



National Folk Festival

29 MARCH - 2 APRIL, 2018
EXHIBITION PARK, CANBERRA



Attention: national music writers and presenters, Canberra media

Media release—for immediate release

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National Folk Festival announces 6 pack taster of top artists

The 52nd National Folk Festival today announced its first round of artists for 2018, with six outstanding headline acts from the UK and Australia.

From England, **Faustus** and **Belshazzar's Feast** will head to our shores to perform exclusively for Festival goers. Also on the bill is returning Festival favourite, **Katey Brooks** (UK) as well as homegrown heroes **Mick Thomas and The Roving Commission** (VIC), **19-Twenty** (NSW) and **Frumious** (TAS).

From 'bloke folk' and 'punk blues' to gypsy jazz fusion and the indefinable and yet unmistakable sound of grassroots and suburban Australia, these diverse acts represent the very best in folk music today. They're at the top of their game as virtuoso musicians, songwriters and entertainers, and each will bring their unique sound to Exhibition Park, Canberra throughout Easter (29 March—2 April 2018).

Heading the list is **Faustus** (UK), a 'bloke folk' triumvirate of prodigiously talented multi-instrumentalists; Paul Sartin, Benji Kirkpatrick and Saul Rose. This trio evolved from award-winning band Dr Faustus, and all three members have performed in other leading acts including the Seth Lakeman Band, Bellowhead, Waterson:Carthy and Whapweazel. Their three albums and dynamic shows have earned them widespread acclaim as the leading lights of their generation, with The Guardian describing them as "one of Britain's outstanding folk bands" and The Independent on Sunday declaring their mission to be "to rescue contemporary folk from the curse of feyness...".

Belshazzar's Feast (Paul Hutchinson and Paul Sartin, UK) play breathtakingly beautiful and wickedly inventive tunes on oboe, accordion and violin, many of which incorporate slapstick comedy with outstanding musicianship.

Guitarist-singer-songwriter **Katey Brooks** (UK) has a haunting intensity and a "voice to melt glaciers" (Venue Mag). After blowing away three full houses at the 2017 Festival, Katey is packing her guitar and returning to Australia with her new album, *We The People*.

Another returning Festival favourite is the 'raucous and manic' trio from the NSW east coast, **19-Twenty**. Featuring Kane Denny (vocals and guitars), Syd Green (percussion, drums, dobro) and John Gwilliam on double bass and vocals, 19-Twenty believe in "asking for forgiveness not for permission" and, accordingly, their music is the closest to punk the blues will ever get.

Each year the Festival draws on the best folk acts from two feature states, in a nod to its history as a travelling festival. For 24 years the Festival was held in different Australian cities and towns before putting down roots at its permanent home at Exhibition Park, Canberra. Tasmania and Victoria are the featured states for the 52nd National Folk Festival.

The first acts announced for the featured states are **Frumious**, a high-energy quintet from Hobart. Borrowing from many styles and cultures, their music is an infectiously upbeat fusion of folk and gypsy jazz with a fresh, contemporary and original sound.

Mick Thomas & The Roving Commission (VIC) features raconteur, troubadour, balladeer and poet, Mick Thomas, along with Squeezebox Wally on piano accordion and a rotating lineup of talented performers to keep the party alive with Mick's unique mix of folk, roots and country.

Promising 'five days in a perfect world', Canberra's award-winning National Folk Festival is one of the country's longest-running, family-friendly and widely loved music festivals. The five-day celebration of music, song, dance, circus, spoken word and film features more than 200 international and national acts. Hundreds of volunteers transform Exhibition Park (EPIC) into a fantastical village, complete with roving entertainers, street circus, stages of all sizes, market stalls, food vans, shopping precincts, cafes, themed bars and arts and craft activities.

The 52nd National Folk Festival runs throughout Easter, 29 March—2 April 2018 at Exhibition Park, corner Flemington Road and Northbourne Avenue, Mitchell, ACT. Tickets on sale now: discounted Early Bird Tickets available.

w: folkfestival.org.au @natfolkfest

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