



Day 1 Photo Recap: Mondo.NYC Conference & Music Festival, Oct 10-13 in New York City

October 11, 2022 (Brooklyn, NY) - The 8th annual [Mondo.NYC Music & Tech Business Conference & Showcase Festival](#) wrapped its first day on October 10th with programming that included the first-ever **AI Hub**, presented by SingularityNET; **The Music Tech Generation** panel series, presented by SoundExchange; and a fireside chat with Kobalt Chairman & Founder **Willard Ahdriz**. In addition, the first night of Mondo.NYC artist showcases kicked off at Drom with AI-human hybrid band **Desdemona's Dream**, The Knitting Factory at Baker Falls with headliner **Paytra**, and online on the Mondo.NYC [YouTube channel](#). More details and images from the first day can be found below with full-size images available for [download here](#).

The conference will continue today (October 11) through Friday (October 13), with today's program starting at 10am. Highlights will include the 8th annual "RIAA Presents..." music policy series, the 5th annual **Covington Presents Getting Physical with Music Tech** series, the 4th annual "Future of Music Creation & Production" series curated by Daniel Rowland of LANDR, and the presentation of DiMA and MusicWatch's "Living the Stream" consumer study.

If you would like to attend Mondo.NYC as press, please let me know; it's not too late to add you to the list!



From left: Ian Holder, Michaël Brun, Jem Aswad, Dhruv Chopra, and Adriana Sein. Photo by Mike Shaw.

The State of the Music Business

Mondo's "The Business of Music" program kicked off in the Grand Ballroom with a panel led by **Jem Aswad** (Executive Music Editor, Variety) and featuring representatives from throughout the music industry ecosystem. Aswad went from panelist to panelist for details on their journey into the music business before diving into current trends in their side of the industry. **Michaël Brun** (DJ & Producer) explained how he makes money as an artist, both upfront via publishing deals and on the backend with his extensive solo touring and regular block party events featuring special guests. **Ian Holder** (Senior Vice President, Creative, Sony Music Publishing) explained how his goal of becoming a major label A&R rep actually landed him in music publishing, and explained what he looks for in potential new signings (and what he saw in a young Jack Harlow). **Adriana Sein** (SVP & Global Head of Artist & Market Development, ADA Worldwide) then explained how her company places strong value on educating indie artists and labels so they can grow their business, and **Dhruv Chopra** (Founder & CEO, Elsewhere & PopGun Presents) closed the panel by discussing how his Elsewhere venue survived the Covid-19 pandemic and how he sees a continuing trend toward "loneliness" that can be helped with new tech solutions. For example, he runs a Discord server for his venue that allows fans to not only make plans to meet up but also create an online community through general discussion of music, movies, TV, and more.

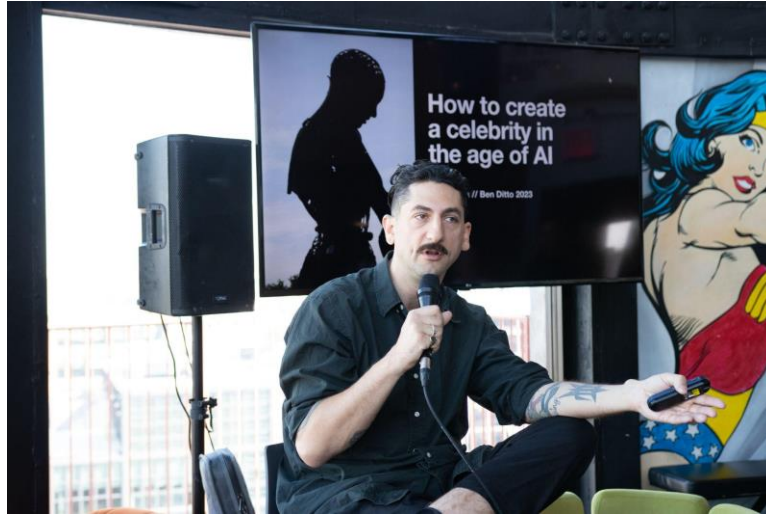


From left: Andrew Bergman, Tatiana Cirisano, John F. Lambros, and Dan Demole. Photo by Mike Shaw.

Industry Changes: From Selling Songs to Buying Services

Moderator **Andrew Bergman** (Chief Executive Officer, Downtown Music Holdings) led panelists **Tatiana Cirisano** (Senior Music Industry Analyst & Consultant, MIDiA), **John F. Lambros** (Co-Head US Technology Group, Houlihan Lokey), and **Dan Demole** (Co-Founder, Slip.stream) in this discussion on the creator economy, how music and tech work together, and what the future might look like. Cirisano explained how it is easier than ever before for the average person to engage in music making, whether simply speeding up a song to use in a TikTok post or creating on a more serious level, and noted that the amount of creators releasing music straight onto social media is growing at double the rate of those who release onto streaming. Lambros discussed how private equity and venture capitalist firms have been the prime drivers behind the creator economy, and how tech continues to help make the music industry much

more global by partnering with the right entrepreneurs who have unique ideas about where this industry is going. Demole stressed the point that people no longer just listen to music, they *use* music, and that all creators including gamers, vloggers, TikTokers, and beyond should be celebrated for how they are helping to drive the industry forward.



