

# MICKEY THOMAS

**John Michael "Mickey" Thomas** (in Cairo, Georgia) is an American rock and blues singer, best known as one of the lead vocalists of Jefferson Starship and Starship.

## Early career in music

Thomas was inspired to pursue a career in music after travelling to Atlanta with long time childhood friends Charles Connell and Tommy Verran to see a Beatles performance in 1965. Thomas, Connell, and Verran wound up in their first band together. Verran was the lead vocalist at the time. They split up to go to different colleges but later reformed in the early 1970s along with friend Bud Thomas as the "Jets".

Thomas was the vocalist for the Lords of London, a garage band from Douglas, Georgia for a brief time, along with guitarist Billy Folsom, bassist Bob Hutchinson, keyboardist Billy Corbi, and drummer Troy Blasingame.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Elvin Bishop Group

While singing lead for the Jets in 1974, Thomas joined the Elvin Bishop Group as a backing vocalist and eventually made it to lead vocals. His best known achievement was singing on Elvin Bishop's chart hit "Fooled Around and Fell in Love", a #3 single in 1976.



Performance in Boston touring as Starship featuring Mickey Thomas, on June 16, 2012

## Jefferson Starship

In April 1979, Thomas was asked to join Jefferson Starship after the departure of Marty Balin and Grace Slick.<sup>[2]</sup> In 1981 he recorded his second solo album, Alive Alone. Former Elvin Bishop Group drummer Donny Baldwin became drummer for Jefferson Starship two years later when Aynsley Dunbar left.

Thomas spent most of the early eighties as the main vocalist of Jefferson Starship, performing several duets with Slick (who rejoined in 1981) and gaining greater influence in the band. After Paul Kantner left in 1984, Thomas was leader of the band. From 1985 until 1989 the newly dubbed 'Starship' scored some of their biggest hits. When Grace Slick left again in 1988, Thomas sang all lead vocals. But their fortunes as pop music artists soon ran out. A tour was cancelled after Donny Baldwin allegedly attacked Thomas in a bar. The damage was such that it required facial reconstruction surgery. Baldwin chose to resign after the incident.

## Starship featuring Mickey Thomas

The original incarnation of Starship disbanded in 1991. In 1992 Paul Kantner reformed Jefferson Starship without Thomas, and Thomas formed a new touring band called *Starship featuring Mickey Thomas*. Touring has continued with this title.

## Solo and collaboration efforts

Thomas recorded the solo album *As Long as You Love Me* in 1976.

Thomas' first soundtrack effort was in 1986 when he recorded the song "Stand in the Fire" for the Rob Lowe hockey movie *Youngblood*. Thomas also recorded "Wild Again" for the soundtrack for the 1988 film *Cocktail*, as well as the title song for the 1989 film *Sing*. He also appeared in the 1989 film *Dream a Little Dream* and recorded the film's titled theme song and its duet version with Mel Tormé for the soundtrack. The duet version was also played during the end of the film.

In 1998 he guested on Sammy Hagar's album *Marching To Mars*.

In 2002 Thomas and his touring band re-recorded all of the Jefferson Starship hits on which he had appeared. The resulting album was released in 2003, without any band credits being provided, as *Forever Gold*, part of a series of releases by St. Clair Entertainment Group.

In 2004 he released an album project, under the title of *Over the Edge*, produced by Fabrizio Grossi. In 2008 he recorded a new album with Aynsley Dunbar for Direct Music, featuring artists such as Jake E. Lee, former guitarist for Ozzy Osbourne. Thomas reunited with Elvin Bishop when Starship closed for them in late 2008.

In November 2010, Mickey Thomas announced on his website that a new Starship album, *Loveless Fascination*, would be released in late summer or early fall of 2011; the album was eventually released in September 2013. In July 2011, Thomas released *Marauder*, a solo project covering songs originally recorded by other artists.<sup>[3]</sup>

## Discography

### Solo albums

- *As Long as You Love Me* (1976)

- *Alive Alone* (1981)
- *Forever Gold* (2003), St. Clair Entertainment<sup>[4]</sup>
- *Over the Edge* (2004)
- *Marauder* (2011)<sup>[3]</sup>
- *The Blues Masters Featuring Mickey Thomas* (2010)

**with Elvin Bishop Group**

- *Struttin' My Stuff* (1975)
- *Hometown Boy Makes Good!* (1976)
- *Raisin' Hell* (1977)

**with Jefferson Starship**

- *Freedom at Point Zero* (1979)
- *Modern Times* (1981)
- *Winds of Change* (1982)
- *Nuclear Furniture* (1984)

**with Starship**

- *Knee Deep in the Hoopla* (1985)
- *No Protection* (1987)
- *Love Among the Cannibals* (1989)
- *Greatest Hits (Ten Years and Change 1979–1991)*
- *The Best of Starship* (1993)
- *Loveless Fascination* (2013)