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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 8/26/2016**

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## **LOTUS INFUSES DOWNTOWN BLOOMINGTON WITH GLOBAL MUSIC**

Over 30 international artists come together in Bloomington, Indiana, for the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Lotus World Music & Arts Festival.

### **– COMPLETE EVENT DETAILS –**

*Bloomington, Indiana:* The Lotus World Music & Arts Festival returns to Bloomington, Indiana, September 15-18. Over 30 international artists from six continents and 20 countries take the stage in eight downtown venues including boisterous, pavement-quaking, outdoor dance tents, contemplative church venues, and historic theaters. Representing countries from A (Argentina) to Z (Zimbabwe), when Lotus performers come together for the four-day festival, Bloomington's streets fill with palpable energy and an eclectic blend of global sound and spectacle. Through music, dance, art, and food, Lotus embraces and celebrates cultural diversity.

The 2016 Lotus World Music & Arts Festival lineup includes artists from as far away as Finland, Sudan, Ghana, Lithuania, Mongolia, Ireland, Columbia, Sweden, India, and Israel...to as nearby as Virginia, Vermont, and Indiana. Music genres vary from traditional and folk, to electronic dance music, hip-hop-inflected swing, reggae, tamburitza, African retro-pop, and several uniquely branded fusions.

Though US music fans may not yet recognize many names from the Lotus lineup, Lotus is known for helping to debut world artists into the US scene. Many 2016 Lotus artists have recently been recognized in both stateside and international press, including:

**A-Wa:** “Ten Artists You Need to Know – June 2016” – *Rolling Stone*, June 2016; “NPR Music’s 30 Favorite Albums of 2016 (So Far)” – *NPR Music*, June 2016  
**Fendika:** “Our Top Discoveries at globalFEST 2016” – *NPR*, 2016  
**Mokoomba:** “Mokoomba is quite simply the most impressive band Zimbabwe has produced in recent memory.” – *Afropop Worldwide*  
**Riyaz Qawwali:** “Of old traditions & new, Riyaz Qawwali group keeps the Sufi voice strident in the US” – *India Abroad (via Twitter)*, 2015  
**Alsarah & The Nubatones:** “International Music You Must Hear Now” – *NPR Music*, 2014

At its core, the Festival centers around premier showcases on Friday and Saturday evenings, when a wristband becomes your passport to explore all downtown venues from 6:00pm until midnight. Festival events – both ticketed and free – also include an opening concert Thursday night, Sunday’s closing World Spirit Concert, free access to the Arts Village and a special Lotus art exhibit throughout the weekend, the popular Lotus in the Park on Saturday afternoon (also free), the Lotus Food Truck village curated by James Beard Award-nominated chef David Tallent, a tribute to Indiana’s Bicentennial, restorative Yoga in the Park, and workshops led by “One Million Stars to End Violence” founder Maryann Talia Pau.

As the flagship program of the non-profit Lotus Education & Arts Foundation, the Lotus World Music & Arts Festival is one of the oldest world music festivals in the U.S. and the only one of its kind in Indiana. Established in 1994, the Festival attracts more than 12,000 people to downtown Bloomington each fall for 4-5 days of music and arts from around the globe. Through the Festival, Lotus creates – on a grand scale – the rare opportunity for audiences to experience places far removed from their everyday routines and to broaden their worldview through the arts. In doing so, the Lotus World Music & Arts Festival contributes to the Lotus Education & Arts Foundation mission: to create opportunities to experience, celebrate, and explore the diversity of the world’s cultures, through music and the arts.

Complete information about the Festival schedule and events, ticketing, and more is available online at [lotusfest.org](http://lotusfest.org).

## **Sponsors**

The 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Lotus World Music & Arts Festival is made possible by the generous support of community partners:

**Presenting Sponsors:** Blueline Media Productions and Indiana University Bloomington

**Producer Sponsors:** Bloom Magazine; Bloomington Brewing Company; Indiana Memorial Union Catering; Indianapolis Monthly; IU Office of the Provost; IU Robert A. and Sandra S. Borns Jewish Studies Program, Lou and Sybil Mervis Fund in Jewish Cultural Studies; Ivy Tech Community College; One World Catering & Events; Organized Living; Pizza X; and Lennie’s Restaurant.

