Jive At Five
The Style-makers of Jazz 1920s -1940s
New World NW 274

Jazz is still a very young form of musical expression, well under one hundred years old — and uniquely American. In the 1890s black musicians began playing ragtime and the early forms of blues that had passed down from slavery days as field hollers and work songs. They played them in small combinations, usually cornet (later trumpet), trombone, clarinet, banjo or guitar, tuba, and drums. Pianists did not become part of these ensembles until the years approaching World War I; they worked as soloists, performing ragtime, popular tunes of the day, and their own compositions, blending the many different types of music played in New Orleans in the late nineteenth century.

Jazz probably developed in New Orleans because of the mix of Spanish, French, black, and other peoples who had settled there— each bringing its own musical heritage. These melded over roughly thirty years during the second half of the nineteenth century into a wholly new form of musical expression, at first called “jass” and later, just before World War I, “jazz,” a Creole word probably of African origin.

Most of jazz's early practitioners had very little formal education of any kind. They developed instrumental techniques on their own, often through unorthodox methods, and improvised as they went along. In early bands the trumpet stated the melody simply, the clarinet and trombone embellished and played countermelody above and beneath, and all were supported by guitar or banjo, tuba, and drums playing together. The music developed in bands that played for parades and funerals. Jazz at funerals was a custom unique to New Orleans. The black bands played straight going to the cemetery and during the service, but once the ceremony was over and they were heading back to town, they played with joyous abandon.

There were few opportunities for these players to earn a full-time living playing music, and most of them— save the pianists who played in brothels in Storyville, the red-light district— worked at other jobs, playing music two or three nights a week or more often if special occasions arose.

By the 1890s every type of performer— from singers, dancers, acrobats, and jugglers to animal acts— was needed to fill vaudeville bills in theaters from coast to coast. Each theater maintained a pit orchestra— often no more than three pieces in the early years— to play for these acts. Because of segregation, black audiences had their own theaters. One well-known chain, the Theatre Owners' Booking Association, provided an outlet for a whole era of entertainers and musicians, who often toured the entire country. Another area of employment was the medicine shows that operated until roughly 1930. They, too, featured small bands that played on the wagons to attract customers for the medicine men's patent cure-alls.

During World War I ballroom dancing became popular, and the growth of nightclubs and ballrooms gave thousands of black and white musicians full-time work at their professions. But World War I also saw the navy's closing of Storyville as an emergency war measure, which eliminated hundreds of part-time jobs for musicians. The best of these players went to Chicago, where the boom of wartime industry opened up a job market in the steel mills and other industrial plants.

The early masters, like trumpeter Freddie K eppard (1889-1933), went on the road, bringing jazz to New York (1913), California (1915), and the rest of the country.

Louis Armstrong (1900-1971) was from the second generation of players. He left New Orleans in 1922 to join Joe “K ing” Oliver (1885-1938) in Chicago. Oliver had been one of New Orleans' best brass players, but had left in the exodus that followed the almost overnight closing of Storyville in 1917. In Chicago he quickly deposed Freddie K eppard as the city's leading jazz trumpeter.

When World War I ended, few top players remained in New Orleans. Those who did were less adventurous or had found a vastly different kind of life from what they were used to in the South and returned home, sometimes to play less and less. Life styles and habits prevented many of the best early players, who ought to have benefited from the developing interest in jazz, from achieving any of its financial rewards.
Three of New Orleans' finest clarinetists made their reputations away from their home city. Johnny Dodds (1892-1940), Jimmie Noone (1895-1944), and Sidney Bechet (1897-1959) worked regularly in New Orleans before Storyville's closing and might never have made the journey north otherwise. Only Noone became influential in his prime years, and this influence was on the styles of the second generation of white jazz players who began their careers in Chicago. One of them, Benny Goodman (born 1909), would become the greatest single popularizer of jazz during the 1930s.

Jimmie Noone spent most of his professional life playing in Chicago. He attained a reputation among fellow musicians in King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band and with Charles "Doc" Cooke's Doctors of Syncopation, a large band that, save for Noone's and Kephard's solo work, had as little jazz as Paul Whiteman's orchestra. Noone remained with Cooke until 1926, toward the end of which time he also led his own group. This five-piece combo moved into the Apex Club in 1927; a recording contract with Brunswick a year later brought world fame. Noone remained an important figure in Chicago until World War II, when he was reduced to working with just a trio at the height of the bigband period (his own big-band attempt failed). In 1943, after leading a combo on the road, he moved to Los Angeles, where he died.

Johnny Dodds, who also settled in Chicago, remained a much less well-known player, although he benefited by his association on records with Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton. Dodds gained enough popularity in Chicago to lead his own small groups, usually in partnership with his younger brother, Warren "Baby" Dodds (1898-1959). No company was interested in recording Johnny after 1929, until a revival of interest in the early New Orleans style took him to New York in 1938 for the first time. The following year he suffered a stroke, but recovered sufficiently to take part in one final recording session for Decca in 1940, the year of his death.

Sidney Bechet was perhaps the most precocious player in New Orleans, leading a busy life as a player as early as the age of ten. He made occasional ventures away from home before leaving for Chicago in 1917. Bechet played clarinet with Joe Oliver and Freddie Keppard in Chicago, but was eager for wider fame and in 1919 successfully auditioned for James Reese ("Lieutenant Jim") Europe's "Hell Fighters" Band (which can be heard on New World Records NW 260, Shuffle Along), shortly before the leader was murdered backstage by one of his drummers during the intermission of a Boston concert on May 9th. He joined composer Will Marion Cook's orchestra, which went to London that year.

Bechet's reputation was made when the Swiss conductor Ernest Ansermet reviewed a London performance of the Cook orchestra: "There is in the Southern Syncopated Orchestra an extraordinary clarinet virtuoso who is, so it seems, the first of his race to have composed perfectly formed blues on the clarinet....I've heard two of them, which he elaborated at great length. They are elaborate equally for their richness of invention, their force of accent, and their daring novelty and unexpected turns. These solos already show the germ of a new style. Their form is gripping, abrupt, harsh, with a brusque and pitiless ending like that of Bach's Second Brandenburg Concerto. I wish to set down the name of this artist of genius; as for myself, I shall never forget it—it is Sidney Bechet."

