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As told to René Kladzyk, 654 words.

Tags: Music, Performance, Success, Money, Production, Income.

Help us build the future music industry we want and need

Announcing a survey to gather insights on how to make the music industry better.

We all know the music industry is a living creature that is simultaneously brutal and beautiful. As a performing artist myself, I vacillate between adoring and despising it on a near daily basis, and I'm certain that I'm not alone in that tangled relationship. From the broken artist-funding model of ad-driven music streaming platforms to rampant gender and race-based inequity (particularly among the upper echelon of the industry's gatekeepers), the music industry has a lot of room for improvement – but what might that look like, in practice?

Several months ago, after becoming frustrated by the perceived dearth of women-run record labels, I began compiling a list of all the music industry organizations that had cis women and trans people* in leadership positions. My initial hope in creating the Future Music Industry list was both to prove to myself that music industry organizations run by cis women and trans people were out there, and also to offer a rolodex-like resource for other artists to find and work with these organizations. Since its conception the list has taken on a life of its own, growing to contain over 400 music industry organizations across 13 sectors of the industry. At the same time, I've seen other similar resources popping up – like the new POC in Audio Directory – which is further proof that there are a great many people out there who are not only ready, but capable of transforming the music industry into a less insidious beast.

As the Future Music Industry list has grown, so has my desire to find ways we can all construct a more fair, inclusive, and sustainable music industry, within which creative people can truly thrive. With this shared aim, The Creative Independent (TCI) and I have joined forces to visualize what a better music industry can and will look like through an industry-wide survey. That's where you come in. TCI and I have put together two surveys – one for musicians and performing artists, and one for music industry

professionals – in order to hear from you, the people who actually live, work, and play in the music industry. We hope you can spend ~15 minutes to participate in the survey by **October 15**. After collecting your input, we plan to synthesize your thoughts on what is needed most, and identify the most important and strategic areas for transformation.

Your participation in this survey will directly inform the creation of a report focused on “How to build the future music industry we want and need.” And on a more personal level, I think it’s so important to individually grapple with these difficult questions about the terrain within which we work. Attempting to create solutions for our creative community at large, while honestly reflecting on our own successes and failures, provides a real opportunity for growth – at both the individual and industry-wide scale. So I hope that, beyond contributing your ideas to our report, your participation in this survey also offers you a helpful space to reflect upon the environment you now inhabit, and how you might choose to navigate it moving forward.

- Take the musician/performing artist survey
- Take the industry professional survey

Thanks so much for sharing your insights and participating in this project. If you can, help us make it as impactful as possible by sharing it with your music-industry colleagues.

– Musician, performer, and Future Music Industry List builder, René Kladzyk

** Note: I use the word “trans” as an umbrella term to include transgender men and women, non-binary, GNC, and genderqueer individuals. By saying “cis women and trans people,” I am endeavoring to describe a group that includes everyone except cisgender men. The language of gender identity is deeply loaded with meaning and sometimes highly contested. I welcome suggestions for how I may improve the inclusivity and precision of my language in describing this group.*

Name

René Kladzyk

Vocation

Musician, Writer, Perfumer, Cultural geographer

Fact

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