

Rebel Music padkos playlist December 2019

intro

While people got creative at a recent padkos palaver, collectively working on their responses to John Holloway's "in, against, beyond" thesis, we had some tunes playing in the background. The tunes were selected quite subjectively, but broadly for their rebelliousness, and they reflect the anger and joy, the pain and ecstasy, of human rebellion and dignity. People enjoyed the playlist a lot, so we're sharing it with you as well via our website. The very rough notes that follow below should give you some orientation around the music, and will hopefully add to your experience of the songs. Enjoy – and go out and support these artists, support rebel music wherever you are!

random notes in a sort of alphabetical order...

3MA: Anfaz: from the album Anarouz. The band is "Malian kora magician Ballaké Sissoko, the Moroccan maestro of the oud Driss El Maloumi and the Malagasy prince of valiha Rajery. ... The sounds of kora, oud and valiha do not try to stand out over each other, but instead develop a common language. While we never lose sight of the rich traditions which Ballaké Sissoko, Driss El Maloumi and Rajery embody, we hear above all a shared message from 3MA, a message that rallies against the violence of our world, with their soft and invigorating harmonies, vital energy and universal poetry." <https://www.sixdegreesrecords.com/3ma-anarouz/>

Alice Phoebe Lou: Skin crawl: South African and partly Berlin-based global citizen really. Why I wrote 'Skin Crawl': I was in the heart of Manhattan after taking myself on a solo date to watch Angel Olsen & I was feeling elated. I ended up at a bar, drinking a few drinks with strangers. I felt dizzy and left to call a cab. The last thing I remember, I was standing on a corner, unable to comprehend how my phone worked, feeling as though my world was upside down, panicking. A few hours are then lost and I never got them back. Then I'm suddenly in Brooklyn and it's 4am, I'm barely able to walk, with a man I've never seen & he's taking me somewhere. I remember thinking that he must be taking me to safety, cause I was falling over & clearly needed to be in a safe place. Something kicked in & I realised I was in danger. I dropped my jacket & ran as fast as I could. Running & falling & crying & pissing my pants. I've never been that afraid. Kind strangers brought me to safety. The next day I was a wreck. Trying to rack my brain & understand how someone slipped something into my drink. But I was lucky. Many people aren't. It took me days to feel ok again. Physically & in my mind. But I realised how important it was for me to not let that moment define me & change something that was so important to me; the independence of going out alone. So I did it again. Only a few days later. Trying to release the fear & not let it control me. I went to a Fela Kuti night and danced my feet off. But I remember being so acutely aware of the men around me on the dance floor; how often I was touched in places I didn't want to be, how many times I was grabbed, told to smile, rubbed up against, you name it. I felt like I had to fend men off like it was some sort of sick game & the circumstances made it so difficult for me to just enjoy myself. I got home full of fire, ready to turn it all on its head, write a song from my perspective about what pisses me off, to get it off my chest, & then set fire to it in my mind so it has no hold on me. It's about the little things; the words, the comments, the feeling that ripples through your skin every time you're told you're a bitch because you don't want to give him your number. Because for me, it's the little things that are the starting point of a broader culture of non consent & sexual aggression. Feminism and my personal experience as a woman are themes that I am writing more about, because they are relevant to me & my human experience. I went through a lot as a teenager & young woman, experiencing a range of extremely negative & traumatic incidences at the hands of men.

This is not to say that I paint men with a single brush. I am lucky to have an incredible community of supportive, sensitive & wonderful men around me, in my band & social life and I am so grateful for them. These are the same men that appear in my music video for 'Skin Crawl', close friends who were happy to play a role in a video where I could use them as my objects & my furniture in order to turn things on their head & have a humorous way of telling this story visually. The video was a joy to make; a DIY, low budget, full of love day, with a lot of laughs & so much effort. The song's intention is to ask that we all work towards a world / community / club environment where we strive to make each other feel comfortable & safe at all times. Cause that's the dream really. Cosy & safe & equal.”

Ali Farka Touré: Yenma: a 1993 outing from the late great Malian singer and multi-instrumentalist.

Aziza-brahim: Hada jil: Born in the Saharawi refugee camps in the harsh Algerian desert, Aziza-brahim is a key voice of Saharawi struggle. “I know my musical traditions and I respect them, but I’m not interested in keeping their purity,” she confesses. “I choose to mix some of their elements with other sounds and see where that takes me. ... “For us, to say that you are who you are already means that you are an activist. ... I can’t separate my political side from my cultural one.” (<https://www.songlines.co.uk/explore/features/aziza-brahim-voice-of-the-resistance>).

