

KASSA OVERALL

bio

Kassa Overall is a Grammy-nominated musician, emcee, singer, producer and drummer who melds avant-garde experimentation with hip-hop production techniques to tilt the nexus of jazz and rap in unmapped directions. He previously released four critically acclaimed projects: *I THINK I'M GOOD*, *Go Get Ice Cream and Listen to Jazz*, *Shades of Flu* and *Shades of Flu 2*.

On *ANIMALS*, his Warp Records debut, Kassa pushes his kaleidoscopic, subversive vision further. He layers Roland 808s against avant-garde drumming in the vein of his mentors Elvin Jones and Billy Hart, the latter of whom he studied with at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. Virtuoso musos appear alongside rap poets, including Danny Brown, Wiki, Lil B, and Shabazz Palaces. Top-flight jazz improvisation weaves in and out of orchestral string arrangements by Jherek Bischoff. The album's diverse, all-star roster of collaborators includes several of his close friends, like vocalists Nick Hakim, Laura Mvula, Francis and the Lights, and jazz stars like Theo Croker and Vijay Iyer.

ANIMALS pushes Kassa's message further too, the title a loaded metaphor for the paradoxes of his life as an entertainer and as a black man in America. *ANIMALS* is the sound of an artist aware of the cost of embodying one's natural self in the public eye, a deep reckoning with the two-sided truth that to perform one's freedom for an audience can mean succumbing to life inside a cage.