When Cook's London engagement terminated, Bechet joined a small group made up from the orchestra, led by drummer Benny Peyton, and played in London and Paris until 1921, when he sailed for New York. There he played with everyone from Ford Dabney to Duke Ellington and James P. Johnson and even ran his own club for a time. He also played and acted in touring shows through 1925. During this time he appeared on dozens of recordings made mostly under the auspices of fellow Louisianan Clarence Williams (1898-1965), who was a music publisher and a recording contractor for the Okeh label.

Bechet was to spend several seasons until the Depression playing in Europe—although not recording there—when he might well have cut many record sides in the United States. He returned to New York with Noble Sissle (see New World Records NW 260, Shuffle Along) in 1931, worked again with Duke Ellington (1899-1974) (alongside Johnny Hodges, to whom he passed on some of his mastery and style on soprano sax), and then with trumpeter Tommy Ladnier formed the New Orleans Feetwarmers, which became for a time the house band at Harlem's jitterbug center, the Savoy Ballroom. The Depression forced the band to break up in 1933, and for some months Bechet and Ladnier ran a tailor shop in Harlem (Ladnier eventually moved away from New York to escape the hard times there). Bechet returned to play with Sissle until 1938, when the Swing Era and a jazz revival were in full flower. From then until his death Bechet played and recorded with small groups, mostly of his own choosing. Bechet and Dodds won fans among public and professionals but had little influence on other players. When the revival of interest in traditional jazz brought their styles back in demand, both men found adherents, but usually among amateur white players whose knowledge came mostly from old recordings. (An exception is Bob Wilbur, who developed into a top-rate professional player.)
Louis Armstrong absorbed the early experiences of the brass players who preceded him in New Orleans, including Joe Oliver, on whose playing he most closely based his own style. His principal early work was with pianist Fate Marable (1890-1947) on the Mississippi riverboats out of New Orleans and St. Louis that played as far north as Minneapolis and St. Paul. He was tutored by Dave Jones and Joe Howard, older players in Mrable's orchestra.

Armstrong joined King Oliver in Chicago in 1922 and worked with him through 1924. He married the band’s pianist, Lil Hardin, who encouraged him to join Fletcher Henderson's orchestra in New York in the fall of 1924.

Using the finest musicians, Fletcher Henderson (1897-1952) led the best-known black orchestra of the 1920s and led outstanding bands until World War II. Armstrong's ability as a soloist helped make Henderson's sometimes staid orchestra the leading hot-jazz ensemble of the time.

Of the great early players in New Orleans, Chicago, and New York, only Armstrong had all the elements at his command: tone, technique, range, endurance, and the seemingly unlimited ability to improvise chorus after chorus. He began to develop into the period’s greatest solo artist after he signed with the Okeh label in 1925. For five years he made record after record that showed the public what he could do. His small handpicked band included Johnny Dodds and, later, Earl "Fatha" Hines (born 1905).

After 1929, Armstrong reigned as the first international king of jazz and as a major entertainer. His musical followers included Bix Beiderbecke (1903-1931) and Bunny Berigan (1908-1942). After 1936 Roy Eldridge (born 1911) expanded the Armstrong style, playing faster and higher with unbounded technique, drive, and ideas. Eldridge was followed by many younger players—including Dizzy Gillespie (born 1917), who, with Charlie Parker (1920-1955), in the forties founded a new way of playing jazz: bebop (see New World Records NW 271, Bebop).

Leon “Bix” Beiderbeke was a brilliant player with perfect pitch, a unique clear tone, and the ability to choose exactly the right notes in his solo work. His introverted personality showed in his playing, in which there was always a sense of restraint, at least in his recorded performances. Because of his limited technique, Beiderbeke influenced fewer trumpet players than did Louis Armstrong. However, his overall musical influence was nearly as widespread as Armstrong's, because of his lyricism and his ability to structure a solo with a composer's touch. His brief but intense life was plagued by alcoholism and by his inability to make money by staying in a big band or in a radio or recording band. Beiderbeke is the classic case of the self-destructive jazzman later immortalized in fiction.

The trombone players of that period seemed to owe most to the early work of Irving Milfred “Miff” Mole (1898-1961) and Jimmy Harrison (1900-1931). Both made their reputations almost entirely in the New York area.

Mole had played with one of the more successful early jazz combos, the Original Memphis Five, which made dozens of records and toured the country several times until the mid-twenties, when Mole settled in New York to play for Sam Lanin, Ray Miller, and Ross Gorman. In Gorman's band he met cornetist Loring “Red” Nichols (1905-1965), a clever and prolific jazzman who captured the public's fancy through a series of highly intricate performances recorded for Brunswick starting in 1925. Mole was trombone soloist on most of these and also for several other labels, using groups of talented New York players working under such names as the Red Heads or the Charleston Chasers.

Harrison's road to fame was slower. He was well thought of by his associates through the mid-twenties but did not reach a wider public until he played with Fletcher Henderson's orchestra in 1927-28 and Charlie Johnson's Paradise Orchestra in 1928-29. He recorded with both groups, returned to Henderson, and, until his untimely death, worked and recorded briefly with Chick Webb.

Though not much younger, Jay C. Higginbotham (1906-1973) was typical of the rising new players. He visited New York in 1928 after playing in the Buffalo area and sat in with Chick Webb at the Savoy Ballroom. He was heard and signed by pianist Luis Russell (1902-1963), who was putting together one of the hottest Harlem bands of the late twenties, with steady jobs at the Saratoga and Nest clubs.

Russell's band could play pretty much what it wanted, without catering to audiences. Their benevolent boss was Casper Holstein, the numbers king of Harlem, who owned the Saratoga Club. He apparently made so much money during the late twenties that he didn't care whether anyone came to his club or not. This, and the band's highly competitive spirit, made a creative atmosphere in which the Russell band, with Higginbotham as trombone soloist, flourished.
Higginbotham's reputation was solidly established after only a year in New York. He moved forward to play with Fletcher Henderson, Benny Carter, Chick Webb, and the Mills Blue Rhythm Band before joining Louis Armstrong's big band in the late thirties. Higginbotham remained a potent soloist for another decade, until his drinking began taking a toll on his playing.

