


CUMBANCHA DISCOVERY PRESENTS:

BOMBINO

THE SOULFUL SOUND OF THE SAHARA'S YOUNG GENERATION
Raised amidst rebellion and exile, Bombino's blazing guitar transports Tuareg traditions into the future.
US/Canada Release Date: April 19, 2011

Europe and ROW Release Date: April 18, 2011

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"His desert rock and roll guitar had the audience cheering. It is the new sound of Niger. Bombino brings a message of peace to the world and is an example of the spirit of changing guns for guitars."

– Afropop Worldwide (reporting from the 2011 Festival in the Desert)

"The singer and guitarist Bombino emerges from the dunes of the Sahara with his desert folk dancing in the flames. Absolutely magical." — Les Inrockuptibles (France)

January 21, 2011 – For centuries, the desert town of **Agadez** has served as a converging point for the great camel caravans driven by the **Tuareg** that link West Africa with North Africa and the Mediterranean. Born in 1980 at a nomadic camp near this dusty outpost, the young guitarist and songwriter **Omara "Bombino" Moctar** was raised during an era of armed struggles for Tuareg independence and violent suppression by government forces. Bombino's electrifying jams capture the spirit of resistance and rebellion while echoing with guitar riffs reminiscent of fellow Africans **Tinariwen** and **Ali Farka Touré** not to mention rock and blues icons such as **Jimi Hendrix**, **John Lee Hooker** and **Jimmy Page**. Already a superstar in the Tuareg community, with the release of **Agadez** on **Cumbancha Discovery (April 18th in Europe and April 19th in North America)**, Bombino's stature as one of Africa's hottest young guitarists will be revealed to the world.

Just thirty years old, Bombino has earned renown throughout the Sahara for his guitar wizardry, and his bootleg tapes are traded among music fans in the region like illicit treasures. Some of Bombino's early and live recordings have made their way into the hands of enthusiasts in the West, and in 2006 Bombino traveled to California with the band **Tidawt** to record with **Keith Richards** and **Charlie Watts** of the **Rolling Stones**. He even served as **Angelina Jolie**'s guide to the region when she visited a few years ago. His Casanova good looks, enigmatic charisma and natural charm have endeared him to his fans, and his compelling life story and socially conscious songs led him to be the subject of an award-winning new documentary film, **Agadez, the Music & the Rebellion**, that is currently making the rounds of film festivals in the U.S. and Europe.

As a child, Bombino learned the traditional survival skills necessary to a nomadic lifestyle but this life was disrupted when he was barely 12 years old and his family fled to Tamanrasset, Algeria to escape the hostilities related to the first Tuareg rebellion. However, destiny is often revealed during difficulty, and in that same year Bombino picked up his first guitar.

After the rebellion calmed, Bombino returned to Niger in 1997. Tuareg guitar was forbidden by the authorities who considered it a symbol of the rebellion. When the conflict reignited in 2007 the military executed two of Bombino's fellow musicians, once again driving him into exile for several years. In January 2010, Bombino was able to return home to Agadez and with the Sultan's blessing, staged a concert outside the Grande Mosque to celebrate the end of the rebellion. Over a thousand people showed up, and after three years of violence, drought and a devastating flood, Agadez found a reason to celebrate.

Filmmaker **Ron Wyman** heard a cassette of Bombino's music while traveling near Agadez and, after becoming enchanted by his sound, he spent the next year seeking him out. Eventually he tracked Bombino down in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, where he was living in exile. While there, Wyman decided to feature Bombino in his documentary about the Tuareg and laid plans to bring Bombino to Cambridge, Massachusetts record parts of **Agadez** in his home studio. The songs on **Agadez** speak of keeping hope alive through struggle, holding the memory of a loved one close while they are away at war, and the destiny of the Tuareg people. Over the slinky groove of "Tar Hani", Bombino sings to a lover asking her to, "Put my heart and yours together everywhere you go," and, "Don't listen to what enemies say, they can break a real love." Later amidst the searing guitar licks of "lyat Idounia Aysasahen" he cautions against seeking material wealth, as that path is "the hardest life in that it separates friends".

Agadez is released as part of the Cumbancha Discovery series, which seeks to introduce exceptional new talent to international audiences. The album features intimate, entrancing slower songs alongside rocking jams, some of which were recorded live. A special version of **Agadez** featuring extended edits and bonus tracks not heard on the physical version will be available by download only at Cumbancha's online store. Also available is an extensive digital booklet featuring extra photos, detailed biography, song lyrics, artist commentaries and much more. This year, Bombino and his band will bring their powerful live show to fans around the world. Tours are slated for Europe in June, the US & Canada in July and September and Japan in August.

