

Louis Armstrong & Satch Plays Fats - A Tribute To The Immortal Fats Waller (2000)

Written by bluesever

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Louis Armstrong - Satch Plays Fats - A Tribute To The Immortal Fats Waller (2000)



01. Honeysuckle Rose 02. Blue Turning Grey Over You 03. I'm Crazy 'Bout My Baby 04. Squeeze Me 05. Keepin' Out of Mischief Now 06. All That Meat And No Potatoes 07. I've Got A Feeling I'm Falling 08. (What Did I Do To Be So) Black And Blue 09. Ain't Misbehavin' [play](#)

10. Black And Blue (Edited Alternate Version) 11. I'm Crazy 'Bout My Baby (Edited Alternate Version) 12. Blue Turning Grey Over You (Edited Alternate Version) 13. I've Got A Feeling I'm Falling (Edited Alternate Version) 14. Squeeze Me (Bonus)

[play](#)

15. (What Did I Do To Be So) Black And Blue (Bonus) 16. Ain't Misbehavin' (Bonus) 17. Blue Turning Grey Over You (Bonus) 18. Keepin' Out Of Mischief Now (Bonus) 19. Sweet Savannah Sue (Bonus) 20. That Rythm Man (Bonus)

Musicians: Louis Armstrong (trumpet), Barney Bigard (clarinet), Barrett Deems (drums), Billy Kyle (piano), Velma Middleton (vocals), Arvell Shaw (bass), Trummy Young (trombone)

Armstrong and "harmful little armful" Fats Waller played together briefly in 1925, then Louis performed many of the pianist's best-known tunes in 1929's New York revue, *Connie's Hot Chocolates*. It took him until 1955 (12 years after Waller's death) to record an album devoted entirely to the Fats songbook. This disc corrects a mistake made on the 1986 CD, restoring the original versions alongside four, previously unreleased, edited alternate takes. Apart from a couple of sensitively delivered ballads, "Blue Turning Grey Over You" and "(What Did I Do To Be So) Black & Blue". It's a session of high-spirited romping, Satch's controlled-vibrato vocals caught in rough-hewn detail, his trumpet solos springing forth with gleaming perfection, razor-edged even when muted. "Honeysuckle Rose" is one of several duets with Velma Middleton, charging through a sequence of solos that serves to introduce Trummy Young (trombone), Billy Kyle (piano), Barney Bigard (clarinet) and Arvell Shaw (bass). That only leaves out drummer Barrett Deems. Velma and Louis are at their bawdiest on "All That Meat And No Potatoes", while Young takes a wonderfully apoplectic solo on the fast-trotting "Ain't Misbehavin'". Producer George Avakian has also included seven more Satch-Fats interpretations from 1929, 30 and 32, providing a good opportunity to compare the two eras.

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--Martin Longley

Following the artistic success of 1954's 'Plays W.C. Handy', Louis Armstrong chose to record a second album devoted to the work of a single composer. He chose Fats Waller, a man whose songs he had recorded many times previously. It was an inspired choice. Waller, whilst a great songwriter and piano player was also a great entertainer, who derived obvious pleasure from the pleasure of an audience. Satchmo was very similar in the respect, and with his wry sense of humour he was perfectly suited to interpret the songs of the great Waller.

This is an artistic high point in Satchmo's career. A lot of work and passion went into the material recorded, and a really foot stomping feelgood album has resulted. There are some slow burners and delightful ballads, but in general this does what the two main men intended - it entertains and brings a smile to the face. Armstrong adds much depth to many of the songs, with careful shadings and colourings that allow them to really sparkle. This finds Satchmo in top form vocally and on trumpet, delivering one of the best recordings from his later years, matched only by the preceding Handy album and his Great Summit recordings with Duke Ellington.

As an added bonus on this record we are presented with a host of Waller tracks Armstrong had recorded earlier in his career. It is interesting to compare these earlier efforts with the 1955 material, and to see how even a prodigy such as Armstrong had developed musically. I especially enjoy the earlier recording of 'Squeeze Me', so full of energy and life, and terribly infectious. The star of the record has to be 'Ain't Misbehavin'', probably one of Waller's best known songs. Both the old and new recordings shine and I defy you not to be singing it to yourself hours after the record has finished! ---Victor Tugelbend

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