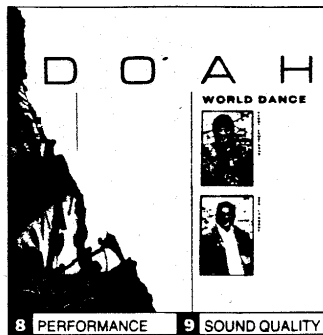


CD Review

AUGUST 1989



Dóah: World Dance

Producers: Randy Armstrong, Ken LaRoche
Engineer: Ed Goodreau
Global Pacific ZK 40734 (AAD) 1988 (88)
Disc time: 41:51

Dóah's *World Dance* is catchy enough to immediately grab your attention and diverse enough to hold your interest throughout subsequent listenings. The leaders of this polished and spirited ensemble, guitarist Randy Armstrong and keyboardist Ken LaRoche, have composed some of the brightest contemporary instrumentals this side of the hemisphere.

World Dance is an appropriate title for such a mixture of upbeat, rhythmic tunes utilizing everything from standard guitars, keyboards, and saxophones to South American and Indian percussion, African Mbira, Bansri flute, sitar, zither, and Chinese yueh-chin. Don't expect too much of a third world bent, however. Dóah has incorporated exotic instrumentation into a decidedly Western sound that grooves with hummable melodies and contemporary jazz harmonies for the most part.

In fact, the only weaknesses in the music stem from occasional chordal and melodic clichés that we've all heard accompanying movies and television commercials. "Wayo" suffers the most from an overabundance of familiar hooks. But just when you think they're slipping a little too far into something routine, these imaginative musicians come up with an unusual twist of phrase or a jazzy solo that takes off in a satisfying direction. The extended percussion break in the title cut as well as the entire arrangement of "The Awakening" (in which the musicians sing the word "peace" in 39 languages to a particularly moving score), provide some of the best moments on this spirited disc. Overall, it's a winning combination, one that's sure to appeal to a wide variety of listeners.

The sound also is a joy: crisp, clean, and complementary to this fairly complex tapestry of instruments from around the world.

—Linda Kohanov