

FROM ORIGINAL ANALOG MASTER

2^xHD

BOBBY HACKETT'S SEXTET

When
the
Saints

STORYVILLE

Late in 1974, when Bobby Hackett – then nearly sixty – forgot a diabetes injection and lapsed into a temporary coma, jazz lovers felt a sense of foreboding. That year, Hackett had undertaken a short British tour, and it was plain that advancing age and chronic diabetes were slowly taking their toll. Towards the end of that tour, Keith Ingham, the brilliant British pianist who accompanied Hackett, found him ‘sometimes almost too weak to play and making, for him, a few uncharacteristic mistakes, although at other times he played superbly.

Once he walked off-stage in mid-concert to inject himself with insulin, murmuring ‘I have to get some blood’, and yet he continued his punishing schedule, leaving London to fly to Montreal and open with Teresa Brewer the same night.

Now, several years after Bobby Hackett’s death, the greying roster of bright young men with horns who illuminated the jazz scene in the Thirties and after continues to diminish, but Hackett’s passing was in many ways a special loss. Besides being a seminal jazz trumpeter who for over thirty years worked with every great jazz figure of his era, Hackett was a generous, lovable man who inspired affection. “The truth is,” he told critic Brian Priestly, “I love everybody – but I like musicians best.” And everyone in turn loved Hackett, from Louis Armstrong – who hired him for his All-Stars to play “them pretty notes” – to Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett – who used him as featured back-up trumpeter – and Dizzy Gillespie, who subbed for him during illnesses.

When he first emerged on the jazz scene in the late Thirties, Hackett was hailed as a latter-day Bix Beiderbecke – a compliment, to be sure, but not a comparison Hackett relished. “Bix was truly a musical genius – a one-time thing, and, God

bless him, too many people did not appreciate him," Hackett told Priestly, "But I can never see trying to imitate anybody. You can start out like that, but you'd better get away from it, because nothing can ever compare with the original. In fact, I go out of my way not to sound like Bix; it would be very vain to try to, because he had it – and I have something else."

If Hackett had an idol at all, it was certainly Louis Armstrong, whom he regarded with deep love, affection, and a certain amount of awe. "I had such awe for the man, I was always a little shook up in his presence," he told Priestly. "And then to have to play trumpet (with Armstrong) was too much, because there wasn't anything I could play that I didn't steal from him years ago."

This was for Hackett a typically modest statement, but the fact is that he possessed a talent which set him apart from all his colleagues, including Louis and Bix. His style was an amalgam of all the greatest qualities of jazz trumpet playing, his solos blessed with a tone of pellucid purity, like glass shot by sunlight, effortless technical control, and a gift for melodic improvisation that was uniquely his own. "I copy everybody I like and try to make it come out with a few curves". Hackett combined melodic sensitivity (a quality he particularly demonstrated on ballads) with a formidable knowledge of chords (perhaps further developed as guitarist with Glenn Miller), which enabled him to make light of complex chord changes, and to utilise even the simplest sequences in a manner that would not occur to most trumpeters. "He had" recalls Ingham, "probably the most perfect ear for harmony in all jazz. Bobby came from a school of musicians, around Boston it seems, who like to play over a pretty basic chord foundation. He preferred to wander around the implied chords himself, against the basic ones laid down by piano and bass. During his

tour, we spent time rehearsing tunes that Bobby wanted to play, and in one tune Peter Ind and I played a short sequence of passing chords. He stopped us gently, saying 'Just play the basics, I'll take care of the rest'."

However, having a sophisticated harmonic ear never meant that Hackett was content to run changes. On the contrary, he had the kind of structured mind that could produce adlib his immortal *String of Pearls* solo (beautifully paraphrased in this album) which, as Ingham points out, most people assume was written down. To hear Hackett's harmonic structural powers in full flight you need only listen to his work on Eddie Condon's *Somebody Loves Me* (for the Gershwin Songbook album), his famous 16 bars on Louis Armstrong's Town Hall recording of *Ain't Misbehavin'* or – for that matter – any of the twelve tracks in this collection.

On the first 6 tracks of this varied album – recorded in 1962 – Hackett floats effortlessly through six standards originally made for the Goodyear Rubber Company with Bob Wilber on clarinet, the splendid Urbie Green (hear his trombone sing on Sentimental Blues), and a fluent rhythm section. The second half of the album – tracks 7-12, were recorded eight years later, with a group co-led by trombonist Vic Dickenson, of whom Hackett has said "If I had my way, I would work with Vic all the time. I think he's the best all-round trombonist in the world and – I can't brag about myself but – we're a pretty good team. I play the melody – I don't want to get fancy – and I let him do all the ad-libbing. When we have the right rhythm section it works out pretty well.

It works out beautifully here.

Dig Fairweather

BOBBY HACKETT'S SEXTET WHEN THE SAINTS

Featuring:
MOREY FELD
URBIE GREEN
DAVE MCKENNA
BOB WILBER
NABIL TOTAH

Personnel tracks 1-6:

Bobby Hackett (tp); Urbie Green (tb);
Bob Wilber (cl); Dave McKenna (p);
Nabil Totah (b); Morey Feld (dr)
Recorded NYC 1/62

Personnel tracks 7-12: Bobby Hackett (tp);
Vic Dickenson (tb); John Ulrich (p);
Franklin Skeets (b); John Mead (dr)
Recorded NYC 2/19/70

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| 1 | Bill Bailey
(Cannon) | 3:54 |
| 2 | Sentimental Blues
(Traditional) | 4:00 |
| 3 | When the Saints
(Traditional) | 3:44 |
| 4 | 'Deed I Do
(W. Hirsch - F. Rose) | 2:34 |
| 5 | Struttin' with Some Barbecue
(Armstrong) | 2:34 |
| 6 | Swing That Music
(Armstrong) | 3:46 |
| 7 | S'Wonderful
(Gershwin) | 3:57 |
| 8 | Fidgety Feet
(La Rocca - Shields) | 6:29 |
| 9 | There'll Never Be another You
(H. Warren - Mack Gordon) | 3:14 |
| 10 | String of Pearls
(J. Gray - E. de Lange) | 3:52 |
| 11 | There'll Be Some Changes Made
(Higgins - Overstreet) | 3:56 |
| 12 | Sign Off | 0:48 |

2xHD Mastering: René Laflamme
2xHD Executive Producer: André Perry
Album cover & Insert artwork: André Perry
Liner notes: Dig Fairweather
Graphics: Sylvie Labelle



THE 2xHD MASTERING PROCESS



For the 2xHD transfer of this recording, the original 1/4", 15 ips NAB master tape was played on a Nagra-T modified with high-end tube playback electronics wired with OCC silver cable from the playback head direct to a Telefunken EF806 tube. The Nagra T has one of the best transports ever made, having four direct drive motors, two pinch rollers and a tape tension head.



We did an analog transfer to DSD256 (11.2mHz) using Merging Horus/Hapi A/D converter and a dCS Vivaldi clock.

Each format (96kHz, 192kHz, DSD2.8mHz, DSD5.6mHz and DSD11.2mHz) was created from that transfer.

2xHD was created by producer/studio owner André Perry and audiophile sound engineer René Laflamme.

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