



ANTIBALAS

"They lead the pack..." Pitchforkmedia.com

True, some bands are simply meant to lead, and Brooklyn's Antibalas--as tough and diverse as the city that birthed them nearly a decade ago--has continued to do just that. The group, whose name means "bulletproof" in Spanish, has indeed proved they possess the mettle to not only survive but also thrive by employing a musical arsenal that has become known worldwide. Initially using the revolutionary blueprint of afrobeat as a launching pad, the dozen-strong members of Antibalas weave a rich tapestry of latin, jazz, classical, funk and soul into their horn-driven mix. Words fail in trying to describe the result: simultaneously polyrhythmic and political, independent and contagious, and the reason why many have credited the band for introducing afrobeat's framework to a new generation.

Always looking to push their unique sound further, however, Antibalas recently entered the studio to record their fourth album with much-heralded musician/producer John McEntire (Tortoise, Stereolab, Tom Ze). Holed up for a month in McEntire's Chicago lair, the band explored and unleashed sonic sides of them not previously tapped. The resulting gem is guaranteed to shock and dazzle new and old fans alike, and will be forthcoming from ANTI- Records (no, not just because they share half a name), known for distinguished releases over the years from such artists as Solomon Burke, Tom Waits, the Refugee All-Stars and Blackalicious. The new album and record deal illustrate Antibalas' penchant for taking chances, building upon a history of previous fiery album releases and recent, stunning collaborations with diverse heavyweights such as Medeski, Martin and Wood, TV on the Radio, Baaba Maal and Gomez.

As distinguished as their recordings may be though, Antibalas has truly become renowned via their relentless live show. And though it's certainly no easy task to keep (and feed) such a vast ensemble on the road, the band has managed to average over 100 concerts a year, incessantly traversing the U.S, Canada and Europe in venues large and small be they the sweaty clubs of Brooklyn or in front of hordes of festival goers in places like Bonnaroo, Bumbershoot, Montreux and Roskilde. 2004 also bore witness to the group's first-ever tour to Japan, as well as debuts at the Glastonbury and Coachella music festivals. It's not by chance the Village Voice exclaimed "their music is right on time," while the New York Times, the New Yorker, Rolling Stone Magazine and a slew of others have taken serious notice. Make no mistake, as XLR8R exclaims, Antibalas are indeed "the baddest on the block."