



September 29, 2019

Queen + Adam Lambert, Alicia Keys, H.E.R., More Rock Global Citizen Concert



The [Global Citizen](#) Festival is a music-and-message event that takes place on the final Saturday in September in New York's Central Park. Its eighth annual incarnation was headlined by [Queen](#) + [Adam Lambert](#), [Alicia Keys](#), Carole King, Pharrell Williams, One Republic, H.E.R., David Gray, French Montana, Ben Platt, K-Pop group NCT 127 and Jon Batiste & Stay Human and was broadcast live by MSNBC and iHeart Radio.

The mission of Global Citizen is to end "extreme global poverty" by 2030. It was a mantra heard throughout the day by performers and speakers concerned about economic disparities, education, pollution and climate issues.

"We are the power of the collective," [Alicia Keys](#) told the 60,000 strong crowd gathered in the Park's Great Lawn. "We do it through music."

Fans don't pay for tickets; instead, they take actions like writing letters to government officials and making social-media posts for points. In exchange, they get to attend the five-hour-long concert, with performances ranging in length from a single song to an hour or so. In between, corporate sponsors, international dignitaries and celebrities give speeches and introduce videos.

Leonardo DiCaprio hailed the students who recently marched to raise awareness about climate change. “The time for inaction is now over,” he declared. Other prominent voices on hand included host Hugh Jackman and fellow actors Natalie Portman, Dakota Johnson, Forest Whitaker, Rami Malek, Rachel Brosnahan, Taraji P. Henson and New York mayor and former presidential candidate Bill de Blasio. Highlights included H.E.R. showing off her gospel-style vocals and impressive guitar playing in a 20-minute set. King, who was performing in Central Park for the first time since 1973, performed a set consisting entirely from her classic 1971 album “Tapestry” and teamed up with Kelly Clarkson for “Where You Lead.” Keys, like King a New York City native, returned to the festival after back-to-back bookings in 2013 and 2014, and served up the strongest performance of the day. From “Girl on Fire” to “If I Ain’t Got You” to “Empire State of Mind (Part II),” her set included many of her biggest hits, but it was a cover of Aerosmith’s “Dream On,” which saw her accompanied by H.E.R. on guitar and backing vocals, that proved to be her half-hour set’s highlight.

Finally, with an hour left in the program, Malek, who won an Oscar for his portrayal of Freddie Mercury in “Bohemian Rhapsody” earlier this year, introduced [Queen](#) and guest vocalist [Adam Lambert](#) — and the group did not disappoint.

Lambert’s operatic vocals echoed Mercury’s and guitarist Brian May showed off his considerable chops on a hit parade that included “Bohemian Rhapsody,” “Another One Bites the Dust,” “We Will Rock You,” “We Are the Champions,” “I Want It All,” “Crazy Little Thing Called Love,” “Under Pressure,” “Radio Gaga” and “Somebody to Love.” Video clips of Mercury meshed with the live band on several occasions.

Next year’s Global Citizen will be an even more ambitious undertaking: On Thursday, the organizers announced a 10-hour event spanning five countries and featuring Keys, Metallica, Billie Eilish and many others, taking place on September 26.

