

# INTRODUCTION CHANGING WORLD

**RECORD BREAKING IS AS OLD AS HUMANITY ITSELF. IT'S AMAZING TO SEE HOW MUCH SOME WORLD RECORDS HAVE CHANGED OVER THE YEARS – AND HOW LITTLE SOME HAVE ALTERED...**

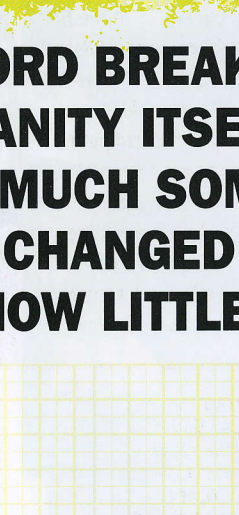
## MOST EXPENSIVE PAINTINGS



**The Magdalen Reading**  
Artist: Unknown  
Date painted: before 1438  
Date of sale: 1746  
**£6,500 (2008:  
\$1,823,940)**



**The Sistine Madonna (above)**  
Artist: Raphael  
Date painted: 1513–14  
Date of sale: 1759  
**£8,500 (2008:  
\$2,269,104)**



**Adoration of the Lamb (right)**  
Artist: Van Eyck  
Date painted: 1432  
Date of sale: 1821  
**£16,000 (2008:  
\$2,232,510)**



**The Immaculate Conception**  
Artist: Murillo  
Date painted: 1660–65  
Date of sale: 1852  
**£24,600 (2008:  
\$4,083,524)**

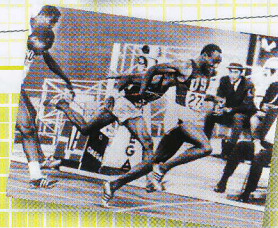
## FASTEST 100 M

**Don Lippincott (USA)**  
Date: July 6, 1912  
Location: Stockholm, Sweden  
**10.6 SEC**



**Jesse Owens (USA, left)**  
Date: June 20, 1936  
Location: Chicago, Illinois, USA  
**10.2 SEC**

**Armin Hary (West Germany)**  
Date: June 21, 1960  
Location: Zürich; Switzerland  
**10.0 SEC**



**Jim Hines (USA, above)**  
Date: October 14, 1968  
Location: Mexico City, Mexico  
**9.95 SEC**

**Leroy Burrell (USA)**  
Date: June 14, 1991  
Location: New York City, USA  
**9.9 SEC**

## PROGRESSIVE SPEED

**Sled**  
Date: ca. 6500 BC  
Location: Heinola, Finland  
**25 MPH (40 KM/H)**

**Horse**  
Date: ca. 1400 BC  
Location: Anatolia, Turkey  
**35 MPH (55 KM/H)**

**Ice yacht**  
Date: ca. AD 1600  
Location: The Netherlands  
**50 MPH (80 KM/H)**

**Downhill skier**  
Date: March 1873  
Location: La Porte, California, USA  
Tommy Todd (USA)  
**87.8 MPH (141.3 KM/H)**

**Midland Railway 4-2-2**  
Date: March 1897  
Location: Ampthill, Bedford, UK  
**90 MPH (144.8 KM/H)**

**Messerschmitt 163V-1**  
Date: October 2, 1941  
Location: Peenemünde, Germany  
Heinz Dittmar (Germany)  
**623.85 MPH (1,004 KM/H)**

## LARGEST CONURBATIONS

YEAR	CITY/PRESENT LOCATION	POPULATION
ca. 27000 BC	Dolní Věstonice, Czech Republic	>100
3000 BC	Uruk (Erech; now Warka), Iraq	50,000
2200 BC	Greater Ūr (now Tell el-Muqayyar), Iraq	250,000
133 BC	Rome, Italy	1,100,000
AD 900	Angkor, Cambodia	1,500,000
1578	Peking (now Beijing), China	707,000
1801	Greater London, UK	1,117,290
1925	New York City, USA	7,774,000
1939	Greater London, UK	8,615,050
1985	Tokyo, Japan	11,600,069
2003	Tokyo, Japan	26,546,000
2020 (projection)	Tokyo, Japan	>37,000,000

