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INTRODUCTION

The year was 1969 in America, political tensions were high as polarization divided a once unified nation, a surge in a counterculture that would define an entire generation, and an ongoing race war that seemed to have no end in sight.

It was a time in need of social cohesion, an increase of relationships and a sense of solidarity among members of a community.

And it was music that would be the medium for this revolution. By, “satisfying a basic human interest in belonging, relating, and collaborating with others”, music can break down barriers and bridge gaps (Bowman). It is through the understanding of ‘musicking’, that these trials and tribulations were relieved in a sense, and harmony looked possible.

Happening in the same state just miles and lifetimes apart, are two essential music festivals that encompassed the summer of 1969. In upstate New York, one of the most well-known musical events, a true ‘sociological phenomenon’, Woodstock, tested every norm that defined its concertgoers and naysayers (Michael Lang).

While in the heart of the Black community in New York City, Harlem, hundreds of thousands of Black individuals and families came together to celebrate and inspire one another through the music and words of their very own.

Bringing in the people by the masses, singers and musicians created a world within a world; talking about the importance of what’s going on in there, is just as or if not more important than what’s going on outside. And the songs, the artists, and the audience were how this importance was going to be shared and remembered. The music that was played at these shows went far beyond the typical interactions of person-person (i.e., singer and crowd member), but went onto individual-society, and even humanity-natural world/supernatural. Music created these interactions, and even though these weren’t infinite environments, the music brought in existence relationships that model a metaphoric form that they’d like to see in the broaden society.

The years that plagued the 60s, all the violence and loss that came with the Civil Rights Movement and the assassinations of those who lead it, and the generation of youth that were done listening to the Establishment and the skewed beliefs it spewed. And from all that hatred, uncertainty, and rebellion, came music and a new sound that graced them with relief, freedom, and above all, inclusion, in a time that was segregated beyond belief.

And it wasn’t just the musicians and performers that made the music what it was, it was the passion and dedication from both the promoters of these events (Michael Lang and Tony Lawrence), the crowds, and people years later that tied it all together. It’s the fact that over fifty years later, conversation is still circulating, and stories are being shared of just what a magical time this was for music. All the individuals that came together to facilitate these spectacles knew the power music has, it’s ability to, “manifest in collective action, its collaborative, participative rituals that satisfy the basic human interest in social togetherness” (Bowman). It was in this manifestation of ideas, love, and prosperity, that the music was their armor that, “served to differentiate “us” from “them”” (Bowman).

These two festivals are essential when one is coming up with modern and relevant examples of Christopher Small’s concept of ‘musicking’, music that is “...not only between those

organized sounds which are conventionally thought of as being the stuff of musical meaning but also between the people who are taking part, in whatever capacity, in the performance; and they model, or stand as metaphor for, ideal relationships as the participants in the performance imagine them to be..." (Small). More notably, musicking relies heavily on the relations in the outside world that create these relevance's within said music.

WOODSTOCK

The weekend of August 15th-18th in Bethel, New York, a town with a population under 3,000, was home to a music festival, Woodstock, that brought with it over 400,000 individuals (Census). Bringing with them some of the largest names in the music industry: Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Sly & The Family Stone, Joan Baez, Creedence Clearwater Revival, The Band, Grateful Dead, and many more. It was '3 Days of Peace & Music', according to its posters, and it proved to be just that.

Concertgoers ranging from all ages, races, genders, and beliefs, left it all behind, and embodied the spirit that was Woodstock. Providing a 'perfect communion' between the musicians and audience, with the festival serving as a catalyst for human encounters. Said encounters being between the members of the audience, that in no way was hostile or one-sided, "...it's more than that. I'm here for the same reason that Indians used to have tribal gatherings. Just being here with people like me makes it all worthwhile..." (Sheehy).

Serving as a haven or **refuge**, from the world around them, war-torn, feared, and racist, that allowed the youth to roam freely and be a "transcendental moment, a coming of age for the young generation of Americans in the late 1960s" (Sheehy).

And the music was the reassurance of this haven, with the first performer, Richie Havens, embodying the spirit of the crowd and the truth that this festival had a life of its own and so much larger than what was before them. Havens began freestyling with his guitar and the single word, 'freedom', and from then it was almost as if spontaneous combustion erupted on stage (Lawrence and Parker). Creating and immortalizing what would become the unwritten anthem of Woodstock, Havens lit the spark for what would be an eternal fire for all.

Ending the first night, Joan Baez, a folk singer known as "the moral center of the anti-war and social-justice movements..." brought the crowd back to their roots and moved them by the words of others (Browne). Singing the words of choir, The Edwin Hawkins Singers, 'Oh Happy Day', Baez made sure the audience was alert by utilizing call-and-response even in the early hours of the morning. She went on to end her act with a classic for the time and for her, 'We Shall Overcome', preciously sung by her at the March on Washington alongside Martin Luther King Jr. in 1963, Baez was able to soothe the worries of many in attendance.

