

Focus on The Netherlands

Throughout its history, The Netherlands have always been in close contact with the rest of the world. That is no great feat with a country the size of a stamp. With a country so small it's perfectly normal to cross ones borders, as the Dutchies have a long tradition of doing. Sandwiched in between Belgium, Germany and the North Sea, with the United Kingdom just a short hop away and a history of French occupation, The Netherlands is at the crossroads of the German, French and British world and has its eyes on the outside world.

Welcome to the Netherlands

With a population of almost 17 million people The Netherlands is one of the most densely populated places on earth. But a lot of people on a tiny speck of land means a lot of contact between people with different backgrounds. The Netherlands have a long standing tradition of welcoming visitors from all over the world, best illustrated by the biggest harbor in Europe (Rotterdam), an airport with excellent connections to major cities worldwide (Schiphol airport in Amsterdam) and a centuries long tradition of welcoming immigrants from all walks of life (Amsterdam). No wonder the Netherlands have always been a magnet for immigrants, visitors and outside influences. Combined with the influences of former colonies like Suriname and Indonesia and immigrants from Morocco and Turkey this has resulted in a thriving cultural climate where dozens of cultures meet and cultural exchanges are part of everyday life.

Clogs, mills and cheese

As far as associations go, the Netherlands have long been associated with tulips, windmills, wooden shoes and cheese. When younger people think about the Netherlands, they might think about coffeeshops, the Red Light District, painters Rembrandt & Van Gogh and Heineken beer. But in those cute windmills and those gorgeous traditional Amsterdam houses a lot of music is (and was) made. Once, the Dutch navy sailed out to explore the world, with Abel Tasman, Peter Stuyvesant en Willem Barentsz leading the way, now it's Dutch music that explores the corners of the earth. The Netherlands have long been known for the chart topping hits of Golden Earring (hit: Radar Love), The George Baker Selection (Little Green Bag, Una Paloma Blanca), Focus (Hocus Pocus) or Shocking Blue (Venus). In recent years this has changed to a different image of Dutch music, thanks to singer Caro Emerald, violin player André Rieu and the massive worldwide success of Dutch dance music. Ever since 2 Unlimited and Vengaboys hit the charts in the early nineties Dutch dance music has made a worldwide impact on the charts. The Dutch love for dance music led to the invention of a new genre in dance music that was massively popular: gabber music, a faster and more aggressive form of techno music. Nowadays, producers/DJ's like Armin van Buuren, Afrojack, Fedde LeGrand, Martin Garrix, The Partysquad, Ferry Corsten, Chuckie, Laidback Luke, Hardwell, Sander van Doorn, Nicky Romero, Dash Berlin, Noisia, Nobody Beats The Drum, Black Sun Empire and Tiësto are massively popular all over the globe, including that country every musician dreams of conquering: the United States. And let's not forget gothic metal. Bands and artists like Within Temptation, Epica, Delain, ReVamp (their singer Floor Jansen is also the lead singer of Finnish band Nightwish) and The Gathering continue to attract thousands of fans to their shows, from Norway to Chile. They are just a few examples of Dutch musicians eager to explore the world and win the hearts and minds of new fans.

The flying Dutchman

But it's not only Dutch dance music, gothic metal and André Rieu that are praised worldwide. In the late eighties and early nineties bands like Urban Dance Squad, Bettie Serveert, Herman Brood, The Ex and The Nits all showed Dutch musicians that it was

possible to be coming from a small European country, make the music you want to make without concessions to radio or chart formats and still be able to find your audience in European and North-America. Bands like Within Temptation, Epica, Daryll-Ann, Voicst, Pete Philly & Perquisite, The Gathering, Anneke van Giersbergen, are just some of the bands and artists that conquered ground abroad without artistic compromise. A newer generation of bands like Project Bongo, Shaking Godspeed, Vanderbuyst, Mister and Mississippi and Town Of Saints are just a few examples of young bands touring abroad and gaining fans in the process. The last eight consecutive years the export value of Dutch music has increased to a total of 130 million euro. A few of the elements that contribute to success of the Dutch music of the last 25 years are mentioned here.

