

DESMOND CHILD

b. October 28, 1953

AWARD-WINNING SONGWRITER

**He is a Top 40
hitmaker, famous for
his collaborations
with music-industry
superstars.**

*“I love the process of working with an artist ...
it’s like taking an X-ray of their soul.”*

Desmond Child is an award-winning gay Cuban American songwriter, singer, and producer. He is most famous for his collaborations on smash hits with top artists like Bon Jovi, Aerosmith, and Ricky Martin.

Born John Charles Barrett in Gainesville, Florida, Child graduated from high school in Miami Beach and attended Miami-Dade Community College. In 1973 he formed a pop group, Desmond Child & Rouge, with three female friends. After completing college in 1974, Child and the band moved to New York City.

In 1976 Child earned a B.A. in music education from New York University. Two years later, Capitol Records signed his band. They released two albums, one with a Top 40 hit that launched a national tour and an SNL appearance.

In his early years in New York, Child caught the attention of KISS guitarist Paul Stanley. Together they co-wrote “I Was Made For Lovin’ You.” Released in 1979, the song reached No. 11 on the U.S. Billboard singles chart. Child’s first No. 1 hit came in 1986 when he co-wrote “You Give Love a Bad Name” with Bon Jovi.

During this period, Child secured a reputation as a sought-after hitmaker. He worked with a variety of rock artists on chart-topping tracks like Bon Jovi’s “Livin’ on a Prayer,” Aerosmith’s “Dude Looks Like a Lady,” and Joan Jett’s “I Hate Myself for Loving You,” along with the entirety of Alice Cooper’s LP “Trash.”

Child’s collaborations span genres. He has worked on tracks with Cher, Cyndi Lauper, Katy Perry, Garth Brooks, and a host of other superstars. He collaborated with Ricky Martin on “Livin’ la Vida Loca” and “The Cup of Life” and co-wrote six songs for and produced Meat Loaf’s 2006 album “Bat Out of Hell III: The Monster is Loose.”

Credited on more than 80 Top 40 hits, Child was nominated for three Grammy Awards in 2000 for his work with Ricky Martin. He won a Latin Grammy for Rock Album of the Year (artist Alejandra Guzmán) in 2001 and received a 2003 Emmy nomination for the Muppets song “Everyone Matters.” He was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2008. Child cofounded the Latin Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2013 and was inducted himself in 2022. The same year, the U.S. Library of Congress added “Livin’ la Vida Loca” to its National Registry.

Child lives in Nashville, Tennessee, with his husband, Curtis Shaw, and twin boys. In 2013 Child released a documentary about raising his sons. He published his autobiography, “Livin’ on a Prayer: Big Songs Big Life,” in 2023.



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