

DAILY TIMES ENTERTAINMENT

US Festival 1983

The US Festival (US is an acronym for “Unite Us In Song”) held on Memorial Day of 1983 was a massive three-day celebration of music and culture sponsored by Steve Wozniak, co-founder of Apple Computer. Wozniak financed the entire thing at a loss to over \$10 million with his motivation quoted as, “to throw a big party in the middle of nowhere.” This festival was a follow up to 1982 Labor Day inaugural US Festival events.

The festivals were intended to be the celebration of evolving technologies; a marriage of music, computers, television and people. Included on the grounds were large air-conditioned tents featuring the US Festival Technology Exposition; a dazzling display of then-cutting edge computers, software, and electronic music devices. Also making a debut were installations of “out-door rain,” perforated pvc nozzles that sprayed water to fight the fierce hundred-degree heat.

The 1983 version saw the US Festival split into distinct categories of “New Wave Day,” “Heavy Metal Day,” and “Rock Day,” with nearly 700,000 fans congregating in southern California. There has been some non-bootleg footage released over the years, but unfortunately, none of it features the marquee performances of Van Halen, David Bowie, Motley Crue or Ozzy Osbourne.

‘US Festival 1983: Days 1 - 3’ comes closest to capturing the experience though, with performances from U2, the Clash, Judas Priest, Stevie Nicks, Scorpions, INXS, Men at Work, Stray Cats, Triumph, Missing Persons and more. This includes the legendary U2 performance of “Sunday Bloody Sunday,” The Clash’s final performance with Mick Jones, a seminal performance for INXS in the US, and many other landmark moments in music history.

Much of this release, no matter how good, remains a tease. When it comes to U2 for example, there’s only one track on the DVD. Here’s hoping that there will be some full sets dropping in the future, which until this point have shown up in inferior quality on YouTube and through various Internet sites and music conventions. Sources behind the “US Festival 1983: Days 1 - 3” told Rock Music Menu that efforts were ongoing to get the bigger artists to sign off on letting the fans in on what they may have missed so long ago – even if they were there.

Still, “US Festival 1983: Days 1 – 3,” while a small slice of a much, much bigger pie, is one to be devoured. Directed by award winning filmmaker and music biographer Glenn Aveni it also includes insight from Mark Goodman, one of the original VJ’s that covered the US Festival in 1983 for the then newly launched MTV.

- Michael Christopher

<http://www.delcotimes.com/arts-and-entertainment/20131205/a-few-hints-for-santa-music-on-cds>