

NEWSLETTER AUG-2018

JAZZology



Bunk Johnson



Marlene VerPlanck



Daryl Sherman



Don Suhor

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JAZZOLOGY NEWSLETTER #11

Here is our newsletter for the year 2018 – in this newsletter we are presenting five new CD releases, 3 12" Vinyl LPs and articles by Paige Van Vorst, Trevor Richards and Charles Suhor, as well as book and CD reviews and other information of interest.

We invite you to take a moment and sign up to receive our E-Newsletter by visiting our website at www.jazzology.com. This way we can keep you updated on new releases and artist information as well as in-depth articles and historical information related to the artists and recordings.



NEWS AT GHB JAZZ FOUNDATION

We are continuing our efforts to make, as much as possible, all of our recordings available to music fans world wide. There is still plenty of unissued material in our vaults and we are also making a few select new recordings of today's jazz artists.

GHB is back in the vinyl LP business again and this year we are releasing three LPs – **Baby Dodds Trio**, **Louis Armstrong Paramount Recordings** and **Eureka Brass Band**. On top of that GHB has also licensed a number of recordings to ORG Music who has produced beautifully designed vinyl LPs of **Duke Ellington**, **Louis Armstrong All Stars**, **Bunk Johnson**, **Sister Rosetta Tharpe**, **Les Paul** and **Shirley Horn** with more to come.

With the CD release of **Bunk Johnson Rare & Unissued Masters Volume Two** we have come to the end of our American Music recordings of this great New Orleans trumpet man. There will however be a couple of more American Music CDs with a variety of material that was for some reason omitted on previous releases. **Daryl Sherman** has once more come up with a very nice new recording, this one featuring the wonderful trumpet playing of Jon-Erik Kellso as well as guitarist/banjoist Don Vappie and bassist Jesse Boyd. The clarinet and alto sax New Orleans virtuoso **Don Suhor** is presented in a nicely designed double-CD produced by his brother Charles Suhor. On the Progressive label we have three new releases - an excellent trio recording of pianist **John Bunch** featuring Cal Collins (guitar) and George Mraz (bass); a **Curtis Fuller** session recorded in New Orleans with Maurice Brown (trumpet) and Javon Jackson (sax) sharing the front line with Curtis, and a **Don Friedman** session of popular ballads played by a master of the keyboard.

Most of our catalog is now available as digital downloads on iTunes, Amazon, Spotify and other digital stores. We have also issued many recordings as downloads only – see page 14 & 15 for a complete listing. Certain select sessions from our catalog will in the near future become available as HD (High Definition) Downloads produced by a Canadian company called Fidelio Technologies.

The Post Office has again increased their rates for overseas and Canadian parcels so unfortunately we have to add these costs to your orders (see page two for the new rates). For US customers there is no change – still just \$3 for any size order (within reason!).

LOUIS ARMSTRONG PARAMOUNT RECORDINGS 1923-1925

BLACK SWAN
BSLP-43
12" VINYL LP

PRICE: \$20.00
MEMBERS / NON-MEMBERS



As indicated in our last newsletter, we are the custodians of the legendary Paramount label, and are dedicated to returning as much of its output to print in significantly improved sound. One of our first projects, an LP, includes fourteen Paramount sides featuring Armstrong, including three with King Oliver, three each with Ma Rainey and Trixie Smith, four with Coot Grant & Sox Wilson, and one with Fletcher Henderson. I've had these sides on LP for fifty years (they were originally on Riverside LP-101) and was floored when I played my test pressing. The sides were remastered by Doug Benson of Off the Record Productions, whose prior projects include the Grammy-nominated King Oliver 1923 set and sets devoted to the New Orleans Rhythm Kings and the Wolverines with Bix Beiderbecke.

The sides are remarkably well-recorded — the King Olivers jump out of the speakers as never before, and the vaudeville-type sides with Grant and Wilson have far more life than I've ever noted. Armstrong was unequalled at accompanying singers, and these sides include some of his best. The Grant&Wilson sides are usually passed over in favor of Rainey or Smith, but Armstrong does some wonderful things behind their old-time routines.

One of the pioneer collectors said that the classics of jazz should be remastered every generation using the best available technology. These sides apparently skipped a generation but are now out there in glorious recorded sound — just compare one of these discs with its counterpart from the 1950s

— *Paige VanVorst*

PERSONNEL:

- King Oliver's Jazz Band (Chicago 1923)
- Ma Rainey and her Georgia Jazz Band (NY 1924)
- Fletcher Henderson and his Orchestra (NY 1924)
- Trixie Smith's Down Home Syncopators (NY 1925)
- Coot Grant and Wesley Wilson accompanied by Fletcher Henderson's Orchestra (NY 1925)

TRACK LISTING:

Side A:

Mabel's Dream

The Southern Stomps

Riverside Blues

See See Rider

Jelly Bean Blues

Countin' The Blues

Mandy, Make Up Your Mind

Side B:

Railroad Blues

The World's Jazz Crazy (And So Am I)

Mining Camp Blues

You Dirty Mistreater

Come On Coot And Do That Thing

Have Your Chill, I'll Be Here When Your Fever Rises

Find Me At The Greasy Spoon (If You Miss Me Here)



BABY DODDS TRIO / JAZZ A' LA CREOLE

GHB RECORDS
GHB-50
12" VINYL LP

PRICE: \$20.00
MEMBERS / NON-MEMBERS

PERSONNEL:

Baby Dodds	Drums
Albert Nicholas	Clarinet
Don Ewell	Piano
Danny Barker	Guitar
Pops Foster	Bass
James P. Johnson	Piano

TRACK LISTING:

Side A:

Buddy Bolden's Blues
Drum Improvisation No.1
Albert's Blues
Manhattan Stomp
Drum Improvisation No.2
Wolverine Blues

Side B:

Mo Pas Lemme Ca
Creole Blues
Salee Dame, Bon Jour
Les Oignons
Buddy Bolden's Blues (Alt)
Wolverine Blues (Alt)

This classic LP was one of our most popular releases in the pre-CD days. It was featured in the TV show "Treme" and ever since we have had many requests to make it available on vinyl again. So here it is with the original front cover (somewhat cleaned up) and a printed inner sleeve with additional musician photos.



EUREKA BRASS BAND NEW ORLEANS FUNERAL & PARADE MUSIC

AMERICAN MUSIC

AML-70

12" VINYL LP

PRICE: \$20.00

MEMBERS / NON-MEMBERS



New Orleans greatest brass band was recorded at the Belkoma Dance Salon in 1951 by two young jazz enthusiasts, Alden Ashforth & David Wyckoff, and issued on a Pax label LP. The Pax LP included two glorious funeral dirges (a Eureka Brass Band specialty) – *West Lawn Dirge* and *Garland of Flowers*.

We have added two uptempo tracks — *Sweet Fields* and *Panama* — from a 1956 rehearsal session recorded by Sam Charters.

The cover photo was taken by Bill Russell. Photos from the recording session, courtesy of Alden Ashforth, are reproduced and included on an insert that comes with the LP. This is New Orleans brass band music at its very best.



PERSONNEL:

Percy Humphrey	Trumpet
Willie Pajeaud	Trumpet
Eddie Richardson	Trumpet
Kid Sheik Cola *	Trumpet
Albert Warner	Trombone
Charles "Sonny" Henry	Trombone
George Lewis	Eb Clarinet
Ruben Roddy	Alto Saxophone
Emanuel Paul	Tenor Saxophone
Arthur Ogle	Snare Drum
Josiah Frazier *	Snare Drum
Robert "Son" Lewis	Bass Drum
Joseph "Red" Clark	Sousaphone

TRACK LISTING:

Side A:

Sing On

West Lawn Dirge

Lady Be Good

Just A Closer Walk With Thee

Side B:

Sweet Fields *

Garland Of Flowers

Panama *



BUNK JOHNSON RARE & UNISSUED MASTERS VOL. 2

AMERICAN MUSIC
AMCD-140 (COMPACT DISC)

PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

Modern recording technology has made it possible to issue numbers previously thought unusable due to small blemishes in the original recordings.

We have assembled a few of these as well as a number of sides previously buried in obscure foreign compilations, including Bunk's delightful discussion of Tony Jackson followed by his rendition (on piano), of *Baby I'd Love to Steal You*, a hitherto-forgotten number.

The session includes material from Bill Russell's recordings in New Orleans in 1944 and 1945, as well as sides with Bunk's trio from New York, 1946. Seven of the sides are previously unissued. The set includes a 24-page booklet with an excellent appreciation of Russell by Trevor Richards.

Many of the sides previously released suffered from poor sound quality — thankfully now we can finally hear them in all their remastered glory.

— Paige VanVorst

PERSONNEL:

Bunk Johnson	Trumpet
Bertha Gonsoulin	Piano
Jim Robinson	Trombone
George Lewis	Clarinet
Lawrence Marrero	Banjo
Alcide 'Slow Drag' Pavageau	Bass
Baby Dodds	Drums
Myrtle Jones	Vocal
Don Ewell	Piano
Alphonse Steele	Drums

TRACK LISTING:

Ballin' The Jack
 Good Morning Blues
 I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate
 All The Whores Like The Way I Ride
 Careless Love
 Make Me A Pallet On The Floor
 Slow Drag's Boogie Woogie
 The Lonesome Road
 My Old Kentucky Home
 Ballin' The Jack
 Bunk Talks About Tony Jackson (interview)
 Baby I'd Love To Steal You
 Plenty To Do
 I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate
 St. Louis Blues
 In The Gloaming
 Where The River Shannon Flows
 Poor Butterfly



DARYL SHERMAN

LOST IN A CROWDED PLACE

AUDIOPHILE

ACD-357 (COMPACT DISC)

PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

Although her bio explains that her father, Sammy Sherman, was a first-rate jazz trombonist during the big band era, I believe in addition to his musicality he may have been a fan of archaeology and paleontology. He instilled in his beloved daughter a devotion to great American popular song and jazz, and the excitement to be experienced by exploring these art forms to the fullest. Daryl certainly accepted his challenge, and continues to explore long lost, neglected but valuable material.

Daryl is the quintessential seeker, finding immense pleasure probing the oeuvre of America's most beloved and respected composers. One would think there is little left to discover, but Daryl's tenacity and perseverance once again find the archival equivalent of 18K gold. A quick glance at the titles will inspire our shared delight in the joy of hearing melodies and lyrics, which have been hiding in the shadows. And we needn't make any effort at all. Daryl has done all the heavy lifting for us, and quite skillfully too. All we need do is sit back and savor the fruits of her research as the generous gifts they are.

Daryl Sherman's voice has often inspired comparison to the intimate playfulness of Blossom Dearie's unmistakable sound. And yes: there are overtones similar to those of the influential singer Mildred Bailey as well. I hear those qualities too, of course, but may I suggest another renowned singer Daryl reminds me of although she was a theatrical star. I hear strong elements of dear Gertrude Lawrence, the actress who collaborated so often and brilliantly with Sir Noel Coward in London and New York. Hers was also a voice of delicacy, a unique quality Mildred, Blossom, and Daryl each equally possesses: sophistication, elegance, gentle swing, and utmost respect for the composer's intent.

— Carol Sloane (*from Liner Notes)



PERSONNEL:

Daryl Sherman	Piano, Vocals
Don Vappie	Guitar, Banjo ** Vocal
Jon-Erik Kelloso	Trumpet
Jesse Boyd	Bass
Boots Maleson	* Bass

TRACK LISTING:

The Land Of Just We Two

Stars Fell On Alabama

At Sundown

Lost In A Crowded Place

Turquoise

You Go To My Head **

Azalea

The Lorelei

If We Never Meet Again

Everything But You

New Sun In The Sky

Rainbow Hill *

Running Time: 54:53

DON SUHOR

NEW ORLEANS CLARINET & SAX VIRTUOSO

JAFB
BCD-561/562
2-CD SET



DON SUHOR NEW ORLEANS CLARINET AND SAX VIRTUOSO

GHB BCD-561/562 2-CD SET

PRICE: \$25.00 MEMBERS: \$20.00

Suhor, who is featured in an article elsewhere in this issue, was a veteran reedman in New Orleans until his death in 2003. His brother Charles Suhor, a longtime jazz journalist, assembled a loving two-CD tribute from a variety of issued and unissued sessions. Suhor was a versatile musician on both clarinet and alto, and moved easily between modern and traditional jazz. The set includes sides accompanying Topsy Chapman, with whom he worked at the Palm Court Jazz Café, sessions led by Amy Sharpe and Don Vappie, and even a number in a band led by Gary Burghoff, one of the stars of MASH. One of the highlights is an eight-tune recording by the Don Vappie Quartet from a 1994 wedding. The band had a lot of fun and obviously so did the wedding party- Suhor was at the top of his form and runs through an interesting selection of standards and New Orleans favorites. Suhor worked all the time but seldom recorded or attracted much attention, so it is nice to have a large selection of his clarinet and alto work.

