

## FACT SHEET

**TITLE:** **LEONARD COHEN LIVE AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT 1970**  
[TV-PG] [Stereo] [CC]

**LENGTH:** 1/60 Base and Pledge; 1/90 Pledge Event

**NOLA CODE:** LECO

**CATEGORY:** Music & Entertainment

**OFFERED:** January 2010 by Premium Service 21

**EXPECTED RELEASE:** March 1, 2010

**CONTRACT TERMS:** Twelve releases to be completed by March 31, 2011. A release is defined as unlimited use within seven days.

**PROGRAM SUPPLIER:** Media Push Entertainment, LLC

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** Musician and enigmatic poet Leonard Cohen wowed a crowd of 600,000 people at the infamous 1970 Isle of Wight Festival, widely considered to be the last great concert of its time. After five days and nights of chaos, fires, rioting and music, Cohen took the stage at 4:00 a.m. and mesmerized fans with many of his greatest songs. In **LEONARD COHEN LIVE AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT 1970**, Kris Kristofferson, Judy Collins, Joan Baez and his then production manager Bob Johnston take a look back at the Isle of Wight and how Leonard Cohen single handedly took over the festival with his music.

**PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS:** Use above description for guide listings. A press release will be posted to PBS Connect and [APTonline.org](http://APTonline.org). Color photography will be available via email and will also be posted on [APTonline.org](http://APTonline.org).

– more –

**LEONARD COHEN LIVE AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT 1970**

**FACT SHEET**

**COPYRIGHT DATE:** © 2009 Pulsar Productions

**PRODUCTION CREDITS:** Director: Murray Lerner  
Producer: Steve Berkowitz and Murray Lerner

**BROADCAST HISTORY:** U.S. Premiere

**RELATED MERCHANDISE:** Individual viewer purchase:  
Recordings by Leonard Cohen are available in retail outlets nationwide.

Pledge:  
Companion DVD/CD: "Leonard Cohen: Live at the Isle of Wight 1970"; Companion DVD: "Message to Love: The Isle of Wight Festival"; Related paperback book: "Book of Longing" by Leonard Cohen (poems)

**WEB SITE:** [www.leonardcohen.com](http://www.leonardcohen.com)

**VIEWER INQUIRIES:** [www.APTonline.org](http://www.APTonline.org)

**COMMUNICATIONS CONTACT:** Kerry Taylor  
(617) 338-4455, ext. 121  
[Kerry\\_Taylor@APTonline.org](mailto:Kerry_Taylor@APTonline.org)

CONTACT: Kerry Taylor  
(617) 338-4455, ext. 121  
Kerry\_Taylor@APTonline.org

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**LEONARD COHEN LIVE AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT 1970,  
FEATURING VINTAGE CONCERT FOOTAGE,  
PREMIERES ON PUBLIC TELEVISION IN MARCH 2010**

*Includes compelling and insightful interviews with Kris Kristofferson, Judy Collins,  
Joan Baez and manager Bob Johnston*

BOSTON (Feb. 5, 2010) – Leonard Cohen’s poetic lyrics and deep, smooth voice have resonated with his audiences for decades, but perhaps never so poignantly as when he calmed and captivated a riotous crowd at the Isle of Wight Festival in 1970. Now fans can watch this historically significant concert from an intimate viewpoint as Cohen takes the stage at 4:00 a.m. and wins over an audience of 600,000 with his passionate music. **LEONARD COHEN LIVE AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT 1970**, a new documentary set to premiere on public television in March 2010 (check local listings), will delight generations of fans who will cherish the opportunity to see live footage of such a career-defining concert.

Interviews with music legends such as Kris Kristofferson and Joan Baez provide a first-hand account of the rowdy festival atmosphere and how Cohen managed to sway the whole crowd with his music. “All those people had been sitting out there in the rain, after they’d set fire to Hendrix’s stage,” [manager] Bob Johnston recalls, “and nobody had slept for days. And then Leonard came out and he started out singing ‘*Like... a ... bird*’ – singing it so slowly that everybody in that audience was exactly with him. It was the most amazing thing I’ve ever heard. And that’s what saved that show and saved the festival.”

