



Richmond Folk Festival Announces First Group of Performers

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August 12, 2010 (Richmond, VA) – The Richmond Folk Festival, one of Virginia’s largest and most unique events, bringing artists from across the country, announces its first group of performers.

Each year the festival’s schedule features a new group of artists and performers of the very highest caliber, making that year’s event completely unique. Since the first year of the National Folk Festival in Richmond (2005) local producer Venture Richmond and its Local Programming Committee, have worked in partnership with the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA) to book and secure the enormous array of traditional artists for the festivals.

Of its work with the Richmond Folk Festival, Joshua Kohn, programming manager for the NCTA, said, “The NCTA draws upon a deep and broad national network of experts in the various fields - musicians, academics, and serious music fans alike, developed over many decades, to get to the core of the great grassroots musical traditions of our country. We aim to present only the finest, community-rooted traditional artists and to do this we are constantly researching to expand our understanding and knowledge of a broad array of cultural traditions. The NCTA is passionate about its mission.”

The Richmond Folk Festival is proud to present its third festival in 2010 which will feature performers on the Altria Stage, Dominion Stage, MWV Stage, Richmond Times-Dispatch Dance Pavilion, Martin’s/Union First Market Bank Family Stage and the CenterStage Virginia Folklife Area and Stage (produced by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and the Virginia Folklife Program). The Festival also features a wide array of interactive and engaging activities in the Genworth Financial Family Area (produced by the Children’s Museum of Richmond), along with a complete Folk Arts

Marketplace and a huge variety of traditional and ethnic foods. Last year more than 150,000 people attended the three-day FREE event.

Among the artists to perform at this year's event:

Lil' Ed and the Blues Imperials

Chicago blues
Chicago, Illinois

Small in stature, but a giant of the Chicago blues. With blistering slide guitar riffs, raw-boned Chicago shuffles, and heartfelt slow blues, Lil' Ed Williams and his high-octane road tested band have been aptly described as "the world's No. 1 house-rocking blues band."

Donald Harrison Jr. and The Congo Square Nation

Jazz and Mardi Gras Indian traditions
New Orleans, Louisiana

One of New Orleans' most celebrated living jazzmen merges his two primary musical influences, jazz and the Mardi Gras Indian tradition, to create a resplendent celebration of New Orleans music and culture.

La Excelencia

salsa dura
New York, New York

With one of the most breathtaking live shows in all of Latin music, this hip, young New York ensemble has become one of the most sought after salsa orchestras in the world.

Boukman Eksperyans

Haitian *mizik rasin*
Port au Prince, Haiti

Drawing upon traditional vodou rhythms, *compas*, rock and R&B to create the Haitian musical movement dubbed *mizik rasin* (roots music), one of this country's most beloved musical groups have re-emerged on the world stage to take their message of hope and survival in the aftermath of this year's catastrophic earthquake in Haiti.

Ensemble Shanbehzadeh

Bushehri music and dance of Iran
Paris, France

Rarely-heard rhythms, songs and dances from the ancient Iranian port of Bushehr on the Persian Gulf, a crossroads of trade where the meeting of Persian, Sufi, Arab, Indian and, most strikingly, African traditions, created a unique musical culture. Swirling across the stage, falling into trance, and throwing his instrument on top of his head, *neyanban*

(double-reed bagpipe) master Saeid Shanbehzadeh draws listeners into his fascinating and little-known musical world.

Lúnasa

Irish
Ireland

With compelling arrangements that melodically interweave wind and string instruments, and a distinctive use of upright acoustic bass, this incomparable band's innovations capture the essence and illuminate the innate beauty of traditional Irish music. A band that lives up to its press accolades: "Irish music dream team" (*Folk Roots*), "the new Celtic royalty" (*Boston Herald*) and "...the hottest Irish acoustic group on the planet." (*The Irish Voice*).

Bonsoir, Catin

Cajun
Lafayette, Louisiana

Honoring their deep family and community roots in Cajun music, the members of this all-women band express the unabashed energy, intensity and raw emotion that is the hallmark and heart of Cajun music. With a broad and deep repertoire that reflects the many facets and decades of the music into the present day, these powerhouse musicians and bold Cajun women create an unforgettable experience.

Peter Rowan Bluegrass Band

Bluegrass
Nashville, Tennessee

Honing his chops as a young "Bluegrass Boy" with Bill Monroe, Rowan, a master of many styles, returns to his bluegrass roots with a band adept at honoring the tradition's past masters while pushing the genre to new heights.

The Richmond Folk Festival is one of Virginia's largest events, drawing visitors from all over the country to downtown Richmond's historic riverfront. The Festival is a free three-day event that got its start as the National Folk Festival held in Richmond from 2005-07. In the tradition of the National, the Richmond Folk Festival features more than 20 performers and performing groups, on six stages with continuous music and dance performances, along with a Virginia Folklife Area, an interactive Family Area produced by the Children's Museum of Richmond, a folk art marketplace, regional and ethnic foods, festival merchandise and more. More information is available at www.richmondfolkfestival.com/org.

The Festival is produced by Venture Richmond, in a continuing partnership with the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA), the City of Richmond, Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, the National Park Service, the Library of Virginia and the Children's Museum of Richmond. Venture Richmond is a non-profit organization

formed to engage business and community leaders in partnering with the City to enhance the vitality of the community, particularly Downtown, through economic development, marketing, promotion, advocacy and events. Venture Richmond also produces Easter on Parade, Friday Cheers and the 2nd Street Festival, and partners with the Richmond Sportsbackers to produce Dominion Riverrock. For more information, visit www.venturerichmond.com.

The NCTA was founded in 1933, and is the nation's oldest folk arts organization. The NCTA presents traditional artists to the public in festivals, national and international tours, concerts, radio and television programs, films, recordings and other programs. www.ncta.net