

JAZZWISE

December 2014

★★★★★ landmark recording   ★★★★★ excellent  
★★★★ good   ★★ average   ★ disappointing

**The Miles Davis Quintet  
Featuring John Coltrane**

All of You: The Last Tour  
1960

Trapeze ACQCD7076 4-CD |  
★★★★★

**Miles Davis (t), John Coltrane (ts), Wynton  
Kelly (p), Paul Chambers (b) and Jimmy  
Cobb (d). Rec. 1960**

Davis' first European tour with his own band in March/April 1960 was put in jeopardy by Coltrane wanting out, only to be persuaded to make the tour at the last minute, which was to be his parting shot with Davis. By all accounts he grumbled throughout the tour, mounted by Norman Granz and variously advertised as 'Jazz at the Philharmonic No. 2 featuring Miles Davis, Oscar Peterson Trio, Stan Getz Quartet' and 'Norman Granz' JATP Presents Jazz Winners 1960'.

By any standards the tour was exhausting, the entourage often playing two houses a night in 20 European cities. What is remarkable is the consistency of the playing, reaching high and often inspired heights twice nightly. Albums and CDs have surfaced from time to time of certain concerts from this tour, most recently on CD *Miles Davis Quintet: Live in Den Haag* (In Crowd Records) and *Miles Davis with John Coltrane: The Legendary 1960 European Tour* (Jazz Plot Records) which claimed to present 'all the surviving music by the Miles Davis-John Coltrane 1960 European Tour'. Where this boxed four album set by Trapeze scores is in sound quality, the detail and quality of the liner notes by Simon Spillett and the completeness of the concerts – the Jazz Plot set assembling 19 tracks by Davis/Coltrane against the more complete 25 tracks by Trapeze plus a valuable interview with Coltrane by Carl-Eric Lindgren (transcribed in *Coltrane on Coltrane: The John Coltrane Interviews* edited by Chris DeVito and published by Chicago Review Press). In all, this set boasts some six hours of jazz of the highest order. Of interest is the way Davis' solos seem to get shorter as the tour progresses and Coltrane's longer – even if he grudgingly took on the tour as a favour to Davis, it is not reflected in his playing, which has an unmistakable edge and a searching quality as he draws on his whole repertoire of improvisational devices, from 'sheets of sound', multiphonics, sideslipping and more. Despite the internal tension between Davis and Coltrane that created audible frisson, such as the Den Haag version of 'Round Midnight', a point made in the liner notes is that 1960 was the year that Coltrane found himself and this is evident on tracks such as 'Walkin' from the second house at the Konserthuset in Stockholm or 'Fran Dance' and 'If I Were a Bell' from the Kongresshaus, Zurich. The latter track also includes a thrilling example of Davis' virtuosity on trumpet. Even today, there are those who believe Davis' technical command of the trumpet was less than adequate, yet even as early as 1949, as a part of a Metronome All Star Big Band in a dream trumpet section with Dizzy Gillespie and Fats Navarro, he rips off a startling display of virtuosity in the three way trumpet exchanges on the 12-inch 78rpm version of 'Overtime' that

climaxes the piece and shows he was not out of place in such exalted company. What is clear from these recordings is that this tour shows both Coltrane and Davis had taken their music to the point where change was now inevitable. For Coltrane, that transition would occur relatively smoothly culminating in the formation of his classic quartet two years later. For Davis, it would be a bumpier ride with personnel changes coming thick and fast, especially on tenor saxophone, from Coltrane to Sonny Stitt to Hank Mobley to George Coleman to Sam Rivers until finally Wayne Shorter joined in 1964, completing Davis' classic quintet of the 1960s. **Stuart Nicholson**