

CULTURE COMMISSION SCOPING IDEAS AND VIEWS
Facilitated by Neon Productions
October 2004

Aim: To explore the key elements which would enable a creative and diverse contemporary music industry to flourish in Scotland

The Process: recruitment of key people from various parts of Scotland all connected actively with contemporary music. 40 individuals were invited to a Scoping Day at Neon Productions to inform the Culture Commission Review. Everyone was issued with a thinking document before the day. Those unable to attend were encouraged to complete a questionnaire for Neon, which covered the main areas touched on during the Scoping Day.

The People: the contributors were; Robert Noakes; Hilary Brooks; Elaine Craig; Richard Begbie; Ronnie Gurr; Prof. Simon Frith; Nigel Clark; Duncan McCrone; Lee Paterson; Dr. Martin Cloonan. Stuart McHugh

The Ideas and Output - collaborative but unedited, therefore not a consensus view

What was good in the past to do with contemporary music:

- o A healthy culture with roots, diversity and creativity
- o Recognisably unique content/delivery/tradition
- o Music camps for kids
- o Free music education
- o Collective enthusiasm
- o Diversity across genres
- o Integrity
- o Art schools
- o Magazines and local TV which covered music of Scotland

What was bad in the past to do with contemporary music:

- o Lack of innovation
- o Little shared knowledge-base re: infrastructure

- o Lack of structured Government support/initiates
- o No financial incentives for creative industry
- o London-centric
- o Chip on the shoulder of Scotland
- o Lack of altruistic thinking and behaviour
- o No discussion about the culture
- o No analysis of impact and value

What is good about the current reality:

- o all culture operating well and healthily without state aid
- o the live music scene
- o Greater tolerance of difference
- o Openness to new views
- o Those who positively identify **what is Scottish** rather than defining through comparison or via negativa
- o Arts Council; Scottish Music Centre
- o Under 16 shows and the wealth of talent
- o Some school provision
- o Internet access and its possibilities

What is bad about the current reality:

Big Picture

Enabler - Scottish Executive:

- o Too many closed doors
- o No inward investment
- o Lack effective agencies for artists
- o Cynical nature of public development agencies/bodies due to lack of legislative/constitutional imperatives
- o Poor and uncoordinated marketing and promotion of live music
- o Uneven funding across genres like jazz, classical and pop
- o Cliques in the funding arena
- o Not accepting Scotland has limitationsgoing South is inevitable
- o Getting visa for USA
- o Not strategy for investment and re-investment
- o No champion - a bland generalisation

- o Culture and commerce indistinct - no cultural measurement

Nitty-Gritty Enabler - Current agencies needs new blood/action projects

- o Too many colleges courses leading people nowhere
- o Lack of exposure and coverage in mainstream media, especially Radio and TV
- o Not enough live music easily accessible outside central belt
- o Population not engaged or interested in a broad sense
- o Fear of nationalism
- o New Deal not inclusive
- o No organised support from music media and TV

What would you like to see in the future:

Big Picture: Enabler - Scottish Executive

- o A champion for contemporary Scottish Music
- o A music culture developed which will enable a musically literate nation
- o Scottish music played by all broadcasters - negotiate with OFCOM for digital
- o A CDR levy
- o Recognition of the essential nature of music as part of the Scottish culture
- o An entitlement to music education under Lifelong Learning - ie free music lessons
- o An investment strategy for artists - financial and infrastructure with return potential
- o Place the understanding of music in an (extra) ordinary and healthy place
- o Make substantial improvements to access to music in schools

Practical: Enabler - Utilise current agencies with new blood/action projects

- o A Live Music Forum and Policy which would link venues across the country and access to them
- o Proper distribution to UK and the world
- o Manufacturing facility
- o Capacity build selected Scottish labels into major players in Europe
- o Start-up business support for this specialised sector - stop re-inventing the wheel

- o Radio Scotland supporting Scottish music shows via digital stations
- o TV shows supporting live music for young peopleall people!
- o Funded websites for contemporary music and artists and related activities
- o Recognition of and infrastructure support for artists' touring circuit which would open up more live music opportunities
- o Policy of public libraries buying every record released by a Scottish record label
- o Combination of risk-taking and vision and knowledge ie publicly owned venues run by creative entrepreneurs who make a commercial living
- o Hubs to develop new talent and support new talent
- o Private investment; support and promote the notion that music industry in Scotland is commercially viable to attract investment
- o Public funding to be attached to the promoter and the venue not the artist (within and without Scotland) - to ensure a quality threshold is met and a risk is taken for a commercial return
- o House concerts.....in music enthusiasts homes
- o Subsidise a touring circuit in Scotland with easier applications made by the venue or promoter not the artists (similar to above).....in that way public monies will have a re-investment/return mind-set

Enablers of the Future

A Contemporary Music

Council

A core conclusion from this day is that to ensure a contemporary music industry will flourish in Scotland, a Scottish Music Council should be established. The SMC's role would be to enable the advancement of Scottish musical life in all its aspects.

It would speak up for the interests of music and music makers, by distributing lots of information, by developing policies and plans, by managing projects, by collaborating with various interests within and outside the musical

world. It would be the portal to the outside world for Scottish contemporary music and the vehicle to take music from Scotland to the rest of the world. It covers just about every aspect of music making, education, production and distribution.

The image of the Scottish Music Council will be essential to its success. It is important that recognition is given to the need for a 'different' group of people to be recruited to manage and run the Council - they should not represent current interests; organisations; and current favoured corners.

The Music Council will take an imaginative approach to the sustainable investment and funding of contemporary music and the industry in Scotland.

This group recommends that the Scottish Music Council has a Champion to call upon with a familiar face, accessible manner of communication and large listening ears.

The Dual Role of the Council

TO

Aid
Encourage
Support
Educate
Develop
Inspire
Embolden

Advance
Strengthen

Those working in the contemporary
Scotland and Scotland to

Attract
Invite
Showcase
Advocate
Promote
Represent
Market

Entice
Draw

The world to

Scottish music scene
the world

Sustainable development and the flourishing of
music culture are interdependent.