

To be released in North American November 4, 2016 on Hollywood Records and on Virgin EMI for all other territories.

Tune in to…

Queen On Air

The Complete BBC Radio Sessions

Available as 2-CD set and 3-LP set

Collector’s Edition 6-CD set

with added live concert broadcasts

and radio interviews

“I heard it on my radio”

Queen’s meteoric ascendancy during the 1970s has been well documented. From their gloriously ambitious self-titled debut album of 1973 through to the album that put them in the superstar bracket, 1975’s A Night At The Opera, and beyond, this unique group carved out a singular path as the most visionary, inventive and charismatic band of that epic decade.

But there is another side to Queen’s rise that has been largely overlooked. Between February 1973 and October 1977, the band recorded six radio sessions exclusively for the BBC. The twenty four recordings these landmark sessions produced include alternate versions of the debut single, unique takes of classic album tracks and even a radically reworked reimagining of one of their best known anthems that has never previously appeared on any Queen studio release.

Now, for the very first time, all six Queen BBC sessions - meticulously restored by Queen engineer Kris Fredriksson and mastered by Grammy Award winner Adam Ayan - have been brought together on Queen On Air, released on November 4 by Virgin EMI. North America through Hollywood Records. Available as a 2-CD set and a 3-LP vinyl edition, plus a Deluxe 6-disc edition featuring a CD of live broadcasts and 3 CDs of radio interviews, Queen On Air is an essential addition for connoisseurs of the band.

Queen On Air is more than just a collection of rare recordings – it is a glorious snapshot of the growth of a legend.

Queen’s very first session for the BBC, which opens Queen On Air, dates from February 1973, five months before the release of the band’s debut album and single. Imagine that you are listening to the radio in early 1973; no-one in the world has heard any Queen recordings EVER! John Peel plays My Fairy King, the very first Queen song to be broadcast on radio anywhere, and the story begins. He follows with Keep Yourself Alive (the song which later became their first single), the laidback Doing All Right and the epic rock operetta Liar – all of which serve notice of the arrival of a major new musical force.

The band returned to the BBC for their second session in July 1973, the same month their debut album was released. Revisiting Keep Yourself Alive and Liar, this time they also covered the heavy-as-lead Son And Daughter and the bluesy See What A Fool I’ve Been. The latter, which has never appeared on any Queen studio album, would later be re-recorded and become the B-side of their breakthrough hit single Seven Seas Of Rhye in 1974.

By the time Queen recorded their third BBC session in December 1973, they had already begun work on their second album, Queen II (eventually released in March 1974). The band premiered a new song which would feature on that album, Ogre Battle, alongside three classics from its predecessor, the galloping Great King Rat, the Roger Taylor-sung Modern Times Rock’n’Roll and a new version of Son And Daughter. Two more Queen II songs were recorded during a subsequent session in April 1974 – the epic White Queen (As It Began) and the delicate ballad Nevermore, alongside a re-recorded Modern Times Rock’n’Roll.

Queen’s penultimate session for the BBC took place in October 1974, a month before the release of their classic third album, Sheer Heart Attack. The session saw the debut of four songs from that record: the dazzling Now I’m Here, the proto-heavy metal attack of Stone Cold Crazy, the caustic Flick Of The Wrist and Tenement Funster, their celebration of the rock’n’roll lifestyle.

It would be another three years before Queen returned to the BBC for their sixth and final session, by which time the success of Bohemian Rhapsody had turned them into a global phenomenon.

On October 28th 1977, they recorded some radically different versions of four songs from the brand new News Of The World album, on the same day as it was given its UK release: the epic power ballad Spread Your Wings, the steel-plated rocker It’s Late, the dusky jazz number My Melancholy Blues and two significantly contrasting renditions of the global hit We Will Rock You – the ‘regular’ version and the ‘fast’ version, a full-tilt guitar-heavy take on the song. The accelerated version on Queen On Air is the only known studio recording of this live favourite. “’We Will Rock You’ – profundity or just another teenage anthem!?”, remarks John Peel on playing the track. Peel is the person who famously once said (on air) of the band, “I’ve never seen them live. I must admit I’d like to – a band that sounds like nutters, actually, and I like that because I like rock music to sound a little out of control.”

To complete the full picture, the 6-CD Deluxe Edition includes Queen Live On Air – a single disc featuring highlights of three live concert broadcasts: Queen live at the Golders Green Hippodrome, from September 1973, their first concert to be transmitted on radio anywhere in the world. Also, Queen performing in Brazil at Sao Paulo’s gigantic Morumbi stadium to a record-setting audience of 131,000 originally relayed live on radio and TV in March 1981 on the Badeirantes network during the band’s infamous South America Bites The Dust tour. Finally, Queen’s penultimate live concert radio broadcast. Aired less than four weeks before their last show with Freddie, this was a live emission from the show in Mannheim Germany, in June 1986 during the mighty Magic Tour.

