

# David Pack

*"Anything David touches, he elevates, and that's a true gift from God."  
-Quincy Jones*

David Pack is the original co-founder of legendary prog-rock pop band Ambrosia, the voice and sole writer of their classic hits from the 70's and 80's. He went on to become a successful solo artist, Grammy-winning record producer, advisor to companies ranging from Avon to Kodak, and Music Director of global special events including both of President Clinton's Inaugural Galas, and events for Barbra Streisand, Elton John, Billy Joel, Madonna and others.

His collected works have sold over 50 million units worldwide.

He cites his two principle musical mentors, friends for over 30 years Quincy Jones and Leonard Bernstein, for helping to shape the course and vision for his career, now into its fifth decade. It was David who formally introduced Bernstein to Jones and to Michael Jackson in the 80's.

David shares: "I have spent more than half of my career creating special projects to honor and serve important causes and other artists, and it follows that most of the best things that have ever happened to me came from acts of charity and freely giving to others. I highly recommend it!"

That is the story behind David's longevity, his heart, and what he hopes will be his legacy. What his industry friends and fans find extraordinary is how a man 100% deaf in one ear since 1977 keeps re-inventing himself and achieving success at every level. In fact, David will soon be launching a new online company he invented that he believes will be revolutionary in helping other artists while giving the world a new way to experience music. In this way, it can be said that David is a quiet Renaissance man in his own right.

## **Current Projects of Note**

**Kevin Jonas Sr. father of Jonas Bros**, David's longtime friend, asked him to be the first artist Kevin would interview on camera for the debut launch of his new podcast. The interview took place in July 2020.

**David Pack's Legends Live:** inspired by Ringo's All Stars, five years ago David assembled a touring band of legendary friends that has become one of America's best live classic rock acts: Alan Parsons, Richard Page (Mr. Mister, Ringo's All Stars), Gary Wright, John Elefante (Kansas), Jim Peterik (Survivor/Ides of March), Mickey Thomas (Starship), Kelly Keagy (Night Ranger), Wally Palmar (The Romantics, Ringo's All Stars) and hall of fame drummer Kenny Aronoff (Fogerty, McCartney), Faith Hill M.D. & keyboardist Jimmy Nichols, PINK drummer Mark Schulman, and more. During the pandemic, David has produced several virtual Legends performances and is working on more.

**Barbra Streisand's "Walls" LP Nov 2018** 16 months prior to the release of Streisand's latest album, David reached out to Barbra with a vision for her to perform Leonard Bernstein/Alan Jay Lerner's song "Take Care of This House" (about the White House) from the musical 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. David, disturbed by the direction America was headed, felt Barbra's definitive performance of the song could send a powerful message. Barbra loved the idea and recorded the song with additional new lyrics by David & Exec, Producer Jay Landers.

**New Albums, Video Releases, Goals 2020** David has recorded 10 songs for a new solo LP he feels is a career best; he has released recent Beatle acoustic cover videos with dear friend Alan Parsons for CADA Santa Barbara Charity that have received Rave fan reviews; he's working on an Ambrosia 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary career Boxed Set with new NY record label Razor & Tie (RTI) Craig Balsam & Rhino; he's looking to start a boutique record label for his artist friends, an "Artists Collective" that harkens back to Herb Alpert's A&M and Mo Ostin's Warner labels, where artists and producers created an artist- friendly family vibe, and a trusted home label for their final greatest works.

## **Career History: Ambrosia**

In 1968 at age 15 David had formed a local South Bay L.A. band called the Sentry's with Joe Puerta. That band included Bob James (who later became lead singer for Montrose.) After Pack and Puerta attended a King Crimson debut show at Whiskey A Go Go, they saw their future prog-rock direction and started over, finding drummer Burleigh Drummond in a Musicians Local 47 directory, and keyboardist Chris North - who had a local reputation for arriving at shows in a coffin and bloodying his Hammond B3. So in 1970 the band was formed and Ambrosia's name was chosen from Greek mythology - the "nectar of the gods."

