



ABBA[®] Voyage

A concert like no other

Education resource pack

Only at the **ABBA[®] Arena**, London

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A large-scale photograph of the ABBA Voyage concert stage. The stage is illuminated by numerous vertical light columns and spotlights from the ceiling. The band members are visible on stage, and a large audience is seen in the foreground.

Welcome to **ABBA[®] Voyage**

This short introductory guide is designed to prepare you for your visit to *ABBA Voyage*.

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This introductory guide was written by Susie Ferguson and commissioned by *ABBA Voyage*.

About ABBA



ABBA's members are: **Agnetha, Björn, Benny** and **Anna-Frid** (known as **Frida**). It's the initials of their first names that create the band's palindromic name: **ABBA**. Although the band is Swedish, their songs are mostly sung in English.

When Benny and Björn met in 1966, they were both already successful musicians. They began writing songs together shortly after they met. In 1969, Benny and Björn met Agnetha and Frida who had also had previous musical success as soloists in their own right. After several years of working together under a different band name, the four represented Sweden, as ABBA, in the 1974 Eurovision Song Contest which was held in Brighton, UK. Their winning song was *Waterloo*: a song that is now one of their most well known hits. ABBA quickly became famous on the international music scene.



Did you know? Although '*Waterloo*' was ultimately crowned as the winner, it received a so-called "nil points" judgement from the UK panel.

Between 1974 and 1980, ABBA had nine number one hits in the UK charts. These included *Mamma Mia*, *The Winner Takes It All*, *Take A Chance On Me*, *Dancing Queen* and *Fernando*.

ABBA's music was later used as the basis for the stage musical *Mamma Mia!* and subsequent film adaptation starring Pierce Brosnan and Meryl Streep, plus sequel *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again*. *Mamma Mia! The Party* is also based

on ABBA songs. That means that on any given night in London, audiences have the choice of 3 different ABBA experiences - not to mention several productions happening all over the world - which speaks to the band's continued popularity.



Many current musicians have mentioned ABBA as an important influence on their own work, including Robyn, Madonna, Lady Gaga and Coldplay's Chris Martin.

ABBA's music is known for its upbeat, popular sound. However, a close look at the lyrics and titles of their songs reveals a huge breadth of subject matter. Their songs cover themes such as love and romance, break ups, fame, and loneliness. You might be surprised to know that some of their songs have deeper meanings: *The Visitors*, which you'll hear at the beginning of the concert, is about the treatment of political dissidents in the former Soviet Union, and was banned in the country! Many of ABBA's songs are fantastic storytelling opportunities: *Money Money Money* tells the story of a woman who dreams of becoming rich "in a rich man's world".



About the Concert



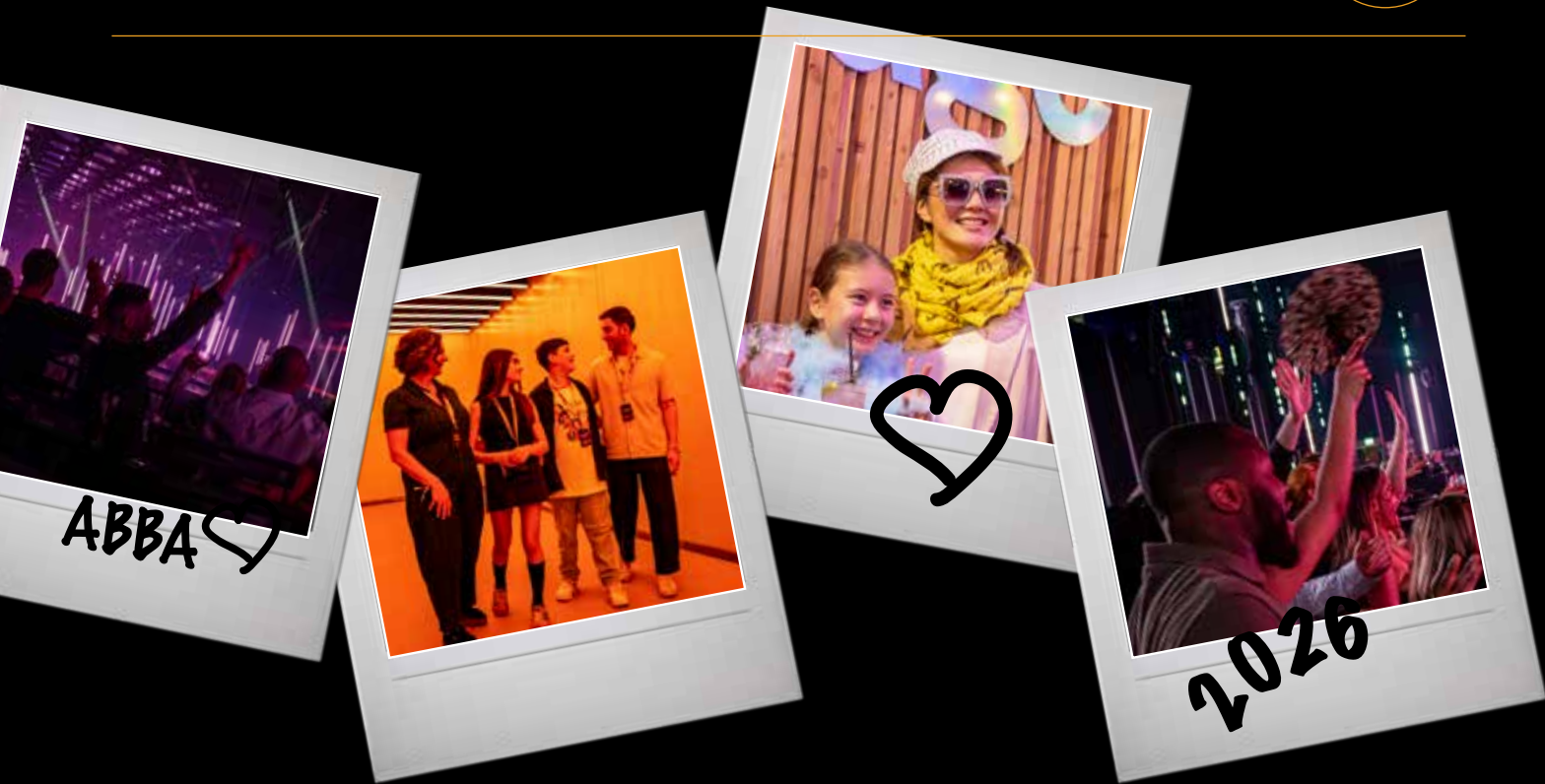
ABBA's music appeals to a wide range of people. *ABBA Voyage* is a groundbreaking way for you to enjoy their music with 2,999 other fans all in one place!

