

**BEFORE THE BEATLES, BEFORE THE STONES,
ROCK & ROLL WAS BORN**



**THE
BUDDY
HOLLY
STORY**

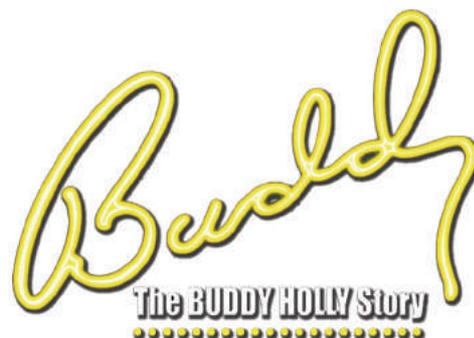
**Stage your production of
“the World’s Most Successful Rock & Roll Musical”**

**Licensing enquiries and perusals:
rick.thorne@buddyshow.com or through
buddythemusical.com
Tel: (+44) (0) 207 240 9941**

© Buddy Worldwide Limited
P.O. Box 293 • Letchworth Garden City • SG6 9EU • United Kingdom
Tel: (+44) (0) 207 240 9941 • info@buddyshow.com

☛ Buddy played the music I love, the music I grew up on — country-western, rock 'n' roll and rhythm and blues — three separate strands of music that he intertwined and infused into one genre, one brand. Buddy wrote songs that had beautiful melodies and imaginative verses. And he sang great. He sang in more than a few voices. He was the archetype — everything I wasn't and wanted to be... He looked older than 22. Something about him seemed permanent, and he filled me with conviction ☛☛

Bob Dylan



BEFORE THE BEATLES, BEFORE THE STONES, ROCK & ROLL WAS BORN

Over 60 years ago, a young man from Lubbock, Texas, changed the face of popular music, only to die tragically in a plane crash aged just 22. Now, **Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story** tells the story of the three years in which he became the world's top recording artist with a show featuring such timeless hits as “Peggy Sue”, “That’ll Be The Day”, “Oh Boy”, “Not Fade Away”, “True Love Ways”, “Everyday”, “Rave On”, “Maybe Baby”, and “Raining In My Heart”.

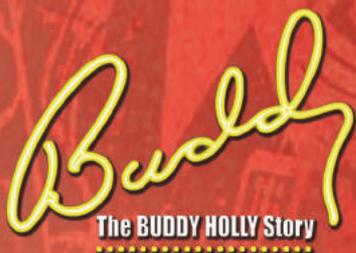
Synopsis:

Buddy tells the story in words and music of the last few years of **Buddy Holly's** life. We see how he and his childhood high-school friends, **the Crickets**, turn country music upside down and create a unique style of sound which some called ‘the devil’s music’. We share Buddy’s frustrations at Decca Records, his skill as a songwriter and composer when recording and experimenting with **Norman Petty**, the excitement he and America felt when “**That’ll Be The Day**” hit #1 on the charts, and his naïve determination to be the first white act to play the **Apollo Theatre**, Harlem. And that’s just the first act.

Later we meet **Maria Elena**, his future wife, and witness his whirlwind romance and marriage, see how he and the Crickets part ways and are taken on his ill-fated ‘**Winter Dance Party**’ Tour of **1959**. Finally, we are the audience at the **Surf Ballroom, Clear Lake, Iowa**, where Buddy’s final performance with **Ritchie Valens** (“**La Bamba**”) and the ‘**Big Bopper**’ **J.P. Richardson** (“**Chantilly Lace**”) is recreated, and what in theatre must be one of the most exciting musical concerts of all-time!

Buddy has been seen by over 22 million people around the world, where the magical talents of Charles Hardin ‘Buddy’ Holly have been shared live with many more people than the real Buddy Holly ever had the chance to perform to. The young man with glasses whose musical career spanned an all-too-brief period has enjoyed, via the show, a longevity that was denied him in 1959.

