

## Thelonious Monk With John Coltrane (1961)

Written by bluesever

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(1) *Ruby, My Dear* (2) *Trinkle, Tinkle* (3) *Off Minor* (4) *Nutty* (5) *Epistrophy* (6) *Functional* Art Blakey Drums John Coltrane Sax (Tenor) Ray Copeland Trumpet Gigi Gryce Sax (Alto) Coleman Hawkins Sax (Tenor) Thelonious Monk Piano Wilbur Ware Bass Shadow Wilson Drums

Universally regarded as one of the greatest collaborations between the two most influential musicians in modern jazz (Miles Davis notwithstanding), the Jazzland sessions from Thelonious Monk and John Coltrane should be recognized on other levels. While the mastery of the principals is beyond reproach, credit should also be given to peerless bassist Wilbur Ware, as mighty an anchor as anyone could want. These 1957 dates also sport a variety in drummerless trio, quartet, septet, or solo piano settings, all emphasizing the compelling and quirky compositions of Monk. A shouted-out, pronounced "Off Minor" and robust, three-minute "Epistrophy" with legendary saxophonists Coleman Hawkins, Gigi Gryce, and the brilliant, underappreciated trumpeter Ray Copeland are hallmark tracks that every jazz fan should revere. Of the four quartet sessions, the fleet "Trinkle Tinkle" tests Coltrane's mettle, as he's perfectly matched alongside Monk, but conversely unforced during "Nutty" before taking off. Monk's solo piano effort, "Functional," is flavored with blues, stride, and boogie-woogie, while a bonus track, "Monk's Mood," has a Monk-Ware-Coltrane tandem (minus drummer Shadow Wilson) back for an eight-minute excursion primarily with Monk in a long intro, 'Trane in late, and Ware's bass accents booming through the studio. This will always be an essential item standing proudly among unearthed live sessions from Monk and Coltrane, demarcating a pivotal point during the most significant year in all types of music, from a technical and creative standpoint, but especially the jazz of the immediate future. ---Michael G. Nastos, AllMusic Review

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