These examples barely scratch the surface on all that Woodstock was a life of its own that harnessed a generational power of love and peace. It started as just a festival held in a dairy farm of pro-Vietnam war to the literal epicenter of the counterculture and progressive beliefs of anti-Establishment. Music can, "empower youth to transform non-play spaces into musical playground to serve their needs", and that is exactly what the attendees achieved and embodied.

The act of musicking in Woodstock goes so much deeper than just the attendees and the hugely influential singers and bands at the time. Michael Lang, promoter and creator of it all, knew the life that this festival could make and the power of music, "This generation was brought together and showed it was beautiful. The peace they were screaming about is what they really want – they're living it" (Sheehy). And none of this would've been possible if not for Max Yasgur, a "pro-Vietnam War political conservative", who on paper is the very thing that Woodstock was rebelling against, yet firmly believed in the right of free expression (Cavanaugh). And what's a better way of expression than alongside thousands of other likeminded youths, singing and dancing to the songs that embody just that.

Woodstock was a once in a lifetime spectacle, and even though the summer of '69 has passed, today we are still able to partake in its wonder and beauty through listening's of live recordings and hearing the stories of those in attendance.

HARLEM CULTURAL FESTIVAL

Spanning over six weekends throughout the summer of 1969, Harlem Cultural Festival, created an environment for the Black community that no government or anyone else at the time could have. Finally, a space that welcomed Black individuals instead of pushing them to the back or segregating them and leaving them to be outsiders in their own communities, cities, and country. It was a "Black consciousness revolution" (*Summer of Soul*).

The Harlem Cultural Festival came at seemingly the perfect time. At the start of a 'change of era' within the community, after slayings of too many of their own brothers and sisters, the founder, Tony Lawrence, realized what needed to be done. Utilizing the power of music and the strength of their community, it wasn't a difficult task for him to find musicians to lead the march.

With familiar and popular musicians at the time, Stevie Wonder, B.B. King, Nina Simone, Sly & The Family Stone, Mahalia Jackson, The Staple Singers, and so many others. All different types of music were played, (soul, blues, Gospel, jazz, and rock), and "all that music that is credited to Blacks in America can be traced back to the experience of Blacks" (Thompson). Singing of times of oppression and triumphs, joy and ache, and the struggle to make sense of it; all that was and unfortunately is to be Black in America.

At a time where the country seemed as though change was soon, with innovations in technology and advancements in policies, "...yesterday the moon, tomorrow, maybe us" the Black community still didn't feel seen or relevant for the times (Greene).

They only had one another to lean on in this time, and Harlem Cultural Festival served as a sanctuary for their culture and beliefs. It was because of one man in New York City, who made this possible for the Black community. It was John Lindsey, a young, white, progressive Republican mayor of NYC, who not only played the role of a concerned mayor but sought out reformation of the Civil Rights Movement with true compassion. New York was at the seams of busting out in riots and rage, and he saw what good a festival like this could do for the city.

Free to the public and protected and served by the Black Panthers, (NYPD refused to provide security) no trouble was to come for these six weekends of music and partying, it was "the ultimate black barbeque" (*Summer of Soul*). Filled with live music, dancing, food vendors, and fashion; The Harlem Cultural Festival radiated the soul of Black America.

Even though the festival was lighthearted and open to everyone, many of the attendees didn't realize at the time how significant this event truly was. Everyone was an activist in some way or another at that time, seemed just by being black was anti-establishment. And "...as activists we are making a complete and total commitment. It was like going to war, and we were propelled on a wave of music" (Thompson).

Nina Simone's performance was the battle cry this army needed. A powerhouse of vocal talent and emotion, she is "otherworldly regality", and she took the stage with grace and built-up rage for her everyone (Thompson). Quoting the poem, *Are You Ready*, by David Nelson, member of the Last Poets, three poets and musicians of the 1960s that embodied African American civil rights movement's idea of black nationalism.

Are you ready black people?
Are you ready black people?
Are you really ready?
Are you ready to do what is necessary?
Are you ready black man?
Black woman are you ready?
Are you ready to kill if necessary?
Is your mind ready?
Is your body ready?
Is your body ready to do what it has to do to create life?
Are you ready to smash white things?
To burn buildings?
Are you ready to build black things?

This is just one example of how impactful musical moments are in the construction and perseverance of social change. The reactions and relations that come out of instances as powerful as this, are essential in the preservation of a culture.

It wasn't just Simone who made this act of 'musicking' as gripping as it was, it was David Nelson and the other poets, the teachers, and idols she's had that created this spirit of resilience and fury in her, her peers who inspire and encourage her, and the people in the audience on that day that fueled her rage and beliefs into action.

CONCLUSION

These two colossal moments in our modern-day history would not be possible if it weren't for every single individual involved and in attendance. The musical phenomenon's that became legendary during these events, Jimi Hendrix and the 'Star Spangled Banner', Santana's debut show, Mavis Staples and Mahalia Jackson singing 'Precious Lord', and Sly & The Family Stone with 'Everyday People', still to this day are shared and essential in introspection of the change we have made since. Woodstock and the Harlem Cultural Festival are two clear examples of what it means to be, see, or be a part of 'musicking', which "...establishes in the place where it is happening a set of relationships, and it is in those relationships that the meaning of the act lies..." (Small).

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