

Cas Bosland

Bosland's 32nd Mega Record and CD Fair in Utrecht, The Netherlands, will be held Nov. 21-22. www.recordplanet.nl

If you weren't doing this, what would you be doing with your life?

CB: Before we were organizing fairs, I used to work as a civil engineer but got bored with it. I don't think I could stand that anymore. Apart from organizing the record fairs we also organize a big antique fair for one of our clients. I guess organizing is in my blood.

What's the best part of your job?

CB: Being self-employed and that I was able to turn my hobby into an income.

What's your favorite thing about running this convention?

CB: A few years back, when we opened the door to let all the dealers in, a Swedish guy got on his knees and prayed, "Momma I'm home!" To watch all the crate diggers having a great time is just pure pleasure. We now have a short video on YouTube where you can recognize all the different characters and there are many!

What shape is the hobby in currently?

Cas Bosland: The upcoming Mega Record and CD Fair in Utrecht, the Netherlands, has been sold out since May this year — 500 stalls booked by dealers from over 45 different countries and another 50 or so are on the waiting list for a stall. Over the last few years we saw the amount of vinyl creep up to 75 percent of the total items on offer at the fair. So far we did not notice a significant decline in the total amount of visitors. Last year, in November, we counted 36,000 people through the door.

How has the global economic downturn affected your business?

CB: It did affect the smaller fairs we organize, but that already has been happening for a couple of years. The global turnaround has not yet affected our main fair in Utrecht, but we cannot see into the future, of course.

What is the story behind your show? How did you get started?



A PANORAMIC VIEW of the floor at a recent Mega Record and CD Fair in The Netherlands.

CB: We started in 1985 in Amsterdam with a small event. Soon the venue was far too small, and in 1992, we moved to the big convention centre in Utrecht. Right from the very first fair there were 8,000 visitors, and the amount has steadily been rising ever since.

What did you do before you started the show or business?

CB: I worked in London for a while in the late '70s/early '80s where I noticed I was not the only one collecting vinyl. Once back in Holland I met a group of people who were organizing pop festivals, music workshops and who released (obscure) indie punk singles. There I also met my colleague, Marjolein Lubbers. She and I run the Utrecht fair up until today.

What are your interests outside of music?

CB: Like everybody else's and apart from that sailing, reading, eating and travelling.

What's the strangest request you've ever had at a show or from a customer?

CB: Where can I find a car mechanic?

How does the future of record

collecting look?

CB: People will always collect. The most interesting period of modern music making (1950-2000) was also the vinyl period. People want the original: products made how the artist wanted it, complete with the art work, inners and cover.

Is there a record you've never owned that you would love to have in your collection?

CB: The Beatles' *White Album* #0000001 for obvious reasons ... and my pension

Was there somebody in this business who you modeled yourself after or who inspired you to do what you do?

CB: The do-it-yourself mentality of the punk bands in the '70s has been most inspiring for me. I guess Geoff Travis of Rough Trade (U.K.) or Daniel Miller of Mute Records (also U.K.) are real survivors and guys I have always followed, because they have a heart for music and for musicians.

What's the one thing that's hurting the hobby or the industry more than anything else? Conversely, what is the hobby or industry doing right?

CB: Over-priced CDs (here in Holland anyway) by the music industry and over-priced secondhand vinyl by ruthless dealers. Quality pressed, well-documented and nicely printed products for a decent price and with loads of extras are a must for record lovers and will beat downloading for as long as it lasts.

What is your favorite moment related to music?

CB: Standing in the London Nashville venue queue to watch one of the first shows of The Specials, with Johnny Rotten in front of me and Elvis Costello behind.

What is the first record you ever owned?

CB: "All You Need Is Love" 45 by The Beatles in a beautiful European picture cover.

Have you seen a resurgence in interest regarding vinyl records?

CB: Definitely. The last vinyl plant here in Holland employs 50 people now, more than in years. The waiting list for our own show is another sign.

Do you think this resurgence will last?

CB: As long as our capitalistic system will last, it surely will go for another decennium. Over the last 25 years we noticed several ups and downs, but collecting vinyl always seems to attract new generations.

What plans do you have to improve your show?

CB: We like to invite more musicians to visit the fair and to meet their fans. It's always a success when they turn up for a autograph session. When Glenn Matlock (Sex Pistols) was autographing and performing in Utrecht, there was a queue of about half a mile. Also we use the Internet to sell the record fair and to show the world how great it is to socialize with like-minded people instead of sitting on your own with a plastic credit card in your hand and in front of a square monitor. **GM**

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