

## Best of the fest

### World Music Festival



Red Baraat

This year's World Music Festival is decentralized and devoid of marquee names. Unless it's jazz and blues brethren, the fractured WMF mostly heads out of the downtown parks for smaller clubs around the city. Michael Orlove and the Department of Cultural Affairs have been reading Brooklynites' blogs, too. An influx of hipster—and rather Westernized—acts make this one of the buzziest and most intriguing installments of the annual get-down.

South Africa's **BLK JKS** (*Sun 20, Bottom Lounge; Mon 21, the Hideout*) are the belle of the ball and the hottest thing from Johannesburg since *District 9*. The band's complex art-rock draws frequent comparison to TV on the Radio, but we're reminded more of wanky Santana and a Police cover band. Frankly, bill-sharers **Fool's Gold** (*Sat 19, Navy Pier; Sun 20, Bottom Lounge*) are far better, if the least authentically "world music" act of the weekend. The L.A. troupe—which features indie rockers from the Fall, We Are Scientists and Foreign Born—soaks up the whole of northern Africa in its upbeat, fluid grooves. Speedy soukous guitar licks flutter under romantic Ethiopian crooning and desert blues beats on the new self-titled debut. Don't miss it.

Another surreptitiously American band, **Red Baraat** (*Fri 18, Martyrs; Sat 19, Navy Pier*), blows audiences away with an East-meets-West melange. Dubbing themselves "bangin' bhangra and brass," the funky Brooklynites raise a ruckus with scampering *dhol* drumming, honking tubas and battered bugles—somewhere between Bollywood and a New Orleans marching band. It's the only group here that can claim to have

played a runway show during Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week.

Similarly, the fellow New Yorkers of **Electric Junkyard Gamelan** (*Sun 20, Uncommon Ground; Mon 21, Daley Plaza*) have little to do with Indonesia and more to do with high-end art. Terry Dame and her eclectic crew bang on an orchestra of self-invented instruments like the Big Barp, sort of a pluckable clothes-drying rack, and the Clayrimba, a marimba made of flowerpots.

Local jazz heads should feel right at home with **Mikrokolektyw** (*Thu 17, Elastic; Sept 24, Chicago Cultural Center*): The plaintively bleating trumpet and skittering laptop glitch of the Polish electroacoustic duo bears striking resemblance to Rob Mazurek's Chicago Underground Duo. Playful, evocative pieces like "Lipuko" perfectly straddle the line between mellow postrock and bebop. Scene regulars Jason Adasiewicz (vibes) and Josh Abrams (bass) will have no problem slotting right into the lineup for gigs at the Hungry Brain (*Sun 20*) and the MCA (*Tue 22*).

No global survey is complete without a dose of tropicalia. Marcelo Frota, a.k.a. **MoMo** (*Wed 23, Empty Bottle; Sept 24, Chicago Cultural Center*), may not have the legendary status of Caetano Veloso or Tom Zé, but the Angola-born Rio resident is a rightful heir and uncanny flashback to late-'60s Brazil. His home-recorded psych-folk is stunningly beautiful in lush lo-fi. With this new model of the World Must Fest, you can catch him, like all the artists, numerous times up close. —BD

For complete World Music Festival times and lineups, see Listings.

