

Ambrose Akinmusire – When The Heart Emerges Glistening (2011)

Written by bluesever

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01. Confessions to My Daughter 02. Jaya 03. Henya Bass Intro 04. Henya 05. Far but few between 06. With Love 07. Regret (no more) 08. Ayneh (Cora) 09. My Name is Oscar [play](#)
10. The Walls of Lechuguilla 11. What's New

[play](#)

12. Tear Stained Suicide Manifesto 13. Ayneh (Campbell)

Personnel: Ambrose Akinmusire - Trumpet Walter Smith III - Tenor Sax Gerald Clayton - Piano Harish Raghavan - Bass Justin Brown - Drums Jason Moran - Rhodes

A new generation of jazz musicians, unimpeded by the idiomatic constraints of tradition, has come of age since the end of the '80s-era culture wars. One such free-thinking artist is young trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire, who was first discovered by saxophonist Steve Coleman at the tender age of 19. When The Heart Emerges Glistening is his first recording for Blue Note, following his 2008 debut, Prelude...To Cora (Fresh Sound New Talent).

The session exudes a hearty romanticism, with Akinmusire's seasoned quintet delivering soulful melodies and rich harmonies that unflinchingly embrace the emotive fervor of free jazz. Blending sultry R&B motifs and driving hard bop riffs with tortuous post bop themes, their efforts are adventurous yet accessible, conveying bold expressionism tempered by dulcet beauty.

The opener, "Confessions To My Unborn Daughter," essays the quintet's strengths. Akinmusire introduces the piece a cappella, with his band mates entering, one by one, until the tune reaches a fevered pitch. Tenor saxophonist Walter Smith III and Akinmusire alternate solos, shadowing each other's lines with an uncanny familiarity; their decade plus spent playing together is revealed in their simultaneous ascension into ravishingly beautiful cacophony.

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While Akinmusire and Smith elevate the bandstand with their spirited interplay, the rhythm section of Gerald Clayton (piano), Harish Ragahvan (bass) and Justin Brown (drums) fashions an endlessly shifting mosaic of tasteful accents, pulsating downbeats and clever harmonic interpolations. Expanding and contracting tempos and time signatures throughout the date, they ply fluid variations on traditional trio dynamics with ceaseless forward momentum.

After the rousing opener, the band tears through the similarly energetic "Jaya," before revealing a more introspective side. The ethereal "Hanya" demonstrates the quintet's capacity for lush cinematic detail, with an effervescent guest spot from producer Jason Moran on Fender Rhodes. The remaining pieces veer between similar extremes, from the punchy swinger "Far But Few Between" and anthem-like "The Walls of Lechuguilla," to the simmering ballad "With Love" and the rhapsodic meditation "Tear Stained Suicide Manifesto." Only "My Name Is Oscar" falls short of expectations—a conceptually interesting drum duet/spoken word tribute to Oscar Grant that is well-intentioned, but emotionally detached. More successful is Akinmusire's duet with Clayton on the standard "What's New," which clarifies the trumpeter's position in the jazz continuum as a forward thinking individualist with deep roots in the tradition.

Bridging the divide between inside and outside aesthetics, Akinmusire's virtuosity encompasses numerous approaches, from poignant lyricism to abstract tonal manipulations. His ability to seamlessly integrate extended techniques into architecturally sound statements is one of the date's most compelling features, as he effortlessly bends, blurs and distorts notes between velvety consonance and bristling dissonance.

When The Heart Emerges Glistening is a significant statement from an up and coming artist whose impressive abilities as an improviser and composer suggest potential greatness in the future. ---Troy Collins, allaboutjazz.com

For his octave-vaulting lines and incandescent high-end tones, 28-year-old California-born trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire suggests connections with Norwegian ambient-brass virtuoso Arve Henriksen. But this is American jazz, and the newcomer already sounds like a redefining force in that sphere. Akinmusire honed his craft with sax trailblazer Steve Coleman, and this music echoes that, and also the work of the album's producer, Jason Moran. But Akinmusire's arresting sound and the collective strength of his band of long-time friends – the dry-toned, Wayne Shorter-like saxophonist Walter Smith III, pianist Gerald Clayton, bassist Harish

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Raghavan and drummer Justin Brown – power it all. Passages of minimally accompanied trumpet are masterpieces of patient development, as is the ensemble ballad Henya, with its deliberate, slow-blown dissonance in an otherwise mellifluous theme. Akinmusire's empathy with tenorist Smith gives an updated Miles Davis/Wayne Shorter atmosphere to jolting faster pieces such as Jaya, and the bass and drums pairing nails everything with steely relish. Get used to pronouncing ah-kin-MOO-sir-ee: we're all going to be saying it a lot. --- John Fordham, guardian.co.uk

Spotkałem się z opiniami, jakobym osiągnął więcej, niż zasłużyłem samą grą – przyznał trzy lata temu Ambrose Akinmusire po kolejnym wygranym konkursie dla młodych trębaczy. Jakże bolesną dla sceptyków musiała być w takim razie decyzja Amerykańskiego Zrzeszenia Krytyków Jazzowych (JJA), które w połowie czerwca ogłosiło Akinmusire wschodzącą gwiazdą gatunku.

„When the Heart Emerges Glistening” to debiut 29-latka z Oakland w wytwórni Blue Note oraz jego druga autorska płyta w ogóle. Zawodowo grywa jednak od dziesięciu lat: u boku Steve’a Colemana, Vijaya Iyera czy Esperanzy Spalding. Współpracownicy fenomen Akinmusire zgodnie tłumaczą tym, że „nie gra na trąbce tak, jak gra się na trąbce”. Dźwięki, które wydobywa z instrumentu, dają zmysłową przyjemność bliższą raczej zapachom i smakom niż wrażeniom słuchowym.

Zachowawcza stylistyka, za którą właśnie bywa krytykowany, stanowi jedynie scenografię dla owego zjawiskowego brzmienia. Zresztą nawet w ramach tradycji Akinmusire pozostaje niespokojny. W „Confessions to My Daughter” cały kwintet gra elegancko i melodyjnie. Nerwowy dialog z perkusją prowadzi w „My Name is Oscar” z melodeklamowanym hołdem dla Oscara Granta, kierowcy zastrzelonego w 2009 roku przez nadgorliwego policjanta. Rację mają jednak ci, którzy oprotowali tytułowanie Akinmusire największą nadzieją jazzu. Trębacz już myśli bowiem o skoku w bok: rozważa nagranie płyty z kwartetem smyczkowym, z laptopowcami, a skrycie marzy o duecie z harfistką i pieśniarką Joanną Newsom. „Za 50 lat – zarzeka się – na pewno nie zobaczycie mnie w kwintecie jazzowym”. Trzymamy za słowo. ---Przekrój

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