

Jackie McLean - Vertigo (1963/2000)

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 15 November 2017 14:47 -

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1. *Marney* (6:13) 2. *Dusty Foot* (6:52) 3. *Vertigo* (8:15) 4. *Cheers* (4:51) 5. *Yams* (7:57) 6. *The Three Minors* (6:01) 7. *Blues In A Jiff* (7:07) 8. *Blues For Jackie* (7:48) 9. *Marilyn's Dilemma* (4:58) 10. *Iddi Bitty* (8:13) 11. *The Way I Feel* (7:05) Tracks 1-5: Jackie McLean - alto sax Donald Byrd - trumpet Herbie Hancock - piano Butch Warren - bass Tony Williams – drums Recorded At Rudy Van Gelder Studio, Englewood Cliffs, NJ. February 11, 1963 Tracks 6-11: Jackie McLean - alto sax Kenny Dorham - trumpet Sonny Clark - piano Butch Warren - bass Billy Higgins – drums Recorded At Rudy Van Gelder Studio, Englewood Cliffs, NJ. June 14, 1962

This 1980 recording released for the first time -- "Formidable" from a 1959 session and five numbers from a 1963 McLean set. While "Formidable" has a strong quintet (with altoist Jackie McLean, trumpeter Donald Byrd, pianist Walter Davis, bassist Paul Chambers, and drummer Pete La Roca), the 1963 session has the recording debut of drummer Tony Williams along with strong contributions from Byrd, pianist Herbie Hancock (then also near the beginning of his career), and bassist Butch Warren. The latter unit sticks to group originals by Byrd, Hancock, and McLean, and the music ranges from catchy funk and hard bop to strong hints of the avant-garde. ---Scott Yanow, AllMusic Review

This CD combines two Jackie McLean quintet sessions from the early '60s that capture the alto saxophonist in a significant period of transition. First up is a 1963 session with trumpeter Donald Byrd and two significant protégés. Byrd had been working for a while with pianist Herbie Hancock, but it was the first recording session for drummer Tony Williams, just 17 years old when he began working with McLean. The arrival of Hancock and Williams was momentous. They were already stretching the vocabulary of hard bop, and the horns respond accordingly.

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It's McLean's presence that's dominant, though. His hard-edged intensity always stood out, and there's an increasing bite in this period, leading up to his embrace of a much freer group format. The second session, from 1962, is more securely in the bop mold. It's another first-rate band of Blue Note regulars, with the veteran trumpeter Kenny Dorham, pianist Sonny Clark (like McLean, a master of blues-suffused bop), drummer Billy Higgins, and bassist Butch Warren. Over the years, these have been elusive recordings. Both appeared on LP (Vertigo and Hipnosis) years after they were recorded and in combination with other material. This is their first appearance on CD, and it's a limited edition, so McLean fans should act quickly. --Stuart Broomer, Editorial Reviews

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