



The Sun Ra Centennial Dream Arkestra to Release *Live at the Babylon*, Documenting 2014 Centennial Tour

Available September 4 on IN+OUT Records

Recording Marks First Album Released in Eight Years

Forever alterable, young again and freshly strengthened, **The Sun Ra Centennial Arkestra** under the direction of **Marshall Allen** presents itself on *Live at the Babylon*, the only live recording from the Centennial Dream Arkestra tour. Recorded at Istanbul's Babylon music club, marking the hundredth birthday of its founder, Sun Ra, the tour kicked off in 2014 and led the band around the globe. The ensemble sparked with a briskness that is a testimony to the timelessness and infinity of their mission.

Live at the Babylon is an aural illustration of the enthusiasm of the brothers Mehmet and Ahmet Uluğ. The tenacious Sun Ra fans indeed made it happen. They wanted to bring the **Sun Ra Arkestra** to Istanbul for the first time since 1990. Both, however, were inexperienced promoters. They drove the band on a flat bed trailer down the arterial road to Taksim-Square and the nearby concert hall they had booked. The unusual promotion campaign drew thousands of curious spectators. Sun Ra's blessing turned out to be fruitful with the concert being a great success. In consequence, the Uluğ brothers founded the music promotion enterprise Pozitif and later on the Babylon. An Istanbul myth had come to life. Therefore, this CD/DVD special edition is dedicated to the late Mehmet Uluğ, whose untimely death occurred in 2012.

Terrific talents grew up in the well-kept house of 91-year-old Maestro Allen in Philadelphia, including piano player **Farid Barron**, Ra's current representative on planet Earth. Barron's exceptional sense of timing, phrasing and timbre puts him on the same level as piano players such as Art Tatum. Before he started to travel to the opposite side of the jazz continuum, Barron had contributed to the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra under the direction of Wynton Marsalis. It was Allen who also discovered violin player and highly gifted vocalist **Tara Middleton**, whose vibrant and velvet, impressive alto voice is capable of claiming the chairs of two Arkestra legends; June Tyson and Art Jenkins. Within the sequence of brilliant solos, **James Stuart** convinces with a mighty overblown, circular-breathing stream of strength on tenor saxophone. Band veteran **Vincent Chancey**, Sun Ra's favorite on the French horn, displays archaic charisma in sounding like a siren's singing or conch shell trumpet. With **Wayne Anthony Smith Jr.** on the drums, Allen took in a young and versatile timekeeper, who is potent to act as the kicking and the supporting leg while also simultaneously providing a confident rhythm base for the music spectacle. The entire rhythm section dives deep into the band's history, which has always closely tied together place and time to gain singularity.

Attracted by rhythm layers which reach into each other, the listener gets into the musical cosmos in a quite gentle way, as if sleepwalking. The pieces build upon each other and grow into each other. Microtonal sequences oscillate across the entire interplay of compositions, they emerge and dive, change perpetually, as if the tones were alchemical ingredients of a lively and ever more self-generating primeval soup. The merit goes to Allen, who is tirelessly evaluating and interpreting the immeasurable treasure of the tone-documents Sun Ra left behind. These

recordings stem from the never-ending rehearsals in Sun Ra's headquarters, and their musical treasure has never before been unveiled in front of an audience. Being reconstructed from the original compositions such as "Ra #2" and "Carefree #2," the Arkestra is an experience of splendid resurrection whether it is the live concert or on the recording ***Live at the Babylon***. It is a sensation. It is Sun Ra rediscovered.

The Sun Ra Akestra · *Live at The Babylon*
In+Out Records · Release Date: September 4, 2015

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