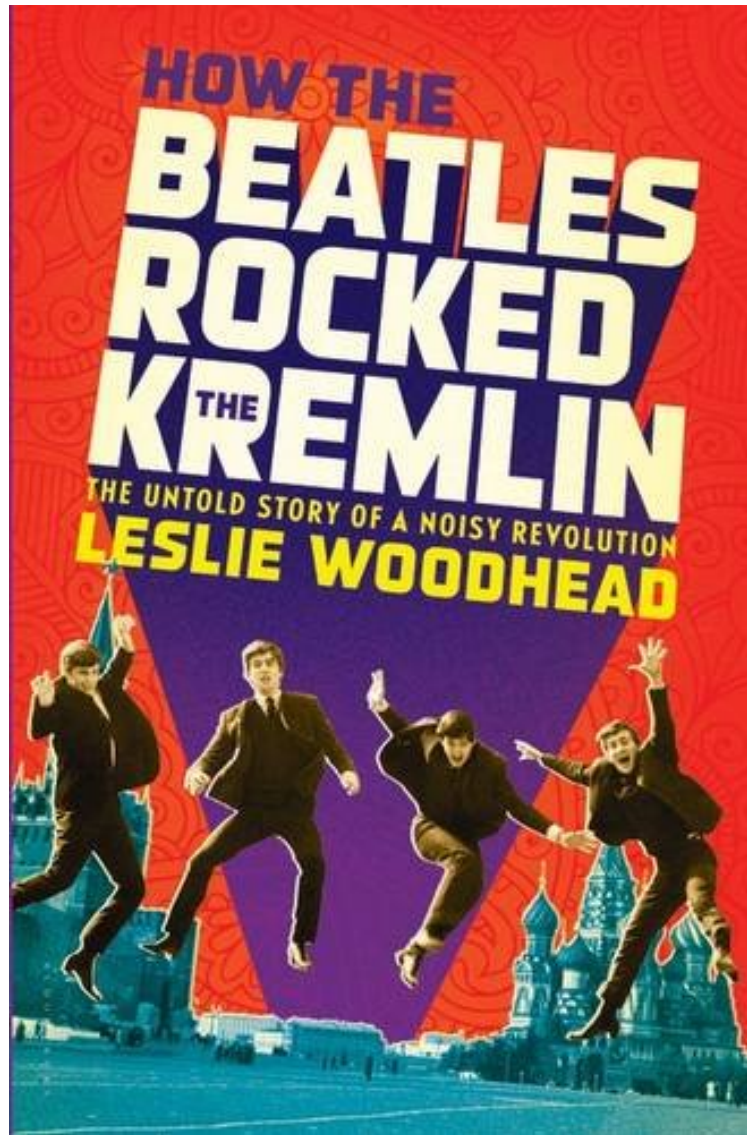


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How the Beatles Rocked the Kremlin: The Untold Story of a Noisy Revolution

Leslie Woodhead

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Leslie Woodhead : How the Beatles Rocked the Kremlin: The Untold Story of a Noisy Revolution before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How the Beatles Rocked the Kremlin: The Untold Story of a Noisy Revolution:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. BeatlesBy Betty H. SheehanWhat can I say? My husband loves anything about the Beatles. Most of the books share the same stories but my husband was very impressed with the

history that was attached with this one. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Beatles rocking the Kremlin...By L Shannonwell written, entertaining. a great gift for anyone interested in the great music of the sixties!!! I totally recommend this book. 13 of 13 people found the following review helpful. How the Beatles Rocked the Kremlin By S Riaz Subtitled, "The Untold Story of a Noisy Revolution", this is the remarkable story of a youth revolution centred around a seemingly unquenchable passion for the Beatles. In 1962, the author was working as a young researcher for Granada television. A jazz fan, he was nevertheless looking for a local rock and roll band for a programme, and a friend directed him to a cellar in Mathew Street, where he filmed the famous clip of the Beatles playing at the Cavern ('Some Other Guy', 'We want Pete!' - yes, that one). Without having any real fondness for rock and roll before, he was, like countless others before and since, interested enough in the band to see other concerts and helped arrange their first live spot on Granada television. By the end of that year they had their first single out, by the end of the following year Beatlemania had begun and by the year after that, they had more or less conquered the whole world. Except in the Soviet Union, where they were considered a bad influence and banned by the powers in charge. Years later, Leslie Woodhead found himself filming documentaries in Russia and he was fascinated by the loyal legion of underground fans of those four boys from Liverpool. This then, is the story of the Soviet Union's love affair with the Beatles. "They changed everything," asserts Stas Namin, a Russian musician. "They were very dangerous for the regime, because (the leaders) knew the Beatles gave Beatles kids some kind of freedom inside." As well as discussing the fans and the obsessive lengths they went to in order to hear the Beatles music (flexi discs produced on x-rays for example and sold on street corners, with the risk of arrest if caught) this is also a history of the cultural musical assault from the West. The author studies the effect of jazz, dance music and rock and roll within the context of Stalin's Great Terror, the second world war and the years of the Cold War. The Beatles were seen as so dangerous that young people could be arrested for playing in a rock and roll band, have their head shaved if their hair was considered too long; and there were even propaganda films and show trials in schools, with the Beatles held up as a bad influence on youth. However, there is no doubt that things that are banned become ultimately even more attractive and Beatles fans became more and more adept at getting round the restrictions. Despite the difficulty of hearing the music, with only grainy black and white pictures of the band and no hope of seeing them live, Russian fans are some of the most obsessive in the world. The author introduces super fan Koly Vasia, who has a temple to all things Beatle and was arrested many times for his love of the band. There is a great scene at a birthday party held for John Lennon, there are Beatles competitions and an outpouring of love when Paul McCartney finally arrives for a concert (the author discusses the Red Square concert and Kiev). It is also the story of how fans, such as Andrei Makarevich, made their own music. A pioneer of Soviet Rock, Makarevich began with secret gigs, keeping one step ahead of the police, before finally becoming a star in his own right. Ironically, when he finally made the pilgrimage to Liverpool, he was shocked by how poor the city was. For indeed, to many of these fans, the Beatles became something quite 'other worldly', almost mystical in their eyes. What is clear though, is that the band somehow did become a symbol for dissatisfied youth, filling a gap that Soviet society failed to and helping to push through change. This is a fascinating read and if you manage to see the documentary of the same name then please do so, as it is well worth a watch. Fans owe Leslie Woodhead two debts now - one for capturing the only footage of the band at the Cavern and this book, which shows their influence did create change and how important they were, and still are, in popular culture.

Imagine a world where Beatlemania was against the law-recordings scratched onto medical X-rays, merchant sailors bringing home contraband LPs, spotty broadcasts taped from western AM radio late in the night. This was no fantasy world populated by Blue Meanies but the USSR, where a vast nation of music fans risked repression to hear the defining band of the British Invasion. The music of John, Paul, George, and Ringo played a part in waking up an entire generation of Soviet youth, opening their eyes to seventy years of bland official culture and rigid authoritarianism. Soviet leaders had suppressed most Western popular music since the days of jazz, but the Beatles and the bands they inspired-both in the West and in Russia-battered down the walls of state culture. Leslie Woodhead's How The Beatles Rocked the Kremlin tells the unforgettable-and endearingly odd-story of Russians who discovered that all you need is Beatles. By stealth, by way of whispers, through the illicit late night broadcasts on Radio Luxembourg, the Soviet Beatles kids tuned in. "Bitles," they whispered, "Yeah, Yeah, Yeah."