

The
TENORSAX
of
CARLOS WESLEY BYAS
“DON”
PART 1
(1938 – 1946)

Born: Muskogee, Oklahoma, Oct. 21, 1912
 Died: Amsterdam, Holland, Aug. 24, 1972.

Introduction:

Don Byas has always belonged to my great tenorsax favourites, and he was so good that it is unjust to classify him as belonging to some 'Hawkins school'. He was a master of all tempi, the slowest ballads to the fastest uptempo, and he had always something important to say with his horn. Although he visited Norway several times, I am sorry to say I never met him.

Early history:

Began on violin, then switched to alto sax. As a teenager worked with Bennie Moten and Terrence Holder, also played in Oklahoma City with Walter Page's Blue Devils (ca. 1929). In 1931-32 led own band: Don Carlos and his Collegiate Ramblers (based at Langston College, Oklahoma). In 1933 left Oklahoma with Bert Johnson and his Sharps and Flats, changed to tenorsax with this band, worked in California and then remained in Los Angeles. In July 1935 played in Lionel Hampton's Big Band, then joined big band led by Eddie Barefield. With Buck Clayton's 14 Gentlemen of Harlem in spring of 1936, briefly with Lorenzo Flennoy, subsequently worked under Charlie Echols' leadership from August 1936. To New York with Eddie Mallory's Band (March 1937) accompanying Ethel Waters, remained with this band for about 18 months, then worked briefly with Don Redman and Lucky Millinder. Joined Andy Kirk in February 1939. Left Kirk in July 1940, worked with Edgar Hayes' Band and also toured with Benny Carter (September 1940). Joined Count Basie in early January 1941, replacing Paul Bascomb. Left the Count late Nov./early Dec. 1943. Left for Europe Sept./Oct. 1946, stayed there (ref. John Chilton).

DON BYAS SOLOGRAPHY

**TIMME ROSENKRANTZ
& HIS BARRELHOUSE BARONS****NYC. May 27, 1938**

Rex Stewart (cnt), Billy Hicks (tp), Tyree Glenn (tb, vib), Russell Procope, Rudy Williams (as), Don Byas (ts), Billy Kyle (p), Brick Fleagle (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Leo Mathiesen (arr), Inez Cavanaugh (vo-23503,04).

Four titles were recorded for Victor, two have DB:

| | | |
|----------|----------------------------|--|
| 023502-1 | A Wee Bit Of Swing | Solo 8 bars. (FM) |
| 023503-1 | Is This To Be My Souvenir? | Intro 4 bars. Solo 16+6 bars, (cnt) on bridge. (S) |

No doubt that DB appears as a new and exciting tenorsax performer, although Timme's efforts as a producer do not give him the solo space he deserves. "... Wee Bit ..." is the most interesting item with glimpses of what later would be in evidence as incredible technique. "... Souvenir" is beautiful, but the playing is rather straight and not particularly exciting.

**LUCKY MILLINDER
& HIS ORCHESTRA****probably late 1938 early 1939**

Lucky Millinder (vo, ldr), Frank Galbraith, Elton Hill, William "Chiefie" Scott (tp), John "Rocks" McConnell, Bert Clagett, Ed Johnson (tb), Ivy Wilson (sop, ts), Beryl Steiner (as), Ted Barnett (cl, as), Don Byas (ts), Bill Doggett (p), Roscoe Fritz (g), Wellington "Wimpy" Lawrence (b), Shadow Wilson (dm). Frank Newton (tp) not present as believed earlier.

Soundtrack from the film "**Readin' Ridin' And Rhythm**". The film was released ca. February 1939, making early 1938 way too early for the soundtrack recording.

All information above from Mark Cantor (correction of Jan. 14, 2014).

Five titles:

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Unknown title | No solo. |
| Unknown title | No solo. |
| Jamboree Jones | No solo. |
| Ride, Red, Ride | Solo with orch 16 bars. (F) |
| Unknown title | Solo with orch 8 bars. (FM) |

This is certainly a shocking (yes!) debut (almost)! On "Ride ..." Don Byas enters with a defiant vibrato and continues with a strong solo with tempo shifts. Immediately he manifests himself as a new "star" with sure execution and flawless technique. It may be surprising, but Don is in fact no novice with his 25 years of age and a varied, professional background so unfortunately undocumented. The "Ride ..." must be one of the fastest tenorsax soli in jazz until this point of time and gives promises for the coming years. Note also the existence of a second tenorsax item from this soundtrack, not issued at the time of writing!

ANDY KIRK AND HIS CLOUDS OF JOY**NYC. March 16, 1939**

Andy Kirk (dir), Harry Lawson, Clarence Trice, Earl Thomson (tp), Ted Donnelly, Henry Wells (tb), John Harrington (cl, as, bar), Earl Miller (as), Don Byas, Dick Wilson (ts), Mary Lou Williams (p, arr), Floyd Smith (g, elg), Booker Collins (b), Ben Thigpen (dm), Pha Terrell, June Richmond (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Decca, one has DB:

| | | |
|---------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 65188-A | You Set Me On Fire | Solo 8 bars. (SM) |
|---------|--------------------|-------------------|

NYC. March 23, 1939

Same. Four titles were recorded for Decca, one has DB:

| | | |
|---------|---------------------|------------------|
| 65251-A | I'll Never Fail You | Solo 8 bars. (M) |
|---------|---------------------|------------------|

NYC. Nov. 15, 1939

Same. Four titles were recorded for Decca, two have DB:

| | | |
|---------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| 66877-A | I'm Getting Nowhere With You | Solo 8 bars. (SM) |
| 66879-A | Please Don't Talk About Me WIMG | Soli 4 and 4 bars. (M) |

Brief soli but not without merits. "... Fail You" and "... With You" are rather sweet and not very interesting, where it not for the fact that they demonstrate the background of the great Don Byas. The other two items are more important in themselves; "... Fire" has some Evans influence from Basie's "Blue and Sentimental",

and the brief soli in "Please ...", are colorful and much more interesting than you may imagine from the description "4 and 4 bars". These sides would not be considered very important without prior knowledge of DB, on the other hand, they are quite interesting and well performed.

ANDY KIRK**AND HIS TWELVE CLOUDS OF JOY****NYC. Dec. 15 or 16, 1939**

Personnel as usual.

WJZ broadcast, four titles, "Cherokee", "South Of The Border" (NC), "Dunkin' A Doughnut" and "It's Funny To Everyone But Me" (NC), but all tenorsax soli are by DW.

ANDY KIRK AND HIS TWELVE CLOUDS OF JOY **NYC. Jan. 2, 1940**

Andy Kirk (dir), Harry Lawson, Clarence Trice, Earl Thomson (tp), Ted Donnelly, Fred Robinson (tb), John Harrington (cl, as, bar), Earl Miller (as), Don Byas, Dick Wilson (ts), Mary Lou Williams (p, arr), Floyd Smith (g, elg), Booker Collins (b), Ben Thigpen (dm), June Richmond, Pha Terrell (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Decca, two have DB:

| | | |
|---------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 67010-A | Wham | Solo 32 bars. (FM) |
| 67010-B | Wham | As above. (FM) |
| 67013-A | It Always Will Be You | Solo 4 bars. (M) |

Missing the New Year's Eve of a great decade by a few hours, DB kicks off on two takes of "Wham", a new tenorsax star is shining! He still does not have the magnificent technique and overall musical comprehension as four years later, but his style is easily recognizable, and with his modern harmonies he gives evidence of his potential.

ANDY KIRK AND HIS CLOUDS OF JOY**Spring 1940**

Personnel similar to that of Jan. 2, 1940.

Different broadcasts.

On March 20, "The Sheik Of Araby" and "Cherokee" probably from The Cotton Club, but no DB. On May 5 there is "The Sheik Of Araby", but no DB, however:

| | |
|----------|--------------------------------------|
| Marcheta | Solo 16+8 bars, orch on bridge. (FM) |
|----------|--------------------------------------|

On May 6 there is "The Riff", same title also on May 24, but no DB. On June 22 "Boog It", but no DB.

An exciting item "Marcheta", featuring both tenorsax players. It must be admitted that DW, first out, has a better grip on this one. DB plays with fire, but he seems to have some harmonic problems he does not manage to solve properly.

BILLIE HOLIDAY ACCOMPANIED BY**NYC. Sept. 12, 1940**

Roy Eldridge (tp), Georgie Auld, Don Redman (as), Don Byas, Jimmy Hamilton (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), John Collins (g), Al Hall (b), Kenny Clarke (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Okeh, two have DB:

| | | |
|---------|------------------------|----------------------|
| 28617-1 | I'm All For You | Intro and break. (S) |
| 28617-2 | I'm All For You | As above. (S) |
| 28620-1 | Practice Makes Perfect | Solo 8 bars. (M) |
| 28620-2 | Practice Makes Perfect | As above. (M) |
| 28620-3 | Practice Makes Perfect | As above. (M) |
| 28620-4 | Practice Makes Perfect | As above. (M) |

DB is disappointing here; "... For You" has only some straight contributions, and "Practice ..." is not very successful; not even four takes can create some attention.

PETE JOHNSON'S BAND/**JOE TURNER AND HIS FLY CATS/****HOT LIPS PAGE AND HIS BAND****NYC. Nov. 11, 1940**

Hot Lips Page (tp), Eddie Barefield (cl, as, (not on 68333)), Don Stovall (as (not on 68333)), Don Byas (ts), Pete Johnson (p), John Collins (g), Abe Bolar (b), A.G. Godley (dm), Joe Turner (vo-68333).

Four titles were recorded for Decca, 68332 issued under PJ, 68333 under JT, and 68334/35 under HLP:

| | | |
|---------|-----------|----------|
| 68332-A | 627 Stomp | No solo. |
|---------|-----------|----------|

| | | |
|---------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 68333-A | Piney Brown Blues | No solo. |
| 68334-A | Lafayette | Solo 16 bars. (FM) |
| 68335-A | South | Solo 16 bars. (M) |

Two extremely dynamic and well conceived soli on De 18124 by a musician who by now must be considered one of the most advanced tenorsax players around.

HOT LIPS PAGE AND HIS BAND **NYC. Dec. 3, 1940**

Personnel including Don Byas (ts).

Two titles were recorded for Decca but no tenorsax soli.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 20, 1941**

Buck Clayton, Harry Edison, Al Killian, Ed Lewis (tp), Ed Cuffee, Dan Minor, Dicky Wells (tb), Tab Smith (sop, as), Earle Warren (as), Don Byas, Buddy Tate (ts), Jack Washington (bar), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Helen Humes (vo).

Two titles were recorded for Okeh, but no DB.

NYC. Jan. 22, 1941

Same. Three titles were recorded for Okeh, one has DB:

| | | |
|---------|----------------|-------------------|
| 29533-1 | You Lied To Me | Solo 8 bars. (SM) |
|---------|----------------|-------------------|

NYC. Jan. 28, 1941

Same plus Jimmy Rushing (vo).

Six titles were recorded for Okeh, five have DB:

| | | |
|---------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 29580-1 | Music Makers | Solo 8 bars. (M) |
| 29580-2 | Music Makers | As above. (M) |
| 29581-1 | Jump The Blues Away | Solo 16 bars. (FM) |
| 29581-2 | Jump The Blues Away | As above. (FM) |
| 29582-1 | Deep In The Blues | Solo 8 bars. (SM) |
| 29582-2 | Deep In The Blues | As above? () |
| 29583-1 | Jitters | Solo 6 bars. (F) |
| 29583-2 | Jitters | As above. (F) |
| 29583-R | Jitters | As above. (F) |
| 29584-2 | Tuesday At Ten | Soli 10 and 8 bars. (M) |

After a shortlived and seemingly unsuccessful replacement for Prez by Paul Bascomb (poor guy!), Don Byas takes the chair. And wow, he goes! With no hesitation, he swings along as if the Basie band had been his nursery! There are more interesting performances to come, but even here we hear the tenorsax giant. Note for instance his three brief breaks on "Jitters". I would have ranked "... Makers" at the top, but I was somewhat disappointed that the takes were utterly similar. (After close listening I believe that this is a case of dubbing! What is your opinion?) So maybe "Jump ... Away"? Also here the two takes do not differ much, however. Perhaps the almost Ike Quebecian soli on "Tuesday ..."? Anyway, they are all worth listening to! "You Lied ..." is, however, interesting only because it lets us hear DB play sweet and straight.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **Chi. April 10, 1941**

Personnel as Jan. 20, plus Coleman Hawkins (ts-3678,80).

