



National Folk Festival

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EXHIBITION PARK, CANBERRA



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US, Irish, Greek, English and Serbian acts join top Australian artists in National Folk Festival 2018 line-up

The National Folk Festival has announced a baker's dozen of 13 more artists, joining the growing line-up of exciting acts for 2018.

Performing in Australia for the first time and exclusive to the National is US acoustic duo, **Ryanhood**. Starting their music career as street-performers at Boston's Quincy Market, they have won more than a dozen music awards in their home state of Arizona including Best Folk Band and Best Rock Band. Cameron Hood's rich and folky lead vocals, Ryan Green's explosive guitar and mandolin riffs, their airtight vocal harmonies and easy rapport with audiences have become a hallmark of their shows.

With a name that combines the Latin word for purple, a colour symbolising spirituality and mystery, with the name of group leader **Chrysoula Kechagioglou, Chrysoula K. & Púrpura** (Greece) bring together East and West. Creating a sound mosaic that is nostalgic, vivid, playful and airy, their music is a mesmerising exploration of 'the endless dialogue between the four cardinal points of the horizon'.

From Serbia and the UK, **Faith i Branko** merges the genius of **Branko Ristic**—one of the leading Roma violinists of this century—with **Faith Ristic**, a charismatic and virtuosic UK accordionist. The two came together when Faith travelled to the Balkans in search of a Gypsy violinist to join her circus band. Their music is sheer delight with their fusion style switching with ease from exuberant Balkan Romani music to ragtime, classical influences and reggae.

Also joining the register of international artists for the 2018 National Festival are young, high-energy contemporary bluegrass quintet **Flats and Sharps** (UK) along with Ireland's **John McSherry** and **Donal O'Connor**, regarded as the finest traditional Irish Uilleann Pipe and fiddle duet of their generation; their sound is acoustic perfection itself.

Headlining the Australian contingent is **Damian Howard** (VIC), whose new album, *Ned*, includes new interpretations and original-penned songs that celebrate the life and times of one of Australia's most notable historical figures, Ned Kelly.

The impressive list continues with **Miriam Lieberman** (NSW) performing on kora (African harp) and guitar. Her songs are reminiscent of Joni Mitchell infused with the rhythms of West Africa, enhanced by the soaring string and vocal accompaniment of **Lara Goodridge** on violin and **Liz Frencham** on double bass.

The Black Swans of Trespass (TAS) will have audiences up on their feet with their funky, soulful, sound, while high-energy travelling folk band, **The Button Collective** (NSW), combines new Australian stories with elements of traditional Irish music, spiced up with the spirit of fast-paced American old-timey grooves.

Horns of Leroy (VIC) take street music to a new level with their New Orleans to Fitzroy inspired flavours, **The Royal High Jinx** (VIC) write, play and sing music inspired by European traditions while sporting a spectacular burlesque wardrobe and **Squeebz** (VIC) takes Irish, Cape Breton, Québécois and Breton music to a new level with their high-energy tunes and songs.

For the kids, it will be a chance to buckle up and take a trip in a giant time machine to get up close and personal with a life sized T-Rex! **Dinosaur Time Machine** incorporates the latest discoveries about dinosaurs with circus and puppetry, in this unique educational theatre production.

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 and attracts more than 40,000 visitors. 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.

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