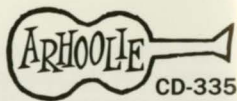


JOHN DELAFOSE

"Joe Pete Got Two Women"

Over 60 Minutes of Classic Zydeco Music



1. Joe Pete Got Two Women
2. One Hour Too Late
3. Lonesome Road
4. Prudhomme Stomp
5. Co-Fe (Why)
6. You Took My Heartache (English)
7. Bye Bye Mo Nèg
8. Rag Around Your Head (English)
9. I Just Want To Be Your Lovin' Man (English)
10. Petite Et La Grosse
11. Joe Pete Lost His Two Women
12. Crying In The Streets (English)
13. Mardi Gras Song
14. Mother's Day Blues (English)
15. Arthritis Two-Step
16. Grand Mamou
17. Uncle Bud Zydeco (English)
18. Sweet Girl In Texas (English) (*)
19. Oh, Negresse
20. Las Valse De Freole
21. Hippity Hop
22. Johnny Can't Dance (*)

Total time: 63:20

(*) previously unissued

All songs © by Tradition Music Co. (BMI)

1-10: John Delafosse – button or piano accordion & vocals.
Charles Prudhomme – guitar
Joseph "Slim" Prudhomme – bass
John "T.T." Delafosse, Jr. – rubboard
Tony Delafosse – drums
Recorded May 1, 1980 at Master Trak Sound Recorders in Crowley, La. Recording engineer: Mark Miller; Mixed by Sierra Sound Labs, Berkeley, Ca.

11-18: John Delafosse - vocals and accordion
Geno Delafosse – drums
Tony Delafosse – rubboard
Charles Prudhomme – guitar
Joseph Prudhomme – bass
Recorded at Mastertrack Studios in Crowley, La. May 18, 1982, Mark Miller – engineer.

19-22: Recorded at the 1981 Festival De Musique Acadienne by Charles Rees at Girard Park, Lafayette, Louisiana.
Barry Ancelet – Festival director
Produced by the Lafayette Jaycees, Vance Lanier – director
Edited and mixed by Chris Strachwitz at Bay Records, Alameda, Ca.

Produced by Chris Strachwitz & John Delafosse

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JOHN DELAFOSE

& THE EUNICE PLAYBOYS

Joe Pete Got Two Women





John Delafosse & the Eunice Playboys in Church Point, La. in 1980

Creole Culture and Music

Zydeco is the syncopated musical melange that has resulted from cultural contact between Cajun, Afro-French and Afro-American peoples in south Louisiana over the last 200 years. It is played today in church halls, barbecues, baseball games and anywhere black Creoles gather for community entertainment on the Louisiana/Texas Gulf Coast from Lafayette to Houston. The Afro-French population that arrived in Louisiana in the 18th century from French West Africa and Haiti, brought with them their religion, languages, food ways, and above all, music. Within the French colonial sphere of the New World tropics, all these traits were modified by European contact. In addition to the 28,000 French slaves that came to the Louisiana colony in the 18th century, a population of free people

of color later developed. These usually lighter and culturally more European people in some cases held land and owned slaves. They were often noted as artisans and craftsmen and contributed to the birth of jazz in urban New Orleans. Many, however, left the Crescent City and the sugar plantation culture found along the bayous and levee crest lands of southwest Louisiana. This was particularly common after the American takeover in 1803 and the subsequent federal land offers.

On the prairies, from St. Martin Parish westward, the free people of color and the descendants of slaves – now generally referred to as black Creoles – mingled with the peasant farming and foraging Cajuns, with regional Indians and other ethnic groups. In terms of music, the black Creoles accepted the diatonic button accordion –

originally a German introduction to the area – and violin, as well as the tunes of Cajun music. At the same time, black Creoles retained the intense syncopation characteristic of Afro-Caribbean dances such as the *Bamboula* and the *Calinda*. In addition, the influence of Afro-American culture and music was felt as American slaves entered the area from the 1820's on. The result is that "zydeco," also spelled as "zodico," zordico" and "zologo," in its traditional form, is mainly composed of Acadian tunes, with blues tonality and call-response

structure in a Caribbean rhythmic framework.

In the years since World War II as a result of strong impact from mainstream Afro-American culture, zydeco has increasingly drawn on the big beat of rhythm and blues while being sung more often in English than Cajun or Creole French. This modern sound is best exemplified by Arhoolie recording artist Clifton Chenier and his great popularity among Gulf Coast black Creoles and Cajuns alike, as well as their kinfolk who have relocated on the West Coast.

The Man And His Band

John Delafosse and his band, the Eunice Playboys, represent both a return to old time zydeco as well as a unique modern sound. He plays the old time button accordion in a staccato style that emphasizes syncopated rhythm over

melody; at the same time he plays the more melodic modern soul/blues sound often on the piano accordion. As to the meaning of the term "zydeco," Delafosse comments: "It's the old traditional music. We call it "zydeco"

when we add a rocking beat to just plain Cajun music. Zydeco really means snapbeans (*les haricots*). In the old days people might say '*Tu vas faire zydeco?*' and mean 'How's it goin'?' If things weren't so good you'd say, '*Zydeco pas sales.*' That's 'The snapbeans aren't salty,' which was a way to say things weren't so good."

