

# Mp3 Nicole Mitchell/black Earth Ensemble - Vision Quest

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Chamber jazz with African rhythms, contemporary sounds and swinging improvisation 13 MP3 Songs in this album (73:26) ! Related styles: JAZZ: Chamber Jazz, JAZZ: African Jazz People who are interested in James Newton Yusef Lateef Bobbi Humphrey should consider this download. Details: Vision Quest is creative flutist/composer Nicole Mitchell's first recording, released in 2001 by Dreamtime Records. While her later recordings including "Afrika Rising," "Hope, Future and Destiny," "Black Unstoppable," and "Xenogenesis Suite," utilize traditional jazz instrumentation, "Vision Quest" contrasts with the use of strings with flute in a jazz setting. Vision Quest, released by Chicago indie Dreamtime Records and recorded live at various locations, is Mitchell's debut recording with her group Black Earth Ensemble. The core of the group consists of bassist Darius Savage and violin/viola player Savior Faire (a.k.a. Sam Williams). These instrumentalists are joined, depending on Mitchell's recording location, by the phenomenal drummer/percussionist Hamid Drake, drummer/percussionist Avreeayal Ra and violinist Edith Yokley. Mitchell's compositions reflect a potent blend of spiritual exploration mixed with traditional bop phrases and extended free improvisations, although the solo flute and voice pieces are less effective. Mitchell has an engaging technique and in particular, incorporates an interesting way of "singing" through her flute, not in a Rashaan Roland Kirk clichéd way, but in a way all her own. Also worth mentioning are the performances featuring Hamid Drake, which include the exciting, "Sanctuary: Aaya's Rainbow" and "Sweet Tooth". His rhythmic drive whether on the full drum kit or hand drums simply galvanizes the ensemble.--Jay Collins, One Final Note Flutist Nicole Mitchell's main project is the Black Earth Ensemble, a Chicago-based group which can be considered a work in progress since it continuously changes shapes and sizes. On Vision Quest, Mitchell brings together musicians from various generations: young guns, such as bassist Darius Savage and violinist Savoir Faire, and experienced veterans, such as Hamid Drake and Avreeayl Ra, who alternate on drums and lay a solid foundation. As a member of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM), Mitchell is faithful to its philosophy -- she combines respect for the tradition with an outlook turned toward the future. The unusual lineup that includes flute, violin, and viola and her unconventional technique undoubtedly indicate that she is looking

for her own path. As every AACM member, she had to hone her skills as a bandleader and composer. Her pieces display her knack for pretty melodies full of spirituality and poetry, whether they take the form of a reverie or are developed over a solid groove. Often resorting to complex structures and tempo changes, Mitchell has a proven talent for layering or intertwining various motives, thus making her music quite unpredictable. For many, the AACM is often reduced to the great talents it produced in the '60s and '70s. This promising debut recording clearly shows that the organization still fosters young, creative musicians who can enable the organization to remain relevant in the future. Alain Drouot, All Music Guide

Nicole Mitchell and the Black Earth Ensemble Vision Quest By David Dacks This is an exciting new step for the AACM. Mitchell has been a member of the Chicago jazz culture collective for ten years but this is her debut as a leader. Vision Quest is an amazingly assured album, which sounds unmistakably AACM, but is an original blend of ideas in its own right. This music recalls Leroy Jenkins, but frankly it's better than quite a number of Jenkins' more groove-oriented albums. It is a profoundly soulful album that will hopefully inject a rougher edge into the groove-dominated nu-jazz. Mitchell, a flautist with great technique, has assembled an unusual line-up of two violins, a bassist, a drummer and percussionist. Mitchell writes arrangements that are truly African, not just a inspirational name check - the strings and flute play essential roles in the polyrhythms and the drums and percussion aren't holding the entire rhythm down. Of course, when the drummer is Hamid Drake, and the percussionist is ex-Arkestran Avreeayl Ra, the groove will never be straight. There is an abundance of different song structures on the disc, multi-part suites, short interludes and group improvisations. The players are outstanding, both as a unit and individually, but special mention must be made of Darius Savage's bass work and Mitchell's versatility as a soloist. Her technique of singing into her flute is somewhat different than Roland Kirk's, and makes for some spooky harmonies. Vision Quest is both dissonant and groovy all the way through, and that is worth celebrating. (Dreamtime)

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