

John Coltrane - Olé Coltrane (1961)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 25 June 2013 16:07 - Last Updated Tuesday, 16 December 2014 11:52

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01 Olé 02 Dahomey Dance 03 Aisha 04 To Her Ladyship Personnel John Coltrane — soprano saxophone; alto saxophone; tenor saxophone Freddie Hubbard — trumpet Eric Dolphy — flute; alto saxophone McCoy Tyner — piano Reggie Workman — bass Art Davis — bass Elvin Jones — drums

The complicated rhythm patterns and diverse sonic textures on *Olé* are evidence that John Coltrane was once again charting his own course. His sheer ability as a maverick -- over and beyond his appreciable musical skills -- guides works such as this to new levels, ultimately advancing the entire art form. Historically, it's worth noting that recording had already commenced -- two days prior to this session -- on *Africa/Brass*, Coltrane's debut for the burgeoning Impulse! label. The two discs complement each other, suggesting a shift in the larger scheme of Coltrane's musical motifs. The assembled musicians worked within a basic quartet setting, featuring Coltrane (soprano/tenor sax), McCoy Tyner (piano), and Elvin Jones (drums), with double-bass chores held down by Art Davis and Reggie Workman. Added to that are significant contributions and interactions with Freddie Hubbard (trumpet) and Eric Dolphy (flute and alto sax). Dolphy's contract with another record label prevented him from being properly credited on initial pressings of the album. The title track is striking in its resemblance to the Spanish influence heard on Miles Davis' *Sketches of Spain*. This is taken a bit further as Coltrane's combo stretches out with inspired improvisations from Dolphy, Hubbard, Tyner, and Coltrane, respectively. "Olé" likewise sports some amazing double-bass interaction. The combination of a bowed upright bass played in tandem with the same instrument that is being plucked has a sinister permeation that assuredly excited Coltrane, who was perpetually searching from outside the norms. The haunting beauty of "Aisha" stands as one of the finest collaborative efforts between Tyner -- the song's author -- and Coltrane. The solos from Hubbard, Dolphy, and an uncredited Tyner gleam from within the context of a single facet in a multi-dimensional jewel. The CD reissue also includes an extra track cut during the *Olé* sessions. "To Her Ladyship" is likewise on the seven-volume *Heavyweight Champion: The Complete Atlantic Recordings* box set. ---Lindsay Planer, Rovi

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