



Pure Pleasure BCP-71
 Stan Levey: Grand Stan
 Format: 1LP 33rpm / standard sleeve

Manufacturer: Pure Pleasure
 Original label: Bethlehem
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Mr. Levey worked with Peggy Lee, Ella Fitzgerald, Bobby Darin and many other singers, and with the big bands of Benny Goodman, Woody Herman and Stan Kenton. He was also a ubiquitous presence in Los Angeles recording studios for many years. But he earned his place in jazz history primarily through his work with Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, the leading lights of bebop.

A self-taught drummer who played left-handed even though he was naturally right-handed, Mr. Levey was still a teenager when he began attracting attention for the ease with which he handled the breakneck tempos and tricky accents of the modern style. Working with Gillespie and Parker, he also attracted attention for being one of two white musicians (the pianist Al Haig was the other) in an otherwise all-black group, by no means a common sight in the 1940's.

Stan Levey was born in Philadelphia on April 5, 1926. The son of a prizefight promoter, he took up boxing about the same time he took up drums, and for a few years pursued both careers. But boxing, at which he was never exceptional, soon lost out to drumming, at which he was.

His work with Gillespie and Parker in 1945, when bebop was new and controversial, won him the admiration of his peers but not much of a living. Greater success came a few years later when he began working with big bands.

In 1954, after two years with Kenton, he settled in Los Angeles, where he spent five years with the Lighthouse All-Stars, the group in residence at a popular local nightclub. He was also in great demand for studio work, recording with many of the best-known musicians in jazz and playing on hit records like Peggy Lee's "Fever". In addition, his drumming was heard on the soundtracks of hundreds of movies and television shows, including five Disney documentaries for which he wrote the music.

Recording: August 1955 in New York City "Grand Stan" - Conte Candoli (tp); Frank Rosolino (tb); Richie Kamuca (ts); Sonny Clark (p); Leroy Vinnegar (b) Stan Levey (dr)