



Satisfying feast

REVIEW

Hypnotic Brass Ensemble (above); and Kokanko Sata Doumbia (right)

By **Sylvia Arthur**

Honest Jon's Chop Up, Barbican Hall, 5 July

FOR the uninitiated, a chop up in West African slang is a lavish feast; in dance music it means juxtaposition and re-constitution.

Hence the unlikely, but effortless amalgamation of Irish folk, American roots, African n'goni and kora and contemporary brass in this truly outernational offering.

Honest Jon's – the legendary West London record shop and label – which specialises in bringing long lost world music to the fore, brought its finest to the Barbican in a showcase

featuring an array of the genre's stars.

With flags from their respective countries draped across the stage, artists including Malian kora master Toumani Diabaté, American soul singer Candi Staton and Nigerian Afrobeat pioneer Tony Allen confirmed their status as leading lights with wholly consuming performances.

The diversity of styles – from Kokanko Sata Doumbia's deep blues to Simone White's gentle folk – was reflective of the label's extensive catalogue, while the understated presence of Honest Jon's co-founder and Blur front man Damon Albarn added to the mystique.

The one criticism was that, at



just over an hour and a half long, the show was a tad short. However, if the night hadn't lived up to expectations, the audience wouldn't have been left wanting more, as was so clearly the case at the end of this satisfying musical feast.