**Since the late 1960s Todd Rundgren has created an unparalleled body of work that has gained him a fiercely loyal cult following. Todd may not have always been the darling of music critics, but fans and peers in the music industry acknowledge Todd as a musical genius for his songwriting, performing and production prowess. Todd is also a trailblazer in the music industry, being one of the first performers to produce conceptual music videos and one of the first artists whose music was commercially available via the Internet. Todd continues to record new material and performs many concerts each year, including recent performances of classic albums in their entirety and tours supporting his newer material. One thing Todd Rundgren is not is predictable.**

**Todd Rundgren was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on June 22, 1948 to Harry and Ruth Rundgren. Todd grew up in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania and after a few formal lessons taught himself how to play guitar. Todd formed his first band, Money, when he was sixteen years old.  After high school, Todd joined a local blues band named Woody's Truck Stop*.* Todd burst onto the national music scene as the guitarist for a group called Nazz, which formed in 1967.**

**Nazz's eponymous debut yielded two singles, "Open My Eyes," still a Todd concert staple, and its flipside, a mellow version of what would become one of Todd's signature hits, "Hello It's Me." Todd's stint in Nazzwas short-lived, with Todd leaving after the recording Nazz's second album ran into a myriad of problems, including visa issues when the band began recording in England. The project began as a double album entitled *Fungo Bat* and instead the band released a shortened version entitled *Nazz Nazz*, eliminating many of the experimental songs on which Todd sang lead vocals. Subsequently Todd left Nazz to embark on a solo career. A third Nazz album entitled *Nazz III* was released after Todd left the band, the album featured songs from the Fungo Bat sessions with Todd's vocals overdubbed by Nazz lead singer Robert "Stewkey" Antoni.**

**Todd's first solo album, *Runt*, came out in 1970 and Todd scored his first commercial hit with "We Gotta Get You a Woman." The album also featured the song "Broke Down and Busted" a fan favorite that Todd played on his recent blues tour, paired with a Utopia song entitled "Mystified" from *P.O.V*.  Todd's second album was titled *Runt: The Ballad of Todd Rundgren*, which was the first album released on the now defunct Bearsville Records, a label that Todd became synonymous with for much of his career.**

**In addition to getting his solo career off the ground, Todd began to establish himself as a record producer in the early 1970s, first as an engineer on The Band's *Stage Fright* and later replacing George Harrison as producer on Badfinger's *Straight Up*, which yielded the hit "Baby Blue." This set the stage for Todd's most ambitious project.**

***Something/Anything?* remains Todd Rundgren's bestselling album. The two album set released in 1972 features two of Todd's biggest hits, a remake of Nazz's "Hello it's Me" and the song "I Saw the Light." The album was the first to feature Todd playing all the instruments and doing all of his own vocals, which occurred on sides one through three. Side four was recorded live in the studio and featured a variety of session musicians including Rick Derringer, Randy Brecker and Rick Vito.**

**The follow up to *Something/Anything?* was *A Wizard a True Star*, an album revered by Todd's loyal fan base. *Wizard* departed from the formula that made *Something/Anything?* a commercial success but it introduced the concert staple "Just One Victory." In 2009, Todd embarked on a short tour and performed the album in its entirety largely through the efforts of fans and the organization of an internet based radio show dubbed appropriately, Rundgren Radio. The follow up to *Wizard* was simply called *Todd*, which included a poster of Todd formed out of the names of fans who sent in a postcard enclosed in *Wizard*. *Todd* also featured "Sons of 1984" which was recorded in San Francisco and New York City with the chorus of each city appearing in separate stereo channels. *Todd* will be performed live by Todd in its entirety in 2010.**

**Shortly after the release of *Todd*, Todd formed the band Utopia. The progressive rock group released the critically acclaimed *Todd Rundgren's Utopia*, which contained only four songs, none of which was under ten minutes. This was followed by another solo release, *Initiation*, which featured "Real Man" a song that spent many years as part of Todd's live set. The next release was Utopia's *Another Life*, followed by Todd's solo offering *Faithful*, which began the years of Rundgren solo works interspersed with Utopia releases. *Faithful's* side two featured longtime staples of Todd's solo shows "Love of the Common Man" and "Cliché."**

**In 1977, the classic Utopia lineup of Todd, Kasim Sulton, Roger Powell and Willie Wilcox was solidified with the release of *Ra*, a progressive rock album that featured "Singring and the Glass Guitar." This was followed by *Oops! Wrong Planet* which features the live staple "Love in Action" as well as the Rundgren penned song later made famous by England Dan and John Ford Coley, "Love is the Answer."**

**Todd's greatest commercial success came in 1977 not as a solo performer or with Utopia; it came unexpectedly as producer of Meat Loaf's *Bat Out of Hell*, one of the largest selling albums of all time. Shortly after *Bat*, Todd released another successful solo album entitled *Hermit of Mink Hollow*, which included the hit "Can We Still Be Friends."**

**Todd continued to record solo and Utopia records through the mid 1980s.  In 1980 Utopia released two albums, *Adventures in Utopia* which included Utopia's biggest hit "Set Me Free", and the Beatles parody album *Deface the Music*. In 1981, Todd released *Healing*, his first solo album in three years. The album included a 45-rpm insert of the song "Time Heals" b/w "Tiny Demons." The conceptual video for "Time Heals" was the second music video played on MTV, after the Buggles song, "Video Killed the Radio Star." Todd will be performing *Healing* in its entirety in the fall of 2010 along with *Todd*.**

**Also in 1981, Utopia released their last album on Bearsville, *Swing to the Right*, an album featuring pointed political commentary at the beginning of the Reagan era. The album also contains the fan favorite, "One World." Utopia's next album was simply called *Utopia*, and featured the band on the cover in suits. The unique package included a "third" side. Utopia began recording the album without bass player Kasim Sulton, who had left the band to pursue a solo career. Sulton returned and his vocals appear prominently on the album. *Utopia* also spawned a moderate MTV hit with the song "Feet Don't Fail Me Now."**