**Sustaining Sponsor:** Southside Rental

**Festival Grantors:** Visit Bloomington, National Endowment for the Arts: Art Works, Indiana Department of Tourism, Indiana Bicentennial Commission, Indiana Arts Commission, Brown County Community Foundation, and the Bloomington Arts Commission.

*NOTE: For your convenience, we’ve included a complete list of 2016 Lotus artist bios.*

##### END #####

## **LOTUS WORLD MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS**

### **KICK-OFF CONCERT – Thursday, September 15**

Festival weekend officially launches Thursday with the Lotus Kick-Off Concert at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater. The double-billed show opens with **Federspiel**, a seven-piece brass Austrian band. Israel's **Baladino** follows with a unique Sephardic – Mediterranean fusion. Tickets at the Buskirk-Chumley Box Office.

### **EVENING SHOWCASES – Friday, September 16, and Saturday, September 17**

Lotus Evening Showcases are the quintessential Lotus Festival experience. A ticket is traded for a wristband, which serves as the passport that gives attendees access to roam through multiple downtown venues to catch 30+ artists representing 20 countries - including Finland, Sudan, Ghana, Lithuania, Mongolia, Columbia, Sweden, Canary Islands, and Israel. Lotus 2016 artists cover an array of musical genres, including Celtic, reggae, folk & traditional, swing, Bhangra, hip-hop, African retro-pop, and several uniquely branded fusions. Tickets at the Buskirk-Chumley Box Office.

### **LOTUS IN THE PARK – Saturday, September 17**

Free to the public, Lotus in the Park offers all-ages fun from 12-5pm at Waldron, Hill & Buskirk Park (Third Street Park). Activities include hands-on art-making, "One Million Stars" star-weaving, live performances, workshops, and displays, as well as a valet bike corral. This year's Lotus in the Park festivities spotlight the Indiana Bicentennial and the history, present, and future of our state's cultural treasures.

### **LOTUS FOOD TRUCK VILLAGE – Evening Showcases and Lotus in the Park**

Curated by six-time James Beard Award nominee chef David Tallent, the Lotus Food Truck Village is a collective effort of 12 food trucks to add a culinary art experience to the festival. Though food trucks offer a diverse culinary experience, they share one common denominator: a belief in sourcing local, sustainable ingredients whenever possible.

### **FESTIVAL ARTS VILLAGE - Friday, September 16, and Saturday, September 17**

Free and open to the public from 6-10pm on both Festival evenings, the Arts Village is an entire block full of art installations, hands-on art-making, live demos, chalk art, hula-hooping, and other activities for all ages. Don't miss the dazzling Arts Village exhibition of thousands of stars woven by our community so far for the "One Million Stars to End Violence" initiative.

### **"AROUND THE BODY, AROUND THE WORLD" – September 1-24**

This featured festival exhibition explores global garment traditions ranging from the ceremonial to the everyday. From shirts to skirts to sashes, and from elaborate beadwork to subtle dyes, textiles from private regional collections tell a story of wearable culture across centuries and continents. Free and open all month at the Ivy Tech John Waldron Arts Center, with extended gallery hours until midnight on Festival weekend.

### **FESTIVAL UNWIND: YOGA IN THE PARK – Sunday, September 18**

The first-ever Yoga in the Park is designed to help center the soul, mind, and body after a long Festival weekend. Multiple all-level practices are available, in partnership with local yoga studios and instructors. Free; donations accepted.

### **WORLD SPIRIT CONCERT – Sunday, September 18**

Featuring the Finnish/Scandinavian duo **My Bubba** as well as the unique pairing of Senegal and Lithuania that is **Solo & Indrè**. The "pin gets you in" – admission comes with the 2016 collectible

Lotus pin, available for \$5 from the Buskirk-Chumley Box Office, Festival Store, Bloomingfoods, or Landlocked Music.

### **ONE MILLION STARS TO END VIOLENCE**

In 2012, Australian artist and weaver Maryann Talia Pau started “One Million Stars to End Violence” as a global movement to raise anti-violence awareness and collective action through the weaving of 8-pointed stars, a symbol rooted in her Pacific Island/Samoan heritage. Lotus is one of 100 official “Star Weave” Partners worldwide (and one of only four in the U.S.), with a goal of contributing at least 10,000 stars towards a final installation of all 1,000,000 stars at the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games. Pau will be in residence in Bloomington throughout Festival weekend, leading workshops, talks, and “meet and weave” sessions. “It is an opportunity to remind each other that we CAN do something about it, says Pau, “Every woven star reminds us that we have to MAKE peace and safe spaces and that it doesn’t just happen.”

