

= James Blunt =

James Hillier Blount ( born 22 February 1974 ) , better known by his stage name James Blunt , is an English singer @-@ songwriter and former reconnaissance officer for the British Army . He originally signed to EMI Music Publishing and is currently signed to Custard Records and Atlantic Records .

Blunt rose to prominence in 2004 with the release of his debut studio album *Back to Bedlam* , achieving worldwide fame with the singles " You 're Beautiful " and " Goodbye My Lover " . The album sold over 11 million copies worldwide , topping the UK Albums Chart and peaking at number two in the US . " You 're Beautiful " was number 1 in both the US , UK and a dozen other countries . *Back to Bedlam* , was the best selling album of the 2000s in the UK .

Blunt has gone on to sell over 20 million albums and 20 million singles worldwide . He has received several awards , including two Brit Awards , two MTV Video Music Awards , two Ivor Novello Awards as well as receiving five Grammy Award nominations .

Blunt was a reconnaissance officer in the Life Guards , a cavalry regiment of the British Army , and served under NATO in the Kosovo War in 1999 .

Blunt was awarded an Honorary Doctorate for Music in 2016 by University of Bristol .

= = Early life and education = =

Blunt was born at an army hospital in Tidworth , Wiltshire , the first of three children to Colonel Charles Blount and Jane Ann Farran Blount ( née Amos ) . His father was a cavalry officer in the 13th / 18th Royal Hussars and then a helicopter pilot and Colonel of the Army Air Corps . The Blount family has a long history of military service , dating back to King Gorm of Denmark in the 10th century .

Blunt grew up primarily in St Mary Bourne in Hampshire , but moved every two years depending on his father 's military postings in : Middle Wallop ; Cyprus ; Soest ( Germany ) ; York ; and Netheravon . He also spent time in Cley next the Sea where his father owned Cley Windmill .

Blunt was educated at Elstree School in Woolhampton , Berkshire , and Harrow School , gaining A @-@ levels in Physics , Chemistry and Economics . He went on to study Aerospace Manufacturing Engineering and Sociology at University of Bristol . , graduating with a BSc ( Hons ) in Sociology in 1996 .

Like his father , Blunt is a pilot , gaining his fixed winged Private pilot licence aged 16 , and has a keen interest in motorcycles .

= = Military service = =

Having been sponsored through university on an army bursary , Blunt was committed to serve a minimum of four years in the armed forces . He trained at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in intake 963 , and was commissioned into the Life Guards , a reconnaissance regiment . He rose to the rank of Captain .

The Life Guards , part of the Household Cavalry Regiment , were primarily based in Combermere Barracks . Blunt also trained in British Army Training Unit Suffield in Alberta , Canada , where his regiment was posted for six months in 1998 to act as the opposing army in combat training exercises .

In 1999 , Blunt volunteered to join a Blues and Royals squadron deploying with NATO to Kosovo . Initially assigned to carry out reconnaissance of the Republic of Macedonia ? Yugoslavia border , Blunt 's troop worked ahead of the front lines locating and targeting Serb forces for the NATO bombing campaign . On 12 June 1999 , Blunt led the 30 @,@ 000 @-@ strong NATO peacekeeping force from the Macedonia border to Pristina International Airport , however a Russian military contingent had moved in and taken control of the airport before his unit 's arrival . American NATO commander Wesley Clark ordered that Blunt 's unit forcibly take the airport from the Russians . However , Blunt refused the order , citing the wider consequences . General Mike Jackson , Blunt

's superior officer , stepped in stating that they were " not going to start the Third World War " . There were less intense moments during Blunt 's Kosovo assignment . Blunt had brought along his guitar , strapped to the outside of his tank , and would sometimes perform for locals and troops . It was while on duty there that he wrote the song " No Bravery " .

Blunt extended his military service in November 2000 , and was posted to the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment in London , as the Queen 's Guard . During this posting , Blunt was featured on the television programme " Girls on Top " , a series highlighting unusual career choices . He stood guard at the coffin of the Queen Mother during her lying in State and was part of the funeral procession on 9 April 2002 .

A keen skier , Blunt captained the Household Cavalry alpine ski team in Verbier , Switzerland , becoming Royal Armoured Corps ski champion in 2000 . Blunt left the army on 1 October 2002 having served six years .

