

Freak 'n See is a west London based management, publishing and production company. We spoke to **Jimmy Mikaoui** to find out more about the operation.

**When was Freak'n See formed and who founded the company?** We set up the company with artist Sophie Delila in 2005

**Who is the Freak'n See team?** I'm (Jimmy Mikaoui) the managing director, Billy Fahey runs our PR & Promotion department and Laurent Tordjman represents Freak'n See in France.

**Can you explain what the company does; there seem to be a multitude of facets to the company?**

Our primary functions are artist management and producer management. We are also a music publisher, sub-published by Sony/ATV. Finally, we have a private recording studio here at Parsons Green for the exclusive use of our artists,

producers and songwriters. Together with this we offer an executive production service to record labels, particularly those in continental Europe, who want their artists' albums to be fully produced in the UK.

**Can you tell us which acts/producers you represent?**

Most of our roster are pop or dance related artists and producers/writers. Our dance roster includes Michael Tordjman who co-wrote Bob Sinclar's "World Hold On"; Julien Jabre, DJ Gregory and Michael Canitrot who are all DJ acts signed to Defected; Max Desprez who is known for his work as a dance remixer for acts such as The Noisettes and we are also developing a new DJ artist, Alex Kassel, who is based in NYC – the industry are really excited about his music!

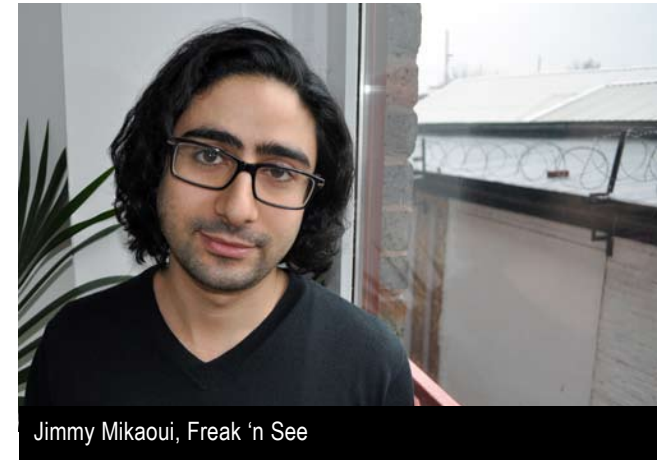
On the pop side, London-based Sophie Delila is a soul-pop singer signed to Universal Music France. She is also a successful songwriter for other artists. And finally from NYC,

Michael Malih, who's a great pop songwriter. We also often work with other great producers such as Jon Kelly.

**We have featured Sophie Delila as a Record of the Day in the past. What's the plan for Sophie this year?**

After a long anticipated wait, Sophie will finally be releasing her album 'Hooked' in the UK later this year. Live promotion will tie in with this in the summer including festivals such as Glastonbury, Go North/Rock Ness and prior to this Sophie will play an exclusive set at Ronnie Scott's in April.

**What's in store for your other acts in 2010?** Michael Canitrot is releasing three records with Defected this year, two compilations entitled "So Happy in Paris?" and a hot dance single, "Desire", which was recently No.10 in the Music Week Upfront Club Charts. Canitrot has a massive live promo tour coming up, with 100 gigs already planned for 2010 – opening for David Guetta at



Jimmy Mikaoui, Freak 'n See

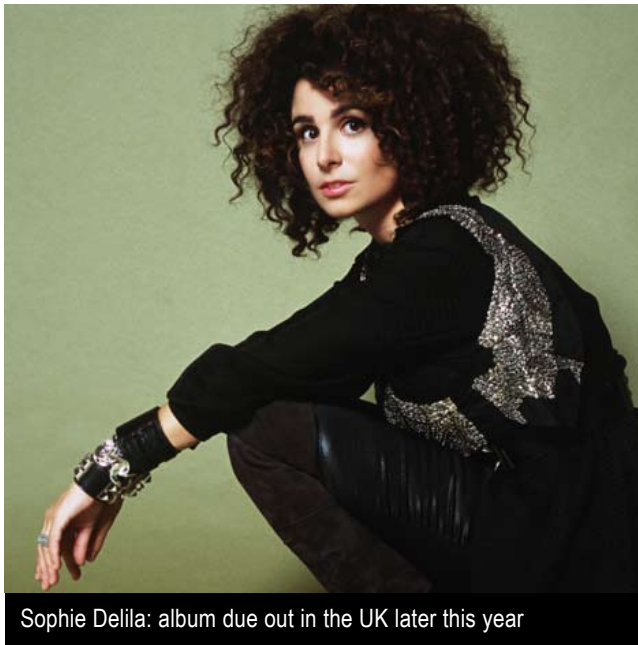
Midem last month was just the beginning! Following the support that "Stand on the Word" by Keedz received from Annie Mac and Zane Lowe we're currently in discussions to release this album in the UK and Europe. We're also planning live dates to launch Alex Kassel and there are a stream of exciting new remixes in the pipeline from Max Desprez.

