

SUPPORT

YOUR LOCAL

MUSIC SCENE

Live DMA

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SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL MUSIC SCENE

Live music venues and clubs lay the ground for an **abundant artistic scene** that we cherish as our European heritage. The diversity of the music stages, everywhere in Europe, gives **thrilling opportunities for music encounters between people**. Especially the smaller stages give artists a place to start their practice, to build confidence in their artistic project and to confront it to an audience.

Concert venues and clubs are the **music sector's foundation** when it comes to **artistic creation** and the **development of new talents**. As such, they are the lifeblood of the European live music sector and essential for its growth and vitality.

Yet, all over Europe, those live music venues and clubs constantly face **challenges that endanger their activities**: consequences linked to urban development and the densification of cities such as gentrification and raising business rates, increasing noise complaints, lack of recognition in the cultural public policies leading to unadapted regulations, cuts or absence in subsidies.

Change is needed.

Live DMA, European network of live music association representing over 3000 live music venues, clubs, and festivals, has been working since 2012 to raise awareness about the huge social, cultural, and economic impact of those small places located all over Europe.

Artists are the best witnesses when it comes to highlighting the important role of these stages for their careers.

Live music stages matter – to the artists, to the audiences, and to the local communities.

We call on decision makers, cultural institutions and the whole live music scene to act together and to **protect, secure** and **improve** the conditions of the smallest live music venues, clubs, and festivals in order to allow prosperous and thriving future of the whole live music sector:

- The nurturing and protection of the **diversity of organisations** (from small and medium sized independent companies to non-profit organisations) facing multinational companies seeking private profit only.
- The recognition of venues for their **cultural and social values** and not only as entertainment and facilitate their **access to funding** and/or beneficial tax regimes.
- The development of a **fair legislation** that does not solely accommodate large corporate monopolies.
- The organisation of a **dialogue** between the sector and policy makers to **cooperate** on the design and implementation of public policies.
- The support of the sector's **structuration** by strengthening representative national and European associations.

In the pages that follow, **artists** highlight their attachment to those smallest stages and highlight how these venues & clubs have been crucial for the development of their careers. Excerpts from the **Live DMA Survey** illustrate how venues & clubs from the Live DMA network support their local music scenes all year long.

Johnny Mafia

France



"There are plenty of venues in France that have the merit of pushing groups to go beyond the end of their own nose. For us it is the venue Silex that supported us! They allowed us to participate in the Inouïs of the Printemps de Bourges and to build, by force, a national network. Thanks to their accompaniment and to the teams of Café Charbon, La Vapeur or La Péniche. We now play almost everywhere in France and we start playing regularly internationally. Thank you family!"

A VIBRANT LIVE MUSIC SCENE

Live DMA represents over **2500 live music venues and clubs** in **15 European countries**. These venues and clubs programme **half a million acts per year**.

Live DMA venues and clubs attract every year **over 60 million visits** to live music events, where the audience is **introduced to emerging talents**.

The opportunity to **play live** on stage is of crucial importance in the development of an artists' career. Live DMA venues and clubs organise yearly almost **300.000 music events** with well **over 500.000 acts performing live** on their stages.

With an average of two programmed live music acts per event, venues and clubs provide **essential opportunities for emerging artists**. Venues and clubs often programme a second live music act as **opening act to a new audience**.

Training plays a **fundamental role** in creating and developing an artist's career. A large scale of Live DMA venues and clubs also provide **tools and spaces for musicians**, specific **training programmes**, rehearsal rooms and studios.

Source: Live DMA Survey 2019 (Survey data 2016)

Triángulo de Amor Bizarro

Spain



“The venues are incredibly important. They are the stage where a group exploits its full potential in front of its audience, where that audience can get a clear reception of the sound of the band. It is where the moment of closest proximity between both occurs, and the place where the emergent bands develop with greater comfort.

We are from a small city, and the only venue is the cultural center, it is the meeting place, the most important and essential spiritual temple within a radius of 50kms. If the venues disappear, the most fundamental spaces of popular culture of the last 100 years will disappear.”



