

Moon Over The World

DRUMMER AKIRA TANA LEADS ASIAN-AMERICAN JAZZ TRIO PROJECT

Chinese and Japanese pop/folk melodies provide improvisational inspiration

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— Jeff Potter, *Modern Drummer*

New York, NY – Sons of Sound proudly announces the February 16, 2004 release of *Moon Over The World* (SSPCD018), a unique Asian-American project that draws upon Chinese and Japanese pop and folk melodies as inspiration for a set of improvisational jazz. Just as the American songbook has provided many of the standards of the jazz repertoire, Tana and his trio (Ted Lo on piano and Rufus Reid on bass) look to the East for fresh material with broad cultural appeal.

Material drawn from Chinese culture includes the 1940s title track “Moon Over The World.” “Reflections of Love,” a melody that is pre-World War II, begins very delicately but then develops itself into a combustible, driving melody and improvisation. “Condor Man” is a theme from a popular Kung Fu TV show based on an old Chinese tale. The trio treats Ted’s arrangement with a fast samba feel.

The much-respected contemporary composer of Japanese popular music, Hiroshi Miyagawa contributes “Koi-no Vacance,” or in English, “Vacation of Love,” and the more recent “Chinese Fingers” to the project. “Chinese Fingers” is strongly reminiscent of the song stylings of Horace Silver (who is himself represented on the program for this reason). “Koi-no Vacance” was a hit song in 1963 for the popular vocal duet group made up of twin sisters known as The Peanuts. This tune remains a best seller for King Records to this day.

As noted by Paul Yamasaki in the liner notes for an earlier trio recording released only in Japan (*Sound Circle*, Paddle Wheel KICJ-146), the concept for this group had its genesis at the Asian American Jazz Festival in 1991 that was until recently held each year in San Francisco. The festival’s presentations demonstrated the diversity of Asian American Jazz expressions: Jon Jang’s politically influenced musical message “Tiananmen,” Deems Tsutakawa’s more commercially flavored grooves, Mark Izu’s impressions of traditional Chinese and Japanese folk musics, or the late Glenn Horiuchi’s musical tribute to the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II.

Drummer **Akira Tana** is an active performer and clinician whose credits span 22 years and include work with Kenny Burrell, Sonny Rollins, Zoot Sims, Sonny Stitt, Cedar Walton, and Dizzy Gillespie. Bassist **Rufus Reid** has played with legends such as Gene Ammons, Kenny Dorham, Eddie Harris, Sonny Stitt, Don Byas, Philly Joe Jones, Thad Jones, Mel Lewis, Dexter Gordon, Bill Evans, Stan Getz, Dizzy Gillespie, and Art Farmer. Presently residing in Hong Kong, pianist **Ted Lo** is known for his association with Airtio Moriera, Flora Purim, Al Kooper, Marlena Shaw, Herbie Mann, Tania Maria, Ron Carter, Michael Franks, Astrud Gilberto, and the late Noel Pointer.

Moon Over The World is Mr. Tana's second as leader in the U.S. on the Sons of Sound label, a follow-up to 2002's *Secret Agent Men*, a jazz exploration of television and film music featuring Dr. Lonnie Smith on Hammond B-3 organ. About that disc, Joel Roberts in *All About Jazz* wrote: "Tana, Reid and Co. have the chops and the imagination to elevate the material above the norm, and the good sense to have fun with a fun idea." Jeff Potter of *Modern Drummer* added: "teamed with supremo bassist Rufus Reid, Tana's drumming leads the pack with nimble touch and urgent groove." In addition to Mr. Tana's *Secret Agent Men* (Sons of Sound SSPCD012), Mssrs. Tana and Reid may also be heard on the popular *Acoustic Romance* by Gene Bertoncini (Sons of Sound SSPCD017), a disc that spent over two and a half months on the US jazz radio charts in the fall of 2003. Mr. Tana also provides the grooves on *Girl Talk* by Jodi Stevens (Sons of Sound SSPCD011).

Sons of Sound is an independent jazz label founded in 1997 to support musicians who support music education. Among many educational endeavors, Mr. Tana is an annual participant in *Stanford Jazz* at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California, and *Swing 'N Jazz*, a three-day celebration of music education with workshops, concerts, and a fund-raising golf tournament for the benefit of The Commission Project, a music education nonprofit in Rochester, NY. He is also the leader of *Percussion Summit*, an educational concert and clinic for student musicians.

For additional information see the label's web site at <http://sonsofsound.com/>. For more about The Commission Project, see <http://tcp-music.org/>.

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