

Column by Renzo van Riemsdijk (Masterenzo): Columns for Popunie, two years of writing about mastering

In the past two years I've written monthly columns about mastering. In these columns I try to shine a light on the subject of mastering.

Mastering is still surrounded by myths and mysteries and when I look at the notes on my phone there are numerous items in the world of mastering yet to be talked about in a column.

So no, this is not the announcement that I quit writing columns for Popunie. Moreover, the amount of information about mastering that has to be shared with the public is overwhelming. Writing more columns about mastering is nothing more but logical.

One of the most essential items that came across in the past two years were the columns about loudness and more so the completely useless *loudness war* that shook up the music industry drastically from the nineties until the first decade of this century.

I also emphasized the contemplating side of mastering. Our consumption of music has changed dramatically over the years and I tried to set focus to mastering as the important final (and contemplating) step in the production process.

Now that I've mentioned it; mastering as a contemplating step makes that we could also see mastering as a form of art. "Mastering & Art", I feel the urge of a new column.

Besides "Mastering & Art" there are many other subjects that could very well end up in a column. Think about the necessity of a recording (contemplating) or an answer to the question why I strictly use vintage Hi-Fi amplifiers for my monitoring environment (technical).

I could throw in some humor. While organizing the notes on my phone, I came across a term that could very well be the title of my next column. Even though I'm not sure that I would win many new costumers if I'd put a sign saying "Clueless Mastering, mastering without a clue" on the facade of my studio. Maybe I'd have to think about it for a while.

Mastering, isn't it a great craft. As a mastering engineer you more or less carry the end responsibility of a recording. The ME determines with what kind of tonal flavor the world hears a record. When a record gets positive feedback, it's also to the credit of the mastering engineer to make an album, track or EP sound as good as it possibly can!

Of course, mastering is a technical craft. Great gear (knobs, sliders, switches and speakers) are all around and also in the computer there's some processing going on. But mastering music is about mastering MUSIC. It's all about you, the listener.

We could describe mastering with over a thousand words but shouldn't we let our ears be the final judges when it comes to listening to music. Listening to great sounding music that hits you hard. Music that hits your straight into your heart, there's nothing that can beat the true emotion of music.

So let's do more. More columns, more interesting topics, more contemplations and above all more mastering!

Renzo

Renzo (Masterenzo) is a Rotterdam based Dutch mastering engineer. He has worked for Gery Mendes (GMB), The Legendary Orchestra Of Love and Phil Bee's Freedom. More info about mastering and about Masterenzo can be found on his [website](#).