

Anita O'Day – Live In Tokyo (1963)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Boogie Blues* 2. *Trav'lin light* 3. *Honeysucke Rose* 4. *Avalon* 5. *Bewitched* [play](#)
6. *You'd Be So Nice to Come Home to* 7. *Night & Day* 8. *Let's Fall in Love* 9. *Sweet Georgia Brown* 10. *Tea for Two*

[play](#)

11. *Stella by Starlight* 12. *Love for Sale* 13. *Get Out of Town* 14. *That Old Feeling* 15. *Four Brothers*

Personnel: Anita O'Day: vocals; Bob Corwin: piano; Toshiyuki Miyama and The All-Star Orchestra and Takeshi Inomata and His West Liners.

This is a never previously released live set from a highly successful 1963 television concert in Japan. Vocalist Anita O'Day came out of the Big Band Era and after memorable stints with the Gene Krupa and Stan Kenton bands she launched an enduring soloist career that was still going strong when she passed in 2007 at 87.

This "new" O'Day album is especially welcome because it is from her peak recording years. The snazzy arrangements by Buddy Bregman come directly out of classic big band sound as is immediately evident with the opener, "Boogie Blues." Sizzling and crackling from note one, O'Day jumps right into a swinging setting that's clearly catnip to her. She pours out each note in her distinctive golden sand-laced caramelized sound. When she slows down for "Trav'lin' Light," her phrasing's still her own but with echoes of Billie Holiday. For sure O'Day knew her way around ballads too. Accompanied by Bob Corwin beautifully in sync on piano, just listen as she wraps velvety sounds around that Rodgers & Hart beauty "Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered." It's dry martini musical witchcraft that's equal parts hip to the jive AND romantic.

But for this listener it's with the swinging tunes where she knocks it right out of the ballpark every time and happily this set is packed with them. On Cole Porter's obsessive "Night and

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Day," she and the band get with a wildly accelerating tempo that may leave your ears breathless. With seemingly unstoppable energy, she ebulliently shouts "jam session time!" and goes into her now-famous rendition of "Tea for Two," from which every barnacle is quickly seared. Trading licks back and forth with trombone and trumpet, she scats with absolute ease and assurance, tossing in a reference to "Salt Peanuts," and finishing off with playful sounds only a supremely confident pro could pull off. (Regrettably her excellent musical cohorts are not identified by name.) No matter what she sang, O'Day always seemed to have a smile in her voice while having a helluva good time. ---Andrew Velez, allaboutjazz.com

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