

# Mp3 Idris Ackamoor - Portrait



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Portrait is Idris Ackamoor's maiden voyage CD filled with beautiful vocals, exhilarating solos and extraordinary compositions in the straight ahead and avant garde jazz tradition. 9 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Weird Jazz, JAZZ: Free Jazz Details: IDRIS ACKAMOO is a multi-instrumentalist, composer, actor, tap dancer, director, and producer. He is the Founder and Executive/Co-Artistic Director of the San Francisco performance company, Cultural Odyssey, that is approaching its twenty-fifth year. Idris' primary instrument is the alto saxophone. An accomplished tap dancer, Idris' signature performance is his uncanny ability to combine tap dancing with playing his saxophone simultaneously: a one-of-kind act! For twenty-five years Idris and his partner actress Rhodessa Jones (Jones Ackamoor) have developed over a dozen original duet productions that have toured throughout the United States, Japan, and Europe receiving critical and audience acclaim as well as numerous awards for their innovative interdisciplinary work. The Duet has performed at such prestigious venues as La Mama Theater and the Public Theater in New York City, Yale Repertory Theater, in New Haven, Steppenwolf Theater in Chicago, and the National Black Theatre Festival. Since 1976 Idris has been registered as a writer and publisher with Broadcast Music Inc. and has registered over fifty musical compositions that are published through his publishing company, Aomawa Music. Idris has composed for theater, dance companies, video/film productions, and student ensembles. The theaters he has composed for include Cultural Odyssey, Penumbra Theater in St. Paul, MN., the Lorraine Hansberry Theater in San Francisco, and La Mama Theater in New York City, among others. He has composed for Dimensions Dance Company, dancer/choreographer Bill T. Jones, and dancer Robert Henry Johnson. He also composed music for the score of the documentary Tongues Untied by the late filmmaker Marlon Riggs. His primary compositional focus for over thirty-years have been the various musical groups he has lead. His current band, the Idris Ackamoor Ensemble, is one of

the Bay Area's most exciting and respected aggregations. The Ensemble's members have included some of the Bay Area's most respected musicians including pianist Art Hirahara, drummer Fred Harris, percussionist Baba Duru, and vocalist Daria Nile. During 1999 Idris founded the Underground Jazz Festival. He wanted to help create a vehicle for local jazz musicians and composers to have a stage for their work. The first Festival was presented in collaboration with ODC Theater in February 1999 and featured the Idris Ackamoor Ensemble, the India Cooke Quartet featuring India on violin and Babatunde Lea on drums, the Marcus Shelby Jazz Trio, and the Ed Kelley Quartet featuring tenor saxophonist Robert Stewart. In February 2001 the Festival was renamed the Underground Jazz Cabaret and was presented once again in collaboration with ODC Theater where Idris Ackamoor and Cultural Odyssey presented noted tenor saxophone legend John Tchicai, pianist Omar Sosa, violinist India Cooke, vocalist Daria Nile and the Idris Ackamoor Ensemble. Three months later in April 2001, due to the success of the ODC presentation, the Cabaret was presented at the Lorraine Hansberry Theater. A new group of jazz artists were featured including Famoudou Don Moye of the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Koto player Miya Masaoka, harpist Destiny, drummer Frederick Harris, pianist Art Hirahara, and experimental musician Kitundu. During May 2004 the renowned tenor/soprano saxophonist Chico Freeman was the special guest for the Cabaret. In October 2001 the Idris Ackamoor Ensemble toured Europe performing at the Nickelsdorf Jazz Club in Austria, the Jazz Studio in Nurnberg, Germany, Weinlokal Jazz Club in Neustadt, Germany and many other locations. During November 2000 Idris Ackamoor and Cultural Odyssey received an Arts International Grant to support the fall European tour of the Idris Ackamoor Ensemble. The Ensemble performed at the Jazz Ost West International Jazz Festival in Nurnberg, Germany as well as various jazz clubs in Austria. In 2004 Idris released his third CD entitled, "Homage to Cuba", inspired by his recent studies in Cuba. In 1999 Idris released his second jazz CD entitled, "Centurian". Centurian contains eight original Ackamoor compositions played by his ensemble. During 1998 Idris recorded and released his first CD entitled "Portrait" which contains nine original Ackamoor compositions. Both CD's have been favorably reviewed by major music publications. Idris has received numerous awards for his compositional and performance work. In November 2003 he was presented with a "GOLDIE Lifetime Achievement Award" presented by the San Francisco Bay Guardian. In May 2003 he was awarded a Business Arts Council Award for Non-Profit Excellence. In June 2002 Idris was awarded an Otto Rene Castillo Award for Political Theater. In December 2000 he was awarded a San Francisco

Foundation Community Leadership Award in recognition of outstanding contributions to improving the life in the Bay Area. In New York during November 1999 he received a prestigious AUDELCO Board of Director's Award "For 20 years of dedication in creating, producing and presenting original Theatre Performance Art". In August 1998 he was awarded the Black Theatre Network's Presidential Pathfinder Award to honor his contributions to the field of performance. He is the recipient of three National Endowment for the Arts Grants in jazz performance and composition. In December 1995 Idris received New York City's 23rd Annual AUDELCO Awards for "Best Male Performer in a Musical" and "Musical Production of the Year" for his performance of "Shoehorn!". Idris has also received a prestigious New York "BESSIE" for his compositional score and direction of Rhodessa Jones' one-woman show, "Big Butt Girls, Hard-Headed Women", an ISADORA DUNCAN Award, and a SOLO MIO Award in recognition of Outstanding Creative Achievement in San Francisco performance. Idris has performed with percussionist Don Moye of the Art Ensemble of Chicago, the Cecil Taylor Orchestra at the 1995 San Francisco Jazz Festival, New York based bass player Wilber Morris, percussionist Kenneth Nash, tenor saxophone legend John Tchicai and Chico Freeman, and guitarist Vernon Reid. He has been a regular at the Ocho Rios Jamaica Jazz Festival (1993-96) performed and taught at the Rotterdam International Jazz Festival in Holland in 1994 where he conducted a residency with young Dutch jazz musicians. The students trained for one week to perform new compositions by Mr. Ackamoor that were then performed as a part of the Festival. During the summer of 1996 Idris toured Japan performing his unique act of playing saxophone and tap dancing simultaneously. One of Idris' most influential teachers was piano virtuoso, Cecil Taylor. He studied music performance and composition with Mr. Taylor as a student at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio where he graduated in 1973 receiving a B.A. in Music. During his studies at Antioch, Idris took a years leave of this country in order to seek out his artistic freedom. Arriving in Paris, France with the idea of forming a musical group, he was co-founder of the jazz ensemble, The Pyramids, which released 3 albums and received international acclaim. Ten Ackamoor compositions can be heard on the 3 albums recorded by the Pyramids. After completing a successful 3 months touring Europe with the Pyramids, Idris departed for Africa. Here, he began 9 months of research into the rich and complex musical traditions of Africa. Working, instrument in hand, he took slides and recorded music in the field traveling to six countries in all (Morocco, Senegal, Ghana, Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia). Idris' compositional style is greatly influenced by his studies in Africa.

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