

David Garrett – The Rise of Classical Rock

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When David Garrett was four years old, his father bought a violin for his older brother. The young Garrett took an interest and soon learned to play. A year later, he took part in a competition and won first prize. By the age of seven, he was playing once a week in public. He studied violin at the Lübeck Conservatoire. At the age of 12, Garrett began working with the distinguished Polish violinist Ida Haendel, often traveling to London and other European cities to meet her.

He continued his studies at the Royal College of Music in London. In 2004, he graduated from the Juilliard School in New York City and was one of the first students to study there with Itzhak Perlman.

At the age of 13, Garrett recorded two CDs, appeared on German and Dutch television, and gave a concert in the residence of the Federal Republic of Germany President, the Villa Hammerschmidt, at Dr. von Weizsäcker's personal invitation. The rest as they say is history. But what is David Garrett like off stage? **Elliott Danker** chats with this talented violinist and finds out more about his personal style and what he misses the most in life.



POPCulture Online: What is the hardest part about being a musician in today's environment?

David Garrett: I would say it's to find a good balance between preparation and promoting. I think it's very difficult to also have the energy to prepare and to also work on new stuff while you're on tour. It's very easy to just you know let things slide and just do your concerts and not think about the future but I'm always someone who tries to (even on promotion or on tour) work because time passes by so quickly and suddenly you have to do a recording and you didn't prepare and though it's of course easier to prepare if you don't have to work but it's part of your job as a musician to always prepare even on tour.

POPCulture Online: What made you decide to incorporate the element of rock into traditional violin symphonies?

David Garrett: Well I found it very interesting because every time I hear rock music, being a classical musician I hear it differently. Some how in my mind there's always an orchestra running so for me it was something very natural and it came quite easy with the arrangements although there were definitely challenges but it was really something I had in my mind for a long time so it really turned out to be something which kind of felt natural.



POPCulture Online: While you were studying you did modeling to get some income. Do you still model in your free time?

David Garrett: Hahaha no man I have no free time!

POPCulture Online: Do you miss it?

David Garrett: No I don't....wait maybe I do....wait I have to think about it... Ermmm I miss the fact that there are certain jobs where you don't have to be responsible and I'm in the position where I have to be responsible for many many people right now and sometimes that can be tough. And I miss how I was only responsible for myself and I was not responsible at all. I miss those days because if I screw up these days, a lot of people are disappointed because they are all connected to me. So I don't have the liberty to do it. If i do it then everybody keeps bashing away at me saying I'm not allowed to do that. So I miss the days where everybody didn't care....you know I didn't even care. That is a very big luxury which I'm still trying to get back. Haha!

POPCulture Online: Tell us about some of the feedback you've received?

David Garrett: First of all every piece that I do which is not mine I do have to go through the process of presenting it to the composers. I got once a nice letter from Metalica who really liked the arrangement for "Nothing Else Matters" so I liked that.



POPCulture Online: Having started as a child performer was there ever a time that you wanted to stop playing the violin?

David Garrett: Ohhh everyday.....there are still times I want to stop. You know there's this a little voice on my shoulder which says "Stop it, it's just a waste of time"and the other one says "Hey that's the thing you love doing so don't quit." You know it's not easy, just because you love something, doesn't mean it's easy. On the contrary if you love something, it makes it harder.

POPCulture Online: Most people would picture a professional violinist dressed in a tuxedo or a suit as part of an orchestra but you have your own unique style. Tell us a bit about your style and does it have anything to do with your modeling days?

David Garrett: It probably does because I some how did wear a lot of different styles of clothes at some point. But then on the other hand I did also have a lot of friends in New York who wanted to go shopping with me all the time. There's definitely influences from both directions but you gotta find your comfort zone. I like to wear a suit or a tux once in a while if it's the right occasion but I think if you are on stage you really have to find your comfort zone and I don't think it's me (wearing a suit or tux) and I don't like to pretend and I don't like to pretend on stage even more. So I want to feel at home and at ease on stage and I feel relaxed and perform better!

David Garrett's album Rock Symphonies is out in stores

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