

RF RECORDS 36

THE GAZZY TWENTIES

COMPILED AND ANNOTATED BY DAVID A. JASEN



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1366
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1978

MUSIC LP

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SIDE ONE

1. Sweet Georgia Brown - Oliver Naylor Orchestra
2. Those Panama Mamas - The Cotton Pickers
3. Red Hot Henry Brown - The Charleston Chasers
4. Indiana Shuffle - Original Indiana Five
5. Wolverine Blues - Gene Rodemich Orchestra
6. Stomp Your Stuff - Ray Miller Orchestra
7. Bell Hoppin' Blues - Fred Rich Orchestra
8. Oh Baby - Original Memphis Five
9. White Ghost Shivers - New Orleans Owls

SIDE TWO

1. Ace of Rhythms - Jabbo Smith's Rhythm Aces
2. Mobile Blues - Wade's Moulin Rouge Orchestra
3. Southbound - Alex Hill and his Orchestra
4. Static Strut - Erskine Tate's Vendome Orchestra
5. Now Cut Loose - John Williams' Synco Jazzers
6. Bearcat Stomp - Savoy Bearcats
7. Fight That Thing - Reb Spikes Majors and Minors
8. Crazy Quilt - Chas. Creath's Jazz-O-Maniacs
9. Boot To Boot - Jesse Stone and his Blue Serenaders

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THE JAZZY TWENTIES

COMPILED AND ANNOTATED BY DAVID A. JASEN

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

COVER PHOTO BY WALKER EVANS

Boarding House, Birmingham, Alabama, 1936

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The twenties was a most active time for popular music in the United States. We have surveyed The Dancing Twenties (RBF-27), popular tunes of the time which never survived its own period in The Tuneful Twenties (RBF-29), and with this release, we celebrate the then new and terribly exciting time when Jazz influenced our popular music.

Jazz bands during the twenties consisted of from five to nine pieces jamming together on a given tune which could be punctuated with solos of varying instruments. The basic five pieces consisted of cornet, trombone, clarinet, piano and drums. To this was added a banjo, tuba, alto saxophone and finally a tenor saxophone. It was when doubling and trebling of the same instruments came into vogue which necessitated the use of arrangements, so that each instrument or group of related instruments would not clash with each other, that the compact dixieland bands of the twenties were destroyed.

But jazz bands weren't the only ones playing jazz. Many of the better dance bands also played jazz and it is extremely difficult if not impossible to differentiate between a jazz band playing a pop tune and a dance band jazzing up a pop tune. The tunes themselves on this album are in two categories: those which were written by band members as either theme songs for the bands or else featured members in the bands. The bands on this album represent the best from this time period. Whether dance bands playing jazz, or jazz bands playing for dancing, these groups consisted of dedicated young musicians playing for the

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sheer joy of it (and whatever money was going around). Climb aboard with a hey nonny-nonny and a hot-cha cha!

SIDE ONE

SWEET GEORGIA BROWN, one of the all-time favorites of 1925 was written by Maceo Pinkard, Ken Casey and bandleader Ben Bernie. Oliver Naylor's orchestra delivers a fabulous charleston-inspired arrangement by Bill Perry. The group consisted of Pinky Gerbrecht on cornet, Pete Beilman on trombone, Jerry Richel, Jack Howard and Gilly Bouchon on clarinets, alto sax and tenor sax, leader Naylor with young Bob Zurke on pianos, Jules Bauduc on banjo, Carl Hansen on tuba and Louis Darrough on drums on this recording which took place in New York City on May 1, 1925.

THOSE PANAMA MAMAS was written by publisher Irving Bibb in 1924. It is one of those unsung tunes (even with lyrics by Howard Johnson) which when once heard remains with one. The Cotton Pickers were a studio group made up of Phil Napoleon on trumpet, Miff Mole on trombone, Chuck Miller on clarinet, Frankie Trumbauer on C-Melody saxophone, Arthur Schutt on piano, John Cali on banjo, Joe Tarto on tuba and Harry Lottman on drums. The band is propelled by the driving horn of Phil Napoleon whose presence insures success. A far from typical piano solo by Arthur Schutt illustrates why he was by far the most in-demand pianist during the twenties. Throughout this decade, on sheet music with photos of jazz and dance bands, one notices Schutt at the keyboard in practically all of them. Was he that prolific or did he simply rent himself out for band photographs?

RED HOT HENRY BROWN was written in 1925 by that now-neglected composer-lyricist-pianist-singer Fred Rose, who musically helped the twenties to roar. The Charleston Chasers were a seven-piece recording band whose first recording this was, made up of such veterans on disc as Leo McConville on cornet, Miff Mole on trombone, Dick Johnson on Clarinet and alto sax, Arthur Schutt again on piano, Tony Colucci on banjo, Joe Tarto on tuba,

and Vic Berton on drums. Miff Mole shows why he was a top-ranking trombonist during this time.

INDIANA SHUFFLE was a group effort by the Original Indiana Five. Like most "Fives" this one was no exception and here we have six pieces with Tony Tortomas on trumpet, Pete Pellizzi on trombone, Nick Vitalo on clarinet, Harry Ford on piano, unknown tuba, and leader Tom Morton on drums. In the great tradition of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band and Original Memphis Five, the Original Indiana Five is mainly an ensemble band with plenty of fire.

