

The Musician Extra

Live Section
theMU.org
Winter 2014

Threats to live venues

Fair Play Venues

Live conferences

Travelling overseas

Musicians'
Union



DEAR MEMBERS

Welcome to your Live Performance Section newsletter. 2014 was the inaugural year of the Live Performance Section.

The Committee has met twice over the year and as usual the full gamut of live performance issues has been discussed. The Committee is made up of a diverse cross-section of the industry, covering all aspects of live performance. The collective knowledge around the table is reassuring and your interests are best represented by these activists.

Your Live Performance Section Committee members are:

Adrian Macintosh
Clara Sanabras
Dave Arcari
Dave O'Higgins
Dominic Dunn
Elliott Morris
Fern Ford
Frank Blades
George Britcher
Jacquelyn Hynes
Jamie West
Jerry Wiggins
Kit Packham
Kojo Samuel
Louis Barabbas
Matthew Cohen
Pete Marshall
Peter Byrom-Smith
Robert Scott
Vernon Fuller



A letter from our Chairperson

Chairperson Peter Byrom-Smith introduces himself

It is an honour to have been elected as the first Chair of the Live Performance Section Committee.

It is a great experience working alongside my Committee colleagues from all genres of our music profession: Rock, Pop, Classical, Jazz, Folk etc. All types of music are equally represented and much experience is brought to the table, which I feel represents a true diversity of talent, but with the same objective — looking after and truly representing all our interests.

At our meetings we discuss a wide range of topics and we have made real headway in many of our objectives, especially on the topic of festival slots for emerging artists, which is a continuing area of development.

We have also been discussing developing other subjects which are important to you

We discuss a wide range of topics and we have made real headway in many of our objectives

as Live Performance Section members: instruments on planes,

visas and work permits when performing abroad, improved profiles and promotional opportunities on the internet etc.

As you can see, although we are actually a 'new' section, we have really been inspired to bring this Committee forward and develop it to the benefit of our section members.

We do, however, look forward to hearing from you in relation to any issues you may have, and assure you of our full support.

More threats to live music venues

The nation's venues are under more threat now than ever before

On the back of the Night & Day in Manchester and the Boilerroom in Guildford having their licences reviewed and new conditions applied, Madame Jojo's in London's Soho is now closed. And the reason? There was a serious violent assault involving the security staff of Madame Jojo's and a member of the public.

We are not condoning violence of any kind. However, it would seem that the actions of a few have bought about a recommendation that the licence be revoked. The Union was initially reassured to hear that the club had dealt with the issue by changing management and security teams with Westminster Council's approval, and it appeared that the venue would continue to operate, but that remains yet to be determined. According to *The Guardian* newspaper, plans submitted to

Westminster Council in 2013 reveal that the building was already intended for demolition and redevelopment. Therefore, the claim that the club was being closed as a result of violence could appear to be a smokescreen.

To the detriment of live music and culture, property developers want simply to turn a profit. The redevelopment of areas such as Soho damages the cultural heritage and attraction of an area that has been built up over decades. Is the vision for a utopian, squeaky clean Soho without the more diverse aspects of London's cultural life on the doorstep? Soho has always been a cultural breeding ground and it's fast disappearing.

We are also saddened to learn of the closure of the

legendary 12 Bar Club on Tin Pan Alley. Okay, the developers have said a new venue is being planned to make up for the loss of the Astoria to Crossrail. Furthermore, the cultural heritage that is Tin Pan Alley will apparently be somewhat preserved, but will it retain its exciting identity that still draws musicians to a world-famous musical hub?

The Union have contacted both Westminster City Council and Camden Council on both of these issues.



MU Fair Play Venues

The MU is launching a 'Fair Play Venues' campaign that aims to recognise good practice and support the work of vibrant and diverse music venues across the UK.

The criteria for joining the campaign includes venues signing up to the terms of the Fair Play Guide, which stipulates that pay-to-play is not okay, and offers fair and workable alternatives such as mutually beneficial ticketing deals and co-promotions.

Venues that sign-up to the campaign will be issued with a sticker that demonstrates to artists and audiences that they offer fair terms of engagement. Members who are looking for venues to approach for gigs can access details of venues through the MU Regional Offices. If you know of a venue that is interested in participating, please contact your Regional Office.