The band was friendly with the owners of Tycobrahe Sound Co in Hermosa Beach, who asked them to demonstrate their speaker system at the Hollywood Bowl one afternoon. No one except English classical engineer Gordon Parry was at the Bowl as Ambrosia performed Bach's Prelude and Fugue in C-minor and prog-rock originals. Parry, who worked at London Decca, was blown away, and eventually flew David Pack, as band leader, to Wash DC to meet Leonard Bernstein for the one year revival of MASS - the piece Bernstein composed to open the Kennedy Center. Parry changed David and the band's lives as Bernstein listened to demos that night, loved them, and asked David to perform in Los Angeles production of MASS the following year (1971.)

The band was signed to 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox Records by music industry legend Russ Regan, who had signed Elton John & Neil Diamond to MCA records, and who had given the Beach Boys their name.

David's career exploded with the release of Ambrosia's acclaimed debut progressive rock album Ambrosia (1975) on 20th Century Fox Records. Mixed by legendary Abbey Road/Pink Floyd Dark Side of the Moon engineer Alan Parsons, it produced the Billboard

top-20 smash hit "Holdin' On To Yesterday" which David co-wrote and sang. The album was Grammy-nominated for "Best Engineered Album of the Year."

Ambrosia became a staple of American FM radio and college airplay, propelled by another song that became a top-10 New York radio hit "Nice Nice Very Nice," co-written with famed author Kurt Vonnegut Jr. featuring lyrics from his book *Cat's Cradle*. This established Ambrosia as a premiere progressive rock touring act with an ever-expanding national fan base. Vonnegut wrote the band a letter to say how proud he was!

Billboard magazine and countless TV entertainment shows of the day called Ambrosia "the next big thing" in music. So big in fact that legendary manager/film producer Jerry Weintraub called for meetings to pitch himself to manage the band.

In 1976, Ambrosia scored another Billboard top 40 hit with David singing The Beatles' classic "Magical Mystery Tour" featuring the London Philharmonic for the film soundtrack *All This and WW2*. The same year, Alan Parsons produced/engineered the band's second album *Somewhere I've Never Traveled*. The album received universal acclaim, with Billboard calling it "a close-up into one of the most intriguing collective minds in today's music." It was Grammy-nominated and yielded several #1 FM radio hits, bolstered by another year of tours with fellow prog-rock bands such as Kansas and Rush.

The title track "Somewhere I've Never Traveled," came from David's love of famed poet e.e. cummings, inspiring the world's only fold-out pyramid album cover that has since become a collector's item and was displayed on an episode of *The Jimmy Fallon Show*. But 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox and Regan were at odds with each other and the album was not properly promoted, which led Ambrosia's manager and attorney to suggest they needed to move to another record label.

So in 1977 industry legends Mo Ostin and Ted Templeman signed the band to Warner Bros. Records and purchased the two albums on 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox. At the same time keyboardist Chris North left the group due to severe mental issues, and they became a band of three.

In 1978 Ambrosia's Warner Bros. debut *Life Beyond L.A.* was released. David composed the prog-rock title track and also wrote/sang the band's break-through classic #1 hit song "How Much I Feel."

A promo video was created for the song directed by famed Queen "Bohemian Rhapsody" director Bruce Gower. Then Warner Bros. put them on their lengthy "Warner Road Show" series of tours with Doobie Brothers and Fleetwood Mac for next year and a half, with keyboardist North re-joining as a sideman.

1980 arrived as Ambrosia's banner year. For their *One Eighty* album David wrote and sang the now classic #1 hit "Biggest Part of Me (Make a Wish)" a BMI 4-million Airplay, 3x Grammy-nominated song, along with the top-20 hit "You're the Only Woman" a BMI 2-million Airplay-awarded song.

The band co-hosted Dick Clark's Rockin' New Years' Eve 1981, and appeared on Midnight Special, Don Kirshner's Rock Concert, The Merv Griffin Show, and many other American TV show. "Biggest Part of Me" would stay at #1 on Radio & Records for seven weeks, eclipsing hits by Paul McCartney, Billy Joel, Bob Seger, and others.

