

JOHN CAGE MEETS SUN RA LP (Meltdown)

My burrows deeper and deeper into the BLOG TO COMM vaults has yielded yet another obscure, mainly this live recording of a concert featuring the meeting of two titans of 20th-century doo-wah music at a Coney Island sideshow of all places! Dunno whose idea it was to match the whiteness of John Cage with Sun Ra's astro-black visions but considering how both of 'em were major twisters and shakers in what used to be known as the "avant garde" maybe a performance by the two alternating between hot free-jazz spasms and epiglottal mutterings is something that would seem the "end all" in just what music as it stood was all about. Or at least music as it stood as far as being not just on the edge but way *over* it would mean to way too many of us more concerned with the sound *between* the notes, if you know what I mean...

Nothing *revelatory* here and I'm positive that members of both camps will find more'n a few bugs and errors here but I *do* think it's rather charming in its own way. What it was, was Ra playing electronic paradoodles on his keyboard for a spell followed by Cage doing more of those late-eighties throaty singing which sounds rather post-tracheal, kinda like listening to Lon Chaney Jr. talking during his final years. Major gaps of silence pervade Cage's segments as well. Then in comes Ra with more of his atonal scronks and screams jolting you back into a more er, *urban* frame of mind.

Well, it's a *footnote* to the careers of two guys who certainly helped me listen to music with more'n my AM-radio ears attuned. And hey, if you think the whole idea of putting Ra and Cage on the same stage was kinda misguided in the first place well, I gotta admit that the concept *does* sound as screwy as all of those DC/Marvel crossovers that we've seen since the late-seventies!

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MELTDOWN