



Wouter van Looy's Five Principles

Wouter van Looy is a Dutch music festival leader and the artistic director of Music Theatre Transparant. He has years of experience in designing events, not least music festivals, with an appeal to the younger generation.

Wouter van Looy was guest speaker at three NewAud workshops, talking on how to organise music events in which young people – but also people in general – felt welcome. The key elements to work with are “involvement and wellbeing” – two principles that are also important for successful teaching. On the basis of these Wouter van Looy has further developed five principles to guide you when planning your event:

1. Alternate expression and impression

When you've passively received for a while you need to be active and extrovert – and when you've been active for a while you need to quiet down and be entertained. Audiences should be met with a balanced alternation between receiving something and doing something.

2. Get rid of barriers and conventions

Why do musicians always wear old-fashioned clothes, why do they never look the audience in the eye, why are there always note stands in the way? Conventions and barriers like these are alienating for modern audiences, not least young people. Try to eliminate as many of them as possible!

3. Present activities on the boarder of the possibilities or skills

Consider the skills and the level of your audience, and make sure that the activities you meet them with are not too demanding and nor too easy. Both things turn people off - but especially if things are too easy!

4. Authenticity based communication

Audiences are scared away if they feel that you are not communicating to them, but to a completely different kind of person. Therefore your communication should be in the language and level of your audience. Sometimes this is easy. If you have designed posters for a childrens concert for instance: Remember to hang them in a height where children can see them!

5. Create an environment for wellbeing

Your audience needs to feel well, and that doesn't always happen by itself when you are in new surroundings. Therefore you must introduce something that makes them feel well: Nice pillows to sit on, something to drink, or perhaps a friendly handshake when they arrive? Ask yourself what will make YOUR audience feel well.