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WELCOME TO THE 3rd EDITION

With only a few days to go until this year’s conference, we’ve got another round of articles for your reading pleasure. On the following pages you’ll find texts about the European Keychange Project, the benefits of Blockchain for artists, the experience of putting on a live show in Tehran, and the first Music Film Contest at Reeperbahn Festival. There’s also an interview with Guano Apes singer Sandra Nasic. And lots more.

Enjoy the read – and start gearing up for Reeperbahn Festival 2017!

We look forward to seeing you at our conference and to debating the topics we’ve covered in our magazines. Don’t hesitate to let us know your thoughts about our magazine by writing to us at feedback@reeperbahnfestival.com. Once again, all of our magazine articles will be posted on Facebook and Twitter. So please check our social media channels, as well as our newsletter and website, for these and feel free to share them. /
VANESSA REED
Closing the Gender Gap

INTERVIEW
Christian Tjaben

Photo: Vanessa Reed © Ruth Kilpatrick
Along with the PRS Foundation, BIME, Iceland Airwaves, Musikcentrum Sweden, Mutek, Tallinn Music Week, The Great Escape and Way Out West, Reeperbahn Festival is one of the partners in Keychange, a project with the mission to accelerate the music industry’s recognition of women’s potential artistic and economic value. A network of 60 women (30 emerging female artists and 30 innovators/industry professionals) will be given the chance to extend their reach to audiences across Europe and connect with the pioneering work of leaders from tech, design, music, audiovisual and other sectors. PRS Foundation Chief Executive Vanessa Reed, who initiated the project, kindly answered some of our questions about Keychange.

**REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL:**
As chief executive of the PRS Foundation, you founded the Women Make Music fund in 2012. Is Keychange basically the same thing on a multinational level? What impact has Women Make Music had and do you expect Keychange to have similar impact?

REED: We launched Women Make Music in the UK in response to the low representation of women amongst songwriters and composers in our country which today is only 16%. Our aim was to encourage more female musicians and songwriters to come forward for our support and to raise the profile of the gender gap in music which at that point was not being widely acknowledged by the industry. Our five year evaluation demonstrates that we’ve reached a large number of new female artists through this fund (86% had never applied to the PRS Foundation before) and the impact of seed funding on the women who received funding has generated a very significant return on investment, both in terms of financial impact and softer outcomes (e.g. 79% said that their Women Make Music grant had increased their confidence and 82% said they had developed creatively).

Keychange was the natural next step, as we wanted to share this experience with our European partners and explore the status quo across different European countries (e.g. in Germany, where only 14.1% of songwriters and composers are women). We felt it would be empowering for more women if we could build a network of talented female music creators and industry professionals who could work together on tackling the barriers whilst also being promoted as an inspiration for other women working in music.
REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL: Foundations, EU and government programmes, etc. concerned with diversity are trying to engineer change within the private sector. Would you rather see legislative measures which might bring on changes faster?

REED: Achieving a gender balance within the music industry will require input at every level across public and private sectors. In the UK, the government’s focus on diversity over the past three years, along with widespread press and social media coverage of the inequalities that exist, has massively accelerated industry leaders’ response – e.g., UK Music and BPI now have a diversity group and the Women in Music Awards have been established.

We have also been impressed with the UK Minister of Women and Women in Business Council’s work on the gender pay gap and other issues (all companies with over 250 employees will have to report on the average pay gap between male and female employees by March/April 2018). Transparency is becoming more crucial to a company’s reputation and that’s a good thing in my view. Most importantly, the people in charge (who are generally male) also need to be on board, driving change and setting the example, as the male music festival directors, like Alex Schulz, are doing in our Keychange partnership.

When it comes to quotas, I think it’s important that these are dictated by the companies themselves – e.g., the General Director of the BBC has committed to a 50-50 balance in pay at the BBC by 2020. Many other organisations are following suit, and we at PRS Foundation are aiming to be funding an equal number of men and women by this date. This is where it becomes interesting, because everyone is realising that if they want to compete and survive, then their organisation needs to better reflect the diversity of its audiences and artists.

We also know from other studies in the UK that having more women in leadership roles results in better business. In my opinion, one of the challenges for the music industry is that its workforce has barely changed over the past 30 years whilst our business environment has been rapidly evolving. Shouldn’t those leading the future of music better reflect the diverse range of artists and fans who are creating and consuming our industry’s content?

REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL: Do you think the creative industries have a pioneering role in bringing about a more diverse society, that more female musicians, producers, filmmakers, etc. would help to strengthen the position of women in the whole of society (i.e. does the creative world have a special responsibility in this regard), or will we experience the same slow change that the rest of the professional world (and, actually, the rest of society) is experiencing?