**In 1983 Todd released *The Ever Popular Tortured Artist Effect*, which contained the stadium anthem "Bang the Drum All Day." *The Ever Popular Tortured Artist* also was the last album Todd released on Bearsville records, ending an often-adversarial relationship with the label. A conceptual video by the same name was released later.**

**Utopia released *Oblivion* the next year, which included the song "Crybaby." Utopia's final album of all original material *P.O.V* was released in 1985 and the band embarked on a nationwide tour as part of a double bill featuring The Tubes. Todd had produced The Tubes last major label release, *Love Bomb*, at the same time Utopia recorded *P.O.V*. The Tubes lineup included Todd's longtime drummer and collaborator Prairie Prince and backup singer Michele Gray who would later marry Todd in 1998.**

**In 1985, Todd released *A Cappella*, an innovative album in which Todd used only his voice through an E-mu Emulater to create various sounds. Bearsville records originally shelved the release deeming it too experimental. After the demise of Bearsville the album was released as part of a three album deal with Warner Brothers. The tour for *A Cappella* featured an eleven-voice orchestra backing Todd.**

**Utopia reformed briefly in 1986 to record two new songs for a compilation entitled *Trivia*, which featured songs from the post-Bearsville Utopia releases. Todd continued to produce records and tour occasionally but it was not until 1989 that Todd released *Nearly Human*. The subsequent tour featured an eleven-piece ensemble that included future Sting guitarist Lyle Workman, future Smash Mouth drummer Michael Urbano and future Grateful Dead keyboardist Vince Welnick. The tour spawned a concert video entitled *Todd Rundgren Live in Japan*.**

**In 1991, Todd released his final album on a major label, *2nd Wind*. Todd recorded the album in front of a live audience in San Francisco. The subsequent tour was the first to feature Todd's longtime guitarist Jesse Gress.**

**Two years later Todd took a new musical direction, renaming himself as TR-i-, which stood for Todd Rundgren interactive- and released *No World Order*. The album was released in three different versions, one that was truly interactive and allowed the user to manipulate the songs, a conventional release with no gap between songs and a "lite" version of just the songs entitled *No World Order Lite*. Todd included "Worldwide Epiphany" in his live set many years afterward.**

**Todd's next album appeared in 1995, entitled *The Individualist*. It continued in the style of *No World Order* and included the fan favorite "Temporary Sanity" and a political jab at Dan Quayle entitled "Family Values." *The Individualist* marked the end of Todd's most prolific years as a recording artist. The next two releases included *With a Twist* in 1997 and *One Long Year* in 2000. *With a Twist* was an album of Todd's songs done Bossa nova style and *One Long Year* was the product of Todd's PatroNet service an internet based music delivery system developed by Todd in the mid 1990s. In the 1990s, Todd also toured with Ringo's All Star Band in 1992 and 1999 respectively.**

**After years of touring and producing, Todd released *Liars* in 2004. It was the first album of all new material in nearly ten years, marking the longest time between original recordings. The album received excellent reviews and the subsequent tour was captured for the DVD entitled *Liars Live*.**

**In 2006, Todd shocked many of his fans by announcing he would be touring with The Cars in place of vocalists Benjamin Orr and Ric Ocasek. The project also included longtime Rundgren collaborators Kasim Sulton and Prairie Prince. The group coined itself as The New Cars and released one album, *It's Alive,* made up of mostly Cars remakes and three originals, "Not Tonight," "Warm" and "More." The New Cars embarked on a tour with Blondie but the tour was cut short when guitarist Elliot Easton was injured in an accident involving the tour bus. The band resumed the tour later and performed their last show in September of 2007.**

**In 2008, Todd celebrated his 60th birthday by inviting fans to his home in Hawaii for an event that is affectionately known as Toddstock. At the gathering Rundgren performed his newest release *Arena*. Todd toured the country performing *Arena* in its original running order both before and after the album's release.**

**In September of 2009, for the first time ever Todd performed *A Wizard a True Star* live in its entirety in Akron, OH. Rundgren Radio organized the show as part of their 2nd Annual Birthday Bash. Rundgren Radio is an internet based radio show devoted to all things Todd. Todd also surprised fans by opening the show with a set of Utopia songs performed by Todd with Kasim Sulton, Roger Powell and Prairie Prince. The show was the first of many Internet simulcasts.**

**In 2010 Todd showed no signs of slowing down, he toured in support of an album of Robert Johnson covers humorously entitled *Todd Rundgren's Johnson*. The tour included plenty of Rundgren rarities like Nazz's "Kiddie Boy" and "Bleeding" from Runt. Todd also performed *Healing* and *Todd*  live beginning at the Rundgren Radio Birthday Bash III Weekend in Akron, OH.

In 2011, Todd opened the year's touring up with two special Todd Rundgren's Utopia concerts at the Highline Ballroom in New York City.   The first night was a benefit concert for Moogy Klingman who was battling with cancer at the time.   Todd later performed with Daryl Hall for a one-off Live From Daryl's concert held in Atlantic City, NJ.  He also toured "Best Of Todd Rundgren" shows in the USA, Japan, and in the UK. Todd finished the touring season for the year with a 12 show tour featuring Todd Rundgren's Utopia minus Moogy who was too sick to start the tour and sadly passed away before it ended.**

**In 2012, Todd will be performing again with Ringo’s All-Star Band as well as various other touring including a short run with the string quartet Ethel and shows with the Rockford Symphony Orchestra and The Metropole Orchestra.**

**-Thom Jennings-**