

SOUL SUGAR

Excursions in Soul, Reggae, Funk & Dub

Available on **June 4th 2021** as vinyl LP & CD.



Label	Gee Recordings	TRACKLIST: A1. Axumites feat. Booker Gee & Lone Ark A2. Out In The Rain feat. Booker Gee A3. Never Too Much feat. Leo Carmichael A4. Matumbee feat. Booker Gee & Blundetto B1. Faith feat. Booker Gee & Lone Ark B2. I Want You (Sly & Robbie Remix) with Leo Carmichael B3. Cool Down feat. Booker Gee & Blundetto B4. Greedy G feat. Booker Gee
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INFOS

Since first emerging in the latter half of the noughties, **Guillaume Metenier's Soul Sugar** project has evolved considerably. Initially a trio built around the virtuoso organist's love of '60s and '70s soul-jazz and Hammond funk – Metenier studied under jazz organ legend Dr Lonnie Smith – Soul Sugar is now a collaborative collective that draws just as much influence from classic Jamaican dub and reggae as the works of Jimmy Smith and Jimmy McGriff.

The outfit's musical evolution comes into sharp focus on *Excursions in Soul, Reggae, Funk & Dub*, a collection of hard-to-find tracks that have been released at different points, and on different vinyl formats, over the last three years. Taken as a whole, the set offers a stunning snapshot of Soul Sugar's rapidly expanding catalogue of classics. Metenier is once again at the controls but this time round Soul Sugar's cast list of contributing musicians includes **Sly & Robbie**, **Blundetto**, **Lone Ark**, **Slikk Tim**, **Thomas Naim** and honey-voiced soul singer **Leo Carmichael**. Metenier also stars as a musician, providing lively and ear-catching organ solos under his now familiar **Booker Gee** alias.

What's most noticeable from the off is the richness of the reggae riddims, the warmth of the instrumentation and the effortlessly soulful nature of the music. This is particularly evident on the collective's stunning covers of **Luther Vandross's "Never Too Much"** and **Marvin Gaye's "I Want You"**: effortlessly sunny and life-affirming interpretations that re-imagine the tracks as sumptuous slabs of reggae-soul and provide a platform for Leo Carmichael's inspiring and comforting voice. Metenier and friends' take on dub reggae – toasty, authentically bass-heavy and seeped in analogue effects – can also be admired on **"Matumbee"** and **"Cool Down"**, the latter a digi-dub influenced affair rich in colourful synths sounds, echoing delay trails and sub-bass so deep it will rattle your teeth. Both also contain lusciously jazzy guitar licks and some incredible keys-work from Metenier. The guiding hand of Spanish multi-instrumentalist and producer **Lone Ark** can be heard on album opener **"Aximities"** – think Lee 'Scratch' Perry producing Jimmy Smith – and **"Faith"**, an expertly breezy concoction that sports Jackie Mittoo-esque Hammond B3 solos from Metenier over a luscious backing track that sounds like something that may have emerged from Studio One in the mid 1970s. The collective's love of Studio One is explored further on a sweaty, reggae-funk cover of **"Greedy"** that features fabulous drums, bass and guitar from **Slikk Tim**, while **"Out In The Rain"** is an authentically sparse, spaced-out dub number laden with fluid instrument solos and devilishly heavy riddim.

Part compilation, part artist album, part collaborative celebration of dub-soul fusion, *Excursions in Soul, Reggae, Funk & Dub* is the strongest statement yet of who Soul Sugar are, and where they're going.

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