Saxophones did not become important in jazz until the early twenties, when smaller combos began using them to fill out their ensemble sound in nightclubs and ballrooms. The first important jazz player was Coleman Hawkins (1904-1969), who was born in St. Joseph, Missouri, and toured the country with singer Mamie Smith's Jazz Hounds from 1921 to 1923. For the next decade he was the principal tenor-sax soloist of Fletcher Henderson's orchestra. Because the Henderson group, after a polite early period, became a rousing, shouting big band, Hawkins developed an extremely loud and powerful tone.

Jam sessions were a regular and often important way to keep up on one's instrument. Players would get together after their 4 regular jobs, or if they weren't working, to jam (improvise) among themselves for their own enjoyment and to sharpen their abilities. Hawkins had been unrivaled until he went up against the unknown Herschel Evans (1909-1939), Ben Webster (1909-1975), Dick Wilson (1911-1941), and Lester Young (1909-1959) at an after-hours session at the Sunset Club in Kansas City in 1933. Hawkins lost his first and perhaps only battle that night. Though it would be years before the Kansas City style would take precedence over the Hawkins sound, he undoubtedly knew changes were in the wind.

In 1934, when it appeared that Henderson's star was waning in the Depression, Hawkins went to Europe, where he gained personal triumphs and a sense of freedom he had not known in the United States. He remained until 1939.

Lester Young, the principal winner in that 1933 contest, was a New Orleans product, although he was born in Woodville, Mississippi. His parents were vaudeville players and musicians, his father a teacher of all instruments and a competent trumpeter. Lester grew up in New Orleans, loved the music, and became a drummer—in his own estimate, a good one. He wanted something easier to transport than drums and switched to clarinet, then saxophone. His family organized a show and band and toured the South and Southwest in the mid-twenties. Lester played first in his father's band, then in various territory bands such as pianist Art Bronson's Bostonians, where he played alto and baritone sax until Bronson's tenor man failed to show up for jobs. Lester was given a tenor sax and began developing a style based on the light, fluid playing of Frankie Trumbauer (1900-1956), whose records with the Mound City Blue Blowers, Jean Goldkette, Paul Whiteman, and Bix Beiderbecke were among the most influential of the twenties. Young's alto-like sound avoided the Hawkins attack and sonority. By 1933 Young had been with Gene Coy, the Blue Devils, and King Oliver in the Southwest and had perfected his style, which was characterized by unusual intervals and patterns and great improvisational imagination.

Lester replaced Hawkins in Henderson's band, but because his sound and style were so different from Hawkins' he ran into opposition from the remainder of Henderson's sax section. He was replaced with Ben Webster, whose tone and style were similar to Hawkins'. Young replaced Webster in Andy Kirk's band and then went to Minneapolis to play with an outstanding small combo until 1936, when he joined Count Basie (born 1904) at the Reno Club in Kansas City. With new management and financial backing Basie enlarged his band and took a path that brought him national fame within two years. Young was widely considered Basie's chief soloist, and he became the most influential man on his instrument until modern jazz began unsettling the old order after World War II. After the forties he went into a steady decline until his death. Hawkins was also affected by modern jazz—he felt that latecomers were reaping rewards he deserved for his continual exploration of the saxophone's resources—and he too deteriorated in the years before his death.

Johnny Hodges (1906-1970) and Benny Carter (born 1907) became the principal influences on alto sax from about 1928 until Charlie Parker displaced both men after World War II. Hodges had starred in Duke Ellington's orchestra after a relatively brief apprenticeship with Chick Webb and lesser leaders in Boston and New York. Ellington had the steady job at Harlem's Cotton Club, with a nightly radio program over the CBS network from 1929 on. The club's atmosphere encouraged Ellington to develop his "jungle" style, with animal sounds made by the plunger mute on Bubber Miley's (and later Cootie Williams') trumpet and Joe Nanton's trombone.
Carter, who derived his style from Trumbauer, built his reputation first with Charlie Johnson, then with Fletcher Henderson, Chick Webb, and McKinney's Cotton Pickers before organizing his own orchestras. He had complete technical facility and a beautiful singing tone like Hodges'. His slightly restrained approach was the opposite of Hodges' passionate playing. Though admired by the best players, Carter was unable to break through with his own fine all-star orchestras in the Depression and had to give up, joining non-playing leader Willie Bryant on a job at the Hotel Vendome in Buffalo in early 1935. But that summer, with a reputation as a player made on dozens of recordings, and a reputation as an arranger the equal of Don Redman or Fletcher Henderson, Carter left for Europe. He played trumpet and alto sax in saxistsinger Willie Lewis' band at the swank Chez Florence nightclub in Paris. A year later he became chief arranger for the British Broadcasting Corporation's house orchestra under the direction of Henry Hall. He played and recorded throughout Europe, and was immeasurably helpful to many European players, until he returned to the United States in May, 1938. Carter organized a new big band and found steady work at the Savoy Ballroom, using outstanding newer players like Vic Dickerson, Tyree Glenn, and Eddie Heywood. He moved to Los Angeles during World War II, and after 1947 he was increasingly active as an arranger, orchestrator, and composer for television and films and enjoyed the commercial success he had never found in fifteen years as a leader of outstanding orchestras.

The most influential white player was Benny Goodman, possibly the most gifted and precocious of his generation—he starred with Ben Pollack's crack big band at the age of seventeen. Goodman took his inspiration from Jimmie Noone, Leon Roppollo, and Buster Bailey, all formidable technicians, and developed his own technique and style. He had good tone, range, speed, and reading ability, and reached the top of the business as a young man. He spent brief periods with Red Nichols and then worked principally as a highly paid radio and recording performer during the Depression, with time out for a short stint as bandleader for singer Russ Columbo. In 1934 Goodman left the security of the studios to organize a big swing band, which signed a twenty-six-week, commercial contract with NBC for a new radio program called "Let's Dance." His arrangements came from the black musicians Fletcher Henderson and Benny Carter and from top white writers. From December, 1934, to May, 1935, this show was heard coast to coast and gained Goodman the audience he had been seeking.

