

WIRE

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By Robert Barry

Music From The World Tomorrow Lawrence Kumpf (Editor)

A square paper sleeve in faded grey and yellowed white, audiotape, all lower case, is printed in the top left hand corner. In the bottom right, the manufacturer is identified as Audio Devices Inc of Madison Avenue, New York. The handwriting, in blue biro and black felt tip, belongs to Alton Abrahams, co-founder of El Satellite Records. The music on the tape inside the box was composed by Abrahams's business partner Sun Ra.

We are looking at the master tape to the 1965 album *Angels And Demons At Play* by Sun Ra & His Myth Science Arkestra, as photographed by John Corbett, one of 34 such photos included in the present volume. In the scrawled tracklisting on the front of the box, one title has been amended: "Music From The Year 25,000" has been scribbled over and replaced with "Music From The World Tomorrow".

"Magnetic tape had a special attraction for Sun Ra," writes Corbett, and the selection of images of his archive here offers a fascinating insight into his private world: the special codes and identifiers he used, his decorative touches and development process. It is just one of the many delights in the book *Music From The World Tomorrow*, the second journal from Blank Forms, and a true box of treats from start to finish.

Here we find a young and very green Alan Licht interviewing an irascible if still enormously generous Tony Conrad over the phone in 1989. Matana Roberts speaks, tersely, about her "struggle" to reconcile her work with the "deluded hysteria" of the political situation in the country of her birth. There's Amy Cimini's analysis of Maryanne Amacher's early piece for percussion and plucked strings, *Adjacencies*. And The Wire's Marcus Boon gives Catherine Christer Hennix the space to speak of the influence on her music of her long period of study under Pandit Pran Nath.

But alongside these more formal, traditionally music journal-type interventions, there are also more intimate, less finished things: a text written by a 13 year old Zoro Babel, son of Limpe Fuchs, about her group Anima Sound's trip to America in 1981; selections from Tony Conrad's box of "Old Ideas", scrawled onto index cards throughout the 1960s and 70s, including ideas for films, for new or adapted instruments, for musical works, and even science fiction stories. These are the richest truffles in the chocolate box.

The journal's a platform for many different kinds of voices: the academic voice of Cimini and the more innocent voice of Babel; the reflective voice of Amacher's colleague at MIT, the photographer Scott S Fisher, and the visionary voice of Olaf Stapledon, from whom we find an extract from his mind-expanding 1930 novel *Last And First Men*, about a far-future human race for whom music was "the underlying reality of all things" (one of several science fiction references here).

Blank Forms was created in Brooklyn, New York in 2016, its first event celebrating Amacher's work, at the Emily Harvey Foundation. Founder and editor Lawrence Kumpf has declared a mission "to bring experimental performance and music to wider audiences" in which the journal plays an essential part, "collecting our ideas and conversations, and creating a space for the dissemination of thoughts and writings around the artists we're working with".

Music From The World Tomorrow, then, is a frequently delightful collection, ideal for dipping into at leisure, allowing its disparate voices to rub up against each other and throw off sparks.

The Wire, Issue 417, p. 78