



RED SQUARE:
THIRTY THREE
(FMRC262-0508)

JON SEAGROATT
(bass clarinet & soprano saxophone)
IAN STAPLES
(guitar & violin)
ROGER TELFORD
(drums & percussion)



The release of this album documents a remarkable, pioneering British group that formed in 1972 and broke up in 1978. The material on 'Thirty Three' was recorded between those years, but was considered too extreme for release at the time.

Red Square consisted of Jon Seagroatt (amplified bass clarinet & soprano saxophone), Ian Staples (guitars & violin) and Roger Telford (drums & percussion).

The groundwork for what became the Red Square sound was laid when Jon Seagroatt & Ian Staples began a musical collaboration in 1972, following encounters at a number of experimental music workshops.

Staples, fresh from the London underground scene, was working with tape multitracking, noise, psychedelia and action painting. His electric guitar playing was a revolutionary blend of Hendrix and Beefheart, with the sonic palettes of Derek Bailey and Stockhausen. Seagroatt drew freely on free-jazz, minimalism and groups such as Can, Faust and Soft Machine. Both were heavily influenced by developments in contemporary 'straight' music.

From the beginning of their collaboration they determined to improvise all of their music. Within a year they found a kindred spirit in drummer Roger Telford, a committed exponent of the free-jazz style of kit playing being pioneered at the time by Milford Graves and Sunny Murray.

The combination of electric guitar, amplified bass clarinet and drum kit gave Red Square a unique sound palette to explore, as well an instantly recognisable group sound.

The line up of Seagroatt, Staples and Telford remained the same throughout the band's six year history, as did the original commitment to total improvisation, but, given the group's wide range of influences, their improvisations drew as heavily on avant-rock as they did on jazz or contemporary improvised music.

Staples became adept at unleashing cunningly atonal guitar riffs which referenced metal without ever becoming metal. These onslaughts were critiqued and counterposed by Telford's coruscating polyrhythms. Seagroatt moved between the two, weaving a sinuous cats-cradle of fractured melody in the liminal space where metal met jazz.

Live, the group were often punishingly loud (one story recounts that a Red Square set drowned out Cliff Richard who was playing at a venue half a mile away!). Despite the support of luminaries such as Miles, then writing for NME, they frequently enjoyed a combative relationship with audiences. Their enthusiasm for playing inappropriate venues (including folk clubs and pub-rock dives), and their willingness to engage forcefully with hecklers led to a number of hurried back-door exits from gigs, and presaged the arrival of punk a few years later.

Red Square played innumerable gigs (four in one day on one occasion!), benefits and student occupations, supported Henry Cow, Red Brass and Lol Coxhill, and were active in Music For Socialism. >>>>>>>>>>page.2

TRACKLISTING:

1. paramusic 1
2. paramusic 3
3. paramusic 6
4. paramusic 10
5. circuitry 2
6. circuitry 3
7. circuitry 5
8. circuitry 6
9. nakamichi 4
10. nakamichi 5

tracks 1 to 4:
Originally released on
cassette-only album 'Paramusic', 1975

tracks 5 to 8:
Recorded live at Lindesfame Hall,
Southend, Essex, 26.10.1976
Originally released on
cassette-only album 'Circuitry'.

tracks 9 & 10:
Rehearsal tape recorded at
Trevor Taylor's studio, Essex, 10.03.1978

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Jon and Ian continued to work together after the eventual break-up of the group, gigging and releasing albums under the names of B So gObal, Omlo Vent and Miramar for a number of labels including Chillum (Plastic Head), Fo Fum and Emergency Broadcast.

Jon has re-mixed and mastered the original recordings for this FMR release, and the band so enjoyed trawling through the reels of tape to choose album tracks that they decided to re-form. The group are now back in rehearsal, some thirty years after last playing together as Red Square, recording new choice cuts of elemental, genre-defying, abstract noise terror, avant-rock and outer-limit free-jazz rampaging. By the time that you read this they may well have already played the first Red Square gig for three decades!

You can listen to tracks from the album and some contemporary rehearsal cuts at www/.

As well as their commitment to the re-born Red Square, the group members are also involved in other projects. Jon is a member of both the Colins of Paradise and legendary psych-folk weirdlings, Comus. Ian is a successful artist who also performs solo as The Visitor, whilst Roger is active in the Oxford Improvisors Collective and plays with Pat Thomas and Pete MacPhail's Nostromo.

In memory of Dave Goldwater, (1958 - 2005) , poet, storyteller, writer and stand-up.
The funniest person we ever met. He played with us sometimes.

Original recordings by Ian Staples (Paramusic 1 - 10), Stefan Suchomski (Circuitry 2 - 6) and Roger Telford (Nakamichi 5 & 6).

All tracks re-mixed and mastered by Jon Seagroatt.

cover design; Red Square & Ewan Rigg

tracks re-mixed & mastered by Jon Seagroatt

original lino-cut & all photographs: Al Johnson

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