REED: The gender gap is part of a societal problem but some of the creative industries’ statistics are, in fact, far worse than other sectors, e.g. women make up less than 5% of music producers in the UK and 16% of film directors. Meanwhile, the number of female MPs in the UK’s House of Commons has risen to 32%. Creative industries, like film and music, promote role models for every generation and I believe there’s a responsibility attached to that. If young women can’t see or hear themselves in festival line-ups, in creative industry awards, on screen or on air, why would they believe that a career in the arts or creative industries was for them? At university level there are often far fewer female music graduates than male ones, so I’d like to see creative-industry leaders working with the education sector to encourage more girls and young women to study music and become part of the pipeline the industry can source talent from.

In the meantime, I think it’s crucial for those with the most clout and influence in the music industry to do as much as they can to promote and celebrate the women who are making brilliant work, even if proportionately, across all age groups, there are fewer women to choose from.
**REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL: Women in executive positions** – female managers, board members, etc. – are rare in the music industry, from organisations like the PRS (or GEMA) to major and independent labels to the newest start-ups. The quota is probably worse than the 20% or less of registered female composers and songwriters in the PROs of the countries participating in the Keychange programme.

Do you think this is a question of needing better networks of women (to counter the old-boy networks of old), or better educational programmes and equal opportunity measures; or do you think it’s a question of overcoming traditions and mentalities that have survived from pre-emancipatory times and have just not yet gone away?

REED: I think it’s all of those things. Women definitely need to support each other more and we’re not always very good at that. There needs to be more mentoring across generations (and this should involve male leaders too). As an independent charity, our governance requires us to rotate board members every three years. The maximum average length of time trustees stay with us is six years. I would like to see all membership/trade bodies adopting this approach so that the range of perspectives on boards is refreshed more regularly, increasing the industry’s capacity to keep up with developments in technology, business models, trends and societal shifts.

How many people in 2017 consider 90-100% male boards to be acceptable? And surely this sends out the wrong message when it comes to attracting new staff/talent of diverse backgrounds. Claire Singers summed this up very clearly in a recent article for Variety: “Why isn’t this creative industry leading the way in creating diverse teams of people who will think differently, challenge the status quo and create a vibrant and dynamic business?”

Why does today’s music industry remain pretty much run by the same coterie as it was back in the days of Elvis?”

Unconscious bias is another challenge which we all face and many organisations, including the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra which I’m on the board of, are embracing training sessions which help us to understand the rationale behind our decisions and perceptions.

**REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL: Who is currently your favourite female artist?**

REED: Björk – can’t dislodge the memory of seeing her at Iceland Airwaves with the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra last year, and Anna Meredith, too, for her versatility and the bombastic, chunky electronic sounds of “Varmints” – we funded her through our Momentum fund. Watch out for her next album which she’s working on as we speak.

The Reeperbahn Festival is a partner of Keychange, the newly launched European project started by the PRS Foundation to celebrate and invest in the talent of female music creators and innovators.

Vanessa Reed will participate in the Keychange press conference and the “Action NOW! The Next Steps for Achieving Diversity in the Music Industry” panel, presented by Keychange and VUT. Please visit www.reeperbahnfestival.com for details.

Keychange is made possible with the support of the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union (URL: Keychange.eu | Twitter: KeychangeEU | Instagram: /KeychangeEU | Facebook: /KeychangeEU)
WE CAN’T TAKE ANY MORE OF THIS!

How to Make the Music Scene into One Big Safe(r) Space

TEXT Robert Franken
Within the music industry, various programmes, initiatives and public pronouncements are calling for more diversity, female rights and an end to the tradition of male dominance. Meanwhile, hardly a week goes by without shocking reports of sexual assaults against women at festivals and other events. Digital & Diversity Consultant and self-declared feminist Robert Franken has something to say about this – and he doesn’t mince his words.

It seems we can no longer just look to the Nordic countries to find shining examples of equality and solidarity in society and business. At least not when it comes to the music industry. And most definitely not when it comes to festivals.

After multiple rapes and sexual assaults at this year’s Bråvalla Festival in Sweden, the organisers called the festival off for 2018 (some people are planning to make it into an all-female event instead). Swedish prime minister Stefan Lofven told the Swedish daily Expressen: “This must stop.” And yes, it must.

Some festival organisers are trying to make a difference. When 27-year-old Laura Whitehurst from Manchester was assaulted by two male friends, she wanted to cancel her visit to the Glastonbury festival. But the festival makers made sure she could enjoy her stay by implementing a whole variety of safety measures, including a security letter and special access tickets.

But how can events like music festivals become safer spaces for everyone? Certainly one key part of the answer is: awareness. Everybody, and especially men, need to realise that they have to become part of the solution – otherwise they will forever remain part of the problem. The United Nations campaign #HeForShe could be a leading example of how to involve men in the quest for gender equality. Making festivals into safer spaces for everyone would be one essential and common goal.

