

Consistent excellence. That's the simplistic accolade for pianist Ahmad Jamal's music-making. He sustains that level of creativity and inventiveness in every format. At age 81, he's got a refreshed band and a new recording.

*Blue Moon* explores classic music from American film and Broadway from the 1940s through the 1960s, adding three originals and a fresh take on Dizzy Gillespie's "Woody'n You." His band here includes bassist Reginald Veal, drummer Herlin Riley and percussionist Manolo Badrena. This was Jamal's first recording of the gorgeous title track, which originated in the 1934 film "Hollywood Party" and was popularized by Billie Holiday, Elvis and Mel Torme. Jamal's version ought to stand without peer for many fans in the way that he has owned "Poinciana" for decades. This is classic Jamal. Dig it.

Posted by Ken Franckling at [6:16 PM](#)

