][173]}

In February 2014 Prince began what was billed as his 'Hit N Run Part One' tour. This involved Prince's Twitter followers keeping an avid eye on second-by-second information as to the whereabouts of his shows. Many of these shows would only be announced on the day of the concert, and many of these concerts involved two performances; a matinee and an evening show. These shows began at Camden's Electric Ballroom, billed as 'Soundchecks', and spread throughout the UK capital to KoKo Club, in Camden, Shepherd's Bush Empire and various other small venues. After his London dates he moved on to other European cities.

In May 2014 Prince began his 'Hit N Run Part Two' shows, which followed a more normal style of purchasing tickets online, and being held in music arenas.

In spring 2014, he launched NPG Publishing, a music company to administer his own music and that of other artists without the restrictions of mainstream record companies.^[174]

In May 2015, following the death of Freddie Gray and the subsequent riots, Prince released a song entitled "Baltimore" in tribute to Gray and in support of the protesters in Baltimore.^{[175][176][177][178]} He also held a tribute concert for Gray at his Paisley Park estate called "Dance Rally 4 Peace" in which he encouraged fans to wear the color gray in honor of Freddie Gray.^[179]

Prince's penultimate album, *Hit n Run Phase One*, was first made available on September 7, 2015, on the music streaming service Tidal before being released on CD and for download on September 14.^[180] His final album, *Hit n Run Phase Two*, was meant as a continuation of this one, and was released on Tidal for streaming and download on December 12, 2015.^[181]

In February 2016, Prince embarked on the Piano & A Microphone Tour, a tour that saw his show stripped back to only Prince and a custom piano on stage. He performed a series of warm-up shows at Paisley Park in late January 2016 and the tour commenced in Melbourne, Australia on February 16, 2016 to critical acclaim.^[182] The Australian and New Zealand legs of the tour were played in small capacity venues including the Sydney Opera House. *Hit n Run Phase Two* CDs were distributed to every attendee after each performance. The tour continued to the United States but was cut abruptly short by illness in April 2016.

Illness and death

Prince saw Michael T. Schulenberg, a Twin Cities specialist in family medicine, in Excelsior on April 7, 2016, and again on April 20.^[183] On April 7, Prince postponed two performances at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta from his Piano & A Microphone Tour; the venue released a statement saying he had influenza.^[184] Prince rescheduled and performed the show on April 14, even though he still was not feeling well.^{[185][186]} While flying back to Minneapolis early the next morning, he became unresponsive, and his private jet made an emergency landing at Quad City International Airport in Moline, Illinois, where he was hospitalized and received Narcan. Once he became conscious he left against medical advice.^{[187][188]} Representatives said he suffered from dehydration and had influenza for several weeks.^[185] Prince was seen bicycling the next day in his hometown of Chanhassen.^[189] He shopped that evening at the Electric Fetus in Minneapolis for Record Store Day and made a brief appearance at an impromptu dance party at his Paisley Park recording studio complex, stating that he was feeling fine.^{[186][190]} On April 19, he attended a performance by singer Lizz Wright at the Dakota Jazz Club.^[191]

On April 20, Prince's representatives called Howard Kornfeld, a California specialist in addiction medicine and pain management, seeking medical help for Prince. Kornfeld scheduled to meet with Prince on April 22, and he contacted a local physician who cleared his schedule for a physical examination on April 21.^{[187][192]}

On April 21, at 9:43 am, the Carver County Sheriff's Office received a 9-1-1 call requesting that an ambulance be sent to Prince's home at Paisley Park. The caller initially told the dispatcher that an unidentified person at the home was unconscious, then moments later said he was dead, and finally identified the person as Prince.^[193] The caller was Kornfeld's son, who had flown in with buprenorphine that morning to devise a treatment plan for opioid addiction.^[187] Emergency responders found Prince unresponsive in an elevator and performed CPR, but a paramedic said he had been dead for about six hours,^[194] and they were unable to revive him. They pronounced him dead at 10:07 am, 19 minutes after their arrival.^[187] There were no signs of suicide or foul play.^[187] A press release from the Midwest Medical Examiner's Office in Anoka County on June 2 stated that Prince had died of an accidental overdose of fentanyl,^[195] at the age of 57.^[196]



Following his death, fans left flowers, purple balloons, and other mementos beneath Prince's star painted on the front of the First Avenue nightclub.