PERSONNEL:

Amy Sharpe Trio :T1-T8

Gary Burghoff's Mardi Gras Celebration Band :T9

Topsy Chapman & The Pro's :T10-T12

Wendell Brunious Jazz Band :T13

John Eubanks Trio :T14-T15; T10-T11 (CD2)

Don Vappie Quartet :T1-T9 (CD2)

TRACK LISTING: Compact Disc 1

Petite Fleur

Crazy Rhythm

Sweet Georgia Brown

Sweet Lorraine

Seven Come Eleven

Lazy River

A Closer Walk with Thee

'Swonderful

Basin Street

Someday You'll Be Sorry

Just A Little While To Stay Here

If Dreams Come True

Dippermouth Blues

Struttin' With Some Barbecue

TRACK LISTING: Compact Disc 2

All The Things You Are

Slow Boat to China

How Deep is the Ocean

Lady Be Good

Makin' Whoopee

Caravan

Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans

South Rampart Street Parade

Take the A-Train

Second Line

Lotus Blossom

Ezz-Thetic

JOHN BUNCH TRIO IT'S LOVE IN THE SPRING

PROGRESSIVE

PCD-7011 (COMPACT DISC)

PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

We're releasing another session from John Bunch, a musician with a long, productive career during which he was always a little under the radar, which would be expected given that he spent most of WWII as a bombardier on a B17 bomber. Bunch moved freely between all aspects of the jazz world, with experience in big and small bands. He lived to be 89, and recorded for Arbors well into his mid-80s.

Bunch grew up in Tipton IN, which he described as "my little one-horse town." He started piano lessons at age 11. He said, "George Johnson, who really loved jazz, moved to town and started giving lessons. He taught a style of music where you learned quickly and played popular tunes. He taught a Fats Waller style, sort of stride style in the left hand."

"This guy was really fantastic for giving a guy experience right from the beginning. He used to play weekend jobs and I was his star pupil, so from time to time he took me and some others with him to those gigs. He sat me alongside of him on the piano bench and showed me how to as he called it chord- we call it comp now, and I just fell into it."

At the time, Bunch was principally influenced by Fats Waller and Teddy Wilson. "I don't have the steam to play that stride style any more. I don't know how Ralph Sutton kept it up all those years. It takes so much energy. Ralph and I were the same age."

His mother owned a small café with a jukebox. When the salesman came to replenish the discs, he suggested they go hear Count Basie. "We were the only white people in the entire audience, two thousand people, and the whole place was moving like an earthquake," he recalled.

Airplanes fascinated Bunch and he left a job on the assembly line at General Motors to enlist in the Army Air Force at the start of World War II. He completed his training, received his officer's commission, and was assigned as a bombardier...

article continued on page 29



PERSONNEL:

John Bunch	Piano
Cal Collins	Guitar
George Mraz	Bass

TRACK LISTING:

It's Love In The Spring

Celia

Cincinnati Slick

Emily

Struttin' With Some Barbecue

Dream Dancing

Night Mist Blues

Jubilee

Cincinnati Slick (alt-Tk2)

It's Love In The Spring (alt-Tk2)

Running Time: 49:29



CURTIS FULLER IN NEW ORLEANS

PROGRESSIVE
PCD-7178 (COMPACT DISC)

PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

This release is by an artist new to our Progressive label catalog — trombonist Curtis Fuller, a man with a long jazz career — over sixty years and counting. During his career he's worked with most of the great names in modern jazz — Miles Davis, Art Blakey, Bud Powell, John Coltrane and Wayne Shorter, to name a few.

There were never a lot of modern jazz trombonists, but he worked with and traded solos with most of them, co-led groups with both J. J. Johnson and Kai Winding, and even worked in a nine-trombone group led by Slide Hampton. He was influenced early on by Johnson, but by the time he hit New York he was a distinctive stylist and remained that way.

Curtis DuBois Fuller was born in Detroit in 1934 — his parents, who were Jamaican, died when he was young and he was raised in an orphanage. One of the social workers steered him toward music — his first choice was violin and she steered him toward something more practical. He was taken to hear Illinois Jacquet's band and was impressed by J. J. Johnson. "I kept my eyes on J J," he noted. "There was something intellectual about the way he stood there, he was involved with the music. Illinois was involved with crowd-pleasing things. J. J. just stood there and played the music. It seemed like he was the man and I thought, gee, that's what I want to do."

Detroit in the early 1950s was full of young jazzmen and many of them were his classmates — He attended school with Paul Chambers and Donald Byrd, and knew Tommy Flanagan, Thad Jones and Milt Jackson at an early age. He enlisted in the Army in 1953 and wound up in an Army band including, among others Paul Chambers, Cannonball Adderley and Junior Mance.

He returned to Detroit when he left the Army and joined the Yusuf Lateef Quintet — he went to New York for the first time to record with them. He played a little with Miles Davis...

article continued on page 28

PERSONNEL:

Curtis Fuller	Trombone
Maurice Brown	Trumpet
Javon Jackson	Saxophone
Peter Martin	Piano
Bill Huntington	Bass
Jason Marsalis	Drums

TRACK LISTING:

- Good Bait
- Up Jumped Spring
- Caravan
- Arabia
- Star Eyes
- Old Folks
- The Court
- Caravan (alt-tk3)

Running Time: 54:08

DON FRIEDMAN TRIO

LOVE MUSIC

PROGRESSIVE

PCD-7045 (COMPACT DISC)

PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

Pianist Don Friedman (1935-2016) was picked by Down Beat in the 1960s as a Talent Deserving Wider Recognition and he gathered a handful of their five-star reviews during that period. He had a fulfilling career, working regularly until shortly before his death. His discography includes a blinding number of recordings, but he was never as widely known as he should have been.

He kept very good company throughout his career — originally a member of the West Coast School of the 1950s, he was an early associate of Conte Candoli, Shorty Rogers and Buddy Collette, basically a Bud Powell stylist. He headed East in 1956 to join Buddy DeFranco. He was fluent in Bebop but advanced enough to work with many of the Post-Bop players who came to prominence in the late 50s and early 60s — he recorded with Booker Little, Max Roach, Eric Dolphy and Charles Lloyd. He was in demand elsewhere as well — he was a regular in Clark Terry's group, recorded with Bobby Hackett, Ruby Braff and other mainstainers, and toured regularly with Herbie Mann.

Friedman worked all over the world and had an especially ardent following in Japan, where many of his albums were issued exclusively; he also worked frequently in Europe, particularly Switzerland, Italy and Germany. His discography is a bewildering hodge-podge of elusive sessions, including eight for Gus Statiras' Progressive label, under his name and other leaders. Gus had a tendency to record a lot more music than he could afford to issue, and many of his projects were sporadically circulated, occasionally only overseas.

The session at hand (recorded 9/12/78 in New York) is a beautiful trio session — he's backed by Frank Luther on bass and Billy Hart on drums, and they're a well-integrated trio. The tune selection is outstanding — classics like *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*, *Fine and Dandy*, and *Easy Living*. Friedman...

article continued on page 28



PERSONNEL:

Don Friedman	Piano
Frank Luther	Bass
Billy Hart	Drums

TRACK LISTING:

- Where Are You
- Smoke Gets In Your Eyes
- The Way We Were
- The Song Is You
- Easy Living
- My Secret Love
- The Shadow Of Your Smile
- Fine and Dandy (tk2 *prev unreleased)

Running Time: 51:31

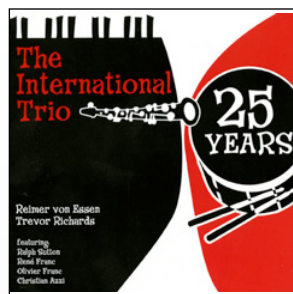
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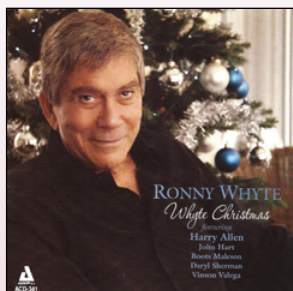


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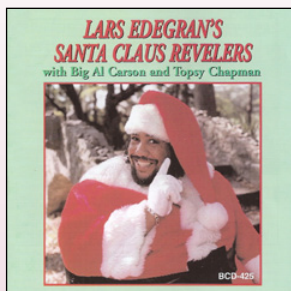


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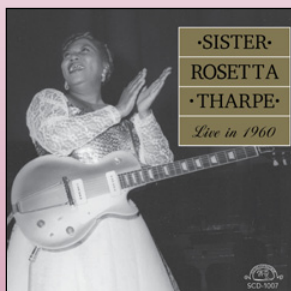


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Jazz Ladies

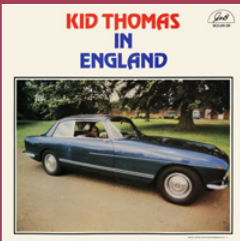


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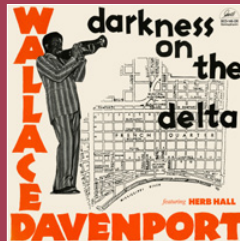
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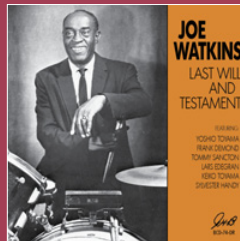
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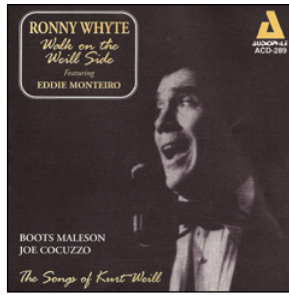
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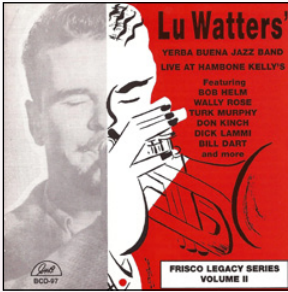
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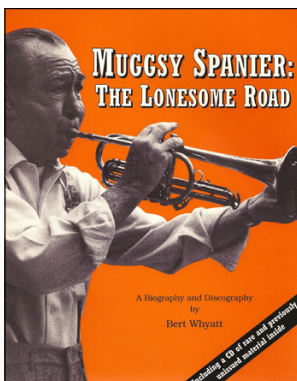


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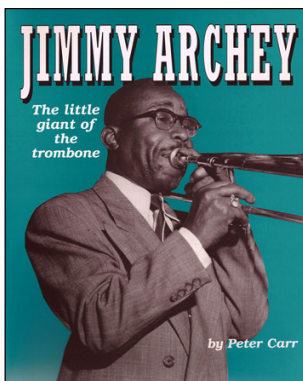
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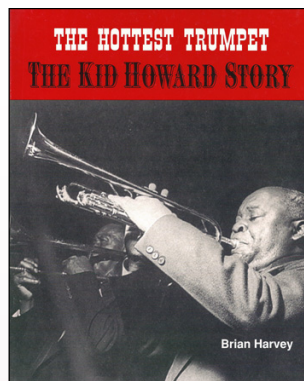
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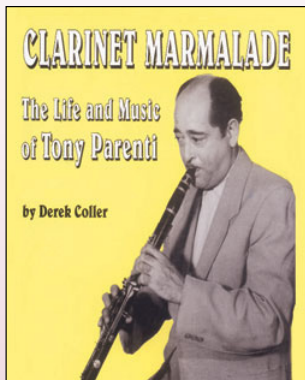
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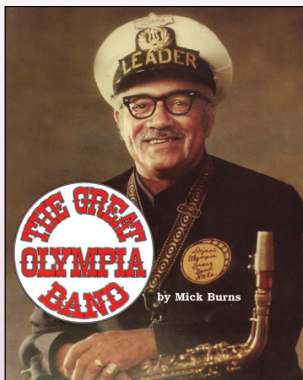
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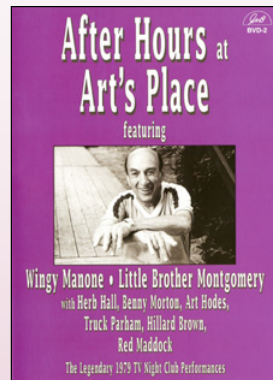
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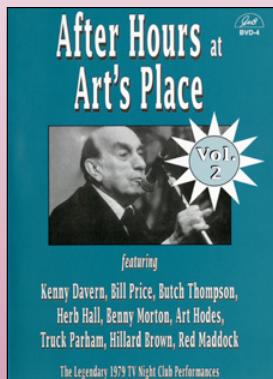
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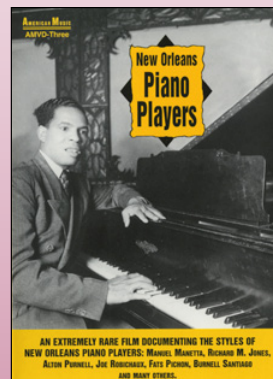
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DON SUHOR