If you remember the golden age of rock & roll, when ‘doo-wops’ and ‘ah hey, ah hey, heys’ rang out from every jukebox, weren’t yet born, or were too young to be a part of this exciting period of musical history, then you won’t want to miss out on the electrifying party that is **Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story!**



“John (Lennon) and I started to write because of Buddy Holly. It was like, ‘Wow! He writes and is a musician’. In our imaginations back then, John was Buddy and I was Little Richard or Elvis”

Paul McCartney

PRESS QUOTES NORTH AMERICA

“The audience is elevated to joyful chaos”
Clive Barnes, New York Post

“It’s a straight ahead, feel-good rave up. ‘Buddy’ motors along with a gee-whiz innocence... Good times rave on for ‘Buddy’ on Broadway”
Dan Hubert, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

“Golden oldies pounded out the way they used to be”
Frank Rich, The New York Times

“‘Buddy’ shakes up Broadway! Those musical numbers will have you up on your feet clapping. ‘Buddy’ is a blast!”
Pia Lindstrom, WNBC-TV

“A darn tootin’ good time. You’ll have a blast”
Chris Jones, Chicago Tribune

“The cast melds into a hard-charging rock ‘n’ roll band for a display of multiple talents... The songs transport us back to when music truly rock ‘n’ rolled”
Daryl H. Miller, Los Angeles Times

“An infectiously happy and dynamic evocation of musical history. The fantastic energy; the beat; the pure snappy joy of Rock & Roll all hit me for the first time in my misspent life”
William B. Collins, The Philadelphia Inquirer

“You’ll likely not have more fun in a theater this season”
Ellen Sterling, BroadwayWorld

“The audience worked themselves into a hand-clapping exhaustion during the final concert sequence. It would be wise for Shubert to have its house physician in the theatre during all performances”
Michael Kuchwara, Associated Press

“A joyous reopening of a musical memory book from the ‘50s”
William A. Raidy, Newhouse Newspapers

“The audience was on its feet at the end screaming for encores as if at a stadium concert”
Linda Winner, Newsday

“How refreshing to be time-tunnelled to a lighter, less angst-ridden era... Sends people out of the theater on an unstoppable high... Sensational”
Steve Morse, The Boston Globe

“Remarkable... It’s a bona fide crowd pleaser”
Variety

“There is no containing the theatrical eruption that follows. Everybody is boppin’... an affirming blast, the high that only live theater can induce when everything clicks”
Alvin Klein, The New York Times

Buddy
The BUDDY HOLLY Story

“ I play Buddy Holly every night before going onstage. It keeps me honest ”

Bruce Springsteen

*“A big hit that’s got Broadway rockin’ and rollin’!
‘Buddy’ is sure-fire fun and sure to get you dancing in
the aisles!”*

Joanna Langfield, LBS Radio

*“Paul Hipp in the title role gives one of the most kinetic,
infectious and musically shrewd performances in memory”*

William A. Henry III, Time Magazine

“Rave On! The most high-octane fun you’ve had in a long time!”

CBS Radio STL

*“If you like Rock & Roll, run do not walk to ‘Buddy – The Buddy Holly
Story’. It was put together by genius. The audience was in an ecstatic
swoon”*

Patrick O’Conner, WBAH-FM New York

“Infectiously Exuberant”

Hedy Weiss, Chicago Sun-Times

*“Astonishing... ‘Buddy’ brings down the house and knocks the theatre
off its foundations. It’s a wild ride that thrills young and old”*

Roger Kershaw/Jim Lingerfelt, Stage Door, Toronto

*“When the music starts, ‘Buddy’ soars in a celebration of
individuality and emotional freedom, and transforms Paul Hipp into
an intense, focused dynamo. The theatre reverberates with joy...
A testament to the power of music”*

Robert Feldberg, Bergen Record

*“Fires on all cylinders... I doubt any audience can resist getting
caught in rock ‘n’ roll fever and jumping to its feet. Forget about feel-
good. ‘Buddy’ is feel-great, leaving its audience roaring for more”*

Peter Birnie, Vancouver Sun

“Clearly the music never died”

Joe Adcock, Seattle Post-Intelligencer

*“Hi-octane... powerful and electrifying... a thrilling evening of theater
and music”*

