HOW IT  
UNFOLDED

The Concert for Bangladesh was the event title for two benefit concerts organised by George Harrison and Ravi Shankar, held at noon and at 7:00pm on August 1, 1971, playing to a total of 40,000 people at Madison Square Garden in New York City.

Arranged for the relief of refugees from Bangladesh after the 1970 Bhola cyclone and during the 1971 Liberation War, the concert begins with a performance by Ravi Shankar and Ali Akbar Khan. Harrison introduces the set.

Shankar and Khan tune their instruments and stop after about 90 seconds. The audience, apparently believing they had heard an entire piece, responds with enthusiastic applause, to which Shankar replies: "Thank you, if you appreciate the tuning so much, I hope you will enjoy the playing more." The maestros then launch into "Bangla Dhun".

Harrison started the rock portion with "Wah-Wah".

The songs played and their sequence differ slightly between the afternoon and evening show. Afternoon show ran: Wah-Wah, Something, Awaiting on You All, That's The Way God Planned It, It Don't Come Easy, Beware of Darkness, While My Guitar Gently Weeps, Jumping Jack Flash, Youngblood, Here Comes The Sun, Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall, Blowin' In The Wind, It Takes A Lot To Laugh, Love Minus Zero/ No Limit, Just Like A Woman, Hear Me Lord, My Sweet Lord and Bangladesh.

Evening show ran: Wah-Wah, My Sweet Lord, That's The Way God Planned It, It Don't Come Easy, Beware Of Darkness, While My Guitar Gently Weeps, Jumping Jack Flash, Youngblood, Here Comes The Sun, Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall, It Takes A Lot To Laugh, Blowin' In The Wind, Mr Tambourine Man, Just Like A Woman, Something and Bangladesh.

The concert featured performers that included Bob Dylan, Eric Clapton, George Harrison, Billy Preston, Leon Russell, Badfinger, and Ringo Starr. Musical help was also on hand from Klaus Voormann, Jim Keltner, Badfinger, a large horn section and a host of backing singers organised by Don Nix.

Both the afternoon and evening shows were filmed and recorded for an album.

The concert created a number of magical moments: Preston's dance across the stage, Starr's sharing stage with Harrison after the break-up of their band The Beatles, Russell's rock and roll medley, Dylan's first stage appearance since 1969 and, to cap it all, Harrison's plea: "Now won't you lend your hand and understand/Relieve the people of Bangladesh..."

SOURCE: [www.sordc.com](http://www.sordc.com)



## ROCK 'N' MIRACLE

Almost 42 years ago, Ravi Shankar, George Harrison and "friends" staged rock's first mass act of philanthropy. Harrison, whom Shankar lovingly described as "my student, my brother, my son, all combined," was enjoying his peak years as a solo superstar. His presence alone ensured that the concert was more than just a worthy cause, in accordance with what we might call Geldof's first law of the charity gig. "The only responsibility the artist has is to create good art," says the man behind Live Aid. "They only fail when they create bad art."

The Concert for Bangladesh scored high on those terms, despite the fact Harrison was, according to his first wife, Pattie Boyd, "extremely nervous. He had to really steel himself to do it." Of the gig itself, Boyd recalls: "You could feel the electricity in the air. It was a momentous occasion. Afterwards there was a feeling of a huge elation. There was lots of talk, lots to deal with. It was too big to just disappear."

Rather than vanish, it expanded. The Concert for Bangladesh raised \$2,43,000 overnight, and spawned a single

(Harrison's typically literal Bangladesh, specially written for the occasion), as well as a triple album and a film. It has since raked in \$17m for Unicef, funding projects not only in Bangladesh but in trouble spots from Angola to Romania to the Horn of Africa.

The concert did more than simply raise money; it left a deep imprint on the times. So did Live Aid, partly because it was the first major music event given blanket TV coverage, but also because Geldof, very much a child of 1968, the high watermark of pop and politics, understood the relationship between the two and how it could be harnessed. In an age of defined ideological divisions, framed by the 1984/85 miners' strike, Live Aid tapped into a desire among musicians to address social issues.

It is just a coincidence that the Concert for Sandy Relief, the gargantuan spawn of the Concert for Bangladesh, was staged the day after Shankar's death (December 11, 2012). There is no reason to doubt the good intentions of any of the stars who played—McCartney, the Rolling Stones, Kanye West,

Bruce Springsteen, Eric Clapton, Alicia Keys, the Who, Roger Waters, the surviving members of Nirvana, and many more. It's to their credit that they did the show and helped bring in the reported \$30 million in ticket revenue to go towards relief from the destruction of Hurricane Sandy.

The Concert for Bangladesh resonated because it united those two lightning rods for 60s idealism – Dylan and, in the form of Harrison and Starr, the Beatles – at a time when music was still regarded as a counter-cultural force powerful enough to change the world. The result, Jonathan Clyde, of Apple (the Beatles' company), who oversees the Concert's legacy, says, "put Bangladesh on the map. For the generation involved in the war of liberation it meant a huge amount. It helped their independence become recognised."

Ravi Shankar had something to add. "I've been to Bangladesh and I can't tell you the love and respect they have for what we did," he said. "It was like a miracle."

