DOLE & HIS BACKDOOR CAJUNS
HEY MADELEINE!
Louisiana cajun, creole & country music
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A1,2,3,4,5,6—Gerard Dole: melodeon, fiddle, mouth organ, jaws harp, triangle, drums, vocal; Dominique Poncet: guitar, vocal.
Recorded September 2nd [A1], September 8th [A2], October 9th [A3,4,5,6], 1983, by Patrick Bordes, Studio du Marais, Paris.

B1—Gerard Dole: melodeon, fiddles, triangle, vocal.
B3—Gerard Dole: melodeon; Dominique Poncet: guitar, vocal; Pierre Chaffouin: fiddle; Dominique Renaudin: triangle.

B4—Alain Casalis & Adrien Studer: fiddles; Banz Studer: guitar, mouth organ, vocal; Beatrice Fouchard: triangle.
Recorded July 26th, 1976, Boulogne.

B5—Gerard Dole: melodeon, vocal; Tuck Certano: guitar, mandolin; Eric Stefanelli: banjo; Claude Neschi: pedal steel, bass guitar.
B6—Idem, but Dominique Poncet: vocal; Gerard Dole: fiddle.
Recorded August 23rd, 24th, 1984, by Marc Attias, Studio Whynot, Nice.

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COVER PHOTO
from left to right: Pierre Chaffouin (fiddle), Gerard Dole (melodeon), Dominique Renaudin (triangle), Dominique Poncet (guitar). Photo by Jean David Josset.
HEY MADELEINE!
Louisiana cajun, creole & country music

The oldest examples of cajun dance music that can be heard are those recorded in 1928 by Joseph Falcon, Mayuye Lafleur, Adam Treham, and Jean Segura. Played and sung by French-speaking people from the prairies of south-west Louisiana, they are mostly waltzes and two-steps performed on accordion — either alone or backed by a guitar, a fiddle, or a triangle.

It seems that this music is indigenous, in style and sound, to the Louisiana prairies where it has developed since the early 1880's - time of boom settlement in the wide-open spaces and of the arrival of the German "melodeon" (accordion) in the general stores of the new villages.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries the prairies were, in a way, a new land which called for a new musical expression. Each flood of settlers (Acadians of the Têche, Spanish, Germans, Irish, Italians, Americans from the midwest) brought its own folklore and their children, by a strange phenomenon of acculturation, became "cajuns" for the most part. They created a new music out of this mixture, as did the black creoles who added their own "pepper."

The "squeeze-box" came to dominate the music so much that Irène Thérèse Whitfield once wrote, using a charming though perhaps too restrictive formula, that it had "...been made so to speak 'of the accordion,' 'by the accordion,' and 'for the accordion'" ("Louisiana French Folk Songs," Louisiana State University Press, 1939; Dover, 1969).

More recently, Hillbilly, Texas Swing, Country and Western, Rock and Roll, and Pop music have all had their influences, so that to decode the various contributions to cajun dance music would now be virtually impossible. The result, anyway, is a striking, highly enjoyable sound which is well loved not only in Louisiana but throughout the world.

THE BACKDOOR CAJUNS

"T'es un cajun par la porte en arrière!" So said Michael Doucet, fiddle player of Lafayette, one time while playing along with me at a party in my rooms in old Paris.

"A backdoor cajun." Yes, that's what I am! Someone not born in Louisiana but who became so much attached to this music that it has been a large part of my life these past ten years.

The other musicians and singers that you will hear on this record can all likewise be styled "backdoor cajuns." They play it from the bottom of their hearts, and I hope that you will enjoy listening as much as we enjoyed playing and recording for you.

Paris, November 1984
Gérard Dôle

SIDE A
HEY MADELEINE!

This old two-step is probably of creole origin. Search as I could, I wasn't able to trace it back exactly. Dominique Pontet, who has been playing guitar and singing with me since 1983, spent most of her youth in black Africa and Madagascar. On hearing this tune, she told me that her "nousou" (nurse) in Douala (Cameroun), who was called Madeleine, used to sing her a song which strangely enough was somewhat similar to the Louisiana one. So, when recording this piece, Dominique sang it to her dear memory.