In the summer of 1935 Goodman's band, with trumpeter Bunny Berigan, drummer Gene Krupa, and pianist Jess Stacy among its outstanding sidemen, began a nationwide tour that culminated in a record-breaking appearance at the Palomar Ballroom in Hollywood. This signaled the start of the Swing Era. Goodman reigned as its king, the idol of millions of fans and musicians. His band featured many of the era's best players and, under the influence of talent-developer and producer John Hammond (born 1910), was the first white group to publicly present black musicians like Teddy Wilson (piano), Lionel Hampton (vibraphone), and, later, Cootie Williams (trumpet) and Charlie Christian (electric guitar).

Christian was the first to star on electric guitar, and instrument only experimented with earlier by his mentor Eddie Durham with Bennie Moten's and Jimmie Lunceford's bands. Christian had played bass with his brother's orchestra, then guitar, and by 1937 was easily the outstanding player on electric guitar. His long, flowing single-note lines contrasted with the prevailing style of Dick McDonough, Carl Kress, George Eps, and other white studio players, who played chord solos. Christian's extremely supple beat and time enabled him to play anything. Virtually every jazz guitarist playing today owes the roots of his style to Charlie Christian. His style was easily adapted to bebop and survives in the playing of masters like Jimmy Raney, George Benson, and the late Wes Montgomery. Christian recorded with Goodman's orchestra and sextet until 1941, when he was hospitalized with tuberculosis. He was the last important figure formed before World War II.
Side One

Band 1
Every Tub
(Coun Basie)
Count Basie Orchestra: Ed Lewis, Buck Clayton, and Harry Edison, trumpets; Dan Minor, Eddie Durham, and Benny Morton, trombones; Earl Warren, alto saxophone; Lester Young and Herschel Evans, tenor saxophones; Jack Washington, alto and baritone saxophones; Count Basie, piano; Freddie Green, guitar; Walter Page, bass; Jo Jones, drums.
Recorded February 16, 1938, in New York. Originally issued on Decca 1728 (mx # 63287-A).

This is the kind of performance that made Count Basie's the hottest big jazz band in the late thirties. The pushing, yet relaxed beat and hard-driving soloists blended into one superbly exciting combination. Jo Jones propels the band with the high-hat cymbal, eschewing the bass drum for rhythm that had been used by jazz drummers till then.

Lester Young blew all competition aside, as musicians flocked to the ballrooms, nightclubs, and theaters where Basie's band appeared to see the redhead who played with his instrument held way up and out to the side, unlike any other saxophonist. His choices of notes, runs, and chords were previously unknown. Young played dynamic solos, but with a softer tone than the prevailing standard of Coleman Hawkins, and each note was distinct and always swinging.

The Basie rhythm team was not a collection of individuals, but a tightly knit group breathing together to create a driving yet sometimes lighter-than-air beat, the greatest in jazz.

Band 2
Melancholy
(Marty Bloom and Walter M elrose)
Johnny Dodds's Black Bottom Stompers: Louis Armstrong, trumpet; Gerald Reeves, trombone; Johnny Dodds, clarinet; Barney Bigard, tenor saxophone; Earl "Fatha" Hines, piano; Bud Scott, banjo; Baby Dodds, drums.
Recorded April 22, 1927, in Chicago. Originally issued on Brunswick 3567 (mx # C 798-9; E 22727-28W; E 6441-42W).

Johnny Dodds repaid Armstrong for helping make him well known among musicians through his many appearances on the famous Hot Five and Hot Seven recordings on Okeh. This classic performance is noted for the restraint of all its players. "Melancholy" is a plaintive blues ballad. After a brief Armstrong introduction, Dodds plays a straight rendition of the verse, followed by a statement of the melody by Bigard without embellishment of any kind. This is followed by a Hines chorus, without his usual exuberant displays of technique, that owes its directness to Jelly Roll Morton.

Band 3
What Is This Thing Called Love?
(Cole Porter)
James P. Johnson, piano.

Along with contemporaries like Lucky Roberts (1887-1968), James P. Johnson (1891-1955) successfully bridged ragtime and jazz and thus led the way for an entire school of pianists who developed what became called the "stride" style. This was characterized by a rhythmically alternating bass note and chord in the left hand supporting constantly varied improvisations on original and standard songs, including light classics that were jazzed up for showcase presentations among fellow pianists. Johnson and his protégés Willie "The Lion" Smith (1897-1978) and Thomas "Fats" Waller (1904-1943) were great favorites among songwriters like George Gershwin (with whom Johnson cut piano rolls in the early twenties) and Cole Porter.

Johnson had a very sketchy recording career, and an erratic career as a bandleader and composer. The only Johnson compositions that have achieved widespread recognition are "Charleston," written in 1928 for the Broadway show Runnin' Wild and "If I Could Be With You One Hour Tonight" (both numbers are today considered the epitome of the Roaring Twenties). He led bands of varying size for shows, but was more successful in the swing years with smaller groups that stuck to the basic jazz repertoire. Johnson and the other stride stylists from Harlem were at home playing any kind of music, and their years of constant practice and of playing in after-hours jam sessions produced nearly flawless technique. Less successful at keeping bands together and recording regularly, after 1930 Johnson became increasingly interested in extended forms of composition. He performed in public only occasionally until 1938, when he began to be in demand in New York during the jazz revival. He played in small groups or as soloist in concerts until he suffered a third and severe stroke in 1951.
**Band 4**  
**What Is This Thing Called Love?** (Cole Porter)  
Sidney Bechet, soprano saxophone; Charlie Shavers, trumpet; Willie “The Lion” Smith, piano; Everett Barksdale, guitar; Wellman Braud, bass; Sidney Catlett, drums. Recorded October 24, 1941, in New York (for Victor) (mx # BS-068166-1).

This unreleased version of Cole Porter's classic is a far different interpretation from the James P. Johnson solo version made a dozen years earlier. It's hard to understand why Bechet's version was not made available, since he plays as well here as on any other disc he recorded during this period. The broad, uniquely expressive tone and abundant technique, coupled with tremendous rhythmic drive, clearly stamp Bechet the supreme artist on the soprano saxophone. There is a chorus by Bechet, then Charlie Shavers (1917-1971) plays a full chorus, and then Bechet plays a half chorus reprise. Shavers was at that time the prime mover and arranger for the highly sophisticated and polished John Kirby group (replete with white tie and tails), and his style is somewhat out of context with Bechet's emotional playing.