Five titles were recorded for Okeh, two have DB:

| | | |
|--------|---------------|--------------------|
| 3677-1 | I Do Mean You | Solo 16 bars. (M) |
| 3579-1 | H & J | Solo 16 bars. (FM) |
| 3679-2 | H & J | As above. (FM) |

Like many times before, one must marvel at the lack of inventiveness by record producers! Hawk and Don at the same place, but never soloing on the same record!! Even at this early stage of Don Byas' career, it was obvious that he was of the same caliber as Hawk and the other great ones. His solo in "I Do ..." is one of my favorites, he combines simple drive and swing with rich harmonic texture. The takes of "H & J" are surprisingly different, with take 1 almost modest at the beginning, to develop slowly and logically, while take 2 starts more explosively.

JAM SESSION AT CARNEGIE HALL **NYC. April 23, 1941**

Personnel according to Sheridan definitely including Buck Clayton, Charlie Shavers (tp), J. C. Higginbotham, Will Bradley (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Tab Smith (as), Don Byas, Buddy Tate (ts), Count Basie, Pete Johnson (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm).

AFRS No. J 15-A. Two titles:

| | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| One O'Clock Jump | Solo 24 bars. (FM) |
| Blues | Solo 36 bars. (M) |

The three blues choruses are quite typical for DB's style at this stage and of fine quality. "... Jump" has earlier been attributed to Buddy Tate, but is by DB.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. May 5, 1941**

Same. NBC broadcast "Chamber Music Society of Lower Basin Street".

| | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Gone With What Wind | No solo. |
| Basie Special | No solo. |

JAM SESSION **NYC. May 8, 1941**

Hot Lips Page, Joe Guy (tp), Rudy Williams (as), Don Byas ?, Kermit Scott (ts), "Tex" (p), Charlie Christian (g), Nick Fenton (b), Kenny Clarke (dm).

Recorded at Minton's Playhouse by Jerry Newman.

| | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Stompin' At The Savoy | No solo. |
|-----------------------|----------|

JAM SESSION **NYC. May 1941**

Joe Guy (tp), Don Byas (ts), Charlie Christian (g), Nick Fenton (b), Kenny Clarke (dm).

Recorded at Minton's Playhouse by Jerry Newman.

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Up On Teddy's Hill | Solo 64 bars. (FM) |
| Down On Teddy's Hill | In ensemble. (FM) |

Note: "Up ..." and "Down ..." are "Honeysuckle Rose" and "I Got Rhythm" respectively. "Down ..." also issued as "Rhythm-A-Ning".

Among the more ordinary DB performances, he seems not quite to get into his otherwise relaxed groove.

JAM SESSION **NYC. May 1941**

Hot Lips Page, Vic Coulsen, Joe Guy (tp), Rudy Williams (as), Don Byas, unknown possibly "Pritchie" (ts), Allan Tinney (p), Ebenezer Paul (b), Marion "Taps" Miller (dm-"... Go"), unknown (dm-"On ...").

Recorded by Jerry Newman at Clark Monroe's Uptown House on West 133rd Street.

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Guy's Got To Go | No solo. (M) |
| On With Charlie Christian | In ensemble. (FM) |

Note: "... Go" and "On ..." are "I Got Rhythm" and "Stompin' At The Savoy" respectively. "On ..." is also issued as "Lips Flips".

Obviously Jerry Newman only managed to capture parts of this jam session, and unfortunately DB is left out.

JAM SESSION **NYC. May 1941**

Dizzy Gillespie (tp), unknown (tp), Don Byas, possibly another (ts), Kenny Kersey (p), Nick Fenton (b), Harold "Doc" West (dm).

Recorded by Jerry Newman at Monroe's.

| | |
|----------|---|
| Stardust | Fades in to solo 34 bars. Possibly solo 32 bars. Acc. (tp) 16 bars at the end. (S) |
|----------|---|

One of the earliest Jerry Newman recordings made available and not without reason, having the most delicate ballad playing by the two up-coming stars, Dizzy and Don! DB combines emotion with sovereign technique, note for instance the last eight with the flashing start and the gorgeous conclusion! Note that the second solo has been suggested to be by another tenorsax player, possibly Chu Berry! Personally I do not think this is correct. Your comments are welcome!

JAM SESSION**NYC. possibly May 1941**

Joe Guy (tp), Don Byas, unknown (ts), Thelonious Monk (p), unknown (b), (dm), Helen Humes (vo).

Recorded by Jerry Newman at Minton's.

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Stardust | Weak "straight" obligato. Solo 64 bars. Weak obligato. (S) |
| Exactly Like You | Duet with (tp) 32 bars to weak (tp)/(ts) obligato 64 bars. Soli 64 and 8 bars. Weak obligato. (M) |

Another beautiful version of "Stardust", obviously DB liked this song very much. One recognizes some of his licks, appropriately placed for effect but not at all as "new" as one might believe from one version only. The result is beautiful and highly noteworthy anyway. Nice is also "Exactly ..." but not as intense as many other soli from this era.

JAM SESSION**NYC. probably May 1941**

Joe Guy, unknown (tp), Don Byas (ts), unknown (p), (b), (dm).

Recorded by Jerry Newman at Minton's.

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Uptown | Solo 36 bars. (M) |
| Body And Soul | Duet with (tp) 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. (S). Solo 64 bars, with (tp) last half. (FM) |

This is one of my favorite DB jam sessions recorded by Jerry Newman. In "Uptown" he takes three blues choruses one better than the other, the start of the third one makes your hair rise! And "Body ..." is a true masterpiece in double tempo, way before Ben Webster did the same on his Savoy recording. He plays magnificently in the slow tempo, but the relaxed and self-confident uptempo is even more impressive. It does not hurt to state it and repeat it: Don Byas was one of the absolutely most creative tenorsax performers from 1941 and through the forties.

JAM SESSION**NYC. probably May 1941**Joe Guy (tp), Don Byas (ts), Thelonious Monk (p), unknown (b), Kenny Clarke (dm).
Recorded by Jerry Newman at Minton's.

Dated May 4 on Onyx 208, but this is probably not correct.

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| I Can't Give You Anything But Love | Solo 64 bars. (M) |
| Indiana | Solo 64 and 64 bars. Solo 32 bars to close. (F) |

This jam session is also one of the finest so gracefully donated to us by JN. Monk and Klook, most important in the modern jazz to come, here gets into a rolling, swing groove, and DB blows like ...!! Two beautiful choruses on "... But Love" compete for top priority of his 1941 performances, and the fast "Indiana" is treated as if no efforts are needed; chorus after chorus are filled with exceptional talent. It is therefore interesting to note that Don is no "talent" really but a man close to 30 years! It took him an unusually long time to get recognition, also because he matured slowly to judge from the sparse recordings before this fruitful NYC period. But here he demonstrates that he has achieved "stardom"!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. May 21, 1941**

Personnel as Jan. 28, except Kenny Clarke (dm) replaces Jones on 30520/21.

Four titles were recorded for Okeh, two have DB:

| | | |
|---------|--------------------|------------------------|
| 30520-1 | You Betcha My Life | Solo 5 bars. (M) |
| 30520-2 | You Betcha My Life | As above. (M) |
| 30520-3 | You Betcha My Life | As above. (M) |
| 30522-1 | Tune Town Shuffle | Soli 4 and 4 bars. (M) |
| 30522-2 | Tune Town Shuffle | As above. (M) |
| 30522-3 | Tune Town Shuffle | As above. (M) |

NYC. July 2, 1941

Same, except Eli Robinson, Robert Scott (tb) replace Minor and Wells.

Four titles were recorded for Okeh, one has DB:

| | | |
|---------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 30834-1 | Diggin' For Dex | Soli 8 and 4 bars. (FM) |
| 30834-2 | Diggin' For Dex | As above. (FM) |

30834-3 Diggin' For Dex As above. (FM)

Incredible, three takes of each, and this is never too much!! Note particularly the remarkable variations in just five bars of "... Betcha ..."! Or equally, as is the trademark of a jazz giant, in the four-bar pieces on "Tune Town ...". "... Dex" is really Buddy Tate's piece, and Byas takes only the four bars at the end, but sometimes it seems as if he has already influenced Tate, as in his eight after the bridge. In all, very important Byas sessions!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. July/Aug. 1941

Personnel as July 2, except Dicky Wells (tb) replaces Cuffee.
RCA film soundtracks.

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Air Mail Special | Solo 16 bars. (F) |
| Take Me Back Baby | No solo. |

Fast tempo, no problems!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA Aug. 9, 1941

Personnel as usual.
Broadcast, Motorola Home Recording Disc, made available by Uwe Zänisch (May 2018), no DB on "One O'Clock Jump" (NC) but:

| | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Air Mail Special | Solo 16 bars. (F) |
|------------------|-------------------|

JAM SESSION NYC. Sept. 15, 1941

Hot Lips Page, Vic Coulsen (tp), Don Byas (ts), Allan Tinney (p), Ebenezer Paul (b), "Popeye" (dm).
Recorded at Monroe's by Jerry Newman.

| | |
|------------|--|
| Foxy Herbs | Duet with (tp) 24 bars to solo 36 bars. Acc. (tp) several choruses. Solo 24 bars. (M) |
|------------|--|

The groovy blues, featuring DB with three choruses of the very best quality!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Sept. 19, 1941

Buck Clayton, Harry Edison, Al Killian, Ed Lewis (tp), Eli Robinson, Robert Scott, Dicky Wells (tb), Tab Smith (sop, as), Earle Warren (as), Don Byas, Buddy Tate (ts), Jack Washington (as, bar), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Jimmy Rushing (vo).
CBS broadcast from Cafe Society Uptown.

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| There'll Be Some Changes Made | Solo 4 bars. (FM) |
| 9:20 Special | Soli 4 and 12 bars. (M) |
| You Betcha My Life | Solo 5 bars. (M) |
| Tuesday At Ten | Solo 18+8 bars, (p) on bridge. (M) |

NYC. Sept. 20, 1941

Same.

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes Indeed | No solo. |
| Tom Thumb | No solo. |
| 9:20 Special | Soli 4 and 12 bars. (FM) |
| I Guess I'll Have To Dream | Soli 2 and 10 bars. (SM) |
| Basie Boogie | No solo. |
| There'll Be Some Changes Made | Solo 4 bars. (FM) |
| Gone With What Wind | No solo. |
| One O'Clock Jump | No solo. |

NYC. Sept. 23, 1941

Same.

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Diggin' For Dex | Soli 8 and 4 bars. (FM) |
| Be Fair | No solo. |
| Love Jumped Out | No solo. |

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Tune Town Shuffle | Soli 4 and 4 bars. (M) |
| My Melancholy Baby | Solo 8 bars. (M) |
| Every Tub | Intro 8 bars to solo 32 bars. Coda 4 bars. (F) |

The Cafe Society broadcasts are valuable supplements to the studio recordings of the Basie orchestra, but I am not quite satisfied with the solo space allocated to DB. Not everything is of top quality either, like the bombastic "... Special" and "... Dream". The best items seem to be "Tuesday ..." and "... Tub".

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 24, 1941**
Same personnel. Lynne Sherman (vo).
Four titles were recorded for Okeh, but no DB.

NYC. Sept. 29, 1941

Same personnel.
WOR broadcast from Cafe Society Uptown.

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| You Can't Run Around | No solo. |
| Jumpin' At The Woodside | Solo 64 bars. (F) |
| One O'Clock Jump | No solo. |

NYC. Oct. 1, 1941

Same personnel. Paul Robeson (vo).
Three titles were recorded for Okeh, one has DB:

| | | |
|---------|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| 31376-1 | Something New | Solo 16+8 bars, orch on bridge. (M) |
| 31376-2 | Something New | As above. (M) |

NYC. Oct. 1, 1941

Same personnel. Cafe Society.

Tune Town Shuffle

NYC. Oct. 2, 1941

Same personnel. Cafe Society.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Out The Window | Soli 8, 4 and 4 bars. (FM) |
| I Want A Little Girl | No solo. |
| Rocking The Blues | Solo 24 bars. (FM) |
| What Word Is Sweeter Than Sweetheart? | No solo. |
| Something New | Solo 16+8 bars, orch on bridge. (M) |
| Topsy | No solo. |
| Air Mail Special | No solo. |

NYC. Oct. 6, 1941

Same personnel. Cafe Society.

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Wiggle Woogie | No solo. |
| Flamingo | No solo. |
| Tom Thumb | No solo. |
| One-Two-Three-O'Laury | No solo. |
| I Do Mean You | Solo 16 bars. (FM) |
| Tuesday At Ten | Solo 18+8 bars, (p) on bridge. (M) |
| Moten Swing | No solo. |

NYC. Oct. 7, 1941

Same personnel. Cafe Society.

| | |
|------------------|----------|
| Board Meeting | No solo. |
| Down, Down, Down | No solo. |

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Take Me Back, Baby | No solo. |
| Blue Lou | No solo. |
| I Found You In The Train | No solo. |
| Broadway | Solo 64 bars. (M) |
| Sweet Georgia Brown | No solo. |

NYC. Oct. 10, 1941

Same personnel. Cafe Society.

