

With his Hot Six:

1. Smile, Darn You, Smile
2. In The Upper Garden
3. You Always Hurt the One You Love
4. My Bucket's Got a Hole in It
5. Mazie
6. Burgundy Street Blues
(George Lewis)
7. Bugle Boy March
8. Far Away Blues
9. Red Wing

***With Michael and David
Doucet, Lionel Batiste, & Lars
Edegran:***

10. Over the Waves
11. Mobile Stomp

With the Tremè Brass Band:

12. Sweet Georgia Brown

1 – 9: Sammy Rimington's Hot Six: Sammy Rimington – clarinet; Lars Edegran – piano; Eric Webster – banjo; Bill Huntington – string

bass; Sven Stahlberg – drums; Fredrik John – trombone. Recorded at the Palm Court.

10 & 11: Sammy Rimington – clarinet; Michael Doucet – fiddle; David Doucet – guitar; Lars Edegran – National tenor guitar; Lionel Batiste – bass drum. Recorded at the home of Bethany Bultman.

12: Sammy Rimington – clarinet; with the Tremè Brass Band: Benny Jones – leader & snare drums; Lionel Batiste – bass drum; Kermit Ruffins & Mervin J. Campbell – trumpets; Corey Henry – trombone; Elliot "Stackman" W. Callier & Frederick G. Sheppard – saxophones; Jeffrey Hill – tuba. Recorded during a street parade in the Treme district of New Orleans, organized by the Black Men of Labor Social Club.

All photos by Chris Strachwitz
Cover design and photo enhancement by Wayne Pope

All recordings made by David Silberberg
Produced and edited by Chris Strachwitz with assistance from Lars Edegran and Jerry Brock
Mastered by Bay Records, Berkeley, CA

All recordings were made "live" on portable equipment in New Orleans in April of 2005 for possible inclusion in the forthcoming documentary film about Arhoolie Records and its owner, Chris Strachwitz. The film is directed by Maureen Gosling and Chris Simon.

For information about the documentary check out our web site: www.arhoolie.com

Sammy Rimington



Visits



NEW ORLEANS

About this Recording

The idea for this recording came about after Maureen Gosling and Chris Simon began making a documentary film about my Arhoolie record label. Unfortunately, many of the artists I recorded over the years since I started the label in 1960 could not be filmed today, as they are no longer with us. Although we plan to dig up as much historic footage as possible, I decided to take the filmmakers on several trips to regions of the country where some of my favorite musical genres are still alive and well. Of course, one of those places was New Orleans. We made this trip just a few months before the flood of Hurricane Katrina.

When it comes to traditional New Orleans jazz, Sammy Rimington has long been my favorite clarinetist. He is a remarkable individual, a sensitive, soulful interpreter, and champion of the music of the late George Lewis. He has carried on the singing beauty, intensity, rhythmic drive and impact of that remarkable sound with which I fell in love over 50 years ago. That's why I wanted to include him in the film even though I had never recorded him before! Fortunately he was able to get his New Orleans band together, musicians who had known each other for some time and had played many gigs together. I happen to name them The Hot Six!

I also enjoyed recording the Tremè Brass Band under the leadership of Benny Jones (note Arhoolie CD 417: "Gimme My Money Back"), who specialize in keeping the traditional brass band sound alive. They all knew Sammy Rimington and were glad to have him join them for this parade. Also included are two selections recorded at an informal get-together organized by pianist, guitarist, banjoist, Lars Edegran. Lars has been a leading traditional jazz musician in New Orleans since the 1960s and recorded for Arhoolie in 1971 with his wonderful New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra (note Arhoolie CD 420: "Creole Belles"). I also invited brothers Michael and David Doucet for this New Orleans visit, having known and recorded them since the early days of Beausoleil. I knew about Michael's love for not only the older jazz forms but for anything related to Creole French music. You will hear

more from this little impromptu band, plus the Tremè Brass Band with Sammy Rimington, my favorite blues pianist Henry Gray, Michael and brother David as a duet, as well as Michael accompanying Bruce "Sunpie" Barnes, and Miss Lollypop, on the companion Arhoolie CD # 534: "A New Orleans Visit – Before Katrina".

In 1947 I went to see a movie called "New Orleans" with a high school friend and was blown away by the music made by the band backing the featured artist, Louis Armstrong. I learned that it was trombonist Kid Ory's band behind Armstrong. The film also featured Billie Holiday, Meade Lux Lewis, and others. I soon acquired the few available 78 rpm records of this type of music. Kid Ory had an album with four 78s and so did trumpeter Bunk Johnson. I liked Bunk's band better – they were so bluesy and had this haunting clarinetist named George Lewis and the gutsy trombonist, Jim Robinson, who weaved in and out of the ensemble. Behind the horns was the most incredible, solid 4/4 rhythm section I'd ever heard – not unlike the one driving the early Count Basie Band. They seemed to be propelled by the string bass player named Alcide "Slow Drag" Pavageau. How could I ever forget that name? After the death of the leader, this band became the George Lewis band.

