

Ammasu Akapoma Group The Music Of Ammasu: Brong Ahasu, Ghana 1976

COUNTRY & EASTERN CD

Archive field recordings invite, maybe even demand reverent listening. Be it the clanking chains and field hollers of Alan Lomax's *Negro Prison Blues & Songs* or the snaggle-toothed hymns of the Smithsonian Folkways *Mountain Music Of Kentucky* collection, hearing these ghostly traces of forgotten lives resurfacing through gauzy layers of tape hiss can be a deeply moving experience: both melancholy and unnervingly sublime.

Though it is mainly comprised of live renditions of tribal funeral dirges, this 32 year old collection of traditional West African music by The Ammasu Akapoma Group is just as poignant, but much less morbid than one might expect. Recorded by Swedish musician Bengt Berger and his wife Prudence, a social anthropologist, during an extended stay in the Brong-Ahafo region of midwestern Ghana in 1976, these songs, captured in crystalline quality, all but explode with life. In fact, according to a key player quoted in the beautifully illustrated sleevenotes: "Akapoma means to unite... to show our strength as people." From the pointillist percussion and rippling drum work of "My Eyes Are Filled With Tears" to the raw-throated vocal harmonies of "Denseuo", this joyful and celebratory mourning soundtrack does exactly that.

DAVE STELFOX

The Office Ambience

Portishead

Third (Island)

Evangelista

Hello, Voyager (Constellation)

Es

Sateenkaarisuudelma (Fonal)

Neptune

Gong Lake (Table Of The Elements)

Steve Lantner Trio

What You Can Throw (Hatology)

Ryoji Ikeda

1000 Fragments (Raster-Noton)

Jeff Mills

Gamma Player Compilation Vol 1 (Axis)

Various

Asian Flashback (PSF)

Ammasu Akapoma Group

The Music Of Ammasu (Country & Eastern)

Manuel Zurria

Repeat! (Die Schachtel)

Goem

Robbed (Small Voices)

Zerfu

Demissie Akotet (Terp)

Shackleton featuring Tenfold Vengeance

Death Is Not Final (Skull Disco 12")

John Butcher/Torsen Muller/

Dylan van der Schyff

Way Out Northwest (Drip Audio)

Fabio Orsi

Find Electronica (A Silent Place)

Compiled by *The Wire* Sound System