


Bruce Springsteen

Peter Basham

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- **2002's *The Rising* put Bruce at the top of the album charts in the U.S. for a fourth consecutive decade.**
- **The E Street Band's 2003 concerts were second only to the Rolling Stones in the highest grossing U.S. tour stakes**
- **Previous accounts have largely ignored the solo careers of the E Street Band, which includes Nils Lofgren's work for Neil Young and Crazy Horse and Steve Van Zandt's emergence as character actor**

Bruce Springsteen grew from a dishevelled, bearded singer of youthful street ballads to become the hottest name in the rock world – twice. The resilience of the New Jersey troubadour has seen him top the album charts in four successive decades, and his epic world tours with the legendarily hard-working E Street Band are still sell-outs well into the new millennium.

Once seen as another Bob Dylan wannabe, Springsteen became rock's definitive chronicler of blue-collar life, inheritor of the spirit of Woody Guthrie. Beyond the cars (and there are a lot) and the working-class lives, he has also addressed matters of the heart on albums such as *Lucky Town* and *Tunnel Of Love*.

Whilst Ronald Reagan famously misappropriated the mournful *Born In The U.S.A.* as a patriotic anthem, Springsteen has found the confidence to stand up and be counted with songs such as *American Skin (41 Shots)*, a controversial account of a police killing, and the Oscar-winning *Streets Of Philadelphia*. 2002's *The Rising* returned Springsteen to the top of the album charts with a stately and balanced investigation of loss, in the aftermath of September 11th 2001. When the world needed a compassionate artistic statement, he delivered.

This guide examines the growth of Bruce Springsteen's career, from the optimistic youth who wrote *Born To Run* to the respected heavyweight songwriter of today. Collaborations and side projects, and the work of band members away E Street are also detailed and rated.

Mild-mannered **Peter Basham's** long-held interest in Bruce Springsteen has in no way affected the way he behaves and none of his friends have ever even thought that in some lights he resembles the younger Springsteen of the *Born To Run* days...

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