Over the years I continued to be captivated by the sound of the George Lewis Band, which to my ears had a totally unique sound, very different from any traditional, Dixieland, or other New Orleans bands at that time. I was far from alone in my admiration for this band. The George Lewis Band became amazingly popular, not only in the US but later all over Europe and Japan. I heard the band live for the first time in 1951 at the Dixieland Jubilee in Los Angeles and they boot-ed me out of my seat! In 1952 while at Pomona College, I went with my friend, Frank Demond (who is today the trombonist with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band!) almost nightly to the Beverly Cavern in Los Angeles. In the fall of 1953, when I began attending UC Berkeley, I joined the Big Game Committee (even though I had no interest in football!). The reason was that this group could hire any major band to play at Wheeler Auditorium on the UC Berkeley campus! I took the

group to the Club Hangover in San Francisco, where the Lewis band was playing a lengthy engagement. My fellow students were totally captivated and agreed to hire this band to appear on the UC campus – where they played to a packed and wildly enthusiastic house!

Meanwhile in the mid 1950s, Sammy Rimington was a young teenager growing up in England. He soon fell under the spell of this New Orleans music. In England it was being popularized by several “Trad” bands, but mainly by Chris Barber’s band. This band included the fine trumpeter, Ken Colyer, who had honed his chops under the masters in the “Big Easy”. I recall going to hear them in London while on leave from the US Army during my service in Austria. By 1960 Sammy joined Ken Colyer’s Jazzmen and soon met George Lewis, who became his friend and teacher.

Sammy has played professionally ever since, and can be heard on 140 LPs and 90 CDs! He has made recordings not only with his own bands, but with all the great names in New Orleans style jazz: George Lewis, Jabbo Smith, Trummy Young, Doc Cheatham, Henry Red Allen, Kid Thomas, Jim Robinson, Capt. John Handy, Louis Nelson, etc. Sammy performed at the first New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival in 1969 and has appeared there many times since then. He has also arranged for many older New Orleans players to tour overseas.

The band behind Sammy on this occasion at the delightful Palm Court restaurant included the wonderful bass player, Bill Huntington. He had learned to play banjo from Lawrence Marrero of the George Lewis band, and actually played in that band and recorded with all sorts of fine bands. Bill can play a great variety of rhythms, but knew that I especially liked that percussive sound of the string bass put down by Slow Drag Pavageau. Bill also felt that this solid 4/4 rhythm was appropriate for Sammy’s music. He adds that this was the sound of the black bands at that time – a time when most white bands were playing 2/4 or “Dixieland” style jazz.

(Chris Strachwitz – 2007)



If you have not heard the music of George Lewis, may I suggest my two favorite CDs:

- 1) American Music CD # 2: "George Lewis with Kid Shots". This CD not only includes the original first recording of Mr. Lewis' "Burgundy Street Blues", but also the incredibly joyful original masterpiece, the 4 minute version of "Ice Cream"! This performance is a remarkable interplay between George Lewis and trombonist Jim Robinson, backed by that powerhouse rhythm section. In addition, the seldom recorded trumpeter Kid Shots Madison appears on several selections.
- 2) Delmark CD 201: "Hello Central – Give me Dr. Jazz". This is a superbly recorded document of the Lewis band at its zenith, in San Francisco in 1953.

Sammy Rimington Visits New Orleans

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12. Sweet Georgia Brown

In April of 2005, before Katrina devastated the city, I visited New Orleans with Maureen Gosling and Chris Simon, two filmmakers who are working on a documentary about Arhoolie Records. With the help of friends Jerry Brock, Michael Doucet, and Lars Edegran, we were able to film some of my favorite musicians. However, films seldom give you more than a taste of the music encountered and often take a long time to complete. So, I decided to release two CDs with most of the marvelous impromptu sounds we were fortunate enough to catch.

This Arhoolie CD 532 is entirely devoted to the remarkable music of British-born clarinetist Sammy Rimington, who has long been my favorite heir to the legacy of the late George Lewis. He is heard with his own Hot Six recorded live at the Palm Court, with Michael Doucet, and with the Tremè Brass Band.

Companion Arhoolie CD 534 – A New Orleans Visit – Before Katrina, brings you spontaneous performances by Michael and David Doucet, Miss Lollypop, Uncle Lionel Batiste Sr., Sammy Rimington, the Tremè Brass Band (recorded during a parade with the Black Men of Labor), blues singer-pianist Henry Gray, and Bruce "Sunpie" Barnes. (Chris Strachwitz – 2007)

For information about the documentary, check out our web site: www.arhoolie.com

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