

## The Muhal Richard Abrams Orchestra - Jazz Masters 96 (1997)

Written by bluesever

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1 *Plus Equal Minus Balance* 11:13 2 *Cycles Five* 7:55 3 *Bloodline* 15:24 4 *Septone* 6:32 5 *Blu Blu Blu* 9:17 6 *Petsrof* 6:29 7 *One For The Whistler* 6:51 8 *Stretch Time* 13:24  
Alto Saxophone, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet – Robert De Bellis Alto Saxophone, Flute, Clarinet – John Purcell Baritone Saxophone, Flute, Clarinet – Patience Higgins Bass – Brad Jones, Lindsey Horner (tracks: 2, 4, 6) Drums – Thurman Barker French Horn – Mark Taylor (3) Guitar – David Fiuczynski Piano, Synthesizer, Bells, Conductor, Producer, Composed By – Muhal Richard Abrams Tenor Saxophone, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet – Eugene Ghee Trombone – Alfred Patterson Trumpet – Jack Walrath Tuba – Joe Daley Vibraphone, Timpani – Warren Smith Wind [Whistler] – Joel Brandon

Composer, arranger, and pianist Muhal Richard Abrams is largely a self-taught musician who was deeply influenced by the bop innovations of the late Bud Powell. Abrams has been a beacon in the jazz community as a co-founder (and first president), in 1965, of Chicago's legendary vanguard music institution, the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM). While Abrams is well-known as a mentor to three generations of younger musicians -- born in 1930 he was a decade older than his closest peer in the AACM -- as a bandleader and professor at the Banff Center, Columbia University, Syracuse University, and the BMI Composers' Workshop, he is not always recognized for his substantial contribution as a player and recording artist. Abrams' first gigs were playing the blues, R&B, and hard bop circuit in Chicago and working as a sideman with everyone from Dexter Gordon and Max Roach to Ruth Brown and Woody Shaw. But Abrams' own recordings reveal his strength as an innovator. His 1967 debut, *Levels and Degrees of Light* on Chicago's Delmark label, set the course for his own career and that of many of his AACM contemporaries, including Henry Threadgill, the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Leo Smith, and Anthony Braxton. Abrams is also a conduit for the tradition. Though his music is noted for its vanguard edginess, he nonetheless bridges everything in his playing from boogie-woogie to bebop to free improv, as evidenced by *Sightsong* and *Rejoicing With the Light*, both on the Black Saint label. Abrams has been a composer that moves through the classical tradition as well. *Novi*, his first symphony for orchestra and jazz quartet, has been performed at various festivals, and the Kronos Quartet performed his *String Quartet, No. 2*. ---Thom Jurek, Rovi

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