



Pure Pleasure CL 836

Sydney Bechet: The Grand Master Of The Soprano Saxophon

Format: 1LP 180g 33rpm / standard sleeve

Release date: 18.11.2016

Manufacturer: Pure Pleasure

Original label: Columbia

Genre: Jazz Sidney Bechet's historic recordings for Blue Note and RCA Victor tend to overshadow some of his other work because they have been reissued more frequently, though there are lesser-known dates worth acquiring as well. This Columbia LP compiles three separate recording sessions made between 1938 and 1947. Bechet sticks almost exclusively to soprano sax throughout each of them and has ample space for his solos, full of his trademark heavy vibrato. The earliest set matches him with drummer Zutty Singleton, bassist Henry Turner, and guitarist Leonard Ware (all members of his working band at the time), along with pianist Dave Bowman and baritone saxophonist Ernie Caceres. The Bechet-Singleton collaboration "Jungle Drums" has delightful solos by the two reeds, along with Singleton's exotic tom-toms. Six tracks come from a 1947 quartet with pianist Lloyd Phillips, bassist Pops Foster, and either Freddie Moore or Arthur Herbert on drums. Bechet's swinging tribute to a legendary jazzman, "Buddy Bolden Stomp", a romp through "Just One Of Those Things", and a heartfelt arrangement of "Laura" are the highlights of this session. Another 1947 session gives a preview of the future of classic jazz, featuring a sextet led by Bechet's star pupil, a young Bob Wilber, along with Dick Wellstood, who would rise to fame as a master stride interpreter. Bechet plays soprano sax and Wilber sticks to clarinet on two numbers, though they switch roles on "Kansas City Man Blues". While Wilber doesn't have Bechet's strong vibrato on soprano sax, they are harder to tell apart on clarinet.

Ken Dryden/AMG

Recording: November 1938 and July 1947 "The Grand Master Of The Soprano Saxophon" - Sidney Bechet (ss); Ernie Caceras (bs); Bob Mielke (tb); Bob Wilber (cl); Lloyd Phillips, Dave Bowman (p); Leonard Ware (el-g); Henry Turner, George „Pops“ Foster (b); Zutty Singleton, Arthur Herbert (dr), a.o.