Lew J. Whittington, HuffPost

“A rousing homage to a rock ‘n’ roll pioneer”

David Lyman, Cincinnati Enquirer

“A jukin’ and jivin’ romp... so full of energy and joy”

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

“Infectious... Electrifying... Triumphant”

George Varga, The San Diego Union-Tribune

*“A feel-good romp through the era of bobby socks, poodle skirts and
the birth of rock ‘n’ roll. It’s hard not to fall in love with the production
and its infectious music that gets audiences on their feet and
dancing, young and old... Delightful... uplifting fun”*

April Boyle, Portland Press Herald

*“A genuine barn-burner of a smash... as joyous entertainment,
it is about as good as it gets”*

Colin MacLean, Edmonton Sun

Buddy
The BUDDY HOLLY Story

**“ He made it okay
to wear glasses.
I WAS Buddy
Holly ”**

John Lennon



LONDON WEST END QUOTES

“A foot-tapping delight – it’s still a Buddy brilliant show”
Bill Hagerty, The Sun

*“The show is still as fresh and revitalising as Holly’s music itself...
The whole company dazzles... No ‘Buddy’ does it better”*
Patrick Marmion, Daily Mail

*“Oh Boy, ‘Buddy’ keeps rocking... High-octane and infectious...
A gem of a musical”*
Julie Carpenter, Daily Express

*“Ludicrously enjoyable... (with) splendid performances from a young
and talented cast of actor-instrumentalists, one enters a lost age of
innocence and pleasure... Buddy Holly’s magnificent music undoubt-
edly ensures that you leave with a smile on your face and a spring in
your step”*
Charles Spencer, The Daily Telegraph

*“Songs that rouse the audience to thrilled participation
– and a tumult of nostalgia and excitement”*
Nicholas De Jongh, Evening Standard

*“This revival certainly delivers – with charismatic newcomer Matthew
Wycliffe in fine voice as the star turn fronting a tight lively band...
whipping the joint into a jumping jive”*
Keith Watson, Metro

“An enduring crowd pleaser”
Mark Shenton, Sunday Express

“High voltage energy... you’ll be in seventh heaven”
Michael Coveney, WhatsOnStage.com

“The show is an unashamed, rabble-rousing fiesta. It’s got everything”
The Sunday Times

U.K. TOUR

“What a show... Arcing enough energy to blow the national grid”
Plymouth Herald

“Spinetingling... the music of Buddy Holly very much lives on”
Manchester Evening News

*“Leaves the audience on a high... by the end, the entire audience is on
its feet, many singing along, dancing and feeling nostalgic”*
Bath Echo

“A hugely entertaining crowd-pleaser of a show”
Bradford Telegraph and Argus



Buddy
The BUDDY HOLLY Story

A MULTI-AWARD WINNING SHOW...



Buddy
The BUDDY HOLLY Story

AWARDS & NOMINATIONS

Laurence Olivier Awards Best New Musical Best Actor in a Musical	London, 1990 1990, 2000
Tony Awards Best Actor in a Musical	New York, 1991
Outer Circle Awards Best New Musical Best Performance in a Musical	New York, 1991
Drama Desk Awards Outstanding Actor in a Musical	New York, 1991
Theatre World Awards Outstanding Debut Performance	New York, 1991
Dora Mavor Moore Awards Outstanding Production Outstanding Musical Direction Outstanding Performance Outstanding Set Design Outstanding Costume Design	Toronto, 1991
Manchester Evening News Best Actor in a Musical Best Touring Musical	United Kingdom, 1992
Helen Hayes Awards Best Touring Production Best Actor in a Touring Production Best Actor in a Resident Musical	Washington D.C., 1993 2007
Australian Entertainment 'MO Awards Best Theatrical Production	Australia, 1993
DALRO Awards Best Performance in a Foreign Production	South Africa, 1994
Vita Awards Best Musical Theatre Production Best Performance in a Musical	South Africa, 1994
Bay Area Critics Awards Best Musical Best Ensemble Best Actor in a Musical	San Francisco, 2004
What's On Stage Theatregoers' Choice Awards Best Musical Revival	London, 2008
Suzi Bass Awards Lead Actor in a Musical	Atlanta, 2009
Sterling Awards Outstanding Production of a Musical Outstanding Musical Director Outstanding Choreography	Edmonton, 2010
Jessie Richardson Theatre Awards Outstanding Actor in a Lead Role	Vancouver, 2010
San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Outstanding Lead Performance in a Musical	San Diego, 2017
Joseph Jefferson Awards Best Production, Musical (Midsize) Best Director (Midsize Theater) Best Ensemble, Musical Best Performer in a Principal Role, Musical Best Music Direction	Chicago, 2018 2018, 2023

