



MAG MUSIC FESTIVAL

Presented by Minsk Club Vietnam and C.A.M.A.

Following on from the huge success of the last two Hanoi International Music Festivals in April and November last year, the Minsk Club Vietnam and CAMA have decided to join forces once again and hold another all-day live music event on Saturday April 25, 2009 at The American Club in downtown Hanoi.

This time proceeds from the event will be donated to MAG (Mines Advisory Group) Vietnam, an international NGO that is dedicated to clearing unexploded bombs and mines, an enduring legacy from Vietnam's decades-long struggle for independence.

Doors open at the American Club (19/21 Hai Ba Trung) from 1230pm and the beats will go on until 11pm. You will be able to purchase tickets at the door on the day for VND200,000 or pick up a limited number of discounted advance tickets for just VND150,000 at Highway 4 (3-5 Hang Tre), Cheeky Quarter (1 Ta Hien), The American Club, MAG office (202/B1, Van Phuc Diplomatic Compound, 298 Kim Ma) and Puku Café (60 Hang Trong) from 10 days before the event. Tickets will also be available for VND100,000 for students (with Student ID) purchasing tickets on the day.

Please check out www.minskclubvietnam.com or www.minskclubhanoi.wordpress.com for the latest info on the event or email minskclubvietnam@hotmail.com. If you would like to find out more about MAG's activities in Vietnam please email mag-po@vnn.vn or check out www.maginternational.org/vietnam.

About MAG Vietnam

The MAG music festival is about more than rock 'n' roll – it's about changing lives. Vietnam is one of the most bombed nations on the face of the Earth, and landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) still pose a daily threat to millions of rural Vietnamese people.

According to the Vietnamese military, 350,000 tonnes of UXO still remain in the soil threatening the lives and well-being of many marginalised communities in nearly every province of the country. Since 1975 it is estimated that there have been more than 100,000 landmine and UXO related casualties, and each year it is estimated that more than 1,000 people are still injured or killed while carrying out daily activities.

MAG's mission is to continue to Save Lives and Build Futures for poorer communities in Vietnam by removing and destroying landmines and UXO. In the past decade MAG has destroyed more than 130,000 items of UXO.

The upcoming festival will continue to support the development of Hanoi's live music scene while raising much-needed funding so MAG can continue its clearance activities in Vietnam and provide safe land to communities – improving economic opportunities and the capacity to play and work without fear of injury or death, helping to remove the explosive legacy of the country's war-torn past and enabling thousands of rural and poverty-stricken Vietnamese to lead their lives free of fear.

PRESENTED BY MINSK CLUB AND C.A.M.A.

MAG MUSIC FESTIVAL

MAG saves lives builds futures

THE MUSIC MAKERS

A spectacular line up of cutting edge bands and DJs from Vietnam and beyond.

MAG Music Festival will feature Some of Southeast Asia's most exciting rock acts will be gracing the main stage. Armed with a boat-load of effects and a healthy appetite for guitar feedback, **I Am David Sparkle** from Singapore's mini-rock operas have drawn comparisons to post-rock stalwarts Godspeed You Black Emperor and Mogwai.

Having risen from the ashes of Futon, **Goo** from Bangkok, Thailand describe themselves as "a mind blowing one night stand". Their guitar-driven sound is backed by the awesome drumming of Simon Gilbert, formerly of Suede, one of

the most famous Britpop bands from the 1990s.

The Dorques from Manila, the Philippines are all about the feel-good factor with country-tinged boogies and dirty French pop ditties as well as lashings of manic indie pop thrown in for good measure. This will be the Filipinos' second trip to Vietnam having played in Ho Chi Minh City last year.

The British troubadour **James Harries**, making his second visit to the capital city after starring in the first Hanoi Music International festival in April last year, will no doubt



James Harries



once again leave the audience swooning with his sublime and soulful singing voice. Harries, a platinum selling artist in Europe, has just released his latest album, Days like These and is currently on tour in the US.

