



*asphalt tango records presents*

## **MAHALA RAI BANDA**

*wild gypsy brass from the romanian suburbs*

Having ripped up stages across the USA and Europe, Romanian roots rockers Mahala Rai Banda are to blast stages all over the world with their fierce Gypsy funk. The 11-piece brass band's blend of hard Balkan brass with minor key violin & accordion melodies has made them as a force to be reckoned with. Having taken shape on the mean streets of Bucharest, Mahala Rai Banda's sound is 21<sup>st</sup> C Gypsy music: rooted in tradition but with hints of dub and soul, Turkish and Arabic assimilated into their roaring dance mix. When Mahala Rai Banda hit the stage ancient Gypsy campfire tunes blend with the raucous din of Balkan Mafia clubs.



Mahala Rai Banda's unique Eastern groove evolved in the mahalas (Gypsy ghettos) on the outskirts of Bucharest, Romania's ruined capital city. In these mahalas musicians from the southern village of Clejani (home to legendary Gypsy orchestra Taraf De Haidouks) jammed with brass musicians from the Moldavian village of Zeci Prajine (home to Balkan brass blasters Fanfare Ciocarlia). Quickly, they became the hottest weddings and parties band in Bucharest. As Romanian Gypsies traveled into Western Europe the band's legend spread.

Initially, Mahala Rai Banda's fame existed on tapes passed around Balkan music scenes in Berlin and Brussels, Barcelona and Vienna. These tapes captured raucous jam sessions that lasted deep into the Transylvanian night and showcased a fierce Gypsy folk-funk taking shape. Their acclaimed 2005 debut album shot them from shantytown to the Borat soundtrack (with 'Mahalageasca'). International acclaim followed and MRB have since graced such international events as Summerstage NYC, Montreal Pop festival or Big Chill and Womad UK.

In 2009 Mahala Rai Banda released **Ghetto Blasters**. Here the spirit of Augustus Pablo drifted from Kingston to Bucharest and the toughest horns since The Bo-Keys proved Romanian funk has fangs. Mahala Rai Banda toured the world as house-band for **Gypsy Queens & Kings** then went out alone, blasting Balkan trance music night after night. Tear the roof off the sucka? Just watch 'em!

The critics agree that MRB are one hot unit:

'Fast and furious dance floor work-outs with a rock-solid up tempo groove, frenetic horn riffs and punchy Roma scat singing. \*\*\*\* **Songlines**

'Mahala Rai Banda play rough-edged, cheek-puffing Balkan brass, full of larger-than-life energy. Enjoy the party! \*\*\*\* **Evening Standard**

'...They kicked serious brass arse, making the crowd feel like they'd gate-crashed the Romanian wedding of the year...' \*\*\*\* **the arts desk**

artist website: [www.mahala-rai-banda.com](http://www.mahala-rai-banda.com)

facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/mahalaRbanda/>

label website: [www.asphalt-tango.de](http://www.asphalt-tango.de)

## **Discography**

**2013: "Balkan Reggae"** – Various Artists  
released by Asphalt Tango Records

**2009: "Ghetto Blasters"**  
produced and released by Asphalt Tango Records

**2005: "Mahala Rai Banda"**  
produced by Stephane Karo & Michel Winter and released on Crammed Discs

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**Helmut Neumann**  
**Ackerstr. 14/15, 10115 Berlin, Germany**  
**fon: +49 30 2858528 fax: +49 30 2858512**  
[agency@asphalt-tango.de](mailto:agency@asphalt-tango.de)