A NEW ORLEANS ORIGINAL

by Charles Suhor



A jazz fan in New Orleans from the post-WWII years to the end of the century might or might not have heard one of the most gifted players of the time — Don Suhor (1932-2003) played constantly and was admired by musicians in all jazz styles, but he had no concern for recognition, let alone fame. His first priority was to find musical settings, traditional or modern, that made room for his love of improvisation. The GHB 2-CD set (BCD-561/562), *Don Suhor—New Orleans Clarinet and Alto Sax Virtuoso*, provides a legacy of his unheralded talent.

In his teen years he mastered the Dixieland and swing era combo repertoires and dozens of popular standards on clarinet. He went on to integrate Dixieland and modern jazz in a “bopsieland” synthesis, at the same time creating a highly original brand of bebop on alto sax with an underground cadre of pioneering modernists in the French Quarter. I was the awed kid brother, following Don as he entered many doors of music, taking from each whatever he found interesting and enriching. Don’s line of development was unlikely, but he came about it honestly. The third in a family of five children from the Ninth Ward, he took up clarinet at age 12 when our mother Marie, a first-generation American, insisted that he get “some kind of musical education.” Don chose clarinet because he had heard Artie Shaw on swing era records that our older siblings, Mary Lou and Ben, had bought—and because he thought Shaw looked handsome playing the instrument.

Don took beginners’ group classes at Werlein’s Music Store under Johnny Wiggs, the noted Bixian cornetist who became a co-founder of the New Orleans Jazz Club. His immediate enthusiasm led to serious study with Emanuel Alessandra, oboist with the New Orleans Symphony. Challenged by the rigorous approach, he gamely did traditional solfeggio exercises, practiced long tones, and was a quick study at reading music. Pete Fountain, who also studied with Alessandra, and Don were among the entrants in Benny Goodman’s search for the city’s most promising young clarinetist in 1947 when Goodman came to town to play with the New Orleans Symphony. The

finalists were Don, age fourteen, and nineteen year-old Don Lasday, who later became a versatile reedman and teacher in the city. Lasday weaved capably though several blues choruses. Don, not yet a fluent improviser, won the competition by playing, ironically, two memorized Artie Shaw solos from the Gramercy Five recordings, both rendered with flawless control of feeling and inflections.



Don Suhor at age fourteen ▲

Formal training was only part of the story. This was the time of the popular postwar revival in New Orleans, and the music came in through the pores. Sharkey Bonano, George Lewis, Papa Celestin, Tony Almerico, Paul Barbarin and others brought to the forefront jazz that had been the province of aficionados like Bill Russell and Al Rose.

Don and his school friends started a combo to play for dances at the W.O.W. Hall. Band director Charlie Wagner, who had once played trumpet across the street from Bix Beiderbecke, enjoyed talking to jazz-oriented students about the music

and its history. During marching band practice in football season, Don would occasionally jam contrapuntally during the trio sections of marches, with Wagner's tacit approval. While the dance band was on break at school events Wagner occasionally played piano with a breakout group of students who could fake and jam.

Don also gigged with solid young Irish Channel musicians like the Assunto brothers and trumpeter Al McCrossen. He worked weekends with veteran trumpeter Red Hott, an Armstrong devotee, who was especially fond of "Lil' Donnie" and brought him to jam at New Orleans Jazz Club meetings. At age 16 he sat in with Sharkey's Kings of Dixieland at a concert at the Municipal Auditorium. Don persuaded me to accompany his front-room solo jams. At first I used coat-hanger sticks, cardboard boxes, a pot cover cymbal, and a small stepstool for a woodblock. I bought a cheap second-hand drum set from Phil Zito. Inspired by Goodman, he tested himself—and me—with breakneck tempos on tunes like "The World is Waiting for the Sunrise."

Don took up alto sax in his late high school years and was soon playing in local dance bands. He chose alto sax because he liked the bright sound of the instrument in big band sax sections. But he became enamored of a radically different sound when he heard the dauntingly complex early recordings of Lee Konitz and the Lenny Tristano school. Jamming in our living room, I could almost see the wheels of his mind turning as he wove out long, complex solo lines. On clarinet, he raised the bar by playing tunes like "I've Got Rhythm" in the standard key then moving up a half step to improvise in every key.

Don enrolled in the Loyola Music School in 1950. As a freshman he played third alto in the big band amid veteran musicians — veterans, literally. Many were Swing Era ex-servicemen studying under the GI Bill of Rights. Younger Loyolans, like Al Belletto, and bassist Oliver "Stick" Felix, gravitated toward the French Quarter, where modernists eked out a living at strip joints. During after-hours sessions, Don's conception on alto shifted from Konitz's ethereal style to straight be-bop. The superb alto saxophonist Joseph "Mouse" Bonati, who'd recently arrived from Buffalo, became his idol, along with, inevitably, Charlie Parker. Don became a hard-swinging bopper among the pioneering artists who were nowhere on the radar of the press or

the general public.

Over the years Don's style grew increasingly distinctive. On clarinet, his tone and vibrato took on a rich, impassioned quality that stamped him as a New Orleans musician. His easeful merging of prodigious technical skills and knowledge of chords into a "bopsieland" synthesis stimulated his fellow musicians. On both alto sax and clarinet, he incorporated notes above the normal range of the instruments into his solos lines. This was never employed as a gimmick; the notes were simply there, like all others, accessible for use in melodic improvisation.

Except for a two-year Army stint in 1954 and a brief subsequent stay in Washington D.C., where he jammed with Shirley Horn, Buck Hill, and others, Don never left New Orleans. He had lucrative offers to go on the road but preferred to stay among family and friends in the beloved city where he could improvise, improvise, improvise. In college his reading skills had put him in demand for sax section work in local dance bands. After subbing with the excellent Lloyd Alexander big band, he remarked, "Yeah, Charlie, it's really a good band, but you know, I didn't get much chance to play." By which he meant, to improvise beyond the usual solo space given to the third alto chair. At the 1980 Jazzfest he sight-read Lionel Hampton's book, a relatively easy assignment. But Kent Larsen, longtime Stan Kenton trombonist who played with Don during their Army years, assured me that Don had the reading and jazz chops to hold a chair in Kenton's celebrated sax section.

Improvise he did, for fifty-five years at innumerable New Orleans jazz venues, among them, Al Hirt's, the Blue Room, Commander's Palace, Court of Two Sisters, Crazy Shirley's, Famous Door, Jazzfest, Maison Bourbon, Palm Court Jazz Café, Playboy, Prima's 500 Club, Sho'Bar, Snug Harbor, Steamer President. His sustained work at luncheon sites enabled him to double up at nights, sometimes playing more gigs than days in the year.

In 2002 Don Suhor was stricken with lung cancer. A benefit jam session was held in January of 2003 at the Palm Court Café, and though Don was too ill to be there, over 250 musicians and friends attended. He died a week later at the age of 70.



BUNK JOHNSON

RARE & UNISSUED VOL. 2

by Trevor Richards



In this abridged version of the liner notes—reduced to 50% and omitting the best bits—I am offering a hypothetical analysis of the complicated relationship between Bunk and Bill Russell—and between Bunk and the rest of the world. It is an attempt to explain and come to terms with the oral and written evidence available that is often at variance with accepted explanations.

The social backgrounds of the two could not have been more different, although these were less the cause of this suspected mutual dysfunction in their dealings with one another than the contrasting personalities for which these two backgrounds were partially responsible. Bunk was a child of the worst era of Southern racial repression: the years leading up to and following the turn of the twentieth century, which were also, not coincidentally, the years in which early jazz evolved. The struggle of the disenfranchised Creole population in New Orleans for legal recognition before the Courts in *Plessy v. Ferguson* was lost in 1896. The Robert Charles riot in New Orleans and its anti-black hysteria took place in 1900, and there was a general growth of racist violence, epitomized by the Ku Klux Klan, in the early twentieth century. This must have left a permanent mark on an independently minded young African-American of far above average intelligence like Bunk Johnson.

Since the Plessy or Charles alternatives were hardly applicable for him—he was not a Creole and as an African-American had no real recourse to legal action, nor was he a candidate for physical violence—it seems fair to surmise that Bunk's experiences left a need to offer some small measure of resistance to such a brutal, restrictive system. The route of passive-aggressive subversion presents itself as the obvious and classic option. He appears to have followed this tactic indiscriminately throughout his life—very often to his own detriment. The argument could be made that he presents one of the most bizarre figures in the prehistory of the civil rights movement. His reactions were a declaration of racial pride, expressed for example in his rejection of Barney Bigard's decision to pass

for white in Los Angeles, and his total personal independence. This manifested itself in a form of one-upmanship to avenge himself for perceived slights or paternalistic tendencies on the part of a white person, or even, as in the case of the Creole Sidney Bechet, any voice of authority. A typical and telling outburst was: "You can't rule me—no one can rule me!"

The behavior pattern that emerges could explain his ignoring Joe Oliver's repeated offers of work in Chicago in the 1920s, sabotaging important concerts in the 1940s until the critics had left, and his bouts of compulsive drinking at crucial times when people close to him tried to ensure his reliability and compliance. He told Alton Purnell that he'd rather return to the rice fields than have anyone tell him what to do. Alcohol seems to have frequently been a means to an end, not the problem. It was just another weapon in his assorted passive-aggressive arsenal.

Bunk's frequent acts of mischief to counteract authority could assume surrealistic proportions, such as with the New Iberia socialite, dilettante, patriarch and plantation owner William Weeks Hall, for whom he often worked as yardman. Bunk targeted Hall's conviction that his dog Spot was in reality a human being—incognito so to speak. The author Henry Miller, one of the many celebrities from the world of the arts that were prized house guests at the Shadows-on-the-Teche, incorporated this fixation in his book *The Air-Conditioned Nightmare* in 1941. Bunk had assessed Hall correctly, described in his—unofficial—biography as "an alcoholic, an eccentric and a man who perpetrated idiotic pranks on friends as well as strangers." Bunk assured Hall that Spot was too refined to eat mere dog food and was allowed to prepare tasty meals and black coffee for the human canine, and, maybe not coincidentally, to enjoy them himself in companionable domesticity with his newfound source of sustenance.

There is the amusing but compelling story of Bunk in a New York drugstore as retold by jazz critic and writer Martin Williams. Bunk noted that the clerk had given priority to all the white customers, and when he was finally served he



▲ A rare color photo slide of Bunk Johnson — courtesy of The Historic New Orleans Collection.

proceeded to monopolize the man in an endless monologue on the product and all conceivable extensions of the subject. When he saw the store was completely packed with frustrated customers he paid for the medication and left, reflecting “For a minute there I thought I was down home.”

