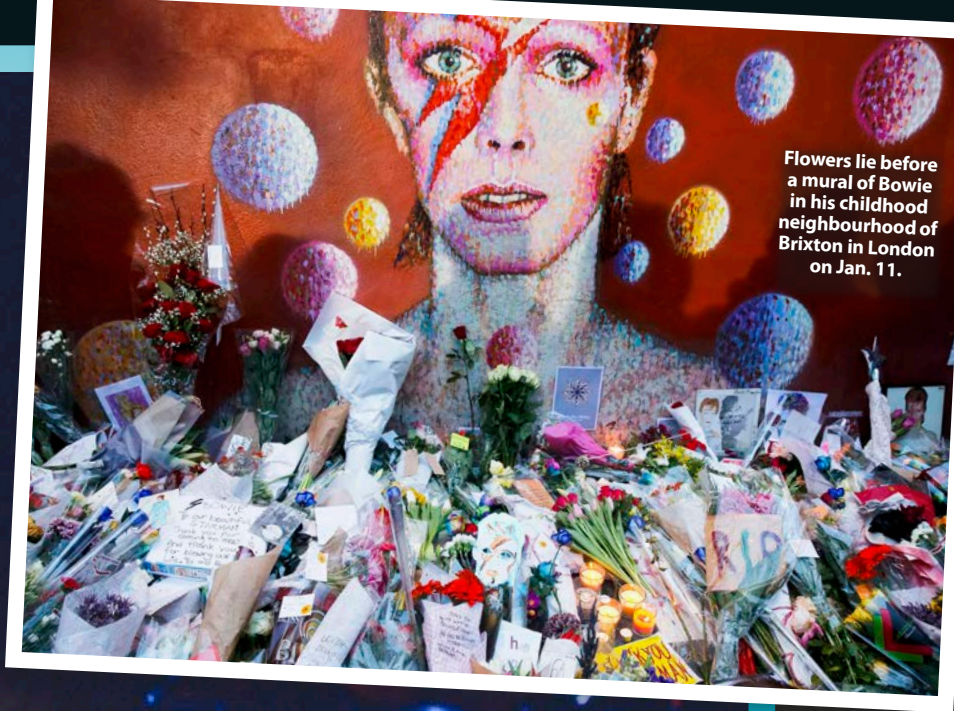


David Bowie seduced the crowd at the Hammersmith Odeon in London in July 1973.



Flowers lie before a mural of Bowie in his childhood neighbourhood of Brixton in London on Jan. 11.



'I SLIP FROM ONE GUISE TO ANOTHER VERY EASILY'

# DAVID BOWIE

1947-2016

THE WORLD MOURNS A POP VISIONARY AND MASTER OF REINVENTION WHOSE GENIUS CHANGED MUSIC FOREVER AND INSPIRED GENERATIONS

Although he was diagnosed with cancer in 2014, David Bowie continued to do what he did best. After months of recording, on Jan. 8, his 69th birthday, the pioneering songwriter released his 25th studio album, *Blackstar*, a jazz-inspired collection of the last songs he would ever record—all while keeping his illness a secret known only to family and close friends. But it is the lyrics of those tracks his fans are now poring over. “I know something is very wrong,” he sings in the final song, “I Can’t Give Everything Away.” “The blackout hearts, the flowered news, with skull designs upon my shoes.” In “Lazarus” he sings, “Look up here, I’m in heaven.” And, “Just like that bluebird, Oh I’ll be free.”

If Bowie was saying goodbye, it was a fitting gesture for an enigmatic artist who expressed so much through his music. On Jan. 10, the actor, artist and barrier-breaking rock star died in New York “surrounded by his family after a courageous 18-month battle with cancer,” read a statement on his official Facebook page. “While many of you will share in this loss, we ask that you respect the family’s privacy during their time of grief.” Minutes later, amid somewhat hopeful rumours that the shocking news—his diagnosis had not been made public—was a hoax, Bowie’s son, Duncan Jones, 44, made a heartbreaking confirmation. “Very sorry and sad to say it’s true,” he tweeted. “I’ll be offline for a while. Love to all.”