A highlight was their sold-out show at L.A.'s legendary Greek Theater at the year's end. Then came the release of Dudley Moore's classic film Arthur with David having co-written a song with Burt Bacharach titled "Poor Rich Boy" on the multi-platinum soundtrack. This came after Ambrosia turned down performing "Arthur's Theme" which they felt label-mate Christopher Cross was better suited for, indeed!

In 1981 Warner Bros. suggested the band return to their progressive rock roots, so Alan Parsons introduced them to Pink Floyd's The Wall engineer/co-producer James Guthrie. Ambrosia and Guthrie shared a common vision for something new, and more akin to the energy of their live shows. He noticed the extreme pressures the band was feeling due to a massive lawsuit against former manager-publisher Fred Piro, so Guthrie decided they should escape to London to record their remarkable final album together.

In 1982 Ambrosia's Road Island was released on Warner's with artwork by famed UK artist Ralph Steadman. David, along with Michael McDonald, had discovered Bruce Hornsby in Williamsburg VA club and they brought Bruce to California to try and help him get a record deal. David decided to ask Bruce to join Ambrosia for the Road Island tour and he accepted. The band made their final promo video with Hornsby on keys for Pack's song "How Can You Love Me" that saw heavy rotation on MTV.

Due to tensions from the Piro lawsuit combined with pressures that their new album had seemed to baffle both FM and pop radio (producing no hit songs,) the band then took a long sabbatical from 1982 to 1990.

They reformed in 1990 to 2000 with David leading, but he had to stop touring with the band when he discovered they'd done shows without him while on vacation, falsely advertising David would be onstage. The remaining 2 members refused to pay David or his family anything from their live shows for over 10 years, and went on to secretly trademark the Ambrosia name by lying to the US Copyright Office. Pack had to file a lawsuit, and finally a settlement was reached in 2012.

## **Quincy Jones Launches David's Career as Music Producer**

In 1983 while seeking a new path forward, David met with the legendary Quincy Jones through his managers Fitzgerald Hartley who shared offices with Jones.

David recalls: Quincy said to me "you produced and wrote those incredible Ambrosia hits, why not produce other artists?" I replied "I'd love to but how do I start?" Quincy said "you should produce Patti Austin for my label Qwest" to which I replied "yes please, thank you!" Quincy added "only one catch - you must introduce me to Leonard Bernstein, he's my hero," to which I replied "done!"

This led to David producing three albums over five years for Patti Austin, including the Grammy-winning "But Who May Abide..." from Handel's Messiah-A Soulful Celebration; along with her acclaimed Qwest standards album The Real Me; and the GRP album classic: Carry On.

Circa 1984 Quincy asked David to write a song for daytime TV heartthrob Jack Wagner from General Hospital, who Jones had signed to his label. That song, co-written with Glen Ballard and Cliff Magness, became the #1 CHR smash "All I Need," Wagner's only hit, and a gold record.

David has since gone on to produce platinum and gold-selling Grammy-nominated records over the last 30 years, including Kenny Loggins' 3-million selling Grammy-nominated Return to Pooh Corner LP, as well as records for Aretha Franklin, Selena, Natalie Cole, Michael McDonald, Linda Ronstadt (Disney's Cinderella) Brian McKnight, Phil Collins, CeCe Winans, Trisha Yearwood, and two tracks on Wynonna's gold album The Other Side.

## **Music Director of Global Special Events**

In the early 90's, music icon Barbra Streisand, via film composer James Newton Howard, asked David to help her arrange, conduct, and be a vocal coach for a fundraiser featuring a new song by Alan & Marilyn Bergman, "Common Threads." The event supporting Sen. Barbara Boxer and women running for Congress featured Barbra, Dionne Warwick, Melissa Etheridge, Judy Collins, Goldie Hawn and other female superstars.

Then in 1992, David was asked by Bernie Taupin to direct and conduct the massive AIDS Project L.A. Commitment to Life fundraiser. This featured Barbra Streisand, Elton John, Billy Joel, Eddie Van Halen, Natalie Cole, Kenny Loggins, Lyle Lovett, and other greats performing David's arrangements of West Side Story. The event was a triumph, raising over \$4 million for AIDS research, for which David received industry-wide accolades.

