

The Imaginary Road was co-commissioned by Manchester Literature Festival and Manchester Jazz Festival and performed by Jackie Kay as part of Manchester Jazz Festival at RNCM in July 2014 and again on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2014 as part of Manchester Literature Festival. They were performed together with original music composed by Adam Fairhall. It was supported by Madeline Mabey Trust.

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### THE IMAGINARY ROAD

If you can picture yourself on the road  
The one that exists in your mind  
If you can walk those steps again  
You'll be surprised at what you find.

The road that was in your head  
Has already found you walking:  
When you looked ahead,  
It was your footsteps waiting.

Then you heard the song of the road,  
Under the dirt and the dust,  
Heard the song of the Delta blue  
And found a song you already knew.

You were humming it.  
It went like this.

There are roads there in the beginning;  
Roads that take us to the end.

Roads that we can't help loving -  
The dips, turns and bends.

Whether it is gravel or old stone  
A dust track, dirt or blues  
Your life travels the roads  
- the familiar and the strange.

There's something about you now -  
Small figure walking the track,  
Growing into the distance  
Avoiding the dips and the cracks,

Trying not to look back.  
The road that was in your head  
The road that was in your head  
Is already up ahead.

The road that was your friend  
Will be waiting in the end.  
It will hold out a helping hand  
As you draw your line in the sand.



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