



Barbican Contemporary Music: Autumn 2011

Transcender Festival 23 - 28 September 2011

The Barbican's acclaimed **Transcender** festival returns for its third year, presenting another global selection of ecstatic, hypnotic and just plain psychedelic music. The focus is on music designed to transport the listener, to conjure trances or summon states of ecstasy through hypnotic grooves.

Featuring cyclical Gambian grooves from **Justin Adams** and **Juldeh Camara's JuJu**, sun-dazed blues from the Sahara with rising star guitarist **Bombino** (making his UK debut), Sufi song from all over the Islamic world including BBC Awards for World Music winner **Sain Zahoor**, spine-tingling European choral chants from **Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares** and beatific electronica from **Fennesz** and the Tangerine Dream-like **Emeralds**,

Friday 23 September 2011, 7.30pm **Justin Adams and Juldeh Camara's JuJu + Bombino**

Barbican Hall

Tickets: £12.50-17.50

Produced by the Barbican

An evening of ecstatic African grooves, featuring the transcendental, dubbed-out sound of Real World's musical alchemists **Justin Adams** and **Juldeh Camara (JuJu)**. Plus intoxicating riffs from the 'Saharan Santana' (Songlines) – fast-rising Tuareg guitarist **Omara "Bombino" Moctar**.

Driven by Justin Adams' rocking guitar and Juldeh Camara's fiery bittersweet ritti (one-string West African fiddle) playing, and featuring bassist Billy Fuller and rising-star jazz drummer Dave Smith, JuJu's transcendental music draws on rock 'n' roll, dub, avant-garde jazz and African dread in equal measure. Tracks build and circle, layer and knit. Melodies interlock, rhythms cross and the drone guitar builds a web of sound with an African aesthetic and heavy rock fervour, while Camara's Fulani-language lyrics only add to the hallucinogenic feel.

Rising star guitarist Omara "Bombino" Moctar is a young Tuareg guitarist and songwriter, who was raised during an era of armed struggles for independence and violent suppression by government forces. His electrifying jams capture the spirit of resistance and rebellion while echoing with guitar riffs reminiscent of Tinariwen and Ali Farka Touré, not to mention rock and blues icons such as Jimi Hendrix, John Lee Hooker and Jimmy Page. Already a superstar in the Tuareg community, with the release of *Agadez* – his debut album on Cumbancha Discovery – Bombino is set to be one of the new world music stars and this show marks his UK debut.

'A fiery musical crossroads, and an original fusion.' BBC Music on JuJu's *In Trance*

Saturday 24 September 2011, 7.30pm

Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares

Barbican Hall

Tickets: £10-25

Promoted by Serious

Internationally renowned vocal ensemble **Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares** blends traditional six-part a cappella repertoire with contemporary arrangements of ancient folk songs.

Formerly known as the Bulgarian State Radio and Television Female Vocal Choir, the group was created in Bulgaria in 1952 by Philip Koutev, aka 'the father of Bulgarian concert folk music.' Now conducted by **Dora Histrova**, the Grammy Award-winning ensemble have toured the globe to great acclaim, carving a distinctive voice within the rich heritage of Bulgaria's folk song. Following a sold-out tour in 2010, the choir return to the UK to play a special one-off London concert, before going on to tour the country.

'They conjure up the most magical spell when they start to harmonise – sheer suspension of self and time takes hold of you when these women sing.' Time Out

'This is not simple folk music. The songs themselves are ancient, but shaped and refined over the years by the singers themselves. If you have not yet experienced the mystery of Bulgarian voices, don't let the chance pass by.' The Guardian

Sunday 25 September 2011, 8pm

Emeralds/ Fennesz

Union Chapel

Tickets: £12.50

Produced by the Barbican

American underground phenomenon **Emeralds** began playing music together in 2005 in Cleveland's western suburbs and have released over forty recordings, on various independent labels. *Does It Look Like I'm Here*, their third official album, was rated 2010's finest album by Drowned in Sound. It finds the group moving from playing single oscillator analog synthesizers to complex analog and analog/digital hybrid as well as guitar synthesizers, not to mention fine-tuning their skills as tunesmiths. Comprising of a number of tracks from their recent limited 7" vinyl series on Wagon, as well as new compositions exclusive to this release, this fine selection of tunes surpassed anything they have achieved in their career. Perfect melodies intertwined with rippling sequences and a guitar sound that floats perfectly throughout.

'One of new cosmic music's most consistently compelling acts.' Resident Advisor

Christian Fennesz is a genuine pioneer who blends electric guitars and digital processing to create immersive, constantly-evolving and emotionally resonant soundscapes. *The Seven Stars* EP, released in July, is his first new music since 2008's acclaimed *Black Sea*.

'Music that seems to poeticise the world outside as you listen to it' Uncut

Wednesday 28 September 2011, 8pm

The Ecstatic Journey: Music from around the Sufi world

Featuring Sain Zahoor, Marouane Hajji, The Fakirs of Gorbhanga & the Ensemble Syubbanul Akhyar

Barbican Hall

Tickets: £15-25

Produced by the Barbican in association with La Cité de la Musique and Zaman Productions

The Ecstatic Journey gathers together classical traditions, ascetic meditations and exultant celebrations into a single, kaleidoscopic concert showcasing the Sufi songs of Morocco, Pakistan, India and Indonesia.

BBC World Music Award winner **Sain Zahoor** is a spiritual minstrel from Pakistan, the wandering guardian of a rich and vital street culture. Representing rich Moroccan Sufi traditions that date back to the 7th century AD is **Marouane Hajji**, born in 1987 in Fès and a member of Chorfas Skalli family, who descend from the revered Saint Moulay Ahmed Skalli. The Moulay Ahmed Skalli zaouïa (religious school) was founded in the 17th century and it remains a place where people regularly practice the *dhikr* (invocations) and the *samaâ* (songs).

The **Bauls of Bengal** are traveling minstrels, mystic singers, beggar philosophers – and a deeply free, altruistic people. At dusk, the **Gorbhanga Fakirs** sit under the “akhra” (or “ashram”), a circular and open-sided hut in the middle of their village, and play music on the dotara (a five-string, bird-headed lute), on the harmonium, on the jhuri (small cymbals), on the dholok (drum) or on the tabla. The musicians usually play two main different repertoires: the *Baul-Fakir gaan*, devotional songs with bakti and sufi influences which are widely inspired by Lalan Fakir poetry (1774-1890), and the *bangla qawwâli* – closer to the Pakistani qawwâli, and associated with guru Gaus-ul-Azam (1826-1906) from the Tarika-e-Maizbandari, in Bangladesh.

Hadrami Arabs from Yemen traveled, traded, and spread religion across Indonesia over the course of several centuries. Today, descendants of Hadrami traders can be found living in urban communities throughout Indonesia and the younger generations of Arab Indonesians use music to reinvent their Arab ethnicity. **Nanang Kurnia Wahab** is one of those. After leaving his Indonesian Islamic Boarding School in 1997, he and his friends started the Islamic music **Ensemble Syubbanul Akhyar** which is based in Jakarta and developed the innovative the Hajir Marawis style.

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