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Down For Double | No solo. |
| This Time The Dream's On Me | Solo 8 bars. (SM) |
| Elmer's Tune | No solo. |
| Yes Indeed | No solo. |
| Moon Nocturne | No solo. |

NYC. Oct. 14, 1941Same personnel. Dinah Shore (vo).
WOR-Mutual "Men Behind The Guns" broadcast.

| | |
|---------------------|------------|
| Air Mail Special | Solo . (.) |
| Love Me Or Leave Me | Solo . (.) |
| Bugle Call Rag | No solo. |

NYC. Oct. 20, 1941

Same. Cafe Society Uptown.

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Wiggle Woogie | No solo. |
| Rockin' The Blues | Solo 24 bars. (FM) |
| 9:20 Special | No solo. |
| Moten Swing | No solo. |

NYC. Oct. 21, 1941

Same. Cafe Society Uptown.

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| H & J | Solo 16 bars. (FM) |
| Diggin' For Dex | Soli 8 and 4 bars. (FM) |
| Goin' To Chicago | No solo. |

NYC. Oct. 25, 1941

Same. Cafe Society Uptown.

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Baby, Don't Tell On Me | No solo. |
| Swinging The Blues | Solo 36 bars. (F) |
| One O'Clock Jump | No solo. |

Several interesting performances last month. "Broadway" calls for attention, one of the famous Prez-vehicles. DB never manages to lift it to comparable heights, the band seems to play more by routine than by inspiration, but the solo is still quite interesting, the second chorus being the best one. Also in "Swinging ..." he pays his tribute to Prez, note the opening, but the rest is DB proper. Note also the single 78 rpm. item "Something New". When listening to the ballroomlike introduction, it sounds rather straight. So does the second one. Still they are quite dissimilar! And a broadcast version adds to the fun! This is characteristic of the really great jazz performers, remember for instance Prez in Teddy Wilson's "Mean To Me".

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. Nov. 3, 1941**

Personnel as Sept. 24, 1941.

Three titles were recorded for Okeh, one has DB:

| | | |
|---------|---------------|------------------|
| 31643-1 | Platterbrains | Solo 8 bars. (M) |
| 31643-2 | Platterbrains | As above. (M) |

31643-3 Platterbrains As above. (M)

Again a very interesting three-takes performance with very different soli, crammed with interesting details.

JAM SESSION NYC. Nov. 12, 1941

Don Byas, Skippy Williams (ts), Allen Tinney (p), probably Ebenezer Paul (b), Bob Holing (dm).

Recorded at Monroe's by Jerry Newman.

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| I Surrender Dear (6'10") | Solo 32 bars (1 st (ts)-solo). (SM). Solo 16 bars to 96 bars 4/4 with SW (F) to ens closing 8 bars. (SM) |
|-----------------------------|---|

A very interesting jam with two good players, not only one, leading to an exciting chase. You probably had no idea SW could play so well, and Don has to take out his very best to stay slightly ahead!

JAM SESSION NYC. Nov. 12, 1941

Hot Lips Page, Vic Coulsen, George Treadwell (tp), Don Byas, Skippy Williams (ts), Allan Tinney (p), probably Ebenezer Paul (b), Bob Holing (dm).

Recorded at Monroe's by Jerry Newman.

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Get Together and Jump | Soli 5 and 4 choruses of 12 bars (1 st and 3 rd (ts)-solo). (FM) |
| I Surrender Dear (10'40") | Solo 32 bars. (S). Solo 16 bars. Ensemble/chase 64 bars. (M) |

Why there are two versions of "... Dear" on the same date is rather unclear, but they are certainly different. Here DB plays mainly slow, while SW goes medium, but they blend in a rather disorganized chase with the trumpets at the end. I find the previous version slightly better. "... Jump" is a fast medium blues with good but not remarkable soli, in the last of the Jerry Newman recordings of Don Byas.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Nov. 17, 1941

Personnel as Sept. 19. Jimmy Rushing, Lynne Sherman (vo).

Five titles were recorded for Okeh, one has DB:

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 31768-1 Harvard Blues | Solo 24 bars. (SM) |
| 31768-2 Harvard Blues | As above. (SM) |

NYC. Jan. 21, 1942

Same. Henry Nemo, Jimmy Rushing (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Okeh, one has DB:

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 32274-1 One O'Clock Jump | Solo 12 bars. (M) |
| 32274-2 One O'Clock Jump | As above. (M) |

I have never been too fond of this "One O'Clock Jump" in general, but certainly Byas gives it importance with his two colorful blues choruses of which take 1 definitely is the best. The favorite item for most people, however, will probably be the unusual, juicy and inspired "Harvard Blues", one of the great Basie records from this period. This is great Don Byas, great tenor saxophone in general, jazz history. Take 1 is the best one, but this is also due to a better microphone balance.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA Chi. April 3, 1942

Personnel as Sept. 19, 1941, except Jerry Blake (as) replaces Smith.

Three titles were recorded for Columbia, no DB.

June 20, 1942

Same, except Snooky Young (tp), Johnny Brown (as) replace Clayton and Blake.

Unknown titles in Library of Congress.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ALL-AMERICAN RHYTHM SECTION L.A. July 24, 1942

Buck Clayton (tp), Don Byas (ts), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Joe Jones (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Columbia:

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| HCO-874-1 Royal Garden Blues | Soli 8, 24 and 2 bars. In ens. (FM) |
| HCO-875-1 Bugle Blues | Soli 12 and 16 bars. In ens. (FM) |

HCO-876-1 Sugar Blues Soli 18 bars. Coda. (S)

HCO-880-1 St. Louis Blues Duet with (tp) 16 bars.
Solo 12 bars. In ensemble. (SM)

I have a certain ambivalence towards this session as such, it never really ignites like it is supposed to. The reason is the segmented production; whenever somebody gets in the groove, somebody else or the arrangement takes over! Therefore the slow "Sugar Blues" works best as a whole. When we analyze "the segments" we find excellent DB all over. I wouldn't have chosen "St. Louis ..." but when the "formalities" are over, wow, how he swings!! And for another highlight, the opening of his longest solo on "Royal..." is really something!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA L.A. July 27, 1942

Buck Clayton, Harry Edison, Al Killian, Ed Lewis (tp), Eli Robinson, Robert Scott, Dicky Wells (tb), Caughy Roberts (as), Earle Warren (as, vo), Don Byas, Buddy Tate (ts), Jack Washington (as, bar), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Jimmy Rushing (vo).

Seven titles were recorded for Columbia, two have DB:

HCO-889-1 Ride On Obbligato 4, 4 and 4 bars.
Obbligato 4 bars. (S)

HCO-890-1 Lost The Blackout Blues Solo 10 bars. (S)

Southgate, Ca., Aug. 20, 1942

Same. KFJ-Mutual broadcast from Trianon Ballroom.

Seven titles, three have DB:

Diggin' For Dex Soli 8 and 4 bars. (M)

Rhythm Man Solo 16 bars. (F)

My, What A Fry! Solo 64 bars. (FM)

Hollywood, Aug. 21, 1942

Same. Columbia film soundtrack for "Reveille with Beverly":

One O'Clock Jump Solo 12 bars. (FM)

Southgate, Aug./Sept. 1942

Same or as Sept. 29, 1941. KFJ-Mutual broadcasts from Trianon Ballroom.

Eleven titles, four have DB:

Every Tub Intro 8 bars to solo 24 bars.
Coda 2 bars. (F)

Shorty George Solo 16 bars. (M)

Swinging The Blues Solo 36 bars. (F)

My, What A Fry! Solo 64 bars. (FM)

Hollywood, Sept. 29, 1942

Personnel as July 27, except Marvin Johnson (as) replaces Roberts and Vernon Alley (b) replaces Page.

AFRS "Command Performance" 33. One title, no DB.

Hollywood, prob. Oct. 1942

Same. Dorothy Dandridge, Jack Williams (vo).

Soundtrack "Hit Parade of 1943", no DB.

The Columbia session above has two extremely delicate and memorable items. "Ride On" is perhaps the Basie record where the ratio between quality and public knowledge is largest! Byas' obbligato tags at the end of each blues phrase are extremely forceful, personal and musical. And the "... Blackout ..." is of a quality similar to "Harvard Blues", except that the arrangement takes over the last two bars and makes the performance somewhat amputated. Note also the long versions of "... Fry!" from Trianon Ballroom, taken in almost medium tempo, slower than Prez later used to do it. And the "... Jump" version on the soundtrack is delicious!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Jan. 19, 1943

Buck Clayton, Harry Edison, Al Killian, Ed Lewis (tp), Eli Robinson, Robert Scott, Dicky Wells (tb), Marvin Johnson, Earle Warren (as), Don Byas, Buddy Tate (ts), Jack Washington (as, bar), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Thelma Carpenter, Jimmy Rushing (vo).

WMCA "Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer Guest Night" broadcast.

Eight titles, three have DB:

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Every Tub | Intro 8 bars to solo 24 bars. Coda. (F) |
| Swingin' The Blues | Solo 36 bars. (F) |
| KMA (Dance Of The Gremlins) | Solo with orch 32 bars, behind announcers. (M) |

Never did you hear the Count Basie orchestra more inspired in the early forties than on this broadcast! Playing with hellfire, the show puts many studio sessions in a rather critical light, sorry to say it. DB is not featured much, but he plays magnificently, particularly on "... Tub".

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA Astoria, R.I. Feb. 8-10, 1943
Same, except Louis Taylor (tb) added, and Jimmy Powell (as) replaces Johnson. Ethel Waters (vo).
United Artists film "Stage Door Canteen", no DB.

LA. June 7, 1943

Same as above, except Snooky Young(tp) replaces Killian.
AFRS Jubilee No. 28, NBC.
Seven titles, two have DB:

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Dance Of The Gremlins | Solo with orch 32 bars. (FM) |
| One O'Clock Jump | Solo 36 bars. (M) |

Hollywood, June 21, 1943

Same as June 7. AFRS Jubilee No. 30, NBC.
Six titles, unknown contents.

Hollywood, mid-June 1943

Same. AFRS "Command Performance" No. 70.
Two titles, one has DB, issued on VDisc:

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Dance Of The Gremlins | Soli 4 and 20 bars. (FM) |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|

Hollywood, June/July 1943

Same. AFRS Down Beat 60.
Eleven titles, four have DB, two on VDisc:

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Rhythm Man | Solo 16 bars. (F) |
| You'll Never Know | Brief break. (SM) |
| Yeah! Man | Solo 32 bars. (F) |
| Jazz Me Blues (Blue Jazz) | Solo 20 bars. (M) |

Hollywood, July 5, 1943

Same. Ida Jones (vo). AFRS Jubilee No. 32.
Seven titles, one has DB:

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Airmail Special | Solo 16 bars. (F) |
|-----------------|-------------------|

Universal City, Ca. Aug. 1-6, 1943

Same. Bobby Brooks Quartet, Delta Rhythm Boys (vo).
Universal films "Top Man", "Man Of The Family", "Crazy House", "Funzapoppin"
and "Choo Choo Swing". Only the latter features DB, with two titles:

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Dance Of The Gremlins | Solo with orch 24 bars. (FM) |
| Swinging The Blues | Solo 12 bars. (F) |

Note particularly the last phrase of "... The Blues"!

NYC. Nov. 23, 1943

Same, except Joe Newman (tp), Rodney Richardson (b) replace Clayton and Page.
Unissued VDiscs.

By now DB's technique is fully developed, and he masters the fast tempi to perfection, note for instance "Yeah! Man". Just too bad there are so few performances preserved from 1943.

DB left the Count late Nov./early Dec. 1943, reportedly after a traumatic experience of having witnessed Ben Webster playing with the band and receiving an ecstatic

reception! I wonder if this is really true, DB must have realized his own worth and potential, and such a jealousy does not seem quite convincing. In any case, the time was ripe for departure, DB needed more challenges than the Basie band could give him.

