

# Raw energy in our park as Womad kicks off



**DIVERSITY:** The wild dancing and music of Egypt's Rango got the crowd into the mood at last night's opening of Womadelaide.

Picture: NIGEL PARSONS

**PATRICK McDONALD  
LOUISE NUNN**

DIVERSITY ruled at a relaxed start to this year's Womadelaide festival, as Australian siblings Angus and Julia Stone established themselves as firm pop favourites among the teenage set.

The punk energy and Mongolian melodies of China's Hanggai group,

in its Monkey Magic-style costumes, sat in stark contrast to the Bjork-like ethereal vocals and percussion of Swedish duo Wildbirds & Peacedrums.

Earlier, Egypt's Rango caused the crowd to erupt with its ancient xylophone playing and wildly energetic dancing.

Thousands of spectators made their temporary homes beneath the

leafy canopy of Botanic Park, drifting from stage to stage throughout the opening evening of the four-day event.

This year's program features 500 artists from 30 countries, including Ukraine, Cuba, Syria, Jamaica, Turkey and Germany.

Tourism Minister John Rau said Womadelaide had grown in appeal since it was first held as part of

the Adelaide Festival in 1992.

"Womad has become an event that really encapsulates and exudes the essence of what Adelaide has become ... elegant and energetic, sophisticated but lighthearted and celebratory," Mr Rau said.

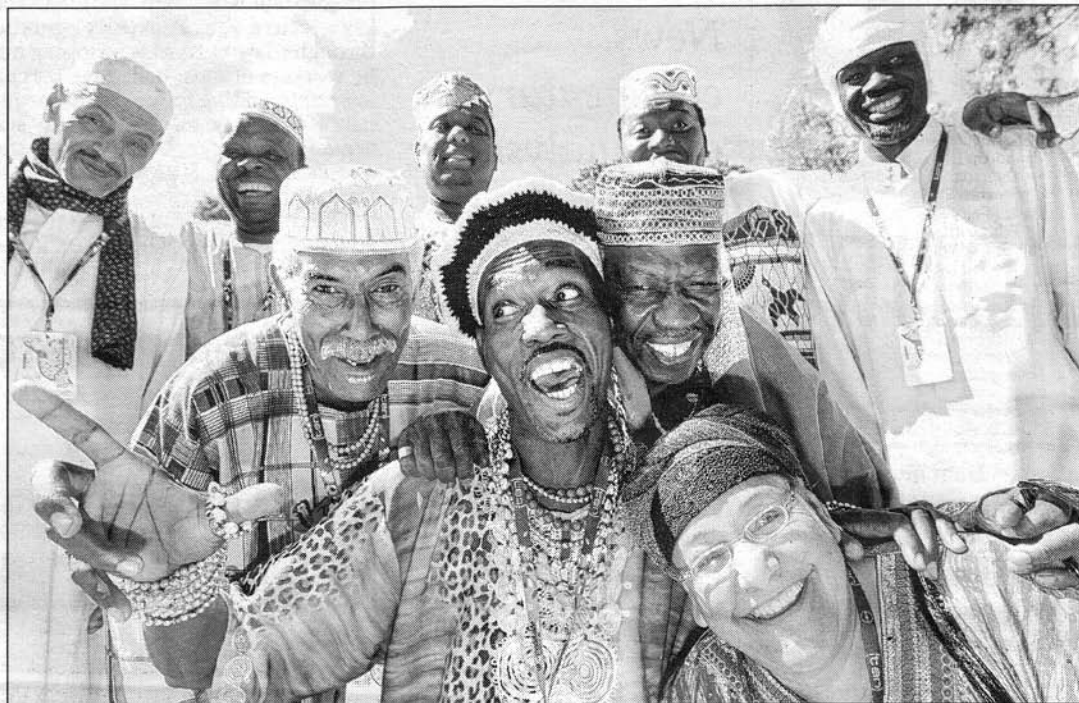
Last year, Womadelaide became a four-day event and generated \$8 million for the state's economy.

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**ENERGETIC:** Rango, in Botanic Park yesterday, will make you want to dance.

Picture: TAIT SCHMAAL

# Sudan sound

## Rango

Egypt/Sudan

WOMADELAIDE began with traditional sounds from Sudan in the form of the energetic group Rango.

The relentless heavy drum beat is leavened with an unusual array of percussion instruments made from goat horns and aerosol cans.

With costumes ranging from the simple to the extravagant, and an engaging on-stage demeanour,

they were an ideal opening act for this long weekend of music from many corners of the globe.

Rango makes you want to move, whether just to bob your head or tap your foot, or get up and dance in the weird manner common among the young latter-day hippies who form part of the colourful Womadelaide crowd.

The focus of Womadelaide has shifted over the years, but it still manages to present a decent number of traditional acts, and Rango is certainly one to catch this year.

- Stephen Whittington