

Herbie Hancock – The New Standard (1996)

Written by bluesever

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1. *New York Minute* 2. *Mercy Street* 3. *Norwegian Wood (This Bird Has Flown)* 4. *When Can I See You* 5. *You've Got It Bad Girl* 6. *Love Is Stronger Than Pride* 7. *Scarborough Fair* 8. *Thieves In The Temple* 9. *All Apologies* 10. *Manhattan (Island Of Lights And Love)*
Herbie Hancock-piano,keyboards John Scofield-electric & acoustic guitars,sitar Sam Riney,William E. Green - flute,alto flute Gary Herbig - flute,bass clarinet Gene Cipriano - oboe,English horn Michael Brecker - tenor & soprano saxes Les Lovitt,Oscar Brashear-trumpets & flugelhorn Suzette Moriarty - french horn Maurice Spears-bass trombone Dave Holland-acoustic & double bass Jack DeJohnette-drums,percussion Don Alias - percussion Lili Haydn,Margaret Wooten - violin Cameron Stone - cello

On first glance this record would not seem to have much promise from a jazz standpoint. Herbie Hancock performs a set of tunes which include numbers from the likes of Peter Gabriel, Stevie Wonder, Sade, Paul Simon, Prince, the Beatles ("Norwegian Wood") and Kurt Cobain. However by adding vamps, reharmonizing the chord structures, sometimes quickly discarding the melodies and utilizing an all-star band, Hancock was able to transform the potentially unrewarding music into creative jazz. Hancock, who sticks to acoustic piano, shows that he is still in prime form, taking quite a few fiery solos. With Michael Brecker on tenor and surprisingly effective soprano, guitarist John Scofield, bassist Dave Holland, drummer Jack DeJohnette and percussionist Don Alias (along with an occasional horn or string section that was dubbed in later), the results are often quite hard-swinging and certainly never predictable. Although it is doubtful that any of these songs will ever become a jazz standard, Herbie Hancock has successfully created a memorable set of "new" music. Well worth investigating. ---Scott Yanow, Rovi

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