ALBERT AMMONS AND HIS RHYTHM KINGS NYC. Feb. 12, 1944

Hot Lips Page (tp), Vic Dickenson (tb), Don Byas (ts), Albert Ammons (p), Israel Crosby (b), Sid Catlett (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Commodore:

| | | |
|--------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 4718-1 | Blues In The Groove | Solo 12 bars. Coda. (S) |
| 4718-2 | Blues In The Groove | As above. (S) |
| 4719-1 | The Breaks | Solo 16 bars. In ens. (M) |
| 4719-2 | The Breaks | As above. (M) |
| 4720-1 | Jammin' The Boogie | Solo 24 bars. (M) |
| 4721-1 | Bottom Blues | Solo 12 bars. (S) |
| 4721-2 | Bottom Blues | As above. (S) |

Don Byas has now quit the Basie organization and is freelancing in a jazzland of milk and honey! He is 31 years old, thus no youngster, and he has developed into one of the very great masters of jazz tenorsax. In fact, in the beginning of 1944 he has no peers, only a few equals like Hawkins, Webster and Young. His technique is perfect, he masters all tempi, and his inventiveness is limitless. He is able to participate in all kinds of setups with no problems whatsoever. And he records almost "every night" in the coming 2-3 years, with incredible artistic results. This first small band session has in general several highlights like Ammons' rolling piano and also shortcomings like lack of rehearsal. For instance, the breaks in "The Breaks" are quite messy (note particularly the trombone breaks). However, when DB enters the scene, he plays beautifully on all items. My favorites are the blues choruses of "... Groove".

COLEMAN HAWKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Feb. 16&22, 1944

Bigband personnel including Coleman Hawkins, Don Byas (ts).

Six titles were recorded for Apollo, but all tenorsax soli are by Coleman Hawkins.

EDDIE HEYWOOD AND HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. May 2, 1944

Ray Nance (tp, vln, vo), Aaron Sachs (cl), Don Byas (ts), Eddie Heywood (p), John Simmons (b), Shelly Manne (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Signature:

| | | |
|-------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| rht-1 | How High The Moon | Solo 32 bars. In ensemble. (FM) |
| rht-2 | Sarcastic Lady | Solo 12 bars. (S) |
| rht-3 | Them There Eyes | Solo 32 bars. (FM) |
| rht-4 | Penthouse Serenade (When We're Alone) | Solo 16 bars. (S) |

A charming session based upon Heywood's unconventional but, at least to my taste, attractive piano playing. The titles fall into two groups, slow and fast medium, and all feature DB to great advantage. There are no discernible quality differences, but maybe the lovely blues chorus on "... Lady" and the driving "... Eyes" should be particularly noted.

COLEMAN HAWKINS AND HIS SAX ENSEMBLE NYC. May 24, 1944

Tab Smith (as), Coleman Hawkins, Don Byas (ts), Harry Carney (bar), Johnny Guarnieri (p), Al Lucas (b), Sid Catlett (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Keynote:

| | | |
|---------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| HL 29-1 | On The Sunny Side Of The Street | As below. (SM) |
| HL 29-2 | On The Sunny Side Of The Street | Solo 16 bars. (SM) |
| HL 30-1 | Three Little Words | Solo 32 bars. (FM) |
| HL 31-1 | Battle Of Saxes | Solo 64 bars. (F) |
| HL 32-1 | Louise | As below. (M) |
| HL 32-2 | Louise | Solo 16 bars. (M) |

There is something wrong with this session. The arrangements are not successful, and the rhythm section does not quite put things together this time. However, the tenorsax soli themselves are good, and on this occasion Don Byas is allotted his share, that is, he gets a solo space approximately half of Hawk's. The influence on DB of Hawk is undeniable, but more important is the opposite fact: That there, in 1944, is no master-disciple relationship but two equals. Possibly one may dare to say that Hawk and Don are the two most prominent jazz tenorsax players now, before the rise of the new generation changes the scene. The dexterious "Battle ..." and the defiant "... Street" are the DB highlights. In "... Words" DB presents the song and takes it easy, while "Louise" is surprisingly modest. While this is an interesting session and an important meeting, we might have got something unforgettable if Keynote had chosen a pure tenorsax setup with equal solo space to each of those two giants. Possibly CH might have won, but what a battle it would have been! Postscript: The discovery of two alternate takes is very welcome. They are of the same quality and moods as the originals where DB is concerned.

MARY LOU WILLIAMS AND HER ORCHESTRA NYC. June 5, 1944

Dick Vance (tp), Vic Dickenson (tb), Claude Greene (cl), Don Byas (ts), Mary Lou Williams (p), Al Lucas (b), Jack Parker (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Asch:

| | | |
|------|-----------------------|---|
| 1234 | Man O'Mine | Solo with orch 16+8 bars, orch/(tp) on bridge. Soli 4 and 6 bars. Coda. (S) |
| 1235 | Stardust Part II | Solo 32 bars. In ens. Coda. (S) |
| 1236 | Gjon Mili Jam Session | Soli 8, 8, 2 and 6 bars. (FM) |
| 1239 | Stardust Part I | In ensemble. (S) |

A heavily arranged session, and I have not the taste for it. I feel that Mary Lou's experiments represent just a blind trail in the search for new expressions. The whole thing sounds quite artificial to me, and when I think of the swinging Andy Kirk band whose existence was mainly based upon MLW, I get sad. The few highlights are due to Don Byas. He composed "Man O'Mine", but is never allowed to stretch out. The "Stardust" solo I have heard before in more swinging surroundings. I end up by preferring the first "normal" solo on "Gjon Mili ...", the good old DB swing!

BENNY GOODMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. June 12, 1944

Billy Butterfield, Charlie Shavers, Mickey McMickle (tp), Vernon Brown, Jack Satterfield (tb), Benny Goodman (cl), Hymie Shertzer, Jules Rubin (as), Art Rollini, Don Byas (ts), Ernie Caceres (bar), Teddy Wilson (p), Allan Reuss (g), Sid Weiss (b), Cozy Cole (dm).

One title was recorded for Capitol:

| | | |
|-------|----------------------|------------------|
| 12368 | All The Cats Join In | Solo 8 bars. (M) |
|-------|----------------------|------------------|

This would have been a lovely record even without Don Byas, who has a brief but nice solo towards the end.

HOT LIPS PAGE AND HIS HOT SEVEN NYC. June 14, 1944

Hot Lips Page (tp, mellophone, vo), George Johnson, Floyd Williams (as), Don Byas (ts), Clyde Hart (p), John Simmons (b), Sid Catlett (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Savoy:

| | | |
|---------|-------------------------|---|
| S5462 | Dance Of The Tambourine | Solo 16+8 bars, (mellophone) on bridge. (M) |
| S5463-X | Uncle Sam's Blues | No solo. (S) |
| S5463-3 | Uncle Sam's Blues | No solo. (S) |
| S5464-X | Paging Mr. Page | Solo 24 bars. (FM) |
| S5464-Y | Paging Mr. Page | As above. (FM) |
| S5465-X | I Keep Rollin' On | No solo. (SM) |
| S5465-Y | I Keep Rollin' On | No solo. (SM) |

Note: Savoy 755 has an edited version of S5463-3, not an alternate take as listed in Jepsen.

Although Hot Lips chooses to use this session for himself, with memorable results, the Don makes a very strong point. The "... Tambourine" is a masterpiece of tenorsax; the right combination of feeling, inventiveness, drama and coolness. Maybe the most memorable solo in the first half of DB's 1944 performances. And the four blues choruses on the "... Page" are most easy-flowing and superb in all

respects.

DON BYAS SWING SHIFTERS

NYC. July 28, 1944

Charlie Shavers (tp), Don Byas (ts), Clyde Hart (p, cel), Slam Stewart (b), Jack Parker (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Savoy:

| | | |
|---------|--------------------------|---|
| S5490 | Riffin' And Jivin' | Solo 32 bars. (F) |
| S5491-1 | Free And Easy | Solo 32 bars. Part of coda. (M) |
| S5491-2 | Free And Easy | Solo 24 bars. Part of coda. (M) |
| S5492 | Worried 'n Blue | Solo 16+8 bars, (tp) on bridge. Solo 8 bars to coda. (S) |
| S5493-1 | Don's Idea | Solo 32 bars. (F) |
| S5493-2 | Don's Idea | As above. (F) |
| S5493- | Don's Idea (false start) | No solo. |
| S5493- | Don's Idea (NC) | Solo ca. 28 bars (NC). (F) |
| S5493- | Don's Idea (false start) | No solo. |

At last, a recording session under his own name! Not a day too early, I should say, however, from now on he more or less seems to live in the studios. This session is certainly a very successful one. Although the tp/ts ensembles sometimes sound semi-kish, the rhythm section works attentively, and DB's soli are all over first rate. The three fast items are all very impressive, and "... Blue" is a beautiful ballad. But maybe your favorite will be the lovely "Free And Easy", not only for the soli but for the total atmosphere and the unusual melody. To quote Don Morgenstern: "Byas, ultra-relaxed, builds his solo (on take 1) with expert use of dynamics, and Hart's celeste work gives an impressionistic flavor to the piece. Don's solo on the second take is even better, though shorter". Postscript: More stuff from this session has appeared. Another fine DB solo on "... Idea" is halted, probably because of reed trouble.

DON BYAS SWING SHIFTERS

NYC. Aug. 17, 1944

Personnel as July 28, 1944, except Rudy Williams (as) added. No (tp), (as) on 5703.

Four titles were recorded for Savoy:

| | | |
|----------|---------------------------------|--|
| S5702-1 | 1944 Stomp | Solo 32 bars. (FM) |
| S5702-2 | 1944 Stomp (NC) | As above. (FM) |
| S5703 | What Do You Want With My Heart? | Solo 32 bars. Solo 8 bars to coda. (SM) |
| S5704 | Bass C Jam | Solo 24 bars. (F) |
| S5705/01 | Savoy Jam Party I | Solo 24 bars. (FM) |
| S5706/00 | Savoy Jam Party II | Solo 24 bars. (FM) |

This session does not quite reach the level of the previous one. It seems Don here is somewhat introvert, and the sparks do not fly. Half of the session is the blues in upper tempo, as in "1944 Stomp", with good but not remarkable soli. The exception is the lovely "... Heart"! Although Don just about only state and close the melody, it's a thrill! Postscript: Only the final ensemble is missing from the non-complete take of "1944 ...". and thus we get another good DB solo.

JOHN KIRBY AND HIS SEXTET

NYC. Aug. 18, 1944

Charlie Shavers (tp), Buster Bailey (cl), George Johnson (as), Don Byas (ts), Billy Kyle ? (p), John Kirby (b), Bill Beason (dm).

Associated Transcriptions, "Flow Gently, Sweet Rhythm".

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Desert Night | Straight 8 and 8 bars. (FM) |
| B-Flat Special | Solo 8 bars. (SM) |
| I'll Make Fun For You | Solo 32 bars. (F) |
| Amour | Straight 8 bars. (M) |
| 9:20 Special | No solo. (M) |
| Taking A Chance On Love | Straight 8 bars. (SM) |
| Gavotte | Straight. (FM) |

| | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|
| K.C. Caboose | Solo with ens 12 bars. (FM) |
| Boogie Woogie | Solo 24 bars. (F) |
| Dengozo | Solo with ens 16 bars. (FM) |
| Passepiéd | No solo. (FM) |

Only five items out of eleven feature DB as a soloist, and of these "... Special" and "Boogie ..." should be particularly noted.

EMMETT BERRY's FIVE

NYC. Aug. 31, 1944

Emmett Berry (tp), Don Byas (ts), Dave Rivera (p), Milt Hinton (b), J.C. Heard (dm).
Four titles were recorded for National:

| | | |
|------|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| NCS1 | Sweet And Lovely | In ensemble. Solo 8 bars. Coda. (S) |
| NCS2 | White Rose Kick | Break. In ens. Solo 34 bars. (F) |
| NCS3 | Deep Blue Dream | In ens. Soli 8 and 8 bars. Coda. (S) |
| NCS4 | Byas 'd Opinion | Solo 64 bars. (FM) |

Again, very fine tenorsax contributions under Emmett Berry's leadership. The two slow tunes have brief soli but nevertheless very satisfying, and the other items feature extended soli with lots of great stuff. Note for instance the start of the second eights of the second chorus of "... Opinion"!

JAM SESSION

NYC. Sept. 2, 1944

Don Byas (ts), Jimmy Jones (p).

Recorded by Timme Rosenkrantz. Issued on Caete LP-2:

| | | |
|---------|------------------|---|
| | Don't Blame Me | Soli 64 and 32 bars. (S) |
| Medley: | My Ideal / | Solo 32 bars. (S) |
| | Sweet Lorraine / | Solo ca. 64 bars, part missing. (S) |
| | Sweet And Lovely | Solo 32 bars. Solo 16 bars to coda. (S) |

NYC. 1944

Don Byas (ts), John Mehegan (p).

Recorded by Timme Rosenkrantz. Issued on Caete LP-2:

| | | |
|---------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Medley: | Stardust / | Solo 64 bars. (S) |
| | Memories Of You / | Solo 64 bars. (S) |
| | I Can't Get Started | Solo 48 bars. (S) |

Although Timme Rosenkrantz' recording activities cannot in scope nor importance compare with Jerry Newman's, he made several important contributions to jazz documentation. Obviously Don Byas was one of his favorites, and on several dates (Timme was not good at noting dates and personnel) his playing particularly in ballad mood is recorded abundantly. The sound quality is not very good (postscript: not that bad either!), making the music shine less brilliantly than it otherwise would have done. On first listening it may seem a little dull. However, played many times, loud, with a good whisky on hand, it goes straight into your heart!

