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INDUSTRY LANDSCAPE**



**OPERATION
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Reopening Arenas

LIAM RETURNS TO KNEBWORTH

An epic adventure to explore uncharted territory and new frontiers

ILMC

B R A V E N E W W O R L D

SHAPING THE NEW INTERNATIONAL LIVE MUSIC BUSINESS

LONDON | 1-4 MARCH 2022

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Daring expedition made by possible by...

FEATURE



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EXPEDITION INVITATION

For the attention of
ILMC ADVENTURERS



ILMC

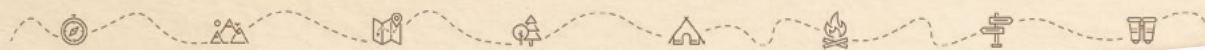
BRAVE NEW WORLD | LONDON | 1-4 MARCH 2022

➔ AN EPIC THREE-DAY ADVENTURE ➔

After close to two years of being trapped within their own four walls, ILMC's intrepid members will be making their way to London to map the paths back to business in the years ahead. The 2022 edition of ILMC invites the world's top live music professionals to discover the live entertainment sector's new frontiers – fittingly, in a new location – for an epic and agenda-packed, three-day adventure.

Having navigated through the online conference labyrinth of 2021, ILMC makes its bold return as a live, in-person gathering at a new and glamorous five-star location – the Royal Lancaster Hotel. Boasting views across two royal parks (Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens), the newly revamped and upgraded Hotel offers conference rooms bathed in daylight, acres of meeting space, and a wide range of deluxe bedrooms and lavish suites.

Our expedition takes place from 1-4 March 2022, when 1,200 resolute souls, invited from more than 40 countries, set out to build a brave new world. So join the world's most thrilling voyage yet as these daring pioneers shape the new international live music business.

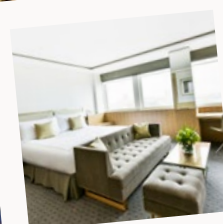


A BRAND-NEW 5-STAR LOCATION

With ILMC's longstanding home, The Royal Garden Hotel, closed for refurbishment, ILMC is moving to a new location in 2022.

Having recently completed a multimillion pound refurbishment, ILMC's new venue combines views of The Royal Parks with exceptionally comfortable bedrooms. The Royal Lancaster Hotel boasts more than 400 rooms, with a large variety of suites for those needing private meeting space away from the main conference floors.

All rooms at the hotel are reserved exclusively for delegates, and with special discounted rates, there are rooms available to suit a variety of budgets. Please note that with ILMC stretching out until the early hours each night, our hotel rooms typically sell out in advance.



REGISTERING FOR ILMC

If you're either a seasoned ILMC'er or representatives from your company have attended previously, you can go ahead and register at 34.ilmc.com/register.

For new delegates who have never attended an ILMC before, including those delegates that registered for our virtual event in 2021 and who hadn't previously attended an in-person ILMC, please check out the New Delegate Process at 34.ilmc.com/register.

CALLING ALL YOUNG LIVE EXECS...

For several years now, the Alia Dann Swift Bursary scheme has provided a route for live music's brightest upcoming executives to participate in ILMC for the first time.

In 2022, however, thanks to the generous patronage of some truly excellent partners (details TBC) we're able to offer 30 complimentary passes for live music's brightest upcoming executives to be able to attend ILMC.

If you're young – or young at heart (suggested age of 30 and under) – and are keen to attend an ILMC for the first time, it's worth checking it out. And please spread the word about the scheme to any suitable younger colleagues who might benefit.

The scheme is named after Alia Dann Swift, ILMC's longstanding producer who passed away in 2017 after a short illness. Alia was instrumental in both bringing talent into the industry and supporting and encouraging new ILMC members. Check 34.ilmc.com for more info.

WHAT IS IT & WHAT'S INCLUDED?

An ILMC pass isn't just a badge of honour, worn proudly by the most daring and intrepid individuals across the worldwide live business... it also comes with plenty of other stuff! Read on for some of the additional perks:

- 🟢 Access to all panels, presentations, networking areas, and most events.
- 🟢 Access to the Green Events & Innovations (GEI) conference on Friday 4 March.
- 🟢 Access to all on-demand recordings of all ILMC sessions for 30 days after the conference.
- 🟢 An invitation list restricted to the industry's top movers and shakers.
- 🟢 Five-star lunches and tea & coffee breaks.
- 🟢 Heavily discounted room rates for registered delegates throughout ILMC.
- 🟢 Access to the ILMC Networking Scheme.
- 🟢 The first-class facilities of a top west London hotel.
- 🟢 *The Globetrotters Conference Guide*, which includes contact information for all delegates.
- 🟢 An ILMC delegate bag.
- 🟢 Free entry to shows across London throughout ILMC.
- 🟢 Significant prizes to be won with proceeds going to charity.
- 🟢 Discounts in local restaurants and eateries.

34.ilmc.com/register

Expedition made possible by...

We are delighted to announce that many of the top companies in the live entertainment business have added their support to ILMC in 2022, underlining the confidence that they have in bringing colleagues and partners from around the world to help kickstart business internationally and accelerate towards pre-pandemic levels of activity.

We are particularly proud to reveal our platinum partner, Live Nation; gold partner, Ticketmaster; silver partner, CTS Eventim; and associate partners, Tysers, ASM Global, DEAG, TADC, and Showsec.

Also joining this lineup of key players are Semmel Concerts, Oak View Group, Feld Entertainment, Megaforce, The Harlem Globetrotters, eps, and Universe.

To ensure your company stays ahead of the competition, contact Chris Prosser on marketing@ilmc.com or **+44 (0) 203 743 0302** to discuss any remaining sponsorship and marketing options.












THE ILMC NETWORKING SCHEME

With communication being key to any successful expedition, the Networking Scheme allows delegates to communicate with each other in advance, in order to pre-arrange meetings.

To take part, please tick the relevant box when you register or contact registration@ilmc.com if you've already registered. Once live, registered participants will be sent details of how to access the password-protected Networking Scheme area.

The contact details for all delegates will be listed in *The Globetrotters Guide* (which you will receive upon your arrival at ILMC), but the Networking Scheme is the only way to access each other's details in advance.

MEETING SPACES

With ILMC moving to a new, larger location for 2022, there is room for all private meetings around the hotel. For the first time in the conference's history, delegates will no longer have to set-up shop in cafés and bars nearby... it's all one great indoor adventure under a single roof!

Meeting space around the Royal Lancaster Hotel varies from a main single delegate networking area, to numerous lounges, café areas, and the main delegate bar - Strangey's Bar (see below).

In most areas you will find relaxed seating along with a tea & coffee or bar service. But one of the biggest changes is the amount of space on offer.

If you would like to hire a room for a private meeting, there are more options available (with capacities ranging from 10 to 200), so please get in touch at lou@ilmc.com.



STRANGEY'S BAR



STRANGEY'S DELEGATE BAR

To commemorate the untimely loss of X-ray co-founder Steve Strange, this year's delegate bar is dedicated to the veteran agent who passed away in October this year. A legendary figure in the business, both ILMC and X-ray could think of no better a way to honour Steve's memory than to highlight his legacy in the place where the international live music business gathers both to do business and to collectively let its hair down.



IPM15

1 MARCH 2022

THE GLOBAL
PRODUCTION
COMMUNITY
UNITES FOR A DAY
OF DISCUSSION &
NETWORKING

EPS
IPM EXPANDS
IN 2022. NEW
LOCATION &
SCHEDULE.



ASSOCIATION PARTNERS



MEDIA PARTNERS

Access All Areas



1 MARCH 2022 REGISTER NOW
ROYAL LANCASTER LONDON, LANCASTER TERRACE, LONDON W2 2TY





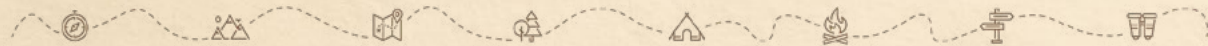
IPM15

ILMC PRODUCTION MEETING

ILMC PRODUCTION MEETING 10:00-18:00

The 15th edition of IPM takes place the day before ILMC kicks off. The world's leading production managers; health, safety and security specialists; crewing companies; production suppliers; transport and travel firms; new technology suppliers; venue and promoters' reps will convene to discuss the most pressing issues affecting the live events production industry.

The IPM schedule will combine four main panel topics with several Production Note sessions in which new ideas and innovations are presented, along with various opportunities to network. IPM15 will also feature additional programming courtesy of ILMC's Event Safety & Security Summit (E3S).



THE 'CALL OF THE WILD' OPENING PARTY

18:00-21:00

After nearly two years 'in the wild,' the live music world's most valiant explorers will finally be able to shake off their crampons and rucksacks and embrace The ILMC 'Call of the Wild' Opening Party.

