

VIBRATIONS... on the young scene

by Owen Co

FOLK EXPLOSION

That's the menu for Durban's festival soon

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FOLK explosion! That's an understatement of the events expected at the Y-Club Theatre, Durban, from July 24 to 28 when the Natal Folk Music Association's festival will be held.

And star of the show - if he makes it from Cape Town - will undoubtedly be Jan Hofmeyer, the incredible singer-composer-player who has suddenly blossomed to the fore of South African folk music.

Als on stage will be Colin Shamley, John Oakley-Smith, Dave Marks and possibly Edi Niederlander, who does unbelievable things to a guitar, from Johannesburg.

There will also be Colin and Muff (Shapiro) who are exponents of the violin, flute, autoharp and other out-of-the-ordinary instruments.

From Durban the show will feature John Dennen



JOHN DENNEN

and Isla Corrigan, Jess Strain and Pete Kitchen, Ian Lindsay, Syd Kitchen, the Shinnery (Lay Yesson, Martin Edwards, Hamish Scott and Paul Slatter) and the Scott family (Hamish, Stuart, and Ann. David, the fourth member, is expected to be back at university at Stellenbosch).

Others from Durban will be Wendy Coleman, Eric Taylor and Christine Henderson.

Producer

The show will be produced by John Dennen and is expected to follow the highly successful format, which has made the festival a sought-after yearly event, and is to be recorded by Tony Hay.

Says John Dennen: "Most of the music is original. The days when an artist was judged on how he sang, for instance, a Dylan number, are dead.

"The wealth of original material indicates how great has been the folk explosion in Natal over the past year.

"Folk music is not dead. It never has been. This show will prove it."

NaFMA - the Natal Folk Music Association - is not new. It was formed in 1966 by Dave Marks, himself an

outstanding performer and composer, now chairman of the National Folk Music Association, in Johannesburg.

It's aim - and that of NaFMA - is to promote interest in folk music on a national basis.

Last year's July concert in Durban featured an American artist, Soupy Sales and her husband, John, as well as Colin Shamley who wrote Katrina's Theme, for the film Katrina.

Growing

This concert was recorded and the albums - a double - are due out any moment.

Says Geraldine Dennen, secretary of NaFMA: "Folk festivals in South Africa are becoming important musical events and are getting bigger and better every year. They provide opportunities for the country's top artists to get together.

"Last year Natal folk singers Ian Lindsay, John Dennen, the Scott Family, the Kitchen brothers and the Shinnery were invited to take part in the National folk festival in Johannesburg. Again this year John and the Shinnery were invited to the Port Elizabeth festival."

Bursaries

NaFMA people have been invited to sing on the SABC in a programme Song and Country on several occasions.

"Next year NaFMA will be offering three bursaries for people to study music at university. We are offering two bursaries to the University of Natal and one



DAVE MARKS... expected for the festival.

to the University of Natal-Westville."

The association also supports the International Library of African Music based in Roodepoort, Transvaal, and run by Dr Hugh Tracey and his son, Andrew. ILAM is the only organisation in South Africa which does research into the music indigenous to the country, mainly African.

The Traceys conduct expeditions collecting and recording African music and indigenous to the country music is already well known

through shows like Walt A Minim and Minimbill which starred Andrew Tracey and his brother Paul.

And in Durban, people heard examples of African songs, drum rhythms and dances in the Andy Dillon-John Dennen productions Seven Good Reasons and Folkways.

For this year's festival an elaborate set is being built. This, and other events, should make the show one of the best NaFMA have presented.

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