



UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP



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QUEEN: Zeitzeugen, Musikerkollegen und Freunde erinnern sich an 40 Jahre Queen:

"We aimed for the top slot and we were not going to be satisfied with anything less."
Freddie Mercury

Paul Rodgers, who was front-man for the band Free at the time recalls his first encounter with Queen in the early 70's

I was going in to see my manager Peter Grant at the time and we met on the stairs and said a quick hello, and I had the impression of a really nice set of guys, really intelligence, and I mean even from a distance there was an intelligence coming from their camp you know because I heard that they were one of the only bands that I ever heard of that got their degrees before they turned professional.

Although the record only reached No.24 in the UK Chart, the band already had a very strong sense of style, in part down to the costumes that they had - specially made, by up & coming British designer Zandra Rhodes.

To me, working with Freddie and the band, to me, they were really very very easy. I got a call – I can't remember if it was Freddie himself who phoned, - but I made the appointment. And I think at the time the band were already very, very popular. But needless to say, I hate to admit it, but of course I always had to ask anyone who works for me who they were. And I only had a big, I had a sort of workroom, which was like two rooms in the top of a house, where I had the machines on one side and the dress rails and a cutting table. And so I asked them to come in the evening, so he came with Brian, and really and truly what we did was I realised if someone phoned me up for an outfit they already had an idea that they wanted something Zandra Rhodesy, so I'd get different things down off of the rail for them to try on and wear. I'd been working very experimentally at the time with pleating, so I had some wonderful dresses with little tiny bodices with lace on them that I designed, and then wonderful pleated sleeves. And what I was concerned about was – I'd say to Freddie 'Try this on', y'know. It would be a lady's blouse, or a lady's top, and I'd say 'Try it on and see if that's how you want to be on the stage? Does it feel good? Look in front of the mirror. Do you feel happy when you're wearing it?'

In 1974 the band released their second album Queen II, and had their first top 10 single, Seven Seas of Rhye, which evokes special memories for George Michael.

I totally remember the first time I heard Queen because it was my 7th birthday and on my 7th birthday I got one of those little 5 button cassette players and did what everyone used to which was The Chart show, you would sit there with the microphone in front of the radio and record your favourite tracks from the Top 20, so erm I think the first thing I recorded was the Seven Seas of Rhye, and I loved that record... and I think the second single I bought was Killer Queen.

This record was a success both in Britain and contained their first proper hit single, Killer Queen a favourite of Wet Wet Wet frontman and West End theatre star Marti Pellow.

My first memory of Queen would be at the school disco, when I was a very, very young boy, and I remember hearing Killer Queen coming out the speakers, and it just absolutely blew my mind. Y'know, the sound and production of it. I mean I never knew about production and stuff like that. But y'know, the whole sound of the record was just so exciting. It made my hair stand on end, y'know, it was so powerful. And that made me explore. After that I went down to Woolworths and started buying Queen records.

Instantly recognizable by his luxurious head of hair and unique guitar sound, Brian May is one of the most iconic 'axe-men' of his generation. To open the Queen's 2002 Golden Jubilee celebration he memorably performed his own arrangement of God Save The Queen on the roof of Buckingham Palace as Fun Loving Criminals front-man and fellow guitarist Huey Morgan well remembers.

From a guitar standpoint a lot of the stuff that Brian May does is so revolutionary that you can't really nail something down and go that's really supercool, everything he did was supercool! He built his own guitar with his dad, so he has this sort of unique sound and anytime you hear him play guitar, you know it's him. And that's, I guess, a trademark of a musician like, you know, of a highest degree. And besides that he's played guitar on top of Buckingham Palace, not many people have done that. I know Slash wants to but I don't think he's gunna. No offence, Slash, but you're not gunna, but Brian did.

As the 1970's came to a close the band dabbled with a Rock & Roll pastiche with Crazy Little Thing Called Love, which became a No.1 hit in the USA. At the same time the band underwent a change in image, most notably Freddie - who cut short his hair and by 1980 had grown that famous Mercury moustache. Fashion Designer Zandra Rhodes remembers what she thought of the change.

