

**PRESS**  
**VIEUX**  
**FARKA**  
**TOURE**



Jay West / icecreamman.com

# VIEUX FARKA TOURÉ

Critical praise for Fondo and live performances



2009

## The New York Times

"Vieux Farka Touré is forging his own identity, expanding on [traditional] drones and gnarled picking patterns with a rocker's joyful audacity."

## Henry Rollins -

"I've been lucky enough to [see] Vieux play twice this year....In the six months between the two shows, he has gone from strength to strength and eclipsed the show I saw at the beginning of the year. I will see him anytime I can now, and am looking forward to checking him whenever possible. His new album, Fondo is so great, he has found his sound, his songwriting, singing and playing is just fantastic. Viueux is only going to get better and better."



### Best Unexpected Guitar Heroics: Vieux Farka Toure

I'd heard of the young Malian singer-guitarist Vieux Farka Toure before seeing him play at Friday's African music-heavy Other stage, but I had no idea of the things he could do with an electric guitar. Whether spitting ringing clusters of notes, spilling forth with long, snaking phrases, or banging out metallic open chords, Toure, rocking a pair of black leather pants, played with a master's sense of pacing and flow and a showman's knack for knowing exactly when his Arabic-influenced songs needed a guitar goosing in order to ascend to the next level of badassitude -- and beyond.

It was a second generation Malian that stole the show on Friday. Vieux Farka Toure played to a jam-packed Other Tent, treating the crowd to songs of his recently released sophomore effort, Fondo.



In particular, Vieux Farka Toure played top notch... bluesy, funky Afropop from West Africa.

# UNCUT

★★★★

"...there's a sense of adventure that thrillingly liberates Fondo from the heritage in which it was forged."

## VIEUX FARKA TOURÉ

Fondo

SIX DEGREES

★★★★

### Second offering from new Malian guitar hero

If Vieux's 2007 debut sat a little too respectfully in the shadow of his late father Ali Farka Touré, the follow-up is a record the old man never could've made. The hypnotic beat of the desert blues still informs his guitar-playing, but there's a sense of playfulness and adventure that thrillingly liberates *Fondo* from the heritage which forged him. His trippy lead playing on the opener "Fafa" owes more to early Clapton than Ali and the dubwise "Dairaby Magni" and Tinariwen-like atmospherics of "Slow Jam" further expand the traditional African contours.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

## The Daily Telegraph

★★★★

"Tearing off screeds of glittering, almost orientally flavored guitar, the 28-year-old...takes [the] desert blues sound in a more rocking, contemporary direction."

## WORLD

### Vieux Farka Touré

Fondo

Six Degrees, £10.76

Tearing off screeds of glittering, almost orientally flavoured guitar, the 28-year-old son of the late, great Ali Farka Touré, takes his father's desert blues sound in a more rocking, contemporary direction. Backing his dark, incantatory voice with everything from kora to jazz drumming, the feel of this second album is earthy, loose, but full of African teen spirit.

Download this: *Cherie Le*

Ⓒ RATING ★★★★★

Mark Hudson

## PopMatters

(8/10)

"Word to the wise: get on board the Vieux Farka Touré bandwagon now.... The best reason to acquaint yourself with Vieux Farka Touré is because he is a surpassingly brilliant young musician whom if we are fortunate, has a long and productive career ahead of him."

"Fondo is a solid album that firmly establishes Vieux Farka Touré's place in a long list of world class Malian musicians."



## Los Angeles Times

"There are few last names in Afro-pop with more credibility than "Touré"... and the young guitarist more than lives up to his lineage with his psych-leaning desert blues riffs. But he's also got an ear for the present, and has proven most amenable to remixes that take his sound from the wide expanses of his native Mali into nightclubs across the globe."