Scotland and Northern Ireland – 0141 341 2960
North of England – 0161 236 1764

Wales and South West – 029 2045 6585

Midlands – 0121 236 4028

East and South East

England – 020 7840 5537

London – 020 7840 5504
or email live@theMU.org

Venues Day

This one-day event examined some of the issues facing music venues

At London's Queen Elizabeth Hall on 9 December, 120 venue owners, musicians and key music industry bodies came together under the banner 'Venues Day 2014', to discuss for the first time the issues and difficulties of surviving as an independent venue. The event was set up by Mark Davyd of the Music Venues Trust and supported by Independent Venue Week and the South Bank centre.

The aim was to give venue owners, musicians, industry and politicians the chance to come together to discuss the issues. 'The book for running music venues was written in the 70's,' said Music Venue Trust CEO, Mark Davyd. 'Venues Day is the time to look at rewriting the book.'

There was a number of in-depth panels and debates during the day, including a Drowned in Sound event entitled 'Making good venues great', which explored what makes a good venue into a great venue and what venues could do more of to increase their value to music fans and to

musicians. This featured MU Assistant General Secretary Horace Trubridge, Ruth Barnes of Amazing Radio (Chair), Jehnny Beth from the band Savages, Sybil Bell (MVT/IVW), Steve Tilley of Kilimanjaro Live/Sugarmill, Suzanne Bull MBE of Attitude is Everything and Mike Weatherley MP, known for his involvement in 'Rock the House.'

The MU also launched its Fair Play Venues scheme at the event. The MU supports those venues that can tell us they agree to the principles of the MU Fair Play Guide and do not operate Pay to Play. The scheme recognises good practice amongst venues and aims to build relationships between musicians, venues and the MU.

You can help. If you have played a gig that went well, at a venue where you were treated fairly, and where the experience was positive, then let us know about the venue and who runs it. We will then get in touch. Over time we aim to build a comprehensive nationwide database of such venues, so if you are looking to break your band in a new area then get in touch - we will have a list of Fair Play Venues you could approach.

Live conferences and events

A round-up of some of the events that the Department has recently attended...

The MU Live Performance Department has recently been invited to attend several events and conferences, which enables us to promote the work of the Union and also to meet musicians and representatives from the live industry.

AIF Festival Congress

The Association of Independent Festivals (AIF) held their inaugural Festival Congress in October in Cardiff, running alongside the SWN Festival. The panels were very well attended and featured

The panels featured interesting discussions such as the application and booking process for artists

high-interest discussions, such as the application and booking process for artists at festivals.

AFO Conference

The Association of Festival Organisers (AFO) hosted their Conference in Stratford in November. MU Live Performance Official, Kelly Wood, took part in a roundtable discussion about the use of contracts at gigs and festivals. It was a really interesting session, and it was encouraging to learn that the MU's standard live contracts are regularly used by artists undertaking all kinds of gigs across the UK.

Bristol Folk Festival English Folk Expo

On the folk scene, we attended the Bristol Folk Festival and the English Folk Expo in Bury. Both festivals provided excellent opportunities to see many varying artists in the ever expanding music that now makes up the eclectic Folk world. We were able to talk to members and recruit non-members into the Union over the duration of each festival.

Independent Venue Week 2015

Following a successful launch event in 2014, Independent Venue Week is hosting another series of shows in 2015 across 85 venues across the UK.

A word from the organisers:

'Independent venues sit at the heart of their local community, providing a vital lifeline to upcoming artists early in their careers whilst bringing together those fans who are passionate about live music. With more and more small-to-medium-sized venues continuing to close around the country, Independent Venue Week supports those venues that play such a significant role to musicians and fans alike.'

The MU supports IVW 2015, which acknowledges the importance of live music venues in relation to emerging and established performing artists. Without a strong national network of live music venues, many artists would struggle to enter the industry, find an audience and sustain a musical career.

MU Officials will be in attendance at shows across the Regions. For further information go to independentvenueweek.com / [@IVW_UK](https://twitter.com/IVW_UK)



CITES: Information for musicians travelling overseas with instruments

Taking instruments made from rare or precious materials abroad can be tricky. Read on for some essential advice...

