

# Elton John performs on Mizzou campus

BY BONNIE BIRSELL  
Index Staff

Elton John is a rock legend for a reason. The musician known as Captain Fantastic played an incredible 24-song set at Mizzou Arena on Oct. 5 that brought an audience of 15,000 to its feet. Columbia was just one stop on his massive Rocket Man Tour, a showcase of John's No. 1 hits.

The show kicked off just a few minutes after 8 p.m. when John took the stage to thunderous applause as his band played intro music behind him. Always the showman, John took his time acknowledging every section of the audience before moving to the piano. But rather than playing any notes, John leapt onto the piano bench and then onto the piano itself, dangling his legs over the side and waving merrily at the crowd. He hopped off the piano with the agility of a much younger man (John turned 60 in March) and, much to the audience's delight, began to play.

And so began three solid hours of hits.

Fans were treated to all the old favorites, such as "Tiny Dancer," "Goodbye Yellow Brick Road" and "Bennie and the Jets." However, John had added extra bits to each song. Some had new, powerful intros or long instrumental breaks that often led more toward jazz, blues and even classical music than typical rock 'n' roll. The new music was a treat for those very familiar with his work — he managed to spice up his set list without destroying the songs his

fans already knew and loved.

Rumors that his voice is deteriorating are completely unfounded. John's pure tenor sound was clear and strong throughout the performance, and other than opting out of a few high notes (the familiar "la la la's" in "Crocodile Rock" were sung by the audience rather than John himself), his voice sounded just as good as it did on any album.

John kept a friendly rapport with the audience throughout the show. When he greeted the crowd, he acknowledged the impending Missouri-Nebraska football game that would take place the following night and admitted with a cringe that he would be in Omaha during the game. At one point, he told the crowd the score of the baseball game occurring simultaneously and asked the audience if it supported the Cleveland Indians or the New York Yankees. The crowd resoundingly booed the Yankees, and John agreed.

After a moving rendition of the original "Candle in the Wind," security allowed those in the first few rows to move toward the stage. Many approached with caution but by the night's end were leaning against the stage. Some even went so far as to rest their arms on the amplifiers in front of them until they were close enough to practically touch John's piano.

There was no intermission. John and his band played without pausing for anything but a quick sip of water for two hours and 45 minutes, when they played an incredibly pumped-up version of "Saturday



Chris Dunn/the Maneater  
Elton John performs for a sold-out crowd at Mizzou Arena on Oct. 5. Despite his age, John leaped onto his piano before beginning to play, then treated fans to a repertoire of crowd-pleasers and a begged-for encore.

Night's Alright (for Fighting)," and John took a bow and left the stage.

The crowd, of course, was not yet satisfied.

Deafening cheers filled the arena for several minutes before John reappeared. Rather than returning to the piano, he moved to the front of the stage. He then signed one item for every person standing along the front row, moving with patience and smiles from one fan's ticket stub to another's vinyl sleeve. It took somewhere between 10 and 15 minutes, but John

didn't appear to mind in the least.

After the last T-shirt was signed, John threw his marker offstage. But he still wasn't ready to play. He took a long look around the arena and reached into his coat, producing a gold headband complete with affixed tiger ears. He placed it on his head as the Mizzou-supporting crowd roared and then, finally, began to play.

The encore couldn't have been more poignant. John and the band tore through one last song, "Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me," after which

John thanked the crowd for its support. The band left the stage as he played his final song, a beautiful performance of "Your Song."

He might now be in his '60s, but John showed no signs of fatigue and no signs of being ready for retirement any time soon. His show was full of energy and a level of showmanship that many much younger acts can only hope to achieve sometime in their career. In Columbia, Elton John proved once more why he is the Rocket Man.

## Lennox's new album comes up short of success

BY FRANKLIN CLINE  
Reviewer

Even though Annie Lennox is four albums into her solo career, she still has yet to find her own voice as an artist, choosing instead to borrow liberally from a pop music smorgasbord ranging from the Scissor Sisters to Joni Mitchell.