From “Suzanne” and “Bird on the Wire” to “Diamonds in the Mine” and “Tonight Will Be Fine,” Cohen’s songs captured such enduring topics as existential angst, tortured love and sexual desire. Just three years into his recording career at the time of the concert (though he was already a published poet and novelist for 15 years), his mesmerizing songs and powerful and probing lyrics clearly captured the hearts and the minds of those listening that night.

At one particularly memorable moment, Cohen tells everyone to light matches “so that you’ll sparkle like fireflies each at your different heights,” and the camera pans across the audience as tiny flames gradually become visible in the night. Through this peaceful ritual, he helps to alleviate the violence of the past few

– more –

## **LEONARD COHEN LIVE AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT 1970 / 2 PRESS RELEASE**

days and bring everyone together through the strength and sincerity of his music.

The camera continually films Cohen up close to capture the expressive emotion in his face as he sings and plays guitar. "It was a brilliant performance," writes veteran British rock journalist and BBC commentator Sylvie Simmons, "and Lerner's cameras captured Cohen's commanding presence, hypnotist's charm, and an intimacy that would seem unfeasible in such a vast, inhospitable space."

Cohen is a Canadian folksinger, songwriter, poet and novelist. He began his career as a poet and writer, and branched into music during his 30s. Over the course of his four-decade career, he became an award-winning artist who has been inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. In 2008, Cohen launched a worldwide tour, delivering three-hour concerts to sold-out audiences.

**LEONARD COHEN LIVE AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT 1970** is produced and directed by Murray Lerner, who also directed and produced *From Mao to Mozart: Isaac Stern in China*, which won an Oscar for Best Documentary. He was nominated previously for *Festival*, and his other acclaimed music documentaries include *Amazing Journey: The Story of The Who*, *Message to Love: The Isle of Wight Festival*, and *The Other Side of the Mirror: Bob Dylan at the Newport Folk Festival*.

**LEONARD COHEN LIVE AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT 1970** is presented by Media Push Entertainment, LLC and Sony Music's Legacy Recordings in association with American Public Television's Premium Service, a co-production, co-financing and acquisition fund that provides fundraising specials to member stations, now in its 21st season. With the financial backing of their public television client stations, APT Premium Service has secured many of public television's most prestigious and highest-rated programs.

### **Sony Music's Legacy Recordings**

The multiple Grammy-winning Legacy Recordings, Sony Music Entertainment's catalog division, produces and maintains the world's foremost catalog of historic reissues, an unparalleled compendium of thousands of digitally remastered archival titles representing virtually every musical genre including popular, rock, jazz, blues, R&B, folk, country, gospel, Broadway musicals, movie soundtracks, ethnic, world music, classical, comedy and more. Founded in 1990 by CBS Records (rebranded Sony Music in 1991), Legacy's original mission was to preserve and reissue recordings from the extensive catalogs of Columbia Records (including ARC, Brunswick, OKeh and Vocalion), Epic Records (including Philadelphia International Records) and associated CBS labels. Following the creation of Sony BMG Music Entertainment in 2005, Legacy assumed responsibility for the preservation and ongoing availability of recordings from the archives of the BMG family of labels including RCA Records, Arista, J Records, Jive, Profile, Silvertone, and Sony BMG Nashville, as well as imprints including American, Bang!, CTI, Mainstream, Monument, Ode, and others.

**American Public Television**

American Public Television (APT) has been a leading distributor of high-quality, top-rated programming to America's public television stations since 1961. In 2009, APT distributed 56 of the top 100 highest-rated public television titles. Among its 300 new program titles per year are prominent documentaries, dramatic series, how-to programs, children's series and classic movies, including *Spain...on the road Again*, *Rick Steves' Europe*, *Worldfocus*, *Globe Trekker*, *Simply Ming*, *America's Test Kitchen From Cook's Illustrated*, *Lidia's Italy*, *P. Allen Smith's Garden Home*, *Murdoch Mysteries*, *Doc Martin*, *Rosemary & Thyme*, *Johnny Cash at Folsom Prison*, *Liza's at the Palace....* and *John Denver: The Wildlife Concert*. APT also licenses programs internationally through its APT Worldwide service. In 2006, APT launched Create™ – the TV channel featuring the best of public television's lifestyle programming. For more information about APT's programs and services, visit [APTonline.org](http://APTonline.org).