“ You could learn from Buddy Holly how to write songs, the way he put them together. He was a beautiful writer ”

Mick Jagger



Buddy
The BUDDY HOLLY Story

STAGING YOUR PRODUCTION OF *BUDDY*

- ★ **Cast size:** 11+ (incl. musicians)
- ★ **Ideal for:** all ages and abilities. *Buddy* is the original compilation musical
- ★ **Running time:** 2 hrs 20 mins (incl. interval)
- ★ **Musical style:** Rock & Roll
- ★ **90-minute version and Small cast version/orchestration also available. Please contact:**
[rick.thorne@buddyshow.com](mailto:ricker.thorne@buddyshow.com)

SONGS IN THE SHOW

Act One

Rose of Texas
Flower of My Heart
Ready Teddy (U.S.) / Rip It Up (U.K.)
That'll Be The Day
Rock Around With Ollie Vee (U.S.) /
Brown Eyed Handsome Man (U.K.)
Everyday
Shout
Not Fade Away
Peggy Sue
Words of Love
Oh Boy

Act Two

Think It Over
True Love Ways
America The Beautiful
Why Do Fools Fall In Love
Chantilly Lace
Maybe Baby
Peggy Sue Got Married
Heartbeat
La Bamba
Raining In My Heart
It Doesn't Matter Anymore
Rave On
Johnny B. Goode
Oh Boy (encore)



CAST REQUIREMENTS

Buddy is more a 'play with music' than a traditional musical. While a few of the roles are quite specific in requirements, the majority of the roles can be modified according to the talent combinations of the people auditioning.

Principle/Supporting/Featured Roles (ages 20s-40s). The show requires energetic, charismatic performers who are able to sing or dance and/or have ability to play a number of acting roles and/or musical instruments.

While it is desirable that cast members possess some combination of these talents, it is not prohibitive in any sense if they don't. The show can be built around the abilities and talents of those involved.

“ I only needed specs for reading, but as a result of wearing them all the time to try to look like Buddy Holly, I became genuinely nearsighted ”

Elton John



Buddy
The BUDDY HOLLY Story

Character breakdown

BUDDY HOLLY

Singer-songwriter and star from Lubbock, Texas. Buddy is intelligent, charismatic, 6ft or over, preferably under 25. Must play guitar, sing and act and have a feel for Rock 'n' Roll. Must possess some serious star potential and have a desire to live as a rock 'n' roll superstar every night.

JOE B MAULDIN

Double Bass player from Lubbock, Texas. Preferably under 25. Serious, square young man with musical ability. Must be able to sing and act.

JERRY ALLISON

Drummer, preferably under 25 from Lubbock, Texas. Good looking, irrepressible cheeky humor with musical ability. Must be able to act. The ability to sing is preferred but not prohibitive.

MARIA ELENA HOLLY

Attractive, under 25 of Hispanic-American extraction. Classy and well-educated. Must be able to sing. Musical ability an advantage but not prohibitive.

J.P. RICHARDSON – THE BIG BOPPER

A former DJ, he is a Texan with an irrepressible larger-than-life character. 6ft and above, with the ability to command the stage on his own as a single performer. His key song is “Chantilly Lace”. Must be able to act and should possess a comedic flair. The ability to play a musical instrument an advantage but not prohibitive.

