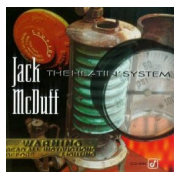


Jack McDuff – The Heatin' System (1972)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 01 August 2011 08:34 - Last Updated Wednesday, 26 November 2014 09:55

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1. 601 1-2 North Polar St. 2. Put On A Happy Face 3. Sundown 4. Mr. T 5. The Heatin' System [play](#) 6. In A Sentimental Mood 7. Fly Away 8. Theme From The Pink Panther 9. The Playoff [play](#) Credits Bass – Phil Upchurch, Sam Jones (tracks: A2, C2) Congas – Fred (Derf) Walker Drums – Greg Williams (10) Guitar – Marty Roberts Organ, Melodica – Jack McDuff Producer – Esmond Edwards Saxophone – Dave Young, Donald Myrick Trumpet – Bobby Alston

A less-than-exemplary 1994 date, *The Heatin' System* finds Jack McDuff in an uncharacteristically subdued frame of mind. The nine tracks are heavy on the covers, which are either unimaginative rehashings of over-familiar standards (did we really need another take on either "In a Sentimental Mood" or "Put on a Happy Face"?) or perfectly acceptable versions of subpar tunes (Henry Mancini is a genius, but "Theme From the Pink Panther" is certainly one of his lesser efforts, and Chester Thompson's "Mr. T" is an obscurity for good reason), and even McDuff's five originals lack the playful strut of his best work. The rhythm section, particularly drummer Rudy Patschauer, certainly doesn't help matters any with their occasionally sluggish and generally uninspired playing, either, and two sax players (alto Andrew Beals and tenor Jerry Weldon) are often one too many. The nadir is "Sundown," which features McDuff's finest solo on the album as well as the first evidence that the rhythm section is entirely awake, but is an otherwise completely bland and forgettable smooth jazz trifle. Jack McDuff can't make an entirely bad album thanks to his immense performing gifts, but *The Heatin' System* is certainly one of his lesser efforts. ---Stewart Mason, Rovi

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