

Christian Music Industry Mourns Loss of John Paculabo

Christian music pioneer and worship champion John Paculabo died Jan. 22 in Eastbourne, England, after a six-month battle with cancer. The managing director of Kingsway for more than 20 years was 66.

"The impact of his vision and legacy will continue to be felt through the worship of local churches on a global scale," Kingsway officials said. "Even though we know he ran a good race (2 Tim.4: 6-8), we miss him dearly."

Originally from Liverpool, England, Paculabo was signed by Kingsway in 1971 as an artist/writer with his band Parchment. A year later, the group enjoyed mainstream chart success with the single "Light Up the Fire," a song which is still being used in school assemblies throughout Britain.

In 1976, Paculabo was appointed A&R manager of Pilgrim Records, where he produced hundreds of albums. In the 1980s, he moved into copyright acquisition and management, relocating to Eastbourne in 1988 to accept a position at Kingsway as director of music.

Within two years, he became managing director. In 2008, Paculabo received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Christian Booksellers Convention—the main Christian product trade show in the U.K.

"John's gentle spirit, relaxed approach, great sense of humor and love of people was matched by his desire to live with purpose and passion, with a tenacity to see lives transformed," Kingsway officials said. "John was much loved and respected, particularly for his ability to empower, support and serve others with humility. ... He was a dedicated visionary who was determined to mentor and develop

songwriters.”

Paculabo established Thankyou Music as a global publisher, working in partnership with Capitol CMG Publishing. He is credited with helping inspire worship songs such as “In Christ Alone,” “All Heaven Declares,” “Here I Am To Worship,” “Everlasting God,” “Blessed Be Your Name” and “Heart of Worship.”

Through the years, his focus was global song development, seeking to discover indigenous songwriters from around the world. Paculabo was passionate about worship and justice, which led him and his wife, Juliet, to launch Ray of Hope. Over the last 10 years, the charity has brought education, healthcare and pastoral guidance to thousands of lives across the Amazon basin and established more than 14 schools and a community center. It has also planted pepper plantations and funded pastors to go into the deepest parts of the Amazon jungle to evangelize the unreached.

Paculabo is survived by his wife of 33 years, three children and one grandchild.