

= The Concert for Bangladesh ( album ) =

The Concert for Bangladesh ? originally titled The Concert for Bangla Desh ? is a live triple album by George Harrison and celebrity friends , released on Apple Records in December 1971 in America and January 1972 in Britain . The album followed the two concerts of the same name , held on 1 August 1971 at New York 's Madison Square Garden , featuring Harrison , Bob Dylan , Ravi Shankar , Ali Akbar Khan , Ringo Starr , Billy Preston , Leon Russell and Eric Clapton . The shows were a pioneering charity event , in aid of the homeless Bengali refugees of the Bangladesh Liberation War , and set the model for future multi @-@ artist rock benefits such as Live Aid ( 1985 ) and the Concert for New York City ( 2001 ) .

Co @-@ produced by Phil Spector and featuring the latter 's signature Wall of Sound in a live setting , the fundraiser album was delayed for three months due to protracted negotiations between Harrison and two record companies keen to protect their business interests , Capitol and Columbia / CBS . Besides the main performers , the musicians and singers on the recording include Badfinger , Jim Horn , Klaus Voormann , Alla Rakha , Jim Keltner , Jesse Ed Davis and Claudia Linnear . The box set 's original packaging included a 64 @-@ page book containing photos from the concerts ; the album cover , designed by Tom Wilkes , consisted of an image of a malnourished child sitting beside an empty food bowl .

On release , The Concert for Bangladesh was a major critical and commercial success , topping albums charts around the world , and went on to win the Grammy Award for Album of the Year in March 1973 . Together with the 1972 Apple concert film directed by Saul Swimmer , the album gained Indian classical music its largest Western audience up until that time . The album was reissued in 2005 , in remastered form , featuring a new cover .

Among the many words of acclaim that have been written about The Concert for Bangladesh since its release , author Tom Moon describes it as an album to play " whenever your faith in the power of music begins to wane " . Sales of The Concert for Bangladesh continue to benefit the George Harrison Fund for UNICEF , which raised \$ 1 @. @ 2 million for children in the Horn of Africa , in a 2011 campaign marking the album 's 40th anniversary .

= = The concerts = =

While in Los Angeles in June 1971 , and after being made aware of the gravity of the situation in what was then known as East Pakistan by friend and musician Ravi Shankar , George Harrison set about organising two fundraising concerts at Madison Square Garden , New York , to aid the war @-@ ravaged and disaster @-@ stricken country . In the middle of these hurried preparations , he composed the song " Bangla Desh " in order to call further attention to the Bengalis ' cause , and rush @-@ released it as a charity single four days before the shows . Riding high with the recent success of his All Things Must Pass triple album , Harrison then headlined the all @-@ star UNICEF benefit concerts , backed by a 24 @-@ piece band of musicians and singers , on Sunday , 1 August 1971 . Equally notable were appearances by fellow ex @-@ Beatle Ringo Starr and Bob Dylan , both of whom , like Harrison , had been mostly unavailable to concert audiences for several years . In Dylan 's case , it was his first appearance on a major US concert stage in five years , and his participation in the event had been uncertain until he walked on for his segment midway through the afternoon show .

The concerts were highly successful in raising international awareness of the plight of the refugees ? thought to number up to 10 million ? and a cheque for over US \$ 243 @, @ 000 was soon sent to UNICEF for relief . The media lavished praise on Harrison as an ambassador for rock altruism and hailed the event as proof that " the Utopian spirit of the Sixties was still flickering " , as Rolling Stone magazine put it . With concert recording having been carried out at Madison Square Garden by Gary Kellgren , using the Record Plant 's 16 @-@ track mobile unit , Harrison intended to raise significantly more money via a live album of the event , to be issued on the Beatles ' Apple Records label , followed by Apple Films ' concert documentary , also to be titled The Concert for Bangladesh .

= = Album preparation = =

During his and Shankar 's press conference in New York on 27 July , Harrison had stated that a live album might be ready for release within ten days of the shows . Although this estimate would turn out to be highly optimistic , the following year , in an effort to foil concert bootleggers , Elvis Presley succeeded in delivering a live album just eight days after his own , much @-@ publicised Madison Square Garden shows .