"Songs of Mass Destruction" is a frustrating album to listen to because although it's clear that Annie Lennox has a great deal of talent from the pleasant opening strains of the album's first track and single, "Dark Road," this talent is buried in a veritable avalanche of overproduction and silly instrument choices. These flaws easily could have been remedied had Lennox not chosen Glen Ballard as her producer.

Ballard, who is probably best known for producing Alanis Morissette's "Jagged Little Pill" over a decade ago, completely misses the mark by creating a very uneven album: The rocking tracks are layered in archaic wall-of-sound style production, and the

ballads are stripped bare, giving them an overdramatic flair. Ballard is a bit of a hack who waters down Lennox's natural talent in favor of piling on slick, modern sounds.

To his credit, Ballard's pile-it-on school of production makes the funkier song on the album into a standout track: "Love is Blind" gets it right from start to finish. Yes, it does sound a little bit like a leftover track from the Scissor Sisters' "Ta-Dah" album, but that's worlds better than the handful of generic ballads that comprise roughly half of the disk.

"Love is Blind" is really the only time Ballard and Lennox nail it and come away with a fun, catchy pop song that easily would be at home on both Top 40 and Adult Contemporary radio, which are exactly the two markets Lennox is gunning for. "Ghosts in the Machine," along with "Through the Glass Darkly," also get credit for striving a little bit beyond the typical white-bread sound of the album, albeit with mixed results, as in the faux-ambient Zero-7 wannabe sound of "Darkly."

Still most of the songs on the album sound quite a bit alike, especially the ballads, which are almost humorous in their unblinking seriousness, as though Lennox called in a favor with Jewel to write a few for her. (She didn't, which is probably for the best for both.) I found it hard to distinguish among them, as they all have a generic piano-strings-and-Lennox sound, with the occasional strange electronic noise in the background just to remind us that, yes, we are in the 21st century.

Another way in which this album is generic is its lyrics, which are mostly waiting room filler. "When I'm with you the days are sweet / I still can't remember what it feels to be complete / I've tried pretending but it drives me off my feet," Lennox croons in "Darkly."

When she's not going through the lovesick motions, she's spitting out abstract imagery that doesn't really cohere with anything — for instance, the track "Lost" is comprised of a string of seemingly unrelated images: "planes

in the night," "murderous drums" and "the sound of a baby's first breath," all strung together by the phrase "we're lost."

Someone should have told her that it takes more to be meaningful than to conjure up the strangest and most desolate phrases one can think of and place them into a sparsely orchestrated, spooky-sounding tune. Even the lyrics on the now-ubiquitous "call for

social change" track "Sing" are confusing more than stimulating and don't mention the fact that the song is supposed to be a call for help with South Africa's HIV/AIDS pandemic. In fact, the lyrics read more like "Independent Women Part I."

However, this album still has its great moments, despite all of its silly aspects. The album's final track, "Fingernail

Moon," is reminiscent of a great Carole King tune: breezy and heavy at the same time with intelligent, evocative lyrics and a beautiful melody.

It's too bad Lennox felt the need to ape what the kids are listening to instead of looking into herself for inspiration. Hopefully her next album will be as great as this one could, and should, have been.

### Music Review

#### "Songs of Mass Destruction"

Annie Lennox  
Arista Records  
Released: Oct. 2

#### Rating



What's on your  
iPod?

Freshman  
**Eric Hughes**  
"Love Stoned"  
Justin Timberlake

Junior  
**Joe Pomicter**  
"Seventy Times 7"  
Brand New

Freshman  
**Spencer Girouard**  
"Stronger"  
Kanye West

Design by Andrea Bailey/Index

## New book reveals PostSecrets

BY JENIFER CALANDRA  
Staff Reporter

I know a secret you don't know. Hundreds of them, actually.

PostSecret creator Frank Warren released his latest compilation book, "A Lifetime of Secrets" last Tuesday. The book includes secrets from people as young as 10 and as old as 80-something.

