

John Stubblefield - Confessin (1984)

Written by bluesever (Bogdan Marszałkowski)
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A1 Spiral Dance 5:08 A2 Waltz For Duke Pearson 4:47 A3 Blood Count 6:33 A4 More Fun 4:10 B1 Dusk To Dawn 7:48 B2 Whisper 4:06 B3 Confessin' 9:02 Bass – Rufus Reid Drums – Eddie Gladden Piano – Mulgrew Miller Tenor Saxophone, Soprano Saxophone – John Stubblefield Trumpet, Flugelhorn – Cecil Bridgewater

John Stubblefield has made relatively few recordings as a leader during his long career, but it isn't because the saxophonist isn't deserving. This post-bop date from 1984 finds him in good company with trumpeter and flügelhornist Cecil Bridgewater, and a rhythm section with Mulgrew Miller, Rufus Reid, and Eddie Gladden. Stubblefield is featured on tenor sax mostly, starting with his hypnotic "Spiral Dance," highlighted by his potent solo and Bridgewater's warm flügelhorn. Bridgewater contributed "Waltz for Duke Pearson" (dedicated to the pianist and composer who died in 1980); this bop-flavored waltz features its composer on muted trumpet and the leader's lush playing. Stubblefield's interpretation of Billy Strayhorn's dark ballad "Blood Count" (the last piece he composed while dying a painful death from cancer) packs an emotional punch. Stubblefield switches to soprano sax for the lively "Dusk to Dawn," which showcase Miller's considerable chops at the keyboard. Miller arranged his haunting "Whisper" around the leader's mournful soprano sax. Stubblefield is again on soprano for the intense closer "Confessin'," which has some thunderous piano and percussion that seem influenced somewhat by McCoy Tyner, with whom Stubblefield has previously worked. This top-notch CD is well worth acquiring. ---Ken Dryden, allmusic.com

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