

## CELEBRATING THE 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF ROCKET MAN - ELTON JOHN RETURNS TO AUSTRALIA -

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE : Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> July, 9am

Forty years ago, during April 1972, Elton John's single **Rocket Man (I Think It's Going To Be A Long Long Time)** was released around the world. To celebrate the landmark 40 year anniversary of its release, Sir Elton John has been taking the celebrations globally for a world tour and will be returning to our shores for his record 42<sup>nd</sup> Sydney Entertainment Centre show plus a very special run of shows, some in parts of Australia he's never been.

To kick things off, Elton John will perform during the opening week of the brand new **Perth Arena** on **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> November**. Following on from Perth, the tour then heads to our nation's capital, Canberra for a show at **Canberra Stadium** on **Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> November**, before finishing things up at the **Sydney Entertainment Centre** on **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> November** – taking his record number of shows at the iconic Sydney venue to a staggering 42.

Performing with a full band, Elton's shows will commemorate the 40 years since the release of Rocket Man as well as being a celebration of Elton's greatest hits. Fans can expect to see this timeless entertainer take them on a journey thru his multi-decade career, backed by his ever-dynamic touring band.

The single, Rocket Man, was a global success, breaking records in multiple territories around the world and achieving the highest chart positions ever held at that point by any Elton John single.

More than just a charting success, Rocket Man held esteemed critical acclaim across the globe garnering reviews following the 1972 release such as this from UK music bible, Disc magazine; *"This is by far the best thing Elton John has ever done - it's quite superb...this band is great, the song is great, Bernie Taupin's lyrics are great and if the Honky Chateau LP is going to be like this you're going to have to listen to it in little doses or you'll go mad. After two hearings I was so busy singing along that I couldn't get myself organised into taking notes about the structure of the record. Consumer, not critic, that's me, and I can consume music like this for evermore."*

Beyond these many accolades, Rocket Man also held with it a cultural and historical significance that remains unrivalled by any other song. Elton's American record company connected the release of **Rocket Man** to the launch of Apollo 16, and took out press advertisements saying *'On the morning of April 16, 1972, Apollo 16 was launched into orbit on a journey to the moon. A few mornings earlier Uni Records launched a new Elton John single into a world-wide orbit. WHAT A TRIP! Both launchings bound to set new records.'*

On 28 April 1972 Elton and the band played a concert at Hofheinz Pavilion, University of Houston, Texas, the second date of their 1972 American tour. Ahead of the show, the Rocket Man met the 'Rocket men' at the Manned Space Centre in Houston, Texas, where Al Worden, Apollo 15 command module pilot, took Elton, Dee Murray, Nigel Olsson and Davey Johnstone on a conducted tour of the NASA headquarters.

In April of this year, Elton was told that European Space Agency (ESA) astronaut André Kuipers had made a special point of playing **Rocket Man** over the airwaves of the International Space Station (ISS) on the song's fortieth anniversary. André said, *"This song has been an inspiration to many people who are interested in space, and especially those who wanted to become astronauts, including myself. It is certainly one of the most played songs here on the ISS, and we know it will accompany more astronauts into space in the future."*

Be sure to join in the celebration of this landmark anniversary.

**TICKETS FOR ALL SHOWS GO ON SALE MONDAY 6<sup>th</sup> AUGUST, 9AM (local time)**