Dedications to the transformative star, who broke boundaries in performance, fashion and

sexuality, flowed from friends to peers and politicians. “I’m devastated ... this great artist changed my life,” tweeted Madonna, while Paul McCartney said Bowie’s music “played a very strong part in the British musical history ... His star will shine in the sky forever.” His body of work crossed generations, with Kanye West naming him “one of my most important inspirations, so fearless, so creative, he gave us magic for a lifetime.” Mourned British Prime Minister David Cameron: “I grew up listening to and watching the pop genius David Bowie. A huge loss.”

Although now it is known he had long been battling illness, Bowie—who as well as his son leaves his wife, model Iman Abdulmajid, and their daughter, Alexandria, 15—appeared to be in good spirits in recent months. On Dec. 7,

HE WAS AN  
EXTRAORDINARY  
MAN, FULL OF  
LOVE AND LIFE

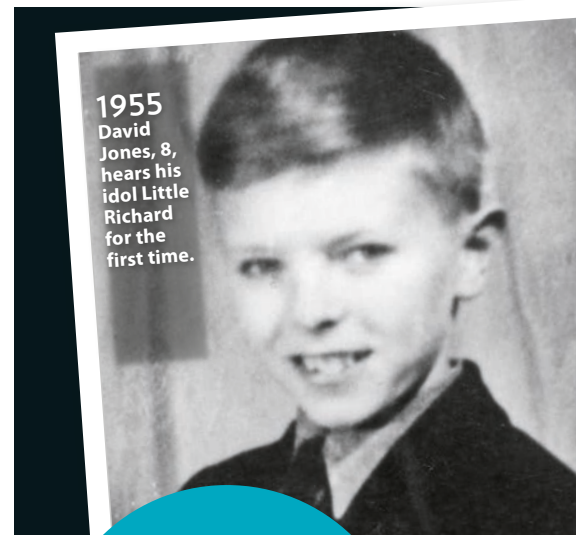
—producer Tony Visconti

he attended the opening of the stage musical *Lazarus*, which he co-wrote, in his adopted city of New York, and according to music promoter and friend John Giddings, he could still have a laugh. Late last year, Giddings got in touch with Bowie after someone had come to him with an artwork purportedly created by the singer. “David said, ‘You can tell by the signature it doesn’t resemble anything by me, but if you want to tell the person it is, then maybe they can make a few bob!’” Giddings tells WHO. “He saw the amusing side of it.”

His long-time friend and collaborator Brian Eno also heard from Bowie via email just a week before his death. “It was as funny as always, and as surreal, looping through word games and allusions and all the usual stuff we did,” said the British music producer. “It ended with this sentence: ‘Thank you for our good times, Brian. They will never rot.’ I realise now he was saying goodbye.”

Days later, he released *Blackstar* (see review, p. 79). “His parting gift,” said Tony Visconti, a producer who worked with Bowie for decades. “I knew for a year this was the way it would be. I wasn’t, however, prepared for it. He was an extraordinary man, full of love and life.”

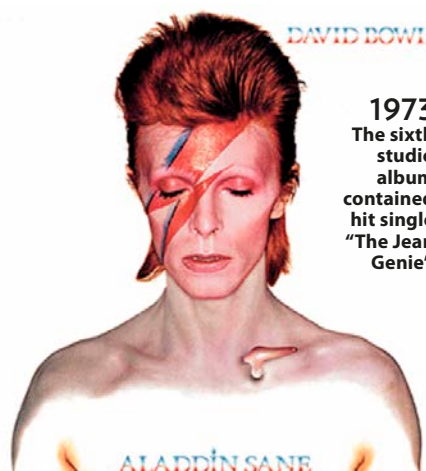
And a pop-culture giant. Bowie’s musical talent was bolstered by his restless drive to “turn and face the strange,” constantly reinventing his image and musical style. Born David Jones (he changed his name partly to avoid confusion with Monkees singer Davy Jones), he brought theatre to pop, portraying himself as the fictional characters he created with his groundbreaking