This international celebration will reunite friends and colleagues, some previously thought lost in the wilderness, and with complimentary wine and beer (not to mention energy giving provisions) on hand to welcome everyone, our fearless family of attendees will no doubt find

themselves making many valuable new acquaintances who have also had to wade through the swamps of Covid restrictions. It's the perfect opportunity for explorers to set aside their maps and compasses for a few hours and ease themselves into the conference, with a soothing drink in hand.

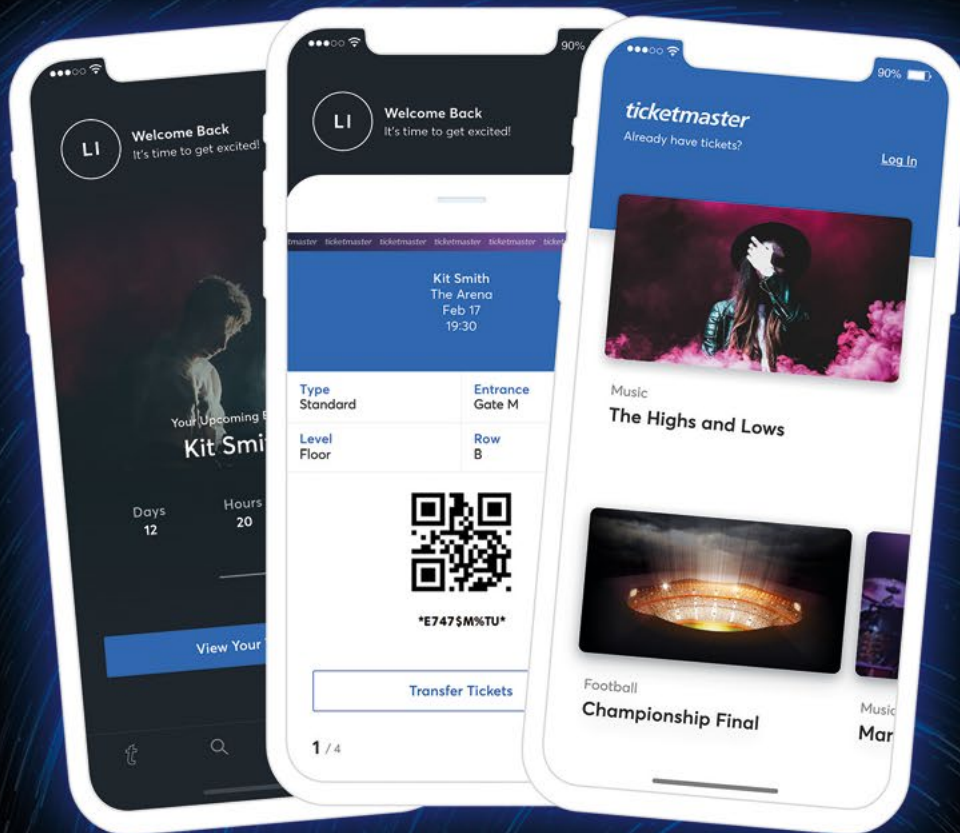
The party also incorporates the closing drinks for the ILMC Production Meeting (IPM), which takes place earlier in the day, allowing partygoers to rub shoulders with the brightest lights of



the production world.

It all takes place in the Nine Kings Foyer on the ground floor of the hotel. And with an early rendezvous time, there will be plenty of hours left in the day for those wishing to head out into London's glamorous West End to take advantage of the capital's many world-class restaurants and iconic venues.

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WEDNESDAY 2 MARCH**THE 'UP THE ANTE' POKER TOURNEY****21:30-0:00**

The 'Up the ante' Poker Tourney will see around 50 explorers-turned-cardsharps battle it out for some spectacular bar-tab prizes (to be redeemed in any of the Royal Lancaster Hotel's bars) in this fierce annual competition.

Players can either sign-up when they register or email marketing@ilmc.com. Alternatively, if you really like to gamble, enquire about any last-minute places on the night.

Alongside several professionally manned poker tables, ILMC's makeshift casino also features roulette and a few other reasons to be in the room.

The tourney costs £30 to enter and all proceeds go towards the Nikos Fund, which this year is raising money for live production welfare and benevolent fund, Stagehand.

THE 'PASS-TURES NEW' TABLE FOOTBALL COMPETITION**00:00-03:00**

A late-night game of quick reactions and occasionally even skill, The 'Pass-tures New' Table Football Competition will see players compete in pairs for both international glory and the world's tiniest trophy.

The game is refereed by ILMC's very own Bear Grylls, Steve Woollett, who'll be making sure that the most daring shots and epic passes are observed.

Taking place on ILMC's two custom, match-grade foosball tables, victory awaits those with supple wrists, a quick eye, and reactions not overly affected by too much time in the bar that night.



THURSDAY 3 MARCH

ILMC'S 'THE GREAT INDOORS' GALA DINNER & ARTHUR AWARDS 19:30-00:00

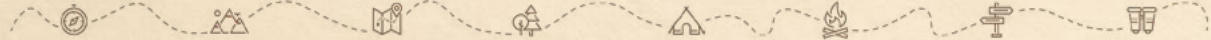


The international live music business's best-loved awards – The Arthurs – are back in person in 2022. With thousands of votes compiled from professionals around the world, The Arthur Awards provides a platform to recognise the backstage stars of the industry, with a handful of lucky winners taking home the cherished statuettes.

As if seeing the top promoter, agent, venue, festival, ticketer and more receive their gongs was not enough, the whole affair will be compered by the pioneering adventuress extraordinaire, Miss Emma Banks! Emma returns to the physical stage after the virtual edition was streamed live to thousands around the globe from The Royal Albert Hall in 2021.

On arrival, tired but well-dressed explorers will uncover a champagne reception, followed by a five-star, four-course feast prepared by award-winning chefs to the very highest, delectable standards. And, of course, a selection of fine wines to match.

The venue for the evening is the glamorous Sheraton Grand Park Lane. With its grade II-listed ballroom and Silver Gallery adorned with palladium leaf walls and Grecian muses, the Sheraton Grand is one of London's most spectacular Art Deco spaces and the perfect location for a lavish jamboree.



MATCH OF THE YEAR FOOTBALL 19:30-21:30

This annual football match involves players from the UK pitting themselves against those from rest of the world in a 90-minute display of bravery and epic skill.

Buses will transport players from the Royal Lancaster Hotel to the grounds of battle and back again, allowing every opportunity for bragging rights afterwards, or time to nurse the odd bruise or three.

The game takes place at The Hive Stadium in north London, and all registered ILMC delegates are invited to play.

Places are limited and must be booked in advance. So if you fancy making a name for yourself, contact peter@aikenpromotions.com to register your interest.

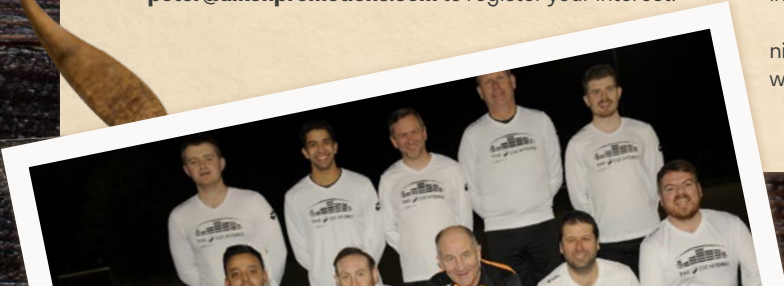
THE 'I WILL SURVIVE' CAMPFIRE KARAOKE 22:30-2:00

It's a brave new-worlder who enters The 'I Will Survive' Campfire Karaoke without numbing their ears with alcohol beforehand.

This event is always the scene of a multitude of aural crimes, all of them against music. Expect some adventure-themed performances by Explora Marling, Terence Tent D'arby, Kagool & the Gang, Lost Lobos, and some courageous "attempts" at *Born to be Wild*, *Grylls Just Wanna Have Fun*, and *With a Whittle Help From My Friends*.

This expedition into the sonic unknown stretches, almost unbearably, into the early hours of Friday morning and incorporates The Arthur Awards after-show party.

With props and costumes on hand for inspiration, this late-night scene of fun and silliness is not the kind of event you want to miss, (nor attend if you're sober).



FRIDAY 4 MARCH



**GREEN EVENTS
& INNOVATIONS
CONFERENCE 2022**

GREEN EVENTS & INNOVATIONS CONFERENCE 10:00-18:00

The Green Events & Innovations Conference (GEI), the leading event for sustainability at live events, has historically taken place the day before ILMC with a separate ticket. But as the live music business emerges from the pandemic with a renewed and greater focus on sustainability, this year's GEI – as a one-off in 2022 – will form part of ILMC, with a full day of presentations, workshops, networking and debate on Friday 4 March.

Access is included in every ILMC registration, and the fourteenth edition of GEI will also see an additional 200+ sustainability experts and event professionals join the conference for this dynamic and forward-thinking day.

