

# fROOTS

## JAUNE TOUJOURS

**Europeana** Choux De Bruxelles LC15565



You may well be familiar with 'Americana', a US musical style which mainly seems to involve twanging guitars and whiney vocals. But how about 'Europeana'? Probably not a term you've come across before. Although it's as good a description as any

for the brassy, multilingual, mixed-up noise that Jaune Toujours have been making for the past two decades or so.

*Europeana* is their seventh album proper (not counting various spin-off projects and a remix set) and in many ways it's business as usual for the Brussels-based six-piece: socially conscious lyrics sung in a variety of languages and a range of genres and influences stirred together in unexpected but satisfactory combinations.

This is European music alive to the full range of cultures from without and within that define what 'European' means (in spite of what the bigots may say). There are influences from the Middle East, West Africa and the Balkans, alongside ska, jazz, funk, folk and punk. Of course it's political, responsive to the mess we face now (in Europe and across the world). But like all the best political music, it's also danceable, poetic and brimming with wit. In the past, comparisons have been drawn with Manu Chao and The Clash (there is something Strummer-esque about lead singer Piet Maris's declamatory drawl) but JT are definitely their own men, with a sound heavy on the three-piece brass section and Maris's pumping accordion.

Thanks to strong material and sympathetic stripped-down production, this is their most consistent and satisfying release yet. It's also a reminder of the joys of the physical artefact, with the CD set into an LP-sized hard-backed book full of photos and transcriptions of the lyrics. I'm sure it's available to download as well. But, really, why would you want to?

[jaunetoujours.com](http://jaunetoujours.com)

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Photo: Rogier Van Vooren