"A Lifetime of Secrets" is Warren's fourth PostSecret compilation book, following "PostSecret: Extraordinary Confessions from Ordinary Lives," "My Secret: A PostSecret Book" and "The Secret Lives of Men and Women: A PostSecret Book." Because the PostSecret Web site (postsecret.blogspot.com) is updated weekly, fans never get the chance to see those particular secrets again. The PostSecret books preserve the secrets in tangible form.

"A Lifetime of Secrets" is almost entirely made up of about

400 enlarged postcards from Warren's blog with litterings of e-mails about secrets, confessions and related stories.

These secrets range from professions of love ("I rarely tell my amazing family that I love them because I'm afraid of showing weakness"), statements of tragedy or sorrow ("I never kissed my son after he was born because he was sick and I was scared. He died 2 hours later"), discussions of guilty pleasures ("My dream is to play the accordion!") and thoughts of hope ("I'm quitting my job in two weeks. I don't have another job lined up. I am feeling awesome and terrified. This is my rebirth!").

There are only two problems with the book. Occasionally some of the postcards are enlarged so much that their edges run off the page, making some letters unreadable. The inability to see the entire postcard on

these over-enlarged pages negatively affects the aesthetics and power of the secret. Secondly, sometimes two postcards share a page, their edges running into each other, making separate secrets difficult to discern. Some secrets contain nude pictures or medical drawings, so those particular postcards are not for the easily embarrassed or weak-of-stomach.

For me, the most powerful part of the book was Warren's introduction, in which he tells the story of a public "anonymous" apology from an older brother to his younger brother. Attendees of one of Warren's presentations had the opportunity to write a secret on an index card and pass them around the audience. Warren asked if anyone wanted to read the secret they were holding, and a young man stood up and read, "I wish I could apologize to my younger brother for the way I treated

him growing up." At the end, Warren collected the secrets and saw that the postcard the young man had read from was blank.

Everyone can find at least one secret they relate to in this book while appreciating the confessions of others who were brave enough to tell the one thing that has been haunting them. Overall, this book would make a great gift or coffee table addition.

### Book Review

#### "A Lifetime of Secrets"

by Frank Warren  
William Morrow  
288 pages

#### Rating



**ARIES (March 21 to April 19)** You might feel compelled to get involved on the "right side" of a seemingly unfair fight. But appearances can be deceptive. Get the facts before going forth into the fray.

**TAURUS (April 20 to May 20)** Bullying others into agreeing with your position could cause resentment. Instead, persuade them to join you by making your case on a logical point-by-point basis.

**GEMINI (May 21 to June 20)** Resist pushing for a workplace decision you might feel is long overdue. Your impatience could backfire. Meanwhile, fo-

cus on that still-unsettled personal situation.

**CANCER (June 21 to July 22)** Your aspects favor doing something different. You might decide to redecorate your home, or take a trip somewhere you've never been, or even change your hairstyle.

**LEO (July 23 to August 22)** You might want to take a break from your busy schedule to restore your energy levels. Use this less- hectic time to also reassess your plans and make needed changes.

**VIRGO (August 23 to September 22)** What you like to think of as determination might be seen by others as nothing more than stubbornness. Try to be more flexible if you hope to get things resolved.

**LIBRA (September 23 to October 22)** Watch that you don't unwittingly reveal work-related information to the wrong person. Best to say nothing until you get official clearance to open up.

**SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21)** With things settling down at work or at home, you can now take on a new challenge without fear of distraction. Be open to helpful suggestions from colleagues.

**SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21)** Your creativity can help resolve an emotional situation that might otherwise get out of hand. Continue to be your usual caring, sensitive self.

**CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19)** You could impress a lot of influential people with the way you untangle a few

knotty problems. Meanwhile, a colleague is set to share some welcome news.

**AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18)** Aspects favor recharging your social life and meeting new people. It's also a good time to renew friendships that might be stagnating due to neglect on both sides.

**PISCES (February 19 to March 20)** Congratulations. Your talent for working out a highly technical problem earns you well-deserved praise. The weekend could bring news about a friend or relative.

**BORN THIS WEEK:** Your sense of justice makes you a strong advocate for the rights of people and animals alike.