

James

James Leary

bass

stereo 006 4 Lps

45 rpm 180g.

The Music



Disc 1	Bemsha Swing	7.55	Denzil DeCosta Best, Thelonius Monk
	Ballad for M	4.50	J. Leary
Disc 2	Bumpin' on Sunset	3.17	Wes Montgomery
	Gone Gone Gone	3.59	Ira Gershwin, George Gershwin, Dubose Heyward
Disc 3	Quite Fire	7.36	George Cables
	So far, So good	4.10	J. Leary
Disc 4	Ambidextrous	3.11	Eddie Harris
	Fall	5.05	Wayne Shorter

BEMSHA SWING - James plays the melody and the first solo. followed by John with C.C. Fred (arco solo). and Al.

BALLAD FOR M - James plays the melody, leading the ensemble and Todd plays the piano solo.

BUMPIN' ON SUNSET - Fred plays melody lead.

GONE GONE GONE - John plays melody-lead and James plays solo.

QUIET FIRE - Solo order: Todd, James. John. and Al.

SO FAR SO GOOD - Trio featuring Todd, James. and C.C.

AMBIDEXTROUS - James plays melody-lead and solo.

FALL - James plays melody, lead and first solo, followed by Reggie.

The recorded presentation of a 'BASS CHOIR', (5 full upright string basses or BASS- VIOLS or DOUBLE BASS, as they are correctly termed), is a musical rarity. Bill Lee, (father of director Spike) produced an album in New York some years back. A French group has also released a CD fairly recently, but without the star talent of some of America's bass-playing giants; without too the masterful compositions and string-bass arrangements of James Leary himself a mega-bassman. James played bass on Todd Cochran's album, and was totally captivated by the simple miking and purist audiophile recording techniques I like to use. He said "I'd like to hear my bass choir arrangements recorded like that, but nobody would have the guts to release it..." (Which is the wrong thing to say to me, knowing, as I do, the profound pleasure that audiophiles derive from different and intensely interesting music!) And so the project was on: James elected to include Sammy Davis Jr. 's favorite drummer, who most often played alongside James for Sammy - that master-of-the-brushes Clayton Cameron, almost always referred to as "C.C." We felt too that a sympathetic pianist would add some additional colors: we played a bass-only rehearsal tape to Todd Cochran who pronounced "I love it -I want to play on it..." And so James began rehearsals again to include LA's titanic JOHN CLAYTON (ex-principal of the Amsterdam Orchestra), FRED TINSLEY (16 years with the L.A. Philharmonic), REGGIE HAMILTON (the youngest, but hottest-rising bass talent) and who else to be the "walking anchor" but that youthful (70-ish) man AL McKIBBON, one or George Shearing's recording favorites. Between these men, they have variously played bass for shining names like George Duke, Joe Sample, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonius Monk, Gerald Wilson, Frank Sinatra, Buddy Rich, Max Roach, Count Basie, Ahmad Jamal, Sonny Rollins and, and, and. . . James Leary chose his bass-choir from players who had the best credentials, to be sure.

The Musicians & Their Bases

James Leary	Bass	Hawkes-Panormo, England 1908	Al McKibbon	Steiner, Circa 1620
John Clayton	Bass	Unknown French Rarity	Fred Tinsley	Bella Rosa, Italy-Modern
Reggie Hamilton	Bass	Pollman, German-Modern	Tod Cochran	Piano

Clayton Cameron Drums

Notes On The Recording

The heart and soul of any recorded sound must surely be the acoustical properties of the room or hall itself, and the microphones being used within that acoustic. I designed the acoustics of the VITAL studio in Chino, California, for 'purist' recording-techniques only, with all the music played 'live' and captured straight onto 2 stereo tracks Measuring 40 ft x 30 ft with a cathedral-peak ceiling of 16 ft height, the entire acoustic treatment. is finished in Oregon Oak and Douglas Fir timbers with continuous Helmholtz tuned resonance absorbing slots. The floor is rubber over high-density particle board over concrete with a resultant reverberation time of approximately 1 1/2 seconds, providing a totally neutral and resonance-free acoustic.

Every single piece of equipment in the (entirely tube, entirely analogue) recording chain is of my design and is built in our factory in Chino. Somewhat unusually, this includes the microphones themselves. The MANLEY 'GOLD REFERENCE' STEREO CONDENSER microphone is the center-piece for this recording. The Manley microphone is of the so-called 'large capsule' variety, and has a diameter of 1 1/4 inches with 3-micron gold-deposition Mylar diaphragms. The stereo version has one fixed capsule and one rotatable capsule which offers a continuously variable 'pick-up pattern'. I most often choose the 'figure of 8' in the classic Blumlein coincident crossed pair mode. For our own recordings we use custom versions of the 'REFERENCE GOLD' microphone. The entire vacuum tube amplification is built into the microphone body, (8 triodes in the stereo microphone!), and no transformer coupling or external amplification is used at all.

The unity-gain mixer is based around the MANLEY REFERENCE preamplifier and can mix up to 10 microphones into 2 busses. Mixing of microphones is achieved by each input having it's own dedicated grid, and not by the usual "pot and build-out resistor" method as found in every console in use in the recording industry. No equalization of any kind is employed. (although we do have MANLEY PULTECS and SHELF-PARAMETRIC Equalizers on hand to patch in if needed, say. with electronic based instruments that might be played on a rock or pop session). All fixed wiring in the patch-bay studio and control room is VTL 'White wire' - 3 x pure copper and 2 x silver cores in Teflon.

We fully updated the mechanics in the 1/2 inch 2-track Studer C37 analogue tape deck which contains only our Manley pure tube circuitry. At 15 ips this machine is flat from 20 HZ to 20 KHZ ± 0.2 dB.

AGFA type 468 tape was used at 200 nano-Webers. but run somewhat on the 'hot' side, (+5dB), without any kind of noise reduction. Again, we chose to accept a small amount of tape hiss. in preference to the sterility and inherent phase-shift distortion produced by (solid-state) noise reduction.

David Manley

Produced & Engineered by David Manley

Mastering & Cutting by Giulio Cesare Ricci

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