ORAN "HOT LIPS" PAGE AND HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Sept. 12, 1944

Hot Lips Page (tp, vo), Jesse Brown, Joe Keyes (tp), Vic Dickenson (tb), Earl Bostic, Floyd "Horsecollar" Williams (as), Don Byas, Ike Quebec (ts), Clyde Hart (p, cel), Tiny Grimes (g), Al Lucas (b), Jack Parker (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Savoy:

| | | |
|---------|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| S5706 | I Got What It Takes | Solo 8 bars. (S) |
| S5707-X | Good For Stompin' | Solo 16 bars. (FM) |
| S5707-Y | Good For Stompin' | As above. (FM) |
| S5708 | Double Trouble Blues (Lip's Blues) | No solo. |
| S5709-X | Blooey | No solo. |
| S5709-Y | Blooey | No solo. |

A beautiful slow solo on "I Got ...", while "Good ..." seems to be difficult for him, and the SJL 2208 version has a fluff, a rarity where DB is concerned.

Frankie Newton (tp), Hank D'Amico (cl), Don Byas (ts), Dave Rivera (p), Sid Weiss (b), Cozy Cole (dm).

Four titles were recorded for National:

| | | |
|--------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| NSC 9 | Hank's Pranks | Solo 16 bars. (FM) |
| NSC 10 | Juke Box Judy | Solo 34 bars. (F) |
| NSC 11 | Shy Little Witch From Greenwich | Solo 16 bars. (M) |
| NSC 12 | Gone At Dawn | Solo 12 bars. (S) |

The session does not really swing, but there are good solo contributions from Newton and Byas, and particularly the slow "... Dawn" should be noted.

DON BYAS DUO

NYC. Nov. 2, 1944

Don Byas (ts), Slam Stewart (b).

Recorded by Timme Rosenkrantz, issued on Caete LP-2.

Postscript of Jan. 2018: Note change of date (earlier Oct. 2):

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Indiana | Solo 3 and 2 choruses of 32 bars. (FM) |
| I Got Rhythm | Soli 4 and 4 choruses of 32 bars. (F) |

Contrary to what has been believed, these are not the well known Town Hall performances June 9, 1945, nor rehearsals to those! The quality is however very much the magnificently same, while the sound quality is not comparable. The tempo of "Indiana" is slower here than in Town Hall.

probably same date

Don Byas (ts), Gene Sedric (cl-"Worried ..."), Kirk Bradford (as), Jimmy Jones (p), Slam Stewart (b).

Recorded by Timme Rosenkrantz. Issued on Caete LP-2:

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Rose Room | Duet with (as) 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Duet with (as) 16 bars. (SM) |
| Worried Blue | Solo with (as) acc. 64 bars. (S) |

DON BYAS

NYC. Nov. 3, 1944

Don Byas (ts), unknown (p), unknown (g), unknown male (vo).

One title, was recorded by Timme Rosenkrantz, CD-liner notes says Slam Stewart (b), but no (b) can be heard, and does not mention the prominent (g). The reference to "Nita" Bradley (p, vo) is also wrong, as the correct name is Anita Bradley, and the vocal here is definitely male:

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Embraceable You | Soli 32 and 32 bars to coda. (S) |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|

Just now appearing on "Timme's Treasures"-CD, with fine DB. Possibly the same item as listed below in abbreviated version.

JAM SESSION

NYC. Nov. 20, 1944

Don Byas (ts), Samuel Benskin (p), Harold McFadden (g).

Recorded by Timme Rosenkrantz:

| | |
|----------|---------------------------|
| Moonglow | Soli 64 and 32 bars. (SM) |
|----------|---------------------------|

same date

Same plus Vic Dickenson (tb) added:

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Rose Room | Duet with (tb) 32 bars. Soli 64 and 32 bars to coda. (M) |
|-----------|---|

NYC. 1944

Same/similar. Unknown (vo-"... You"):

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Just You, Just Me | Soli 64 and 64 bars. (FM) |
| How High The Moon | Solo 32 bars. (FM) |
| Embraceable You | Solo 32 bars. Solo 2 bars (NC). (S) |

The recording quality of the tapes I have heard is so bad that no comments can be made. Postscript of June 22, 2015: The original acetates may be quite different, as evident when "Rose Room" appeared to me recently in excellent sound. Fine tenorsax playing here!

COZY COLE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Nov. 21, 1944**

Charlie Shavers (tp), Hank D'Amico (cl), Coleman Hawkins, Don Byas (ts), Johnny Guarneri (p), Tiny Grimes (g), Slam Stewart (b), Cozy Cole (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Continental:

| | | |
|--------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 3283 | Memories Of You | Solo 8 bars. (S) |
| 3284-x | Comes The Don | Solo 16 bars. (M) |
| 3284-y | Comes The Don | As above. (M) |
| 3285 | When Day Is Done | No solo. |
| 3286 | The Beat (The Drag) | Solo 8 bars. (M) |

Although the soli on this session are brief, they are nevertheless worthy of attention. Note the majestic "... The Don", or the surprising and dramatic "The Beat", or the lovely, slow "Memories Of You", all small masterpieces!

CYRIL HAYNES SEXTET **NYC. 1944**

Dick Vance (tp), Don Byas (ts), Cyril Haynes (p), Al Casey (g), John Levy (b), Hal West (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Comet (12"):

| | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Morning Sadness | Soli 24 and 8 bars. (M) |
| One Sad Thursday | Solo 16 bars. (SM) |
| Across The Road | Solo 64 bars. Part of coda. (F) |
| Cedar Manor | Solo 16 bars to 32 bars with ens. (M) |

Fine variations in tempi and the solo performances are as perfect as ever. Choose "... Sad Thursday" followed by "... The Road" for highlights.

TRUMMY YOUNG **NYC. Dec. 4, 1944**

Buck Clayton (tp), Trummy Young (tb), Milt Yaner (as), Don Byas (ts), Ernie Caceres (bar), Bill Rowland (p), Hy White (g), Al Lucas (b), James Crawford (dm). Four titles reported to be recorded for Signature. 154 "Let Me Call You A Sweetheart" and 157 "Flogalapa" also reported to be issued on Signature 15005, but this is not correct, a last minute change must have been done. 155 "Lame Brain" and 156 "Please Please Please" certainly unissued.

V-DISC ALL STARS **NYC. Dec. 6/7, 1944**

Charlie Shavers (tp), Trummy Young (tb), Don Byas (ts), Ernie Caceres (cl), Bill Clifton (p), Herb Ellis (g), Bob Haggart (b), Specs Powell (dm).

One title was recorded for VDisc:

| | | |
|---------|---------|--------------------------------|
| VP 1065 | Rosetta | Solo 32 bars. (FM) |
| | Rosetta | In ensemble. Solo 32 bars. (M) |

A beautiful rhythm section sends DB into orbit!

DON BYAS **NYC. prob. late 1944**

Don Byas (ts), unknown (p), (perc).

One title, Timme Rosenkrantz collection:

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Lady Be Good | Soli 3 and 3 choruses of 32 bars to 8 bars coda. (FM) |
|--------------|--|

This is an exciting item which ranks very high among the recent Rosenkrantz discoveries! NB! Now on CD!

JAM SESSION **NYC. prob. late 1944**

Kirk Bradford (as), Don Byas, Lucky Thompson (ts), Ted Brannon (p), Al Hall (b). Recorded at Timme Rosenkrantz' apartment, two titles:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Body And Soul | Solo 64 bars. (S) |
| Cherokee | Solo 16+64 bars. Solo 3 choruses of 64 bars. Solo 8 bars. (F) |

These are some of the most important results of Baron von 'Timme' Rosenkrantz' activities in the middle forties. Two tenorsax giants meet, Don 32 years old, Lucky only 20. On "Body ...", Lucky takes the opening and the end, while Don takes a beautiful solo in the middle. On "Cherokee" the proceedings starts messily with Lucky starting but quits after half a chorus, letting Don pick up the remnants and

then take a full flashing chorus. Later after Lucky has taken three choruses, Don takes three, but the start seems more modest than usual, as if hypnotized by Lucky!

same/similar?

Hot Lips Page (tp), Kirk Bradford (as), Don Byas, Lucky Thompson (ts), Thelonious Monk (p), Al Hall (b), unknown (perc).
Four titles, Timme Rosenkrantz collection:

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Lullaby In Rhythm | Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars (2 nd (ts)-solo). (FM) |
| Crazy Rhythm | Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. (FM) |
| Let's Go (I Got Rhythm) | Solo 64 bars (last (ts)-solo). (M) |
| What Is This Thing Called Love? | Solo 64 bars. (M) |

There is not much to add really, the Timme Rosenkrantz collection is really a treasure chest, and I believe we have only heard some of it yet!

OSCAR PETTIFORD AND HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Jan. 9, 1945

Dizzy Gillespie, Bill Coleman, Benny Harris, unknown (tp), Trummy Young, Vic Dickenson, unknown, unknown (tb), Johnny Bothwell, unknown (as), Don Byas, unknown (ts), Serge Chaloff (bar), Clyde Hart (p), Al Casey (g), Oscar Pettiford (b), Shelly Manne (dm), Rubberlegs Williams (vo).
Four titles were recorded for Manor:

| | | |
|-------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| W1218 | Something For You | Solo 36 bars. (FM) |
| W1219 | Worried Life Blues | Obbligato 16 bars. (S) |
| W1220 | Empty Bed Blues Part I | Obbligato 12 bars. (S) |
| W1221 | Empty Bed Blues Part II | Obbligato 12 and 12 bars. (S) |

The very strong tenorsax solo on "Something ..." is the highlight of the session, a solo of importance! Otherwise some nice obbligato performances with one of my favourite singers ...

DIZZY GILLESPIE SEXTET NYC. Jan. 9, 1945

Dizzy Gillespie (tp), Trummy Young (tb ÷ 1226), Don Byas (ts), Clyde Hart (p), Oscar Pettiford (b), Shelly Manne (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Manor:

| | | |
|---------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| W1223-2 | I Can't Get Started | No solo. |
| W1224-1 | Good Bait | Straight in ens. Solo 16 bars. (M) |
| W1225 | Salt Peanuts | Solo 16 bars. (F) |
| W1226 | Be-Bop | Solo 64 bars. (F) |

A magnificent bebop session, led by a Dizzy in his prime and with Oscar P's bass pushing everybody to their utmost capabilities. DB's most prominent item is the very fast "Be-Bop" where he shows how sovereignly he masters the modern trends. In "Good Bait" he is strong and extrovert, while a certain coolness is evident on "... Peanuts".

CLYDE HART'S ALL STARS NYC. Jan. 1945

Dizzy Gillespie (tp), Trummy Young (tb, vo-3305-08), Charlie Parker (as), Don Byas (ts), Clyde Hart (p), Mike Bryan (g), Al Hall (b), Specs Powell (dm), Rubberlegs Williams (vo-3301-04).
Eight titles were recorded for Continental:

| | | |
|-------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| W3301 | What's The Matter Now? | Solo 18 bars. (M) |
| W3302 | I Want Every Bit Of It | Obbligato 12 bars. (S) |
| W3303 | That's The Blues | No solo. (S) |
| W3304 | 4-F Blues | Solo 12 bars. (M) |
| W3304 | G.I. Blues/4-F Blues | As above. (M) |
| W3305 | Dream Of You | Solo 2 bars. (SM) |
| W3306 | Seventh Avenue | Solo 16 bars. (M) |
| W3307 | Sorta Kinda | Obbligato 32 and 32 bars. (FM) |

W3308 Oh, Oh, My, My, Oh, Oh Solo 20 bars. (SM)

As any serious jazz collector knows, this is one of the most crazy recording sessions in jazz. The combination of Rubberlegs Williams' inspired (by a lot of things!) vocal and some of the most important performers of jazz ever, produces some unbelievable results. One could swear that it would be impossible to bring forth any important music under the circumstances, but the guys seem to thrive, and the soli are generally magnificent. (With "circumstances" I mean the first four titles). Don Byas is excellent all over, note for instance his two versions of "4-F Blues". When Trummy Young conquers the vocal mike, the atmosphere changes remarkably, but the soli still are full of fire. The "Oh, Oh ..." should be an excellent example of the exquisite professionalism of these guys.

