



AS AAPJ 084

Herbie Hancock: Head Hunters

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There are few artists in the music industry who have had more influence on acoustic and electronic jazz and R&B than Herbie Hancock.

In 1963, Miles Davis invited Hancock to join the Miles Davis Quintet. During his five years with Davis, Herbie recorded many classics with the jazz legend including "ESP", "Nefertiti" and "Sorcerer", and later on he made appearances on Davis' groundbreaking "In A Silent Way" and "Bitches Brew".

Hancock's own solo career blossomed on Blue Note, with classic albums including "Maiden Voyage", "Emyrean Isles" and "Speak Like A Child". After leaving Davis' fold, Herbie put together a new band called The Headhunters and, in 1973, recorded "Head Hunters". It was a pivotal point in Hancock's career, bringing him into the vanguard of jazz fusion. Hancock had pushed avant-garde boundaries on his own albums and with Miles Davis, but he had never devoted himself to the groove as he did on Head Hunters. Drawing heavily from Sly Stone, Curtis Mayfield and James Brown, Hancock developed deeply funky, even gritty, rhythms over which he soloed on electric synthesizers, bringing the instrument to the forefront in jazz. It had all of the sensibilities of jazz, particularly in the way it wound off into long improvisations, but its rhythms were firmly planted in funk, soul and R&B, giving it a mass appeal that made it the biggest-selling jazz album of all time (a record which was later broken).

Jazz purists, of course, decried the experiments at the time, but "Head Hunters" still sounds fresh and vital four decades after its initial release, and its genre-bending proved vastly influential on not only jazz, but funk, soul and hip-hop.

deutsch "Head Hunters" - Herbie Hancock (synth, el-p, keyb, pipe); Bennie Maupin (sax, cl, fl); Paul

Jackson (b, marimbula); Harvey Mason (dr); Bill Summers (cga, tamb, perc, dr)