

echo



FESTIVAL

Belgrade

July 10-13, 2003

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THE EVENT



“It was like DJ-ing the main stage at Glastonbury. Everything was going off in there. Off the hook, man. I've never seen anything like it. That refreshed me.”

Grooverider on performing in Serbia last summer, in an interview with DJ magazine, December 2002

ECHO is an open-air festival, presenting the best in contemporary global music on four stages over four days to more than 250,000 people from Belgrade, the Balkans and beyond. All on a beautiful island in the middle of the Danube.

It is also much more: a cultural exchange, a tourist attraction, a catalyst for foreign investment and a provider of jobs for young people in an industry with serious growth potential. Our partners already include the City of Belgrade, the Serbian Ministry of Tourism and JAT Yugoslav Airlines.

ECHO is not just another bunch of people in a field.

It has something precious that many events of its kind have lost: a hungry crowd, an electric atmosphere and the sense of being somewhere special. Our organizing committee has three years of experience in producing outdoor events for international stars who are excited about performing in the Balkans.

Now that more people are eager to see for themselves what life in this region is really like, it is time to bring them to the Serbian capital and a unique inner-city location surrounded by trees, sand and water, featuring a chill-out stage on the beach.

ECHO will run from Thursday, July 10 to Sunday, July 13.

Reasonable and affordable ticket prices, together with promotional travel packages supplied by our partners, will make the festival accessible to the broadest possible range of people from Serbia, neighbouring countries and Western Europe. We anticipate an average daily crowd of at least 60,000 people and the site can accommodate close to twice that number.

ECHO will reverberate into the future.

It will be Southeastern Europe's biggest cultural gathering this year and we have ambitious expansion plans, including similar events on the Adriatic coast in Croatia and Montenegro. A Balkan fusion of Ibiza and Glastonbury.

We are investing in the future of the local community, the city and a regional entertainment industry that is reviving a sense of common purpose as this part of the world works to build a happier future. After a decade of isolation, Serbia's future lies in integration with the rest of Europe, but it's not easy.

ECHO keeps people moving.

Come and watch Belgrade get back in tune with the rest of the world.

And bring your friends.





THE PROGRAMME

“The strong British contingent of DJs assembled onstage is nothing if not completely stunned. Acid house, it appears, is alive and well and hiding out in the former Yugoslavia. Maybe it's time to rethink next year's summer holiday destination.”

Seven magazine's verdict on the Serbian music scene, September 2002

MAIN STAGE

We are still finalizing the line-up, but it will include big name attractions such as Moby, The Chemical Brothers, Sonic Youth and Burning Spear. Local and international bands will support the headline acts before DJs take over until well past dawn. More than 12 hours of continuous performances featuring stars from around the world.

BRISTOL STAGE

There's something about Bristol: Massive Attack, Portishead, Rip Rig and Panic, Kosheen, Tricky, Smith and Mighty, Full Cycle: Roni Size, DJ Die, Krust, Suv and Dynamite; Breakbeat Era, Blow Pop, Dope on Plastic, Way Out West, Day One... All from the same city. If you love these acts, you'll love the rest. Straight from the dance stage of the Ashton Court free festival: intelligent sounds from a diverse selection of sound-systems and MC's, mixing up live acts and DJ sets incorporating much original material. Throughout the festival we intend to encourage and facilitate collaboration between British artists and their Balkan counterparts, creating new partnerships and exchanging ideas for forthcoming projects.

LONDON XPRESS STAGE

From house to jazzy hip-hop beats, electronica to African funk, soul and techno, it's all here. DJs and multimedia visual effects from the sharp end of the club scene. A taste of the style and quality you expect from the clubs of London and New York. Limitless musical indulgence from the likes of Talvin Singh, Justin Robertson, Andrew Weatherall, Carl Craig, Jhelisa, Faze Action and Adam Goldstone.

REGGAE STAGE

An eclectic blend of reggae, beats and dub, live on the beach. Organic Grooves from New York will jam with a wide spectrum of musical influences, supported by reggae artists such as Aba Shanti-i and Iration Steppas. With space for 5,000 people to relax in peace and get to know each other, or for many more to shake to sounds from the likes of Jah Shaka, this is the ideal chill-out area. In association with Culture Promotions.

Our main programme runs from 2000-0800 every night.





“Clubbing in Eastern Europe: Back with more of those Eastern Bloc-rocking beats. The travelling DJ's current destination of choice because, from Serbia to Prague, the crowds are mad for it.”

From “Dance music's hot 50 - the blazing stars of the new underground”, published in Muzik magazine, November 2002



THE VENUE

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In the centre of Belgrade, beneath a medieval fortress, the river Sava meets the fabled blue Danube. Right at the confluence lies a small island that is unoccupied for much of the year.

