

Music and More

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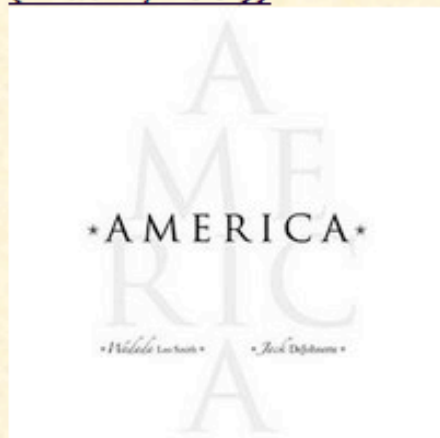
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MONDAY, JUNE 22, 2009

Wadada Leo Smith and Jack DeJohnette - America (Tzadik, 2009)



Trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith and drummer Jack DeJohnette originally proposed a duet record to ECM in the late 1970's but it didn't come to pass. They have played together in other settings for many years including Smith's excellent Golden Quartet, before finally recording this duet. Stark but beautiful, the music is very interesting and the musicians are really locked into each other throughout. The album opens with the suite "America Parts 1, 2 and 3" starting fast with rolling drums and

darting trumpet, before moving into spacier long tones and strong modular playing and an robust, sharp drum solo. "Red Trumpet" has fast trumpet with Smith getting a plump, clear sound. DeJohnette increases the pace and Smith's trumpet purrs a pure golden sound which is moving and beautiful. "John Brown's Fort" has some nimble drumming, with long trumpet lines moving in and around the shifting percussion. DeJohnette sounds like a percussion quartet playing amazing rhythms against the strong clarion call of the trumpet. "Ed Blackwell, the Blue Mountain Sun Drummer" and "Rabi'a's Unconditional Love, a Spiritual Mystery of the Heart" have stark but beautiful playing featuring muted and melancholy trumpet and brushes. "Masnavi: The Falcon and the Owls" (interesting titles!) wraps up the album with rolling drums and tart slurred trumpet racing each other daringly through to the finish line. This was an austere but fascinating record with the music built architecturally to logical conclusions. Both Smith and DeJohnette are clearly masters of their respective instruments, but neither tries to overwhelm the other on sheer skill. Rather it is a true collaboration that at times reaches a near zen level of enchantment like meditation like a deep, clear pool of music.

[America - amazon.com](http://America-amazon.com)

Send comments to: Tim

Posted by Tim Niland at 11:03 AM

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