

3 March 2003

Dear Grahame

Thanks for the retirement reminders and your concern. Strange times to be talking music and money; but perhaps that's just what the world needs now – more of both!

It's true that if we (Fran and I) had lived any other life, we would / should most probably be worried. However, without sounding like a big deal - given the contributions that we have made to the music community in this country, over the past 35 years, and are still making, I believe - we should be OK. That's not to say we don't appreciate / need your sage advise on money matters.

So saying, can I ask you, as a friend and an advisor (and a musician), to have a look at the enclosed motivation? I know you don't have a lot of time to go through these long-winded things, but if you are interested, or know of someone who may be, we can meet and I can talk you through it?

Have a look at our site > www.3rdear.com > and you'll note, contrary to the popular family view that we have been dreamers for nothing all these years, just what it is we do. And can do! Should do?

Kind regards

David

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Grahame

The Hidden Years Music Archive Project – Hidden Years Arts Trust & Story Book

This is partially a generic motivation, sent to a few music friends & contributors. I hope to make this my final pitch (I've said that before), whereby we can (hopefully) raise the necessary funds / capital so that Fran can keep the HY archive active and that I can (hopefully) be freed-up to focus on the **Hidden Years Story** - which everybody in the industry thinks is so important. Just when I start thinking how indulgent of me to even ask and I get to feel like a 419 African Spammer with a begging bowl, demanding compensation and a handout, two things keep me going. One, as Zolani Mkive (Mandela's Praise Poet) always says when introducing the old man, *without a yesterday there can be no tomorrow*, and two, it is play back time! The SABC and the Record Industry owes this country. It's really as simple as that! Too many creative people, who had nothing to do with politics, were forced to give up their God given talent because a crazy system denied them access to the world.

Penguin Books have contracted me to write two **Hidden Years Story** books - with an option of a third, because they too believe that the story should be told. Even if the first book - which is complete, but for the edit – is more of an auto-biography. It covers a unique period in SAfrican history that is being re-invented. Hence the relative urgency.

This motivation then, follows the suggestions to **Morrison Murray** (Fred Rose) that we form a **HY Arts Trust** with a board of trustees; that we invite Terry, Peter Cottrell, yourself - if you're interested - and one or two others, to serve. The objective would be to collect and administer funds to keep the HYMAProject alive and allow me to complete the HY books. At the moment I have been faced with a dilemma of a number of (8 to 5) works offers. They look good and I love producing festivals etc. But if it's at all possible, I should not leave the HYMAProject and the books at this crucial stage.

(It may sound a bit presumptuous of me, but I am assuming that you have clients or connections who do have some extra venture capital and would occasionally look for the odd tax-relief project? Perhaps the HYMAProject could be such a project?)

3rd Ear Music has received a 5 000 Pound donation from an old friend **Bob Wilson** in London and a R100 000 from **Norway (MMINO)** for 2003. That is about 1/4 of what we need to function without interference. I'm not too sure if the **National Lotteries Board** will donate again this year. However, another reason for forming the trust is to try and avoid government funders and the subsequent obligations. They have far more important social projects to fund. The *Politically Correct* aspects of such funds could become an issue later on. Anyway, this government shouldn't be made to pay for **The Big A** twice! With a prestigious board of trustees funds can be raised elsewhere.

A few points to consider:

(1) Tell the Hidden Years Story first - The SABC and the commercial record industry are re-inventing our music history at an embarrassing pace; trying their best to be PC. The only way that the truth can be told (without a massive, and unnecessary marketing budget) is to tell the **Hidden Years Story** first. The memories of the musicians - that we still urgently need to interview, all over the country - are fading as fast as our magnetic tapes, photos, programmes and posters. (Everything from being stuck in Estcourt at the Plough to those Township Shebeen bashes; all wonderful SAfrican stories that need to be told.) As arrogant as this may be, there is nobody else out there - according to many music academics, commercial record industry suits and **Penguin Books** - who can tell the HY story. So there should be money. But how do we tap into it?

