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Tori Amos

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Article history

Last edit by **mathewsanders** today (31 August 2009 at 13:55)

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Tori Amos (born **Myra Ellen Amos** on **August 22, 1963**) is an **American pianist** and **singer-songwriter**. She was at the forefront of a number of female singer-songwriters in the early 1990s and was noteworthy early in her career as one of the few **alternative rock** performers to use a **piano** as her primary instrument. She is known for her emotionally intense songs that cover a wide range of subjects including **sexuality**, **religion** and personal **tragedy**. Some of her charting singles include "Crucify", "Silent All These Years", "God", "Cornflake Girl", "Caught a Lite Sneeze", "Professional Widow", "Spark", and "A Sorta Fairytale," her most commercially successful single in the U.S. to date.[1]

As of 2005, Amos had sold 12 million records worldwide.[2] Having a history of making eccentric and at times ribald comments during concerts and interviews, she has earned a reputation for being highly **idiosyncratic**. As a social commentator and sometimes activist, some of the topics she has been most vocal about include feminism, religion, and sexuality.

Musical beginnings (1963–1985)

When Amos was 2, her family moved to **Baltimore, Maryland**, where she began to play the piano. By age five, she had begun composing instrumental pieces on piano and, while living in **Rockville, Maryland**, she won a full scholarship to the Preparatory Division of the **Peabody Conservatory of Music** (still aged five). Her scholarship was discontinued at age 11 and she was asked to leave. Amos has asserted that she lost the scholarship because of her interest in **rock** and popular music, coupled with her dislike for reading from sheet music. Two years later, she began studying at **Montgomery College** and began playing at **piano bars**, chaperoned by her father, who was sending tapes of songs she had written to **record companies**.

Amos first came to local notice by winning a county teen talent contest in 1977, singing a song called "More Than Just a Friend". As a senior at **Richard Montgomery High School**, she co-wrote "Baltimore" with her brother Mike Amos for a competition involving the **Baltimore Orioles**. The song won the contest and became her first single, released as a 7" **single** pressed locally for family and friends during 1980 with another Amos-penned composition as a **B-side**, "Walking With You". Prior to this period she performed under her middle name, Ellen, but permanently adopted **Tori** after a friend's boyfriend told her it suited her.[3] At age 21, Amos moved to **Los Angeles** to pursue her music career, after several years performing on the piano bar circuit of the **East Coast**.

Atlantic years (1986-2001)

Y Kant Tori Read

That same year, Amos formed a music group, **Y Kant Tori Read**, the name of which was a reference to her days at the Peabody Conservatory, where she was able to play songs on her piano by ear, but was never successful at **sight reading**.[4] In addition to Amos, the group was composed of **Steve Caton** (who would later play guitars on all her subsequent albums until 1999), drummer **Matt Sorum**, bass player Brad Cobb and, for a short time, keyboardist Jim Tauber. A year later, **Atlantic Records** gave Amos a six record contract, and by July 1988, the band's self-titled debut album was released to poor reviews. The album is now out of print, and Amos has expressed no interest in reissuing it.[5] After the commercial failure, Amos began working with other artists (including **Stan Ridgway**, **Sandra Bernhard**, and **Al Stewart**) as a backup vocalist. She also recorded a song called "Distant Storm" for the film *China O'Brien*; in the credits, the song is attributed to a band called Tess Makes Good.[6] It was the only song recorded by the band, and its only commercial release was in the film.

Solo career

Despite the disappointing reaction to *Y Kant Tori Read*, Amos still had to comply with her six record contract with Atlantic Records, who in 1989 wanted a new record by March 1990. When she presented them with her initial recordings, they were rejected on the grounds that such piano-based music would not sell in an early-'90s market of **grunge**, **rock**, **rap**, and **dance music**. Extensively reworked and expanded with the help of **Steve Caton**, **Eric Rosse**, Will MacGregor, Carlo Nuccio, and Dan Nebenzal, the record ended up full of raw, emotive songs recounting her religious upbringing, sexual awakening, struggle to establish her identity, and her sexual assault. The Atlantic executives changed their minds upon hearing the updated version, with the plan to promote her as an heir to **Joni Mitchell** and **Laura Nyro**, or alternatively as a female version of **Elton John**. Expecting the traditionally more open-minded UK market to warm to Amos and to create a "buzz" with which to return to the US, Atlantic relocated Amos to Britain in early 1991 to play small clubs in preparation for the launch of the new album, which was released under the title *Little Earthquakes*.