The performance is really all Bechet, recorded at a time of discovery by a musical audience that wanted a return to the classic small-band jazz of an earlier decade.

(Yet another interpretation of Porter's song may be heard on New World Records NW 271, Bebop, where it is played by the Clifford Brown-Max Roach Quintet.)

**Band 5**  
**Pardon Me, Pretty Baby** (Vincent Rose, Ray Klages, and Jack Meskill)  
Benny Carter and His Orchestra: Benny Carter (arranger), trumpet and alto saxophone; George Chisholm, trombone; Coleman Hawkins, tenor saxophone; Jimmy Williams, clarinet and tenor saxophone; Freddy Johnson, piano; Ray Webb, guitar; Len H arison, bass; Robert M ontmarthe, drums. Recorded August 18, 1937, in The Hague. Originally issued on English Vocalion S-126 (mx # AM 399-1).

Benny Carter teams up with his old Fletcher Henderson section-mate, Coleman Hawkins, for one of the better recordings they made in their years away from America. Carter found a more congenial atmosphere in Europe and few of the difficulties he had undergone in attempting to organize bands and keep working in America. During his four-year sojourn, he recorded more than fifty sides in six countries, more than three times the number he had made in the United States.

This band was a cut-down version of a twelve-piece group of the best available European and English musicians that played the summer season at Scheveningen in the Netherlands. Hawkins happened to be recording for the Dutch firm Panachord the same day as the American pianist Freddy Johnson (1904-1961), so the two men joined forces on a firmed-up version of a pop tune of the early thirties.

Carter leads on trumpet, an instrument he had grown to love as much as saxophone, followed by George Chisholm's trombone and Jimmy Williams' clarinet; Johnson solos on piano, and Carter plays a wonderfully fluent alto solo that leads into a driving tenor chorus by Hawkins; Carter and Hawkins split four-bar breaks, leading to an ensemble close.

Johnson was a well-loved pianist, one of the founders and inspirations of the Hot Club in Paris, and a teacher of many of Europe's best younger players. He was born in New York, accompanied Florence Mills, had his own bands, played with Elmer Snowden, and went to Europe in 1928 with Sam Wooding. He remained in Europe until World War II, playing, arranging, recording and teaching.

**Band 6**  
**I Know That You Know** (Vincent Youmans and Anne Caldwell)  
Jimmie Noone's Apex Club Orchestra: Jimmie Noone, clarinet; Joe Poston, alto saxophone and clarinet; Earl "Fatha" Hines, piano; Bud Scott, banjo and guitar; Johnny Wells, drums. Recorded May 16, 1928, in Chicago. Originally issued on Vocalion 1184 (mx # C 1937-C; E 7355).

A tour de force for Jimmie Noone, this, his first record under his own name, gave ample evidence why musicians and fans went as often as possible in 1927-29 to hear his combo at Chicago's Apex Club. Earl "Fatha" Hines's reputation grew to such an extent as a result of his performances with Noone's group that he left to organize his own twelve-piece big band to open a new nightclub, the Grand Terrace Cafe.
Noone's group was a complete departure from the classic New Orleans small-band lineup of trumpet, trombone, clarinet, and rhythm. The Apex Club was an elegant cabaret, and the band had to play sweet as well as for the shows and for dancing. Noone was perfectly at home playing the most saccharine ballads and the hottest jazz: he could play, as he does on "I Know That You Know," with flowing full vibrato in endless variations, or in the older staccato style so highly thought of by early jazz players from the period when ragtime merged with jazz.

Noone had a perfect foil in Poston, with whom he had worked for years in Doc Cooke's large orchestra. Poston was Noone's contemporary and a fellow Louisianan. Unfortunately, two years after making this record he went into mental decline and spent the remaining years of his life in a sanitarium.

**Band 7**

I've Found a New Baby (Jack Palmer and Clarence Williams)

Benny Goodman Sextet: Benny Goodman, clarinet; Cootie Williams, trumpet; Georgie Auld, tenor saxophone; Count Basie, piano; Charlie Christian, guitar; Artie Bernstein, bass; Jo Jones, drums.

Recorded January 15, 1941, in New York. Originally issued on Columbia 36721 (mx # CO 29514-1).

All Benny Goodman's smallgroup efforts produced fine jazz. This particular unit, using Count Basie and Jo Jones in place of Goodman's regular pianist and drummer, reached the heights.

Charles "Cootie" Williams was born in 1908 in Mobile, Alabama. He went to New York, was discovered by Chick Webb in Harlem, and was hired away by Fletcher Henderson before replacing growl specialist James "Bubber" Miley (1903-1931) in Duke Ellington's orchestra in 1929. Williams, one of Louis Armstrong's strongest followers, developed his own style on plunger mute (using the rubber end of a toilet plunger) and made many outstanding records with Ellington until he left to join Goodman in 1940. Goodman featured him in the big band as well as in smaller combos for the next two years, until Williams formed his own big band. With the recent death of Ray Nance (his replacement in the Ellington band), Williams' style is unique in the field today.

Georgie Auld (born 1919 in Toronto) became a star in 1937 playing with Bunny Berigan, and then worked with Artie Shaw and for eighteen months with Goodman. He was one of the most admired soloists of the period and led his own big and small bands before going into studio work. His primary influence was Coleman Hawkins.

Charlie Christian's eloquent playing in this recording is typical of the best of his work during his all-too-brief career.

Jo Jones's subtle drumming drives the group without drawing attention to itself.

Count Basie's solo piano distilled the elaborate runs and striding bass of Fats Waller and James P. Johnson. He let the rhythm section carry him while he played carefully chosen chords. When the sections played or soloists took off, Basie heightened the rhythmic excitement by feeding them notes or chords unlike any other accompaniment then being played.

**Band 8**

Body and Soul (Johnny Green, Edward Heyman, Robert Sour, and Frank Eyton)

Coleman Hawkins and His Orchestra: Coleman Hawkins, tenor saxophone; Tommy Linday and Joe Guy, trumpets; Earl Hardy, trombone; Jackie Fields and Eustis Moore, alto and baritone saxophones; Gene Rodgers, piano; William Oscar Smith, bass; Arthur Herbert, drums. Recorded October 11, 1939, in New York. Originally issued on Bluebird B-10523 (mx # BS 042936-1).

