

ReBIRTH JAZZ BAND

"Here to Stay"

*Recorded live at the Grease Lounge,
New Orleans, La., 1984*



1. **MARDI GRAS MEDLEY**
 - a) **Going to the Mardi Gras** (*Henry Byrd*)
 - b) **Tuba Fats** (*Anthony Lacen*)
 - c) **Blackbird Special**
 - d) **Lil' Liza Jane**
(18:40)
2. **CHAMELEON** (*Herbie Hancock*) (3:55) (*)
3. **LORD, LORD, LORD, YOU SURE BEEN GOOD TO ME** (3:20)
4. **BLUE MONK** (*Thelonius Monk*) (4:50)
5. **IT AIN'T MY FAULT** (*Smokey Johnson*) (4:00)
6. **SHAKE YOUR BOOTY** (4:30)
7. **SWEET GEORGIA BROWN** (3:50) (*)
8. **THE LAW**
(*Philip Frazier, etc. - Tradition Music Co./Bug Music*) (4:00) (*)
9. **LET'S TEAR IT UP** (*)
10. **HERE TO STAY (P.I.E.)**
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(*) *Previously unissued / CD bonus tracks. All other selections originally issued as Arhoolie Cass/LP 1091. Cass 1091 is still available.*

Philip Frazier—tuba & leader; **Kermit Ruffins**—trumpet; **Gardner Ray Green**—trumpet; **Keith Anderson**—trombone; **Reginald Stewart**—trombone; **Kenneth Austin**—snare drum; **Keith Frazier**—bass drum & cymbal.

Recorded by Chris Strachwitz with 2 Neuman KM 861 microphones on a Nagra IV-S recorder at the Grease Lounge, New Orleans, La.: #1 on 5/7/84; all other cuts on 5/3/84.

Cover photo by Mike Smith.

Cover by Patrick (Moon) Mullins, Jerry Brock, Tom Diamant, & Dix Bruce.

Produced by Chris Strachwitz, Jerry Brock & ReBirth Jazz Band.

Thanks to James "12" Andrews for his help and introducing the band to us.

*For bookings contact ReBirth Jazz Band,
PO Box 53384, New Orleans, La. 70253.*

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From *New Orleans*

ReBirth Jazz Band



Here to Stay

*Live at the Grease Lounge, 1984
Their First Recording*



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The ReBirth Jazz Band of New Orleans is a part of the current "rebirth" or repopularization of traditional style marching brass bands in New Orleans, Louisiana.

The ReBirth, along with other young brass bands including the Roots of Jazz Brass Band, the Charles Barbarin Memorial Brass Band, Tuba Fats and the Chosen Few, the Pinstripes, the Dirty Dozen, the West End Jazz Band, the All Stars Jazz Band, the Young Men Jazz Band, Leroy Jones and the Hurricane Brass Band, and not to exclude older brass bands with young members such as Doc Paulin's Brass Band, Floyd Anckle and the Majestic Brass Band, Harold Dejan and the Olympia Brass Band, the Onward Brass Band, the Imperial Brass Band, the Spirit of New Orleans, and the original Sixth

Ward Dirty Dozen Kazoo Band represent a new generation of New Orleans jazz musicians.

The first time you see the band it is evident that these guys are young. At the time of this recording, the members ranged in age from fifteen to nineteen years old. Sometimes a friend named Joe or Vincent will sit in with the band on tambourine. Though they are not official members, they like to help out and add a good percussive sound.

ReBirth Headquarters (as they call it) is located on North Villere, half a block from Armstrong Park and five blocks to the French Quarter. It is in a neighborhood known as Tremé in the Sixth Ward where there is a strong tradition of Black New Orleans culture.

At the headquarters the band holds

meetings and practices. On one wall plastic music notes seem to drift towards the ceiling. In a corner stands a mountain of stereo equipment and on top rests a large mirror that has been changed into the official ReBirth Headquarters sign. In another corner there is an altar constructed by Philip's and Keith's stepfather, Larry, who is the drummer at the Antioch Spiritual Church.

Barbara Frazier, their mother, sings, plays piano and organ at her Baptist church. She is one of the chief supporters of the band and has influenced their performance on some of the hymns the ReBirth play. "I don't mind them using the house as headquarters," she said, "I'm glad that they want to play music and be in a brass band. If they work hard and keep at it they can develop something real good for themselves because there is a need for brass bands in New Orleans. People will always want to hear New Orleans music when they come to this city."