<http://www.andrierieu.com/>
<http://www.nits.nl/nits/home.html>
<http://www.hermanbrood.nl/>
<http://www.theex.nl/news.html>
<http://www.within-temptation.com/>
<http://epica.nl/>
<http://www.daryll-ann.nl/>
<http://www.voicst.com/>
<http://www.petephillyandperquisite.com/>
<http://gathering.nl/>
<http://www.annekevangiersbergen.com/>
<https://nl-nl.facebook.com/ProjectBongo>
<http://www.shakinggodspeed.com/>
<http://www.vanderbuyst.com/>
<http://www.misterandmississippi.nl/en/>
<http://townofsaints.bandcamp.com/>

An unrivaled amount of clubs, festivals and live-venues

Despite its size, it's hard not to stumble over a club, festival or venue for live music. From comfy clubs, via distinctive concert venues and award-winning festivals to the enormous Arena stadium: there's a venue and festival for every kind of music. With so much on offer music lovers are used to cherry picking. The result? Top class events, venues and festivals with world class line-ups and facilities unmatched in other countries. As a rule, every year Dutch festivals are shortlisted for the European Festival Awards (presented at the Dutch showcase festival Eurosonic Noorderslag) and have won multiple awards. Festivals like Lowlands, Mysteryland, Roadburn, Sensation and the longest continues music festival in the world Pinkpop are just a few festivals that are both well-known and attract people from all over the world. In fact, the Amsterdam edition of Sensation drew so many international visitors (12.000 from 71 different countries) the festival went abroad, to 22 cities in Asia, Australia and South-America.

<http://festival.eurosonic-noorderslag.nl>
<http://lowlands.nl/>
<http://www.mysteryland.nl/>
<http://www.roadburn.com/>
<http://www.sensation.com/netherlands/en/>
<http://www.pinkpop.nl/2014/>

There's (a) room for everyone

It's not only festivals that attract music lovers by the droves. A widespread network of professional venues ensures people never have to travel far to see a top class band or artist perform. Paradiso in Amsterdam is perhaps the most famous club of the country, but venues like the brand new Tivoli/Vredenburg in Utrecht, Melkweg in Amsterdam, Vera in Groningen, Rotown in Rotterdam, Hedon in Zwolle, 013 in Tilburg, Effenaar in Eindhoven and Paard van Troje in The Hague are just a few examples of venues that will make even the most blasé music lover salivate, both in it's atmosphere, welcoming nature and line-up. And when even the newly build Ziggodome (capacity: 17.000) is not big enough, there are always football stadiums like the Amsterdam Arena or Gelredome in Arnhem to accommodate the biggest artists and bands in the world. The biggest professionally-run venues and festivals are collectively represented by the umbrella organisation VNPF (Vereniging Nederlandse Poppodia en -Festivals). The VNPF represents 58 clubs and 28 festivals. In 2013, the 49 open venues organized 18.000 concerts with a revenue of 100 million euro, drawing 3.1 million visitors. 75% of the concerts featured Dutch bands. 15% of the concerts sold out, and 18% of the club nights (dance). In addition to Mojo Concerts, the biggest promotor of the country and part of Live Nation, there are several important players on the concert circuit like Friendly Fire, Agents After All, Greenhouse Talent, Topbillin', Alles Los, Boom! Agency, AT bookings, Belmont Bookings, Armada, Spinnin' Records, Earthbeat, Radar Agency, Rock 'n' Roll Highschool, Bureau Zwaardvis, Paperclip Agency and Dox Records.

