



JULIUS
EASTMAN
VOL. 4

WILD UP
DAVÓNE TINES
RICHARD VALITUTTO
SETH PARKER WOODS

THE HOLY
PRESENCE



WILD UP

ANDREW MCINTOSH, VIOLA
MONA TIAN, VIOLA
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DIANA WADE, VIOLA
DEREK STEIN, CELLO
HILLARY SMITH, CELLO
CHRISTOPHER AHN, CELLO
NIALL TARO FERGUSON, CELLO
SETH PARKER WOODS, CELLO
STEPHEN PFEIFER, BASS
MARLON MARTINEZ, BASS

DAVÓNE TINES, VOICE
RICHARD VALITUTTO, PIANO
SETH PARKER WOODS, CELLO

CHRISTOPHER ROUNTREE, CONDUCTOR
/ ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Produced, recorded, and mixed by
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production by Christopher Rountree
Engineered by Lewis Pesacov and
Clint Welander

Recorded at Sunset Sound Recorders
and United Recording
Mixed at Ahata Sound

Additional mixing on Prelude to
the Holy Presence of Joan d'Arc by
Clint Welander

Recorded at East West Studios,
Infinitespin Studio, and Sunset Sound
Mixed at Ahata Sound

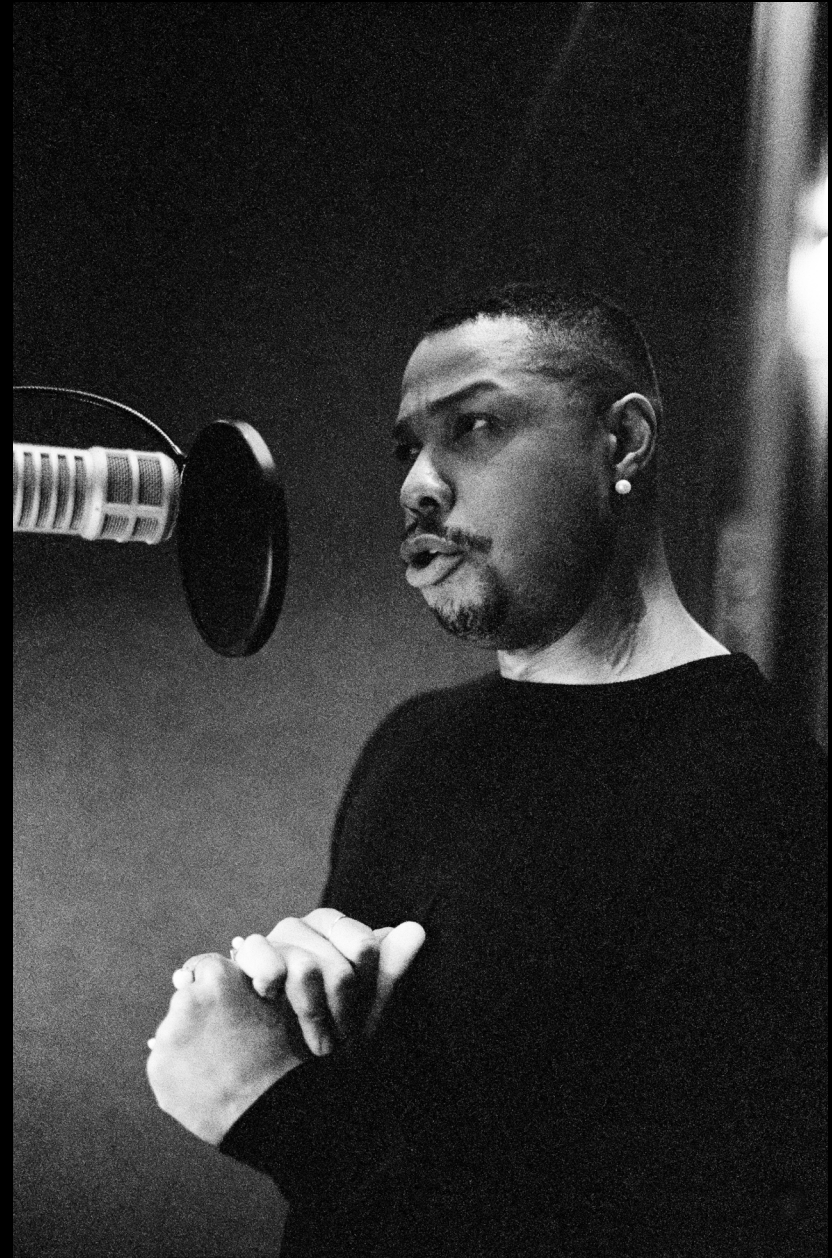
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With deep thanks to Sue Bienkowski,
Ruth Gilliland and Arthur Rieman,
and Anonymous for supporting the
artists on this record. We couldn't
do this work without you. This
project is made possible in part
by the National Endowment for the
Arts. Thank you to G. Schirmer for
your support.

