

Gallery 2 & 3

October 15 –
December 17
2006

RELATED EVENT

LIVE DRUM PERFORMANCE

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 4PM

The 16 mm film of a drum performance will play
SUNDAYS from 4:00–4:45 PM until December 17.

Le Conqueroo: Part 3. Defeat! Thus the Magpie, Rider of Leviathan, Herald of Saturn—the 9 choirs By Academy Records



Academy Records
Untitled
2006
Mixed media collage
11¾ x 9½ inches

Hyde Park **ART**CENTER

5020 South Cornell Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60615 773.324.5520 www.hydeparkart.org

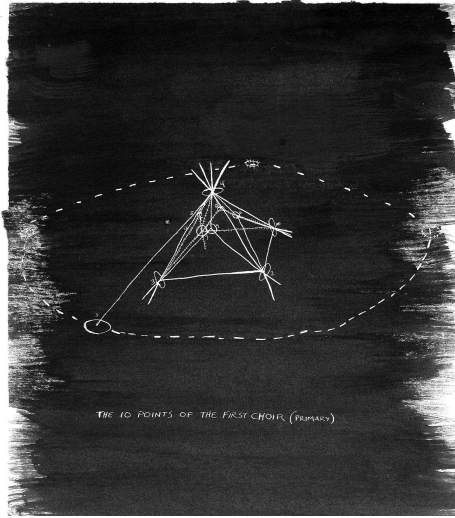
The Hyde Park Art Center is a not-for-profit organization that presents innovative exhibitions, primarily work by Chicago-area artists, and educational programs in the visual arts for children and adults of diverse backgrounds. The Center is funded in part by the Alphawood Foundation; The Chicago Community Trust, a City Arts III grant from the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and the Illinois Arts Council; the Illinois Humanities Council, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Illinois General Assembly; The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation; The Lucius and Eva Eastman Foundation; The Field Foundation of Illinois; Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; The Leo S. Guthman Fund; The Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; The Joyce Foundation; The Mayer & Morris Kaplan Family Foundation; Kraft Foods; The MacArthur Foundation; The MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince; The National Endowment for the Arts; The Orbit Fund; The Playboy Foundation; Polk Bros. Foundation; The Clinton Family Fund; The Sara Lee Foundation; South East Chicago Commission; The Terra Foundation for American Art; and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; and the generosity of its members and friends.

As sung by Muddy Waters in blues classics like *Hoochie Coochie Man* or *Mannish Boy*, the word Le Conqueroo, or John the Conqueror Root, is a reference to the voodoo prescription of rubbing a similarly named root to bring good luck. Darkly optimistic, the activity bestows the individual with the power to succeed and control his/her future. Systems of belief have always provided a channel for those struggling to define their direction in life and give momentum to the pursuit of higher consciousness. For the mixed media installation on view in Gallery 2 & 3, the Chicago artist collective Academy Records researched various doctrines from the Qabalah, and Gematria by Aleister Crowley, to numerology, magick and creeds of resistance, such as the Black Panther's Ten Point Program. The objective of Academy Records' installation at the Art Center is to drill or insert a rhythmic signature or vibration into the Center's architectural fabric, determined to move away from the object and focus on activity. Academy Records proposes the question, "Can the individual be self determined to realize their own path while still remaining connected to community in a productive rather than a destructive manner?"

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Academy Records, led by contemporary artist Steve Lacy along with an increasing list of over 40 participants, works in media ranging from painting and drawing to performances, sonic works, and staged events. It creates and distributes sound and performance projects examining the social experience of works of art. Their collaborative, ephemeral, and visual works reflect on contemporary culture through the language of popular music, consumer culture and other genres.

The first solo exhibition at the Art Center by Academy Records is the third and final installment in a body of work titled *Le Conqueroo*, an art project realized in three discreet exhibitions during 2006. *Direct Address System*, at the Meyers Gallery, University of Cincinnati (OH), initiated the trilogy while the second installation, *The Breastplate of Fire* occurred at the Art Gallery of Knoxville (TN). The sequence of these exhibitions charts a journey of growth and discovery for Academy Records. The first exhibition presented an archive of ephemera and recorded performances of past projects and announced proposals of projects to come. The second exhibition, conceived of as the Attack Battalion, showcased a customized off-road Volkswagen dune buggy (Baja) painted orange and grey, representing the physical vehicle of action to transform concept into form.



Academy Records
10 points of the First Choir
2006
Ink on paper
11½ x 9⅞ inches

Part three, *Defeat! Thus the Magpie, Rider of Leviathan, Herald of Saturn—the 9 choirs* culminates this year long process by originating a communal frequency designed to live on after presence has dissolved. The first day of the exhibition features a live 45 minute drum performance including 9 drummers, which is thereafter replaced by a 16 mm sound film loop of the same performance projected in the space for the remainder of the exhibition. The film only plays on Sundays from 4 to 4:45 pm to carry on the

meditative tradition of the initial performance, emphasizing time as a unifying force that can simultaneously conflate past, present and future through the repetitive (live and recorded) beat.

Defeat! Incorporates film, wall painting, drawings, and live and recorded drum performances exploring the effects of rhythm and its relation to both the architectural space and individual's unconscious space. According to Academy Records, the artwork here is the activity of the individual's experience with conclusions raised through this experience, and not necessarily the objects on display. Three is the magick number, making visual the Triad, or as Crowley defines it "the divine intelligence". The orange circles mark the intended placement for absorption of the performed drum rhythm into the physical structure of the building. In Gallery 3, two sets of drawings—one in black ink and another in graphite on white paper—document the conceptual process of the performance and installation and again point to the importance of the solid matter, or the Triad, to achieve a sound mind, body and spirit.

The Art Center invited Academy Records to create a new work during this block of exhibitions focused on Sun Ra and his influence on contemporary culture because of their long standing practice of experimentation with sound, performance, space and perception. Like in *Defeat!*, Sun Ra played with rhythm to create a sound, which he believed could help the individual attain a higher consciousness or Truth. In many ways, Truth is also the desired destination for Academy Records, which is recognized as an ongoing process of evolution that is equally dependent upon the individual, as it is the community, to attain wholeness.

Allison Peters
Director of Exhibitions

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