

#MEX20 closes with multi-Grammy-winning composer Rachel Z

 By [Martin Myers](#)

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Two-time Grammy winner, Rachel Z will close the annual Music Exchange conference on Sunday, 20 September at 12pm on the Ticketpro platform.

She will discuss the global entertainment landscape and will share an in-depth look at her personal studio space and go through all the gear she and her husband Omar create.



Rachel Z Hakim is a jazz and rock pianist and keyboardist and is considered one of the most influential and versatile musical forces of her generation.

She has already recorded 10 solo albums as a jazz musician. "Rachel Z is an improviser whose spontaneous playing is by no means eclipsed by the work of presiding geniuses such as Herbie Hancock and McCoy Tyner," opined John Fordham in *The Guardian* (4 August 2005.)

In 1988, she co-wrote the Grammy Award-winning and certified Gold Record *Tokyo Blue* with saxophonist Najee.

From 1988–96 she played keyboards and piano with fusion band Steps Ahead with vibes player Mike Mainieri.

In 1995, she worked with Wayne Shorter, on his album *High Life*, which won a Grammy for Best Contemporary Jazz Album. She was also responsible for the album's 40 tracks of synthesized orchestral sounds, acoustic piano solos and several concurrent world tours.

Hakim worked closely on pre-production with Marcus Miller in the studio to mesh the synth orchestra with the live ensemble to create the unique and innovative soundscape.

Besides her decades of work, Ozmosys (Omar and Rachel Z) is where we find her today and she and her husband are currently working on their second release in their studio and plan to release the project in 2021. The band performs improvised EDM electronica jazz funk-rock.

The group recently recorded an EP at Power Station at BerkleeNYC, which came out in 2019 with Kurt Rosenwinkel on guitar and Linley Marithe on bass and also toured with JC Maillard on guitar.

I caught up with Rachel Z Hakim at home in New York last week.

■ ***The four-letter word jazz:***

Jazz is one of the languages of music, it's based on improvisation expression and connection with other musicians' souls, it creates energy, it's powerful.

■ ***Where is the music industry going?***

It's harder than ever if you want to play for free, it's easier than ever. Exposure is easy.

■ ***A tool you need to improve yourself:***

Make sure you play. YouTube kids, see that you get one click from YouTube, you need to get with friends to play together, the human interaction is so key. Music is about human interaction, the conversation, the interaction.

■ ***Ozmosys means:***

A great EDM band; funk, jazz, rock, dance all blended in with four great players, we have rich harmony in the band.

■ ***When are you happiest?***

Making music and being with my husband Omar, meditation is also beautiful to get rid of useless thought and engage the higher part of the mind.



■ ***What music means to me?***

Life, air and breath. The reason for living the power that sustains everything, music is sharing love, beauty, joy and healing.

■ ***Any funny moments on stage:***

The piano I was using on stage when I played with the band Journey started rolling off stage during the set.

■ ***What is your most treasured possession?***

My husband and my Fazioli piano.

■ ***It's your round, what are you drinking?***

A Pellegrino.

■ ***What makes you stand out?***

It's really a boring answer, but I am a hard worker.

■ ***Pick five words to describe yourself?***

Loving, focused, caring, energetic and introspective

■ ***Favourite albums of all time?***

Miles Davis – *Smiles*
Smashing Pumpkins – *Adore*
Peter Gabriel – *So*
Chick Corea – *Now He Sings, Now He Sobs*
Herbie Hancock – *Empyrean Isles*
Kate Bush – *Live at Hammersmith Odeon*

■ ***What is your favourite word?***

Shag

■ ***Favourite fashion garment:***

YSL boots

■ ***Your greatest achievement:***

Being in the Miles Davis lineage and having played with Wayne Shorter and having played with Wayne Shorter puts me in that lineage. Learning to relax in life and take things as they come.



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■ ***What do you complain about most often?***

Complain about Omar complaining and we need fair compensation for artists.

■ ***What is your fear?***

It's an interesting state of mind, fear can motivate or it stops you, and don't view yourself as the centre of things.

■ ***Happiness is:***

A delicious slice of pizza, we spoilt for choice in New York and our puppy Luna.

🍷 ***The best life lesson you have been taught:***

There are so many, but staying focused on your mission in life is important so that you can look back and say I did something meaningful and never get too big for your boots, stay humble.

ozmosysband.com

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ABOUT MARTIN MYERS

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