

Title:

American Rock In Its Purest Form - Melissa Etheridge On Stage

Word Count:

505

Summary:

Melissa Etheridge has long been known as an artist who produces music that fits the core of what many consider "American Rock and Roll." Her style combines folk, blues, rock and roll and searing guitar melodies that cut to the soul. Her wide-ranging style has captured the hearts and ears of millions of fans, and Etheridge is returning to the stage in the summer of 2006. A look at her life will at least partially explain how her style came to be.

Early Life

Etheridge was...

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Article Body:

Melissa Etheridge has long been known as an artist who produces music that fits the core of what many consider "American Rock and Roll." Her style combines folk, blues, rock and roll and searing guitar melodies that cut to the soul. Her wide-ranging style has captured the hearts and ears of millions of fans, and Etheridge is returning to the stage in the summer of 2006. A look at her life will at least partially explain how her style came to be.

Early Life

Etheridge was born in Leavenworth, Kansas on May 29, 1961. She almost immediately became involved with music, as she learned to play the guitar at the age of eight and began writing music shortly thereafter. She played in a series of local bands through her teen-age years and was accepted into the prestigious Berklee College of Music in Boston after high school.

Etheridge stayed at Berklee for only one year, and she dropped out to play in and around Boston for a time before making her way to Southern California in the early 1980's. She spent her time producing demo tapes, and was discovered by

Bill Leopold, who got her steady work at a series of gigs in the Los Angeles area.

### Career Highlights

Etheridge's regular performances at the Executive Suite in Long Beach got her noticed by record companies, and her talent led to a bidding war between A&M, Capitol, EMI, and Warner Bros. Etheridge ultimately decided to sign with Island Records, and she immediately began producing albums.

Her first studio work, entitled Melissa Etheridge, went multi-platinum, and four singles released from this work climbed into the Billboard charts. Her second release, Brave and Crazy, got as high as number 22 on the album charts and had three singles earn spots in the Billboard charts.

Since then, Etheridge has released seven subsequent albums, with two more, Yes I Am in 1993 and Your Little Secret in 1995 going multi-platinum. In all, Etheridge's albums have sold over 27 million copies worldwide, and her music is as recognizable as any artist in her era.

### Personal Causes

Etheridge is only slightly-less known for her personal causes as she is for her music. Perhaps her most famous "cause" was her courageous decision to reveal her homosexuality during President Clinton's inauguration ceremonies in 1993. Since then, she has been an avid supporter for gay rights, and is as recognizable as any star for this cause in the world.

Etheridge has also performed for countless benefits, including such causes as Hurricane Katrina relief, the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army. Etheridge is widely known for giving her time, money, talents and platform as a star to bring attention to the causes in which she believes, no matter how controversial.

This bravery has only enhanced her standing with her fans and music lovers alike, and it speaks to the nature of her musical style - honest, open, heartfelt and sincere. She will no doubt continue to perform for her causes, and she is sure to bring a crowd wherever she appears.