I think that the only thing that you can rely on – in fashion – the only constant is change. Fashion will always change. I think that Queen went on from height to height. What he wore looked right for each particular moment of time. So at every period, I think what they wore looked right, and I epitomized an early period for them.

Here's a big Roger Taylor fan... Robson Green..

For me it was Roger Taylor I mean he was, he was kind of, I know everybody says Freddie was the driving force behind the band but he has to be driven and Roger Taylor did that and he was so in tune and if Freddie would wonder off and Brian would off on one and John had decided you to just go off on a solo Roger would just keep up with it but then would draw them all back. He was the one controlling the whole band, in my opinion.

Also performing that day, in fact opening the whole event for the Wembley Crowd was Status Quo, It's a day Francis Rossi and Rick Parfitt will never forget.

Well what actually happened on the day was – we were really looking forward to it, it was the biggest audience that we'd ever played to at the time. And we were looking forward to seeing everybody. And Queen - Cos we knew Queen really quite well, we were kind of mates with them, y'know. And unfortunately, we did our thing, and I don't remember anymore [Francis Laughs] because we, er, we had a big day out and a glass of wine.

I remember seeing the footage back and just being pleased that we opened and didn't have to follow Queen, and I forget who did follow them, but [Francis – 'Yeah, a damp squid after Queen'] It took a bit of doing, but they just stole the show, without a shadow of a doubt.

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Robson Green on Queen at LiveAid:

I think the Queen performance kind of overrode the actual issue I mean people said it was their comeback but we were just being reminded everyone of how great they were and now when people mention Live Aid, it's in brackets (QUEEN) and their performance, Radio Gaga, Bohemian Rhapsody and you are just reminded what great musicians they are, both emotionally and technically, and how good they were together and how much they loved what they were doing. There was a real love for each other there and that's really enjoyable to watch.

Queen were back and the following year they released their 14th Studio album A Kind Of Magic, from which came Who Wants To Live Forever – which was the theme to the movie Highlander- actress Kara Tointon:

I think my favourite song, however kind of morbid and upsetting really, but it's 'Who Wants to Live Forever'. And it always kind of brings a tear to my eye. It's a beautiful song, but I think every song that Queen has ever produced is just so moving – it has a storyline, it gets you. . . .it gets you right there, if that makes sense. And they'll always be my favourite band.

One thing George Michael admired about his fellow front man was the way Freddie handled the limelight
I think he handled it great, and he had a sense of humour which I think is what got him through it you know, I never heard him complain about, he never winged on about fame the way I do (laughs)

So it would seem that Queen are just as relevant now as they were 40 years ago, influencing emerging artists and entertaining crowds in theatres all over the UK and around the world with We Will Rock.. Marti Pellow

I think that Queens testament to their music that is that it has longevity and that's something as a songwriter that you always crave, that can span decades. And their music isn't about yesterday, and I say that about great songwriters, it's about tomorrow as well. And them branching off into musical theatre – the success of We Will Rock You has managed to broaden the horizon to many different. . . a whole different audience. And there's still been people turned on by their music constantly. So I think Queen have brung a lot to the table – to the British music scene as well as on an international level.

But how must they be feeling, 40 years on.. George Michael again

I think they must feel incredibly blessed in the same way I do, I don't know quite how I'll feel about 30 years until it happens but 30 years. . . it just doesn't feel possible, and I'm sure they feel the same and of course I'm sure they wish Freddie was here to feel that same feeling of pride but god knows he's still here with us in every other sense they're still all over the radio their catalogue still sells belief, and I know he'd be really happy with that.

<http://www.queenonline.com/>

QUEEN: News Of The World, Jazz, The Game, Flash Gordon, Hot Space & Deep Cuts Vol. 2 erscheinen als Original Album und Deluxe Versionen mit Bonus Tracks

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