

BARRY MANILOW

b. June 17, 1943

SINGER AND SONGWRITER

“I’m so private. I always have been.”

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Barry Manilow is an award-winning American singer and songwriter. He has recorded 47 Top 40 singles and sold more than 80 million albums worldwide, making him one of the best-selling recording artists of all time.

Born Barry Alan Pincus in Brooklyn, New York, he adopted his mother’s maiden name, Manilow, at the time of his bar mitzvah. He attended the New York College of Music and studied musical theater at Julliard.

Early in his career, Manilow earned a living as a pianist, producer and arranger for CBS. He also wrote advertising jingles for clients such as State Farm (“Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there”) and Band-Aid (“I’m stuck on Band-Aid, ’cause Band-

Aid’s stuck on me”) and sang jingles for Kentucky Fried Chicken, Pepsi and McDonald’s, including for the hamburger chain’s famous “You deserve a break” campaign.

By 1971 Manilow was playing piano for a then-unknown singer, Bette Midler, in the Continental Baths—a gay bathhouse in New York. He wrote and recorded his own music and arranged and co-produced Midler’s chart-topping 1972 debut album, “The Divine Miss M.”

Manilow’s first big hit came in 1974 with “Mandy,” which reached No. 1 on the Billboard charts. He followed it with a string of hits, albums and television appearances. His international hit “Ready to Take a Chance Again” was nominated for the Oscar for Best Song in 1978. The same year, he met Garry Kief, the man he would marry in 2014 after California legalized same-sex marriage. The longtime couple kept their relationship secret for most of Manilow’s career.

In the early 1980s, Manilow hosted his own variety show on ABC for which he won an Emmy Award. He went on to win another Emmy, four Academy Awards, two American Music Awards and a special Tony Award. He has been nominated for 15 Grammys.

Manilow has toured worldwide. He has performed at many charity events for health organizations and to benefit victims of natural disasters. He created the Barry Manilow Scholarship for the six highest-achieving lyric-writing students at UCLA.

Manilow officially came out two years after making headlines for marrying his longtime partner. He told People magazine that he kept his sexuality secret for fear of disappointing his female fans. Manilow’s first marriage, to a woman, was annulled in 1966.