**Vieux Farka Touré: Fondo**  
Six Degrees ★★★★★

Perhaps it's inevitable that talented Malian guitarist/vocalist Vieux Farka Touré is always introduced as 'son of the late, great Ali' – his bluesman father earned legendary status, after all. But Farka Touré junior has never sounded cowed by that lofty precedent; his 2006 debut album and live gigs have revealed a subtly confident, self-possessed musician, and he extends that potential on Fondo. These original songs (and one take on a West African traditional, Walé) incorporate rockier elements with modern pan-African grooves, from the tenderly funky Ai Haira to the dubby Diaraby Magni and the luxurious Slow Jam. There's plenty of convivial spirit too, with guests including kora ace Toumani Diabaté, who contributes to the distinctly elegant Paradise. But more than ever, Vieux Farka Touré emerges as an international artist forging his own way in the world. *AH*



★★★★

“More than ever, Vieux Farka Touré emerges as an international artist forging his own way in the world”

[guardian.co.uk](http://guardian.co.uk)

★★★★

**Music-News.com**

“Vieux Farka Toure – in short he is a brilliant player. Every track on this album has some hook or another to grab the listeners attention, widen the eyes and make the jaw drop.”

**The Observer**

“A dazzling piece of work”

**Vieux Farka Touré**

Fondo (Six Degrees) £10.76



On his 2007 debut, Farka Touré paid homage to his late father Ali, Mali's legendary guitar maestro, while suggesting his own ambitions went beyond west Africa's desert blues. This follow-up finds the 27-year-old eager to press his credentials as a moderniser. The opening, “Fafa”, has him blazing out fast, intricate lines worthy of any western axe hero, and he goes on to experiment with dubwise reggae on “Diaraby Magni”. At times the hypnotic grooves acquire a psychedelic tinge; elsewhere they affirm his connection to tradition. A dazzling piece of work. **NEIL SPENCER**

**Vieux Farka Touré**

Fondo

★★★★★

(Six Degrees) £13.70



When Vieux Farka Touré released his debut album two years ago, it seemed an outrage. Here was the son of the finest guitarist in Africa daring to move into the same territory within a few months of Ali Farka Touré's death. Young Vieux (as he must get fed up with being called) startled his critics because his album was so good. His live performances have shown an increased confidence, after a wobbly London debut, and here's a new set to show that he has become another great exponent of the African blues. He has developed his own style by adding more western influences into the mix, with his electric guitar work matched against bass and drums. However, his songs still have a Malian edge, thanks to the use of n'goni and djembe, along with additional vocals from Afel Bocoum, who worked with his father. Many songs follow the same pattern: a bass riff paired with chanting vocals and rapid-fire guitar, as on Chérie Lé. He adds a dash of reggae and dub on the jaunty Diaraby Magni, and echoes his father's work with Toumani Diabaté, as the kora star joins him for the exquisite Paradise. Ali Farka Touré never wanted his son to be a musician, but he would have been proud to hear this. **RD**

## Vieux Farka Touré

★★★★

Fondo SIX DEGREES

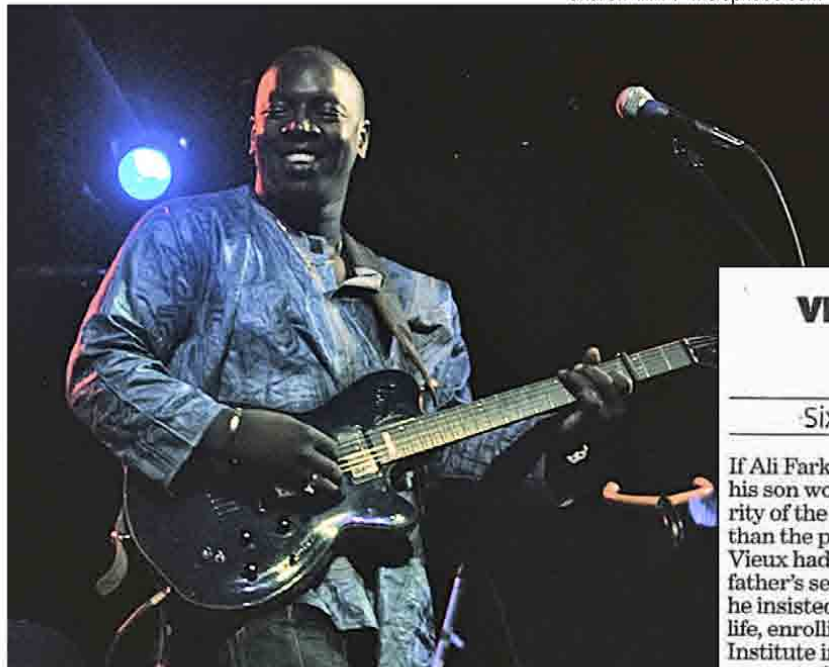
**Son of Malian guitarist legend Ali emerges from his father's shadow.**

