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A Heads Up with Dennis Feichtner

With Covid-19 lockdowns worldwide and health authorities urging people to self-isolate and practice social distancing on a massive scale as part of an enormous effort to #FlattenTheCurve of this global pandemic ... we are reaching out to industry friends, colleagues, associates, partners, etc., and asking them to share their #StayAtHome and #QuarantineAndChill activities with us during this extraordinary time.

In 1998 Dennis Feichtner started working in theatre event technology and since 2005 has been a self-employed lighting designer and operator. With his company Feichtner Veranstaltungstechnik, he is involved in a diverse range of events from TV shows and rock 'n' roll tours to industrial and corporate events. Right now, he would have been involved in the final planning of a project commemorating the founding of the Hungarian state.

Robe: Where are you right now?

Dennis: At the moment I am at home most of the time, in Ratingen near Düsseldorf.

Robe: How are things emerging from the lockdown in your region / country?

Dennis: A return to normality as known before the Coronavirus pandemic is of course not possible at the moment, while we do not have a vaccine. But with well thought-out hygiene concepts and sufficient distancing, more and more possibilities are slowly emerging. Some venues are venturing forward and taking the first small steps with limited audience numbers.

Robe: How did you spend your time during lockdown?

Dennis: During the break-up of the live sector, I was fortunately able to supervise a few TV shows without audience participation and dedicate myself to my writing work at a musicians' portal, where I publish product tests and workshops in the field of lighting technology. In my private life, I spend a lot of time on lighting concepts for interior design. In general, I am very fond of architectural lighting.

Robe: What are your biggest concerns / considerations as lockdowns ease worldwide?

Dennis: Even if it is a tempting thought for many people to ignore the daily case numbers, we should not lull ourselves into a false sense of security.

The understandable need for 'normality' should not lead us to underestimate the dangers.

Robe: Do you have any thoughts / predictions about how and when live events and the industry will re-start?

Dennis: Although eagerly anticipated, concrete dates or deadlines are left to speculation. Also, I don't give up hope for the one or other smaller club tour, which is still in the calendar for this year with pencil. But we can only wait and see.

Robe: Going forward, how do you think live events and the entertainment technology industry will change in a post-Covid 19 world before there is a vaccine widely available?

Dennis: I think well thought-out safety and hygiene concepts have the highest priority for us at the moment because we can only start with a very limited number of participants. Hybrid event concepts with participants on site and a simultaneous online audience also offer exciting possibilities. Drive-in cinema events, for example, will not, in my opinion, become established as a long-term alternative.

Robe: How sustainable do you think these changes will be?

Dennis: Maybe we will realize that - especially in corporate events some elements can also be realized digitally so that, for e.g., executives do not have to travel halfway around the world to be there 'live' when new figures are communicated.

Through the progressive integration of streaming solutions, an online ticketing market can generally emerge, also for live events, and represent an expansion of the distribution circle.

Robe: Has anyone / anything particularly inspired you since this crisis started?

Dennis: I find all those who can adapt and adjust to changing situations with caution particularly inspiring. People who adapt and see opportunities in difficult times, always remaining resilient and not losing their nerve.

Robe: Own question / answer / message of solidarity or something you'd like to say?

Dennis: Even this difficult time will pass at some point. Culture will not die out. And if we show solidarity now, it will only be to our advantage later on. Everything will be fine!

