



NOAH HOWARD Patterns

Label

AGUIRRE RECORDS

Format

LP

Catalog Number

ZORN 091LP

UPC

769791986954



Store Price

\$23.39

Release Date

12/06/24

Territory

NORTH AMERICAN EXCLUSIVE

Genre

FILE UNDER - H - JAZZ



DESCRIPTION

Classic free jazz album reissued for the first time since the '70s. Old-style Gatefold LP, with liner notes by **Ed Hazell**. **Noah Howard**, an alto saxophonist and composer, was known for weaving intricate and innovative musical patterns, often likening his work to "sound paintings." His 1971 album *Patterns*, the first LP he self-produced on his Altsax label, stands as a testament to his experimental and spiritual approach to music. In interviews, Howard frequently used visual terms like "patterns" and "shapes" to describe his compositions, emphasizing the importance of melody and structure even in highly improvisational settings. For Howard, patterns and melodies were essential to guiding listeners through his explorations without alienating them, maintaining a balance between innovation and accessibility. Howard's quest for an original sound was deeply influenced by jazz greats like **Charlie Parker**, **Ornette Coleman**, and **Jackie McLean**. While he admired these legends, Howard avoided imitation, striving instead to develop his own distinct voice. His sound was unmistakably his own, and he felt a deep obligation to carry the jazz tradition forward through personal expression, not by mimicking others. His music was also rooted in spirituality, a legacy he traced to his upbringing in the Black Baptist Church. He believed jazz had always contained a spiritual essence, from **Louis Armstrong** to **John Coltrane**, and his work aimed to channel this cosmic, spiritual energy. *Patterns* was recorded in the Netherlands during Howard's second stint in Europe, where he found a more open, less racially charged environment compared to the U.S. For the album, Howard collaborated with Dutch musicians such as **Misha Mengelberg** (piano), **Han Bennink** (drums), and **Earl Freeman** (bass). Despite the challenges faced by guitarist **Jaap Schoonhoven**, who felt out of place in the session, the album came together as a powerful mix of blues, jazz, and classical elements. The music on *Patterns* is a high-energy fusion of American free jazz and Dutch improvisation. Howard's saxophone work alternates between leading with passionate, lyrical lines and blending into the collective improvisation. The album's dynamic interplay, particularly between Mengelberg's dissonant piano clusters and Bennink's thunderous drumming, creates a vivid "sound painting" full of contrasting forms and colors. *Patterns* remains one of Howard's most unique and celebrated recordings, showcasing his visionary approach to jazz.

TRACKLISTING

A1. Patterns (18:41)

B1. Patterns (18:45)

HIGHLIGHTS

- Classic free jazz album reissued for the first time since the '70s. Old-style Gatefold LP, with liner notes by **Ed Hazell**.
- **Noah Howard**, an alto saxophonist and composer, was known for weaving intricate and innovative musical patterns, often likening his work to "sound paintings." His 1971 album *Patterns*, the first LP he self-produced on his Altsax label, stands as a testament to his experimental and spiritual approach to music.
- The music on *Patterns* is a high-energy fusion of American free jazz and Dutch improvisation.

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