Sometimes we should be glad children never listen to their fathers. If the late, great Malian guitarist Ali Farka Touré had had his way, son Vieux would probably have become a dentist. However, after finding a mentor in Malian kora whiz Toumani Diabaté, Vieux managed to convince his father that he had something unique to offer to the family trade. Far less traditional than his father, Vieux blends Senegalese mbalax rhythms, dub production, Western Saharan guitar riffs, Moroccan gnawa mysticism, Delta blues chords and sweet, call-and-response vocals. Enlisting the help of Toumani Diabaté and Afel Bocoum (who adds harmonies on the sun-dappled track Mali) he has created an album of fresh, hypnotic grooves that somehow manage to be both joyous and haunting, hooked up to deep tradition but an essential soundtrack to modern, urban Africa.

Andrew Male

“Vieux blends Senegales mbalax rhythms, dub production, Western Saharan guitar riffs, Moroccan gnawa mysticism, Delta blues chords and sweet, call-and-response vocals...he has created an album of fresh hypnotic grooves that somehow manage to be both joyous and haunting, hooked up to deep tradition but an essential soundtrack to modern, urban Africa.”

andrew illiff / melophobe.com



## VIEUX FARKA TOURÉ

Fondo

Six Degrees ★★★★★

If Ali Farka Touré had had his way, his son would have enjoyed the security of the Malian military rather than the performing arts. But young Vieux had been exposed to his father's seminal guitar-playing that he insisted on pursuing the musical life, enrolling at the National Arts Institute in Bamako, where at Ali's request, the legendary kora maestro Toumani Diabate became the boy's mentor. And as this second album demonstrates, the apple didn't fall too far from the tree: Vieux's fingering and general guitar style on tracks such as "Fafa" and the traditional "Walé" strongly reflects his father's influence, with its abrupt, stinging phrases and trailing lines - but the resonant, reverb-drenched tone tingles like water sparkling in a fountain, compared to the dry, dusty lines traced by Ali Farka Touré's guitar. Co-produced by Yossi Fine, Fondo demonstrates the range of modes available in Vieux's Koroboro Rock ("Black African Rock") style, from the skirling, almost psychedelic tone allied to the urgent patter of percussion on "Al Halwa", to the dubby blues of "Diaraby Magni". The dominant modes here are deep, soulful desert blues such as "Souba Souba" and the instrumental "Slow Jam", and the cyclical, hypnotic style of "Sarama" and "Mali".

**DOWNLOAD THIS:** 'Fafa', 'Diaraby Magni', 'Mali', 'Souba Souba', 'Paradise'

## THE INDEPENDENT

★★★★

“[Vieux's] live performances have shown an increased confidence...and here's a new set to show that he has become another great exponent of the African blues. He has developed his own style by adding more western influences into the mix, with his electric guitar work matched against bass and drums.”



