

Interview with

Thomas Brooman - Co-founder Womad

Thomas Brooman is a festival organizer and promoter of music, best known for his role as co-founder and artistic director of the WOMAD (World of Music Arts & Dance) festival organization. He has programmed and collaborated in the production of more than 145 womad festivals and events in 24 countries and islands all over the world until 2008.

Thomas is also a co-founder of Real World Records, a label established in 1987 and one of the members who coined the term world music 1987.

WM Oasis - You are a co founder of the real world records. What does the name real world record really mean in this context, since the world music concept was already founded?

WM Oasis - In 1980 you were one of the founders of womad; you did already have a vision of a multicultural music. A few years later came the name world music, a label to make order in the record shops. This is a name that has been interpreted in many different ways. Some people even think it's a discrimination of the music from "outside ", what do you think about that?

WM Oasis - The name "world music" have create order in the shelves in the shops around the world, but artists like Ray Lema don't want to classify his music as world but Jazz. In witch shelve you think we should place his music?

WM Oasis - How do you see the evolution of world music today?

WM Oasis - Rai music from Algeria had its glory days in the 80's and 90's with Khaled, Mami, Zahouania, but seems slow now and no new artists is emerging now. Why do you think it's like that?

WM Oasis - On internet i found a lot of different answers that make me little bit confused . whose idea with womad and who are the few people who have in the reality been involved from the start? What was the role of Peter Gabriel?

Thomas B - Before Womad became Womad, as it were, the whole project began with an idea from Peter Gabriel. He had the thought of organizing a concert with one or more artists from 'somewhere else' in the world (most probably Africa) together with one or more sympathetic western artists who would encourage an audience to attend. At the start, there was no clear idea of a festival. Discussion of the idea began in January 1981 at a meeting between a whole group of people who Peter had invited to attend. We had several meetings in Bath during January and February 1981, as far as I remember. The first two meetings were attended by Peter, myself and my friends from The Bristol Recorder (Martin Melbourne, Jonathan Arthur and Stephen Pritchard), Jumbo Van Reenan (who was with Virgin Records' Frontline Records at the time), Mark Kidel (film-maker and journalist) and Toni Basil (pop star and