Tori Amos

Tori Amos in 2009

Background information

Birth name: Myra Ellen Amos

Born: August 22, 1963 (age 46)
Newton, North Carolina

Genre(s): Alternative rock, Baroque Pop, Electronica, Piano Rock

Occupation(s): Musician, vocalist, songwriter, record producer

Instrument(s): Piano, harpsichord, clavichord, Hammond organ, harmonium, Fender Rhodes, Wurlitzer, Kurzweil, clavinet, vocals

Voice type(s): Soprano

Years active: 1990– (solo career)

Label(s): Atlantic (1988–2001), Epic (2002–2008), Rhino (2006), Universal Republic (2009–)

Website: toriamos.com, everysomethingtori.com

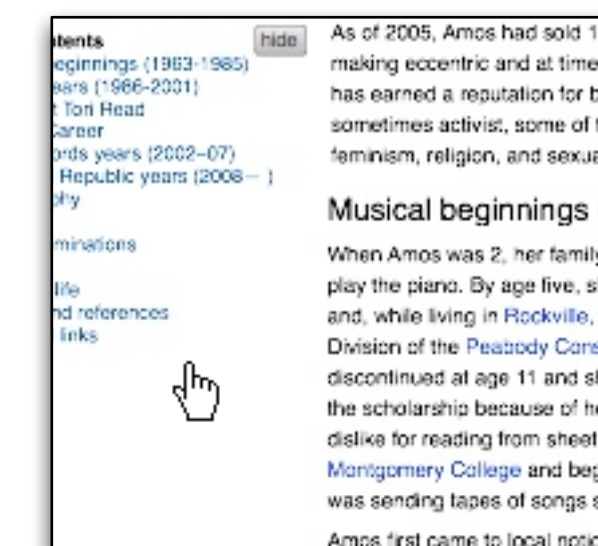
Notable instrument(s): Bösendorfer piano