The set further offers a captivating selection of radio interviews with both the whole band and the individual members at various points between 1976 and 1992. Queen On Air: The Interviews (3 CDs) delivers a compelling three and a half hour distillation of revealing encounters recorded for the BBC and Capital Radio in London between 1976-1992.

Spanning 220 minutes, the seventeen interviews represent significant landmarks in the Queen story. Talking with some of Britain’s best known broadcasters and presenters, the band reflect on various moments in their musical history, influences and aspirations, and provide some memorable quotes, such as Roger Taylor’s now famous description of Queen’s 1984 Works tour as having “more lights and spectacle than the Vatican”.

On a more serious note, from June 1982, Brian discusses the Hot Space album and explains why the non-compromising anti-gun song Put Out the Fire is immediately followed on the album by Life is Real (Freddie’s song for John Lennon).

Elsewhere, in a 1981 interview recorded during the band’s South American adventure, John Deacon provides some rare insight into some of the more unusual demands of the tour, including why it was necessary to fly in 75 tons of stage equipment and an entire football pitch-worth of Astro turf.

Roger is interviewed by Richard Skinner and Tommy Vance in 1979 and 1980 to promote the new Queen albums of the time, Live Killers and Flash Gordon respectively, and in a BBC Radio 1 interview with Simon Bates in 1985, Freddie (drinking vodka while the host sips tea!) talks candidly about the public perception of him, about playing ‘rock and roll dodgems’, his image, private life, and working with Michael Jackson and David Bowie.

Freddie, as he was generally accustomed to doing, steals the show again during a 1976 encounter with his friend Kenny Everett, on his Capital Radio programme. The host attempts to throw his guest off balance by handing him a weather report to read out on air, without warning, while Freddie does his utmost to maintain his composure.

Queen On Air also provides us with the very last interview Brian, John, Freddie and Roger would give together. Being interviewed for a ‘Queen For An Hour' special with BBC Radio 1’s Mike Read to promote the new album The Miracle and broadcast during the May Bank Holiday weekend of 1989, Read makes the most of his one hour with Queen by cajoling all kinds of details from his guests and covering significant and often enthralling ground. Rare candor emerges, particularly from Freddie, as well as poignant and amusing moments. Aside from discussing the recently recorded new tracks, there is mention of Aretha Franklin, George Michael, Montserrat Caballé, Smokey Robinson, John Lennon and Jimi Hendrix, before moving on to what could be expected next from Queen.

In an emotional August 1992 BBC Radio 2 interview with Simon Bates three years after that final band interview, Brian recalls the shattering loss of Freddie Mercury nine months earlier and coming to terms with his death.

The Deluxe Edition of Queen On Air also comes with a meticulously assembled booklet containing rare photographs and sleeve notes lovingly compiled by band archivist Greg Brooks, featuring memories from the band and BBC producers Jeff Griffin and Bernie Andrews, plus comments from legendary Radio 1 DJs John Peel and Bob Harris from the time of the original broadcasts. Amongst them, Bernie Andrews, BBC Radio 1 producer of Queen’s first and third sessions recalls his first introduction to Queen:

“I first heard of Queen through a very well respected young promotion guy. He said ‘I want to play you a tape’. We went into a room and he got this reel-to-reel out. ‘Well what do you think,’ he asked. ‘They’re bloody great, I love it,’ I replied. Then he told me, ‘They’re called Queen’, and I just fell about the place laughing. I said: ‘They’re great, but you can’t put a band called Queen in the Radio Times!’ I booked them anyway and they went in the Radio Times as Queen.”

Thanks to their studio albums and their monumental live shows, Queen’s status as bona fide rock legends has long been assured. With Queen On Air, the world finally gets to hear and discover this fascinating side of their legacy.

