

1. **Chameaux One-Step (B) (*)**
2. **J'ai Passé Devant Ta Porte (M)**
(I Passed In Front Of Your Door)
3. **J'ai Fait Un Gros Erreur (M)**
(I Made A Big Mistake) (*J.D. Miller*)
4. **Cajun Reel**
5. **Mes Petits Yeux Noirs (M) (*)**
(My Little Dark Eyes)
6. **Lake Arthur Stomp**
7. **Jolie Blonde Du Bayou (B)**
(Pretty Blonde Of The Bayou)
8. **Petite Fille De La Campagne (B)**
(My Little Country Girl) (*Abe Manuel*)
9. **Ma Chère Maman Créole (B) (*)**
(My Dear Creole Mama)
10. **Je Peux Pas T'oublier (M)**
(I Can't Forget You) (*D.L. Menard*)
11. **Liberty (*)**
12. **Mon Bon Vieux Mari (B&M)**
(My Good Old Man)
13. **En Bas Du Chêne Vert (M)**
(Beneath A Green Oak Tree) (*D.L. Menard*)
14. **Mardi Gras Jig**
15. **La Valse à Pop (*)**

16. **Port Arthur Blues (B)**
17. **Dans Le Coeur De La Ville (M,B,&S) (*)**
(In The Heart Of Town)
18. **La Porte Dans Arrière (M)**
(The Back Door) (*D.L. Menard*)
19. **J'ai Ete Au Bal (B)**
(I Went To The Dance)

DEWEY BALFA—fiddle and vocals(B);
MARC SAVOY—accordion and fiddle;
D.L. MENARD—guitar and vocals(M);
JERRY WHITEN—string bass.

Recorded and produced by Chris
Strachwitz.

Selections marked (*) are released here
for the first time. All others originally
issued on Arhoolie LP/C-5019.

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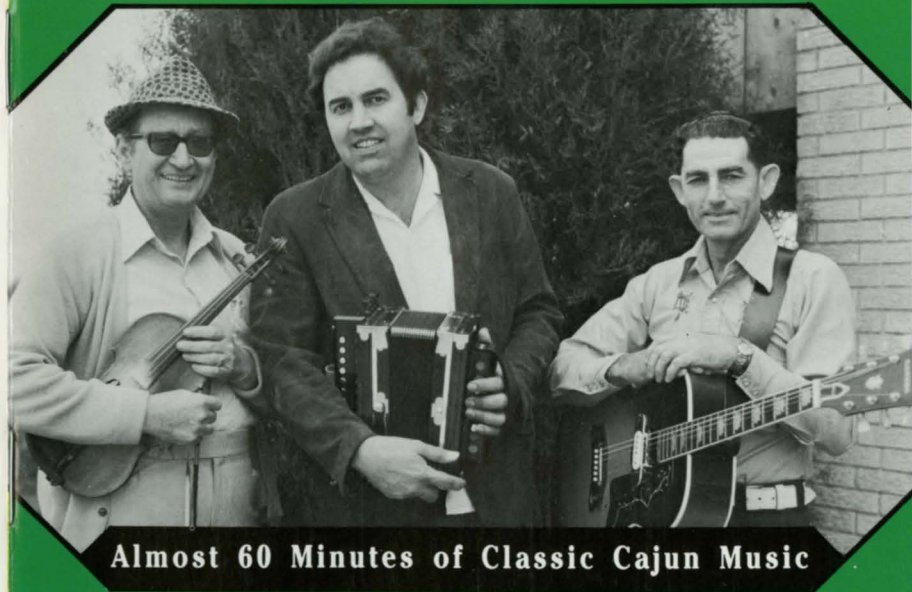
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Dewey Marc D.L. BALFA · SAVOY · MENARD



Almost 60 Minutes of Classic Cajun Music

“Under A Green Oak Tree”

 CD 312

About the Musicians

Dewey Balfa, D.L. Menard, and Marc Savoy are three of the best known and respected Cajun musicians in southwest Louisiana: this disc is their recording debut as a trio. Featuring members of the Balfa Brothers, The Louisiana Aces, and Marc Savoy & His Musicians, the group made their first tour together in February 1976, appearing in Delaware, North Carolina, and Washington, D.C. Warm friends with a high degree of mutual esteem, Dewey, D.L., and Marc seem ideally suited to play as an ensemble, and the chance to record for their friend Chris Strachwitz was welcomed by all of them. The session was scheduled for November 13, 1976, amid busy work and touring commitments for all involved. The entire proceedings were conducted in the atmosphere of Cajun hospitality so characteristic of a people who, 400 years and thousands of miles away from their original home in France, have a warm welcome ready for other travellers.