Ben Ditto. Photo by Gabriela Oliveros.

How to Manufacture a Popstar in the Era of Artificial Intelligence

In the Arlo Hotel’s rooftop Water Tower space, **Ben Ditto** (Creative Director, YAYA Labs) — who’s worked with Kim Petras, the 1975, and Grimes, among others — discussed his development of the **Desdemona** robot and the process of turning her into a musician and a celebrity. (The robot had a bigger moment in the spotlight later on, during an evening performance by the band Desdemona’s Dream at Drom in the East Village.) “It’s hard for people to relate to AI unless it’s embodied,” Ditto explained, “and it’s hard to relate to that embodiment unless it’s familiar. And so robotics becomes important.” His talk covered the practical and moral issues of AI celebrity as well as its possibilities, including the concept of making LLM (Large Language Model) hallucinations part of the human creative process. “I’ve loved Garfield for 40 years,” Ditto noted. “I don’t know why, he’s a fat orange cartoon cat. But clearly we can have meaningful connections with cartoon characters — so we can do the same with robots.” A brief demo of Desdemona followed, with SingularityNET CEO **Ben Goertzel** accompanying the robot on synth as she recited the words to “Like a Wasp, or the Singularity Will Not Be Centralized.” Both the song’s lyrics and music were partly AI-generated.



From left: Willard Ahdritz and Jem Aswad. Photo by Mike Shaw.

A Conversation with Kobalt Chairman & Founder Willard Ahdritz

Jem Aswad (Executive Music Editor, Variety) sat down with Chairman & Founder of Kobalt Music **Willard Ahdritz** for an intimate interview detailing his career history and the core values that Kobalt upholds in order to protect and empower creators. Ahdritz explained that a major challenge currently facing the industry is that 40% of the money being collected by performing rights organizations has no clear path of where it should go, which results in leaving a lot of funds undistributed to rights holders. Kobalt, however, has 100% clean data in their system, allowing them to maximize efficiency, accuracy, and transparency for the songwriters, artists, publishers, and rights holders they represent, which currently includes over 40% of the top 100 songs and albums in the US and the UK. “Aligned interests give higher returns,” said Ahdritz. “If you really invest in buying data you know who to pay, and that’s a fundamental concept.” Kobalt also recently launched AMRA, the only global digital society focused on removing the frictions and spillage in the last mile of paying songwriters and rights holders.



From left: David Hughes, Dr. Martin Clancy, and Albhy Galuten. Photo by Mike Shaw.

AI: Opportunity or Apocalypse?

The conversation on AI and music spilled out of the Water Tower and into the Great Ballroom with this panel, which began with **Albhy Galuten** (Senior Fellow, Intertrust Technologies) discussing the good and the bad of the technology. Positive tools for the music business include the ability to create songs for sync; applications to speed up songwriting, production, mixing, and mastering; stem separation capabilities, including the recent announcement that John Lennon's voice was extracted from an old demo to allow the creation of a final Beatles track; and translation services. Threats include questions over creator revenue and AI-generated cloned voices. Galuten and the panelists then discussed several possible solutions to embrace the positives and eliminate the threats, including **Dr. Martin Clancy** (Founder & CEO, AI:OK) and **David Hughes'** (Principal, Hughes Strategic) proposed AI:OK initiative. This would create a seal of approval for music and other media that was created with AI in an ethical manner, with any content used for AI training properly licensed, the consent of any humans whose voices have been cloned, and the creative involvement of a human in the process, who should also be entitled to compensation from their work.



Bob McLynn (left) and Michael Huppe. Photo by Mike Shaw.

The Future of the Music Business with SoundExchange President & CEO Michael Huppe and Crush Music co-founder and partner Bob McLynn

SoundExchange's "The Music Tech Generation" panel series began with a fireside chat between **Michael Huppe** (President & Chief Executive Officer, SoundExchange) and **Bob McLynn** (Co-Founder & Partner, CRUSH MUSIC) that touched on a wide range of issues affecting artist promotion. McLynn began by explaining how there are two main factors that they look at to determine success: streaming numbers and ticket sales. He also addressed the growing trend of music catalog sales, stating that he has seen more reluctance in younger artists to do so. Given the rise of TikTok, many of these younger artists blow up without any deals in place and begin making money while simultaneously owning all aspects of their work, making them more apprehensive to relinquish control. In addition, McLynn explained his company's successes in appealing to superfans, particularly with a special Fall Out Boy merch offer just for Spotify top listeners, and Weezer's embrace of NFTs. "There's an artistic way to do anything," he said, later adding, "business should be creative as well."



