



"Meet 'n greet" day 2008

An intimate moment between **José Hoebee** and her fans in Best (Netherlands) on September 28th 2008.

I would like to thank **José, Peter & Marco, Jos**, the fans (**Martin, Holm, Jennifer, Ada, Kenny, Casper...**), the **Dutch Show Company** and **Café Amicitia** for such a good time!!!!

Source of the photos: Myself + Official Fan Club + Jennifer and Holm.



José Hoebee & me

The Official José Hoebee Fan Club (runned by **Peter Boonstra** with the assistance of **Marco** and **Jos Theuns**) organised on September 28th a "**Meet 'n Greet**" afternoon in **Café Amicitia** in Best (a village near Eindhoven, in the south of the Netherlands). I had the chance to attend this special event. It was a good opportunity for the fans to meet the legendary **Luv'** singer.



Best, the place where the Fan Club afternoon was held, wasn't chosen as a coincidence. It is indeed where **José** was born, like my Dutch family. I arrived at 1:00 pm at **Café Amicitia**. I was accompanied by my grand mother (who likes **José's** music though she isn't a real fan). I didn't want to let "Oma" alone and thought it would be nice if she could meet **José's** relatives that she knew from the past.

José greeted us at the entrance door. I hadn't seen her for real for 18 years. She looked great with a new haircut (look the pictures!). She was nice and appreciated the fact that I came from so far (1100 kms!!!). Then I greeted **Peter Boonstra** and **Marco** as well as **Jos Theuns** (who took a lot of pictures).

I immediately recognized some faces of fans with whom I had been in touch with (**Holm** from Germany, **Ada**, **Jennifer...**). **Holm** and me hugged warmly. I was so happy to see him and the others. I'd known some fans for 3-4 years from the **José's** forum. I even interviewed **Holm** one year ago for my former blog. **Ada** and **Jennifer** sent me nice emails.

As usual, **José** was nice and far from being arrogant and cold like some so-called divas. I know what "I'm talking about". I worked five years ago at the communication service of the **French Music Export Office** and two years ago in the **Mercier Champagne House** (where I met then a lot of celebrities who thought they were "**Madonna**").

I gave **José** some presents (a bottle of Champagne, Calissons (candies from Aix-en-Provence) and nougat from Montélimar). The other fans were also generous. Of course, **José** has one of the best fanbase!!!



I gave José presents like other fans did.

I was so surprised that **José** had time for all her fans who came especially for her. She even recognized me, though I'm not often in the Netherlands and that I'd never been to one of her "meet'n greet" days earlier. **José** and me know someone in common (**Miek van den Hurk**) who used to work in her father's office.

Miek was the first who gave me a record of **Luv'** when I was four years old. Thanks to her, I met **José** in August 1990. I told **José** that it was neat that she was so close to her public.

Later, I talked a while to members of the fan club. I started with **Holm** (natürlich!!!). Both of us talked about the future of **Luv'**. We thought that it would be better that the ladies would be busier as a group. The fact is that **Patty Brard** is very active on TV. That's why,

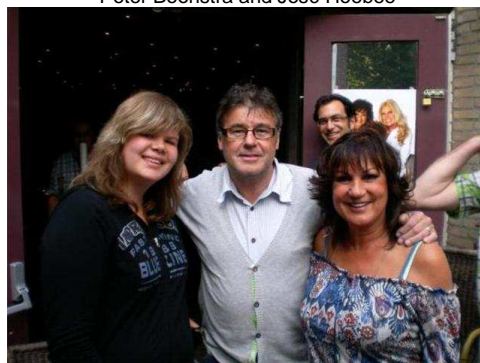
Luv' performs sporadically. I also chatted to **Holm's** friend (**Rüdiger**) who was nice. Then, I saw **Jennifer** and her father. **Jen** is only 15 years old and thus the "youngest fan of **Luv'** and **José**". I asked **Jennifer** for how long she had been a fan of the girl group and her lead singer. I also congratulated her for her sites on the clubs.nl portal. I also like the story of **Ad** and **Lia** who have been married for years. They came with their daughter and their grand children. Can you imagine: three generations in the sign of **Luv'**!!!



José between Holm and me



Peter Boonstra and José Hoebee



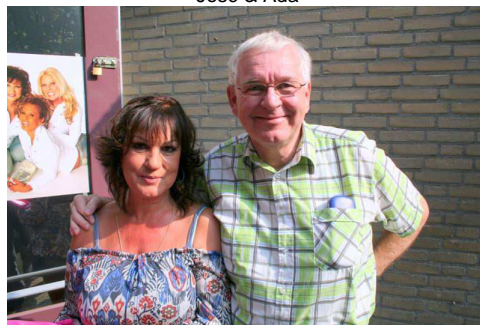
Jennifer, Will & José



Arnold, José and Martin



José & Ada



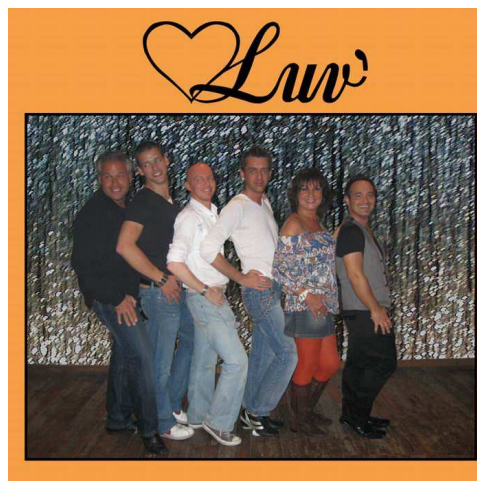
José & Jos

I later met other fans but just said "hello" to them. I wish I had more time to talk to them: **Frank** and **Kenny** (of the **FK Disco Club** (the boys and their "posse" made funny pictures with **José** : I liked when they paid a tribute to the **U.O.Me's** single cover and the **Lots Of Luv'** album cover), **Chris** from Belgium....Even **Casper Janssen** (aka **Dennis Jones**) was there. I also interviewed him for my former weblog.