Queen On Air

Full Tracklisting

2-CD Edition:

The Complete BBC Radio Sessions:

Available formats: Physical + digital & streaming

**CD1**

Session 1: 1. My Fairy King 2. Keep Yourself Alive 3. Doing All Right

4. Liar / Session 2: 5. See What A Fool I’ve Been 6. Keep Yourself Alive

7. Liar 8. Son And Daughter / Session 3: 9. Ogre Battle

10. Modern Times Rock’n’Roll 11. Great King Rat 12. Son And Daughter

**CD2**

Session 4: 1. Modern Times Rock’n’Roll 2. Nevermore

3. White Queen (As It Began) / Session 5: 4. Now I’m Here 5. Stone Cold Crazy 6. Flick Of The Wrist 7. Tenement Funster / Session 6: 8. We Will Rock You

9. We Will Rock You (Fast) 10. Spread Your Wings 11. It’s Late

12. My Melancholy Blues

3-LP Vinyl Edition:

The Complete BBC Radio Sessions:

**Side 1 – Session 1**

1. My Fairy King 2. Keep Yourself Alive 3. Doing All Right 4. Liar

**Side 2 –Session 2**

1. See What A Fool I’ve Been 2. Keep Yourself Alive 3. Liar 4. Son And Daughter

**Side 3 – Session 3**

1. Ogre Battle 2. Modern Times Rock’n’Roll 3. Great King Rat 4. Son And Daughter

**Side 4 – Session 4**

1. Modern Times Rock’n’Roll 2. Nevermore 3. White Queen (As It Began)

**Side 5 – Session 5**

1. Now I’m Here 2. Stone Cold Crazy 3. Flick Of The Wrist 4. Tenement Funster

**Side 6 – Session 6**

1. We Will Rock You 2. We Will Rock You (Fast) 3. Spread Your Wings

4. It’s Late 5. My Melancholy Blues

Deluxe 6-CD Edition

**CD1: The Complete BBC Radio Sessions**

Session 1: 1. My Fairy King 2. Keep Yourself Alive 3. Doing All Right

4. Liar / Session 2: 5. See What A Fool I’ve Been 6. Keep Yourself Alive

7. Liar 8. Son And Daughter / Session 3: 9. Ogre Battle

10. Modern Times Rock’n’Roll 11. Great King Rat 12. Son And Daughter

**CD2: The Complete BBC Radio Sessions**

Session 4: 1. Modern Times Rock’n’Roll 2. Nevermore 3. White Queen

(As It Began) / Session 5: 4. Now I’m Here 5. Stone Cold Crazy

6. Flick Of The Wrist 7. Tenement Funster / Session 6: 8. We Will Rock You

9. We Will Rock You (Fast) 10. Spread Your Wings 11. It’s Late

12. My Melancholy Blues

**CD3: Queen Live On Air**

**Golders Green Hippodrome, London, 13th September 1973:**

1. Procession (Intro Tape) 2. Father To Son 3. Son And Daughter

4. Guitar Solo 5. Son And Daughter (Reprise) 6. Ogre Battle

7. Liar 8. Jailhouse Rock

**Estádio Do Morumbi, São Paulo, Brazil, 20th March 1981:**

9. Intro 10. We Will Rock You (Fast) 11. Let Me Entertain You

12. I’m In Love With My Car 13. Alright Alright 14. Dragon Attack

15. Now I’m Here 16. Love Of My Life

**Maimmarktgelände, Mannheim, Germany, 21st June 1986:**

17. A Kind Of Magic 18. Vocal Improvisation 19. Under Pressure

20. Is This The World We Created 21. (You’re So Square) Baby I Don’t Care 22. Hello Mary Lou (Goodbye Heart) 23. Crazy Little Thing Called Love

24. God Save The Queen

**CD4: Queen On Air: The Interviews (1976-1980)**

Freddie Mercury With Kenny Everett (November 1976) / Queen with Tom Browne (Christmas 1977) / Roger Taylor with Richard Skinner (June 1979) / Roger Taylor with Tommy Vance (December 1980) / Roy Thomas Baker

‘The Record Producers’

**CD5: Queen On Air: The Interviews: (1981-1986)**

John Deacon, South American tour (March 1981) / Brian May ‘Rock On’

with John Tobler (June 1982) / Brian May ‘Saturday Live’ with Richard Skinner and Andy Foster (March 1984) / Freddie Mercury ‘Newsbeat’ (August 1984) / Brian May ‘Newsbeat’ (September 1984) / Freddie Mercury ‘Saturday Live’ (September 1984) / Freddie Mercury with Simon Bates (April 1985) / Brian May ‘The Way It Is’ with David ‘Kid’ Jensen (July 1986)

**CD 6: Queen On Air: The Interviews (1986-1992)**

Roger Taylor ‘My Top Ten’ with Andy Peebles (May 1986) / ‘Queen For An Hour’ with Mike Read (May 1989) / Brian May ‘Freddie And Too Much Love Will Kill You’ with Simon Bates (August 1982) / Brian May ‘Freddie Mercury Tribute Concert’ with Johnnie Walker

(October 1992)

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