The Association of Independent Festivals (AIF) offers three key messages to festivalgoers in order to support the idea of #saferspacesatfestivals:

1. Zero Tolerance to Sexual Assault
2. Hands Off Unless Consent
3. Don’t Be a Bystander

This is most definitely a good start, but we cannot close our eyes to the fact that there is a pattern. From New Year’s Eve in Cologne to Glastonbury 2017, from Roskilde to Bråvalla, it sounds all too familiar: Large groups of men, alcohol and other drugs, and a weekend away from the drudgery of everyday life seem to form a very dangerous combination.
So let’s start talking about cause and effect. Horrible crimes like rape and sexual assault are symptoms of a society that hasn’t come to terms with what masculinity is about – or should be about. This is why those men who have taken the right step in the right direction should become catalysts for change. They can influence a new norm: a norm of tolerance, respect and equality. We must start today. And we must embrace new concepts to trigger change. The whole music industry thus needs to reboot its parameters of success. Let’s replace toughness with empathy, for example. Instead of incredibly long working hours, we should consider job sharing models as an alternative. It’s also high time to support gender equality on and off stage. And finally: diversity is key. The more we bring different backgrounds and perspectives together, the better the outcomes will be.

ARE WE READY FOR THIS?

The issue will be debated also at the session “Women in Rap”.

Robert Franken will be moderating the „Action NOW! The Next Steps for Achieving Diversity in the Music Industry“ panel, presented by Key-change and VUT. For details please visit www.reeperbahnfestival.com.
SANDRA NASIC

EYES WIDE OPEN

INTERVIEW Christian Tjaben
Fronting the band Guano Apes, Sandra Nasic is one of the most prominent alternative rock musicians in Germany. Ever since releasing their debut album, “Proud Like a God”, in 1997, Nasic and the Guano Apes have been album chart regulars and live favourites. After taking a break in 2006, the band got back together in 2009 and continues to tour and release records.

As part of the “Musik Bewegt” (“Music Moves”) initiative (a partner organisation of this year’s conference and our “Raise Your Voice” meta-theme), Sandra Nasic is also raising her voice to address political and social issues. The idea of Musik Bewegt is to “mobilise artists, musicians, fans, friends” to stand up against social injustices and help eliminate them. While preparing the live activities to celebrate 20 years of “Proud Like a God” later this year, Sandra Nasic was kind enough to grant us an interview.

**REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL:**
What moves you?

NASIC: Everything and nothing. I’d like to see more real progress.

**REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL:** Why is it important to be involved in social activism as a musician?

NASIC: Music and art usually have their origins in the middle of society and circulate back there, too. Musicians are very much in the public eye; they always have a direct audience, and this means they might feel intrinsically somewhat closer to society than an anonymous board of directors at a company might. That’s why most musicians use their reach to do good and to send a positive signal, which is a great thing. I don’t think it is an artist’s primary task, though, to be politically active, but it can quickly be seen as shallow and egotistical if outwardly you seem to have no opinion at all.
**REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL:** What should musicians do to assume their responsibility in society – charities, political engagement, artistic responses?

NASIC: There are, of course, many things that musicians, and non-musicians, can do – supporting Musik Bewegt, for example, or organising charity concerts, like the Peace by Peace festival in Berlin, or other similar things. A fair amount is already going on, and now megastars like Leonardo DiCaprio and Miley Cyrus and others are getting involved. Anything that helps, helps. Music can help, but only as much as a plaster helps a wound. The main problems have to be sorted out in the political arena, and by every single human being – there’s not too much that all the musicians in the world combined can change. There are other cogs that need to be set in motion.

**REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL:** Have the political developments of the recent past (rise of populism in Europe, Brexit, Trump) changed your ideas about the artist’s role in society?

NASIC: It’s almost impossible to ignore today’s problems; everything is more visible and the world of advertising is able to sell us fewer and fewer false promises – because once people see the connections they don’t fall for any of it anymore. Of course, all of this has some influence on the world of art, it always has, just not to the huge extent it does now. Trump’s election has unleashed quite a lot; lots of artists are now aware and feel it is their responsibility to take a stand. It’s hard to sing about love and trivial things if you open your eyes. The mass demonstrations around the world as part of the Women’s March, after Trump’s election, made a deep impression on me. International artists took action and demonstrated their solidarity – they should do this more often, and for themselves, too, because a lot of money is made out of music but only a fraction ends up with the artist – this hasn’t changed – and that’s why a lot of artists sell out to the industry.

**REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL:** Your lyrics mostly deal with personal feelings – is there room for politics? Should politics be put into songs?

NASIC: I would find it too bleak to just be political – I wouldn’t enjoy my job very long and I’d probably have become a politician. I like to make use of the full range of emotions. Which is why political songs like “Fake” or “Money and Milk” exist alongside songs like “Sundaylover”. It is counterproductive when musicians just brood over world problems; there’s so much more to music, and it is in its very nature to make people dream, bring them comfort, get them partying. A time-out from reality is important sometimes, to keep despair from setting in. Great bands, like Rage Against the Machine, that are exclusively political, have, of course, been extremely important for an entire generation, and for me, too.

**REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL:** This year you are celebrating 20 years since the release of the Guano Apes’ debut album, “Proud Like a God”. Since recording it at the time, have political atmospheres and experience influenced your creative work?

NASIC: Yes, on the first album it was songs like “Open Your Eyes” or “Maria”. At age 18, though, my thoughts mostly revolved around rebellion, fun, and freedom. I grew up with grunge and rap groups like Public Enemy – and that’s always been a certain attitude I’ve lived according to.
“Musik Bewegt“ is part of the Reeperbahn Festival Conference’s meta-theme „Raise Your Voice“ and its respective sessions. More Info on „Musik Bewegt“ can be found at www.musik-bewegt.de

More Info on the Guano Apes can be found at www.guanoapes.org

REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL: Diversity is a hot topic at the moment. There are networks for female musicians and a general understanding that women are facing the same disadvantages in the music business as they are in the rest of society. Has this already changed things for the better or do you basically see the same conditions as when you were starting out doing music? Was it more difficult to be self-determined producing and releasing music as a female musician in the past?

NASIC: I can only speak for myself and only as a female musician in the rock-music world. I don’t know of any subordination or disadvantage, quite the contrary, but that’s also in my nature as a female singer and songwriter. In the pop world, where many people are basically only performers, things are definitely a bit different. Most women in more normal professions are often still disadvantaged. They usually earn less, but have higher taxes, and then there’s the problem of time in our society. Are things really better for women today – I don’t think so; they have even more to do in less time. It’s disgraceful the way politicians just aren’t paying attention – it makes me really angry. Men band together and support each other better than women do. It really is time for women in good positions to do the same thing among themselves. People who say: I don’t want quotas, women have to make it work, are either out of touch, stuck-up, or spoilt. Of course they can do it, but all you have to do is listen to other women at their jobs, talk to them about how they are doing – in the nursing profession, for example, etc. – then maybe the people against quotas will start to get it. I’m optimistic, though, because the idea of a general basic income would probably solve some problems.
Do Artists Benefit from Blockchain?

Blockchain. Yes, the topic almost everyone in every business is talking about and an inescapable subject of discussion in the music world since 2015. There is a myriad of projects based on Blockchain, and expectations are extremely high. It’s like the holy grail for the music business of the 21st century, if you believe some people. But what, exactly, are the advantages for artists? Since some are declaring that Public Rights Organisations (PROs/collection societies) like GEMA, PRS, and ASCAP are becoming obsolete with the advent of Blockchain, what about members of PROs? Who will be better off, independent artists or signed artists? Or is Blockchain just another technology that only the major labels and tech giants like Apple, Google, and Spotify will benefit from?
Let’s take a look at two groups of artists. On the one hand, there are composers, performers and producers who are signed to a label, a publisher, and/or who are a member of a PRO – keeping it simple, we call them signed artists. On the other hand, there are those who are none of the above. At best, they are running their own tiny label. Still keeping it simple, we call them unsigned. The core differences between the two are their access to market and the capability to control the use of their works. Being signed means you are an integral part of the music industry. If you are an unsigned artist, marketing and administrative tasks are entirely up to you. You may be part of the musical and cultural ecosystem but it’s hard to pay your rent – but this doesn’t necessarily mean you’re better off in the first group.

**BLOCKCHAIN FOR EVERYONE**

No matter if you are signed or not, these Blockchain features are relevant to any artist:

Security and authenticity: Since Blockchain features a strong focus on security it prevents infringement or theft of identity in various ways. New data and contracts are automatically approved by other participants of the Blockchain network. They can be seen as acting as independent “witnesses”. Contracts can’t be changed without the agreement of all signees. The data itself is safely encrypted, and it is part of a chain that can’t be perforated. Plus, there are plans to establish a separate Blockchain architecture for identities that features the same precautionary measures.

Transparent allocation of all creators and performers: A widespread Blockchain for licensing, with clean and secure data based on the Blockchain concept’s features, can be groundbreaking for a global and open licensing database. There is a long way to go but it’s a suitable approach to identifying creators, to shopping licence worldwide, and to paying every creator accordingly. There certainly will be no excuse to say: “We couldn’t find the licensing information in time.”

How to prove that my song has really been written by me? Imagine being able to automatically fingerprint each sequence, each sound, each stem, each recorded track from your soundboard or any other electronic device while saving. This builds up to a history of composition. A complete chain of evidence that the song is yours. Due to the character of a Blockchain it can’t be corrupted. It’s your legal assurance.

