

# ICHI



Ichi took a lot of people by surprise last year when he arrived on European soil for the first time - not only does he play steel-pan, glockenspiel, accordion, trumpet, and many more instruments in his live set, but he plays them with skill and wit, and sets a new bench-mark for the phrase 'one man band'. His live performances are playfully mature, the songs seamlessly combine music with humour, and both visually and sonically he comes across like the leader of an obscure tribe, ancient and ritualistic, while at the same time hilariously accessible.

Ichi's debut album *Mono* is released on the Japanese label **Coup**, and he is currently recording a new album ready for the summer. As well as his solo performances, he is a member of the new wave band **Nohshintoh** who are based in Nagoya, Japan and are described by many as 'Japanese Treasure' for their high-energy, idiosyncratic and irresistibly danceable live performances. He also has an improvisational music project titled **Flyhoop** with beautiful cine-film projections. Both Flyhoop and the much awaited new Nohshintoh CD are also available to buy.

Ichi has toured extensively as a solo artist in Japan, the UK and Europe, and has played with **Shugo Tokumaru** and **Asa-Chang & Junray**. His festival performances last year received standing ovations, both at **Glastonbury Festival** and The Fence Collective's festival **The Homegame**.

[www.myspace.com/ichijapan](http://www.myspace.com/ichijapan)

# THE H'AND



In the last 12 months The Hand have played over 100 gigs in the UK, Europe and Japan, including festival performances at **Glastonbury**, **End of the Road** and **The Homegame**.

The Hand began on a small ferry-boat where Rachael Dadd & Wig Smith worked. On quiet days they'd sing songs by their favourite songwriters. Rachael got a banjo, Wig got a Kora, and taking their name from a ferry-boat stop (where stands a huge statue of a hand), they began to experiment. Their instrumental sketches developed into songs sung in harmony, with lyrics inspired by Russian folk stories, apples, and life working on the water.

Aside from their staple instruments banjo and kora, they play guitar, ukulele, harmonium, clarinet and piano. Together they create something that is pastorally English, yet throughout the spirit of the kora moves the locus of these recordings towards Africa and the Orient. Their self-recorded album *Berries from the Rubble* is released by **Angels Egg** in Japan. 'On we skip' is typical of their album - English folk song cross-bred with desert campfire blues to produce something that is at once gentle, dramatic and timeless.

Wig & Rachael are also solo performers, and this February Rachael toured with her new mini-album titled *Moth in the motor*, which is out on 10" vinyl with the label **Broken Sound**. She also has a back catalogue of releases, her most recent album being the stunning and eclectic *After the Ant Fight*, which is released in Japan alongside Wig's debut album *A Means of Escape Through a Hedge*. Wig is currently spending five weeks in **The Gambia** studying kora with a master player, after which The Hand will record a new EP in April, ready for their summer travels.

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