



PRESS RELEASE

ALI FARKA TOURE 'RED & GREEN' (WCD070) CLASSIC ALBUMS RE-RELEASED ON 2CD SET

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Available for the first time in over a decade, World Circuit present the 'Red' and 'Green' albums by the great Malian musician Ali Farka Toure. Originally released on vinyl in 1979 and 1988, these albums have been digitally remastered from the original master tapes and are made available complete as a two CD set with full lyrics and sleeve notes. This is the first Ali Farka Toure release since his 1999 release 'Niafunke'.

In the 1970s Ali worked as a sound engineer for national Radio Mali and broadcasts of his performances earned him a formidable local reputation. In 1975 on the advice of a friend he sent a number of recordings he made there together with some photographs to the Sonodisc record company in Paris. This soon resulted in one of the first ever commercial releases of Malian music - a 12" vinyl album titled Ali Toure 'Farka'. Between 1975 and 1988 a total of seven albums were released and material from the first five of these was compiled on the World Circuit released 'Radio Mali' in 1996. All seven albums were titled only with variations on the artist's name and included no information other than a photograph and the song titles. Because of this, the last two albums released became known as the 'Red' and 'Green' albums due to the colouring of their original album sleeves.

The Sonodisc albums circulated mainly in France and Mali, but in the mid-1980s a few copies of the 'Red' album found their way to the U.K where they found an enthusiastic reception from specialist radio shows and magazines. The album quickly gained great acclaim amongst the burgeoning world music public and people clamoured for more information on this remarkable enigmatic artist who was hailed as the 'John Lee Hooker of Africa'. As a result of this interest, Anne Hunt of World Circuit records went to Mali armed with a copy of the 'Red' album to seek out the mystery man to invite him to record and tour. She arranged for an appeal to be broadcast over Radio Mali and as luck would have it Ali was visiting the capital Bamako and he heard the broadcast. Thus began Ali's very successful international career which has taken him round the world and resulted in the release of five acclaimed albums including the GRAMMY winning duet with Ry Cooder 'Talking Timbuktu'.

The 'Red' album contains the original versions of some of Ali's most memorable songs. Playing acoustic guitar and singing in a number of local languages, Ali is accompanied by Hammer Sankare on backing vocals and calabash, one of the first times that instrument had ever been used on a record. The album opens intriguingly with Ali quoting the guitar

introduction to Otis Redding's version of 'My Girl'. Released in 1988 the Green album sees Ali's acoustic guitar and vocals alone or accompanied by calabash and ngoni (traditional four string guitar). These albums feature an updating of the traditional repertoires of the north of Mali which Ali has made unmistakably his own. .

These albums have been out of print for and have remained in the archives for over ten years, and as Ali's reputation grew so did that of these 'lost' classics. Alongside this CD issue Ali has also just re-released these albums on cassette for the local market due to renewed interest. This is pure, unadulterated Ali Farka Toure, a must for both fans and collectors alike.

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