

HOPE Freedom Music Festival 2022

“Raising the vibration” was the overwhelming feeling that we took away from this three-day festival, held deep in the Sussex countryside, blessed by a weekend of glorious sunshine. Many of the artists who performed have been outspoken about lockdowns, mandates, and the behavior of the UK government and media since relatively early on in 2020. This event gave people the opportunity to listen to their music and support them in a much more pleasant environment than perhaps the more familiar meeting place of rallies on the bustling streets of London.

HOPE is a flourishing community-run education and social hub with a focus on the nurturing of its attending children and the support of their families and local community. HOPE provides education and support, and organizes and hosts talks and family educational sessions on subjects such as foraging. This ethos ran through the theme for the entire weekend as we saw the artistry, food, organization, collaboration, and camaraderie of the organizers and the HOPE Community.

From the blues and slide guitar songwriter Roger Hubbard, who once opened for Muddy Waters (the important post-World War II American blues artist), to one of the forefathers of the UK house music scene, Danny Rampling, there were around 50 artists in the line-up and musical genres for all that sunny weekend.

Brian Gerrish (ex Royal Navy and co-founder of the independent news organization, UK Column) gave an exclusive interview to Children’s Health Defense (CHD) and shared his sobering thoughts with us on the issues facing our children, with a particular emphasis on pharmaceuticals. “Every adult in the UK should be concerned about children’s health. I believe that children’s health is under an attack like it has never been before.”

Offering a much-anticipated weekend away from the torrent of news, talk of climate change, and the concerns of parents, grandparents, and the general public, the HOPE Freedom Music Festival did not disappoint.

Food and Conversation

From the moment that you entered the site, perfectly encircled by huge old trees, it was otherworldly. Beautiful hand-painted signs hung at every turn, with one such sign guiding us to the “Whiskey Bar,” a bohemian and Moroccan-inspired area where the air hung with the heady scent of patchouli and sandalwood. Underneath the hanging lanterns, both children and adults relaxed on sofas, scattered ornate rugs, and cushions centered around a fire pit, all under the quietly watchful eye of a Solari Hero of the Week, headteacher and author Mike Fairclough and his beautiful wife and children. Of course, whiskey was on the menu. This spot was where, as the sun set, many of the children were to be found, interspersed among adults, singing, playing instruments, drawing, plotting, playing games, and some gently sleeping under blankets below the stars. Conversations overheard were of biodynamic farming, natural health, gardening, and the joy of home baking and brewing. At times, it was difficult to know whether to join them or to head off to one of the musical tents for some altogether more energetic entertainment.

As one barefoot little girl wandered past me toward the crackling fire pit and inviting blankets, she pushed some flowers behind her ear, smiling and balancing a huge piece of cake, and said, “I wish that every day was like this.”

As I met her eyes, I smiled back and responded, “I concur.”

Speaking of food and sustenance, in addition to the whiskey bar, there was a good selection of food on offer, some organic, some vegan (not all are created equal, and this was very popular), and of course some meat. A cocktail bar offered gigantic fluorescent syringes full of an extra cocktail when purchasing a single cocktail. A local brewery manned by a friendly team always engulfed and engaged in happy conversation with the festival goers. Another beautiful sign indicated “The Unjabbed Arm’s,” where food and drink were cooked and served by a hot and happy throng of people within the HOPE community.

Music in Defense of Freedom

In the live band tent, a constant stream of bands and artists graced the stage. Many had written their own songs about the events of the last two years, and several had performed at rallies. Each act was interspersed with raucous clapping and cheers.

We met up with the enigmatic multi-award-winning artists, Richard and Fred Fairbrass (Right Said Fred), whose awards include two Ivor Novellos (songwriting and composing awards presented annually in London). These charming brothers spent the weekend hosting, introducing artists, and enjoying the ambience. Richard noted, “Freedom needs defending every single day,” and Fred’s t-shirt was boldly emblazoned with “DO NOT COMPLY.” They talked to us about Robert F. Kennedy Jr’s book *The Real Anthony Fauci* (at the time, number 1 on Amazon, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, and a Publishers Weekly National Bestseller), the Glastonbury Festival, and their thoughts on compliance.

Fred commented, “My daughter is 24; if this was happening when she was 6, 7, or 8, I would not let her anywhere near a vaccine.” Richard summarized, “It seems to me, the whole of Western civilization has lost its collective minds.”

