

Ahmad Jamal □ – Ahmad Jamal '73 (The World Is A Ghetto) (1973)

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1. *The World Is A Ghetto* 9:44 2. *Children Of The Night* 5:04 3. *Superstition* 4:03 4. *Trilby* 4:34 5. *Sustah, Sustah* 6:44 6. *Soul Girl* 3:25 7. *Peace At Last* 6:17 Arranged By [Orchestra], Conductor, Piano – Richard Evans Producer – Ahmad Jamal, Richard Evans

Most famous for his '60s Argo and Cadet stint, this is Jamal's first album for 20th Century after a few albums with Impulse, including 1971's *Outertimeinnerspace*. By this effort, Jamal had already begun to play an electric piano. For this effort, Jamal also decides to do more pop material. Although those two things might irritate a few fans, *Ahmad Jamal '73* proves that at times the idea is interesting. From the beginning, Jamal and co-producer Richard Evans attempt to do three of the more popular tracks of the time. While the premise isn't horrifying, overblown horn, string, and vocal productions weigh the effort down. The album starter "The World Is a Ghetto" is way too long at nearly ten minutes. Jamal does better with Thom Bell and Linda Creed's "Children of the Night." On the always poignant track, the disconsolate tone of Jamal's Fender Rhodes possesses the right measure of melancholy. As that was good, his pointless take of "Superstition" basically has Jamal all but wasting time and adding nothing to it. Despite the attempts, the more mature material works better here. Orlando Murden's "Trilby" gets a warm, middle-of-the-road treatment with Jamal hitting the keys so softly they at times sound like vibes. The up-tempo "Sustah, Sustah" has an earthy arrangement and nice multi-layered tones from Jamal. *Ahmad Jamal '73* is an early instance of him playing an instrument besides acoustic piano, but it is a few tracks away from being a necessity. ---Jason Elias, AllMusic Review

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