

November 14, 2013

## United in song



Special Arrangement  
Coco's Lunch

### **Coco's Lunch, Australia's magical purveyors of a cappella music, blend multifarious voices for their concert, Blueprint**

Lisa Young, Jacqueline Gawler, Nicola Eveleigh, Emma Gilmartin and Libby O'Donovan have one thing in mind — to make the audience look at a cappella in a whole new way. For over 15 years now as part of Coco's Lunch, they have travelled the world mesmerising listeners with the way their voices combine melody, accompaniment and percussion. Their song-writing skills and brilliant vocal harmonies have billed them as Australia's "national treasure" and made them favourites of both adults and children for whom they have performed at the Sydney Opera House and released albums.

The group draws its influences from jazz and blues, African-inspired rhythms, pop and Western classical harmonies and even Carnatic percussion. While Lisa Young has trained under mridangam maestro Karaikudi Mani and specialises in konnakol, Jacqueline Gawler trained in classical piano and learnt percussion from a West African master drummer. Nicola Eveleigh is an outstanding flautist while Emma Gilmartin and Libby O'Donovan are talented jazz vocalists. They bring their varied music to the stage to present audacious adventures in stereo.

Coco's Lunch has composed, recorded and released seven critically-acclaimed albums of original vocal music and received a host of awards and nominations including the Contemporary A Cappella Awards in the U.S. (Best Folk World Song and Runner-Up Best World Music Album).

For their concert at *The Hindu* Friday Review Music Fest, the group will perform the best of their music, including songs from their latest album *Blueprint*. Lisa Young's 'Other Plans' that incorporates konnakol will also feature at the concert. Look forward to an evening inspired by the group's rich multi-cultural moorings and music.

*Interview with Jacqueline Gawler, production manager of Coco's Lunch.*

### **How did you'll choose to sing a capella?**

Coco's Lunch was originally formed through musicians at Melbourne's 'Victorian College of the Arts' school of music, by then lecturers Sue Johnson and Lisa Young. Sue and Lisa wanted an avenue for composing and performing innovative music just for voice, to bring their skills as instrumentalists and improvisers into the creative vocal arena. Coco's Lunch developed from their passion to compose a fresh Australian repertoire, and since then it has come to incorporate percussion, flute, and many varied influences into the group's sound.

### **Does the genre deserve a wider audience?**

It seems now that a cappella is generating a wider and wider audience all the time, particularly with the popularity of T.V. shows in Australia centred around singing, vocal groups and choirs. We are always inspired by the new vocal groups and communities springing up around us.

### **Which musician or band is the biggest influence on your group?**

Sweet Honey In the Rock, Bobby McFerrin and Zap Mama would have to be three very influential group and individual sounds for the artists in Coco's Lunch. However we all love to listen to a huge spectrum of music, and our composing influences come from the most unlikely of places!

### **How much of folk tradition finds a place in your music?**

In some respects our music is a kind of 'new folk' sound in Australian vocal music. We draw from Western classical, jazz, pop and world music genres as well as Carnatic influences, with one of our artists Lisa Young studying her Ph.D. in konnakol. We bring improvisation and a lot of exotic percussion into our music, and our lyrics and themes reflect our lives in modern, urban Australia. In this way we feel our sound is new, fresh and distinctive, and our history as vocal innovators has in a sense helped us form new 'folk' traditions in vocal music.

### **Apart from music what other interests do you have as a young group?**

Aside from Coco's Lunch, many of us are involved in other musical projects and study, and some of us have had a long history of practising yoga, studying energy healing, working as educators or workshop facilitators, as well as writing poetry, enjoying graphic design and painting, and of course cooking! No Coco's Lunch rehearsal is complete without a feast at the end!

## **Is there a favourite song?**

Our favourite song at the moment is probably Coco's Lunch artist Lisa Young's new composition called 'Other Plans', which we will premiere at the November Fest. 'Other Plans' fuses Western harmonic concepts with both intoned and pitched konnakol, where the solkattu language is used in vocal melodies, riffs and basslines as well as in vocal percussion breaks.

**Venue:** The Music Academy

**Date and Time:** November 19, 7.30 p.m.

### ***The Schedule:***

**November 15:** Pt. Hariprasad Chaurasia with Pt. Birju Maharaj & Kaushiki Chakrabarty

**November 16:** Indian Ocean

**November 17:** Vikku Vinayakaram, Vidya Shah & the Manganiyars

**November 18:** Mandolin Rajesh, Jayateerth Mevundi, Rakesh Chourasia & Trichur Brothers

**November 19:** Coco's Lunch

**November 20:** Monsorate Brothers

[For the detailed schedule of Nov Fest 2013 in all five cities, click here.](#)

### **Tickets:**

**Price:** [Rs. 600, Rs. 350 & Rs. 200. Season passes at Rs. 3,000 & Rs. 1,800](#)

All tickets can be purchased online at [www.thehindu.com/frnf2013](http://www.thehindu.com/frnf2013)

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