If you have ivory, Brazilian rosewood, abalone or other materials built into your instrument and you are travelling overseas, there are a few precautions you should take, especially if travelling to the USA.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) is concerned with the illegal trade of endangered flora and fauna such as Brazilian rosewood, African ivory, mother of pearl and abalone. These species have for many years been used in instrument manufacture. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have introduced regulations that allow for instruments with certain endangered species to be seized by authorities when musicians have been entering or leaving the country when working. This has raised grave concerns for the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) and the American League of Orchestras who have been lobbying hard for an exemption for musicians.

Due to the efforts of the AFM, the USFWS issued an amended order making it possible to

travel with instruments made, sold or transferred before February 2014. While this exemption now exists, you still need to be able to prove purchase, transfer details of the instrument and provide supporting documentation.

Instrument Passport

CITES has recommended the use of an 'Instrument Passport', which will identify when the instrument was bought and should include accompanying purchase/transfer documentation and identifying photos of the instrument. The MU has discussed this issue with International Federation of Musicians (FIM) and employers across Europe and a joint letter is being drawn up asking that clear concise information from CITES and the US Government be issued as to how musicians can obtain these 'passports'.

We have also spoken to the AFM and they advise having both a permit from your home country and a permit for the country to which you are travelling. The MU contacted the UK authorities over this issue and we have been advised that until such time as

the internationally recognised 'instrument passport' is available UK musicians, whether individual or a group, can apply for a CITES Permit through defra.gov.uk/ahvla-en/category/forms/cites/

The UK issuing authority Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA) have informed us that the form that is required to obtain a Travelling Exhibition Certificate (TEC) is actually Form FED 0173 from gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/321718/form-fed0173.pdf

The AHVLA has stated that you contact them directly for detailed advice via the following link gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-health-and-veterinary-laboratories-agency

Please note it is not advisable to attempt to sell your instrument abroad. If you are planning on doing so, seek detailed advice from the AHVLA. The Union is working with other international musicians' unions on your behalf to try to make this process easier and more transparent for musicians.

Visas

Despite many attempts to persuade the US Embassy in the UK to provide some clear answers to the MU regarding the confusion surrounding visa applications for performing and showcasing in the US, we have yet to receive a response. It's vital that you ensure you have the correct visa for your visit whether showcasing or playing paid gigs/tours. Our advice is available on the website, so if you are planning to perform in the US, ensure you give yourself plenty of time to go through the visa application process. There are organisations out there that can assist in this process.

MU benefits and services for live performers

There are a range of useful benefits and services available to all MU members

Fee Recovery – If you have a dispute with an employer in relation to unpaid fees or a gig cancellation, you may qualify for legal advice/assistance in relation to recovering the fee.

Contract Advisory Service – If you're offered a contract, for example by a live agent, you can have it checked by a solicitor prior to signing. Members qualify for one hour of legal time per contract. Don't forget, we also offer an aftercare service. See the *Handbook* for more details.

Standard Contracts – The MU offers live performance contracts for members to use when booking shows with venue owners and promoters. The *L1 (Hiring a band)* and *L2 (Hiring a solo musician)* contracts are available for download on the MU website or in printed format via Regional Offices.

Live Rates – MU live rates are available on the website and are reviewed annually in April.

Partnership Agreement Service – Where all partners of a band/ensemble are MU members, the Union offers a free written partnership agreement tailored to the needs of the group.

Public Liability Insurance – Members are insured for legal liability of £10m, to cover injury to members of the public or damage to property.

Equipment/Instrument Insurance - All members are entitled to instrument and equipment insurance up to £2,000 (this needs to be activated by contacting **Hencilla Canworth: hencilla.co.uk / 020 8686 5050**).

For further information contact your Regional Office.

Contact Us



Live Performance
Section, 60-62
Clapham Road,
London SW9 0JJ

T 020 7840 5512
F 020 7582 9805

live@theMU.org

theMU.org



Dave Webster
National Organiser
Live Performance

—
dave.webster@theMU.org
T 020 7840 5512



Kelly Wood
Live Performance
Official

—
kelly.wood@theMU.org
T 0777 5895141

If you require this edition in large print format, please contact National Organiser Dave Webster by emailing dave.webster@theMU.org