

Roger Chapman

Roger Maxwell Chapman (born 8 April 1942 in Leicester), also known as **Chappo**, is an English rock vocalist. He is best known as a member of the progressive rock band Family, which he joined along with Charlie Whitney, in 1966 and also the rock, R&B band Streetwalkers formed in 1974. His idiosyncratic brand of showmanship when performing and vocal vibrato led him to become a cult figure on the British rock scene. Chapman is claimed to have said that he was trying to sing like both Little Richard and his idol Ray Charles. Since the early 1980s he has spent much of his time in Germany and has made occasional appearances there and elsewhere.

In Germany, he was awarded an *Artist of the Year* award during the 1980s, followed by a *Lifetime Achievement Award* in 2004.

History

Chapman was originally the vocalist for Farinas, who released the single "You'd Better Stop" b/w "I Like It Like That" in August 1964. (However, lead vocals on that single were performed by Jim King.) He moved on to join *The Roaring Sixties* who were renamed Family in 1966. In 1967 the first single was released, "Scene Through The Eye of a Lens", something of a psychedelic classic. Chapman wrote most of Family's songs with Charlie Whitney and their debut album *Music in a Doll's House* was released in 1968. Their bluesy, experimental rock music gained them a reputation as a progressive underground band.

The release of *Family Entertainment* (1969), *A Song for Me* (1970) and *Anyway* (1970) established Family as a fast and loud rock band also capable of producing the most intense acoustic music, in the British underground music scene, at that time. Their single "The Weaver's Answer" from the *Family Entertainment* album was a hit in 1969. On 28 August 1970 they appeared at the third Isle of Wight Festival. Although the band was popular in UK and Europe, success in the US eluded them and in 1973 they broke up.

Chapman formed Chapman-Whitney with Whitney, late in 1973. They signed to the Vertigo label and recorded an album *Chapman Whitney Streetwalkers* (1974), with a line-up including other members of Family and King Crimson, as well as Nicko McBrain, now with Iron Maiden. Chapman and Whitney morphed their band into Streetwalkers, who were a polished album-oriented rock band who used more white soul than Family had. They released *Downtown Flyers* (1975), moving on to record the groove heavy album *Red Card* (1976) which was released in the UK in 1976 and remains a much respected album by music fans and the music press. Two more albums followed before the band broke up in 1977, ending eleven years of the Whitney-Chapman musical partnership.

In 1979 Chapman began a solo career and recorded his first solo album *Chappo*. His backing band became known as *The Shortlist* at this time and he toured Europe extensively. Mike Oldfield's song "Shadow on the Wall" from the album *Crises* (1983) featured Chapman on vocals and became a hit. He appeared as a guest artist on the second Box of Frogs album *Strange Land* (1986) singing lead vocals on two songs. Chapman went on to record *Walking the Cat* (1989) and *Hybrid and Low Down* (1990).

Since then Chapman has released eleven albums of new and live recordings. His album *Hide Go Seek* (2009) was produced by former Family bassist Jim Cregan and released during May 2009. His appearance on Saturday 21 August 2010 at the Rhythm Festival was billed as: "The farewell performance from Roger Chapman & The Shortlist".