



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 2020

AFRICAN ROCK BAND SONGHOY BLUES RELEASE NEW TRACK “BARRE”
A CALL TO ACTION FOR SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHANGE
[WATCH VIDEO](#)

ANTICIPATED NEW ALBUM *OPTIMISME* SET FOR OCTOBER 23RD RELEASE
ON FAT POSSUM RECORDS

Nashville, TN – Acclaimed Malian rock band Songhoy Blues have released their new track “Barre” today. The group has emerged as a vital band coming out of the surging African music scene who make music for both the moment and the people. Translated from their native Songhai, “Barre” means change. The song was written to inspire the youth of their Mali homeland to get involved and help change their corrupt and oppressive political system. In light of the very recent military coup d’etat in Mali, it could not come at a more prescient and poignant time. “Barre” serves as a figurative and spiritual call to arms for the younger generation to take control of their destiny and invest in their futures. View the video performance of “Barre” [HERE](#), and read the English lyrics below.

As lead singer Aliou Toure states, “It’s like how yesterday gave today a chance, today needs to give tomorrow a chance.” *Youth! Let’s rise for this change! / Just as Yesterday knew how to welcome Today / Just as Spring knew how to welcome Summer / And Summer knew how to welcome Winter / Old age must welcome Youth.* “This verse describes how we are condemned to respect and accept the cyclical nature of all things,” Aliou adds. “We want the older generation to give space to the new generation. Especially in Mali right now, and to be honest, in Africa in general.”

The new track appears on the group’s highly anticipated third album *Optimisme* (French for optimism), which comes out of October 23rd via Fat Possum Records. “Barre” gives voice to the current situation in Mali and the people fighting for change. Like many of songs on *Optimisme*, the messages are universal, accessible and relevant. That is no coincidence. The members of Songhoy Blues are strong, smart and well-informed citizens who are aware of injustices, inequities and threats affecting people’s lives both inside and outside of their country’s borders, be they political, social or environmental. By marrying their music to their activism, they are able to impact the world around them in tangible and positive ways.

Their recently released track “Badala” was written from the perspective of a woman freed from male domination and oppression. The first single, “Worry” is an inspiring song of optimism, hope, strength and vigilance. “Worry” was also the first original song Songhoy Blues recorded in English.

Optimisme was produced by Matt Sweeney (Stephen Malkmus, Run the Jewels, Chavez, Bonnie Prince Billy). The album builds upon Songhoy Blues’ distinctive blend of Western rock and punk influences with desert blues and traditional Malian cross rhythms. Their music, as well as their message, are exhilarating, inspiring and vital.

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**Songhoy Blues – “Barre” (Change) Lyrics
(Translated from Songhai)**

Chorus: We are tired, exhausted, we have struggled
We are tired, exhausted, we have struggled

Now, change is essential for development
Now, change is essential for development

Chorus: We are tired, exhausted, we have struggled
We are tired, exhausted, we have struggled

Now, change is essential for development
Now, change is essential for development

Chorus: We are tired, exhausted, we have struggled

Youth! Let's rise for this change!
Just as Yesterday knew how to welcome Today,
Just as Spring knew how to welcome Summer,
And Summer knew how to welcome Winter,
Old age must welcome Youth.

Chorus: We are tired, exhausted, we have struggled
We are tired, exhausted, we have struggled

Now, change is essential for development
Now, change is essential for development

For years, things keep repeating themselves
For months, the same things keep repeating themselves
Corruption and injustice have become the law
Some eat anything they like
While others starve to death
Some have full bank accounts
While others don't even have bread

Chorus: We are tired, exhausted, we have struggled
We are tired, exhausted, we have struggled

Now, change is essential for development
Now, change is essential for development