It is not yet known whether Prince obtained the fentanyl by a prescription or through an illicit channel.^[197] The question of how and from what source Prince obtained the drug which led to his death has been the subject of investigations by several law enforcement agencies.^{[188][192][194]} A sealed search warrant was issued for his estate,^[198] and another, unsealed, warrant was issued for the local Walgreens pharmacy.^[199] On April 19, 2018, the Carver County Attorney announced that the multi-agency investigation related to the circumstances of Prince's death had ended with no criminal charges filed.^{[200][201]}

Following an autopsy his remains were cremated.^[202] On April 26, 2016, Prince's sister and only full sibling Tyka Nelson filed court documents in Carver County, to open a probate case, stating that no will had been found. Prince's five half-siblings also have a claim to his estate, which totals millions of dollars and includes real estate, stocks, and cars.^{[203][204]} As of three weeks after his death, 700 people claimed to be half-siblings or descendants.^[205] Bremer Trust was given temporary control of his estate, had his vault drilled open,^[206] and was authorized to obtain a blood sample for DNA profiling.^[207]

Prince's ashes were placed into a custom, 3D printed urn shaped like the Paisley Park estate.^[208] The urn was placed on display in the atrium of the Paisley Park complex in October 2016.^[209]

Remembrances

Numerous musicians and cultural figures reacted to Prince's death.^{[210][211]} President Barack Obama mourned him,^[212] and the United States Senate passed a resolution praising his achievements "as a musician, composer, innovator, and cultural icon".^[213] Cities across the US held tributes and vigils, and lit buildings, bridges, and other venues in purple.^{[214][215][216]} In the first five hours after the media reported his death, "Prince" was the top trending term on Twitter, and Facebook had 61 million Prince-related interactions.^[217] MTV interrupted its programming to air a marathon of Prince music videos and *Purple Rain*.^[218] AMC Theatres and Carmike Cinemas screened *Purple Rain* in select theaters over the following week.^[219] Saturday Night Live aired an episode in his honor titled "Goodnight, Sweet Prince", featuring his performances from the show.^[220]

Nielsen Music reported an initial sales spike of 42,000 percent.^[221] Prince's catalog sold 4.41 million albums and songs from April 21 to 28, with five albums simultaneously in the top ten of the Billboard 200, a first in the chart's history.^[222] At the 59th Grammy Awards, Morris Day with the Time and Bruno Mars performed a tribute to him.^[223]

In June 2016 Vanity Fair /Condé Nast, released a special edition commemorative magazine, *The Genius of Prince*. The magazine was a celebration of Prince's life and achievements, with new photography and archive articles, including the original Vanity Fair article from Nov 1984, written in the wake of Prince's breakout success, with other content from *Vanity Fair*, *The New Yorker*, *Wired*, and *Pitchfork*. The cover of *The Genius of Prince* featured a portrait by Andy Warhol, Orange Prince (1984).^{[224][225][226]}

Posthumous projects

Prince was posthumously inducted into the Rhythm and Blues Music Hall of Fame.^[227]

The first album released following Prince's death was a greatest hits album, *4Ever*, which was released on November 22, 2016. The album contains one previously unreleased song: "Moonbeam Levels", recorded in 1982 during the 1999 sessions.^[228]

On April 19, 2017, an EP featuring six unreleased Prince recordings, titled *Deliverance*, was announced, with an expected release date for later that week.^[229] The next day, Prince's estate was granted a temporary restraining order against George Ian Boxill – an engineer who co-produced the tracks and was in possession of the master tapes – and halted the release of the EP.^[230]

On February 9, 2017, Prince's estate signed a distribution deal with Universal Music Group which includes the post-1995 recordings on his NPG Records label and unreleased tracks from his vault.^[231] On June 27, Comerica (acting on behalf of the estate) requested that Carver County District Judge Kevin Eide cancel the estate's deal with Universal, as UMG's contract would interfere with a contract with Warner Music Group that Prince signed in 2014. After Universal's attorneys were granted access to the Warner contract, the attorneys also offered to cancel the deal.^[232] On July 13, the court voided Universal's deal with Prince's estate, though Universal will continue to administer Prince's songwriting credits and create merchandise.^[233]

On June 23, 2017, *Purple Rain* was released as a *Deluxe* and *Deluxe Expanded* edition. It is the first Prince album to be remastered and reissued.^[234] The *Deluxe* edition consists of two discs, the first being a remaster of the original album made in 2015 overseen by Prince himself and a bonus disc of previously unreleased songs called "From the Vault & Previously Unreleased". The *Deluxe Expanded* edition consists of two more discs, a disc with all the single edits, maxi-single edits and B-sides from the *Purple Rain* era and a DVD with a concert from the *Purple Rain Tour* filmed in *Syracuse*, New York, on March 30, 1985, previously released on home video in 1985.^[235] The album debuted at No. 4 on the *Billboard* 200 and at No. 1 on both the *Billboard* R&B Albums and Vinyl Albums charts.^[234]