### **INDIANA BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION**

Lotus in the Park is dedicated this year to the history and future of arts and culture in Indiana, including commemorating the life of the organization’s partial namesake, Quinten “Lotus” Dickey. In addition to Bicentennial-inspired performances and art activities, the celebration will also feature “Indiana Folk Art: 200 Years of Tradition and Innovation,” a 24-panel traveling exhibit sponsored by Traditional Arts Indiana that includes the work of more than 45 Indiana artists, as well as demonstrations and talks by four Indiana musical-instrument makers. These activities are a signature project of the Indiana Bicentennial Commission, and are made possible, in part, with support from the Indiana Arts Commission.

## **For More Information**

### **LOTUS WORLD MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL**

For more information about the Lotus World Music & Arts Festival, please contact the Lotus Education & Arts Foundation:

Email [media@lotusfest.org](mailto:media@lotusfest.org)

Phone 812-336-6599

Web [www.lotusfest.org](http://www.lotusfest.org)

## LOTUS WORLD MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL – 2016 ARTIST BIOS

### Aallotar

Ancestors of Sara Pajunen and Teija Niku lived within hours of each other in western Finland – speaking the same language, playing the same music, living the same culture. In the late 19th-century, Pajunen’s ancestors emigrated to northern Minnesota; Niku’s family remained in Finland. Today, they explore a common heritage in Finnish folk music, even as they create new music that reflects their contemporary cultures. Pajunen is a violinist and Niku is an accordionist; their lithe instrumentals and beautiful vocal harmonies in Finnish and English demonstrate how gracefully traditional and modern folk music can speak together. “Extra elusive appeal, its lightness of touch and melodiousness of repertoire matching the skill of the musicians,” says folk and roots magazine fRoots of the duo.

### Adonis Puentes

With a fresh, rich voice and a tight all-Cuban acoustic band, Adonis Puentes is earning a place in the list of great soneros – bandleader/singers whose vocal improvisations are the hallmarks of a Cuban son. Although he now lives in Canada, Puentes comments, “I feel like a messenger of my roots and tradition. ... My mission is to make you dance and enjoy my melodies and rhythms.” The multi-layered arrangements that will bring you to the dance floor include guitar, tres (six-string guitar), piano, bass, trumpet, and percussion. “... [A] world class band that delivers with great precision; witty, intelligent lyrics inspired by everyday life and by the greatest power of all: Love,” described the Latin Jazz Network.

### Alsarah & The Nubatones

Dubbed by Alsarah as “east African retro pop,” Alsarah & The Nubatones blend 1960s and 70s Ethiopian music with Arabic and North African influences to create a sound with soaring vocal melodies, eastern instruments, and pentatonic arrangements. A Sudanese born singer, songwriter and ethnomusicologist, Alsarah understands being an immigrant: her family moved to Yemen to escape a stifling Sudanese regime before relocating to Brooklyn when civil war escalated in Yemen during the 1990s. Alsarah & The Nubatones’ work draws on Nubian “Songs of Return” that portray the dream of returning home and a nostalgic longing for a place that no longer exists. That rich feeling is propelled by Alsarah’s vocals accompanied by a strong groove grounded in East African acoustic instrumentation provided by the Nubatones, including including percussionist Rami El Aasser, master oud player Haig Manoukian, and bass player Mawuena Kodjovi.

### Altan

Altan emerged from the creative spontaneity of jam sessions in kitchens and pubs in their hometown of Donegal. For more than three decades, the band has brought the living legacy of Irish traditional music to audiences around the world. Altan has always been a band of virtuosos, and its current configuration is no exception. Founder Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh (fiddle, lead vocals) is joined by Ciarán Tourish (fiddle, tin whistle, backing vocals), Martin Tourish (button accordion, melodeon), Dáithí Sproule (guitar/vocals) and Ciarán Curran (bouzouki, bouzouki guitar). In addition to their formidable repertoire of Irish music, Altan also delves occasionally into the musical connections between Ireland and Appalachia. “More than any other Irish group, this Donegal quintet is seen as keeper of the traditional flame,” printed Boston Globe.

