

ART ENSEMBLE OF CHICAGO

ROSCOE MITCHELL – FAMOUDOU DON MOYE
MOOR MOTHER – ROCO CORDOVA – ERINA NEWKIRK
NICOLE MITCHELL – HUGH RAGIN – SIMON SIEGER
JEAN COOK – EDDY KWON – TOMÉKA REID – BRETT CARSON
SILVIA BOLOGNESI – JUNIUS PAUL – JARIBU SHAHID
DUDU KOUATÉ, ENOCH WILLAMSON, BABU ATIBA, DOUSSOU TOURÉ
STEED COWART

THE SIXTH DECADE FROM PARIS TO PARIS

LIVE AT SONS D'HIVER

2023

«ROGUEART»

Everything that we had thought and projected started happening in Paris. Lester Bowie



ART ENSEMBLE OF CHICAGO, February 7th 2020, Maison des Arts de Créteil, Créteil, France. Photos © Michel Robert

This album, recorded live at the Sons d'hiver festival, commemorates the Art Ensemble's triumphant return to Paris, the city where in 1969 Roscoe Mitchell and his bandmates made a sensational debut, introducing their revolutionary music to France—and to the world. Like all enduring successes, though, the Art Ensemble's Paris debut was years in the making. The story of the Art Ensemble began in 1961, when Roscoe Mitchell and Joseph Jarman met at Woodrow Wilson Junior College on the South Side of Chicago. Within a year, the two young saxophonists were studying with Muhal Richard Abrams and playing in his Experimental Band, the renowned workshop ensemble that gave rise to the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM). Also around this time, Mitchell founded the group that would evolve into the Art Ensemble. Bassist Malachi Favors joined in 1963, and trumpeter Lester Bowie came aboard in 1966, the year when Mitchell's band made *Sound*, the first commercial recording by an AACM group. By 1968, *Sound* and other recordings by AACM members (including Jarman) were attracting an audience in France, and the drummer and impresario Claude Delcloo started to encourage AACM artists to come to Paris, a hotbed for jazz and experimental music. In 1969, Mitchell and his bandmates accepted Delcloo's offer, inviting Jarman to join the Art Ensemble for their venture to France. Mitchell, Favors, Bowie, and Jarman arrived in France in June 1969. Within weeks, they were recording for multiple labels—BYG, Pathé, and Saravah—and giving concerts nearly every night. Back in Chicago, the members of the Art Ensemble had struggled to profit from their music, but in Paris, they became some of the most celebrated performers in the city, earning steady incomes and appearing in the pages of *L'Express*, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, and *Paris Match*. By the year's end, they were collaborating with the singer and poet Brigitte Fontaine on her acclaimed album *Comme à la radio*. The Chicagoans were also preparing to add a drummer to their band, and in 1970, after a series of auditions, Famoudou Don Moye became the fifth member of the Art Ensemble.

The successes that the Art Ensemble experienced in Paris changed everything for the group. With their income from concerts and recording sessions, the members of the Art Ensemble were able to rent a spacious farmhouse in suburban Saint-Leu-la-Forêt, where they could rehearse for hours prior to their performances at Left Bank venues such as the Théâtre du Lucernaire, the American Center for Students and Artists, and the Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier. They also purchased a fleet of trucks, which enabled them to undertake concert tours throughout France and elsewhere in Europe. Additionally, the musicians invested in collaborations with other artists, beginning with Brigitte Fontaine, whose work with the Art Ensemble established a model for the multi-dimensional performances documented on this album.

Mitchell, Favors, Bowie, Jarman, and Moye were a mighty unit—the flagship band of the AACM and one of the best groups in the history of jazz and experimental music. But they were also avid collaborators: over the years, they toured and recorded with guest pianists (Muhal Richard Abrams, Amina Claudine Myers, Don Pullen, Cecil Taylor), classical orchestras, percussionists, and a South African chorus. Collaborations like these expanded the Art Ensemble's already-abundant sonic palette and gave the band members new forums for their compositions. The Art Ensemble's collaborations continued even after three of the original members passed away—Bowie in 1999, Favors in 2004, and Jarman in 2019, a half-century after the group's historic venture to Paris. For the band's fiftieth-anniversary

tour, Mitchell and Moye remade the Art Ensemble into a chamber orchestra, with more than a dozen collaborators, from brass, piano, string, and woodwind players to percussionists, singers, and the poet Moor Mother. The music was entirely new, yet rooted in the sound-world that the Art Ensemble had been exploring since the 1960s. As Mitchell observed, "this group comes from all the work that has been done previously...since the beginning of the AACM." And with a novel circle of collaborators in the fold, many of them younger than Mitchell and Moye, the sound experiments initiated by the Art Ensemble could proceed for decades to come. "The AACM sparked a second generation of younger musicians," Mitchell affirmed, "and they've now become part of us."

