Written by bluesever Friday, 29 August 2014 22:22 -

Bunk Johnson - Bunk And The New Orleans Revival 1942-1947 (2003)



Disc 1: Bunk Johnson's Original Superior Band 1. Panama 2. Down by the Riverside 3.Storyville Blues 4.Moose March Bunk Johnson's Jazz Band 5.Big Chief Battle Axe 6.Dusty Rag Bunk Johnson and Yerba Buena Jazz Band 7.Ace in the Hole 8.Ory's Creole Trombone 9.Girls Go Crazy About the Way I Walk Bunk Johnson's V-Disc Veterans 10.Spicy Advice 11.Mama's Gone Goodbye 12.Ballin' the Jack 13.Lowdown Blues Bunk Johnson's Band 14. When the Saints Go Marching In 15. Careless Love 16. Walk Through the Streets of the City 17. After You've Gone Bunk Johnson's Street Paraders 18. Tiger Rag 19. Weary Blues Bunk Johnson-Sidney Bechet And Their Orchestra 20.Milneburg Joys 21.Lord Let Me in the Lifeboat Disc 2: Bunk Johnson's Band 1.Swanee River 2.Sheik of Araby 3.Old Grey Bonnet 4.Shine Bunk's Brass Band 5.0h Didn't He Ramble 6.0ver in the Gloryland 7.Just a Little While to Stay Here Bunk Johnson And His New Orlean Band 8. Maryland, My Maryland 9. Alexander's Ragtime Band 10. Tishomingo Blues 11. You Always Hurt the One You Love 12.1 Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate 13.Just a Closer Walk With Thee 14.Snag It 15.One Sweet Letter from You 16.I Can't Escape from You Bunk Johnson Trio 17.In the Gloaming 18.You've Gotta See Mama Every Night Bunk Johnson And His Band 19.Entertainer 20.Hilarity Rag 21.Some of These Days 22.Till We Meet Again Personnel: Bunk Johnson (trumpet); Danny Barker, Frank Pasley (guitar); Laurence Marrero (banjo, bass drum); Garvin Bushell, George Lewis, Wade Whaley, Sidney Bechet (clarinet); Chester Zardis, Alcide Pavageau, Pops Foster, Red Callender, Austin Young, Wellman Braud (baritone saxophone); Kid Shots Madison (trumpet); Floyd O'Brien, Albert Warner, Jim Robinson, Sandy Williams, Ed Cuffee (trombone); Isadore Barbarin (alto horn); Adolphe Alexander (baritone horn); Joe Clark (sousaphone); Don Ewell, Don Kirkpatrick, Cliff Jackson & His Crazy Cats, Freddy Washington, Walter Decou, Alton Purnell (piano); Baby

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Dodds (drums, snare drum); Ernest Rogers, Red Jones, Abbie Williams, Edgar Mosely, Alphonse Steele, Lee Young, Manzie Johnson (drums)

A valuable core sample of Bunk Johnson's remarkable career as living relic and patriarch of the traditional jazz revitalization movement of the 1940s, Bunk and the New Orleans Revival 1942-1947 contains some two and a guarter hours of austere New Orleans polyphony. This two-for-the-price-of-one package includes authentic street parade jazz, a swell taste of how Johnson sounded filling in for Lu Watters with the Yerba Buena Jazz Band, and two powerful examples of Johnson's brief collaboration with Sidney Bechet. A trio session from 1946 offers a rare opportunity to appreciate Johnson without any other horns in the room, backed only by pianist Don Ewell and drummer Alphonse Steele. This trio's treatment of "In the Gloaming" is very likely among the best recordings old Johnson ever made. Four selections from Johnson's last recording session, made (with no audience in attendance) at Carnegie Hall in 1947, round out a satisfying tribute to this controversial man and his scruffy brand of traditional jazz. While Johnson may be an easy target for critics and disgruntled historians, the music he left behind stands its own ground, unencumbered by numerical rating systems or anybody's specialized opinions. It moves at will according to its own itinerary. The best way to listen is to suspend all preconceptions, opening one's heart to the simple unity of each ensemble. Then you get the feeling there is no need for highfalutin evaluations. While the rhythms of the 1942 recordings are described in the liner notes as "rather plodding" (as compared with those 1945 sessions involving Baby Dodds), there is something weirdly satisfying about their deliberate "dance tempo" percolation. Johnson's recordings are about hanging loose and getting the feeling. See also Lester Bowie's moments of gutbucket ebullience with the Art Ensemble of Chicago. It's all about getting the feeling.

This has got to be one of the widest-ranging Bunk Johnson retrospectives ever presented to the public in one package. Johnson is first heard in New Orleans in 1942, armed with his new horn and a special set of artificial teeth designed for him by Dr. Leonard Bechet, Sidney's brother. The 1944 Yerba Buena session took Johnson to San Francisco, while a "V-Disc Veterans" date (including bassist Red Callender and Lester Young's brother Lee on drums) was recorded in Los Angeles that same year. Johnson made more recordings in New Orleans during 1944-1945, and in New York throughout 1945, 1946, and 1947. In a way it is unfortunate that certain individuals persisted in focusing the limelight (and the microphones) so exclusively upon Johnson, thereby neglecting other gifted New Orleans musicians such as Kid Shots Madison, whose woefully few recordings are hardly remembered today. (Shots appears on the Johnson's Brass Band session of May 18, 1945; three tracks from that date are included in this compilation.) In another sense listeners are awfully lucky that William Russell took the time and made the effort to record this music on location in the city of New Orleans, where surprisingly few jazz recording sessions occurred before 1942. Anyone seeking an in-depth Bunk Johnson experience should consult the American Music label of New Orleans, from which all of

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Johnson's hometown sessions are available on compact disc. Shots Madison shows up marvelously on George Lewis with Kid Shots Madison (AMCD-2). Congratulations to Jasmine Records of London for releasing this outstanding tribute to Bunk Johnson. He deserves to be heard. --- arwulf arwulf, Rovi

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