

FREDDIE MERCURY – THE ULTIMATE SHOWMAN

Freddie Mercury was born on the island of Zanzibar on September 5th, 1946. His parents, Bomi and Jer Bulsara, called their son Farrokh. His parents were Persian but his father worked as a cashier for the British government in Zanzibar.



At the age of eight, the young Farrokh was sent to an English boarding school near Bombay in India. While he was at school, his friends and family started calling him Freddie. He was a keen sportsman and loved art more than any other subject. The headmaster of the school also noticed that Freddie had exceptional musical talent and recommended to his parents that they pay for their son to have some piano lessons. As well as having piano lessons, Freddie also joined the school choir and started taking part in school theatrical productions. All of this was helping Freddie to prepare for his future career.

After leaving school, Freddie returned to Zanzibar. Soon afterwards, because of political problems, Freddie and his family moved to England and settled in Middlesex, near London. Freddie entered the Ealing College of Art to study to be a graphic illustrator. At college he met, and became friends with Tim Staffell, a bass player in a band called *Smile*. Tim introduced him to the other members of the band Brian May (who played guitar) and Roger Taylor (who played drums). Freddie had no idea at the time that he, Roger and Brian would end up in one of the biggest bands of the 70s and the 80's, *Queen*.

After leaving college, Freddie opened a stall in Kensington Market in London and sold his art and other items. In the summer of 1969, he was introduced to a band from Liverpool called Ibex. He joined the band and they enjoyed some success, covering artists like Jimi

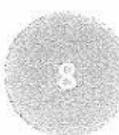


Hendrix, Cream and (Freddie's favourite band) Led Zeppelin. His time with the band was short-lived – they broke up just a few months later.

In April 1970, Freddie's friend Tim left the band *Smile* and Freddie joined them as lead singer. He decided to change the band's name to *Queen* and his own name to *Mercury*. In 1971, John Deacon joined the band and the full line up was complete. Freddie wrote their first song to enter the charts (*Seven Seas of Rhye*), their first big hit (*Killer Queen*) and their most famous song (*Bohemian Rhapsody*), which was at the top of the charts for nine weeks.

In 1975, the band toured Japan. Freddie fell in love with the country and became a keen collector of Japanese art. For the rest of the 70s and throughout the early 80s, the band continued to top the charts. They also provided material for the films *Flash Gordon* (1980) and *Metropolis* (re-released 1984). In the late 80s, Freddie teamed up with Spanish soprano Montserrat Caballé with a song he had written for her and her home city, Barcelona. The song was an enormous hit but sadly Freddie died a month later, on November 24th, 1991, of AIDS-related pneumonia, just one day after announcing his illness to the world.

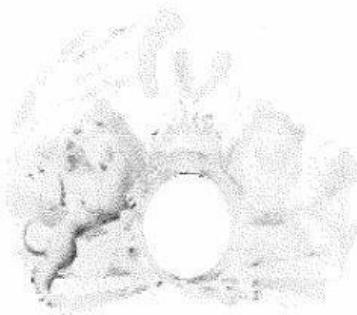
In 1992, Queen held a tribute concert at Wembley Stadium for their friend. Singer George Michael took Freddie's role as the band played their most famous songs. The world is a quieter, less colourful place without him, but we will never forget Freddie Mercury, the world's ultimate showman.



Love Of My Life

(Freddie Mercury)

Love of my life, can't you see? Bring it back, bring it back Don't take it away from me Because you don't know What it means to me	You will remember When this is blown over And everything's all by the way When I grow older I will be there at your side To remind you how I still love you	Love of my life, can't you see? Bring it back, bring it back Don't take it away from me Because you don't know What it means to me
Love of my life Love of my life Love of my life, don't leave me You've taken my love And now desert me	Love of my life, you've hurt me You've broken my heart And now you leave me	Hurry back, hurry back Please, bring it back home to me Because you don't know What it means to me



Queen
A Night At The Opera