



World music CD

Etran Finatawa, Introducing Etran Finatawa

4 stars (World Music Network)

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This may be a decidedly uninspired album title, but the music makes up for it. Etran Finatawa are a fine band from the southern regions of the Sahara, though unlike most of the musicians from the desert who have found success in the west, they don't come from Mali but from Niger, the land-locked state further to the east. Several of the band's members come from that nomadic group, the Touareg, who also range across Mali, and there are echoes here of the Malian desert blues of that great band, Tinariwen. The best songs, such as Ildeman, mix sturdy electric guitar lines against drums and chanting vocals. Other tracks use a simple blues-like riff as the starting point for impressive acoustic guitar improvisation. They will be in Europe this summer and should be worth checking out.

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