Hey Madeleine!
Toil t'as couchée dehors
Hey Madeleine!
Dedans les matins
Hey Madeleine!
Toil t'es vraiment catin
Mo ma Madeleine!
Z'a couvairiller tous ces bandits
Hey Madeleine!
Toil t'as couchée dehors
Hey Madeleine!
Dedans les macabo
Hey Madeleine!
Toil t'es vraiment catin
O ma Madeleine!
Z'a couvairiller jung'au grand jour

NON COEUR T'APPELLE

This Waltz was first recorded by Cléoma Breaux (guitar and vocal), Joseph Falcon (accordion), and Phyl Breaux (fiddle) on April 18th, 1929 in Atlanta (Georgia). It has since become a classic under the name of "J'ai passé devant ta porte."

J'ai passé devant ta porte
J'ai crié bye bye la belle
Pas personne qui m'a répondu
O yé yé, mon cœur me fait mal

Quand je jongle
Je jongle à toi
Quand je pleure
Je pleure pour toi
Quoi faire donc t'es si canaille?
O yé yé, mon cœur me fait mal

I passed in front of your door
I cried bye bye sweetheart
Nobody answered me
Oh ye ye, my heart is aching

When I think
I think of you
When I cry
I cry for you
What to do, you're such a rascal
Oh ye ye, my heart is aching
LES TRACES DU HOBO BLUES

This bluesy two-step was first recorded by the Breaux Brothers at the same session as "Mon cœur t'appelle." Anadie was on the accordion, Tophy on the fiddle, and their sister Cléoma on the guitar. Other interesting versions are those by Alphée and Shirley Bergeron (recorded in 1960) and by Marc and Ann Savoy with Michael Doucet (recorded in 1983).

Ca m'était pitié d'me voir
Mais comme un pauvre hobo
Qu’a pris les grands chemins
T’a fallu pour t’oublier
Ca m'était pitié d’mes voir
Mais comme un pauvre hobo
Plus personne pour m’aimer
Tite fille comment j’veux faire?

J’ai plus d’oubliers, plus d’argent
Tite fille pour m’en acheter
0 gardes donc, tit monde
Si c’est pas misérable!
Ca m’est pitié d’mes voir
Mais comme un pauvre hobo
Qu’a pris les grands chemins
Mignon, moi j’prends ça dur!

LA VAUSE DU PONT D’AMOUR

This waltz was on Iry Lejeune’s first release, “Love Bridge Waltz” along with “Evangeline Special,” recorded in Houston (Texas) in 1948. Iry Lejeune was the master of cajun accordion after World War II. His premature death in a highway accident in 1954 left him as a legend in cajun music.

Oh tit coeur
Quoi faire tu m’fais ça?
J’ai pris ça assez dur
Que j’ai pris les grands chemins
Oh tit coeur
Quand même tu voudrais
Chère, t’en revenir
Bébé tu s’ras trop tard!

Oh tit coeur
Quoi faire tu m’tournes le dos
Chère, j’érète pas ça
Bébé c’est misérable!
Oh tit coeur
Quand même tu voudrais
Chère, t’en revenir
Bébé j’veux plus te revoir!

FRENCH HARP STOMP

This two-step is a combination of a theme whose name I don’t remember and, for the bridge, “Le two-step de Bayou Tèche” as played by Austin Pitre, the accordionist from between Elton and Basile. As I had to give it a name, I titled it after the jaws harp that I played.

PREPARE TOI, JE VIENS TE CHERCHER

I heard this old two-step played and sung by Cyprien Landreneau of Mamou in August 1975. The tune is somewhat similar to that of “Burra Me in a Corner of the Yard” recorded by the Segura Brothers in New Orleans on December 16th, 1928, but the words are different. Mr. Landreneau told me that the piece had originated in the 30’s. A neighbour who was an accordion player and singer was performing at a dance. His sweetie, whom he was soon to marry, was in the audience and he sang to her and improvised these words.

