

Composer Paper

Mathew Bellamy is lead singer/songwriter for the band Muse. He is known for his guitar shredding riffs, falsetto voice, and intense deep lyrics. He has a Guinness world record for most guitars smashed on a single tour and is known to be incredible to see live. He has won multiple awards with Muse and continues to be a great success.

Matt Bellamy was born on June 9, 1978 in Cambridge England (1). His father George, was in the Tornados (a British band with success in the United States). This is where the roots of Matt's musical talent began to take place. His mother Marilyn raised Matt and his older brother after his parents got divorced. After living with his mom, he began playing the piano at age six and at age eleven he started to play the guitar (1). He was amazing at the piano and performed at the age of twelve in front of his school at Teignmouth Community College (1). This is when Matt really found himself lost in music. His early influences came from his dad, classical piano composers, Radio Head, and Queen.

Matthew's career started very slow(ly). With multiple bands being unsuccessful, he felt lost and wasn't sure if the music industry was right for him. He then joined band created by now Muse drummer, Dominic Howard. They then reached out to Chris Wolstenholme (3). They then formed what is now, Muse. Their career took off after they won a battle of the bands competition in college (2). The band wanted Matthew to be the lead singer and frontman of the band. "Bellamy was ranked No. 19 on Gigwise's list of The 50 Greatest Guitarists Ever. Total Guitar readers voted Bellamy No. 29 on a list of the Top 100 Guitarists of All Time. Bellamy's riff from "Plug in Baby" was No. 13 in Total Guitar's poll of the Top 100 Riffs of All Time. In the January 2010 edition of Total Guitar, Bellamy was named "Guitarist of the Decade" and was proclaimed to be "the Hendrix of his generation". In the Guinness Book of World Records 2010, Bellamy is credited as holding the world record for most guitars smashed on a tour. His record, 140, was set during the Absolution Tour. In April 2010, Bellamy was named the eighth best front man of all time by the readers of Q. In December 2010, readers of MusicRadar voted Bellamy the 9th Greatest Lead Singer of all time. In 2010, BBC Radio 6 conducted a survey where Matt Bellamy came third as the best guitarist of the last 30 years" (1). He wrote and composed every song they have recorded or performed except for a few covers they did. That includes seven studio albums and over 80 songs written and composed by one artist.

Muse signed with Maverick in their early years to produce their album *Origin of Symmetry*. Maverick, however, didn't think Matt's falsetto voice was very "radio friendly." They then quit Maverick and signed with Warner Bros. to release the album (2). *Origin of Symmetry* was Matt's first successful album in the United States. , Muse experimented with instrumentation such as a church organ, Mellotron, animal bones, and an expanded drum kit. There was more of Bellamy's falsetto, arpeggiated guitar, and piano playing. Songs like *Citizen Erased*, *Newborn*, and *Plug in Baby* feature Matthew's loud falsetto voice and ear-shredding guitar riffs.

Absolution was Matt's first album to hit gold in the U.S. (3). It debuted at number one in the UK and produced Muse's first top-ten hit, *Time Is Running Out*, and three top-twenty hits: *Hysteria*, *Sing for Absolution* and *Butterflies and Hurricanes*. *Resistance* was another album that had huge success. In its debut week, the album sold more than 148,000 copies. Reviews raved about Matt's three-part symphony, *Exogenesis: Symphony*. Matthew explains the symphony, "There is a new song in three parts, more of a symphony than a song, which I have been working on sporadically for many years [...] As a large percentage of the composition is orchestral, I have never wanted to collaborate with a string arranger as they may make it 'theirs'. So I have been arranging the orchestral elements myself, which [took] a long time" (6). Matt drew influences from Frédéric Chopin and Franz Liszt. Chris Wolstenholme, Muse bassist, says "[Matt made it so] You can always just take the band away from that track and just have the orchestral bit and it would still be beautiful. I just think it's a stunning piece of music and we've never done something like that before, where you've got all these songs that are in different movements. The orchestra was the main bit of the song and the band was more of a backdrop. The strings were at the forefront. It's astonishing" (6). Matt uses more than guitars, drums, and bass in his compositions. He likes to experiment with music and make it entertaining for him and his listeners.

Matt has had a lot of opportunities to use his music in games, movies, live shows, and much more. His music has been featured in games such as "Batman: Arkham Knight," "Need for Speed," and movies like "The Twilight Saga: New Moon," and "World War Z." World War Z was his biggest project. The people making the movie even reached out to Matt to write the entire score for the movie. However, he was unavailable to write the score, so they used the song *Isolated System* from their album *The 2nd Law*. Matthew also contributed to the Olympics when they were hosted at his home country, London, England. His song *Survival*, also from *The 2nd Law*, was featured as the theme song for the London Olympics. Bellamy and his fellow band members brought the song to Olympic staff, who "said they'd love to use it as the official tune." The track, Bellamy noted, "[It] expresses a sense of conviction and determination to win" (5). In an interview with Rolling Stones, Matt says "'It's a huge honor to have the track chosen as such a major part of the London 2012 Olympic Games" (4). The London Olympics was Matt's and his band's biggest opportunity to perform live in front of the entire world. One other notable performance was the new Wembley Stadium in London. Matt and Muse were the first artists to sell out Wembley with crowds of 180,000 fans in two days.

Through his career with Muse, the group has been nominated for 133 awards and won 45 (7). The most notable include; 2 nominations for Billboard Music Awards, 10 nominations for Brit Awards including 2 wins, 6 Grammy nominations, and 2 Grammy wins with Best Rock Album *The Resistance*, and *Drones*. They have also been nominated 45 times for NME Awards and have won 17 times (7). Muse has been noted for being one of the best live acts to see and has won MTV Europe Music Awards "Best Alternative Act" (in 2004) and "Best UK & Irish Act" (in 2004 and 2007) (7). Bellamy has also received the prestigious Ivor Novello Award for International Achievement.

Matt has had a very successful career with Muse making music that is very entertaining to listen to. When listening, one can expect to be surprised, shocked, intrigued, and satisfied. For first time listeners, they may sound weird. However, Matthew Bellamy has written and composed songs to be different. He uses amazing guitar riffs, hard drums, big bass, and incorporates strings, choirs, organs, animal bones, clarinet solos, trumpet solos, and much more. His inclusion of so many instruments and parts are what makes Matt so great. He is also a very good person. He is humble, cares for his family, and loves to make music. His life revolves around music and he is devoted to make Muse the best band around for the 21st century.

References

- (1): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matt_Bellamy
- (2): [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muse_\(band\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muse_(band))
- (3): <http://www.microcuts.net/>
- (4): <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/news/london-olympics-choose-muses-survival-as-official-song-20120627>
- (5): [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Survival_\(Muse_song\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Survival_(Muse_song))
- (6): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exogenesis:_Symphony
- (7): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_awards_and_nominations_received_by_Muse