RITCHIE VALENS

Good looking, under 25 and of Hispanic-American extraction. Ritchie is an attractive, handsome boy with serious charisma, a dedicated eye for the ladies, and the ability to hold the stage in his own right. His key song is “La Bamba”. Must be able to act.

HIPOCKETS DUNCAN

An exuberant hometown radio DJ from Lubbock, Texas, with an air of authority and a keen sense of humor. Must be a strong actor. The ability to sing and/or play a musical instrument an advantage but not prohibitive.

NORMAN PETTY

A record producer from Clovis, New Mexico, with a businesslike manner and a love of making records. Must be a strong actor. The ability to sing and/or play a musical instrument an advantage but not prohibitive.

VI PETTY

The wife of Norman with a heart of gold. Vi must be able to sing and act, and have keyboards ability, with a good sense of humor.

“To guys of my age at the time, if you were the least bit interested in music, Buddy was the one... Elvis was fantastic, but because Buddy had glasses and looked a bit like a bank clerk, you could say to yourself, ‘Well, it’s not just for guys who look like Elvis,’ because otherwise it was sort of unattainable”

Keith Richards

APOLLO PERFORMER

Male of African-American extraction with the ability to hold the stage on his own. Key song “Shout”. Must have good comic timing and be able to act. It is preferable to have the ability to play a musical instrument but not prohibitive.

(and/or)

APOLLO PERFORMER

Female of African-American extraction with the ability to hold the stage on her own. Key song “Shout”. Must have good comic timing and be able to act. The ability to play a musical instrument is an advantage but not a prerequisite.

THE COMPANY

Must be able to sing and have ability to play a multitude of roles and/or musical instruments. We define the show around the talent that is available. Experience and training are not necessary but ability is a prerequisite for the show.

MUSIC

Full size or reduced orchestrations available. The Materials package includes Full Score (for Musical Director), Band Parts (for each instrument), Vocal Score (with piano reduction) + Sound FX/Backing Music. Instrumentation can be adapted.

PRODUCTION TESTIMONIALS

“*Buddy — The Buddy Holly Story* is timeless and appealing to audiences of all ages. While I knew it would do well, it became the highest revenue producer in our 25-year history, selling out most of our three-week run”

Anita Allen-Farley, Producing Artistic Director, Georgia Ensemble Theatre, Roswell, Georgia

“*Buddy* was a big success for us. The audiences were dancing in the aisles, and many patrons told us it was their favorite show they've seen. You just can't beat that music!”

**Josh Fiedler, General Partner, Aged In Wood Productions
Producer, New Hope Productions, Bucks County Playhouse,
New Hope, Pennsylvania**

“*Buddy* is a show that is near and dear to our hearts – not only does it have a charming and heartbreaking story filled with some of the most irresistible and infectious songs from the early days of rock ‘n’ roll, but it is also one of the highest-grossing shows in our theatre’s history. It was so popular that the public demanded a return; again, our cast performed to sold-out audiences who left the theatre dancing and singing all the way to their cars!”

Bradford T. Kenney, Executive Artistic Director, Ogunquit Playhouse, Maine

“*Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story* ranked as our second most-attended show (just under *White Christmas*)! The last 30 minutes of this show are without a doubt the most energetic of any theatrical stage performance of which I’ve been a part. The crowd goes wild!”

Jamie Lawson, Artistic Director, Theatre Alliance, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Buddy
The BUDDY HOLLY Story

“I heard Buddy Holly make that incredible sound on his guitar, singing that beautiful song, hearing those wonderful harmonies, and it completely motivated me. I just thought, ‘That’s what I want to do. I want to be able to make music that does that to people, makes them feel this kind of yearning, makes them feel this joy and passion’”

Brian May

“Buddy has been a hit with our audiences! We’ve gotten standing ovations at every performance – it seems to just be a big party every night! In the middle of ‘Johnny B. Goode’ the audience started to stand. Here and there throughout the audience, people got to their feet and started dancing. We had never seen anything like this before at our theatre! The audience was so connected to *Buddy* and the story we’d told that night, that they wanted to participate in the fun they were witnessing onstage”