Dancing under the Stars

Meanwhile, next to the constantly busy local brewery stand, the DJ tent summoned attendees with the often hypnotic and rhythmical beats (that you just can’t stand still to) from DJs from all corners of the UK, each drawing more attention than the last. Many of these DJs—far more accustomed to playing on sweltering beaches and in packed nightclubs—were at their decks wearing massive smiles, some playing dance classics, some playing deep house music, and some a smattering of ‘70s disco. Almost all shared their views on the last two years, with words of hope and encouragement. This “mid-countryside” nightclub scenario presented a somewhat stark contrast to the deep green wall of tall trees that surrounded us, which almost acted like an amphitheater. Here, many of us danced as we haven’t danced in decades, joyously, late into the night under a big, open, star-filled sky.

Almost everyone present at the last DJ set of Saturday night by Danny Rampling would have met with the sparkling dark eyes and infectious smile of James Delingpole of The Delingpod. Delingpole is an English writer, journalist, columnist, and podcaster who has written for a number of publications, including the *Daily Mail*, *Daily Express*, *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and *The Spectator*. Delingpole gleefully danced alongside his equally enthusiastic brother Dick Delingpole (instantly recognizable as he donned a fabulous pith helmet) and a packed tent of festival goers, which included breakdancing children, a family of three generations, and some inspirationally energetic retirees. Earlier in the day, Delingpole told CHD, “You only need to look at a homeschooled, unvaccinated child to realize what we are missing

and what we should have more of.”

Plenty of Smiles

A jovial mustached man, I suppose like a “runner” on a film set, would often cruise past astride a huge quad bike, smiling and gesticulating, “your children are over there,” “amazing band in the top tent,” “try the veggie burgers,” as he ferried artists’ food back and forth and chaperoned them to the green room or a food tent.

Quietly stationed at the two entrances/exits was a team of cheerful “security” clad in yellow “high-visibility” jackets who, without incident, ensured that only ticket holders were allowed access and always greeted me with a smile and a joke. Some of the enthusiastic children of the HOPE community also donned the yellow jackets to escort, supervise, and entertain the smaller children over the weekend. “Herding cats” springs to mind with the distraction of a constant stream of sparkling glitter, dancers, highly polished instruments, delicious food, and tempting-looking tents.

As far as accommodation was concerned, a large campsite offered spacious grounds to pitch a tent or van, with inspired site urinals that featured images of Boris Johnson, Matt Hancock, Keir Starmer, and Dr. Hilary Jones, which apparently gave an indication of where to aim.

On Sunday, as we made our way back to the car, I noticed two beautifully dressed ladies, probably in their 70s, laughing uncontrollably. “She’s lost her shoes,” one said, to which I replied, “Where were they last seen?” The reply, “We don’t know, it was last night; I took them off to dance, and they must be somewhere between the live bands and DJ tent,” and on the infectious laughter continued.

It ended as it began, with smiles, good humor, love, and an immense sense of freedom.

Moving Forward

Moving forward, there is great excitement. Lessons have been learned and feedback graciously accepted, and there is a boundless energy to offer this exciting weekend to more people, even bigger and better.

Outside one of the colorful and delicious cafe tents, I had stumbled upon a lively discussion between Dr. Niall McCrae, PhD, MSc, RMN, author and senior lecturer in mental health at King’s College, London, and Brian Gerrish. As I stood and filmed, I realized that quite a crowd was gathering, and a thought crossed my mind—this type of discussion is something that perhaps could be offered and encouraged at such an event. Attendees could go listen to debates between medical professionals, scientists, activists, legal professionals, and holistic health practitioners, and perhaps there might even be some opportunities for questions and answers.

The festival was promoted as a music festival, and in that it excelled; however, it also highlighted the power and necessity of a warm and safe platform and environment to share news, advice, information, and encouragement.

We would like to give a huge thank you to the organizers, volunteers, and all of the artists, too numerous to mention, but who can be found on the HOPE website. The HOPE Freedom Music Festival and the community that it is centered within offered all of us a sense of positivity, hope,

and inspiration for the future.

As one happy couple remarked, "There should be one in every English county." To that, we say, "Why stop there?" As the 14th-century English proverb reminds us, "Mighty oaks from little acorns grow."