**Can you tell us what your biggest successes to-date have been?** Recently we've had cuts on Westlife's last album "Where We Are" for Sophie Delila as well as Leona Lewis second album for Michael Malih. Finding the legendary Phyliss Joubert in the US 25 years after she wrote "Stand

on the Word" was really exciting - convincing her to sign with us as an artist and songwriter and re-produce a modern version of her Celestial Choir was even better. Almost everyone on our roster has collaborated on this project. We also had a No. 1 UK Airplay hit with "Lucy" in 2006 which was A-Listed at all major media as well as producing the official theme for the 2007 Rugby World Cup.

**Are your acts signed to Freak'n See for records and publishing, or do you work with external companies**

We're a management and production company – we are not a record label. However, we often either finance records or carry ▶▶



Sophie Delila: album due out in the UK later this year

▶▶ out executive production for our artists but there is always a label who we partner with for their development and releases. As for publishing, we administer most of the catalogues of our artists/producers, nonetheless some artists/producers like Sophie Delila are directly signed to publishers - in her case Sony/ATV.

**How do you view the industry right now? Do you fall on the positive, or negative side** I started working in the industry in 2003 and the business had already gone through a huge amount of change. As a result we don't compare our sales and performances to "the good old days", and it means we can continue to grow our company in line with the developments of the modern music business.

Branded entertainment opportunities, sync deals and direct connection to the consumer over the internet make this a very exciting time for artists and their managers. A great example is our experience with the Rugby World Cup theme. The song was exploited by the

Rugby World Cup Federation, the TV station TF1, Universal and the official sponsor, Toyota. More recently Sophie Delila has been collaborating with Hermes and Liberty. So I fall on the positive side!

**And, what would you say are your biggest challenges moving forward?** Getting our writers/producers on the A-list(s), breaking Sophie Delila in the UK and most probably starting a record label with a solid London based partner.

**We spoke before you went off to Midem...how did you find it this year?** It's always a pleasure having a drink on the Croisette with our colleagues! However the state of the music business coupled with the economic and financial crisis has obviously filtered out a lot of participants and has redefined the type of people attending, which actually makes Midem more efficient. Furthermore, there are lots of new participants that come from the digital world that weren't necessarily attending a couple of years ago. This Midem was much more productive than last year's,

at least for us.

**Many of your acts are non-British. How do you find the UK market in comparison to other territories?** From an artistic standpoint I think it's the most exciting market for one thing because of the exceptional level of talent. Obviously this also means the UK is the most competitive market in Europe. In comparison with European territories, the UK is in a stronger position because British consumers tend to download music legitimately i.e. pay. The UK also has the potential of exporting any act that has a promising future to the US or the rest of the world. By contrast, continental Europe has a more serious problem with illegal downloading and labels are often limited to working their acts domestically with little opportunity to export internationally except for specific genres such as electronica/dance. Britain is also home to some of the best executives in the business – Lucian Grainge's recent promotion is testament to that fact. There is no other market I would rather be working in!



## Artist features this week

There is something oddly reassuring about the manner in which **Paolo Nutini** has become one of the biggest names in pop. ([Mail](#))

'Dog House' bluesman **Seasick Steve** reveals his romantic side, and his new album, to Hermione Hoby. ([Guardian](#))

If she reads this, **Lily Allen** might get The Fear about her impending move into retail. Lauren Cochrane has some warnings from pop's past. ([Guardian](#))

Two decades into their career, the Bristolian trip-hop crew **Massive Attack** are still as boldly confrontational as ever, says Kitty Empire. ([Guardian](#))

Trip-hop act **Massive Attack** have their first stand-alone album for seven years. Here one half of the band, 3D,



gives an exclusive inside view of the record that also features Damon Albarn and Martina Topley-Bird. ([Independent Arts](#) p16-17)

Manchester's new **Hacienda** has opened. Benjamin Halligan attends and finds much more than the ghosts of Tony Wilson and Happy Mondays. ([Independent Arts](#) p19)

Next week's **Brit Awards** include a category commemorating the most memorable performance of the show's past 30 years, writes Elisa Bray. ([Independent Arts](#) p20-21)

Sure, it's derivative and cliched in places. But it is also wickedly funny, unexpectedly moving and subtle. Fiona Sturges explains why she is an unabashed fan of 'Glee'. ([Independent Arts](#) p34-35)

Caught in the net: With a string of wonderful records **Cat Power** near perfected the indie female singer-songwriter sound. ([Independent Arts](#) p25)



The British actor **Idris Elba**, who starred in *The Wire* as Stringer Bell, is launching his music career with an EP. Can a 37-year-old British-born Hollywood actor make it in the rap game as Big Driis? Matilda Egere-Cooper meets him. ([Independent Arts](#) p23)

**Gil Scott-Heron** on Richard Russell, who visited him in prison and produced his new album. ([Telegraph](#) p27 - Rob Fitzpatrick)

On the 25th anniversary of *Meat Is Murder*, Terry Christian hails the genius of **The Smiths**. ([Times2](#) p6-7)

Pete Paphides has a solution to the dire state of the charity song - the 'one size fits all single'. ([Times2](#) p11)