



MUSICMATTERS

THE ASIA PACIFIC MUSIC FORUM 3-5 JUNE 2008, GRAND HYATT, HONG KONG

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WHY MUSICMATTERS

It's the best of times for the music industry. It's also the worst of times. As the Music Matters Asia-Pacific forum enters its third year this month, Scott Murphy talked to some of this year's key players to find out what's in store...



When U2 manager Paul McGuinness steps up to the podium to give the keynote address at the third annual Music Matters forum at the Grand Hyatt this month, it's unlikely that he'll talk about the band's upcoming album. Instead, it's expected that he'll discuss issues that have been dividing the music industry for the past decade, namely piracy.

But the fact that he's agreed to attend is a sign of how far the forum has come in such a short time. While last year saw the attendance of legendary musician and producer Nile Rodgers (ex-Chic), Sire Records founder Seymour Stein and hundreds of attendees,



this year is expected to be even bigger. Already confirmed are Nettwerk Records CEO Terry McBride (he's also Avril Lavigne's manager), well known UK music promoter Harvey Goldsmith (responsible for Live Aid and the recent Led Zeppelin reunion) Linkin Park manager Rob McDermott and "Guitar Hero" creator Charles Huang. That's in addition to the musical acts already lined up, who include acclaimed Chinese singer Sa Ding Ding, the

Shanghai's best known rock act The Honeyz and more who were still being confirmed at press time.

For the industry, it will certainly be the local networking event of the year. Aspiring musicians could get signed, business deals will certainly be made and with MTV sponsoring at least one of the parties, well, anything could happen. "It's wonderful for us to welcome so many global names," says Jasper Donat from Branded, the organizers of the event. "They tell us that they see this part of the world as a key driver for the future. This is now a global event based in the heart of Asia, focussing on Asia."

After talking to some of the major attendees, here's a sampling of the major and exciting issues that

expected to be addressed during the conference...

THE MUSICIAN IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Radiohead's doing it. The Nine Inch Nails are doing it too. They've ditched their music labels to release albums by themselves on the internet and everyone is watching. Then there's the path Madonna and Jay-Z have recently taken where every aspect of their career from albums to touring to merchandising will come under one lucrative umbrella deal. It's called the "360 degree model", a topic Terry McBride, the CEO of the Nettwerk Music Group will be addressing during Music Matters.

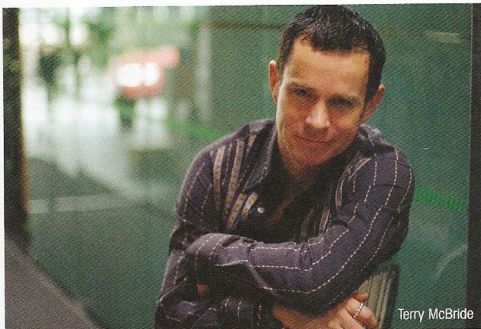
As the founder of the record company that has signed such acts as Sarah





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Terry McBride

McLachlan and the Barenaked Ladies, he sees this type of model as the way forward for musicians. "We're looking at a marketplace that is 70 percent physical and 30 percent digital," McBride says. "That's the market norm, but it's rapidly changing. At Netwerk, we continue to let the artists run labels. We continue to allow music to flow and monetize. It's a different way of looking at all this. This is not product. Music is a creative art form that we need to monetize and Asia is the most important marketplace if you want to have a worldwide career."

THE MUSIC AND YOU

Wouldn't it be great to have an endless amount of music available whenever and wherever you want it? That's the dream, but right now, few can agree on how to get there. So we download music onto iPods, mobile phones or computers. Some even cling to CDs. But according to a recent survey (commissioned by MTV and Synovate) 76 percent of respondents across Asia would really like to have their mobile phone be their main digital device. However, until now, most phone companies only allowed single songs to be downloaded. And what happens next is expected to be the subject of one of the biggest debates at this year's Music Matters forum.

"The consumer wants easy to use practical services," says Calvin Wong, a long time Warner Music representative. "But try downloading a full track over the phone. It's a nightmare and the charge is enormous. We need to sit down and agree what the model is, or else we'll be the blind leading the blind in a dark alley."

On the other side of the equation are the telecommunication operators themselves who insist that they are heading down a path that you, the consumer, will like. "Everyone on the 'Mobile Matters' panel at Music Matters would confirm that the strategic

objective for them is to get global consumers on models here they have unlimited access to music either through the manufacturer or the carrier," says Omnitone CEO Rob Lewis. Expect this discussion to be one of the most lively debates of the conference, and one that could ultimately directly affect you, the consumer.



Rob Lewis

ASIAN CONCERTS

Based on the amount of varied acts coming through Hong Kong in the past year, there's a growing appetite for everyone from Avril Lavigne to Kenny G to Muse. Then it should come as no surprise that forward thinking concert promoters as well as band and artist managers will be attending Music Matters in order to assess the current scene and keep their eye on the main touring prize: China.



Rob McDermott

"The panel I'm on this year is talking about China and how to break in there and the history of Linkin Park and how the Chinese fans really embraced the band from the get go," says Linkin Park manager Rob

McDermott. "I'll also be discussing everything we would like to do or attempt to do and hope to learn more as well."

But top UK promoter Harvey Goldsmith, who will be looking at what's taking place in Macau while he's here, believes that nobody should focus on a potential lucrative future until the customer is taken care of first. "The artists want too much money and the promoters are paying it," he says. "At the of the day, the public gets shafted. What's becoming

more and more important is being able to say 'No, it's too much.' The customer is key."

With such hot button issues across the board, what happens at Music Matters might just end up affecting who you end up seeing and how you hear it in the years ahead.

Music Matters Asia Pacific Forum will take place from June 3rd-5th at the Grand Hyatt in Wan Chai. For more information, including registration fees, visit www.musicmattersasia.com

YES, THERE'S MUSIC!

Despite so much talk about the "biz", there will be several acts appearing at this year's conference. Headlining at the Music Matters closing party is 25 year old Sa Ding Ding, who combines chants from her native Mongolia with dance rhythms for a sound that recently enabled her to be the recipient of the BBC Radio 3 World Music Award. "I describe my music as spiritual communication," she told BEATS.

Also headlining will be The Honeyz, hailed as Shanghai's biggest alternative act, who will make their first appearance in Hong Kong during the conference. "We are pretty happy about the chance to play at Music Matters this year," says

band manager Ina Schroeder. "We are very curious about the audience in Hong Kong. These will be our first shows in Asia outside China."

The group will play a series of dates in the city, including a slint at CLIQ June 4th, alongside *We Will Rock You* star MIG Ayesa, up and coming female local musician G.E.M., three new artists from Nokia's Independent Artists Club and Shanghai based DJ and DMC China winner DJ V-Nutz.



The Honeyz



Sa Ding Ding