For just over one year the ReBirth Jazz Band has developed their own style of brass band music at street parades, jazz

funerals, Social Aide and Pleasure Club parades, parties, public events, hotels, small neighborhood bars, and at various spots outdoors in the French Quarter.

The ReBirth sound is distinctly New Orleans and reflects many of the musical styles commonly found in the Black neighborhoods of this city like jazz, R&B, gospel, blues, and the poly-rhythms and chanting of the Mardi Gras Indians.

The tempo is well paced and never rushed. In a very natural setting they perform a variety of New Orleans songs like "Saints," "Lil' Liza Jane," "Go To The Mardi Gras," "Down By The Riverside," "Closer Walk With Thee," "Lord, Lord, Lord," "They All Ask For You," "Muskrat Ramble," and others.

The two trombones give the band a round and warm sound with lots of tailgate. The two trumpets can play high over the rest of the band, in counterpoint, or lay back and add rhythm. There is a lot of ensemble work and call and response between the trumpets and trombones. The drums lay down a hard second line of New Orleans funk and street rhythms, while the tuba plays walking bass lines



Photo © by Mike Smith

ReBirth Jazz Band at Louis Armstrong Memorial in New Orleans, 1984.

more like a string bass.

New Orleans is a horn and percussion town. One of the strong influences in the development of the ReBirth's sound is that at one time or another they all played in the J.C. Clark High School Marching Band.

The Dirty Dozen Brass Band, the Pin-stripes, Tuba Fats, and other brass bands have also been a strong influence on the ReBirth. This has led to the band's own interpretations of modern jazz classics like Thelonious Monk's "Blue Monk," Golson's "Killer Joe", and Herbie Hancock's "Chameleon," as well as more currently popular pieces like Michael Jackson's "Shake Your Booty" and "Billie Jean."

One of the ReBirth's original songs, "Here To Stay" (originally titled "P.I.E.") is a sort of testimony to the band's determination to stick together. The chorus repeated throughout goes,

*"Hey there, don't go nowhere
The ReBirth's on its way.
Hey there don't go nowhere
The ReBirth is here to stay."*

Brass bands in New Orleans are the continuation of a folk tradition which has existed in this city for over a hundred years. Their music is inextricably intertwined with the social life found in the communities from which these musicians grew up and in which they now live.

It is easy to forget that brass bands once flourished in America. Almost every city, town, or village supported its brass bands during the late 1800s. From the beginning of jazz in New Orleans as we know it, brass bands have consistently been the main resource for new jazz musicians; however, they have very seldom been given the recognition by a wider audience.

The first Black New Orleans brass band to be recorded was Bunk Johnson's Brass Band in 1945. Since that time only a very small number of bands have recorded in comparison to those which have and do exist. Recently, however, as this record is an example, there has been a more concerted effort to get these groups on record.

This particular recording is also a good

example of a New Orleans brass band performing for the people who really understand, love, and enjoy this music as a part of their daily lives. It was recorded in a small neighborhood bar called the Grease Lounge located just around the corner and down the block from the ReBirth's Headquarters, on May 3 and 7, 1984. From time to time this is one of the places where you can regularly hear the ReBirth perform.

Anyone with an interest in the history and development of jazz in America will be interested in listening to this record. You will hear elements of traditional, big band, bebop, and contemporary jazz styles, along with disco, Caribbean, Mardi Gras Indian, gospel, blues and New Orleans second line street funk. A combination which gives their sound a certain timeless quality and makes the music, at once, fun to dance to like jazz was in its formative years, and interesting enough to just sit back and listen to, which is more common with the more modern jazz styles.

(Jerry Brock—1984)

Update:

This recording, made in 1984, was the first by the ReBirth Jazz Band. Since that time, the ReBirth has recorded a CD for Mardi Gras Records; four for Rounder; and a new one (1997) for Shanachie entitled "We Come to Play." Over the past fifteen years, the ReBirth has performed at concerts, festivals, and numerous other events throughout the world. As a group they have evolved and changed over the past decade with the addition of different personnel with differing musical ideas.

Philip Frazier continues to lead the group, as he has since its inception and Kermit Ruffins now has a successful solo career.

This recording, available for the first time on compact disc, offers a glimpse into the history of the brass band revival of the past twenty years in New Orleans. It also captures the young ReBirth Jazz Band, as a group of teenagers, just beginning to tap their cultural and artistic resources.

(Jerry Brock—1997)



Photo © by Chris Strachwitz

ReBirth Jazz Band at Grease Lounge in New Orleans, 1984.

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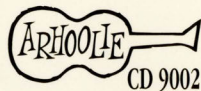
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