In the wake of COP26, with many industry initiatives targeting a zero-carbon future, how the live music sector moves to a sustainable business model is one of the most critical issues it faces. GEI brings together industry leaders, visionaries & thinkers, governments, and cutting-edge organisations, to identify practical pathways for this change.

Sessions cover transport, food systems, equality & inclusivity, power systems, design & materials usage for circularity and more. And with all ILMC delegates invited and encouraged to attend this year, we hope to accelerate this vital and necessary evolution.

THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY MEETING 10:00-16:30



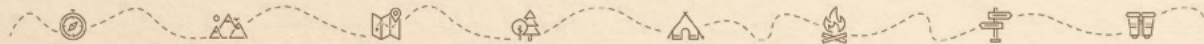
The Experience Economy Meeting (TEEM), the world's only conference dedicated entirely to touring exhibitions and the experience economy, joined forces with ILMC in 2021 and returns to ILMC in 2022 with its first dedicated in-person conference programme.

Previous attendees will be familiar with our popular presentation format (formerly known as 'the flea market') in which the latest venue-filling productions are showcased. Alongside this, expect panels, meetings, and demonstrations, featuring the world's most important touring exhibition professionals, including expo producers, promoters, venue bookers, suppliers and more.

Formerly known as the Touring Exhibitions Meeting (TEM), TEEM previously took place in locations such as Paris, Berlin, Munich, and Istanbul. The event is organised by Christoph Scholz at Semmel Exhibitions, the exhibitions division of German promoter/producer Semmel Concerts.

By moving into ILMC, all the conference's delegates are able to benefit from these unique sessions at the heart of the touring exhibition and experience world.

If you have a touring exhibition, experience, or service relevant to this sector and would like to present it during TEEM, please email scharf.britta@semmel.de and include your name, company and a short description of your product. The deadline for receiving applications is 14 February 2022.



THE 'OVER & OUT' CLOSING DRINKS 17:30-20:00

To wrap up both ILMC and the Green Events & Innovations Conference, delegates of both events are invited to put down their binoculars and explore the Royal Lancaster Hotel's well-stocked bar for a glass of wine or three.

After days of networking, exploring and conversation, enjoy a final few hours in the company of new friends and long-time colleagues alike. And with the party wrapping up around 20:00, there's still plenty of time to enjoy Friday evening in London immediately afterwards...



NEW WORLD EXPLORERS' ITINERARY

TUESDAY 1 MARCH 2022

09:00-17:00	IPM Registration
10:00-18:00	IPM (ILMC Production Meeting)
10:00-18:30	Association Meetings (invitation only)
11:00-16:00	Association Summit (invitation only)
13:00-21:00	ILMC Early-Bird Registration
13:00-18:00	Travel Desk
18:00-21:00	The 'Call of the Wild' Opening Party
Various	Access All Areas Shows

WEDNESDAY 2 MARCH 2022

09:00-20:00	Registration Desk & Help Desk
09:00-18:00	Travel Desk
09:30-11:00	The Uncharted Terri-tea & Coffee Break
09:30-18:00	The 'Promised Land' Networking Space
10:00-10:30	New Delegates' Orientation
10:00-late	Strange's Delegate Bar open
10:00-15:00	NIPA Networking Space open
10:00-18:00	Conference Sessions
10:00-18:00	Association Meetings (invitation only)
12:30-14:30	The 'Survival of the Fattest' Lunchtime Buffet
Various	Access All Areas Shows
21:30-00:00	The 'Up the Ante' Poker Tourney
00:00-03:00	The 'Pass-tures New' Table Football Competition

THURSDAY 3 MARCH 2022

07:00-10:00	Breakfast Available
09:00-18:00	Registration Desk & Travel Desk
09:00-19:30	Help Desk
09:30-18:00	The 'Promised Land' Networking Space open
09:30-11:00	The Tea, Coffee & Whittling Break
10:00-late	Strange's Delegate Bar open
10:00-15:00	NIPA Networking Space open
10:00-18:00	Conference Sessions
12:30-14:30	The 'Scouting for Grills' Lunchtime Buffet
13:30-14:00	Nikos Fund Grand Prize Draw
16:00-17:00	Feld's 'Dawn of Civil-ice-ation' Ice Cream Break
16:00-19:00	Association Meetings (invitation only)
19:30-21:30	Match of the Year Football
19:30-00:00	ILMC'S 'The Great Indoors' Gala Dinner & Arthur Awards
Various	Access All Areas Shows
22:30-late	The 'I Will Survive' Campfire Karaoke

FRIDAY 4 MARCH 2022

07:00-10:00	Breakfast Available
09:00-17:00	Registration Desk
09:00-16:00	Travel & Help Desk
09:30-18:00	The 'Promised Land' Networking Space open
09:30-11:00	The Sustainabili-tea and Coffee Break
10:00-18:00	Strange's Delegate Bar open
10:00-18:00	Conference Sessions
10:00-18:00	GEL (Green Events & Innovations Conference)
12:30-14:30	The Vegan Veg-Out Delegate Lunch
17:30-20:00	The 'Over & Out' Closing Drinks
18:00-20:00	International AGF Awards
Various	Access All Areas Shows

THE NOT-SO-SMALL PRINT

A full list of terms and conditions can be found online, but please note:

- ILMC conference sessions may not be videoed or recorded
- Children are not allowed in the conference areas
- Conference passes must be worn at all times
- Lost passes will incur a replacement fee



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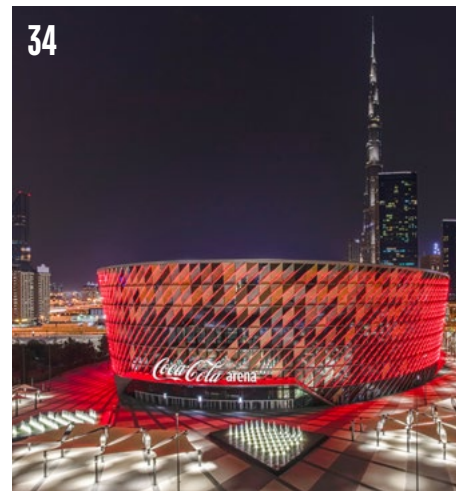
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Who would you have at a dinner?

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Be the first to discover next year's breakthrough acts at ESNS 2022; the European music conference and showcase festival in Groningen, The Netherlands, January 19 – 22, 2022.

Four days filled with panel discussions, keynotes, sessions, speed meetings, network opportunities and lots of new music.

Tickets at www.esns.nl



OMICRON: OMINOUS OR OVERBLOWN?



Less than a week ago, the word omicron was simply the name of the 15th letter in the Greek alphabet. But on Friday 26 November, the World Health Organization gave the name to a variant of the coronavirus that health experts fear could be hundreds of times more resistant to the vaccines that laboratories around the world worked so tirelessly to develop.

The panicked reactions of many governments makes me wonder if there is something they are not telling us about this particular variant because the little of what I've seen from doctors in southern Africa suggests that the symptoms this virus carries, compared to earlier variants, may be much milder. Indeed, Dr Angelique Coetzee, who first alerted the South African authorities about the variant, says she has not admitted any patients to hospital, as yet, but the "unusual" symptoms, although mild, seem to be affecting a broader demographic. On a darker note, she states that omicron could prove deadly to older patients and the unvaccinated who have underlying health issues.

Within 48 hours of the UK confirming the first two omicron cases, epidemiologists were predicting there would be hundreds of confirmed cases within a week, underlining the dangerous speed of the variant. And around the world, other health authorities are reporting similar scenarios.

But just how governments try to prevent the omicron variant's spread is already taking different paths. Israel, for example, has sealed its borders and banned foreigners entry, while the UK reintroduced mask mandates for flights.

As we approach the holiday season, it's all very worrying, with artists already cancelling tours and nations like Austria in lockdown, while the likes of the Netherlands has effectively shut down its live entertainment sector due to a 5pm curfew on businesses.

As our feature on Reopening Arenas (page 36) notes, the fact that the restrictions differ vastly from one nation to another, and even city to city, is hindering the recovery of the live music business, with those hoping to organise tours in the months ahead facing increasingly complex obstacles. Let's just pray that they are not insurmountable.

With governments under intense pressure to avoid the mistakes of the past two years, the live entertainment industry needs to step up its lobbying game yet again. However, with officials scrambling to head off yet another potential medical crisis, the task facing our industry leaders – and perhaps their legal counsels – is tricky, to say the least, because up until now live music has been an afterthought for politicians, rather than a priority.

On a more optimistic note, James Hanley's interview with Alex Hardee and Adele Slater (page 30) highlights music fans' demand for large-scale live events, ahead of Liam Gallagher's historic return to Knebworth. And comment pieces by Suzanne Hunt (page 26) and Debbie Taylor (page 28) prove that even in the United States, where Covid restrictions can differ from venue to venue, touring success is achievable if the correct protocols can be agreed and implemented by everyone involved.

Gordon Masson

IQ

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LIVE MUSIC INTELLIGENCE

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IN BRIEF INDEX

The concert business digest



Insomniac and ALDA announce a new location for their Romanian festival, Saga.

