

By continuing to use this site you consent to the use of cookies on your device as described in our [cookie policy](#) unless you have disabled them. You can change your [cookie settings](#) at any time but parts of our site will not function correctly without them.



## FINANCIAL TIMES

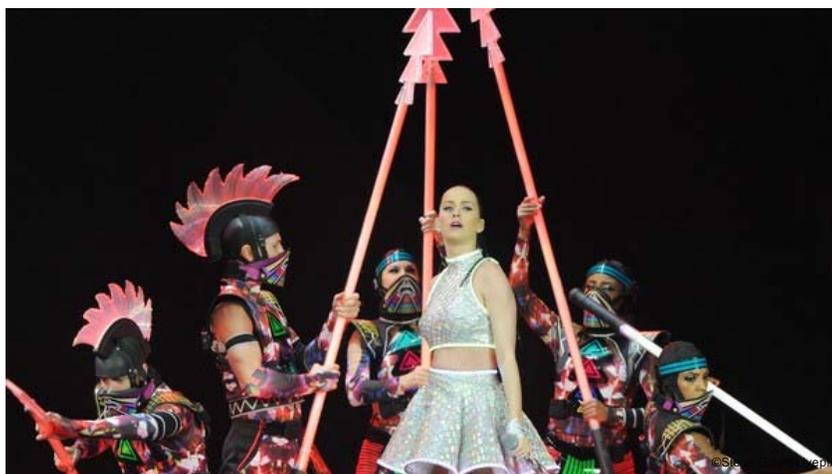
Home UK World Companies Markets Global Economy Lex Comment Management Personal Finance Life & Arts  
Arts Magazine Food & Drink House & Home Lunch with the FT Style Books Pursuits Travel Columns How To Spend It Tools

Last updated: May 28, 2014 4:49 pm

# Katy Perry, O2 Arena, London – review

By Richard Clayton

Brilliantly bonkers, sonically stonking, visually spectacular



Katy Perry on stage at the O2 Arena, London

“I’ll always try my best. I’ll never half-ass it,” Katy Perry told us at the most brilliantly bonkers and full-on entertaining arena concert of the year. Combining all-American pizzazz with a British lack of pretension, the 29-year-old from Santa Barbara was true to her word. The Prismatic show was sonically stonking, visually spectacular and fun, fun, fun.

Its breathless theatrical antics owed as much to the West End as to Hollywood. Perry emerged from a shiny pyramid to belt out the self-empowering “Roar” like an intergalactic tennis gal in silver minidress and crop-top and ferocious ponytail (there would be numerous costume and hair changes). Mohawked gladiators bounded down a twin-pronged thrust stage. Everything fringed with green, orange and pink fluorescence.

There were more primary-school kids here than at any gig I can recall (half-term week was canny scheduling). Suggestive knee sliding and one “make some f\*\*\*ing noise” apart, Perry seemed essentially wholesome – genuine even – her audience responding to what she calls her “heart-on-my-sleeve approach”. And her humour. If the content was superficial and trifling, it was substantially so – in the way crushes or trips to the circus or pop itself are.

A gutsy “Part of Me” was sung mock-running on a travelator; “Wide Awake” from the edge of an elevated plinth – the first of several moments to make Perry’s insurers gulp. “Dark Horse” began an ancient Egyptian section, Perry astride a blingy horse puppet. For “ET”, a diamond-shaped trapeze frame lifted her horizontal form – imagine an indoor air-sea rescue. It was the only time she was still in the show’s two hours – and it can’t have been very relaxing.

The cat-themed sequence had Terry Gilliam-ish animations and witty graphics (Chateau Meowmont, etc). “I Kissed a Girl” featured dancers in outsized bodysuits, with comically large boobs and bums, Perry dressed as a vampish version of the Pink Panther. A tap-dancing “Hot N Cold”, with sundry felines, segued into a mad snatch of “Vogue” that finished with Perry showered in glittery “milk”.

While lachrymose and ploddy, “By the Grace of God” was done with such belief that you couldn’t help but root for Perry. She strummed an acoustic guitar convincingly for the teeth-whitened country of “The One That Got Away”; a parade of butterfly banners accompanied “Unconditionally”, a slushy yowl delivered with sock-it-to-them sincerity.

During an interlude of 1990s house music, a Dance Cam picked out parents shaking their thangs, to the delight of their offspring and those busting a groove. Pop can be a cynical, manufactured business, but isn't pure joy what much of it is meant to be about? Happily marching along in smiley logos and green hair for "Walking on Air", Perry must surely agree. An inflatable pink Cadillac was carried round for the geeky "Last Friday Night"; "Teenage Dream" and "California Gurls" induced electro-rocked pandemonium.

Perry swung from a cluster of balloons during an encore of "Birthday". It was a victory lap she deserved to take. If I were an 11-year-old, I'd be showing and telling all this for weeks.



*katyperry.com*

Printed from: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/8c334c14-e64b-11e3-9a20-00144feabdc0.html>

Print a single copy of this article for personal use. Contact us if you wish to print more to distribute to others.

© THE FINANCIAL TIMES LTD 2014 FT and 'Financial Times' are trademarks of The Financial Times Ltd.