On April 19, 2018, the previously unreleased original recording of "Nothing Compares 2 U" from 1984 was released as a single by *Warner Bros. Records* in conjunction with Prince's estate.^[236] In addition, the Prince version was given its own music video, released in conjunction with the single; the video consists of edited rehearsal footage for the *Purple Rain* tour shot in the summer of 1984.^[237] Troy Carter, adviser for Prince's estate, later announced in an interview with *Variety* that a full-length album is planned for release on September 28, 2018.^[238]

In May 2018 it was announced that a second album, of new material, is set for release in 2019, on *Tidal*. This album is rumoured to be Prince's planned follow up to *HitnRun Phase Two*, as part of his original 'deal' with the streaming service. It has also been announced for a worldwide Physical CD release a month after.^[239]

Legacy

Music and image

The *Los Angeles Times* called Prince "our first post-everything pop star, defying easy categories of race, genre and commercial appeal."^[240] Jon Pareles of *The New York Times* described him as "a master architect of funk, rock, R&B and pop", and highlighted his ability to defy labels.^[241] *Los Angeles Times* writer Randall Roberts called Prince "among the most versatile and restlessly experimental pop artists of our time," writing that his "early work connected *disco* and synthetic funk [while his] fruitful mid-period merged rock, soul, R&B and *synth-pop*."^[242] *Simon Reynolds* called him a "pop polymath, flitting between *funkadelia*, *acid rock*, *deep soul*, *schmaltz*—often within the same song".^[243] *AllMusic* wrote that, "With each album he released, Prince showed remarkable stylistic growth and musical diversity, constantly experimenting with different sounds, textures, and genres [...] no other contemporary artist blended so many diverse styles into a cohesive whole."^[244] *Rolling Stone* ranked Prince at number 27 on its list of 100 Greatest Artists, "the most influential artists of the rock & roll era".^[121]

As a performer, he was known for his flamboyant style and showmanship.^[241] He came to be regarded as a *sex symbol* for his *androgynous*, amorphous sexuality,^[245] play with signifiers of *gender*,^[246]^[247] and defiance of *racial stereotypes*.^[248] His "audacious, idiosyncratic" fashion sense made use of "ubiquitous purple, alluring makeup and frilled garments."^[240] His androgynous look has been compared to that of *Little Richard*^[245]^[249]^[250] and *David Bowie*.^[251] In 2016, Reynolds described it as "Prince's '80s evasion of conventional gender definitions speaks to us now in this trans-aware moment. But it also harks backwards in time to the origins of rock 'n' roll in racial mixture and sexual blurring".^[252]

Prince was known for the strong female presence in his bands and his support for women in the music industry throughout his career.^[253] *Slate* said he worked with an "astounding range of female stars" and "promised a world where men and women looked and acted like each other".^[254]



A costume worn by Prince and associated memorabilia, displayed at a Hard Rock Cafe in Australia

Influences and musicianship

Prince's music synthesized a wide variety of influences,^[241] and drew inspiration from a range of musicians, including James Brown,^{[255][256][257][251]} George Clinton,^{[255][256][251]} Joni Mitchell,^[255] Duke Ellington,^[258] Jimi Hendrix,^{[255][251]} the Beatles,^{[255][251]} Chuck Berry,^[255] David Bowie,^[255] Earth, Wind & Fire,^[255] Mick Jagger,^[255] Rick James,^[255] Jerry Lee Lewis,^[255] Little Richard,^[255] Curtis Mayfield,^{[255][259]} Elvis Presley,^[255] Todd Rundgren,^[260] Carlos Santana,^[255] Sly Stone,^{[255][261][256][251][262]} Jackie Wilson,^[255], Chicago and Stevie Wonder.^{[262][263][264]} Prince has been compared with jazz great Miles Davis in regard to the artistic changes throughout his career.^{[255][265]} Davis said he regarded Prince as an otherworldly blend of James Brown, Jimi Hendrix, Marvin Gaye, Sly Stone, Little Richard, Duke Ellington, and Charlie Chaplin.^{[266][258][267]} Prince and Miles Davis performed together for a Charity Event at Paisley Park. This performance was viewed as the pinnacle of their on-again, off-again partnership.^[13]