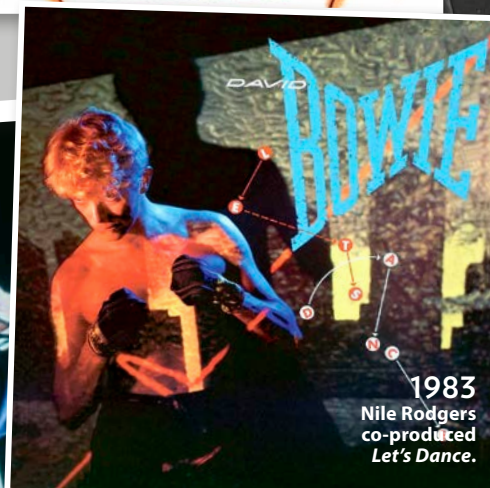
1955  
David Jones, 8, hears his idol Little Richard for the first time.

CREATING  
AN  
ICON

David Jones named himself David Bowie after an American knife. He said, “It is the medium for a conglomerate of statements and illusions.” While he played with persona, Bowie’s different-coloured eyes came from a schoolyard punch when he was 14, which left his pupil permanently dilated.



1973  
The sixth studio album contained hit single “The Jean Genie”.



1983  
Nile Rodgers co-produced *Let’s Dance*.



2004  
Bowie posed at Circular Quay, Sydney, during his *A Reality* tour.



1973  
Bowie would go on to sell more than 140 million records worldwide.



1974  
After “killing” Ziggy Stardust in 1973, Bowie (on the Dutch TV show *TopPop*) wore an eye patch and became Halloween Jack.

CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: AUSTRALSCOPE; ALAMY; RCA RECORDS; AAP; REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES; GETTY IMAGES; EMI; HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES



In his last public appearance, Bowie attended the New York premiere of his off-Broadway musical *Lazarus* on Dec. 7, 2015.

music: doomed astronaut Major Tom in his first hit, “Space Oddity”, the bisexual leotard-donning alien Ziggy Stardust, and the aristocrat, the Thin White Duke, which he adopted for his album *Station to Station*. “I am an actor,” he told WHO’s US sister publication *People* in 1976. “My whole professional life is an act. I slip from one guise to another very easily. One guise plays into another, and the extreme comments force it into another direction.”

The music followed suit. After his glam-rock stint with fifth album *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars*, he turned to soul with 1975’s *Young Americans*, which included his first US hit, “Fame”, co-written with John Lennon. “He was probably the best vocalist I ever

worked with,” Ken Scott, who produced Bowie’s seminal albums including *Ziggy Stardust* and *Hunky Dory*, tells WHO. “He used to get bored in the studio. The guys playing with him had to get the track in a couple of takes because otherwise David would say, ‘All right, let’s move on.’ But it worked.”

Struggling with addiction to drugs including cocaine, Bowie—he also nurtured the careers of friends Iggy Pop and the late Lou Reed—moved to Germany in 1976 for a fresh start, where he produced experimental music in what became known as his Berlin trilogy: *Low*, *Heroes* and *Lodger*. But in the next decade, the chameleon turned superstar. After the success of the 1980 single “Ashes to Ashes”—a Major Tom update—and his collaboration

with Queen for “Under Pressure”, in 1983 he released *Let’s Dance*, a pop-dance collection that included hits “Modern Love” and “China Girl”. (The video for the latter was shot in Sydney, and the one for “Let’s Dance” in rural NSW.) “I always thought that David felt a little uncomfortable about the success of [*Let’s Dance*],” the album’s producer, Nile Rodgers, tells WHO. “He said that he called his mother and said, ‘Mum, I’m the new Phil Collins, I’m on the radio. Can you believe it?’ It was so charming I started crying, because when he hired me to do *Let’s Dance* that’s what I was charged with, giving him a hit.”