= = Music career = =

= = = Early career = = =

Blunt had piano and violin lessons as a child , but was introduced to the electric guitar aged 14 at Harrow by a fellow student . His dissertation at Bristol University was titled , The Commodification of Image ? Production of a Pop Idol . One of his main references for was Simon Frith , a sociologist and rock critic , and chair of the Mercury Music Prize panel of judges since 1992 , who later did a lecture tour entitled : " The unpopular and unpleasant thoughts inspired by the work of James Blunt " . While still in the army Blunt would write songs during his time off . A backing vocalist and songwriting collaborator suggested he contact Elton John 's manager , Todd Interland , with whom she used to share a house . Interland told HitQuarters that he listened to Blunt 's demo while driving home and , after hearing the track ' Goodbye My Lover ' , pulled over and called the mobile number written on the CD to set up a meeting .

Blunt left the British Army in 2002 so that he could pursue his musical career . He started using the stage name " Blunt " in part to make it easier for others to spell ; " Blount " is pronounced the same way , and remains his legal surname . Shortly after leaving the army he was signed to EMI music publishers and to Twenty @-@ First Artists management . A record contract remained elusive , with recording label executives pointing to Blunt 's posh speaking voice as a barrier in class @-@ divided Britain . Linda Perry , who was just launching her own Custard Records label in early 2003 , heard Blunt 's promotional tape when visiting London , and soon after heard him perform live at the South by Southwest Music Festival . She made an offer to him the same night and within a few days Blunt signed a recording contract with Perry . One month later , he travelled to Los Angeles to meet producer Tom Rothrock .

= = = Back to Bedlam : 2003 ? 2006 = = =

Blunt recorded Back to Bedlam in 2003 with producer Tom Rothrock in Conway Recording Studios and Rothrock 's home studio in Los Angeles , playing many instruments himself . During recording , he lodged with actress Carrie Fisher . Fisher contributed in naming the album and Blunt recorded the song " Goodbye My Lover " in her bathroom . Back to Bedlam was released in the UK in October 2004 .

Blunt 's debut single in the UK was " High " ( co @-@ written with Ricky Ross of Deacon Blue ) . This song initially peaked below the Top 100 of the UK Singles Chart , however after the subsequent success of " You 're Beautiful " it finally made the Top 75 before being re @-@ released . The song was chosen to appear in a Vodafone commercial in Italy , and was a Top 10 hit in that country .

The debut album from the unknown Blunt initially attracted little critical attention , and there were no published reviews from major UK music journals . His live performances , mainly in support of better

known musicians , received somewhat mixed but generally favourable reviews . Blunt 's lack of performing experience and inconsistent approach with audiences was commented upon , while his music was likened to that of Damien Rice and David Gray . In March 2004 , with Blunt performing in the support role for Katie Melua in Manchester , Alex McCann of Designer Magazine wrote , " Blunt 's ascendance is a dead cert and this time next year it isn 't that far removed from reality to suggest that a number one album , Brit Award and countless accolade 's [ sic ] will be his for the taking . " After release of the album , concert support slots for Elton John and Lloyd Cole and the Commotions in late 2004 and early 2005 followed , as did a band residency at London club 93 Feet East . In March 2005 , his second single , " Wisemen , " was released .

Blunt 's third single , " You 're Beautiful " , was his break @-@ out hit . The song debuted at number 12 in the UK , and rose all the way to number one six weeks later . The song also received huge airplay in the UK , propelling Back to Bedlam to number one on the UK Albums Chart . The extensive airplay ultimately led to Blunt and his co @-@ writers being awarded the Ivor Novello Award for Most Performed Work . After the success of " You 're Beautiful " in the UK , the song crossed over to mainland Europe , becoming one of the biggest hits of summer 2005 across the continent . In the US , " You 're Beautiful " made its debut in the summer of 2005 on WPLJ , a prominent radio station in New York City , despite not having been released to radio yet . The song was released to radio stations in the fall of 2005 and climbed into the Top 10 in three radio formats : Adult Contemporary Music , Hot Adult Top 40 Tracks , and Adult album alternative . Blunt became the first British artist to top the American singles chart in nearly a decade when " You 're Beautiful " reached number one on the Billboard Hot 100 in 2006 ; the last British artist to do so had been Elton John in 1997 with the song " Candle in the Wind 1997 " .

