

Eddie Jefferson - Body and Soul (1968)

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1 Introduction By Ed Williams 1:15 2 See If You Can Git To That 2:45 3 Body And Soul 4:28 4 Mercy, Mercy, Mercy 2:57 5 So What 4:24 6 There I Go, There I Go Again 2:18 7 Psychedelic Sally 2:45 8 Now's The Time 4:30 9 Filthy McNasty 3:29 10 Oh Gee 6:37
Bass – Steve Davis Drums – Bill English Piano – Barry Harris Tenor Saxophone, Flute – James Moody Trumpet – Dave Burns Vocals – Eddie Jefferson

Eddie Jefferson had not been on record in quite a few years when he recorded this excellent set (reissued on CD) for Prestige. A few of the songs ("Mercy, Mercy, Mercy," "Psychedelic Sally" and "See If You Can Git to That") were attempts to update the singer's style in the mod idiom of the late '60s but the most memorable selections are "So What" (on which Jefferson recreates Miles Davis's famous solo), "Body and Soul", "Now's the Time," "Oh Gee" and "Filthy McNasty"; the latter has very effective lyrics by writer Ira Gitler. Tenorman James Moody, trumpeter Dave Burns and pianist Barry Harris are in the supporting cast of this excellent set. ---Scott Yanow, AllMusic Review

Although there were a couple obscure early examples (Bee Palmer in 1929 and Marion Harris in 1934, both performing "Singing the Blues"), Eddie Jefferson is considered the founder, and premier performer of vocalese, the art of taking a recording and writing words to the solos, which Jefferson was practicing as early as 1949.

Eddie Jefferson's first career was as a tap dancer but in the bebop era he discovered his skill as a vocalese lyricist and singer. He wrote lyrics to Charlie Parker's version of "Parker's Mood" and

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Lester Young's "I Cover the Waterfront" early on, and he is responsible for "Moody's Mood for Love" (based on James Moody's alto solo on "I'm in the Mood for Love"). King Pleasure recorded "Moody's Mood for Love" before Jefferson (getting the hit) and had his own lyrics to "Parker's Mood," but in time Jefferson was recognized as the founder of the idiom.

Jefferson worked with James Moody during 1955-1957 and again in 1968-1973 but otherwise mostly performed as a single. He first recorded in 1952 (other than a broadcast from 1949) and those four selections are on the compilation The Bebop Singers. During 1961-1962 he made a classic set for Riverside that is available as Letter from Home and highlighted by "Billie's Bounce," "I Cover the Waterfront," "Parker's Mood," and "Things Are Getting Better."

Jefferson recorded a pair of albums for Prestige during 1968-1969. Body and Soul includes "So What" (the original Miles Davis version), "Body and Soul" (paying tribute to Coleman Hawkins), "Now's the Time" and some current material such as "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy." Come Along with Me is highlighted by "The Preacher," "Yardbird Suite," and "Baby Girl" (based on Lester Young's "These Foolish Things").

Eddie Jefferson, who worked with Richie Cole in the late 1970s, was having a revival of his career when he was shot to death in 1979 outside of a Detroit club.

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