DON BYAS ALL STARS

NYC. Jan. 23, 1945

Joe Thomas (tp), Don Byas (ts), Johnny Guarneri (p), Billy Taylor (b), Cozy Cole (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Jamboree:

| | | |
|------|---------------------|--|
| 7001 | Pennies From Heaven | Intro 4 bars to duet with tp 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. Duet with (tp) 8 bars. (M) |
| 7002 | Should I? | Soli 64, 4 and 4 bars. Duet with (tp) 8 bars. (F) |
| 7003 | You Call It Madness | Solo 16 bars. Solo 14 bars to coda. (S) |
| 7004 | Jamboree Jump | Soli 8 and 34 bars. (M) |

A fine session with a varied repertoire. JT is one of my favorite trumpet players and obviously an inspiration for DB. All items are first rate and highlights are everywhere. The duet to open "... Heaven" with the following solo is a real must, but so is the lovely introduction of "... Madness". And the way he dives into the first bridge on "... Jump" is certainly worth a try. Since the fast "Should I?" is a real singer, the main impression of this session is excellent.

WOODY HERMAN AND THE WOODCHOPPERS

NYC. Jan. 25, 1945

Charlie Shavers (tp), Bill Harris (tb), Woody Herman (cl), Herbie Fields (as), Flip Phillips, Don Byas, Georgie Auld (ts), Marjorie Hyams (vib), Tony Aless or Ralph Burns (p), Billy Bauer (g), Chubby Jackson (b), Johnny Blowers (dm).

Recorded at the Vanderbilt Theatre.

J. P. Vanderbilt IV Solo 32 bars. (M)

Playing the second tenorsax solo, DB gives an excellent performance.

JOE TURNER ACCOMPANIED BY PETE JOHNSON'S ALL STARS

NYC. Feb. 2, 1945

Frank Newton (tp), Don Byas (ts), Pete Johnson (p), Leonard Ware (g), Al Hall (b), Doc West (dm).

Four titles were recorded for National:

| | | |
|----------|--------------------------|---|
| NCS 33 | S.K. Blues Part I | Obbligato 12 bars. Obbligato with (tp) 12 bars. In ensemble. (S) |
| NCS 34 | S.K. Blues Part II | Solo 12 bars. Obbligato 12 bars. In ensemble. (S) |
| NCS 35-1 | Johnson And Turner Blues | Obbligato 12 bars. Obbligato with (p) 12 bars. Coda tag. (SM) |
| NCS 35-2 | Johnson And Turner Blues | Obbligato 12 bars. (SM) |
| NCS 36 | Watch That Jive | Obbligato 12 bars. Obbligato with (p) 12 bars. Duet with (tp) 12 bars. (SM) |

Every session is excellent! Here the Don joins the famous and successful Turner/Johnson combination, with the great Frankie Newton as an extra attraction. Possibly the tunes are too similar in tempo with all blues, but DB plays like always in perfect shape. The highlight is his solo on "... Part II".

COZY COLE AND HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Feb. 2, 1945

Shorty Rogers (tp), Vernon Brown (tb), Aaron Sachs (cl), Don Byas (ts), Bill Rowland (p), Billy Taylor (b), Cozy Cole (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Keynote:

| | | |
|--------|------------------------|--|
| HL78-2 | Lover Come Back To Me | Solo 34 bars. (FM) |
| HL79-2 | Smiles | Solo 34 bars. (F) |
| HL80-2 | All Of Me | Solo 32 bars. (M) |
| HL81-3 | They Didn't Believe Me | Duet with (tb) 8 and 8 bars. Solo 16 bars. Coda. (SM) |

Dan Morgenstern puts it this way: "As a session, this can't compare to Cole's famous All Star bash from the year before (with Hawk and Joe Thomas), but its unissued tracks are major finds because Don Byas, well featured, is in absolutely brilliant form". Yes, I can agree wholeheartedly! All items are magnificent and compete violently with each other for top ranking, and to judge is surely very difficult. I have a certain weakness for the "old" item, "... Believe Me" with its utterly beautifuls/tb duets and likewise solo. But the new, faster discoveries all have their merits. For "Smiles", Dan states, "has a full chorus by Byas that now takes its place among his greatest on record. It is a solo of amazing velocity (he starts off as if shot from a cannon) and continuity, as astonishing in instrumental virtuosity as in musical context. A masterpiece". Yes. Note then the colorful "Lover ..." (the beginning of second half) and "All Of Me" (anywhere!) and be immensely pleased.

**SAVANNAH CHURCHILL
& HER ALL STAR ORCHESTRA /
TIMMIE ROGERS & HIS ORCHESTRA**

NYC. Feb. 26, 1945

William Johnson, Alfonso "Talib Dawud" Barrymore, Felix Barboza, Loyal Walker (tp), Alton Moore, John Haughton, George Washington, J. J. Johnson (tb), Benny Carter (tp, as, arr), Porter Kilbert, Jewell Grant (as), Harold Clark, Don Byas (ts), Willard Brown (bar), Rufus Webster (p), Herman Mitchell (g), Charles Drayton (b), Max Roach (dm), Timmie Rogers (vo-1256,1258), Savannah Churchill (vo-1261,1262).

Six titles were recorded for Manor/Regis, "Capacity" and "If You Can't Smile" were rejected but:

| | | |
|-------|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| W1256 | Daddy-O | Solo with orch 12 bars. (M) |
| W1258 | Good Deal | Solo 4 bars. (SM) |
| W1261 | All Alone | Solo 16+8 bars, orch on bridge. (M) |
| W1262 | Daddy-Daddy | Obbligato 12 bars. (SM) |

The Regis/Manor sides have brief but excellent tenorsax pieces, and the obbligato on "Daddy ...", while badly recorded, is nice. On "All ..." DB is the featured soloist, even on the label, but here he plays rather timidly.

DON BYAS

NYC. March 1945

Don Byas (ts), Kenny Watts (p), John Levy (b), Slick Jones (dm), Big Bill Broonzy (g, vo-418, 19, 20, 22).

Eight titles were recorded for Hub:

| | | |
|--------|----------------------------|---|
| HU 414 | Double Talk | Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 32 bars to long coda. (F) |
| HU 415 | Fruit Salad | Solo 32 bars. Solo 16 bars to long coda. (SM) |
| HU 416 | Don Juan | Soli 24 and 24 bars to coda. (SM) |
| HU 417 | Spots | Intro 4 bars. Soli 5, 3 and 3 choruses of 12 bars. (F) |
| HU 418 | Please Believe Me | Faint obbligato. (S) |
| HU 419 | Why Did You Do That To Me? | Faint obbligato. Solo 32 bars. (M) |
| HU 420 | You Got To Play Your Hand | Intro 4 bars. Straight obbligato. Break. Coda. (S) |
| HU 422 | Just A Dream | Straight obbligato parts. (S) |

Not the best sound quality on the Hub recordings, and the Broonzy items have DB in a minor role. However, there is some incredible playing on the fast items "Double Talk" and "Spots", your ears will almost not believe what they are hearing!! "Don Juan" has some magnificent blues playing, however, DB obviously believes time is running out before he throws himself into the last chorus, a typical "reject".

COZY COLE**NYC. March 19, 1945**

Don Byas (ts), Billy Taylor (p), Tiny Grimes (g), Billy Taylor (b), Cozy Cole (dm), June Hawkins (vo-603,604).

Four titles were recorded for Guild:

| | | |
|-------|-----------------------|---|
| 601-B | Hallelujah | Straight 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. (F) |
| 602-B | Stompin' At The Savoy | Straight part of intro. (M) |
| 603-B | Dat's Love | Straight. Solo 16 bars. (M) |
| 604-B | Through For The Night | Intro 8 bars. Obbligato 16 bars. Solo 8 bars. (SM) |

There are three fine DB soli on this session which otherwise is a mess, quite disorderly produced without any purpose whatsoever. In addition, the sound quality of the pressings is quite inferior. So it does not matter if you miss these titles.

COZY COLE**NYC. April 1945**

Don Byas (ts), Johnny Guarneri (p), Tiny Grimes (g), Sid Weiss (b), Cozy Cole (dm), June Hawkins (vo-616, 617).

Four titles were recorded for Guild:

| | | |
|-------|----------------|---|
| 615 | Strictly Drums | No solo. (F) |
| 616-B | Night Wind | Solo 16 bars. Faint obbligato parts. Coda with (g). (S) |
| 617 | Why Regret? | Straight 8 bars. Faint obbligato parts. Straight 8 bars. (S) |
| 618-B | Now's The Time | Intro 4 bars to straight 32 bars. Solo 8 bars to straight 8 bars. (SM) |

The Guild producer obviously chose the wrong occupation! Also this session is badly produced and wastes the time of great musicians. The merit of the session is the ts/g duet in the coda of "Night ...", in fact there is even less interesting DB on this one compared to the previous session. The two soli on "Night ...", and "... Time" which is not the well known blues, are quite ordinary.

ALBINIA JONES ACC. BY**DON BYAS' SWING SEVEN****NYC. April 14, 1945**

Dizzy Gillespie (tp), Gene Sedic (cl), Don Byas (ts), Sammy Price (p), Leonard Ware (g), Oscar Smith (b), Hal "Doc" West (dm).

Four titles were recorded for National:

| | | |
|--------|---------------------------|--|
| NSC 49 | Evil Gal Blues | Solo 12 bars. (SM) |
| NSC 50 | Salty Papa Blues | Obbligato with (cl) 12 bars. Solo 12 bars. (SM) |
| NSC 51 | Albinia's Blues | Obbligato 12 bars. (SM) |
| NSC 52 | Don't You Wear No Black | Solo 24 bars. (FM) |
| NSC 52 | What's The Matter With Me | As above. (FM) |

Wow, what an exciting session! I really do not care much about the vocal although competent enough, the main point is to have Dizzy and Don together again in their prime. The tenorsax soli are just magnificent all the way. Note that the Savoy SJL 2233 version called "What's The Matter ..." in fact is an alternate take of the 78 rpm. version of "Don't You Wear ...".

DIZZY GILLESPIE QUINTET**NYC. May 30, 1945**

Dizzy Gillespie (tp), Charlie Parker (as), Don Byas (ts), Al Haig (p), Curly Russell (b), Stan Levey (dm).

Recorded live at Lincoln Square, one title:

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Sweet Georgia Brown | Soli 8, 16, 8, 8, 8 and 8 bars. (FM) |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|

A very interesting discovery!! The start is missing, and we enter in a sort of chase between the three horns, excellent!!

DON BYAS DUO/TRIO**NYC. June 9, 1945**

Don Byas (ts), Slam Stewart (b), Teddy Wilson (p-"Candy").

Recorded in concert at Town Hall by Timme Rosenkrantz.

| | |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| Indiana | Soli 3 and 5 choruses of 32 bars. (F) |
| I Got Rhythm | Soli 5 and 4 choruses of 32 bars. (F) |
| Candy | Solo 72 bars to very long coda. (S) |

These concert performances contain some of the most exciting tenorsax playing of the forties. The format is rather unusual with only bass accompaniment on the two fast items, and maybe this fact has made listeners feel the rhythm is anemic. However, with the clear sound on the latest reissues, we can hear the wonderful driving bass background and the perfect cooperation bass/tenorsax. These performances are each appr. 5 minutes long, quite unusual for this era. In fact, there are just a handful of broadcast performances of black jazz tenorsax of similar length before this time. As length itself is not enough, it is an enormous pleasure to have it combined with such quality. I don't believe any contemporary could play in fast tempo with such flashy easiness. "Indiana" and "I Got Rhythm" are so unique that one almost forgets the beautiful "Candy", the ballad-Byas in his prime. In all, one of the milestones of tenorsax development.

DIZZY GILLESPIE QUINTET**NYC. June 22, 1945**

Dizzy Gillespie (tp), Charlie Parker (as), Don Byas (ts), Al Haig (p), Curly Russell (b), Max Roach (dm).

Recorded at Town Hall concert (more titles without DB):

| | |
|-------|---------------------------------|
| Bebop | Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (F) |
|-------|---------------------------------|

Exciting recent discovery, but why couldn't DB participate on all titles?

DON BYAS ALL STARS**NYC. June 27, 1945**

Buck Clayton (tp), Don Byas (ts), Johnny Guarneri (p), Eddie Safranski (b), Denzil Best (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Jamboree:

| | | |
|------|-------------------|---|
| 7005 | Little White Lies | Part of intro. Duet with (tp) 16+8 bars, solo 8 bars on bridge. Solo 32 bars. Solo 8 bars to duet with (tp) 8 bars. (M) |
| 7006 | Deep Purple | Solo 16 bars. Solo 8 bars to coda. (S) |
| 7007 | Them There Eyes | Solo 64 bars, last 8 with (tp). (F) |
| 7008 | You Came Along | Solo 16 bars. Solo 16 bars to coda. (S) |

The same fine variations and excellent quality as the first Jamboree session with Joe Thomas replaced by Buck Clayton. The two slow tunes "... Purple" and "You ... (Nowhere)" are just beautiful tenorsax playing with some starspangled trumpet on top. "... Lies" swings easily in medium tempo, while "... Eyes" has a very colorful, strong two chorus conclusion in a fast but unproblematic tempo. The productivity of DB in 1944-45 is just close to unbelievable. The only negative I am able to find about the Jamboree sessions is that the rhythm sections are, to my taste, somewhat underrecorded.