### Anda Union

*\* 2016 Kat Domingo Memorial Artist \**

The 10 women and men of Anda Union express the ancient musical culture of Inner Mongolia's grasslands, a culture passed from generation to generation through stories, music, and songs. The ensemble plays an array of traditional instruments, including morin khuur (horsehead fiddle), tob shur (Mongolian lute), percussion, and the rare moadin chor (a flute made from a single reed, grown in the Altai Mountains of northwestern China). Vocals include hoomei, or throat-singing, and urtyn duu or long-song, so-called because each syllable of the song is drawn out at great length. "Meditative, soulful and enlightening, Anda Union are a privilege to watch," dubbed the UK publication Concrete.

*\*The Kat Domingo Memorial Artist honors the memory of Dr. Katherine "Kat" Domingo, an advocate for the power of music to build bridges and community – in particular, through the beauty of the human voice.*

Anna & Elizabeth

*\* 2016 Lotus Dickey Artist \**

Multi-instrumentalist Anna Roberts-Gevalt and ballad-singer Elizabeth LaPrelle honor Appalachian artistry with a repertoire collected from archives, elder musicians, and their contemporaries among the old-time renaissance in the U.S. In haunting ballads, lilting lullabies, and songs of grace and redemption, the duo showcases arresting vocal harmonies that seem both very old yet fresh and raw. Roberts-Gevalt and LaPrelle also create and perform with "crankies," remarkable old-fashioned story-scrolls. "These songs are given few embellishments — sometimes a fiddle is added to a single voice, sometimes a banjo or guitar chimes in — but always the power is in the sparseness. If you've never thought your tastes would lean to mountain music, take a deep breath and soak it all in," says Bob Boilen of NPR Music.

*\*The Lotus Dickey Artist honors the late Lotus Dickey, an Indiana old-time musician whose love of music from around the world embodies the spirit of the Lotus World Music and Arts Festival.*

A-Wa

Tair, Liron, and Tagel Haim grew up in a small southern Israeli village near the Egyptian border. The family's Yemeni Jewish roots -- and their love of the Yemenite language, an old and nearly extinct dialect of Arabic spoken by Yemeni Jews -- inspired the Haim sisters to develop a new sound that weaves traditional Yemeni music and women's chanting into a thoroughly modern, riveting electronic groove. A Facebook encounter with Balkan Beat Box's Tomer Yosef led to a collaboration that has launched A-Wa on their own meteoric rise. "We feel like our music is sort of a bridge to connect people from Arab countries and from Israel and from all over the world. They relate to the music, the groove, and the story of liberation," Tair told Forward.com.

Ayaan Ali Bangash

Ayaan Ali Bangash grew up learning the intricacies of the sarod – the four-stringed lute of classical Indian music. He is the younger son of sarod master Amjad Ali Bangash and the seventh generation of a musical lineage known as the Senia Bangash School. Since making his solo debut when he was just eight years old, Ali Bangash has been performing throughout the world both with his father and on his own, offering him opportunities to experiment with collaborations that bring the sarod into harmony with other cultural traditions and musical genres.

Baladino

The Israeli band Baladino offers fresh, authentic interpretations of unique Mediterranean music and tradition rooted in Ladino culture, singing in a Spanish-Jewish dialect spoken by Sephardic Jews. Conceived by wind instrumentalist Yonnie Dror and string player Thomas Moked, the band includes percussionist Yshai Afterman and singer Yael Badah. Badah's collection of Ladino songs, many of which belonged to her ancestors, form the core of Baladino's repertoire. Tradition is a departure point for the musicians, who often improvise Mediterranean-Gypsy grooves that embrace more modern influences.

#### Bill Berg

Bill Berg has been making musical instruments for over thirty years. He enjoys working in his Nashville shop, Mountain Made Music, where he specializes in instruments mountain dulcimers, hammered dulcimers, bowed psalteries, lap harps, and various other harp-like instruments. Bill finds it fascinating to take a piece of raw wood cutting it and finding its beauty within, which he makes into exceptional musical instruments.

