

# TARTIT



**“The African Record of the Year.”**  
Robert Christgau, *Rolling Stone*

## THE BAND

Nothing is more evocative of the fascinating expanses of the Sahara desert than the music of Tartit, a Tuareg band consisting of five women and four men residing in the Timbuktu region. Tartit play hypnotic, trance-inducing music: the women sit down, sing, and play cyclic rhythms on their *tinde* drums, while the men sing and play string instruments, acoustic and electric. The *tinde*, played exclusively by women, is made from a small wooden mortar that the women use to grind grains, and which is covered with a goatskin. The men are veiled, the women aren't. Tuareg society is one of the few throughout Africa in which women are allowed to choose (and divorce) their husbands.

The word Tartit means *union*; it symbolizes the link that exists among these musicians. The band was formed in a refugee camp, during the Tuareg uprising in the early '90s. These men and women of the desert, in their colourful attire, express themselves primarily through their music. They cultivate their Tuareg traditions wherever they go, whether they are in exile, refugee camps or on tour. For the Tuareg, music is neither a profession, nor a sign of some exceptional trait. It is, quite simply, the identity of a nomad people that seeks to live freedom, without borders with the meaning of the bands name.

Tartit have toured Europe several times, most recently as part of the Desert Blues shows. Their second album *Abacabok* was recorded in Bamako and in the northern Mali desert by (*Congotronics* producer) Vincent Kenis, on his mobile studio.

## PRESS

“The African record of the year: A male-led, woman-dominated group of Saharan Tuaregs, Tartit were conceived by Belgian record men and sound more Arab than African, though they really just sound Tuareg. This new album hops up the drones and chants of 2000’s *Ichichili* with faster tempos and the occasional western rhythm instrument. Eerie proof if you need it that Islam and its music comes in many forms.”  
–Robert Christgau *Rolling Stone*

“An entirely mesmerizing set by a Tuareg group whose membership slightly favours women. (It’s noted that the men of Tartit, playing stringed instruments, are veiled, whereas the women are not.) The loping grooves and spidery guitar figures are reduced here to the barest, most powerful essence, as though this nine member group was a sub-Saharan version of ESG” –*WIRE*

“Congotronics producer Vincent Kenis hit the Sahara earlier this year to capture a different kind of trance music performed by this desert blues nontet. The group, like fellow Tuareg rockers Tinariwen, formed in a refugee camp, but their music is more cyclical than that of their more well-known counterparts. The band's five women play percussion while the four men play electric and acoustic guitars. Everybody sings. "Ansari" is a captivating piece of music that trades verses lead by a solo male voice for huge choral moments, and the rhythmic dynamics are excellent, balancing stop-time passages with jumping beats driven by handclaps. There are two jaw-dropping guitar solos, and neither break the song's hypnotic rhythmic momentum. It's amazing how rooted to geography music can sound, and this music somehow is the Sahara, with towering dunes roiled by wind, and the arid, empty expansiveness unique to that part of the world.” –*Pitchforkmedia.com*

## TARTIT IS

**Fadimata Walett Oumar:** vocals, tinde drum  
**Walett Oumar Zeinabou:** vocals, tinde drum  
**Mama Walett Amoumine:** vocals, tinde drum  
**Fadimata W. Mohamedun** (Fatma): vocals, tinde drum  
**Tafa Al Hosseini:** vocals, imzad  
**Amanou :** 3-string teharent lute, vocals  
**Ag Mohamed Idwal:** 4-string teharent lute  
**Mossa ag Mohamed:** vocals  
**Mohamed Issa ag Oumar:** lead electric guitar, vocals

## CONTACT

Tartit: [www.myspace.com/tartit](http://www.myspace.com/tartit)

[www.crammed.be/craworld/crw34/index.htm](http://www.crammed.be/craworld/crw34/index.htm)

North American Booking  
Chris Colbourn, Concerted Efforts.  
(617) 969.0810. [chris@concertedefforts.com](mailto:chris@concertedefforts.com)  
[www.concertedefforts.com](http://www.concertedefforts.com).

