

***A concert like no other…***

Facts & Figures

* 40 years since the last concert
* 5 years in the making
* 4 members of ABBA
* 10 live musicians
* 20 songs
* Costumes by 5 designers
* 3000 capacity arena (1600 seats)
* 1000 ILM vfx experts, across 4 global studios
* 1 billion computing hours to create the ABBA avatars
* 160 cameras used to film ABBA’s motion capture performance technique over 5 weeks
* 291 speakers
* 870,000 watts of audio amplification
* 500 moving lights mapped to 30,000 points in the arena
* 745 tonne domes roof
* Largest kinetic system in the world using an 850 winch system to drive it
* Over 100k production cabling

Quotes

Björn Ulvaeus (speaking to the Evening Standard) - *‘What I like is the fact that not only are we pushing boundaries in the digital world, but we’re trying to integrate the physical and the digital world, in a way that is immersive. You’re in an arena with 3,000 other people, human beings, flesh and blood. And nothing beats that.’*

Björn:

*‘I think one of the most important things about this was to have an emotional connection between the ABBAtars and the audience and we’ve seen that a couple of times now during previews, but it really works.’*

Benny Andersson (speaking to the Sunday Times) -

*‘Artistically, though, what are the risks? What are the possible criticisms? ‘Well, the band aren’t really there, are they?’ That’s the whole point. Will people accept that? Will they enjoy the environment, the great sound system? Above all it needs to involve emotions, and to me it does.”*

Benny -

*‘One of the reasons this works with the audience is because we have a live band. Those ten guys are so wonderful and they are sort of a bridge between us and the audience.’*

Anni-Frid Lyngstad

*‘It’s hard to fully grasp that it isn’t really me, and yet it is me. I can certainly see myself in the digital figure. The gestures, the facial expressions, the eyes that express all sorts of feelings. It’s absurd, but it’s real!’*

Svana Gisla - ABBA Voyage Producer

*‘The most special thing about ABBA - and therefore this concert - is bringing people together. And you’ve got to have space to bring them into it. That’s why this arena was built…you need to physically stand there and look at other people’s faces around you and feel something.’*

Ludvig Andersson - ABBA Voyage Producer

*‘This was never meant to be a time capsule. This happens here and now. This is what ABBA wants to do in 2022 and beyond…the fact that the four [of them] did all that work to create their avatars and be intimately involved in the whole process of the Voyage speaks for itself. They are artists at the peak of their creative process. Again.’*

Ludvig Andersson

*“Agnetha, Frida, Benny and Björn got on a stage in front of 160 cameras, and almost as many VFX geniuses, and they performed every song in this show to perfection over 5 weeks, capturing every mannerism, every emotion, the soul of their beings. That becomes the great magic of this endeavour - that when you see this show, it is not a version of, or a copy of, or four people pretending to be ABBA. It is actually them.”*

Baillie Walsh - ABBA Voyage Director

*There’ll be people who come and wonder at the ability of ILM [Industrial Light & Magic], who are unbelievably talented. It’s astonishing what they have done. But when I go to a concert, I’m not interested in how someone did something. I think music is about emotion. I want people to dance, to laugh, to sing along and to cry. ABBA music is emotion. I want a visceral experience. With 3000 people a night coming to see it…it had to be a communal experience with ABBA.*

Ben Morris, Creative Director of ILM (speaking to the Evening Standard) - *‘First, we started with a period of forensic archaeology, sourcing and scanning thousands of original 35mm negatives and hours of old 16mm and 35mm concert footage and TV appearances…From here our team of character specialists started building the faces and bodies of the Abbatars, understanding how Agnetha and Frida wore their hair, manicured their nails, applied their iconic make-up. In addition, we have tailored stunning digital costumes from a number of modern designers that move and react to every nuance of performance.’*

Ben Morris -

*“People have often talked about whether you can create either people who have lived in the past, or people when they were younger, and we actually create ABBA in their prime, 1979. We are creating them as digital characters. We will then be using performance capture techniques to animate them and perform them and make them look perfectly real, and that stuff starts first of all with the present day ABBA. We did some performance capture on them and that’s formed the basis for the whole of the project, the backbone.”*

Wayne McGregor, Choreographer (speaking to the Evening Standard) - *‘They’re performing differently to back in the day and that’s brilliant and beautiful. But then we looked at thousands of hours of concerts, hijacked all of that physicality, bound it all together with some novel moves as well.’*