



The Last Great Event: with Jimi Hendrix and Jim Morrison (When the World Came to the Isle of Wight)

Ray Foulk, Caroline Foulk

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The Isle of Wight Festival in 1969 famously 'stole Bob Dylan' from Woodstock' and was the starting point and benchmark for all rock and pop festivals in the UK. What followed in 1970 was one of the world's greatest music gatherings of all time, attracting musicians and fans from across the whole music spectrum. The list of performers is a Who's Who of the then music élite, who are now legends: Jimi Hendrix, Miles Davis, the Who, Joan Baez, Richie Havens, Joni Mitchell, Procul Harem, the Doors, Leonard Cohen, the Moody Blues, Emerson Lake and Palmer - the list goes on. This was Britain's 'Woodstock' and all on a tiny island off the south coast. It would also be Hendrix's last major performance - 17 days later he was dead. But the organization of such a huge happening was inevitably far from plain sailing. It proved to be a roller coaster ride for the intrepid young Foulk brothers who navigated its course through a year of relentless political buffeting from local reactionary opponents and then from extremist counterculture militants who thought that they would prefer a free festival. Just as Island opponents were busily sabotaging the festival site and issuing death-threats, so too an unsavory cabal of radicals arrived from London under the banner of the White Panthers, intent upon undermining the event. For the first time, Ray Foulk, joint organizer, gives his own full, frank and authoritative account, delving into pivotal texts from all sides of the divide. Many remember this festival as a magical, life-changing experience, encapsulating the sixties trip of sex, drugs, rock'n'roll and a political yearning for a better world. But for the others, a question looms large over history: did this final festival precipitate the end of the dream of an alternative society, or did it reflect the changes already taking place? This most controversial of the festivals was aptly promoted by the Foulk brothers as 'The Last Great Event'.

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