Harrison and co @-@ producer Phil Spector began working on the Bangladesh recordings on 2 August , and work continued there at the Record Plant for around a week . Spector later talked of them spending " six months " mixing what amounted to a total of four hours of music ; in fact , the process took just over a month , as Harrison told talk @-@ show host Dick Cavett that November . In their book *Eight Arms to Hold You* , Chip Madinger and Mark Easter question the extent of Spector 's involvement , citing Harrison 's subsequent lauding of Kellgren 's role in " capturing the performances " on 1 August , as well as the fact that Spector was " in and out of hospital " during this time , similar to his erratic attendance at the All Things Must Pass sessions in 1970 .

= = = Concert recordings = = =

Speaking in 2011 , Spector identified two issues that prolonged the live album 's preparation , both of them reflective of the haste with which the concerts came together : " It was chaos [ setting up at Madison Square Garden ] ? we had three hours to mic the band , then the audience came in , and we didn 't know how to mic the audience . " And rather than a standard " band " , this was a full Wall of Sound orchestra : two drummers ( Ringo Starr and Jim Keltner ) , two keyboard players ( Billy Preston and Leon Russell ) , six horn players ( led by Jim Horn ) , three electric guitarists ( Harrison , Eric Clapton and Jesse Ed Davis ) , a trio of acoustic guitars to be " felt but not heard " ( Badfinger 's Pete Ham , Tom Evans and Joey Molland ) , the seven members of Don Nix 's " Soul Choir " , together with bassist Klaus Voormann and a dedicated percussion player , Mike Gibbins of Badfinger . In his review of the Concert for Bangladesh film for NME , John Pidgeon described the scene as " a roadie 's nightmare of instruments , mikes , amps and speakers " .

Before the Western portion of the concerts , there were the traditionally hard @-@ to @-@ record Indian string instruments of Ravi Shankar and Ali Akbar Khan to amplify , together with Alla Rakha 's tabla and the drone @-@ enhancing tambura , played by Kamala Chakravarty ? each offering natural musical tones so easily lost in the " cavernous Garden " . An additional challenge for Kellgren had been the need to capture the dynamics of a well @-@ paced show designed around professionally presented hit songs , rather than a loose superstar jam .

= = = Post @-@ production = = =

With ongoing friendships a priority , Harrison had promised the main participants that , should things turn out badly on 1 August , they could be excluded from any album or film release . According to Madinger and Easter , he took early mixes of the concert tapes to Dylan for the latter 's approval . Of all the featured performers , only Leon Russell chose to intervene , necessitating a reworking of his " Jumpin ' Jack Flash / Youngblood " medley , which he apparently remixed himself . Post @-@ production on the Madison Square Garden recordings was minimal , the known examples being Harrison 's double @-@ tracked lead vocal on the bridges of " While My Guitar Gently Weeps " , and a composite edit of his opening song , " Wah @-@ Wah " , which was assembled from both the shows . In addition , it is possible that Shankar and Khan 's " Bangla Dhun " was severely edited down : Harrison later described their set as having lasted 45 minutes , yet the running time on the album is under seventeen minutes and in the film just fifteen .

The final mix down of the recordings , for album and film use , was carried out in Los Angeles in September , by A & M Studios engineers Norman Kinney and Steve Mitchell . In their joint interview for the 2005 *Concert for Bangladesh Revisited* documentary , Kinney and Mitchell confirm that

music from both the afternoon ( matinee ) and evening performances was used for the concert film and live album ; they also state that Spector repeatedly instructed them to increase the volume of the audience in the mixes , in a search for more " feel of the room " in the end result . The second show was preferred when it came to selecting the best concert audio . The exceptions are as follows : " Wah @-@ Wah " , which starts off with the evening version but cuts to the matinee at 2 : 53 ; Harrison 's band introduction and " While My Guitar Gently Weeps " , both sourced from the first show ; and Russell 's medley , which is also from the matinee on the album , but in the concert film , the audio cuts to the evening show during " Youngblood " .

Harrison 's geniality as a host was well represented on the recordings . As with Shankar 's pre- " Bangla Dhun " address , Harrison 's band introductions , complete with Russell and Voormann breaking into " Yellow Submarine " when Starr 's name is mentioned , and his other on @-@ stage dialogue ? particularly the concert @-@ sealing " Like to bring on a friend of us all ... Mr Bob Dylan " ? would become as integral to the legacy of the event as the music itself .

