

SERENDIPITY PANEL

How A **Chance Meeting** At **Pollstar Live!** Led To A **New Joint Venture**

By SARAH PITTMAN

You never know what's going to happen during the wildly popular Pollstar Live! panels moderated by Dan Steinberg, from tequila shots to new connections. The February 2016 panel "Are Concert Promoters The Modern Day PT Barnum?" had both, with panelists challenged to a game known as "Truth or Patron," along with what would turn out to be a fateful meeting between Jonathan Shank (then of Red Light Management) and Ollie Rosenblatt, founder and CEO of London-based concert promoter and producer Senbla.

"Everyone else on the panel besides Ollie I had known for years and had a really close relationship," Shank told *Pollstar*. "I happened to sit down next to Ollie. During the panel we were having small talk and joking around with one another. I could tell that we were very like-minded and he was just a very charismatic individual and somebody I wanted to get to know a little better. After that panel I grabbed Ollie's number. We stayed in touch and we started to think about ways we could work together."

Fast forward four years and the timing was finally right.

In August Shank announced the formation of artist management and production company Terrapin Station Entertainment where he's joined by the roster he previously represented at Red Light including Scarypoolparty, Maddie Poppe and Victoria Justice. Shank will continue his work with family-centric tours. During his time at Red Light Shank led the family entertainment division, producing tours including Peppa Pig Live! and Disney Junior Dance Party.

After the news about Terrapin broke, Rosenblatt reached out to Shank with a proposal to partner with Sony Music Masterworks, which had acquired a majority stake in Senbla in 2019.

"I took it to Sony and said here's this idea I've got to bring [the business] into family entertainment management ... where we can collaborate on projects that Terrapin would work on and also we can generate IP and grow the brand in general," Rosenblatt says. "[Jonathan] can be the extension of Senbla in the U.S. and I can be his extension in the UK and Europe."

Rosenblatt adds, "Sony has been utterly supportive. ... With Jonathan, knowing what a brilliant operator he is and how successful

he's been, it was like, this is a no-brainer. He's an amazing guy as a friend and business colleague as well. This made total sense."

Sony Music Masterworks announced Oct. 15 that it was launching a joint venture with Terrapin Station Entertainment by acquiring a majority stake in the company.

Mark Cavell, president of Sony Music Masterworks, comments: "Creative, vibrant entrepreneurs excite us as a company, and Jonathan Shank and Ollie Rosenblatt are the epitome of that. In a post-COVID world, the thirst for live entertainment will be greater than ever, but so will audiences and consumers' demand for more creativity and innovation, along with a desire for more audience interactivity than ever before. We cannot continue to expect audiences to be satisfied with a repeat of 19th and 20th-century forms of live entertainment that ultimately limit the cross-section of the public to which they appeal. In collaboration with both Jonathan and Ollie, Sony Music Masterworks is building a global entertainment division that looks to pave the way for exhilarating new live experiences, whether in the world of music, theater, or more family-oriented events. With their expertise and knowledge and that of other

key Masterworks' executives running our business units, we will work as one team to ensure we deliver on that promise and put smiles back on audiences' faces."

New music is coming from Terrapin artists including Scarypoolparty working on a new album and the recent release of Victoria Justice's first new single in seven years, with more singles due out over the next several months.

"On the touring side, as we wait for things to reopen we're creating an interactive experience for Bob Marley, which we are honored and humbled to be a part of, along the lines of an interactive museum exhibit," Shank says.

Terrapin is also developing a touring experience for LOL Surprise.

"We have an incredibly exciting roster and slate of projects for 2021," Shank says. "Our goal is to continue to grow and give more people opportunities to build into their own verticals and finally, to support as many local venues and promoters and other folks in the music business who have had tough times during the pandemic. I'm just really thrilled to put this story out there because I think it's important, especially during this time, that any small spark can create a fire." Shank notes that after the Sony deal closed he and Rosenblatt realized "if we hadn't met at Pollstar Live!, this would have never happened.

"The exciting part for us is now we get to work together. We're actively working on a handful of things that he has going in the UK that we're looking to bring to North America, and vice versa."

The name of Shank's company is a nod to the 1977 Grateful Dead album. Shank happens to be the person who introduced his former client Dead drummer Mickey Hart to this week's cover subject when Shank and Hart knocked on the stage door of a Trey Anastasio show in 2005.

"Working with Mickey was an invaluable experience ... It all comes back to being able to develop and maintain these relationships. You never know where things can lead." **S**



Andrea Johnson, Andy Somers, Jonathan Shank, Ollie Rosenblatt, Dan Steinberg, Nate Kranz and Alex Hodges gather for a group photo to commemorate the Pollstar Live! panel "Is A Concert Promoter The Modern Day PT Barnum" on Feb. 11, 2016.