Programme note

**Ode to Sun Ra (2008)**

**Douglas Finch**

On my first trip to Tokyo, I was suffering from jet lag. In my sumptuous but strangely kitsch hotel, I knocked over a large ornamental Santa at breakfast, and decided to go back to bed. I was woken around 2:00 PM by an unsettling, extra-terrestrial sounding *Muzak* that was regularly piped through the hotel at that hour. When I later saw a programme about the free jazz experimental pop guru Sun Ra, who claimed to have come from Saturn, it reminded me of the effect that hotel music had on me. When working on this piece, the experience came back to me again. It might be replicated by playing the piece slowly over and over on an electric organ. But even when you play it as fast as driving hip-hop, some of that mood should remain.

The piece was written for Elena Riu, and published by Boosey & Hawkes in *Elena Riu’s R&B Collection*. It was written to be playable at about a ‘Grade 7’ standard. It can be programmed with its somewhat more difficult companion piece *Signal House*, also written for Elena.

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