DON BYAS**NYC. July 15, 1945**

Don Byas (ts), Frank Froeba (p), unknown (b), Sid Catlett (dm), Art Ford (mc).

Broadcast, Art Ford Swing Session, issued on "Timme's Treasures", one title:

| | |
|--------|---|
| Cuckoo | Intro to solo 36 bars. Solo 24 bars to coda. (M) |
|--------|---|

This is a very nice swinging item, a gutsy blues in fact!

possibly same

Possibly same, listed as Frank Froeba's Back Room Boys, with Ann Hathaway (vo), Art Ford (mc). One title:

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Sometimes I'm Happy | Solo 18 bars. (M) |
|---------------------|-------------------|

Postscript of Sept. 2018: Fine solo this one, obviously Timme's treasury chest contains more than previously thought.

V-DISC ALL STARS**NYC. July 18, 1945**

Buck Clayton (tp), Trummy Young, Henry Wells (tb, vo), Bill Stegmeyer, Willie Smith (cl, as), Don Byas (ts), Ken Kersey (p), Mike Bryan (g), Bob Haggart (b), Jimmy Crawford (dm).

Two titles were recorded for VDisc:

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Four Or Five Times | Solo 16 bars. (SM) |
| I Want A Little Girl | Solo 16 bars. (SM) |

Two first-rate performances in the most pleasant DB tempo.

DB has been suggested to be the tenorsax player camouflaged as "Nuff Sed" on the BANTAM BLUE QUARTET session for Session from ca. Aug. 1945, but this is false, in fact the tenorsax player is white Johnny Richard.

BEN AND THE BOYS **NYC. Aug. 20, 1945**

Buster Bailey (cl-item 1), Herbie Fields (cl-item 1, ts), Ben Webster, Don Byas (ts), Dexter Gordon (ts-item 2), Stuff Smith (vln), Duke Ellington (p), Al Lucas (b), Eddie Nicholson (dm).

Recorded at the Onyx Club:

| | |
|------------------|--|
| The Romp | Solo four choruses of 32 bars (last (3 rd) tenorsax solo). (FM) |
| Honeysuckle Rose | Solo three choruses of 32 bars (last (4 th) tenorsax solo). (F) |

This jam session does not belong to my favorite ones in general. It is rather disorganized and noisy at times, and Ben Webster has an offday. However, DB (and Dexter) do some very good playing worth noticing in rather rough tempi. Note that the first tenorsax solo on "The Romp" is not by DB as stated in the liner notes of JA-35, but probably by Herbie Fields.

DON BYAS QUARTET **NYC. Aug. 30, 1945**

Don Byas (ts), Erroll Garner (p), Slam Stewart (b), Harold "Doc" West (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Super Disc:

| | | |
|-------|------------------------------|--|
| MF 14 | Three O'Clock In The Morning | Straight solo 28 bars. Soli 16 and 4 bars. Coda. (M) |
| MF 15 | One O'Clock Jump | Solo 36 bars. Straight solo 36 bars to coda. (F) |
| MF 16 | Harvard Blues | Solo 12 bars. (S) Solo 12 bars. (SM) |
| MF 17 | Slammin' Around | Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Straight 32 bars. (F) |

These sides are very enjoyable, but they are not quite coherent, and the fun is more in spite of than because of the coplaying. While Erroll's soloing is original and inspired (and as good as new today), his backing is heavy and not very suitable for Don Byas, in my opinion. Therefore, the music has to be enjoyed as fragments and not as integrated performances. The most interesting soloist is in fact the inimitable Slam Stewart! Regarding tenorsax, there is an excellent 32 bars chorus on "... Around", and three blues choruses on a fast "... Jump" to be noted. The "Harvard Blues" is "of course" beautiful. Note that the first very slow solo is in fact two, not one blues chorus! "... Morning" is the weakest item.

DON BYAS QUARTET **NYC. Sept. 6, 1945**

Don Byas (ts), Johnny Guarnieri (p), Slam Stewart (b), J. C. Heard (dm).

Four titles were recorded for American:

| | | |
|------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1001 | Laura | Solo 32 bars. Solo 8 bars to coda. (S) |
| 1002 | Stardust | Solo 32 bars. Solo 4 bars to coda. (S) |
| 1003 | Slam, Don't Shake Like That | Straight with bass 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. Brief coda. (M) |
| 1004 | Dark Eyes | Part of intro. Straight solo 16 bars to solo 16 bars. Solo 20 bars. Coda. (FM) |

The two beautiful ballads are, soberly seen, the best items, and it is interesting to compare "Stardust" with the Minton/Monroe versions, the same tricks are still there. The other two items are lighter stuff, but with the gigantic swinging bass of Slam Stewart in the lead, they are very noteworthy. Particularly "Dark Eyes" has excellent contributions by everybody, and Don's understated playing here is really memorable. The piano of Guarnieri seems to function better than Erroll Garner's, although their solo qualities can be discussed in length. In all, a varied and interesting session.

HOT LIPS PAGE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 7, 1945**

Personnel not known but includes aurally Hot Lips Page (tp, vo), Benny Morton, J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Earl Bostic (as), Don Byas, Ben Webster (ts). Note that 3403 has a tenorsax solo which is played by neither of the two fellows above!

Seven titles were recorded for Continental:

| | | |
|-------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| W3397 | The Lady In Debt | Obbligato 12 bars. (SM) |
| W3398 | Corsicana | No solo. |
| W3399 | They Raided The Joint | Solo 12 bars. (M) |
| W3400 | Sunset Blues | No solo. |
| W3401 | Willie Mae Willow Foot | Solo 8 bars. (M) |
| W3403 | Florida Blues | No solo. |
| W3404 | Race Horse Mama | Solo 12 bars. (M) |

Although there are few opportunities given to DB on this date (dates?), he uses them to maximum effect; all of these three soli must be considered quite noteworthy!

DON BYAS QUARTET **NYC. Sept. 12, 1945**

Don Byas (ts), Johnny Guarneri (p), Al Hall (b), Sid Catlett (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Super Disc:

| | | |
|--------|--------------------|---|
| MF24 | Embraceable You | Intro 4 bars to solo 24 bars. Solo 8 bars to long coda. (S) |
| MF25 | The Sheik Of Araby | Part of intro. Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 8 bars to close. (F) |
| MF26-1 | Super Session | Soli 4 and 5 choruses of 12 bars. (FM) |
| MF27-1 | Melody In Swing | Straight 32 bars. Solo 32 bars to straight 16 bars. (M) |

Another magnificent quartet session, this time for Super Disc. The tempi and musical material are very varied, but DB seems to master it all. Possibly 1011 is a notch sharper than 1010 with a beautiful ballad and a dynamic "... Araby", but the "... Session" which is a blues, and the easy swinging "... Swing" are also very pleasant performances.

DON BYAS QUARTET **NYC. Oct. 3, 1945**

Don Byas (ts), Johnny Guarneri (p, cel-7009), Eddie Safranski (b), J. C. Heard (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Jamboree:

| | | |
|------|----------------------|--|
| 7009 | Once In A While | Intro to solo 24 bars. Solo 14 bars to coda. (S) |
| 7010 | Avalon | Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Solo 64 bars. (F) |
| 7011 | Blue And Sentimental | Soli 26 and 10 bars. (S) |
| 7012 | My Melancholy Baby | Soli 64 and 8 bars. (FM) |

The final session on Jamboree omits trumpet, thus giving DB more blowing space (this is one of the paradoxical conclusions of Jazz Solography research: many good soloists on a record consequently produce short soli). However, it also seems that DB thrives "alone", and I am inclined to consider this the best Jamboree session, even with the very high quality of the previous ones. The piano of JG is remarkable here, and DB is pushed to further heights, whether in the two slow items, the fast "Avalon" or my favorite "... Baby". Note the "to the point" conclusion!!

DON BYAS **NYC. Autumn 1945**

Jimmy Powell (as), Don Byas, Hal Singer (ts) plus unknown (tp), (p), (b) and (dm). Rubie Blakely (vo-474,477).

Three titles were recorded for Hub:

| | | |
|--------|----------------|------------------------------------|
| HU 474 | The Gypsy | Soli 8 and 8 bars. Long coda. (SM) |
| HU 477 | Nancy | Solo 8 bars. (S) |
| HU 483 | Poor Butterfly | Soli 32 and 32 bars. (M) |

A very energetic and not at all 'poor' "... Butterfly", the last solo is a gasser! The other two titles are in the commercial vein, but particularly "Nancy" is a quite pleasant item with a good, brief solo.

DON BYAS**NYC. Autumn 1945**

Don Byas (ts), Gene Schroeder (p), Tony Gottuso (g), Slim Dunham (b), Johnny Blowers (dm).

One title was recorded for International:

Annie Laurie Soli 64 and 8 bars to coda. (SM)

A fine performance, of the same quality as generally found in this period.

SLAM STEWART QUARTET**NYC. Nov. 1, 1945**

Don Byas (ts), Erroll Garner (p), Slam Stewart (b), Harold "Doc" West (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Arista:

| | | |
|--------|------------------------------|---|
| WS 501 | Humoresque | Soli 16, 16 and 32 bars. (FM) |
| WS 502 | Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams | Solo 32 bars. Soli 16 bars to coda. (SM) |
| WS 503 | Smoke Gets In Your Eyes | Solo 32 bars. Soli 16 bars to coda. (SM) |
| WS 504 | Slamboree | Straight solo 8 bars. Solo 32 bars. (FM) |

Two fine ballads of the same quality as we now know so well, although it is allowed to consider Garner's piano backing as quite heavy (but his soloing on "Smoke ..." is just beautiful!). The two other items really belong to Slam, whose soli are quite magnificent. Don Byas is really only a sideman, but so what? "Humoresque" is nice, but "Slamboree" is a gasser! As I mentioned in the previous session with this personnel, the work of the quartet might be better integrated, heard particularly when piano changes to tenorsax soloing, but the general impression of these items is very attractive.

DON BYAS QUINTET**NYC. Nov. 26, 1945**

Benny Harris (tp), Don Byas (ts), Jimmy Jones (p), John Levy (b), Fred Radcliffe (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Savoy:

| | | |
|---------|-------------------|---|
| S5845-1 | Candy | Solo feature for DB: verse 8 to 1 1/2 chorus of 32 bars to coda. (S) |
| S5845-2 | Candy | As above. (S) |
| S5845-3 | Candy | As above. (S) |
| S5846 | How High The Moon | In ens. Solo 64 bars. (F) |
| S5847 | Donby | In ens. Solo 32 bars. (M) |
| S5848 | Byas-A-Drink | Part of intro. Solo 34 bars. In ensemble. (M) |

This is the third of five sessions for Savoy, the two first to be found in 1944. They are in general very well produced and go deeper than most of the contemporary setups. DB plays with great inspiration on all titles, having fine soli on "Donby" alias "Perdido" (note the bridge!) and "... Drink" alias "Stompin' At The Savoy". Nevertheless it is the extremes that are unforgettable, a superlative (quote Dan. M.) chorus on the slow moving "Candy" and an incredible showoff on the fast "... Moon". Postscript: Two alternate takes of "Candy" have appeared, equally beautiful, but the differences are slight, and you have to listen very carefully to discern one from the other, easiest are the codi (?).

GEORGE WILLIAMS**NYC. probably 1945**

Unknown (tp), Don Byas (ts), unknown (p), probably Eddie Durham (g), unknown (b), (dm), George Williams (vo).

Two (or more) titles were recorded for Hub:

| | | |
|-------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 450-B | A Woman Gets Tired Of One Man ATT | Solo 10 bars. (SM) |
| 451-B | Don't Care Blues | Solo 8 bars. (SM) |

A typical blues session focusing on Williams' not too advanced performance, and then suddenly pops up unmistakably DB! Particularly "... Blues" has a fine solo.

EARL BOSTIC AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. ca. Nov./Dec. 1945**

Roger Jones (tp, vo), Benny Harris, Dick Vance (tp), Claude Jones, Benny Morton (tb), Eddie Barefield (cl), Earl Bostic (as), Don Byas, Walter "Foots" Thomas (ts), Ed Finkel (p), Tiny Grimes (g), Al Hall (b), Cozy Cole (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Majestic:

| | | |
|------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| T614 | The Man I Love | No solo. |
| T615 | Hurricane Blues | Solo 12 bars. (SM) |
| T616 | The Major And The Minor | No solo. |
| T617 | All On | Solo 16 bars. (FM) |

Two good soli in big band surroundings where Earl Bostic himself takes most of the solo space.