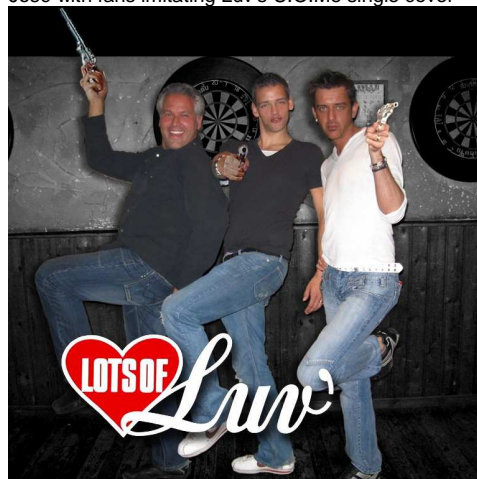
I must say that in the beginning I was a bit shy and impressed by all these people who knew each other for so long. But my shyness disappeared as the afternoon went on. I may seem cold when you first meet me but I need time to adapt to new persons. What I appreciated is that the fans weren't hysteric. I think **José** couldn't stand it. The majority of us are over 30.

I hoped that the afternoon wouldn't be boring for my grand ma but anytime I was looking in her direction, I saw her talking to **Ms van den Wijdeven** (**José's** mother) and the singers's sisters (**Marijke** and **Yvonne** (I once met **Yvonne** when I first saw **José** as I was 12 years old). As I noticed that "Oma" was OK, I could concentrate on myself and had conversations with the others.

There was a special person that I saw for the first time. His name is **Martin Vink**. He came with his friend, **Frank** who liked my Oma and chatted to her. **Martin** lived in the neighborhood of **Roosendaal**. He asked me where I came from, how I became a fan, how long I would stay in the Netherlands, the records I had at home....I told **Martin** my story and listened to what he had to say. He told me that **Luv'** and **José** were part of the "soundtrack of his life" for 30 years. One of his most beautiful stories was when he offered **Patty Brard** the tea service of her daughter (**Priscilla**) in one of her TV shows in 1999. Six years earlier, **Patty** went bankrupt and had to sell all her possessions. It was a moving moment. Because **Martin** really liked me, he invited me at his house five days later to let me see his impressive **Luv'** collection. I accepted his invitation, feeling that I wouldn't regret our meeting (Soon I'll post an article about the afternoon at his house). **Martin** introduced me to one of his best friends and who like him is a "hardcore" fan: **Arnold**.



José with fans imitating Luv's U.O.Me single cover



Boys (including Kenny to the right) imitating the "Lots of Luv" album cover

At 4:00 pm, **Peter** informed the participants that the live show of **The Dutch Show Company**, a party band, was about to begin. The group consists of a couple of female singers and **Anton** (whose outfit looked a bit like a renewed version of **Travolta's** white costume in "**Saturday Night Fever**"). The band sang standards of the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's (**Connie Francis, Beach Boys, Doris Day, ABBA...**). One of the best songs they performed was **Little Peggy March's I Will Follow Him** (that **José** covered in 1982). They sang the **Sister Act's** version (with a nice intro).

Then, **José** took the mic and performed two songs with the band: *Zoals Vrienden Doen* (**José's** duet with **Bonnie St. Claire**) and **Luv's** *Megamix* (a medley of the ladies greatest hits: *U.O.Me*, *Trojan Horse*, *Greatest Lover*, *Yes I Do* and *Casanova*). This improvised performance was great. There was a moving moment as **José's** parents (more than 80 years old) and her sisters sat just in front of her and the band.



José performing with the Dutch Show Company

After the show, **José** signed autographs. The discussions with the fans continued until 05:00 pm. At the end of the afternoon, **Will Hoebee** (**José's** husband) appeared. As he shook my hand, I said to him: "Hi! I'm Ralph from France." He immediately answered: "Oh, the one from Champagne!!", referring to my previous job at a Champagne House.

Then I talked to **José's** mom and asked her what her feelings were about her daughter's career. She told me she was proud of her, of course. She added: "**José** has always been afraid to fly" (I remember that when **Luv'** made a comeback in 2006, **José** got rid of her plane sickness). I chatted again to "**La Hoebee**". I asked her about the group's next big performance in March 2009 in Ahoy for the "**Revival of the 80's**" concert. She was surprised and didn't know about it. Strange that she wasn't directly informed by her management whereas the official website of the nostalgia show mentioned the presence of **Luv'**.

At half past five, My Oma and me left **Café Amicitia** (whose personnel had been friendly). I said good-bye to the participants. I thanked **Peter** for his organisation and **José** to have time for her public.

It was a great afternoon with my **favourite Dutch singer !!!!**