

Mp3 Gretchen Elise - Are You Ready?



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"Signature blend of world, jazz, R & B and hip-hop..." (Boston Globe) 9 MP3 Songs WORLD: World Fusion, JAZZ: Jazz Vocals Details: Are You Ready? is the debut CD of original compositions by Gretchen Elise. Re-claiming her Philly roots, she moved back in fall '06 after establishing her musical career in Boston MA and Berlin, Germany. Defying categorization, Are You Ready? is danceable music with a message-sometimes political, sometimes personal. A mix of R&B, Caribbean and Brazilian grooves provide a jazzy basis for catchy melodies with lyrical beauty. The title track, a mellowed-out reggae-ton collaboration with Boston reggae singer Lady Lee, is a typical collaboration for Gretchen: crossing genres, bridging communities. Musical style: Gretchen Elise's original music fuses R&B, world music influences, and a distinct sense of groove with a jazz approach. She writes simple, catchy melodies with striking lyrics, and grounds them with strong rhythm. Her music is bold and assertive, and she has been described as "fearless." Icons influencing Gretchen's original work are jazz vocalist Abbey Lincoln, trendsetter Erykah Badu, Latin Jazz great Eddie Palmieri, Brazilian songbird Elis Regina, and Afropean sisters Les Nubians. After co-composing her first recording as a guest on Brazilian singer/songwriter Joao Marcos' A Familia (2002), Boston producer/pianist Mark Shilansky encouraged her to combine her myriad influences and her jazz-based pop sensibilities in her first original CD Are You Ready? (2004 MusicalSolutions/BMI). Origins: Gretchen Elise Iversen grew up near Philly listening to jazz, R&B and hip hop radio, playing the piano and turning cartwheels. Living over six years in Norway and Germany while growing up, and learning to speak four foreign languages (Spanish, French, German, Norwegian) added a unique international flavor to the US-American roots of her original compositions. Gretchen began studying voice, composition and music theory in Berlin upon trading in her professional dancing shoes for a microphone. She has been mentored by Latin jazz vocalist Mili Bermejo (Berklee College of Music) in

Boston. Performance: Gretchen Elise's performances are spontaneous, interactive experiences, where improvised audience participation flavors and helps create her live arrangements. Gretchen Elise's performing career began in 1994 in Berlin, where she sang and composed for an East German rock band, a jazz combo and a World Music Orchestra. In Boston, she has been featured at Ryles, Jorge Hernandez Cultural Center, the Milky Way, the Western Front, often in collaborations with hip hop poet Walnut (shelshokentertainment.com) and reggae songstress Lady Lee. Ethos: Gretchen Elise is both musician and teacher, with feet anchored in each realm. Founding director of MusicalSolutions, Gretchen bridges the arts and education, using performing and composing music as tools to build community and catalyze social change. A recent graduate of Harvard University Graduate School of Education's Arts-in-Education program, she currently helps get arts projects into underfunded Philly schools through the Picasso Project (pccy.org)

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