Jim King says the 2022 edition of BST Hyde Park is “set up to be the biggest we have ever seen.”

Blockfest’s founder and CEO, Kalle Kallone, is charged with money laundering.

Live Performance Australia says the country’s cautious reopening has left it facing a shortage of touring artists over the summer months.

A **hybrid** planning application is submitted for the proposed new 17,000-capacity arena in Cardiff.

ASM Global hires Tom Saunders as programming manager and Katie Morgan as programming assistant.

Bilbao promoter Last Tour announces new international festival in Caja Mijas, Spain.

Epic Games acquires *Rock Band* and *Guitar Hero* creator Harmonix “to create musical journeys and gameplay for *Fortnite*.”

The **list** of nominees is revealed for the Oscars of the international live

music business, the 2022 Arthur Awards.

Music Venue Trust reveals noise complaints have been made against more than 40 UK venues since lockdown lifted in July.

Denmark gains a new agency, Queer Music Agency, that will exclusively represent queer artists.

Venue Group CEO Ben Lovett says over 250 shows are booked for each of his London venues in 2022.

Netherlands-based CM.com launches a new ticketing solution for the live events sector in the UK and Ireland.

Ed Sheeran partners with Amazon Music for a global live-streamed concert from London’s Alexandra Palace.

Crypto.com’s currency surges almost 70% in the wake of the platform’s naming rights deal for AEG’s Staples Center.

DreamHaus announces an exclusive collaboration with Alex Ritcher, the former MD of Four Artists agency.

ASM Global APAC expands its footprint in Asia Pacific with the announcement of new Singapore headquarters.

DEAG reports a 126% increase in sales for Q3 2021, thanks largely to the performance of its UK business.

OneRepublic becomes the first major-label US act to accept the cryptocurrency bitcoin as full payment for a concert.

DF Concerts is to revive Connect, a music festival that took place in Scotland in the mid-noughties.

OVG completes its acquisition of Philadelphia-based venue management firm Spectra.

AEG Presents France head Arnaud Meersseman tells *IQ* he is hopeful of a strong summer ‘22 for the touring business.

Glastonbury Festival receives a share of £10million (€12m) from the latest round of the UK government’s Culture Recovery Fund.

Tampere Deck Arena in Finland becomes the Nokia Arena under a new naming-rights deal.

Goodlive Artists Austria co-MD Silvio Huber says the domestic live business has cause for optimism despite the country’s lockdown.

Ocaso Festival is to be the first government-approved mass event in Costa Rica since the pandemic started.

Wacken Open Air promoter ICS Festival Service announces a heavy metal cruise across the Mediterranean.

GTS Eventim posts “encouraging” financial results for Q3 2021, powered by improved ticket sales.

Pokémon Go announces an exclusive performance from Ed Sheeran.

House of Vans expands its live interests by opening a new venue in Mexico’s capital.

The **world’s first** global crew network, Entourage Pro, launches for freelance production crew.

ILMC announces a new five-site venue for the highly anticipated in-person 2022 event.

Spain announces when ent

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LA'S STAPLES CENTER TO BECOME CRYPTO.COM ARENA



AEG's Staples Center in Los Angeles is to be renamed the Crypto.com Arena as part of a new 20-year naming rights deal with the Singapore-based cryptocurrency platform.

Reportedly worth \$700million (€615m), the agreement was brokered by AEG Global Partnerships and will result in the first name change in the 20,000-cap venue's 22-year history.

"This partnership represents the fastest-growing cryptocurrency platform and the biggest sports and live entertainment company in the world converging to drive the future of sports and live entertainment, as well as the incredible legacy of this arena for decades to come," says Todd Goldstein, chief revenue officer of AEG.

Opening its doors in 1999, the downtown Los Angeles arena is home to the NBA's LA Lakers and LA Clippers, and the NHL's LA Kings and LA Sparks, and hosts over 240 major high-profile events a year, including 19 of the last 21 Grammy Awards shows.

The move appeared to pay instant dividends for Crypto.com, whose currency, CRO token, surged almost 70% in the aftermath of the announcement, according to a report by *Forbes*, prompting some observers to declare the deal had already paid for itself more than a dozen times. **IQ**

SPAIN WAIVES VISAS FOR UK TOURING ARTISTS

industry trade body LIVE, the Association for British Orchestras (ABO), and their Spanish counterpart, APM (La Asociación de Promotores Musicales) as well as Live Nation Spain.

"We are delighted that our hard work has paid off, and the Spanish government has agreed to lift the restrictive visa process for touring artists, ending the complicated and painful process of expensive visa applications," says Craig Stanley, chair of the LIVE Touring group. "A whole host of people came together, both here and in Spain, to fix this situation, and this shows what we can achieve when we work together."

"However, that is still only one small part of a very large problem affecting our ability to tour in the round. We are calling on the [UK] government to follow our lead and urgently work to change the rules with the remaining member states so that we can continue to tour across the continent of the European Union."

Twenty other EU Member States have also confirmed they offer visa-free access to their territories for UK musicians and bands. These include Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain.

British artists will no longer need a visa when entering Spain to undertake a short-term tour following months of lobbying from live music trade bodies.

Previously, artists and their promoters were required to file applications for short-term visas entirely in Spanish, provide a host of itinerary details before know-

ing whether the tour could go ahead, and give proof of applicant earnings of up to nearly £1,000 (€1,100) before ever having left the country.

Touring artists and their production teams were also required to wait for over a month for a decision, making long-term scheduling impossible.

The agreement would not have been possible without the dedicated work from live music in-

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NEW SIGNINGS & NEW MUSIC



Each month, **IQ**'s partner agencies help us to compile a playlist of new music, much of it released by the new signings to their rosters. Among the tracks on December's playlist are submissions from CAA, ICM Partners, ITB, Mother Artists, Paradigm, Primary Talent, UTA, WME and X-ray.

LUKE ROYALTY (UK)

AGENTS Olly Hodgson & Alex Hardee
Paradigm



Hailing from Darlington in the north east of England, Luke Royalty comes from a creative family of artists and musicians. He, however, avoided dabbling in music until his late teens, preferring to spend his time playing Sunday League football and following his beloved Darlington FC.

Upon finding influence in the likes of Mike Skinner, Mac Miller, and Frank Ocean, Royalty got drawn into the culture of turning his words to music, and the rest is history in the making. His first single *I Could Get Used To This* was supported by Jack Saunders on Radio 1. His follow-up single *I Do* was made BBC Introducing track of the week, while *Stay Gold*, released in May, was featured as part of this year's BBC Radio 1 Big Weekend.

MUDD THE STUDENT (KR)

AGENT Cils Williams
ATC Live



© Seungwon Jun

Mudd the student, born Yoon Seung-min, is a member of Korean band Balming Tiger. He is the latest member of the group to embark on a solo career, having used his production, singing, and rapping skills to reach the final round of the 2019 VANS Musicians Wanted contest in Korea.

Creating genre-destructive music that represents Generation Z, his debut EP, *Field Trip*, is about "the chaos of just coming of age" and was entirely written, arranged, and produced by the 21-year-old. It includes lead single *G-LOC* and pre-release track *Off Road Jam* – both of which feature cameos from fellow band members San Yawn and Omega Sapien.

Mudd the student is currently appearing on the son of South Korea's biggest hip-hop reality show *Money*, and will be performing alongside his bandmates at Pohoda Festival in July 2022.

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PLATON KARATAEV



Named after a Leo Tolstoy character, Platon Karataev was formed in 2016. The Budapest-based band released their *Orange Nights* EP in October of that year, and their first single, *Elevator*, received huge attention – ranking no. 4 on Spotify’s German viral top50 playlist and also featured in the UK’s viral playlist.

In 2017, their debut LP, *For Her*, was released in three parts. The album received positive feedback from local critics and also attracted international followers, which resulted in Platon Karataev becoming one of the most streamed Hungarian acts. *For Her* has now been streamed on Spotify more than 5 million times, mostly from the US, the UK, and Germany.

In 2019, the band was selected for INES#talent, which involved 100 emerging bands chosen from 3,000 applicants, performing at various European showcase festivals. This led to them playing at Zandari Festa, Liverpool Sound City, Reeperbahn, and Waves Vienna.

In terms of local gigs, Platon Karataev performed at all the major Hungarian festivals in summer 2019 (Sziget, VOLT, etc.) and also played a sold-out show at Budapest’s main venue, Akvárium (1,300 capacity).

The band released a second LP, *Atoms*, in June 2020, clocking up an impressive 1 million streams in its first month. With catharsis as a key theme, *Atoms* saw the band move away from *For Her*’s acoustic sound to something broader and heavier.

During lockdown, the band wrote their third LP, which will be released 21 January 2022. *Partért kiáltó* will be the band’s first Hungarian album, with lyrics diving deeper, aiming to observe the core of existence through themes of altered states of consciousness and self-exploration.

