

The IAJRC Journal

Wendell taking another trillion solo. During the climactic solo by Marshall Royal Wendell and Terry play a very groovy *Star Spangled Banner*. Clark Terry, who is now in his eighties and still playing, always sounds good and I feel that around this time and up to his Riverside recordings, Clark was at his best.

The unidentified trumpet on the last four titles is a mystery. I have played these tracks several times but can't put him down, he plays well and sounds more modern than Terry and I feel I should know him, but just cannot identify him.

Sound is not very good on this date and *Saga Jazz* apologizes for this. Again we get the more boppish feeling in the music from this live date, at one stage the band can be heard riffing Todd Dameron's *The Squared* behind Marshall Royal's clarinet solo for example. In fact, overall, the band's arrangements sound more like Todd Dameron arrangements at times.

With the combination of film and broadcasts on this CD, overall the music sounds up very well. The sound is not too much of a problem, the original recordings were never very good and *Saga Jazz* made every effort to clean the sound up, it's certainly not Hi-Fi, but it is most listenable. Total playing time runs for a very generous nearly 90 minutes. Try checking the *Saga Jazz* website - www.sagajazz.com - they have a not too big, but high quality resume programme which, in my view, interests most people.

— Malcolm Walker

Jazz in Italy

Orchestra De Ritmo Moderni Diretta da

Francesco Ferraro

Riviera Jazz RJR CD 014

Recorded Florence, 1946, 1948. Home 1951-1951, 1953



These guys were liked Harry James and Count Basie, for the repertoire of those band leaders the whole thing... this led and fascinating 26-track compilation. Francesco Ferraro (at the mercy of his frontiers, above) led what was reportedly the jazzier big band in Italian music, besides being a group that had twice turnover in personnel because the leader's arrangements were spot on. Obviously, the trumpet work in this set is rich and expressive, at

slow tempo, such as Fritz Jackson's hit with the Earl Hines Orchestra, *Yellow Flies*, or on the live *Digga Digga Do*, done with a quick lightness and Francesco Ferraro's recognition.

Starting at the first track, the band gets a slow sort of rocking going but the rhythm is not especially swingy on their early numbers and I suppose it's because they date from 1946, when Italy was decimated from the recent war. The sets play with its but most times are intended cooler, I can only assume, some older records that were left behind by American soldiers. Not despite the country's lack of raw materials at the time, these players had plenty of fuel - every rpm of their effort on *Far Chausseaus* is indeed better than the Woody Herman original. And the ambition and a certain past-ownie quality to the solos as general make this set applause-worthy.

By 1950, the band really gets down, funky-like, as if they modelled themselves after the American bands who played mainly for the African American community - Buddy Johnson and Erskine Hawkins - but, you know, those records weren't available in postwar Florence, nor then. But because Ferraro and the guys played with so much feeling, they were not afraid to slow groove some numbers in a late 1940s jumpin' grid manner. To use a term of the time, these guys are really groovy. Glenn Miller's version of *Jerry Gray's The Spirit is Willing* was a lot fast compared to the version on this album and, although moodily, not groovy.

Francesco Ferraro's was a great swing band but they were keen to make the transition to arranged bebop and so the later numbers on this collection change in that direction. The six tracks from 1953 are pleasing, boppy originals, with the rapid breezies that we associate with releases, even of original matters of that era; for good or ill, that effect was a slow-walk-in-the-1950s led to make things sound even-sage-appeal. Still, give me crisp, quick-interval type solo over Columbia Records' crowded 1940s vocal track of *Levittown* Hall any day. Sorry to say, I don't know what happened to Francesco Ferraro as a player or leader but his own formal bebop recording is the ring on *Casare* and one wishes more of these tracks included his playing. Then again, he had so many first-class players, you'd really be missing out if you missed this CD.

Available from Riviera Jazz Records, Via Livorno 145, 50188 Roma, +39-06-5367-7179 or www.rivierajazz.it

— Andy Sment

Orb's Choice

Pepper Adams

Mighty Quinn MOP1103

Pepper Adams (arr.) Lew Newman (trumpet), 1-3-67 Jimmy Rowles (piano) Doug Watkins (bass) Mel Lewis (drum) Recorded Los Angeles, CA August 12 & 23, 1957

Since: Michel/Blokkout Blues/High Step/Eze/Alone Together/5021 Four Fucky People TT: 45:17