**BLOCKCHAIN FOR SIGNED ARTISTS**

Of course, advantages for signed artists depend on how labels, publishers, and, most of all, PROs are implementing and applying Blockchain. As a member of a PRO, or as a member of organisations such as DOMUS, FAC, etc. you can engage and have a say. There are multiple ways for signed artists to benefit.

How does licensing work? Thanks to Blockchain’s responsive transactional concept, licensing works the same way it does today only it’s much faster and more secure. It’s more comfortable for licensees, which should lead to more licensing and higher revenues for creators.

Do signed artists benefit from Smart Contracts? There might be a way. It is possible to extend and to constrain licences individually by additional clauses – with almost no administrative effort. PROs may add more options for individual choice. They may select and provide only those options which comply with law. This is a strong advantage; unsigned artists have to consult a lawyer.
Who takes care of my licence fees? Can he be trusted? It probably will be your PRO that’s running the Blockchain. The administrational workflows can be replaced by automated ones within the Blockchain. Actually, due to its purpose the PRO’s Blockchain might be securely separated from other Blockchains. Another option would be to establish a shared Blockchain run by multiple or all PROs, thus simplifying cross-border licensing.

Can payments from PROs be accelerated? If the PRO’s transactions are transferred to a Blockchain, all payments and splits are calculated in real time. The date the actual payment is due still depends on the workflow of the PROs (and on accounting). In spite of that you should see reliable and exact numbers on your dashboard for current and for upcoming payments.

What about fees for User Generated Content (UGC)? Licensing of samples, fragments or songs can be a more smoother process than it is today. Digital copies can be identified by a code; any descendants of an analogue copy have to be monitored by an algorithm. Content producers might be notified upon recognition of a potentially copyright infringing use. To enable publishing, the producer pays for all items that have to be licensed. All creators involved are paid according to Smart Contracts attached to the original works. The entire workflow, including individual constraints for usage, is automated and processed by the Blockchain. OneClick-License (OCL) by Alan Graham and Rupert Hine is a solution very similar to this.

Is it possible to simplify tariffs for licensing? Definitely. Smart Contracts may replace tariffs. More precisely, tariffs might get coded. Smart Contracts are much more suitable for detailed customisation that otherwise would lead to even more complexity in rules. The licensee describes the intended use and receives a price tag. It might be possible to design a licensing interface with controls to see and learn about one parameter’s impact on the price.

HOW UNSIGNED ARTISTS MAY BENEFIT FROM BLOCKCHAIN

You might be a DIY artist, you might have a team or even a manager, you might license your works under Creative Commons, or you might license under full copyright at your own label.

Unsigned artists have to take care of the entire workload of their business. Blockchain can transfer contracts, sample clearing, transactions, and accounting to a new layer that’s built upon the internet. It’s a transactional layer. Most likely there will be “naked” Blockchain services handling your transactions, similar to telco providers for access to internet. Specific service providers in the music business may allow for more comfortable access, comparable to music distributors.

How much am I paid, what for, by whom, and when? Transactions in Blockchain are executed in real time. Wherever the track is licensed, your account shows when the payment will arrive, if it has arrived – and exactly how high the amount is going to be. Even if you may not be paid in real time, you can prove your financial credibility to your bank in order to get a credit.

How to control if the usage of my music complies with the licensing conditions? Just like you don’t need to worry about how an email can be sent to the recipient, Blockchain maintains the rules and executes transactions only if they comply with the contract – automatically.
Wolfgang Senges is a strategic advisor in music, media & technology. He focuses on Blockchain and co-founded the Blockchain Working Group in 2016. His book “Blockchain for the Music Industry – Concepts, Expectations & Concerns” will be out in spring 2018.

The Reeperbahn Festival Conference will host several panels and a workshop about Blockchain in 2017. Please visit www.reeperbahnfestival.com for details.

How to clear that sample? Getting a sample cleared is often a pain. If the rightsholder manages his works on the Blockchain, you can check the licensing conditions, digitally sign the licence, pay for it, and you are ready to go.

How to get my music found? Managing transactions on the Blockchain makes it much more attractive as a market place than the internet is now. The effort of licensing is extremely low.

Finally, streaming services don’t have any excuses for not licensing, and even a low play count can be paid without administrational overhead.

How to claim licensing fees? Generally speaking, claiming won’t be necessary. Just like you can clear a sample, someone else can license your song. The song refers to you and any other people involved in recording, performing, publishing and producing it. Automated processing calculates the splits. You get paid.

How to individually define licensing conditions? Limited availability, constraint access for certain people, no access for certain purposes: Everything might be part of the Smart Contracts (contracts written in programming code). But you have to be extremely careful – not every rule you wish to add complies with law. It’s better to consult a lawyer.

How to manage Creative Commons licence type changes? Blockchain keeps track of all changes. It prevents the same track from being licensed under different conditions, which in turn avoids legal hassle with licensees.