Billy Bragg: The World Turned Upside Down: Bragg is a long time leftie singer-songwriter from the United Kingdom. He performed this in support of the historic 1985 British Miners’ Strike. It’s a song originally by Leon Rosselson about the radical 17th century Diggers movement upending ownership and inequality (Mojo 2018 Revolution Blues)

Black Belt Eagle Scout (Katherine Paul): At The Party: Paul grew up on the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community reservation in Washington state, US, and her work intentionally works through her feelings as a queer, indigenous artist. Her music is influenced by post-rock, alt-rock, and Native American traditional music. <http://blackbelteaglescout.com/>

Emel Mathlouthi: Ma Lkit: The Tunisian singer-songwriter was well known for her protest songs during the Arab Spring of 2010, which ousted the long-serving president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. *Ensen* (Person) is Mathlouthi’s second album; it explores a more experimental route, thanks to one-time Björk producer Valgeir Sigurðsson as well as her main collaborator, Amine Metani.

Ezra Collective: Juan Pablo: from the 2018 outing (an EP called: Juan Pablo: The Philosopher) from London-based 5-piece, Ezra Collective made up of Femi Koleoso – Drums; TJ Koleoso – Bass; Joe Armon Jones – Keys; Dylan Jones – Trumpet; James Mollison - Saxophone. Critics reckon they “marry the delicate technicalities of jazz musicianship with afrobeat and hip hop, tied together by a sound that’s unmistakably London”.

Fatoumata Diawara: 1. Clandestin; and 2. Wilile (with Toumani Diabate): as noted for CLP 2013 music collection, born in Côte d'Ivoire, Fatoumata Diawara is a Malian currently living in France she writes songs that blend Wassalou traditions of Southern Mali with international influences. During 2012 she collaborated with a campaign called "30 Songs / 30 Days" to support the activism of *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*.

Hackney Colliery Band with Angelique Kidjo: Mm Mm:

Jenny Hval: That Battle Is over: (Norway) ‘can you be a feminist and...?’ is the self-defeating question of our age, mistaking individual consumer choices for freedom. The song mocks the delusion that freedom to “consume what I want now” is proof of gender parity. She “finds freedom in the lack of answers and assurances” [*Uncut (2017 02) Protest Now*]

Jojo Abot: Divine Feminine: “JOJO ABOT is a Ghanaian artist expressing herself through music, film/photography, literature and performance art. ... Through her work, Abot Investigates new forms of spirituality and expression as part of growing global conversations and curiosities around what it means to live a truly fulfilling intention lead life that exists beyond existing socio-political confines of religion, color, race, class and sexual orientation.” <https://www.jojoabot.com>

Kate Tempest: People’s Faces: astounding piece from an astounding artist frankly. Note she gets a mention in John Holloway’s talk, “Opening Speech, in Holloway 2019. *We are the crisis of capital: A John Holloway reader*.” (Note - lyrics are included at the end of this note.)

Kefaya: 1. Charsi (with Alaha Sorhoor) and 2. Indignado: كفاية Kefaya - “an eclectic group of immigrants, travellers and international artists” - are an award-winning musical collective led by London-based musicians and producers Al MacSween and Giuliano Modarelli. Their name from the Arabic word meaning “enough”, a rallying-cry that came to prominence during the ‘Arab Spring’ uprisings.

Their debut album ‘Radio International’ was recorded during travels and collaborations with musicians across India, Palestine, Spain, Italy & the UK. Themes of internationalism, freedom of movement, immigration and political struggle are reinforced by the concept of the album as an international radio station

Kel Assouf: Fransa: As Charles Leonard notes (for New Frame) “Kel Assouf’s music isn’t constrained by borders. It’s a mix of genres that draws on issues of migration, injustice, colonialism, displacement and homesickness”. His work is firmly located in the struggles of the Tuareg who have “waged a number of political struggles against domination, starting with the first rebellion against French colonialism in 1916 and continuing post-independence with numerous battles against Niger and Mali, with these countries posing the main threats to the Tuaregs’ traditional, nomadic way of life”.

Los de Abajo: Resistencia (2005): these ‘Mexican ska punks’ drew their band name from Mariano Azuela's novel which means "Those from below" and they are strong supporters of many progressive struggles – especially the Zapatistas. This track features sound from a speech by the Zapatistas’ Comandante Esther.

