

The Big M

As Indie As It Gets



Anniversary Issue

So Far, So Good
A Journey Called Indie Music

2012 - Best Bets
Bands To Watch Out For

The Indian Ibiza
Submerge Goa Project

Bands, Interviews & More

The Extra Mile

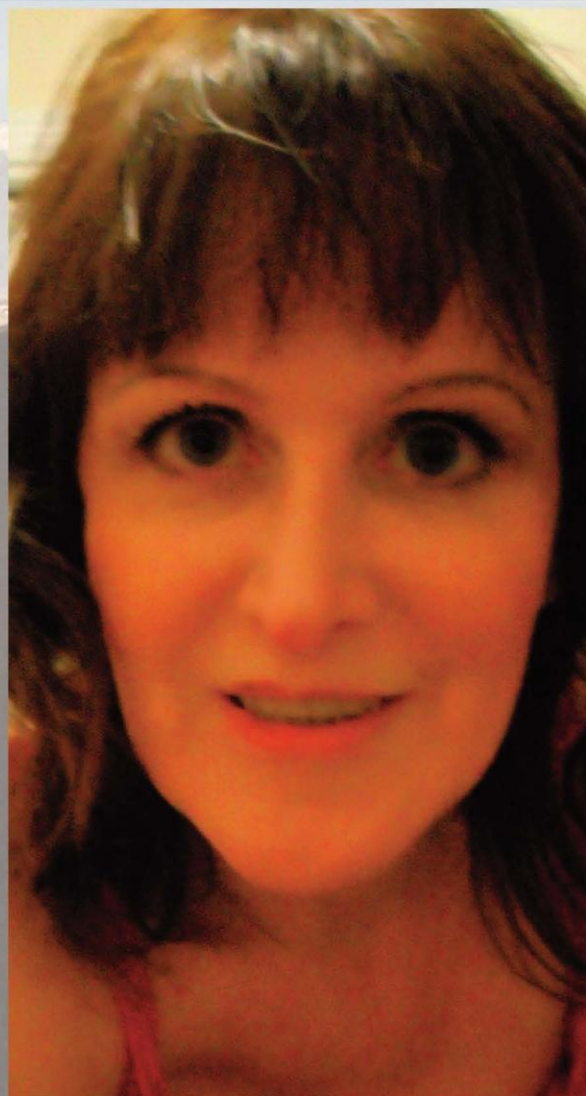
In this piece, we follow the respective paths of two international promoters who go the extra mile for their artists, even from miles and miles away.

The truest hard work is born of passion. Yet even though some rather talented bands slave away in their little corners of the city, their music fails to reach the desired audience and they eventually quit the game or die trying. For some it's just a case of bad luck, while some others believe that good music doesn't need to be promoted; but in truth, reaching the right audience is half an artist's battle won. For some artists a hard working promoter will take care of reaching out to yet undiscovered fans for them; Eva Dowd and Denise Wilcke do this from halfway across the world.

Denise Wilcke has been managing African roots band, Farafina, for over 20 years now, under the banner of Artways Productions. Currently, Wilcke's buzzing portfolio is chockfull with 8 successful international acts, stretched across 3 continents, 7 different countries and an interesting mix of genres. Eva Dowd, on the other hand, juggles a demanding corporate job with the task of promoting 3 Indian acts and one band from Pakistan under the Eva Dowd Productions banner that's been around for the past 6 years.

Tech gurus have been making the world smaller over the last few decades and communication lines are noticeably shorter; but probably the best achievement of these technological advances is the ease with which Dowd and Wilcke are able to promote their artists overseas. Dowd, who holds a senior position in corporate America currently lives and works in Boston, but to her losing sleep to keep in touch with her artists in India is merely a labour of love.

"The most difficult part of working across borders is probably the 3 am phone calls", Dowd confesses, "Working with countries 10 hours ahead of myself, I often have to take calls in the middle of the night." Dowd also relies heavily on social networking to get her message to the masses; having conquered most of the ears through Facebook and online forums. With Motherjane as an excellent example of the success of



Dowd's work, communication is clearly not a problem here, instead understanding cultural differences across the world is what proves to be a barrier. "I am very much a free spirit and live in a country where I can say and do pretty much as I wish, I was worried about how some of the more conservative countries would take my online persona", she explains.



Holding an incredibly diversified portfolio, Wilcke's problems are very different. She lives in Switzerland while her work involves getting her artists to festivals and gigs across the world; the biggest hurdle she encounters is acquiring visas. "Music has no barrier but countries do", Wilcke exclaims, saying "Unfortunately, visas are quite a challenge many times." She also faces a tough time putting concerts together one after the other while fitting artists' schedules with those of the festivals.

