

Balkan Beat Box

Nu Med

With their roots firmly planted all around the Mediterranean rim and their solid rock+reggae foundations, this New York-based band are the new sensation.

Their name, their personal history and the enthusiastic media & audience reactions suggest a link with the so-called *Gypsy Rock* movement, but their scope is reaching way beyond that: Balkan Beat Box really transcend categories (pop, electronic dance music, world, rock) by creating a new breed of 21st century music, deeply connected to their folk upbringing yet forward-thinking, which appeals to audiences across the geographical and stylistic borders.

This very strong new album weaves elements of ragga and hip hop with Balkanoid horns, Arab & Bulgarian guest singers, Greek guitars and more... Hence **Nu Med** (for "New Mediterranean"), a title which can be understood both as a musical and a cultural/political statement.

Balkan Beat Box are an awesome live band, their energetic live shows have become legendary. They've been making crowds go wild at major festivals such as Bonaroo, Roskilde, Paléo etc, and will be touring again around the world throughout the year.

Balkan Beat Box is centered around its two founders: saxophone player **Ori Kaplan** and drummer/programmer/producer **Tamir Muskat** (*). After having been active for over a decade in some of NYC's premier underground bands (including Gogol Bordello, Firewater, Big Lazy, Shotnez), they joined forces with charismatic MC **Tomer Yosef** and brought together their combined experiences and ideas to create the powerhouse called Balkan Beat Box.

Mostly recorded in Tamir's Vibromonk Studios in Brooklyn, but also in various locations around the globe, and fuelled by ideas gathered during a year of intense touring, Nu Med features the band's hyperactive vocalist/MC Tomer Yosef, as well as **a host of distinguished guests**: Syrian singer Dunia, Moroccan singer Gilber Gilmore, Macedonian clarinet master Ismail Lumanovski, Bulgarian vocalist Dessislava Stefanova (who leads the London Bulgarian Choir) and Mikey Nikolic, Lance Muncan & Vinny Sau, three outstanding young Serbian Gypsy musicians born and based in Queens, NYC. Balkan Beat Box mainstays such as Uri Kinrot (guitar), Itamar Ziegler (bass) and several others are also greatly contributing to most of the album tracks.

Nu Med is one of these rare albums which manage to be powerful, festive and musically sophisticated at the same time. Its buoyant mix is a living example of how the Mediterranean rim can become a hotbed for creative collaborations and exchanges between people and cultures.

Balkan Beat Box are nominated for a BBC Planet Award 2007 (in the Club Global category).

"Nu Med" will be released on Crammed worldwide (except in North American where the album will come out through JDub Records)

() Both Tamir Muskat and Ori Kaplan are born to parents who emigrated from Eastern Europe, and grew up in Israel, where they were exposed to a wide variety of music. They moved to New York in the early '90s, where Ori studied with Bulgarian sax player Yuri Yunakov and played & recorded with a host of bands in NYC's downtown scene, while Tamir joined Firewater as a drummer and producer, and founded the Big Lazy trio. Ori and Tamir joined forces with Eugene Hutz to create the JUF project, and were later involved with Eugene's band Gogol Bordello (Ori as a band member and Tamir as a producer). Tamir founded Vibromonk Studios in Brooklyn, where a lot of the above-mentioned music was produced. The first Balkan Beat Box album came out on 2005 on Essay Records. Tamir and Ori also have a side-project called Shot'nez.*

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