Dewey Balfa (fiddle & vocals), was for many years the leader of the Balfa Brothers, a group which had labored long and hard on behalf of their musical heritage. Prior to that he along with brother Rodney worked for many years with Nathan Abshire's Pinegrove Boys. Dewey learned to play first from his father, the late Charles Balfa, then from neighborhood musicians around his home town of Mamou. An early influence was Harry Choates, with whom Dewey worked at a shipyard in Orange, Texas. Since appearing at the Newport Folk Festival in 1964 at the invitation of Ralph Rinzler, Dewey and the Brothers have played throughout the United States and Canada, and took their music home to France on a memorable tour in 1975.

Since the tragic death of his wife and his brothers, Dewey has resumed his career as the premier Cajun fiddler and spokesman for traditional Cajun music.

Doris (D.L.) Menard (guitar & vocals), the "Cajun Hank Williams," learned to play guitar at the age of 16 and played for his first dance six months afterwards. He has appeared for many years with the Louisiana Aces, a well-known group featuring Elias Badaeux. In 1975, D.L. joined the Aces for a tour of South America under the auspices of the U.S. State Department; other engagements have taken him throughout the Eastern U.S. and Quebec. Held in particularly high regard as a songwriter (several of his songs have become widely imitated classics of the modern Cajun repertory), D.L. lives in Erath, Louisiana, with his wife, Louella, and their children and operates a chair factory specializing in hand made rockers.

Marc Savoy (accordion and fiddle), youngest of the three, was born in Eunice, Louisiana, where he still makes his home. After graduating with a Bachelor of Science in chemical engineering he returned to his hometown to open a successful accordion factory and music store. The Acadian Accordion, made entirely by hand (except for the reeds), is the most highly prized accordion of Louisiana today. Marc has a difficult time supplying the increasing demand for these instruments, especially since he is also a sought-after musician. He accompanied the Aces on their South American tour, then made two national tours with Dennis McGee and S.D. Courville and the Balfa Brothers. In recent years the outside world has heard Marc mainly with his wife Ann and fiddler Michael Doucet as the Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band who appear at many festivals and concerts. At home Marc plays frequently with friends and neighbors at private gatherings and especially at informal jam sessions held at his store on Saturday mornings.

(All three musicians along with many others are seen and heard in the film and on the soundtrack to "J'AI ETE AU BAL" (I WENT TO THE DANCE)—THE CAJUN AND ZYDECO MUSIC OF LOUISIANA. Produced and directed by Les Blank and Chris Strachwitz, edited by Maureen Gosling. The film is also available on video and Arhoolie Records has the soundtrack available on 2 CDs or cassettes: CD/C 331 & 332).

(Notes, transcriptions and translations by Will Spires—1977; with some additions and editing by Ann Savoy, D.L. Menard, & Chris Strachwitz—1989)

The Songs

2. J'AI PASSE DEVANT TA PORTE: This is one of the most widely known and loved songs in southwest Louisiana and perhaps one of the oldest. Every band has its own arrangement of this waltz but the lyrics are always much the same.

J'AI PASSE DEVANT TA PORTE

J'ai passé devant ta porte
J'ai crié, bye bye, à la belle
Il y a personne que m'a pas répondu,
Oh ye yaie, mon coeur fait mal.
Quand j'étais cogné à la porte
Quand ils ont va ouvert la porte
Oh, j'ai vu les chandelles allumées
Tout le tour de ton cercueil.

I PASSED IN FRONT OF YOUR DOOR

I passed in front of your door,
I cried farewell to my girl,
There was no one to answer me,
Oh ye yaie, that broke my heart.
When I knocked at the door
When they opened it to me
Oh, I saw all the bright candles lit
All around your casket.

3. J'AI FAIT UN GROS ERREUR

Quand j'ai quitté de la maison
Moi j'croisais j'avais raison
Et j'ai dit que j'aurais pu à revenir a toi.
Et c'est pas été longtemps
J'ai trouvé que je t'avais besoin
Mon je'connais qu'j'avais fait un gros
erreur.

Quand je t'rejois dessus la rue
Avec un autre à ton cté
Tu 'semblais aussi heureuse et aussi
contente.

