

Interview

Rikki Stein - Producer, Fela's manager

Rikki Stein is the man often we associate to Fela with who he did have a long career as his manager, primarily the man who set up Jimi Hendrix's first European tour, managed the Moody Blues, and many other world music groups like les ballets Africains. He has also been involved, since its inception, with the Broadway musical, Fela!, depicting the life and times of the Nigerian icon. Also, most recently, as Associate Producer of the definitive Fela documentary, Finding Fela, directed by Oscar-winning filmmaker, Alex Gibney. Rikki is the man behind many artists and festivals on several continents.

WM Oasis - Martin Meissonier (the French producer) who I have interviewed last year, think that the Fela's tour 1981 in France was the start of the expansion of the African music and world music in France. Do you agree with him and what are the factors which contributed to the emergence of the African music in France and England?

Rikki Stein - [I THINK THAT IS CERTAINLY TRUE. THAT, TOGETHER WITH THE LENGTHY ARTICLES THAT APPEARED IN THE MAGAZINE ACTUEL](#)

WM Oasis - Who were the first artists who have emerged in London scenes in the 80's and when did world music begin to be heard in England?

Rikki Stein - [FELA WAS CERTAINLY ONE, SUNNY ADE WAS ANOTHER THERE WERE ALSO ATTEMPTS TO PROMOTE GHANAIAN HIGHLIFE BUT EVERY TIME A TOUR WAS PUT TOGETHER THE ARTISTS ALL RAN AWAY. HIGHLIFE IS THE WORLD'S BEST KEPT SECRET!](#)

WM Oasis - Beatles have contributed to discover Ravi Shankar and the music of India to the western audience, but the venue of Paul McCartney hasn't got a same response, what are the reasons?

Rikki Stein - [NOT REALLY SURE WHAT YOU MEAN.](#)

WM Oasis-Ravi Shankar was grateful for the venue of the Beatles to India that helped him and the music of India to be known internationally, but the venue of Paul was interpreted differently. Fela have been accusing Paul for stealing their music. Tony Allen claims that

James Brown sent his arranger, David Mathews, to check and he picked a lot from Fela when they came to Nigeria. How can you interpret these two cases? What was the reason of the Nigerian suspicions?

Rikki Stein - JUST PARANOIA FOR THE MOST PART. SEE PAUL'S EXPLANATION.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E4Jnl4jERqE>

WM Oasis-Francis Kertekian and Mamadou Konté have played a crucial role in the promotion of the African artists in France through their companies Yaba productions and Africa fete. Have you been involved to promote African artists in England too and what were you relation with Francis Kertekian, except that you have both works with Fela?

Rikki Stein - FRANCIS AND I WERE (AND STILL ARE) FRIENDS AND PARTNERS IN FELA'S MANAGEMENT. MAMADOU KONTE HAS DONE A LOT TO PROMOTE AFRICAN MUSIC IN FRANCE.

WM Oasis - The term world music has been launched by some English promoters and labels companies 1987. This term has been subject of many interpretations, what are according to you the reasons and how you definite the world music?

Rikki Stein - I'VE NEVER BEEN COMFORTABLE WITH THIS TERM AND FEEL THAT IT HAS SERVED TO 'GHETTOISE' MUSIC FROM VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD.. AT THE SAME TIME, THOUGH, IT HAS SERVED TO OPEN THE MARKET FOR ALL KINDS OF MUSIC THAT MIGHT OTHERWISE NEVER HAVE SEEN THE LIGHT OF DAY

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