

## The Coltrane Hartman Fantasy

When singers and musicians gather to either record or perform live, the conversation is always the same. What do you want to play? What songs do you know? Who do you know?

Coltrane and Hartman would have approached their recordings and live performances in much the same manner. They both knew a great many songs and knew some of the same people. Common ground is what they would be striving for. Common experience would be the key. Coltrane and Hartman both worked for Dizzy Gillespie. Both had recorded in the late '40s and early '50s with Dizzy Gillespie. Gillespie was common ground.

### INTERLUDE

Written by Gillespie and Frank Paparelli with a lyric created by veteran lyricist Raymond Leveen, Interlude was recorded for the first time on December 31, 1944 by Sarah Vaughn with Gillespie on the session. (Leonard Feather was the pianist and contractor on the session. It was released on Don Gabor's Continental Record label.)

Vaughn and Gillespie had been in Earl Hines' Chicago based orchestra. In 1944, they left Hines along with their fellow band members Billy Eckstine and Charlie Parker to form Eckstine's big band. In 1946, Hartman joined the Hines band. Hartman also continued worked as a solo artist in Chicago. In February 1947, Hartman cut his first single for Sunbeam Records. From March till mid May of 1947, Hartman worked as the opening act for Sarah Vaughn at Chicago's Rhumboogie Club. Hartman then toured with the Hines band and record with Hines for both the Miracle and Sunrise record labels. Hartman joined the Dizzy Gillespie big band in 1947 and remained there until 1950. Interlude aka Night in Tunisia was part of the Gillespie big band instrumental book and therefore was played at many performances. In 1950, Coltrane joined the Gillespie band. Coltrane recorded Tunisia at least three times with Gillespie in 1950-51.

Our fantasy time frame is 1964 – twenty years after the Vaughn recording of Interlude. The perfect song for Coltrane and Hartman to pay tribute to Dizzy and Sassy.

### I WANT TO TALK ABOUT YOU

From 1958 on, this Billy Eckstine composition was performed and recorded extensively by Coltrane. For Hartman this song would be his opportunity to salute Mr. B.

### MY LITTLE BROWN BOOK

For Coltrane, the choice of this song (which he had recorded with Ellington in 1962) would be consistent with the methodology established on the first Coltrane Hartman disc...namely recording songs that Coltrane but not Hartman had previously recorded (i.e. Lush Life).

For Hartman, you have two choices of common ground:

- 1) Prior to Billy Eckstine, Herb Jeffries was the baritone singer in Earl Hines Grand Terrace Orchestra. Hartman growing up in Chicago with a profound interest in music had many opportunities to hear Hines and Jeffries on the radio. Jeffries left Hines and became a movie star appearing in a number of cowboy movies. Jeffries joined Duke Ellington's band in the 1940s with whom he recorded the original version of Billy Strayhorn's My Little Brown Book.
- 2) In 1947, Hartman was recordings for Sunbeam Records and Billy Strayhorn was producing sides for Sunbeam Records. Strayhorn cut Al Hibbler (Ellington's current singer) on My Little Brown Book. There is no way that Hartman was not aware of Strayhorn's production

Given the acclaim that Coltrane and Hartman received for their performance of Strayhorn's Lush Life; the opportunity to record this song would have been (at least in our fantasy) irresistible.

#### IF I'M LUCKY

A number of years ago, Kevin did a series of performance dates and recordings with Hank Jones and George Mraz. Hank and George had recorded a live album with Johnny Hartman in Japan and both had performed with Hartman innumerable times. Hank had also recorded with Hartman on Hartman's first solo project recorded after the Coltrane-Hartman album.

I asked Hank about Hartman's solo project and in the conversation, he remarked that this particular song was one that he felt had been considered by Coltrane and Hartman but was dropped from the final selections. The song is from a 1946 movie of the same name starring Perry Como, who also recorded the song in 1946. Perry Como, according to Hartman, was a primary influence in Hartman's ballad style. Coltrane was familiar with the song because he had participated in the recording of the song in the 1950s with Oscar Pettiford. Kevin thought it would be an interesting choice to record this song as part of this fantasy CD.

#### COME RAIN OR COME SHINE

##### ANY PLACE I HANG MY HAT IS HOME

These are both Harold Arlen – Johnny Mercer songs that were written for the Broadway musical St. Louis Woman in 1946. The show received severe criticism by the NAACP; thus Lena Horne refused to star in the show. The show with its all black cast was the subject of much debate within the African-American community even though it was an adaptation of the African-American poet Arna Bontemps' God Sends Sunday novel.

Coltrane had participated in recording COME RAIN OR COME SHINE on several occasions in 1957 and 1958. Sarah Vaughn recorded it in 1950.

ANYPLACE I HANG MY HAT IS HOME is a Mercer song that neither Coltrane or Hartman had previously recorded. There's no evidence that Coltrane or Hartman had ever previously played or sang this song. However it is reasonable to assume that they would both have had an awareness of the Arlen-Mercer songs that emerged from the notoriety of St. Louis Woman. Additionally, the song had high visibility in 1963 since it appears as both the opening and closing song of Barbra Streisand's highly successful album of that year.

This is the complete fantasy selection on this CD.

#### HOW HIGH THE MOON / SATELLITE

How High The Moon was written for the 1940 Broadway review entitled ,Two for the Show, where it was sung by Alfred Drake. There were many hit recordings of the song prior to 1964, thus it was mandatory that any working singer know how to sing this song, even if they had grown to despise it. It was also by all accounts, a part of the request list of every nightclub drunk. There is no question that Hartman knew this song. However, the more interesting part of this is that How High The Moon is the song that the Coltrane composition of Satellite is based on. Coltrane had recorded Satellite for Atlantic Records in 1960. However, the record was not issued by Atlantic until 1964. The idea of Coltrane and Hartman bringing How High The Moon and Satellite together as a performance vehicle either prior to the Atlantic release of Satellite or as a response to Satellite's release, is the stuff fantasy is made of.

Richard Cioffi, Mahogany Digital