Agnetha, Benny, Björn and Frida have all been involved in creating *ABBA Voyage*, working with world-class designers, choreographers, musicians, and technical experts to create this concert like no other. The visual effects you'll see on stage have been developed by a company called Industrial Light and Magic (ILM) who have used the technology on films including the *Star Wars* and *Marvel* franchises.

ABBA's journey began in 1974 and their music has been popular ever since. For *ABBA Voyage*, ABBA have created the kind of concert they always dreamed of, performing for their fans at their very best as digital versions of themselves backed by today's finest musicians. **Blurring the lines between the physical and digital, you'll see the magic of ABBA brought to life.**



About the Concert



This concert marks the first time the technology has been used in concert form to bring ABBA back on stage as digital versions of themselves. Using 120 motion capture cameras, the creators captured the movement, facial expressions and appearance of the four band members and turned it into this new production.

Supported by the 10 live musicians in the Hero Band, ABBA's Avatars dance, walk, play instruments and



interact with each other (and the audience) in a way that is truly breathtaking: it seems impossible that it isn't really ABBA, live on stage!

Like any pop concert, the songs have been carefully selected to create an inspiring, energetic and varied experience. The concert's director has thought carefully about how to create mood and atmosphere which will take the audience on an emotional journey. The pace and content of the songs varies but by the end of the concert, it's likely that everyone will want to dance and sing along!

Once you arrive at the venue, you'll make your way into the ABBA Arena via brightly lit tunnels which immediately transport you to the world of ABBA Voyage. Wherever you're seated in the ABBA Arena, you'll have an awesome view of ABBA and the ten-piece Hero Band. Over 300 speakers and 500 moving lights will fully immerse you in this audio-visual concert experience.



About the ABBA Arena



The ABBA Arena is a purpose-built venue within the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in East London. It holds 3,000 people. The arena has been designed in tandem with the cutting-edge concert to provide the perfect environment for the audience. It's a temporary structure, and sustainability was a key aspect of its design and construction.

Following the 2012 London Olympics, the park has formed an ongoing legacy in which people are encouraged to enjoy the area and everything it has

to offer. The nearby London Stadium is the home of West Ham United, and the park is also a thriving area of industry and creativity, hosting world-class institutions such as BBC Studios, V&A East and Sadlers Wells East.



As you move around the ABBA Arena, what aspects of the building do you think might be inspired by this focus on sustainability?



A note from the band

Pop music has always been tech driven. Whenever there was a new synth on the market back in the 70s Benny would get it and the whole idea behind ABBA was not only to make music as best we could and to develop artistically album by album but also to use the latest and best technology to get there.

The potential of astounding new technologies in combination with emotional, artistic and musical content is and always has been huge. This potential, this promise of an extraordinary adventure, was irresistible to us and that's why we embarked on the project.

Welcome to a little strange, but hopefully enjoyable concert experience!

ABBA



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