



## **Final Press Release**

### **WOMEX 09 – The World Music Expo**

Sunday, 1 November 2009  
Copenhagen | Denmark

A record year, a successful event. There have now been 15 editions of WOMEX, the World Music Expo, that began with about 200 delegates and has now expanded to over 2700. During that time, this fledgling movement has expanded to become a diverse, multicultural, increasingly popular expression of interest in world culture. And, in the process, WOMEX has become the premier professional event in the international world music calendar.

With the recorded music industry crisis surpassed by the overall world economic crisis, we were indeed surprised – and grateful – to see our WOMEX 09 numbers:

There were over 2700 delegates and 650 exhibiting companies from 92 countries in 280 Trade Fair Stand Units. And WOMEX presented 57 acts including 340 artists on 6 stages and 23 Conference Sessions, having inaugurated a new structure. Each Conference day highlighted a different key issue: Digital Myths, Markets and Mayhem; The Economy of Music; and Advocating for Change each presented special sessions designed to update, innovate or stimulate.

2009 brought a new city and a new partnership. Many of the city's key cultural players banded together to make the invitation, and then created WorldMusicFair Copenhagen (WMF CPH) to become the local production partner. First and foremost Roskilde Festival, Copenhagen Jazz Festival and Wonderful Copenhagen. The other principal members comprise the Danish Center for Culture and Development (CKU/DCCD), Global Copenhagen and World Music Denmark in cooperation with Welcome Meeting Management.

In honour of our new city location, WOMEX hosted a special Opening and added a new stage this year. An all-star Nordic band took to the stage with artists from Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Samiland. Danish fiddler Harald Hugaard created and directed this once-in-a-lifetime concert experience. The stage, called the Nordic Club, highlighted talent from all the Nordic countries and edged our Showcase numbers up to almost 60. These concerts were held in DR-Danish Broadcasting's new studios and concert halls, offering some of the best conditions ever at a WOMEX.



This year's WOMEX Artist Award for World Music went to DR Congo's Staff Benda Bilili. The WOMEX Award for Professional Excellence was given to Christian Mousset from France.

Staff Benda Bilili: We are used to honouring great artists at the end of long illustrious careers. This time, however, it might appear like we're lionising mere beginners. Therein lies a humbling lesson. "So often, by the time many groups play their first note on a European stage, they have already lived, struggled and suffered a tale of epic proportions," says Andy Morgan. And no group could possibly illustrate this truism more effectively than Staff Benda Bilili."

Christian Mousset: As Yorrick Benoist of Run Productions notes, "For almost 35 years Christian Mousset and his 'Musiques Métisses' Festival has kicked off the careers of greats such as Cesaria Évora, Salif Keita, the Mahotella Queens, the Super Rail Band, Danyel Waro, Johnny Clegg, and many others. His was arguably the first festival dedicated primarily to African music, starting a trend that many followed and few could match." Add to that his work first for Label Bleu and now for his own Marabi label, and this is a popular choice indeed.

Each year, in partnership with the World Music Charts Europe, WOMEX also awards a Top Label, based upon the releases of that label which the Charts DJs have voted highest during the previous 12 months. This year's winner is Crammed Discs from Belgium.

And, finally, WOMEX hosted the presentation of a new award this year, one created by one of our partners, the Roskilde Foundation. Presented during the Sunday Award ceremony by the Lord Mayor of Copenhagen, Ritt Bjerregaard, Roskilde honoured Malian artist Rokia Traoré and her newly inaugurated Foundation Passarelle. The prize included 30,000 euros. (For more information contact Peter Hvalkof of Roskilde, [peter.hvalkof@roskilde-festival.dk](mailto:peter.hvalkof@roskilde-festival.dk)).



## Statistics WOMEX 09

In 15 editions WOMEX has grown to...

- Over 2700 delegates and 1420 companies from 92 countries.
- Over 970 concert and festival bookers, arguably the highest concentration of potential bookers in the same place at the same time anywhere on the planet.
- Over 760 labels, publishers and distributors.
- Over 770 managers and 420 producers.
- Over 400 national and international journalists, including 150 radio broadcasters.
- A bustling Trade Fair with 280 stands and over 650 exhibiting companies, including numerous umbrella stands of countries, regions, networks and other joint-venture structures.
- 57 Showcase acts with over 340 artists from 43 countries on 6 stages.
- More than 60 speakers in around 30 Conference and Mentoring Sessions and Master Classes.
- The Festive Opening event, presenting an all-star Nordic band with artists from Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Samiland. Danish fiddler Harald Haugaard created and directed this once-in-a-lifetime concert experience.
- The 11th Annual WOMEX Award, this year honouring DR Congo's Staff Benda Bilili and France's Christian Mousset.
- The WOMEX Top Label Award in recognition of label excellence, compiled in association with the World Music Charts Europe, this year awarded to Crammed Discs of Belgium.
- The WOMEX World Music Film Market with 11 film screenings, in cooperation with the International Music + Media Centre IMZ, Vienna.
- Numerous Networking Meetings, Presentations and Receptions.
- The Radio WOMEX broadcasting studio for live interviews and performances, organised by NRK from Norway in collaboration with DR from Denmark.
- The WOMEX TV Studio and Webcast, in cooperation with Mondomix, Paris.
- virtualWOMEX – the professional future of world music online.

WOMEX thanks the army of production staff, volunteers, enthusiasts, professionals and fans, along with its production partners at WMF CPH, Bella Center and DR.

WOMEX 09 was a production of WOMEX – The World Music Expo, in cooperation with WMF CPH.