JOHNNY GUARNIERI QUARTET **NYC. 1945**

Don Byas (ts), Johnny Guarneri (p), Leo Guarneri (b), J. C. Heard (dm).

Four titles were recorded for HN:

| | | |
|-------|-------------------------|---|
| 500 C | I'd Do Anything For You | Soli 8, 32 and 24 bars. (FM) |
| 501 A | Sophisticated Lady | Solo 16 bars. Solo 16 bars to coda. (S) |
| 502 C | Armand The Groove | Straight 32 bars to solo 16 bars. Solo 8 bars to straight 8 bars. (SM) |
| 503 B | Dot's My Baby | Straight 8 bars. Solo 16 bars. (SM) |

Maybe not such a well known session as many of the other quartet sessions of 1944-45-46 but nevertheless of similar, high quality. Everything works well, and to select favorite items is only a matter of very private taste. For me, the delicate version of the old "... Anything ..." is remarkable, note the subdued entrance to the longest solo! But all items have their special charm, as the groovy "Armand ..." or the lovely "... Lady". Maybe "... Baby" is the least interesting DB item but here Guarneri shines brightly.

NAT JAFFE AND HIS V-DISC JUMPERS **ca. 1945**

Charlie Shavers (tp), Don Byas (ts), Nat Jaffe (p), unknown (b), possibly Specs Powell (dm).

One title was recorded for VDisc:

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| The Jeep Is Jumpin' | Soli 8 and 64 bars. 4/4 (tp/ts) for 64 bars. (F) |
|---------------------|---|

An excellent recording in a quite fast tempo but without any problems for Don Byas who is in the prime of life.

DON BYAS QUINTET **NYC: prob. 1945**

Probably Tony Scott (cl), Don Byas (ts), unknown (p), (b), (dm), Symphony Sid Thorin (mc).

Broadcast from Three Deuces, two titles:

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Groovin' High / Whispering | Duet with (cl) 32 bars to solo 64 bars. Solo 32 bars to coda. (F) |
| Stardust | Intro 24 bars to solo 64 bars to long coda. (S) |

Fine tenorsax playing on "Whispering" but the main item is a long and beautiful solo feature version of "Stardust". Note several details we recognize from his 1941 Minton/Monroe versions!

DB has been presented as taking part in the BANTAM BLUES QUARTET session for Super Disc, LA. 1945, under the pseudonym of "Nuff Sed". Strange thing, because the tenorsax playing does not resemble that of DB, nor was he in LA at that time, and in fact the tenorsax player is Johnny Richards.

BENNY CARTER AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 7, 1946**

Emmett Berry, Neal Hefti, Shorty Rogers, Joe Newman (tp), Trummy Young, Al Moore, Sandy Williams, Dickie Wells (tb), Benny Carter, Russell Procope (as), Tony Scott (cl), Don Byas, Flip Phillips (ts), Willard Brown (as, bar), Sonny White (p), Al Casey (g), John Simmons (b), J. C. Heard (dm).

Three titles were recorded for DeLuxe, two feature DB:

| | | |
|-------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 168-X | Diga Diga Doo | Solo 16 bars. (F) |
| 168-Y | Diga Diga Doo | As above. (F) |
| 170 | Some Of These Days | Solo 16 bars. (M) |

NYC. Jan. 8, 1946

Same except Al Grey (tb), Dexter Gordon (ts), Freddie Green (g) replace Wells, Phillips and Casey.

Three titles were recorded for DeLuxe, one features DB:

| | | |
|-----|-----------|--------------------|
| 173 | Rose Room | Solo 16 bars. (FM) |
|-----|-----------|--------------------|

Half of the excellent DeLuxe items feature DB with quite different soli. The greatest excitement is to be found with the rather unorthodox opening of "Rose Room". Note also that there are two quite different versions with regard to all solists on "Diga ...", and DB plays fine in high up-tempo. Nevertheless, the best item is the rather reticent "... Days", which contrasts beautifully with the band. Quality items all of them!

ESQUIRE ALL-AMERICAN**1946 AWARD WINNERS****NYC. Jan. 10/11, 1946**

Louis Armstrong (tp-5020,21, vo-5020), Neal Hefti (tp-5021), Charlie Shavers (tp-5020,22), Jimmy Hamilton (cl-5020, 21, 22), Johnny Hodges (as), Don Byas (ts), Duke Ellington (p-5020,22), Billy Strayhorn (p), Remo Palmieri (g), Chubby Jackson (b), Sonny Greer (dm), Red Norwo (vib-5022).

Four titles were recorded for Victor:

| | | |
|--------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 5020-1 | Long Long Journey | Obbligato 12 bars. (SM) |
| 5021-1 | Snafu | Solo 16 bars. (M) |
| 5022-1 | The One That Got Away | Solo 32 bars. (F) |
| 5023-1 | Gone With The Wind | Solo 32 bars. (S) |

Rarely do you hear such a magnificent item as "... Wind", and the combination Byas/Hodges is just unforgettable! Typically, this was the item cut after most of the guys had gone home, the "business" was over and now one plays for the pleasure of it. There are DB items with more notes per second and more improvisation, but that is not at all the point. If you look for beauty, you find it on "... Wind", DB first and Hodges to sum up. The remaining items have all their benefits in general and good DB, I will recommend the fast "... Got Away".

DON REDMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. Jan. 29, 1946**

Personnel includes Hot Lips Page, Dick Vance, Harold Johnson, Henry Glover (tp), Henderson Chambers (tb), Bernie Peacock, Don Redman (as, vo-6), Don Byas (ts), Bob Wyatt (p), Cozy Cole (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Swan:

| | | |
|-----|------------------|------------------------------|
| SG5 | Midnite Moods | No solo. |
| SG6 | Dark Glasses | Solo with orch 24 bars. (M) |
| SG7 | Mickey Finn | Solo with orch 24 bars. (FM) |
| SG8 | Carrie Mae Blues | No solo. |

Between swing and bebop, this is interesting music with excellent DB.

DIZZY GILLESPIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. Feb. 22, 1946**

Dizzy Gillespie (tp), Don Byas (ts), Milt Jackson (vib), Al Haig (p), Bill De Arango (g), Ray Brown (b), J. C. Heard (dm).

Three titles were recorded for Victor (Note that DB does not play on 1685 Anthropology):

| | | |
|--------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1682-1 | 52nd Street Theme | Solo 32 bars. (F) |
| 1682-2 | 52nd Street Theme | As above. (F) |
| 1683-1 | Night In Tunisia | In ensemble. Solo 18 bars. (M) |
| 1683-2 | Night In Tunisia (NC) | In ensemble. (M) |
| 1684-1 | Ol' Man Rebob | In ensemble. Solo 16 bars. (FM) |

A famous bop session belonging to the most important ones of the era, discussed in length numerous times by competent authors and led by a Dizzy in his very prime. Although DB has moved around in much musical turbulence the last years, this is his first 100% modern session founded on different rules than most of the other sessions

before and after this one. However, he plays like he has been boppin' around for years! His work is impressive everywhere, but the two fast takes of "52nd ..." should be highlighted.

DON BYAS QUARTET**NYC. May 17, 1946**

Don Byas (ts), Teddy Brannon (p, cel-49), Frank Skeete (b), Fred Radcliffe (dm).
Five titles were recorded for Savoy:

| | | |
|---------|---------------------------|---|
| 59048-1 | I Don't Know Why | Solo 32 bars. Solo 8 bars to coda. (S) |
| 59048-2 | I Don't Know Why | As above. (S) |
| 59049-1 | London Donnie (Danny Boy) | Soli 32 and 8 bars. (S) |
| 59049 | London Donnie (NC) | Solo 5 bars (NC). (S) |
| 59049-2 | London Donnie | As take 1. (S) |
| 59049 | London Donnie (NC) | Solo 32 bars. (S) |
| 59050 | Old Folks | Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S) |
| 59051-1 | Cherokee | Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 24 bars. (FM) |
| 59051 | Cherokee (NC) | Solo 5 bars (NC). (F) |
| 59051-2 | Cherokee | As take 1. (F) |
| 59052 | September In The Rain | Soli 64 and 16 bars. (M) |

I remember I did not like these sides very much when I was a kid. They seemed too serious, too introvert, almost unswinging to me, being not pure swing music, nor bop! Today I realize that they are unique. This is one of the first modern tenor sax sessions, conceived almost like an LP production of many years later, letting the artist select a number of vehicles to ride to obtain a wanted effect. The playing is just incredibly good. Three magnificent ballads of which I prefer "Old Folks" for its larger scope, a magnificent swinger "... In The Rain" with breathtaking double-tempo phrases, and a "Cherokee" where the rhythm section just has to stick to two-two (so in fact the tempo is really "very fast"). Maybe these and the remaining Savoy sides represent the peak of Byas' career. Postscript: The existence of alternate takes only makes the session more wonderful. The monumental and solemn approach perhaps does not make alternate takes as important as in more informal settings; the variations are not that great and demand close listening, however, when you discover a fancy detail, the pleasure is just so much greater!

TEDDY WILSON OCTET**NYC. Aug. 19, 1946**

Buck Clayton (tp), Scoville Browne (as), Don Byas (ts), George James (bar), Teddy Wilson (p), Remo Palmieri (g), Billy Taylor (b), J. C. Heard (dm), Sarah Vaughan (vo-5652,53).

Four titles were recorded for Musicraft, no DB on "Penthouse Serenade", "Don't Worry 'Bout Me" and "Just One Of Those Things", but:

| | | |
|------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 5054 | I Want To Be Happy | Solo 16 bars. (F) |
|------|--------------------|-------------------|

The good musicians on this session are mostly used as arranged background for a wonderful singer. However, in the fast "... Happy" DB creates an excellent, colorful solo.

DON BYAS QUARTET**NYC. Aug. 21, 1946**

Don Byas (ts), Sanford Gold (p), Leonard Gaskin (b), Max Roach (dm).
Nine titles were recorded for Savoy, 3337 "If I Loved You" unissued but:

| | | |
|------|-------------------------|---|
| 3329 | Living My Life | Straight 32 to solo 32 bars. Solo 8 bars to straight 8 bars. (M) |
| 3330 | To Each His Own | Solo 48 bars to coda. (S) |
| 3331 | They Say It's Wonderful | Part of intro. Solo 48 bars. (SM) |
| 3332 | Cynthia's In Love | Solo 40 bars to coda. (S) |
| 3333 | September Song | Soli 48 and 16 bars. (SM) |
| 3334 | St. Louis Blues | Straight. Soli 48 and 24 bars. Straight. (FM) |
| 3335 | I've Found A New Baby | Long intro with rhythm. Soli 64 and 64 bars. Coda with rhythm. (F) |

3336 Marie Intro 8 bars to straight 32 bars
to solo 16 bars. Solo 36 bars. (M)

Another magnificent session, very well conceived with everything from beautiful slow ballads to an incredible "... New Baby" with four choruses in an ultra-fast tempo. You simply must not miss DB's treatment of "St. Louis Blues" nor the harmonically intriguing original "... My Life". And "September Song" is a real autumn flower. The slow "To Each ..." and "Cynthia ..." are what Don M. calls "pseudo-classical vogue" but what does that matter, the big beautiful tenorsax sound of Don Byas turns any song into a jazz performance of great value (just like Sonny Rollins did some years later). In fact, there are only highlights on this session! If you must choose your goodnight song, I will again ask you to note "... New Baby". Only Charlie Parker could play fast like this in 1946, and to be compared to Bird should be an honor great enough for most people. Don Byas was not inferior to anyone.

DON BYAS

NYC. early Sept. 1946

Don Byas (ts), Beryl Booker (p ÷ 185), Tony Scott (p-185), John Simmons (b), Fred Radcliffe (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Gotham:

| | | |
|--------|-----------------------|--|
| S1-182 | You Go To My Head | Solo 40 bars. Solo 6 bars to coda. (S) |
| S1-183 | Don't You Know I Care | Solo 32 bars. Solo 8 bars to coda. (S) |
| S1-184 | Gloomy Sunday | Soli 16 and 16 bars. (S) |
| S1-185 | More Than A Mood | Soli 32 and 8 bars. (S) |

This session is probably the very last in the U.S., a few days or weeks later DB left for Europe with Don Redman, never to return. It is almost a premonition, the choice of very slow ballads played in a sad mood seems to say: "I will miss my home country very much, but I still have to leave you!" In Europe, he found a world which appreciated his talents and made him feel at home. Forever.

To be continued in Europe late 1946.

...ooo...