With eternal gratitude to Julius
for what he brought to this world.



THE HOLY PRESENCE

Harmony Holiday

It's unclear precisely when God went out of vogue to make way for a vague veneer of collective existentialism that pandered excessively to the domineering Western conceptualization of intellectualism and sophistication. That shift, paradoxically, rendered nihilism's devout believers naive, smug, driftless as they played God to displace their need for a higher power. Amidst this performatively casual though severe shipwreck, in the center of the deliberate turn toward the profane, black musicians were becoming and revering gods of their own. Duke Ellington made a series of sacred concerts, Mahalia Jackson broke through to the pop fes-

tivals singing spirituals, Sam Cooke left the Soul Stirrers and Chitlin Circuit to become a crooner heartthrob, Stevie Wonder cited Allah or God as his influence in an Ebony interview, and blatantly throughout the lyrics of "Higher Ground." Al Green found God as epiphanic rebuttal to the punchline hot grits incident, his grand alibi of a redeemer after the scandal culminated in the death of his mistress, allegedly by suicide. The cool that black sound had rebirthed was in defense of the sacred, a smoke smudging in music where the notoriously disaffected demeanors of hip black jazzmen and women afforded them the privacy to expand their per-

sonalities and personal commitments to form and craft through intensifying rehearsal and backstage note-keeping, sharing, shedding the skin of performance for ritualized practice into which religion would inject an understanding of how to be disciplined without fanfare. God was the spirit here, and a collective commitment among these musicians that the spirit imbued. Mary Lou Williams devoted her life to God and made Black Christ of the Andes, rebel devotional music and the most arresting of its kind. Donald Byrd recorded "Christo Redentor." John and Alice Coltrane called out Allah Supreme, and we heard their love eternally returning

as secularized exegesis. Julius Eastman was not a jazz musician, and his identity as black man is often decentered in the scheme of identity politicking that has nagged his afterlife. Nonetheless his is sacred music as much a part of this tradition as Aretha's, as Ye's.

On this album, Julius Eastman Vol.4: The Holy Presence, you hear him retracing a fall from grace to its inevitable crescendo in reckoning and repentance. If it harbors the minimalism he's often accused of, it's minimalism of an opulent kind, embellished and ravished with yearning toward apotheosis. This is composition as conjuring, and Wild Up's pitch-perfect interpretation of a work Eastman first performed at The Kitchen in New York in 1981, respects the thick gothic nature of the song cycle without being too precious about it. You'll enter a house of worship in the middle of seance bent on the reclamation of its own divinity. You'll experience a dis-

course on methods of surrender that feel nothing like forfeit, more like fits of earned fancy, ornate reticence, the tension of skill against the chaos of rapture. This is Eastman's praise break and maybe also a breaking point, after which he disappeared into lore or, on some level, was left for dead. An awakening as bright as Holy Presence is a confrontational, aggressive resurrection fantasy. Eastman's own spectacular aura overcomes the layered chorus until the holy presence is Eastman himself, haunting us as we endeavor to earn access to his sonic vision. Was he visited by saints and demons alike and asked to embody the oblivion of that dualism before he would be given custody of his talents? Was what you're about to hear his big no, his adieu to the Roman Circus of even the so-called avant-garde music industry into recreational obscurity, precarity, hazard, heartbreak? I cannot help, while listening, but detect glimmers and winks of rollicking pleasure, deca-

dence even, Eastman's caustic and calamitous whisper-scream reminding us who the arbiter of his destiny was. Which is not to say, he wanted it thus, to deliver a finale as if speaking only to God and Joan of Arc, but that his access to divine love was not flippant or existential, that we must not smother him in protracted shame and pity, or gather elements of minor fame from our attentions to him now that he's gone, as if we are the martyrs and good shepherds.

This music embraces and leaves you with no choice but awe, an almost numb or dejected splendor for how high it takes you and how long you must dangle there with no parachute—true splendor, a truce between the secular and the divine. The sacred lets us move past cults of celebrity and personality in music, this is why we have no choice but to return to it whenever we seek to return to ourselves. This album is a prolonged miraculous encounter with nature's rite of return.



1. OUR FATHER

DAVÓNE TINES, VOICE
WILD UP
ARRANGED BY CHRISTOPHER ROUNTREE
/ AND DAVÓNE TINES

2. PIANO 2

RICHARD VALITUTTO, PIANO

3. PRELUDE TO
THE HOLY
PRESENCE OF
JOAN D'ARC

DAVÓNE TINES, VOICE

4. THE HOLY
PRESENCE OF
JOAN D'ARC

SETH PARKER WOODS, CELLO
TRANSCRIBED BY CLARICE JENSEN