



ORIGINALS



STEREO A-40

JOHN
COLTRANE
AND
JOHNNY
HARTMAN



JOHN COLTRANE

BOB THIELE



JOHNNY HARTMAN

JOHN COLTRANE AND JOHNNY HARTMAN

JOHNNY HARTMAN JOHN COLTRANE MCGGY TYNER at the piano



THIS RECORD serves a double purpose: it brings back into the public ear one of the most neglected singers of the middle hop era and it proves in a novel—for them—way that John C. and his Thrilling Three are eloquent balladiers and very, very sensitive accompanists. I say novel for them because, to my knowledge, no singer has ever performed or recorded with the John Coltrane quartet. The quartet has been, till now, concerned with other things, with the development of a kinetic vernacular which facilitated the release of a kind of group energy that was deeper in content and fuller in emotional color than any music I have ever experienced, anywhere.

How translate this energy-formed vernacular to the more articulate but more restrictive form of the song? For one thing, Trane's been recording little else lately. His latest two releases were *Ballads* (Impulse A-32) and *Duke Ellington & John Coltrane* (Impulse A-30), which were about 2/3 ballads. In these two dates, particularly the latter, Trane showed a lyric sophistication that surprised nobody who'd ever sat through more than one of his sets in the clubs. His ballad style is increasingly becoming as subtle as his up-tempo blues playing is dynamic, as witness *Autumn Serenade*. The vernacular translates quite well; it is, in fact, the same language.

Johnny Hartman was Coltrane's unequivocal choice for the singer he'd like most to be caught with in front of a mike. Hartman is one of the very best of a strong lot of big-voiced crooners who were the sine qua non of the big bebop band. He conjures up images of Earl Coleman with the big voice, the even bigger collar, and the skinny, drooping boopie; of Lee Richardson, a good one, whom Hartman replaced with Dixsy's Band; of Herb Jeffries, the Brownskinned Burkarrow; of Herb Lance and Arthur Prysock; and, of course, of the Great Mister B. Billy Eckstine.

Where are they now? That jazz singing, especially among male singers, has declined since the fadeout of the lark band is one of the least controversial topics in jazz. Replacing the masculinity of the crooner with the effete-ness of the lark is only another kind of the premature destruction of artists by factors which have nothing to do with their art, which destruction we are the passive witnesses of in these times.

So we are fortunate to have Johnny Hartman back in the life, and in a better than "favorable" setting, too.

You are immediately struck by Hartman's dark satin lyricism in *They Say That Falling In Love Is Wonderful*. His voice, always a perfectly tuned instrument, is unobtrusive and relaxing, heavy in quality but almost without tremolo, which makes Hartman unique among the big-voiced hoppers. His enunciation is impeccable (you'll hear every word of this record), which makes him unique among all male singers. He respects the word, adapts his vocal embellishments to the value (in meaning and sound) of the word; which makes him unique among everybody.

Coltrane's bridge is intended to fit into the totality of the song. He doesn't, as you might expect of such a hard-blow-

ing tenor man, try to overpower the singer or the song. He rather re-interpret it along the same lines as Hartman.

Dedicated To You is rendered with all the intimacy the name suggests. Hartman sings the first verse and leaves off right in the middle of Coltrane's horn. This time it's Trane who makes the initial interpretation with one of the sweetest, most straightforward choruses he's ever recorded. You get the feeling Trane's thinking the words while he blows the melody. Then when Hartman sings the last verse you hardly notice the change from horn to vocal.

Coltrane introduces *My One and Only Love*, one of "Tin Pan Alley's" most lyric moments. It's a tender and rather complete statement from Trane. Garrison makes a strong bridge to Hartman, who breathes these lyrics like a horn. Garrison is a beautiful bass accompanist. He plays the lines under Hartman like the bass in a vocal quartet. I don't mean to slight McCoy Tyner, whose skills as an accompanist were a known quantity by the time *My Favorite Things* became popular; or Elvin's sensitive restraint on drums. It's just that performing with a singer necessarily tones this group down and the bass lines get through better.

Lush Life, which Trane's recorded before, is often performed but never this well. Hartman's vocal control lets him handle the song's first stanza in a way that seems like pure communication. From there he glides through the difficult changes of a very wavy song with an ease of expression that pulls every nuance from it with no ostentation whatever. And Hartman, like Coltrane, uses Tyner's comping, both as an extension of his own expression and as a musical ancillary to a conversational song. Coltrane's solos—well, another insight into what the song is about. A double-timed commentary on what Hartman's just said.

You Are Too Beautiful For One Man Alone is one of my favorite songs. Again, Hartman impresses by his ability to approach every song in terms of what it is about. The essence of his style is relaxed communication. He and McCoy Tyner are perfectly in tune. Every phrase in this set is impeccably stated. By everyone. Trane lays out on this tune.

Autumn Serenade is a light-headed rumba. Hartman makes his voice a little heavier to get that effect across. Again he takes an instrumental stance in the group. Coltrane plays his longest and most powerful solo. For the only time on this set he concentrates more on the harmonic and rhythmic implications of the changes than on the melodic line. Thus he makes those perfectly placed embellishments in all parts of the horn that we know him by. Heretofore Trane's played a relatively self-effacing set. Now he stretches out, in a languid sort of way, and plays a solo that is at once relaxing, poignant, strong, romantic, danceable, complex and beautiful. The man is a master, easily the most identifiable tenor player since Lester Young. A man who found his own voice and refined it to a point where he constantly finds new and more subtle areas of expression in it. Like Johnny Hartman.

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

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PERSONNEL:

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

SIDE ONE

1. THEY SAY IT'S WONDERFUL 5:15
2. DEDICATED TO YOU 5:27
3. MY ONE AND ONLY LOVE 4:56

SIDE TWO

1. LUSH LIFE 5:30
2. YOU ARE TOO BEAUTIFUL 5:32
3. AUTUMN SERENADE 4:11

Recorded March 7, 1962

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- 4-32 Ballads - John Coltrane Quartet
- 4-42 Impression - John Coltrane

Produced by BOB THIELE
Engineer RODDY VAN NELDER
Linear Notes: A. B. SPILLMAN
Cover Design: PLYMTH/THOMAS
Linear Design: JOE LEBOW
Cover and Liner Photos: JOE ALPER



1 THEY SAY IT'S WONDERFUL 5:20

(Irving Berlin)

2 DEDICATED TO YOU 5:32

(Sammy Cahn-Saul Chaplin-Hy Zaret)

3 MY ONE AND ONLY LOVE 4:55

(Robert Mellin-Guy Wood)

4 LUSH LIFE 5:29

(Billy Strayhorn)

5 YOU ARE TOO BEAUTIFUL 5:36

(Richard Rodgers-Lorenz Hart)

6 AUTUMN SERENADE 4:19

(Sammy Gallop-Peter DeRose)

Personnel:

John Coltrane, tenor saxophone

Johnny Hartman, vocals

McCoy Tyner, piano

Jimmy Garrison, bass

Elvin Jones, drums

Produced by Bob Thiele

Recorded at Van Gelder Studios, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey on March 7, 1963.

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JOHN COLTRANE AND JOHNNY HARTMAN

RECORDED 1963

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