Paul Steinbeck

A half-century after its formation, the Art Ensemble of Chicago continues its association, faithful to its precepts and principles, but in a new form, one better equipped to pass the torch to younger people. This recording bears witness to the perpetuation of an egalitarian spirit, of mutual aid, of creation as self-realization *and* as participation in the dynamics of a community, virtues upheld by the Art Ensemble since it emerged from the AACM. True to this philosophy, the Art Ensemble of Chicago has never stopped developing and nurturing its all-encompassing approach to the musical fact, in every sense of the term—not only the production of sound, but also everything that accompanies it, from concepts of concert production to divisions of labor, diffusion, etc. Here, all-encompassing does not imply difference, but instead a harmony of distinct points of view. For Roscoe Mitchell, this means syncretism, as heard in the opening of "Leola." The initial *om* is followed by pointillism, punctuated by the silences that Mitchell loves. Spoken passages, operatic voices, and a string quartet intervene alongside sonic personalities whose magnetisms are oriented towards *le champ jazzistique*. What results is a syncretism of sounds attached to certain idioms instead of a syncretism of the idioms themselves—transidiomatism! Eventually, though, the piece takes on the character of a Lutheran chorale, with the solemn dramaturgy of Bach's *Passions*. This is not in contradiction with a title like "Ritual 'Great Black Music'" or with "Introduction to Cards," in which trombonist Simon Sieger's sound effects clearly refer to the music called "contemporary" by listeners in Paris, the home of Ensemble intercontemporain, founded by Pierre Boulez. Nor is this contradicted by the evocations of Miles, Trane, and Louis in "New Coming," where another chorale gives way to the African percussion dear to Famoudou Don Moye. To the preliminary syncretic approach, the Art Ensemble adds—at a higher level, that of the concert as a whole—the idea of succession, not with a *where* but with an *and*, the coordinating conjunction that characterizes the suite "I Greet You with Open Arms," which (as its title suggests) seeks the *union* of Mitchell's conceptions with those of Moye. Succession *and* syncretism, ultimately, in "Variations and Sketches," where the Art Ensemble of Chicago assumes the status of a "concert ensemble"—not contradicted, as we have learned, but in harmony with the procession during the final moments of the concert, when the musicians conclude the performance by parading through the hall, to share with the audience their joy of being.

Ludovic Florin
(translation Paul Steinbeck)

Compositions:
Roscoe Mitchell (Art Ensemble of Chicago Publishing Co/ASCAP): A-1, A-2, A-3, C-2
Roscoe Mitchell / Donald Moye (Art Ensemble of Chicago Publishing Co/ASCAP): A-4, B3, B4, B-6, C-1, C-3, D-2
Joseph Jarman, Lester Bowie, Roscoe Mitchell, Malachi Favors, Donald Moye (Art Ensemble of Chicago Publishing Co/ASCAP): D-1
Mohamadou Kouate aka Dudù Kouate (Art Ensemble of Chicago Publishing Co/ASCAP): B-1, B2
Traditional: B-5, B-7

All text by Carnae Dennis aka Moor Mother (B-3, B-4, B-6, C-1, C-3)