If Blockchain is applied in a reasonable way in various fields of the music business or even throughout the music business, unsigned artists as well as signed artists are likely to benefit. Access to market as well as licence monitoring can improve tremendously. It’s important, though, to build an infrastructure that enables access to Blockchain for all creators, no matter whether they are signed or unsigned.

Therefore, all artists should know what Blockchain is about and should participate in shaping it. Chances are that revenues from licensing will increase with Blockchain. PROs won’t become obsolete, instead there are quite a few opportunities ahead for them.

All of this has to be taken with a grain of salt. It is a vision. But it is what Blockchain might have on offer. There certainly are questions, caveats, and concerns. These are to be discussed. If you bring your ideas and concerns to the table now, there is the rare chance we can avoid that Martin Atkins moment:
“Welcome to the music business. You’re fucked.”
RELAX!
Even Your Weirdest Music Can Make Money

TEXT
Vikram Gudi
The co-founder of Split Music on the independent approach to the sync and licensing business, reasons to get up in the morning, and building a go-to catalogue for music supervisors.

It might sound cliched – but if you’re not passionate about what you do and having fun at the same time, you’re in the wrong business. Our mission statement when starting Split Music was to build a catalogue of music we absolutely loved and could work to picture. In our case, contemporary classical, experimental electronica, trap and grime. The model and the business idea are important but without passion and genuine love for the music, it’s a waste of everyone’s time.

It all started when avant-garde composer Riz Maslen introduced Pete Saville and me. We instantly bonded over our mutual love of obscure, weird electronic music, our knowledge of the sync business and music supervision. Over beers we came up with the idea to start a new publishing company that would cater for our strange tastes, yet offer artists and their managers a simple, short-term deal that would free their music if things didn’t work out.

New signings mostly come to us through direct introductions from our artists or from friends, indie labels & managers who pop by the office and play us what’s exciting them the most.

Our journey in experimental techno started with These Hidden Hands – a band that embodied Split Music’s vision of pushing the envelope on music to picture. “Trelesire” was used in the BAFTA-nominated BBC series “Our World War”, and it went from there. When Tommy and Alain from These Hidden Hands played us their debut album we were blown away. We’re very proud to have represented them ever since; I know they’ve had offers from much bigger players than ourselves. Their second LP is very special, absolutely uncompromising. We placed “These Moments Dismantled” on the “Raw” trailer, which won this year’s Golden Trailer Award for Best Foreign Music.

In less than three years, we’re lucky to have become a go-to catalogue for some of the most respected music supervisors. We are honoured to be working alongside some of the great creatives in music, both in LA and London. It’s these risk-taking music nerds in the supervision game that keep this company alive. We’ve placed music on spots for great brands like Adidas, IKEA, Lexus, Netflix, Dior, Virgin, Puma, Vice, Unicef, and many film trailers, most recently “The Dark Tower” and “Blade Runner”.

THE A&R PROCESS IS SPORADIC AND PERSONAL – IT HAS A LOT TO DO WITH LUCK

For both Pete and me, the foundation has always been enjoying and being inspired by new music, meeting the people who make it, sharing stories, influences, visiting their studios, going out for dinner and getting our hands dirty. We have never had a set A&R process or pre-conceived notions of what we are looking for.
Building the team has been a learning curve. Thankfully we now have a very special group of highly intelligent, music loving characters. Delegating departments such as royalties, licensing, finance and sales was hard at first, but we eventually found people who were better than us. It’s important for everybody to be enjoying their job, as well as being really good at it.

**AN ALTERNATIVE CONTRACT AND NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT DEALS**

From the outset we wanted a company that could work exclusively as an owner of both publishing and master rights – and that’s a big ask. With deals like this, artists and their managers have to know exactly what they’re getting into. Why should they put such valuable rights in our hands?

The only answer we have is to promise to only take on music which we believe we can do proper business for and which we’re personally passionate about. Because of that, we stay focussed, and that’s key. We sign a two-year exclusive deal for an album or just specific tracks... and nothing else. If we don’t do our work in that time, an artist/songwriter’s rights are fully returned.

Independent acts can activate sync with us while they concentrate on their wider career trajectory. They can sign certain tracks to us without limiting what they do with their new work – and they can do that with any label or publisher they like. We’ve never taken any cuts on artists’ traditional sales revenue such as sales or playing live, it’s important to define as much freedom as we can within our exclusive arrangement.

The sync money we bring in operates as a great financial bonus for our artists – helping to finance that part of an artist’s career is the most rewarding thing about our job, and it’s why we get up the morning. There’s an element of Robin Hood in plugging experimental music into the commercial world. Our artists normally spend that money on their next creative venture, and it leaves them free to do what they do best – create great music.