Ça fait mon coeur braillait pour toi,
Les larmes a venu dedans mes yeux,
Mon je connais que mon j'ai fait un
gros erreur.

Ça dit tout vas revenir un jour
Quand le soleil va sortir,
Et le soleil va briller ouais encore.
Personne autre dedans ma place,
Dedans mon coeur tu vas rester
Mon, je regrette que mon j'ai fait un
gros erreur.

4. MES PETITS YEUX NOIRS

A ce matin je m'ai trouve
Assis sur mon lit
Après pleurer avec un coeur aussi cassé,
Pareque j'avais rêvé
A mes chers 'tits yeux noirs
Elle a parti, elle va jamais s'en revenir

I MADE A BIG MISTAKE

When I left home
I believed I was right,
And I said I could never come back
to you,
But it was not very long
Before I found I needed you—
I knew I'd made a big mistake.
When I saw you in the street
With another by your side,
You seemed happy and content.
That made my heart cry out for you,
The tears came to my eyes—
I knew I'd made a big mistake

It is said all will come back one day,
When the sun's gonna' come out
The Sun will surely shine again
With no one else in my place,
In my heart you're going to stay
I regret that I made that big mistake.

MY LITTLE DARK EYES

This morning I find myself
Sitting on my bed,
Weeping with a broken heart
Because I dreamed
Of my little dark eyes
Who has left me never to return.

Après-midi j'étais assis
Dessus ma gallerie
Après guetter le soleil se coucher.
Je m'ennuie, et j'adore
Mes chers 'tits yeux noirs
C'est ça qui fait mon coeur aussi cassé.

This afternoon I sat
Out on my porch
Watching the sun go down.
I'm lonesome and I love
My little dark eyes
That's what caused my heart to break.

7. JOLIE BLONDE DU BAYOU: Dewey's version of what is perhaps the best-known Cajun song of all. On this and some of the other fiddle duets, Dewey plays with his fiddle tuned FC GD, while Marc plays in standard tuning (GDAE). This makes for some intricate position arrangements and an unusual overtone series.

JOLIE BLONDE DU BAYOU

Jolie blonde, ma chère 'tite fille
Gardez-donc quoi t'après faire.
T'après me laisser moi tout seul dans
les misères
Quel espoir pour l'avenir que mon
j'peux avoir?
Jolie blonde, tu croyais
Il avait juste toi dedans le pays
Il y a pas juste toi dans tout le pays
que mon j'peux aimer
T'es la seule que mon j'voudrais
dessus le bayou.

PRETTY BLONDE OF THE BAYOU

Pretty blonde, my dear little girl,
Look at what you have done,
Left me all alone in misery,
What hope for the future can I have?

Pretty blonde, you thought
That in all the country there was
only you.
You're not the only one in the
country I could love,
But you're the only one that I
want on the bayou.

8. PETITE FILLE DE LA CAMPAGNE

Mon j'étais au village
Pour chercher ma chère 'tit fille
Quand elle m'a dit elle voulait pas
s'en revenir
Comment j'vas faire chez moi tout
seul,
Moi tout seul à la maison
Fais pas ça, ma chère 'tit fille de la
campagne

9. MA CHÈRE MAMAN CREOLE

Dit bye bye à ton Pop
Et ta vieille Mom pour t'revenir
Pour t'revenir avec moi a la maison.
Si t'as écouté les conseils
De ton Pop et ta Mom tu vas jamais
t'en revenir
T'en revenir avec moi, ma maman
créole.

10. JE PEUX PAS T'OUBLIER: This beautiful waltz was composed by D.L. in 1964 and makes perfect use of the heavy IV-chord progression so characteristic of Cajun music.

MY LITTLE COUNTRY GIRL

I went to town
To find my dear little girl
Who told me she wouldn't come back.
What will I do at my house all alone,
All alone at my place,
Don't do that, my dear little country
girl?

MY DEAR CRÉOLE MAMA

Say bye bye to your Pop
And your old Mom
And come back home with me.
If you take their advice
You'll never come back,
You'll never come back with me,
my creole mama.



