



## Hot Mama Vibes

**In Store June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010 independently through Delta Groove and Shock**

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Ash Grunwald's fifth studio album, *HOT MAMA VIBES*, is neck-deep in the technological swamp of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It's also the most primal concoction of elemental junkyard soul to stomp through your speakers this year.

"Mixing electronica with the blues was always a dream of mine," says Ash, now a 10-year veteran of live stages from Byron Bay Bluesfest to the Montreux Jazz Festival.

"On the first album I was really trying to strip it back to raw elements, just be as soulful as possible. I guess every album since then has been a gradual move towards this point."

In fact, the track *HOT MAMA* has been swirling round the Melbourne singer-songwriter's head since before he laid his career foundations with his award-winning stomp-box debut of '02, *INTRODUCING ASH GRUNWALD*.

"I remember singing that chorus into my tape recorder during my earliest bedroom recordings, 15 or 16 years ago. It's been making me laugh ever since," he says.

"It's not something I would have put out there in the past. I would have constrained myself; I wouldn't have felt comfortable. This is my fifth album so it was time to just launch in there, do whatever I felt like."

Recorded in two states, then fine-tuned by email and every other kind of digital voodoo going, *HOT MAMA VIBES* is a radical combination of this kind of damn-the-torpedoes bravado and painstaking collaborative tweaking with a close pool of maverick compadres.

*Tear the Roof Off* picks up where Ash's last, ARIA-nominated album, *FISH OUT OF WATER*, left off, with TZU funkmeister Countbounce chairing a raucous revival meeting in the grip of swamp fever.

Three more tracks — *Walking*, *Love Me*, *Mind Playing Tricks* — were laid down in the Adelaide Hills with Mr Trials from the Hilltop Hoods' Certified Wise circle. A fourth, *Parents*, finds Trials bringing his whole Funkoars crew for a closing hip-hop face-off.

The other eight full-band tracks were recorded over two days in Brisbane at the end of a tour, with results ranging from the mellow, minimal blues of *Never Let You Go* to the powerhouse work song, *Raw*:

"Raw is kind of my manifesto groove," says Ash: "slow, lurching, hip-hop crossed with blues. Most of the other songs really pushed in different directions for me."

Not least the profoundly soulful *Lady Luck*, which began with a beat supplied by Sydney hip-hop maestro Chasm, and fell into place at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour when Fingers Malone emailed an exquisite synth organ groove from London.

"I get a kick out of those kind of things," Ash says. "I love technology if it facilitates something that works. Musically I'm obviously very influenced by older music, but some of my most popular songs, like *Give Signs*, had beats created on GarageBand (software) and recorded through a laptop microphone."

That said, "I love using junk percussion because it has that crossover with old work songs and field hollers — basically chain gang music," he adds. Hence the earthy flavour of car doors struck with hammers, cymbals made from 44-gallon drums and a hard drive loaded with a whole metal scrap yard of loops and samples.

"The thing that makes Ash unique," says Trials, "is his love for brand new plug-ins and software geekery combined with old school hardcore purist production techniques. You tell me how many musos can play the entire Howlin' Wolf and Biggie Smalls catalogues seamlessly back to back?"

"The great thing about this record," the producer adds, "was stepping out of the genre box and still being able to convey that head-banging, face-scrunching, 4am-neighbours-complaining jam!"

Says Ash: "People who are deeply into blues often aren't that big into technology. This is something that held me back for a long time. But I was never into bluesy music because of its antique value or because I like to drive old cars. It's just the soulfulness of it: Pure function, in a way.

"With this album I think I've finally proven, to myself anyway, that it doesn't make any difference what techniques and instruments are used to make it — as long as it comes from the heart."

### Hot Mama Vibes Track Listing:

1. Walking
2. Tear The Roof Off
3. Raw
4. Hot Mama
5. Lady Luck
6. Love Me
7. Change
8. Somebody
9. Born For Good Luck
10. Get It Back
11. Mind Playing Tricks
12. Never Let You Go
13. Parents Feat Funkoars



Hot Mama Vibes was recorded at Alchemix Studio in Brisbane, DJ Debris Studio in the Adelaide Hills and The Container in Melbourne.

Featuring the talents of Ash Grunwald, Mr Trials, Countbounce, Chasm, Fingers Malone, Benny Owen and Kanchana Karunaratna.

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**[www.ashgrunwald.com](http://www.ashgrunwald.com)**