



Most Wanted: Music 2020 – the music industry raises its voice and unites against the crisis

- The seventh edition of Berlin's most forward-thinking music business conference successfully shifted online, broadcasting from Berlin's historic Alte Münze.
- More than 80 international expert speakers explored what's next for the music business, across an innovative mix of more than 30 talks, workshops, AMA sessions and panels.
- In a year of unprecedented disruption, MW:M20 sought solutions. Key themes were: support for the creative sector and how streaming platforms pay artists; music's role in the climate crisis and social change; reshaping live performance; and using new technology to empower musicians.
- MW:M20's key speakers include Prof. Maya Ackerman (WaveAI), Dr. Florian Drücke (BVMI), Christian Goiny (CDU), Michael Fritz (Viva con Agua), Madame Gandhi, Marek Lieberberg, Prof. Jens Michow (BDKV), Tatsuya Takahashi (KORG) and Beatie Wolfe.
- The music showcase MW:M Live returned and moved online, presenting 24 artists from across the world to an online audience of top-tier industry experts.
- The listen to berlin: Awards 2020 celebrated the city's vibrant musical scene, and spotlighted those who showed boldness and vision in the face of the crisis.
- Berlin embraced the ethos of MW:M20, with socially-distanced satellite events taking place all across the city.

MW:M20 successfully takes place online, with multiple livestreams and an international selection of speakers and artists

Berlin – November 9th – **Most Wanted: Music (MW:M)** overcame all of the obstacles that 2020 brought, successfully transitioning the conference to a digital format at short notice from November 3rd - 5th. *"The challenge of moving to an online space was a rewarding one,"* said **Stephan Hengst, Director of Most Wanted: Music**: *"I'm really proud of the whole MW:M team. Under immense pressure, they delivered a digital conference that looked fantastic, with expert speakers who initiated important change for the future of the industry."* The festival started confidently Wednesday morning with an electrifying performance by Berlin-based artist **VALENTIN** and was followed by a packed day of panels, workshops and discussions, watched by attendees via MW:M's virtual conference platform.

Survival during crisis: government support, and uniting to change the future

The COVID-19 pandemic dominated conversation, with many talks discussing how the industry can take greater control and find solutions to the problems posed by the crisis. In a frank discussion during the *Live Will Survive - But How?* session, legendary festival curator and promoter **Marek Lieberberg** was critical of the support offered to creatives, saying that, *"only one billion euros of the 25 billion in bridging aid has actually reached the recipients."* He had similarly strong opinions about NEUSTART KULTUR, the rescue and future programme of the Federal Government: *"The money did not reach the recipients at all. We are in a bureaucratic labyrinth here."*



In *Musik 2030*, a panel focused on what happens next, **Christian Goiny, Spokesman for Budgetary Policy, CDU Parliamentary Group in the Berlin House of Representatives** stressed the importance of supporting musical creatives: *"Culture is our heavy industry! [...] No federal state is as dependent on culture as Berlin. We must make our voice heard nationwide."* He also appealed to the Berlin and Federal Governments: *"We need programmes which last at least until the end of next year: more than just liquidity support, and which are predictable, reliable and take account of self-employed individuals."*

Jeannine Koch, Director of re:publica and future Chairwomen of media:net berlinbrandenburg, proposed establishing a Berlin Cultural Think Tank for the entire sector, where politicians and creative industries unite in an interdisciplinary search for solutions: *"We must gather all our strength, keep the business running – but still find solutions for the future."*

The second day of the conference saw the formation of a united response. During a **MW:M Satellite** event, a new specialist group for the Berlin event industry was founded within the Berlin Music Commission. Consisting of around 30 founding members – including festival, tour and concert organisers, agencies, theatres, halls, clubs, and self-employed service providers – the group aims to influence political decisions that affect the industry at both state and federal level, in collaboration with networks from other areas affected by the current corona crisis.

