

Mp3 Fred Hellerman - Caught In The Act

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Fred Hellerman (of the legendary folk group, The Weavers) offers this collection of old vaudeville songs that he has arranged, orchestrated, conducted and even sung while dusting off the cobwebs and giving them a contemporary, yet authentic, sound. 18 MP3 Songs EASY LISTENING: Musicals/Broadway, EASY LISTENING: Cabaret Details: Once upon a time in America - (you may not believe this:) there was no television. No talking pictures. No CD's, no DVD's, no cellphones, no Internet, and can you believe it: no hip-hop or rap music! So ... how did we manage without entertainment? The answer is ... vaudeville. All over the land, in cities and towns, from East Armpit, Missouri to Chicago, down Laughing Water, Oklahoma back up to Missoula, Montana, back and forth, over and over, performers traveled from South Spitoon, Pennsylvania to Denver, playing split weeks, full weeks and two-a-days, in the local theatres known as the Bijou or the Majestic or the Opera House. If you don't believe me, go rent any MGM musical or any of the movies made during the 30's and there you'll find vaudeville, alive and glorified. What did all those performers do when they came on stage? They tapped, they danced, juggled, did acrobatics, worked with trained dogs and cats, even rats, ventriloquized with dummies and always --- they sang. Who were they? Burns and Allen. Smith and Dale. The great Al Jolson,. Will Rogers, Sophie Tucker, Nora Bayes, Ukelele Ike, Harry Houdini, Benny Fields and Blossom Seeley... plus a whole raft of people you've never heard of unless at 5 AM you're watching Turner Classic Movies or AMC, where they all live on. And now here are the songs they sang, circa 1911-1926, some of them written by such great tunesmiths as L. Wolfe Gilbert, Al Dubin, Milton Ager, Burt Kalmar and Harry Ruby and even Ring Lardner. You may find some of this material offensive or "politically incorrect." You're absolutely right! In those days, songwriters could get laughs from audiences by taking aim at anything or anybody. Chinese? ("China, We Owe A Lot To You.") The Irish? ("O'Brien is Tryin' to Learn to Talk Hawaiian.") The Jews? ("Whose Izzy Is He?") Religion? ("When Ragtime Rosie Ragged the Rosary.") Feminism? ("Poor Papa".) Wartime? ("Don't Bite The Hand That's Feeding You.") Post-War? ("How Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down On The Farm?") There's something here to insult everybody.. Anything and everything for which songwriters could find a rhyme-scheme was enough for them to sit down and set it to music! So now, sit back and take this

nostalgic trip, CAUGHT IN THE ACT. Curtain going up and here comes vaudeville!! -Max Wilk **** "Fred's performance of these hysterical vintage vaudeville turns is classic. He captures the essence of their charm and absurdity and transports us back to a time that was not simpler but wackier!" - Michael Feinstein "Fred Hellerman's brilliant new CD shows that on his first-ever solo album, which most of us have been waiting for our entire lives, he remains not only a multi-talented performer / arranger / visionary but a singin', swingin' historian!! "This extraordinary compilation of songs gives us a portrait of the America of nearly one hundred years ago done in a way that is so much fun to listen to that everyone from grandparents to toddlers can enjoy the incredible kaleidoscope of words and music. "There is not one dull moment. I can hardly wait for Volume II." - David Amram

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