



Moniker takes flight

Formed in 1976, the group was first called Feedback, then The Hype. The band members settled on the moniker U2 in 1978, after the U.S. high-altitude U2 spy plane shot down over the Soviet Union in 1960.

Band's 'Beautiful Day' has lasted 20 years

BY CHUCK MYERS — KNIGHT RIDDER/TRIBUNE INFORMATION SERVICES

Atlanta: Sold out.
Dallas: Sold out.
Boston, three shows: Sold out.
Chicago, four shows: Sold out.
New York, two shows: Sold out.

And the beat goes on for U2's 2001 Elevation Tour. The U2 juggernaut is on a roll, with many venues adding new shows to keep up with demand. Even top tickets with

a face value of \$130 have not dissuaded the faithful from turning out in force during the North American leg of the band's world tour. And if its chart-topping album "All That You Can't Leave Behind" and loyal fans weren't enough, U2 is riding high on its 2001 Grammy Award trifecta: Record of the Year, Song of the Year and Best Rock Performance By a Duo or Group With Vocal, all for "Beautiful Day."

U2 has traveled a serpentine creative path for more than 20 years. Its 1980 debut album, "Boy," featured a distinctive blues and rock style that packed plenty of punch. Over the next decade, the band explored traditional American music and a bluesy bottleneck vibe. When pop music gravitated toward techno in the early 1990s, U2 unleashed its own brand of pulsating, dance-inspired rhythms. A more synthesized sound followed, with lyrics that took

aim at consumer culture. But by the late 1990s, U2 had changed course one too many times. Fan interest began to wane, and the band felt the sting of declining record sales and a slump in its mega-band status. "All That You Can't Leave Behind" changed that. On its latest album, U2 returns to its rock 'n' roll roots. Stirring rock textures support lyrics that zero in on the human condition, on both a personal and global level. "Beautiful Day" muses about someone who has lost everything but emerges grateful for the simplicities that remain. "Stuck in a Moment You Can't Get Out Of" touches on the suicide of Bono's troubled friend, rock star Michael Hutchence. "Walk On" pays homage to Burmese opposition leader and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi.

Over the years, U2 has attracted almost as much attention for its off-stage antics as it has for its music, often with frontman Bono leading the way. Adapting various personas, Bono has played the revolutionary, the social activist and the self-absorbed rock star. Sometimes it was all in good fun. Other times it was in dead earnest. No cause has ever been too large for U2. The band has championed Third World debt relief, human rights, the fight against apartheid, nuclear disarmament and environmental protection. Given the strength of U2's album and concert sales, it would appear people are still listening.

Name that tune

How well do U know U2? Match the lyrics with the correct song:

LYRICS:

- I was looking at myself/ I was blind, I could not see"
- "Sleight of hand and twist of fate/On a bed of nails she makes me wait"
- "I wanna feel sunlight on my face/I see the dust-cloud disappear without a trace"
- "In my dream, I was drowning the sorrows/But my sorrows, they'd learned to swim"
- "It's no secret ambition bites the nails of success"
- "Jesus can you take the time/ To throw a drowning man a line"
- "Love, lift me out of these blues/Won't you tell me something true"
- "One man washed up on an empty beach/One man betrayed with a kiss"
- "I can't believe the news today/I can't close my eyes and make it go away"
- "Got the swing, got the sway, got my straw in lemonade/Still lookin' for the face I had before the world was made"

SONGS:

- 1."Where the Streets Have No Name" ("The Joshua Tree")
- 2."Peace on Earth" ("All That You Can't Leave Behind")
- 3."The Fly" ("Achtung, Baby")
- 4."Mofo" ("Pop")
- 5."Sunday Bloody Sunday" ("War")
- 6."With or Without You" ("The Joshua Tree")
- 7."Pride (In the Name of Love)" ("The Unforgettable Fire")
- 8."I Will Follow" ("Boy")
- 9."Until the End of the World" ("Achtung, Baby")
- 10."Elevation" ("All That You Can't Leave Behind")

4 : 5 : 7 : 10 : 12 : 3 : 6 : 1 : 9 : 8 : 5 : 2 : 11 : 13 : 14

How did you do?
8 to 10 correct: Consider yourself a true U2 fan.
6 to 7 correct: You could use some U2 fine-tuning.
3 to 5 correct: Better look into a U2 immersion plan.
0 to 2 correct: You're hopelessly stuck in the disco era.

SOURCE: "U2: THE COMPLETE SONGS" AND "ALL THAT YOU CAN'T LEAVE BEHIND"



PHOTO COURTESY INTERSCOPE RECORDS

The band at a glance

Dave "The Edge" Evans, guitar, piano and vocals.
Born: Aug. 8, 1961.
Did you know?: The Edge grew up in Ireland, the son of Welsh parents. Although he visited Wales during childhood holidays, he identifies strongly with his Irish ties.

Paul "Bono" Hewson, lead vocals and guitar.
Born: May 10, 1960.
Did you know?: Bono adopted his name from the Bono Vox Hearing Aid Co. shop in Dublin.

Larry Mullen Jr., drummer.
Born: Oct. 31, 1961.
Did you know?: While in high school, Mullen pinned a note up at school asking if other students were interested in forming a band. Paul Hewson, Adam Clayton, and Dave and Dik Evans responded. Dik left the band in 1978.

Adam Clayton, bass.
Born: March 13, 1960.
Did you know?: Clayton was born in Oxford, England, and raised in Africa. His family moved to Ireland when he was 4.



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Fact file

Balcony boys: All four U2 members sang in their high school choir.
Career decision: Bono, The Edge and Mullen once contemplated bailing out of U2. In the early 1980s, the trio were members of a Christian group called Shalom and had become concerned about playing the "devil's music." They weighed not touring to support their second album, "October." But commitments to their manager, road crew and record company prompted them to reconsider. Eventually, the band was back on the concert circuit.

End of the road for Bono?: Bono thought his days with U2 were kaput after a Live Aid concert in London in 1985. During U2's set, he burned up precious stage time by dancing with a fan. As a result, plans to play "Pride (In the Name of Love)" were cut from the program. Bono's performance annoyed the other band members, but his impromptu jig made a big impression on fans. The band's record sales quickly soared.

Hoteliers: Bono and The Edge co-own the Clarence Hotel in Dublin. Once frequented by a punk rock clientele, the hotel has become a chic Dublin locale.

Wrenching reply: The biting U2 ballad "Peace on Earth," ("All That You Can't Leave Behind") was recorded in response to the deadly 1998 bombing by an IRA splinter group in Omagh, Northern Ireland. The Edge has called the number "the most bitter song" that the band has ever produced.



"Boy" (1980; Island Records)



"October" (1981; Island Records)



"War" (1983; Island Records)



"Under a Blood Red Sky" (1983; Island Records)



"The Unforgettable Fire" (1984; Island Records)



"Wide Awake in America" (1985; Island Records)



"The Joshua Tree" (1987; Island Records)



"Rattle & Hum" (1988; Island Records)



"Achtung Baby" (1991; Island Records)



"Zooropa" (1993; Island Records)



"Pop" (1997; Island Records)



"Best of U2 — 1980-90" (1998; Island Records)



"All That You Can't Leave Behind" (2000; Interscope Records)