Vietnamese rock fans and local expats will no doubt recognise **Quan Yeomans**, the front man of the Australian rock band, Regurgitator, who played sell-out shows in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City last year. This time performing his solo work under the moniker of Quan, this talented Vietnamese-Australian musician is producing some of the most electrifying hip-hop and electro tunes around. His album Quan the Amateur has been receiving rave reviews since being released late last year.

Besides the array of international talent the festival will also feature three local acts from Hanoi as the Minsk Club and C.A.M.A. strive to showcase some of the country's finest talent. Expatriate band **The Van Ho Ba** will kick off the day's proceedings on the main stage and Vietnamese rock act **Recycle**, who released their second album *Tái chế* last year, will perform their own range of Alternative/Post-rock. The ongoing musical and art house project **Girl and the Machine** from Canada will also reform especially for this event!

There will also be a full line up of djs in the **C.A.M.A.** tent where you will also conveniently find a fully stocked bar serving mixed drinks and tasty cocktails all day long. Amongst others there will be djs from **the Philippines (Red-i)**, **New Zealand (DJ Funk'n'slocuts)** **Ho Chi Minh City (DJ Jase)**, as well as all the boys from the **C.A.M.A. Sound System** and Hanoi's own **Tri Minh** playing everything from funk, soul, dub reggae, old school hip hop to house, minimal techno and electro.

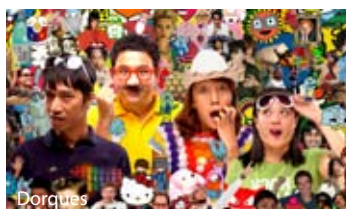
Coming to Vietnam for the first time ever will be **Minuit**, a dazzling three-piece electropop act from New Zealand that has toured the UK and Europe extensively, supporting acts like The Chemical Brothers and winning countless plaudits from critics along the way.



Minuit



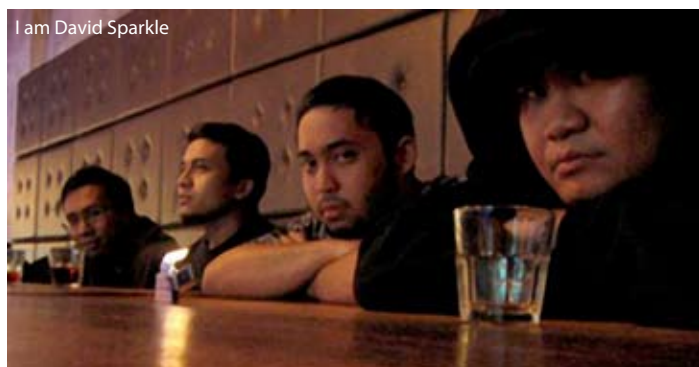
Goo



Dorques



Girl + The Machine



I am David Sparkle



Recycle

Links to the Music Makers

1. **Minuit:** www.myspace.com/minuittheband
2. **Quan:** [HYPERLINK www.myspace.com/quantheamateur](http://www.myspace.com/quantheamateur)
3. **The Dorques:** www.myspace.com/thedorques
4. **Goo:** www.myspace.com/ilovefuton
5. **James Harries:** www.myspace.com/jamesharries
6. **I am David Sparkle:** www.myspace.com/iamdavidsparkle

FESTIVAL ATMOSPHERE

Years of experience in event coordination

As with the previous festivals organised by the Minsk Club and C.A.M.A. on the day there will be an international food court, drink stalls, and a full programme of entertainment and games throughout the day for adults and children alike (tug-of-war battles, table football matches, a kid's corner with face painting, a bouncy castle, beat the goalie competition, egg and spoon races and lots more). This is a day for the whole community to come together and listen to some live music in the open air – and it's all for a great cause!



A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MINSK CLUB AND C.A.M.A

Minsk Club Vietnam

www.minskclubvietnam.com
Established in March 1998, when more than 85 enthusiasts turned up a tiny bar in the Hanoi suburbs to trade stories of their travels through the Vietnamese rural heartlands on the back of the legendarily robust Belarusian motorbike.

