

DeJohnette, Metheny, Hancock, Holland - Parallel Realities Live (2007)

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1-1 *Shadow Dance* 15:30 1-2 *Indigo Dreamscapes* 7:03 1-3 *9 Over Reggae* 7:35 1-4
Solar 13:09 1-5 *Silver Hollow* 8:25 2-1 *The Good Life* 6:08 [download](#) 2-2 *Blue* 7:02
2-3 *Eye Of The Hurricane* 5:30 2-4 *The Bat* 8:25 2-5 *Cantaloupe Island* 9:42

Lineup: Jack DeJohnette - cymbals, drums, keyboards, bass Herbie Hancock - piano, keyboards Dave Holland - electric and acoustic bass Pat Metheny - acoustic and electric guitar, synthesizer, orchestration Live at The Mellon Jazz Festival, 23.06.1990 - Philadelphia, USA

In June of 1990, drummer Jack DeJohnette, pianist Herbie Hancock, bassist Dave Holland, and guitarist Pat Metheny, went on tour together to promote DeJohnette's album, *Parallel Realities*. The two of these shows, which were performed at the Mellon Jazz Festival, were edited to make the very exciting DVD, *DeJohnette, Hancock, Holland, Metheny in Concert*. Watching the disc, I became very envious of the audience for being able to see four musicians of this caliber play together on one stage. In fact, watching the tremendous amount of skill and creative energy exhibited by the musicians in this DVD is a good reminder of why jazz is such an important school of music. Although the concert does at times stray into musical styles that are not so tasteful, namely smooth jazz, the distinctions seem less important when the music is actually being performed live by these four men.

This wide range of styles is seen in just the first few tunes, if not the first song. The show opens with only DeJohnette on stage performing a very expressive percussion solo. Holland then joins him at which point the two lay into a very dissonant and funky groove. After just a few bars of this, a very excited Herbie Hancock runs out to the stage and attacks his piano only to make the tune all the more dissonant. Finally, a very playful looking Pat Metheny joins his colleagues to play the head of the first tune, "Shadow Dance," by Dave Holland. The head speeds up to take on more of a straight-ahead rhythm, but becomes funky again for Metheny's solo, which he plays with his trade-mark guitar synthesizer, while Hancock comps with his own keyboard synthesizer. Hancock takes his solo on the acoustic piano as the piece jumps back into the

straight-ahead feel. This first composition is characteristic of the entire video in that Metheny and Hancock take the lead. However, the musical styles change with the next tune.

This tune, "Indigo Dreamscape," is a DeJohnette original from the "Parallel Realities" album. For this piece, Hancock switches to play only synthesizers and Holland trades his upright bass for an electric one. They come together with these new tambres to play smooth jazz, which varies stylistically from the very hard edged fusion sound of the first tune. Although I tend to believe that, for the most part, smooth jazz is just a more easily marketable genre of real jazz, I also think that it can be done well if the musicians really put their soul into their work, as is true with all genres. This is achieved by the quartet in "Indigo Dreamscape.". However, on the following tune, "9 Over Reggae", not even the combined brilliance of these four individuals could save the composition from the excessively "cheesy" sound of synthesizers and pop rhythms. Fortunately, this is the only such tune on the DVD.

The rest on the Concert continues to be very eclectic. The quartet covers "Solar," a Miles Davis original which is played essentially as a hard-bop tune with all four taking very long, thoughtful, and exciting solos. Then they slow down considerably to play "Silver Hollow," another DeJohnette original, mostly featuring Metheny on the nylon string guitar. Another DeJohnette composition follows which is appropriately titled "Blue" because of its very bluesy feel, although it is not in a twelve bar format. The video continues to vary in style, thanks in no small part to the unique compositions of all four featured musicians.

Basically, what it all comes down to in the end is the fact that all four of the musicians are, very appropriately, jazz legends. All have contributed significantly to modern jazz and all are at the top of their game. The only aspect of this video I would like to see changed is the instrumentation. It is my opinion that Herbie Hancock's talents are wasted on the synthesizer sounds that he chooses. However, while some of the styles played are somewhat dated and commercial, the skill and heart-felt intentions of the musicians comes through brilliantly. The manner in which the DVD was filmed allows this to happen. The camera work is totally free of gimmicks such as excessive pans and video effects which tend to ruin many concert videos. The video simply shows the musicians playing, focusing mostly on the individual who is soloing. Although it may be impossible to accurately recreate the energy of attending a live performance, this DVD comes close. ---amazon.com

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