#### Bruce Taggart

Bruce Taggart is a mandolin builder, fiddle builder, banjo neck maker, and an instrument repairman. "I started as a musician interested in banjo but couldn't afford a real fancy instrument," he recalls, "so I built one. The Earl Scruggs book 'How to Play Bluegrass Banjo,' in the back section, says how to build your own banjo. And that was my first foray into the musical instrument building world." Bruce soon came across two old violins in need of work, which evolved into fiddle building, a "labor of love" that continues to this day alongside Taggart's mastery of mandolin-making.

#### Clint Bear

Clint Bear started building acoustic guitars in 2001 after almost 35 years of playing, repairing and tinkering with electric and acoustic guitars. His lutherie skills evolved from woodworking skills honed during several decades in homebuilding, remodeling, and cabinet making; in addition, his work in his family jewelry business provided skills in detail work that directly apply to guitar making. Clint applies elements of both new and old design philosophies to his guitars, and is particularly inspired by old "Pre-War" Martins and Gibson flattops.

#### The Dhol Foundation

Led by master percussionist Johnny Kalsi, this London-based collective is founded on the Indian bhangra drumming traditions of Kalsi's native Punjab. However, Indian bhangra drumming is just the starting point for Dhol Foundation's freewheeling style. Rock, pop, electronica, Indian folk, and classical music. The band brings it all together in the group's wall of sound. The Dhol Foundation has played on film soundtracks and at festivals around the world, including WOMAD. This year, the band makes its Lotus debut.

#### Federspiel

Founded in 2004, the seven-members of the brass ensemble Federspiel ("feather game") were students at Vienna's University of Music and Performing Arts. With a sound that takes listeners on an eclectic musical journey through folk, world, traditional, and even pop, Federspiel's bold improvisations redefine any preconceptions of brass-band music. "So much inspiration, humor, sensitivity and free flowing energy you rarely find on stage, especially with brass bands," described world-renowned trumpet player Reinhold Friedrich.

#### Fémina

This trio of Patagonian women write and sing diverse songs in exquisite harmony to deliver an unforgettable theatrical stage performance. Hailing from the tiny mountain town of San Martín de los Andes, Fémina is made up of two sisters and their best childhood friend: Sofia “Toti” Trucco (vocals, guitar, ronroco), Clara “Wewi” Trucco (vocals, percussion), and Clara Miglioli (vocals, guitar). They mix a variety of Latin genres – including cumbia, candombe, rumba, and boleros – with other rhythms and styles, such as reggae, funk, poetry, and hip-hop.

#### Fendika

The musicians and dancers of Fendika come from Addis Ababa and draw deeply from the well of Ethiopia’s *azmari* music, a tradition developed by itinerant bards. The seven-member group includes two dancers, two singers, and instrumentalists who play *kebero* drums, *masenko* (a one-stringed bowed fiddle), and *krar* (a five- or six-stringed lyre). Founder Melaku Belay is also virtuoso interpreter of *eskista*, or the traditional trance dance known for athletic shoulder movements that presage hip hop and breakdancing. Though Fendika interprets *azmari* music of the Ethiopian highlands and dance forms from southern Ethiopia, Somalia, and Afar regions, don’t expect a classic folkloric presentation. “My artistic vision is to present the rich musical traditions of Ethiopia to the world, while also including a natural innovation in our expressions. I believe that culture is always changing, but should also honor its roots and sustain that heritage while building cultural opportunities for the future,” stated Belay on WorldMusicCentral.org.

#### Fiddle River Stringband

Fiddle River Stringband delights audiences with high energy traditional dance music, original old-time songs, flatfooting, and percussive dance. The fiddle-driven quartet features Ohio’s Bob Lucas and Chris Westhoff (of Mad River Theater Works) and Bloomington’s Jamie Gans and Tamara Loewenthal (of Fiddle 'n' Feet). The Foot Squad joins in to add percussive dance to the band’s Lotus in the Park performance, where the group will also lead the audience in a community dance.

#### Germán Lopéz

Germán López comes to Lotus from the Spanish Canary Island of Gran Canaria off the coast of Africa. Germán is an accomplished artist on the *timple*, a small five-stringed instrument unique to folk music of the Canary Islands (and related to South American instruments like the *cavaquinho*, *cuatro*, and *charango*). He performs throughout the world, equally comfortable playing with a symphony orchestra, collaborating on a jazz fusion project, and wowing audiences on a festival stage. He will be accompanied by guitarist Antonio Toledo.

