Angela Marie Eidenmiller provides us with some sage advice on a monthly basis for our Tips From Our Members section. Besides the great article that she wrote for this month, Angela also provided us with this gem, that many of us can related to!

The Day Job Isn't the Problem. The Silence Is.

There's a quiet truth moving through the independent music community—one most artists feel but rarely say out loud. In November, I took a job at Amazon.

- Not because I stopped believing in music.
- Not because I failed.
- Not because I "gave up."

I did it because I understand something too many musicians are suffering through in silence:

You can love your art deeply and still need stability, structure, and room to breathe. Most musicians don't walk away from music because they stop caring. They walk away because the pressure never turns off—bills, algorithms, comparison, guilt, and the unspoken belief that "real" artists should be struggling harder.

The industry has done an incredible job romanticizing burnout. But here's the truth that needs daylight:

- A day job can be a strategy.
- A season.
- A tool.

Working nights didn't make me less creative, it made me clearer.
- I watched systems work—and break.
- I learned discipline that doesn't depend on inspiration.
- I earned income that didn't demand my art perform on command just to survive.

And this part matters:

- Your worth as an artist is not reduced because your art isn't your only income.
- A job is not a moral failure.
- It's not an identity downgrade.
- It's not something you need to apologize for.

Some of the strongest, most sustainable artists I know are the ones who stopped asking their music to rescue them financially before it was ready—and instead built stability around it. The "starving artist" myth benefits everyone except the artist.

- Sustainable artists last longer.
- They make clearer decisions.
- They protect their creativity instead of bleeding it dry.

So if you're clocking in somewhere and still writing songs late at night…
If you're working Amazon, retail, construction, teaching, bartending, ride share—while still chasing the thing that lights you up—
You are not behind. You are building a foundation!

Foundations don't look glamorous.

- They look quiet.
- They look like discipline without applause.
- They look like leadership.

And leadership is exactly what the independent music community needs more of.

—

Angela Marie Eidenmiller
International Singer Songwriters Association (ISSA)

REFRIGERATOR CHECKLIST: FOR MUSICIANS WITH DAY JOBS

(Print this. Stick it somewhere visible. Read it on the hard days.)

DAILY REMINDERS

- □ My job funds my freedom—it doesn't define my talent
- □ Stability is not selling out
- □ I don't owe anyone a suffering narrative
- □ Progress counts even when it's quiet

CREATIVE PERMISSION

- □ I am allowed to rest without guilt
- □ I am allowed to create slowly
- □ I am allowed to protect my art from burnout
- □ I don't need to monetize everything immediately

MINDSET CHECK

- □ Comparison is not research
- □ Algorithms are tools, not judges
- □ My timeline is valid
- □ Longevity beats virality

LEADERSHIP TRUTH

- □ Artists with structure last longer
- □ Income diversity is smart, not shameful
- □ Discipline is a form of self-respect
- □ I am building something that lasts

ON THE HARDEST DAYS

- □ This is a season, not a sentence
- □ I chose sustainability on purpose
- □ I am not failing—I am preparing
- □ Keep going