

MEDIA RELEASE



Immediate Release: August 2014

Two Aboriginal Bands Tour Remote Country to Promote Act-Belong-Commit Message

Nationally recognised band Blekbala Mujik from Arnhem Land will headline this year's flagship remote Aboriginal music touring program, Sand Tracks. They will be joined by emerging band Running Water and tour some of Australia's most remote communities.



Sand Tracks 2014 headline band, Blekbala Mujik. Photo provided by CAAMA Music.

Presented by Country Arts WA and sponsored by Healthway, promoting the Mentally Healthy WA Campaign message Act-Belong-Commit, Sand Tracks will tour to Alice Springs and five remote Aboriginal communities. During that time Blekbala Mujik will offer music and song writing workshops to the communities, help spread the Act-Belong-Commit message and act as a mentor to the emerging band Running Water from Kintore, who were chosen from last year's Central Australian Indigenous music showcase event, Bush Bands Bash.

"Country Arts WA is proud to deliver this unique and significant tour as it continues to develop contemporary Aboriginal artists as well as the communities that present them. Sand Tracks not only assists to improve the touring experience, workshop delivery and performing skills in the emerging band but also the people and budding musicians that they meet on the way. Mental health is an important consideration for Country Arts WA and that's why we have partnered with the Mentally Healthy WA Campaign and Healthway to promote the Act-Belong-Commit message," says Jessica Machin, Chief Executive Officer of Country Arts WA.

Healthway's Executive Director, David Malone, said the Act-Belong-Commit message aimed to promote positive mental health in communities throughout WA.

"Healthway's partnership with Country Arts WA for 2014 Sand Tracks tour is an ideal way of getting this important message to many Aboriginal communities in regional Western Australia," Healthway's Executive Director, David Malone, said.

"A sense of belonging is fundamental to good mental health and this involves keeping connected to friends and family, being involved in groups, or joining in local

community activities, such as the Sand Tracks tour," Mr Malone said.

Very remote Aboriginal Communities from the central desert voted from six established and well respected Aboriginal bands to determine who they wanted headline the 2014 Sand Tracks tour and Blekbala Mujik came out in front.

"We're so proud that Blekbala Mujik, a legendary and iconic band from the CAAMA Music label (Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association) has been chosen to headline the Sand Tracks tour. In the remote communities of Central Australia everyone knows the classics by Blekbala Mujik. The kids out here have grown up listening to these songs." says Micheal Smith, Manager of CAAMA Music.

The 2014 Sand Tracks tour includes the following dates and communities:

- Bush Bands Bash, Alice Springs NT - Saturday 6 September 2014
- Amata Community SA - Wednesday 10 September 2014
- NG Music Festival, Wingellina WA - Thursday 11 - Saturday 13 September 2014
- Warburton Community WA- Tuesday 16 September 2014
- Warakurna Community WA -Thursday 18 September 2014
- Kiwirrkurra Community WA - Tuesday 23 September 2014

"We're really looking forward to playing our music in Central Australia. We've never done a tour in those communities, but it's always been number one on our agenda to take the music to the people," says Apaak Miller, lead singer of Blekbala Mujik

The Sand Tracks program profiles and further develops Aboriginal artists, increases remote audiences and builds community capacity through partnering and delivering workshops, performances and music. This is the fifth year that the program will travel across state borders, touring from Alice Springs through the Anangu, Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara and Ngaanyatjarra lands.

More information is available through www.countryartswa.asn.au/touring/sand-tracks

Media Contact

Kelly Jennings, Marketing and Public Relations Manager

08 9200 6202 or regional freecall 1800 811 883

kjennings@countryartswa.asn.au

The Sand Tracks program has been assisted by



Government of Western Australia
Mental Health Commission



Tour coordination by Country Arts WA.

Country Arts WA receives core funding from



Government of Western Australia
Department of Culture and the Arts



Support Information

About Country Arts WA

Country Arts WA is an independent, not-for-profit, membership based organisation. The role of Country Arts WA is to enable and empower regional people to develop and enrich their communities through engagement with culture and the arts.

This is approached through a range of funding opportunities, advice and performing arts touring services. Country Arts WA has four priority programming areas which are children and young people, Indigenous arts and culture, technology as well as health and wellbeing.

www.countryartswa.asn.au

About Blekbala Mujik

Blekbala Mujik's music takes ancient knowledge and tradition and reinterprets it for the modern world. Mixing traditional song and instruments with synthesizers and modern production, Blekbala Mujik carries a message of reconciliation and shared dreams. Formed in 1986 and led by Peter Miller (Apaak Jupurrula), Blekbala Mujik is one of the most successful bands to emerge from the Top End of Australia.

Hailing from Burunga (Gulin-Gulin) in Arnhem Land, the band is cited in World Music: The Rough Guide as being next best known to Yothu Yindi. Blekbala found international acclaim with the release of its first full-length self-titled release, touring extensively overseas whilst still maintaining a loyal and strong fan base throughout remote Central and Top End Australia.

Career highlights include:

- ARIA nomination for 'Blekbala Mujik'
- Playing to 20,000 people at WOMAD in the Canary Islands
- Triple J 'Live at the Wireless' broadcast
- 1996 Deadly Sounds Album of the Year

About Running Water

Running Water hails from a remote community that doesn't see too much running water – Kintore, 530kms west of Alice Springs. The band has a growing reputation and was the stand-out performance at last year's Bush Bands Bash, rallying the crowd to dance and sing along to their Luritja lyrics.

Running Water has been included on the last two CAAMA Music Snapshot releases. They wrote and recorded the hit song Ngurra Palyanku Kanyila (Keep Our Community Strong) for MacDonnell Shire's 'The Right Track' compilation and have played many gigs throughout remote Northern Territory and Western Australia. With family members from Tjupi Band and Warumpi Band, music is in their blood.

Country Arts WA receives core funding from



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Culture and the Arts**