We are currently in the process of launching an indie label, Research, as part of our three year anniversary, featuring some of our favourite artists. Each release will explore a challenging area of music we work in, and will be limited to 500 vinyl copies. The focus with Research is on the art rather than the industry but it’s impossible to separate the two.

From These Hidden Hands to Mondkopf to OAKE, and now into the new generation of our signings, we consider this our family. Seeing and hearing this work on massive Hollywood trailers is just awesome. It’s why we get up in the morning.

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Vikram Gudi will be moderating the “Real Horror Stories” panel at the 2017 Reeperbahn Festival Conference. Please visit www.reeperbahnfestival.com for details.
While globalisation and digitalisation may have made the world smaller and music seems to transcend most borders these days, there are still many places far removed from the world as we know it. Matthias Koch reports on his experiences in Iran, where he recently promoted a show by pianist and electronic musician Martin Kohlstedt.
It’s now nearly two years since I first visited Iran. What first was vaguely intended to be a back-packing trip to a country I had heard so many rumours and been told so many things about, developed into quite an active, intense and ongoing relationship. I’ve meanwhile collected many visas from the Islamic Republic in my passport (probably making a possible trip to the US in the future a bit more complicated as I cannot apply for an electronic visa anymore after having travelled to Iran). The topic “music” was an important element of my experiences and encounters in Iran straight from the beginning and and the importance of music in Iran is growing. Wait, “music in Iran”? In general, music in Iran, especially live, is subject to strict rules. For example, a woman may accompany a male singer in the background, but solo performances by women are forbidden. These rules have been enforced sometimes more, sometimes less strictly since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Before that time, during the feudal reign of the Shah, things were different. Back then, Iran even had a vibrant pop scene (a star from that era, Googoosh, is still touring very successfully worldwide). Nowadays, concerts can only take place with permission: The Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance (Ershad) is the central authority granting the necessary permits for media, art exhibitions, internet content, theatre and concerts. No permissions, no concerts. Except if they take place illegally in private or abandoned places. And there are many such concerts!

One might think that the population in a theocratic Islamic republic might be behind the times ((living under a rock)) when it comes to contemporary music, literature or arts. The opposite is the case: the well-educated Iranian youth is very much following and observing Western trends. A couple of times friends from Tehran informed me about a new independent German film, interesting music projects from the US, and so on, before I had heard about them.

On my first trip to the desert, far from the smog-ridden Tehran with its 15 million inhabitants, I had the pleasure of listening to German modern classical musician Nils Frahm while having a chai (tea) in a small café. When I asked the waiter for his opinion, he said “yes, mister, he’s big over here, everyone knows him”.

Since president Rouhani – a relatively moderate cleric – was first elected in 2015, the Iranian music scene has been subject to less strict rules (although they can vary from day to day). The entire climate in the culture scene seems to be becoming more and more liberal. In tiny steps of course. And still – in my impression – music and art is something only the upper middle class and the rich in the big cities can afford, either to create or consume. The working class and the poor have to deal with totally different problems every day.

The negative image of the country in Western media, along with restrictions, meant that not many popular artists from the West made it to Iran in the past, although the young, well-educated urban population is eager to see live performances by artists they discovered on the internet. Instagram is the main source of information, as platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter are still blocked in the Islamic republic.

The hip, current, new wave of contemporary classical and electronic music has opened new possibilities for playing in Iran: the music – being mostly instrumental – does not need to be checked for offending lyrics, and female vocalists are rare. An attitude that might be seen as too Western is not part of what this music is about.
Lately more and more artists from the West are going to Tehran to discover and experience this melting pot of traditional Persian and modern music. Last winter I met Andreas Spechtl, singer for Austrian indie band Ja Panik!, who was just writing and recording his new solo album with field recordings and themes from this mega city (the album is coming out in November 2017).

In February 2017 I organised a concert for neoclassical artist Martin Kohlstedt, who had the honour of playing together with local piano icon Peyman Yazdanian in Tehran’s famous Roudaki Hall, a place with excellent acoustics, built in the Shah era in the late sixties. The bigger Vahdat Hall in the same complex is THE place for classical music, jazz and theatre. The better venues in Iran’s big cities have most of the standards we are used to over here: Lights, sound system, a grand piano etc. What we might not be used to are the two Ayatollahs, Khomeini and Khamenei, overlooking the performance in the form of their pictures placed in the corners of the stage (their pictures are obligatory in all public places in Iran). The Kohlstedt concert was sold out within three days thanks to a big campaign on Instagram and young urban hipsters poured out of taxis, busses and the metro to fill the place. Young people in Tehran are very stylish, the latest clothing trends and beard styles can be seen, and women’s headscarves are definitely more a style accessory than a religion-imposed rule. Which they still are, of course.