Violet Road

Norway

"Throughout our career it has been extremely important with the diversity of venues we find around Norway. We have been welcomed by enthusiasts, volunteers, and idealists year after year, who are passionate about that the audience and artists are able to experience great things together."

This has been and still is the driving force of our work. Without these venues there will be no livelihood or a place to start, for us and lots of other artists, and we greatly appreciate the work being done out there."

Girls in Hawaii

Belgium



"In 15 years, we had the opportunity to play in a maximum of clubs in Wallonia, Flanders, and all over Europe. This is where we meet passionate organizers, and a passionate audience. We all see each other closely. This is often where everything starts. It is passing through all these rooms that we recognize all those who have been there before us. We see all that we owe to all these passionate people."

Girls in Hawaii would like to thank everyone who makes this musical life possible."

Alba Molina

Spain



"After singing at home, at family gatherings and parties, I have sung in many venues. The venues are essential for emerging artists. For established artists, this is the place where they can meet more intimately with their audience."

Malo'

France



"Since the age of twelve, I have been able to integrate computer-assisted writing and music composition workshops in the SMAC Cargö in Caen, and on my return from Australia I have benefited from a personalized accompaniment that allowed me to repeat, create, compose and meet many musicians, professional technicians of the current music sector.

Over the years I have been able to develop my scenic skills thanks to accompanied residencies and I had the chance to be a user of 24/24 studios available for emerging artists in the region and use professional equipment to create my models and work on my tour. It is also in this venue that I was able to make my first concerts, especially as the opening act of Charlie Winston when I released my album in front of my audience.

Without this support, I do not know if my current life would have been that one."

Gaspar Claus

France



"I have been fortunate for a few years to have access, as a musician, to concert venues of all sizes. The diversity of audiences, programming, technical and artistic teams, human relationships that I have come across make my job one of the most beautiful in the world.

As often, the smallest are the most fragile, whereas what they offer is unique, and often richer and more daring than the large stages that must meet the heavy demands of attendance. If these small stages were to disappear, it is the health of creation and that of its reception that would suffer. They are the only effective weapon against the homogenization that threatens our time, and teams like that of the venue Plages Magnétiques in Brittany are fighting on a daily basis for that. Let's protect them!"



Selah Sue

Belgium

"I've had the luck to be invited to play in different venues, big and small throughout my career. I would never have been the artist that I'm now without the support of the grassroots venues. Smaller clubs were the perfect preparation for the bigger festivals.

Both the intimacy between public and artist and the creative process on stage only reach their full potential in grassroots venues. That's why they're still my favourite place to perform.

Some of these venues have a special place in my heart after all these years. Like 'Het Depot' in my hometown Leuven. Quite often it's a combination of the atmosphere, the public, the sound on stage and the cosy backstage. Not to mention the excellent food.

If everything is right, all conditions are fulfilled for an unforgettable evening."

PROGRAMMING ARTISTS - THE VERY HEART OF LIVE MUSIC VENUES & CLUBS

Live DMA venues and clubs spend **over half a billion euros on programming costs** for artists to perform on their stages.

Most venues and clubs in the Live DMA network spend **more money on programming** than there is **income from ticket sales**.

This means that venues and clubs have to **rely on other income sources** in order to pay part of the **artists' costs**, to invest into other **social and education functions** and training programmes for artists, but also to cover their **functional costs** (e.g. staff and housing costs) and to make **structural investments** (e.g. sound insulation and renovation works).

Source: Live DMA Survey 2019 (Survey data 2016)

"After a journey through Grenoble and Besançon, we arrived somewhat tired at La Péniche in Chalon-sur-Saone! We had played gig after gig, accumulated the kilometers with little slept, and then, what a positive surprise: a set-up of an industrial wasteland, tagged everywhere, a stage with a new sound system, and a room on the spot where we could rest after enjoying cheese specialties and local charcuterie!!

The beginnings of a project very often pass by first dates in atypical places where the main assets are the audience, the hosts and the atmosphere. These rooms are often much more accessible than larger stages. As a young band, we need to be reassured, advised and these small and medium sized venues are very beneficial to take the time to meet the teams and the audience, to get real feedback and to improve our live show.

