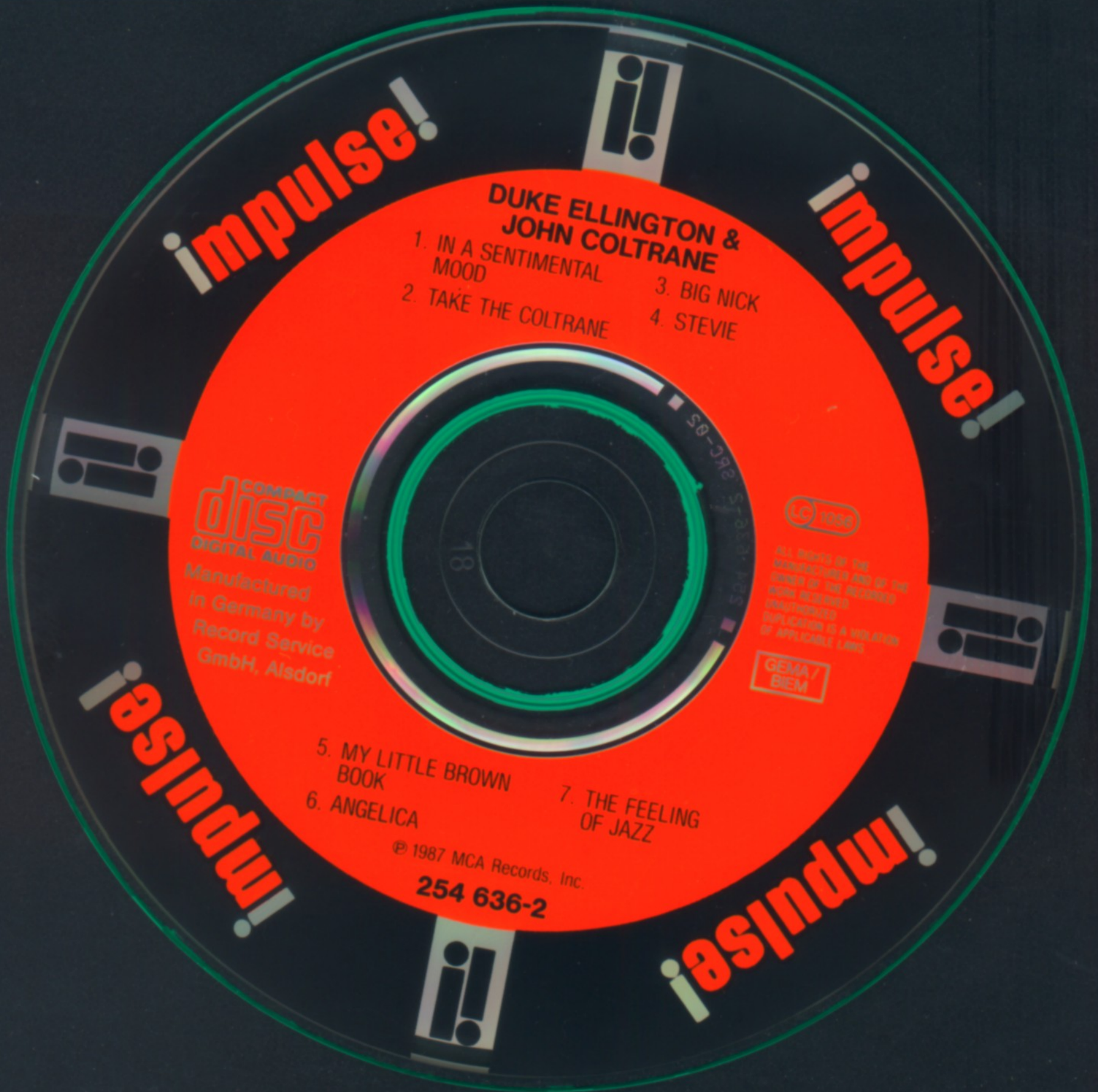

impulse!
DUKE ELLINGTON &
JOHN COLTRANE
1. IN A SENTIMENTAL MOOD
2. TAKE THE COLTRANE
3. BIG NICK
4. STEVIE
COMPACT disc DIGITAL AUDIO
Manufactured in Germany by Record Service GmbH, Alsdorf
LC 1056
GEMA / BIEM
5. MY LITTLE BROWN BOOK
6. ANGELICA
7. THE FEELING OF JAZZ
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DUKE ELLINGTON & JOHN COLTRANE

