

FURTHER REVIEW

Janis Joplin and the Holding Company take the stage June 17, 1967 — Day 2 of the Monterey Pop Festival. They would perform again Sunday evening.

SUMMER OF LOVE

By Charles Apple | THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Fifty-five years ago, the first modern rock music festival kicked off in Monterey, California — about an hour down the coast from San Francisco — giving a crowd of about 200,000 over a three-day period a look at such unknowns as Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, the Grateful Dead and The Who.

The event was a huge hit and led directly into the now-famous 1967 “Summer of Love.” Over the next few years, the success of Monterey Pop would be duplicated by a number of other music festivals around the country.

THE MONTEREY POP FESTIVAL

The organizers were quite serious in selling the Monterey Pop Festival with a slogan of “music, love and flowers.” John Phillips of the Mamas & the Papas — one of the organizers of the festival — even wrote a song for Scott McKenzie to help promote the event: “San Francisco (Be Sure to Wear Flowers in Your Hair).”

And while the lineup of musical acts performing was impressive, a number of hoped-for bands couldn’t make it. Two of the Rolling Stones had recently been arrested for drug possession and couldn’t get visas.

Bob Dylan was recovering from a serious motorcycle accident. Brian Wilson, stinging from the demise of his beloved “Smile” album project, withdrew the Beach Boys at the last minute.

But the acts that did show up received much love from the audience. Those included The Association, Lou Rawls, Johnny Rivers, the Animals, Simon & Garfunkel, Steve Miller Band, the Byrds, Otis Redding, Buffalo Springfield and the Grateful Dead. Phillips and the Mamas & the Papas closed the show at the end of Day 3.

Artists performed for free — with the exception of Indian sitar master Ravi Shankar, who played for the entire afternoon of Day 3. Ticket prices were between \$3 and \$6.50.

Smelling a sure thing, ABC put up \$200,000 in advance to hire documentary maker D.A. Pennebaker to film the entire festival. The head of the network at the time, Tom Moore, was horrified by a number of overtly sexual acts and scenes in the resulting footage and refused to broadcast it. Pennebaker’s documentary was released in theaters instead.



Earlier that year, San Francisco-based Jefferson Airplane featuring Grace Slick had released a Top 10 single: “Somebody to Love.” Another, “White Rabbit,” would soon follow.



Janis Joplin and the Holding Company, electrified the audience with a performance of “Ball and Chain.” Columbia records immediately signed them to a recording contract.



Monterey was the first major U.S. appearance for The Who, which shocked the crowd by wrecking its amps, speakers and instruments after its set as smoke bombs went off.



Not to be outdone by The Who, Jimi Hendrix ended his set by dropping his guitar, dousing it with lighter fluid and then making a sort-of burnt offering to the music gods.

THE 1967 ‘SUMMER OF LOVE’

Young people who considered themselves “hippies” and “flower children” had been gathering in a 25-square-block area of San Francisco since a hugely publicized “Human Be-In” rally in January.

But with the end of the Monterey Pop Festival in June, activity in San Francisco ramped up considerably.

As word spread of an idealistic, bohemian-like lifestyle there, college students dropped out or used their summer breaks to join the fun. Eventually, about 100,000 young people flooded into Haight-Asbury to share life, music,



“free love” and the very latest in illicit psychedelic drugs: LSD.

The Vietnam War was a constant reminder of what



BOTH PHOTOS BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Young people indeed wore flowers in their hair to celebrate life in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park in the summer of 1967.

waited when the summer ended. Some protested by collecting their draft cards and turning them in, en masse, at the city’s Federal

building.

As newspapers around the nation picked up the story, local officials came up with “Summer of Love” as a way

to put a positive spin on it all.

But not surprisingly, the crowds eventually grew too large. The numbers of people experiencing drug overdoses and mental problems grew. Underage teen runaways joined their older brothers and sisters in the streets. Places to sleep safely became scarce. Street crime exploded.

By autumn, it was clear that while the Summer of Love might have been fun for many, it was not sustainable. A “Death of the Hippie” mock funeral was held in October and young people began trickling back to their homes and schools.

OTHER NOTABLE 1960S MUSIC FESTIVALS

Aug. 3-4, 1968
NEWPORT POP FESTIVAL

Costa Mesa, California

Attendance: **100,000**

The festival ended with a cream pie fight between the Grateful Dead’s Jerry Garcia, David Crosby of the Byrds and bystanders.

Dec. 28-30, 1968
MIAMI POP FESTIVAL

Miami

Attendance: **99,000**

So many great acts were invited that officials had two stages built and had shows going on simultaneously.

June 20-22, 1969
NEWPORT ’69

Northridge, California

Attendance: **150,000**

The Costa Mesa City Council banned further music festivals, so the next year’s event moved to Devonshire Downs.

July 3-6, 1969
NEWPORT JAZZ FESTIVAL

Newport, Rhode Island

Attendance: **78,000**

Fearing a riot, producers canceled an appearance by Led Zeppelin — which showed up anyway and closed the final day’s lineup.

July 4-5, 1969
ATLANTA POP FESTIVAL

Atlanta

Attendance: **110,000**

Grateful festival promoters thanked fans by staging a free show in Atlanta’s Piedmont Park featuring the Grateful Dead.

Aug. 1-3, 1969
ATLANTIC CITY POP FESTIVAL

Atlantic City

Attendance: **110,000**

Joni Mitchell stopped after just one song, complaining she “just played the same verse twice and no one noticed.” Incensed, she stalked off the stage.

Aug. 15-18, 1969
WOOD-STOCK

Bethel, New York

Attendance: **500,000**

Performances by Hendrix, Joplin and others were overshadowed by a crowd twice the size expected — and a shortage of food, water and rest rooms.

Aug. 30-Sept. 1, 1969
TEXAS INTERNATIONAL POP FESTIVAL

Lewisville, Texas

Attendance: **120,000**

B.B. King performed all three days, telling the same jokes — apparently unaware it was the same audience.

Dec. 6, 1969
ALTAMONT

Livermore, California

Attendance: **300,000**

A free festival turned violent: During the climactic Rolling Stones set, a Hells Angels security guard stabbed a pistol-waving audience member to death.