

WIRED4MUSIC MANIFESTO COUNCIL MEETING 3

Thursday 30 October 2014, 6pm – 8pm
Main Space at Spotlight, Langdon Park.

PROGRESSION



At Wired4Music Manifesto Council meetings, we gather young musicians from across London with organisations and decision makers to discuss issues surrounding our five core manifesto themes:

OPPORTUNITY / INVESTMENT / PROGRESSION / COMMUNITY / UNITY

Our third manifesto meeting focused on *progression*; questioning ideas such as “what are progression routes within the music industry” and “how do young people progress on their musical journeys?”

As always, we were delighted to welcome representatives from various organisations, this time welcoming Ben Molen from **Beatnik PR**, **Matt Wilde** from **Brighter Sound** and **James Thomas**; **Head of Hackney Music Service**. We were also hugely excited to be joined by **Terrence**; **from Hackney’s newly formed Youth Music Forum**; (initiated by Hackney Music Service). The meeting was held at the brilliantly set-up **Spotlight**; an amazing new youth arts centre in Langdon Park.

Led by Wired4Music members Kaisle Grai and Michael Olorunfemi, five key questions surrounding the theme of progression were presented. Attendees were split into smaller parties to discuss topics in further detail and presented back with the following conclusions:

Q: What are the smaller steps we can take to achieve larger goals?

- We must first recognise that success is **relative** and personal. “Achievement is finding a passion for what you love” – Michael Olorunfemi.
- We must define for ourselves what ‘achievement’ means. As it is relative, in order to achieve goals we set ourselves we must not compare our work to that of others.
- Take tiny steps. Keep things as simple as possible and **find like-minded individuals** to work with.
- Identify key areas for help and guidance – recognise music centres, hubs, organisations, work placements and experience. Once identified, one possibility is to climb up through internships.
- Does pressure cause a loss of interest? From experience yes. Take advantage of not knowing exactly who or what you want to be and use it as a chance to **experience everything** and try out all opportunities. You never know what you might find you like!

Q: How could your musical journey have started earlier?

- This is a very subjective question, very much depending on your expose to genre & instrument and your personal background.
- How do we define the ‘right age’ to start in music? This once again is subjective, it is a **personal journey** that we cannot compare to others.
- What is our current obsession with being a gifted at a young age? We need to recognise that **some musicians take longer to develop** and, as stated above, **music is a life-long personal journey**. There needs to be more opportunities for ‘older young people’ i.e. 21-25 who haven’t necessarily figured out ‘what they what to be when they grow up’.



Q: How can young people progress backstage/behind the scenes?

- Huge emphasis on a lack of information provided by schools. **Career advice services are ineffective** and often more confusing than helpful.
- There is a general neglect towards job education and information on internships, apprenticeships, work experience and general awareness of varying career paths.

- Young people would benefit from learning how to **build networks**, make contacts, present themselves on social media and manage a public image.
- **Exchange cards** rather than just hand them out, **learn how to make meaningful contacts**.

Q: How can we increase local opportunities?

- There is still no strategic focus from schools on music opportunities. It is still considered 'less important' than other subjects e.g. history & maths and therefore, opportunities provided are often presented as fun but not necessarily educational or beneficial to the careers of young musicians.
- More focus should be given to educating young people on **what jobs are out there** for those interested and trained in the creative arts.

Q: How do progressions routes differ in music to that of more traditional career routes?

- The music industry is more or less unstandardized. There are no clear routes so you need to really get to know people and **direct your talent** to the correct people.
- Opportunities provided need to have more serious professional intent at the top of their agenda. Because of outlandish statements from points of authority claiming that many choose music because they don't really know what else to do, young people with serious ambition are suffering. Young musicians often cannot find a place to work with that takes music as seriously as them.
- Stay persistent and **"treat an internship like an extended interview"** – James Thomas, Hackney Music Service.



Advice from Ben Molen at Beatnik PR

We were joined by Ben Molen from Beatnik PR, who looks after artists such as Jaguar Skills and Guti. As part of our panel discussion, he offered Wired4Music members some valuable insight into how to get work in the music industry on all levels. His tips included:

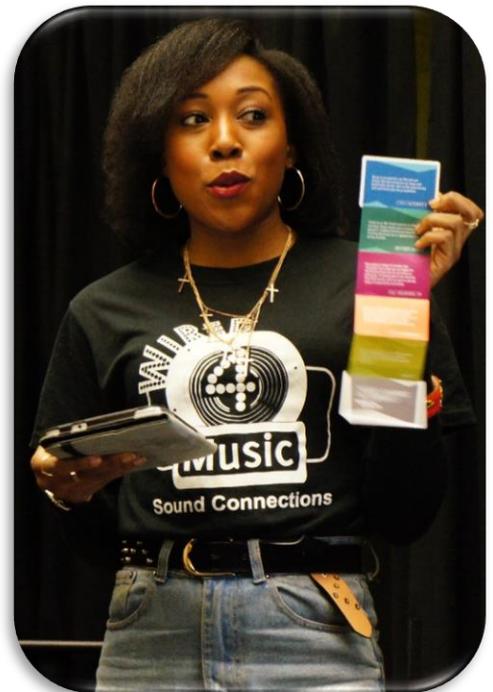
- **Do your research.** Make sure you know about the company you are applying to. Be specific, know who works there, who they represent and why you want to work for them.
- **Be persistent.** Really make the company know you want to work with THEM, prove you're not firing out CVs to companies you don't really know a lot about.
- "If you do it well you will find some who takes notice".
- **"Good music will always get found out"**.
- If you want to become a performer then you have to be performing constantly. If you **perform at least once a week** then you stand a greater chance of being seen by someone who can help you on your next steps.

Wired4Music member Delicia Edgar talked about the manifesto and what it means.

"Wired4Music opens up channels between decision and policy makers allowing us to shape our destinies". Music is a community in which we can all belong. Wired4Music advocates inclusivity through its theme of 'community'. "Let's all rise as one" – Delicia Edgar.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. We need to all work together. It has become clear that tasks and goals become easier when we accept the help of others. This works both ways and we need to be prepared to help others too. Many members and organisations believe in a holistic approach to music, advocating inclusive learning and networking, all of which are seen at Wired4Music.
2. There is a general lack of awareness with regards to career paths in the music industry. Many young people leave school not fully aware of what job options are out there. Schools need to widen their discussions about careers within music as well as educating young people on the subject itself. Often the lines are blurred when it comes to 'being a musician', with so many fields of work encompassing said title. After much discussion it has become apparent of a need for schools to create bespoke career advice services.



The intention being young aspiring musicians can receive tailored advice to what specifically they are interested in. In order to achieve this the vast array of career paths within the music industry need to be made readily available to schools. Not only must they become better informed but they must also be able to offer realistic and constructive advice on how to get into certain career paths.

Attendees

Wired members: 11

New young people: 3

Sound Connections staff: 3

Guests / organisations: 3

Who

Alex Irons W4M

Thomas Drake W4M

Helen Finnegan W4M

Sian Dicker W4M

Delicia Edgar W4M

Michael Olorunfemi W4M

Kaisle Grai W4M

Zelal Segin W4M

Marcos Melo W4M

Jess Loveless Sound Connections

Zoe Whitfield Sound Connections

Matt Wilder Brighter Sound

James Thomas Hackney Learning Trust

Ben Molen Beatnik PR

Aran Young person

Terrence Young person, representing Hackney Youth Music Forum