

Mp3 Leni Stern - Africa

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Leni Stern's "Africa", two years in the making, integrates African and Western music forms with such authenticity that it may come to be regarded as an 'audio documentary' of African musical life. 13 MP3 Songs JAZZ: African Jazz, ROCK: Adult Contemporary Details: Leni Stern's 'AFRICA,' two years in the making, integrates African and Western music forms with such authenticity that it may come to be regarded as an 'Audio Documentary' of African musical life. Recorded in Africa, playing with local musicians at the pace of life in Africa, Stern invites listeners to immerse themselves in African culture as she experienced it, first-hand. She comments: "I want people to hear what Africa sounds like. Africa deserves our respect, not just our mercy. And out of respect for the music, I felt compelled to record the album in Africa." With its robust percussion and asymmetrical song structure, 'Africa' showcases the indigenous sounds of brilliant African instrumentalists and singers, as well as Stern's acclaimed electric guitar chops and vocals. Stern recalls: "As a white woman in a Muslim country, playing an electric guitar, my presence had an powerful impact." In fact, her African colleagues gave Stern a name of honor: 'MOUSSA GUITAR FOE' and she is the only one. "My gold Strat became popular," Stern recalls. "Guitar Dechire, theyd say in Mali - distorted guitar. The women liked to see me play -- 'she is talking back to the men, she doesnt stop, she is making them work hard' -- they'd laugh. I think Salif Keita enjoyed the controversy about his toubabou - his white woman on lead guitar." 'Africa', set for October 30th release, is a passionate turn for Stern, notable for its musicianship as well as for the simple fact that it got made. "Few have attempted such an undertaking and pulled it off," she says. A listen to the track 'Dakkan (What is Written)' captures the dynamic quality of the new album -- sounding simultaneously Western and distinctly African -- from the instrumentation to the vocals to the mix of languages -- this track is a centerpiece of 'Africa' and conveys the uplifting spirit of the project. The 13-song CD 'Africa' grew out of the Stern EP 'Alu Maye (Have You Heard),' which was recorded in Mali, at Salif Keita's Bamako Studios. The EP was the latest step in Stern's evolution as a musician's musician, without boundaries. In a recent, rave review in JAZZIZ Magazine, critic Philip Booth praised: "As an artist, she has become practically unclassifiable. To everyone but the bean counters, thats a strength...Stern effectively allies her throaty

vocals and thoughtful six-string playing with the hypnotic rhythms, percussive textures and singsong choruses of West African music. The kaleidoscopic flickering of multi-stringed instruments makes an entirely natural sonic backdrop for the leader." Stern pays tribute to the late Michael Brecker on '1000 Stars' and showcases two of his final recordings on 'Saya (Farewell)' and 'Ousman'. Other collaborators on 'Africa' include Ami Sacko and Mah Soumano -- a recent joint appearance on African Television may be seen here: youtube.com/watch?v=Br4UyqgzgMI Stern's strong bond with Mali was chronicled in a Guitar Player Magazine photo essay last year. The photos and first-person commentary described Stern's visit to Mali's Festival In The Desert. A follow-up feature, on the making of 'Africa', will run soon. In the mean time, here is a look at Stern's journey: guitarplayer.com/story.asp?storyCode=13913

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