

VOLUME 9

PIANO

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FJ 2809

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

EDITED BY FREDERIC RAMSEY, JR.

JAZZ PIANO

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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TOM CAT BLUES
Jelly Roll Morton (GR 5515)
KENTUCKY STOMP
The Dixie Four (Para 12661)
WOLVERINE BLUES
Jelly Roll Morton Trio (FV 21064)
JUST TOO SOON
Earl Hines (QRS 7039)
FIREWORKS
Louis Armstrong and His Hot Five (OK 8597)
LITTLE ROCK GETAWAY
Joe Sullivan (DE 600)
BARRELHOUSE
Jess Stacy (Para 2187)

HANDFUL OF KEYS
Eats Waller (FV 38508)
ONCE UPON A TIME
The Chocolate Dandies (OK 41568)
SNOWY MORNING BLUES
James P. Johnson
SPECIAL No. 1
Meade Lux Lewis
MEXICO REMINISCENCES
Jack Dupree
LIBRA
Mary Lou Williams
BLUES
Lennie Tristano Trio

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Jazz Vol. 9

PIANO

The piano got off to a late start in jazz, as has been pointed out elsewhere in this anthology (Notes, Jazz Volume 7, New York), but it made up in scope for whatever it lacked in punctuality. The story is related in "Jazzmen," as told by pianist Lillian Hardin-Armstrong, that on her first rehearsal with the Sugar Johnny Band, she asked about the selection the musicians were waiting to play. "What key is it in?", she wanted to know. "Never you mind, gal," the leader replied, "Just hit it!"

There wasn't much use for piano in early New Orleans jazz, but New Orleans produced a pianist who quite possibly did more to preserve jazz than any musician from this or any other city. Pianist Jelly Roll Morton, pursuing at first a career utterly independent of jazz combinations, ultimately joined forces with musicians from his native city to play and to record, in California, Chicago, and New York, some of New Orleans jazz' most stirring performances. From his very first recordings (made in Chicago from 1922 on; see Jazz, Volume 5, I, 1), Morton displayed characteristics that defined, at a very early stage, the relationship of piano to jazz.

These have been concisely set down by William Russell, most informed and most lucid of jazz scholars, in a short note he contributed to The Needle in 1944. In reviewing the S.D. reissue of Morton's Frog-i-more Rag (now available as Paramount reissue 14032), Russell delineated "typical features of Jelly's style" as "his wealth of melodic invention and skill in variation; the tremendous swing, which made him a veritable one-man band; his feeling for formal design and attention to detail; his effective use of pianistic resources; the contrasts of subtle elegance with hard hitting drive; the variety of harmony and yet freedom from complication and superficial display that might have brought him popularity."

From Morton on, pianists assumed significant roles in jazz playing and composition. Simply because the piano made it possible to set down and transpose melodies, and to play parts which could be assigned to other instruments, it became the workaday tool of the growing jazz profession. Musicians who composed, arranged, and conducted their own orchestras from the keyboard include, besides Jelly

Roll Morton, Clarence Williams, Duke Ellington, Fletcher Henderson, Luis Russell, James P. Johnson, Fats Waller, Mary Lou Williams, Teddy Wilson, and Count Basie. Of the contemporary generation of jazz composers, conductors, and pianists, there is, primarily, Lennie Tristano.

That is one way the piano has got at jazz, or if you will, jazz has got at the piano. A second group of jazz pianists includes those who because of rock-solid performances have become essential parts of jazz combinations, small and large; to a man, these pianists have shown pleasing abilities at improvisation coupled with the most reliable rhythmic sense. Here we find musicians like Earl Hines, Joe Sullivan, Jess Stacy, Alex Hill, and Jimmy Blythe. Their performances stand up alone, or in small ensemble work of the most stimulating and exacting sort.

Marginal as far as these categories are concerned, yet not at all marginal as far as creativity and execution are concerned, are the pianists like Meade Lux Lewis, Pete Johnson, Albert Ammons, Cripple Clarence Lofton, Jimmy Yancey, and Jack Dupree. Some of them are to be found grouped on sides I and II of Jazz, Volume 10, Boogie Woogie and Jump. Lewis and Dupree were included here because both seemed to have something to say that was not quite strictly classifiable as boogie woogie alone, at least so far as these specific performances are concerned.