Platon Karataev will be touring the Netherlands in December, having recently completed a ten-day tour in Germany in November. In terms of bookings, the band is already confirmed for Eurosonic Noorderslag and Roadburn in 2022.

Some Fantastic Place(s)

Earlier this year, rock legends Squeeze became the first UK band to tour the US since the pandemic.

Here, their manager, **Suzanne Hunt**, gives a priceless insight into how they pulled it off.

We planned Squeeze's *Nomadband* tour back in 2019. There were to be three legs: the first was in February 2020, the shortest run, and the band left the US a couple of weeks before Covid hit. We did two shows with Hall & Oates, one being Madison Square Garden, and seven of our own shows, and the tour was an amazing success, on the back of another great one in 2019.

We all arrived back just before restrictions started coming in. The other two legs were due to take place over summer 2020 but were re-scheduled to summer 2021.

What we had to learn since Covid, was that we could not just plan everything way in advance, we had to accept that things could change at any time and we would need to adapt and change accordingly. We were continually waiting, looking at the latest guidance, and talking with Hall & Oates, management, our US agent, and Live Nation regularly.

The final decision, to put our shows on sale and go for it, was made in early June. That was the cut-off point if we were to have enough time to arrange visa appointments. Without confirmed on-sale shows, we would not have the relevant paperwork. Also, this time was needed to promote the shows.

Guidance and Covid rules were continually changing with no notice. We had our three-year visa application approved really easily, but the US Embassy was not open fully for visa services. Keeping everyone safe and clear of Covid infection was also another big challenge that needed to be taken very seriously.

Once we knew the tour was going ahead, instead of having months to plan and prep, we had to pull everything together in just over six weeks. We did not want to incur any charges if we were not going to do the tour, so had to wait. Again, there were many hoops to jump through to manage to get the visas in our passports.

Managing to arrange emergency appointments for all personnel was very challenging. The extra amount of supporting paperwork was huge. Arranging all the Covid requirements for travel and making sure all personnel had the correct paperwork was also complicated. Sourcing all the supplies and vehicles we required was far harder than usual as supply and

services across the country were very compromised – bus companies were low on drivers and supply companies had much longer lead times than normal, plus low stocks.

Everyone on the tour was tested at least three times a week. All local venue personnel, our crew, and the band wore masks at the venues, except in our dressing rooms and production office, and everyone except the band wore masks during the shows. We all avoided any crowded bars/restaurants/shops and tried to eat outside as much as possible. We had no meet and greets, no handshaking, and kept our distance from anyone who was not in our touring bubble. We only met friends on the road outside and again, kept our distance.

We asked for all backstage areas to be sanitised before our arrival, and all personnel had hand sanitiser on them and used it regularly. It was very much a team effort. A lot of thought and time went into planning the tour, and the fact we managed to get through 47 shows without cancelling one means that I think we did a good job.

The shows were absolutely amazing. The crowds were all so up for having a good time, and quite a few of our shows were the first in the venues since Covid, so they were especially special. Hall & Oates were really great. The whole band and crew were amazing to work with, and their shows were incredible. Luckily, their approach to Covid was just like ours. We were one very happy large touring family, and it was one of our most memorable tours.

If I were to offer advice on planning upcoming tours, it would be to still take Covid seriously. We are just about to go on the road with Madness in the UK. Luckily, again, their approach towards keeping safe with Covid is very similar to ours. We will all be testing before every show, wearing masks, keeping our distance, no after shows with guests or meet and greets, sanitising regularly. It is just not worth the risk to drop our guard.

There is still no insurance to cover performers if shows are cancelled due to Covid. We have all been out of work for such a long time, and we need to protect ourselves as much as possible and keep the wheels turning on those buses. **IQ**



The metaverse: our next battleground

Gregor Pryor, co-chair of the Entertainment and Media Industry Group at legal firm Reed Smith, outlines some of the challenges that the metaverse could bring to the live music business

Parts of the music industry have been running into the arms of the global metaverse phenomenon, seeking opportunities for growth, collaboration, revenues, and creativity. Fortnite's Ariana Grande concert, HYBE's diversification beyond music, and UMG's launch of a new "NFT supergroup" offer a taste of what music can do in this alternative, fully digital world.

Opportunities or threats?

If the Rolling Stones were already live-streaming in 1995, what makes this new form of music consumption in the metaverse different from the traditional "vanilla" live-streaming?

Performing in a virtual venue has proved to be a commercial success, with record-breaking attendance in Lil Nas X's Roblox concert and Fortnite's Travis Scott performance. The diversification into the gaming industry is just one medium. NFTs prove that digital goods can be marketed as part of a wider package of rights and can offer new monetisation methods for the music sector.

Aside from virtual events and NFTs, another emergence sensation affecting the music sector has been the metaverse of virtual "artists" and the traction around AI avatars. Early adopters cite reach, immediacy, and interactivity through collaborations between talent performing from different virtual locations as key differentiators for artists. The opportunity of direct interactions with fans will provide acts with exposure to wider audiences and high user engagement.

Do these innovations, however, come at a price? Artists who rely on traditional production channels to reach audiences risk getting left behind. Looking ahead, could some of the more one-dimensional approaches to the digital music industry – such as purely owning rights and monetising through subscription streaming channels – quickly become commoditised and mechanised to the extent they no longer yield the profit margin we have come to expect?

From a scale perspective, the global audience that even the biggest tours are unable to accommodate, patched together with migration to online entertainment during the pandemic, has made music and metaverse arguably now inseparable.



Legal issues

Mostly, the traditional legal and licensing rules to online exploitation apply equally in the metaverse. However, the proliferation of music within closed and open online environments adds another potential layer of complexity to a chain of rights in the music licensing process. For instance:

Walled gardens. The opportunity for music businesses to create their own place in the metaverse raises the question of how each environment is to be regulated legally. It is widely accepted that online environments are subject to offline laws, specifically contractual terms in which users are permitted to use the platform. The terms under which a licence is obtained would need to be aligned with the terms of the walled garden for the exploitation of someone else's music in the metaverse. An underlying difficulty with having different rules regulated by different legal jurisdictions is maintaining consistency and good relations between the individual platforms.

Rights clearance. Any users nowadays can manipulate, edit, and deliver an entirely new musical creation by simply creating a meme. Does the responsibility of music licensing then lie with the uploaders or consumers? While the platform will be responsible for making efforts to obtain licenses for content uploaded by users, it will not be held responsible for licensing copyrights in content that is brought to a platform by commercial operators.

Fence hopping. The moving of the user's avatar between environments begs more questions. Could a Spotify user listen to their music playlist whilst playing multiple games? Could a user listen to music in a virtual coffee shop?

One thing is certain

The exploitation of music and rights in the metaverse creates massive opportunities to build new models and ways of exploiting copyrights that help drive incremental revenues and value to the industry, artists, creators, and the platforms that invest in the metaverse itself. Read our metaverse guide for further unique legal issues here. **IQ**

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Going the Distance

Having recently completed Guns N' Roses 25-date North American tour, production coordinator **Debbie Taylor** shares some of her key takeaways from life back on the road during the continuing pandemic

I am back from my US tour, and although I am much wearier, I am also a little bit wiser. There was a lot of new learning to do out on the road, with some lessons coming easier than others. I've put together some insights that will hopefully help those in the same position to be as prepared as possible.

- You will have to walk a fine line between control and flexibility; fear and understanding; knowledge and the unknown. It will be an ever-shifting situation, and as such you need to be ready to adapt and change as required. Your skills will be tested, and your communication style and your management method will need to be modified to suit the constantly evolving situations that you find on tour. You will often be asked to do and cope with things that are of a contradictory nature. All you can do is look at the bigger picture and make the most informed decisions that you can.

- Before you head out, have a clear action plan in case of a positive test result or symptomatic presentation. Work out the chain of command, and who is responsible for communicating info to each stakeholder. This will remove some of the emotion and fear from the high-stress decision-making process.

- Using a third-party Covid-compliance provider can also be extremely useful for the implementation of your protocol. It allows a degree of separation between the event organisation and policy compliance. It removes the potential for long-standing personal relationships to come into play. It also allows for people to get on with their main roles, which are often busy enough and will only be made busier by the knock-on effects of Covid. If using a third-party company, ensure that it is one that understands your show/tour's needs, and one that you can communicate with effectively. You will need to work together to ensure that your policy is implemented effectively and efficiently.

- Your protocol needs to be set and in place across the board. The rules should not change depending on location or local and venue requirements. Your policy should cover the highest of standards. If you lower your requirements, it becomes very hard to revert back. The policy should also apply to everyone: band, management, guests, and crew.

Everyone needs to be onboard. Continuity really is the key, and the safety provided is for everyone's benefit.

- Communication is the most important factor in keeping everyone safe. It is not only your content that needs to be considered but also the tone. Questions need to be welcomed, and people need to feel comfortable enough to approach the Covid team with any issues, including reporting potential symptoms.