## TALLEST STRUCTURES

**Djoser Step Pyramid**  
Location: Saqqāra, Egypt  
Built: ca. 2650 BC  
**204 FT (62 M)**

**Great Pyramid of Cheops**  
Location: El Gizeh, Egypt  
Built: ca. 2580 BC  
**480 FT 10 IN (146.5 M)**

**St Paul's Cathedral**  
Location: London, UK  
Built: 1315–1561  
**489 FT (149 M)\***

\*Original spire destroyed by lightning, June 4, 1561



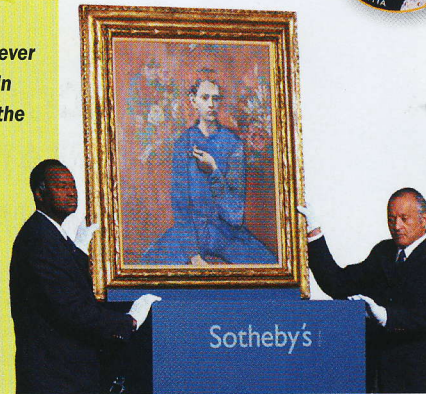
# BEST-SELLING SINGLE

Although no exact figures are available, it has been estimated that sales of the song "White Christmas," written by Irving Berlin (USA, b. Israel Baline, Russia), exceed 100 million copies worldwide when 78s, 45s, and albums are taken into account.



"White Christmas" was listed as the world's best-selling single in the first-ever Guinness Book of Records (published in 1955) and – remarkably – still retains the title more than 50 years later.

Bing Crosby (USA, pictured) is the artist most closely associated with the song. He originally recorded it on May 29, 1942, but his re-recording (on March 18, 1947) has become the best-known version. The song has been a Yuletide favorite ever since.



# ALTITUDE (SINCE 1900)

**248,655 MILES (400,171 KM)**

Holder/vehicle: crew of US Apollo 13: Capt. James A. Lovell Jr; Frederick W. Haise Jr; John L. Swigert Jr (all USA).  
Date: April 15, 1970

**234,672 MILES (377,667 KM)**

Holder/vehicle: crew of US Apollo 8 command module: Col Frank Borman; Capt. James A. Lovell Jr; Maj. William A. Anders (all USA).  
Date: December 25, 1968

**203.2 MILES (327 KM)**

Holder/vehicle: Maj. Yuri A. Gagarin (USSR) in Vostok 1.  
Date: April 12, 1961

**169,600 FT (51,694 M)**

Holder/vehicle: Joseph Walker (USA) in US X-15 rocket plane.  
Date: March 30, 1961

**126,200 FT (38,465 M)**

Holder/vehicle: Capt. Iven C. Kincheloe Jr (USA) in US Bell X-2 rocket plane.  
Date: September 7, 1956

**79,600 FT (24,262 M)**

Holder/vehicle: William B. Bridgeman (USA) in US Douglas D558-11 Skyrocket.  
Date: August 15, 1951

**72,395 FT (22,066 M)**

Holder/vehicle: Capt. Orville A. Anderson and Capt. Albert W. Stevens (both USA) in US Explorer II helium balloon.  
Date: November 11, 1935

**51,961 FT (15,837 M)**

Holder/vehicle: Prof. Auguste Piccard and Paul Kipfer (both Switzerland) in FNRS 1 balloon.  
Date: May 27, 1931

**36,565 FT (11,145 M)**

Holder/vehicle: Sadi Lecoq (France) in Nieuport aircraft.  
Date: October 30, 1923

### The Colonna Altarpiece

Artist: Raphael  
Date painted: 1503–05  
Date of sale: 1901  
**£100,000**  
**(2008: \$15,567,416)**

### Irises

Artist: Van Gogh  
Date painted: 1889  
Date of sale: 1987  
**\$53,900,000**  
**(2008: \$98,377,938)**

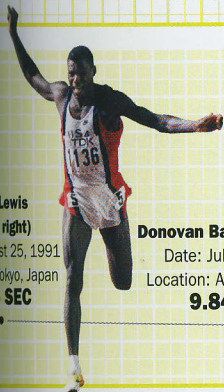
### Garçon à la Pipe\*

Artist: Picasso  
Date painted: 1905  
Date of sale: 2004 (above)  
**\$104,200,000**  
**(2008: \$114,372,876)**

\*In November 2006, it was reported that Jackson Pollock's painting No. 5 (1948) had been sold by David Geffen (USA) for \$140 million. However, as there has still been no definitive confirmation of the sale, the sale price, or even the buyer, GWR still recognizes Garçon à la Pipe as history's most expensive painting.

### Carl Lewis

(USA, right)  
Date: August 25, 1991  
Location: Tokyo, Japan  
**9.86 SEC**



### Donovan Bailey (Canada)

Date: July 29, 1996  
Location: Atlanta, Georgia  
**9.84 SEC**

### Maurice Greene (USA)

Date: June 16, 1999  
Location: Athens, Greece  
**9.79 SEC**

### Asafa Powell

(Jamaica, right)  
Date: June 14, 2005  
Location: Athens, Greece  
**9.77 SEC**



### Usain Bolt (Jamaica)

Date: May 31, 2008  
Location: New York, USA  
**9.72 SEC**

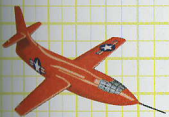
### USAF Bell XS-1

Date: October 14, 1947  
Location: Murdoc Dry Lake, California, USA  
Capt. C. E. Yeager (USA)  
**670 MPH (1,078 KM/H)**