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

impulse! Mono—A-30 Stereo—AS-30

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COLTRANE and DUKE

Three of the major stylistic influences in jazz have been Louis Armstrong, Coleman Hawkins and John Coltrane. In introducing each by turn to Duke Ellington, producer Bob Thiele has convincingly demonstrated the significance of Duke's position. It is a position well described by Benny Green in the twelfth issue of the British weekly. *Scene:*

"In actual fact," says Green, "Duke Ellington was put into the jazz world to separate the men from the boys. His grasp of harmony and instrumental voicing is more advanced than anybody else's in the entire range of jazz, and the reason why many modern fans are unable to accept him is not that they are too modern for Duke, but that Duke is too modern for them."

Green writes as a musician, and a marked divergency of opinion often exists between musicians and the critic-spokesmen of the audience, but there is little doubt that John Coltrane, the most *avant* of the *avant-garde*, would agree with him.

"I'd really like to get into all Duke's songs," John said some weeks after the session heard here. "I have a feeling there's a lot to find out in his music. He has covered so much ground, and if you could work at it you maybe could really relate to it in five years or so. I once worked with Johnny Hodges, and that was the closest I'd been to Duke before this date. They're both kings in my book."

There are five Ellington numbers and one by Billy Strayhorn in this set, and it is a credit to the saxophonist that he "related" to them so successfully and skillfully in as many hours as he desired years.

Nowadays, it is quite common to bring together in a recording studio jazz musicians who not only have never previously worked together, but who have often not even met before. Such meetings are supposed to be stimulating to the artists and to result in stimulating music. More often than not, the outcome is tense, uncommunicative music which mirrors the personal relationships between its makers.

Despite the difference of background and experience, there was nevertheless a singular lack of tension on this session. For Ellington, who has led a big jazz band longer than anyone else in the music's history, the small-group context has always seemed productive. It gives him both more and less responsibility. As a pianist, he is more prominent, but as a listening leader his role is obviously less arduous.

For Coltrane, this occasion carried considerable musical obligations. "I was really honored," he said afterward with characteristic modesty, "to have the opportunity of working with Duke. It was a wonderful experience. He has set standards I haven't caught up with yet. I would have liked to have worked over all those numbers again, but then I guess the performances wouldn't have had the same spontaneity. And they mightn't have been any better!"

Duke certainly esteemed that spontaneity. When there was a question of another take of one number, he said, "Don't ask him to do another. He'll end up imitating himself."

They got on well together. Each arrived with his own rhythm men. The two drummers soon went off to a nearby bar in search of fuel; the bassists fell into friendly conversation; and the two leaders planned the program. Then, while Duke sat at the piano and mapped out the routines for the first numbers, John lit up the first of several long, brown cigars. A very promising, relaxed atmosphere was established—and maintained.

On the opener, *In a Sentimental Mood*, Coltrane immediately proves his ability to play a pretty melody expressively. He gives it a wistful, meditative quality that is absolutely right, that conveys respect and affection for the music and its composer. It is as though he had dedicated himself to seek—and to sound—the most possible in it. Duke's solo and introduction seem very much of a piece with Coltrane's conception. Aaron Bell is on bass here, Elvin Jones on drums.

Duke's piano opening to *Take the Coltrane* bears out Benny Green's contention about his "modernity." Actually, of course, the great jazz musicians are never "modern" in the narrow sense of the word. They are timeless, and the piano here is fresh and arresting. When Coltrane goes into his more discursive form of improvisation, the pianist lays out, but Jimmy Garrison's bass, providing the foundation, walks right through. Against this, and the rapid, shifting interplay of Elvin Jones's patterns and accentuations, the saxophonist's playing becomes a kind of counterpoint. These three musicians, accustomed to working together, contribute to an ensemble effect on equal terms, and all enjoy a great degree of freedom. On subsequent tracks, the role of Aaron Bell and Sam Woodyard is primarily an accompanying one. Although it is more definite, it is also very resilient, and it often seems to influence Coltrane into different and rewarding directions.

