

CLASSIC GUNNERS: THE ESSENTIAL INTERVIEWS

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POWDERFINGER
THE PERILS OF
POLITICAL ROCK
BY ROB HIRST

Six Strings and the Truth

New Adelaide-based festival offers something different. BY DAN LANDER



Virtuosos (l-r):
Cindy Cashdollar
and David Spelman

WHILE THERE HAVE PREVIOUSLY been a few Australian festivals celebrating the guitar, this November will see the launch of a genuinely international event in Adelaide aimed at exploring all aspects of the instrument.

The Adelaide International Guitar Festival is being curated by David Spelman, the man behind the world-renowned New York Guitar festival, and he has already brought together a huge array of local and overseas talent.

"I think in doing something like this, it's important to balance the local and the international elements," says Spelman. "I have been invited to curate a few other guitar festivals outside of New York, and I really try to be mindful to having eyes wide open to the local culture."

To that end, the first line-up announcements for the event boast some of the finest guitar talent Australia has to offer, from blues and roots maestro Jeff Lang (who is one of the two "guitarists in residence" at the event) to Midnight Oil legend Jim Moginie, plus a long list of respected international players, creating a very diverse event.

"What we really wanted to do was to put a global perspective on the guitar, and then look at the cross-pollination of that with the rich local musical history," Spelman explains. "And that's not just like 'one from column A, one from column B'; it is an attempt to really dig into working out who are some of the players, local and international, who have been influential in Australia."

The festival will run from November 23rd to December 3rd, featuring performances, workshops, jam sessions, panels, and master classes, as well as a number of special events. These specials include an exploration of the history of blues guitar featuring performers like John Hammond and Alvin Youngblood Hart, and a massive celebration of the playing of Jimi Hendrix on December 2nd that will include sets from Kaki King and Living Colour's Vernon Reid.

And while it is these bigger events that will bring the punter through the doors, the magic of a festival like this one is that it will give audiences an opportunity to hear talented musicians that might otherwise go unnoticed. One such player is slide-queen Cindy Cashdollar, who has played guitar for everyone from Bob Dylan and Rod Stewart to Ryan Adams and will be one of the feature performers of the festival.

"David always does an amazing job putting these shows together," says Cashdollar. "He's an artist himself, and has the performers' and audience's interest at heart. It's always been very intimate, no matter where his shows end up."