JE PEUX PAS T'OUBLIER

Tous les soirs moi je me couche
Avec chagrin sur mon idée;
Moi je peux plus dormir
Juste à jongler à ça qu'arrivait.
Je cursaillais d'un bord et de l'autre
Je connaissais plus comment revenir,
J'ai perdu la seule j'aimais,
Là, moi je peux plus t'oublier.
A cette heure moi je voudrais
T-demander pour tu t'en reviens,
Me pardonner pour tout ça j'ai fait,
Et tout le tracas que je t'ai donné,
Je m'ai perdu dans la vie,
L je peux jamais me trouver
Les années peut changer
Mais je vais jamais t'oublier

I CAN'T FORGET YOU

Every night I lay me down
With sorrow on my mind,
I can't sleep anymore
When I just think of what happened.
Chasing around here and there,
Not knowing how to come back,
I've lost the only one I love,
And I can't forget you.
Now I wish
To ask you to return,
To forgive me for all I did,
All the sorrow I gave you,
I lost myself in life,
And I can't find myself anymore
The years may roll by,
But I'm never going to forget you.

12. MON BON VIEUX MARI: Also known as LE VIEUX SOLARD ET SA FEMME (The Old Drunk And His Wife), this comic repartee has an English version called My Good Old Man. This was one of the earliest Cajun commercial releases on record by Joseph Falcon and Cleoma Breaux. The band decided to record it quite spontaneously after Chris produced a bottle of tequilla to take the chill off of the rainy Lafayette night,

MON BON VIEUX MARI

"Et où c'est que t'es parti, ouais,
mon bon vieux mari,
Et où c'est que t'es parti, ce qu'on
appelle amour?
Et où c'est que t'es parti, ouais mon
bon vieux mari qui est
Le meilleur buveur du pays?"
"Parti au café."
"Quoi c'est que t'es parti faire . . ."
(etc.)
"Parti me soûler."
"Quand tu vas revenir?"
"Hein, demain ou un autre jour."
"Quoi c'est que tu veux je te cuis?"
"Un' demi-douzaine d'oeufs et un
gallon de couche-couche."
"Ça, ça va te tuer."
"Mais, c'est all right, je vas mourir
quand même."
"Et où tu veux je t'enterre?"
"Dans la coin de la cheminée, et de
temps en temps tu me passes une
patate chaude!"
(Et un 'tit pint de tequilla, c'est bon
comme ça!)

MY GOOD OLD MAN

"And where are you going, yes, my
good old man,
And where are you going, you that I
call my love,
And where are you going, yes, my
good old man,
Greatest drinker in the land?"
"I'm going to the bar."
"What are you going to do?"
"I'm going to get myself drunk."
"When are you coming back?"
"Eh, tommorrow, or some other day."
"What is it you wish me to cook
for you?"
"Half a dozen eggs and a gallon of
couche-couche."
"That's going to kill you."
"But, that's all right, I want to die
all the same."
"And where do you want me to
bury you?"
"In the corner of the chimney, and
from time to time, pass me a hot
potato."
(And a little pint of tequilla, it's good
like that!)

13. EN BAS DU CHÊNE VERT: This is D.L.'s most recent (1976) composition, a tour de force in which he finds expression for his obvious gift as poet, composer, accompanist, and singer. This song so moved Dewey that he made D.L. promise to let him record the fiddle part. Marc was whistling the tune at his workbench for days after the session.

EN BAS DU CHÊNE VERT

C'était en bas du chêne vert
Sur le bord du marais,
Et où on se rencontré
Et qu' on se courtoiser.
A cette heure elle est partie.
J'veis jamais la revoir
J'veis jamais oublier
Ce beau vieux chêne vert.
L'hiver est arrive
Il y a de la glace sur la terre
Il y a des chandelles de glace
Dessus tous les feuilles.
J'veis jamais oublier
Le bon temp qu'on a eus.
Et quand on était jeune,
Au bord du chêne vert.

16. PORT ARTHUR BLUES

Tu m'as dit hier au soir
Tu pouvais plus m'aimer
Tu t'en reviens pour m'rejoindre à la
maison, oh ye yaie.

BENEATH A GREEN OAK TREE

It was under a green oak
By the banks of the swamp
Where we met
And courted one another.
Now she is gone,
I'll never see her again,
I'll never forget
The beautiful old green oak.
Winter has come,
There's ice on the ground,
There are icicles hanging
Beneath all the leaves.
I'll never forget
The good time that we had
When we were young,
Beside the green oak.

PORT ARTHUR BLUES

Just last night you said to me
You couldn't love me any more
You couldn't come back to me at
home, oh ye yaie.

Mon je vois pas qui je-t-ai fait
Quo' faire donc tu t-reviens pas,
Oh, bébé au Port Arthur.

