

Compact disc noncirc CD #17,098

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2014

11-18



presents

A Sun Ra Centenary Special Event!

featuring Seattle's own

Sun Ra Tribute Band

Jones Playhouse, 18 November 2014

CD #17,099

Performed without intermission, the set includes *Saturn, Lights of a Satellite, Carefree, Space Loneliness, Somewhere Else, Others in Their World, Outer Nothingness, A Call for All Demons, We Travel the Spaceways*, costumes, improvisations, processions and other surprises.

Artist Biography by Scott Yanow

Of all the jazz musicians, **Sun Ra** was probably the most controversial. He did not make it easy for people to take him seriously, for he surrounded his adventurous music with costumes and mythology that both looked backward toward ancient Egypt and forward into science fiction. In addition, **Ra** documented his music in very erratic fashion on his Saturn label, generally not listing recording dates and giving inaccurate personnel information, so one could not really tell how advanced some of his innovations were. It has taken a lot of time to sort it all out (although **Robert L. Campbell's Sun Ra** discography has done a miraculous job). In addition, while there were times when **Sun Ra's** aggregation performed brilliantly, on other occasions they were badly out of tune and showcasing absurd vocals. Near the end of his life, **Ra** was featuring plate twirlers and fire eaters in his colorful show as a sort of **Ed Sullivan** for the 1980s.

But despite all of the trappings, **Sun Ra** was a major innovator. Born **Herman Sonny Blount** in Birmingham, AL (although he claimed he was from another planet), **Ra** led his own band for the first time in 1934. He freelanced at a variety of jobs in the Midwest, working as a pianist/arranger with **Fletcher Henderson** in 1946-1947. He appeared on some obscure records as early as 1948, but really got started around 1953. Leading a big band (which he called **the Arkestra**) in Chicago, **Ra** started off playing advanced bop, but early on was open to the influences of other cultures, experimenting with primitive electric keyboards, and playing free long before the avant-garde got established.

After moving to New York in 1961, **Ra** performed some of his most advanced work. In 1970, he relocated his group to Philadelphia, and in later years alternated free improvisations and mystical group chants with eccentric versions of swing tunes, sounding like a spaced-out **Fletcher Henderson** orchestra. Many of his most important sidemen were with him on and off for decades (most notably **John Gilmore** on tenor, altoist **Marshall Allen**, and baritonist **Pat Patrick**). **Ra**, who recorded for more than a dozen labels, has been well served by Evidence's extensive repackaging of many of his Saturn dates, which have at last been outfitted with correct dates and personnel details. In the late '90s, other labels began reissuing albums from **Sun Ra's** vast catalog, an effort that will surely continue for years to come.

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Special thanks to Richard Karpen, Director, UW School of Music; staff of UW School of Music; and staff of Floyd and Delores Jones Playhouse.

W SCHOOL OF MUSIC
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON



****SPECIAL CENTENARY EVENT!****



In this **Sun Ra Centenary** year “Sun Ra Tribute Band” gathers to celebrate with a concert at Jones Playhouse in Seattle’s “U District” at 4045 University Way, 7:30 pm, 18 November 2014. \$10 cash or check at the door (no advance sales). Notecard is applicable. Request disability accommodation at: (206) 543-6450/V, (206) 543-6452/TTY, (206) 685 7264 (FAX), or dso@u.washington.edu.

Costumes and processions in the spirit of Sun Ra are the order of the day for this event along with group vocals and other features of Sun Ra’s music. Pieces to be performed include Call for All Demons; Enlightenment; Space Loneliness; and Somewhere Else. Herman “Sonny” Blount officially became Sun Ra in the early 50s, declaring that he was from the angel race whose mission it was to be a cosmic communicator. This incarnation of the Sun Ra Tribute Band first performed at On the Boards when the Hubble Telescope got its corrective lens, and the images of the universe became forever imprinted on our collective psyches.



Photo by Daniel Shehan, Chapel Performance Space, 2011 (program, other info overleaf)

Performers include a mix of former UW students, retired faculty and members of the community: Greg Campbell, percussion, horn; Stuart Dempster, trombone; Tom Baker, guitar; Jim Knodle, trumpet; Michael Monhart, saxophone; Bill Moyer, percussion; Dan O'Brien, bass; Greg Sinibaldi, saxophone; Bill Smith, clarinet; Lynette Westendorf, piano and leader.

Sun Ra Centenary program supplement

November 18, 2014 - Jones Playhouse

All pieces by Sun Ra unless noted

CD#17,099

Approx. start time - title

00:35 - Procession (improv)

8:02 - Saturn

13:19 - Lights of a Satellite

19:00 - Welcome/Stu Dempster

19:50 - Carefree

26:40 - Space Loneliness

34:55 - Somewhere Else

42:15 - The Others in Their World

52:43 - Outer Nothingness

59:40 - Introductions/Lynette Westendorf

1:01:47 - A Call for all Demons

1:11:42 - We Travel the Spaceways

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