WOLVERINE BLUES was one of Jelly Roll Morton's most famous tunes, published in 1923. Recorded the same year by St. Louis' most important dance band, the Gene Rodemich Orchestra boasted eleven players including publisher-songwriter-trombonist Larry Conley and future bandleader-arranger-composer-pianist Allister Wylie dueting with leader Rodemich on some fancy pianistics.

STOMP YOUR STUFF was pianist Bill Krenz' maiden effort. Born in Rock Island, Illinois on February 23, 1899, Krenz played with such luminaries as Paul Biese, Jean Goldkette, Arnold Johnson, as well as with the twelve-piece 1926 Ray Miller orchestra on this track.

BELL HOPPIN' BLUES is another neat tune from 1926 featuring the trombone of Miff Mole and the novelty piano of leader Fred Rich.

OH BABY was one of the many hits Walter Donaldson created in 1924. The Original Memphis Five for this recording was actually down to five: Phil Napoleon on trumpet, Charles Panelli on trombone, Jimmy Lytell on clarinet, Frank Signorelli on piano and Jack Roth on drums. It is a typical selection of this exciting group which features its co-leaders beautifully. Phil Napoleon's drive has been noted, but in this recording we hear an interplay with Frank Signorelli which is one of the marvels in early jazz. Signorelli's incredible pianistics are given full range as

accompanist with the band, as a duetist with first Napoleon, then with Panelli and finally with Lytell and then as soloist. For further contributions of this remarkable group, see RBF-26, The Original Memphis Five.

WHITE GHOST SHIVERS is a smashing effort for the New Orleans Owls in this 1926 recording. Actually coming from and formed in New Orleans, this was recorded by the nine-piece group in Atlanta, Georgia. The reed section of leader Benjie White, Pinky Vidacovich and Lester Smith is particularly outstanding.

SIDE TWO

ACE OF RHYTHMS is a Jabbo Smith original of 1929 and features the great cornetist in the exciting five-piece combination called his Rhythm Aces. These were Jabbo on cornet, Omer Simeon on clarinet, Cassino Simpson on piano, Ikey Robinson on banjo, and Hayes Alvis on tuba.

MOBILE BLUES was written by that fabulously multi-talented Fred Rose and bandleader Albert E. Short at the end of 1923. Jimmy Wade had a brilliant twelve-piece band which became the first to record this incredible piece. Wade was fortunate to have the legendary Teddy Weatherford on piano, as we hear one of his rare solos. We are also fortunate to hear the powerful cornet of Jimmy Wade himself as well as the melody thereafter played by trombonist William Dover.

SOUTHBOUND was composed and performed by the extraordinary pianist-arranger Alex Hill. His orchestra in this 1929 recording consisted of George Dixon on cornet, an unknown trombonist, a reed section made up of Darnell Howard, George James and Cecil Irwin, Alex Hill on piano, Ikey Robinson on banjo, and unknown tuba and drummer.

STATIC STRUT was pianist Phil Wall's contribution in 1926. Erskine Tate was a violinist in Chicago whose group in May of that year contained the unique Louis Armstrong on trumpet and Teddy Weatherford

on piano. A powerful band for a movie theatre, this and another tune (see Folkways FJ-2805) were its only recordings.

NOW CUT LOOSE is by pianist Mary Lou Burley and features her terrific pianistics. She was only seventeen at the time! Her soon-to-be husband, John Williams, is also featured on the alto saxophone. The Synco-Jazzers was a fine six-piece territory band.

BEARCAT STOMP was written especially for this exciting group by famed alto saxophonist-arranger, Don Redman. This eleven-piece band opened the equally famous Harlem nightspot, the Savoy Ballroom. The Savoy Bearcats made this recording in 1926 and featured their tubaist Harry Edwards a good year before it became fashionable to do so. Joe Steele is their pianist and proves he can stride with the best of them. The advanced harmonies in the latter half of the recording shows this band to be well above its competition.

FIGHT THAT THING is a product of the ubiquitous Spikes Brothers, Reb and John, who had a music store in Los Angeles which became a base for traveling musicians in that area. The Majors and Minors were fourteen pieces with doublings in trumpets, trombones, clarinets, pianos and banjos.

CRAZY QUILT is a 1926 tune by Paul Van Loan. Chas. Creath's Jazz-O-Maniacs was a marvelous ten-piece group originally from New Orleans who played on the riverboats up and down the Mississippi, finally settling in St. Louis. This recording, their last, had Charles Creath and Dewey Jackson on cornets, Albert Wynn on trombone, William Blue, Horace Eubanks and William Rollins on reeds, Burroughs Lovingood on piano, Pete Patterson on banjo, Cecil White on tuba and Creath's brother-in-law, Zutty Singleton on drums.

BOOT TO BOOT is pianist-arranger-leader Jesse Stone's original. His ten-piece Blue Serenaders from St. Louis provides a contrast to Chas. Creath's band recorded just a few days before. The

beginning sounds like Tiger Rag but it turns out differently.
The band contained a young saxophonist, Jack Washington, soon
to gain fame first with Bennie Moten's Kansas City Orchestra and
then with Count Basie's band. A fine, swinging tune to end this
tour of the jazzy twenties.

CREDITS

Programmed and Notes by David A. Jasen

Mastered by Carl Seltzer

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