<http://www.paradiso.nl/>

<http://www.tivolivredenburg.nl/>

<http://www.melkweg.nl/>

<http://www.vera-groningen.nl/>

<http://www.rotown.nl/>

<http://www.hedon-zwolle.nl/>

<http://www.013.nl/>

<http://www.effenaar.nl/>

<http://www.paard.nl/>

<http://www.ziggodome.nl/>

<http://www.amsterdamarena.nl/home.htm>

<https://www.gelredome.nl/>

<http://www.vnpf.nl/>

<http://www.mojo.nl/>

<http://friendly-fire.nl/>

<http://www.agentsafterall.nl/>

<http://www.greenhousetalent.com/>

<http://www.topbillin.nl/>

<http://www.alleslos.nl/info>

<http://www.atbookings.com/>

<http://www.belmontbookings.nl/>

<http://www.armadabookings.nl/>

<http://www.spinninrecords.com/>

<http://earthbeat.nl/>

<http://www.radar-agency.com/>

<http://www.rocknrollhighschool.nl/>

<http://www.bureauzwaardvis.nl/roster/>

<http://www.paperclip-agency.com/>

<http://www.doxrecords.com/>

POP NL

The VNPF not only represents the collective interests of both the clubs and festivals, but also helps with the development of the Dutch music industry to ensure a professional environment. The VNPF is not the only organisation helping the growth of the Dutch music and its industry. Clubs as well as concert venues and festivals are equally important for the growth and promotion of Dutch music. They play a key role in helping young groups to blossom, by allowing them to play and present themselves to music lovers. Every province has their own regional music contest and supporting organisations, collectively represented in umbrella organisation POP NL. Every organisation offers young talent advice regarding the music industry and/or a helping hand in finding opportunities to play gigs. Four times a year the Muzikantendag on Tour visits a different city to offer bands and artists to meet up with key players in the Dutch music industry. They can get feedback on their demo's, listen to how successful bands planned their career and can pitch their music to representatives of national radio, tv, press, record labels, bookers and promoters.

<http://www.vnpf.nl/>

<http://www.popnl.nl/>

School of Rock

Each year, music schools like the Herman Brood Academie, the Rockacademie in Tilburg, Codarts in Rotterdam, The Amsterdam Conservatory, ARTEZ in Enschede and The Minerva Academy for Pop Culture in Leeuwarden bring forth new talent that finds a place in the Dutch music scene. Martin Garrix (dance, one of the headliners of Coachella festival 2014), Mister and Mississippi (folkrock, toured and released their selftitled debut album in Germany, Austria and Switzerland in 2014), Taymir (Britrock, toured the UK in 2014) or Birth Of Joy (bluesy rock ´n roll, toured all over the world in 2013 and 2014) are some recent examples of graduates that managed to gain success outside of The Netherlands. And they´re only just getting started.

<http://www.hermanbroodacademie.nl/>

<http://fontys.edu/Short-term-programmes/Exchange-programmes/Rock-Academy-Tilburg.htm>

<http://www.codarts.nl/>

<http://www.ahk.nl/conservatorium/>

<http://www.artez.nl/conservatorium>

<https://www.hanze.nl/DE/studiengaenge/kunst/Seiten/Default.aspx>

A goldmine waiting to be found

These music schools are hotbeds for ambitious musicians and a breeding ground for new initiatives. Musicians meet, share experiences, knowledge and connections and opportunities arise. But bands and artists only make progress if they are able to play live and present themselves to the outside world. Combined with easily accessible yet popular platforms like daily tv-show The Wereld Draait Door (1 million+ viewers daily), national radio 3FM, talent festival Popronde, yearly talent hunts De Grote Prijs van Nederland and De Beste Singer-Songwriter van Nederland, the professionally run music website 3voor12, countless festivals (among them the internationally famous Lowlands, Pinkpop, Roadburn, Sensation and Mysteryland, but every year new festivals pop up), leading showcases and conferences like Eurosonic Noorderslag and Amsterdam Dance Event and world class

venues like Paradiso, TivoliVredenburg, Melkweg, Vera and 013, to name a few. The musical infrastructure and an interested audience is there, waiting to be used and found by bands and musicians both from Holland and abroad. All these factors combined lead to a healthy foundation for a growing number of ambitious bands with a DIY-attitude and an eagerness to succeed with their music, whatever genre they operate in.