Joe R. Fox III, V.P. of Production, New Theatre Restaurant, Overland Park, Kansas

“The show creates a relationship between the cast and audience which is unique. The audience is so involved that they instinctively rise to their feet and start singing and dancing. Now that is a sight to see”

Maurice Galpern, Producer, Toronto Youth Theatre, Ontario

“Wow! What fun! Sold-out shows and standing o’s! *Buddy* has put our little theatre on the map”

Ken Mastel, Vice President, Wetaskiwin Theatre Society, Alberta, Canada



“Our production was a huge success, both artistically and financially, and was loved by our audiences. Being able to reach 100 percent venue capacity, months without live theatre and music, *Buddy* has brought the crowds out and wanting more. I would have no hesitation in recommending *Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story* to other theatre companies”

Maree Brodzinski, President, Devonport Choral Society, Devonport, Tasmania, Australia

“What a week – it’s been an experience that none of the cast will ever forget. The audiences have been amazing with sell-out performances every night”

Adrian Perkins, President, Church Wilne Rotary Club – Amici Productions, Draycott, Derbyshire, England

“Our students not only entertained with their full house audience on their feet every night, they now have a wonderful appreciation of Buddy’s talent and his musical influence. We all loved it”

Kirsty Hazledine, Wellington College Arts Director, Wellington, New Zealand

“*Buddy* sold out every performance, to rave reviews. It earned some of the highest exit reviews we have ever received. The perfect gem of a show to create joy and get people to rock & roll!”

Valerie Rachelle, Artistic Director, Oregon Cabaret Theatre, Ashland, Oregon

Buddy
The BUDDY HOLLY Story

“Of all the music heroes of the time, Buddy Holly was the most accessible, and he was the real thing... He was one of us”

Eric Clapton

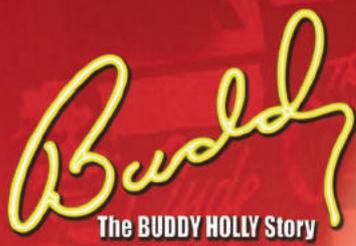
MARKETING SUMMARY

It's So Easy!

Vital information that will make your life and that of your staff so easy in the run-up to the arrival of *Buddy* at your theatre.



Main contact	Rick Thorne (Buddy Worldwide Limited) Tel: (01144) 207 240 9941 Email: rick.thorne@buddyshow.com
Format of the show	Beginning in 1956, Act I follows the story of Buddy Holly, his life, loves, dreams and aspirations on his meteoric rise from small town Lubbock to becoming the undisputed king of Rock 'n' Roll. Act II continues with overwhelming exuberance, re-creating his last ever performance at Clear Lake, Iowa.
Number of performers	11+
Music	Rock & Roll classics played live by performers
Children	None
Running time	Act I (1 hour), Interval (20 mins), Act II (1 hour) 90 minute 'concert' version available. Small cast version also available
Audience interaction	Positively encouraged
Era	Late 1950s
Short Synopsis (for box-office)	<i>Buddy</i> has been enjoyed by millions of people around the world and tells the story of the tragically short life of Buddy Holly, who along with high-school friends the Crickets, turned country music upside down to create some of the best rock 'n' roll songs ever written. We share Buddy's frustrations through his first recording contract; the excitement America felt when 'That'll Be The Day' hit #1; his naive determination to be the first white act to play the Apollo Theatre, Harlem; his whirlwind romance and marriage to Maria Elena; concluding with the ill-fated 'Winter Dance Party' tour of the Midwest and what in theatre must be one of the most incredible musical concerts of all-time. Don't miss out, this is your chance to see Buddy sing his way through two hours of the best rock 'n' roll you'll ever hear!
Suitable for	All ages – no nudity or profanity. Fans of theatre – <i>Buddy</i> is more of a play with music than a musical. Young people who have never heard of Buddy Holly.
Why go to <i>Buddy</i> ?	Featuring over 20 classic songs including 'Peggy Sue', 'That'll Be The Day', 'Oh Boy', 'Rave On', and 'Everyday', <i>Buddy</i> is a good, clean family show with universal appeal, and is performed live onstage by an ebullient, multi-talented cast. Pound for Pound, Yen for Yen, Dollar for Dollar, <i>Buddy</i> gives the best value show that money can buy.
Show website	buddythemusical.com



