

# Mama Tokus makes her album debut: On The Ragtime

Expect cheeky rhythm'n'blues, new-gospel, saucy swing, fruity funk and rude blues from the ladies' perspective from On The Ragtime.

Original songs penned by Mama Tokus tackle eye-rolling subject matter including: love for older men, a celebration of bigger butts, wifebeating and the plus-points of choosing a child-free lifestyle.

Ingenious covers are dotted throughout, including a blues mash-up of a Sex Pistols number, a reheating of 1937's If It Don't Fit Don't Force It (originally a hit for Barrelhouse Annie), plus a beatbox-boosted version of the Pointer Sisters' classic Yes We Can Can, featuring the wisdom of Bill Hicks, creating a cosmic outro and uplifting denouement to the whole affair.

"I wanted to create an album with messages," says Mama. "I feel that many of the great artistes had something precious to say or share. Yes, there are comic songs on this album, but I was keen to create stories and ideas that would be carried along on good music and that would sit in listeners' minds and percolate. Some of these ideas have been sitting with me for a long time, so it's a relief to finally get them down and out into the open!"

Mama's memorable songs are presented with great vocals and musicianship from an ensemble cast of superlative musicians (The Sons of Bitches) resulting in a richly-textured sound that will reward repeated listening. The album features story-songs drawn from Mama's busy life. A former newspaper reporter, Mama uses her sharpened pen to write witty ditties that would go down just as well in a saloon-bar, a theatre or a cabaret night. She's taken her time to make this debut; she ain't no spring chicken and that's all grist to the mill.

Tracklisting:

1. **That Was It** – a high-octane, hand-clap gospel opener imploring the listener to act before life passes you by
2. **Trouble With A Lowercase T** – a 100-mile-an-hour funk romp that tells of Mama's reckless past whilst looking for a future that's tamer, but not too much.
3. **Too Much Butt** – a celebration of the larger lady for today's image-obsessed times. A fruity cover of The Uppity Blues Women's tune.
4. **If It Don't Fit** – Barrelhouse Annie's naughty song from 1937. Apparently it's about rough sex...
5. **Wifebeater** – Mama's signature blues, penned in reaction to Lee Dorsey's misogynistic yet oh-so-funky Get Out My Life Woman. This epic 10-bar blues number fuses domestic abuse and comedy. What's not to like?
6. **Silver Fox Fixation** – about the love you can feel for an older man. A much older man.
7. **(Too Busy To) Reproduce** – No children by the age of 40? It's not all bad, you know. Set to a swing rhythm featuring Vince Lee's sweet lapsteel, it can be a lot of fun...
8. **Packing For the Promised Land** – A super-optimistic gospel tune for today's troubled times. So if we are going to the Promised Land, what are we going to pack?
9. **I Just Want Some Anarchy** – a blues re-imagining of that Sex Pistols tune
10. **500 Nights** – written on a road trip to the USA, this strut-funk number talks of blowing loads of money while blowing out lovers. Typical blues fodder, right?
11. **Yes We Can Can** – The Pointer Sisters told us first time round. Now Mama (with the help of a beatboxer and Bill Hicks) is telling you again. An ultra-optimistic climax to On The Ragtime.

The album was produced by Vince Lee, alongside Mama herself. He's a bluesman in his own right, with several releases, regular tours and a growing UK and European profile. See here: [www.vinceleebigcombo.co.uk](http://www.vinceleebigcombo.co.uk). The album also features guest backing vocals from blues songstress Becca Langsford, straight after her own release this year, Big Surprise. Find out more here: [www.beccalangsford.com](http://www.beccalangsford.com).

Both will be part of the Mama Tokus & the Sons of Bitches Blues Revue, touring later this year.

Editors' notes:

More high-resolution photography available on request or at [www.mamatokus.com](http://www.mamatokus.com)  
For more details about Mama Tokus, call 07786 808807 or email [mama@mamatokus.com](mailto:mama@mamatokus.com)



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**FOR BOOKING/ENQUIRIES:**

e: [mama@mamatokus.com](mailto:mama@mamatokus.com)  
t: 07786 808807

## Biography:

Mama Tokus is entertaining, edifying funky and funny, writing/playing original tunes and sly interpretations. She writes and sings gospel, soulful blues and R&B tunes (old, proper Ray Charles-style R&B, that is), nu-music-hall ditties and humorous (but always groovy) tunes – memorable originals and interpretations.

She hails from that wellspring of blues and UK R&B, the Thames Delta (think Ian Dury, Dr Feelgood and Zoot Money). She then headed to the Tamar Delta in the UK's Deep South West. One day she'll get to the Mississippi Delta...

She is influenced by:

Dinah Washington; Sarah Vaughan; Tina Turner; Barrelhouse Annie; Burt Bacharach; Earl Okin; Cole Porter; Noel Coward; the Rolling Stones; WAR; Georgie Fame; James Booker; Sister Rosetta Tharpe; The Meters...and many more groovy people.

Mama Tokus has performed at The Burning Man Festival (USA), The Big Chill Festival; London's hip The Brickhouse; The Port Eliot Festival; Bath's Ustinov Theatre; Barbican International Jazz and Blues Festival and more.



## What the people say:

*"Like Dr John in a three-way with Shirley Bassey and Eartha Kitt"*

– The People's Republic of South Devon culture news website

*"One day, We will be able to say, 'We knew Mama Tokus before she was famous - she wowed the audience on our little stage at Burning Man in 2010'"*

– Cabaret Stage manager at Burning Man Festival, Nevada, USA

*"The glorious, garrulous queen of the (South West) swamp delta blues, Mama Tokus"*

– Apples & Snakes performance poetry organisation

Hear and see Mama Tokus online by visiting [www.mamatokus.com](http://www.mamatokus.com)

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