

Jan Akkerman – Profile (1972)

Written by bluesever

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01. *Fresh Air* (Jan Akkerman) - 19:51 including: a). *Must Be My Land* b). *Wrestling To Get Out* c). *Back Again* d). *The Fight* e). *Fresh Air - Blue Notes For Listening* f). *Water And Skies Are Telling Me* g). *Happy Gabriël?* 02. *Kemps Jig* (Anonym) - 1:32 03. *Etude* (Matteo Carcassi) - 1:30 04. *Blue Boy* (Akkerman) - 2:23 [play](#) 05. *Andante Sostenuto* (Anton Diabelli) - 4:07 06. *Maybe Just A Dream* (Akkerman) - 2:33 07. *Minstrel/Farmers Dance* (Akkerman) - 1:43 [play](#) 08. *Stick* (Akkerman) - 3:38

Personnel: - Jan Akkerman - guitars, bass (01e-01g), auto-lute (02,03,07), Spanish guitar (05), electric Fender piano (01) - Pierre van der Linden - drums (01,04,06) - Bert Ruiter - bass (01a-01d,04,06) - Ferry Maat - piano (08) - Jaap van Eyck - bass (08) - Frans Smit - drums (08) - Tim Griek – producer

In 1972, Focus was experiencing planetary success with the single "Hocus Pocus" and the accompanying LP *Moving Waves*. With this kind of momentum, guitarist and leader Jan Akkerman decided it was time for a parallel solo career. *Profile* is not disconnected from his work with Focus, but was at the time a good medium to show the extent of his talent. The two main musicians on this record apart Akkerman himself are Focus alumni Pierre van der Linden (drums) and Bert Ruiter (bass). The first half contains "*Fresh Air*," a 20-minute epic in seven parts. This is a jazz-rock track like Focus rarely recorded (except maybe the In and Out of Focus version of "Anonymous"). Akkerman is smoking on the electric guitar and the whole thing sounds a lot like early Mahavishnu Orchestra: There is a strong sense of urgency to it coupled with the feeling that these guys were having a wonderful time. The second half is more eclectic in styles and in results. Here, Akkerman indulges in his interest for medieval and classical music. A rendition of "*Kemps Jig*" (a medieval tune that was also part of Gryphon's repertoire) and an *Etude* by Carcassi are both played on the lute, and Diabelli's *Andante Sostenuto* is performed on Spanish guitar. A rather poor blues number and two Focus-inspired tracks complete the set. More technical, the album's second half is a showcase for Akkerman's guitar chops, but it is really "*Fresh Air*" that best exemplifies his talent both as a composer and a performer and puts this album a cut above other prog guitarists' solo projects, namely Steve Howe's first two records. ---François Couture,

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Jan Akkerman (born 24 December 1946) is a Dutch guitarist. Akkerman is a distinctive guitarist, constantly experimenting with new equipment and guitars. Akkerman's distinctive guitar sound is characterised by his pioneering use of volume swells which produce a smooth, fluty, sustained tone, and other complex techniques such as sweep picking, tapping, and high-speed alternate picking. He also pioneered the use of the lute in a rock band, reflecting his interest in medieval and Renaissance music and culture. He first reached world acclaim in the 1970s when he was seen as the core of the Dutch rock band, Focus, together with Thijs van Leer.

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