However, people need to be in no doubt who is in control, what the policy is and the fact that it must be

adhered to. Covid is a divisive topic, but when individuals sign-up to the tour/show they must be made aware that they are agreeing to follow your policy regardless of their individual beliefs.

- Your protocol should cover what happens to individuals who test positive. This will instil confidence in your team that they will be taken care of, be provided with medical assistance and not be left to fend for themselves. If you are not testing regularly,

you need people to feel comfortable in reporting symptoms or potential exposure. This is especially relevant to road crew, who are fiercely independent and quite often prefer to take care of themselves. Seeking assistance now can really mean the difference between life and death.

- You cannot police everyone all of the time. At some point, individuals need to be responsible for themselves, especially outside of the venue. They need to be trusted to follow the protocols but be made aware of the ramifications if they do not. The actions of a few may now be responsible for the continuation of the tour/show, and the health of their co-workers.
- You are responsible for your entire team. This includes any Covid staff that you have with you or that you are working with. They are often approached aggressively and suffer regular abuse. It is a thankless task, and they deserve respect.

The good news is that it is getting better out there. As more people venture out, the knowledge spreads and new and easier methods are discovered and shared. Teams are becoming accustomed to the expectations placed on them and with familiarity comes acceptance. I personally cannot wait to get back on the road next year and I hope to see you all out there.



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VIBELAB CO-FOUNDER ON SAUDI ARABIA'S MUSIC PUSH

Lutz Leichsenring of the Amsterdam-based consultancy will appear at the inaugural XP Music Conference in Riyadh from 13-15 December

whole society. This is important because the nature of the creative scene is fragmented and not well organized.

It's a hard balancing job because the scene needs space but the advocates also need to be close to the creatives to understand their problems and help them. The problems these communities face could be financial, regulatory, or technological issues for example.

So, there is a lot that needs to be done and the better your communication strings are, the better it performs – this is where excellent advocates can have the strongest impact.

Where do these insights come from and how will this play out in Saudi?

There are best practices and tools that could be used to learn from, taken from all over the world. It is important to understand that the music scene is not going to be built the same way you build a tower. There is not actual blueprint to building a music scene, but I don't see this as something very hard as it is rooted in the Saudi culture. The Saudi people are creative, the Saudi people have craftwork, the Saudi people enjoy music. It is basically rooted in their DNA.

The important question is how to rekindle this? You need to make sure that people are willing now to a different route from their parents or grandparents, or even from the musicians they listen to that are from another country. You need to make sure that people are willing to build their own identity and own culture. And all of this takes a lot of time – there's no shortcut.

What local artists think on the way forward for the regional music industry:

TAMTAM

I'm inspired by a lot of cities and Los Angeles is top, although it's not the perfect role model for our region. I think the best angle would be to take away what's best from different music cities, not just look at one city. The best bits from Berlin, Paris, London, Austin, Los Angeles, NYC, Atlanta.

JEME

Creating public venues for artists to showcase their art/work will play a big part in supporting the music ecosystem as a whole. Having more venues will create demand for artists, a huge market for promoters, booking agencies, production companies and so many other possibilities.

Along with a number of other cultural representatives and music industry experts from around the Middle East and the world, Lutz, TamTam and Jeme will be at MDLBEAST's XP Music Conference in Riyadh in December, a 3-day event aimed at accelerating and amplifying the music industry of the region.

<https://mdlbeast.com/xp/>

Lutz Leichsenring is the co-founder of Amsterdam-based consultancy, VibeLab, and one of the world's leading authorities on protecting night-time economy, community, and culture.

In the next month, he'll be speaking at the XP Music Conference in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, giving his insights into how the country, and the Middle Eastern region, can further grow its creative economy.

To start off Lutz, what's the benefit of a vibrant scene for a city or a country?

So there are basically three dimensions: monetary, social, and aesthetic. While the economic isn't the biggest if you compare it to something like the software industry, it's far reaching as it allows other industries to grow because it attracts talent and is something people that can identify with.

That takes us into the social dimensions where you create spaces for groups of people that maybe don't know each other – they become meeting points where you align as a society and share in culture.

The last part is the aesthetic dimension which is the idea of projecting that culture into the development of a place – be it a city or a country. It's the expression of the art.

What's your take on how a country like Saudi Arabia goes about building a music scene?

Most cities, most countries will have had a scene of some sort, perhaps it wasn't visible, perhaps because it wasn't allowed, but there would be something there. And that was certainly the case in Saudi with a genuine underground vibe.

So now these huge transformations are happening in the country and they're creating the opportunity for what was previously underground to enter the mainstream. That's being supported by government, so from the top down, but then there's also the grassroots 'bottom up', organic scene which is now able to grow much much more.

Further, there are now Saudi creatives returning home to be a part of these changes and they're bringing experience they've gained all around the world, back to their hometowns. This is amplifying the movement.

What are the success factors for creating a vibe?

It is based on the creative community being unconventional and nonconformist because being creatively minded means you are different from the majority. It is also important to provide spaces for them to perform and rehearse their art and these spaces need to be accessible and affordable. Next is the framework and in a country that is changing at a rapid pace, it needs time because it is important to building the right set of systems and regulations that allow creatives to express themselves. The final point is to have the freedom to express yourself and your art as the more freedom a creative has, the better the creative output is.

In a community where you have the people at the top regulating the scene and at the people at the bottom who are the scene - what is the right structure to operate?

You need people in the middle, and we call them advocates because they're not lobbyists lobbying to a certain group, they are advocates to the

ALL YOU'RE DREAMING OF

James Hanley speaks with Paradigm Agency's **Adele Slater** and **Alex Hardee** about Liam Gallagher's mammoth plans for 2022, the state of rock music, the prospects for live music's recovery, challenges for emerging talent and more...

As the old saying goes, the best ideas are often the simplest. So when a 25th anniversary documentary on Oasis's legendary 125,000-cap Knebworth concerts debuted on the big screen in September, there was no better time to announce frontman Liam Gallagher's return to the site of his biggest triumph.

Upon a wave of nostalgia and renewed excitement, the rock & roll star sold out two nights at the fabled Hertfordshire venue from 3-4 June 2022, promoted by Festival Republic, Live Nation, and SJM Concerts. Kasabian head a strong support bill also featuring Michael Kiwanuka, Fat White Family and Goat Girl, with more to be confirmed.

Days later, the singer confirmed his maiden solo UK stadium tour, which stops at Manchester's Etihad Stadium and Hampden Park in Glasgow next summer, as well as Belsonic in Belfast's Ormeau Park. European dates include festival slots at Rock in Rio Lisbon, Syd For Solen in Denmark, and France's Beauregard Festival, while he will also play a support slot for Foo Fighters at Estadio Wanda Metropolitano in Madrid.

Earlier this summer, Gallagher played a free show for



NHS workers at The O2 in London and completed a run of UK headline appearances at festivals including Reading and Leeds, TRNSMT, and Isle of Wight.

Since his 2017 comeback, the Britpop icon has been represented on the live scene by Paradigm's Alex Hardee and Adele Slater. Here, the agents reveal the genesis of the Knebworth plan, Gallagher's international ambitions, and share their hopes and fears on rock music and the resurgence of the touring sector. As you were...

IQ: When was the idea for next year's Knebworth shows first formulated?

AH: I think that the idea might have been [Live Nation UK & Ireland chair] Denis Desmond's, but we're going to claim it as ours! Whoever's it was, it's not going to go up there with Einstein's theory of relativity, because it's not the most complicated thing to think, "Let's do Knebworth shows 25 years after they actually happened, with a documentary coming." It's a good idea but an obvious one. But our jobs are quite simple compared to doctors and nurses.

AS: With the timing of the anniversary of the film, it kind of just made sense.

AH: I tell you what, the idea was simple, and we knew it would capture the imagination and be a hot event, but it was a bit of a surprise that we could do two [nights]. We always thought we'd do one, and we had a second day on hold. A lot of people thought that the second show was an outside chance.

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DEVA



Deva is a solo project by 20-year-old Budapest-based Dorina Takács that recently saw her nominated for next year's Music Moves Europe Talent Awards.

Music has always played a major role in Deva's life, but in 2019, she felt it was time to take matters into her own hands and decided to do everything herself. As a result, she writes, produces, and performs her own tracks and designs her own artwork. Her highly anticipated debut album will be out this winter on Move Gently Records.

During the pandemic, she took time to focus on her inner self. She says, "Thanks to the isolation, I realised that I am the person who makes the decisions for my happiness. I made a lot of music and learned how to energise myself for the concerts."

Talking of live, she continues, "Last year, I had the chance to perform at the Kino Šiška venue in Ljubljana. It was nice to see that people speaking other languages could find my music interesting. This summer, I had my first festival season including events like Kolorádó, Bánkitó, and Campus Festival. In 2022, I am invited to Eurosonic festi-

val in Groningen. That is such a great honour for me."

