

**L**IVE AID, the music event that brought the world together 39 years ago, was surely the greatest demonstration of the power music can have over hearts and minds. Live Aid was not just a concert, it was a movement that spawned a mood of global communalism and left an indelible mark on millions of lives, including my own.

Last week, the Live Aid musical *Just For One Day* at The Old Vic brilliantly brought this all back, capturing the essence and energy of Live Aid, allowing the audience to relive the magic and significance of that historic day. This show is going to be a hit with the public, guaranteeing nostalgia for those who were there and amazement for those too young to remember July 13, 1985. *Just For One Day* is pure joy for all.

While the direction and staging are masterful, it is the performances of the cast which truly scale the heights in this production. The actors brilliantly embody the iconic musicians and personalities involved in Live Aid, capturing their essence and mannerisms with authenticity and affection. The energy and passion they bring to their roles are infectious, drawing the audience into the narrative and making them feel part of the concert. The vocal performances are particularly impressive, as the actors flawlessly recreate the iconic songs that defined Live Aid, evoking nostalgia and excitement.

Julie Atherton's portrayal of the prime minister of the day Margaret Thatcher is comic genius, while Craige Els captures Bob Geldof's earnest and earthy honesty to perfection. Joel Montague wonderfully brings great humour to the sheer intensity of the will power needed from Harvey Goldsmith to make it all

# It changed everyone who saw it — so I'm delighted Live Aid is reborn on stage

## Jonathan Shalit



happen. Live Aid was not limited to the confines of the old Wembley Stadium; it reached hundreds of millions of people around the world through live television broadcasts and a sister concert in Philadelphia.

As I watched the concert unfold in 1985, I realized that I was part of something epoch-making. The global solidarity that day was awe-inspiring. People from all corners of the globe joined hands and hearts to support the cause of ending poverty and hunger in Africa. It was a reminder that when humanity comes together, we have the power to create positive change on a global scale. The atmosphere generated on that great day was electric, filled with people from all walks of life united by a common love for music and a shared desire to make a difference.

Amid the incredible performances



*It served as a real wake-up call, igniting a fire within me to become an agent of change in my own small way*



from artist such as Queen, right, U2 and Elton John, there were moments that touched my heart and left a lasting impact. Geldof's impassioned plea for donations, the heart-wrenching images of famine-stricken children, and the stories of hope and resilience shared by those directly affected by the crisis painted a vivid picture of the urgency and importance of the cause. These moments served as a wake-up call,



igniting a fire within me to become an agent of change in my own small way. Live Aid was in every sense, for all of us lucky enough to be at Wembley that day, so very much more than a concert. It became a catalyst for personal transformation. Witnessing the collective power of humanity coming together to address a pressing global issue ignited a sense of purpose within thousands of us and certainly one that lives within me personally to this day.

It inspired me to act and try to make a difference in the lives of others. From that day forward, I became more conscious of the world around me, more empathetic towards those less fortunate, and more determined to create positive change.

Live Aid extended far beyond that one day. It served as a turning point in the way we perceive and address global issues. It showed us that music has the power to transcend boundaries and foster unity. It taught us the importance of coming together, regardless of our differences, to tackle the most pressing challenges of our time. Live Aid's legacy lies in reminding us that we all have the power to make a difference, no matter our age or background.

This Old Vic production of *Just For One Day* will transport you back to that day. It immerses its audience in the energy and significance of Live Aid and of the enduring example and the lessons it has for our still troubled world.

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