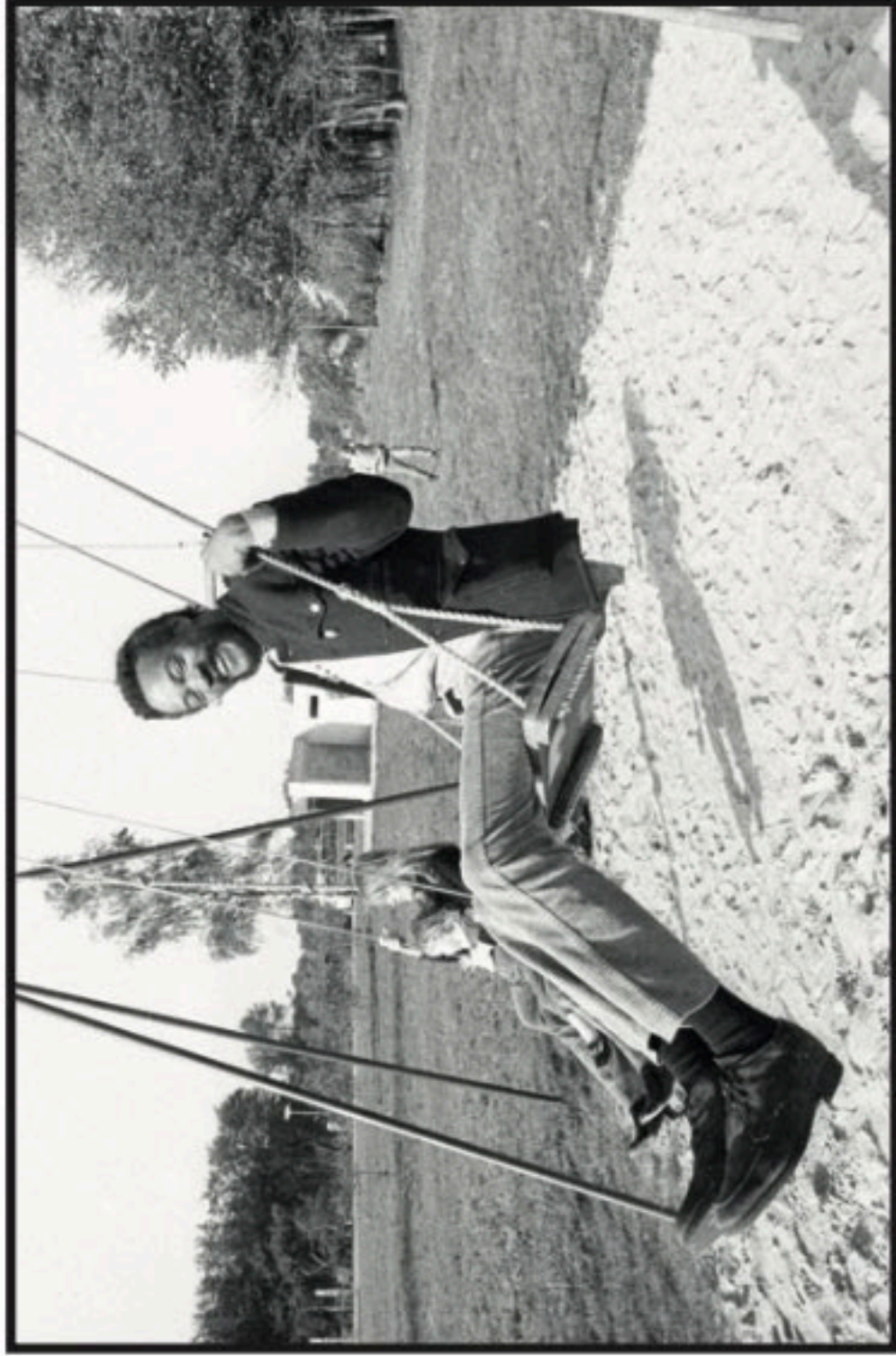
Recorded live by Olivier Gascoin on February 7th 2020 at Maison des Arts de Créteil, Créteil, France, as part of Festival Sons d'hiver
Mastering: Griffin Rodriguez
Liner notes: Paul Steinbeck and Ludovic Florin
Photos: Michel Robert, Jacques Bisceglia
Cover design: Max Schoendorff
Cover realization: David Bourguignon
Produced by Sons d'hiver

Many thanks to Fabien Simon and the whole Sons d'hiver team as well as to Paolo Locatelli and Akamu. Many thanks also to Eric Bisceglia for providing Jacques Bisceglia's photos.

