Icon: Kate Bush is probably the most influential living female musician

The last time Kate Bush performed a concert in London, the Eventim Apollo was called the Hammersmith Odeon and Margaret Thatcher had just arrived at 10 Downing Street. Probably the most influential female musician that Britain has ever produced is finally back at the same venue later this month — you can understand the excitement. Demand is such that she's ended up announcing 22 shows here, almost as many as she has played in her all-too-brief touring life in total. In the intervening years her mystique has swelled immeasurably.

She's about the last legend left on the must-see list, but seeing her singing in the flesh will mean much more than just another box ticked. If it wasn't for her creative daring, today's pop world would look very different, as her musician fans reveal.

Anna Calvi

I really appreciate the risks Kate Bush takes in her music. There's something absurd and yet beautiful in her work. That playfulness and imagination is incredibly inspiring. I love her voice and the way she can manipulate it for different songs; sometimes it feels fragile and thin, like a whisper, and other times it feels incredibly forceful and deep. It feels like she can channel so many different characters and yet they all feel distinctly personal and very much her. I love The Morning Fog from Hounds of Love. It's such a sad song, in which she's saying goodbye to her family as she's drowning, and yet it's sung in such an uplifting, beautiful way, which sums up her ability to juxtapose two conflicting feelings or moods through her voice.

Boy George

Kate Bush has always been a typewriter in a renaissance. She appeared out of nowhere at the tail end of punk and sort of embodied the punk spirit by just being completely herself. I know Johnny Rotten loved her. She blew things apart with things like Running Up That Hill because it defied the classic logic of pop. Kate is unique and a bit of a Greta Garbo, which makes her even more interesting. Most importantly, she's from south-east London, like me.

Catherine Pierce (The Pierces)

The first time I heard Kate Bush's Running Up That Hill I was moved to tears. I don't remember a song ever striking such a chord with me. I was going through a difficult time and it was as though she was reading my heart. Still, every time I listen to it, it invokes a feeling that makes me instantly go inward. It's one of those songs that I wish I had written and would love to cover, but wouldn't dare because I don't think there could be a more perfect version.

Steve Hackett (formerly of Genesis)

In my opinion Kate Bush is still the UK's most outstanding female singer-songwriter. I was impressed by her vocal range and the way she conveyed the atmospheric ghostly subject matter when I first heard Wuthering Heights. My own favourite is The Man with the Child in His Eyes — an intimate song, beautifully played and sung.

Holly Johnson (Formerly of Frankie Goes to Hollywood)

It's hard to think of Kate Bush as flesh and blood and not some mythological creature or forest faery weaving her musical web of dreams. From the moment I heard Wuthering Heights on the radio in 1979 I was enchanted. It was a newsworthy event, the sound of her voice, her uniqueness, what stories would she tell us.

She came out of the British landscape at a moment of post-punk despair. Even David Bowie's mentor Lindsay Kemp wasn't quite aware that the girl who came to dance, who was sewing backstage for his company, was to have quite such an international impact. Her legend has grown with the years, as her body of work has continued to evolve. Possessing all of the three graces, she has enthralled us for decades and held us in her spell.

Rumer

Having six older siblings, I got to listen to artists like Kate Bush from an early age. When rifling though my older sisters' bedroom one day, I found Hounds of Love. I loved the album so much it barely left the tape recorder, although I always had to run across the room to fast-forward Waking the Witch because it was too scary! That was my first introduction to her wild and rugged musical landscape, and that unique inner world. She is such a rare artist of our time, uncompromising yet always feminine, with no walls to her expression.

Sharon den Adel (Within Temptation)

We covered Running Up That Hill in 2003. I grew up with Kate Bush because my dad really liked her music. She was always in the background. When our band started there were some parallels with the way I was singing, the falsetto voice. People were always comparing us. It wasn't a sound that you hear a lot, especially in rock like I do. With some of her songs, when you take them apart, they don't seem possible. If you look at the rules for how you write songs, they shouldn't work, but they do. She's one of a kind. She's the icon for a lot of female vocalists. She inspired so many of us.

Emily Kokal (Warpaint)

I was late to the Kate Bush fan club. A few years ago a friend of mine spent an evening showing me videos and songs and telling me Kate's story, and I was so excited to have this woman's work to dive into and to discover what a pioneer she was, and how influential she was on artists I have loved. Her melodies are unreal. Singing along with Kate is like vocal Olympic training. I floated down the Nile for a week and she was my constant companion. Cloudbusting — ahhh. She's like Glinda the Good Witch's punk sister. She's a champion and an innovator and I'm so happy she exists and expresses her beauty for us all to enjoy.

Donny Osmond

The title of Don't Give Up, Kate Bush's duet with Peter Gabriel, let alone the lyrics, could be the mantra for every person with the desire to make it in showbusiness. I was told it would be next to impossible to get back in the charts again because of my prior teenybopper-based career. Through it all, my wife kept telling me, "Don't give up." One of my all-time favourite albums is So by Peter Gabriel. It was that song that helped through those difficult years.

Tom Fleming (Wild Beasts)

Like most people I started with Hounds of Love and went outwards from there. Now The Sensual World is my absolute favourite. There's a song on there called The Fog, which I think was the most captivating four minutes I'd ever heard at the time. It's remarkable. She was instrumental in moving our band down certain routes — her and Antony Hegarty, Michael Gira of Swans — these writers who are playing with sexuality and delicacy versus strength. It's all really interesting and not macho, which is really important to us. Also, she's seen as this pop star and doesn't really get the credit she deserves as a producer. She was really ahead of the game. I haven't met her but I expect she'd be quite sane and normal, which the best people usually are.

Imogen Heap

When I was 17 and getting my first record deal, it was the likes of Kate Bush who had contributed to labels taking me seriously as a girl who knew what she was doing and wanted. I was able to experiment and left to my own devices in the studio. Kate produced some truly outstanding music in an era dominated by men and gave us gals a licence to not just be "a bird who could sing and write a bit", which was the attitude of most execs!

Beth Orton

One of the biggest influences Kate Bush had on me was as a storyteller. Her songs unfold and the stories keep writing themselves in my imagination. There is something about the way a melody can carry meaning and bring it to light while retaining all mystery. Hounds of Love was the record that first caught me — the seemingly simple lines had a power to climb deep inside my 14-year-old mind. The music was like nothing I'd ever heard before.

There was talk of a machine she used, a Fairlight, which just added to her mystery, how she wrote and produced all her own music. It was utterly inspiring to me. She schooled me in all sorts of ways by being who she was and writing the songs she did. I love her passion and honesty and I was always moved by her. I was moved to try to write stories of my own. She's all woman and it's a wonderful thing.

Louisa Allen (Foxes)

She has an ability to lead you into a dream-like mystical world. She's influenced and inspired generations of females, including myself. You can't compare her with anyone else, she's one of a kind, a true icon.

Benjamin Clementine

Kate Bush wrote and created with such sincerity that the ultimate result was the obvious beauty recognised not just by our ears but our hearts. That's what music does. That's what art does. When that happens, art speaks for itself for centuries and centuries to come. It becomes the listener's monument for hope and inner peace. I must admit that I discovered her music through my ex-lady, even though back at home in Edmonton I used to hear glimpses of her from nowhere. It's no surprise, I guess that's what good music does: it comes to you most of the time. You don't chase after it.