

## JOHN ANDERSON: A SPECIAL VOICE

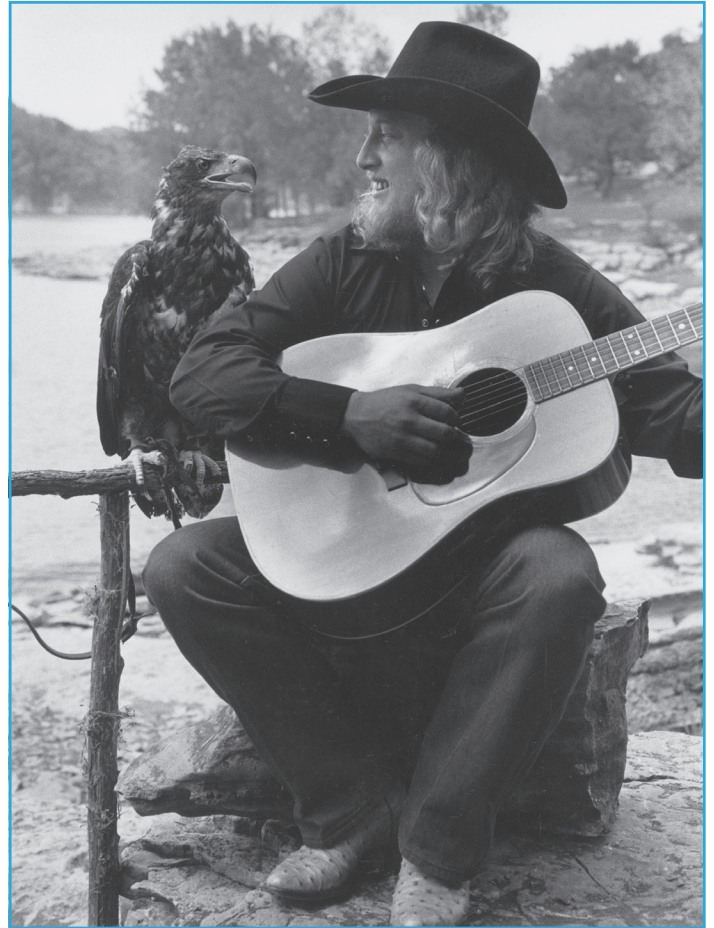
In 1980, while on tour with famous country singer Merle Haggard, Haggard told John Anderson how much he liked his new song, “Your Lying Blue Eyes.” Before Anderson could answer, Haggard asked him, “Do you love it, son? Do you really love it?” Anderson knew Haggard was actually asking him about his love for country music and he answered, “Yes, sir, I really do.”

After recording and touring for nearly fifty years, Anderson remains just as committed to his chosen career. “I moved to Nashville to sing country music,” Anderson said. “It’s all I’ve ever done. I had no backup plan.”

Born on December 13, 1954, Anderson grew up in Apopka, Florida. By the seventh grade, Anderson was playing in garage rock bands with his friends, and by the age of twelve had decided to be a musician. But it was hearing the songs of Haggard and George Jones that got him into country music and to Nashville.

Shortly after finishing high school, Anderson moved to Nashville and word began to spread about this young country singer with a very special voice. Anderson signed a recording contract with Warner Bros. Records in 1976.

Merle Haggard, George Jones, and Willie Nelson gave Anderson the chance to perform at the beginning of their concerts, which helped many people get to



know him. Anderson’s vocal style started to convince country radio just how entertaining he could be. In the early 1980s, Anderson was a leader of country music’s return to a more traditional sound, a movement called New Traditionalism. His hit records helped lead and define the movement that would come to include other Country Music Hall of Fame

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### LISTEN

“Your Lying Blue Eyes,” “Seminole Wind,” “Chicken Truck”

## JOHN ANDERSON: A SPECIAL VOICE (CONTINUED)

members, such as George Strait and Reba McEntire. Over time, Anderson had fewer hit songs. However, he had become well known and was able to make more money touring than before. He has earned twenty Top Ten country hits, five of which reached #1. In 2014, Anderson was inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame.



Jamey Johnson, a musician and an Anderson fan, commented on what has made Anderson such a powerful presence in country music over the years: “You won’t find any other voice that sounds anything like John Anderson,” Johnson said. “He puts so much soul and so much passion into every song he does, but I’m not even sure those things are the reasons he sounds so unique. He just does.”

John Anderson was elected into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2024.



### CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. At what age did Anderson decide to become a musician?

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2. Circle the phrase “New Traditionalism” in paragraph 6. Underline the clue words and phrases that help you understand the meaning of the phrase.

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3. In your opinion, did Merle Haggard have influence on Anderson’s career? Explain and highlight your evidence.

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