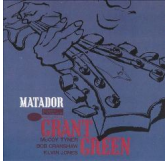


Grant Green – Matador (1979)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 02 March 2013 19:32 - Last Updated Thursday, 13 November 2014 09:28

Grant Green – Matador (1979)



01. *Matador* (Grant Green) – 10:49 02. *My Favorite Things* (Oscar Hammerstein II, Richard Rodgers) – 10:20 03. *Green Jeans* (Grant Green) – 9:06 04. *Bedouin* (Duke Pearson) – 11:38 05. *Wives And Lovers* (Burt Bacharach, Hal David) – 8:59 Personnel: - Grant Green - guitar - McCoy Tyner - piano - Bob Cranshaw - double bass - Elvin Jones – drums

Grant Green recorded so much high-quality music for Blue Note during the first half of the '60s that a number of excellent sessions went unissued at the time. Even so, it's still hard to figure out why 1964's *Matador* was only released in Japan in 1979, prior to its U.S. CD reissue in 1990 -- it's a classic and easily one of Green's finest albums. In contrast to the soul-jazz and jazz-funk for which Green is chiefly remembered, *Matador* is a cool-toned, straight-ahead modal workout that features some of Green's most advanced improvisation, even more so than his sessions with Larry Young. Part of the reason for that is that Green is really pushed by his stellar backing unit: pianist McCoy Tyner, bassist Bob Cranshaw, and drummer Elvin Jones. Not only is Green leading a group that features one-half of the classic Coltrane Quartet, but he even takes on Coltrane's groundbreaking arrangement of "My Favorite Things" -- and more than holds his own over ten-plus minutes. In fact, every track on the album is around that length; there are extended explorations of two Green originals ("Green Jeans" and the title track) and Duke Pearson's Middle Eastern-tinged "Bedouin," plus the bonus cut "Wives and Lovers," a swinging Bacharach pop tune not on the Japanese issue. The group interplay is consistently strong, but really the spotlight falls chiefly on Green, whose crystal-clear articulation flourishes in this setting. And, for all of *Matador*'s advanced musicality, it ends up being surprisingly accessible. This sound may not be Green's claim to fame, but *Matador* remains one of his greatest achievements. ---Steve Huey, Rovi

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