

PRESS RELEASE



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MatchWorks Pako Festa Program Highlights

King Marong is a gifted musician from The Gambia, West Africa. He has been living in Australia for over 10 years, singing in Mandinka, his native language and promoting the rich music and culture of the Manding Empire, the biggest cultural group in West Africa. With his 8 piece band, Afro Mandinko, this performance delivers the very best of traditional West African instruments and rhythms blended with bass and drums, guitar, keyboards and a horn section. It's an eclectic hybrid of afrobeat-funk-reggae, an audio-visual feast that no one can resist! Amongst their string of impressive credits, King Marong and Afro Mandinko were one of the musical highlights of the 2009 Port Fairy Folk Festival. *MatchWorks West Park stage at 12.30pm.*

Sweethearts are based at Matthew Flinders Girls Secondary College, Victoria, Australia, where members can study Certificate IV in music, the highest musical qualification available in any school in Australia. They are the only school based band in the world that operates in professional settings. The girls have received accolades over three tours of Europe. They have played the prestigious Montreux Jazz and Poretta Soul Music festivals twice. They've also captivated audiences at the Luzerne Blues Festival and Parma Summer Festival. *Westpac Diversity stage 12.15pm*

Perplex. Over the last 5 years, Australian spinner Perplex has become an artist of world standing. The DJ with "hands of fury and wrists of rubber" (Beat Mag) has taken out the Australian DMC World DJ Championships 3 consecutive years in a row and landed an impressive 7th placing in the prestigious 2008 World finals in London. With an aim to harness turntablism's complex technicality and make it accessible to the crowds, Perplex is a dynamic and engaging addition to the local and international scenes. Striving to marry battle skills with party rocking beats, his sets are tight and flowing – mixing up funky sonics, with dark atmospheric undercurrents. *Freeza Youth Stage 1pm – 3pm*

'MADHOUSE' - an 8 piece, brass driven party band with a range of sounds influenced by the early 80's U.K. R&B /ska/reggae scene, will literally belt out a great set of classics hits from the 80's, 90's & now. Guaranteed to get you hot 'n sweaty on the dance floor. When these guys hit the stage, anything could happen! *Barking Dog Stage 4pm*

Tunog Kawayan Cultural Group. *The Angklung* is a musical instrument made out of two bamboo tubes attached to a bamboo frame. The tubes are carved so that they have a resonant pitch when struck. The base of the frame is held with one hand while the other hand shakes the instrument rapidly from side to side producing a corresponding musical note. Each *angklung* performer in an ensemble plays just one note and when they *angklung* performers combine their notes, complete melodies are produced. The Tunog Kawayan Cultural Group will perform 3 musical pieces which

reflect the faces of the community:Waltzing Matilda (Australian), Sole Mio (Italian), Leron Leron Sinta Medley (Filipino). *MatchWorks West Park stage 3.55pm*

Los Mas Altos ('rock' in Spanish). Formed in 2007, this is a 7 member band that plays rock music in Spanish. There is a long tradition of rock music in Latin-America and Spain, and they pay homage to it by performing covers of very popular songs. 2010 is a very important year for Mexico, as it celebrates its Bicentenary of Independence. *Westpac Diversity Stage 5.20pm*

Stringybark McDowell. In the current popularity of slide guitar and foot percussion comes a man who's been doing it for nearly 20 years. Quietly influential to many, yet influenced by the old blues masters and man more modern day hero's, Stringy has a raw edged sound of his own, sometimes compared to early Captain Beefheart, he can be a bit Tom Waitsy, Raw & Swampy or Fingerpick it up in a pretty way. Stringy now performs as a one man band playing Acoustic & Electric guitars, including his famous Diddley Bow, Raw gritty vocals, "Doof Doof" the 14" kick drum, "Lefty" a homemade snarey highhatty rattle and a bit of rack harp and kazoo. *Petrel Hotel stage 2pm*

John-Luke Shelley & High Speed Steel. Displaying a distinctive 'Blues Rock' sound, the John-Luke Shelley & High Speed Steel line-up has been wowing their audiences for over a year now with skilled command of the "rocking blues" style, performing regularly around Victoria, Melbourne and Geelong. The beginnings of High Speed Steel were in 2003 when a very young John-Luke and his father Brett were living in beautiful North-East Victoria. They were joined by Tim Hancock to form a Folk/Blues High Speed Steel and the Trio gigged locally until 2006, when John-Luke and Brett moved to Geelong. *Petrel Hotel Stage 3pm*

King Marong and Afro Mandinko

