

Record review

I am pleased to report that today I finally cleared my backlog of 1991 albums to review with some words about the marvellous Queen CD "Greatest Hits II"!

This was actually released at the end of October, before the sad loss of their lead singer Freddie Mercury and had already reached No.1 before his death, but there cannot be a more fitting epitaph than this collection. Only the Beatles with 12 chart-topping albums, and the Rolling Stones with nine, have had more No.1 long-players. Queen, Abba and Led Zeppelin have each had eight.

Queen have been one of the top rock bands of the last 20 years, leading the way with the first pop video of its kind - "Bohemian Rhapsody" in 1975. That song has now exceeded two million sales to become Britain's third biggest selling single ever, behind Band Aid and "Mull Of Kintyre" by Wings.

When you combine its nine-week run at the top in 1975 with its more recent five-week spell at No.1 it is the third longest resident at the chart summit behind Frankie Laine's "I Believe" (18 weeks in 1953), and Bryan Adams' recent 16 consecutive week stint. More importantly, Queen's first volume of "Greatest Hits" has just become the first album to be certified platinum eleven times over.

Each platinum disc awarded represents 300,000 sales, so it has sold 3.3 million units in this country.

I feel sure that this new collection of their more recent hits will eventually come close to those massive sales figures as, generally speaking, the hits improved later in their career. The CD spans the period from "Radio Ga Ga" in 1984 to "The Show Must Go On" last year, and includes gems like "I Want To Break Free" which was promoted by one of their most memorable videos, "A Kind Of Magic" which sounds brilliant on the new technology, and "Innuendo" featuring the genius of Steve Howe on "Wandering Minstrel, Guitar." All four members of the band wrote some great songs, but Mercury's outstanding showmanship made them stand out from the pack!

Queen's "The Days Of Our Lives" won the British Record Industry Award for Best British Single at the recent ceremony, and for the first time there was a tied vote for one award when the KLF and Simply Red both won the Best British Group trophy. Lisa Stansfield retained her top billing as Best British Female Artist, while Seal won Best Video, Album and British Male Awards.

His producer Trevor Horn, who also worked with Marc Almond in 1991, was voted Best Producer.

These were the Albums that reached the top positio

in the Album Charts during 1991:-

MCMXC A.D. (Enigma) one week.

The Soul Cages (Sting) one week.

Doubt (Jesus Jones) one week.

Innuendo (Queen) two weeks.

Circle Of One (Oleta Adams) one week.

Auberge (Chris Rea) one week.

Spartacus (The Farm) one week.

Out Of Time (R.E.M.) one week.

Greatest Hits (Eurythmics) ten weeks.

Seal (Seal) three weeks.

Love Hurts (Cher) six weeks.

Essential Pavarotti II (Luciano Pavarotti) two weeks.

Metallica (Metallica) one week.

Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat (Jason Donovan/Cast) two weeks.

From Time To Time (Paul Young) one week.

On Every Street (Dire Straits) one week.

Use Your Illusion II (Guns 'n' Roses) one week.

Waking Up The Neighbours (Bryan Adams) one week.

Chorus (Erasure) one week.

Greatest Hits II (Queen) five weeks.

Shepherd Moons (Enya) one week.

We Can't Dance (Genesis) one week.

Dangerous (Michael Jackson) one week.

Stars (Simply Red) three weeks in 1991.

The Simply Red album overtook "Eurythmics Greatest Hits" on the final day's trading of 1991 to become the year's top seller, and it has added many more weeks to its total time at No.1 in the early weeks of this year.

Bob Woodhead.



Freddie Mercury