#### Josienne Clarke & Ben Walker

Double BBC Folk Award nominees Josienne Clarke and Ben Walker infuse ageless stories of love and loss with their exquisite command of many instruments. Josienne was born in Sussex and Ben, in Evesham; it was after studying in London, and utterly by chance, that they met in July 2009. Together they have resolutely forged their own path through traditional music. Whether interpreting words centuries old or singing her own authentic lyrics, Josienne’s jewel-like voice finds nuance in the simplest phrase, while Ben’s musical tact and flair for arrangement provide the perfect setting for the song to shine. Their first major album together reached No. 1 on the UK Amazon folk chart, and they have also received the Isambard Folk Award, the FATEA Award for Best Album and Female Vocalist of the Year, and the Spiral Earth Award for Best Duo, as well as coveted Radio 2 folk award nominations for Best Newcomers and Best Duo.



### Lautari

From barn dances to jazz clubs, concert halls, and festivals, Lautari explores the living traditions of Polish folk music. The ensemble learned their repertoire from a combination of village musicians and works of 19th-century folklorist Oskar Kolberg. Lautari approaches folk music both as an essential expression of Poland's national culture and a fertile ground for avant-garde experimentation and improvisation. "Drawing on musical modernism as much as specific rural folk traditions, Lautari deliver a compelling contemporary account from one small corner of the European folk tradition's amazing legacy," observes TheArtsDesk.com.

### Lotus Dickey Tribute

Quinten "Lotus" Dickey (1911-1989) was one of our state's most important tradition-bearers for both the song and fiddle music of southern Indiana, specifically Orange County. He was also known for his openness to all people and all cultures, a welcoming spirit that partly inspired the naming of our Festival. Through music and stories, the Lotus Dickey Tribute shares this legacy with a new generation at Lotus in the Park, honoring his original songs and fiddle compositions as well as his appreciation for the traditional tunes and songs that he learned from his community.

### Maryann Talia Pau

An artist and practicing weaver in Australia, Maryann Talia Pau is the founder of the "One Million Stars to End Violence" project, in which Lotus is a "Star Weave" partner. Pau makes breastplates and body adornment using both traditional and contemporary weaving techniques. The co-founder of Pacific Women's Weaving Circle, Pau helped launch a partnership was between the Office of Commonwealth Games Arts & Cultural program and "One Million Stars" in a collaborative effort to bring together all one-million stars woven by participants and communities around the world by July 2017, for a major installation at the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games. Pau will travel extensively throughout 2016 to promote the project and to run star weaving workshops with diverse communities around the world. Pau's works and collaborations have been featured in Australia's Gallery of Modern Art and acquired by the National Gallery of Victoria.

### Mokoomba

Formed in 2001 by six musicians from Zimbabwe, Mokoomba's sound ranges from funky rap, to expert Congolese grooves, to quasi-reggae, to Latin music. The band uses rhythms and melodies from their native Tonga culture to create a global fusion through blending sounds from around the world with music from their homeland. In a recent album review, Afropop Worldwide's Banning Eyre calls them "quite simply the most impressive band Zimbabwe has produced in recent memory" and "the best news we have heard out of Zimbabwe in years."

### Movits!

A fan favorite, Movits! returns with their special Swedish concoction of hip-hop and swing. Johan Rensfeldt (vocals), Anders Rensfeldt (DJ, sampling, and other instruments), and Joakim Nilsson (sax) bring flair and energy to every Lotus performance. They call their music "appelknyckarjazz," or "apple-stealing jazz" referring to trousers worn by Swedish street kids in the '30s and '40s.. Even if you don't speak their language, you'll get the groove. "Movits! sounds like a party, pure and simple, and a party needs no translation."

### My Bubba

My Larsdotter and Bubba Tomasdotter make soulful, sensual, unhurried music that's as playful as it is powerful. The sparse songs sometimes feature a cappella, body percussion, or simple acoustic arrangements. The lyrics are deceptively simple, sounding at times like found poetry. "With just a guitar and vocals, they are mesmerizing in their softer-than-soft, lilting songs," writes Amos Perrine in *No Depression*, who also called them "their generation's Simon and Garfunkel." *All Songs Considered* summed it up best: "It's so lovely to hear voices unadorned and acoustic. Honestly a night of magic."