" Goodbye My Lover " was released as the fourth UK single from the album in December 2005 , and the second US single . The songs " High " and " Wisemen " were subsequently re @-@ released in 2006 . Blunt started off 2006 celebrating five Brit Award nominations , going on to win Best British male solo artist and Best pop act categories , having already started an 11 @-@ month world tour . On 31 August , Blunt won two awards at the 2006 MTV Video Music Awards , with " You 're Beautiful " winning the award for Best Male Video .

In late 2005 , Blunt made appearances on The Oprah Winfrey Show and as a musical guest on Saturday Night Live . Eight of the songs on the album were featured in television shows ( The O.C. , Grey 's Anatomy and many more ) , films ( Undiscovered ) , and advertising campaigns ( Hilton Hotels , Sprint telecommunications ) throughout 2005 and 2006 . Blunt performed " You 're Beautiful " at the 49th Grammy Awards in February 2007 , dedicating the song to the late Ahmet Ertegun of Atlantic Records , but he did not win in any of the five categories for which he had received nominations ( including Best New Artist , won by Carrie Underwood ) .

The album eventually sold 11 @.@ 2 million copies and topped the album charts in 16 territories worldwide . It sold 2 @.@ 6 million in the U.S. and was certified 2 x platinum . In Britain the album sold over three million copies , was certified 10 x platinum , and entered the Guinness Book of World Records for the fastest selling album in one year .

In 2005 , Blunt performed 90 live shows , mainly across the UK and Europe , and supported Jason Mraz in a North American tour . The " Back to Bedlam World Tour " started off in January 2006 , covering cities in Europe , the UK , Australia , New Zealand , and Japan , as well as three separate headline tours in North America , ending in November of that year . Not including promotional appearances , Blunt performed over 140 live shows in 2006 .

The videos for all of Blunt 's singles from Back To Bedlam feature symbolism and dark imagery . In the first video for " High " , he is buried in a desert . In the first video for " Wisemen " , he is kidnapped and taken hostage . In the video for " You 're Beautiful " , he alludes to suicide by jumping off a cliff into the sea . In the " Goodbye My Lover " video , he is the outsider in a love triangle , imagining the couple , a man and woman ( played by Matt Dallas of Kyle XY and Mischa Barton of The O.C. ) together . The re @-@ release video for " High " features Blunt running in a forest . The re @-@ release video for " Wisemen " has Blunt burning identification papers , and then walking through a forest while he is on fire .

Blunt appeared on an episode of Sesame Street which aired on 14 November 2007 , singing about

triangles to the tune of " You 're Beautiful " .

A parody of " You 're Beautiful " titled " You 're Pitiful " was recorded by Weird Al Yankovic . Blunt gave personal permission for this parody to be included on a Weird Al album , but Atlantic Records , Blunt 's label , stepped in to forbid the commercial release of the song . Weird Al has since made the song available as a free MP3 download on his website . In a request by Yankovic to include the song on an upcoming compilation CD , Blunt 's manager replied via email , " Thanks for your email , but both James and I will never approve this parody to be released on any label . "

On 28 December 2009 , BBC Radio 1 announced that Back to Bedlam was the biggest selling album of the 2000s decade in the United Kingdom .

= = = All the Lost Souls : 2007 ? 2008 = = =

Blunt 's second studio album , All the Lost Souls , was released on 17 September 2007 in the United Kingdom and one day later in North America . It sold 65 @,@ 000 units in its first week , and was certified gold in the UK after only four days . By the end of January 2008 , the album had sold 600 @,@ 000 copies in the UK , and 4 @.@ 5 million copies internationally . Blunt completed the album 's songs at his home in Ibiza in the winter of 2006 ? 2007 . He performed five of the ten album tracks during his 2005 ? 2006 tours ; lyrics , melodies , and harmonies were refined for the studio recording , on which his touring band played and Tom Rothrock worked as producer .

