

Ash Grunwald - Hot Mama Vibes (2010)

Written by bluesever

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- 01 Walking [00:04:07]
- 02 Tear The Roof Off [00:03:56]
- 03 Raw [00:03:24]
- 04 Hot Mama [00:03:07]
- 05 Lady Luck [00:03:17]
- 06 Love Me [00:04:10]
- 07 Change [00:03:29]
- 08 Somebody [00:04:57]
- 09 Born For Good Luck [00:03:03]
- 10 Get It Back [00:03:07]
- 11 Mind Playing Tricks [00:02:09]
- 12 Never Let You Go [00:03:36]
- 13 Parents (feat. Funkoars) [00:03:58]

Whether the sight of Ash Grunwald makes you swoon, or want to take the garden shears to his top-heavy dreadlocks (or both); his new album proves he has moved well beyond John Bulter's shadow. Taking his blues roots – with huge debts to the likes of RL Burnside – and adding large slabs of hip-hop inspired beats, and a lot of Tom Waits-like mega-phone vocals, has provided an interesting blueprint for Hot Mama Vibes. The lead track Walking was an obvious first single, with its Bo Diddley foot-stompin' riff and thumping rhythmic accompaniment. It is well backed up by Raw, a slower, bass heavy tune that runs around a sampled matra/chain-gang chant with great effectiveness – providing the sort of dynamic palette that shows Grunwald's playing to best effect. The policy of collaborating on the beats with the likes of Funloars, Chasm and Mr Trials makes the album track more and more like a hip-hop release, and at times Grunwald sounds uncomfortable trying to find his place in the groove, he is at his best when he leads from the front. The exception to this is the excellent Lady Luck, where Grunwald kicks back on the vocals, and plays just sparse leads on guitar, allowing the track to hang on a cooler than cool keyboard refrain from Fingers Malone. To shear or not to shear, that is the question. --- Chris

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