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Mosaic Select: Don Pullen (MS 013)

Text from mosaicrecords.com announcing this set:

"There is a searching bluesiness in Don which roots even his stunning pianistic runs and chromatics in the real, the concretely blue. For me, the pianistic pyrotechniques of Art Tatum and the crack-the-sound-barrier runs of Bud Powell are Pullen's obvious double-jointed God-fathers."

Amri Baraka, liner notes for "Breakthrough"

There are in jazz those rare ensembles whose members sound as if they were born to play with each other, ensembles of unique artists who come together to make a totally new sound. The Coltrane quartet, some of Miles Davis's quintets and the Nat Cole trio are obvious examples. The Don Pullen-George Adams Quartet with Cameron Brown and Dannie Richmond is a less obvious one; four creative individuals who came together to create a whole that is bigger than the sum of its parts.

Fueled mostly by Pullen's compositions, they could move from a roadhouse blues groove to rapturous lyrical beauty to fierce explosive improvisations and it all made perfect sense! As Lee Jeske wrote in 1987, their ninth year together, they were "a band that had all the right elements: chops, soul, experience, compatibility, wit, authority, intensity, humor, you name it." This set contains their final two albums Breakthrough and Song Everlasting.

When the quartet disbanded after the death of Dannie Richmond, Don Pullen turned his focus to the piano trio as a his creative vehicle and made two masterpieces for Blue Note, both included here. New Beginnings brought this unique pianist-composer together with two creative giants that hadn't played together for more than twenty years, Gary Peacock and Tony Williams. Randon Thoughts featured his brilliant working trio with James Genus and Lewis Nash. Pullen's compositions are memorable and wide-ranging; both sessions are brimming with power, lyricism, swing and interaction.

These four albums, long unavailable, are standouts in career of one of jazz's true originals.

Track Listing & Discography

DISC ONE

1. Mr. Smoothie (A)	6:04	(George Adams)
2. Just Foolin' Around (A)	6:19	(Don Pullen)
3. Song From The Old Country (A)	8:11	(Don Pullen)
4. We've Been Here All The Time (A)	9:09	(Don Pullen)
5. A Time For Sobriety (A)	9:42	(George Adams)
6. The Necessary Blues (or Thank You Very Much, Mr. Monk) (A)	13:33	(Don Pullen)
7. Sun Watchers (B)	5:43	(George Adams)
8. Serenade To Sariah (B)	7:35	(George Adams)
9. 1529 Gunn Street (For Johnny Holloway) (B)	6:14	(Don Pullen)

DISC TWO

1. Warm Up (B) 9:50		
2. Sing Me A Song Everlasting (For EBU and Hamiet Bluiett) (B)	10:30	(Don Pullen)
3. Another Reason To Celebrate (B)	8:44	(Don Pullen)
4. Jana's Delight (C)	5:56	(Don Pullen)
5. Once Upon A Time (C)	5:47	(Don Pullen)
6. Warriors (C)	6:45	(Don Pullen)
7. New Beginnings (C)	6:20	(Don Pullen)
8. At The Café Centrale (C)	6:52	(Don Pullen)
9. Reap The Whirlwind (C)	7:00	(Don Pullen)

DISC THREE

1. Andre's Ups And Downs (D)	5:19	(Don Pullen)
2. Randon Thoughts (D)	9:05	(Don Pullen)
3. Indio Gitano (D)	9:39	(Don Pullen)
4. The Dancer (For Diane McIntyre) (D)	5:58	(Don Pullen)
5. Endangered Species: African American Youth (D)	7:36	(Don Pullen)
6. 626 Fairfax (D)	6:40	(Don Pullen)
7. Ode To Life (For Maurice Quesnell) (D)	8:39	(Don Pullen)
8. Silence = Death (C)	10:12	(Don Pullen)

(A) George Adams, tenor sax; Don Pullen, piano; Cameron Brown, bass; Dannie Richmond, drums.

Recorded at RCA Studio A, New York City on April 30, 1986.

Recording engineer: Mike Moran.

All tunes except “The Necessary Blues” originally issued on BREAKTHROUGH by the Don Pullen-George Adams Quartet (Blue Note BT-85122). All tunes issued on the CD version of the album (B2-46314).

(B) George Adams, tenor sax; Don Pullen, piano; Cameron Brown, bass; Dannie Richmond, drums.

Recorded at RCA Studio C, New York City on April 21, 1987.

Recording engineer: Mike Moran.

All tunes except “Another Reason To Celebrate” originally issued as SONG EVERLASTING by the Don Pullen-George Adams Quartet (Blue Note B1-46907). All tunes issued on the CD version of the album (B2-46907).

(C) Don Pullen, piano; Gary Peacock, bass; Tony Williams, drums.

Recorded at A & R Studios, New York City on December 16, 1988.

Recording engineer: David Baker.

All tunes except “Silence = Death” originally issued on NEW BEGINNINGS (Blue Note B1-91785). All tunes issued on the CD version of the album (B2-91785).

(D) Don Pullen, piano; James Genus, bass; Lewis Nash, drums.

Recorded at A & R Studios, New York City on March 23, 1990.

Recording engineer: David Baker.

All tunes issued on RANDOM THOUGHTS (Blue Note CD B2-94347).

Original sessions and reissue produced by Michael Cuscuna

Executive producer: JoAnne Jimenez

Produced for release by Michael Cuscuna

Mastered by Kurt Lundvall

Masters appear courtesy of Blue Note Records, a division of Capitol Records, Inc.

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