

## Mp3 Bakithi Kumalo - This Is Me



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South African jazz, funk, soul, rhythms and grooves 10 MP3 Songs WORLD: African, JAZZ: World Fusion  
Details: Bakithi Kumalo (Bah-gee-tee Koo-mah-low) first came to the attention of the American public following the release of Paul Simon's Grammy Award winning "Graceland" album in 1986. His precise and sinuous bass lines went far beyond simply marking time and thundered out a countdown for the dismemberment of apartheid. Thought of by many as one of the most talented living bassists, Bakithi Kumalo possesses a unique musical style reflecting influences from around the world, including South African traditional folk, contemporary jazz, salsa, and electronica. Bakithi was born Alexandria Township of Johannesburg. He was exposed to local styles such as mbaqanga, mbube, and jive at an early age. He decided to become a musician and at seven he was already performing in his uncle's band. Due to his persistence, he became a regular on the wedding and party circuit around the townships. At ten, he went on a tour into Zululand where he remained for a year and a half. It was at this time that he developed his unique approach to playing. Fame grew, but his musical career was still a terrible struggle. Bakithi was seriously considering taking a job as a car mechanic at that time Paul Simon came calling in 1985. Simon was in South Africa to put together a band for his "Graceland" album. A well-known Johannesburg producer suggested Bakithi for his unique ability. Simon was entranced by the sound and, after some preliminary sessions in South Africa, he brought Bakithi to New York City to complete the tracks. Bakithi was both elated and terrified to be in New York City. He had always longed to go to New York, but he barely spoke English and was understandably overwhelmed by this sudden dramatic change in fortune. However, his misgivings did not affect his playing and his indelible contributions to the Grammy award winning "Graceland" album gave him major visibility in the music industry. He found himself in much demand for recordings and tours with many great artists such as Chaka Khan, Harry Cyndi Lauper,

Herbie Hancock, Mickey Hart, Randy Brecker, Paul Winters, Angelique Kidjo, Laurie Anderson, Jon Secada, and Gloria Estefan among others. Currently Bakithi lives on Long Island with his wife, award winning storyteller and singer Robbi K. Most recently they've performed at The Berks Jazz Festival, IMAC, The St. Louis Museum of Art, Harmony on the Hudson, and The Children's Theatre Festival of Philadelphia.

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