

## Mp3 Bakithi Kumalo - Transmigration



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"While we're only six years into it, 'Transmigration' may very well be the most important jazz album of the 21st century thus far." --Ray Ellis - 10 MP3 Songs in this album (53:24) ! Related styles: WORLD: African, JAZZ: World Fusion People who are interested in Paul Simon Hugh Masekela Josh Groban should consider this download. Details: A native of Soweto Township outside Johannesburg, South Africa, Bakithi Kumalo (Paul Simon's "Graceland") creates a singular electric fretless bass sound that teems with double stops that sound like human voices and the African grooves of his homeland and has garnered him a stellar reputation as a sideman. In addition to touring with Simon on his current North American tour, he's also recorded and/or toured with the likes of Gloria Estefan, Chaka Khan, Harry Belafonte, Gerald Albright, Miriam Makeba, Josh Groban and Chris Botti. Kumalo breaks fertile new ground with his latest CD, 'Transmigration,' on Guru Project. "This record is me," says the leader, who is based in Long Island, New York. "On my earlier albums, I played a lot of African songs, for this new project, I wanted to show the other side of me. I wanted to try something different, to show my bass style, to play melodies on my bass and to showcase the wide range of music that moves me." Co-Produced with Chris Pati, who also performs throughout the disc, 'Transmigration' displays Kumalo's multifaceted talent in a variety of jazz-infused, deep-grooved musical settings including those steeped in contemporary/lyrical jazz, R&B funk and straight-ahead acoustic jazz (with Kumalo setting aside his electric bass for an upright acoustic) as well as an African rhythm jam. "Every track is different," says Kumalo, who in addition to bass plays keyboards, drums and a variety of percussion instruments. "Some albums stick to having a certain sound, with all the songs having a similar feel but I wanted to show all the sides of my playing." Now, Bakithi may have grown up in South Africa, but his virtuosic fretless bass style shows that he spent some of his formative years listening to then-popular jazz-fusion that was filtering around the world, courtesy of bands

such as Weather Report and Herbie Hancock's Headhunters. 1998's release *San Bonan* and 2000's *In Front of My Eyes* featured a lot of African and African-influenced music and grooves, but for his latest project, *Transmigration*, Kumalo has decided to focus on his funk-pop-jazz playing, creating a disc that is sumptuous enough for most smooth jazz fans, yet also has enough groove for jam fans and enough chops for fusion fans. Like fellow bassist Marcus Miller, it appears that Kumalo is adept at crossing smooth, funk, and contemporary R&B styles without degenerating into musical mush. Kumalo has produced a disc that is both accessible and listenable. There's a strong smooth jazz element here and smooth listeners would enjoy this CD a great deal. The opening track, *Twilight Fire* is basically a studio duet with Kumalo and Pati handling all the sounds between them. The next track, *Step By Step* does nothing to dispel this notion, except that you have some real drums and a real saxophone. From here, things shift a bit and help create a more balanced overall album that is appealing through repeated listening. The track *Looking Forward* features some bass work that is a bit closer to Kumalo's South African heritage. It's catchy, pretty, smooth, and somehow satisfying all at the same time. The piece is buoyed by its infectious energy. *Light Rain* is like a smooth late night instrumental track. *Seems Like Old Times*, featuring soprano saxophonist Morris Goldberg jamming over a Tutu-esque groove also allows Kumalo a good solo spot. The same group makes *Make Me Smile* a winner as well, with its winsome melody played in unison by Kumalo and Goldberg. On *Trio* Kumalo, pianist Bill Smith, and drummer Damon DueWhite play a straight-ahead trio piece that adds a unique dimension to the CD. That's followed by the more than ten minute *Your Point Being?* which is quite reminiscent of some of the grooves Miles Davis and his bands were playing live in the 80s. Kumalo concludes with the drum and percussion-driven *Africa*, on which he plays all bass, percussion, guitar, wood, flute, and djembe. It's a familiar style for Kumalo, and coming at the end of *Transmigration*, it provides a completely different sound as the album's coda.

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