Songhoy Blues: Mali Nord (feat. Elf Kid): From the 2017 album Resistance. Songhoy Blues is a desert blues music group from Timbuktu, Mali. The band was formed in Bamako after they were forced to leave their homes during the civil conflict and the imposition of Sharia law. (Wikipedia).

Manu Chao: Clandestino: The 1998 album of the same name contained many soundbites throughout, two of which are bits of a speech by Subcomandante Marcos that, like Chao's subsequent albums, was mostly recorded by the musician himself in various locations around the world. Nigel Williamson, *Uncut* magazine, suggests that in the album, *Clandestino*, “Chao created a subversive, multi-lingual global party manifesto that gave voice to the dispossessed and soundtracked a brief but tangible moment of premillennial hope in which it seemed the world was progressively becoming a more tolerant place as we hurtled towards the year 2000.

Sadly, times have instead grown darker. Yet if Clandestino captured a moment in time, Chao's irresistible rhythms and message of resistance continue to sound fresh and vibrant a generation on" (<https://www.uncut.co.uk/reviews/manu-chao-clandestino-bloody-border-112236/>).

Marcus Wyatt & the ZAR Jazz Orchestra: Mali: From the the second double album - "Into Dust" - released by South African trumpet player/composer Marcus Wyatt's Johannesburg based ZAR Jazz Orchestra. The orchestra are: Saxes: Justin Bellairs, Mthunzi Mvubu, Sisonke Xonti, Linda Sikhakhane, Janus vd Merwe; Trumpets: Adam Howard, Marcus Wyatt, Sydney Mavundla, Neil Engel. Trombones: Bez Roberts, Justin Sasman, Alex Hitzeroth, Siya Charles. Bokani Dyer (piano); Aldert du Toit (guitars); Romy Brauteseth (upright bass); Marlon Witbooi (drums); Mihi Matshingana (vox). Special Guests: Feya Faku (trumpet); Zoë Modiga (vox).

Refugees for Refugees - Ama cho Kang na yo: Dolma Renqingi voice, Tristan Driessens - ud/bandleader, Simon Leleux - percussion, Tareq al Sayed - ud, Asad Qizilbash - sarod Refugees for Refugees brings together renowned musicians from Syria, Tibet, Pakistan, Iraq, Afghanistan and Belgium who are united by their desire to weave links between their music. The group has developed an original repertoire at the crossroads between their different traditions. - [vpro vrije geluiden](#)

Rhiannon Giddens: Freedom Highway: cover of the Staples Sisters original and title of her solo 2017 album. she's best known for lead role in the US band, Carolina Chocolate Drops. Giddens contributed the standout a-Capella track "We Rise" to the LP *We Are Not For Sale: Songs of Protest* by the NC Music Love Army – a collective of activist musicians. (Wikipedia & Uncut 2017)

Smockey: Le President, Ma Moto et Moi: This militant but hilarious rap became the soundtrack to the popular uprising that in 2014 overthrew Blaise Compaore, the dictator of Burkina Faso. It imagines the president riding a motorbike through the slums over which he rules so uncaringly. A power cut results in failed traffic lights and an accident that means the president must get to a hospital – named after him – where the facilities are too poor to treat him. When the song was released, the Pres' men bombed the studio – but the dictatorship fell! (Uncut 2017)

Susamam: Şanşer ft. Fuat, Ados, Hayki, Server Uraz, Beta, Tahribad-ı İsyân, Sokrat St, Ozbi, Deniz Tekin, Sehabé, Yeis Sensura, Aspova, Defkhan, Aga B, Mirac, Mert Şenel, Kamufle "Turkish rap epic Susamam, which translates as 'I Can't Stay Silent': a 14-verse manifesto for a generation fed up with complicity, and the largest collaboration in the history of Turkish rap. For a quarter of an hour, 19 artists challenge a litany of social issues, ranging from domestic violence to animal rights and police brutality. It got 20m hits on YouTube in the first week alone." <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2019/nov/06/words-are-our-weapon-blistering-power-turkish-protest-rap-susamam>

Tamikrest: Imanin bas Zihoun: Tamikrest means "crossing" in the language of the Kel Tamashek, a traditionally nomadic Saharan people that are commonly referred to as the Tuaregs. Originally hailing from Kidal, in the northeast of Mali, as the result of ongoing war, persecution and political collapse most of the band now lives in exile in Algeria. This track is from the album *Chatma* which was Tamikrest's first album to be wholly written around a defined theme. In Tamashek "Chatma" means "Sisters" and the band has dedicated the album in their own words to: "the courage of the Tuareg women, who have ensured both their children's survival and the morals of their fathers and brothers." (see: <https://onlineradiobox.com/track/51343273/>)

The Black Tones: The Key of Black: (They Want Us Dead): Eva Walker during The Black Tones live performance on KEXP, 18th June 2019: “‘The key of black’ is about the violence toward black Americans from hate groups that are infiltrating the police department, so it was a response to that. The shootings that were happening, the unarmed American citizens that were being murdered and justice not being served... It doesn’t just stop with us, it affects anyone who’s considered a minority – not a white cisgendered person. With the key of black, there’s a lot to say about these issues but I thought I would let the guitar kind of cry and the only words would be the call and response.

