



Ola Melzig.

A great communicator, organizer and multi-tasker with positive lateral thinking abilities and a grounded overall technical knowledge, the zany and outlandish Ola Melzig is not someone you forget in a hurry.

Looks can be deceptive. At first sight, as an imposing six-foot five frame with long hair, a penchant for elegant punky clothing and a strong metaphorical “No Messing” written loudly across the face, they could fuel a specific myth! However, Melzig is a polite, peace-loving egalitarian that does assertion not aggression... and has it down to a fine art.

His well-documented extravagant and infectious sense of humor is always a great icebreaker, although Melzig takes the ethics of ‘work hard/play hard’ very seriously to their logical conclusions.

EARLY DAYS

Melzig was born and brought up in Malmo, southern Sweden. He has always loved music, although there were no inklings of the future in his early career. At high school he studied ‘Office & Distribution’ among other subjects and learned to touch type — this turned out to be one of his top 10 most useful career skills. He left at 18 and went to work in a fishing store in Malmo for a year, before getting bored and moving on to the massive SAAB car factory.

Management at SAAB soon spotted his personality traits and potential, selecting him for a ‘team leader’ education, which included public speaking, interviewing and on-camera techniques plus other organizational skills. When he left four years later to relocate to Stockholm in the early 1990s, he was running a department of 30 people.

Stockholm proved a more socially and culturally cosmopolitan experience in which Melzig immediately felt at home. He supplemented his first job there in a window factory with additional work as a stagehand for EMA Telstar — Sweden’s largest concert promoter at the time, today Live Nation — following an introduction by his then girlfriend’s brother.

This was a revelation. Melzig instantly realized that pushing flight cases and setting up band, sound and lighting equipment was infinitely more fun than working in a window factory, which conveniently went bankrupt around the same time.

He threw his energies into the stagehand work, taking to it like a duck to water. He ran follow spots, drove forklifts, did production running and assisting, and also started working for various local lighting companies including Spectra AB, which was then a small company with 10 employees and a 400m² warehouse. One day he let it slip that he could play guitar, and so a raft of backline tech opportunities opened up!

In 1994, Melzig started Sweden’s first crewing company, M Concert Crew, which kept running for 3 years until he grew “sick of the bureaucracy that interfered with the daily activities and took away the fun”.

Running a production department at Saab and managing local crews gave him a very good grounding in motivational skills and organizing efficient working practices.

During the early 1990s, Melzig also toured extensively around Europe, the US and the rest of the world as a backline tech and a lampie, which allowed him a great insight into production organization and the application of technology.

SHIFTING GEAR

Around 1997, Spectra invited him onboard as a project and production manager. Tired of touring, he seized the opportunity with characteristic energy, and he stayed with the company until 2006 when he went freelance. His first gig as PM with Spectra was a VIP party for fashion house Diesel with a budget of €10,000 — a fortune at the time.

This nine-year period encompassed an endless slew of TV, corporate events, exhibition stands and live shows of all shapes, sizes and styles. And 5 Eurovision productions!

Melzig shot to prominence after 2000 as technical production manager for the Eurovision Song Contest (ESC), which was staged that year at Stockholm's Globe Arena. Although he has production managed several other high-profile events including a number of Nobel Prize Awards banquets and several big corporate events and TV shows, it was the ESC that has put him on the international production community radar. This has been for many reasons; the main one — aside from his flamboyant personality — being the upping of the technical ante for the show.

Eurovision is the second largest worldwide televised event, topped only by the Olympics opening and closing ceremonies. Since 2000, Melzig has handled technical production for 10 finals, been Stage & Concert producer for 2. — And Head of Production for 3.

In 2010 Melzig took the step into the world of Ceremonies when he was hired as the Technical Director for Ceremonies of the 2010 Commonwealth Games in New Delhi, India. The by far, largest show produced in the world in 2010! He was later involved as Senior Technical Manager for the Closing Ceremony of the European Games, produced by Five Current at the Olympic Stadium in Baku, Azerbaijan in June 2015.

His production philosophy and sense of fun has always played an important role in the technical side of his productions becoming a phenomenon in its own right. UK-based Head Rigger Oz Marsh first worked with Melzig on the 2002 Eurovision in Tallinn, Estonia. He says: "Ola's unique talent is to assemble a great team and hold it together under intense pressure."

Robe Show Lighting international sales manager, Harry von den Stemmen says: "Ola looks like a real rock'n'roller and has a great personality. He is extremely reliable, keeps his promises and is a really fair partner who doesn't only think about maximizing his own or his company's profits. His communication skills are excellent, he responds very quickly to everything... and, of course, there's that famous Melzig sense of humor!

Oz Marsh adds: "Ola makes everyone involved feel valuable to the show and we thrive on it. He buoys crew morale with a variety of extra-curricular activities and his attention to the small details that really matter to a happy, hard-working crew is fantastic."

Ola Melzig last executed big international productions was as the Head of Production for Eurovision Song Contest 2017 in Ukraine where him and his team single handed saved the entire production. He returned as a Head of Production for Eurovision in Portugal 2018 and in Israel 2019.

He was also involved as a consultant for the host broadcaster of Eurovision Song Contest 2020/21 in The Netherlands.

In February 2017, he was awarded as The Production Manager of the year at the annual TPI Awards in London.

In 2022 he was one of the Executive Producers for The American Song Contest on NBC.

He just finished his contract as the Senior Technical Director for Eurovision Song Contest 2024.