As for her home nation, Deva says last year's restrictions in Hungary made live music difficult. "Over the last year it changed a bit," she tells *IQ*. "For those who vaccinated themselves, 2021's festival season was almost the same experience as it used to be, except for bigger events like Sziget, which were postponed. In my opinion, the fans and [artists] are all getting used to the fact that sometimes it's impossible to experience live music."

Nevertheless, she is optimistic about the year ahead. "In 2022, I'm gonna release my first album, *Csillag*. I hope it will make a deep connection with people all around the world and spread those energies I put into it. The songs are filled with a lot of Hungarian/Transylvanian folk music elements. I hope they'll grab the listener's attention."

Deva is planning to host her album launch party at Eurosonic in January, and will also be performing a release show at Trafó in Budapest on 29 January.

To vote for Deva in the Music Moves Europe Awards, [click here](#).



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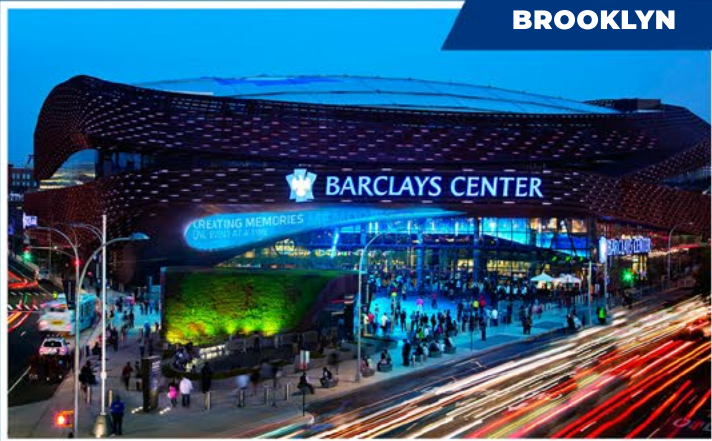
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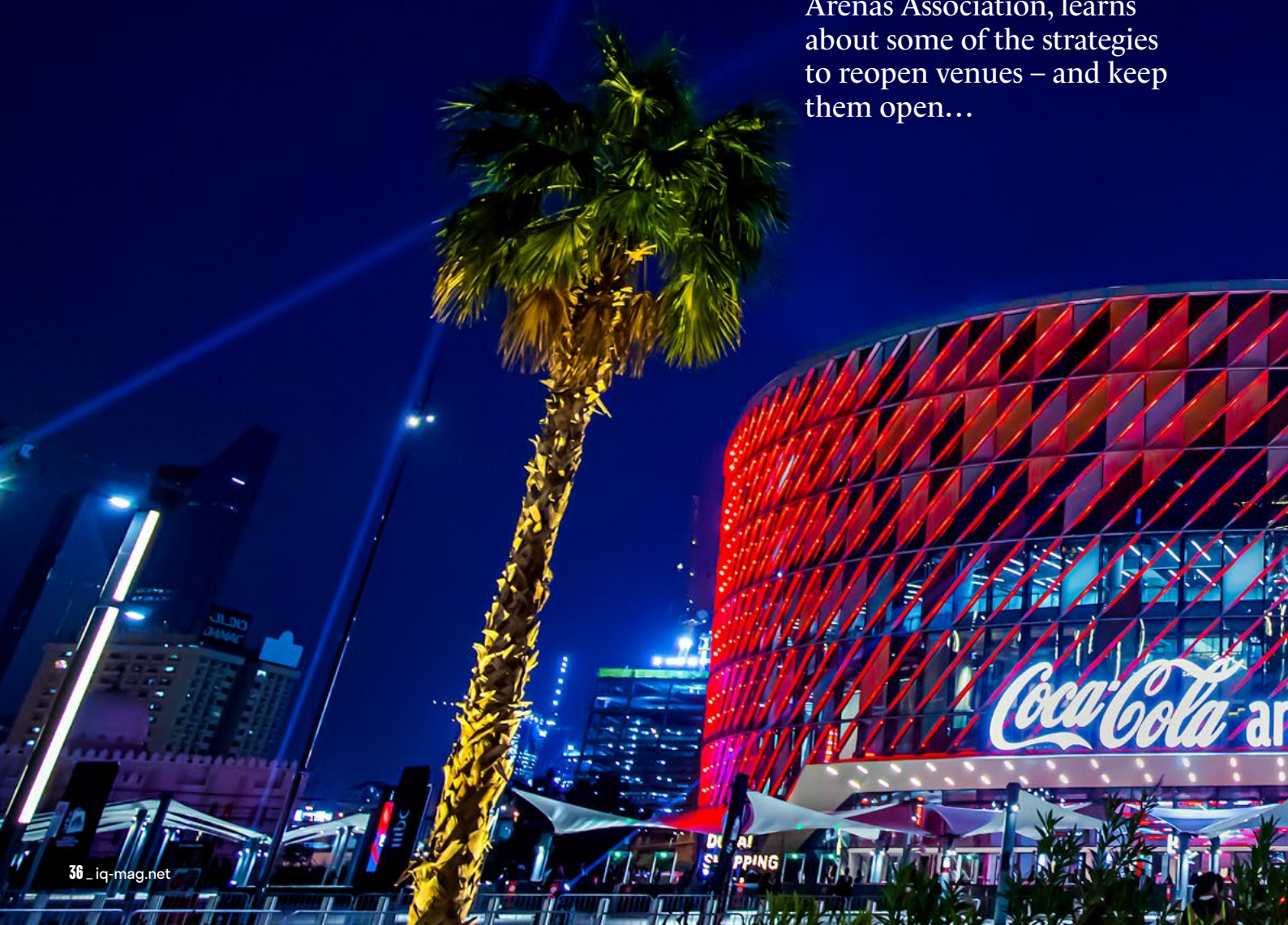


PUERTO RICO



OPERATION PHOENIX

Scientists and epidemiologists predict that the winter months will see another peak in cases of Covid-19, so as arena management around the world draw up plans to cope with their busiest year ever, **Gordon Masson**, with the help of the European Arenas Association, learns about some of the strategies to reopen venues – and keep them open...



Major concerts and tours are taking place throughout North America and Europe, but scratch the surface and it's obvious that the coronavirus pandemic is far from over, as many territories still have social distancing restrictions in place, or outright bans on mass gatherings.

In the UK, meanwhile, the entire business is awaiting the findings of the Manchester Arena Inquiry, although the ramifications of that will doubtless have an international impact, too.

Nevertheless, a cursory chat with anyone in the arenas sector yields similar responses: venues are massively oversubscribed for 2022 and 2023, and the volume of shows and tours in the diary mostly surpasses the levels of business enjoyed in 2019.

European Arenas Association (EAA) president Olivier Toth notes that, as the restrictions change on a regular basis, the association's recent survey of its members only captures a moment in time – in this case, 25 November. Given that the survey was conducted before the omicron variant became an issue, the data is certain to change in the coming days and weeks.

"I was hoping that things would change and everybody would be able to reopen, go to full capacity and all of that good stuff. Yeah. But unfortunately, it's the other way round. So it remains complicated," says Toth.

Nevertheless, Toth believes the EAA survey was important to gauge the disparity of restrictions throughout the organisation's membership – and indeed, all 36 members of the EAA submitted data to help in that regard.

"In capacity restrictions, we see strong differences between the northern part of Europe and the southern part of Europe," he reports. "In northern venues and western venues, nobody has restrictions. In the south, however, we see no restrictions for 56% of our colleagues, while 44% do have to work with restrictions. In central Europe it's 75% working with restrictions, while in eastern Europe, it's similar with 71% having to deal with capacity restrictions." (See charts on pages 38 & 42)

"Those restrictions will, again, be variable, and there it becomes very complex because they change between countries, but they also change between regions. One example that struck me: we were talking to friends [at an arena in southern Europe] and whereas in my part of Europe everybody thinks and believes that Covid digital certificates are the way out for our sector, this particular venue doesn't use them. They're not going to check [certificates] at the entrance, at least not at a time when they participated in the survey. But, on the other hand, they need to keep the bars closed. They need to keep wearing masks and seated shows are mandatory. So no standing."

Such disparities mean that coming up with an overarching guideline to help arenas across

the continent to reopen, is – at present – an impossible task.

That's certainly the case for some of the major venue operators, internationally.

Ron Bension, president and CEO of ASM Global, notes that while there is no set plan to cover every arena in the company's portfolio, that network of venues provides its own cumulative strength. "When [the pandemic] initially happened, the focus was on cleanliness, containing the air and those kinds of things to ensure that people were safe and that people didn't get [the virus]. That's evolved through the intervening 18 months, and reopening is more about vaccines, tests, face masks, crowd size.

"The good thing about ASM Global is we've got more than 300 buildings around the world,



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rules that are imposed on arena management, and he applauds the efforts of executives across Europe for the hard work they are putting in to get back to business.

“Our colleague members of the EAA – and those who are not members – have spent a lot of time to get a good understanding of how reopening works,” he says.

