

## Mp3 Kokolo - Fuss And Fight



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Afrobeat funk; their reputation for mounting an explosive live show is the reason they continue to rack up frequent flyer miles year after year. 6 MP3 Songs WORLD: World Fusion, WORLD: Rai Details: "Yeah, we got our own thing", states matter-of-factly Ray Lugo, leader of New York City powerhouse KOKOLO. Based on the spiky and hyper-funky grooves found in the groups latest album, "Love International", it would be difficult to argue with the man. Few groups in todays global Afro scene generate as much attention and excitement as they do debate and criticism as KOKOLO. "Its the result of going against conditioned expectations", expands Lugo. "People are used to expecting the familiar, but Im doing my thing in my time. This is music that comes from my heart, humble music for the whole world. " KOKOLOs ever-growing international appeal (to date, the band has performed in over 15 countries) appears to lend weight to Lugos words. A former punk rocker that grew disenchanted with the promise held by that genre, Lugo formed KOKOLO in 2001 in the Big Apples Chinatown district, along with long time cohort Chris Morrow. He took the name from Spanish Harlem slang used to refer to devout fans of afro music. From the outset, the duo sought to carve a path of their own. There may be better afrobeat, funk, latin or polka groups aroundbut we were going to be the best KOKOLO in the world. Within weeks of forming the group, they recorded their urgent Fuss and Fight debut and soon found themselves playing to receptive audiences both at home and abroad. Their second album, More Consideration, further expanded their audience and afforded the band performances in a score of new countries and on some of the worlds premier stages, such as The Montreal Jazz, Glastonbury Festivals and many others, where they shared the spotlight with acts ranging from Gilles Peterson, Roots Manuva, Taj Mahal and Issac Hayes to Zap Mama, Chic and Roy Ayers. During this time, their discography grew exponentially as well, giving them the opportunity to reach new audiences through a number of releases that also feature acts such as Zero

7, Femi Kuti, Masters At work, Ladysmith Black Mambaso, Quantic Soul Orchestra, U-Roy, Tony Allen, Afro Celt Sound System, Jazztronik and many others. KOKOLO's reputation for mounting an explosive live show is the reason they continue to rack up frequent flyer miles year after year. "Each musician brings an important element...everyone just comes as they are". "Darren Lipper loves his hard rock, Casey Howard is a Jazz and Country music head, Eladio Gonzalez is Mr. Salsa personified, Chris loves his Zappa, John Turner is on the experimental side of the dial, Ando Kal lives for Reggae and lately, I've been getting into lots of Rai music, actually", says Lugo, "These guys have a lot of soul...and together, that mix makes KOKOLO unique onstage." On Love International, the group's third studio album released on Adrian Gibson's Freestyle imprint, KOKOLO astutely combines an intoxicating blend of afrobeat, funk, latin, hip hop and jazz elements into a sound that is at the same time thoroughly familiar yet remarkably fresh and intriguing. On tracks like the muscular Our Own Thing they spell out in no uncertain terms where they stand on the matter, on the brilliant cover of The Clash's The Magnificent Seven they masterfully inject more fire into a song that was burning to begin with, musical worlds collide on the irresistible The Way Up, and we get transported to the motherland on the hypnotic Let Compassion Be Your Fashion. The Lyrics, half-sung, half-scatted in English, Spanish and even Portuguese, wiz by like sparks after an explosion at a firecracker factory. Yes, this is in fact, something new and exciting. Lugo's ideology draws more from humanist philosophy than from conventional political ideas of right and wrong. Billions of people today are manipulated via empty political slogans and organized religion, he continues, Only through changing how we educate future generations can we begin to move the human experience towards a universal spirit of brotherhoodthe eradication of fear. The socially conscious aspect of the group is reinforced through their consistent participation in a variety of projects and benefit concerts for causes ranging from the environment, to the Darfur Crisis, youth empowerment groups, and urban development organizations. It's not about ego or rock-star clichés about the luxury that is to be alive and have the opportunity of bringing a positive message to people. The future looks bright for KOKOLO. For the moment, expectations seem to be the least of their concerns. - Malcom Traficant

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