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# ESKA MTUNGWAZI BAND



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**Eska Mtungwazi is one of the most talented British soul/jazz artists of her generation. She has recorded and performed live with a diverse range of musicians and singers, including UK rapper and Mercury Music Prize nominee Ty, jazz/hip-hop saxophonist and MOBO award winner Soweto Kinch, multi instrumentalist and Asian music pioneer Nitin Sawhney, dance music producer Mark Pritchard and well known British jazz musicians Courtney Pine, Robert Mitchell and Denys Baptiste.**

Born in Zimbabwe, the singer, keyboards player, songwriter and producer grew up in Lewisham, South London, where her father would play his favourite albums while his children watched the Smurfs with the television sound turned off. Eska used to get annoyed as her father would pick up his guitar and strum along enthusiastically to George Benson, Oscar Peterson and Quincy Jones while she was trying to concentrate on Papa Smurf's antics.

Later, at university, she met fellow students who were fans of 'rare groove' music and hearing the same music that she had grown up despising in the London clubs, Eska started going through her father's album collection and discovered that he was the most hip record collector she knew.

Eska always loved singing, particularly in church and school choirs, and as well as becoming a highly respected singer in her own right, she is a mentor to many other singers, offering advice on phrasing, tonality and breathing techniques and taking regular workshops.

She was a member of bassist Anthony Tidd's Philadelphia-based jazz/hip hop project Quite Sane, winning awards and supporting black music legends including James Brown. She also played keyboards in the live band for DJ Pogo's monthly hip-hop residency Lyrical Lounge and has worked with brokenbeat producer I G Culture as well as neo-soul artist Julie Dexter and psychedelic soul singer Lewis Taylor.

Eska is a charismatic performer with a vocal that moves effortlessly between jazz, hip-hop, folk and African influences. Eska has worked with artists such as Tony Allen and on this tour is backed by an accomplished band that easily matches her range and dynamism while keeping it tight and funky. This is intelligent, life-affirming music as it should be.