Olaf Kretschmar, CEO and Chairman of the Berlin Music Commission (BMC), said: *"Lifetime achievements are crumbling into dust and livelihoods are heavily endangered – our industry is in a disastrous situation. We now have to compensate for the damage and at the same time find new ways out of the crisis. **The clock is ticking: How we position ourselves today will significantly change our chances in the near future.** The corona pandemic may separate us physically, but it also unites us in our joint search for agile solutions and brings the whole industry closer together. This year's digital edition of Most Wanted: Music was all about "Togetherness" and provided an important and safe platform to jointly empower and unite the industry during the crisis."*

Artists and their partners demand more transparency and fair payment models from streaming platforms

Meanwhile, **music industry analyst Cherie Hu** spoke with media lawyer, music and sports manager **Dr. Olaf Meinking**, who described his three main criticisms of the current streaming system: *"a lack of transparency within the accounting system, ... the number of manipulations in the system – and we would prefer a user-centric or user-time-centric billing system. This would be fairer."*

Cherie Hu observed that if Spotify starts to offer more services – such as its recent experimental 'Discovery Mode' – it may start to *"look more like a 'Facebook for the music industry' than an independent platform."* **Olaf Meinking** agreed that this could mark the start of the streaming giant, *"becoming a marketing and services provider."*

Dr. Florian Drücke (Chairman and CEO, BVMI) spoke out in favour of a common European digital responsibility, and against the proposed German separate path of implementation of the **EU Copyright Directive**. He appealed to politicians to, *"finally emerge from their 'helpless amazement', and to ensure partnerships on an equal footing."*



The role of music in the climate crisis and how the industry can drive social change

Social worker, artist, and cultural curator **Olad Aden** spoke passionately on the value of Hip Hop as an educational and community-oriented tool: *"[Hip Hop] is an amazing opportunity for us educators to reach out to young people [...] It's a way to have conversations that go deeper. More educators, teachers and social workers need to realise what they can do with this artform."*

In the *Think Global, Act Social* session, **Henry Ohanga** of the **Octopizzo Foundation**, cited the US presidential candidates' use of musicians as cultural catalysts: *"both candidates are going to musicians to help them get at young people. That should show us how powerful art is [...] the way to reach the most people on the ground is through art."*

Music pioneer **Beatie Wolfe** presented her immersive multimedia project "From Green to Red", the audio visualisation of human influence on the planet, based on NASA data going back 800,000 years. Wolfe also spoke about the impact of music technology on our relationship with music.

New technology empowering musicians and the future of live performances

The influence of technology on music was addressed by some of music-tech's most respected pioneers. **Tatsuya Takahashi**, CEO of **KORG Germany**, and designer of iconic electronic instruments, delivered a fascinating solo talk, titled *Music Instrument Design for the Powers of Ten*. He showed off some unique experimental instruments, and discussed his design philosophy, how he keeps ideas fresh through continual innovation, and his unabashed love of physical instruments.

According to award-winning AI expert **Prof. Maya Ackerman**, CEO of **WaveAI**, technology enables people to become more human. *"Popular musicians depersonalise music so that people can relate to it. The music I hear people create with our AI system is a lot more personal [...] it's wonderful that people are expressing themselves in this way."*

Hybrid artist **Portrait XO**, who also performed at **MW:M Live**, believes that AI will not replace musicians – and that it will augment creativity: *"Crafting a song based on human experience is not something a machine can do. Lyrics and stories are formed through personal experiences."*

listen to berlin: Awards recognise resilience during crisis, and expanded MW:M Live returns

Most Wanted: Music 2020 kicked off with the fifth **listen to berlin: Awards**, which celebrated the diverse Berlin music scene with nine awards – including a special **Business Prize**, which was given to the global and solidary streaming project **United We Stream**, in recognition of their innovative approach to helping Berlin club culture during the coronavirus crisis. The final day of MW:M20 also saw the return of the music showcase event **MW:M Live**, in an expanded format, with 24 international performances – some broadcast live from Alte Münze Berlin, and some streamed from elsewhere, including **TUYS** from Luxembourg, **Monako** from Hamburg and Montreal, **J-Pag** from Rostock, **LIN** from Mainz, **Platon Karataev** from Hungary, **Super Duty Tough Work** from Canada and **Kid Be Kid** from Berlin.



Most Wanted: Music is an event organised by the **Berlin Music Commission** on behalf of the **Senate Department for Economics, Energy and Enterprises**.

MW:M Live is the showcase event of **Most Wanted: Music** – run by the **Berlin Music Commission**. It is supported by **Initiative Musik gGmbH** with project funds from the **Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media** and the **Senate Department for Economics, Energy and Public Enterprises**.



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