17. DANS LE COEUR DE LA VILLE

Dans le coeur de la ville
J'ai aimé une tite fille
Elle disait qu'elle m'aimait,
Mais c'était pas vrai.
Quand mon j'étais là
Il y a rien de plus beau
Quand mon, j'étais pas là
Elle avait deux ou trois beaux.
Il y a personne qui connaît
Comment mon je l'aimait
Il y a personne qui connaît
Tout ça j'ai passé
Avec cette tite fille
Dans le coeur de la ville
Elle disait qu'elle m'aimait
Mais ç'était pas vrai.

18. LA PORTE D'EN ARRIÈRE: Composed in 1964 by D.L., this one became the Louisiana Aces biggest hit, and is still widely popular in Cajun country.

LA PORTE D'EN ARRIÈRE

Moi et la belle on avait été-z-au bal,
On a passé dans tous les honky-tonks
S'en a re'nu le lendemain matin,
Le jour était apres se casser
J'ai passé dedans la porte dans arrière.

I don't see what I've done to you
So that you can't come back,
Oh, dear girl of Port Arthur.

IN THE HEART OF TOWN

In the heart of town
I loved a little girl
Who told me she loved me
But that wasn't true.
When I was there
There was nothing better
When I wasn't there
She had two or three others.
There's no one who knows
How much I loved her,
There's no one who knows
All that I have gone through
With that little girl
In the heart of town
Who said she loved me.
But that wasn't true.

THE BACK DOOR

We went to the dance, my girl and me,
We passed through all the honky-tonks.
We got ourselves home the next morning,
The day was just about to break,
I went in through the back door.

L'après-midi moi j'étais au village,
Et je m'ai soulé que je pouvais plus
marcher
Ils m'ont ramené back à la maison,
Il y avait de la compagnie, c'était du
monde étranger
J'ai passé dedans la porte dans arrière.
Mon vieux père un soir quand
j'arrivais,
Il essayais de changer mon idée—
Je l'ai pas écouté, mon j'avais trop la
tête dure
"Un jout à venir, mon negre, tu vas
avoir de regret
T'as passé dedans la porte d'en
arrière."
J'ai eu un tas d'amis tant que j'avais
de l'argent;
Asteur j'ai plus d'argent, mais ils
voulont plus me voir.
J'ai été dans le village, et moi je m'ai
mis dans le tracas,
La loi m'a ramassé, moi je suis parti
dans la prison,
On va passer dedans la porte en
arrière.

I went to town this afternoon,
I got so drunk I couldn't walk,
They led me back home,
We had company there from out of
town,
I went in through the back door.

One night when I came home
My old father tried to straighten
me out,
I paid no attention to him, my head
was too thick,
He said, "A day will come, mon
negre[1], you'll regret
You came in through the back door."

I had many a friend while I had
money,
Now that there's no more they'd
rather not see me.
I went to town and got into a brawl,
The cops hauled me in and now I'm
off to jail
I'll go in through the back door!

19. J'AI ETE AU BAL

J'étais au bal hier au soir
Tout habillé en bleu
C'est ça l'habit que mon j'aime
Pour cortiser la belle.
Oh ye yaie, 'tite fille
Quo' faire tu m'fais comme ça,
Quo' faire donc, mon nègre,
Tu veux pas t'en revenir.
J'étais au bal hier au soir
Tout habillé en bleu,
C'est ça l'habit que mon j'aime
Pour courtiser la belle.
Pas la peine, 'tite fille,
Toi, t'm'fait comme ça, mon nègre,
Pas la peine, tu veux
T'en revenir à la maison.

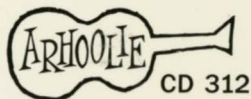
(Song texts transcribed and translated by Will Spires with some alterations by Ann Savoy and D.L. Menard)

I WENT TO THE DANCE

I went to the dance last night
All dressed in blue,
That's the color I prefer
For courting my girl,
Oh ye yaie, little girl,
Why do you treat me so?
Why is it, mon negre,
You don't want to go home?
I went to the dance last night
All dressed in blue,
That's the color I like best
For courting my girl,
Don't worry, little girl,
That you treated me like that
Don't worry, you want
To go back to the house.

Dewey Balfa, Marc Savoy & D.L. Menard

EN BAS DU CHÊNE VERT (Beneath a Green Oak Tree)



Over 60 Minutes of Classic **CAJUN MUSIC**

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(I Passed In Front Of Your Door)
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Cover by Elizabeth Weil

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COMPACT
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