Journalist Nik Cohn described him as "rock's greatest ever natural talent".^[268] His singing abilities encompassed a wide range from falsetto to baritone and rapid, seemingly effortless shifts of register.^[8] Prince was also renowned as a multi-instrumentalist.^{[251][269]} He is considered a guitar virtuoso and a master of drums, percussion, bass, keyboards, and synthesizer.^[270] On his first five albums, he played nearly all the instruments,^[271] including 27 instruments on his debut album,^[272] among them various types of bass, keyboards and synthesizers.^[273] Prince was also quick to embrace technology in his music,^[274] making pioneering use of drum machines like the Linn LM-1 on his early '80s albums and employing a wide range of studio effects.^[275] The *LA Times* also noted his "harnessing [of] new-generation synthesizer sounds in service of the groove," laying the foundations for post-'70s funk music.^[242] Prince was also known for his prolific and perfectionist tendencies, which resulted in him recording large amounts of unreleased material.^[276]

Prince also wrote songs for other artists, and some songs of his were covered by musicians, such as the hit songs "Manic Monday", written specifically for the Bangles (as Prince was dating Susanna Hoffs), "I Feel For You", originally on Prince's self-titled second album from 1979, covered by Chaka Khan, and "Nothing Compares 2 U", written for Prince's side project the Family, and covered very successfully by Sinead O'Connor. Neither "I Feel For You" nor "Nothing Compares 2 U" were actually written for the singers who made them famous. Prince co-wrote "Love... Thy Will Be Done" with singer Martika, for her second album Martika's Kitchen, and also gifted Celine Dion a song for her second album, *Celine Dion*, titled "With This Tear"; a song Prince had written specifically for her.^[277] Prince also wrote "U" for Paula Abdul, appearing on her 1991 release Spellbound.

Legal issues

Pseudonyms

In 1993, during negotiations regarding the release of *The Gold Experience*, a legal battle ensued between Warner Bros. and Prince over the artistic and financial control of his musical output. During the lawsuit, Prince appeared in public with the word "slave" written on his cheek.^[278] He explained that he had changed his name to an unpronounceable symbol to emancipate himself from his contract with Warner Bros., and that he had done it out of frustration because he felt his own name now belonged to the company.^{[279][280]}

Prince sometimes used pseudonyms to separate himself from the music he had written, produced, or recorded, and at one point stated that his ownership and achievement were strengthened by the act of giving away ideas.^[100] Pseudonyms he adopted, at various times, include: *Jamie Starr* and *The Starr Company* (for the songs he wrote for the Time and many other artists from 1981 to 1984),^{[281][282]} *Joey Coco* (for many unreleased Prince songs in the late 1980s, as well as songs written for Sheena Easton and Kenny Rogers),^[283] *Alexander Nevermind* (for writing the song "Sugar Walls" (1984) by Sheena Easton),^[284] and *Christopher* (used for his song writing credit of "Manic Monday" (1986) for the Bangles).^[285]

Copyright issues

On September 14, 2007, Prince announced that he was going to sue YouTube and eBay, because they hosted his copyrighted material, and he hired the international Internet policing company Web Sheriff.^{[286][287]} In October, Stephanie Lenz filed a lawsuit against Universal Music Publishing Group claiming that they were abusing copyright law after the music publisher had YouTube take

down Lenz's home movie in which the Prince song "Let's Go Crazy" played faintly in the background.^{[288][289]} On November 5, several Prince fan sites formed "Prince Fans United" to fight back against legal requests which, they claim, Prince made to prevent a use of photographs, images, lyrics, album covers, and anything linked to his likeness.^[290] Prince's lawyers claimed that this constituted copyright infringement the Prince Fans United said that the legal actions were "attempts to stifle all critical commentary about Prince". Prince's promoter AEG stated that the only offending items on the three fansites were live shots from Prince's 21 nights in London at the O2 Arena earlier in the year.^[291]

On November 8, Prince Fans United received a song named "PFunk", providing a kind of "unofficial answer" to their movement. The song originally debuted on the PFU main site,^[292] was retitled "F.U.N.K.", but this is not one of the selected songs available on the iTunes Store. On November 14, the satirical website b3ta.com pulled their "image challenge of the week" devoted to Prince after legal threats from the star under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA).^[293]

At the 2008 Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival ("Coachella Festival"), Prince performed a cover of Radiohead's "Creep", but immediately afterward he forced YouTube and other sites to remove footage that fans had taken of the performance, despite Radiohead's request to leave it on the website.^[294] Days later, YouTube reinstated the videos, as Radiohead said: "it's our song, let people hear it." In 2009, Prince put the video of the Coachella performance on his official website.