Since then the Minsk Club has promoted the safe exploration of rural Vietnam on two wheels whilst organising more than 40 not-for-profit events for locals and expatriates alike, including the Dai Lai Lake Charity Rally, which raised funds for a children's home for disadvantaged and handicapped children, and the Minsk Olympics weekend festival, held annually in May at Thac Da resort, Ba Vi district in Ha Tay province since 2003.

The 10-year Anniversary Music Festival, held last April at Hanoi's American Club, was the club's biggest achievement yet with bands from Australia, England, Japan, Thailand and Vietnam playing to a crowd of over 1,000 happy punters. The second international music festival further highlighted Hanoi's increasingly vibrant music scene while promoting Vietnam as a destination for the intrepid traveller.

Club for Art and Music Appreciation

www.myspace.com/camavietnam
C.A.M.A. is a collective of like-minded individuals based in Hanoi bringing independent musicians to Vietnam for the good of all. C.A.M.A. has been active in Hanoi since 2005 and has played a central role in bringing some 25 bands and DJs to Hanoi.

For the latest info on the event.

Please check out minskclubvietnam.com If you would like to find out more about MAG's activities in Vietnam please email mag-po@vnn.vn or check out www.maginternational.org/vietnam

www.minskclubvietnam.com/magmusic
minskclubvietnam@hotmail.com



Vietnam's high-flyers

Thousands may apply, but only the best become pilots for Vietnam Airlines

»»» page 13

Property market begins to thaw

Vietnam's property market is beginning to see signs of recovery, with a strong improvement likely to be seen by the year-end

»»» page 5

Bach Ma forest offers a sight for sore eyes

With its breath-taking views, a walk through Bach Ma is well worth the effort

»»» page 10



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Magnificent work

The workers of the Mine Advisory Group are still busy removing unexploded ordnance decades after the end of war
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A call from the wild

Despite rapidly declining numbers of some endangered species, illegal wildlife trading plagues Vietnam
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living

Want to contribute? Have a topic you would like to read about?
living@vietnamnation.vn

Magnificent work

By Desmond Moynes

A convoy of two land cruisers, an ambulance and a large transport truck grinds to a dusty stop in front of the village headman's house in a remote commune in the central province of Quang Binh just as the sun starts rising over the sleepy hamlet. As the waking villagers gather round to watch, uniformed people spill out of the vehicles, unloading equipment and setting up tents.

Emblazoned on the vehicles and uniforms is a red and white skull and crossbones – the universal symbol for 'danger', along with the acronym MAG (standing for the UK based Mines Advisory Group). Although dressed and behaving with professional military precision, these Vietnamese employees of MAG are not part of any military group, rather they work for an international non-government organisation (NGO) that has been tasked with assisting the Vietnamese military to remove the threat posed by the remaining unexploded ordnance (UXO) left over from conflicts during the 1960s and 70s.

For Vietnamese citizens and foreign tourists visiting the bustling, thriving cities of Vietnam the legacy of the country's multiple conflicts have all been relegated to memories and museums, however, for a number of poorer marginalised communities in poor provinces, the legacy of unexploded bombs and mines still has a deadly impact.

According to the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, since 1975 it is estimated that over 100,000 people have been killed or injured by UXO and current annual casualty estimates are not known due to many deaths or injuries going unreported. Munitions failure rates are the cause of so much of the UXO left behind, and for some people this metal is a lucrative source of cash.

Scrap collecting is still a thriving industry in some parts of Vietnam and although it is illegal to harvest explosive material, many people take the risk to boost their family's income. One man in Quang Tri who wished to remain anonymous said he makes about 150,000 VND (nearly \$8.80) a week from this activity.

"If I didn't do this my family wouldn't survive – farming only allows me to grow enough rice to last us for eight months a year, so collecting scrap is the only thing I can do," he says. "I realise that the job is dangerous but I'm very careful when digging and reburial any UXO I find."

