

Queen: The Band that Influenced the Music Industry

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The world of music is ever changing. Artists come and go quickly, but it's rare to see a band so influential and relevant long after they form. The British rock band Queen is one of those rare cases, forming more than 50 years ago and still holding the title as one of the greatest bands of all time.

Freddie Mercury, Brian May, Roger Taylor, and John Deacon formed the famous rock band Queen in London, England, 1970. Queen recorded four songs, and the hopeful band searched high and low for a record label to sign them but came out empty-handed. The band was unsuccessful in their desperate search for a label for 2 years until Elektra Records signed them in 1973, producing their first album: Queen (History-biography, 2022, p. 4). The album was well received by critics, but generally unsuccessful with the public. Queen then had a breakthrough after they released their third album, Sheer Heart Attack. This album offered something that no other rock album had; a combination of opera and heavy rock into one album (Cardenas, 2019, p. 7-8).

Queen produced hit albums and songs for the rest of their career, including Bohemian Rhapsody, the most streamed song from the pre-streaming era, and the most

streamed classic rock song of all time (Steele, 2018, p. 2). This song changed the norm for what rock music was. A six-minute-long song that changes styles, keys, and tempos numerous times throughout the song, ranging from soft ballads to opera to hard-rock (Steele, 2018, p. 3), the song was like nothing anyone had heard before.

The band was legendary because it broke the boundaries of the classic rock scene, not only with their music, but also with their presentation. They confronted social norms head on. The lead singer of Queen, Freddie Mercury, explored his sexuality, masculinity, and identity fluidly and openly, something that few artists had truly done before. During their concerts, Mercury would use this time to be proudly flamboyant and eccentric, giving him an outlet to express how he felt (Cardenas, 2019, p. 3). Queen created a space for anyone who is different to come alive and embrace what makes them special.

Many artists who came after Queen have described them as their greatest influence. Artists, including but not limited to Guns N' Roses, Metallica, Nirvana, Red Hot Chili Peppers, and Radiohead, have all drawn inspiration from Queen in terms of sound, stage presence, and style (Cardenas, 2019, p. 13). Brenden Urie, the lead singer of Panic! At The Disco, a pop-punk band formed 13 years after the tragic death of Mercury, and 9 years after their final album was released, was heavily influenced by Queen (Baltin, 2019, p. 14). "I did drums, background vocals and the background vocals I was

playing different characters, I was doing operatic Queen stuff for songs like 'Victorious' and 'Emperor's New Clothes'" (Baltin, 2019, p. 14). Tom Chaplin, the frontman of Keane, stated that "The [band] that had probably the biggest impact on me certainly growing up was the Queen," (Baltin, 2019, p. 16). Chaplin took great inspiration from Queen, and admired Mercury. "I basically for many, many years just wanted to be Freddie Mercury, probably still do in many respects" (Baltin, 2019, p. 16).

Queen was not only popular for their music, but also in the film industry. *Bohemian Rhapsody*, a biopic about Queen that was made in 2018, became the most popular and highest grossing music biopic in history, just five weeks after it was released (Steele, 2018, p. 10). Since its release in 2018, the film has grossed over \$910 million USD, information courtesy of Box Office Mojo. The film was so popular that it won several awards, two major awards being the Golden Globe Award for Best Motion Picture Drama, and the Academy Award for Best Actor, Rami Malek (Hertz, 2019, p. 3)

Queen has unarguably left a tremendous legacy in music history, shaping decades of the rock and even pop world. They experimented with genre, style, identity, and sexuality, and opened people's eyes to new possibilities for what the music world could sound and look like. They have kept their relevancy for more than 50 years, and without them, artists that the world knows and loves today may never have found their sound without the inspiration of Queen. In years that have passed and years to come,

Queen will forever be legendary and a staple in music history, making them one of the greatest bands of all time.

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