Big Nick is for Big Nick Nicholas, an excellent tenor saxophonist whom Coltrane remembers from his days with Dizzy Gillespie. "In thinking back," John said, "it seemed to have something that would suit the style he liked to play in. But maybe not?" His decision to play it on soprano certainly left the field open to Big Nick! It is a distinctive and decidedly earthy sound he produces from the soprano. At times it has an harmonica-like quality, and at others it suggests the bagpipes and the Campbells a-comin', unhuh, unhuh. As for the number's suitability for Ellington, John was in no doubt. "The way he plays," he said, "he can play anything!" And Duke drifts into the scene here with some exceptionally graceful piano. The other two members of the quartet are Garrison and Jones.

Stevie is a blues original for Duke's nephew, Stephen James, a keen young drummer who has been known to take Sam Woodyard's place in the Ellington band. He is also a great admirer of John Coltrane and Elvin Jones, so that this union of so many of his favorite people should give him much pleasure. The rhythm section on this is completed by Aaron Bell and Sam Woodyard, who produced a relaxed and integrated framework for the two soloists.

My Little Brown Book brings another piece of musical introspection from Coltrane. It is a Billy Strayhorn number of the kind on which Johnny Hodges is usually featured, and the leisureliness of Coltrane's approach does in fact recall Johnny's. In his first chorus he shows to the full the beauties of the line, and this enables him to explore later to the greatest effect. Bell and Woodyard underline the whole sensitively.

Angelica is a gay little number Duke wrote for a French movie, and he introduces it with some pretty, atmospheric piano. Joined on this by Garrison and Jones again, Coltrane takes off on a whirlwind tour while Duke lays out, but he does not go so far that the founding chords aren't always sounding themselves in the listener's ear. Duke returns to fill out the picture and the performance retains good artistic form, all four musicians obviously working toward a common objective.

The Feeling of Jazz is the first recording to appear of a new Ellington composition that is undoubtedly destined to become a standard. It is well suited to Coltrane, and Duke sounds happy as he furnishes chords to color. Together, they give the number flavors and dimensions quite different from those of other versions. The unobtrusive but solid backing is by Bell and Woodyard.

In an article by Gene Lees in the monthly magazine, "Jazz," there is an intimation that Coltrane's playing may have "undergone another spurt of rapid evolution" as a result of this relatively brief association with Ellington. It is more than possible, for Duke's catalytic influence is unique in jazz. The one certainty is that there is warm, exciting music here which will pleasantly surprise Ellington and Coltrane fans both.



DUKE at the piano



DUKE and BOB THIELE



SAM WOODYARD



JIMMY GARRISON



ELVIN JONES



DUKE and COLTRANE



AARON BELL



THIELE and COLTRANE



JOHN COLTRANE

1. IN A SENTIMENTAL MOOD
   (I. Mills, D. Ellington, M. Kurtz)
   (American Academy of Music, Inc.-ASCAP) 4:12
   Elvin, Aaron, Duke and Coltrane
2. TAKE THE COLTRANE
   (Duke Ellington)
   (Tempo Music, Inc.-ASCAP) 4:40
   Elvin, Garrison, Duke and Coltrane
3. BIG NICK
   (John Coltrane) *(Jowcal Music-BMI)* 4:25
   Elvin, Garrison, Duke and Coltrane
4. STEVIE
   (Duke Ellington)
   (Intimate Music-ASCAP) 4:20
   Sam, Aaron, Duke and Coltrane
5. MY LITTLE BROWN BOOK
   (Billy Strayhorn)
   (Tempo Music, Inc.-ASCAP) 5:20
   Sam, Aaron, Duke and Coltrane
6. ANGELICA
   (Duke Ellington)
   (Tempo Music, Inc.-ASCAP) 5:56
   Elvin, Garrison, Duke and Coltrane
7. THE FEELING OF JAZZ
   (Duke Ellington, Bobby Troup, George Simon)
   (Tempo Music, Inc.-ASCAP) 5:30
   Sam, Aaron, Duke and Coltrane

Recorded September 26, 1962

Producer: BOB THIELE
Engineer: RUDY VAN GELDER
Liner Notes: STANLEY DANCE
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Liner Design: JOE LEBOW
Cover Design: FLYNN/VICEROY

DUKE ELLINGTON & JOHN COLTRANE

1. IN A SENTIMENTAL MOOD (4:12)
2. TAKE THE COLTRANE (4:40)
3. BIG NICK (4:25)
4. STEVIE (4:20)
5. MY LITTLE BROWN BOOK (5:20)
6. ANGELICA (5:56)
7. THE FEELING OF JAZZ (5:30)