The momentum from the AIDS concert manifested in David being asked to music direct, perform, and co-produce President Bill Clinton's Inaugural Arkansas Ball in Wash DC on Jan 20, 1993. David hired his friends Kenny Loggins, Michael McDonald, Bruce Hornsby, Patti Austin, and Eric Clapton's rhythm section to perform at the event. This became part of American history when Pack asked Clinton to play sax on Loggins' "Your Mama Don't Dance" - seen by over 3-billion people worldwide.

This event went so well that in 1997 Pres. Clinton asked David back to direct his 2<sup>nd</sup> Inaugural Arkansas Ball - for which Pack recruited Sheryl Crow, Jewel, Trisha Yearwood, and other superstars.

David went on to conduct/music direct events such as: Amfar Elizabeth Taylor's tribute to Madonna; PETA fundraiser with Sheila E.; American Bible Society 9/11 Anniversary concert in New York; Colin Powell & Living American Presidents' Volunteer Summit with Oprah Winfrey; California AIDS Walk at Greek Theater; Children of Bosnia at Greek

Theater; and countless others.

in 2011 David served as music director, celebrity judge, and music producer for the global Avon female talent search Avon Voices. This two-year project included Fergie, Natasha Bedingfield, Diane Warren, Reese Witherspoon, and other female stars. David produced Diane Warren's song "Until U Love U" for Russia's #1 star Valeryia (over 200-million units sold) as the project's debut single.

## **Special Products – Tribute to Leonard Bernstein & More**

**The Songs of West Side Story – Tribute to Leonard Bernstein:** In 1996, after several years of dogged determination and almost impossible impediments, Pack's career masterwork was released on RCA/Grammy Records: *The Songs of West Side Story - A Tribute to Leonard Bernstein*. Conceived, arranged, and produced by Pack with royalties donated to Grammy In The Schools and Leonard Bernstein Education Foundation, it features 27 legendary superstars including Aretha Franklin, Natalie Cole, Selena, Wynonna, Trisha Yearwood, Little Richard, Chick Corea, Brian Setzer, Steve Vai, Phil Collins, and TLC. The RIAA-certified Gold LP also included the late iconic Latin artist Selena performing her final work with David on this project, "A Boy Like That" feat. Sheila E.

**Thank You Billy Graham:** In 2002, David co-wrote and produced a tribute song to Rev. Billy Graham titled "Thank You Billy Graham" with country star Billy Dean and Pat Boone. It featured Bono, Faith Hill, Leann Rimes, Michael McDonald, CNN's Larry King, Andrae Crouch, Tim McGraw, DC Talk, Pack, and others. Proceeds went to Graham's charity Samaritan's Purse. It is sold at the BGEA.com store.

**Purpose of Christmas:** In Dec. 2009 David produced a special CD project for famed Pastor Rick Warren (author of the best-selling *Purpose Driven Life*.) It featured David, along with superstars Sarah McLachlan, Martina McBride, Vince Gill, and others, and it was released exclusively by Walmart thanks to Irv Azoff's help. It raised over \$500,000 for Warren's global PEACE missions.

**Time Life Committed 2 Rock:** David formed a music and media company in the early 2000's with David Schwartz (founder of legendary Mix Magazine) and produced several specialty products, one of which was the *Committed 2 Rock* compilation CD for Time Life - featuring songs of positivity and faith from both Christian and mainstream artists like Foo Fighters, DC Talk, Dave Matthews Band, P.O.D., and many other multi-platinum acts.

## **David's Solo Works**

1986 was the year David's debut solo album *Anywhere You Go* was released on Warner Bros. and contained the Billboard top-10 Pack-penned song "I Just Can't Let Go," a trio with James Ingram and Michael McDonald. It also included "Prove Me Wrong," featured during the only dance sequence in director Taylor Hackford's legendary *White Nights* film for Barishnikov and Gregory Hines, also appearing on the multi-platinum soundtrack.

In 2003 David released Unborn - a collection of “songs in the raw” on Oglío Records that continues to sell far beyond his expectations.