In 1939, when Coleman Hawkins returned to the United States after several years in Europe, he formed a nine-piece band and went into a New York club, Kelly's Stables, that had a nightly radio program. He also signed with Victor to record for their thirty-five-cent Bluebird label. At one session Hawkins recorded three titles, two original compositions his group was playing nightly plus a standard ballad sung by his vocalist, Thelma Carpenter (born 1922). Nothing further had been committed for the date when the artist-and-repertory supervisor requested Hawkins to record the signature theme he used to open the club's radio show. Hawkins protested that they never played more than a chorus of it, just enough to get the program started. The tune was "Body and Soul," a 1930 song that had become a standard.

With only the briefest planning, Hawkins made what turned out to be one of his most enduring records, an understated classic ballad treatment played with a much softer tone than he normally used. The record quickly re-established his eminence on saxophone.
Side Two

Band 1

I Double Dare You (Terry Shand and Jimmy Eaton)
Louis Armstrong and His Orchestra: Louis Armstrong, trumpet and vocal; Shelton Hemphill, Louis Bacon, and Red Allen, trumpets; Wilbur DeParis, George Washington, and J. C. Higginbotham, trombones; Pete Clark and Charlie Holmes, alto saxophones; Bingie Madison and Albert Nicholas, tenor saxophones; Luis Russell, piano; Lee Blair, guitar; Pops Foster, bass; Paul Barbarin, drums.
Recorded January 12, 1938, in Los Angeles. Originally issued on Decca 1636 (mx # DLA 1136-A).

Louis Armstrong led his own big bands on a regular basis from 1929 until 1947, and most of them had outstanding players; but because they were mainly a backdrop for Armstrong's brilliant trumpet and voice, some of the bands were well below his level of impeccable musicianship. In this instance the band comes alive on a better than average pop tune of the period by jazz pianist Terry Shand (born 1904), with a melody that allows ample room for inventive playing. Armstrong, Jay C. Higginbotham, and Bingie Madison (born 1902), who also arranged, have solo spots after the vocal.

I double dare you to sit over here.
I double dare you to lend me your ear.
Take off your high hat and let's get friendly,
Don't be a scare cat.
Say, what do you care?
Can't you take a dare?
I double dare you to kiss me, and then....
I double dare you to kiss me again.
And if that look in your eyes
Mean what I'm thinking of,
I double dare you to fall in love with me.
[Hot mama!] I double dare you.


Band 2

Passion Flower (Billy Strayhorn)
Johnny Hodges and His Orchestra: Ray Nance, cornet; Lawrence Brown, trombone; Johnny Hodges, alto saxophone; Harry Carney, baritone saxophone; Duke Ellington, piano; Jimmy Blanton, bass; Sonny Greer, drums.
Recorded July 3, 1941, in Hollywood. Originally issued on Bluebird 30-0823 (mx # BBS 061347-1).

No more unusual recording than “Passion Flower” was made during the Swing Era (1935-45), and it was not released until well after the other six selections recorded under Hodges' name during the period Duke Ellington was under contract to RCA Victor.

A tour de force for Hodges' full-toned and totally committed performance, “Passion Flower is an eerie piece even for Ellington. It has the Ellington trademark of unusually voiced instrumentation, which he taught the band verbally, note by note, without a written arrangement.

Hodges easily swept away all competition— even Benny Carter— with this kind of playing. He played every kind of tune and in every jazz style, but melancholy tunes and the blues belonged exclusively to him during this period.
Band 3

Three Blind Mice (Chauncey Morehouse and Frankie Trumbauer)

The Chicago Loopers: Bix Beiderbeke, cornet; Don Murray, clarinet; Frankie Trumbauer, C-melody saxophone; Frank Signorelli, piano; Eddie Lang, banjo; Vic Berton, drums.

Recorded in New York, c. October 20, 1927. Originally issued on Perfect 14910 (mx #107854 or 5 or 6).

Bix Beiderbeke and Frankie Trumbauer were among the most highly regarded players of the twenties, both jazzmen at heart yet with a detached, elusive style. Both floated each note individually; and although part of a whole, every note was as near perfect as possible.

This group was an all-star unit. One of its players, the gifted Don Murray (1904-1929), died in Hollywood from an injury aggravated by alcoholism. Frank Signorelli (1901-1975) played and recorded with Bix several times and in later years enjoyed a wide reputation as a composer. Eddie Lang (1902-1933), who had a high reputation on both banjo and guitar, died young from complications following a tonsillectomy. Vic Berton (1896-1951) played with everyone from John Philip Sousa and radio orchestra leader Abe Lyman to the Los Angeles Philharmonic and spent many years in New York and Hollywood recording studios.

Band 4

Love Me Tonight (Bing Crosby, Victor Young, and Ned Washington)

Earl “Fatha” Hines, piano.

Recorded July 14, 1932, in New York. Originally issued on Brunswick 6403 (mx # B12079-A).

Earl Hines became the most important pianist in the Midwest in the late twenties. His style was based loosely on the Eastern stride of James P. Johnson but was less symmetrical, with daring intervals and time changes and unexpected runs and chord patterns. With Louis Armstrong, Hines made some of the best records of the decade; he made his own solos for the QRS and Okeh labels late in 1928, just at the time he was asked to form a big band to open the new Grand Terrace Cafe in Chicago.

When he became a bandleader Hines's solo work was featured less on recordings, but his playing was the most influential in the Midwest until the Swing Era, when Teddy Wilson and Art Tatum began attracting followers.

“Love Me Tonight,” a popular song of the time, was Hines's first piano solo in four years and his last for quite a few more. Either Brunswick and Decca were reluctant to allow him to record solos, or Earl himself wanted his band to make a commercial success on records. His big bands were good—occasionally superb— with many outstanding players, and were important on radio in the early and middle thirties, competing with Cab Calloway and Duke Ellington for limelight time. As the years went on, Hines refined his style to allow the rhythm sections more leeway, as Count Basie did. His work also became less adventurous, which is why these early recordings remain valuable.

