

COMPILED AND ANNOTATED BY DAVID A. JASEN

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FJ 2819

# THE BIG BAND SOUND OF BUNNY BERIGAN &



# JACK TEAGARDEN



PHOTO BY WILLIAM P. GOTTLIEB

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

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**SIDE 1 — Bunny Berigan**

1. Tiger Rag
2. Sweet Sue
3. Stardust
4. Bugle Call Rag
5. The Blues
6. Honeysuckle Rose
7. Old Man Mose

**SIDE 2 — Jack Teagarden**

1. China Boy
2. Royal Garden Blues
3. Freeze Out
4. The Theme
5. Wally's Riff
6. Boogie Woogie Stomp

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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Roland Bernard (Bunny) Berigan was born in Hilbert, Wisconsin on November 2, 1908. His family was a musical one with his mother playing piano and older brother playing drums. Bunny started with the violin and it was on this instrument that he joined his grandfather's band as a child. He soon learned the trumpet and he was to double on both instruments for the next fifteen years. As a young teenager, he played with local bands, and while not a student at the University of Wisconsin, he performed regularly in their dance bands. When he was twenty years old, he first played in Philadelphia and New York City. It wasn't until 1930 that he established himself in the big-time by joining Hal Kemp's orchestra at the Hotel Taft in Manhattan. After a European trip with Kemp, he became a free-lance, working extensively in the recording studios and working with the name bands on radio. He also appeared in the Dorsey Brothers' pit band for the Broadway show "Everybody Welcome." He worked for Smith Ballew, Paul Whiteman, Abe Lyman, Red McKenzie, Ray Noble, Red Norvo and Billie Holiday. He achieved fame with his rendition of "I Can't Get Started" on which he both played trumpet and sang. He then joined the Benny Goodman orchestra in June, 1935 and helped to create Benny's first memorable hits, "King Porter Stomp," and "Sometimes I'm Happy." Those two recordings also established the pattern of tunes for the Big Band Era. In 1937, he joined Tommy Dorsey's band, where he created another big hit in "Marie." Thought that he could lead his own band, but being an alcoholic didn't help. He rejoined Dorsey for awhile before starting another band in September, 1940. He was plagued by ill health and toured with his band until contracting pneumonia at the end of April, 1942. He died in New York City on June 2, 1942.

The first four tracks on this LP were taken from a radio broadcast done on March 12, 1936 and featured Bunny on trumpet, Joe Marsala on clarinet, Bud Freeman on Tenor saxophone, Teddy Wilson on piano, and Stan King on drums. The last three tracks are with an unknown big band. Bunny Berigan was equally at home with the various groups and sizes in which he was asked to play.

Jack Teagarden was born Weldon Leo in Vernon, Texas on August 29, 1905. He was the oldest in a musical family in which two brothers played trumpet and drums and a sister played piano. While he started piano himself at the age of five, taught by his mother who also played in movie houses, he took to the trombone at age ten and became so proficient that he started his career playing with his mother at the movies. An early influence was Peck Kelly, a legendary pianist, whose band Jack joined in 1921. He gigged around with Willard Robison, Doc Ross, Johnny Johnson, Wingy Manone, Tommy Gott and then settled down in New York City with Ben Pollack in mid-1928. He stayed with Pollack for the next five years, during which time he appeared on many important recordings, even leading his own recording orchestra. From 1933-38, he was with Paul Whiteman's huge orchestra and was featured as part of the Three T's (the others were his brother Charlie and Frank Trumbauer). He led his own big band from 1939-47 when he joined Louis Armstrong All Stars for the next four years. He then formed his own All Stars which he had at the time of his death after completing an engagement in New Orleans on January 15, 1964. He appeared in several Hollywood musicals, toured Europe and the Far East, made many recordings with most of the important jazzmen of his day and was generally considered the finest jazz trombonist of his time. His singing came in for a good deal of praise. He won numerous awards in jazz polls from 1944-1960.

The first two selections finds him as part of a small European dixieland band. The remaining four in a superior big band. Like Berigan, he was equally at home in both surroundings.