



Biography

A highly coveted sideman, singer/songwriter Kasim Sulton is recognized and respected the world over for his work with other artists, including Todd Rundgren and Utopia, Meat Loaf, Joan Jett, Hall and Oates, Patti Smith, Patty Smyth, Mick Jagger, and Celine Dion to name just a few. His level of involvement has ranged from playing bass, keyboards, and/or guitar, to adding vocal harmonies, singing lead, and contributing as a songwriter, to producing entire albums, as he did with the Meat Loaf VH-1 Storytellers CD, released in 1999. There isn't much he hasn't done in his 25 years in the music industry.

In April of 2001, Sulton began showcasing his own music for the first time since the early 80's release of his self-titled debut album. He scheduled a few solo acoustic shows in his home state of New York. They were to be small, quiet shows just to test the waters, but word quickly spread and fans traveled from miles around to show their support. Enthusiastic fans welcomed him with open arms, and venues were soon asking when he'd be back. The overwhelming success of these early shows prompted Sulton to hit the road for a full tour that summer. Armed with just an acoustic guitar and some stories from his past and present, he played his way across the U.S. including stops in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Chicago, and Milwaukee. In Chicago, Sulton made an appearance at the Guitar Center where he met with fans, signed autographs, and posed for photos. In Rochester, he made a similar appearance at The House of Guitars, played a stellar concert at The Little Theater, and was asked to stay in town a few extra days to sing the national anthem before the start of the Rochester Red Wings baseball game at Frontier Field; an honor he graciously accepted.

Up next on the agenda, was to be his completing the new CD.

However, this would have to wait, as Sulton's talents were in demand once again – this time, as bassist and musical director for a European tour with Meat Loaf. The “Night of the Proms” tour consisted of 47 concerts in Belgium, Germany, and Holland over a period of three months, stretching well into December. By the time the tour was through, it was Christmas.

Upon returning to the U.S., Sulton continued working on his CD while gearing up for another six-week solo tour to test out a few new songs before live audiences. The tour began February 1st and saw him visiting many new markets, including Boston, Washington DC, Albany, and Detroit. In Westerly, Rhode Island, Sulton appeared on a network TV special. Radio stations WJJO/Milwaukee and WCSX/Detroit welcomed him to their airwaves for live interviews while he was in town, and print media was supportive in every market he played. The 21-date tour wrapped up March 16th with a standing-room-only show at The Bitter End in New York City.

A few weeks later, Sulton signed an independent recording contract with Sphere Sound Records, based in Rochester. Now he will be focusing on his own music. “I've wanted to record a CD of all new material for some time now,” says Sulton. Now that time has come.

As one of the most in-demand players in the business, Sulton will still answer the call when asked to perform with other artists; so don't be surprised to see him onstage from time to time with Meat Loaf, Tommy James and the Shondells, or any other artist lucky enough to enlist his talents to enrich their performances. But after years of playing with others, Kasim Sulton is finally giving his own music the center stage it truly deserves.

A bit of history

With the exception of a brief stay in Los Angeles in 1980 while recording his first solo album, New York has always been home to singer/songwriter Kasim Sulton. He was born in Brooklyn, and moved to Staten Island at the age of six, where he still lives today.

As a teenager, Sulton got his first big break playing piano with rock singer/poetess Cherry Vanilla, who at the time was David Bowie's publicist. "That gig opened up a world of doors for me that never would have happened otherwise." As they say, it's a small world, and being in the right place at the right time can certainly help, too. "Events have a way of happening that cause chain reactions. A friend asked me to take a ride to Kennedy Airport one day; he was driving fellow musician and David Bowie guitarist Earl Slick there for a flight. We walked into Slick's house and the first thing he said to us was, "Either one of you guys want to play bass for Todd Rundgren?" My friend saying, "Go ahead, Kasim, you do it." Slick saying, "Call Michael Kaman (renowned musician on the New York scene), tell him you're interested, he knows the details." But you see, I never would have known Michael Kaman had Cherry Vanilla not introduced me to him."

That connection turned out to be a very meaningful one. Sulton auditioned and earned a spot as bass guitarist and vocalist for the progressive rock band Utopia. Over 9 releases from 1977-1986, Sulton polished his musical and vocal techniques. He went from a young, gifted musician to one with confidence and a seasoned onstage presence. On the 1980 pop release *Adventures In Utopia*, he wrote and sang the band's only top 30 hit, "Set Me Free." Sulton credits Rundgren with helping him improve along the way, and reach that next level. "The saying goes, 'Genius creates, talent delivers.' Todd does both. And although he wasn't consciously teaching me, a lot rubbed off over the 10 years in close proximity to him."

As a member of Utopia, Sulton was afforded the opportunity to perform as a session musician on one of the best-selling rock albums of all time, Meat Loaf's *Bat Out of Hell*. (48 million copies to date.) His bass playing appears on all but one song.

Throughout the 80's, Sulton recorded and performed with a wide variety of artists, including the Indigo Girls, Mick Jagger, Bon Jovi, Jim Steinman, Patti Smith, Patty Smyth, Cheap Trick, and Joan Jett, whom he also toured with as an official member of the Blackhearts. In 1982, his first solo album, *Kasim*, was released, and a collaborative album with fellow Blackheart Tommy Price, titled *Lights On*, was released in 1986.

In the early 90's, he hit the road with Hall and Oates for their unplugged tour, and also began contributing background vocals for Meat Loaf's follow-up to *Bat Out of Hell*, titled *Bat Out of Hell II (Back Into Hell)*. A tour followed in support of the album, which lasted nearly three years

and saw Sulton playing both guitar and keyboards, as well as singing background vocals. He continued working steadily with Meat Loaf, appearing on his 1995 release *Welcome to the Neighborhood*, the *Born to Rock* tour, and the 1996 release *Live Around the World*. That same year, Sulton also contributed background vocals for Celine Dion's *Falling Into You*.

In 1998, he toured with Richie Sambora of Bon Jovi, visiting Japan, Australia, Germany, Holland, and England. Later that same year, he took over the reins as musical director for Meat Loaf, and returned to playing bass. It was Sulton's responsibility to arrange and rehearse the band for the upcoming tour. The first performance with this new line-up was a taping of *VH-1 storytellers*. *The Very Best of Meat Loaf*, with three new tracks, was released shortly after that, and a tour of Europe ensued.

In the summer of '99, Sulton joined Todd Rundgren for a brief tour, produced the Meat Loaf *VH-1 storytellers* CD, and later that fall toured the U.S. once again with Meat Loaf.

2000 saw Sulton teaming up with Todd Rundgren for his 3-man power trio tour. It lasted throughout the summer and covered most of the U.S., including TV appearances on *Late Night* with Conan O'Brien, *The Late Show* with David Letterman, and *The Late, Late Show* with Craig Kilborn."