Band 5

Bugle Call Rag (Jack Pettis, Billy Meyes, and Elmer Schoebel)

The Chocolate Dandies: Benny Carter (leader), alto saxophone and clarinet; Bobby Stark, trumpet; Jimmy Harrison, trombone; Coleman Hawkins, tenor saxophone; Horace Henderson (arranger), piano; Benny Jackson, guitar; John Kirby, tuba.


Each player save Jackson and Kirby solos briefly in this classic jazz song of the twenties. Carter plays both clarinet (with only guitar accompaniment) and alto in his fluent big-toned style. Hawkins, Stark (slightly nervous for some reason), and Henderson have their moments. Harrison builds his trombone chorus simply and logically with just enough vibrato, a sound that was influential on Sandy Williams, Benny Morton, and many lesser trombonists from then on.

Bobby Stark (1906-1946) was one of Fletcher Henderson's brilliant trumpet soloists from 1928-1933 and played with Chick Webb for six years after that. He was an Armstrong follower with abundant technique and a strong vibrato.

Horace Henderson (born 1904) was a force in the Swing Era as an arranger, occasional composer, and bandleader in Chicago and New York. His solo work was a leaner version of Earl Hines's complex style that anticipated Count Basie. Many musicians preferred his arrangements to those of his better-known brother Fletcher, for whom he played and wrote on many occasions.
John Kirby (1908-1952) was one of New York’s best rhythm men on tuba, and later in the thirties on string bass, and achieves a fine rolling and rich quality here. He enjoyed great success as leader of the most sophisticated small group in jazz from 1938 until well after World War II.

**Band 6**

**Wolverine Blues** (Jelly Roll Morton)

Baby Dodds Trio: Albert Nicholas, clarinet; Don Ewell, piano; Baby Dodds, drums.

Recorded in New York, January 6, 1946. Originally issued on Circle J-1001; subsequently reissued on LP, GHB-50 (mx # NY 1).

Baby Dodds was born in New Orleans and studied drums under Dave Perkins, Walter Brundy, and Louis Cottrell. He played with Manuel Manetta, Willie Hightower, and Oscar “Papa” Celestin and spent three years on the riverboats under Fate Marable until summoned to Chicago by King Oliver. Dodds was probably the most sought-after New Orleans drummer during those years, and recorded with Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton, among others. He spent a good part of his career before World War II working in small combos led by his brother Johnny.

At the end of World War II Baby was first heard in New York with trumpeter Bunk Johnson’s New Orleans revival band, and worked off and on for several years with pianist Art Hodes (born 1904).

These records were made during the period Dodds was broadcasting with Albert Nicholas (1900-1973) and Don Ewell (born 1916) over WOR on the “This Is Jazz” series.

Nicholas, a veteran of the Oliver band in Chicago, spent two years traveling in the Far East with various groups until joining Louis Armstrong, Art Hodes, and Kid Ory before going to Europe to stay in 1953.

Ewell is the foremost interpreter of Jelly Roll Morton’s music, an interest he acquired in the late thirties in his hometown of Baltimore. He worked and recorded with Bunk Johnson, and played solo and in traditional jazz bands in the United States and Europe.

**Band 7**

**Slippin’ Around** (Miff Mole)

Red and Miff’s Stompers: Red Nichols, cornet; Miff Mole, trombone; Fud Livingston, clarinet; Arthur Schutt, piano; Dick McDonough, banjo; Jack Hansen, tuba; Vic Berton, drums.

Recorded in New York, October 12, 1927. Originally issued on Victor 21397 (mx # BE 40168-1)

Miff Mole’s career seemed tied to cornetist Red Nichols during the middle and late twenties. Nichols was one of the most widely recorded players of his day, and the dozens of records he and Mole made with all-star lineups from 1925 on were the rage among players and public alike. Nichols (from Ogden, Utah) worked for leaders like Johnny Johnson, Sam Lanin, Harry Reser, Paul Whiteman, Bennie K rueger, Vincent Lopez, and Donald Voorhees until 1928, when he began leading his own small groups and big bands. Both Nichols and Mole were extremely adept and technically gifted players. Mole’s playing remains the more interesting today, because his solo work sounds more emotionally committed, whereas Nichols’ playing tends to lack conviction. “Slippin’ Around” seems to be a relatively non-improvised composition designed as a showcase for Mole’s remarkable technical skills.

On this recording he and Nichols are joined by the prolific and excellent sax and clarinet player Joseph “Fud” Livingston (1906-1957), from Charleston, South Carolina. Livingston was also one of the great band arrangers of the twenties and thirties, but alcoholism ended his career in the forties. Arthur Schutt (1902-1965), from Reading, Pennsylvania, was an equally gifted jazz and studio musician whose career fell apart in the forties due to alcoholism.
**Band 8**

**Pitter Panther Patter** (Duke Ellington)  
Duke Ellington, piano, and Jimmy Blanton, bass.  
Recorded October 1, 1940, in Chicago. Originally issued on Victor 27221 (mx # BS 053504-2).

Jimmy Blanton (1918-1942) was the first modern jazz player to succeed in making the bass a solo instrument. The leading performers before his arrival on the national scene with Duke Ellington in 1939 were Wellman Braud (1891-1966), Ellington's first bassist; George "pops" Foster (c. 1892-1969), of Louis Russell's and Louis Armstrong's big bands; Walter Page (1900-1957), of Count Basie's and Bennie Moten's bands; and John Kirby, of Fletcher Henderson's and Chick Webb's bands. They achieved national recognition on the double bass in the late twenties and early thirties, when bands were switching from tuba. All except Braud had played tuba, and all contributed to making string bass the core of the rhythm section.

Blanton was born in Chattanooga and raised in St. Louis, where he played cello, tuba, and bass with Jeter-Pillars Club Plantation Orchestra and with Fate Marable. He became a star because Duke Ellington recognized in him someone who opened up rhythm, bringing a new freedom to the confines of the rigid 4/4 swing beat. Others in the late thirties and early forties, like Israel Crosby (1919-1962), Gene Amby (born 1913) Billy Taylor (born 1906), and Billy Hadnott (born 1916) were capable of improvising interesting solos, but none was showcased like Blanton. His playing influenced Oscar Pettiford (1922-1960), Ray Brown (born 1926), and the whole range of post-World War II modern-jazz bassists.

