

Your Music's Awesome! Now What?! (notes from event: July 27th, 2009 at Brutopia)

Networking

- Meyer: You have to be social – go to shows, record shops.
MCH: Ask what you want specifically from the networking – perhaps there are already existing groups out there.
Shev: Befriend people who are doing shows and get on the bill.
Dave: The more events and conferences the better.
Frank: Myspace hits are an important indicator of the following of an artist.
Meyer: The most dangerous thing is to look at this as a career – concentrate on the music instead.

Managers

- Shev: If they ask for money up front, that's bad. Should be a percentage fee, usually around 10% or 15%.
Frank: Look up the record of any potential manager. Talk to people who have worked with that person.

Producers – is there a standard agreement?

- MCH: There is no standard. It's best to get advice.
Meyer: Look up the producer, who they've worked with.
MCH: Write a deal memo. In the long term, see a lawyer.
Meyer: Do it because you like making music, not for a career at the start.

How do you go about getting representation?

- Dave: Wait until you are making enough money to attract a manager.
Meyer: Build an audience. If it doesn't catch on, that's too bad. Some people have [commercial potential] and some don't.
MCH: Build relationships. Attract general attention – media, public, etc. If you meet someone, keep them in your network. Don't abandon relationships and after time it will happen.

Pay-for-Play

- Meyer: Unfortunate reality in Montreal.
Dave: Was adamantly against it until he spent a year running a venue with too many empty Friday and Saturday nights. If you pack the house perhaps the booker will give you a break next time.
Meyer: A fee can be incentive to promote the show and put up some posters

Promotion

- Shev: Know your music type, who your audience is, and which stations/producers suit you. FACTOR is for “commercially viable” art, unlike the more experimental works the Canada Council will fund.
- Frank: Sees badly chosen promotion all the time. Death Metal for a folk show, etc.

What is the ideal FACTOR application?

- Shev: Made clear that she wasn't a juror herself. Stressed that the music has to be good quality technically, the singing has to be on key and the parts have to be well played. Both the music and the marketing plan have to be strong.
- Meyer: Postering is illegal on city property (audience member stated that the fine is currently \$144) but they have to catch you doing it or they can't prove it was you. “I totally endorse postering”. End of show flyers are the most effective way to promote a show.

What's the best way to approach the CBC?

- Frank: Radio and the web are two different organizations, check out CBC Radio Three online and Concerts On Demand and fill out the form. Also, talk to people at events.

Concert Bookers

- Meyer: Most don't even want to know about you if you've sold less than 15k records
- MCH: First take care of your own music – learn and understand copyright. A music publisher will give you feedback – start by just looking for that. In the current climate indies with followers are doing ok. Big label groups are hurting. We look for other presentation – tv, film, etc. They are lucrative and good promotion. We look for every way to get paid!

Should music be copyrighted before sending it out?

- MCH: In Canada, copyright is automatic upon creation. [copyright info]

Last important things to remember

- Frank: Know who you are and make sure the music you are making is unique
- Dave: The \$10 000 wants to inspire other corporate programs to do this.
- MCH: Become the best artist you can and learn about the business aspect. Run your own business.
- Shev: FACTOR is available to fund you. Keep applying. Every time you'll get important feedback. Be clear in your applications.
- Meyer: Register your band as a business and get a bank account. Music first, establish yourself, then look for management.