At a time when we realize that the social bond is essential for a healthy society, it is important to preserve these places, like LaPéniche in Chalon-sur-Saône, where people meet and share and where cultural diversity is assured. Thank you La Péniche!"

Péroké

France



adrien vincent

Sharko

Belgium



"Sharko, because of his status as an indie and Belgian rock band singing in English, played more "small capacity stages" than stadiums. And in Belgium, we are lucky enough to have "small" stages, adapted to our status and our audience. These are equipped, healthy, often well structured, and the public who frequents them is just as dynamic. If this sphere of small stages were to be neglected, oh of course, we could always occur in the garden shed of my mother-in-law, with the sound of cousin Kevin, but it would be less good, I think."

Ringa Manner

Finland



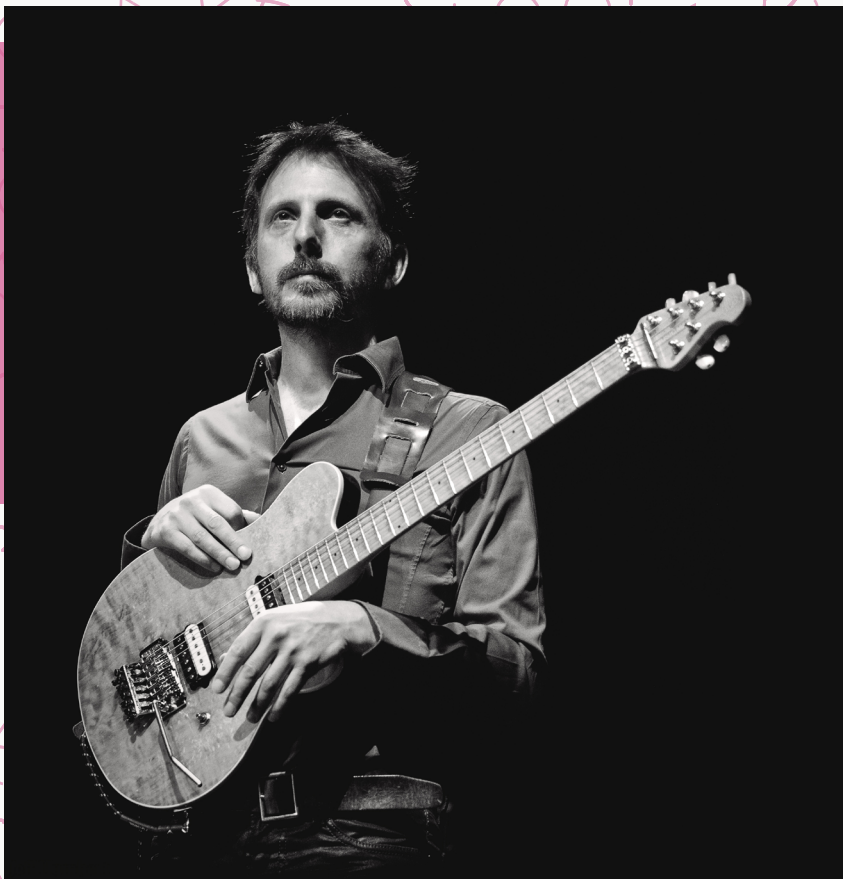
"Smaller venues have a magic of their own. The artist is intensely surrounded by an engaged audience and you can't fake your way through anything. The club scene at its best widens the narrow window we can see music through by taking on smaller and lesser known acts, regardless of how many records they have been selling. It's an irreplaceable platform for young artists throughout the diverse spectrum to hone their craft, and an absolutely vital part of any city's living, breathing culture scene."

Hélio Morais - PAUS

Portugal

"Clubs are the basis of everything. If you stop playing clubs and you're not a huge mainstream band/act you'll lose awareness of who's your crowd, where does it fit and how your band is growing or not. When you play clubs you're not selling tickets for na "experience", you're selling tickets for your show. If you only play the festivals' circuit you can't distinguish who's there just for you and would buy a ticket for your show and who's not. You may even survive for years playing just festivals, for as long as your booking agency manages to keep your hype, but maybe you're not building a career, because you can't do that not knowing exactly who your real followers are."





