

## MEDIA RELEASE



**UPBEAT Middle-Eastern music and festivity will celebrate the tenth anniversary of Melbourne group *Yalla*, at Fitzroy Town Hall on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> November.**

*Yalla* (Arabic for Let's Go!) have transfixed audiences all around Australia, with their spicy mix of traditional music and dance ranging through the Egyptian styles of Shaabi (folk), Baladi (urban folk) and Sharqi (classical) to the sounds of Persia, Turkey, Lebanon, Morocco and other North African tribal and trance rhythms.

The group was a highlight of this year's National Folk Festival in Canberra and has performed at The Spiegel tent (Melbourne International Arts Festival), Port Fairy Folk Festival (Vic.), Fairbridge Folk Festival (WA), Cygnet Festival (Tas.), Folk Alliance Conference (SA), Queensland Music Festival and in tours across regional Victoria.

Founding member **Phil Carroll** passion for Middle-Eastern music and culture has taken him to study his craft in Morocco, Egypt and Turkey and with *Yalla* he plays Arabic flute (ney), oboe (mizmar) and quartertone accordion. Other players in this East meets West flavoured ensemble are **Mik Vella**, **Anita Larkin** and **Matt Stonehouse** on percussion (tabul, darrabukas, reqs and dufs), **Ernie Gruner** on violin, **Phil Gunter** on lute (oud) and dancer **Maria Sangiorgi** also on percussion and vocals.

Over their ten years together, *Yalla* has featured some of Melbourne's most consummate exponents of Middle-Eastern music in its ranks and for this special occasion, they will be rejoined by past players **Andrew Khulmann**, **Brahim Benhim**, **Nashat Abdelesayed**, **Ben Last**, **John Norton** and **Pin Rada**.

Belly dancing is integral to the music of *Yalla* and this celebration will be swaying to the dance movements of the original **Snake Sisters**, **Daughters of Isis** and **Underbelly**. There will also be cameo musical performances from guests including duo **Bohemian Nights**, the **Sanctuary Ensemble** with their more relaxed Turkish style of music and dance known as "Sufi" and **Monkey Brigade**, a young group inspired by Afro-funk, hip-hop and rap.

With the concert beginning at 6.30pm, doors open at 3.00pm for free workshops in Arabic drumming (3.30pm & 5.00pm), Egyptian dance (4.00pm) and Persian dance (4.30pm), henna painting and stalls providing food and beverage, Middle-Eastern dance wear, books, CD's and information. There will be a bar operating.

Fitzroy Town Hall, Cr. Napier St. & Moore St. Fitzroy  
Advanced bookings: \$16 full or \$14 concessions.  
Book online: [www.dancingisis.com](http://www.dancingisis.com) or call 0419 523 710  
Door sales: \$20 full / \$14 concessions.

**Generously supported by Multicultural Arts Victoria, Underbelly, Ausdance, La Boite and the Victorian Multicultural Commission.**

## REVIEWS

*"You'd have to travel thousands of kilometres, endure sizzling temperatures and ride a camel to hear music as authentic as that of Yalla!"* Sarah Hudson, Herald Sun, Melbourne.

*"Upbeat middle-eastern dance music...from an unlikely location."* Lucky Oceans, The Planet, ABC Radio National.

*"An ensemble that is vibrant, colourful and able to sustain a high energy level throughout its entire performance"* THE NEWS, Gippsland.

## FURTHER ENQUIRIES

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