

TERAKAFT : a genuine desert rock band

Terakaft (meaning « caravan » in Tamasheq) is a genuine desert rock band, sculpted by the pure searing air and the endless rolling sands of the Sahara. The stark, harsh conditions of the Sahara have permeated their wild riffs, and as a result Terakaft are the perfect embodiment of all that is wild and free in desert blues today. They have taken the electric guitar and made it their own.

Terakaft was formed in 2001 by Sanou Ag Ahmed, then based in Kidal, Mali with Kedou Ag Ossad. Kedou was a member of the original line-up of Tinariwen (four of Kedou's compositions are embodied on their first international release « *The Radio Tisdas Sessions* »).

Liya Ag Ablil (aka Diara), Sanou's uncle, joined the band in 2006. Diara was also an original member of Tinariwen and was known for his fierce and passionate style of rock'n'roll guitar playing. He played with Tinariwen for almost 20 years, but stepped back just before Tinariwen started touring internationally. He's still a close friend of Ibrahim « Abaraybone » Ag Alhabib, and played on Tinariwen's last album « *Imidiwan : Companions* » (as did Sanou and Abdallah of Terakaft).

Terakaft recorded their first studio album « *Bismilla, The Bko Sessions* » in four days at the legendary *Bogolan Studios* in Bamako, Mali. Following its release, Terakaft went on their first European tour in Spring & Autumn of 2007 with its line-up of the time : Sanou, Kedou, Diara and Rhissa Ag Oghram on the bass.

Terakaft's second album, « *Akh Issudar* » was produced by Jean-Paul Romann (Tinariwen, Lo'Jo) and released in 2008. Rhissa, who had left the band prior to the recording, was replaced in 2008 by Jean- Louis Livenais (of *Akeikoi*). Terakaft also released an EP of live recordings in 2008, which is a record of Kedou's last gigs prior to his departure from the band.

Kedou left Terakaft in 2008 as he preferred to remain in the desert, and Diara stepped in as leader of the band. The band were then joined by Abdallah Ag Ahmed, Sanou's younger brother, making Terakaft a true family band. Abdallah became the bass player of the band. In 2009, Mahamad Moha (aka Tohandy) joined the band on percussion for one year. He was replaced in 2010 by Mathias Vagunez (also of *Akeikoi*). This line-up will be completed in 2011 with a Touareg percussionist.

Terakaft's roster of songs were mainly written by Diara and Inteyeden Ag Ablil, Diara's brother. Inteyeden was a Touareg legend and he and Ibrahim « Abaraybone » Ag Alhabib, were co-founders of Tinariwen. Inteyeden passed away in 1994, but his influence is still felt and heard today in the music of Tinariwen and Terakaft. The more modern sounding Terakaft tracks have been written by Diara, Sanou and Abdallah and have a more « pop » sound in the true sense that it is « popular » music, listened to and sung every day by Tamasheq youth.

Terakaft are a band that must be seen live. The perfect mix of two rhythm guitars (one keeping the beat effortlessly, the other soaring and sweet) and the deep tones of the bass, bringing to mind the delicate but strong steps of a camel making its way through the wastelands, will send you on a journey to the deepest heart of the desert, from which you'll never want to return. The heavy, pulsating heartbeat of

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the percussion holds everyone together and completes the sound of Terakaft.

Terakaft have just recorded a new CD called « *Aratan n Azawad* », produced by Cali in France. It will be released in March 2011 by World Village and distributed throughout the world by Harmonia Mundi.

Liya Ag Ablil (aka Diara) : guitars, vocals
Sanou Ag Ahmed : guitars, vocals
Abdallah Ag Ahmed : bass, guitar, vocals
Mathias Vaguenez: percussions

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Discography :

Bismilla, the Bko Sessions (2007), Tapsit

Akh Issudar (2009), Tapsit

Terakaft Live (2008), Re-aktion

Aratan n Azawad (2011), Tapsit / World Village – Harmonia Mundi

www.myspace.com/terakaft