While Blunt 's first album received little critical attention , critics from every major music publication , and newspapers around the world , weighed in on All the Lost Souls . The album was met with generally mixed to positive reviews , and maintains a 53 / 100 rating at Metacritic . " Eric Danton , of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and The Hartford Courant wrote that the album is " a collection so bland , it makes hardtack seem sumptuous " . However , Kerri Mason of Billboard said Blunt " shows the abandon and confidence of a long @-@ term artist , not just a one @-@ hit wonder " and continued " there is not a misstep throughout " . Equally effusive , Liz Hoggard of The Observer wrote that " it 's impossible to resist Blunt 's troubadour yearning . "

The first single from All the Lost Souls , " 1973 " , was inspired by Blunt 's nights out at Pacha , an Ibiza club , which opened in that year . The song became another hit for Blunt reaching number one the Billboard European Hot 100 Singles chart . D.J. Pete Tong remixed " 1973 " and played the track during his set at Pacha over the summer of 2007 . The second single , " Same Mistake " , was released in early December 2007 but did not fare well in the UK charts , peaking at number 57 . It was Number one in Brazil and a hit in many South American countries . The third single from the album was " Carry You Home " , released in March 2008 , peaking at number 20 in the U.K charts and bringing the album back into the Top 10 , six months after its release . The fourth and final single from the original " All The Lost Souls " album was " I Really Want You " .

Blunt collaborated twice during this album cycle . In late 2007 , he worked with French rapper Sinik . They released " Je Réalise " , which took elements of Blunt 's song " I 'll Take Everything " , which hit the top three in France . On 14 November 2008 , " Primavera in anticipo " , Laura Pausini 's new album , was released . The title track is a duet with Blunt . The album reached the Number one in Italy .

Throughout 2007 and 2008 , Blunt went on his second world tour , including a performance in London 's O2 Arena . On 24 November 2008 , All The Lost Souls was re @-@ released as a deluxe edition , with new album artwork , new single " Love , Love , Love " and the documentary James Blunt : Return to Kosovo .

= = = Some Kind of Trouble : 2010 ? 2013 = = =

Blunt 's third studio album titled Some Kind of Trouble , was released on 8 November 2010 . The album debuted at number four in the UK with over 100 @,@ 000 copies sold in the first week . The album 's first single " Stay the Night " was released on 27 October 2010 . The single did much better in Europe than the UK , sitting at number two on the European Airplay Chart for five consecutive weeks , but only charting at number 37 in the UK top 40 . The second single from the album , " So

Far Gone " was released in the UK on 3 January 2011 . The third single from the album , " If Time Is All I Have " was released in the UK on 4 April 2011 . Overall critical reception has been mixed , with Allmusic saying , in a positive review , that " Some Kind of Trouble is a step in the right direction for Blunt , a move toward love songs free of pretension " whilst BBC Music felt " When all 's said , Some Kind of Trouble is not a terrible record by any means , but there 's little sense that Blunt has advanced , and equally little sense that it 'll make any difference to his bottom line . "

As of February 2011 , worldwide sales stood at over one million copies .

= = = Moon Landing : 2013 ? present = = =

Blunt 's fourth album , " Moon Landing " , was released on 18 October 2013 . It featured production from Back to Bedlam producer Tom Rothrock . The lead single , " Bonfire Heart " , debuted at number six before peaking at number two the following week in the UK Singles Chart . The single went to number 1 in Australia , Germany , Switzerland and Austria , and was in top 10 in several other countries .

On 16 September 2014 , Blunt confirmed on his official Instagram account that Moon Landing would be re @-@ released on 3 November 2014 . The new version of the album was named Moon Landing - Apollo Edition and contained 19 tracks : 11 from the original disc , plus the three bonus tracks of the deluxe version ( Telephone , Kiss This Love Goodbye and Hollywood ) and five new tracks ( Smoke Signals , When I Find Love Again , Breathe , Trail of Broken Hearts and Working it Out ) . The new track When I Find Love Again was released as a single that same day , after being played on BBC 's Radio 2 for the first time . The official music video for When I Find Love Again was released on 14 October 2014 . The new version of the album also contains a 19 @-@ track live DVD recorded during Blunt 's performance in the 2014 edition of the Paléo Festival .

On 3 May 2015 , Blunt was confirmed to be replacing Ronan Keating on the seventh season of The X Factor Australia . He was joined by American rock musician Chris Isaak and returning judges Guy Sebastian and Dannii Minogue .

On 2 February 2016 , Blunt announced via his newsletter that work in his fifth album had just started .