Wireframe notes

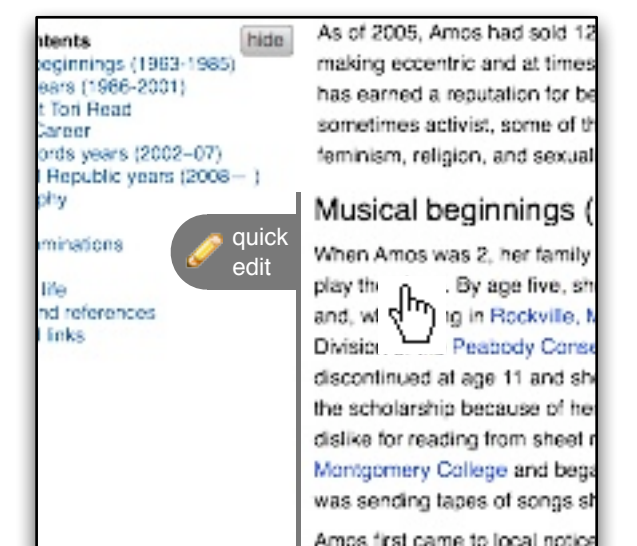
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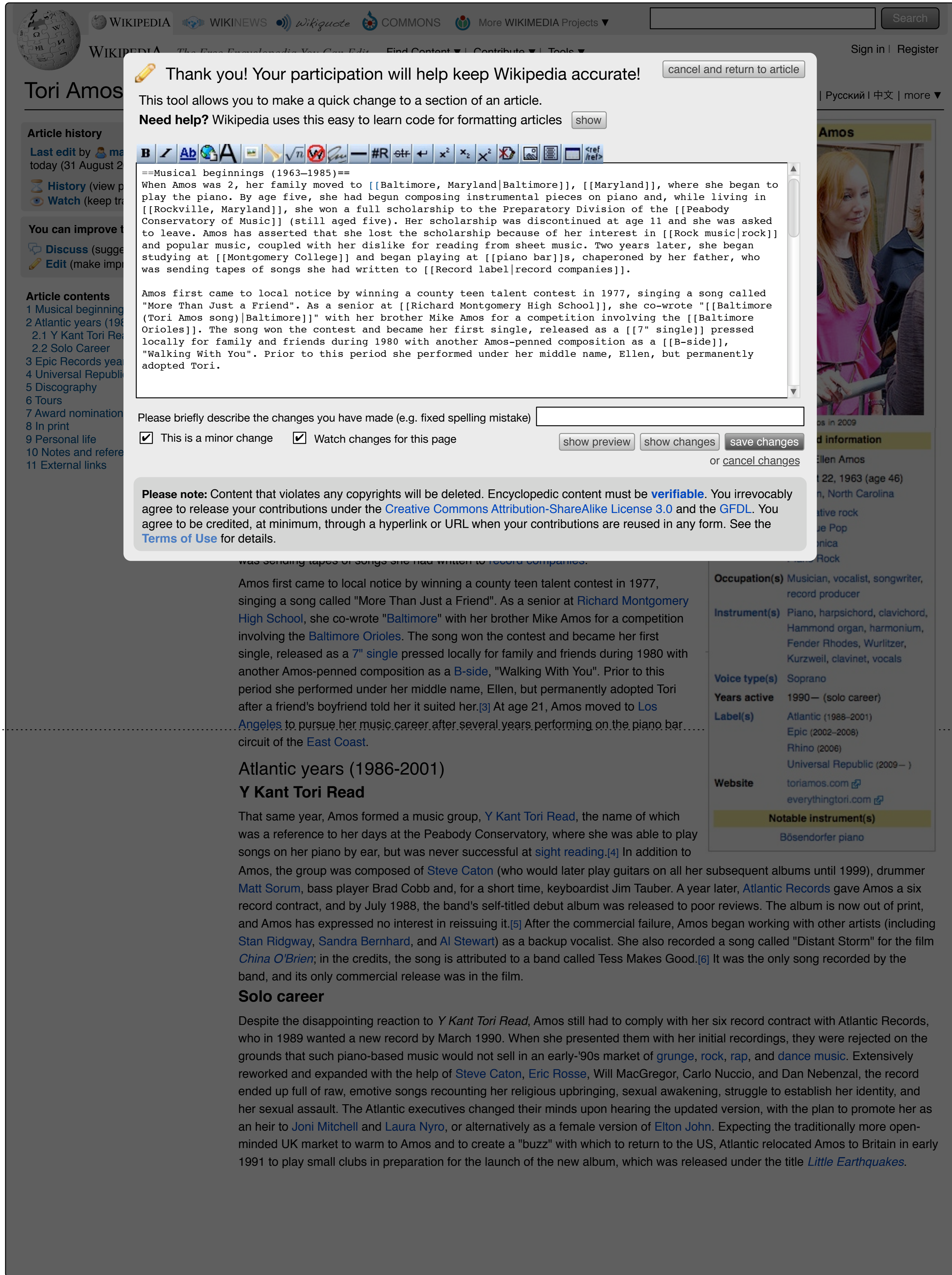
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For articles that include a contents, present this outside of the article text, as this is generated automatically from the subheadings in the article and adds confusion in the proposed changes to the editing model.
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Mouse cursor over editable text





Wireframe notes

Quick Edit Thick Box

One barrier to participation may be that people become nervous when they click the edit button and see an entire page of strange code of formatting markup. To help lower the barrier to simple participation, like fixing spelling mistakes, grammatical errors and typos it's proposed that a lightbox interface allow for a quick edit of section content.

This allows people to feel like they are remaining on the article page, and they have not navigated away to a special area they do not belong. If they are uncomfortable, it's clear that they can return back to the article they were just reading.

Expanded formatting guide

A formatting guide can be expanded to show the markup. It's proposed that a WYSIWYG editor is not used, as we should be helping people from an early stage become comfortable with the markup rules in small steps rather than hiding it entirely.

Markup text area

Importantly, the text area where markup is entered has a clear affordance of being an editable space. Contrast between the background and the text area help indicate that this is an area to update text.