In 2010 he declared "the internet is completely over", elaborating five years later that "the internet was over for anyone who wants to get paid, tell me a musician who's got rich off digital sales".^[8]

In 2013, the Electronic Frontier Foundation granted to Prince the inaugural "Raspberry Beret Lifetime Aggrievement Award"^[295] for what they said was abuse of the DMCA takedown process.^[296]

In January 2014, Prince filed a lawsuit titled *Prince v. Chodera* against 22 online users for direct copyright infringement, unauthorized fixation, contributory copyright infringement, and bootlegging.^[297] Several of the users were fans who had shared links to bootlegged versions of Prince concerts through social media websites like Facebook.^{[298][299]} In the same month, he dismissed the entire action without prejudice.^[300]

Prince was one of a small handful of musicians to deny Weird Al Yankovic permission to parody his music. By Yankovic's account, he'd done so "about a half-dozen times" and has been the sole artist not to give any explanation for his rejection beyond a flat "no".^[301]

Personal life

Prince was romantically linked with many celebrities over the years, including Kim Basinger, Madonna, Vanity, Sheila E., Carmen Electra, Susanna Hoffs, Anna Fantastic,^[14] Sherilyn Fenn,^[302] and Susan Moonsie.^[303] He was engaged to Susannah Melvoin in 1985.^[304] In 1990, he met 16-year-old Mayte Garcia backstage in Germany after he saw a tape of her dancing. She moved into his Paisley Park home and he became her guardian.^[305] After graduating high school, she began working as one of his backup singers and dancers. When she was 19, he instructed her to get on birth control, thus beginning their sexual relationship.^[305] They were married on February 14, 1996; he was 37 and she was 22. They had a son named Amiir Nelson, who was born on October 16, 1996 and died a week later on October 23 after suffering from Pfeiffer syndrome.^[306] The distress of losing a child and a subsequent miscarriage took a toll on the marriage, and the couple divorced in 2000. In 2001, Prince married Manuela Testolini in a private ceremony. They separated in 2005 and divorced in May 2006.^[307]



Prince's home and recording studio, Paisley Park, in Chanhassen, Minnesota

Prince was an animal rights activist who followed a vegan diet for part of his life, but later described himself as vegetarian.^{[308][309][310][311][312]} The liner notes for his album Rave Un2 the Joy Fantastic (1999) featured a message about the cruelty involved in wool production.^[313] He became a Jehovah's Witness in 2001, following a two-year debate with friend and

fellow Jehovah's Witness musician Larry Graham Prince said that he did not consider it a conversion, but a "realization", comparing it to "Morpheus and Neo in *The Matrix*". Prince attended meetings at a local Kingdom Hall and occasionally knocked on people's doors to discuss his faith.^{[314][315]}

Prince had needed double hip replacement surgery since 2005. A false rumor was spread by the tabloids^[316] that he would not undergo the operation because of his refusal to have blood transfusions. The *Star Tribune* reported^[317] that Graham, Prince's mentor and Bible teacher, "denied claims that Prince couldn't have hip surgery because his faith prohibited blood transfusions" and put the false rumor to rest as hip surgery does not require blood transfusions.^{[318][319][320]} According to Morris Day, Prince in fact had the hip surgery in 2008.^[321] The condition was reportedly caused by repeated onstage dancing in high-heeled boots.^[322] Prince had been using canes as part of his outfit from the early 1990s onwards; towards the end of his life he regularly walked with a cane in public engagements, which led to speculation that it resulted from his not having undergone the surgery.^[323]

As a Jehovah's Witness, Prince did not speak publicly about his charitable endeavors; the extent of his activism, philanthropy, and charity was publicized after his death.^[324] In 2001, Prince donated \$12,000 anonymously to the Louisville Free Public Library system to keep the historic Western Branch Library, the first full service library for African Americans in the country, from closure.^[325] Also in 2001, he anonymously paid off the medical bills of drummer Clyde Stubblefield, who was undergoing cancer treatment.^[326] In 2015, he conceived and launched YesWeCode, paying for many hackathons outright and performing at some of them.^{[324][327]} He also helped fund Green for All.^[324]

In late March 2016, Prince told an audience he was writing a memoir, tentatively titled *The Beautiful Ones*.^[328]

Awards and nominations

Discography

In his life Prince released 39 studio albums:

- *For You* (1978)
- *Prince* (1979)
- *Dirty Mind* (1980)
- *Controversy* (1981)
- *1999* (1982)
- *Purple Rain* (1984)
- *Around the World in a Day*(1985)
- *Parade* (1986)
- *Sign o' the Times* (1987)
- *Lovesexy* (1988)
- *Batman* (1989)
- *Graffiti Bridge* (1990)
- *Diamonds and Pearls*(1991)
- *Love Symbol Album*(1992)
- *Come* (1994)
- *The Black Album*(1994)
- *The Gold Experience*(1995)
- *Chaos and Disorder*(1996)
- *Emancipation* (1996)
- *Crystal Ball* (1998)
- *The Truth* (1998)
- *The Vault: Old Friends 4 Sale*(1999)
- *Rave Un2 the Joy Fantastic*(1999)
- *The Rainbow Children*(2001)
- *One Nite Alone...* (2002)
- *Xpectation* (2003)
- *N.E.W.S* (2003)
- *Musicology* (2004)
- *The Chocolate Invasion*(2004)
- *The Slaughterhouse*(2004)
- *3121* (2006)
- *Planet Earth* (2007)
- *Lotusflow3r* (2009)
- *MPLSound* (2009)
- *20Ten* (2010)
- *Plectrumelectrum* (2014)
- *Art Official Age* (2014)
- *HITnRUN Phase One*(2015)
- *HITnRUN Phase Two* (2015)

Posthumous releases:

- *4Ever* (2016)
- *Purple Rain Deluxe and Deluxe Expanded*(2017)

He also released two albums credited to Madhouse, three albums credited to the New Power Generation and one credited to the NPG Orchestra:

Madhouse:

- 8 (1987)
- 16 (1987)

The New Power Generation:

- Goldnigga (1993)
- Exodus (1995)
- Newpower Soul(1998)

NPG Orchestra:

- Kamasutra (1997)

Filmography

Film

Year	Film	Role	Director
1984	<u>Purple Rain</u>	The Kid	<u>Albert Magnoli</u>
1986	<u>Under the Cherry Moon</u>	Christopher Tracy	Prince
1987	<u>Sign o' the Times</u>	Himself	Prince
1990	<u>Graffiti Bridge</u>	The Kid	Prince

Television

Year	Show	Role	Notes
1997	<u>Muppets Tonight</u>	Himself	Episode 11
2014	<u>New Girl</u>	Himself	Episode: " <u>Prince</u> "

Tours

- Prince Tour (1979–80)
- Dirty Mind Tour (1980–81)
- Controversy Tour (1981–82)
- 1999 Tour (1982–83)
- Purple Rain Tour (1984–85)
- Parade Tour (1986)
- Sign o' the Times Tour (1987)
- Lovesexy Tour (1988–89)
- Nude Tour (1990)
- Diamonds and Pearls Tour (1992)
- Act I and II (1993)
- Interactive Tour (1994)
- The Ultimate Live Experience(1995)
- Gold Tour (1996)
- Love 4 One Another Charities Tour (1997)
- Jam of the Year Tour (1997–98)
- New Power Soul Tour/Festival (1998)
- Hit n Run Tour (2000–01)
- A Celebration (2001)
- One Nite Alone... Tour (2002)
- 2003–2004 World Tour (2003–04)
- Musicology Live 2004ever(2004)
- Per4ming Live 3121(2006–07)
- Earth Tour (2007)
- 20Ten Tour (2010)
- Welcome 2 (2010–12)
- Live Out Loud Tour (2013)
- Hit and Run Tour (2014–15)
- Piano & A Microphone Tour (2016)

See also

- [List of best-selling music artists](#)
- [List of best-selling music artists in the United States](#)
- [Unreleased Prince projects](#)

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External links

- Prince at *Encyclopædia Britannica*
- Prince on *IMDb*
- Prince at the *TCM Movie Database*
- Prince at *Find a Grave*
- Prince at *AllMusic*
- Prince at *Billboard.com*
- Performance at *Rock and Roll Hall of Fame* at his induction in 2004

Preceded by Funky 4 + 1 More	<i>Saturday Night Live</i> musical guest (with Todd Rundgren) February 21, 1981	Succeeded by Delbert McClinton
Preceded by The Strokes	<i>Saturday Night Live</i> musical guest February 4, 2006	Succeeded by Fall Out Boy
Preceded by Iggy Azalea	<i>Saturday Night Live</i> musical guest November 1, 2014	Succeeded by Kendrick Lamar

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