But even with these challenges, Wilcke and Dowd put their shoulders to the wheel because overcoming these challenges is extremely rewarding. "Seeing the artists on stage gives me a feeling of deep gratitude and pride; I love working with them and sharing their music with others", Wilcke says of the experience, adding "Sharing music and culture is a good feeling; I know then that I am doing the right job." Dowd agrees that working with the artists is very rewarding, adding an-

other feature to her *raison d'être* in explaining that "The fans are also very appreciative of me sharing the work of artists they love; finding yet-to-be-met fans and having them fall in love with music they've never heard before is quite satisfying."

The need for hardworking promoters like these and their superlative skills and deep passion for music is what puts these women so far up at the top of their game that neither of them needs to scout for talent. With an ear that can easily spot raw talent and personalities that long to create lasting cultural relationships, they choose the artists they manage in very unique ways. Wilcke says, "I don't scout for talent, instead I meet them along my path and go with my heart and feelings. Music is important and the people behind the music are as important as the art itself. The culture is a part of it, it is not separated."

Dowd, whom several scenesters call an 'unmet gypsy', too echoes this same formula for signing up artists. While she has literally hundreds of Asian artists sending her their music in the hope that she'll choose to promote them, she doesn't work for just anyone as all her artists are as close to her as family. Of her decision, she explains, "I chose this route over offers made by artists that just want to pay money but want no personal bond because if I didn't have a personal bond I would feel like I was just selling a product, not something I truly believe in."

Currently, Dowd's days are filled with new releases and Wilcke has been traipsing across the globe with the artists she promotes; clearly the joy of the work they do balances the volume of the work they put in respectively.

You could reach Eva Dowd at eva@evadowd.com and Denise Wilcke at info@artways.com

-Tracy deSouza

Special Thanks to Tracy deSouza and Big M for asking me to be part of their Special Anniversary Issue, I understand to make the article flow some of the Interview sent was eliminated I wanted to share with all of you the full interview and including my mention of Incredible Indian and Pakistani Artists I work with and the fans that have always kept me motivated.

What's the most challenging part of your job?

Time, I work fulltime in corporate America in a totally unrelated field and all the work I do with Artists has to be squeezed in much like any Indie Artist you have to do both one to pay the bills and one to feed your passion.

- And what's the most rewarding part?

The fans no doubt, they are very appreciative of me sharing work of the artists they love and finding yet to be met fans and having them fall in love with music they never heard before is very rewarding. The other key reward is dealing directly with the Artists themselves I know firsthand their dreams and I feel responsible to help making them come true and mine at the same time, sharing common dreams is a very powerful bond between people, all my artists are like family to me, I choice this route over offers by Artists that just want to pay money but want no personal bond, if I don't have a personal bond I would feel like I was just selling a product not something I truly believe in , I think the fans see and know the difference and why so many connect with me.

- What are the difficulties in working across borders?

The 3Am phone calls :D, being with countries 10 hours ahead of myself I often have to take calls in the middle of the night , also not always understanding the cultural differences around the world, I am very much a free spirit and live in a country where I can say and do pretty much as I wish, I was worried about how some more conservative countries would take my online persona but I am happy to say I get many emails from woman who really support me and my work , I guess that is also a huge reward learn about other cultures and coming together through music.

- How do you scout for talent?

I don't have literally hundreds of artists contacting me it is simply not possible to help so many but next year with my ongoing work with ACIA The Asian Coalition of Indie Artists, a Think Tank of Industry Professionals dedicated to Promoting Indie Music , I will be having them submit one Indie Artist each week from around the globe for me to promote on my sites., just my lil way of trying to help the Indie Music community. In regards to the Artists I currently represent Motherjane, Qayaas, Shallum Asher Xavier and Suraj Mani it really comes down to a click , a connection that can't be totally explained why I chose them , or lol why they chose to stay with me I am very demanding I want and expect a lot from them and my fiery nature is infamous both online and off :D Of the course the music is a key aspect and why you see diversity in my extended artist family because I love diversity in music and life.

- What advice would you give to amateurs entering this field?

Believe in your music and yourself, I have so many Artists ask me to review their work and tell them if I think they can make it, to me you are already planting seeds of doubt in your mind by giving someone else that power to judge you , if I hate your music would you change to please me, I hope not ! Own your Music Own your Dream , your passion and belief in yourself has more power than you know , Trust me I Know !



Motherjane and I started our 4th year recently , many changes over the years but not our bond , their fans the Janiacs have been incredible in supporting the band and my work as their “Angel”

Qayaas my newest Artist the incredible Award Winning Rock Band from Pakistan , I am so excited about what we will accomplish this year , don't take your eyes or ears off of them.



Shallum Asher Xavier, the man that introduced me to a whole new world of Pakistan and it's music and fans , Shallum is Multi Award Winning Producer , Composer and Guitarist , best known for his work with Fuzon but also a Solo Artist which you will learn more about soon.

Suraj Mani former front man of Motherjane currently on the mend from a serious back injury , will be back in the studio in a few months and releasing his own music and there is a surprise no one is going to expect !