Admittedly, it is hard to maintain interest in a jazz performance for several minutes with one instrument alone. The quintessence of jazz is more frequently abstracted in the highest proofs by groups of musicians working together; some definitions of jazz ensemble music would exclude piano renditions completely. For this reason, not all the selections here are solo displays; some are neatly balanced collaborations of orchestra and keyboard.

RECORD DATA

SIDE I (A)

Band 1. (9 A 1): TOM CAT BLUES, by Jelly Roll Morton. (Morton) Recorded July, 1924. Ge5515.

Band 2. (9 A 2): KENTUCKY STOMP, by The Dixie Four. Jimmy Blythe, piano; possibly John Lindsay, bass; Jimmy Bertrand, drums and washboard. Circa 1927-1928. Para 12661.

Band 3. (9 A 3): WOLVERINE BLUES, by Jelly Roll Morton Trio. (Morton) Jelly Roll Morton, piano; Johnny Dodds, clarinet; Baby Dodds, drums. June 10, 1927. FV21064.

Band 4. (9 A 4): JUST TOO SOON, by Earl Hines. (Hines) Chicago, 1928. QRS 7039.

Band 5. (9 A 5): FIREWORKS, by Louis Armstrong and His Hot Five. (Williams) Earl Hines, piano; Louis Armstrong, trumpet; Fred Robinson, trombone; Jimmy Strong, clarinet and tenor sax; Mancy Cara, guitar; Zutty Singleton, drums. June 27, 1928. OK 8597.

Band 6. (9 A 6): LITTLE ROCK GETAWAY, by Joe Sullivan. (Sullivan) August 8, 1935. De600.

Band 7. (9 A 7): BARRELHOUSE, by Jess Stacy. (Stacy) Jess Stacy, piano; Israel Crosby, bass; Gene Krupa, drums. Chicago, 1936. Pae R2187.

SIDE II (B)

Band 1. (9 B 1): HANDFUL OF KEYS, by Fats Waller. (Waller) March 1, 1929. FV38508.

Band 2. (9 B 2): ONCE UPON A TIME, by The Chocolate Dandies. (Carter) Teddy Wilson, piano; Benny Carter, alto sax, trumpet, arranger; Max Kaminsky, trumpet; Floyd O'Brien, trombone; Chu Berry, tenor sax; Lawrence Lucie, guitar; Ernest Bass Hill, bass; Sid Catlett, drums. October 10, 1933. Ok41568.

Band 3. (9 B 3): SNOWY MORNING BLUES, by James P. Johnson. (Johnson) Previously unissued. Recorded by M. Asch, November 17, 1943.

Band 4. (9 B 4): SPECIAL # 1, by Meade Lux Lewis. (Lewis) Previously unissued. Recorded by M. Asch, August 18, 1944.

Band 5. (9 B 5): MEXICO REMINISCENCES, by Jack Dupree. (Dupree) Previously unissued. Recorded by M. Asch, 1943.

Band 6. (9 B 6): LIBRA, by Mary Lou Williams. (Williams) Previously unissued. Recorded by M. Asch, May, 1945.

Band 7. (9 B 7): THE BLUES, by Lennie Tristano Trio (Tristano)

FOLKWAYS HISTORY of JAZZ SERIES

11-12" Long-playing records

FJ2801 (FP53) JAZZ, Vol. 1. (The South). Original records of Negro folk music related to jazz. Hollers, blues, work songs, church meeting, rag, creole, breakdown, boogie woogie. Ol' Hannah, Juliana Johnson, John Henry, Down South, Penitentiary Blues, Dry Bones, Dallas Rag. Notes by Charles Edward Smith.

FJ2802 (FP55) JAZZ, Vol. 2 (The Blues). Early records edited and with notes by Frederic Ramsey Jr. Blind Willie Johnson, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Ma Rainey, King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Jelly Roll Morton, Jimmy Yancey, Original Tuxedo Jazz Band, Bessie Smith.