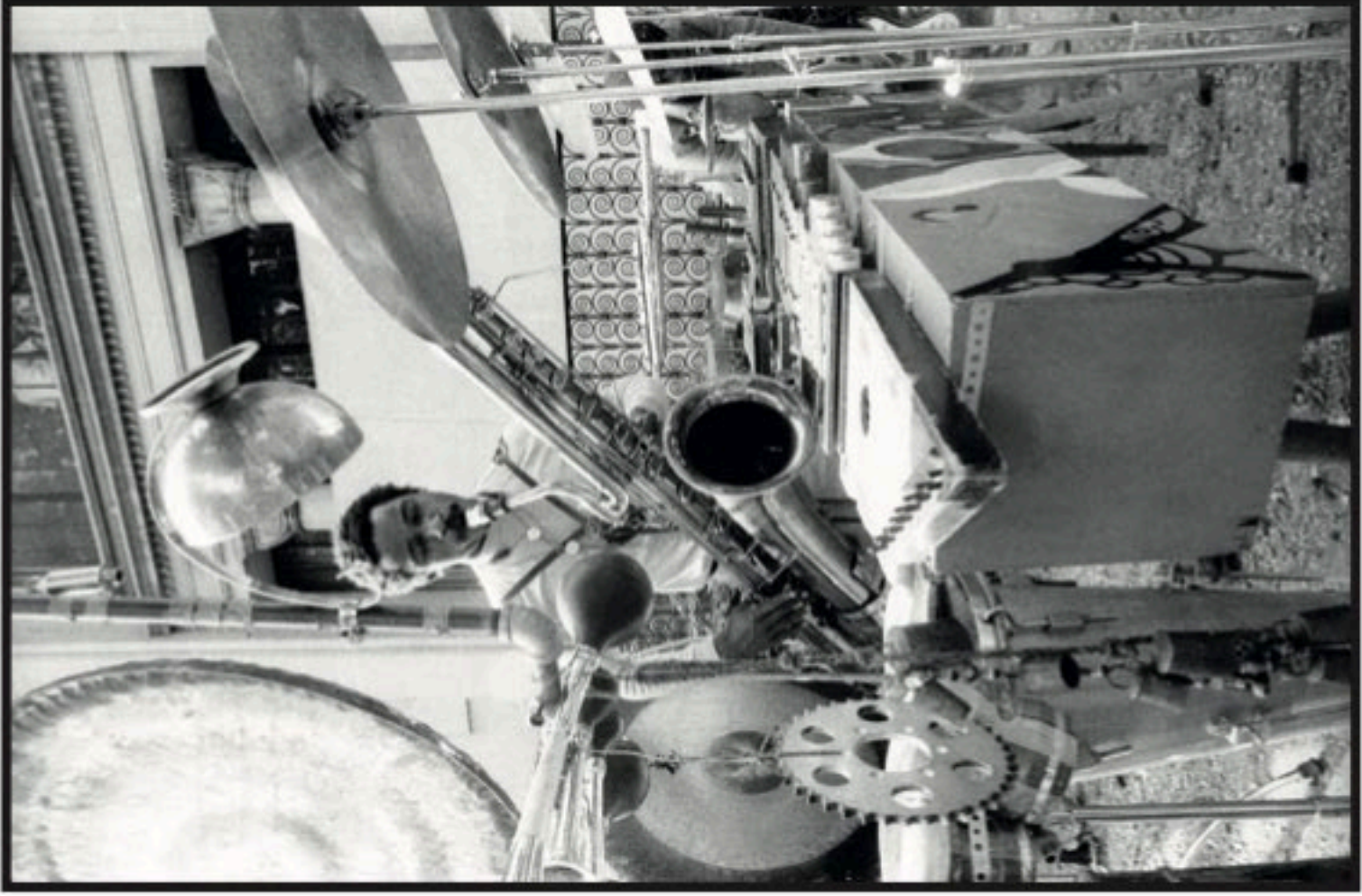
Would you be interested by getting the e-version of the album, please contact RogueArt at contact@roguart.com; a mp3 version will be provided.
The e-version that will be provide will contain also "Odwalla", which is on the CD, but not on the LP.



1.



2.



4.



3.

1. **LESTER BOWIE** arrives in Europe for the first time; ferry terminal, Cherbourg, France, June 2nd 1969.
2. **JOSEPH JARMAN**, **MARGARETHA WINBERG** AND **BARBARA BISCEGLIA** on a swing between Paris Belgium, France, October 1969
3. **LESTER BOWIE**, **JOSEPH JARMAN**, **ROSCOE MITCHELL** AND **ANTHONY BRAXTON**; American Center for Students, Paris, France, June 27th 1969
4. **ART ENSEMBLE OF CHICAGO: ROSCOE MITCHELL**; American Center for Students, Paris, France, June 28th 1969.