# # #

## SONG LIST

### LEONARD COHEN LIVE AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT

#### 1st segment:

“Diamonds in the Mine”  
(excerpt from) “Famous Blue Raincoat”  
“Bird on the Wire”  
“One of Us Cannot Be Wrong”

#### 2nd segment:

“The Stranger Song”  
“Tonight Will Be Fine”  
“Hey That’s No Way to Say Goodbye”  
“Sing Another Song, Boys”  
“Suzanne”  
“The Old Revolution”

#### 3rd segment:

“So Long Marianne” (song only, not performance) played during Credits

# # #

### LEONARD COHEN

For four decades, Leonard Cohen has been one of the most important and influential songwriters of our time, a figure whose body of work achieves greater depths of mystery and meaning as time goes on. His songs have set a virtually unmatched standard in their seriousness and range. Sex, spirituality, religion, power – he has relentlessly examined the largest issues in human lives, always with a full appreciation of how elusive answers can be to the vexing questions he raises. But those questions, and the journey he has traveled in seeking to address them, are the ever-shifting substance of his work, as well as the reasons why his songs never lose their overwhelming emotional force.

2008 was a landmark year for Leonard Cohen and marked a return to the live stage. Cohen traveled across the world, delivering three-hour concerts to sold-out audiences who offered standing ovations to the poet with over 40 years worth of repertoire. His latest offering, the 2-CD and DVD *Live In London*, beautifully captures the passion and energy Cohen brought to London's O2 Arena and the love affair he's had with his fans for over four decades.

His first album, *Songs of Leonard Cohen* (1967), announced him as an undeniable major talent. It includes such songs as "Suzanne," "Sisters of Mercy," "So Long, Marianne" and "Hey, That's No Way to Say Goodbye," all now longstanding classics. If Cohen had never recorded another album, his daunting reputation would have been assured by this one alone.

However, the two extraordinary albums that followed, *Songs From a Room* (1969), which includes his classic song, "Bird on the Wire," and *Songs of Love and Hate* (1971), provided whatever proof anyone may have required that that the greatness of his debut was not a fluke. (All three albums were reissued in April, 2007.)

Part of the reason why Cohen's early work revealed such a high degree of achievement is that he was an accomplished literary figure before he ever began to record. His collections of poetry, including Let Us Compare Mythologies (1956) and Flowers for Hitler (1964), and his novels, including The Favourite Game (1963) Beautiful Losers (1966), had already brought him considerable recognition. His dual careers in music and literature have continued feeding each other over the decades – his songs revealing a literary quality rare in the world of popular music, and his poetry and prose informed by a rich musicality.

One of the most revered figures of the singer-songwriter movement of the late '60s and early '70s, Cohen soon developed a desire to move beyond the folk trappings of that genre. By temperament and approach, he had always been closer to the European art song – he once termed his work the "European blues."

Add to that a fondness for country music; an ear for R&B-styled female background vocals; a sly appreciation for cabaret jazz, and a regard for rhythm not often encountered in singer-songwriters, and the extent of Cohen's musical palette becomes clear. Each of Cohen's albums reflects not simply the issues that are on his mind as a writer, but the sonic landscape he wishes to explore as well. The through-lines in his work, his voice and lyrics, are as distinctive as any in the world of music.

Cohen's 1974 album, *New Skin for the Old Ceremony*, found him making bolder use of orchestration, a contrast to the more stripped-down sound he had earlier preferred. This was followed by *Death of a Ladies' Man*, his 1977 collaboration with Phil Spector, and constitutes his most extreme experiment.

*Recent Songs* (1979) and *Various Positions* (1984) returned Cohen to more recognizable sonic terrain, though the latter album, in a perhaps misguided nod to the trend at the time of its release, prominently incorporated synthesizers. Though not initially released in the U.S., *Various Positions* includes "Hallelujah," which has since become one of Cohen's best-known, best-loved songs and has been covered by more than 150 artists including Jeff Buckley, Willie Nelson and Bono.