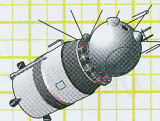
### North American X-15

Date: March 7, 1961  
Location: Murdoc Dry Lake, California, USA  
Maj. R. M. White (USA)  
**2,905 MPH**  
**(4,675.1 KM/H)**



### Vostok 1

Date: April 12, 1961  
Location: Earth orbit  
Maj. Y. A. Gagarin (USSR)  
**CA. 17,560 MPH**  
**(28,260 KM/H)**



### Apollo 10

Date: May 26, 1969  
Location: Re-entry into Earth's atmosphere  
Crew of Apollo 10 (USA)  
**24,790.8 MPH (39,897 KM/H)**



### Warszawa Radio Mast

Location: Plock, Poland  
Built: 1974  
**2,120 FT**  
**(646 M)\***



### Ursa Tension Leg Platform

Location: Gulf of Mexico  
Built: 1998  
**4,285 FT**  
**(1,306 M)**



### Empire State Building

Location: New York City, USA  
Built: 1929–30  
**1,250 FT**  
**(381 M)**



### Chrysler Building

Location: New York City, USA  
Built: 1929–30  
**1,046 FT**  
**(318 M)**



### Eiffel Tower

Location: Paris, France  
Built: 1887–89  
**985 FT 10 IN**  
**(300.5 M)**



\*Fell during renovation, 1991

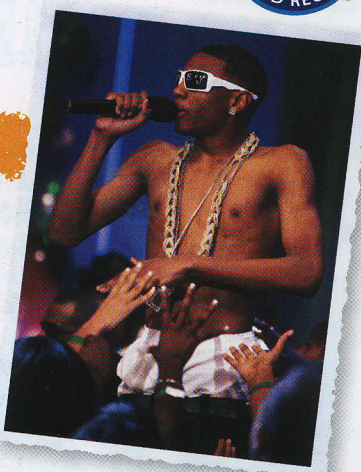


- ★ NEW RECORD
- ★ UPDATED RECORD

## BEST-SELLERS

### BEST-SELLING ALBUM

The year 2007 marked the 25th anniversary of the first release of Michael Jackson's (USA) 1982 album *Thriller*. At that time, estimations from Sony and the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) put sales at over



55 million copies, although Jackson's management claim that international sales have pushed the total worldwide figure to over 100 million. While it is impossible to verify the final global sales, there is no doubt that it remains the biggest-selling album of all time.

### BEST-SELLING SINGLE SINCE CHARTS BEGAN

Elton John's (UK) "Candle In The Wind 1997/Something About The Way You Look Tonight" is the biggest-selling single since UK and US singles charts began in the 1950s, having accumulated worldwide sales of 33 million copies. As of October 20, 1997, the single had also reached No.1 in 22 countries.

(The **best-selling single of all time** was released before the first pop charts – see pp.14–15.)

### ★ BEST-SELLING DOWNLOAD SINGLE IN THE USA IN ONE YEAR

"Crank That (Soujla Boy)" by 17-year-old Chicago, USA, rapper Soujla Boy Tellem (born DeAndre Cortez Way) sold an unprecedented 2.7 million downloads in 2007.



## THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON

On April 12, 2008, Pink Floyd's (UK) album *The Dark Side Of The Moon* spent its 1,600th week on the US best-sellers charts – over 35 years after making its debut at No.95 on March 17, 1973, making it the album with the **longest stay on the US album charts**. The *Dark Side Of The Moon's* chart run straddles two charts: The Billboard 200 and the Top Pop Catalog chart, to which albums move when they are more than 18 months old and have fallen below position 100 on The Billboard 200. It is estimated that the album has sold over 40 million copies worldwide.

### ★ MOST UK CHART ENTRIES IN ONE YEAR BY THE SAME ARTIST

In 2006, Michael Jackson (USA) notched up 19 UK chart hits, more than any other act in one year. The singles, re-issued as part of Jackson's *Visionary – The Video Singles* box set, were released from February 25 to July 1, 2006. All 19 tracks made the Top 40.

### ★ LONGEST TIME-SPAN BETWEEN UK NO.1 SINGLES

A re-issue of Elvis Presley's (USA) "It's Now Or Never" hit No.1 in the UK singles chart in 2005, 48 years after "All Shook Up" took the top spot in 1957.

## BIGGEST-SELLING BOY BAND ALBUM

The Backstreet Boys' (USA) *Millennium* album, released in 1999, had sales of 13 million by March 2001. The record entered the US Billboard 200 album chart at No.1 in June 1999. It sold 1,134,000 copies in its first week, shattering Garth Brooks's one-week sales world record.