Composer-bandleader Duke Ellington is heard here as pianist and accompanist. His style, originally distilled from that of James P. Johnson, had by this time become unique and instantly recognizable.

**Band 9**

**Jive At Five** (Harry Edison)  
Count Basie Orchestra; Ed Lewis, Buck Clayton, Shad Collins, Harry Edison, trumpets; Dickie Wells, Eddie Durham, trombone; Lester Young, tenor saxophone; Jack Washington, baritone saxophone; Count Basie, piano; Freddie Green, guitar; Walter Page, bass; Jo Jones, drums. Recorded February 2, 1939, in New York. Originally issued on Decca 2922 (mx # 64982-A).

Lester Young is the first soloist in this relaxed harbinger of the cool jazz of the fifties. He is followed by Harry Edison, Jack Washington, and Dickie Wells. Jo Jones's understated drumming propels the band in this swinging performance.

Jonathan "Jo" Jones was born in Chicago in 1911, toured as a drummer with carnival bands in the later twenties. His important early band associations were all in the Midwest with leading territory bands, including that of Bennie Moten. After Moten's death in 1935, the band drifted apart searching for jobs, and Jones worked briefly in St. Louis before joining Count Basie at the Reno Club in Kansas City. John Hammond heard Basie's nine-piece band over short-wave radio in the summer of 1936, and with the help of wealthy Kansas City patrons built the group up to big band size and signed them with MCA to play theaters, hotels, and ballrooms.

Aside from the major soloists, it was the unique, driving but extremely subtle rhythm team of Jones, Page, and Basie that made all others pale by comparison. Jones was probably the first drummer to keep steady time on the top cymbal instead of the bass drum, which he used only for rhythmic accents. In two years when Basie was a nationally established name, young drummers throughout the country began switching to the new style that Jones had perfected. He remained with Basie until 1944. After service in World War II, he worked in Jazz at the Philharmonic and with Illinois Jacquet, Joe Bushkin, Teddy Wilson, Milt Buckner, and a variety of other groups in a continuing and distinguished career.

**SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**


SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

Louis Armstrong. V.S.O.P. Encore 22019.
Johnny Dodds. Clarinet King (with Louis Armstrong, Baby Dodds). Ace of Hearts AH-169.

Side One
Total time 25:41

1 EVERY TUB (Count Basie) ........................................ 3:14
   Count Basie Orchestra
   (publ. Bregman, Vacco, and Conn, Inc.)

2 MELANCHOLY (Marty Bloom and Walter Melrose) .......................... 3:07
   Johnny Dodds' Black Bottom Stompers
   (publ. Melrose Music Corp.)

3 WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED LOVE? (Cole Porter) .......................... 3:02
   James P. Johnson, piano
   (publ. Harms, Inc.)

4 WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED LOVE? (Cole Porter) .......................... 3:32
   Sidney Bechet and Group
   (publ. Harms, Inc.)

5 PARDON ME, PRETTY BABY (Vincent Rose, Ray Klages, and Jack Meskill) 2:57
   Benny Carter and His Orchestra
   (publ. Mills Music, Inc.)

6 I KNOW THAT YOU KNOW (Vincent Youmans and Anne Caldwell) 2:55
   Jimmie Noone's Apex Club Orchestra
   (publ. Harms, Inc.)

7 I'VE FOUND A NEW BABY (Jack Palmer and Clarence Williams) 3:03
   Benny Goodman Sextet
   (publ. MCA Music)

8 BODY AND SOUL (Johnny Greene, Edward Heyman, Robert Sour, and Frank Eyton) 3:00
   Coleman Hawkins and His Orchestra
   (publ. Harms, Inc.)
Side Two
Total time 26:49

1 I DOUBLE DARE YOU (Terry Shand and Jinnry Eaton) ........................................ 2:58
Louis Armstrong and His Orchestra
(publ. Shapiro, Bernstein & Co., Inc.)

2 PASSION FLOWER (Billy Strayhorn) ................................................................. 3:07
Johnny Hodges and His Orchestra
(publ. Tempo Music, Inc.)

3 THREE BLIND MICE (Chauncey Morehouse and Frankie Trumbauer) ............... 2:56
The Chicago Loopers
(publ. Robbins Music Corp.)

4 LOVE ME TONIGHT (Bing Crosby, Victor Young, and Ned Washington) ............ 2:39
Earl "Fatha" Hines, piano
(publ. Robbins Music Corp.)

5 BUGLE CALL RAG (Jack Pettis, Billy Meyes, and Elmer Schoebel) .................... 2:48
The Chocolate Dandies
(publ. Mills Music, Inc.)

6 WOLVERINE BLUES (Jelly Roll Morton) ............................................................ 2:55
Baby Dodds Trio
(publ. Melrose Music Corp.)

7 SLIPPIN' AROUND (Miff Mole) ........................................................................... 2:48
Red and Miff's Stompers
(publ. Robbins Music Corp.)

8 PITTER PANTHER PATTER (Duke Ellington) ..................................................... 3:02
Duke Ellington and Jimmy Blanton
(publ. Robbins Music Corp.)

9 JIVE AT FIVE (Harry Edison) ............................................................................. 2:44
Count Basie Orchestra
(publ. Bregman, Vocco, and Conn, Inc.)

Full archival information on the recordings and a complete list of the performers for each selection may be found within the individual discussions of the works in the liner notes.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
We wish to extend our thanks to CBS Records for: "I've Found a New Baby"; "I Know That You Know"; "Three Blind Mice"; "Love Me 10 Night"; and "Bugle Call Rag"; to MCA for: "Every Tub" and "I Double Dare You"; to RCA Records for the Bechet performance of "What Is This Thing Called Love?"; "Body and Soul"; "Passion Flower"; "Slippin' Around"; and "Pitter Panther Patter"; to Decca/London for "Pardon Me, Pretty Baby"; "Wolverine Blues" through courtesy of GHB Records, 3008 Wadsworth Mill Place, Decatur, Georgia 30032, U.S.A.

The producer wishes to thank the following collectors who provided material for this album: Robert Altshuler; Ken Noble; Hank O'Neal; and special thanks to Frank Driggs for his invaluable help in programming this album.