In summer, a pontoon bridge connects a quiet bathing beach at its western tip with the banks of the Danube at Zemun, a distinctive district with lively restaurants and bars and a well-preserved Austro-Hungarian old town.

An additional pontoon bridge capable of supporting any commercial truck will provide easy access to and from the site, a plot of well over 100,000 square metres that occupies only a fraction of the island's undisturbed habitat.

Power, up to 600 KW, will be supplied by generators. Mobile toilets, dressing rooms and a private bar for performers and their guests will be situated behind each stage.

ECHO aims to meet the highest standards of similar events in Western Europe. All power, water, and catering requirements will be supplied on site.

Accommodation for artists and technicians will be provided at waterfront hotels a short boat away ride from the site, which is within 15 minutes drive of Belgrade international airport.

A campsite will be available for visitors at a location within walking distance of the island and special rates arranged at a selection of nearby hotels and guesthouses.

We are providing our own security for performers and to assist the Serbian police in crowd control that ensures public safety is protected without an intrusive presence.

All traces of our presence will be cleared up after the event, apart from a small recreation area where we plan to develop cultural and leisure facilities for young people. Then we'll be back next summer.

For this year's festival, we plan to erect a skate ramp and space for artists' workshops.

During the day, ECHO will also feature a series of events for local children, keeping the festival rooted in the community while also expanding people's horizons.

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REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT



More than 50 million people live in the Balkans. This is now Europe's biggest emerging market.

Ten years ago, adventurous investors took a gamble on transition in Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic. They were handsomely rewarded. Along with much of the rest of the former Eastern bloc, these countries will join the European Union next year and their economic prospects have grown steadily rosier.

The same thing can happen here. After a decade of turmoil, every country in the Balkans has a democratically elected government these days and economic reforms are starting to make a difference.

Southeastern Europe's potential is waiting to be tapped. And now is the time to act.

Consider the following excerpt from "A Brave New Generation", a UNICEF report on young people in the Balkans that was published last year:

"Like education, recreation is a major part of youth's transition from childhood to adulthood, from play to work, from family to independence. Young people certainly place a high priority on leisure activities, making these important opportunities for participation and expression. In many industrial democracies, youth recreation is big business, a situation that has given young people tremendous economic clout and greater influence in family life and on society's agenda."

Together with our partners, we are building a vibrant entertainment industry that cuts across Balkan borders. Sponsors are keen to align themselves with a positive force for change and economic revival.

ECHO can connect with their target market in Serbia and neighbouring countries because it speaks directly to young people in a language they all understand: music.

We offer something fresh and dynamic for people to get excited about at a time when many are frustrated with the slow pace of change. And we're creating jobs in the industries of the future, helping to reverse the brain drain.

There are strong synergies between tourism and the entertainment business and rich opportunities for developing creative enterprises here. We can help investors to implement their business plans and put them in touch with people working on the ground to transform this region's economic future.

Everyone will profit from long-term investment here. It's that simple.

"The challenges facing the Balkans in the coming period are not categorically different from those which the European Union has been dealing with in its own territory for many years. However, as it stands, the promise offered by Europe to the region is curiously insubstantial."

From "Assistance, cohesion and the new boundaries of Europe - a call for policy reform", published by the European Stability Initiative, a Balkan research institute (Berlin/Brussels/Sarajevo, November 2002)

The way into the minds of people in this region is through television, which will form the backbone of our pre-event promotional campaign, starting in May. We will develop this exposure through our extensive contacts with print, broadcast and Internet media organizations in Serbia and around the world.

Selected international newspapers, magazines and travel organizations will promote ECHO during the month of June, supporting our sales operations in Western Europe. Negotiations are also under way with foreign broadcast networks to arrange live transmissions and supplementary coverage before, during and after the event.

Partner electronic media networks in Serbia and across the region will run a six-week campaign, supported by printed media, billboard advertising, posters and flyers.

Past events have already received extensive write-ups in The New York Times and Muzik and Seven magazines in the U.K., as well as coverage on the BBC. ECHO will commission special programming featuring the stars of our 2003 event, to be aired on partner networks in Serbia and internationally.

We expect more than 500 accredited journalists from Serbia and around the world to attend the event, raising its profile. Through coverage in international publications, ECHO will promote both itself and the region as tourist attractions, encouraging young people from Western Europe to consider taking holidays in Serbia and neighbouring countries.

A strong Internet presence is essential to all aspects of our operation and the ECHO website (www.echofest.com) is now under construction. A portal in English and Serbian, it includes travel information, media sections and links to relevant online material, including sponsors' own websites. Secure payment facilities are planned.

Tickets will also be on sale at distribution outlets throughout the Balkans. Although we anticipate the majority of festival-goers will be from Belgrade and its environs, we will attract thousands of international visitors, who will in turn spread the word to other independent travelers: "Belgrade welcomes the world".