The Specials feat. Saffiyah Khan: 10 commandments (2019): such a great song and back-story, I’m tempted to put the whole of Charles Leonard’s article here!:

On a Saturday morning two and a half years ago, Saffiyah Khan put on a T-shirt that would change her life. A bunch of fascists belonging to the English Defence League (EDL) held a demonstration in the centre of Birmingham, one of the United Kingdom’s most ethnically diverse cities, on 8 April 2017. The 20-year-old Khan intervened to defend a woman in a blue hijab, Saira Zafar, at a counter-demonstration in front of the city library. Far-right EDL members had cornered her and were shouting abuse as they closed in on her. Zafar told *The Guardian* newspaper after the incident: “They were saying ‘You’re not English’, ‘This is a Christian country, not your country’ and ‘Go back to where you came from’. I was alarmed and worried for my safety.”

Khan, who is a Brummie of Pakistani and Bosnian descent, stepped in because the police were not responding: “I wasn’t going to let someone who was speaking the truth and being replied to aggressively be put in that position.”

A photograph of a slightly bemused Khan, serenely staring down the ranting EDL leader, Ian Crossland, went viral. In the picture, a police officer is holding Crossland back. With his unshaven chin jutting out, the right-winger appears to be radiating rage. In contrast, Khan, hands in jacket pockets, seems calm and nonchalant as she gazes down at the shorter man.



Crossland later described Khan on Facebook as a “dirty unwashed left-wing scrubber ... She’s lucky she’s got any teeth left.”

The Guardian columnist Suzanne Moore commented on what made the picture so potent. “Female insouciance against fascism takes a special bravery. It signals to us that we all might be braver, that we can stand up and fight, that men who cannot tolerate difference cannot tolerate being laughed at either.”

There were additional pictures of the police taking Khan away. She was still smiling and the black T-shirt she had on under her denim jacket could be seen, bearing the name of veteran British ska band The Specials.

Unity through music: The Specials were an outspokenly left-wing band in the late 1970s and early 1980s, signed to the influential 2 Tone Records label. "The Specials sought to unite black and white kids through music," wrote Kenneth Partridge in *Billboard* magazine. "The septet featured a nattily dressed multiracial line-up and raucous sound built from English punk rock and Jamaican ska."

(<https://www.newframe.com/political-songs-10-commandments-the-specials/>)

Thievery Corporation: The Richest Man In Babylon: great piece from US electronic duo,

Thievery Corporation. Lyrics include-
"There is no guidance In your kingdom
Your wicked walk in Babylon
There is no wisdom to your freedom
The richest man in Babylon

Your beggars sleep outside your doorway
Your prophets leave to wander on
You fall asleep at night with worry
The saddest man in Babylon

The wicked stench of exploitation
Hangs in the air and lingers on
Beneath the praise and admiration
The weakest man in Babylon"

Tinariwen (feat. Cass McCombs): Kel Tinawen: 2019. Perhaps the best known of the 'desert blues' Tuareg bands, Tinariwen are Tuareg from the Sahara Desert region of northern Mali. The band was formed in 1979 in Tamanrasset, Algeria, but returned to Mali after a cease-fire in the 1990s. The group first started to gain a following outside the Sahara region in 2001 with the release of *The Radio Tisdas Sessions*, and with performances at Festival au Désert in Mali and the Roskilde Festival in Denmark. Their popularity rose internationally with the release of the critically acclaimed *Aman Iman* in 2007. NPR calls the group "music's true rebels", AllMusic deems the group's music "a grassroots voice of rebellion", and *Slate* calls the group "rock 'n' roll rebels whose rebellion, for once, wasn't just metaphorical" (Wikipedia).