#### Palenke Soultribe

The "electronic production collective" Palenke Soultribe deconstructs Afro-Colombian rhythms, blending them with modern beats, catchy bass lines, and synthesized arpeggios. Formed in Colombia but currently based in Los Angeles, PST has made a name for itself on the alt-Latin dance music scene by working with a fluid array of guest producers, singers, songwriters, and players. "The Colombia natives meld dancehall, cumbia and EDM into a party-starting punch," reviewed *TimeOut Chicago*.

#### Riyaz Qawwali

Riyaz Qawwali entralls listeners with lively rhythms, joyous melodies, and inspirational poetry in an improvisational Sufi vocal tradition made famous in the West by the late Pakistani singer Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. In addition to paying homage to traditional qawwali that has been in existence for over 700 years, the ensemble uses qawwali as a universal message of oneness that transcends religious boundaries. Though Mostqawwali troupes are composed of Muslim family members, Riyaz Qawwali is composed of musicians from various spiritual backgrounds, including Islam, Hinduism, and Sikhism. This age-old spiritual music is joyful, sincere, and tremendously appealing.

#### Rocky Dawuni

The Afro Roots sound of Ghanaian musician and social activist Rocky Dawuni has been influenced by the soulful music of Afrobeat legend Fela Kuti and the positive messages and deep grooves of Bob Marley. Rocky's songs straddle musical boundaries between Africa, the Caribbean and the U.S.

Infectious grooves pair with stirring anthems meant to unite generations, and cultures. You'll hear a healthy dose of reggae in Rocky's sets, too. Dawuni is only the second African musician to be nominated for a Grammy in the "Best Reggae Album" category.. "Much like the blues, reggae is the root of so much popular music," he says. "I am proud to contribute to its grand tradition and legacy."

#### Solo & Indre

Senegalese kora meets Lithuanian kanklės in the duo of Solo Cissokho and Indrė Jurgelevičiūtė. Solo is a griot, a storyteller and praise singer devoted to transmitting his African heritage, who plays the kora, a 21-stringed West African instrument that is part harp, part lute. Indrė is both a singer and an expert player of the kanklės, a Lithuanian plucked string instrument similar to a zither. This unique pairing of traditional instruments with very similar sounds, coming from vastly different cultural landscapes, leads to spontaneous improvisations and compelling acoustic performances. "Real musical communication without any feeling of imposed fusion" reviewed *fROOTS*.

#### Söndörgő

This Hungarian ensemble is a tamburitza band: it's built around the tambura, a small string instrument reminiscent of the mandolin. Add wind instruments and accordion, and you have the Söndörgő sound. Growing up amidst a strong Serbian culture in their small town near Budapest, the members of

Söndörgő began playing together in high school and became devoted to southern Slavic music traditions, especially those found in Hungary's Serbian and Croatian settlements that border the Danube. The group researches, arranges, and performs in this little-known Balkan tradition, deriving their repertoire from material gathered by Béla Bartók and Tihamér Vujicsics, as well as pieces learned directly from old masters.

#### Tony Artis

For Tony Artis, aka “Baba Amoah,” drum-making combines his interests in music, aesthetics, and Nigerian Yoruba culture. His craft allows him to have a greater connection to the music he plays, because he believes that the drum takes on the maker’s voice. His studies have taken him across the U.S., Ghana, West Africa and Cuba. He is owner/operator of Amoah's African Drum Works and Coal Bin Productions, founder and artistic director of Ori Afro Jazz Ensemble, and co-founder of Sancocho Music and Dance Collage.

#### Yann Falquet & Pascal Gemme

Yann Falquet & Pascal Gemme started their musical journey two decades ago, busking on the streets of Montréal. They have since played over a thousand shows in 20 countries with the Quebecois trio Genticorum, and they now return as a duo to present an intimate show based on the close musical bond forged by years of touring together. Blending seamlessly, yet allowing each other plenty of space for their musical personalities to shine through, Yann (guitar) and Pascal (fiddle) are two masters of the music of Quebec, illuminating a vast repertoire of traditional songs and tunes.