Photos © Jacques Bisceglia



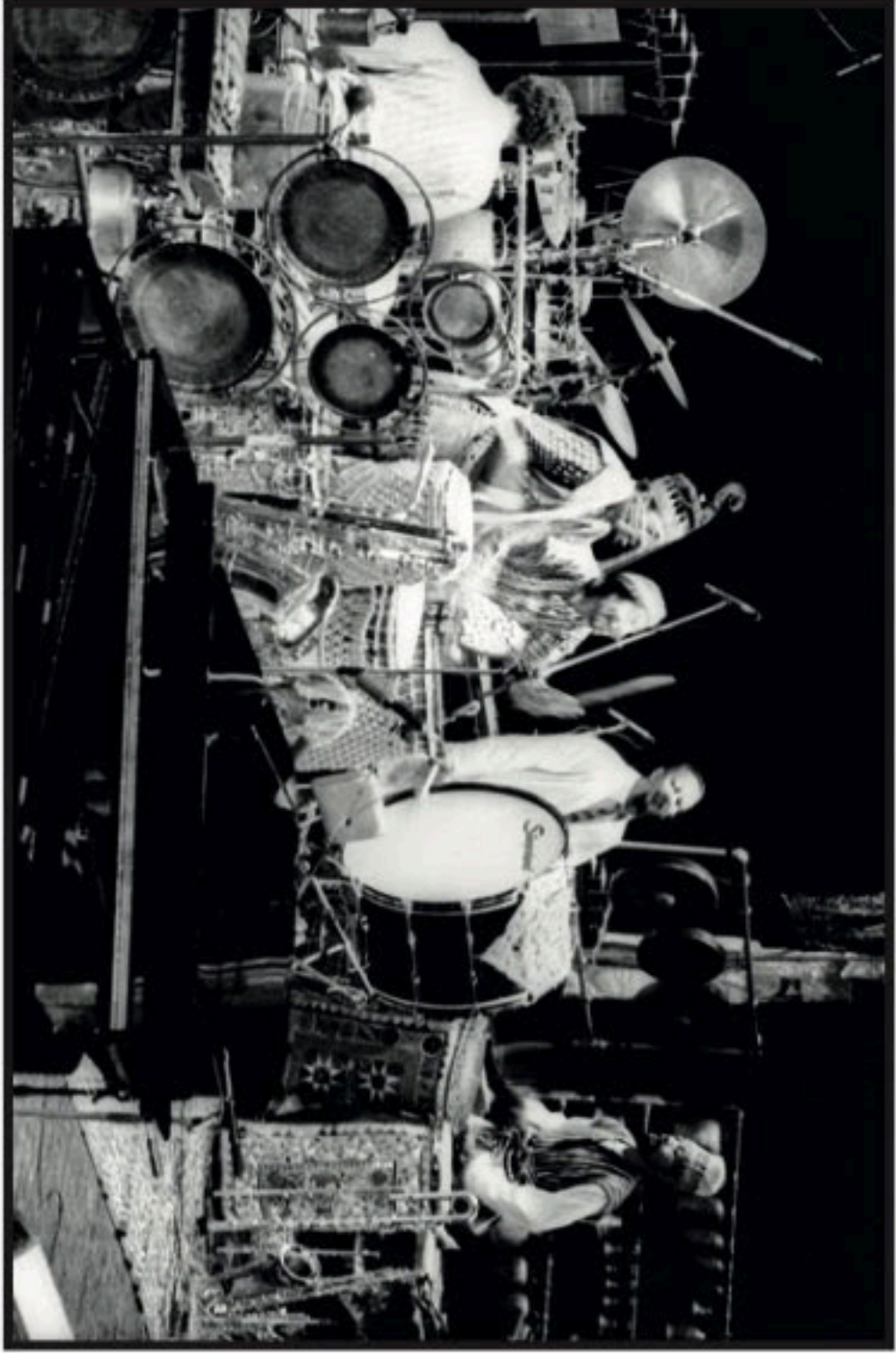
2.



3.



4.



1.

1. **ART ENSEMBLE OF CHICAGO: ROSCOE MITCHELL**, **EMADOU DON MOYE**, **MALACHI FANORS**, **LESTER BOWIE** AND **JOSEPH JARMAN**; Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris, France, October 30th 1984.
2. **ART ENSEMBLE OF CHICAGO: JOSEPH JARMAN**; Festival d'Amougies, Belgium, October 25th 1969.
3. **LESTER BOWIE** AND **STEVE MCCALL**; American Center for Students, Paris, France, June 28th 1969.
4. **ANTHONY BRAXTON** AND **JOSEPH JARMAN**; American Center for Students, Paris, France, June 27th 1969.

Photos © Jacques Bisceglia