

Mp3 Baba Ken Okulolo - Best Of Baba Ken & Kotoja



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Afro-beat and Afro-funk of Nigeria, West Africa. 13 MP3 Songs WORLD: Afro-Pop, JAZZ: African Jazz

Show all album songs: Best of Baba Ken Kotoja Songs Details: Baba Ken Okulolo Leader of three African bands. Nigerian vocalist/bassist/producer Baba Ken Okulolo is one of the few popular African musicians of today whose roots extend deep into Nigerian musical history. As a bandleader, his warm, smiling personality enlivens three distinct performing groups: the modern Afro-beat band KOTOJA, the all-star WEST AFRICAN HIGHLIFE BAND, and the acoustic, traditional NIGERIAN BROTHERS. Each group brings forth the universal healing magic of African music. Ken was first seen in the U.S. with King Sunny Ade's African Beats on their 1985 world tour, and he continues to appear on Ade's latest recordings. In addition to his vast body of Nigerian studio and production dates, he is known for his early stints with highlife master Dr. Victor Olaiya, Steve Rhodes' African Voices, and the seminal Afro-rock group, Monomono. Five times, the Nigerian Journalists' Association has voted him the country's top bassist. Ken was born into the Urhobo ethnic group, to a family of traditional dancers and musicians. In the tiny fishing village of Aladja, surrounded by deep forests and lagoons traveled by dugout canoes, he was exposed to the traditional stories, rhythms and songs of his people. At eight years of age, Ken was sent to the city of Warri to be educated in the Anglican missionary schools. While living with relatives and undergoing the exacting discipline of the school headmasters, he diverted himself by sneaking out to hear some of the historic touring highlife bands of the time. On short-wave radio, he listened avidly to jazz, Afro-cuban, rhythm and blues, and Congolese music. Inspired, Ken apprenticed himself to an uncle, guitarist Miller Okulolo. Gradually, he began sitting in with bands comitionally with the Harmony Searchers, until he was heard by a talent scout for the great bandleader Dr.Victor Olaiya, who convinced the young bassist with the 'roots' feel to leave his homeland and head for the giant city of Lagos. There,

Okulolo was at first one of three bassists in Olaiya's big band, but as his versatility grew, he became the only one. In a few years, restless to explore the modern potential of African music, he joined vocalist Joni Haastrup to form the seminal and legendary Afro-rock band, Monomono. By the early 70's, they were at the top of the charts and touring West Africa with the albums "Give a Beggar a Chance" and "Dawn of Awareness" (EMI), by the late 70s, Okulolo became the most in demand bass player on the Nigerian music scene, touring Europe with various groups, producing and performing on countless recordings, including his own hit album, "Talking Bass Experience" (EMI), and leading his band, Positive Vibrations. On a tour with King Sunny Ade, Okulolo first visited the San Francisco Bay Area, enjoying the unique mix of people and musical atmosphere. In 1985, he returned to stay. There, joining with a heady mix of top Nigerian and American musicians, he started the modern Afro-beat band KOTOJA. Featuring Ken's vocals and original tunes, KOTOJA blends jazz, funk, highlife, Afro-beat, and juju into exciting, animated shows. Songs on this CD came from various recordings of his productions. Please, enjoy it and pass on the good vibration.

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