

JOURNEY OF A JUMPSUIT – HOW IT ALL BEGAN

FROM A JACK TO A KING

It started *Way Down* back in November 1956 when Elvis met fellow entertainer Wladziu Valentino Liberace, known to everyone by one name, **Liberace**. Elvis was on holiday in Vegas, Liberace was performing and Elvis was in the audience. They had a jam session after the show where they swapped jackets and instruments. Elvis donned a gold-sequined jacket and played a mean piano as reported in an *Associated Press* article of that day. Liberace wore Elvis' sports jacket but his guitar playing, according to the same article, was less of an inspiring performance!

Colonel Parker liked the jacket so much on Elvis that he commissioned a full gold lamé suit to be made up by Hollywood designer, *Nudie Cohen* to be worn on stage during the next tour in Chicago, four months later.

WISE MEN SAY

Elvis also played Las Vegas in 1956 but his first taste of performing in Sin City was far from a resounding success! We all know the story about Elvis being told to go back to driving a truck, don't we? Audiences at that time were very conservative. Elvis with his looks, his promiscuous moves, his outrageous fashion style for that era, made him the proverbial fish out of water! He was different ... too different for some!

It was Liberace, then a permanent resident and accepted showman in Vegas, who gave Elvis some sound advice. "You need more glitz in your act," Liberace said.

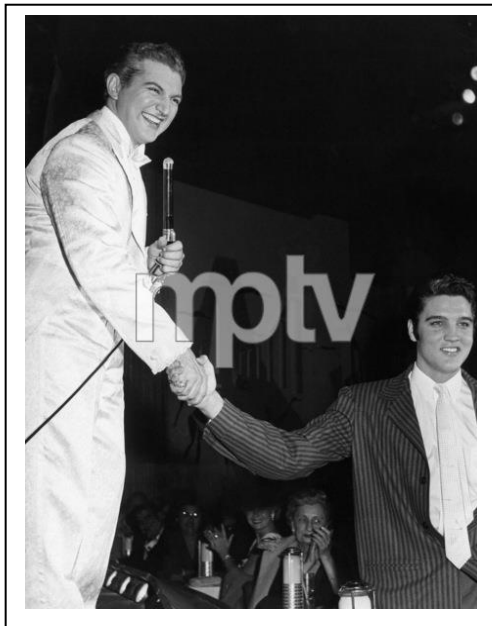
Elvis listened, remembered and was inspired. He started to wear two-piece suits embellished with gold. Capes were introduced to add interest to his stage wear.

ENTER BILL BELEW – COSTUME DESIGNER

Bill started designing costumes for Elvis as early as 1968 when he came up with the Black Leather outfit worn during the Singer '68 Special. The jumpsuit was Bill's idea. He loved fashion from the Napoleonic era especially the high collars, and Elvis loved the freedom of movement that the jumpsuit would give him as he incorporated more Karate moves into his performances. Bill designed all the jumpsuits right up to 1977, many of them featuring elaborate embroidery by *Gene Doucette* and more glam and glitter over the years. They tried

the same designs in different colours like blue, red and black, but beneath the glare of the stage lights white was best at spectacularly highlighting Elvis' features. Bill also designed the three-piece suits (pants, jacket and cape) and the belts.

On stage Elvis was the ultimate showman. His specially designed jumpsuits, at first simple but stylish, transcended into sometimes themed, always sparkling, highly embroidered and heavily embellished with rhinestones, works of art! They were his signature. They were not just eye-catching but reflected Elvis' larger than life image. He wanted to make his performances memorable and unique. You did not just go to an Elvis concert – you went to a full-on elaborate SHOW! This was our man, the ENTERTAINER!



LIBERACE HAD A SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE ON ELVIS' SHOWMANSHIP, SOMETHING THAT BECAME AN ESSENTIAL PART OF ALL HIS LIVE APPEARANCES.

*Did **YOU** know that before you stepped into the building?*

*What is **YOUR** favourite jumpsuit? Check them out at the following link:*

<https://www.elvisconcerts.com/jumpsuits/>

You will see that the suits are grouped by year. Some were used over several years, some updated in a new colour.