= = Personal life = =

Blunt 's primary residence is in Ibiza . Blunt also owns a chalet in the Swiss town of Verbier , which he purchased in February 2007 , and has a ski lift named after him there . In 2012 , Blunt , Carl Fogarty and Lawrence Dallaglio opened a restaurant at the top of the chairlift called La Vache .

On 8 February 2012 , Hugh Tomlinson QC , representing a number of victims of the News International phone hacking affair , informed the High Court that Blunt was one of six alleged victims who had filed for damages in civil cases .

In September 2014 , Blunt married ( Alexandrina ) Sofia Wellesley , daughter of Lord and Lady John Wellesley , and grand @-@ daughter of the 8th Duke of Wellington . On 9 October 2015 it was revealed that the couple were expecting their first child . At the Oxford Union in early June 2016 , Blunt revealed he had become a father .

On 17 February 2016 , he received the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Music from the University of Bristol .

= = Charitable and environmental causes = =

Blunt is a patron of Help for Heroes , a charity that raises money to provide better facilities for wounded British servicemen , and has also held benefit concerts for this charity .

Blunt also raises funds for the medical charity Médecins Sans Frontières ( MSF , or " Doctors Without Borders " ) . He first encountered the non @-@ governmental organization while on operations in Kosovo . Since then , Blunt has been an active supporter by holding meet @-@ and @-@ greet auctions at many of his concerts , and filming the documentary Return to Kosovo , in

which he visited the people and places he had encountered while there .

Blunt also supports environmental causes . He screened the trailer for An Inconvenient Truth at his concerts , and for each advance sales concert ticket purchased through his designated website , a tree is planted . On 7 July 2007 , Blunt performed at the Live Earth concert at Wembley Stadium , London . Blunt also contributed , with his vocals , to the charity single , " Everybody Hurts " in aid of the 2010 Haiti earthquake appeal .

= = Discography = =

Back to Bedlam ( 2004 )  
All the Lost Souls ( 2007 )  
Some Kind of Trouble ( 2010 )  
Moon Landing ( 2013 )  
2016 TBA

= = James Blunt Band = =

The following musicians have performed with Blunt during his 2014 " Moon Landing " tour .

Karl Brazil ( drums , backing vocals ) : 2004 ? present  
Ben Castle ( lead guitar , backing vocals ) : 2005 ? present  
John Garrison ( bass , guitar , backing vocals ) : 2007 ? present  
Simon Lea ( drums ) : 2014 ? present  
Christopher Pemberton ( keyboards , backing vocals ) : 2014 ? present  
Morten Hellborn ( drums ) : 2015

= = = Former members = = =

Daisy Blount ( backing vocals ) : 2004  
Paul Freeman ( lead guitar , backing vocals ) : 2004 @-@ 2005  
Malcolm Moore ( bass , backing vocals ) : 2004 ? 2007 , 2010 ? 2014  
Paul Beard ( piano , keyboards , backing vocals ) : 2004 ? 2014

= = Awards and nominations = =

= = = Grammy Awards = = =

= = = 2005 = = =

MTV Europe Music Awards ? Best New Act  
Q Awards ? Best New Act  
Digital Music Awards ? Best Pop Act

= = = 2006 = = =

NRJ Music Awards ( France ) ? Best International Newcomer  
BRIT Awards ? Best pop act and Best Male Vocalist  
ECHO Awards ( Germany ) ? Best International Newcomer  
NME Awards ? Worst Album  
MTV Australia Video Music Awards ? Song of the Year for You 're Beautiful  
Ivor Novello Awards ? Most Performed Work and International Hit of the Year  
MTV Video Music Awards ? Best Male Video and Best Cinematography

World Music Awards ? Best New Artist in the World and Biggest Selling British Artist in the World  
Teen Choice Awards ( United States ) ? Choice Music Male Artist  
Premios 40 Principales - Mejor Artista Revelación Internacional ( Nominated )

=== 2007 ===

IFPI Hong Kong Top Sales Music Awards - Top 10 Best Selling Foreign Albums All the Lost Souls

=== 2008 ===

ECHO Awards ( Germany ) ? Best International Male Artist

=== 2010 ===

Virgin Media Music Awards ? The Hottes

=== 2011 ===

Elele Magazine Teen Idol of Turkey 2011

=== 2016 ===

Honourary doctorate from the University of Bristol