

Girl Power! Spice Girls at 30

Friday 12 January, 2024

Outfits to Go on Display at the BME in Celebration of 30 Years of the Spice Girls

Girl Power! Spice Girls at 30 at the British Music Experience is a temporary exhibition charting the history of the most important girl band in British history. In March 1994 an ad was placed in *The Stage* asking "Are you street smart, extrovert, ambitious, and able to sing and dance?". The rest is history. The Spice Girls debut single Wannabe topped the charts in 31 countries in 1996, they sold 80 million records and had nine UK Number One singles. The exhibition celebrates the story of how Sporty, Baby, Scary, Ginger and Posh became one of the most successful girl groups ever and enjoyed phenomenal global success.

Girl Power! Spice Girls at 30 will run from **7 February 2024 to 8 September 2024** and will tell the band's story through outfits from the extraordinary collection of independent curator Liz West, who is the foremost collector of Spice Girls memorabilia and merchandise in the World. Liz's Guinness World Record breaking collection boasts many iconic costumes all beautifully hand-made by international designers or specially commissioned by the Spice Girls themselves.

Liz began collecting Spice Girls memorabilia in 1996 when the girls first launched themselves onto the pop scene. As an impressionable 11-year-old, she was hooked as soon as they released their first single 'Wannabe'. At that age all her friends and family would buy Spice Girls items for Birthday and Christmas presents. Initially Liz just collected albums, magazines and sticker books but after a year of chart successes she started buying singles and masses of official merchandise. Everything was kept pristine in the packaging unlike her contemporaries who would use the items. Liz had a collector's instinct from an early age, she would arrange and showcase proudly the boxed memorabilia on her bedroom shelves as a teenager. Liz did not buy her first museum worthy piece until at Art School in Glasgow, armed with a student loan she purchased a top worn by Melanie C at the age of 19 via eBay. After graduating from the Glasgow School of Art in 2007, Liz pursued her idea of exhibiting her ever increasing Spice Girls collection in museums nationwide.

Director of BME, Elizabeth Koravos commented "The British Music Experience is delighted to showcase the highlights of Liz West's record-breaking collection of Spice Girls memorabilia through our new exhibition **Girl Power! Spice Girls at 30**. We are excited to explore the Spice Girls' meteoric successes of the 1990's and the enthralling result. A familiar story that started with a girl band being pressurised and 'manufactured' by male-dominated powerful forces but were able to shake it off. The result was the next generation of girls empowered by their lyrics, their performance and what they could hear and see in front of them, a diverse group of powerful women oozing with confidence and control. Eleven-year-old superfan, Liz West, did not see the industry forces widely discussed behind the scenes. She simply internalised the lyrics which paved the way for greater self-esteem and healthier relationships in an entire generation and now a huge cross section of the population in the UK and around the world. It's impossible to measure but this exhibition will remind us of what was the phenomenon of the Spice Girls."

Liz West commented "I have wanted to exhibit my Spice Girls collection with the British Music Experience ever since I was invited to speak about my super-fandom for an interactive display when the museum first launched in London in 2009. Bringing my collection to Liverpool is particularly fitting as it pays homage to 'Sporty Spice' Melanie C, who hails from Widnes and is forever proud of her Northern heritage. I am proud to be exhibiting costumes and items that have never been seen in public before. I hope this exciting exhibition brings back nostalgia and reminds visitors how influential and lively those 5 girls are... **Girl Power!**"

The outfits on display will be complemented by audio visual elements, including a stage show montage of Spice Girls hits and listening stations. The BME has a season of activity planned to support the exhibition - it will form part of the Learning Programme and feature on school tours, and the public programme will include film screenings, conversations, acoustic music and a special quiz night. Finally, the Museum's merch store will be selling a range of Spice Girls apparel and giftware.

Girl Power! Spice Girls at 30 is included with all general entry tickets purchased. All general entry tickets are valid for 12 months and each eligible visitor has the opportunity to support the Museum by Gift Aiding the cost of admission.

To purchase general entry tickets, go to www.britishmusicexperience.com

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Girl Power! Spice Girls at 30 – Launch Night

Wednesday 7 February 2024, from 7pm

Be the first in line to see the exhibition! The museum galleries, Merch Store and Star Café & Bar will be open and there will be live music from Spice Girls tribute band, The Spicey Girls. The Spice Girls iconic status is etched in memory, from their unforgettable live performances to their distinct looks, signature costumes, and boundless energy. With their spirited dance routines woven into their songs, they epitomized a high-energy pop act that has earned a cult status that continues to endure. The Spicey Girls pay homage to the spirit and charisma of the original group, and the essence of '90s pop culture.

Tickets £10 each, on sale Monday 15 January 2024, 10am.

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