<http://dewerelddraaitdoor.vara.nl/>
<http://www.3fm.nl/>
<http://www.popronde.nl/>
<http://www.groteprijsvan.nl/>
<http://www.debestesingersongwriter.nl/>
<http://3voor12.vpro.nl/>
<http://festival.eurosonic-noorderslag.nl>
<http://lowlands.nl/>
<http://www.mysteryland.nl/>
<http://www.roadburn.com/>
<http://www.sensation.com/netherlands/en/>
<http://www.pinkpop.nl/2014/>
<http://www.amsterdam-dance-event.nl/>
<http://www.paradiso.nl/>
<http://www.tivolivredenburg.nl/>
<http://www.melkweg.nl/>
<http://www.vera-groningen.nl/>
<http://www.013.nl/>

Across the Atlantic

Like Caro Emerald, the hugely successful pop diva who sold more than a million copies of her self-released debut album Deleted Scenes From The Cutting Room Floor, an album that saw her in the charts and brought her on stages all over Europe. Or Thomas Azier, who inked a deal with French record label Mercury Records and toured both Europe and the USA multiple times, including tours with Woodkid and Stromae. The talent of 60's baroque pop singer/multi-instrumentalist Jacco Gardner was quickly recognized across the Atlantic, followed by an extensive US-tour. Like Gardner, garage rock band Mozes and the First Born was adopted just as quickly by the Americans, resulting in a record deal with the hip Burgers Records and various tours through the States. They could've run into Nobody Beats The Drum, an exciting three-piece that combines electro music with visual wizardry, much to the delight of American dance music fans. Or next level dance group Skip & Die, who combine African rhythms and Dutch dance music into an explosive cocktail that was served during 250+ gigs world wide and continues to impress both Dutch and international audiences during their ever extending headline tour.

<http://www.caroemerald.com/>
<http://thomasazier.com/>
<http://www.jaccogardner.com/>
<http://www.mozesandthefirstborn.com/>
<http://www.nobodybeatsthedrum.com/>
<http://www.skipndie.com/>

Dutch media

For a potential market of only about 20 million people (Belgian Flanders included), the Dutch medialandscape is very diverse and wide. The Netherlands has one of the highest ratios in the world for magazines per inhabitant. There are about 1200 public magazines in print in the Netherlands, twice as many as in Germany.

Radio

The Netherlands public radio service opens their FM airwaves to a wide variety of musical styles, origins and attitudes. There are seven radio channels, of which 4 focus on contemporary music: Radio 2 (40 years and older), 3FM (popular music for people under 40), Radio 6 (jazz and soul) and FunX (urban, hiphop). Radio 3FM is the main youth channel with a focus on pop, rock and dance music. 3FM invites bands in the studio for interviews and live-sessions, they broadcast live from concerts and festivals and they present new Dutch talent under the banner of "Serious Talent".

The biggest commercial channels that focus on contemporary music are Q Music (dance), Sky Radio (oldies), Radio 538 (dance), Radio Veronica (diverse) and SLAM!FM (dance). Online radio channels that are worth mentioning are Pinguin Radio (pop-rock, alternative) and KX Radio (diverse).

<http://www.radio2.nl/>

<http://www.3fm.nl/>

<http://www.radio6.nl/>

<http://www.funx.nl/>

<http://q-music.nl/>

<http://www.skyradio.nl/>

<http://www.538.nl/>

<http://www.radioveronica.nl/>

<http://www.slamfm.nl/>

<http://pinguinradio.com/>

<http://kxradio.3fm.nl/>

TV

The Dutch public television service includes three channels, conveniently named Nederland 1, 2 and 3. Nederland 3 has the biggest focus on music, with live broadcasts from festivals like Lowlands, Pinkpop, the EO Jongerendag (festival focusing on christian music) and Eurosonic Noorderslag. TV-show the Best Singer-Songwriter is a popular televised contest for singer-songwriters, hosted by 3FM DJ Giel Beelen. However, the show with the biggest influence for a band is broadcast on Nederland 1: tv-show De Wereld Draait Door, with over a million viewers daily. Every day of the working week, a band is invited into the studio to perform for 1 minute.

Of the commercial channels, RTL4 deserves a mention with their daily show RTL Late Night, often inviting bands and artists into the studio for a live performance. XITE and MTV are commercial channels focused on music and youth.

