

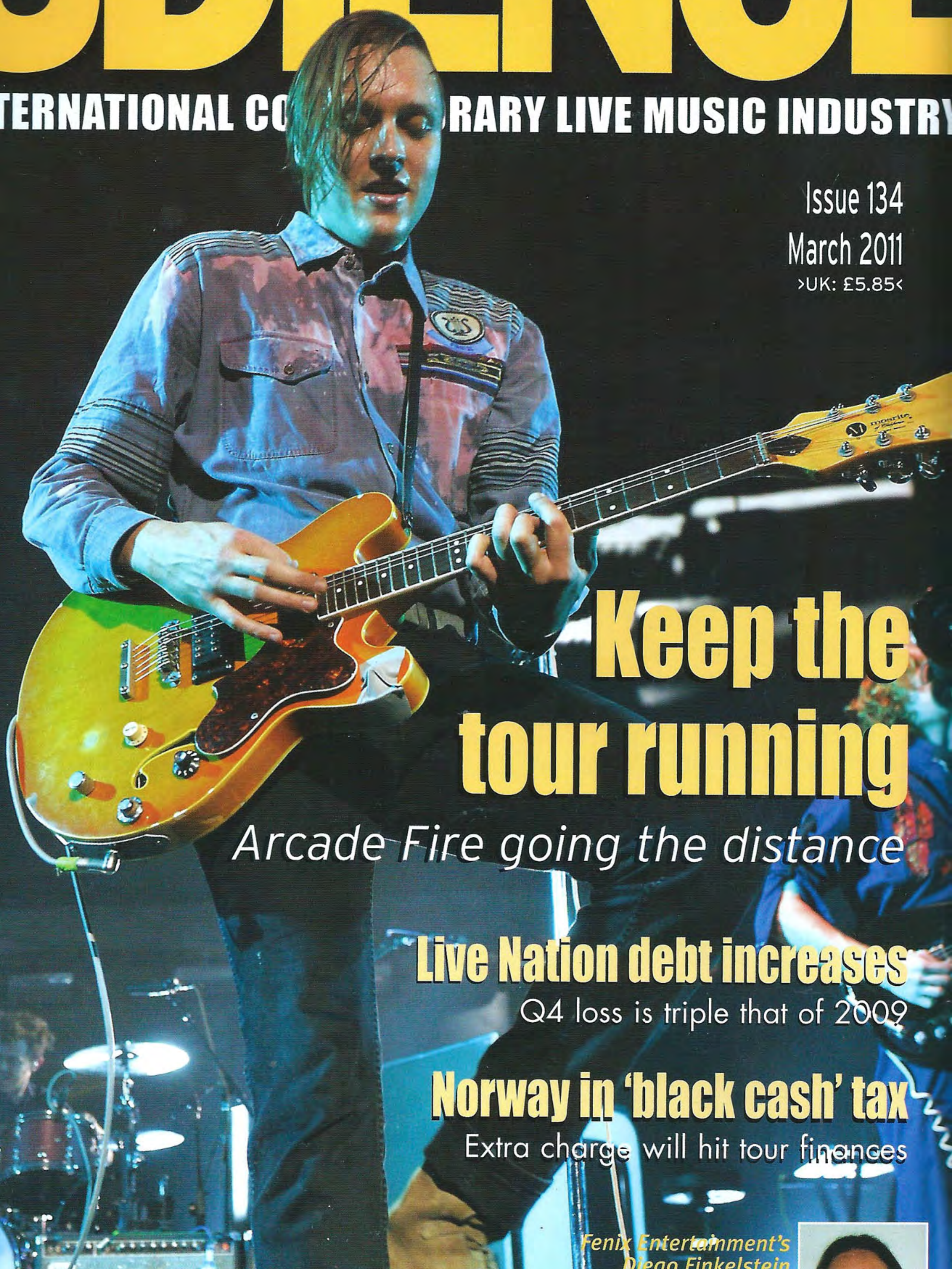
AUDIENCE

FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY LIVE MUSIC INDUSTRY

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Keep the tour running

Arcade Fire going the distance

Live Nation debt increases

Q4 loss is triple that of 2009

Norway in 'black cash' tax

Extra charge will hit tour finances

Fenix Entertainment's
Diego Finkelstein



The recession has caused many artistes, who didn't consider touring outside Europe or the US, to pay more attention to Latin markets

see, choosing from two venues downstairs - the original Melkweg and The Mass - and an upstairs, theatre venue which holds 120, or the cinema with 90 seats."

Theatre sharing

Since 2009 there has also been "a theatre space that we programme for one week a month, with a partially-seated 1,400-capacity. When it's not being used by our neighbour the City Theatre, for theatrical and dance performances" the Melkweg uses it for jazz and world music concerts.

"The secret is that we're a non-profit organisation, meaning we have a relatively small subsidy from the city of Amsterdam, but it's only seven or eight per cent of our budget these days," explains Schlosser.

"The whole attitude is that everybody that works there is like a co-owner of the club. So we are still building on the history of the place. Everybody working there is aware of being part of a movement."

High ideals, but based on a solid financial footing. And with more than 400,000 visitors a year and more than 1,200 programmes scheduled annually, including concerts, cinema, theatre shows and gallery events, they need a large full and part-time staff.

As Melkweg's executive director Erik Backer explains, "We have about 260 people that work here. Sometimes it's a 24-hour business, so you need

different shifts for staff and technicians, the cloakroom and bars."

What makes it extra tricky, says Backer, is the arts-based nature of the endeavour. "It's all individuals we're dealing with. But the appealing thing is that every day is different. It's the difference that makes you tick, but it's also what gives you the problems. We always want to do it better than the time before."

Backer started in 1983 in the cinema department, programming the films they showed. His background was as a sociologist. But, by 1988, he had become Schlosser's right-hand man.

He explains how the non-profit aspect of the operation works. "I would say we are a not-for-loss organisation. We try to keep some money at the end of the year but we try to take more risks in the arts programme.

"We have a turnover of about €30 million (\$41.5m) a year. But, for instance, for last year we will have a profit of about €150,000-200,000 (\$207,000-276,000). For an ordinary business that would not be a good profit but we are very proud of this result, especially in these times.

"We sometimes put on shows where maybe only 50 or 150 people are interested, so we know we will have a loss on that night, but we think it's worthwhile. Also we are hoping to build up on it so that next time this band will come back and say 'you gave us a chance'."

"I remember the first Pearl Jam show there in 1993. It had been booked before the single Alive exploded and everybody was there"

Rob Trommelen



Erik Backer



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