



Articles

Reviews

MP3s

Videos

New Releases

Future Articles

Log In | Sign Up

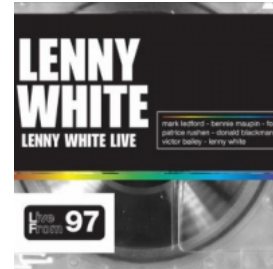
1

CD/LP/Track Review

## Lenny White: Lenny White Live (2013)

By [DAN BILAWSKY](#), Published: April 7, 2013

Drumming legend [Lenny White](#) made his first trip to Japan in 1971, before he became a stick wielding star with fusion pioneers [Return To Forever](#). He's played to appreciative audiences in that country time and again over the years, in various settings and with various outfits, so it comes as a shock to hear that he didn't receive an offer to bring one of his own groups over there until 1997. When the offer finally came, White didn't waste the opportunity. He called up some old friends and put together a band with muscle and groove to spare. The resultant tour was a success, as White and company found their funky, fusion-laced footing without a problem. Now, the music they made on that tour is available for all to hear.



*Lenny White Live* features lengthy treatments of material from a pair of then-current White albums—*Present Tense* (Hip Bop Essence, 1995) and *Renderers Of Spirit* (Hip Bop Essence, 1996)—and every performance betters its original counterpart. The material still essentially exists in the same form, as electric fusion that marries funk, rock, R&B and jazz, but it breathes fresh air, not stifled oxygen. Slamming beats underscore corrosive-and-serrated solo lines ("Dark"), a restrained-heady duality comes into focus ("East St. Louis"), steady pocket playing serves as a foundation for individual explorations ("Whew! What A Dream"), and a fired up, funky bottom powers energetic discoveries that occur above the surface ("Wolfbane").

The band burns with the fire of a thousand suns, following White wherever he may go. [Bennie Maupin](#) leaves his bass clarinet at home, but it turns out he doesn't need it; his saxophone(s) serve him well, whether melting flesh ("Wolfbane") or messing around with "Nature Boy" during a solo spot ("East St. Louis"). Trumpeter Mark Ledford meshes well with Maupin and his muted voice makes an impression that isn't all [Miles Davis](#)-style moodiness. The rhythm section, which contains two bassists, two keyboard players, and White, may sound unwieldy on paper, but each player has a specific role. [Victor Bailey](#) is the slapping, groove-setting bassist who occasionally comes out front, and [Foley](#) delivers guitar-like, "lead bass" work. [Patrice Rushen](#) is responsible for to-die-for piano solos that rip through the fabric of these songs, while Donald Blackman delivers the atmospheric, and occasionally unearthly, keyboard work that appears throughout.

White, as many already know, provides the hands and feet that serve as the hammer(s) of God. He remains a powerhouse of a drummer, capable of driving a song with muscular beats that, while hardly refined, remain appropriate within the context that he's created. He's a passion player with

the chops to back up his enthusiasm and he's capable of building an arc of intensity that few others can match. He produced this recording so the mix is built in his image, with a balanced sound that still gives some love to the oft neglected low end. This is a fusion feast that took way too long to serve; maybe White has some other tasty treats in his archive that he'll offer up for consumption in the near future.

Track Listing: Whew! What A Dream; East St. Louis; Pick Pocket; Dark; Wolfbane; Whew! What A Dream (alt.).

Personnel: Mark Ledford: trumpet; Bennie Maupin; saxophones; Foley: lead bass; Patrice Rushen: keyboards; Donald Blackman: keyboards; Victor Bailey: bass; Lenny White: drums.

Record Label: BFM Jazz

Style: [Fusion/Progressive Rock](#)

1

**Shop for jazz:**

[Amazon](#) [CD Baby](#) [CD Universe](#) [HDtracks](#) [iTunes](#)

**Lenny White Related**

- Photos
- Calendar
- Videos
- Articles
- Similar Artists
- Fans
- Links

[View more Lenny White photos](#) | [Upload Lenny White photos](#)

**0 comments**

★ 0



Leave a message...

Best ▾ Community

Share

No one has commented yet.

**ALSO ON ALL ABOUT JAZZ**

[What's this?](#)

**Yusef Lateef in New York City, April 6**

1 comment • 11 days ago



**Michael Gwynne** — I gotta get my ass out to see this man. His music has been with me since 1959 and here he is. So I at least gotta make ...

**updateTake Five Wlth Viktorija Pilatovic**

2 comments • 19 days ago



**Maxim Micheliou** — Viktorija, I am glad the article is out. How is the contest in Odessa going? Good luck with that too!

**updateReliving Elvis**

4 comments • 22 days ago



**ElvisLucky PresleyJackson** — One of the best Elvis fan written articles I have ever read. Thank you! I saw Elvis myself 15 times in Las Vegas ...

**Jazz Near You - Venue: Roulette [in Brooklyn, NY]**

1 comment • 20 days ago



**Michael Gwynne** — On the way SATurday to hear him play.

[Comment feed](#) [Subscribe via email](#)