= = Record company obstruction = =

On 23 August , press reports appeared citing " legal problems " as the reason behind the delaying of the much @-@ anticipated live album ? problems that would turn out to be a disagreement between EMI @-@ owned Capitol Records ( Apple 's US distributor ) and Columbia Records ( Dylan 's label ) over who had a rightful claim to release the album . Columbia / CBS were eventually mollified with the granting of tape distribution rights in North America , and record and tape distribution in the rest of the world . Another stumbling block was Capitol 's insistence that they receive monetary compensation , thought to be around \$ 400 @,@ 000 , for what the company perceived to be vast production and distribution costs for the boxed three @-@ record set . It was a position from which EMI chairman Bhaskar Menon refused to budge , while Harrison was equally adamant that , since all the artists were providing their services for free and Apple was supplying the album packaging at no charge , the record company " must give up something " also .

With the sound mix being completed in LA , Harrison spent most of September 1971 in New York working on the problematic film footage of the concert , before heading to London . There he attended the re @-@ opening of Apple Studio on 30 September and produced new signing Lon & Derrek Van Eaton 's debut single , as well as enduring a fruitless meeting with the British Treasury 's financial secretary ? the latter activity in an attempt to have the government waive its standard purchase tax , and so keep the album affordable to record @-@ buyers . Harrison returned to New York on 5 October and announced that the Bangladesh live album would be issued during the following month . At this time , with concert bootlegs now on the market , posters were placed in record shops bearing the slogan : " Save a starving child . Don 't buy a bootleg ! " .

In the fourth week of November ? well into the lucrative Christmas sales period and close to four months after the concerts ? Harrison voiced his frustration at the stalemate with Capitol on ABC 's late @-@ night chat show , The Dick Cavett Show . Harrison was on the program to promote the Raga documentary with Shankar , but after making a surprise guest performance with Gary Wright 's new band Wonderwheel , he launched into a complaint about his US record company 's interference and threatened to take the whole album package to Columbia . With the outburst attracting unfavourable attention in the press , where Capitol were viewed as " profiteering on the backs of famine victims " , the company eventually backed down and agreed to release the album on Harrison 's terms . Of all the labels involved , only Columbia would make any money from The Concert for Bangladesh ? 25 cents on every copy sold . Although none of these royalties went to the artist , Dylan and his record company were already benefiting from the exposure provided by the Bangladesh concerts , through the timely release of Bob Dylan 's Greatest Hits Vol . II . Of the other featured artists at the Concert for Bangladesh , the careers of both Preston ( A & M Records ) and Russell ( Shelter ) likewise prospered as a result of their participation , but their record companies imposed no such conditions on Apple and Capitol . In January 1972 , Melody Maker 's Richard Williams remarked in his Concert for Bangladesh album review : " Between them , Capitol and CBS have proved that , when it comes to awareness and enlightenment , the business is still several

years behind the musicians . "

Once the album had been granted a release date , Apple 's financial terms ensured that as much money as possible would be raised from each copy sold , but that it would be difficult for retailers to profit financially . Some retailers responded with " shameless price gouging " on the three @-@ record set , apparently at Capitol 's recommendation . Following the protracted negotiations surrounding the live album 's distribution , Harrison 's disaffection with EMI / Capitol was a key factor behind his signing with A & M Records in January 1976 .

= = Album artwork = =

The album 's packaging was designed by Camouflage Productions partners Tom Wilkes and Barry Feinstein , the same team responsible for All Things Must Pass , rock music 's first boxed triple album . Along with Alan Pariser , both Wilkes and Feinstein had taken stills photographs at Madison Square Garden , at the soundcheck on 31 July and during the concerts the next day , the results filling the 64 @-@ page full @-@ colour booklet accompanying the original album . Also used as the Concert for Bangladesh movie poster , the album @-@ cover photograph ? the " haunting " image of a malnourished young child sitting naked behind a wide , empty food bowl , author Bruce Spizer writes ? was a still taken from news agency film footage and airbrushed extensively by Wilkes . Having created the provocative , headline @-@ filled picture sleeve for Harrison 's " Bangla Desh " single earlier in the year , Wilkes was keen to capture " real human compassion " in this cover and poster image .

