

## Interview with

# Nick Gold - World circuit

World Music record producer and World Circuit label owner. Nick is the man behind Vuena Vista social Club Project & Ali farka Touré

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**WM oasis:** You have accepted the invitation of Roger Armstrong and Ben Mandelson to the meeting in Empress of Russia. What was your first reaction about the name that has been chosen and were you among those who voted for the name "world music"?

**I VOTED FOR IT AND THOUGHT IT THE BEST CHOICE**

**WM oasis:** “Local Music from Out There” is the phrase that Ian Anderson uses to describe world music. This phrase has got many interrogations, what is your opinion about it?

**I LIKE THIS EXPRESSION**

**WM oasis:** Have you your own definition about this music, except the description that Ian Anderson proposes to the people?

IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THE MODEST AIMS OF THE MEETING AND THE NAME – JUST TO PROVIDE A DIVIDER FOR A RECORD STORE BIN. IT WAS NEVER INTENDED TO BECOME A DEEP PHILOSOPHICAL/CATEGORICAL EXPRESSION APPLYING TO ALL MUSIC FROM OUTSIDE THE ANGLO-AMERICAN WORLD. THE WORDS ‘OUT THERE’ MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THIS IS A PHRASE DESIGNED TO BE USED IN COMMUNICATING WITH AMERICAN/EUROPEAN MUSIC CONSUMERS TO MAKE IT EASY FOR THEM TO LOCATE RECORDS.

**WM oasis :** Ian Andersson told me recently that “Local music not from here” was just a joke from the Marseille Womex in the late 1990s when somebody was asking “What is World Music in Borneo? How can you interpret these two sentences that people use to confuse “Local Music from Out There” and “Local music not from here

THEY SOUND TO ME LIKE THE SAME THING. AGAIN, I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THAT THE HEAVY SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PHRASE ‘WORLD MUSIC’ HAS BEEN IMPOSED FROM THE OUTSIDE AND WAS NEVER INTENDED BY THOSE WHO INITIATED IT.

**WM oasis:** Your label World Circuit, best known for the winning Buena Vista Social Club album, which is the biggest selling world music album of all time, this has led to the phenomenal rise in popularity of Cuban music. How was this success interpreted in Havana and have it helped the situation of Cuban artists?

N/A – BUT I CAN ANSWER BASED ON CUBANISMO’S SUCCESS – MOST CUBANS FELT THAT BVSC AND CUBANISMO WERE JOKES AND HAD NO RELEVANCE TO MODERN CUBAN POPULAR MUSIC. THIS IS OFTEN THE CASE, THE WORLD OVER AND HAS NO REAL BEARING ON THE QUESTION OF THE ‘WORLD MUSIC’ MARKET IN AMERICA/EUROPE.

**WM oasis:** World Circuit’s first taste of major success was Buena Vista. What was the secret behind the success? Is it still the best seller record for ever in the category world music and how many copies have been sold?

**WM oasis :**Mali have developed to become the world music meeting point with the ”festival du desert”, and Mali has developed to be one of the biggest exporters of music this last 15 years. Will the troubles in that country affect the relations between artists who want to see Mali unified and those who are fighting for the independence of Azawad, like Tinariwen?

I ALWAYS FOUND THE DESERT FESTIVAL A BIT SILLY WITH ALL THE JAMMING WITH EUROPEAN CELEBRETIES, AND PREFERRED THE FESTIVAL OF THE RIVER NIGER IN SEGOU.

**WM oasis:** You have been asked a question by the magazine Billboard about the expression "world music", you replied: *I 'don't like it really. At the time 1987, it was coined to serve a very specific purpose, which was to get a category into record shops.* Do you still have the same opinion or do you think that it was a positive thing that happened in 1987?

I THINK IT WAS VERY POSITIVE. SO MANY MUSICIANS HAVE SOLD SO MANY RECORDS AND TOURED THE WORLD UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF THIS TERM. THE FINANCIAL EFFECT ON TRADITIONAL MUSICIANS HAS BEEN VERY POSITIVE.