

PRESS RELEASE

The World Festival returns!

The award-winning venue returns with a bigger, more exciting programme showcasing the best new talent from around the world.

Mercy Madonna of Malawi
Ranganika: Island of Dance
Creole Choir of Cuba
A Town Called Addis
Samba Sene and Diwan
Boys From Brazil
Church of Salsa



www.theworldfestival.com

**“★★★★★ Out of this World” – The Scotsman
Winner of the Jack Tinker Spirit of the Festival Award**

Background

The World, launched last year to great critical and audience acclaim, is dedicated to bringing an eclectic range of high quality world music and theatre to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. It is the brainchild of five-times Fringe First winner, writer and director Toby Gough, and is supported by the prolific Scottish actor Brian Cox. Last year the venue won The Scotsman's Spirit of the Fringe award.

Brian Cox was involved in the launch of the venue and is delighted to continue his support this year: "I am very proud to be involved in this ground-breaking, truly international venue which showcases work that really can change the lives of the participants, as well as revealing a glimpse of their unique and vibrant culture."

The Shows

This year The World is thrilled to be bringing a world premiere production direct from Malawi, entitled *Mercy Madonna of Malawi*. This project was written and directed by Toby Gough, and is produced in collaboration with the British Council and Theatre for Change, a Malawian organisation involved in AIDS awareness and education.

What Gough calls a "Black Musical Comedy" tells the story of Mercy James and David Banda, the two orphans adopted by Madonna, as well as the story of the orphans who are left behind. It shows the problems of AIDS, child labour and child trafficking, and confronts the ethical issues raised by the trend of adoption of African children by Western millionaires. In spite of its serious issues it promises to be an uplifting and thrilling piece of world theatre.



The Scottish composer John Kielty worked with Ben Michael, a Malawian songwriter to create stirring and entertaining original music for the production. Kielty won the Cameron Mackintosh award for Scotland's best musical theatre composer in 2008.

We are delighted to bring the **Creole Choir of Cuba** to Edinburgh, as part of their first ever UK tour. The 14 singers, drummers and dancers who make up the choir will present *Undiscovered Voices of the Caribbean*. An estimated one million Haitian immigrants have made their home in Cuba since the 18th century and each wave brought with them the strong musical and dance traditions, their religion, customs, rituals and cultural habits. The Creole Choir of Cuba celebrates and preserves the rich legacy of Haitian culture and has gained national and now international recognition. Having grabbed the spotlight at this year's WOMAD and The Big Tent festival with their extraordinary voices and exquisite harmonies, they will be setting the stage on fire at the Edinburgh Festival.



A Town Called Addis, brought to Edinburgh in association with Peter Gabriel's Real World Records, features the best musical talent from Ethiopia. Count Dubulah and his nine piece band transport audiences to the music halls and night clubs of Addis Ababa, in a show that features a stunning range of musical styles from traditional Azmari songs to Ethio-jazz, 70s reggae to 90s afropop.



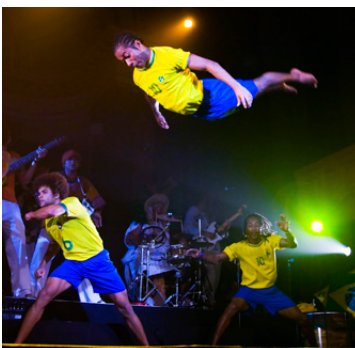
Vocalist Sintayehu 'Mimi' Zenebe, known as the Ethiopian Edith Piaf, invites us to dance into the African night with a new generation of great Ethiopian musicians supported by ex members of Jamiroquai and Asian Dub Foundation.

The album *A Town called Addis* reached No. 1 in world music charts earlier this year. The band has already wowed the crowds with sell-out gigs at the Barbican and the Glastonbury Festival, and Count Dubulah was nominated for the Songlines/WOMAD 'best newcomer' award.

Toby Gough has long held an association with Sri Lanka, winning awards for his theatrical productions *Finding Marina* and *Children of the Sea*, in which survivors of the tsunami told their harrowing story. This year, the Arakavila Dance and Theatre Foundation from Sri Lanka will perform **Ranganika – Island of Dance**. This spectacular production features young dancers and musicians aged between 12 and 25 in striking indigenous costumes and masks, performing to the pulsating rhythms of traditional Sri Lankan drums. The show comprises traditional Sri Lankan dancing styles fused with Indian and contemporary dance and is combined with a short theatrical performance that highlights the effects of pervasive Western influences on Sri Lankan culture.



More music comes in the form of Scottish-based Senegalese musician **Samba Sene and his band Diwan** who are sure to get the crowd up dancing with his combination of Senegalese grooves and ska-influenced dance-beats. This charismatic singer has broad appeal from serious world music fans to those who just want to get up and dance.



Making a welcome return after their sell-out show in 2008 are the **Capoeira Knights: Boys from Brazil**. These phenomenal dancers wowed the crowd last year with their athleticism and their six packs! This year they are bringing a new show that promises to be just as popular.

Also returning is the hugely popular **Church of Salsa** club night featuring the legendary Cuban band Sonora la Calle and the sensational Sister Salsa from Brazil. Club-goers can dance the night away to the sounds of salsa, samba and afro-reggae.

The World @ St George's West is supported by Lonely Planet.



ENDS

**For further information, photographs or to arrange interviews,
please contact John Simpson on 07917 407222 / john@theworldfestival.com
or Alistair Riddell on 07867788919**

Notes to Editors

- 1. Press night / preview: Wednesday 5th August** (please phone John Simpson on 07917 407222 to arrange tickets).
- 2. Venue information:** The World @ St George's West, Shandwick Place, Edinburgh (Fringe Venue No. 157).
- 3. Box Office information:** Tickets are available from the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Box Office T: 0131 226 0000, boxoffice@edfringe.com. Tickets are also available from the venue from 5th to 31st August.
- 4. Performance times:**

3pm	Mercy Madonna of Malawi
4.30pm	Ranganika, Island of Dance
6pm	Creole Choir of Cuba
7.20pm	A Town called Addis (7 – 26 August)
7.20pm	Samba Sene and Diwan (27 – 31 August)
9pm	Capoeira Knights: The Boys from Brazil
10.30pm	Church of Salsa

**Full Electronic Press Kits for all shows are available on our website
www.theworldfestival.com**