



## Dashanzi International Arts Festival

*Tango, Friday 19 and Saturday 20*

This year the Dashanzi International Arts Festival (DIAF) is capitalising on Beijing's blossoming love affair with electronic music by staging a series of workshops and events that gather together 20 DJs from across Asia and Europe. It's being hosted by I'mPulse, the Asia-Europe Foundation's music camp, and supported by the British Council, the Goethe Institute Peking and Tango.

Disappointingly, the workshops will not be open to the public as they make up the most interesting part of the programme, but the DJs will be given the opportunity to showcase what they've been learning behind closed doors when they support The State of Bengal and Yang Bing during two nights of music at Tango.

The State of Bengal is the brainchild of DJ/producer Sam Zaman. One of the first producers to merge traditional Bengali music with Western dance beats, he struck a chord with the UK's huge Asian population and was instrumental in the growth of the Asian underground dance scene. Zaman is one of three invited guests to hold talks with the group of DJs on the 'representation, translation and migration of Asian and European DJ culture' at the workshops. Joining him is DJ and producer Ges-E who, much like State of Bengal before him, merged traditional Tabla loops with break-beats and soon became regarded as an innovator in Asian dance music. He went on to release the critically acclaimed 'Eastern Drum and Breaks' on his own label Nasha Records. The third guest is China's Yang Bing, one of the biggest influences on Beijing's underground dance scene.

I'mPulse also plan to incorporate multi-media installations from German artists Walkscreen at Tango. The installations will comprise a series of images and video clips depicting daily life in Beijing and a number of short stories created by Chinese children.

Whilst the organisers have gone all-out to bring together a healthy cross section of DJs and producers to represent Asian and European dance music, it seems that the best bits of this six-day-long series of events will take place behind closed doors. If the point of the DIAF is sharing artistic forms with the public, then it's a shame that I'mPulse will fail to achieve such a goal. CC

*The State of Bengal and Yang Bing will play Tango on May 19 and 20. Check listings for more details.*