Weather Report - Montreux 76 (1976)

01 Bass Intro 02 Cannonball 03 Black Market 04 Piano Intro 05 Badia 06 Gibraltar -2-
Line Up: Joe Zawinul (keyboards), Wayne Shorter (saxophones), Jaco Pastorius (bass), Alex Acuna (drums), Manolo Badrena (percussion).

Along with MAHAVISHNU ORCHESTRA, and RETURN TO FOREVER, WEATHER REPORT can trace its origins to Miles Davis' late 60s line up and breakthrough recordings "In a Silent Way" and "Bitches Brew". Joe Zawinul and Wayne Shorter had played together briefly in 1959 with MAYNARD FERGUSON'S BAND, kept in touch and collaborated again with the aforementioned Davis projects when they finally decided to form their own band. Leaning further perhaps towards the jazz end of the meter among their jazz-rock peers, WEATHER REPORT has made an essential contribution in the legacy of fusion. Zawinul and Shorter comprised the bulk of creative force for the early part of their career, cycling through various lineups until the 1976 recording "Black Market" introduced fusion's most influential and renowned bass player, Jaco Pastorius.

"Mysterious Traveler" marks the peak of the pre-Jaco era and is hailed by many as their finest moment. While other fusion acts relied heavily on the presence of the ever popular electric guitar, WEATHER REPORT forged ahead without one and still managed to produce an album that transcended anything done with jazz based music before. "Black Market" would mark another transition in their direction that would ultimately be realized in 1977's "Heavy Weather". Standing as their most commercially successful and critically acclaimed album, "Heavy Weather" boasted a hit single in Birdland, and leant a production credit to Pastorius, who was now a driving force in the group.

WEATHER REPORT complete the triangle that launched fusion in the early seventies, and are highly recommend for anyone interested in Jazz Fusion. --- Jeremy Spade, progarchives.com

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