From left: Zack O'Malley Greenburg, Natalia Nastaskin, Jennifer Newman Sharpe, Anjula Singh, and Roneil Rumburg. Photo by Mike Shaw.

Breaking the Mold: Business Models of the Future

In this panel, moderator **Zack O'Malley Greenburg** (Author, "Empire State of Mind") spoke with panelists **Jennifer Newman Sharpe** (General Counsel and Head of Legal & Business Affairs, Exceleation Music), **Anjula Singh** (CFO & COO, SoundExchange), **Roneil Rumburg** (Co-Founder & CEO, Audius), and **Natalia Nastaskin** (Partner and Chief Content Officer, Primary Wave Music) about several areas currently impacting business models including the state of streaming, the monetization of superfans, tracking intellectual property (IP), and more. Sharpe discussed how DSPs are promising that indie artists won't be left behind in the streaming world but have yet to give them a proper seat at the table to take their input into finding a model that

works for everyone. Nastaskin explained how we're currently in the era of the creator and the creative, with so much more opportunity now than there was 20 years ago. For example, Burt Bacharach's catalog, which is administered by Primary Wave, reached an entirely new and younger audience when Doja Cat released "Paint the Town Red," which samples Bacharach's "Walk On." Rumburg discussed how the ability to implement free market pricing could help "hyperserve" an artist's most engaged fans and give them an enhanced experience digitally, for example offering an exclusive track to fans for the price of \$100 if an artist determines that is the song's proper value. And all panelists agreed on the importance of tracking your IP and making sure you know where it's being used at all times, as well as finding and working with the right partners who will ensure you're getting paid from all areas.



From left: Janet Adams, ARTZ, Gabriel Axel Montes, Doc Holliday, and Jamie Gale. Photo by Gabriela Oliveros.

AI-Generated Music vs. Human: Can We Tell the Difference?

SingularityNET began wrapping up their AI program in the Water Tower with this discussion of the difference between AI-generated and human-generated music. Host **Janet Adams** (COO, SingularityNET) began by showing a video of Dolly Parton's "Jolene" performed by Holly Herndon's Holly+ AI program before asking audience members if they could feel the emotion in the track. Panelists **Gabriel Axel Montes** (Founder & CEO, Neuralprint & Pathform), **Jamie Gale** (Founder, Jamie Gale Music), and **Doc Holliday** (Producer, Composer, Vocal/Performance Coach) then began examining why so many could. Gale explained how singers like Otis Redding and Ozzy Osbourne are known because of the imperfections in their voice, and said that AI models must be trained to capture imperfections to capture emotion. According to Holliday, it's all about accumulating data to help integrate the AI, and Axel Montes concurred, saying that since machine learning is just statistics, we need to gather more statistics on human imperfection. "Keep an open mind on this thing so we can impact the world positively," said Holliday.



From left: Sean Glover, Alex Mitchell, Carrie Able, Simmi Singh, and Megh Vakharia. Photo by Mike Shaw.

A Whole New Ecosystem: Creating & Releasing New Music with AI

Tuesday's journey into all things AI concluded with **Sean Glover** (Director of Industry Relations, SoundExchange) leading a discussion with **Carrie Able** (Musician & Metaverse Pioneer, Multidisciplinary Artist), **Megh Vakharia** (Co-Founder & CEO, SymphonyOS), **Alex Mitchell** (Co-Founder & CEO, Boomy Corporation), and **Simmi Singh** (Chief Product Officer, Hook) about current trends and best practices when it comes to AI music. Vakharia discussed how every phase of the creation and release process can be streamlined and augmented by AI, saving time for everyone involved, with Singh adding that because AI is still in the early stages, artists can use this as an opportunity to lean in and identify what problems AI can solve for them. Able emphasized the benefits of expanded inclusion and accessibility that AI is helping make possible, for example by making it easier to produce realistic 3-D live streams with less tools needed. Mitchell pointed out that all of the terminology surrounding AI needs to be more clearly defined in order for laws and policies to properly catch up with technology and provide guidance for everyone. The panel ended with a reminder to focus on the "3 C's" - consent, credit, and compensation, in order to protect creators as AI progresses in the music industry.

[Registration for Mondo.NYC is available here.](#)

About Mondo.NYC:

Mondo.NYC is an international festival and global business summit of and for music and tech industry insiders and innovators, emerging artists, and their fans. Mondo connects fans and creators in a shared mission of empowering artists and advancing ideas in an ever-changing music business and technology landscape. Founded in 2016 by Joanne Abbot Green and Bobby Haber, the event and its year-round content programming have brought together thousands of industry professionals, artists, and fans both in-person and online.

Please note all Mondo.NYC 2023 events are subject to change without notice.

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