Oh joline, regarde ici, regarde là-bas
Prépare toi, j’viens t’chercher
Pour t’emmener, oh, avec moi!
Oh tít bébé, prépare toi, fais ton paquet
J’vas t’emmener avec moi
Tout là-bas dans ma maison!

Oh bébé, dis bye bye à ta famille
C’est ton neg’ qui s’en revient
Pour t’emmener au Bayou Tèche!

LAFAYETTE

This two-step was the first ever put on wax, by Joseph Falcon (accordion and vocal) and Cléoma Breaux (guitar) on April 27th, 1928. It became an instant hit and opened the way for many other cajun players to record.

Allons à Lafayette
C’est pour changer ton nom
On va t’appeler Madame
Madame canaille comme moi!
Petite t’es trop mignonne

Pour faire ta criminelle
Comment tu crois naiss moi
J’peux faire, mais moi tout seul?

Allons à Lafayette
It’s for to change your name
You’ll be called Madame
Madame naughty like me!

To be so cruel
What do you think that I
Can do, all alone?

Let’s go to Lafayette
It’s for to change your name
You’ll be called Madame
Madame naughty like me!

Dear, you’re too cute
To be so cruel
Doll, but look then
How far I am from you!

Oh pretty, look here, look there
Get ready, I’m coming to get you
To take you away, oh, with me!

Oh little baby, get ready, pack your things
I’m going to take you with me
Right over there to my house!

Oh, baby, say bye bye to your family
It’s your sweetie who’s coming back
To take you away to Bayou Tèche!

Gérard Dôle

2
BILAL CATHRINE

This two-step was composed in the winter of 1980 by Pierre Chalfoun. Pierre played the fiddle with me on many occasions these last few years. Recently, he left for Normandy to form a band called "Tit Pierre et les Johnny Crapauds."

JOLIE CATIN

In France in the early 70's a group called "Grand-Mère Funibus," formed by a bunch of excellent folk musicians (Christian Gour'han, Michel Hindenoch, Jacques Benhamieu alias Ben, and Daniel Lefebvre alias Croqui), included cajun music for half of their repertoire. "Jolie catin" (with Gour'han on the hurdy-gurdy) was one of their best renditions. They probably learnt it from "Cajun Folk Music" recorded by Harry Oster (Prestige 25015), as played by Austin Pitre, Milton Molitor, and Lurin Lejeune, and called simply "Breakdown." This tune was in fact first recorded about 1937, as "Lake Arthur Stomp" by Miller's Merry-makers (a group from Eunice). The present version is closer to that of Grand-Mère Funibus.

Oh ye ya' chère catin
T'as pas passé quatorze ans
Tu connais déjà la bouteille
Ca m'a fait pitié d'te voir comme ça!
Oh ye ya' cher bébé
T'as pas passé quatorze ans
Et t'as là à bamboucher
Ca m'a cassé le coeur d'te voir comme ça!

Oh ye ya' chère catin
T'as pas passé quatorze ans
Tu connais déjà la bouteille
Ca m'a fait pitié d'te voir comme ça!
Oh ye ya' cher bébé
T'as pas passé quatorze ans
Et t'as là à coursailleur
Ca m'a cassé le coeur d'te voir comme ça!

Oh ye yai dear doll
You're not yet fourteen years
You already know the bottle
It makes me sorry to see you like that!
Oh ye yai dear baby
You're not yet fourteen years
And there you are revelling
It breaks my heart to see you like that!

Oh ye yai dear doll
You're not yet fourteen years
You already know the bottle
It makes me sorry to see you like that!
Oh ye yai dear baby
You're not yet fourteen years
And there you are running wild
It breaks my heart to see you like that!

SI TU CHERCHES LE VENT

This two-step was composed in 1976 by Niksz Studer, a Swiss-German who loved cajun music. (The bridge tune was adapted, I think, from the New Lost City Ramblers.) Along with his cousin Adrien and a friend Alain Casalis whom they had met in a folk club in Paris, they recorded it at my request. Alain, a top fiddle player, performed regularly with me until 1979, along with Marie-Paule Vadunthum alias George Muma Cool in the group called "Bagou Sauvage."