The booklet 's back @-@ cover picture showed an open guitar case filled with food and medical supplies , below a copy of the cheque for the Madison Square Garden box @-@ office takings . Wilkes intended this image to convey a sense of hope , signifying the completion of the task that the participants had set out to achieve for the refugees from East Pakistan .

The three vinyl LPs and booklet were housed inside a deep orange @-@ coloured box . The 1991 CD release placed the cover photo on a white background , however , replicating the front of the original album booklet . As commentators noted in 1991 , the necessary downsizing to CD dimensions meant that much of the effectiveness of the booklet photography was lost , not least because the contents had also been trimmed down to just 36 pages .

Further changes to Camouflage 's design concept occurred for the 2005 CD remaster and DVD release . In 1971 , Capitol executives had been concerned that the cover image was too " depressing " and uncommercial , according to Jon Taplin , who served as production manager at the Madison Square concerts ; Harrison had been resolute , however , and so Wilkes 's design was used . In October 2005 , four years after Harrison 's death , the remastered Concert for Bangladesh releases appeared with a photo of him on the cover , although the special @-@ edition DVD retained the original image .

= = Release = =

The Concert for Bangladesh was released in the United States on 20 December 1971 , and in Britain on 10 January 1972 , with the same Apple Records catalogue number ( STCX 3385 ) in both territories . The retail price for the lavishly packaged triple album was set at \$ 12 @.@ 98 in America and an extraordinarily high £ 5 @.@ 50 in the UK , due to the purchase tax surcharge there . The prices drew some criticism , from Harrison for one , even if it was accepted that the proceeds were going to those in desperate need ? or , as Beatles Forever author Nicholas Schaffner wrote in 1977 , to " a nation still viewed as the worst pocket of misery on earth " . Similarly , the relief project 's funds controversy and tax problems , which came to light shortly after the release of the live album , were a source of frustration and embarrassment to Harrison , but commentators have noted that these problems took nothing away from the " resounding success " of Harrison and Shankar 's Bangladesh relief project .

Despite the cost , the album was an immediate commercial success . In America , it spent six weeks at number 2 on the Billboard Top LPs chart , kept from the top by Don McLean 's American

Pie , which was one of the top @-@ selling albums there for 1972 . On the other US charts , compiled by Cash Box and Record World , the live album peaked at number 2 and number 1 , respectively . In the UK , The Concert for Bangladesh became Harrison 's second number 1 album , after All Things Must Pass in early 1971 . The album was certified gold by the RIAA on 4 January 1972 for sales of over 500 @,@ 000 units .

In March 1973 , The Concert for Bangladesh 's significance was further underlined when it won the Grammy Award for Album of the Year . In Harrison 's absence , Ringo Starr attended the awards ceremony in Nashville and carried off a tray of Grammys , one for each of the featured performers . Author Peter Lavezzoli writes that , with the success of the live album and Saul Swimmer 's concert documentary , which opened in US cinemas in March 1972 , Indian classical music reached its largest Western audience to date through the Concert for Bangladesh .

= = = Reissue = = =

The Concert for Bangladesh was first issued on CD on 30 July 1991 in America and 19 August in Britain . It was presented as a two @-@ disc set , with significant editing of the breaks between songs . Having stated his disappointment in a 1988 interview that the album had been allowed to go out of print , Harrison recorded a promotional interview on the 20th anniversary of the concerts , to accompany the CD release .

Harrison was working on a reissue of the album and film before his death in November 2001 . Although the project was due for release the following year , the new editions were not made available until 24 October 2005 . The album was remastered for this release , with the heavily revised packaging credited to Wherefore Art ? , and the addition of Dylan 's afternoon @-@ show performance of " Love Minus Zero / No Limit " as a bonus track . The reissue coincided with the concert film 's first international release on DVD , accompanied by the Concert for Bangladesh Revisited with George Harrison and Friends making @-@ of documentary , which was directed by Claire Ferguson and co @-@ produced by Olivia Harrison .

Sales of the album and DVD continue to benefit the George Harrison Fund for UNICEF . In 2011 , as one of the fund 's projects to mark the 40th anniversary of the concerts and the live album 's release , and in conjunction with UNICEF 's " Month of Giving " campaign , the George Harrison Fund for UNICEF raised over \$ 1 @.@ 2 million in emergency relief for children in famine- and drought @-@ stricken areas of the Horn of Africa .

