

Christian Scott - Christian aTunde Adjuah (2012)

Written by bluesever

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CD 1 01. *Fatima Aisha Rokero* 400 02. *New New Orleans (King Adjuah Stomp)* 03. *Kuro Shinobi (Interlude)* 04. *Who They Wish I Was* 05. *Pyrrhic Victory of aTunde Adjuah* 06. *Spy Boy Flag Boy* 07. *vs. the Kleptocratic Union (Ms. McDowell's Crime)* 08. *Kiel* 09. *Of Fire (Les Filles de la Nouvelle Orleans)* 10. *Dred Scott* 11. *Danziger* CD 2> 01. *The Berlin Patient (CCR5)* 02. *Jihad Joe* 03. *Van Gogh (Interlude)* 04. *Liar Liar* 05. *I Do* 06. *Alkebu Lan* 07. *Bartlett* 08. *When Marissa Stands Her Ground* 09. *Cumulonimbus (Interlude)* 10. *Away (Anuradha & the Maiti Nepal)* 11. *The Red Rooster* 12. *Cara*

Personnel: Matthew Stevens (guitar); Christian aTunde Adjuah (trumpet, siren); Lawrence Fields (piano, Fender Rhodes piano, harpsichord); Jamire Williams (drums).

New Orleans trumpeter Christian Scott has always examined various historic musical traditions for their wealth of knowledge and culture. He's also deeply well-read, putting forth an inquiry which addresses the future from global and socio-political codes of past and present -- without hectoring. 2010's *Yesterday You Said Tomorrow* was a successful integration of what Scott calls "stretch music," which thoroughly understands and respects what came before it in jazz and doesn't attempt to replace it, but instead tries to embrace within its rhythmic and harmonic architectures as many musical forms and cultural languages as possible. *Christian aTunde ADJuah* is a deliberate extension of that model; it's a sprawling, 23-track double album. Accompanied by his seasoned quintet -- Matthew Stevens, guitar; Lawrence Fields, piano, Rhodes, harpsichord; Kristopher Keith Funn, bass; Jamire Williams, drums, and select guests -- Scott takes his listeners on an exhaustive, ambitious journey through jazz, employing elements of rock, hip-hop, and even traces of Crescent City R&B. *Christian aTunde ADJuah* is long and diverse, but it's accessible in its ambitious creativity. On "New New Orleans (King Adjuah Stomp)," Stevens' dark repetitive vamp prompts the rhythm section inside it, just before Scott goes over the top to offer a gorgeous, Spanish-tinged melody. Utilizing a ute on "Who They Wish I Was," Scott directly embraces Miles Davis' melodic vulnerability while offering his own sense of phrase and space. Disc one closer "Danziger" (named for the infamous bridge where New Orleans policemen shot and killed two men and wounded five others -- all unarmed -- after Hurricane Katrina), is nearly a set stealer. Scott's mournful lyric, expressively annotated by Stevens' guitar and Fields' funereal chords, begins to articulate a drama that takes a number of

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turns over its ten minutes. The beautiful modalism in the brief "Spy Boy/Flag Boy," with Scott's soloing and Williams' breaks, is another high point. The rock dynamics of "Jihad Joe" create a multivalent textural palette for the mysterious interplay between Scott and Fields; Stevens' solo is full of imagination and fire. "Alkebu Lan" is a stunner, as knotty post-bop meets Afro-beat. "Trayvon," with its double-time, funky backbeat, is a new spin on modal blues. The shimmering post-bop on "Away (Anuradha & the Maiti Nepal)," with Stevens' elegant yet distorted solo, is a gorgeous precursor to the pastoral "The Red Rooster" and the whispering closing ballad that is "Cara." Scott's previous recordings portended the integration of sounds, textures, and music readily available here. On Christian aTunde ADJuah, Scott and company create a seamless, holistic 21st century jazz that confidently points toward new harmonic horizons. ---Thom Jurek, Rovi

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