

Max Roach – We Insist! Max Roach Freedom Now Suite (1960)

Written by bluesever

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1. "Driva Man" – 5:10
2. "Freedom Day" – 6:02 [play](#)
3. "Triptych: Prayer/Protest/Peace" – 7:58
4. "All Africa" – 7:57
5. "Tears for Johannesburg" – 9:36

Musicians

- * , Abbey Lincoln, vocals
- * Coleman Hawkins, tenor saxophone on "Driva Man"
- * Walter Benton, tenor saxophone
- * Booker Little, trumpet
- * Julian Priester, trombone
- * James Schenk, bass
- * Max Roach, drums
- * Michael Olatunji, conga drums on "Tears for Johannesburg"
- * Raymond Mantilla, percussion on "Tears for Johannesburg"
- * Tomas du Vall, percussion on "Tears for Johannesburg"

At a time when the civil rights movement was starting to heat up, drummer Max Roach performed and recorded a 7-part suite dealing with black history (particularly slavery) and racism. Driva' Man has a powerful statement by veteran tenor Coleman Hawkins and there is valuable solo space elsewhere for trumpeter Booker Little and trombonist Julian Priester, but it is the overall performance of Abbey Lincoln that is most notable. Formerly a nightclub singer, Lincoln really came into her own under Roach's tutelage and she is a strong force throughout this intense set. On Triptych: Prayer / Protest / Peace, Lincoln is heard in duets with the drummer and her wrenching screams of rage are quite memorable.

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A special dedication to one of the most gifted drummers to ever grace the planet earth. The black genius, Mr. Max Roach, joined the ancestors on 8-15-07. You will be missed. Thank you for this wonderful recording. This little known gem is probably the most potent recording to come out of the early days of the civil rights movement. It should well be known as the soundtrack to the movement. Mr. Roach delivers a beautiful musical journey through the African American experience in 5 parts.

Track 1 Driva' Man -Our story begins on the plantation with Driva'Man. Abbey Lincoln provides a wonderfully piercing vocal that reveals the disdain of being a victim of Driva'Man,the overseers'/slavemasters' brutality. The percussive slaps, done to mimic the sound of a whip, accents her vocals. Coleman Hawkins, the great tenor saxophonist delivers a great solo on this track.

Track 2 Freedom Day -The estatic feeling of joy and disbelief is felt as Ms. Lincoln's voice floats aimlessly as Max Roach & the rhythm section accelerates to speeds that depicts overjoyed Africans running to spread the news of freedom.

Track 3 Triptych: Prayer, Protest, Peace - This is the centerpiece of the recording and still the most moving. Max Roach plays the drums and Abby Lincoln provides the vocals. It is sectioned into 3 parts. The first, prayer, is a hymn-like humming over a sort of drum roll; the second part, protest, bursts from the quietness of the first part with chaotic drumming, and the screaming voice of Ms. Lincoln. Her voice depicts the anger, frustration, and fury of a people who constantly have to struggle for basic human rights in a so called "free" society. Part 3 is a return to calmness, Ms. Lincoln sings & hums as though she is exhausted but healed and it evolves to a singing that has a more freer sound while Max Roach carries throughout with his excellent drumming. This song in itself is a journey. It is a wonderful testament to the power of music as a communicating language, not just something to dance to.

Track 4 All Africa, in my opinion is the door that opens after the baptism of Triptych. It is a return to home, so to speak. As Mr. Roach and the band is joined by OLANTUNJI, the great Africa drummer, Abbey sings the history of the drumbeat, then commences to do a role call of all the African nations from the Bantu to the Watusi before the drummers go into some serious African rhythms.

Track 5 Tears for Johannesburg picks up where the African drumming stops with a hypnotic bass line that sets up a polyrhythmic, multi-tempo tune that once again Ms. Lincoln beautifully

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floats over wordlessly humming a melody that gives the feeling of redemption even though it is a lament for the brothers and sisters in Johannesburg, S. Africa.

This is a recording that should be remembered as a potent piece of history in relationship to the civil rights movement era. It is probably not as well known because after it was recorded and released, Max Roach was blacklisted and the recording eventually went out of print, in which is still is today. It took me forever to find a copy 2 years ago, now it's here on amazon; Get it, at least for its historical value. ---SBLove99

Maxwell Lemuel Roach (ur. 10 stycznia 1924, zm. 16 sierpnia 2007 w Nowym Jorku) - amerykański perkusista, perkusjonista i kompozytor jazzowy. Związany był najsilniej z jazzowymi nurtami bebopu i hard bopu. Znany dzięki nagraniom i koncertom z najsłynniejszymi amerykańskimi jazzmanami. Znaleźli się wśród nich między innymi: Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Duke Ellington, Charles Mingus, Sonny Rollins i Clifford Brown. Po początkowym sprzeciwie wobec free jazzu, zaakceptował go i rozpoczął kilkuletnią współpracę z Cecillem Taylorem, tworząc z nim duet Cecil Taylor-Max Roach Duo. Max Roach, uważany obok Arthura Blakeya i Kenny'ego Clarke'a za jednego z najlepszych perkusistów gatunku, wywarł olbrzymi wpływ na kształtowanie metody i techniki gry na jazzowej perkusji. Roach zaczął udzielać się także politycznie, odgrywał ważną rolę w organizowaniu wielu kulturalnych projektów dla Afro-Amerykanów (w tym okresie powstała "We Insist! Freedom Now Suite").

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