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Band Camp Karaoke: Bang on a Can @ 92Y Tribeca

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We wanted to be the place where the homeless composers could all go.

-- Composer and Bang on a Can co-founder David Lang

Before new music collective Bang on a Can launched its [Summer Festival @ MASS MoCA](#), experimental musicians had no place to nest during the summer months. As temperatures rose, the mass urban exodus to a smorgasbord of traditional music festivals began: want classical music on the beach? Jazz in the mountains? Rock in the desert? The answer was always the same: there's a festival for that. But what if you

were a composer or performer who wanted to make music that falls between the cracks, music that defies such programmatic categorization? Where did you summer?

It was with this question in mind (and a hard hat on head) that David Lang toured an old abandoned factory in North Adams, MA that was crystallizing into MASS MoCA (Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art). Meeting with museum director Joe Thompson, Lang pitched the long-standing Bang on Can vision of a Utopian educational retreat for young musicians, dedicated entirely to the creation, study, and performance of adventurous contemporary music. Thompson loved the idea, they shook hands, and "Banglewood" was born.

Since it opened its doors in 2002, the Bang on a Can Summer Festival has rapidly established itself as a preeminent international new music mecca: nearly 400 musicians have attended, coming from over 50 countries including places as far away as Malaysia, Argentina, and Uzbekistan. Many graduates of the Festival have founded new ensembles, festivals, record labels, and bands around the world -- Dirty Projectors, New Amsterdam Records, Ensemble Signal, Asphalt Orchestra, MIVOS Quartet, and Carlsbad Music Festival being a tiny snap shot of projects launched by alumni. (See a more complete list [here](#)).

But even though the Bang on a Can ethos has spread far and wide across the globe, there is no better place to experience the Summer Festival network in action than New York City. As Lang describes: "It's a really amazing thing -- these incredible musicians come to our Festival from all over the place and then they move to Brooklyn."

It's a true story: the Summer Festival has propagated an entire lifestyle for post-Banglewood 20 and 30 something musicians living in the hipster-laden borough. (Personally calling Fort Greene home, I run into fellow alumni even during the most mundane life tasks, having recently sealed the deal on a solo flute commission while buying milk at the corner bodega). It's virtually impossible to *not* interact with a young contemporary music aficionado on every corner.

It's this motley crew leading the charge for the [Bang on a Can Summer Festival Shindig](#) at 92Y Tribeca this Saturday March 23, a benefit raising funds to keep tuition low for future generations of attendees. But although the evening's performers are alumni of the Festival, this won't be an evening of new music: rather, it will be an opportunity for you to release your inner rock god via live karaoke!

Happy hour begins at 7 p.m. with a DJ set by Li'l Miss Dolomite (aka Lisa Dowling), and the power ballads start at 8 p.m. with Live Band Karaoke (James Moore, guitar; Eleonore Oppenheim, bass; Jeremy Schulick, guitar; Wil Smith, keyboard; Peter Wise, drums). Pabst Blue Ribbon beer, the unofficial beverage of the Festival, will fuel the evening at 3 bucks a pop all night (or until supplies runs out). Check out the set list of Michael Jackson, Journey, Madonna and more [here](#).

Best part of all: If enough money is raised, Bang on a Can artistic directors Michael Gordon, David Lang, and Julia Wolfe will even belt out a few tunes themselves.

Get your tickets [here](#).