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Veteran singer-songwriter kicks off first North American tour in 17 years this week.

Adam Ant promises that his forthcoming album, "Adam Ant is the Blueblack Hussar in Marrying the Gunner's Daughter," is, like its title, "completely different from anything else I've done before."

"It's reflections of what's happened since the last album and the things that interest me," Ant, whose last set of new material was 1995's acoustic-flavored "Wonderful," tells Billboard.com. "It's very analog-sounding. It was done in a studio with friends... everything played old-style, really. One of the good things about the

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demise of the old-fashioned studio is you can actually get quite a good rate in studios now, certainly in London. So I was able to get in with the band and just sing in the microphone and lay stuff down, like we used to at the beginning."

Ant says the album, which is due out in early 2013, will feature 17 songs, including collaborations with Morrissey cohort Boz Boorer, Andy Bell of Oasis and Beady Eye, 3 Colours Red guitarist Chris McCormack and longtime Ant aide de camp Marco Pirroni. Ant resurrected an early 80s song called "Who's a Goofy Bunny, Then?" to pay tribute to his late former manager Malcolm McLaren, and the album also includes tracks such as "Cool Zombie," "Gun in My Pocket," "Hard Men Tough Blokes," "punkyougirl" and "Shrink," the latter about his mental health issues that included a brief psychiatric hospitalization during 2003.

"The mood of it, I'd say, is quite personal," Ant acknowledges. "I'm very pleased with it lyrically. I never stopped writing lyrics all through the time away. I had plenty of time to choose the songs, and I'm quite content with what I've done on this. I'll just be relieved to have it out there and let the public decide if they're any good."

Ant and his current band, The Good, The Mad and The Lovely Posse, will be previewing some of the songs when they tour North America for the first time in 17 years, which kicks off Thursday (Sept. 13) in Los Angeles and wraps up October 20 in Anaheim, Calif.

"This tour is to reacquaint myself with the audience there, really," explains Ant, who's also touring the U.K. in November. "We're doing quite a long set, a two-hour set, so we can really swap things around. I've got nine albums I've made, so I have to decide what kind of show I'm going to put on. I enjoy playing the hit records because that's the kind of thing I'd like to see if I go to see someone I've grown up with, like Roxy Music. You want to hear the hits. So I want to give them an opportunity to hear their favorite songs, and then I'll do at least one song from the new album as a taster prior to doing more when I actually release the album. It'll be quite a challenge every night to do, and I look forward to it."