



Joe Bonamassa at Hallenstadion

real and that's something the audience have embraced and appreciate," says Gille.

Team supporters

Bonamassa's regular touring team have worked with him on ventures around the world, as far and wide as Russia, New Zealand and Thailand. The guitarist's hard work ethic and easygoing attitude is something they don't just relate to but admire.

"He is one of the hardest working musicians I have ever worked with," says tour manager Clay Allen. "He knows what he wants and is not afraid to get his hands dirty."

Production manager Eric Roa is no less appreciative of Bonamassa's approach to touring and his ability to understand the challenges the production team face on the road.

"I have worked with a lot of artistes and Joe is the easiest I have ever encountered," says Roa. "He knows

exactly what he wants and there is no hidden agenda. Joe understands when there are limitations, that you cannot hang a speaker from a cloud. He is probably the least demanding person on the stage."

Jörg Philipp of Beat The Street Touring Service has been responsible for bussing Bonamassa between ever more sizeable European shows since 2007. At the outset Philipp had never heard of Bonamassa and turned up for a show at Germany's Muffathalle (900) Munich, expecting to say 'hi' to the management and head home early.



Jörg Phillip

"I usually just pop into shows to say hello and stay a short while but I was so blown away that I stayed until the end – it was an amazing show," says Philipp.

It is not only the size of venues accommodating Bonamassa that are growing. The initial tour saw Beat The Street supply a single bus with the

backline in a trailer, Bonamassa now uses a 45-foot (14 metre), double-deck Star Bus alongside two crew buses.

"He is living proof that if you work hard and are a good musician you don't need to rely on hype to make it," says Philipp.

Smooth ascent

Jeppé Nissen at Live Nation Denmark had been aware of Bonamassa's ascendancy beyond the club circuit before promoting his first major show, at Copenhagen's 2,100-capacity Falkoner Theatre in 2013. Tickets were priced at 615 krona (€82) and sold out.

Nissen admires both Bonamassa's integrity and work ethic. "It is a different strategy to most artistes," says Nissen. "He releases a lot of products and plays a lot of shows. It is impressive and is one of the reasons his fan base is so strong here."

He admits that he is kept on his toes by the team at J&R Adventures. "It is amazing to work with an artiste that works so hard and has such a professional agent and management," he says. "They are very thorough with everything they do – the deals, the venues, the site lines – everything is considered."

When tickets to Bonamassa's 11 May 2009 show at Finland's Theatre Savoy (700) in Helsinki went on sale, it sold out in five hours. The show was the first promoted there by Live Nation Finland's Johan Hollsten.

In October 2013 Bonamassa played a cut-down theatre configuration at Helsinki's Hartwall Arena with 2,828 tickets sold. Hollsten is now waiting to announce a 2015 show at the venue, with sales expected to be close to 4,000.

Hollsten appreciates the strategy of Bonamassa's management and agency team at Neil O'Brien Entertainment, which includes Pete Sangha. "Pete has a great attitude and is very focused on building Joe's live career step by step," says Hollsten. ▶

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