



## **Baka Beyond Press Release October 2015**

*"If there has to be a definition of world music, this is it!" Andy Kershaw*

## **Baka Beyond**

After seeing a documentary on Channel 4, Martin Cradick and his wife Su Hart packed a tent, tape recorder, camera, guitar and mandolin, and headed off into the forests of Cameroon. There they spent six weeks living, hunting, gathering and playing many hours of music together with the Baka Pygmies. From this experience came two delightful recordings, Heart of the Forest and Spirit of The Forest, which led to the birth of the band Baka Beyond.

The rhythms of the hunter-gatherer Baka People from the Cameroon rainforest resonate with musical styles from all around the world. Baka Beyond use them to tie music from different genres together. Also carried in these rhythms and in all Baka Beyond performances is the sense of joyous celebration and inclusion that the Baka bring to all their music. The band brings musicians from different cultures and backgrounds together in a seamless celebration of the Global Village.

After 21 years of touring around the world Baka Beyond's live show has evolved over the years. The current show includes a multi-media element. Videos from the Cameroon rainforest are projected behind the band, cleverly synchronised with the live music so that the Baka become part of the live show.

It is best described in a review by Pete Taberner in the Bristol Post:

*"Seeing and listening to their current live performance [Baka Beyond] transports you right into the life of the people whose music they celebrate.*

*"Projected onto a large oval screen behind the musicians scenes of forest life provide the perfect backdrop to the music.*

*"Gentle percussion and reedy sounds are used to evoke the dawn and the awakening insect and bird life. Vocalists Su and Ellie recreate the wordless sounds of the forest creatures.*

*"It was impossible to resist the relentlessly upbeat nature of the music. There were big smiles on screen, on stage, and in the audience as the music progressed to a final grand dance with everyone standing and moving to the intoxicating rhythm."*

Baka Beyond members still regularly visit the Baka in Cameroon, returning royalties earned by their music and helping them use the money for community development projects through the charity they set up, Global Music Exchange.

Baka Beyond are not recreating other people's music. They use the spirit of the Baka's music to present their own musical heritage, whether the Rhumba rhythms of Kibi's native Congo, or the Celtic melodies of Martin's Cornish/Welsh heritage, seamlessly combined as can be heard in their latest album, "After the Tempest", Baka Beyond's eighth studio album, released in Spring 2014.

Baka Beyond's live show includes song, dance, percussion, musical virtuosity, videos and big smiles all round.

The live band features the following artists:

**Martin Cradick:** guitar

**Su Hart:** vocals

**Kibisingo Douglas** (long-time bass player for Kanda Bongo Man & Baka Beyond bassist since 2005): bass guitar

**Ayodele Scott:** percussion

**Clyde Kramer:** drums

**Ellie Jamison:** vocals

On selected tours they are joined by **Paddy Le Mercier** on violin

The latest album, "After the Tempest" has guest appearances from:

**Molara** (ex Zion Train, who toured with Baka Beyond between 2008 and 2011): lead vocals ("Mosumana Collé" & "Imbayé")

**Daniel Waples:** Hang (Hand Pan) ("Seóhin Seó Lo")

**Baka Forest People:** still play their part in writing some of the songs and providing vocals and traditional instruments on several tracks.

All royalties owed to the Baka musicians go to them via the registered charity Global Music Exchange [www.1heart.org](http://www.1heart.org)

More information at [www.bakabeyond.net](http://www.bakabeyond.net)

Photos at [www.bakabeyond.net/photos.html](http://www.bakabeyond.net/photos.html)

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Baka Beyond believes in giving back to the source of their inspiration, they call it "cultural fair trade". Royalties are returned through the charity **Global Music Exchange** either directly to individual musicians, or for sustainable projects decided within the Baka community. A large performance space has been built, as well as work in health and education. With the forest and therefore their lifestyle under threat, it helps that the Baka's music and culture is appreciated worldwide.

## **WORKSHOPS.**

The Baka have initiated Su and Martin into their music and have asked that they spread their culture beyond the forest. Su (a trained teacher) has worked in schools at all levels, with choirs, in the community, at festivals and in prisons. They also run Baka culture camps together and teach at university level. Workshops and showing of Martins forest films often run alongside gigs. In July 2011 Martin & Su taught at the world famous Hollyhock retreat in BC, Canada. More information at [www.bakacamp.com](http://www.bakacamp.com)

See [www.bakabeyond.com](http://www.bakabeyond.com) and [www.1heart.org](http://www.1heart.org) for more

*". . . if you are not dancing, maybe you should have someone check your pulse."*