<http://www.npo.nl/>

<http://www.eo.nl/beam/evenement/eojongerendag/>

<http://lowlands.nl/>

<http://www.pinkpop.nl/2014/>

<http://festival.eurosonic-noorderslag.nl>

<http://www.debestesingersongwriter.nl/>

<http://www.3fm.nl/>

<http://dewerelddraaitdoor.vara.nl/>

<http://www.rtl.nl/rtl4/#/>
<http://xite.nl/>
<http://www.mtv.nl/>

Print en web

De Volkskrant, Trouw, Parool, Algemeen Dagblad, De Telegraaf, NRC Handelsblad and it's spin-off for younger readers NRC.NEXT are the main daily newspapers. All of them pay attention to culture and music, with interviews, reports from festivals and cd-reviews.

<http://www.volkskrant.nl/>
<http://www.trouw.nl/>
<http://www.parool.nl/>
<http://www.ad.nl/>
<http://www.telegraaf.nl/>
<http://www.nrc.nl/>

Specialized printed music magazines include the monthly OOR Magazine (rock, pop, dance, hiphop, since 1971), Jazzism (jazz, soul, blues, r&b, world music, hiphop, 7 issues per year), Muziek.nl (rock, pop, every 2 months), Lust for Live (oldies, rock, pop, monthly), Heaven (singer-songwriter, folk, blues, every two months), Aardschok (metal, hardrock, monthly), Music Maker (focus on the musician and their instruments, monthly). Online, music lovers find their way to a number of websites dedicated to music. The biggest and best one is 3VOOR12, which focuses on rock, pop, dance and hiphop. It's part of broadcasting company VPRO and is funded by the government. Other notable sites include OOR.nl (mostly rock and pop, but also dance and incidentally hiphop), Kickingthehabit.nl (indie, rock), DJ Broadcast (dance), the Daily Indie (indie), Nu.nl (mainstream pop, rock, dance), Kindamuzik (alternative), Fileunder (alternative), Puna (hiphop), State magazine (hiphop), Noisey (alternative) and Cortonville (rock).

<http://oor.nl/#!/articles>
<http://www.jazzism.nl/>
<http://www.muziek.nl/>
<http://flmagazine.nl/>
<http://www.popmagazineheaven.nl/>
<http://aardschok.com/>
<http://www.musicmaker.nl/>
<http://3voor12.vpro.nl/>
<http://www.vpro.nl/>
<http://kickingthehabit.nl/>
<http://www.djbroadcast.nl/>
<http://www.thedailyindie.nl/>
<http://www.nu.nl/>
<http://www.kindamuzik.net/>
<http://www.fileunder.nl/>
<http://www.puna.nl/>
<http://www.statemagazine.nl/>
<http://cortonville.com/>

Record Industry, Music Sales and other figures

Of the four major record labels in The Netherlands (UMG, SME and WMG), UMG is the biggest company. Apart from the majors a lot of independent labels release records, such as PIAS, Excelsior Recordings, Subroutine Records, Armada Records, TopNotch, Noah's Ark, Suburban, 8ball music, Dox Records, Bertus, Snowstar Records, Spinnin' records and CNR.

In 2013, the total revenue of the Dutch music industry increased with 1,1%, to a total of more than 130 million euro. The digital market has a share of 41,6%. Although physical album sales have decreased to a total of 76,1 million euro (a trend like pretty much every other country), the revenue from streaming services have increased with 113,5% compared to 2012, to a total of 38 million euro. Vinyl records make up a total of 7 million euro, a share of 10% of the market of physical music carriers.

The revenue of Buma, the Dutch Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers, increased with 2,73% to a total of 152,201 million euro. The growth was mainly accounted to an increase use of music online and the number of live concerts. Buma also saw an increase in the use of Dutch music abroad with 11,4% compared to 2012, to a total of 13,8 million euro. In 2013, Buma represents 24.000 authors and composers and 6 million Dutch musical works.

<http://www.pias.com/pias/>

<http://www.excelsior-recordings.com/>

<http://www.subroutine.nl/home.php>

<http://www.armadamusic.com/>

<http://www.top-notch.nl/>

<http://www.noahsark.nu/>

<http://www.suburban.nl/>

<http://www.8ballmusic.nl/>

<http://www.doxrecords.com/>

<http://www.bertus.com/>

<http://www.snowstar.nl/>

<http://www.spinninrecords.com/>

<http://www.cnrrecords.com/>

For more information about the Dutch music industry, please visit

<http://www.bumacultuur.nl>