

## 1b - Biography



2- Meanwhile, Staffell had become friends with a unique character named Freddie Bulsara. Born Farrokh Bulsara in Zanzibar, Mercury had emigrated with his conservative Parsee family to Feltham, Middlesex, in 1964, before enrolling at Ealing in 1966. Largely remembered by classmates as shy and quiet, Mercury nonetheless stood out for his exotic looks and budding taste for outlandish fashions. He also possessed a sharp sense of humor and an endearingly campy side, traits that made an immediate impression on May and Taylor upon their first meeting in early 1969.

Before long, Mercury was an established member of the Smile entourage, instructing its members on how to perform and lobbying to become the lead singer while following them around on gigs. He grew especially close to Taylor and moved in with the band after graduating from Ealing in 1969.

That summer, Mercury became the lead singer of a cover band called Ibex. Eventually changing its name to Wreckage, the group struggled to find its footing and disbanded by the end of the year, though not before its frontman stumbled upon what would become his signature move of parading around with the top half of a mic stand.

As Wreckage flailed, the fortunes of Smile also waxed and waned. By early 1970, Smile had been dumped by its label and lead singer Staffell. Mercury was then involved with another group called Sour Milk Sea, but this venture soon petered out as well. Thus created the opportunity that had been staring everyone in the face for some time, and in April 1970, Mercury, May and Taylor agreed to move forward with their musical aspirations together.