Olivier Benoit

France

"The first time I played at Jazz in Poitiers was around 2000. I owe a lot to this scene to have opened the doors to me at a time when it was so difficult for me to play my personal projects. Since then, this place has not left me and I come back regularly."

It is an essential stage for artists, for art, as much as for the audience. Thanks to the very demanding and adventurous programming, Jazz à Poitiers gives the possibility to discover musicians little or not known, but also allows to see famous artists who are very attached to the idea to play close to their public. This proximity upsets habits and this intimacy gives at least as much importance as concerts in large halls."

Ogun Afrobeat

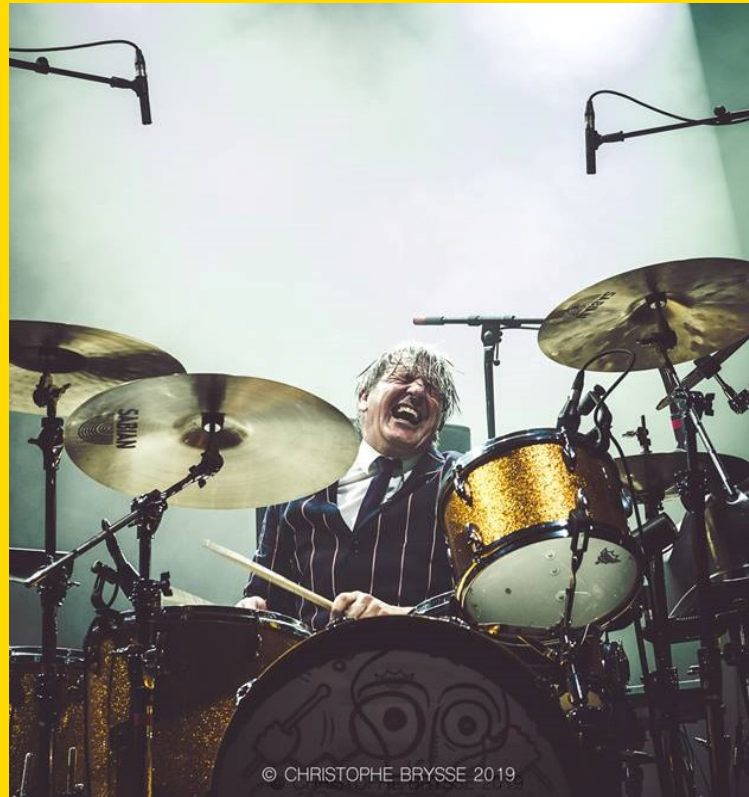
Spain



"Small, grassroots music venues are important for the whole music scene: new artists need them in order to be seen and heard, and confirmed artist can be near to the audience."

Mario Goossens - Triggerfinger

Belgium



"Grassroots venues are extremely important for young artists as a place to present themselves to the public and to grow. If you're young, there's only thing that counts: being able to play."

In our early days we had to find our own way, but we eagerly jumped on every possibility. There was less infrastructure than there is now. Why not invest the same amount in music as in sports? Grassroots venues are a binding factor and are places where colouring outside the lines is still tolerated. And a creative society really needs those kind of places."

ALL FOR THE ARTS, NOT FOR PROFIT

Around **half of all Live DMA venues and clubs** are **public or private non-profit** organisation. Most venues and clubs with a private commercial status are also working in a **not for profit perspective** as all the income they make is reinvested into live music.

PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR VENUES & CLUBS MEANS SUPPORTING EMERGING ARTISTS

With **public funding**, venues and clubs can **programme more upcoming talents** on stage and invest in career development.

Venues and clubs receiving **public funding** are able to **invest more in talent support**: they have more possibilities and flexibility with their programming and promotion costs, and they more often **provide specific training programmes**, tools and spaces for musicians.

