

ATOMIC BOMB! The Music of William Onyeabor

AUSTRALIAN EXCLUSIVE

Gotye / Sinkane / Money Mark (Beastie Boys) / Luke Jenner (The Rapture) / Pat Mahoney (LCD Soundsystem) / Pharoah Sanders / Mahotella Queens



Photo: courtesy of Luaka Bop and Wilfilms Nigeria Ltd

So brilliant and magical... I wish I could make music like him." **Damon Albarn (on William Onyeabor)**

What are these shows? A band and a variety of singers cover the songs of William Onyeabor, an eccentric African artist who released some records in the 70s and 80s that sound like nothing else, really. That's the concept... then it explodes! **David Byrne**

Mystery and intrigue surround Nigerian synth pioneer **William Onyeabor**, the man responsible for some of the most searing afro-punk grooves of our time. In an Australian exclusive, Sydney Festival welcomes *ATOMIC BOMB! The Music of William Onyeabor*, an 18-strong all-star lineup paying homage to the magical and mythical music of William Onyeabor.

Onyeabor self-released eight albums in south eastern Nigeria between 1978 and 1985 that ingeniously mixed politics with charming, exuberant and progressive dance tracks. Onyeabor is a kind of missing link—Nigeria's answer to synth-pop and New Wave. After establishing himself as a respected and highly imaginative artist, Onyeabor became a born-again Christian, was crowned High Chief of his Igbo village, and publicly vowed he would never discuss his music again.

Inspired by this eccentric and truly wonderful musician, NYC's Luaka Bop label embarked on a 5-year mission to reissue Onyeabor's music. The collection, titled *World Psychedelic Classics 5: Who is William Onyeabor?* was released in 2013 and received album of the year nods from the likes of Pitchfork, NPR, iTunes and Time Magazine.

Reissuing Onyeabor's music invited new listeners, from a non-African perspective, to appreciate the seminal artist's joyously uplifting sounds which preceded outsider electronic music by several decades.

In *ATOMIC BOMB! The Music of William Onyeabor*, the electro-funk and futuristic grooves of Luaka Bop' anthology are brought vividly to life by a supremely talented line-up of world-renowned musicians. Following a wildly successful run of U.S., U.K. and European shows that starred the likes of **David Byrne** and **Damon Albarn**, *Atomic Bomb!* arrives in Australia for 2 exclusive shows at the Enmore Theatre with the show's most eclectic lineup to date.

Gotye and South Africa's legendary **Mahotella Queens** will be joining Atomic Bomb!'s **Ahmed Ghallab** and his band **Sinkane**, **Money Mark (Beastie Boys)**, **Luke Jenner (The Rapture)**, **Pat Mahoney (LCD Soundsystem)** and jazz legend **Pharoah Sanders** - along with a fantastic group of horn players and Nigerian percussionists.

MEDIA RELEASE

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David Byrne has likened *Atomic Bomb!* to the **Talking Heads** *Remain In Light* tour (which spawned the *Stop Making Sense* concert film) during which the band doubled in size and became a sort of funk orchestra - "I had to admit the feeling is similar—the groove-based music is similarly ecstatic, and I'd have to say for folks who weren't around at that time this is a way to experience that."

ATOMIC BOMB! presents a joyous celebration of Onyeabor's futuristic grooves and electro explosions as they piece together a musical puzzle that connects the cult musician with the beginnings of synth-pop and new wave.

Where	Enmore Theatre
When	16 & 17 January, 8.00pm
Duration	120minutes no interval
Price	Standing Dance Floor \$85 /\$77 A Reserve Seating \$85 /\$77
Bookings	Sydney Festival 1300 856 876 sydneyfestival.org.au/atomic

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