

**ZOK RECORDS** aims to promote artists working in experimental and so-called outsider music<sup>1</sup>. It offers a digital sales platform, cassette production and sale, visibility and advertisement to our bandcamp-audience, instagram-followers and newsletter-subscribers, as well as support along the way, namely recording, mixing, mastering and design.

All of the cassettes are homemade and recorded in real-time, as opposed to factory duplication. This allows for a higher fidelity product.

ZOK believes in sustainability as a tangible practice in music-making: all tapes are recorded over old tapes from junk stores. CDs are sourced second-hand as much as possible. Every release is limited edition, with edition size varying according to the artist's wishes.

## S T A T E M E N T O F V A L U E S

- \* ZOK holds an explicitly left-wing position: democracy, economic justice, climate justice, anti-racism, queer feminism, anti-imperialism and the DIY-ethos are the baseline to our work.
- \* ZOK does not work with people with people who espouse right-wing, anti-democratic, classist, racist, misogynist, transphobic, colonialist or harmful conspiratorial beliefs.
- \* ZOK is a (digital) safe space. We try our best to cultivate a scene for artists, in which everyone feels safe and heard. Toxic masculinity, exclusionary rhetoric, elitism or other forms of toxicity are not tolerated.
- \* ZOK does not work with people who have committed any kind of abuse and refuse to take accountability for their actions.
- \* ZOK reserves the right to terminate their relationship with an artist for the specific reasons listed above. This means:
  - :: We take the release out of our catalog.
  - :: We pay out all revenue up until the day of the cancellation immediately.
  - :: We destroy the remaining stock of tapes by recording other releases over them.
  - :: We inform our audience of the termination, without publicly stating any further information.

## W H O I S Z O K

ZOK is mostly a one-person operation. I have a small workspace, access to means of production (CD drive, tape machines, software), specialized knowledge (mixing, mastering, audio tech, some visual design skills), a day job next to my artistic work and a big love for experimental sound. This grants me the privilege of dedicating time, energy and a bit of money to promote other artists' work.

## H O W D O E S I T W O R K

I do this to give access, visibility and freedom to underground artists I find interesting, and who generally do not have easy access to all of the possibilities I enjoy/enjoyed in life. The label is non-profit. In practice that means:

- 100% of digital sales go to the artist. No fees are charged.

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<sup>1</sup>ZOK finds this term problematic. It is both a statement of fact – many artists historically ascribed to this field have been outsiders to the academic, artistic, economic, political or even broader social world(s) of their time; but the genre of outsider art has also been used to fetishize mentally ill, poor, queer or otherwise marginalized artists. We disagree with the traditional idea of outsider-ness as defined through a bourgeois gaze.

- For physical releases, artists either pay the production costs\* upfront (which I try to keep at a minimum) – this is the version for artists with access to funds who wish to financially support the label –...

- ... or I put in the money, and take a 12.5% - 20% cut (smaller & cheaper runs have a higher payback rate) off the sales until the production costs are paid back. If the money is never paid back due to low sales, then that's fine too. No debt is being created. This would be the version for artists unable to support the label monetarily.

- ZOK does not take any further rate/surcharge and thus does not generate any profit

Please note that Bandcamp takes a 10% cut off the sales, and Paypal takes a small processing fee. All percentages above are applied after those fees are deducted.

One further reason I do not want to make money off the label is that I consider taking cuts off artists' sales (beyond our rate-payment of production costs, which is meant to help artists without funds) as similar to being a landlord, i.e. not a real job.

## I N F O R M A T I O N F O R A R T I S T S

You can send your submissions to [zokrecords.main@gmail.com](mailto:zokrecords.main@gmail.com). If I don't come back to you, it doesn't mean I don't like your music – it might just mean that I didn't find time yet, that there's no possibility for a release right now, or that it doesn't fit with the current selection of artists/styles.

Feel free to hit me up a second or third time within reasonable intervals.

Payout is normally done at the end of each month, but you can request me to transfer your earnings at any time. Transfers are done through PayPal only, because international transfers create additional costs, and we don't want that shit.

ZOK does not have funds to pay royalties to copyright-agencies (GEMA, SUISA, AKG, SIAE etc.).

For tape, we only do C40 tapes, meaning 2 sides at 20 minutes each. This is because we exclusively overdub old cassettes found at thrift shops. Most commercially produced cassettes that people give away are about that length – longer tapes (C60, C90) are less common and quite pricy in comparison, when purchased new. Because of our manufacturing concept, the cassette itself will have a different label on it, like „Swiss Pop Hits 2008“. The outside packaging is of course your artwork – nicely printed, and cut, folded and labeled by hand. This is recycling in its purest form, and also exactly my sense of humor.

For CD, we use the common 700MB format and gladly accept a 44.1KHz/16Bit version of your tracks. The burning is done manually and the disc does not get the artwork printed on it. The sleeves are handmade from out of 200g/m2 paper.

Our digital releases are only published on our Bandcamp page. We don't work with distributors (Distrokid, Fuga etc.). Our Bandcamp account is an artist account, not a label account. In case you want the release to show up on your personal page, that means you'll have to use the following work-around: add an album/EP/single to your page, add everything (artwork, text etc.) except the music; then paste a link to the album uploaded by label to the top of the release description and add a brief comment like "album hosted by ZOK Records:" alongside it.