

## Mp3 Sage Ali - Not From Around Here



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Deep blend of R&B/Pop, Funk, Jazz, Hip-hop: vibes like India.Arie, Donny, Santana, and classics by E,W&F, Stevie, Marvin Gaye -- powerful songs, exotic interludes, soulful vocals, funky band, stellar production beautiful 20-page full-color booklet 18 MP3 Songs URBAN/R&B: R&B Pop Crossover, URBAN/R&B: Soul Details: Sage Ali is a young man with a musical message of the ages to share. His sound is unique, yet deeply familiar. Comparisons have been made with artists ranging from Donny, Eric Benet and Brian McKnight to Prince to such legends as Stevie Wonder, Sting, Earth, Wind Fire, Santana and Curtis Mayfield -- even Bob Marley! One sample of his music, however, brings the sneaking suspicion that it comes from somewhere special, definitely "not from around here." Thus the title of Sage Ali's epic debut, "Not From Around Here." More than an album, it is an experience, an inspirational journey along a path towards righteousness, but with trials and detours along the way. It's a hope-filled life story with uplifting titles such as the hip-hop/rock-edged "Communicate" (featuring Johnny Graham's blazing lead guitar), the reggae-funkified "Love Revolution" and the smooth-jazz inflected, beautiful "Miracle." It's tender love songs with folk and Spanish lilts like "All I Need Is You," "Never Let You Down" and the sensual "Hypnotize." And it is other-worldly mysticism by way of the bookending opener and closer, "The Mountain" and "Climb." Celestial backing voices meet funky electric guitars and bass, exotic berimbau and the Phenix Horns (Earth, Wind, Fire's original horn section) in a richly layered tapestry of soul music and soundscapes (featuring special guest, saxophonist Ernie Watts). "That song ('The Mountain') is very special to me. It just came to me, straight from the Infinite. Friends in the biz thought I was crazy to start the album with a song which is over 8 minutes long, but so far the response has been incredible! I've had so many people call or write me to say that they love to start each day playing 'The Mountain.' Louis Johnson (bassist for Brothers Johnson, Michael Jackson, etc.) told me that he drives

around playing just that one song over and over! It really is magical." "People often ask me about the title of the album. For me, 'Not From Around Here' reflects the concept that no matter what place we choose to call home, there's always somewhere else to look back to. It goes all the way back to the ancestors, to Egypt, and even beyond to the cosmos -- back to the roots of our humanity. I must credit Maurice White and Earth, Wind & Fire with being my greatest musical inspiration. Their early work not only touched me musically, it also helped to put me on the path of higher learning and consciousness. To now have such greats as Ernie Watts, Leon Ware, and Ramon Stagnaro as well as E,W&F originals Johnny Graham and the Phenix Horns playing on my album is a great honor for me. In many ways, my work is a way of saying 'thank you' to E,W&F and others, and to contribute in my own way to the raising of consciousness through music." As triumphant as Not From Around Here's 12 songs and 6 interludes turned out, Ali faced many setbacks and adversities during its creation, including his recording engineer being robbed in the studio at gunpoint, and the untimely loss of one of his closest friends. But Sage's unwavering dedication to faith, hope and inspiration prevailed so that he could make an album that might touch others in a profound way. He wrote the haunting "Invisible" as a reflection of and response to life's challenges. Amidst Rahmlee's muted trumpet, Tim Law's screaming guitar licks and Ginger's haunting background vocals, Sage takes the listener through the bad times and urges us never to give up as congas build the energy at the end. Congas and timbales were Sage's first instruments, but in high school he fell in love with the electric bass, which is now his main axe. "The funk just took over," he explains, "I got into everyone from Larry Graham, Louis Johnson and Verdine White to Stanley and Jaco. Nowadays, Louis and I jam together from time to time." Ali later began focusing on keyboards, songwriting and arrangement. "I had all these ideas inside, and I just needed the chops to get them out. I still have so much to learn, and so much to share. This is only the beginning." Sage was born and raised in Washington, D.C., one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world. Music always touched him at the deepest level, and something inside him knew that music was the universal language of the spirit. Even as a young boy, he constantly sought answers to spiritual questions that led him to read the Bible, the Quran, and the Torah, as well as several Buddhist, Hindu, and Taoist texts. "I wanted to understand what life is all about," he says simply. "I have found that all religions share common truths. It's this commonality, the deeper connectedness of all people, that I seek to express through my music."

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