

Count Basie - Cafe Society Uptown 1941 (1999)

Written by bluesever

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CD 1 1. *There'll Be Some Changes Made* 2. *You Betcha My Life* 3. *Tuesday At Ten* 4. *One O'Clock Jump* 5. *Yes Indeed* 6. *Tom Thumb* 7. *9:20 Special* 8. *Basie Boogie* 9. *Gone With 'What' Wind* 10. *Diggin' For Dex* 11. *Be Fair* 12. *Love Jumped Out* 13. *Tune Town Shuffle* 14. *My Melancholy Baby* 15. *Every Tub* 16. *You Can't Run Around* 17. *Jumpin' At The Woodside* 18. *One O'Clock Jump* CD 2 1. *Out Of The Window* 2. *I Want A Little Girl* 3. *Rockin' The Blues* 4. *What Word Is Sweeter Than Sweetheart* 5. *Something New* 6. *Topsy* 7. *Air Mail Special* 8. *Board Meeting* 9. *Down, Down, Down* 10. *Take Me Back Baby* 11. *Broadway* 12. *Down For Double* 13. *This Time The Dream's On Me* 14. *Elmer's Tune* 15. *H & J* 16. *Diggin' For Dex* 17. *Goin' To Chicago* 18. *Baby, Don't Tell On Me* 19. *Swinging The Blues* 20. *One O'Clock Jump*

Buck Clayton, Harry "Sweets" Edison, Al Killian, Ed Lewis (trumpet), Robert Scott, Eli Robinson, Dicky Wells (trombone), Earl Warren (alto saxophone, vocals), Tab Smith (soprano & alto saxophone), Buddy Tate, Don Byas (tenor saxophone), Jack Washington (baritone saxophone), Count Basie (piano), Freddie Green (guitar), Walter Page (bass), Jo Jones (drums), Jimmy Rushing (vocals).

This double CD contains numerous radio transcriptions of Count Basie and his band from their prime years. In that sense, it isn't particularly special. On the other hand, the period captured here -- from September 19 through October 25, 1941 -- was a special one for the band. It was during this period that they performed a seven-week engagement at New York's Cafe Society (Uptown), one of the most prestigious performing venues in the city. The worsening war situation in Europe and Asia aside, this was an idyllic time for the band, and it certainly seems it in these performances. Though the band wasn't at top strength -- Lester Young having departed nearly a year earlier -- the lineup was still one to be reckoned with, featuring Buck Clayton, Harry "Sweets" Edison, Earle Warren, Don Byas, Jo Jones, and Jimmy Rushing. The performances swing with a quiet elegance, and the legendary Basie rhythm section (with Jones kicking the hell out of his drum kit) is in full force, driving the beat behind "There'll Be Some Changes Made," "You Betcha My Life," "Yes Indeed" (a tune never otherwise recorded by the band), "9:20 Special," "Jumpin' at the Woodside," "Rockin' the Blues," "Swinging the Blues," and more than two dozen others -- and a few, like "Gone With What Wind," that are priceless for

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their good humor and high spirits. These transcriptions have surprisingly good fidelity (Basie's piano seems to have been particularly well miked), though they're lacking a certain degree of presence and some treble response, but these are easily compensated for. The only flaw in the material, apart from the fact that "One O'Clock Jump" never gets a full performance in three appearances here, is that because these were radio broadcasts, an announcer intrudes into the program every number or so to give us the name of the piece about to be played. ---Bruce Eder, AllMusic Review

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