



Downtown Nashville
Labor Day Weekend
Sept. 2-4, 2011

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73rd National Folk Festival Announces First Eight Performing Groups Nashville to Host Festival September 2-4

NASHVILLE – The 73rd National Folk Festival is excited to announce the first eight performing groups that will appear in Nashville Sept. 2-4 at this exuberant free-to-the-public festival, an event expected to bring tens of thousands of people to downtown Nashville.

“Nashville’s diverse line up of artists is evidence of a commitment to our entire community to broaden the Music City brand and welcome a vast array of performers from all genres of music,” said Tim DuBois, Vice-President and Managing Executive of ASCAP. “This city is a growing haven for culturally diverse musicians and the National Folk Festival stands to highlight this on a national stage.”

“We care about excellence and authenticity, and these artists are the best of the best,” said Julia Olin, Executive Director of the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA), the organization that is bringing the traveling National Folk Festival to Nashville for a three-year stay. “They’re from all over the country and all over the cultural map. This is just the beginning; there’ll be 30 performing groups in all.”

“This exciting festival will showcase the growing diversity of our community as we celebrate the universal language of music and its powerful voice for expressing cultural, social, political and spiritual traditions of all people and for promoting cross-cultural understanding and respect,” said Ellen Gilbert, Director of Global Education Center, a Nashville nonprofit arts education center for students, teachers and the community in the area of multicultural, anti-bias education.

The first eight groups that will perform at the 73rd National Folk Festival include:

Green Fields of America – Irish-American music and dance

Formed in 1978 and still led by celebrated musician, folklorist and National Heritage Fellow Mick Moloney, this is the group that started it all - sparking the glorious renaissance of traditional Irish music and dance in America that continues to this day. Its members are a veritable “Who’s Who” of Irish-American instrumentalists, singers and dancers.

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Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano – Mexican mariachi

For nearly 50 years, NEA National Heritage Fellow Natividad “Nati” Cano has led the Los Angeles-based Mariachi Los Camperos, bringing the group to international prominence. With soaring, impassioned vocals, a magnificent violin section and superb showmanship, Los Camperos is considered by many to be the finest *mariachi* ensemble in the world.

The Holmes Brothers –blues, gospel, R&B

Sacred and profane, rocking and righteous, the Holmes Brothers from the Virginia Tidewater are the undisputed masters of blues-based American roots music. “God’s own bar band” has been bringing down the house with its audacious, inimitable and borderless blend of blues, gospel, R&B, soul, funk and American country for over 30 years.

Dale Ann Bradley – bluegrass

Raised in the mountains of eastern Kentucky, this daughter of a Primitive Baptist minister and coalminer is now acknowledged as one of the great singers in bluegrass music, with a shimmering voice that brings alive the stories she sings.

BeauSoleil avec Michael Doucet – Cajun

America’s premier Cajun band and leading ambassador of Southwest Louisiana’s Cajun culture. *Rolling Stone Magazine* called BeauSoleil “the best d_ _ _ _ _ dance band you’ll ever hear.” Legions of Cajun music lovers and dancers around the globe agree.

La Excelencia – salsa *dura*

In the 1960s and ’70s, New York City gave rise to *salsa dura*, or “hard salsa,” a driving, socially conscious dance music that today has become the vehicle for a new generation of hip, young, politically aware New York musicians. Keeping the music firmly rooted in the *barrio*, La Excelencia has created one of the most breathtaking live shows in all of Latin music, making it one of the most sought-after salsa orchestras in the world.

Roan Mountain Hilltoppers – Appalachian old-time string band

Carrying on a family legacy, Bill and Janice Birchfield lead a boisterous old-time band that plays hard-driving, rhythmic dance music from the rugged mountains of East Tennessee with an energy that has made the group a favorite with locals and old-time music fans across the nation.

Samba Mapangala & Orchestre Virgunga – East African *rumba* and *soukous*

Despite having made his home in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, D.C. for over a decade, Samba Mapangala is still the undisputed star of East African music, and one of its most beloved singers. Infusing Congolese *rumba* with the flavors of Kenyan *benga*, the music of Mapangala and his legendary band has gained attention worldwide.

For additional performer information and photos, visit www.nationalfolkfestival.com.

Created by the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA) in 1934, the traveling National Folk Festival is the oldest and longest-running multicultural festival in the nation. It celebrates the roots, richness and variety of American culture through traditional music, dance, craft, storytelling and food, and is currently attracting the largest audiences in its long history.

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The 73rd, 74th and 75th National Folk Festival in Nashville will be produced by NCTA and Nashville Folk and Roots, in partnership with the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, the Arts and Business Council of Greater Nashville, the state of Tennessee, the Nashville Downtown Partnership, the Nashville Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.

The National Folk Festival is a celebration of traditional music and cultures from all over the United States. This free, three-day public event is projected to draw 60-80,000 attendees to downtown Nashville this Labor Day weekend and is estimated to have a \$10-\$15 million economic impact on Nashville per year.

For more information about the National Folk Festival, please visit www.nationalfolkfestival.com or call (615) 891-4944.

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