# Elvis Evolution criticised for missing hologram and failing to meet VIP expectations



The immersive Elvis Presley experience, "Elvis Evolution," which launched at London’s ExCel Waterfront, has provoked a wave of criticism from attendees who describe the show as “misleading” and fundamentally disappointing. The production was originally promoted as featuring a holographic, life-sized digital Elvis, portrayed through cutting-edge AI technology, promising audiences iconic musical moments reimagined on stage for the first time in the UK. Tickets ranged from £75 to a £300 Super VIP package that included exclusive perks such as a mid-show champagne toast and dedicated seating. However, many audience members have voiced their frustration over what they expected versus what they experienced.

Several attendees, including Mark and Tracey Baldwin, expressed to the BBC their sense of having been “mis-sold” the event, feeling more like “mugs than VIPs.” They described the show as “absolutely atrocious,” lamenting the absence of any holographic Elvis and dismissing the presentation largely as video footage easily accessible on YouTube. Mrs. Baldwin accused the producers of exploiting older fans by misleading them with promises of technology they might not fully grasp. Social media reactions echoed these sentiments, with some calling the performance akin to a “GCSE performance on a shoestring budget” and questioning the justification for the steep ticket prices. That said, the response has not been uniformly negative; some have praised aspects of the production, while others have demanded refunds.

In response, Layered Reality, the company behind the show and working in partnership with Elvis Presley Enterprises and Authentic Brands Group, clarified that the concept had evolved significantly since its initial announcement in early 2024. A spokesperson explained that the decision was made not to attempt recreations of Elvis’s iconic performances, deeming them “too iconic and irreplaceable.” Instead, the show uses AI to upscale existing archive footage and supplements gaps with new material crafted to offer a fresh perspective on Elvis's life. Founder and CEO Andrew McGuinness has previously described the experience as a “next-generation tribute” aimed at enabling fans to “step into the world of Elvis” and immerse themselves in his extraordinary legacy rather than passively watching a traditional concert.

The show specifically focuses on Elvis’s 1968 comeback special, a seminal moment in his career, and incorporates live actors, musicians, and meticulously recreated set pieces, including Elvis’s dressing room and the NBCStudio where the comeback was filmed. The producers tout a multi-sensory journey covering Elvis’s rise from humble beginnings in Tupelo to global superstardom, blending digital effects, AI technology, and live performance elements. The immersive approach aims to offer fans an experience akin to time travel, transporting them into Elvis’s world rather than simply presenting a hologram concert.

Despite these intentions, critical reception has been mixed. The Telegraph delivered a scathing one-star review, calling the show “limp” and stating it was not worth even a fraction of the VIP ticket cost. On the other hand, Time Out offered a more measured assessment with three stars, acknowledging the show’s careful crafting and enjoying it once accepted on its own terms. The varied responses highlight the ambitious nature of the production but also the challenge of balancing innovative technology with audience expectations, especially for a figure as revered as Elvis Presley.

Elvis Evolution faced delays, originally scheduled to launch in November 2024 but eventually opening several months later. It now runs multiple performances daily, with a capacity of 160 attendees per show, extending its run through December 2025. Located at Immerse LDN within ExCel London, the event features themed bars and live music as part of its immersive offerings, underscoring its goal of creating a comprehensive tribute beyond a mere stage show. While some fans may regret the lack of a holographic Elvis, the experience nonetheless represents a bold experiment in harnessing AI and mixed media to explore the cultural impact of an enduring music icon.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.the-independent.com/arts-entertainment/music/news/elvis-evolution-reviews-tickets-vip-hologram-b2793643.html), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/business/elvis-presley-hologram-docklands-excel-immersive-experience-ai-b1189292.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.the-independent.com/arts-entertainment/music/news/elvis-evolution-reviews-tickets-vip-hologram-b2793643.html), [[4]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-67906106)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.the-independent.com/arts-entertainment/music/news/elvis-evolution-reviews-tickets-vip-hologram-b2793643.html), [[4]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-67906106), [[2]](https://www.immersiverumours.com/post/review-elvis-evolution-by-layered-reality)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://elvisevolution.com/), [[5]](https://www.visitlondon.com/blog/elvis-presley-immersive-experience-first-look-2025), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/business/elvis-presley-hologram-docklands-excel-immersive-experience-ai-b1189292.html)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.the-independent.com/arts-entertainment/music/news/elvis-evolution-reviews-tickets-vip-hologram-b2793643.html), [[2]](https://www.immersiverumours.com/post/review-elvis-evolution-by-layered-reality), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/business/elvis-presley-hologram-docklands-excel-immersive-experience-ai-b1189292.html)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.the-independent.com/arts-entertainment/music/news/elvis-evolution-reviews-tickets-vip-hologram-b2793643.html), [[5]](https://www.visitlondon.com/blog/elvis-presley-immersive-experience-first-look-2025), [[7]](https://www.excel.london/VISITOR/news/elvis-evolution-immersive-experience)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.the-independent.com/arts-entertainment/music/news/elvis-evolution-reviews-tickets-vip-hologram-b2793643.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.immersiverumours.com/post/review-elvis-evolution-by-layered-reality> - This review of 'Elvis Evolution' by Layered Reality highlights the show's departure from the company's previous immersive experiences. The production, which focuses on Elvis's 1968 comeback special, is noted for its limited interactive elements and reliance on archival footage. The reviewer expresses disappointment over the absence of a holographic Elvis, a feature that was initially promised, and criticizes the show's lack of immersion and engagement compared to earlier Layered Reality productions.
3. <https://elvisevolution.com/> - The official website for 'Elvis Evolution' provides detailed information about the immersive experience, including ticket pricing, packages, and the show's duration. It outlines the journey through Elvis's life, from his early years in Tupelo to his rise to superstardom, culminating in the 1968 NBC special. The site emphasizes the use of cutting-edge technology, live actors, and musicians to create a multi-sensory tribute to the King of Rock and Roll.
4. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-67906106> - An article from the BBC discusses the creation of 'Elvis Evolution' by Layered Reality. The founder, Andrew McGuinness, describes the experience as more akin to time travel than a traditional hologram show. The piece highlights the use of intricate sets and interactive elements to immerse visitors in Elvis's world, aiming to make them feel as though they've stepped into the past to witness the King's life and performances firsthand.
5. <https://www.visitlondon.com/blog/elvis-presley-immersive-experience-first-look-2025> - This preview of 'Elvis Evolution' offers insights into the immersive experience set to debut in London. Produced by Layered Reality, the show combines digital technology, live performances, and AI-powered holograms to retrace Elvis's legacy. The article highlights the focus on the 1968 comeback special and the use of virtual reality and cutting-edge technology to bring key moments of Elvis's life vividly to the audience.
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/business/elvis-presley-hologram-docklands-excel-immersive-experience-ai-b1189292.html> - An article from The Standard details the 'Elvis Evolution' immersive experience, emphasizing its AI-powered hologram and focus on Elvis's 1968 comeback special. The piece discusses the show's capacity, ticket pricing, and the inclusion of themed bars and live music. It also touches upon the collaboration between Layered Reality and Elvis Presley Enterprises, highlighting the ambition to create a multi-sensory tribute to the legendary performer.
7. <https://www.excel.london/VISITOR/news/elvis-evolution-immersive-experience> - This announcement from ExCeL London introduces 'Elvis Evolution,' an immersive experience produced by Layered Reality. The article highlights the collaboration between ExCeL London and Layered Reality to bring this unique show to life. It emphasizes the immersive approach that allows fans to step into Elvis's world, experiencing his music and persona in an unprecedented way, and discusses the show's location at Immerse LDN within ExCeL London.