It does not seem realistic to believe that a man of this mental subtlety could reduce his existence to mindless begging as would appear to be the case when reading his collected correspondence to Bill Russell and occasionally Weeks Hall. There is no letter where he does not urgently require money: for travel, books, a camera, teeth, medications, his daughter, car tires, a mouthpiece, a trumpet or just pocket money. Hall had a comparatively easy time with Bunk: he was apparently only asked for a bicycle (for his birthday—the address of the bicycle company included!), cigarettes, alcohol, a personal character reference and a list of the wealthiest people in the region (with the admonition “Answer at Once!”—an unusual approach for a black servant in the 1940s to take when asking a favor of his rich white employer). It’s almost as though he were calling in yet another payment on a ceaseless personal damages claim against the world in general. Judging from his demands, he seems to have only thought in personal terms, not as a representative of his social or ethnic group. These character traits of single-mindedness and

compulsion—not to mention their penchant for parsimony—establish a similarity between Bunk and Russell that they might well have recognized and appreciated in each other.

At this point we need to consider the discrepancies in regard to Bunk’s age and all that is related to it. His claim to 1879 as his year of birth has long been contested. The independent research of the Belgian jazz writer Robert Goffin and the American author Morroe Berger that incorporated the statements of some of the oldest living pioneers such as Manuel Perez, Alphonse Picou and Louis Nelson Delisle, contests Bunk’s claims to a birth date of 1879—which was within a year of the pioneers’ own births (note Willie Santiago’s comment on Bunk’s later appearance on the scene in RCA Victor executive John Reid’s interview on AMCD-44). Indeed, Berger reported that Delisle turned down a deal, in which Bunk offered him a recording session in return for detailed information on the early days of the music. Most standard reference works and authorities now cite 1889 as the probable date.

Bill Russell, typically, never doubted Bunk’s word, either on his age or any other historical fact or claim. Indeed, he would refuse even to accept any criticism of him. His position was a complicated, even contradictory one. He came from a poor but upstanding liberal family of German origin with an artisan father and music-loving mother. His moral code and political beliefs, stemming

no doubt from his upbringing, were a personal amalgam of liberalism and anarchism conceived for his own activities and matured in an age when adherence to such philosophies—personal or social—was still perfectly acceptable. He was nonetheless a man of conflicting character traits. He was a pacifist (even throughout the fanaticism of World War II) and possessed many of the humble characteristics of a hermit or monk, but followed his own agenda ruthlessly. He was well-known for his sensitivity to and tolerance of others' feelings and behavior but at the same time was notorious for his stubbornness when following his fixed course of action. He was an avantgarde composer—his work had been performed at Carnegie Hall in 1933—and a friend of John Cage, and yet subsequently dedicated his life to the documentation of early New Orleans jazz, an urban folk music far removed from his classical world. He was painfully exact in financial matters with musicians and fans, always to his own disadvantage, and yet he was a feared opponent when it came to the acquisition of old records or documents. He was also widely revered for his readiness to assist others, which sometimes bordered on a neurotic need to help, as further demonstrated by his menial relationship with New Orleans gospel singer Mahalia Jackson in Chicago after the years with Bunk. Bill had frequently been willing to sell his own personal belongings in order to send Bunk the money that he solicited. So it was inevitable that two complicated individuals with such diametrically opposed personalities and social backgrounds should experience difficulties in their dealings with one other. A more detailed study of this appears in the CD liner notes.

In conclusion we should try to place Bunk in the context of national and international jazz opinion and developments. In spite of the highlights in his 1940s career—one only has to think for example of *Shine* from the 1942 Jazz Information session, in spite of the poor recording quality (AMCD-119), the Decca session, most notably *Alexander's Ragtime Band* (AMCD-116), the concert with Doc Evans' band (AMCD-129) or Harold Drob's 1947 recordings (Delmark DE-225)—Bunk's intermittent musical disasters played into the hands of hostile critics. Whereas his supporters had no problem ignoring his poor performances, concentrating on his unique historical pedigree, these lapses gave the modern camp the ammunition it needed to torpedo the traditionalist opposition and its musical validity

by implying that Bunk's debacles accurately represented the authentic sounds of early New Orleans jazz.

The irony goes further: An outbreak of interest in revivalist jazz erupted simultaneously in North America, Europe and Australasia in the years after 1945 and took on almost pandemic proportions, the reason being partly the superficial and deceptive simplicity of the music and the apparent ease to learn and perform it. Copies of Bill Russell's American Music records found their way across the Atlantic, and were being pirated, dubbed and sold to the pundits of a new generation by the end of the 1940s. He could never have imagined the cult status that the trite 1927 novelty song *Ice Cream* would assume as the result of his recording (master #713), turned by the British bandleader Chris Barber into a veritable warhorse in the early 1950s, comparable in popularity with *The Saints*.

Russell's original hopes of introducing musical and emotional integrity into the popular music scene were not achieved. Harold Drob later encountered similar commercial failure with Bunk's New York band. Even so, the 1944–45 sessions and the one long-term commercial success resulting from the American Music venture—the George Lewis band—had a tremendous influence on the jazz scene in Europe and culture in general. It created several generations of idealistic, largely amateur musicians, often self-taught, who perpetuated the spirit, and often also the repertoire, if not always the brilliance, of the music. The spotlight was placed permanently on the city of New Orleans, both for musicians and fans, as a continuing source of live traditional jazz with its unique emotional intensity, and, seventy-five years later, due in no small degree to the single-minded efforts of Bill Russell, the survival of the old style has been ensured.

Likewise, the reputation of a unique musician and his legacy had been established and safeguarded for future generations. Bunk Johnson had a crucial stylistic influence on the following generation of trumpet players, born around the turn of the century, such as Buddy Petit, Tommy Ladnier, Lee Collins, Guy Kelly—and of course Louis Armstrong. As a separate but related benefit, we are granted this glimpse into the romanticism of a long-lost age. But, above all else, it is the individuality and the beauty of the music Bunk was able to document in the last five years of his life that leaves the deepest impression.



MARLENE VERPLANCK

1933 - 2018

by Paige VanVorst



Marlene VerPlanck, who recorded 24 albums for Audiophile in a career that stretched sixty years back into the Swing Era, died January 14 at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Hospital. She was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer back in November but worked until a few weeks before her death even though the effort necessary to travel to the club and sing took everything out of her; nothing in her performances indicated she was gravely ill.

Marlene was born in New Jersey – her mother’s family had an Italian restaurant and she worked there growing up, and was as renowned in the kitchen as she was on stage. She entered the music business as soon as she finished high school, and sang around NJ as Marlene Paula. It was tail end of the Swing Era — there wasn’t much big band action by the early 1950s but she caught on with Charlie Spivak’s orchestra and impressed the boys in the band with her singing and her cooking. She fell in love with J Billy VerPlanck, one of the trombonists; they moved up to the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra together and were married shortly after. Billy was a brilliant man, the love of her life, and he spent his time arranging her music and much of her professional life. There have been few partnerships that worked as well on a personal and professional level. He was totally devoted to her; he passed away in 2009 after an almost magical fifty-five-year marriage.

VerPlanck hit the jackpot the first time she recorded, in 1955 — Savoy producer Ozzie Cadena assembled an all-star band for a then-unknown singer — Joe Wilder, Herbie Mann, Hank Jones, Wendell Marshall and Kenny Clarke. The session was released under the name “Marlene.” She worked around New York for several years and then bookings dropped off with the advent of rock-and-roll. She ran into a friend in the hall of the Brill Building who said they needed someone to sing some advertising jingles. She auditioned and got hired to do five commercials in an hour, for \$10. She was fortunately prepared — she was able to sing almost anything with no need for a second take, with perfect pitch and excellent sight-reading ability.

New York was the center of the advertising business in those days and a singer like Marlene could work all the time recording jingles; she and Billy worked enough to buy a beautiful home in New Jersey. She was most famous for the “M-M Good” slogan for Campbell’s soup, which she recorded for twelve years. In addition, she crooned “Nationwide is on your side” for the insurance company, and especially, for Michelob — “Weekends were made for Michelob” and most famously, the “aah” at the end of each commercial. She recorded it once and it was used for seven years, regardless of who did the commercial. She collected a royalty each time the commercial ran.

The revival of interest in the Great American Songbook came at the perfect time for her — the jingle business was phased out by changes in technology and the decentralization of the ad business. She had remained somewhat active in the music business during her jingle period, working as a background singer behind artists ranging from Tony Bennett, Perry Como, Frank Sinatra and Mel Torme to KISS. She was hired once for a Modernaires number for a Glenn Miller tribute — they asked her to bring in four backup singers and she walked in with Julius LaRosa, Mel Torme, Michael Mark and Marty Nelson.

Marlene began recording for Audiophile in 1969 and all but three of her albums were made for us,

She was an inveterate tunesleuth and was always digging up wonderful numbers that were either forgotten or sinfully overlooked. Each album was well thought-out and different from her other sets. Billy VerPlanck was an ingenious arranger and devised unique ways to showcase Marlene’s talents.

She was able to work as much as she wanted for the rest of her life. She worked regularly in New York and New Jersey, wherever the Great American Songbook is respected, and her website was full of bookings and glowing reports on past appearances. She scheduled a Spring tour every year to the United Kingdom — she had a regular working group over there, and also recorded for us with that group.

She'd been a favorite of connoisseurs of cabaret music for years — John S Wilson, the New York Times' veteran jazz critic, said "she may be the most accomplished interpreter of popular material performing today," and a Jazz Journal International reviewed called her "the finest canary in captivity."

Marlene finished her career on a high note — her final album, *The Mood I'm In* (ACD-348) won five-

star ratings from both *DownBeat* and *Jazz Journal* — a rare accomplishment for a standup singer.

We're glad she spent half her life recording for Audiophile, and we're proud of the tremendous body of work she produced. She was a charming, gracious lady and produced great music to the end of her life.

SPOTLIGHT ON MARLENE VER PLANCK - AUDIOPHILE:



ACD-62

I THINK OF YOU WITH
EVERY BREATH I TAKE



ACD-121

YOU'D BETTER LOVE ME



ACD-288

MEETS SAXOMANIA

- ACD-109 A BREATH OF FRESH AIR (ARRANGED, CONDUCTED & PRODUCED BY J. BILLY VER PLANCK)
- ACD-138 LOVES JOHNNY MERCER
- ACD-160 A NEW YORK SINGER
- ACD-169 A WARMER PLACE
- ACD-186 I LIKE TO SING
- ACD-218 SINGS ALEC WILDER
- ACD-235 PURE AND NATURAL
- ACD-256 A QUIET STORM
- ACD-280 LIVE IN LONDON
- ACD-304 WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO WITH ALL THIS MOONLIGHT?
- ACD-320 SPEAKING OF LOVE
- ACD-325 IT'S HOW YOU PLAY THE GAME
- ACD-330 NOW
- ACD-334 MY IMPETUOUS HEART
- ACD-338 ONCE THERE WAS A MOON
- ACD-340 ONE DREAM AT A TIME
- ACD-343 BALLADS ...MOSTLY
- ACD-347 I GIVE UP, I'M IN LOVE
- ACD-348 THE MOOD I'M IN

BILL WATROUS 1939 - 2018

by Paige VanVorst

Bill Watrous, a virtuoso modern jazz trombonist, died July 2 in California. A native of Connecticut, son of a trombonist, Watrous was scouted by the Yankees as a teen, but enlisted in the Navy and went to band school. He hit NY when he was mustered out and took up jazz in earnest. His first work was in a band led by Billy Butterfield, and he was soon appearing on records with Woody Herman, Stan Kenton, Maynard Ferguson and Johnny Richards. He worked in groups led by Kai Winding for most of the '60s. He was an active session man and joined the Merv Griffin Show band. In 1971 he joined Ten Wheel Drive, a jazz-rock group. In 1972 he formed Manhattan Wildlife Refuge, another jazz rock group. John Hammond signed him for two albums on Columbia Records. He settled in California in 1977; he worked extensively in the studios and taught at USC for twenty years. He was active in studio work and

backed artists such as Prince and Frank Sinatra. He was well-known for his work on the *Roots* soundtrack under the leadership of Quincy Jones. His most popular recording was *A Time for Love*, from a 1993 album of the same name dedicated to Johnny Mandel compositions.

Most of his Famous Door albums have been reissued on Progressive, in response to continuous demand from his fanatic followers.

He was a brilliant improviser and one of the most technically proficient jazz trombonists ever, which led to his cult status among his fellow bonemen. As the Penguin Guide to Jazz on CD said, "Watrous is one of the great trombone technicians. He can play extraordinarily fast, prefers a steady pace, and produces a tone so smooth it could be spread on toast."

