1. MARDI GRAS MEDLEY
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   (18:40)

2. CHAMELEON (Herbie Hancock) (3:35)

3. LORD, LORD, LORD, YOU SURE BEEN GOOD TO ME

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8. THE LAW
   (Philip Frazier, etc. – Tradition Music Co./Big 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/EP 1091. Cass 1091 is still available.

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 5/5/84.

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.

The ReBirth Jazz Band of New Orleans is a part of the current "rebirth" or re-popularization 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 Sen, 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 Treme 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 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.
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 "Cha­
meleon," as well as more currently popu­
lar 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 deter­
mination to stick together. The chorus re­
peated 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 were the
continuation of a folk tradition which has
existed in this city for over a hundred
years. Their music is inextricably inter­
twined 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 be­
ginning of jazz in New Orleans as we
know it, brass bands have consistently
been the main resource for new jazz mu­
sicians; 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 re­
corded 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)
ReBirth Jazz Band

"Here to Stay" Recorded live at the Grease Lounge, New Orleans, La., 1984

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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.

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