

Jackie McLean – Hipnosis (1967)

Written by bluesever

Sunday, 28 March 2010 18:56 - Last Updated Wednesday, 26 November 2014 22:10

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1. *Hipnosis*
2. *Slow Poke*
3. *The Breakout*
4. *Back Home*
5. *The Reason Why*

Jackie McLean – Alto Saxophone
Billy Higgins – Drums
Scott Holt -Bass
LaMont Johnson – Piano
Grachan Moncur III – Trombone

Musician Jackie McLean was born in New York City on May 17, 1931. Growing up surrounded by jazz, he gained notice for his skills as a saxophone player. McLean performed with such jazz greats as Charlie Parker and Miles Davis, and released his own albums in the 1950s and '60s. He later taught and mentored a new generation of jazz artists before his death on March 31, 2006, in Hartford, Connecticut.

John Lenwood McLean was born in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City on May 17, 1931. His father was a jazz guitarist, and McLean was exposed to music at an early age. He began studying saxophone when he was 14, beginning with the soprano sax and soon switching to the alto version. Some of McLean's friends at Benjamin Franklin High School in Harlem were also aspiring jazz musicians, and he formed a band with several of them, including Sonny Rollins and Art Taylor. Older musicians in the neighborhood, such as Bud Powell, mentored the young McLean. Playing small music venues in Harlem, McLean gained notice for his talent. He made his debut at the legendary club Birdland in 1949.

McLean was especially influenced by the music of Charlie Parker early in his career, and he became a friend and protégé of the famous saxophonist. He was also introduced to the trumpeter Miles Davis, a rising star in the jazz world, and played on one of Miles Davis's first recordings, *Dig*. McLean also performed with Art Blakey and Charles Mingus while he was still in his 20s. McLean began releasing his own records, beginning with his debut album *Presenting... Jackie McLean*, in 1955. At the time, he played in the style known as bebop, a fast and highly rhythmic type of jazz. He also developed an addiction to heroin that enveloped many of his peers in the industry, although he was later able to shake the habit. In the 1960s, McLean took inspiration from the experimental free jazz style pioneered by musicians such as Ornette Coleman and John Coltrane, forging a blend of the new style and bebop that became his signature. Some of his most notable recordings were his releases on the Blue Note label during the decade, including *A Fickle Sonance*, *Let Freedom Ring*, *Destination... Out!* and *Jackknife*.

After his contract was terminated by Blue Note in 1967, McLean began teaching music at The Hartt School conservatory at the University of Hartford. In 1980, he was named director of the school's African-American music program, which was later named the Jackie McLean Institute of Jazz. McLean also taught at the Artists Collective, a Hartford community center he founded in 1970 with his wife, Dollie. In 1980, he appeared in the documentary film *Jackie McLean on Mars*, which showcased his teaching as well as his performing. Although McLean devoted himself primary to his work as an educator and activist after joining The Hartt School faculty, he began to perform more frequently in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

McLean, who had been guided by more experienced musicians in his own youth, became a mentor to a younger generation of jazz artists. As a key figure in jazz history, he was interviewed for the Ken Burns documentary *Jazz*, which aired on PBS in 2001. McLean died at age 74 on March 31, 2006, at his home in Hartford, Connecticut. He was survived by his wife and three children, sons Rene and Vernone and daughter Melonae.

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