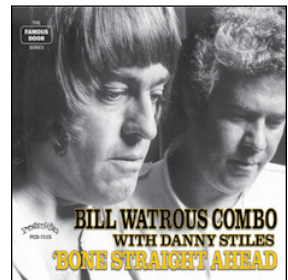
SPOTLIGHT ON BILL WATROUS - PROGRESSIVE & FAMOUS DOOR:



PCD-7153 (HL-136)
CORONARY TROMBOSSA!



PCD-7154 (HL-137)
LA ZORRA



PCD-7115 (HL-144)
'BONE STRAIGHT AHEAD



PCD-7160-DR (HL-127)
WATROUS IN HOLLYWOOD



PCD-7155-DR (HL-144)
ROARING BACK INTO NY

THE FOLLOWING
(2) ITEMS ARE
ONLY AVAILABLE
AT DIGITAL STORES



NOT AVAILABLE ON
COMPACT DISC



DARYL SHERMAN LOST IN A CROWDED PLACE



by Paige VanVorst

We're proud that Daryl Sherman chose to return to New Orleans to record for the third time at GHB Recording Studios. She's developed a following around New Orleans — appeared at Sachmo Summerfest and Snug Harbor. This latest CD, *Lost in a Crowded Place* is her sixth for Audiophile.

Daryl Sherman has been the toast of New York since the mid-70s, though she hails from Providence, RI and has devoted followings in Great Britain and Japan, where she appears and records regularly. Her musical roots run deep in Rhode Island — her late father, Sammy Sherman, was an excellent trombonist who chose to stay home and raise his family despite offers from major bands during the Swing Era — he finally got a chance to record while in his 80's and demonstrated that the jazz world missed a chance to hear a superior trombonist.

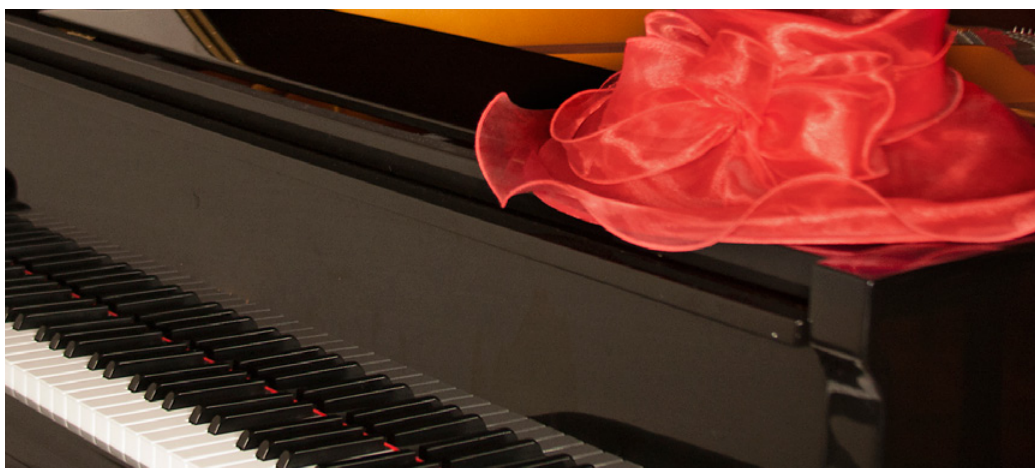
Daryl shows her unique talents repeatedly on the new CD — she is one of relatively few artists equally talented as a singer and a pianist, and in addition she wrote one of the numbers and the lyrics for another. She's been a part of the New York cabaret scene for forty years, including a record setting fourteen-year run at the Waldorf-Astoria, playing Cole Porter's Steinway piano. In addition to her nightclub work she's often called upon for special occasions, including the JVC Jazz Fest, at Lincoln Center with Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, and at the

Mabel Mercer Foundation Cabaret Convention.

The current CD features a quartet — Daryl on piano, Jon-Erik Kellso, trumpet; Don Vappie, banjo & guitar, and either Jesse Boyd or Boots Maleson on bass. Ms. Sherman picked a delightful selection of numbers, combining in equal parts wonderful but not overdone standards and songs that are her special property because she discovered or wrote them — she's an expert musical archeologist, and even came up with *The Lorelei*, a Gershwin tune most people haven't heard.

Sherman uses the small group very effectively — it is the perfect size for a project like this — Kellso's trumpet is excellent accompaniment, and he is perfect on this album, keeping the variety in the music. The three-piece rhythm section generates a nice swing where needed, as one would expect from a New Orleans oriented group. Vappie has been active for a generation with New Orleans groups, and also ventured to New York to appear at Lincoln Center with Wynton Marsalis. In fact, the ensemble sounds a lot like the Ear-Regulares, a similarly configured group Kellso leads in New York.

Daryl Sherman has a light, playful sounding voice, excellent diction, and she and Kellso sound like they've been doing this for years; I'm sure they've done this before, as both are among the busiest musicians in New York.



CURTIS FULLER

by Paige VanVorst (cont. p11)

...and worked in Lester Young's last band. Alfred Lion of Blue Note heard him with Davis and used him on sessions with Sonny Clark and John Coltrane, and he led four dates for Blue Note. His work on Coltrane's *Blue Train* is certainly his best-known recording. He became very close to Coltrane and spent a lot of time with him, and was greatly impressed with Coltrane's spirituality.

Fuller did a lot of recording in those days. As he indicated in a DownBeat interview, "We did something like three or four sessions a week! There was one day I did three different LPs! It's amazing the way we had the resilience. Everybody — Pepper Adams, all the guys — were doin' it. Those were like the survival days. We'd record for you if you had a company. But those things were done to pay the rent, and for a chance to be heard, since that was the only medium through which we could get some sort of recognition." He recorded with almost every major jazz label and with most of the major leaders.

He had extended terms with the Jazztet led by Art Farmer and Benny Golson, Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers and the Count Basie Orchestra. He spent time in the late 60's with Dizzy Gillespie and toured Europe with him. He had an experimental group in the 1970s using electronic instruments but by the 80's he settled down to a regular life touring in Europe with the Timeless All-Stars and with a reorganized Jazztet. He became involved in academic music and worked as an artist in residence at the University of Minnesota and in Wisconsin. In his recent years he's been a faculty member of the New York State Summer School of the Arts School of Jazz Studies.

The CD at hand was recorded in our Audiophile Studio in 2002, while Fuller was in New Orleans for an engagement. The band included the men he was then working with: Maurice Brown, trumpet; Javon Jackson, saxophone; Peter Martin, piano; Bill Huntington, bass; and Jason Marsalis, drums, a nice mix of age groups and definitely compatible players ranging from relative oldsters like Fuller and Huntington to then-young tigers like Marsalis and Brown. The band work well together for a basically pickup group as they all have a reference point in Art Blakey, to whom they are all in some way connected.

The tune selection is delightfully eclectic, drawing from Basie (*Good Bait*), Ellington (*Caravan*), Freddie Hubbard (*Up Jumped Spring*), and Willard Robison (*Old Folks*), along with two Fuller originals.

Marsalis describes the feeling of recording with Fuller in the liner notes — he was practicing along with some records, little realizing he would be recording one of the numbers he was listening to a few days later. He said, "Fuller calls *Arabia*. The moment we started playing, that spiritual moment occurred. Even though it was a new version and I was definitely channeling Blakey's drumming, it also felt as though I was at Rudy VanGelder's studios in the 1960's on the original "Mosaic" recording session"

This is a relaxed session, highlighting Fuller's excellent trombone playing — the rest of the band enjoyed the chance to record with him and it shows, and the New Orleans contingent had a chance to work with a legend from some of the classic bands of the 1950s and 60's.

Marsalis, who is a fixture at the Audiophile Studio, gets a nice workout on *Caravan*, particularly on take three. Bill Huntington, whose recording career is now approaching seventy years, works well with Martin and Marsalis. Fuller had a unique opportunity to assemble a group in New Orleans, and had the good fortune to find two of the men during their relatively short residence in New Orleans. One doesn't normally encounter jazz like this in Louisiana — its nice they had the chance to visit the Audiophile Studios for a session.

DON FRIEDMAN

by Paige VanVorst (cont. p12)

has beautiful command of the keyboard, enough imagination to wring the maximum effect from each performance. He also pays respect to what was happening at the time of the session, with beautiful versions of *The Way We Were* and *The Shadow of Your Smile*. The trio generates a full head of steam when they want to, particularly on an up tempo *The Song is You*. *My Secret Love* was a surprise inclusion — I hadn't heard the song in years, and they give it a nice workout.

Luther and Hart are certainly not along for the ride — they're an intricate part of every track.

The session is well-recorded, and includes a bonus track (*Fine and Dandy*) which was not part of the original Progressive LP. Don Friedman was a working jazzman for sixty years and its nice to return another of his sessions to print forty years after it was briefly issued.

JOHN BUNCH

by Paige VanVorst (cont. p10)

flying missions out of England over the Continent. He was shot down over Germany in 1944 and held as a prisoner of war for six months. Luckily, the Germans saw the end of the War coming and took reasonably good care of their prisoners; he was released in the Spring of 1945 just as the War was ending.

The jazz scene changed greatly while Bunch was away and Bebop was the new thing. When he returned home, his friends immediately immersed him in the music of Bud Powell and Charlie Parker. "I don't think there's been anybody like Bud Powell- he was just fantastic. But of course, there are others. Art Tatum's always been in a class by himself. And I was sort of influenced by Teddy Wilson. In other words, what you might call a lighter touch approach to piano playing."

Bunch's other heroes all fall within the jazz mainstream. "Charlie Parker is probably the greatest single player. Ben Webster, I always liked Ben very much. Duke Ellington, of course. You have to like him. I heard that band many times when I lived in Indiana. I used to go to Chicago whenever he played at the Blue Note. In the '50's Ellington had, in my opinion, the greatest band he ever had."

He returned to Indiana and enrolled at Indiana University. He didn't think he had the facility to be a music major and took a degree in broadcasting. He moved to Indianapolis after graduation and became part of a flourishing jazz scene- the Montgomery brothers and Leroy Vinnegar were active all over town. "Once starting to work with the top men in town, I felt confident enough to leave."

Bunch left Indianapolis in the mid 50's- he wasn't confident enough for New York and went to Los Angeles, hoping for some studio work. "I fell in with Jimmy Rowles right away. He'd taken a job with the studios and I walked into a lot of the club work he'd been doing. I had some friends out there already- Leroy Vinnegar and Med Flory, who'd been

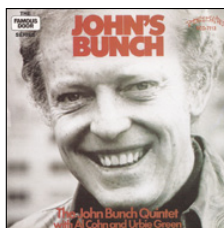
active in Indianapolis

Woody Herman hired Bunch in 1956 and he hit the road. "Woody worked a lot more in the East and I got a taste of the scene in New York, and wound up settling there". Bunch became one of the busiest men on the New York scene and worked a series of high-profile gigs with Buddy Rich's small group, followed by others with Gene Krupa, Maynard Ferguson and Benny Goodman; Goodman used him for the rest of his life. He made three overseas tours with Goodman: USSR (1962), Mexico (1963) and Europe (1973) and spent two years with Al Cohn and Zoot Sims.

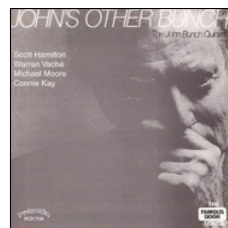
From 1966-72 Bunch worked as music director for Tony Bennett. This was an exclusive job as he had to coordinate music for all of Bennett's tours. "Now he travels with a trio. Back then we had sixteen pieces, sometimes even thirty-two pieces. I'd have to put a band together wherever we were playing. In some towns, like Chicago and LA, we had enough local men who could work out. In smaller towns we'd have to bring key players with us. It was a great experience and I learned a lot about arranging and conducting".

Bunch became a virtual house pianist for Famous Door Records in the 1970s. He was a sideman on several sessions and then was the leader on *John's Bunch* and *John's Other Bunch*, which stimulated his career and led to some work in Europe. We've found another Bunch session- *It's Love in the Spring* (Progressive PCD-7011), a trio session backed by Cal Collins on guitar and George Mraz on bass.