Quand tu cherches le vent
Tu le trouves comme ci, comme ça!
By and by, all around, ho la la!
Et soleil à c't'heure, le vent dans le visage
Ou le temps qui mouillasse dans le vent!

Si tu peux oublier que les poules mangent les œufs
Et que les hommes ont besoin de manger
Et la jolie fille que demain tu as revoir
T'a fait beaucoup de mal, ho la la!

When you seek the wind
You find it this way, that way.
By and by, all around, ho la la!
And sun now, the wind in your face
Or the damp weather in the wind!

Si tu peux oublier que les poules mangent les œufs
And that men need to eat
And the pretty girl you'll see again tomorrow
Has done you much ill, ho la la!

Alain Casalis
LES TITS YEUX NOIRS

This sad waltz was composed and recorded by Lawrence Walker, the accordion player and singer from Duson. It has since been recorded many times (Balfa Brothers, Marc and Ann Savoy, etc., etc.) and has become a standard in Louisiana nowadays.

A c'matin j'ai trouvé
Droit sur mon lit
A pleurer avec le coeur aussi cassé
C'est parce que j'avais rêvé
A me chers tits yeux noirs
J'connais pas, jamais si j'vas les r'voir!

Après-midi, moi j'suis là
Sur ma galerie
A guetter soleil se coucher
Et j'me prends à jongler
A me chers tits yeux noirs
J'connais pas, jamais s'ils vont revenir!

A soir, moi tout seul
Dans mon tit camp
A verser des larmes sur l'oreiller
Et j'm'ennuis et j'm'endors
De me chers tits yeux noirs
J'connais pas, jamais s'ils vont revenir!

This morning I found myself
Sitting on my bed
Crying with a heart so broken
It's because I had dreamt
Of my dear little black eyes
I don't know if I'll ever see them again!

Afternoon, I'm there
On my porch
Watching the sun go down
And I take to thinking
Of my dear little black eyes
I don't know if they'll ever return!

At night, all alone
In my little shack
Spilling tears on the pillow
And I miss and I'm weary
For my dear little black eyes
I don't know if they'll ever return!

JE SUIS GONE SUR LES GRANDS CHEMINS

A bluesy one-step, adapted from an American folk tune, recorded as "Je suis parti sous le grand chemin très disastreux" in Dallas (Texas) in April 1938 by Céline Breaux (guitar and vocal) and Ophy Breaux (fiddle). Here it is sung by Dominique Ponce in Céline's style, but with a country music accompaniment. The musicians on this session - as on "Les tits yeux noirs" - are all excellent bluegrass and country players who created "Ontario Bluegrass," a band based in Nice (south of France). I met them in a folk club there in February 1983 and the recording session was organised last summer with the help of Alain Amiel, a painter, publisher, and radio presenter from the town. On this occasion, Tuck Certano played guitar and mandolin, Eric Stefanelli banjo, and Claude Nesci pedal steel and bass guitar.

J'suis gone sur les grands ch'mins
J'suis gone sur les grands ch'mins
J'suis gone sur les grands ch'mins
I've left for the big roads with a
I've left for the big roads with a
I've left for the big roads with a
worried mind (3X)
I'm not going to be treated like
I'm treated

J'vas pas être traitée comme
J'vas pas être traitée comme
J'vas pas être traitée comme
I'm not going to be treated like
I'm treated

J'suis traitée
J'suis traitée
J'suis traitée
I've been to prison on my
I've been to prison on my
I've been to prison on my
knees (3X)
I'm not going to be treated like
I'm treated

Ca m'nourrit sur du pain d'mais,
Ca m'nourrit sur du pain d'mais,
Ca m'nourrit sur du pain d'mais,
on beans (3X)
on beans (3X)
on beans (3X)
I'm fed on corn bread,
I'm fed on corn bread,
I'm fed on corn bread,
on beans (3X)
on beans (3X)
on beans (3X)
I'm not going to be treated like
I'm not going to be treated like
I'm not going to be treated like
I'm treated
I'm treated
I'm treated

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Other Louisiana cajun records by Gérard Dole on the Folkways label

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FA 2623