

Brian May Talks Queen's 1975 Concert Film, Performing 'Bohemian Rhapsody' Live

"In those days, people went to a rock show to listen ... And there's nobody with mobile phones in the audience, nobody doing selfies – how weird is that," guitarist says of 1975 gig

By [Mark Sutherland](#) October 12, 2015



Queen perform in 1975. The band will release their live album/concert film 'A Night at the Odeon - Hammersmith 1975' on November 20th. Andrew Putler/Redferns

Christmas will come early for [Queen](#) fans this year as the band releases its legendary 1975 festive London Hammersmith Odeon gig as a live album/DVD.

The much-bootlegged concert footage – originally broadcast live to an audience of millions on BBC TV and radio on Christmas Eve night in 1975 – has been completely restored for the release, entitled *Queen – A Night at the Odeon – Hammersmith 1975*. The new version was premiered at a screening at the former Olympic Studios – now a cinema – in Barnes, West London on October 8.

In attendance was Queen guitarist [Brian May](#), who went through the unusual experience of watching his younger self play what was then the most important concert of his career.

"It was very weird," he laughed, speaking exclusively to *Rolling Stone* at the event. "It seems like watching another person, that young boy. I look so thin! I look very serious and the body language is so different now – I was quite shy in those days. There was a lot of noise and energy in the playing, but my body is different from the way I am now. These days I feel a channel in the body towards the noise that's coming out, but in those days it looks like it just comes from nowhere."

Nonetheless, the concert – the final date of Queen's *A Night at the Opera* UK tour – captures the band in typically flamboyant form, with lots of pyrotechnics, a finale featuring balloons, confetti and blow up dolls falling from the roof and a vintage display of showmanship from late frontman Freddie Mercury.

"It felt great at the time," said May. "There was a lot of adrenalin, a lot of joy because all our fans who'd followed us on the tour had all scrambled to get in there. Roger [Taylor, drummer] was really sick – he looks pretty good but he was feeling really bad. I think he threw up afterwards but you wouldn't know [from watching]."

The tour also marked the live debut of "Bohemian Rhapsody" which, at the time of the Odeon concert, was on a nine-week run at the top of the UK charts. Live, however, it featured as part of a medley with "Killer Queen" and "The March of the Black Queen," as the band didn't feel it would be able to recreate the full song live.

"We've never played 'Bohemian Rhapsody' in full," said May, "Because the middle bit is a little work of art, it's something that's painted on a canvas and you can't really reproduce that – or, at least, we prefer not to try [recreating] the operatic bits. It's a choice we made early on; we thought, 'We don't want to be standing there trying to reproduce 140 voices in the studio.' You can't really pretend you're doing that on stage."

According to May, Queen only started thinking about how songs would work live later in its career, when it wrote anthems such as "We Will Rock You" and "We Are the Champions" with audience participation in mind. The *A Night at the Odeon* footage, however, shows a different type of crowd.

"They sing along on some things but not a lot," the guitarist noted. "In those days, people went to a rock show to listen – and to jump about and scream and shout, but not to sing every word like they do now. And there's nobody with mobile phones in the audience, nobody doing selfies – how weird is that?"

Queen – A Night at the Odeon – Hammersmith 1975 is released on CD, DVD, Blu-Ray, vinyl, digitally and in a super deluxe box set version on November 20. Audio formats feature three additional tracks as the cameras stopped rolling before the band's second encore, while the audio team carried on recording.

***Queen – A Night at the Odeon – Hammersmith 1975* Track List**

- "Now I'm Here"
- "Ogre Battle"
- "White Queen (As It Began)"
- "Bohemian Rhapsody"
- "Killer Queen"
- "The March of the Black Queen"
- "Bohemian Rhapsody (Reprise)"
- "Bring Back That Leroy Brown"
- "Brighton Rock"
- "Son and Daughter"
- "Keep Yourself Alive"
- "Liar"
- "In the Lap of the Gods... Revisited"
- "Big Spender"
- "Jailhouse Rock Medley"
- "Seven Seas of Rhye"
- "See What a Fool I've Been"
- "God Save the Queen"