“ In those days you didn't know how young he was and in truth, the tragedy of losing him. Then, later on, you realized how important he was. Buddy Holly started a lot of creative sensibilities, very modern, very connected, unique, in the way he approached his music ”

Mick Fleetwood
(Fleetwood Mac)



Buddy
The BUDDY HOLLY Story

Buddy
The BUDDY HOLLY Story

COPY FOR MAILINGS

Buddy - The Buddy Holly Story

Dear **[NAME]**

With audiences around the world dancing in the aisles this legendary production hits **[VENUE]**. **Oh Boy! Rave On! Peggy Sue! That'll Be The Day!** – All smash hits of the golden days of rock 'n' roll, when 'doo-wops' and 'ah hey, ah hey, heys' rang out from every jukebox!

Experience the ups and downs of Holly's 'budding' musical career as he strives to fulfil his potential genius. The heart-warming tale of a small town all-American boy is told with care, detail and humor. *Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story* finally explodes into a celebration of youth and lust for life in a re-creation of his last concert at Clear Lake!

This immaculately staged production gives some of the nation's best musical talent the chance to perform Buddy Holly's music as it will always be remembered and always should be performed – with youth, joy and boundless enthusiasm!

If you want to relive or experience this incredible period in music history for the first time then you won't want to miss out on the electrifying party that is ***Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story!***

Remember, there are many imitations but only one ***Buddy!*** Don't miss out...
BOOK EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT!

30 SECOND RADIO SCRIPT

Intro Music: Oh Boy! (intro)

Male V/O: Buddy Holly's in town...
Having rocked audiences around the world

Music: Oh Boy!

Male V/O: With electrifying performances, featuring all
Buddy's Greatest Hits!

At the **[VENUE]** between **[DATES]**.
Book Now on **[WEBSITE ADDRESS/TELEPHONE NUMBER]**
to see the show you'll never forget!
Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story – there is only one *Buddy!*

“ I can't remember if I cried, when I read about his widowed bride/But something touched me deep inside, the day the music died...”

Don McLean
['American Pie']

BUDDY HOLLY Biography

Charles Hardin Holley (September 7, 1936–February 3, 1959), better known as **Buddy Holly**, was an American singer, songwriter, and a pioneer of Rock and Roll. The change of spelling of Holley to Holly came about because of an error in a contract he was asked to sign, listing him as Buddy Holly. That spelling was then adopted for his professional career.



Holly was born in Lubbock, Texas. The Holleys were a musical family and as a young boy Buddy learned to play the violin, piano and guitar. In the fall of 1949 he met Bob Montgomery at Hutchinson Jr. High School. They shared a common interest in music, and soon teamed up to perform as the duo Buddy & Bob. Initially influenced by bluegrass music, they sang harmony duets at local clubs and high school talent shows. Holly's big break came when they opened for Bill Haley and his Comets at a local rock show organized by Eddie Crandall who was also the manager for Marty Robbins. As a result of this performance, Buddy was offered a contract with Decca Records to work alone. However, early success as a solo artist eluded him.

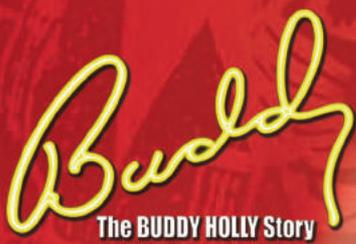
Back in Lubbock, Holly formed his own band, The Crickets, and began making records at Norman Petty's studios in Clovis, New Mexico. Among the songs they recorded was "That'll Be The Day", which takes its title from a phrase which John Wayne's character says repeatedly in the movie, *The Searchers*. Norman had music industry contacts, and believing that "That'll Be The Day" would be a hit single, he contacted publishers and labels.

