

The Ultimate Jazz Archive Vol.29 - Lu Watters [1942] [2005]



01.Figety Feet 02.Figety Feet – Alternate 03.Milenberg Joys 04.High Society 05.High Society – Alternate 06.Hot House Rag 07.Come Back 08.Daddy Do 09.Daddy Do – Alternate 10.Tiger Rag 11.London Cafe Blues 12.London Cafe Blues – Alternate 13.Terrible Blues 14.Muskrat Ramble 15.Muskrat Ramble – Alternate 16.Temptation Rag 17.Sunset Cafe Stomp 18.Sunset Cafe Stomp – Alternate 19.Riverside Blues 20.Cake Walking Babies From Home

He was a young jazz trumpeter in love with a style of music that reached its creative peak while he was still in diapers. Wynton Marsalis? No...Lu Watters, one of the leading New Orleans revivalists of the 1940s. Watters was a die-hard fan of King Oliver's Original Creole Jazz Band (which included a young Louis Armstrong); his Yerba Buena Jazz Band featured the two-trumpet lineup made famous by Oliver. Watters and the other white revivalists believed in the primacy of early jazz -- specifically, the music made in New Orleans by black musicians during the '10s and '20s -- eschewing subsequent stylistic developments like swing and bop. The Yerba Buena Jazz Band was founded in 1939 and Watters drew its members from a large swing group he led in Oakland, CA. His intent was to resuscitate the Oliver style, which he did with a great deal of success. Although Dixieland revivalists were a dime a dozen in the '40s, the Yerba Buena Jazz Band stood apart by virtue of its authenticity and helped spread the revival worldwide. The band began playing the Dawn Club in San Francisco in 1939 and the gig continued until Watters was drafted in 1942. The band regrouped after the war and returned to the Dawn Club, where they attained great popularity. In 1947, they moved to Hambone Kelly's in El Cerrito, where they remained until Watters broke up the band in 1950. On its most influential recordings, made in the mid-'40s, the group included Watters on first trumpet, Bob Scobey on second trumpet, Harry Mordecai on banjo, Bob Helm on clarinet, Turk Murphy on trombone, Bill Dart on drums, Wally Rose on piano, and Dick Lammi on tuba. Scobey and Murphy went on to lead their own popular Dixieland outfits. Besides playing tunes from the trad repertoire, Watters also supplied new arrangements and compositions. Watters retired from playing music full-time in 1957; he studied geology and later became a chef. He began playing again in 1963, performing with Turk Murphy's band at anti-nuclear rallies in Northern California. He made one last record before retiring. --- Chris Kelsey, Rovi

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