

# Seven Ages of Rock

## Loud and proud



*Seven Ages of Rock* explores the music that has been the soundtrack of popular culture and defined each generation since the 60s, charting the story of rock music from the suburb to the stadium, from the crackly 45 to the MP3 download.

Despite numerous predictions that 'rock is dead', it has survived. Fans are attending more gigs and more festivals than ever before and the guitar is definitely back as the weapon of choice.

From the UK electric blues boom, via the psychedelic rock of the late 60s; from the 70s punk explosion and on to the rise of grunge and indie rock in the 80s and beyond, *Seven Ages of Rock* tells the story of the music itself – with contributions from some of the biggest names in rock.

### 1. The Birth of Rock

In the early 60s, a generation of rebellious British teenagers who had grown up with raw American blues began to invent their own, adrenaline charged new sound. Bands like **The Rolling Stones** and **The Who** provided the soundtrack to volatile, changing times and introduced the attitude, swagger, sex appeal and volume that would launch an electrifying new music movement: Rock.  
*Also featuring: Bob Dylan, The Kinks, The Yardbirds, Cream*

### 2. White Light, White Heat: Art Rock

From the pop-art multimedia experiments of Andy Warhol and the **Velvet Underground** to the sinister gentility of Peter Gabriel's **Genesis**, via the psychedelia of **Pink Floyd** and the theatricality of **David Bowie**, this episode traces the story of how artistic and conceptual expression permeated rock.  
*Also featuring: Roxy Music*

### 3. Blank Generation: Punk Rock

A tale of two cities, London and New York, and the bands that emerged from the dispossessed, the lost, the angry – the 'blank generation'. Through the scorched earth music of **The Sex Pistols**, this episode unpicks the relationship between the bankrupt New York and the class- and race-riven London of the mid-70s.  
*Also featuring: The Clash, Ramones, Television, Patti Smith, The Damned, Buzzcocks*

### 4. Never Say Die: Heavy Metal

Emerging at the tail end of the hippy dream, from the rust belt of industrial England, heavy metal would go on to conquer the world. With **Black Sabbath** as the undisputed godfathers, this episode follows their journey.  
*Also featuring: Deep Purple, Judas Priest, Iron Maiden, Metallica*

### 5. We Are The Champions: Stadium Rock

This episode follows the development of rock in the 70s and 80s, when rock achieved a global influence on culture and politics, and groups such as **Led Zeppelin**, **Kiss** and **The Police** decided to see just how far their ambition would take them. The film climaxes with **U2's Zoo TV**, a multimedia extravaganza that brought the concept of the stadium rock show into the modern age.  
*Also featuring: Queen, Bruce Springsteen, Dire Straits*

### 6. Left Of The Dial: American Alternative Rock

From America's underground punk scene in the 80s to the grunge explosion of the 90s, this episode traces the rise of alternative rock heroes like **R.E.M.** and **Nirvana** and unsung pioneers like **The Pixies**. **Kurt Cobain**, rock's reluctant idol, is at the heart of this story... and his triumph and tragedy continues to cast a powerful shadow.  
*Also featuring: Black Flag, Pearl Jam, Sonic Youth, The Replacements*

### 7. What The World Is Waiting For: UK Indie Rock

In the 1980s, British indie group **The Smiths** brought the sound of electric guitars to an era awash with synthesised pop, and **Oasis** brought UK Indie Rock crashing into the mainstream. In the millennium a new generation of British bands would reclaim the music for outsiders everywhere.  
*Also featuring: Blur, Kaiser Chiefs, Arctic Monkeys*

#### Series Producer

William Naylor

#### Executive Producer

Michael Poole *Soul Deep*

A BBC/VH1 Classic co-production

## HISTORY

**TX Date:** 20 May 2007

**Channel:** BBC TWO

**Duration:** 7 x 50 minutes

M & E available

## RATINGS & REVIEWS

**"This TV banquet is the latest in a pedigree portfolio of pop shows made at BBC Bristol"**

*The Times*

**"Impressive"**

*Guardian*

**"Music-heritage TV at its finest"**

*Daily Mail*

**"Absorbing and intelligent music television"**

*The Times*