However, some scrap collectors are less careful. In Me Village, Quang Binh there was an accident in January 2007 as one of the workers at the yard was cutting open a large bomb in order to remove the explosives so they could be sold. He died, along with three other people, in the resulting explosion.

Tran Thi Thu Hien is 30 years old and a mother of two. Her husband was killed instantly in the explosion as he drove his motorbike past the scrap yard and she is still angry with the scrap collectors: "My husband didn't even work at the yard, he was just passing by. Now my children have lost their father."

Tran Thi Tam's husband was the one who cut open the bomb. "He wasn't a scrap collector, but used to carry steel for the scrap yard," she said. "The owner wanted him to cut the bomb open with a chainsaw to remove the fuse and get the explosive. I told him not to do it because it was dangerous, but he still went ahead." The accident happened right outside her house, near the corner of her garden and the eldest of her three children was the first on



photo: Sean Suttren



the scene and tried to help his father.

The memory of this is obviously still raw and tears fill her eyes as she continues. "He saw his father lying bleeding on the ground and knelt beside him, trying to push his intestines back into the wound. My son is still traumatised." The incomprehension is clear on her face. "If my husband dies of disease or age, it is normal. But he died because of the bomb."

The scrap yard was discovered to house more than 1,500 items of potentially lethal UXO, including projectiles, mortars, artillery shells and a large bomb.

Apart from the detectors and explosives used to destroy the UXO, the equipment MAG technicians use to clear ground could be found in any hardware store. Whipper snippers and secateurs are used to clear brush and shovels and trowels are used to expose any metal signal detected by the technicians. Work is sometimes slowed down by the amount of metal that is still left in the earth, with sometimes 1,000 pieces of scrap being uncovered per day. Since the end of the Vietnam War the Vietnamese military has been responsible for clearing the estimated 350,000 – 700,000 tonnes of UXO that is still lodged in Vietnam's soil, however in the late 1990s a number of international NGOs were given permission by the national government to start clearing land, conducting mine risk education and providing support to survivors.

MAG was one of the first organisations to start operations in Vietnam, and was tasked with clearing a 370 acre site which was the location of former US firebase in the central province of Quang Tri. During this first task MAG removed and destroyed over 2,000 land mines and

over 8,000 unexploded bombs, shells, grenades and mortars, and since then has been responsible for destroying almost 140,000 items of UXO and making almost 700 hectares of land safe to develop.

MAG's work is generally focused in poorer, rural communities, clearing villages of all reported UXO and clearing sites for community development projects such as schools, hospitals, resettlement areas, agricultural land etc. However, it is not just poor, rural villagers that are at risk of death or injury from UXO – large international corporations are also finding the threat of UXO is affecting their work on large projects, and insurance companies are also querying employee safety on uncleared sites.

MAG and the military's job are far from over due to the 15.5 million tonnes of naval-, air- and ground-fired ordnance in Indochina. Of this figure 12 million tonnes was used in South Vietnam alone. MAG's International Technical Operations Manager, Mark Russell, a 46-year-old ex-British Royal Navy diver, said the highly mobile and multi-skilled mine action team (MAT) is made up of 11 explosive ordnance disposal technicians and additional support staff including supervisors, drivers and medics.

"The team operating in this area is one of nine MATs that MAG has had operating in communes in Quang Tri and Quang Binh Provinces over the past decade," said Russell. "With over 200 national staff and five international staff, MAG is the largest NGO conducting humanitarian mine action activities in Vietnam."

Although a relatively simple and tedious process MAG has had an impact on the lives of many villagers in Quang Tri and Quang Binh Provinces. Staff have knocked on the doors of almost 200,000 houses and each village or piece of land the organisation clears just adds to the amount of land available for people to safely develop.

■ *MAG (Mines Advisory Group) is a neutral and impartial humanitarian organisation clearing the remnants of conflict for the benefit of communities worldwide. MAG is co-laureate of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize, awarded for its work with the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), which culminated in the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty – the international agreement that bans anti-personnel landmines, sometimes referred to as the Ottawa Convention. For more information visit www.maginternational.org.*