(2) It's Play Back Time! We want to avoid the political route - but as you'll note from Bishop Tutu's recent TRC plea, businesses who made their fortunes off the **A Daze** (at our expense) and who have not contributed to transformation and development since 1994 - in our case the SABC and the Commercial Record Industry specifically - should be encouraged to do so. Play back time! The only historic music stories that we are starting to hear here are about how hard we were done by - funded by the very interests who caused the trouble in the first place. *Strange, strange world indeed.* We should rather be rapping up the past and untying the present, so that we can uncover our hidden roots and get on with building the future. Our heritage is not only about struggle music for political rights and wrongs, or from one particular era.

(3) The Hidden Years Arts Trust - We won't be around here forever. We are also not in a position to simply hand over 35 years of work to the UND. And they keep asking. My suggestion to Fred is that we form a trust or a section 21, ASAP, to try and get at least 2 / 3 years of the project funded upfront by the very enterprises who can afford it, and, according to "the rules", who should be funding hidden history arts projects. It's not a great amount of money - relatively speaking; a minute fraction of the music industry's 2 billion Rand VAT bill. Fact is I need to be freed up from chasing these funds and / or investors and to get on with the HY Story. There's no question that a board of trustees could persuade the SABC and the Record Industry to come to the party. Not just for benevolent or academic research reasons, but commercial as well.

(4) Current Funding, Investors & HY Projects - Terry Rosenberg and the other arts funders have each had a specific interest in 3rd Ear Music and the HY Archives. Basically, to get the pre-1994 archives into shape and into a digital and manageable form; and post -1994 to develop a (website) data base and to present local and international music at festivals, in concert, on tour and through recordings.

A few recent examples of how HY Archives and database can network and connect: The **BBC TV** documentary of **Solomon Linda's** song based on **Rian Malan's** story, **Mbube**; > <http://www.3rdear music.com/forum/mbube2.html> < and the premier of the **Roger Lucey / Paul Erasmus** (Demark funded) TV documentary; premiered in Europe last year > <http://www.3rdear music.com/forum/footsoldier.html> <. We are now negotiating for the filming of **Jeremy Taylor's** hidden history with Ster Kinekor and director **Kevin Harris** > <http://www.3rdear music.com/forum/forumfeb03/taylorj.html> <. Then ofcourse there's our own **Hidden Years Story** – that will eventually be filmed.

The funds received have been a great relief, but they have also kept us in a half-full-half-empty situation since 2000; where I've had to take on a lot of outside commercial work to make ends meet. The funds have also allowed Fran and myself (and the many hundreds of people that we've employed and / or empowered along the way) to collate and get much of the library / archives together. We now have to focus. Time she runs!

Besides the 100 odd commercial albums I've produced, we have, through the archive, issued 6 CDs, with a further 12 now ready for release; the idea of a radio programme with each CD production, is in mind. There are another 20 work-in-progress albums.

(5) Music Movies and Export Potential - South Africans often say that outside of our political or traditional past, we don't seem to have any informative and entertaining contemporary music material with which to work and produce local movies, TV, plays and books, that will interest the world. This is simply (?) not true. We do indeed have many colourful Music (and related) stories to tell. Some of those stories on the site do have universal themes and yet they are unique. And we don't have to re-invent the past - or re-live it for that matter. Simply re-produce it. Truth is stranger than fiction.

However, unlike the Americans and the British Corporates, when SAfrican companies are presented with airy-fairy story boards, they get all cautious. They are not adventurous; they don't take risks without first securing the bottom line. Artists like Paul or Manfred are just two of many who have tried, in vain, to encourage local investors; so they take their ideas back to the USA and UK. And what's so sad for us, is that only after their projects become universal successes do local investors say: why didn't you ask me? I didn't understand the story. Or why did you take no for an answer? Strange!

In conclusion - I may have this choice of a possible (arts) post and a few (music) production offers for 2003 / 2004. Personally that's what I may have to do, but time is a factor here. There's noway that we can look at the 3rd Ear Music collection as my personal hobby. So, if possible, I would like to avoid taking on a *real job* at this stage. Our attention and focus now needs to be on completing the 1st **Hidden Years Story** book this year, if possible, and what to do with the HYMAProject in time to come.

What do you say? Would there be any benevolent or commercial interest from clients? If not, I understand, but don't say I never asked.

Peace at this time and kind regards.

David (eMailed and therefore not signed.)