



MULATU ASTATKE & HOODNA ORCHESTRA Tension

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BATOV RECORDS

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DESCRIPTION

Ethio-jazz pioneer **Mulatu Astatke** joins the **Hoodna Orchestra**, Tel Aviv's number one Afro funk collective, melding his enchanting vibraphone playing with their brass heavy force across original compositions that play tribute to the classic Mulatu sound while forging fresh paths. Produced by and featuring **Dap-King Neal Sugarman**, the results are gritty, yet majestic, soulful and uplifting. Mulatu Astatke requires little introduction at this point. Born in Jimma, Ethiopia, Mulatu went on to live and study in London, Boston and New York. Initially drawn to and trained in jazz and Latin music, he developed the sound he called "Ethio-jazz" over a series of seminal albums combining jazz, Latin, funk and soul, with traditional Ethiopian scales and rhythms. Long a cornerstone of the Ethiopian recording industry, his albums and even guest appearances were long sought after by record collectors and music enthusiasts around the globe. Formed in 2012 on the south side of Tel Aviv, the 12-member Hoodna Orchestra is a collective of musicians and composers who initially bonded over a shared love of Afrobeat. They have gone on to incorporate psychedelic rock, hard funk and soul, jazz, and East African music into their sought-after releases, winning praise and airplay from the likes of **Iggy Pop** and **Huey Morgan** on BBC Radio 6 Music. The collective draws together a huge array of musical talents such as guitarist **Ilan Smilan** and organist **Eitan Drabkin** of **Sababa 5** fame, **Shalosh** trio drummer **Matan Assayag**, and percussionist **Rani Birenbaum** of **The Faithful Brothers**, many of whom also contribute compositions to the orchestra, ensuring its collaborative environment. Over time, members of the orchestra came to find they shared a growing interest in Ethiopian music, particularly the Ethio-jazz of Mulatu Astatke. One can imagine the band slowly marching out of the venue through the crowd at the end of their show, the audience clapping in time with the orchestra's brass and percussion, recalling another legend, the late great **Sun Ra**. On one hand, *Tension* is clearly a deeply personal tribute by the Hoodna Orchestra to iconic Mulatu Astatke, but at the same time the recordings emit a remarkable amount of chemistry, and together they have created an essential addition to Mulatu's rich discography that charts new directions in his Ethio-jazz trajectory and provides the Hoodna Orchestra with their strongest album to date.

TRACKLISTING

01. Tension
02. Major
03. Hatula
04. Yashan
05. Delilah
06. Dung Gate

HIGHLIGHTS

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- Produced by and featuring **Dap-King Neal Sugarman**, the results are gritty, yet majestic, soulful and uplifting.
- On one hand, *Tension* is clearly a deeply personal tribute by the Hoodna Orchestra to iconic Mulatu Astatke, but at the same time the recordings emit a remarkable amount of chemistry, and together they have created an essential addition to Mulatu's rich discography.

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