



Rensselaer



News from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

June 15, 2009

www.rpi.edu/news

WRPI Radio Station To Feature “Summer of Woodstock” Music

Special program will air Sunday evenings throughout the summer

Troy, N.Y. – Taking a trip down memory lane, 40 years ago, nearly half a million concert goers gathered on a dairy farm in the rural town of Bethel, N.Y., to hear 32 of the best-known musicians of that time. Billed as one of the greatest moments in popular music history, the 1969 Woodstock Music and Arts Festival was also listed in *Rolling Stone* magazine’s “50 Moments That Changed the History of Rock and Roll.” In honor of the event, WRPI, a college radio station based on the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute campus, will host a special program titled “Summer of Woodstock” highlighting performances from the historic festival.

From June through August, recordings from the festival will air Sunday evenings from 8 to 10 p.m. EDT on 91.5 FM for audiences in New York’s Capital Region. The program will also be available via live Web stream at <http://wrpi.org/>.

Additionally, since some of the artists have not released their full Woodstock performances, the remaining portion of WRPI’s weekly, two-hour “Summer of Woodstock” program will feature other studio and live recordings from Woodstock artists.

In cooperation with the Bethel Woods Center for the Arts, located on the site of the 1969 festival, WRPI will be giving away tickets to the “Heroes of Woodstock” tour. This tour is hosted by Country Joe McDonald and will include performances from a few of the original artists who performed at the festival. Listen to “Summer of Woodstock” on WRPI on Sunday nights in August for more information on how to win tickets.

Of special note, last month marked the 40th anniversary of The Who’s release of “Tommy,” a celebrated album that the band performed nearly in its entirety at Woodstock. One of WRPI’s “Summer of Woodstock” programs will include The Who’s performance of “Tommy,” which appears on the band’s 1989 live release, “Join Together.”

Steve Malinski, a 2009 graduate of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, will host the program. “It is fair to say that WRPI is largely responsible for exposing a large number of youth in 1969 to the music that was heard at Woodstock, and by hosting this program, we hope to share the music not only with people from that generation, but others as well,” Malinski said.

More than 50 years ago, WRPI made history when it joined a small but growing group of radio stations presenting regular FM broadcasting. An enterprising group of students convinced WROW, an Albany-based radio station, to donate an unused FM transmitter to Rensselaer, allowing WRPI to operate 1,000 watts with an FM broadcast radius of 30 miles. At the time, WRPI was located in the 15th Street Lounge, now the RPI Playhouse, and had been airing programs via AM “carrier current” broadcasting since the early 1950s.

-more-

WRPI Radio Station to Feature “Summer of Woodstock” Music

Page 2

While that transmitter put WRPI on the FM map, it was in 1968-1969 that the current 700-foot transmitter tower in North Greenbush, N.Y., was acquired from WTEN- TV Channel 10, which had switched frequencies. Getting the transmitter tower allowed the station to jump from 1,000- to 20,000-watt stereo, quite an accomplishment for a college, non-commercial radio station. Soon after, WRPI broke ground on the FM dial, being the first radio station in the area to adopt a progressive rock format, playing for the first time artists such as the Doors, Jimi Hendrix, and others. The station’s next big change came in 1975 when it moved its studio to the basement of the Darrin Communications Center, where it still is today.

In 2007, WRPI celebrated the 50th anniversary of its first FM broadcast and honored the contributions of students, alumni, and community volunteers. Today, the station continues to set new milestones in its efforts to persevere in the long and valued tradition of transmitting music, conversations, and more to the loyal audiences who tune in.

For more information regarding the Bethel Woods Center for the Arts, visit:
<http://bethelwoodscenter.org/>.

For more information regarding the “Summer of Woodstock” program, contact Steve Malinski at steve.malinski@gmail.com.

About WRPI

WRPI is a college radio station on the campus of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, N.Y. The station broadcasts 365 days a year at 10,000 effective watts from its tower in North Greenbush, N.Y., which gives WRPI an approximate listening radius of 75 miles. Programming includes a wide range of alternative and experimental music, cultural and public affairs programs, special events and sports simulcasts, and live local bands, among others.

Contact

Jessica Otitigbe
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
(518)276-6050
otitij@rpi.edu