

Leon Redbone – Red To Blue (1987)

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01. *Diamonds Don't Mean A Thing* 02. *Lovesick Blues* 03. *Reaching For Someone And Not Finding Anyone There* 04. *Somebody Stole My Gal* 05. *Steal Away Blues* 06. *Aw You Salty Dog* 07. *Border Of The Quarter* 08. *Someday Sweetheart* 09. *Whose Honey Are You?* 10. *Living With The Blues* 11. *Nobody Cares If I'm Blue* 12. *Think Of Me Thinking Of You* Leon Redbone - Guitar, Vocals Howard Alden - Banjo, Guitar Dan Barrett - Trombone Giampaolo Biagi - Drums Scott Black - Cornet David Bromberg - Dobro Eddy Davis - Guitar (Tenor) Big Jonny Dong - Tuba Peter Ecklund - Cornet Steve Fishell - Guitar (Steel) Vince Giordano - Bass, Bass (Upright), Drums, Percussion, Sax (Bass), Tuba Bobby Gordon - Clarinet Joel Helleny - Trombone Richard Hendrickson - Violin Arnie Kinsella - Drums Arnold Kinsella, Jr. - Drums Biréli Lagrène - Guitar Maggie - Vocals Richard Maximoff - Violin Emmett Miller & His Georgia Crackers Joe Muranyi - Clarinet Ken Peplowski - Clarinet Mac Rebennack - Piano The Roches - Vocals Alvin E. Roger - Violin Andy Stein - Violin, Voices Suzzy - Vocals Terre - Vocals Terry Waldo - Piano Eric Weissberg - Guitar (Steel), Pedal Steel, Pedal Steel Banjo Hank Williams, Jr. - Dialogue, Speech/Speaker/Speaking Part Charlie Wilson - Clarinet

Redbone's conversational style fits anywhere from a coffeehouse setting to a concert to hawking detergent on TV. Here, in this reissue of an album he cut in 1987, he takes on everything from country & western tunes (the opening "Diamonds Don't Mean a Thing" and "Lovesick Blues," which features a dialogue with Hank Williams, Jr.) to old favorites like "Someday Sweetheart," "Somebody Stole My Gal," and "Aw You Salty Dog." The usual Dixieland backing augmenting his tasteful fingerpicked guitar work makes this a seamless addition to his discography. --- Cub Koda, Rovi

Canadian singer and guitarist, born 26 August 1949, Cyprus. While his gravelly baritone and

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omnipresent fedora, dark glasses, and Groucho Marx mustache made him one of the more distinct and recognizable characters in popular music, little is known about the neo-vaudeville crooner Leon Redbone. Throughout his career, he steadfastly refused to divulge any information about his background or personal life; according to legend, Redbone's desire to protect his privacy was so intense that when he was approached by the famed producer John Hammond, the contact number he gave was not his own phone, but that of a dial-a-joke service.

Because Redbone first emerged as a performer in Toronto during the 1970s, he was believed to be Canadian; his work, a revival of pre-World War II ragtime, jazz, and blues sounds, recalled the work of performers ranging from Jelly Roll Morton and Bing Crosby to blackface star Emmett Miller. He made his recording debut in 1976 with *On the Track*, which featured legendary jazz violinist Joe Venuti as well as singer/songwriter Don McLean; his 1977 follow-up *Double Time* even reached the U.S. Top 40 charts, largely on the strength of his frequent appearances on television's *Saturday Night Live*.

After 1978's *Champagne Charlie*, Redbone began recording only sporadically; following 1981's *Branch to Branch*, he waited four years before reentering the studio to cut *Red to Blue*. Invariably, his albums featured guest appearances from an eclectic cast of luminaries: while 1987's *Christmas Island* included a cameo by Dr. John, 1994's *Whistling in the Wind* included duets with Ringo Starr and Merle Haggard and 2001's *Any Time* featured contributions from such jazz luminaries as guitarist Frank Vignola, reedman Ken Peplowski, and bassist Jay Leonhart. Despite his low profile, Redbone has also earned a certain measure of fame as a fixture in various television advertising campaigns. ---discogs.com

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