

Duke Jordan - Trio And Quintet (1955)

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1 *Forecast* 4:46 2 *Sultry Eve* 3:56 3 *They Can't Take That Away From Me* 4:35 4 *Night In Tunisia* 5:09 5 *Summertime* 4:25 6 *Flight To Jordan* 4:43 7 *Two Lovers* 3:07 8 *Cu-Ba* 3:32 9 *Yesterdays* 5:45 10 *Scotch Blues* 4:37 Baritone Saxophone – Cecil Payne (tracks: 6 to 10) Bass – Percy Heath Drums – Art Brakey Piano – Duke Jordan Trombone – Eddie Bert (tracks: 6 to 10)

The title of this 1955 Savoy release by pianist Duke Jordan succinctly points to the set's merits and shortcomings. The five trio performances with Art Blakey (drums) and Percy Heath (bass) work well. The five tracks from the same group augmented by Cecil Payne (baritone sax) and Eddie Bert (trombone) don't come up to the mark. For the trio tracks, Jordan's elegant, swinging bop style is the main attraction, with Blakey and Heath providing appropriately understated support. "They Can't Take That Away From Me" and "Night in Tunisia" are each given fresh reworkings. Jordan's upbeat "Forecast" and his meditative ballad "Sultry Eve" are strong originals. George Gershwin's "Summertime," unfortunately, gets an undistinguished, overly literal reading. On the quintet tracks the focus wavers. Jordan is too often relegated to conventional comping in the background. Blakey's playing occasionally becomes cluttered and Heath seems to lose interest. More problematic is the ineffective, bottom-heavy baritone sax/trombone combination. Payne's and Bert's parts generate little harmonic interest. The result is two horns doing no more than the work of one. As for the tunes, the pianist's "Flight to Jordan" and Payne's "Cu-ba" offer respectable solos, while "Scotch Blues" is an awkward attempt by Jordan to fuse a Scottish folk dance theme with straight-ahead blues. The blues passages are fine, but the scotch doesn't mix. There are some good moments on this CD, particularly from Jordan and Payne. Both the pianist and the baritone saxophonist, however, can be heard to better advantage on Payne's 1956 set, *Patterns of Jazz*, where Jordan, with Tommy Potter (bass) and Art Taylor (drums), shines in a consistently integrated and cohesive performance with Payne. ---Jim Todd, AllMusic Review

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