**VIEUX FARKA TOURÉ**  
fondo

**WORLD**  
**Vieux Farka Touré**  
Fondo  
●●●●●


Two years ago, Farka Touré's debut acted more as tribute to his late father, Ali, than introduction to the son. His second, however, announces the arrival of a feisty new African guitar hero, proud to display his versatility, adding an impressive modern groove to the Saharan blues. Consistently excellent, this will be a contender come the end-of-year roundups.  
**David Hutcheon**  
(Six Degrees, TS £10.76)

Download these tracks  
Diaraby Magni, Chérie Lé

## TIMES ONLINE

★★★★

"His second [album]...announces the arrival of a feisty new African guitar hero, proud to display his versatility, adding an impressive modern groove to the Saharan blues. Consistently excellent."



**Vieux Farka Touré**  
**Fondo**  
Six Degrees  
★★★★☆

Vieux Farka Touré's father wanted him to be a farmer. But as he was Ali Farka Touré, the great African bluesman, perhaps that was never going to happen. The music stretches from the traditional Timbuktu melody "Walé" to the cavernous reggae of "Diaraby Magni". Afel Bocoum and Toumani Diabaté, friends to both generations, turn up in supporting roles (Diabaté's fluid kora on "Paradise" is a highlight); "Chérie Lé" is an urgent turbocharge of Vieux's father's unhurried manner.

## FINANCIAL TIMES

★★★★

**sonic** Boomers

"Fondo is a tour de force of West African sounds married to modern elements, giving every song a distinctive edge. Farka Toure's guitar is amazing. He goes deep into ancestral grooves, pulling out styles that are as ancient as the Earth itself, but also sets himself free in how he approaches his music.... Hooray for everyone involved, because they've not only created one of the best albums of the year, they have shown how the past and the present can be put together to hurtle us into the future."



- the Netherlands

"Vieux is a typical representative of the young African generation of musicians, who interpret the notion of worldmusic as music that testifies to his own world-citizenship. Vieux is full of laughter and very muscular, and shows live, almost carelessly, that he also is one of the most vehement (or passionate) heirs of Jimi Hendrix....Africa has a mighty trump in Vieux Farka Touré. Fondo is record that you can't play often and loud enough. Great spiritual and hypnotising music."



John Kertzer

**EL**  **MUNDO**

"[Vieux's] second album, while the old feeling remains in the familiar playing of his guitar, affirms his own style, more effervescent, in the search for new paths. Pieces like "Fafa" or Aï Haïra have a delicious vitality, and the guitar duel from "Paradise" is extremely beautiful."

Jennifer Leahy



**la Repubblica** - Italy

"...the magnificent Fondo in which Vieux melts with rare creativity his modern vision and the sounds that have been familiar for generations : those mid-tempo hypnotic rolls that are the deepest mark of Malian music. They appear in the detailed filigree of his Hendrix riffs, hallucinatory dub interactions, layered blues lines a la Clapton and other bases of rock that comes from black origins...the recipe is simple : Vieux was born, and will always remain, an African solidly anchored in his personal and social history, yet is healthily vaccinated against every impulse to imitate."

## The New York Times

“The second album by the Malian singer and guitarist Vieux Farka Touré distinguishes itself right away... “Fondo,” is wiser and more cutting (than his debut): it has more personality and exponentially stronger guitar playing.”



“At a time when American and British rock musicians are finally turning to West African music and forging new varieties of African blues, here's one young Malian with the perspective and the chops to take on all comers at this game...he has all the makings of a 21st-century African rock god.”

## denverpost.com

“Vieux Farka Touré led a rhythmic African renaissance Saturday at Cervantes Masterpiece Ballroom. Touring in support of his latest release, “Fondo,” Touré is on a worldwide jaunt and his newly-forged work is heralding bold acclaim and, in more cosmopolitan locales, drawing sell-out crowds.”

“[The] best fucking rock n roll band in the world” - Don Was



## allmusic

“With Fondo, Touré has created a mature, exciting, and jubilant album, and shows himself already a master.”