



## IMPERIAL TIGER ORCHESTRA *MERCATO*



**ARTIST :** IMPERIAL TIGER ORCHESTRA  
**TITLE :** Mercato  
**Format :** CD / LP / Digital  
**Label :** Mental Groove Records / Absinthe Music  
**Cat nb. :** AMMGCD001 / AMMGLP002  
**Street date :** 18/04/2011 (EU)  
**File under :** Afrobeat

**STREAMING LINK:**

<http://official.fm/playlists/46571>  
password : donotshare

Follow-up to last year's acclaimed EP **Addis-Abeba**, **Mercato** is the debut album by Swiss band **Imperial Tiger Orchestra**, the finest connoisseurs and grooviest performers of Ethiopian music from the Golden Age.

**Raphaël Anker**, trumpet player from Geneva, one day decides to gather musicians for a live performance revisiting the golden age of Ethiopian music, the sound of **Tlaloun Gessesse**, **Getatchew Mekurya**, **Mulatu Astatke**, **Mahmoud Ahmed** and other legends. It's 2007, and the experience is so memorable that the one shot happening becomes a band: Imperial Tiger Orchestra, a nod to the **Imperial Bodyguard Band** from Addis-Abeba and to a classic line from **Monty Python's The Meaning of Life**. *A tiger - in Africa? ...Well it doesn't sound very likely...*

Consisting of members with very diverse backgrounds (free jazz, noise experimentations, contemporary music, re-invented psychedelic music, strange pop, bizarre rock) the Orchestra tests the grounds with an EP and a 7" breaking the boundaries of genres followed by a trip to Addis-Abeba in 2009 where they

perform with local luminaries and learn about the large diversity of Ethiopian music. A life-changing experience which brings them back to the studio for their debut album: **Mercato**.

Overseen with flair by Ethiopian music expert **Jeoren Visse**, Mercato is a mesmerizing re-interpretation of Ethiopian music's golden age mixed with the digitalized themes that appeared in the 80s and filtered through the eclectic influences of the Orchestra. Instruments such as the kebero (the most iconic percussion instrument of the country), the Indian dholak, the Thai cymbal, the traditional Thai phin, or the krar (an Ethiopian lyre) follow hypnotizing drum patterns and layers of MIDI sounds. It's a fascinating retro-futuristic piece of music, close yet totally different from the songs that inspired the band. It's progressive Ethiopian rock!

This new record undoubtedly confirms the band's wider knowledge of Ethiopia's musical diversity, while allowing them to express their desire of choosing a route not taken by many. Whether it's saluting the phenomenal Mahmoud Ahmed on the splendid "Lale Lale", re-interpretating the classic wedding theme "Shinet", or taking **Martha Ashagani's** "Zoma" to new heights, the Orchestra always does it with a unique vision while at the same time honoring the originals. Popular songs magically become classy instrumentals. Thunderous rhythms and feverish hooks, down tempo moments and fast paced epiphanies, electronic sounds and ambient nirvanas, Mercato explores multiples paths and never loses its warm groove, from "Yedao", the **Rahel Yohannes** cover that starts the record, to the collaboration with **Bethalem Dagnachew** whose high pitched vocals close the full-length in the most enchanting way. A winter Mercato sure to bring fire to stages this summer!

#### TRACKLIST:

1. **Yedao** (Rahel Yohannes / Yilma Gebereabe)
2. **Lale Lale** (Abrar Abdo)
3. **Zoma** (Martha Ashagani / Zelalem Mekuria)
4. **Anchi Bale Game** (Tegenu Balkew)
5. **Yefikir Woha Timu** (Tezera Haile-Michael)
6. **Bemgnot Alnozem** (Bahta Gebre-Heywet)
7. **Shinet** (Tadesse Alemu / Traditional)
8. **Demamaye** (Ephrem Tamru / Akelilu Siyume)
9. **Tirulegn** Feat. **Bethalem Dagnachew**  
(Hamelmal Habate / Moges Tekla)

#### CONTACTS :

Booking/management:  
[jakob@mazurka.ch](mailto:jakob@mazurka.ch)

Promotion:  
[camille@mentalgroove.ch](mailto:camille@mentalgroove.ch)

#### LINKS:

[myspace.com/imperialtigerorchestra](https://myspace.com/imperialtigerorchestra)  
[www.mentalgroove.ch](http://www.mentalgroove.ch)  
[www.absinthemusic.com](http://www.absinthemusic.com)  
[myspace.com/mentalgroove](https://myspace.com/mentalgroove)

#### SELECTED QUOTES FOR PREVIOUS EP, **ADDIS-ABEBA** :

"Fabulous release!!! So fresh to hear this in my inbox instead of mindless minimal & noise for deaf & dumb kids. wonderful wonderful wonderful!!! thanX" Trevor Jackson

"Beautiful music. Perfect for my headphones and sunsets/sunrises. Thanks :)" Soul Clap

"I Adore! Superb fusion modern/traditional" Laurence Pierre (France Inter)

"Wonderful" Nick Warren

"Yes! That's exactly what I need right now! Some raw, ethiopian Funk mixed with the best grooves this world has to offer...essential! Save the Tigers!" Quarion

"What a wonder. Superb" Laurent Garnier

"Love it - powerful music" Sinden

"wow. It's like mulatu in a time machine. love the interpretation and love the finished sound." Scattermish