John Delafosse was born in Duralde, near Eunice, in 1939. The community was founded in the 1930's in part by Cyprian Ceazer, a free man of color and a maternal ancestor of John Delafosse. Today the surrounding area is famous for its Cajun and Creole musicians alike: Dewey Balfa, Nathan Abshire, Cheese Read, Bois Sec Ardoin, Amadie Ardoin, Canray Fontenot and Wilfred Latour among others. Delafosse recalls making guitars and violins as a boy with window screen wire stretched taut over a board and cigar box. This is not unlike what is sometimes called a

"diddley-bow" elsewhere in the South. "Since I can remember I liked music. I would beat sticks when I was six and then at about eight I'd make me those stringed instruments. Mama would yell 'Don't tear that screen!', but I wanted my music bad. I also played some harmonica. When I was eighteen I started on the button accordion. I always wanted to accomplish something. I wanted to be up on the bandstand with the big men."

Delafosse, who came from a sharecropping family of five, farmed until about twenty years ago. He raised cotton, corn, rice and sweet potatoes. As small farmers gave way to what are locally called the *gros chiens* (big dogs) of agribusiness, John switched over to repairing electric fans, a needed occupation in torridly tropical south Louisiana. He also began to make hot music on harmonica and accordion with a variety of pickup bands. He met

the Prudhomme brothers, Charles and "Slim," his current guitar and bass players, in nearby Kinder and they formed a steady band about six years ago. This later came to include his teenaged sons, seventeen year old John "T.T." and Tony Delafosse, eighteen, on *frottoir* (rubboard) and drums respectively. Both are students at nearby Mamou high school. Music is a family affair for the entire band since all the men's wives show up at the dances. Of his wife Joenn, a woman with a warm, gold-toothed smile, John says, "She meets the people. If she doesn't come out, people ask for her."

Today John Delafosse and the Eunice Playboys are one of the most popular bands on the Louisiana/Texas Gulf Coast from Slim's Y-Ki-Ki Club in rural Opelousas to church dances in urban Houston. Recently they have also played for the Governor's inaugural festival in Baton

Rouge and at folk festivals in Natchitoches and El Paso. Their fans will tell you that their rhythm section is one of the best for dancing. It's their "hot French music" style that has brought the younger crowd back to the Creole dance halls. This is paralleled by a community-wide revival of French Creole identity.

On stage the Eunice Playboys move with the dancers in a pulsation of shifting rhythms. The tiny squeeze box looks like a sponge in big John Delafosse's hands while the wiry guitar man Joseph "Slim" Prudhomme and his brother Charles shuffle from side to side in a Caribbeanized choreography. The overall impression at the club is one of constant motion as dancers following the band rise and fall from their tables for an evening of fast two-steps, slow waltzes and swaying blues. About the popularity of their hypnotic rhythmic style, Morris Ardoin,

local dance hall owner and member of the musical Ardoin family, comments, "Delafosse has a good band. Man, they can cut the grass out from under you and you won't know it." In a proudly competitive comment typical of zydeco band leaders, John Delafosse adds, "We are number one in demand. I guess many bands have gone down to nothing after we came along. We have our own sound so I never worry about them stealin' my songs, because they can't catch our rhythm."

(Nicholas R. Spitzer
– Folklorist, State of Louisiana,
Baton Rouge, November 1980)
Copy editing by Dix Bruce

Since the release of John Delafosse's first record (selections 1 through 10) the band has been very busy playing dances along the Gulf Coast and have also taken their unique

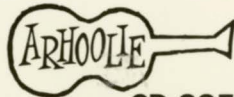
brand of zydeco music to folk festivals in Washington, D.C., to the World's Fair in Knoxville, Tenn. and even to Nairobi, West Africa! As far as John's Louisiana fans are concerned it was a song off his first album entitled JOE PETE GOT TWO WOMEN which put him on most juke boxes and on the radio. Thanks largely to zydeco DJs Luke Collins on KEUN in Eunice and J.J. Caille on powerful KJCB in Lafayette, that JOE PETE reached a lot of homes where most people probably had never heard of John Delafosse before.

Cover photo taken at the 1990 Cajun & Zydeco Festival in Oakland, Calif.

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All other selections previously released on

Arhoolie 1083 & 1088

All songs composed or arranged by John Delafosse except "Joe Pete Got Two Women" co-writer: Canray Fontenot; and "Johnny Can't Dance" by Clifton Chenier. All selections © and published by Tradition Music Co. (BMI)

John Delafosse & his Eunice Playboys is one of the most popular authentic Creole zydeco bands in southwest Louisiana. Since the death of Clifton Chenier, the undisputed King of Zydeco, Boozoo Chavis, Rockin' Doopsie, and John Delafosse have been battling it out as to who draws the biggest crowds at the best local dance halls like Richard's in Lawtell or Slim's Y-Ki-Ki in Opelousas.

John Delafosse is a strong, expressive singer in both Creole French and English and plays both button and piano accordion. The Eunice Playboys, currently featuring Jerome Jack on rubboard, along with Tony and Geno Delafosse and Charles Prudhomme, have always been known for their powerhouse syncopated rhythm machine accomodating the demanding tastes of their dancing audiences. John has toured Europe and Africa and has played many Festivals in the US. These are his first recordings made between 1980 and 82 and include the regional hit: "Joe Pete Got Two Women" which established John Delafosse as a major artist on the Zydeco scene and started a whole chain of answer songs about the mysterious Joe Pete!

John Delafosse - vocals in Creole (except when marked English) & accordion accompanied by The Eunice Playboys.

Produced by Chris Strachwitz

Cover by Elizabeth Weil

Cover and liner photos by Chris Strachwitz



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