It proved to be the biggest success

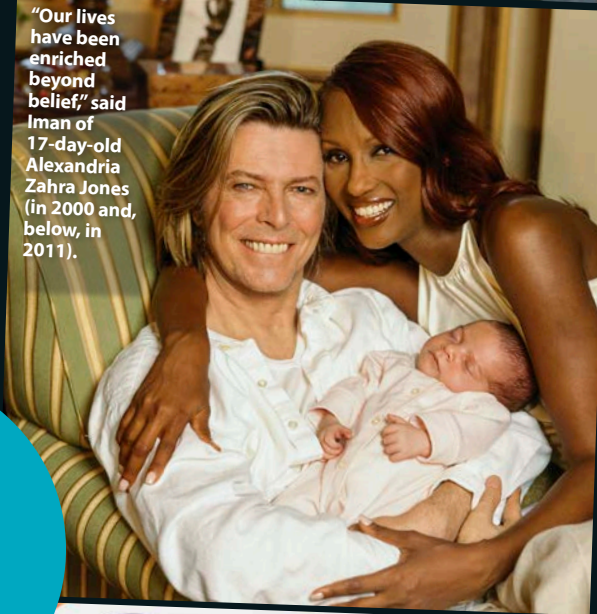


"I still fancy him—totally—after all these years," Iman (partying with her husband in London in 2002) once told *Harper's Bazaar*.

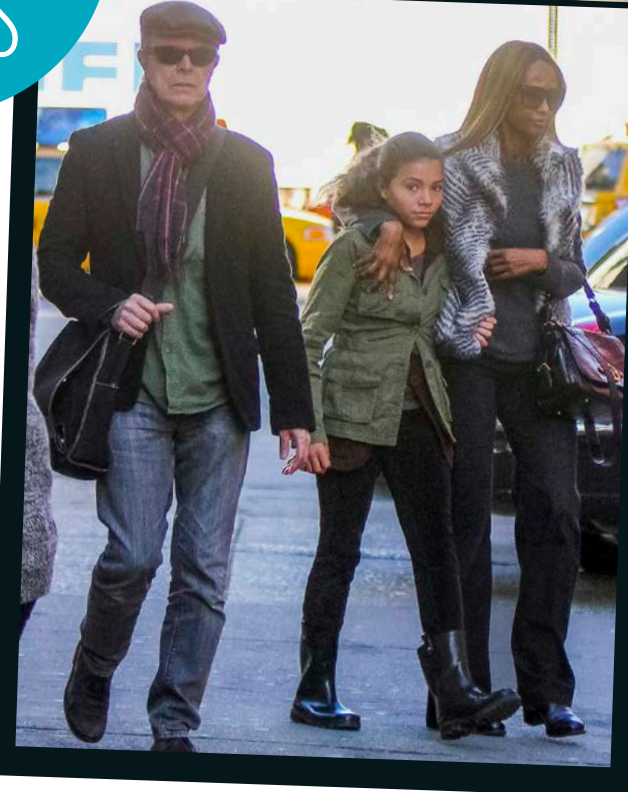
## HIS GOLDEN YEARS



"I'd never gone after anything in my life with such passion," said Bowie of his bride (in 1992).



"Our lives have been enriched beyond belief," said Iman of 17-day-old Alexandria Zahra Jones (in 2000 and, below, in 2011).



### FIRST FAMILY

Angie Bowie, Bowie's first wife, was initially unaware that the star had died, because she was competing on *Celebrity Big Brother*, which forbids outside contact. "She has taken the decision to continue," says a rep for the show.

Ending their 10-year marriage was "awful" said Angie Bowie (with David and "Zowie").

Bowie joined his film-director son, Duncan Jones, at a 2009 premiere of his BAFTA-winning *Moon*.

CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: SNAPPER MEDIA; AUSTRALSCOPE; BRIAN ARIS/CAMERA PRESS/AUSTRALSCOPE; GETTY IMAGES; AAP; GETTY IMAGES (2); SNAPPER MEDIA; GETTY IMAGES; BRIAN ARIS/CAMERA PRESS/AUSTRALSCOPE

of an eclectic career that went on to include three albums with his band Tin Machine. "I asked him once, 'What would you do, if you weren't performing?'" said his tour hairdresser, Teddy Antolin, "and he said he'd like to be working on a restoration of a painting. He loved talking about art." Says Giddings: "His talent went far beyond music."

Indeed, as his music career took off, he turned to acting, starring as an alien in 1976's *The Man Who Fell to Earth*. He was a goblin king in *Labyrinth* (1986) and had roles in Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988) and Christopher Nolan's *Prestige* (2006). In 2007, he appeared as himself with Ricky Gervais in TV comedy *Extras*. "He's a normal, grounded human being," said Gervais in 2006. "You don't meet David Bowie, you meet David Jones, the bloke who was born in South London, and through integrity and hard work became the biggest star on the Earth."

He used that platform to stretch every boundary, becoming the first rock musician to publicly identify as bisexual. Even so, he told *People* in 1976 that his bisexuality was "just a lie," adding, "they gave me that image so I stuck to it pretty well." However, he added that he is "proud" that he never tried to hide his sexuality, and his first wife, Angie Bowie, declared that she had come home one day to find Bowie and Mick Jagger "in bed" together. Ever a mystery, he told *People*, "There is no definitive David Bowie."

At home, he was just Dad. His 1970 marriage to model Angie Barnett (a current contestant on the UK's *Celebrity Big Brother*) gave him his son, Zowie (now Duncan), a film-maker. Bowie "was always very concerned about Duncan and his schoolwork," recalls Adrian Belew, the musical director of Bowie's 1990 tour. "Getting homework done, all the normal things that a father would be."

Having divorced Angie in 1980, Bowie was flicking through a fashion magazine on a private plane when "he saw this one picture and said, 'I want to meet that girl,'" recalls Belew. The "girl" was supermodel Iman. A meeting was arranged through mutual friend Antolin in 1990 and they married in 1992. She gave birth to "Lexi" in 2000, and the family became regulars in their downtown New York neighbourhood. "We had the children's section above the staircase and sometimes I would stand under it and listen to him read to his kids," says Allison Glasgow, manager of the SoHo bookshop Bowie regularly visited. And New York tap teacher Courtney Runft says Bowie was a regular at his daughter's recitals. "He was always so sweet, bobbing his head along and smiling," she tells *WHO*. "He was beaming at the little kids walking by. It made him seem like such a human



Bowie and Tina Turner (performing together in England in 1985) teamed up for Bowie's "Tonight".

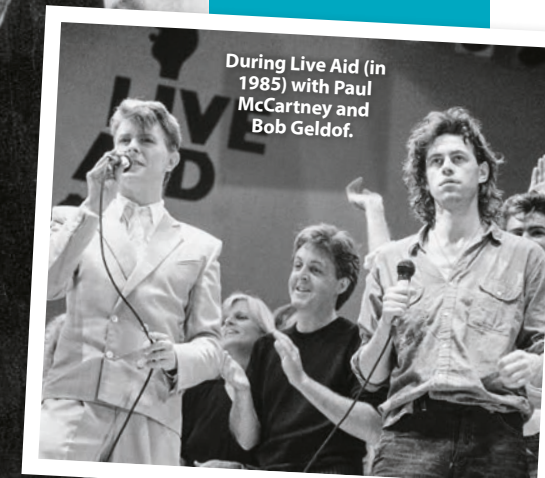
## FAMOUS FRIENDS

David Bowie, nominally a solo artist, enjoyed collaborating with musicians from old-school crooners such as Bing Crosby to glam rockers like Freddie Mercury.