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IT'S ONLY WORDS, AND WORDS ARE ALL I HAVE

Now for some fun! Find 20 of Elvis' Jumpsuits in the following word puzzle. Words can go in any direction and letters are not shared. Why not time yourself and let us know how you get on!

Did you know? You can download this presentation and print it if you want to do the Word Search the old-fashioned way!

JUMPSUIT PUZZLE

Adonis Suit	American Eagle	Aztec Star	Chinese Dragon
Blue Nail	Blue Rain	Chain Suit	Red Pinwheel
Chicken Bone	Concho	Eyelet Suit	
Fringe	Lava Suit	Mad Tiger	
Mexican Sundial	Orange Sunburst	Peacock	
Red Ladder	Snow Flake	Totem Pole	

J	D	Z	Q	E	T	D	J	N	Y	C	J	U	A	P	F	G	K	C	D	E	L	G	O	B
H	X	L	I	L	A	V	A	S	U	I	T	G	A	K	N	D	C	U	Z	R	S	U	U	I
O	X	H	M	Q	Y	H	S	Y	K	T	O	T	E	M	P	O	L	E	Q	F	O	T	R	X
C	R	Y	J	J	G	G	H	B	L	U	E	R	A	I	N	Z	L	A	N	M	Z	N	Y	R
Q	E	A	C	H	A	I	N	S	U	I	T	A	T	S	N	O	W	F	L	A	K	E	T	E
T	C	M	N	B	E	Z	F	X	B	H	M	H	Z	E	W	T	N	C	H	R	G	Q	W	S
P	A	D	S	G	M	T	Z	D	J	M	E	E	Q	T	C	P	B	T	I	W	Z	L	I	T
O	D	A	E	Z	E	W	V	F	U	B	S	O	X	B	E	Z	Y	L	X	U	H	V	I	K
N	O	M	Z	C	L	S	F	U	K	I	Z	D	Y	I	C	C	X	O	U	P	C	U	L	U
T	N	E	Q	I	W	N	U	F	B	G	F	A	I	B	C	H	S	R	X	E	E	V	F	R
E	I	R	G	F	Y	N	M	N	B	D	I	H	K	P	H	A	U	T	P	B	N	Z	H	M
W	S	I	R	W	Y	X	O	A	B	I	R	P	H	W	J	S	N	P	A	I	M	A	K	Z
N	S	C	E	Y	X	I	M	L	F	U	A	E	A	P	M	T	Z	S	G	R	G	J	I	H
H	U	A	D	Z	K	A	G	E	Z	Q	R	T	P	T	V	O	P	E	U	R	W	Q	A	L
C	I	N	P	B	D	M	H	J	C	L	L	S	A	X	T	K	C	R	G	N	S	X	I	L
I	T	E	I	K	U	D	Y	I	V	D	U	A	T	J	V	A	X	R	T	P	D	I	S	A
F	T	A	N	E	L	D	D	S	A	O	R	R	X	Y	X	U	C	E	B	A	Q	I	T	H
M	G	G	W	F	J	L	N	V	L	E	Y	E	L	E	T	S	U	I	T	H	H	D	A	Z
A	U	L	H	R	C	R	E	D	L	A	D	D	E	R	F	H	S	O	Z	P	R	E	Y	L
D	X	E	E	I	R	U	A	K	M	X	G	J	E	L	S	G	D	O	A	I	I	L	K	Q
T	D	A	E	N	S	Y	W	U	L	G	L	W	G	P	Z	K	K	V	L	S	C	Q	S	H
I	I	E	L	G	C	H	I	N	E	S	E	D	R	A	G	O	N	X	B	Q	L	F	X	P
G	D	R	A	E	J	J	E	K	L	L	G	Z	T	T	H	A	L	P	E	A	C	O	C	K
E	Q	P	G	I	C	Q	E	J	V	V	M	C	O	N	C	H	O	V	V	E	Q	M	F	R
R	C	H	I	C	K	E	N	B	O	N	E	M	O	Z	G	H	G	T	R	R	N	K	W	H

Answers: The answers are hiding on our social media pages. Get searching now on Facebook, or Instagram to see how you did in our word puzzle.