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THE TISZIJI MUNOZ TRIO!!!

TISZIJI MUNOZ / DON PATE / RA KALAM BOB MOSES - Drop Dead (Anami Music 062; USA)

Featuring Tisziji Munoz on guitar, Yaka Don Pate on contrabass and Ra Kalam Bob Moses on drums. This session was actually recorded in July of 2006, but was shelved at the time to take care of some sonic problems. It has been a few years since we had any new discs by Cosmic Guitar Master, Tisziji Munoz, hence, this disc has just been released into our difficult world situation and feels like the Sonic Medicine that we can all use. Tisziji Munoz has released around fifty discs since his first album came out in 1978 on India Navigation, around the same time he was playing with Pharoah Sanders. The majority of Munoz releases, most of which have been released on his own Anami Music label, have had the same rhythm team members for many years: Don Pate on bass and Rashied Ali or RaKalam Bob Moses on drums. Mr. Munoz claims to have been influenced by the ancient masters, John Coltrane and Pharoah Sanders, who he has played with on & off throughout the many years. Munoz has also often worked with different pianists/keyboardists: Bernie Senensky, Marilyn Crispell, John Medeski and longtime friend Paul Shaeffer. On occasion, Munoz will also add a saxist like Dave Liebman, Ravi Coltrane, as well as with Pharoah Sanders.

This disc however, titled 'Drop Dead', features just a trio with Don Pate and Ra Kalam Bob Moses and it is indeed a rarity amongst Munoz releases. This consists of just four pieces, all between 7 and 16 minutes long and all were written by Mr. Munoz. The first, "Protect This Dead Relative from Ignorance", starts slowly & calmly but picks up quickly. Munoz has a unique way of playing these lines, building up the inner tension, reaching up higher and higher as he goes. Bassist Don Pate, plays that heartbeat-like pulse at the center of the cyclone while the guitar and drums play those long frenetic lines tightly together. Munoz will often hold on to a singular note or short line of notes, carefully tightening up, bending or caressing that special note or phrase. The bass and/or the drums will then repeat that note/phrase, giving us a place to hold on to while Munoz reaches even higher. The opening of "Bestow the Light of Fearlessness", has a lovely, solemn, ancient sounding melody. Once the trio states the theme, they again start to build. The bass slowly repeats that melodic fragment while the guitar & drums join forces, the lightning-like licks increasing in tempo and intensity, often astonishing. "The Presence of Clear Light" has the trio slow down even more, the vibe is ever so peaceful. Munoz takes his time, carefully bending certain notes, making each one count, there is an almost hidden melody going on, which you don't often notice when the tempo increases to another furious stream. Midway through this long piece, start to play another somewhat familiar bluesy fragment which has a way of tugging at our heartstrings. What I like about this piece is the way it builds to a furious crescendo and then slowly glides down to the original sense of calm. There seems to be a battle going on here, between death and life or between Mother Nature and HuMankind. Whenever I get together or communicate with Tisziji Munoz or Ra Kalam, we always greet each other with the word "HU". It is similar to the word "shalom" which is Hebrew for "hello, goodbye & peace". Whenever we use that special word, it is as if two cosmic spirits meet, greet and respect each other's presence. Do not take the word lightly, only if you do feel that that righteous spirit is there. HU to you from the land of the truly Free Spirits. - Bruce Lee Gallanter, DMG