Chic's Nile Rodgers, who co-produced Bowie's monster 1983 album *Let's Dance*, said, "I was concerned about us being overly commercial or doing things that were considered outside of David Bowie's norm, but his concept was, 'If you always approach it in an artistic way you can't be corny, because it's just not in you.'"

With that philosophy, Bowie poured himself into work with contemporaries Iggy Pop, Queen and Lou Reed, and with the next generation, including Trent Reznor, TV on the Radio and Arcade Fire.

But it may have been the Christmas song "Peace on Earth/Little Drummer Boy" with Bing Crosby that stands out in Bowie's oeuvre.



During Live Aid (in 1985) with Paul McCartney and Bob Geldof.



Bowie and Jagger "Dancing in the Street" in 1985.



Bowie, Yoko Ono and John Lennon (in 1975) were close friends



On recording albums, Bowie (in 1999) said, "I had to resign myself, many years ago, that I'm not too articulate when it comes to explaining how I feel about things. But my music does it for me."

instead of just being a rock star."

Born to a waitress and nightclub owner in Brixton, south London, in 1947, Bowie fell in love with music aged 8 when he "hit gold," hearing Little Richard's "Tutti Frutti". "I'd never heard anything resembling this," said Bowie. "It filled the room with energy and colour and outrageous defiance." It sparked a passion for making music, and he took up the ukulele and then the saxophone. His first public performance was in 1962 at a school fete, in a band with schoolmates. The next year they appeared on a TV talent show but lost. "He kept pushing," the band's drummer, David Hadfield, told Paul Trynka for the biography *Starman*. "He wanted to write more things, change how we dressed, saying, 'We've got to go out on a limb.'"

The fledgling star took his own advice in 1963, leaving the group and joining the King Bees just as the Beatles and the Rolling Stones were taking the helm of the 1960s. It was through a letter Bowie and his father crafted to a local entrepreneur seeking representation that led to producer Les Conn managing the group. They recorded a single, "Liza Jane", but it flopped.

More failure followed when he released a self-titled solo album under new management. Then, on the eve of NASA's *Apollo 11* launch to the moon in 1969, Bowie came up with a song. "He called me up and said, 'Can I come around and show you something I have written?'" Bowie's then friend, blues singer Dana Gillespie, recalls to WHO. "He had just written 'Space Oddity' 30 minutes before and wanted to show me. He was always talking about music."

The track reached No. 5 on the UK charts and Bowie never looked back, following up his success with *The Man Who Sold the World* and *Hunky Dory*, featuring the classics "Life on Mars" and "Changes", a song that would define his artistic future. "I look at him as one of the absolute best," *Countdown* host Ian "Molly" Meldrum tells WHO. "David will be remembered for his songs, his performances, his fashion, his acting, the whole lot."

Bowie stopped touring and his musical output waned following emergency angioplasty in 2004—he reportedly had six heart attacks as he finished his final album—but his popularity lived on. "He has left behind a tremendous legacy, which is exactly what he wanted to do," says Gillespie. "He would have known that he was going, he had time to think about his departure. I am so pleased that he continued to make music until the very end." The sentiment was echoed by Tony Visconti. "He will always be with us," he said. "For now, it is appropriate to cry."

■ *By Michael Crooks and Cynthia Wang. Reported by Louise Talbot, Phil Boucher, Joanne Fowler, Liz McNeil, Danielle Anderson and Rose Minutaglio*



Kate Moss wore her affection for all to see as she left her home in London on Jan. 11.



Thousands gathered in front of Brixton's Ritzy Cinema, not far from where Bowie was born on Stansfield Road in 1947.



Candles adorned Bowie's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, which he received in 1997.

