

The Smile File - The Precursors of Queen - C J Smith

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Chris Smith is a highly respected rock and blues musician who has been performing and writing for over six decades. His beginnings are very similar to so many aspiring pop and rock stars of the 60s, attending Art College and absorbing the explosion of music of that era.

Art School was the unofficial music school for British musicians in the 60s and 70s and in 1967 Chris Smith attended Ealing Art College. It was there he started writing songs with Freddie Bulsara following the formation of the band, Smile. Bulsara became Freddie Mercury, Smile became Queen and Chris remained true to the blues music that had inspired him from his early teens. The rest is history.

One song which Chris worked on with Freddie, he called the Cowboy song, but they were never able to finish it. Freddie came up with the first line: "Momma, just killed a man, put a gun against his head, pulled my trigger, now he's dead." The song was shelved, only to emerge seven years later as Bohemian Rhapsody. Curiously it contained a line Brian had composed for a song Smile played: "Is this the real life."

His dream was never to be rich and famous. As he told Freddie Mercury: "I'd like to have a little blues band in which I'd be the songwriter." He has achieved this, and is never happier than in the company of fellow musicians. Today he performs as the CJ Smith Band.

This is his story.

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Genre : Rock Biography
BGA Autobiography: general
AVH Individual composers and musicians, specific bands and groups
AVGP Rock and Pop music

