

ORIGINALS



JOHN *Ballads*
COLTRANE QUARTET
WITH McCOY TYNER
JIMMY GARRISON &
ELVIN JONES



Ballads

JOHN COLTRANE QUARTET



JOHN COLTRANE



ELVIN JONES
JIMMY GARRISON



McCOY TYNER

JOHN COLTRANE has on occasion expressed puzzlement over descriptions of himself as "best of the angry tenors."

"I guess," he once said, "they say that because I play the horn hard."

Coltrane is, as a matter of fact, one of the gentlest and quietest people I've met in jazz. And, two or three years ago, he was just about the shyest.

Not that he has become a study in effusive cameraderie. But he has emerged considerably from that cocoon of quiet in which he lived his off-stage life. He talks more now, he laughs more readily, he seems more assured.

It used to be that, on stage, he'd plant his feet solidly apart, shut his eyes and, thus unshakably, play his music straight at you. Now he seems willing to let you approach him and get it for yourself. The music comes out, instead of being thrust out.

I wish I were one of those sages who can say, "Man, I dug Bird the first time I heard him." I didn't. I thought Bird was ridiculous, and it took some exposure to his music for me to get it. Similarly, I thought Coltrane was ridiculous. It was puzzlement over the simplicity and sincerity of the man that led me to re-examine his playing. And lo! I found that under the sheets of sound was music of exceptional lyricism.

For a time, I operated on the theory that lyricism was a new quality in Coltrane's playing. Then I got my hands on one of the first albums he ever made. It was done in 1955, with Tadd Dameron. All that is Coltrane was there then, including the lyricism. Well, wrong again.

His playing has, of course, undergone considerable evolution since 1955. Once, a year or two ago, I mentioned to him how little I'd got out of his playing before and how much I was getting now. I said I didn't know whether his playing had changed or I was listening and understanding better. "Probably a little of each," he observed.

After a reflective moment, he said, "I guess my playing must have changed. You're the second person who's told me that recently."

"Who was the other one?"

"My wife," he said.

Bob Thiele, who produced this record, thinks that Trane's playing has undergone another spurt of rapid evolution

lately, and suspects that an association with Duke Ellington on another *Impulse!* album (A-30 Duke Ellington and John Coltrane) may have prompted it. When Bob asked John to do a retake on one tune, Ellington said, "Don't ask him to do another. He'll end up imitating himself."

Whether it was the influence of Ellington or whatever, John's playing does seem to have taken another large, if not giant, step. He is more direct now, and his solos seem tighter, shorter, more disciplined of organization, which overcomes the one reservation I had maintained about his music.

An album of ballads therefore seemed most in order. Besides, John wanted to do one. Asked why, he said, "Variety." Meaning a change of pace. And perhaps he wanted to apprise those who haven't discovered it that he can be lyrical.

Donald Byrd once said, "After all these years of playing, I've come to the conclusion that one of the most difficult things to do is play a melody straight and play it well, with good tone and feeling."

That is what John does in this album. Up-tempo playing presents one set of difficulties; ballads present another. An uncovered error is more conspicuous in a ballad than in a stream of high-speed notes.

John had no trouble.

It was one of the most curious record dates I have ever attended. Excepting *It's Easy to Remember*, the quartet had never played any of the tunes before. They arrived with music-store sheet music of the songs. Coltrane, McCoy Tyner, Jimmy Garrison, and Elvin Jones would discuss each tune, write out copies of the changes they would use, semi-rehearse for a half hour, and then do it. Usually the tune was done in one take.

An exception was *All or Nothing at All*, on his copy of which John had written "Arabic feeling." Because it was rhythmically more complex than the others, it got off to a couple of false starts. Then they did it without difficulty. John played the tunes straight, in the in-choruses, unless you count his lovely phrase endings as deviations from melody. When the development occurred, he made his musical points quickly and succinctly. I'd never heard him play this tightly.

The growth of Coltrane apparently continues unimpeded. Long may it do so.

—GENE LEES

THE NEW WAVE IN JAZZ..... FEEL IT ON

IMPULSE! Records, a product
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Inc., 1501 Broadway, N.Y. 26.



MADE IN U.S.A.

SIDE ONE

1. SAY IT (OVER AND OVER AGAIN)
(Frank Loner, Jimmy McHugh)
(Famous Multi-ASCAP) 4:15
Recorded November 13, 1962
2. YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT LOVE IS
(Don Ray, Gene DuPaul)
(Leafy Multi-ASCAP) 5:11
Recorded November 13, 1962
3. TOO YOUNG TO GO STEADY
(Harold Adamson, Jimmy McHugh)
(Robbins Multi-ASCAP) 4:20
Recorded November 13, 1962
4. ALL OR NOTHING AT ALL
(J. Lawrence, A. Altman)
(Leafy Multi-ASCAP) 3:55
Recorded November 13, 1962

SIDE TWO

1. I WISH I KNEW
(Henry Warren, Mark Gordon)
(Triangle Multi-ASCAP) 4:54
Recorded November 13, 1962
2. WHAT'S NEW
(Bob Huggart, Johnny Burke)
(M. Witmark & Sons-ASCAP) 3:43
Recorded September 18, 1962
3. IT'S EASY TO REMEMBER
(Gus Arnheim, Richard Rodgers)
(Famous Music Corp.-ASCAP) 3:43
Recorded December 21, 1961
4. NANCY (WITH THE LAUGHING FACE)
(Jimmy Van Heusen, Phil Silvers)
(Burton Music Corp.-ASCAP) 3:09
Recorded September 18, 1962

Producer: BOB THIELE
Engineer: RUDY VAN GELDER
Cover and Liner Photos: JIM MARSHALL
Cover Design: FLYNN/VICEROY
Liner Design: JOE LEBOW

- 1 **SAY IT (OVER AND OVER AGAIN)** 4:17
(Frank Loesser-Jimmy McHugh)
- 2 **YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT LOVE IS** 5:11
(Don Raye-Gene DePaul)
- 3 **TOO YOUNG TO GO STEADY** 4:22
(Harold Adamson-Jimmy McHugh)
- 4 **ALL OR NOTHING AT ALL** 3:35
(Jack Lawrence-Arthur Altman)
- 5 **I WISH I KNEW** 4:52
(Harry Warren-Mack Gordon)
- 6 **WHAT'S NEW** 3:43
(Bob Haggart-Johnny Burke)
- 7 **IT'S EASY TO REMEMBER** 2:45
(Lorenz Hart-Richard Rodgers)
- 8 **NANCY (WITH THE LAUGHING FACE)** 3:10
(Jimmy Van Heusen-Phil Silvers)

Personnel:

John Coltrane, tenor saxophone
McCoy Tyner, piano
Jimmy Garrison, bass
Elvin Jones, drums

Produced by Bob Thiele

Recorded at Van Gelder Recording Studio, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey
on December 21, 1961, September 18, 1962 and November 13, 1962.

Recording engineer: Rudy Van Gelder

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IMPULSE! STEREO AS-32

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COLTRANE
QUARTET

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JIMMY GARRISON &
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COVER DESIGN: ROBERT FLYNN/VICEKINDY PHOTOGRAPH: (JIM MAGNANI)

impulse!

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file under: Jazz

