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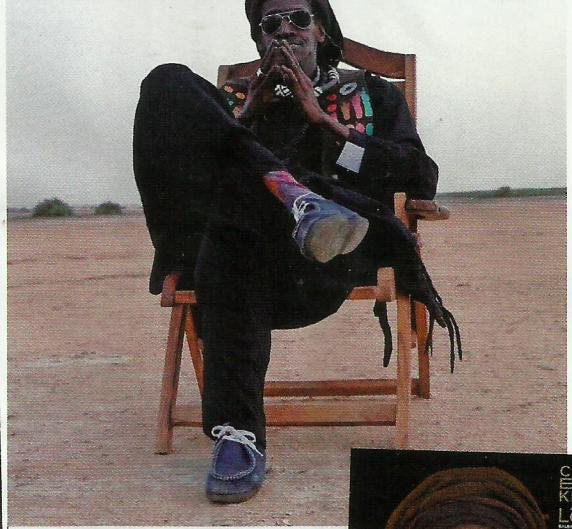
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REVIEWS
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WORLD
BY DAVID HUTCHEON



Cheikh Lô
★★★★

Balbalou
CHAPTER TWO. CD/DL/LP

If you're looking for a man what takes his time, here is Mr Reliable.

CHEIKH LÔ has never been the most prolific singer in Senegal – approaching his sixties, he has taken five years to record his fifth album, the follow-up to the excellent *Jamm* – so it's a good job he knows exactly what it is he is doing. Having developed his own loping rhythm, with reggae basslines and hyperactive talking drums, the Dakar-based dread (he is a member of the Muslim Baye Fall sect rather than a Rasta) keeps alive the old West African adaptation of Cuban music, yet adds plenty of international flavour. On the stand-out tracks, that includes French accordionist Fixi and Brazilian pop star Flavia Coelho (Degg Gui) and Lebanese jazz trumpeter Ibrahim Maalouf (Balbalou). Add in the sweeping strings on *Baïsson Les Armes* and you have a perfect argument for hoping he takes his time over album number six – but quickly.