

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FJS 2816

# STRIDING IN DIXIELAND

ANNOTATED BY DAVID A. JASEN

## **Fats Waller Band featuring Louis Armstrong and Jack Teagarden**

COMPILED BY J. LYONS

## **James P. Johnson Trio with Omer Simeon and Pops Foster**

RECORDED BY MOSES ASCH



BUILDING WITH ELABORATE GRILLWORK, SELMA, ALABAMA, 1935, PHOTO BY WALKER EVANS

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE



FOLKWAYS RECORDS FJS 2816

**SIDE ONE** Total Time - 21:29

Fats Waller Band featuring Louis Armstrong and Jack Teagarden — Compiled by J. Lyons

1. Tiger Rag (ODJB)
2. The Blues (Jam)
3. I Got Rhythm (Gershwin)
4. On the Sunny Side of the Street (McHugh)
5. Honeysuckle Rose (Waller)
6. Jeepers Creepers (Warren)

**SIDE TWO** Total Time - 11:27

James P. Johnson Trio with Omer Simeon and Pops Foster — Recorded by Moses Asch

1. Harlem Hotcha (Johnson)
2. Lorenzo Blues (Simeon)
3. Creole Lullaby (Johnson & Simeon)
4. Bandana Days (Blake)

**CREDITS**

Annotated by: David A. Jasen  
Remastering: Carl Seltzer

© 1981 by Folkways Records & Service Corp.,  
43 West 61st St., NYC, USA 10023

**STRIDING IN DIXIELAND**

ANNOTATED BY DAVID A. JASEN

**Fats Waller Band  
featuring Louis Armstrong  
and Jack Teagarden**

COMPILED BY J. LYONS

**James P. Johnson Trio  
with Omer Simeon  
and Pops Foster**

RECORDED BY MOSES ASCH

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FJS 2816



FOLKWAYS RECORDS FJS 2816

# STRIDING IN DIXIELAND

ANNOTATED BY DAVID A. JASEN

**Fats Waller Band  
featuring Louis Armstrong  
and Jack Teagarden**

COMPILED BY J. LYONS

**James P. Johnson Trio  
with Omer Simeon  
and Pops Foster**

RECORDED BY MOSES ASCH





## Notes by David A. Jasen

### SIDE ONE Total Time - 21:29

Fats Waller Band featuring Louis Armstrong and Jack Teagarden

1. Tiger Rag (ODJB)
2. The Blues (Jam)
3. I Got Rhythm (Gershwin)
4. On the Sunny Side of the Street (McHugh)
5. Honeysuckle Rose (Waller)
6. Jeepers Creepers (Warren)

The great Thomas "Fats" Waller made thousands of recordings, appeared on hundreds of radio shows (many of them his own programs), played in countless nightclubs, gave innumerable concerts around the world and made several motion pictures. Altogether, he was, with Louis Armstrong, the most famous jazzman of his time. Imagine the thrill of finding then, not a commercial recording, but a radio broadcast featuring Fats Waller and his Rhythm with the band including the immortal Louis Armstrong on trumpet, Jack Teagarden on trombone, Bud Freeman on tenor saxophone, Albert Casey on guitar, and George Wettling on drums! Surely, a once-in-a-lifetime gathering of jazz geniuses. It happened on Martin Block's Make Believe Ballroom of October 19, 1938. In such heady company, Fats proves himself the natural leader as he sings, shouts, and cajoles his colleagues to further endeavors. At the piano, he controlled the ensemble, provided solid backing to the other soloists, and stretched out for his own solos in his happy, romping fashion, striding in dixieland.

Fats was born in the Harlem section of New York City on May 21, 1904. He died on a train from Hollywood in Kansas City, Kansas on December 15, 1943. He began lessons on piano at the age of six, loved the organ also and taught himself how to play it. After winning a talent contest in a local movie house by playing James P's groundbreaking *Carolina Shout*, he was given lessons by James P. who became his very good friend and gave him his start in the recording and piano roll industries. Like everything else in music, Fats excelled as a composer of popular songs. His most famous, *Honeysuckle Rose*, is here featured with the band. He spent most of his professional life on the road touring and playing nightclubs throughout this country. His great sense of humor, along with his marvelous pianistics made him one of America's favorite entertainers.

Louis Armstrong, born in New Orleans on July 4, 1900 and died in New York City on July 6, 1971, was without doubt the most beloved jazzman in the twentieth century. One of early jazz's first geniuses, he revolutionized trumpet playing in jazz bands and was the first to lay down thoughts of improvisation which became standard for players afterward. He started his big-time professional career with King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band, then went with Fletcher Henderson's Orchestra, with his own Hot Five



and Hot Seven combinations, made what are now classic dixieland recordings throughout the twenties. Front Luis Russell's big band through the thirties, made many movies in Hollywood during the second world war and formed his All Stars in 1947, with whom he toured all over the world for the next twelve years. Headlined jazz festivals worldwide and made several goodwill tours for the United States State Department. He has been the direct inspiration for the majority of jazz trumpeters since he came to the public's attention in 1923.

