

PATREON PAGE INVITATION

Welcome, web-surfing soul. You've most likely found your way here because you're a kind, clever, generous, inquisitive and devoted music fan. We are an irreverently spiritual tribe of world musicians composing a new paradigm of how art, commerce and social action can work together. We hope you'll be intrigued by what we propose, and be motivated to join us.

EXISTENTIAL DILEMMAS



As independent artists, we wear every hat and perform every function, frequently working long hours by ourselves. We book and coordinate concert tours, design flyers, promote our music and do the accounting.

Managing all of this is very important, and we love what we do, but it has a big impact on the amount of time we have available to write and record new music.

Although our tour schedules can appear to be glamorous, we're often really just minimum wage jet-setters with relentless work ethics. We keep our operations going from the back seats of rental vans and from the couches of people's apartments where we are temporarily staying. In the midst of juggling a thousand buzzing things, we offer up heartfelt music every night, and often just break even.

We used to sell records to make a living, but the internet ended that. Forces outside our control have now made music effectively free, which is pretty close to a catastrophe. How can we pay our bills and continue to create new work? A patronage system once supported Mozart, and it can support us too. In the current age, the crowd is the king. If our music calls you, then we invite you to respond.

ENTREPRENEURIAL SOCIALISM

The myth that we can do it all by ourselves exhausts our potential. It takes teamwork to care for the vineyard, and a community to share the wine. Combining our energies and resources, we can work more efficiently and use our collective bargaining power to negotiate better terms for our music and services. With you on the tour bus, we can cultivate a deeper symbiosis between artists and audience. Your interest, your presence, and your love give our work resonance and meaning.

Together, we can:

- Engage professional staff to assist with booking, promotion, and finances.
- Create more benefits and opportunities for our audience.
- Focus our efforts to draw more attention to important social causes.
- Recommend and share each other's music.
- Leverage our combined marketing reach to attract sponsorship from corporations and foundations.
- Endow a fund that supports new recordings and videos.
- Consult with experienced management for better career guidance.
- Invest our resources for the future.

We intend to start modestly and build ourselves sustainably, but this is not a small undertaking. We are synchronizing and harmonizing what are effectively many small businesses into a unified collective. We want to balance the interests of a diverse group of artists at different points in their careers and also foster emerging voices. Your commitment and contributions will allow us build an organization in which the message and the method are seamlessly connected.

OFFERING IT UP

Our first project will be a collection of inquiring songwriters, ecstatic Kirtan artists, lysergical DJs and transcendental Indian classical musicians, all in support of an important social cause. Following that, we will keep compilations of new and vintage music coming every week. 10% of your monthly commitments will go to benefit social causes, and we'll be asking your opinion every year about which causes you'd like to support. Merging our booking, promotion and distribution operations allows us to make benefits to patrons available across our entire community of artists.

Benefits include:

- Complimentary tickets to concerts by any artist, anywhere, anytime.
- Post-concert gatherings with refreshments organized especially for patrons to meet and connect personally with the artists.
- Access to preferred seating or ticket sales before the general public.
- Weekly collections of new and vintage music.

- Demos and works in progress from the artists, allowing unique insight into the creative process.
- Discounts on retreats, workshops and special events.
- Music lessons via Skype or Facetime
- Open communications platform for requests, suggestions and discussion.
- Special patrons-only merchandise like T-shirts, mugs, canvas bags, water bottles and body adornments.

Benefits will first become available three months after the launch of our initial fundraising drive, which is designed to help us launch our operations. People who make pledges of any size during these first three months will be considered Founding Partners and receive additional benefits.

FACING THE MONSTER

Streaming services like Spotify and Apple Music are a double-edged sword. They have made music extremely easy for fans to access, but they have drastically reduced our income. This has seriously damaged the economics of producing recordings, particularly for artists like us who create music for boutique audiences.

Along with various middlemen, the streaming services take their cuts off the top. The people who actually create the music are the last to get paid. Most music consumers don't realize that artists receive shockingly little income from streaming (\$00.004891 per play, on average - that amounts to \$4891 for one million streams).

Music fans used to buy recordings from companies that invested in artist's careers. Now songs are effectively rented to listeners at prices fixed by near-monopolies. These companies do not underwrite recording and promotional costs, and have no relationships or commitments to the writers, producers and musicians. We would rather work for ourselves, and for you.

THE EXPANDING UNIVERSE

In the last decade, the audience for music that references the world's spiritual traditions has grown exponentially. Tracking the global expansion of interest in yoga and meditation, an educated, affluent and socially conscious community now extends across every continent, for whom this music is very meaningful. This audience, like you, is spiritually motivated and culturally diverse.

A recent Pew Research Center poll shows people who describe themselves as religiously unaffiliated now comprise 22.8% of the population of the USA, equivalent in size to the number of people identifying as Catholic. Experience verifies that this trend also exists in most of the world's developed economies. This spiritual-not-religious demographic is affluent and aspirational, and has grown by 7.9% in the last seven years.

This is a potentially enormous audience, but we think we can best mobilize it by starting small, and then replicating our model with other similar-minded communities world-wide. Just 100,000 subscribers and patrons who can commit to supporting us with \$10 per month will give us an annual operating budget of \$12,000,000.

GOALS AND PROMISES



Our initial pledge goal is \$35,000 per month to fund an organization that will serve the administrative needs of around 20 founding artists. That might seem like a lot of money, (or if you don't

think so, we'd like to meet you!) but it is needed to cover office rent and utilities along with salaries in the following areas:

- Publicity, promotion and marketing
- Video and photo editing
- Website and IT
- Artist management
- Social cause and outreach coordination
- Accounting and legal

Agents for booking and property rights (publishing, licensing and synch) will be compensated on a percentage basis. In the future, we intend to extend to our patrons options to fund writing, recording and video production for both established and developing artists.

We regard our audience as our partners in making our art. We are inviting you into a closer relationship with us, but we also want to be respectful of your attention. We will only do patronage drives occasionally, like public radio stations, so you'll be spared constant pleas for contributions. We hope most of our interactions with you will be about the wonders and mysteries of music, heart, mind and spirit. You can choose to have Patreon collect funds on either a monthly or yearly basis. Thanks for your support!



"Musicians are some of the most driven, courageous people on the face of the earth. They deal with more day-to-day rejection in one year than most people do in a lifetime.

Every day, they face the financial challenge of living a freelance lifestyle, the disrespect of people who think they should get real jobs, and their own fear that they'll never work again.

Every day, they have to ignore the possibility that the vision they have dedicated their lives to is a pipe dream. With every note, they stretch themselves, emotionally and physically, risking criticism and judgment.

With every passing year, many of them watch as the other people their age achieve the predictable milestones of normal life - the car, the family, the house, the nest egg. Why? Because musicians and singers are willing to give their entire lives to a moment - to that melody, that lyric, that chord, or that interpretation that will stir the audience's soul.

Musicians are beings who have tasted life's nectar in that crystal moment when they poured out their creative spirit and touched another's heart. In that instant, they were as close to magic, God, and perfection as anyone could ever be. And in their own hearts, they know that to dedicate oneself to that moment is worth a thousand lifetimes."

--- David Ackert, LA Jazz Times