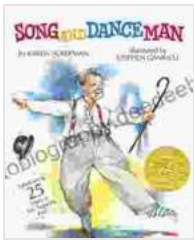


# Song and Dance Man: The Life and Legacy of Sammy Davis Jr.

Sammy Davis Jr. was a true Renaissance man of the entertainment world. He was a gifted singer, dancer, actor, and comedian. He was also a talented musician, playing the drums, piano, and guitar. Davis Jr. was a pioneer in the entertainment industry, breaking down racial barriers and paving the way for other African American performers.



## Song and Dance Man: (Caldecott Medal Winner)

(Dragonfly Books) by Karen Ackerman

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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Print length : 32 pages

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Item Weight : 16 ounces

Dimensions : 6.14 x 9.21 inches



## Early Life and Career

Sammy Davis Jr. was born in New York City on December 8, 1925. His father, Sammy Davis Sr., was a vaudeville performer, and his mother, Elvera Sanchez, was a dancer. Davis Jr. began performing at a young age, appearing in his father's act. He also studied tap dancing with Bill (“Bojangles”) Robinson, who became his mentor.

In the early 1940s, Davis Jr. began his own career as a solo performer. He appeared in several Broadway musicals, including "Mr. Wonderful" and "Porgy and Bess." He also starred in several films, including "Anna Lucasta" and "Carmen Jones." In 1954, Davis Jr. joined the Rat Pack, a group of entertainers that included Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Peter Lawford, and Joey Bishop. The Rat Pack became one of the most popular entertainment acts of the 1950s and 1960s.

## **Rat Pack Years**

Davis Jr. was a key member of the Rat Pack. He was the group's resident comedian, and he often performed duets with Sinatra. Davis Jr. also starred in several Rat Pack films, including "Ocean's Eleven" and "Sergeants 3." However, Davis Jr. was also a target of racism, and he was sometimes not allowed to perform in certain venues or appear on certain television shows.

## **Solo Career**

In the late 1960s, Davis Jr. left the Rat Pack to pursue a solo career. He starred in several films, including "Golden Boy" and "Sweet Charity." He also released several hit albums, including "The Sammy Davis Jr. Show" and "Sammy Davis Jr. Sings the Great American Songbook." Davis Jr. continued to perform into the 1980s, and he was one of the most popular entertainers in the world.

## **Personal Life**

Davis Jr. was married three times. His first marriage was to actress Loray White in 1958. They had one child, a daughter named Tracey. Davis Jr.'s second marriage was to Swedish actress May Britt in 1960. They had one

child, a son named Jeff. Davis Jr.'s third marriage was to Altovise Gore in 1970. They had one child, a daughter named Manny.

Davis Jr. was a close friend of Frank Sinatra, and he was a pallbearer at Sinatra's funeral in 1998. Davis Jr. also had a close friendship with Dean Martin, and he was a pallbearer at Martin's funeral in 1995.

## **Death and Legacy**

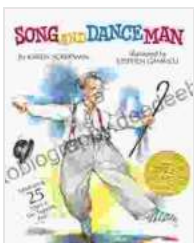
Sammy Davis Jr. died of throat cancer on May 16, 1990, at the age of 64. He was buried in the Forest Lawn Cemetery in Los Angeles. Davis Jr. was a true pioneer in the entertainment industry, breaking down racial barriers and paving the way for other African American performers. He was a multi-talented entertainer who excelled in singing, dancing, and acting. Davis Jr. was also a gifted comedian and musician. He was one of the most popular entertainers of the 20th century, and his legacy continues to inspire performers today.

## **Image Gallery**





Sammy Davis Jr. with the Rat Pack



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