In August 2005 David released a jazz-pop-oriented solo CD on Concord Records titled The Secret of Movin' On featuring special guests Ann Wilson (Heart), Steve Perry (Journey), Timothy B. Schmidt (Eagles), Dewey Bunnell (America), and good friend jazz keyboardist David Benoit. The CD yielded two top-ten national AC & smooth jazz hits, and rave reviews from pop and jazz critics - including Jazziz Magazine's Top 5 Best CD's of 2005.

In 2007, David was nominated for “Best International Vocalist of the Year” by the Canadian Jazz Awards, along with Al Jarreau and Corrine Bailey Rae.

In September 2008, David's first-ever musical The Bubble - A Musical Dot Comedy premiered as part of the New York Musical Festival ([www.nymf.org](http://www.nymf.org).) He wrote all of the music and majority of lyrics, with the book being written by Karen Paull. It is based on the greed-fueled Silicon Valley Internet bubble and stock market crash of 2000, and inspired by the classic Broadway musical Damn Yankees. Opening night found David sitting with Leonard Bernstein's daughter Jamie and renowned Eric Clapton producer Russ Titelman who gave rave reviews and encouragement. David is only now finishing the Bubble LP to be released in 2021.

## **Film, TV & Radio Highlights**

Career film and TV highlights include usages of David's songs for hit movies such as Judd Apatow's #1 blockbuster 2007 comedy Knocked Up; Taylor Hackford's 1987 film White Nights; and a duet with Bette Midler for the iconic movie Beaches (#1 double-platinum soundtrack.) David wrote five songs for Goldie Hawn's Wildcats. For the Arthur movie #1 Platinum soundtrack starring Dudley Moore, David co-wrote “Poor Rich Boy” with Burt Bacharach.

He penned “Our Love” (w/ Michael McDonald) as the end title song for Richard Gere and Kim Basinger's film No Mercy. More recently David composed a significant amount of music for the indie film Gallow's Road, starring Ernie Hudson (Ghostbusters) and Kevin Sorbo (Hercules); and music for Director Robert (Coppola) Schwartzman's 2018 movie Dreamland.

For TV, David wrote all music for Roseanne Barr's Roseanne talk show on NBC; and in 2006 he wrote all music and cues for Rick Dees' radio show on Movin' 93.9 Los Angeles.

## **Independently Produced Albums**

Beato Band is David's collaboration with his high school best friend, Cuban drum legend Fred Beato, released in 2016. Their resulting key song: “Cuba BC (Before Castro)” garnered

major media coverage on CNN, Univision, NBC TV, OC Register (cover story,) and Sirius XM radio. Emilio Estefan gave the record his endorsement when Beato & Pack previewed it at his Miami offices. Full story: [BeatoBand.com](http://BeatoBand.com).

Napa Crossroads is David's 2014 hybrid song collaboration with CEO's of five of Napa's top wineries - Silver Oak, Far Niente, Pride Mountain, Gargiulo, and Casa Piena/Carmen Policy. Superstar guests: The Doors' Ray Manzarek, Todd Rundgren, Alan Parsons, David Benoit, Cage the Elephant, Rooney, and others. It was composed and recorded in Napa Valley at the wineries.

## **Works of Charity**

In May 2019, David & his wife Stacey formed the Stacey Pack Best Life Cancer Foundation 501c3 charity to help artists and their families battling cancer. The kickoff fundraiser featured long time dear friend Michael McDonald and his wife Amy Holland, and Leonard Bernstein's daughter Jamie. David and his wife are both cancer survivors and have a heart for helping others. They live in Napa Valley with 14-year-old son Jackson.

David cites his devout faith as the single driving force in his life. He does volunteer work for Pastor Rick Warren, author of the 40-million-selling book Purpose Driven Life - in addition to the aforementioned Purpose of Christmas project, David booked the Jonas Brothers for Warren's Saddleback Easter service 2010 at Angel Stadium in Anaheim, and produced a satellite radio special for Sirius XM live from the event.

He supports charities and non-profit orgs: Slide Ranch-Muir Woods for Kids, St. Helena Hospital, Nashville Songwriter Association (NSAI), AIDS Project L.A., Dream Foundation, American Bible Society NY, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, American Cancer Society, Grammy In The Schools, Convoy of Hope, V-Foundation, Leonard Bernstein Artful Learning, Pamper Me Pink / Crohn's Disease

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