

SPREE WILSON

HOMETOWN: Nashville
INFLUENCES: Fleetwood Mac, Outkast, Snoop Dogg
ALBUM: *The Spark*, out soon
WEBSITE: spreewilson.com

RAPPER, SINGER AND GUITARIST SPREE WILSON GREW up in the capital of country music, Nashville—but while he enjoyed learning from the city's rich musical tapestry, he knew his own destiny lay elsewhere. After high school he headed to Clark Atlanta University, where producer Dallas Austin became an invaluable mentor. Emboldened, Wilson headed for New York City with only a duffel bag full of belongings. He spent his first three weeks hitting the streets during the day while sleeping at Penn Station at night. Eventually his demo found its way to veteran rapper Q-Tip, who was impressed enough to help him secure a label deal. All along, Wilson resisted attempts to pigeonhole himself as a hip-hop artist alone, citing inspirations including Jimi Hendrix, Elton John and the Velvet Underground. *The Spark* features production from Organized Noize, the team best known for its work with Outkast—apt, as Wilson calls the duo's 1998 *Aquemini* "the landmark album of my life."



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MARCH/APRIL 2012 M MUSIC & MUSICIANS MAGAZINE