John Bunch remained active in music well into his 80's. In 2002 he was honored at the JVC Jazz Festival for his contributions to jazz, and in celebration of the reissue on Progressive of his first Famous Door LP. He recorded seven albums for Arbors Records and two for Concord Jazz during a very long career. He was one of those pianists who provided a more delicate approach to the music, a result of his early immersion in the music of Teddy Wilson and his contemporaries. John Bunch died March 30, 2010, of melanoma.



PCD-7113 (HL-107)
JOHN'S BUNCH



PCD-7134 (HL-114)
JOHN'S OTHER BUNCH

JAZZBEAT BOOKSHELF

RECENT PUBLICATIONS by Paige VanVorst

CRESCENT CITY SLIDEMEN

by Christopher Hillman with Richard Rains
and Mike Pointon

(Devon, England: Chris Hillman Books. 75pp pamphlet)

Available from Chris Hillman Books, 2 The
Halt, Tavistock, Devon, PL19 95R, England.
The email address is Scottlededoo@gmail.com.

The booklet sells for 20 pounds

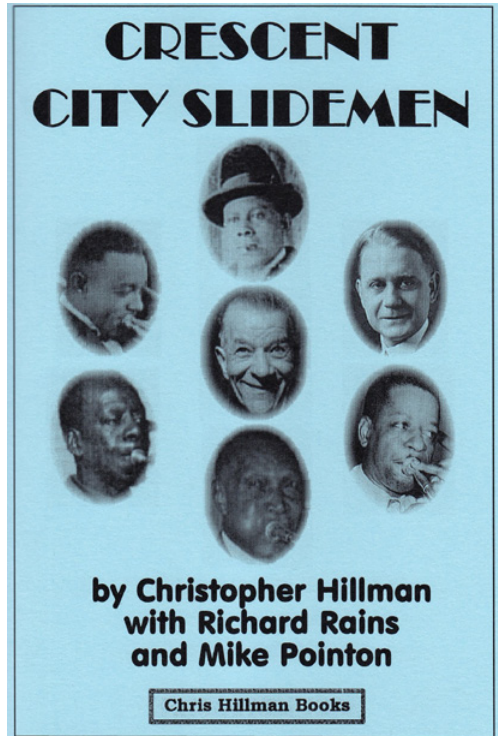
Shipping to the US is another 4.5 pounds.

This is the eleventh in a series of books devoted to piano blues and New Orleans jazz. Like its two immediate predecessors, the book discusses briefly all the prominent players on one of the key instruments used in New Orleans jazz, in this case — the trombone.

The book includes some basic information on the trombone, then moves through the history of jazz, citing the influential New Orleans players from each era. Some players get mentioned twice due to the fortunate intervention of the New Orleans Revival, which brought people like Kid Ory and Jim Robinson back for a deserved second career.

The book is well-illustrated with many photos including a few I've never seen before. The writing is clear and provides a short (not more than a paragraph of two) piece on each of dozens of trombonists. There is no cutoff in the book — young players active in New Orleans today are given the same respect accorded legends from the 1920s, and, in addition, there is an Acolytes and Apostles section, including non-New Orleans players dedicated to that style, including Mike Casimir, Freddie John, Frank Nauendorf and Frank Demond.

There is a section of trumpet players not included in the last volume, and, delightfully, six pages of letters from Preston Jackson — he was one of my closest friends and a world-class letter writer. Its wonderful to read his letters, as he was one person who spoke what was on his mind — it is clear from one of the letters that he was miffed at Hillman's lukewarm review of a record he was on.



These books are always fun to read and, in most cases, reread, as the names fly by so fast you have to back up to make sure you didn't miss anything. As always, the booklet includes a CD featuring one track from most of the recorded players mentioned in the text. Nothing unissued or rare, but a very nice bonus, and it brings the spotlight on some seldom-reissued sides like the Lottie Hightower NightHawks..

The only sad fact is that Hillman is not planning any more booklets itemizing other instruments — he feels unable to handle the technical part of the writing. In any case, the booklet is a good read and covers its ground very well.

BILL RUSSELL AND THE NEW ORLEANS JAZZ REVIVAL

by Ray Smith & Mike Pointon

Sheffield, England: Equinox Publishing Ltd , 2018
335 pg hardbound

Available from Equinox Pub and Amazon

This is the book we've all been waiting for. Bill Russell (1905-92) was one of the most beloved figures in jazz history. He was one of the first jazz record collectors, contributed to the first book on jazz, rediscovered Bunk Johnson, began the revival of New Orleans jazz, and helped found Preservation Hall. And all within a well-spent 87 years. He was regarded as a saint by most New Orleans musicians, and respected as a god by most of us who've followed New Orleans jazz for a long time.

Russell was an annoyingly humble man and very shy when it came to being interviewed. He told me long ago that he shouldn't be interviewed as long as there were New Orleans musicians who hadn't been profiled. Smith and Pointon, both musicians long active in Great Britain, interviewed him at length in 1990 as part of a largely-aborted video documentary. They interviewed him for seven days, resulting in nine hours of interview material; part of it was used in an award-winning BBC radio documentary. The authors worked 25 years assembling this beautiful volume, which covers most of Russell's various careers, and is carefully arranged chronologically, a difficult effort based as it on a series of non-sequential interview fragments.

The book is beautifully assembled- the authors call it a mosaic in that it is put together from smaller pieces, and it is certainly a work of art. It is illustrated with a number of small cuttings (newspaper ads, record labels, promotional brochures) as well as photographs of Russell at various stages of his life and most of the musicians who were important to him. The photographs are reproduced in sort of a greyish tone- the photos aren't really black and white, but they're well-chosen and in many cases previously unpublished.

The book is composed of the narrative from 1990 interspersed with interview material from other sources, including interviews with various Russell associates and articles by and about Russell from sources ranging back to the

'30's. It sounds complicated, but it works- the narrative flows, and once you're immersed in the book you don't even notice the transitions, which are marked with various fonts and margin lines



The book brings Russell to life better than most biographies- I knew him for twenty years and everything in the book rings true, as it should, since the bulk of the book is in his own words.

Russell had an amazing life including careers as an avante garde classical composer, a Chinese musician, record producer, performer, and intrepid researcher. The only period not discussed in detail is the interlude where Preservation Hall evolved from the public jam sessions held by Russell and some associates at Larry Borenstein's art gallery.

Russell's old compatriot George Avakian wrote a beautiful foreword about his lifelong friend-Avakian, who died shortly after completing it, was the last of the jazz enthusiasts who started the classic jazz movement in the 1930s. Avakian also figures in an interesting piece on Russell's work with Mahalia Jackson.

Seldom do we encounter a genius on several levels like Russell and its nice to have everything about this wonderful man in one volume.

REVIEWS OF CDs

CURRENT & RECENT RELEASES



Just Jazz:

BUNK JOHNSON: RARE AND UNISSUED MASTERS - VOL. 2

AMERICAN MUSIC
AMCD-140

As the Jazzology website states; “Bunk Johnson embodied the New Orleans jazz revival of the 1940s. His recordings and oral history dramatically updated knowledge of the early style. This is the second and last CD of rare and unissued recordings from the first three years of Bill Russell’s American Music label. It includes seven takes that are being issued for the very first time, the rest have never been on general CD release. The booklet contains previously unpublished photos and includes an evaluation of the difficult relationship between Bunk and Bill Russell.”

So true folks! When I approached this CD for review, I made a point of reading the sleeve notes (booklet) before listening to the CD. I’m glad I did, because I found it brought a lot of previous ‘quote and unquote’ about Bunk into perspective. Trevor Richards’ expansive writings have been well thought through and because of that, all references made about Bunk and his music can be related to the tracks on the CD. Although the majority of Bunk’s recordings were made with what was to become ‘George Lewis’ Band: he never made it easy for Bill Russell to record these sessions, e.g. he would purposefully destroy a great ‘take’ by fluffing his way through the last few bars. Nevertheless, what did go down on disc was great New Orleans jazz. Russell tried to exploit Bunk’s reputation of being a ‘great Blues player: but Bunk was having none of it, always moaning about having to play the Blues, wanting to play Pop tunes. Bunk’s backing of Myrtle Jones is nowhere as good as his backing to Sister Lottie Peavey on those ‘West Coast’ recordings with Turk Murphy and Clancy Hayes, etc. Noticeable also the recordings he made with Bertha Gonsoulin, his playing is lyrical and flowing not as stilted as some of his playing within the Lewis combo. It seems Bunk liked the Jelly Roll Morton

style of piano playing, which makes it no surprise, that he was to book Don Ewell for his band at the Stuyvesant Casino (shamefully not recorded) and then consequently the trio recordings with Don -all great music, with Bunk in top form. This ‘final’ Bunk CD is a definite winner and I’m sure will be gracing New Orleans aficionados’ collections very quickly. The CD has peaks and troughs throughout, but even the low points have their own quality, usually made up from George Lewis’ clarinet playing or Jim Robinson’s trombone style. It’s noticeable on one of the Blues with Myrtle Jones that Jim takes the lead on the last chorus as Bunk just seems to lose interest. However, to highlight a Bunk peak, listen to *St. Louis Blues* and *Plenty To Do*, by Bunk, with Bertha on piano.

One wonders if Bill Russell’s attention to detail went somehow into aggravating Bunk and causing Bunk to be cantankerous at times. I can highly recommend this CD, but like me, read the sleeve notes first, it makes the listening even more enjoyable.

-Pete Lay

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*from The Syncopated Times:*

The Bunk Johnson story would make for a fascinating movie. Born around 1889 (he claimed it was 1879 so he could say that he had played with Buddy Bolden), Johnson grew up very poor but developed into one of New Orleans’ top trumpeters of the 1910-30 period. A fight during a dance in 1931 resulted in his teeth being damaged and his career stopping. He worked at manual jobs for the rest of the decade.

Discovered by the writers of the book *Jazzmen* in 1939 after they interviewed other New Orleans pioneers who mentioned Johnson, they raised money to buy the unrecorded legend dentures and a new trumpet. By 1942 he was beginning to appear on records and was on his way to becoming a cult figure. Johnson’s trumpet playing, although sometimes erratic due to his drinking, returned to its earlier form and he had a few years of glory before ill health caused his retirement in 1947. A braggart who made some outrageous claims and an alcoholic, Johnson was ridiculed by



many followers of modern jazz while at the same time being held up as a representative of “the real jazz” by those who felt that jazz had taken a wrong turn during the swing era. He had many adventures in San Francisco, Boston (where he drank his way out of Sidney Bechet’s band), and New York before his retirement.

The American Music label has done a superior job of making most of Bunk Johnson’s recordings (other than those reissued by other companies) available. Rare & Unissued Masters Volume Two 1943-1946 releases just about all of the Johnson recordings not previously on CD; I only know of six performances from 1943-44 that are not in print. Filled with alternate takes, unissued performances and rarities, this set features ten selections from 1944-45 with his regular band (essentially clarinetist George Lewis’ group with drummer Baby Dodds), three trios from 1946 with pianist Don Ewell and drummer Alphonse Steele (who unfortunately relies too heavily on his bass drum), three duets with the excellent but forgotten pianist Bertha Gonsoulin in 1943, one of only two Johnson piano solos (“Baby I’d Love To Steal You”), and his brief reminiscing about the early pianist Tony Jackson. Other than a few brief missteps, the music is quite rewarding, surprisingly so considering that these are mostly rejected takes. The Lewis selections include “Good Morning Blues,” “Sister Kate,” “and “My Old Kentucky Home,” and the Gonsoulin duets are particularly rewarding. With Trevor Richards’ lengthy liner notes as a bonus, this is a CD that Bunk Johnson collectors and those wondering what all of the fuss was about will want to pickup.