TootArd: Laissez Passer: (Glitterbeat Records, 2017) Coming from occupied Golan Heights, TootArd's musical styles will have you thinking they're from North Africa or even the Caribbean. Such is their diverse palette when it comes to their craft, they mix together desert blues, reggae and psych with a bit of traditional Arabic music. *Laissez Passer* is named after the papers they carry as a result of not owning passports. Despite this, their latest album is an enjoyable, fun record.

United Vibrations: Grow: "Music with a message and for community. ... Comprised of three brothers - Ahmad, Kareem, and Yussef Dayes - alongside close friend Wayne Francis II, the group prescribes to the mantra, "Out of many must come one." (<https://unitedvibrations.bandcamp.com/>)

Woody Guthrie: Better World A-comin': Guthrie is enormously important in the tradition of western protest music from the 20th century on. This song from 1944 expresses his optimism for a communitarian anti-fascist future where the bosses spoils are shared by all. (Mojo 2018 Revolution Blues)

Yasamin Shahhosseini: Gahan: Yasamin is a young Iranian artist aspiring to redefine the cultural and stylistic possibilities of her instrument - she's a master of the oud - for a new generation. Her first solo album, *Gahan*, is a collection of improvisations in traditional Persian modes.
(<https://www.theautumnsalon.com/yasamin-shahhosseini/>)

Yoyo Ma & Silkroad: Briel: formerly the Silk Road Project, Inc., is a not-for-profit organization, initiated by the cellist Yo-Yo Ma in 1998, promoting collaboration among artists and institutions, promoting multicultural artistic exchange, and studying the ebb and flow of ideas. The project was first inspired by the cultural traditions of the historical Eurasian Silk Road trade routes and now encompasses a number of artistic, cultural and educational programs focused on connecting people and ideas from around the world. It has been described as an "arts and educational organization that connects musicians, composers, artists and audiences around the world" and "an initiative to promote multicultural artistic collaboration." (Wikipedia)

Annexure: Kate Tempest: People's Faces:

Lyrics:

It's coming to pass, my countries coming apart
The whole thing's becoming such a bumbling farce
Was that a pivotal historical moment we just went stumbling past?
Well, here we are, dancing in the rumbling dark
So come a little closer, give me something to grasp
Give me your beautiful, crumbling heart
Another disaster, catharsis
Another half-discarded mirage
Another mask slips
I face off with the physical
My head's ringing from the love of the stars
There is too much pretense here
Too much depends on the fragile wages
And extortionate rents here
We're working every dread day that is given us
Feeling like the person people meet really isn't us
Like we're gonna buckle underneath the trouble
Like any minute now, the struggle's going to finish us
And then we smile at all our friends

[Refrain]

It's hard, we got our heads down and our hackles up
Our backs against the wall, I can feel you aching
None of this was written in stone
There is nothing we're forbidden to know
And I can feel things changing
Even when I'm weak and I'm breaking
I'll stand weeping at the train station
'Cause I can see your faces
There is so much peace to be found in people's faces

I saw it roaring
I felt it clawing at my clothes like a grieving friend
It said there are no new beginnings
Until everybody sees that the old ways need to end
But it's hard to accept that we're all one and the same flesh
Given the rampant divisions between oppressor and oppressed
But we are, though
More empathy, less greed, more respect
All I've got to say has already been said
I mean, you heard it from yourself
When you were lying in your bed and couldn't sleep
Thinking, "Couldn't we be doing this differently?"
I'm listening to every little whisper in the distance singing hymns
And I can, I can feel things changing

[Refrain]

But it's so hard, we got our heads down and our hackles up
Our backs against the wall, I can feel your heart racing
None of this was written in stone
The currents fast, but the river moves slow
And I can feel things changing
Even when I'm weak and I'm breakin'
I stand weeping at the train station
'Cause I can see your faces
There is so much peace to be found in people's faces

It's not enough
To imagine we'll be happy when we've got enough stuff
All this stuff is blocking us
I'm neat with no chaser
I'm all spirit, but I'm sinking
'Cause the days are not days but strange symptoms
And this age is our age
But our age is rage sinking to beige
And yes, our children are brave
But their mission is vague
Now I don't have the answers
But there are still things to say
I stare out at my city on another difficult day
And I scream inwardly, "When will this change?"
I'm beginning to fade
But my sanity's saved 'cause I can see your faces
My sanity's saved 'cause I can see your faces

[Refrain]

It's hard, we got our heads down and our hackles up
Our backs against the wall, I can feel your heart racing
None of this was written in stone
The current's fast but the river moves slow
And I can feel things changing
Even when I'm weak and I'm breaking
I stand weeping at the train station
'Cause I can see your faces
I love people's faces