



# Freddie Mercury: The World's Greatest Frontman



I always knew I  
was a star and  
now, the rest of  
the world  
seems to agree  
with me.

-Freddie  
Mercury

Freddie Mercury certainly was the Queen of Rock and Roll. He was a musical genius, a legendary performer, an amazing vocalist, and a fine pianist. When one considers Freddie, pianist is not a word that comes to mind, but the piano is where he started, taking lessons as a child. Born in Zanzibar in 1946 as Farrokh Bulsara, he focused almost exclusively on Western pop music, rock and roll at the time, while attending a British-style boarding school in what is now Mumbai, India. His family later fled to England to escape the Zanzibar revolution of 1964. He enrolled and graduated from Ealing Art College in England with a degree in art and graphic design. He later used this talent to design the Queen logo above.

Freddie joined a few different unsuccessful bands and held odd jobs until he formed the legendary band with Brian May, an astrophysicist, Roger Taylor, a dentist, and John Deacon, an electrical engineer, known as Queen. This band was outrageous, smart, exciting and would go on to surpass everyone's expectations and change the world. He wrote

many hit songs as the lead singer and pianist for the band including "Bohemian Rhapsody", "Killer Queen", "Somebody to love", and "Crazy Little Thing Called Love".



Surprisingly to me, Freddie was unimpressed with his skills on the piano and played it less and less over his career. During the 1880's, he started hiring professional pianists for concerts and on recordings. Brian May attributes this to Freddie's desire to dance around on stage and interact with the audience more. Much of Queen's music has piano parts in it covering many playing styles including ragtime, blues, jazz, and rock. He was fairly versatile on the instrument and had a good control over it. As someone who plays piano works by Chopin and other piano greats, I agree that the piano parts Freddie wrote are not especially difficult, but they are certainly not "Hot Cross Buns" either. He felt he better served the audience front stage with a microphone and a wild costume and there is a lot of truth to that as well.

I won't be a rock  
star. I will be a  
legend.

-Freddie Mercury

If you haven't heard, the movie "Bohemian Rhapsody" was released last month on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. I believe it will be in the box office for a while, and I do recommend seeing it if you have a chance. I have seen it twice now, and as much as it stretches the truth and even contorts it sometimes, it is a wonderful biopic of Freddie Mercury and Queen that has no rival. Rami Malek, the actor who portrays Freddie, puts on a wonderful performance that makes you think you are watching the real man in action. The Live Aid performance from 1985 at the end of the film is recreated almost identically to the original performance. It's a worthwhile film that may inspire you to listen to more of Queen's music and even learn a few of their songs.

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