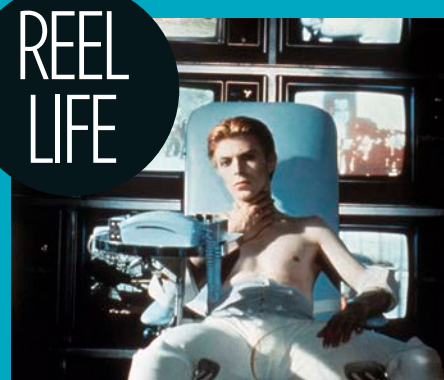
## MOURNING AN ICON

In 1985, a jubilant David Bowie bounced around with pal Mick Jagger in the video clip for "Dancing in the Street". On Jan. 11, Bowie's fans followed suit, celebrating his life at an impromptu street party in his childhood London neighbourhood of Brixton. "Please share with anyone you think would be able to help with music or any other element of this event," the organisers wrote on Facebook. "Bring instruments, speakers, food and most importantly love."



A fan cried in front of Australian street artist James Cochran's painting in Brixton.

## REEL LIFE



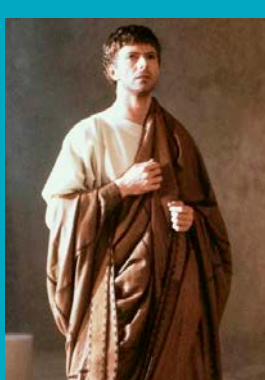
### 1976 THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH

Bowie won a Best Actor Saturn Award for his first major movie role as extraterrestrial traveller Thomas Jerome Newton. The film, directed by Nicolas Roeg, was based on a 1963 novel by Walter Tevis.



### 1986 LABYRINTH

Jennifer Connelly has said working with Jim Henson's puppets and Bowie as the Goblin King was "magical."



### 1988 THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST

Martin Scorsese, who directed Bowie as Pontius Pilate, called him "a great artist."



### 2006 THE PRESTIGE

Bowie played Nikola Tesla in this Christopher Nolan film. "We have lost a legend," tweeted co-star Hugh Jackman.



### 2001 ZOOLANDER

Ben Stiller tweeted of his walk-off judge: "Kind of feels like we're still hanging at the party after the coolest guy left."

“WE HAD SO MANY GOOD TIMES TOGETHER. HE WAS MY FRIEND, I WILL NEVER FORGET HIM”

—Mick Jagger

“HE WAS AN UTTER GENTLEMAN, TOO. WHEN MY HOUSE BURNED DOWN IN 1984, HE CALLED AND TOLD ME TO COME AND STAY WITH HIM AT HIS HOUSE IN SWITZERLAND FOR A FEW WEEKS UNTIL I GOT EVERYTHING TOGETHER”

—Ian “Molly” Meldrum

“AS JOHN AND I HAD VERY FEW FRIENDS, WE FELT DAVID WAS AS CLOSE AS FAMILY. SWEET MEMORIES WILL STAY WITH US FOREVER”

—Yoko Ono

“WE HAD THE CHANCE TO WORK TOGETHER ON *THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST*, IN WHICH HE APPEARED AS PONTIUS PILATE, AND FOR ME IT WAS SHEER JOY”

—Martin Scorsese

“I’VE ALWAYS CALLED HIM THE PICASSO OF ROCK ‘N’ ROLL, BECAUSE I KNOW THAT IF I SHOWED HIM ANYTHING, LIKE A GRAPEFRUIT, HE WOULD SEE THE GRAPEFRUIT THAT I SEE AND THEN HE’D SEE THE GRAPEFRUIT THAT *HE* SEES, AND THEY WOULD BE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS”

—Nile Rodgers

“DAVID’S FRIENDSHIP WAS THE LIGHT OF MY LIFE. I NEVER MET SUCH A BRILLIANT PERSON. HE WAS THE BEST THERE IS”

—Iggy Pop

Madonna wrote a long tribute to Bowie (here in 2002) on Facebook describing how he influenced and inspired her career. “So ahead of his time,” she said. “I owe you a lot.”