= = Critical reception = =

= = = On release and through the 1970s = = =

" If you buy only one LP in 1972 , make it this one , " Richard Williams wrote in Melody Maker , echoing the goodwill felt throughout the music press towards the Bangladesh relief project . Williams lavished praise on every one of the triple album 's seventeen selections : Ravi Shankar and Ali Akbar Khan 's interplay towards the end of " Bangla Dhun " made for a " marvellous opening " ( like " Charlie Parker trading licks with Johnny Hodges " , he noted ) ; Harrison 's trio of All Things Must Pass tracks were " [ u ] nbelievably ... in some ways even better " than the originals , with Ringo Starr and Jim Keltner 's drumming " just breathtaking " on " Awaiting on You All " ; Billy Preston 's " That 's the Way God Planned It " was " feverishly exciting " , the audience " absolutely wild " by the end of the song . " Can all this be happening ? " Williams asked , even before moving on to the second of the three discs .

Rolling Stone magazine continued its near @-@ deification of the event as a defining moment in the evolution of rock ' n ' roll , with Jon Landau declaring : " The Concert for Bangla Desh is rock reaching for its manhood " , and as for Harrison : " the spirit he creates through his own demeanor is inspirational . From the personal point of view , Concert for Bangla Desh was George 's moment . He put it together ; and he pulled it off , and for that he deserves the admiration of all of us . " To the

Rolling Stone writer , the highpoint of the album was the closing " Bangla Desh " , whose lyrics were no longer " an expression of intent but of an accomplished mission " . Landau had praise for the pacing and professionalism of the entire show , the only " incongruous " moment being Leon Russell 's " Jumpin ' Jack Flash " / " Youngblood " segment , since it was straight from the singer 's usual repertoire .

The NME 's Roy Carr and Tony Tyler were equally generous in their appraisal of " probably the greatest indoor rock ' n ' roll event ever held " ; to them , Bob Dylan 's five @-@ song set " easily justified " the album 's price tag . As at the time of the concerts , much was made by album reviewers of the change in Dylan 's singing voice , as well as his choice of songs , which harked back to the so @-@ called " protest period " of 1962 ? 64 and the subsequent creative zenith that culminated in his Blonde on Blonde album ( 1966 ) .

Having attended the concerts six months before , Ed Kelleher of Circus magazine was relieved to discover that the live album didn 't just do justice to the " magic ... the sheer joy " of the event , but rather its music " practically jumps right out into your life " . After singling out as defining moments Dylan 's " Just Like a Woman " ( " it 's enough to make you cry and smile at once " ) , Russell 's medley and Harrison 's " Here Comes the Sun " , along with the talents of Shankar ? " the most masterful and accomplished of them all " ? Kelleher admitted to the futility of trying to identify " individual highlights " on an album that was " one consistent high " . In fact , almost every selection on the three @-@ record set was named as a highlight by one reviewer or another : Preston 's " That 's the Way God Planned It " coming as a " sheer delight " to Landau , Harrison 's " Something " especially " delicate and moving " to Playboy 's album reviewer , Dylan 's " A Hard Rain 's A @-@ Gonna Fall " resonating most with Nicholas Schaffner , while to Richard Williams , " Just Like a Woman " was " the masterpiece " .

" While My Guitar Gently Weeps " was a track that received significant attention , thanks to the guitar " duelling " between Harrison and his ailing friend , Eric Clapton . Writing in Rolling Stone Press ' Harrison tribute , Greg Kot views the performance as " a snapshot of early @-@ Seventies rock royalty " ; yet their joint soloing was about friendship , writes musical biographer Simon Leng , rather than the " six @-@ string ego battles " or " macho showdowns " so typical of that decade . Author Tom Moon describes their interplay as two guitarists " finish [ ing ] each other 's thoughts " . In The Village Voice 's inaugural Pazz & Jop poll , critics voted The Concert for Bangladesh the eighth best album out of all releases for that year .

