

Los Angeles Times

Tuesday, April 4, 1989

MUSIC REVIEW

DO'AH's Global Eclecticism

Let's start with the name. The group DO'AH, according to co-leader and guitarist Randy Armstrong, is a Persian word signifying a call to prayer.

A bit esoteric, perhaps, for a pop or jazz group, but, as its Sunday-night opening set at At My Place made amply clear, New Hampshire-based New Age group DO'AH has lofty aspirations—most notably to blend jazz and pop with what might loosely (if somewhat inaccurately) be described as "world music."

Other ensembles—Eternal Winds, Don Cherry, Jan Garbarek and Milton Nascimento, to name only a few, come to mind—have had similar goals. But DO'AH (in the persons of co-leaders Armstrong and keyboardist Ken La Roche) has been pursuing its unique vision for nearly 15 years.

Intrinsic to the music it has created is a huge array of instruments from around the world. La Roche's specialty, in addition to keyboards, is flutes—pan flutes, bamboo flutes, pottery flutes, tin whistles and all stops in between.

Armstrong frequently moved from guitar to a variety of drums and the marimba-like West African *balophon*.

The other players—drummer Marty Quinn, bassist Volker Nahrman and saxophonist Charlie Jenkinson—were equally versatile, tapping, stroking, rubbing and banging on a colorful melange of unidentifiable, but clearly sound-making objects.

The result of all this global eclecticism was a surprisingly accessible program of music. Unusual time signatures swept through some of the pieces, others erupted with sudden vocal inflections and modal melodies.

DO'AH clearly is a group with skills and potential.

—DON HECKMAN