

LA WEEKLY

Yahowa 13 at Spaceland

The Source Family were an idealistic hippie cult who ran the health-food restaurant the Source in Hollywood in the early '70s before moving their commune to Hawaii, where they ultimately disbanded after their leader, Father Yod, died in a vainglorious hang-gliding accident. (The group's bizarre history was recounted by former member Isis Aquarian in her fascinating memoir, *The Source: The Untold Story of Father Yod, Ya Ho Wa 13 and the Source Family*, which was the focus of a cover story in this paper in the August 31, 2007, issue.) Yod fronted the improvisational band Yahowa 13 as a means of spreading his vaguely Judeo-Christian mysticism, but even non-believers might be impressed by the musicians' psychedelic expansiveness and trancelike incantations (you can hear some of their early music on a bonus CD that comes with Isis' book, as well as on *Children of the Sixth Root Race: Songs From the Source*, a collection of lost recordings from 1974, which was released earlier this year on Drag City). Three surviving members — Djin, Octavius and Sunflower — recently reunited to record their first album in 30 years, *Sonic Portation* (Prophase Music). Regardless of how much you buy into their simple-minded Hebraic wordplay and half-baked numerology, Yahowa 13's mostly instrumental passages build a powerful momentum with soul-scouring bass tones, stormy cymbal washes and febrile flurries of spiky, sitarlike guitar. The 11-minute ramble "E Ah O Shin" makes the Doors' "The End" sound like the Monkees, while the mind-stretching "Raga Nova" surges with a punky prog-rock drive. Seldom has "religious" music sounded so simultaneously earthy, spacy, guttural and evil. This sure ain't the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

(Falling James)