As the '80s and their garishness began to wane, Cohen's star began to rise once again. The listeners that had grown up with him had reached an age at which they wanted to re-examine the music of their past, and a new generation of artists and fans discovered him, attracted by the dignity, ambition and sheer quality of his songs.

Cohen rose to the opportunity this audience represented by releasing two consecutive albums, *I'm Your Man* (1988) and *The Future* (1992), that not only rank among the finest of his career, but that perfectly capture the texture of particularly complicated times. Cohen had long documented the high rate of casualties in the love wars, so the profound anxieties generated by the AIDS crisis were no news to him. Songs like "Ain't No Cure for Love," the wryly titled "I'm Your Man" and, most explicitly, "Everybody Knows" ("Everybody knows that the Plague is coming/Everybody knows that it's moving fast/Everybody knows that the naked man and woman – just a shining artifact of the past") depict Cohen surveying the contemporary erotic battleground and reporting on it with characteristic perspective, insight and wisdom.

Similarly, in the title track of *The Future*, Cohen ironically describes himself as "the little Jew who wrote the Bible," and his immersion in Jewish culture, obsession with Christian imagery, and deep commitment to Buddhist detachment rendered him an ideal commentator on the approaching millennium and the apocalyptic fears it generated. Along with the album's title track, "Closing Time,"

“Anthem” and “Democracy” limned a cultural landscape rippling with dread, but yearning for hope. “There is a crack in everything,” Cohen sings in “Anthem,” “That’s how the light gets in.” Our human imperfections, he seems to be saying, are finally what will bring us whatever transcendence we can attain.

Since that time, Cohen has released the albums *Ten New Songs* (2001) which includes the songs “Boogie Nights” and “In My Secret Life”, and *Dear Heather* (2004), as well as *Blue Alert* (2006), a collaboration on which Cohen produced and co-wrote songs with his former background singer Anjani Thomas, who provides the vocals. All three albums have only solidified his place in the pantheon of contemporary songwriters.

Collectively, Cohen has published 12 books the most recent 2006's Book of Longing, a collection of poetry, prose and drawings. Book of Longing reached No. 1 on the Top 10 Hardcover Fiction Books in Canada, as compiled by Maclean’s Magazine, being the first book of poetry ever to reach the top of the bestsellers’ lists in Canada.

Leonard Cohen has been inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame and the Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame. In 1991, Cohen was made an Officer of the Order of Canada and in 2003, a Companion to the Order of Canada - the latter of which is Canada's highest civilian honor recognizing a lifetime of outstanding achievement, dedication to the community and service to the nation. In June 2008, he was made a Grand Officer of the National Order of Quebec.

Last year “Hallelujah” became a record-setting U.K. chart phenomenon when a version performed by Alexandra Burke, winner of the massively popular television talent competition “X Factor,” rocketed to the No.1 slot on the U.K. singles chart, becoming the fastest-selling single by a female artist in U.K. chart history. So much interest in the song was generated that Jeff Buckley’s rendition bulleted to No. 2 while Cohen’s original version entered the singles chart at No. 34, bringing the artist his first-ever British Top 40 single. With versions of the song holding down three Top 40 U.K. Singles Chart positions simultaneously, “Hallelujah” became the fastest-selling digital single in European history. RIAA, CRIA, ARIA and IFPI statistics alone show that, prior to late 2008, more than five million copies of “Hallelujah” sold in CD format.

His songs have been covered throughout the world while influencing generations of songwriters. Cohen's music has earned the accolades of other artists in tribute albums in France, Norway, Canada, Spain, the Czech Republic, South Africa and the United States.

Documentaries, awards, tribute albums and the ongoing march of artists eager to record his songs all acknowledge the peerless contribution Cohen has made to what one of his titles aptly calls “The Tower of Song.”

- more -

## **LEONARD COHEN LIVE AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT 1970 / 4**

## **BIOGRAPHY**

In 2008 Cohen was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and it was also the year that brought him back to the stage, performing in front of audiences in Canada for the first time in 15 years. His 84 date concert tour led him from Halifax to Bucharest, from Dublin to Auckland. The tour sold out around the world winning accolades, critical acclaim and over 80, 5 Star reviews.

# # #