

## Mp3 The Essentials - Urban/r&b: Soul



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The Essentials are a 10-piece soul band inspired by Stevie Wonder, Tower of Power, and the like. Their original debut is rooted in this formula with a distinctive modern twist. 12 MP3 Songs URBAN/R&B: Soul, URBAN/R&B: Funk Details: The Essentials is a collaboration of ten highly talented and experienced young musicians, each with a personal or professional attachment to the University of Oregon School of Music. Covers of such artists as Stevie Wonder, Earth Wind and Fire, and Chicago join originals written by the group to make up the band's sound, a mixture of tight rhythm, heavy brass and soulful vocals. Together, the members of The Essentials have performed in over thirty different ensembles, in all genres including jazz big bands and combos, past funk, latin, rock, gospel and soul acts, wind orchestras and quartets, percussion ensembles, musical theatre pits; the list goes on. All of these influences combine onstage to give you one of the finest quality shows around. "The Essentials" is the band's debut release, featuring eleven original tracks and a cover of a fan favorite, "Me and Mrs. Jones". The CD was entirely self-produced and is owned by the band. Continue reading for a review. The Essentials pour heart and soul into debut CD The Register - Guard - Eugene, Or. Anyone who's been following the history of local soul band the Essentials will find it, well, essential to be at Latitude 21 on Saturday for the release party for the band's self-titled debut. The album consists of 11 original tunes, written by band leader Gabe Dickinson, plus a cover of Kenny Gamble's "Me and Mrs. Jones." At the risk of evoking images of cheesy wedding dances, the Essentials pour the romance on thick in their rendition of "Mrs. Jones." They have some charming horns working in the arrangement. Lead vocalist Neil Thurston can sing. No, he can si-iiiiiiing. Like, make-your-knees-weak sang. Playing weddings and corporate events was how the 10 University of Oregon music students managed to afford to release a CD after just two years together, guitarist Bill Marsh says. Each member offers some degree of professional experience. Through regular

gigs at local clubs, playing the Willamette Valley Folk Festival and by word of mouth, the band has accumulated a strong local following, Marsh says. Dickinson and drummer John Kalny co-produced the album. Kalny has been playing around town for more than 10 years in bands such as Papa's Soul Kitchen and D-Fault. In fact, you can catch Kalny tonight at the Green Room event with D-Fault at the WOW Hall. "I wanted a mix of material that would catch different people's attention," Dickinson says in a news bio. He notes that he formed the whole band around the fact that people love to hear Thurston sing. "I think Neil will suck people in when they first hear the album, and the quality of the music and playing will just make it that much more satisfying," Dickinson says. For a nice example of the group's signature instrumentation, listen to Track 8: "Away."

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