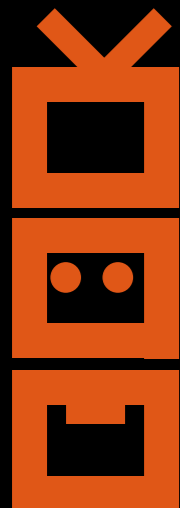
We already have support from Western embassies in Belgrade, including those of Great Britain, Switzerland, France, Austria and the United States and we're talking to many more people, including UNICEF, The British Council and other agencies promoting the arts around the world.

"Above all, Western governments need a much broader and more creative idea of what public diplomacy is and what it can do ... The challenge is to move from supplying information to capturing the imagination."

From "Diplomacy by other means", by Mark Leonard, the director of an independent British Foreign Policy research institute launched by Tony Blair. Published in the September/October 2002 issue of Foreign Policy magazine

"This is not the Balkans of just a few years ago. Every country has a democratic government. Milosevic is on trial... Croatia is welcoming back tourists, and winning at Wimbledon and the Olympics. Bosnia has just picked up an Oscar. Tremendously talented peoples are starting to be associated with success again."

From a speech to policymakers by Chris Patten, the European Union's Commissioner for External Relations, April 2002



USEFUL LINKS

Echo homepage:
<http://www.echofest.com>

City of Belgrade:
<http://www.beograd.org.yu>

Tourist Organisation of Belgrade:
<http://www.belgradetourism.org.yu>

Belgrade in your pocket:
<http://www.inyourpocket.com/yugoslavia/belgrade/en>

National Tourism Organisation of Serbia:
<http://www.serbia-tourism.org>

Hotels in Serbia and Montenegro:
<http://www.hotels.co.yu>

Yugoslav Airlines:
<http://www.jat.com>

Invest in Serbia:
<http://www.invest-in-serbia.com>



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PUBLICITY FOR PREVIOUS EVENTS

BBCi

Saturday, 13 July, 2002, 14:56 GMT 15:56 UK

Young Yugoslavs unite through music

By **Matthew Price**

BBC correspondent in the Balkans



"There are Croats, Slovenes, Bosnians, Macedonians and Serbs, all partying together."

"And then there are the musicians. Milais is from one of Croatia's most popular bands. 'There are a lot of people in Croatia who think that it is not good to play in Serbia if you are a Croatian band,' he said. 'But I don't want to wait 10 more years to visit this beautiful country and its beautiful people.'"

"There is still a political message here; greater openness with the West and greater freedom for young people."

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The New York Times

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Music to Make Glum Serbia Want to Sing Again

By DANIEL SIMPSON

"Seeing foreign stars is still a novelty for young Serbs after a decade of wars and being ostracised for Mr. Milosevic's policies."

"Changing the world with a music festival seems a lofty ambition. But the zeal and professionalism of the organisers has secured them influential backing."

"It's a way of persuading other talented Serbs that emigration is not the only passport to success."

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Or consult our presentation for sponsors



THE ORGANISERS

ECHO is co-produced by HKMP of New York and Euro-Esstrada of Belgrade and supported by music industry professionals from Serbia, Croatia, Britain and the United States among others.

Our partners in London and New York are engaging multinational corporate sponsors and we have support from many international organizations, including the European Union. We are also talking to companies from the region about possible long-term partnerships.

Our promotional backers include people working in the global travel industry and the international media.

OUR MISSION:

To inspire and entertain young people in Belgrade, Serbia and across the Balkans by bringing them together and giving them something special for an affordable price.

To attract badly needed foreign investment that offers young people jobs, satisfaction and new incentives.

To help Belgrade rebuild its battered reputation and welcome back the outside world.

To demonstrate to others that they could be doing this too.

NANNY FOR THE BALKANS?

To the Editor:

Re "U.S. and Allies Must Increase Aid to Balkans, a Panel Asserts" (news article, Dec. 9):

That it took a panel of 21 experts to establish the shortcomings of Western policy toward the Balkans is staggering.

The West may well be concerned about the stability of this volatile region, but its strategy for dealing with the threat is devoid of vision and divorced from reality.

The countries of the Balkans have democratic governments, but there is virtually no incentive for them to undertake any sort of ambitious reform, other than to avoid another diplomatic dressing down when political and economic stagnation create new headaches.

A distant promise of possible admission to Europe's elite clubs is no substitute for intelligent policy making. Instead of patting each other on the back for keeping a lid on conflicts, Western officials should consider how they can become a catalyst for change in the Balkans by investing heavily in economic revival.

Otherwise, they'll be playing nanny to this region for a long time to come.

RAOUL DJUKANOVIC
Belgrade, Serbia, Dec. 10, 2002

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