**The Execution of Sun Ra**

the mysterious tale of a dark body sent to earth to usher in an unprecedented era of cosmic regeneration and happiness

July 4, 2014

For Immediate Release:

New book on iconoclastic cosmic jazzman hits the galaxy ->

On May 22, 2014, a global community of committed fans celebrated the 100th anniversary of the birth of one of jazz music's most enduring and colorful enigmas. Drawing equally from the ancient mythological and the futuristic technomagical, Sun Ra declared an "official" end to time and invited the most courageous and creative of Earth's people to join him in constructing an alternative planetary destiny. Ethnomusicologist Thomas Stanley has written a book that he hopes will bring Sun Ra's philosophy and message into classrooms, workplaces, homes, and hearts around the world. Titled in homage to a Sun Ra pun on the double meaning of the English word *execute*, Dr. Stanley's work offers less an exegesis of the copious legacy of the iconoclastic artist's unique cosmospeak than an active intellectual response to Sun Ra's thickly layered take on the fate and condition of intelligent life on Earth.

One thing I learned from Sun Ra is that you take him lightly at your own peril. He spoke of serious things, and needs to be taken seriously. The time is right for a new book on Ra, and Thomas Stanley's is the right book. You can never be certain with Ra, but I'm betting he'd have loved it.

John Szwed
Sun Ra biographer

Thomas Stanley has given himself the daunting task of taking Ra seriously as a critical thinker while not violating Ra's refusal to exclude paradox, play, outright contradiction, jokes, puns, bon mots and loopy homemade aphorisms from the kaleidoscopic critical mix.

Greg Tate
Author, musician

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**Availability ->**

Currently, advance copies of *the Execution* are available through the author's website <www.musicovermind.org>. The cover price is $14.95; each book ships by USPS priority mail. Bulk quantities are available. Please use the contact info on the web page.
Who is Thomas Stanley?

Dr. Thomas Stanley believes he is changing the world two ears at a time. Most of us will appreciate the capacity of music to serve as an emotional reservoir of past experience, a sonic trigger for a million shades of nostalgic reflection, but Stanley is in hot pursuit of a forward-facing musical functionality in the most obtuse quarters of audio culture. As artist and teacher, his work erupts like molten magma at the churning intersection between sound art and experimental music. As thinker, his unique synthesis draws upon the tradition of “serious” philosophy (Bergson, Deleuze, Spinoza, Žižek) but is also heavily indebted to “more accessible” thinkers (Sun Ra, Terrence McKenna, Fools Crow, Jesus Christ). Stanley's *Anti-Predator-Drone* interventions are rich with broad musical references, blackadelic hand jive, and a genuine love for human beings and their evolving condition away from war and waste and towards some kind of collective renewal. Stanley recently authored and published *The Execution of Sun Ra*, an elaboration upon ideas embedded in the work of the enigmatic 20th Century jazz icon and teacher. His doctoral research explored the unique compositional strategy of Lawrence “Butch” Morris. Stanley is an assistant professor in George Mason University’s School of Art where he has taught hip hop, sound art, critical theory, writing, and/or consciousness studies since 2004. He is also co-author of an oral history of George Clinton and P-Funk, a founding member of the volunteer curatorial collective Transparent Productions, and a weekly music programmer on fm-radio station WPFW.

What is MIND OVER MATTER MUSIC OVER MIND?

MIND OVER MATTER MUSIC OVER MIND or MOM² is an intrepid trio of improvising musicians who have been engineering liberated zones of sonic sedition since 2004. Composed of Bobby Hill on record players, Luke Stewart on bass and sequencer and Stanley on electronics and effects, MOM² offers neuroleptic enhancements to modern life through a singularly unique performance experience that defies description or repetition. Bobby Hill is a founding member of Transparent Productions and has been a featured programmer at WPFW for more than 30 years. Hill was recently honored by the Jazz Journalists Association as one of its 2014 Jazz Heroes, two dozen individuals who, according to their press release, are “activists, advocates, altruists, aiders and abettors of jazz.” Multi-instrumentalist Luke Stewart is also a WPFW music programmer, a member of several highly-in-demand ensembles, and a co-founder of Capital Bop, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving, promoting and building community around jazz in Washington, D.C.

**Highlights in the career of Dr. Stanley**

- May 1959: debuts at Jewish Hospital, Cincinnati Ohio
- May 1981: graduates from Brown University
- November 2009: awarded doctor of philosophy, University of Maryland

**Lectures and presentations**

- March 2004: “Garifuna Music in the Central American Nation of Belize” hosted by Africa In the Schools/The International Center for Transcultural Education
- February 2009: “Hip-Hop at The End of Time” hosted by Montgomery College-Rockville Music Department
- April 2010: “Bring the Noise: The Political Phenomenology of Sound and Music” hosted by the Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

**Publications**

- 1992: *Erotique Noire/Black Erotica* (ed. by Decosta-Willis, Martin, and Bell)
- 1998: *George Clinton and P-Funk: An Oral History* (with Mills, Alexander, and Wilson)
- 2014: *The Execution of Sun Ra*

**MOM² highlights**

- February 2004: debut at UMD’s David C. Driskell Center for African Diasporic Studies
- September 2009: The John F. Kennedy Center’s Millenium Stage
- January 2009: District of Columbia Arts Center
- January 2010: Bohemian Caverns w/guitarist Jean-Paul Bourelly
- January 2013: Bohemian Caverns w/drummer William Hooker
- December 2013: Conundrum Night Club and USC in Columbia, South Carolina
- May 2014: The Goethe-Institut w/saxophonist Sohrab Saadat Ladjevardi

**BOOKING**

Thomas Stanley is accepting reservations for workshops and lectures. MOM² is available for performances. Hybrid programs combining lecture and performance (solo or ensemble) are also available.

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