

Swinging with Legends 2 begins with the rarely performed **New York City Blues**, a collaboration between Quincy Jones and Peggy Lee. A tribute of sorts to the Big Apple, Lee's lyrics are still timely today. After beginning quietly, this rendition becomes a real rouser as Angela gives the words her own high-powered interpretation, a contrast to Peggy Lee's low-key approach. In addition to the passionate singing, the big band ensembles are heated with some screaming notes from trumpeter Bryan Davis that will lead some to think of Maynard Ferguson. "He is an amazing player who can hit high notes all night long," marvels Angela.

Easy To Love starts with some unaccompanied playing by the masterful Ken Peplowski which precedes two warm choruses from Angela and a fine clarinet solo. The singer's scatting is a transcription of a chorus from Rob McConnell's version. Notice how joyful Angela sounds during the final section of this piece, clearly relishing soaring over the big band.

Randy Brecker brings in the Rodgers & Hammerstein classic **Hello Young Lovers**. But just when one thinks that this will be a ballad in waltz-time, Angela and the big band enter and Ron's arrangement quickly transforms the piece into a fast and hard-swinging romp. Brecker takes a solo that sounds both dazzling and effortless, before the singer manages to sound calm despite the raging tempo.



The late Burt Bacharach's **A House Is Not A Home** was always one of his finest ballads and this thoughtful arrangement retains its essence. Angela does justice to the song and Chris Persad's statement on trumpet is an added plus.

"I always loved Phil Woods' versions of **Willow Weep For Me**, so I decided to write this one out in his style," says Ron. "Todd Bashore kills the alto solo. I think that that kid is a future legend." With the tempo being a bit faster than usual, Angela sounds flawless during a potentially difficult scatting section. This exhilarating version of Ann Ronell's lone big hit (if one does not count "Who's Afraid Of The Big Band Wolf") was done in one take.

As with the guest appearances of Peplowski and Brecker, **It Might As Well Be Spring** begins with an unaccompanied statement from a giant; tenor-saxophonist Lew Tabackin digs into the bridge of the standard. Angela's opening chorus is full of warmth and then she cooks with the band including scatting in unison with the horns.

Illinois Jacquet and Jimmy Mundy's "Black Velvet" became **Don'cha Go 'Way Mad'** when Al Stillman added lyrics. Ron Aprea's arrangement starts at a high level of excitement and builds up from there.

The touching **Two For The Road**, one of Henry Mancini's most haunting ballads, has tender and heartfelt singing from Angela along with some brief but powerful flute playing from Tabackin. It also includes typically tasteful piano playing from Cecilia Coleman, of whom Angela says, "There is a comfort about singing with Cecilia. She is perfect on the rubato sections of these songs even though we could not see each other in the studio due to the separation. She anticipates everything, one cannot lose her, and she is a stunning player."

That Old Black Magic is taken quite fast but somehow Angela sounds relaxed and joyous even when the big band is raging behind her; check out her final note.