Coral Records, a subsidiary of Decca, signed Buddy Holly and The Crickets. This put Buddy in the unusual position of having two record contracts at the same time. Before "That'll Be The Day" had its nationwide release and became a smash hit, Holly played lead guitar on the hit-single "Starlight", recorded in April 1957, featuring Jack Huddle.

Holly's music was sophisticated for its day, including the use of instruments considered novel for rock and roll, such as the celesta (heard on "Everyday"). Holly was an influential lead and rhythm guitarist, notably on songs such as "Peggy Sue" and "Not Fade Away". While Holly could pump out boy-loves-girl songs with the best of his contemporaries, other songs featured more sophisticated lyrics and more complex harmonies and melodies than had been previously shown in the genre.

Many of his songs feature a unique vocal "hiccup" technique, a clipped "uh" sound used to emphasize certain words in any given song, especially the rockers. Example, the start of the raucous number "Rave On": "We-UH-ell, the little things you say and do, make me want to be with you-UH-ou..."

Holly also managed to bridge some of the racial divide that punctuated rock, notably winning over an all-black audience when accidentally booked for New York's Apollo Theater (though, unlike the fictional portrayal in his movie biography, it took several performances for audiences to be convinced of his talents).



“It's not that I want to be rich. I just want the world to remember the name Buddy Holly”

[A teenage] Buddy Holly



Buddy
The BUDDY HOLLY Story

After the release of several highly successful songs, in March of 1958, he and the Crickets toured the United Kingdom. In the audience were teenagers named John Lennon and Paul McCartney, who later cited Holly as a primary influence (the band's name, The Beatles, was later chosen partly in homage to Holly's Crickets). The Beatles did a cover version of "Words Of Love" that was an almost perfect reproduction of Holly's version. The Rolling Stones did a cover of "Not Fade Away." The group, The Hollies were named in homage.

Holly's personal style, more controlled and cerebral than Elvis's and more youthful and innovative than the country and western stars of his day, would have an influence on youth culture on both sides of the Atlantic for decades to come, reflected particularly in the New Wave movement in artists such as Elvis Costello and Marshall Crenshaw, and earlier in folk rock bands like The Byrds and The Turtles.

He married Maria Elena Santiago on August 15, 1958. In 1959, Holly split with the Crickets and began a solo tour with other notable performers including Ritchie Valens and J.P. Richardson, "The Big Bopper". One audience member at the tour stop in Duluth, Minnesota was a young Bobby Zimmerman who would later be known as Bob Dylan.



Following the February 2nd performance at the Surf Ballroom in Clear Lake, Iowa, the performers and their road crew drew straws to decide who would fly in the airplane to the next stop on the tour, and who would ride in the unheated tour bus. The winners were Holly, Valens and Richardson. The four-passenger Beechcraft Bonanza took off into a blinding snow storm and crashed into Albert Juhl's cornfield several miles after takeoff at 1:05am. The crash killed Holly (22), Valens (17), Richardson (28), and pilot Roger Peterson (21), leaving Holly's pregnant bride, Maria Elena Holly, a widow. (She would miscarry soon after.) Funeral services were held at the Tabernacle Baptist Church in Lubbock, Texas, and Buddy Holly was interred in the City of Lubbock Cemetery.

Holly's headstone carries the correct spelling of his name, Buddy Holley. It also features a carving of his favorite guitar. Downtown Lubbock has a "walk of fame" with plaques to various area artists such as Mac Davis and Waylon Jennings, with a life-size statue of a guitar playing Buddy as its centerpiece. Holly was among the first artists inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1986. The Buddy Holly Hall of Performing Arts and Sciences opened in Lubbock in January, 2021.

The tragic plane crash inspired singer Don McLean's popular 1971 ballad "American Pie", and immortalized February 3rd as "The Day The Music Died". Contrary to popular myth, "American Pie" was not the name of the ill-fated airplane.

The Surf Ballroom, a popular and old-fashioned dance hall that dates to the height of the Big Band Era, continues to put on shows, notably an annual Buddy Holly tribute on the anniversary of his last performances. The building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2011, and in 2021 was named a National Historic Landmark.