= = = Legacy = = =

While the technical imperfections of the concert recordings were overlooked in 1972 ? or even applauded for their adding to the " honesty " of the moment , in the case of Starr forgetting the lyrics to " It Don 't Come Easy " ? reviewers of the first CD @-@ format album remarked on the relatively poor sound quality . In his review for AllMusic in 2001 , Bruce Eder noted the " less @-@ than @-@ perfect sound " while still viewing the album as a " unique live document showcasing Harrison near his best " . Another point of contention , though mainly among Harrison 's biographers , concerns Leon Russell . Alan Clayson bristles at the omnipresence of the Oklahoman singer and musician ? " the epitome of the self @-@ satisfied sexism of the Delaney and Bonnie super @-@ sidemen " , Clayson writes ? and the fact that his turn in the spotlight so blatantly became " The Leon Russell Show " . Leng likewise bemoans Russell 's " consciously extreme hollerin ' " , and finds his delivery pales beside the " unaffected naïveté " of Billy Preston and particularly the " knife @-@ edge emotions " of Harrison and Shankar , which only Dylan can match . In The Rolling Stone Album Guide ( 1992 ) , Paul Evans gave the record three stars and preferred the Dylan set over Harrison 's songs .

The Concert for Bangladesh is continually viewed in a highly favourable light by critics in retrospective reviews . Among reviews of the 2005 reissue , Mojo described the remastered sound as " sumptuous " while AllMusic 's Richard Ginell wrote : " Hands down , this epochal concert ... was the crowning event of George Harrison 's public life , a gesture of great goodwill that captured the moment in history and , not incidentally , produced some rousing music as a permanent legacy . "

Writing in Rolling Stone that year , Anthony DeCurtis said : " The Concert for Bangladesh is rightly enshrined in rock history as the model for Band Aid , Live Aid , Live 8 and every other superstar benefit concert of the last three decades ... In emphasizing the concert 's idealism , however , it 's easy to overlook what a musical gem this two @-@ disc set is . " Dan Ouellette of Billboard considered that " The star @-@ studded package holds up well as a live greatest @-@ hits collection " , before concluding : " But the revelation is the exhilarating concert lift @-@ off , the improv @-@ laced eastern Indian classical tune ' Bangla Dhun , ' featuring sitar master Ravi Shankar . "

In his entry for the album in 1 @,@ 000 Recordings to Hear Before You Die , Tom Moon advises his readers : " Pull this out whenever your faith in the power of music begins to wane . " The Concert for Bangladesh also features in Sean Egan 's 2006 book 100 Albums That Changed Music and in The Mojo Collection : The Greatest Albums of All Time .

= = Track listing = =

= = = Original release = = =

= = = 2005 remaster = = =

Disc one

The first disc contains the ten tracks from side one to side three of the original release .

Disc two

The second disc contains the nine tracks from side four to side six of the original release , together with :

= = = 2011 40th anniversary reissue = = =

A download @-@ only version of the album per the 2005 remaster , with a second bonus track exclusive to iTunes :

= = Personnel = =

Credited as " The Artists " :

George Harrison ? vocals , electric and acoustic guitars , backing vocals

Ravi Shankar ? sitar

Bob Dylan ? vocals , acoustic guitar , harmonica

Leon Russell ? piano , vocals , bass , backing vocals

Ringo Starr ? drums , vocals , tambourine

Billy Preston ? Hammond organ , vocals

Eric Clapton ? electric guitar

Ali Akbar Khan ? sarod

Alla Rakha ? tabla

Kamala Chakravarty ? tambura

The Band :

Jesse Ed Davis ? electric guitar

Klaus Voormann ? bass

Jim Keltner ? drums

Pete Ham ? acoustic guitar

Tom Evans ? twelve @-@ string acoustic guitar

Joey Molland ? acoustic guitar

Mike Gibbins ? tambourine , maracas

Don Preston ? electric guitar , vocals ( on " Jumpin ' Jack Flash " / " Young Blood " and " Bangla Desh " only )

Carl Radle ? bass ( on " Jumpin ' Jack Flash " / " Young Blood " only )

The Hollywood Horns :

Jim Horn ? saxophones , horn arrangements

Chuck Findley ? trumpet

Jackie Kelso ? saxophones

Allan Beutler ? saxophones

Lou McCreary ? trombone

Ollie Mitchell ? trumpet

The Backing Vocalists / Soul Choir :

Claudia Linnear , Jo Green , Jeanie Greene , Marlin Greene , Dolores Hall , Don Nix , Don Preston  
? backing vocals , percussion

= = Accolades = =

= = = Grammy Awards = = =

= = Charts and certifications = =

= = = Weekly charts = = =