-Scott Yanow

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*from Cadence Magazine:*

When BUNK JOHNSON [1889-1949] was rediscovered in the New Orleans area in 1942 it was cause for excitement and really the spark plug for the revival period of traditional jazz which in turn gave George Lewis a career which helped spread traditional come trad music. RARE AND UNISSUED MASTERS Vol 2 [American Music Records AMCD-140], says it covers 5/9/7/43 - 6/3/46. 7 of the 18 tracks [60:23] are unissued and I’m surprised there are any at this late date. I tried to cross reference this against a discography but it got confusing pretty quickly. Included are many of the recordings by Bertha Gonsoulin [p] who only cut 5 tracks before going into obscurity. There is

also one track by Myrtle Jones, who is credited with only one jazz recording. These recordings were a result of Bill Russell’s efforts, one of the earliest and most important jazz benefactors. The label American Music Records is now part of the GHB [George H. Buck] family of labels. This umbrella operation houses a gold mine of jazz recordings and is now I believe in the good hands of Lars Edegran. Photos and wonderful notes by Trevor Richards fill out the 24 page liner booklet. A side note; when I listened to this (traditional) music in the 1950s it seemed antiquated, yet today it strikes me as music first and I don’t hear it so much as “dated”. A wonderful reissue.

-Robert Rusch



*Just Jazz:*

**DON SUHOR:  
NEW ORLEANS  
CLARINET & SAX  
VIRTUOSO**

GHB BCD-561/562

I guess that most of our readers would not have heard of Don Suhor. From the late 1940s up until his death in 2003 he had played clarinet and alto sax in a stunning variety of jazz contexts in New Orleans. He was passionately devoted to the art of jazz and had no interest in self-promotion. You could say that his career was ‘low profile’.

Over those years he played in every jazz bar on Bourbon Street (when they existed) with Traditional jazz groups in settings like the Famous Door and Crazy Shirley’s. These were the ground for development of a unique and highly advanced clarinet style that made use of his prodigious technique. His inventive alto sax work was honed in gritty post war underground Be-bop sessions and strip clubs in the French Quarter. Some readers who visited New Orleans in the 1990s may have heard him playing at the Palm Court Cafe on Decatur.

Also, in the years prior to his death, he kept a hectic schedule, with a steady trio gig at the Court of Two Sisters, a Big Band session with Irvin Mayfield, and playing Modern jazz at Snug Harbor.

I remember hearing him a couple of times in the early 1990s during various French Quarter Festival sets. It didn’t really sink in at the time,

how good he was. This two-CD set, which is made up from recordings from private sessions, proves his excellence, and his accompanists aren't bad either. There is some really good jazz on these CDs, albeit one or two edging towards the 'Modern idiom; but his playing still stands out. Definitely an unsung musician from New Orleans — I hope these CDs mean that Don Suhor's talents will not go 'unsung'. Highly recommended!

-Pete Lay

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from Cadence Magazine:

GHB Records has issued a nice legacy double CD set as, DON SUHOR; NEW ORLEANS CLARINET & SAX VIRTUOSO [GHB Records bcd-561/562]. The 12 page liners, with photos and notes by Suhor's younger brother cover the bio and 26 tracks [114:59]. Suhor [1932-2002] never left New Orleans (except for the draft), and was reticent to record and this issue is filled out with recordings [1977-2002] made under someone else's leadership, mostly unissued. CD #1 is dedicated to his clarinet playing, although more interesting is CD 2 which is devoted to his alto sax work. Accomplished, here he plays with a woody tone, similar to his clarinet sound but not oblivious to Charlie Parker and bop or Paul Desmond.

-Robert Rusch



Jazz Lives:

**DARYL SHERMAN:
LOST IN A
CROWDED PLACE**

AUDIOPHILE
ACD-357

Daryl Sherman's new CD is just splendid, and I don't exaggerate. I'd thought that with her most recent disc, MY BLUE HEAVEN, she'd reached a real peak of intimacy and swinging expressiveness. But this newest recording offers even more expansive delights. And, by the way, don't let the title put you off: the music is not morose.

Daryl, once again, presents very heartfelt dramatic vignettes -- a dozen. It's a tasting menu for the ears, the brain, and the heart, and one

can dine at this particular restaurant over and over again. No shock at the multi-digit bill, no caloric woes.

Daryl's colleagues -- in various permutations -- are our hero Jon-Erik Kellso on trumpet; Don Vappie on guitar, banjo, and vocal; Jesse Boyd, string bass; Boots Maleson, string bass on RAINBOW HILL only.

They are a splendid crew, but I want to say something about the pianist, who also happens to be Ms. Sherman. Daryl's playing here is so fine that I occasionally found myself distracted from what she was singing or one of the instrumentalists was playing to admire its restrained elegance that never lost the beat. Think, perhaps, of Hank Jones or of Dick Katz. And when Daryl accompanies herself, she is -- without multiple-personality disorder -- a pianist who is kind to the singer and a singer who doesn't overwhelm the pianist. Her opening instrumental duet with Jon-Erik on the title song is wonderful -- the way it should be done.

Then there's Daryl the composer / lyricist: both selves in evidence on the opening song, THE LAND OF JUST WE TWO, a song that could easily pass as a kinder, gentler Frishbergian romance. Her lyrics to Turk Mauro's improvisation over TANGERINE that he called TURKQUOISE are nimble and witty.

There's Daryl the song-scholar: offering not only the rarely heard verse to STARS FELL ON ALABAMA but the never-heard verse to IF WE NEVER MEET AGAIN, bringing forth Barbara Carroll's LOST IN A CROWDED PLACE -- with sweetly anachronistic lyrics (from 1956) by Irving Caesar that speak of finding a dime for the pay phone -- and Billy VerPlanck's RAINBOW HILL, here offered as a fond tribute to Daryl's friend, Billy's wife, singer Marlene.

There's Daryl the comedienne, never resorting to "humor," which quickly wears thin, but underpinning her vocal delivery with an unexpressed giggle. I don't know that it's possible to sing and grin simultaneously, but there are places on AT SUNDOWN where I'd swear it was happening, and even more so as Daryl negotiates her way with great style through THE LORELEI. It's not comedy, exactly, that uplifts many of the songs on this disc, but it is Daryl's pleasure at being able to be the vehicle through which the music passes to us. EVERYTHING BUT YOU is not just an Ellington song to her, but a witty, rueful commentary on romance.

Going back to my start: when I first heard MY BLUE HEAVEN, I thought, "This is the way Daryl really sounds in the most welcoming circumstances -- no debatable amplification system, no patrons with glasses full of iced, no waitstaff asking, "Who has the parmigiana?" Her singing on CROWDED PLACE is even more subtly compelling, if that's possible. I won't compare her to other singers: she is herself, and that's reassuring. The recording by David Stocker is faithful without being clinical or chilly, so that her remarkable sound -- "sounds," I should say -- come through whole.

I would have singers study her phrasing on this disc -- that wonderful science of balancing song and conversation, adherence to the melody and improvisation. How she does it from song to song, from chorus to chorus, is something quite remarkable.

And Daryl presents herself as not "just a singer," which is to say, someone trained in singing and performance practice who has brought a dozen lead sheets to the studio, but someone with great (quietly dramatic) skill at making each song its own complete emotional and intellectual statement. Each of the twelve performances is like a fully-realized skit or an aural short story, and no one sounds like the other in some monotonous way. Consider the sweet -- and I mean that word seriously -- duet (a duet of many colors, shifting like a long sunset) between Daryl and Don on YOU GO TO MY HEAD, a song that I would have thought done to a crisp, or the HELLO, DOLLY! world Daryl and Co. create on NEW SUN IN THE SKY. These are memorable performances, each one with its own shadings. And the mood is often a wise tenderness, something rare and needed in our world.

Daryl's colleagues are inspiring on their own, but at times rise to new and surprising creative heights. Boots Maleson is her long-time colleague, and his one offering, RAINBOW HILL, reminds me of how beautifully he plays, both pizzicato and arco. More to the forefront is bassist Jesse Boyd, eloquent and swinging. I have the privilege of seeing and hearing Jon-Erik Kellso often in New York City, and I know him best as the heroic leader of the EarRegulars, but here he is a superb accompanist as well as delivering some melodic choruses that startled me with their beauty, or providing the perfect echoes in THE LORELEI. I'd only known Don Vappie at a distance, but his rhythm guitar is more than welcome, his solos remind me of a down-home Charlie Byrd, his

banjo is splendid, and his vocal duet on YOU GO TO MY HEAD is touching, loose, and inspiring. Fine incisive notes by Carol Sloane, who knows, also.

But this is Daryl's masterful offering. I only apologize for writing at such length that some readers might have been delayed from purchasing several copies. LOST IN A CROWDED PLACE is that rewarding, and you can purchase it here. Thank you, Daryl.

- Michael Steinman

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*from Jersey Jazz:*

The clever cover photo of the new album by vocalist/pianist DARYL SHERMAN, *Lost In a Crowded Place* (Audiophile-357) finds Sherman in a spectacular red outfit seated at a piano with a crowded Grand Central Station lobby in the background. A rare song of the same name by Barbara Carroll and Irving Caesar is the source of the title. Finding good obscure songs is one of Sherman's many talents. In addition to being a fine singer who knows how to extract the essence of each lyric that she sings, and a wonderful jazz pianist, Sherman is also adept at creating appealing melodies and literate lyrics. Her opening track, "The Land of Just We Two," is a charmer, and her hip lyrics for the Turk Mauro tune "Turkquoise" is one that should find homes in the repertoire of other jazz-oriented vocalists. The program's two most frequently heard numbers are "You Go to My Head," an effective vocal duet with guitarist Don Vappie, and "Stars Fell on Alabama." The other songs, "At Sundown," "Azalea," a real rarity by Duke Ellington, "The Lorelei," "If We Never Meet Again," "Everything But You" and "New Sun in the Sky," are superb tunes that stay well under the radar. Special mention needs to be made of the closing track, "Rainbow Hill," a lovely selection by Billy VerPlanck that Sherman recorded as a special surprise for the late Marlene VerPlanck, with sole support from bassist Boots Maleson. On the rest of the album, Sherman also has support from Vappie on guitar and banjo, Jesse Boyd on bass and Jon-Erik Kellso on trumpet. Kellso is one of the horn players who truly understands how to embellish a vocalist's efforts without getting in the way. There is a lot of pure pleasure to be found on *Lost in a Crowded Place*.

- Joe Lang



Jazz Journal:

★★★★ (4 Stars)

### DANNY STILES 5: IN TANDEM

PROGRESSIVE PCD-7175

The late Danny Stiles met Bill Watrous when he was the contractor and lead trumpeter for the Merv Griffin show in the 70's. Watrous was a colleague and this was the first of three albums they recorded together for the Famous Door label during that decade together with the estimable Derek Smith on piano. They usually performed what can loosely be called common-denominator standards, which is exactly what we have here. This repertoire has been inspiring jazz musicians almost from the earliest days of the music- *It Had to Be You* (1924), *Blue Room* (1927) and *In a Mellow Tone* (1940) which of course is based on *Rose Room* (1919). Danny's intriguing *Myrtle Lee* is our friend *Indiana* (1917) dressed up in some attractive new clothes. Two blues originals complete the set- *Dirty Dan* by Watrous and Stiles' *The Skipper-Flipper Blues*.