Jack Teagarden was born in Vernon, Texas on August 29, 1905, and died in New Orleans, Louisiana on January 15, 1964. Probably the most famous white jazz trombonist in dixieland, Jack got started professionally at the beginning of the roaring twenties in local bands touring throughout the midwest, southwest and far west. His renown began when he joined Ben Pollack's band in New York in 1928. Then, he played with practically everybody: Wingy Manone, Paul Whiteman, Louis Armstrong, Earl Hines, Benny Goodman, Red Nichols and Eddie Condon. From the mid-fifties, he led his own band which toured the world and played nightclubs. He died of pneumonia in a New Orleans motel while playing an engagement with his band at The Dream Room.

**SIDE TWO**     Total Time - 11:27

James P. Johnson Trio with Omer Simeon and Pops Foster

1. Harlem Hotcha (Johnson)
2. Lorenzo Blues (Simeon)
3. Creole Lullaby (Johnson & Simeon)
4. Bandana Days (Blake)

James P. Johnson, with stalwarts Omer Simeon on clarinet and Pops Foster on string bass, creates several moods from a romp through *Harlem Hotcha* to the sublime beauty of *Creole Lullaby*.

James P. Johnson, born in New Brunswick, New Jersey on February 1, 1891 and died in Jamaica, New York on November 17, 1955, was the acknowledged Father of the Stride piano. He grew up in New York City where he learned what other pianists were doing, with his perfect pitch practicing their tricks and learned the usefulness of playing for dancers. All of this practical training was put to good use when he was asked to make piano rolls for the largest manufacturer of them, Q R S. He became the biggest selling black artist on rolls during the twenties, and his sparkling arrangements dominated the field for ten years! Throughout his performing career, he made relatively few records. His first took place in 1921. The recordings on this album, made on February 22, 1945, were among the last he made (see also *The Original James P. Johnson*, Folkways FJ-2850).



Omer Simeon, born in New Orleans, Louisiana on July 21, 1902 and died in New York City on September 17, 1959, was one of the most outstanding clarinet virtuosi in Dixieland. When he was twelve years old, his family moved to Chicago where he began taking clarinet lessons from New Orleans legend, Lorenzo Tio, Jr. (for whom LORENZO'S BLUES is named), who was working in Chicago then. By the time he was eighteen, Omer was working professionally. His major bands included Charlie Elgar's Orchestra, recording with Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers, King Oliver's Dixie Syncopators, Luis Russell's Orchestra, Erskine Tate's Orchestra, Earl Hines' Orchestra for ten years, Jimmie Lunceford's Orchestra for five years and finally with Wilbur De Paris's Band from 1951 until his death. The purity of his tone was remarkable and his sympathetic yet full backing made Omer one of the greatest dixieland clarinetists of all time. These sides provide an excellent showcase for his many talents.

George "Pops" Foster was born on a plantation in McCall, Louisiana on May 18, 1892 and died in San Francisco, California on October 30, 1969. His family moved to New Orleans in 1902 where he started taking lessons on the cello. After three years he switched to string bass where he was in much demand with such local New Orleans bands as the Tuxedo, The Eagle, Armand Piron's Orchestra, Fate Marable's Orchestra and King Oliver's band. During the twenties he shuttled between St. Louis and Los Angeles, where he played regularly with Kid Ory, Mutt Carey, Charlie Creath, Dewey Jackson and Ed Allen. Joined the Luis Russell band fronted by Louis Armstrong throughout the thirties. Spent the war years in New York City playing with Sidney Bechet and Art Hodes. Throughout the fifties and sixties, he played with Jimmy Archey, Bob Wilbur, Earl Hines, Papa Celestin, Elmer Snowden, and appeared in many jazz festivals around the world. His firm but unobtrusive playing on these sides illustrate his greatness.

It is exciting to hear the Father of Harlem Stride in an unaccustomed role - that of being part of a group. And when the group is a trio, we are indeed treated to the expansiveness of that form, allowing ample room for ensemble work and for soloing.

Of the tunes, three are originals and one a show tune from an historic show. The historic show was *Shuffle Along*, which opened on Broadway on May 23, 1921. What made it historic was the fact that it was the first time an all-Black cast in an all-Black written show appeared on Broadway. The music was written by the incredible Eubie Black (1883 - ), and the lyrics by his partner, Noble Sissle (1889 - 1975). The tune Eubie's friend chose to record with his trio was the lovely BANDANA DAYS.

Of the three originals, HARLEM HOTCHA was composed by James P., making its debut on records. LORENZO'S BLUES was composed by Omer Simeon, and it, too, appears on disc for the first time. CREOLE LULLABY was created by both James P. and Omer expressly for this recording session. They gave it the subtitle, *Peephole Blues*. A warm and evocative piece, sensitively performed by a great jazz trio.