JOHN COLTRANE, tenor saxophone
DUKE ELLINGTON, piano
JIMMY GARRISON, bass
ELVIN JONES, drums
SAM WOODYARD, drums
AARON BELL, bass

Recorded September, 26th, 1962

IMPULSE! STEREO A-30

DUKE ELLINGTON & JOHN COLTRANE

COVER DESIGN ROBERT FLYNN/VICEROY PHOTOGRAPHER BOB GHIRALDINI

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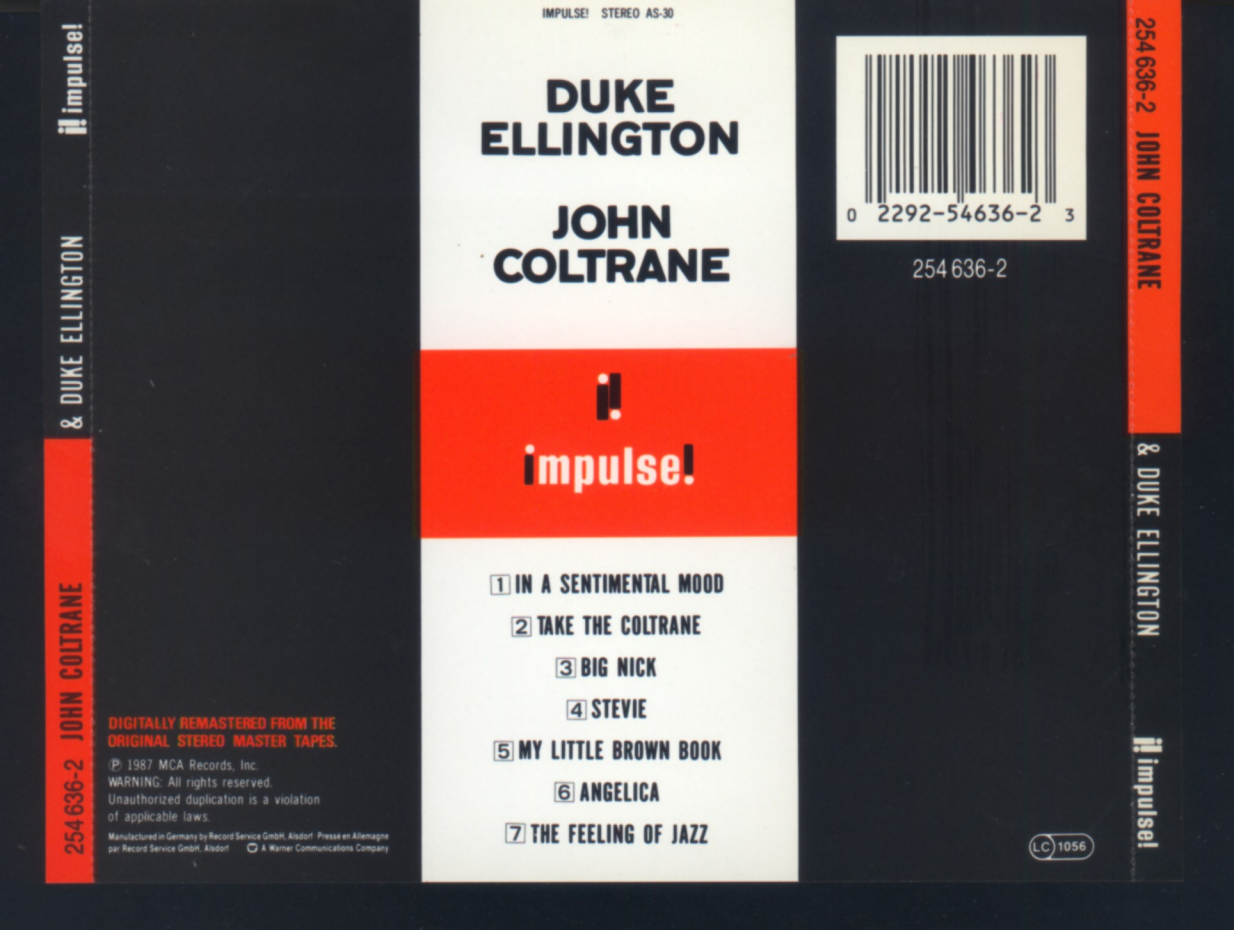
DUKE ELLINGTON & JOHN COLTRANE

ELVIN JONES / AARON BELL / JIMMY GARRISON / SAM WOODYARD

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