

## Songs for the Quarantine #35: Don't Stop Me Now, Queen

Good morning, Roll Over Easy, and welcome to the thirty-fifth Songs for the Quarantine. I'm @suldrew. Every week while we are under shelter-in-place, we'll bring you a song that's perfect for taking your mind off social distancing, that you can listen to while you walk in the park, or work from home, or open the windows and throw the page-a-day calendar out on the street, like the Financial District used to do a few years ago.

2020. Not the easiest year, to put it mildly. When a year ago we were hanging out on the Embarcadero watching the fireworks, little did we know that we would soon be on lockdown due to the "novel coronavirus," as it was called then. Besides that, the less said about 2020, at least the tough parts, frankly, the better. We can remember the nice parts - Slow Streets and the Great Walkway, outdoor dining and cocktail delivery, stylish masks, clean air, music on the block, and this segment - while we remember those we've lost, and keep each other safe.

Still, in the face of all that, San Francisco is coming out of 2020 fairly strong. Why not close out the year with a song we used to close out The Long Lunch Break back in 2018, with an energy boost? So today, on New Year's Eve, with close to half of the world's population already into 2021, let's play Don't Stop Me Now, by Queen. This [classic](#) of queer exuberance only made it to Number 86 on Billboard's Hot 100 when it was released on their 1978 album Jazz, but by the time it [closed out](#) the Freddie Mercury biopic Bohemian Rhapsody in 2018, it had become, again according to [Billboard](#), "One of The Band's Most Beloved (And Inescapable) Songs."

And you can see why. Starting with Mercury's piano solo and leading into his joyful promise to "make a supersonic woman (or man) of you" - perfect for the all-genders 2020s - you can hear in his voice the determination to keep the energy going - "I don't want to stop at all." In his profile of Mercury - "[Guaranteed to blow your mind](#)" - Alexis Petridis of The Guardian called Don't Stop Me Now "Queen's greatest song of all." Guitarist and [Erdos-Bacon-Sabbath number 9](#) holder Brian May was skeptical, noting that the song was about "Freddie Mercury's most hedonistic sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll phase," but let's be honest - May was just as part of this as was Mercury. And the band plays it brilliantly now, with Adam Lambert as front man.

Of course we know now that Mercury wasn't just having a good time - he was suffering from AIDS, at a time when there was no effective treatment, and he died of the disease in 1991. Just as today, we are losing thousands of fellow Americans a day to Covid-19 - and we have to do everything we can to stop it, until everyone gets the vaccine. But that need not keep us from sharing our joy and exuberance with each other - on video and community radio, and when it's safe again, from a safe distance, outside. Don't let your guard down against Covid, but tonight, New Year's Eve, safely, let's have ourselves a real good time! For 2020, let's go out with Queen.