



JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC

*The Ella Fitzgerald Set*



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JAZZ At The Philharmonic began on July 2, 1944 when jazz entrepreneur Norman Granz staged a benefit concert at Philharmonic Hall in Los Angeles. It was an overwhelming critical and commercial success, and spawned more concerts. Eventually a series of national and international tours were organized, and Granz decided to record them for posterity — knowing that the jazz public would want to relive the historic sounds of JATP for years to come.

He handpicked the musicians for JATP, and they were indeed the cream-of-the-crop. A member of the troupe was by definition an all-star. Swing-style players were most frequently represented, but a Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie or, later, Stan Getz, Sonny Stitt, or J.J. Johnson was right at home on the JATP stage.

By 1949, the format for the shows was set. The cast of characters changed from show to show, although several jazz greats were stalwarts including Ella Fitzgerald, Oscar Peterson and Gene Krupa.

The presentations were broken down into two parts, the first half being an all-star jam session, and the second half featuring the individual sets of Fitzgerald, Peterson, Krupa and occasionally Lester Young or Coleman Hawkins. At the completion of this segment the whole troupe joined together for a rousing finale.

The music contained on this and the other nine volumes is Jazz At The Philharmonic at its peak. Whether it's an individual performance or a jam session, this is unparalleled live jazz.

#### Also available in the Jazz At The Philharmonic series:

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Jazz At The Philharmonic Concerts & Recordings produced by Norman Granz. Reissue compiled and annotated by Bob Porter. Reissue engineered by Steve Baldwin. Album Design and Art Direction: Tom Hughes, Hughesgroup, New York. Cover Photo of Ella Fitzgerald: Herman Leonard (courtesy Chuck Stewart). Executive Producer: Barry Feldman.

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# The Ella Fitzgerald Set



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#### Side A:

1. A Foggy Day	2:33
2. My Bill	2:48
3. The Man That Got Away	4:30
4. Hernando's Hideaway	3:11
5. Why Don't You Do Right?	3:07
6. Later	2:22

Ella Fitzgerald, vocals; Raymond Tunia, piano; Ray Brown, bass; Buddy Rich, drums.

*My Bill* and *Why Don't You Do Right?* recorded on September 19, 1953 at Carnegie Hall, New York City. All other selections on Side A recorded September 17, 1954 at Carnegie Hall, New York City.

#### Side B:

1. Robbins Nest	2:27
2. Black Coffee	3:32
3. Just A Lucky So & So	2:42
4. Somebody Loves Me	1:47
5. Basin St. Blues	3:02
6. Flyin' Home	5:10

Ella Fitzgerald, vocals; Hank Jones, piano; Ray Brown, bass; Buddy Rich, drums. On *Flyin' Home* Roy Eldridge, trumpet; Tommy Turk, trombone; Charlie Parker, alto sax; Lester Young, Flip Phillips, tenor saxes; are added.

Recorded September 18, 1949 at Carnegie Hall.

All selections previously unissued.

ONE of the aspects seldom mentioned in any discussion of Jazz At The Philharmonic is the performance of Ella Fitzgerald, the first lady of song. Ella initially performed with JATP in 1946 and was, very quickly, made a permanent member of the cast. Yet in all the years that the JATP concerts were recorded, Ella was involved only twice (*Jazz At The Hollywood Bowl*, 1956, and *Ella At The Opera House*, 1957).

Look at the roster of artists for any given year of JATP and you'll encounter only the very best players, and some enormous egos as befits stars of that magnitude. Yet, Ella Fitzgerald was accepted as "one of the boys" by the musicians on the tour, because of her musicianship and professionalism. To them she was Lady Fitz, just as Flip Phillips was Lady Flip or Sonny Stitt, Lady Stitt (all names courtesy of Lester Young).

Talk to a stagehand or a recording engineer who has ever worked with Ella Fitzgerald, and you will hear nothing but the highest praise for her ability to take care of business. She will be on time, well prepared and ready to hit the mark *always*. Ella Fitzgerald came into jazz as a *fan* and she remains a fan, she has too much respect for the music and the people who make it to let anything get in the way of someone else's enjoyment.

For this reason it seems unlikely that she would have complained if she were given material to record that was well beneath her stature. Ever heard *Santa Claus Got Stuck In My Chimney?* How about *Little Man In A Flying Saucer?* *The Bean Bag Song?* Well, these are examples of some of the tunes Ella was given to record during the

time she was touring with JATP. Of course, when she was on stage with Jazz At The Philharmonic, she sang only great songs very much in her league.

All of this leads us to the music on this album which was recorded during JATP concerts, but not issued until now. You'll hear a lady at work who really enjoys what she is doing. On several occasions you'll hear the rowdy JATP crowd calm down almost immediately when Ella turns to a ballad. This is not only genuine respect from the audience, but indicative of the commanding presence of Ella Fitzgerald as an artist.

By the 1950's Ella Fitzgerald carried her own pianist, but here she sounds quite at home with Hank Jones as she does with Ray Tunia. Ray Brown and Buddy Rich are without peer as rhythm players. Listen to her with her own lyric *Hernando's Hideaway*; doing her highly credible yet very funny Louis Armstrong imitation on *Basin Street Blues*; or her cooking scat on *Flyin' Home* (with Charlie Parker in the background), setting the stage for some incendiary Flip Phillips' tenor sax.

Within a few short years of these live performances, Ella Fitzgerald would be sweeping every poll in the world; would make movie appearances; and would begin a whole new facet of her career with her *Songbook* series on Verve. Yet it was her association with Jazz At The Philharmonic that brought her into the spotlight as an international star and some of her very best singing is contained within these grooves.

As Lady Flip might say, "If you don't like this...you don't like broccoli."