

Mp3 Johnny Maddox - Salute To The Jazz Age

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A Johnny Maddox jam session with clarinet master Vern Baumer brings you right back to the days when people had the good sense to listen to all musical styles (folk songs, ragtime, blues, jazz, and tin pan alley) without distinction. 14 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Ragtime, BLUES: Piano Blues Details: In the Nineteen Twenties, The Jazz Age, Americans were playing and listening to many kinds of music: folk songs, ragtime, the blues, gospel songs, jazz and Tin Pan Alley versions of them all. These sounds merged, submerged and re-emerged, especially in our cities, and the swirl of musical activity and creativity helped make The Twenties roar. On this unique recording, Johnny Maddox and Vern Baumer play it all. From their rousing opening with Sugar to the dazzling display of technical virtuosity in their mad dash to the finish at the end of Nobodys Sweetheart, they combine their talents in an infectiously spirited jam session. Johnny also plays solo many of the tunes hes discovered in his tireless search for new material from our musical past. To get yourself in the swing of this session, imagine you just dropped over for the afternoon, and Johnny and Vern decided to play a few tunes together unrehearsed and spontaneous, drawing on their common repertoire and years of experience. Vern calls one; Johnny calls one. And they go to it. Vern blows those fine, clear sounds from his clarinet and Johnny plays with the driving energy of his distinctive ragtime style. The sheer joy of making music together is what its all about. Johnny and Vern salute The Jazz Age. SUGAR The first chorus of Sugar is all Johnnys. And then he sets up Verns entrance in another key- a pleasant surprise for their opening number! Maceo Pinkard, composer of Sugar in 1926, also wrote the music for Sweet Georgia Brown, Gimmie A Little Kiss, Will Ya, Huh? and Them There Eyes. In 1922, with lyricist Nat Vincent, he wrote the tunes for Liza, an all-Black musical that seemed at the time a worthy successor to Noble Sissle and Eubie Blakes Shuffle Along (1921). Liza ran for twenty-one weeks and Pinkards music received praise from the critics, but both show and score have long since been forgotten. VIRGINIA BLUES Fred Meinken, who also composed the Wabash Blues, helped make the Virginia Blues an endearing piece with his clever inclusion of the little strain from James Blands Carry Me Back To Old Virginny (1878). Erdmans lyrics for the song run like this: Ive got those old Virginia Blues, the meanest kind of homesick blues. SAINT LOUIS BLUES Early on, there was not a clear

distinction between rags and blues. W.C. Handy's first published blues, *The Memphis Blues* (1912), was in fact subtitled *A Southern Rag*. These first blues were generally more up-tempo than we've come to expect, and it's fitting that Johnny plays so many of them this way in his ragtime style. *The St. Louis Blues* has three separate sections, making it also in this respect more like a rag. The middle section has an unusual tango rhythm and is in the minor key; and it also has sixteen measures instead of the usual twelve. Johnny uses this B section as the introduction for his duet with Vern. **DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO MISS NEW ORLEANS?** This and Johnny's *Friday Night Stomp* are the only tunes on this album which were written after the 1920s. *Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans?* was sung by Billie Holiday in her only feature film role, *New Orleans*, A United Artists production of 1947. The movie depicted the evolution of jazz, and featured such musicians as Woody Herman, Louis Armstrong and Kid Ory. This song is nostalgically reminiscent of those early days in jazz. In 1915, at the age of 13, composer Louis Alter began his own career playing piano for silent movies. In the 1920s, he accompanied singers Nora Bayes, Irene Bordani, Helen Morgan and Beatrice Lillie. He later composed for Broadway musicals and for many other film scores, his most famous song being *Manhattan Serenade*. **CRAZY BLUES** Blues singer Mamie Smith recorded the *Crazy Blues* August 10, 1920, accompanied by her own band, Mamie Smith's Jazz Hounds. The band included Coleman Hawkins and Perry Bradford. Earlier that year, on February 14, she had become the first Black vocalist to make a record, with *That Thing Called Love*, and *You Can't Keep A Good Man Down* on the flip side. This was at the Okeh Studios in New York, and she was accompanied by the Rega Orchestra, a white studio group. She had also recorded, on January 10 at Victor, a test record side of *That Thing Called Love*, accompanying herself on piano, but this was not published. Composer-pianist-vocalist Perry Bradford also had his own band, called Perry Bradford's Jazz Phools. **WHEN THE RED RED ROBIN COMES BOB-BOB-BOBBIN ALONG** One of Vern's favorites, this was Harry Woods' first big hit, but not his last. He also wrote, among many others: *I'm Looking Over a Four-Leaf Clover*, *Side By Side*, *When The Moon Comes Over The Mountain* and *Try A Little Tenderness*. He composed songs for the 1929 RKO film, *The Vagabond Lover*, including the title song and *Heigh Ho, Everybody, Heigh Ho*, which became Vagabond Lover Rudy Vallee's trademark greeting. **ROYAL GARDEN BLUES** Named for the Royal Garden Dance Hall in Chicago, this song was first recorded in 1920 by the George Morrison Jazz Orchestra, of Denver. Jimmy Launceford was part of this group and, while growing up in Denver, studied under Paul Whiteman's father, Wilberforce J. Whiteman.

