

Meshell Ndegeocello's Red Hot & Ra: The Magic City Album Stream



Meshell Ndegeocello's curated *Red, Hot & Ra: The Magic City* is a tribute to the work of the late Afro-jazz futurist Sun Ra. The album is the latest in the Red Hot Organization's series of projects started three decades ago to raise awareness and money for A.I.D.S. Ndegeocello uses Sun Ra as a muse to produce abstract sketches of his work instead of cover songs. Every composition is original and reflects Sun Ra's visionary status by tapping the creativity of contemporary voices. In some places, Sun Ra actually appears when he is sampled recanting the band's travels and his philosophy on "Solipsistic Panacea (Black Antique)" and "Departure Of The Seven Sisters." Ndegeocello delves into the spirit of Sun Ra's expression with a variety of collaborators including Marshall Allen who is the leader of the late musician's Arkestra. Hip-Hop/punk rocker Pink Siifu provides ethereal poetry and scraggly-whispered rap on "El-soul The Companion, Traveler" and "Yet Differently Not- Mars Hall (in)."

"#9 Venus The Living Myth" pays homage to Sun Ra's respect for other planets and his avant-garde jazz with a cacophony of saxophones, percussion eruptions, choral-like chants, and quotes from the master himself. The Justin Hicks-penned "Reproductive Manatees" has Sun Ra's early proto-funk keyboard experimentation and parts that sound like sung prayers. Ndegeocello's creative decisions encapsulate Sun Ra's sonic and philosophical creed of jazz-based musical freedom and respect for other life forms and planets. *The Magic City* presents all the spookiness, improvisation, mystery, and elusiveness of Sun Ra and his Arkestra who were waiting on

aliens decades before George Clinton's mothership landed in D.C.

Listen: Justin Hicks' Bedlam Blues From Red Hot Sun Ra Tribute



Cover Art by Cécile McLorin Salvant

"Bedlam Blues" is the second single from the *Red, Hot & Ra: The Magic City*. Justin Hicks performs the song that he wrote after hearing Sun Ra's poem, "The Mirror Of Things To Be." He explained in a statement:

"Some years ago I wrote a piece of a song based on Sun Ra's poem 'The Mirror Of Things To Be', over the years it's been a space for me to think through and speak on the state of humans who drive the world with their bodies. Sometimes it's hard to feel how integral we all are to every single system we live with. Yet imagining a different way or other systems can be terrifying and disorienting. "

The Meshell Ndegecello curated album brings the late Afrofuturist jazz innovator Sun Ra's music into a modern musical world. The music is not a strict group of cover songs but compositions inspired by Sun Ra's work which was a mix of cosmic philosophies, pageantry, and an encyclopedia of jazz styles performed by his Arkestra. Marshall Allen, the leader of the Arkestra, is on the album in addition to rapper/punk

rocker Pink Siifu, bassist Rahsaan Carter, drummers Kojo Roney, Deantoni Parks, and more. *Red, Hot & Ra: The Magic City* hits retail on April 12th.

Red, Hot & Ra: The Magic City

1. Solipsistic Panacea (Black Antiques)
 2. Departure Guide Of The 7 Sisters
 3. Bedlam Blues
 4. #9 Venus The Living Myth
 5. El-Soul The Companion, Traveler
 6. LQ1TY – 29 Years
 7. Yet Differently Not- Mars Hall
 8. Reproductive Manatees – Sunny Said Up!
 9. The World Of Shadow
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**Meshell Ndegeocello
Introduces Sun Ra Tribute
Album Red Hot + Ra: The Magic
City**



Credit: Charlie Gross

Meshell Ndegeocello introduces the latest Sun Ra tribute album from the Red Hot Organization with the single “Venus The Living Myth.” *Red Hot + Ra: The Magic City* is the third tribute album dedicated to the late jazz icon from the organization and Ndegeocello’s third time being on a Red Hot project. The song is a mix of Sun Ra’s “Rocket Number 9” and “The Living Myth.” Marshall Allen, the longtime leader of Sun Ra’s Arkestra is on the recording with jazz prodigy Immanuel Wilkins who played with them at the age of 10 years ago in Philadelphia. *Red Hot + Ra: The Magic City* seeks to take the essence of Sun Ra’s music and reimagine it through the lens of contemporary artists. Hip-hop, punk, and jazz vocalist Pink Siifu; drummer Kojo Roney, nephew of late trumpeter Wallace Roney; bassist Rashsaan Carter; vocalist-composer Justin Hicks, violinist Eddy Kwon and more are featured on the album.

Ndegeocello and Hector Castillo produced and mixed *Red Hot + Ra: The Magic City*. The Red Hot Organization previously

released a cover of Sun Ra's ["Nuclear War"](#) in 2023. Ndegeocello revealed in a press statement that her reading of John Swed's *Space Is The Place: The Lives And Times Of Sun Ra* during the 2020 pandemic changed her view of the eccentric keyboard innovator who was born Herman Poole Blount.

"I haven't been the same since reading that book," says Meshell. "I think it's what inspired [2023's great Grammy-winning album] The Omnichord Real Book, in the sense of, 'what happens when you're no longer driven by youth?' Sun Ra's music is a living organism, and once you immerse yourself in his work, his life, you recognize there's a fork in the road – that you really have to make choices, because there's so many other realms and dimensions to explore Musically."

Red Hot + Ra: The Magic City will be released on April 12th. The Sun Ra series will have future albums produced by Om'Mas Keith, Madlib, and Kronos Quartet.

Angel Bat Dawid's Cover Of Sun Ra's Nuclear War Is Remixed By Oui Ennui



Oui Ennui has remixed Angel Bat Dawid's cover of Sun Ra's "Nuclear War" as part of the *Red, Hot + Ra* tribute album. The Sun Ra tribute which is part of the Red Hot series came out last month. Ennui and Dawid have worked together in the past specifically, their 2020 album *Message From The Daoui*. The remix of "Nuclear War" is a combination of calm and chaos. The layers of sounds encompassing multiple voices including Sun Ra's build anxiously with the fear of a war-inducing button push. There are three other versions of "Nuclear War" on the remix EP from Sanford Biggers, Dennis Bovell and Joel Tarman. Ennui's remix is streaming now and the EP will officially be released on July 14th. *Red, Hot + Ra: Nuclear War* is the first album tribute to Sun Ra from the Red Hot organization and there are plans for more over the next two years. The late jazz visionary was a pioneer of Afrofuturism and was an early user of synthesizers. "Nuclear War" was recorded in 1982 and released as a 12" in Britain and as an album exclusively in Italy two years later. The album was released in the United

States in 2001.

[Red Hot & Ra – Nuclear War : The Remixes by Red Hot Org](#)