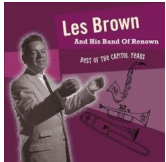


Les Brown and His Band of Renown - Best of the Capitol Years (2002)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 03 September 2015 16:01 - Last Updated Thursday, 03 September 2015 17:28

Les Brown and His Band of Renown - Best of the Capitol Years (2002)



1 *I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm* 2 *On The Alamo* 3 *Perfidia* 4 *Moonlight In Vermont* 5 *The Continental* 6 *Midnight Sun* 7 *Lover* 8 *Harlem Nocturne* 9 *The Piccolino* 10 *Shine On Harvest Moon* 11 *Tangerine* 12 *Ridin' High* 13 *Nina Never Knew* 14 *My Blue Heaven* 15 *Stardust* 16 *Tea For Two* 17 *Swingin' Down The Line* 18 *Younger Than Spring Time* 19 *This Nearly Was Mine* 20 *Invitation* 21 *The Sweetheart Of Sigma Chi* 22 *Frenesi* 23 *Just You, Just Me* 24 *Leap Frog* 25 *Goodnight Sweetheart* Arranged By: Frank Comstock (tracks: 2 to 4, 6 to 8, 11 to 13, 17, 19 to 25), J. Hill (3) (tracks: 10, 14 to 16), Les Brown (tracks: 18), Skip Martin (tracks: 1, 5, 9), Sonny Burke (tracks: 18).

By the time that Les Brown signed with Capitol Records in the mid-'50s he had already become an internationally acclaimed clarinet and sax player as well as bandleader for nearly two decades. This single CD compilation gathers over two dozen tracks cut during the brief three-year stint (1955-1958) that Brown and his Band of Renown spent recording for Capitol Records. Although primarily known as a big band dance combo, Brown and company were much more jazz-oriented and improvisational than their swing contemporaries. However, they never lost their ability to keep dancers on their feet, as evidenced by their innumerable accolades from the popularity polls in *Downbeat* and *Metronome* magazines as well as the coveted Ballroom Operators Association. Much of the unqualified success that Brown retained during the burgeoning days of the rock & roll revolution was due to his association with arrangers such as Ben Homer, Wes Hensel, Skip Martin, and his primary collaborator, Frank Comstock. They keep the arrangements of pop standards "My Blue Heaven," "Tangerine," "Moonlight in Vermont," and "Shine on Harvest Moon," as well as the show tune "This Was Nearly Mine" -- from *South Pacific* -- light, easy, and deceptively unencumbered. The prowess of the various incarnations of the Band of Renown should not be underestimated either. The laid-back solo styles of Donn Trenner (piano) and Brown (clarinet) carry the combo with a sophisticated air borne in the spirit of the big bands. For example, "Frenesi" retains the large, elegant orchestration while simultaneously bearing the loose, metronomic quality of a jazz band. The same can be said of Comstock's tight brass arrangements, most specifically on "Just You, Just Me" and the definitive reading of "Harlem Nocturne." Also notable is the crystalline sound

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quality throughout the package, which is the first in the CD realm to have accessed the original session tapes and remastered them with an ear for the audiophile's attention to detail and nuance. ---Lindsay Planer, Rovi

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