The reception Kohlstedt got was amazing. I’ve never before had the pleasure of attending a concert where the audience in a packed venue was listening with such concentration and focus from the first to the last minute of the performance. The positive feedback the artist received from the locals after the show, the selfie requests, were just overwhelming. At the short aftershow gathering tea and cookies were offered, alcohol is of course strictly forbidden. After 20 minutes with the locals we hopped into an old Peykan taxi and returned to the hotel.

Currently we are working on a new series of concerts in Tehran, and in other areas of Iran, starting December 2017. And I’m pretty sure those won’t be the last, as Tehran seems to be developing into THE new hotspot in Asia!
PETER ROMMEL

On Music and Films

INTERVIEW

Christian Tjaben

Photo: Peter Rommel © P. Rommel
Peter Rommel is a German film producer who is best known for his work with film director Andreas Dresen ("Halbe Treppe" ["Grill Point"]; "Wolke 9" ["Cloud 9"]; "Halt auf freier Strecke" ["Stopped on Track"]). As he is on the jury of the first Reeperbahn Festival Music Film Contest, a new competition being launched this year, we had some questions for him about the genre.

**REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL:** What interests you about music films?

ROMMEL: Well, mostly the backgrounds and the music of artists / bands (and their managers) that have been a constant in my life or manage to move me, inspire me, again.

**REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL:** You were born in 1956, which makes you a baby boomer. In your youth, there were only a few music films – but they were defining ones. Which ones made the biggest impression on you?

ROMMEL: “Gimme Shelter” and “Woodstock” were two big-screen films that had a huge impact on me and my friends back in those almost virginal yet rebellious days. And there were the very contentious – as far as our parents were concerned – broadcasts of Radio Bremen’s “Beat-Club”, in distorted black-and-white, which were on TV on Saturdays.

**REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL:** Do you think the current millennial generation will have their own similarly formative experiences?

ROMMEL: The present-day, purely commercial-oriented availability of film content at every digital level makes me rather doubt it.

**REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL:** From historical documentaries through concert/tour recordings to biopics and experimental audio/video productions – the variety of music films is quite large. Do you have a preferred genre?

ROMMEL: No. I go more by artists and bands.

**REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL:** Music films that target an already existing group of fans can often get made through crowd-funding contributions. As a producer, what do you think of this approach?

ROMMEL: The way I see it, all options for pushing through – financing – a project are legitimate and worth pursuing when trying to get a good film idea off the ground.

**REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL:** What music film would you like to produce?

ROMMEL: A portrait of the path Trent Reznor has taken, and an in-depth TV programme dedicated to our indomitable hero himself, Neil Young.
“Bring me one that rattles when you lug it, one that’s red and juicy when you pluck it” – *from Jon Hendricks’ lyrics for the Herbie Hancock jazz classic “Watermelon Man”.*

Best-selling author, food blogger, and chef Stevan Paul treats us to one of the recipes he collected on a tour of open-air festivals – a tour that inspired his latest cookbook: “Open Air” has 100 recipes tested at Roskilde (Denmark), Dimensions (Croatia), Summerjam (Germany), Sziget (Hungary), Acoustic Lakeside (Austria), and Melt! (Germany).
INGREDIENTS – Serves 4-6 –

- 1 cold watermelon
- The juice from 1 lemon
- 2-4 tbsp. liquid honey
- Ca. 1/2 bottle of ice-cold Sekt (alternatively Crémant or Prosecco)

A cool, sweet watermelon on a hot summer’s day is refreshing on its own, of course. Add just three more ingredients – a dash of lemon juice, honey, and ice-cold Sekt – however, and it becomes the hit of any campsite party. On our tour, we were treated to a spontaneous Mexican wave!

PREPARATION

Cut the top off one side of the watermelon. On the other side, cut a thin, straight slice from the bottom to create a stable base – be careful not to cut through to the flesh.

Cut or spoon out the flesh in the largest possible pieces and chop these into cubes.

Sprinkle the cubes of flesh with lemon juice, cover with honey, mix briefly and thoroughly, and put the cubes back in the watermelon.

Immediately before serving, pour the Sekt, bubbling and sparkling, over the flesh.

Use forks for the chunks of fruit and divide up the remaining juice into glasses or cups.

(Preparation time: 10 minutes)

The watermelon should be well chilled. Alternatively, the flesh can be cut into cubes, put in a Ziploc bag or a bowl, placed on ice cubes, and chilled in a cooler bag or styrofoam box. It will cool fairly quickly. Or, if you’re by the sea, or by any other stretch of water, a string bag can be used to place the watermelon in the (hopefully cold!) water near the shoreline. Don’t forget to moor it! /

Stevan Paul will host the culinary part of this year’s Reeperbahn Festival opening dinner, “Cook ‘n’ Dub” (with music by Matthias Arfmann featuring Thomas Cook). For details please visit www.reeperbahnfestival.com.

More info on “Open Air”, Stevan Paul’s festival and camping cookbook, please visit www.brandstaetterverlag.com/buch/open-air.