And the EAA president believes sharing those experiences can help every venue to reopen sooner rather than later. “We’re in the process of aligning the parameters that are laid out by the European Commission in their recommendations, with experience that we’ve gathered throughout our membership. For instance, us at the Rockhal have contributed; our friends in Lisbon who are open to full capacity, have contributed; we spoke to the French, who have contributed; so we’re gathering the different sets of parameters that are in place, just to be able (if any request comes along from any EAA members or maybe future members) to tell people about how arenas are doing it.”

Indeed, Toth contends that gathering such information could provide the confidence boost the industry needs to kickstart international touring. “We can use it as a signal toward artists and productions, who instead of wondering what goes on in each territory separately, maybe can get some guidance in a more coordinated way.”

Flexibility

At press time, the Netherlands was introducing tougher rules, during what was supposed to be



UBS Arena in New York is the latest addition to the Oak View Group portfolio

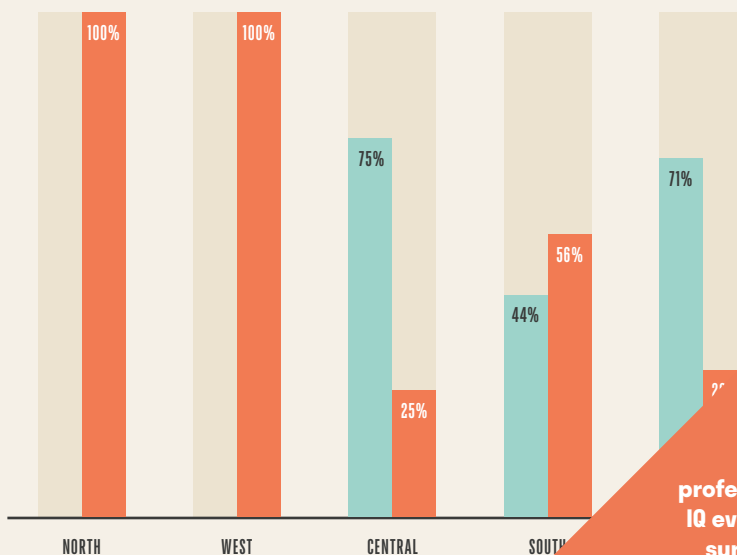
CAPACITY RESTRICTIONS BY EUROPEAN REGION



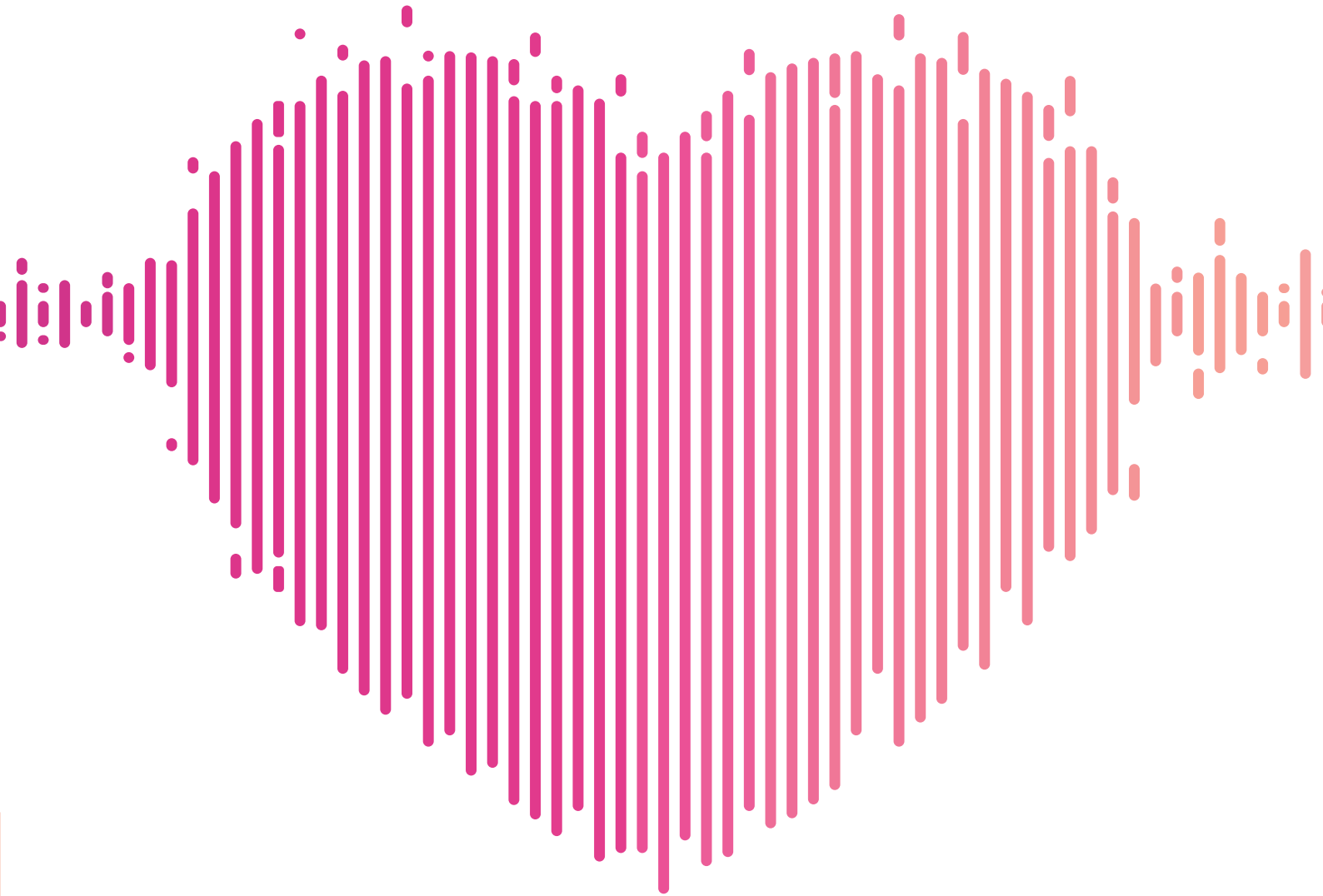
Preliminary results show strong regional trends across Europe

Northern/Western based arenas – Scandinavia and the UK – are currently operating with far fewer restrictions regarding capacity than equivalent venues in Central, Southern and Eastern Europe

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- NO RESTRICTIONS



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YOUR SHOUT

Who would be your three ideal guests for a dinner party?

TOP SHOUT

Tom Jones, Juliette Lewis, and the late great Steve Strange from X-ray. Tom for all his amazing stories and that wonderful voice; Juliette because she's fun and wild and unpredictable; and Strangey as he was a great laugh and like me was into sitting up all night drinking and listening to music, and he never went to bed before anyone. I miss the fella – his like will never be seen again.

Conal Dodds | Crosstown Concerts

Robert De Niro, Al Pacino, and I wish I could have one more dinner party with Steve Strange.

Christian Vadillo-Bilda | x-why-z Konzertagentur

I'm thinking Jesus Christ, The Prophet Mohammed and Ghandi would make an interesting evening – particularly in today's climate where despite the founders of the two largest religions in the world that proclaim peace, they are still the main violent protagonists – and Ghandi who insisted peace was the answer and lived by that mantra.

Michael Hosking | Midas Promotions

Donald Trump and two KGB hitmen (blood-free methods preferred).

Nick Hobbs | Charmenko

Björk, Michelle Obama and Greta Thunberg.

Andreas Möller | Konzertbüro Schoneberg

Daniel Fontana, Martin Elbourne and Natasha Gregory.

Stefan Reichmann | Haldern Pop

Gordon Masson, Prue Almond and Claire Courtney.

Gillian Park | MGR

Henry Rollins (ah, all the great stories...), Nina Simone (no need to explain why) and Lou Reed (really doesn't hurt to have a grumpy but friendly man at a dinner party that usually sees too many happy people anyway).

Berthold Seliger | Büro für Musik, Texte & Strategien



My three dinner guests would be Harry Houdini, Winston Churchill and Albert Einstein. That should make for some interesting conversations.

Wendy Dio | Niji Entertainment Group

Ahmet Ertegun, Joan Rivers and Jennifer Lawrence – people from three different parts of showbiz, but all really engaging and riotously funny. I'd just sit back and listen.

Gordon Masson | IQ Magazine

Anthony Bourdain, John Lennon and David Attenborough.

Andy Copping | Live Nation

Clive Davis, Quincy Jones and Steve Vai.

Anca Lupes | Star Management

Iggy Pop, Nick Cave and Johnny Rotten would definitely be the best guests for dinner. I was lucky enough to have dinner with each of them and it was always good fun that I'll never forget. Having dinner with all of them together must be an unforgettable party, with all the consequences.

Patrik Kohut | Ostrava V Plamen

Donald Trump, Joe Biden and some home-cooked potatoes and soju!

Tommy Jinho Yoo

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