FJ2803 (FP57) JAZZ, Vol. 3 (New Orleans). Jazz band styles from a collection of early records. New Orleans Wanderers, Kid Rena's Band, King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band, Dallas Jug Band, Bunk Johnson Orig. Super'r Band, Jelly Roll Morton, Louis Armstrong and His Hot Seven, New Orleans Rhythm Kings, Red Onion Jazz Babies, Johnny Dodds Orch. Notes by Frederic Ramsey Jr.

FJ2804 (FP59) JAZZ, Vol. 4 (Jazz Singers). Louis Armstrong, Baby Cox, George Thomas, Jelly Roll Morton, Ivy Anderson, Ella Fitzgerald, Jimmy Rushing, Helen O'Connell, Leo Watson, Dizzy Gillespie, Billie Holiday, Fats Waller, Una Mae Carlisle, Bassie Smith, Ma Rainey, Cripple Clarence Loffen, Berth Chippie Hill, Sonny Terry, Champion Jack Dunree. Notes

FJ2805 (FP63) JAZZ, Vol. 5 (Chicago, No. 1). Freddie Keppard, Louis Armstrong, Tommy Ladnier, Jimmy Noone, Punch Miller, Lil Armstrong, Johnny Dodds, King Oliver, Jelly Roll Morton, Kid Ory, Natty Dominique, Jasper Taylor, Roy Palmer, etc. Notes by Frederic Ramsey Jr.

FJ2806 (FP65) JAZZ, Vol. 6 (Chicago, No. 2). King Oliver's Jazz Band, The New Orleans Rhythm Kings, The Wolverine Orchestra, Charles Pierce and his Orchestra, The Stomp Six, Paul Mares and his Friars' Society Orchestra, Bix Beiderbecke and his Gang, Frank Teschemacher's Chicagoans, McKenzie-Condon's Chicagoans. Notes.

FJ2807 (FP67) JAZZ, Vol. 7 (New York, 1922-34). The Cotton Pickers, Miff Mole and his Little Mollers, Frankie Trumbauer, Kentucky Grasshoppers, Louisiana Rhythm Kings, Lang-Venuti, Jack Teagarten, Clarence Williams, Fletcher Henderson, Duke Ellington, James P. Johnson, Fats Waller, Louis Armstrong, Henry Allen, and their orchestras. Notes by Frederic Ramsey Jr.

FJ2808 (FP69) JAZZ, Vol. 8 (Big Bands Before 1935). Fletcher Henderson, Bennie Moten's Kansas City, Charlie Johnson, Duke Ellington, Luis Russell, McKinney's Cotton Pickers, The Little Chocolate Dandies, Ben Pollack, The Charleston Chasers, Jimmie Lunceford, and their orchestras. Notes by Frederic Ramsey Jr.

FJ2809 (FP71) JAZZ, Vol. 9 (Piano). The Dixie Four Jelly Roll Morton, Earl Hines, Joe Sullivan, Jess Stacy, Louis Armstrong's Hot Five, James P. Johnson, Fats Waller, The Chocolate Dandies, Meade Lux Lewis, Jack Dupree, Mary Lou Williams, Lennie Tristano Trio. Notes.

FJ2810 (FP73) JAZZ, Vol. 10 (Boogie Woogie, Jump, and Kansas City). Jim Jackson's Jamboree, Charlie Spand, Albert Ammons, Meade Lux Lewis, Cripple Clarence Lofton, Jimmy Yancey, Pete Johnson, Bennie Moten's Kansas City Orch., Andy Kirk & his Twelve Clouds of Joy, Jones-Smith Inc., Jay McShann & Orch., Count Basie's Kansas City Seven. Notes by Frederic Ramsey Jr.

FJ2811 (FP75) JAZZ, Vol. 11 (Addenda). Bunk's Brass Band, Sam Morgan's Jazz Band, Jimmy Bertrand's Wizards, Ma Rainey, Fats Waller & his Rhythm, Eddie Condon Orch., New Orleans Feetwarmers, Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers, The Chocolate Dandies, Bunny Berigan and his Blue Boy's, Tommy Ladnier Orch., Frankie Newton's Orch., Dizzy Gillespie & his Sextet. Notes.