March's Composer / Musician of the Month

CAROLE KING



Born **Carol Joan Klein** on 9th February, 1942

American singer, songwriter and musician who has been active since 1958.

She is regarded as one of the most significant and influential musicians of all time. Her success has gained her the title "Most successful female songwriter of the 20th century" in the USA, having written or co-written 118 pop hits on their music charts called the 'Billboard Hot 100'.

She also wrote 61 hits that charted in the UK, making her the most successful female songwriter on the UK singles charts between 1962 and 2005.





Early Music

Carole King was originally named "**Carol Joan Klein**" by her Jewish parents Eugenia, a teacher and Sidney N. Klein, a firefighter. Her parents met in an lift in 1936 at Brooklyn College, where her father was studying chemistry and her mother was studying English and drama.



Perfect Pitch means that you know and can name a note just by hearing it!

Why might this be a useful skill for a musician or composer?



Her mother had learned how to play piano as a child, when Carole developed a strong curiosity about music so from the age of three, her mother began teaching her basic piano skills through musical games. When King was four, her parents discovered she had perfect pitch, her father enjoyed showing off his daughter's skill to visiting friends :

"My dad's smile was so broad that it encompassed the lower half of his face. I enjoyed making my father happy and getting the notes right."

MAKING IT BIG...

Carole's first major success began in the 1960s when she and her first husband, Gerry Goffin, wrote more than two dozen chart hits, many of which have become standards for the artists that recorded them. This is something that she has continued to do throughout her musical career, with great success and praise!

Her success as a performer in her own right did not come until the 1970s, when she sang her own songs, accompanying herself on the piano, in a series of albums and concerts.

Have a listen to "I Feel the Earth Move" - can you hear the different instruments? Can you describe the tempo of the music?



Definition : standards

A song or piece of music that a musician or composer is well known for and it is expected for them to perform it at concerts or gigs.

Carole's debut album "Writer" didn't do very well, however, her album Tapestry (that topped the U.S. album chart for 15 weeks in 1971 and remained on the charts for more than six years! Which is the world record for most weeks at No. 1 by a female artist for more than 20 years) was a massive success and has received many awards and recognition.



PERSONAL LIFE...

Carole King has been married four times.
She married her college boyfriend, Gerry Goffin, in 1959, and they wrote songs together for many years.



He was then followed by fellow musician Charles Larkey, in 1970.
Both her marriages fell apart after a few years.



She then married Rick Evers however, it wasn't a happy marriage and so they separated.

Carole then married Rick Sorenson, but yet again this marriage didn't last long.

She has four children, including musicians
Louise Goffin and Sherry Goffin Kondor
and artist Molly Larkey.



Cover Versions

Many other cover versions of Carole's work have appeared over the years. Some of the most famous are listed below.

"You've Got a Friend" was a No. 1 hit for James Taylor in 1971 and a Top 40 hit for Roberta Flack and Donny Hathaway the same year.

Barbra Streisand had a top 40 hit in 1972 with "Where You Lead" twice – by itself and as part of a live medley with "Sweet Inspiration".

The Carpenters recorded King's "It's Going to Take Some Time" in 1972, and reached number 12 on the *Billboard* charts.

"It's Too Late" reappeared on the Adult Contemporary chart in 1995 by Gloria Estefan.

Linda Ronstadt recorded a new version of "Oh No Not My Baby" in 1993, reaching number 35 on the AC Chart the next year.

Celine Dion recorded King's song "The Reason" on her 1997 album *Let's Talk About Love* with Carole King singing backup. The remake was certified Diamond in France.

The Crusaders had an instrumental hit with "So Far Away", rising to number 39 in 1972 on the AC Chart.

"Locomotion" was recorded by Kylie Minogue, having success and starting off a long career in the music industry.

Have a listen to the Carole King versions and the covers. Which do you prefer and why? Can you hear the differences and similarities in the versions?



Other Interests

After relocating to Idaho in 1977, Carole became involved in environmental issues.

Since 1990, she has been working with the Alliance for the Wild Rockies and other groups towards passage of the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act (NREPA). Carole has testified on Capitol Hill (similar to our House of Parliament) three times on behalf of NREPA: in 1994, 2007 and again in 2009.



On January 21, 2017, Carole marched in the Women's March in Stanley, Idaho, carrying a sign that said "One Small Voice." In an article for The Huffington Post, she wrote that she had carried that message because

"I've never stopped believing that one small voice plus millions of other small voices is exactly how we change the world."

Talk About It



Do you think it is important for celebrities to use their fame to help and support others?

Explain your thoughts.

Awards and Star Status

Carole's record sales were estimated at more than 75 million copies worldwide.

She has won four Grammy Awards and was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

Carole has been inducted, twice, into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, as both a performer and a songwriter.

She was given the 2,486th Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame on 3rd December, 2012.