Source: Live DMA Survey 2019 (Survey data 2016)

"We would like to remind you of the importance of contemporary music venues for artists and their public. They are a space where diversity and freedom of speech can be taken for granted. Tryo was born in the suburbs of Paris in a youth cultural center where open-mindedness is still paramount. The band would never have come to exist without that place.

Des Lendemains Qui Chantent is the second home I have chosen as a musician and this is where I am now to send you this message. This place rekindles a feeling dearest to my heart: the feeling that I am needed for something or by someone. As we are in the middle of a most joyful and stimulating project of collective creation, I think of you as crucial and indispensable partners for all those places, be they small or large, that provide a space for the creation, transmission and sharing without which nothing would ever be possible.

Thank you."

Manu - Tryo

France



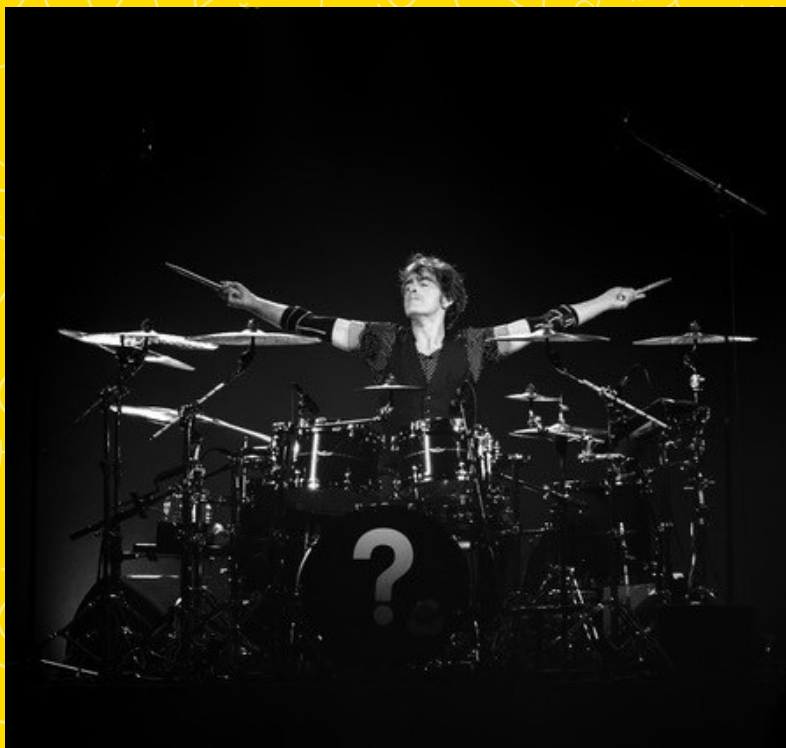
Antonio Serrano

Spain

"I started my career playing in small venues with local musicians and I consider this experience as the most important in my development as a professional musician."

Kolinka - Téléphone

France



"It is so important that venues like Rocksane exist to offer the artists optimal conditions: that it is the quality of the material available, the competence and the passion of the technicians, all here push the artists to give the best of them.

The Rocksane, in addition to being a stage, offers rehearsal rooms and a music school.

It is important that places like Rocksane offer such opportunities to access culture near you. Young people also like to meet during the day at the bar of this venue. It is a real place of life, open to all, which brings to this city a real cultural dynamic. A city without music, without culture is a city that is dying."



Live DMA is a European non-governmental network working to support and to promote the conditions of the live music sector. Live DMA is an international collaboration network based on shared visions and values.

The network is composed of 19 members situated in 15 countries. The members are regional and national live music associations that represent more than 3000 music venues, clubs and festivals located all over Europe.

In 2017, the European Commission recognized Live DMA as European network and granted, via the Creative Europe program, funding to develop the network's project Live Style Europe. Live Style Europe is a "building capacity program" with the objective to empower music venues, clubs and festivals, and regional and national live music associations and to provide them with skills and tools in order to adapt to the changes of the music sector.

This publication is part of Live DMA's project Live Style Europe. Some of the statements are also available in their original language on the Live DMA website.

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