

Kenny Garrett – TrioLogy (1995)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 09 March 2010 15:17 - Last Updated Sunday, 04 January 2015 12:18

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1. *Delfeayo' Dilemma* (5:41)
2. *Night and Day* (6:56)
3. *Giant Steps* (4:51)
4. *A Time for Love* (6:32)
5. *Wayne's Thang* (6:50)
6. *Pressing the Issue* (6:21)
7. *Koranne said* (4:33)
8. *Oriental Towaway Zone* (6:11)
9. *In Your Own Sweet Way* (5:49)
10. *What Is This Thing Called Love* (3:37)

Musicians: Charnett Moffett – Bass
Brian Blade – Drums
Kenny Garrett - Sax (Alto), Producer
Kiyoshi Kitagawa – Bass

Kenny Garrett first got his start in 1978, playing alto sax in the Duke Ellington Orchestra at the age of 18. Since then he has compiled an extensive discography and been recognized as a world renowned saxophonist and flautist. The aptly named *Triology* was his eighth recorded album, released in 1995. It features Garrett playing alto sax in a trio format, accompanied only by upright bass and drum set. The other musicians on *Triology* are Kiyoshi Kitagawa and Charnett Moffett on bass, and Brian Blade on percussion.

“Delfeayo’s Dilemma” sets the stage for the record, showcasing Garrett’s 20th century style and obvious virtuosity. It is a Wynton Marsalis tune and one of the hardest tracks on the album to digest. Much like the sixth track, “Pressing the Issue”, the harmonic and melodic structure of the

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song is very open and difficult to follow. As attention-requiring a track as it may be, it is one of the best on TrioLOGY. The trio play off each other perfectly, making for a dynamic opener.

The majority of the tracks are arrangements, but there are three Garrett originals. “Wayne’s Thang” is one of Garrett’s hallmark compositions. Driven by a thick, ostinato bass pattern, it is one of the pieces where you are least likely to notice the absence piano or guitar accompaniment; bass provides a more than substantial foundation for the sax solo. It is one of the more aesthetic tracks, sold by Garret’s melodic solo. The other two Garrett originals are “Koranne Said”, and “Oriental Towaway Zone”. “Koranne Said” feels almost vocal in a catchy accessible sort of way. Moffett lays down the chords clearly with his solid bass line, and Garrett’s solo reacts off of that. The latter track is quite a departure from that, featuring Garrett delving into Eastern sounds. It ends with an interesting and enjoyable solo by bassist Kitagawa.

Looking beyond Garrett and the bassists, the percussive work is excellent. Blade decorates each track with the perfect amount of color, and his off-beat accents and lopsided fills really compliment and complete the trio sound.

TrioLOGY is quintessential Garrett, experimenting in an almost childlike fashion. It is a subtle classic of his, featuring his usual ingenuity and also a touch of playfulness. His version of Coltrane’s great “Giant Steps” is extremely up-beat, featuring a fresh and interesting solo. His unique spin on the song is determinedly less serious without being underwhelming. At the same time, the album can be exhausting for its open trio format and modern structure. Still, there are respites, in the form of “A Time For Love” and the more melodic tracks. If you are a fan of modern jazz or the alto sax, do yourself a favor and buy this. It is a landmark album by a must-hear jazz artist. --- Nate Sniffen, sputnikmusic.com

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