SOURCE: THE GUARDIAN, NEWREPUBLIC



With a little help from  
my friends

## GEORGE HARRISON

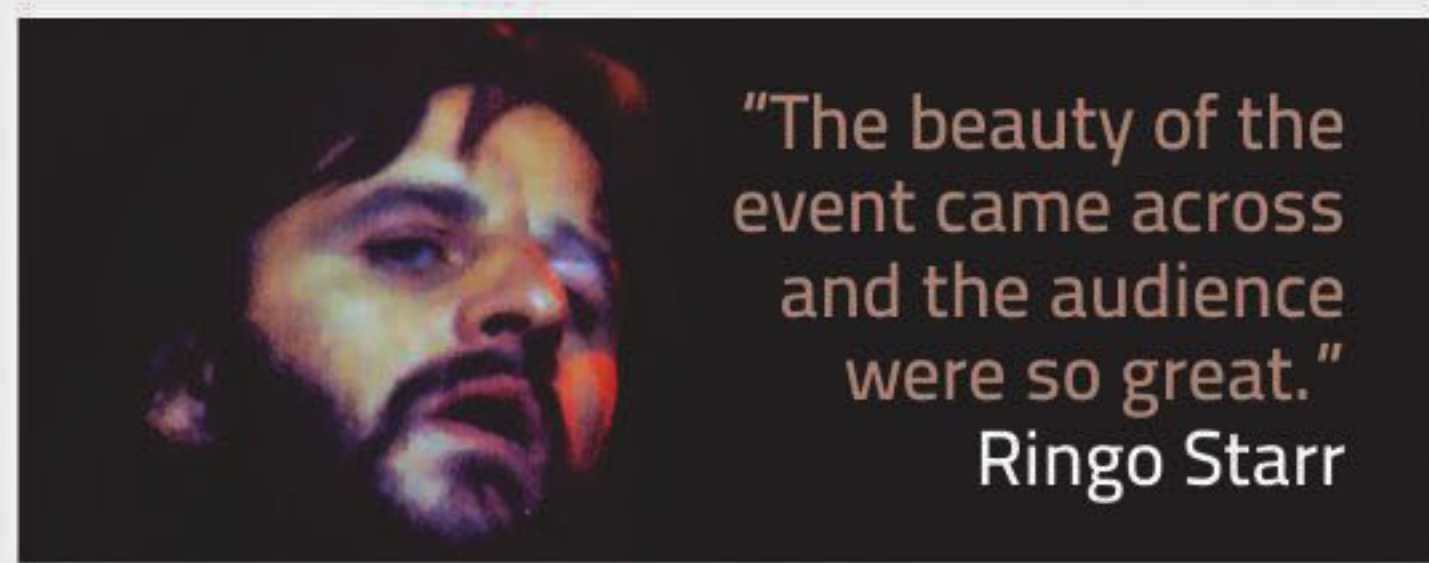
The Concert for Bangladesh happened because of my relationship with Ravi. He is such a humble person. He said, "I am going to do this show. Maybe, if you or Peter Sellers or both of you can come on and do something or announce something, maybe we can make \$25,000 and do something about this terrible war."

I said: "If you want me to be involved, I think I'd better be really involved," so I started recruiting all these people. It was difficult at first, but once it got closer to the show I had commitments from so many people that some had to be turned down. Everybody wanted to be in it.

Mainly the concert was to attract attention to the situation that was happening at one time. The money we raised was secondary, and although we had some problems because Allen Klein had not been handling it right, they still got plenty of money, even though it was a drop in the ocean. The main thing was, we spread the word and helped get the war ended. Little Bengali waiters in Indian restaurants still come up to me and say, "When we were fighting in the jungle, it was so great to know there was someone out there supporting us."

The Concert for Bangladesh was just a moral stance. These kinds of things have grown over the years, but what we did shows the musicians and people are more humane than politicians. Today people accept the commitment rock 'n' roll musicians have when they perform for a charity. When I did it, they said things like, "He's only doing this to be nice."

SOURCE: [www.superseventies.com](http://www.superseventies.com)



"The beauty of the event came across and the audience were so great."  
Ringo Starr

"This will always be remembered as a time that we could be proud of being musicians. We just weren't thinking of ourselves for five minutes." Eric Clapton



GEORGE HARRISON  
AND FRIENDS  
2 PERFORMANCES  
SUNDAY AUG. 1st  
2:30 P.M. & 8 P.M.  
NO REFUNDS OR EXCHANGES  
LIMIT 4 TICKETS PER PERSON



## Mr Tambourine man returns

Dylan had been off the road since a motorcycle accident prematurely ended his 1966 Blonde on Blonde world tour, though he did perform at a Woody Guthrie tribute show in 1968, later guesting with the Band at a 1969 Illinois show and again at the Isle of Wight a few months later.

Yet by the time George Harrison started planning the Concert for Bangladesh in 1971, Dylan hadn't played a single song onstage in almost two years. Harrison knew that getting Dylan on the bill would guarantee sell-outs at both the afternoon and evening shows, and somehow he actually talked him into showing up. According to legend, Harrison asked Dylan to perform "Blowin' in the Wind," a song he hadn't played in seven years. Dylan snapped back, "Are you going to play 'I Want to Hold Your Hand?'"

In the end, Dylan did perform "Blowin' in the Wind," along with "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall," "It Takes a Lot to Laugh, It Takes a Train to Cry," "Love Minus Zero/No Limit," "Just Like a



Woman" and "Mr Tambourine Man." He was backed by the one-time-only supergroup of Harrison (guitar), Leon Russell (bass) and Ringo Starr (tambourine). "With his beard trimmed below the jawline, his hair medium short but wiry, he looked as if he'd stepped off the cover of The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan," read the original review in Rolling Stone. "His voice now had a beautiful fullness to it, but it was closer to The Times They Are A-Changin' than Nashville Skyline."

The Sixties had been over for slightly over a year and a half by the time the Concert for Bangladesh rolled around, but there was already nostalgia for the era. The sight of Ringo and George playing together again brought tears to people's eyes, and the return of Dylan was hailed as a huge event. They'd have to wait another two and a half years, however, before he was ready to take the Sixties nostalgia show on the road.

SOURCE: [www.rollingstone.com](http://www.rollingstone.com)