The leader's rich, burnished tone has an irresistible joie de vivre reminiscent of Clark Terry, Harry Edison and Charlie Shavers. He's a supreme lyricist and his unaccompanied introduction to *It Had to Be You* is a masterpiece of melodic construction. Both horns display their glorious open sounds throughout, thankfully uninhibited by the use of mutes. The amazing Bill Watrous is far better known and as usual his incredible facility in the upper register where the notes are closer together on a trombone is very much in evidence. Judicious use of alternate positions there keeps slide movements to a minimum. Happy foot-tapping music by a quintet of masters, and this reissue adds three previously unissued alternate takes

- Gordon Jack

~~~~~  
from *New York City Jazz Record*:

Danny Stiles, whose 20-year death anniversary was December 2017, could have been a contender. A superb swing/bop trumpeter who always woke up sessions, Stiles had an impressive resume. He worked with Woody Herman, the Gerry Mulligan Concert Jazz Band, and the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra in addition to being on many New York

recordings in the 1960s and '70s. In the early 1970s he was a key soloist with trombonist Bill Watrous' Manhattan Wildlife Refuge Orchestra.

Stiles' most exciting combo albums were the five that he made with Watrous for the Famous Door label (now owned by GHB/Jazzology and released on their Progressive subsidiary). Unfortunately Stiles had a much lower profile after 1978 when he made his last recording. He moved to Orlando, Florida, became discouraged by his career and life, and committed suicide on New Year's Day 1998.

1974's *In Tandem* is arguably Danny Stiles' finest recording. He leads a quintet that features Watrous, pianist Derek Smith, bassist Milt Hinton and drummer Bobby Rosengarden. The all-stars perform Watrous' uptempo blues "Dirty Dan" (highlighted by some unaccompanied choruses for the horns), "It Had To Be You," a faster-than-usual "Blue Room," "In A Mellow Tone," and two of the leader's originals. The original program is augmented by three previously unreleased alternate takes.

Throughout these energetic performances, Stiles and Watrous consistently play colorful and extroverted solos, almost daring the other one to play something more spectacular. Plenty of fireworks occur, resulting in a highly recommended and timeless set filled with hard-swinging music.

Danny Stiles deserves to be remembered.

- Scott Yanow



Jersey Jazz:
(EDITOR'S PICK):

PEGGY LEE: COMPLETE WORLD TRANSCRIPTIONS

AUDIOPHILE ACD-354/355

The George H Buck Jr. Jazz Foundation was created by George Buck in 1986 to maintain the catalog of the record labels he founded and acquired. The collection features Dixieland, big band, blues R&B, gospel and cabaret music. The Elizabeth NJ born Buck, who died in 2013, started his first label, Jazzology Records, in 1949 when he recorded a band in New York City that consisted of three of his favorite musicians- Wild Bill Davison, Tony

Parenti, and Art Hodes- becoming part of the first wave of small independent record companies. The Foundation operates in the French Market in New Orleans, issuing previously unavailable or out-of-print music and new recordings on nine labels.

A recent release by the Foundation's Audiophile Records label is the two-disc Peggy Lee World Broadcast Recordings, 1955, featuring music Lee recorded for the World Program Service, a company that provided original music for syndication to radio stations. (Buck acquired the company in 1965.) Lee assembled the nightclub band and over fourteen hours in four sessions in February and August of 1955, recorded 49 short tracks in one or two takes, mainly from head arrangements figured out on the fly. The result is a minimalist gem, the quintessential midcentury nightclub act, without the clinking glasses and murmured conversations, performed by a master of the art at the peak of her powers.

Many of the tracks have been released before on other collections, but this is the first release to contain everything recorded for the 1955 WPS project.

The selections are mostly familiar standards and include songs from the 1920's Lee recorded for the film *Pete Kelly's Blues* that same year, pared-down versions of her Decca recordings of the day like *Love Me or Leave Me*, along with her own compositions *It's a Good Day* and *San Souci*.

The singer is backed by a crackerjack combo led by pianist Gene DiNovi, with Bill Pitman featured on guitar and a cleverly-used harp played by Stella Castellucci on multiple cuts. Pete Candoli is added on trumpet for tracks on disc two. Many arrangements feature a Latin flavor with Jack Costanzo on bongos. Overall the spare backing allows Lee to stretch out as a jazz singer.

The release is accompanied by a glossy twelve-page booklet with informative notes by Lee biographer James Gavin.

- Tony Mottola

from *InTune International*:

What a surprising pleasure it is to open up a brand new Audiophile two-CD set with for the first time all in one place the entire 49-standard song delights from the World Program Service. These were produced and syndicated just for

a number of subscribing radio stations. Let's now enter the familiar world of Norma Deloris Engstrom beginning with a detailed twelve-page liner booklet. Here are six beautiful photos of her. Mr. James Gavin, as one would expect, has again done himself very proud by writing liner notes that place you almost right there in the recording room of World Program Service in 1955. Peggy Lee had just completed a pair of successful theatrical films. One in front of the camera: *Pete Kelly's Blues*, and the other, for which she wrote four songs, *Lady and the Tramp*. There are the complete lists of songs, numbers and dates for the specialists amongst us to drool over.

And now for the songs which all just happen to be head arrangements; *That Old Black Magic* (Arlen/Mercer) really kicks things off with a marvelous brisk up tempo bongo assist by Chicago's Jack Costanzo by way of Stan Kenton and Nat Cole. *Love Me or Leave Me* (Donaldson/Kahn) is another swinger, this time featuring her guitarist Bill Pitman. *Deed I Do* (Rose/Hirsch) is another feature for Jack Costanzo and Bill Pitman to really excel.

I May Be Wrong (Ruskin/Sullivan) has a great piano solo assist from Brooklyn's Gene Di Novi. Peggy was the first singer he ever worked with after being with the Artie Shaw Orchestra. *You're Mine You* (Green/Heyman) is all Peggy's. You have the feeling hearing her sing this ballad that a purring cat was in the room. *Too Marvelous for Words* (Whiting/Mercer) contains a swinging Costanzo bongo plus a remarkable Pitman guitar performance. It's a splendid up tempo delight. *Them There Eyes* (Pinkard/Tracey/Tauber) features Mr. DiNovi's swift piano artistry. You can certainly hear Peggy's ever-happy satisfying sound here.

The romantic ballad *My Ideal* (Whiting/Chase/Robin) contains a lovely spot for the pianist Gene DiNovi. When Ms. Lee delivers *What's New* (Haggart/Burke) she reaches out directly to you. It's like a hypnotist's reach. Everyone is aboard for *Almost Like Being in Love* (Lerner/Loewe) in an all-out swing fest.

There is an unusual Irving Berlin song called *Me* which is yet another brass-filled swinging delight. *Mountain Greenery* (Rodgers/Hart) and *Best Things in Life Are Free* (Henderson/DeSylva/Brown) are terrific up tempo wonders. Everyone aboard sounds so joyful. Finally, there

is a version of *Bye Bye Blackbird* (Henderson/Dixon) to close out her program in a most sad rare performance. Listen for a fine muted trumpet as Peggy emotionally drains all from this familiar standard.

-Dan Singer

from Syncopated Times:

Peggy Lee (1920-2002) was at one of her highpoints of her career in 1955. Her prime singing years were during 1942-68 and in 1955 (the exact mid-point) both Pete Kelly's Blues (which had her best acting role) and Lady And The Tramp (for which she co-wrote six songs and provided the voices for four characters) were set to be released. Less known was the fact that in Feb. and August, she recorded 49 selections as radio transcriptions for the World Program Service. Not released to the general public, these recordings were used by radio stations that had unexpected time to fill and needed music.

Lee's performances are brief, with all but six songs running under three minutes and ten not even being two minutes in length. Lee is joined by her regular group of the time with pianist Gene DiNovi, guitarist Bill Pitman, Bob Whitlock or Don Prell on bass, drummer Larry Bunker, Ramon "Ray" Rivera on congas, harpist Stella Castellucci, and probably trumpeter Pete Candoli. Due to the brevity of the renditions, the solos are quite brief although the harp and trumpet make consistently strong impressions.

The formerly rare performances on World Broadcast Recordings were only available in piecemeal fashion previously but are now included in full on this two-CD set. The music is more jazz-oriented than many of Lee's Decca recordings of the time due to the small combo and the fact that some of the songs are from Pete Kelly's Blues. Lee's cool but inwardly heated voice is heard throughout in top form with the many highlights including "Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea," "Deed I Do," "Just One Of Those Things," "I May Be Wrong," "It's A Good Day," "Them There Eyes," "What Can I Say After I Say I'm Sorry," "Mean To Me" and "Somebody Loves Me."

If you love Peggy Lee, then this twofer is a must.

- Nights At The Turntable by Scott Yanow



Just Jazz:

GEORGE LEWIS AND HIS NEW ORLEANS STOMPERS: 1943

AMERICAN MUSIC
AMCD-100/101

This latest CD release from American Music takes us back to one of the most renowned New Orleans sessions recorded during the Revival. It was one of the bestselling AM sets, but it has been out of print for some time. In releasing this set, they have converted it to a double-CD digipak instead of two separate CDs. It is worth pointing out that there is a newly-produced, illustrated twelve-page booklet inside.

Bill Russell wanted to record Bunk Johnson, but he was to be disappointed. Bunk, who had recorded some bits and pieces for Russell, skipped off to San Francisco and he wasn't sure he'd be able to get any worthwhile music. George Lewis suggested using Avery 'Kid' Howard, but Russell was very reticent, as Bunk told Bill that he didn't rate him very highly, so Russell kept looking for someone better. However, he reluctantly agreed to hire Howard, when his efforts to get Herb Morand failed.

As it turned out, Kid Howard was a revelation; he was in terrific form and led the band through a magnificent set of New Orleans standards, Blues and Ragtime numbers. It is suggested that he never played better in his life. The music was sensational. The recordings came out on the Climax label, a Blue Note subsidiary organized to circumvent Union rules. It wasn't only Howard who put on a show, the whole Lewis band played 'a blinder,' Jim Robinson played some great tailgate trombone and the rhythm section was powerfully driven along by Chester Zardis, Edgar Mosley and Lawrence Marrero. The sides were available on Blue Note throughout the '50's and '60's and for many collectors they were must haves.

Reading the sleeve notes, it states that these CDs were produced from the original acetates cut in the Gypsy Tea Room and include all of the issued and unissued masters. It's a pleasure to have these sides back in production Timeless music!

Just one warning- some avid collectors may already have the original American Music CDs or possibly the Complete Blue Note Recordings of George Lewis on Mosaic. -Pete Lay



IN REMEMBRANCE

OF THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED ON



Big Bill Bissonette (1937-2018)

William Edward Bissonette, one of the aficionados who extended the careers of many of New Orleans' pioneers, died June 26. A trombonist and drummer, Big Bill patterned himself after Big Jim Robinson. He retired after selling his Jazz Crusade label to George Buck, but returned to the business in the '90's — writing his autobiography and producing a hundred CDs for a new Jazz Crusade label. Most of his earlier sessions are in print on GHB.

Tony Pringle (1937-2018)

Pringle, leader of the New Black Eagles, died May 4 of heart disease. A native of Liverpool, he began his career with the Druids, house band at the fabled Cavern Club. He moved to the US and settled in Boston, where he founded the original Black Eagles with Tom Sancton and Jim Klippert. They reorganized as the New Black Eagles in about 1972 and remained active to the present; they are featured on a blinding array of LPs, CDs, cassettes and videos. Two of their earliest sets were recorded for GHB — BCD-59 & BCD-145.

Audrey Morris (1929-2018)

Audrey Morris was a fixture in Chicago nightclubs beginning in the 1950s, the heyday of Chicago's jazz scene. She was always elegant and worked in the best places. She recorded for Audiophile in 1997 (ACD-297) — she rolled through a selection of numbers accompanied by two of Chicago's young tigers of that era, and her piano playing had lost nothing over the years. She was a gracious lady and enjoyed talking about the glory days of the nightclub scene.

Everett Farey (1930-2018)

Ev Farey, cornetist with the Bay City Jazz Band and Turk Murphy, died April 4. He first recorded with the BCJB for Good Time Jazz in 1955 and was a member of Murphy's band in the 1960s. He was still active fifteen years ago when he recorded for Delmark with a revived Bay City band under the leadership of Mike Walbridge.

Bob Byler (1931-2018)

Byler, a professor of Journalism at Bowling Green State University, led a spectacular double life as a traditional jazz maven — he was a photographer, videographer, writer and overall authority on traditional jazz. He was a longtime contributor to the *Mississippi Rag*, and his photographs were used in articles for a number of publications. He contributed an excellent profile of George Buck for the 50th Anniversary edition of *JazzBeat*. His collections were donated to various universities and his videos of 1980s jazz festivals are available for viewing on YouTube.

Jack Reilly (1933-2018)

Reilly, a prolific pianist who alternated between jazz and other forms of music, died of a stroke May 23. He worked with Ben Webster and toured Europe with George Russell's orchestra. He recorded an album for Progressive (PCD-7138 — November) about twenty years ago. He was 86.

Lorraine Gordon (1923-2018)

Lorraine Gordon, 95, proprietor of the Village Vanguard, New York's pre-eminent jazz room, died June 9 of complications from a stroke. A lifelong jazz fan, she was married in the 1940s to Alfred Lion and helped him start Blue Note Records. She was an early advocate for Thelonious Monk and obtained an early booking for him at the Vanguard, and later married its owner, Max Gordon. She was a strong supporter of Jabbo Smith and issued two LPs to help him in his later years; they were combined into GHB Records Compact Disc BCD-509, *Hidden Treasure*.

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