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MAGIC SUN (DVD)

by Phil Hall

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1967, Un-rated, 17 Minutes, Music Video Distributors

CREDITS

The great jazz iconoclast Sun Ra used to get a high amount of mileage by claiming to be from outer space. The man and his music could have easily used the avant-garde short film "Magic Sun" to bolster that boast.

"Magic Sun" is a 17-minute experimental film shot in the mid-1960s by Phill Nablock. Made in black-and-white using a negative process, Nablock tightly framed Sun Ra and His Solar Arkestra in severe close-ups of hands, faces and instruments as their other-worldly music booms and whistles with a bizarre and glorious sweep. The result is literally out of this world - one could easily imagine this being the first film made by aliens, starring aliens, scored by aliens.

Sun Ra addicts will have a blast from this rare production, which is re-emerging on DVD in a sharp new print. Those who don't appreciate Sun Ra or experimental filmmaking will probably find this work closer to 17 light years rather than 17 minutes - but those are the type of squares who should be boarding up on Sun Ra's Rocket #9 to the planet Venus!

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