The following year, no fewer than six recordings of The Royal Garden Blues were made, cut by Mary Stafford, Ethel Waters, Mamie Smith, Noble Sissle (accompanied by Eubie Blake at the piano). Daisy Martin and The Old Dixieland Jazz Band. It continues to be a popular staple of jazz bands. Composers Clarence and Spencer Williams, although not related, were born a year apart in the 1890s in Louisiana. Both got into the music business early and each left quite a legacy. Another notable collaboration is their I Aint Gonna Give Nobody None O This Jelly Roll. Spencer also composed I Aint Got Nobody, Everybody Loves My Baby, I Found A New Baby, The Basin Street Blues, Shim-me-sha-wobble and the Tishemingo Blues. He lived in Paris in the 1920s, writing material for Josephine Baker, and in the 1930s worked there with Fats Waller. Clarence was the musical director at Okeh Records from 1923 until 1928. He accompanied both Bessie Smith and Mamie Smith, among others, and he was a very influential friend of the young Fats Waller, helping him get his first recording dates. Clarence also wrote the Sugar Blues, Squeeze Me and the West End Blues. Usually taken at a more relaxed pace, Johnnys rendition of the Royal Garden Blues is a tour de force of enthusiasm and speed. He injects the excitement you would expect in a live performance, keeps you on the edge of your seat and, just at the end, winds you back down.

FRIDAY NIGHT STOMP Johnny Maddox composed his Friday Night Stomp on the spur of the moment during a recording session at Dot Records in 1953. It is based on two old fiddle tunes Stones Rag and Ragtime Annie. He says he does not recall just why they named it as they did, but its also been recorded as the Friday Night Blues. This is a good study of the inimitable Maddox style complete with walking bass, striding bass, trills, grace notes, changing keys, ragtime fills and breaks.

HONEYSUCKLE ROSE Fats Waller wrote Honeysuckle Rose partly over the telephone with collaborator Andy Razaf. It was first used for a quite forgettable tap dance routine in Load of Coal, a musical revue produced at Connies Inn in Harlem. It gained most of its popularity after its presentation in a three-minute film by the same name, produced by MGM in 1941; and, of al Wallers tunes, is second in popularity only to Aint Misbehavin. Vern and Johnny jazz this one up just right.

WANG WANG BLUES The Wang Wang Blues is another one of Johnnys happy musical finds. Paul Whitemans orchestra introduced it on a recording made in 1920, a year before the tune was published. A photograph of the orchestra is on the cover of the original sheet music. The tune itself is harmonically more interesting than most of Tin Pan Alleys blues efforts, but the lyrics are rather typically banal and meaningless: Shes gone and left me with the Wang Wang Blues. Wang Wang apparently was a pseudo-oriental expression signifying nothing in particular.

HOT LIPS Henry Busse worked with the Paul Whiteman Orchestra from 1919 until 1928, and is the featured soloist on a recording of his composition Hot Lips, cut by the orchestra in 1920. In the 30s, Busse recorded it several times with his own orchestra. He was known for his distinctive vibrato on a delicately soft, muted trumpet, and he used Hot Lips as a showcase tune and theme song. Busse was known also for his rendition of Have You Forgotten (The Thrill?), recorded in 1931, and When Day is Done, which he used to close out the evening when he played at the Chez Paree in Chicago in the 1930s.

DOWN AND OUT BLUES The Down And Out Blues becomes even more low down in Johnnys hands, as he infuses this infrequently played tune with the energetic propulsion of a blues boogie bass. Composer Arthur Sizemore was a pianist with traveling companies early in his career, later writing music for films and leading his own band on club dates. At one time, he owned his own publishing firm and mail order house.

JUST A CLOSER WALK WITH THEE The only gospel song on this album, Just A Closer Walk With Thee, is featured regularly by traditional jazz bands. It evokes images of the tailgate procession of happy mourners dancing their way back from the cemetery during New Orleans style jazz funerals. Vern and Johnny set a appropriately peppy tempo, slowing into a more reverential tone at the end.

NOBODYS SWEETHEART Although written six years earlier in 1923, Nobodys Sweetheart also turned up in the early sound film, The Vagabond Lover. Gus Kahns lyrics describe the small town girl who would be out of place in (her) own home town, ever since she traded her gingham gown for fancy hose, silken gownpainted lips, painted eyes, wearing a Bird of Paradise. It wasnt an easy task for a modern woman to be a flapper and also keep her reputation at home intact. The list of songs for which Kahn wrote lyrics is almost too long to get started on, but here are a few: Memories, Pretty Baby, Aint We Got Fun, Carolina in the Morning, Yes Sir, Thats My Baby, and Makin Whoopee. Elmer Schoebel was also a collaborator on other tunes, such as the Farewell Blues and Spanish Shawl. He was one of the first important composer-arrangers of the early 1920s, preparing for the public works by King Oliver, Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton. For a fitting close, Johnny and Vern bounce right along in their exuberant rendering of Nobodys Sweetheart. Verns clarinet line fairly soars, and Johnnys double-time is relentless. Hang on to your hats!

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