

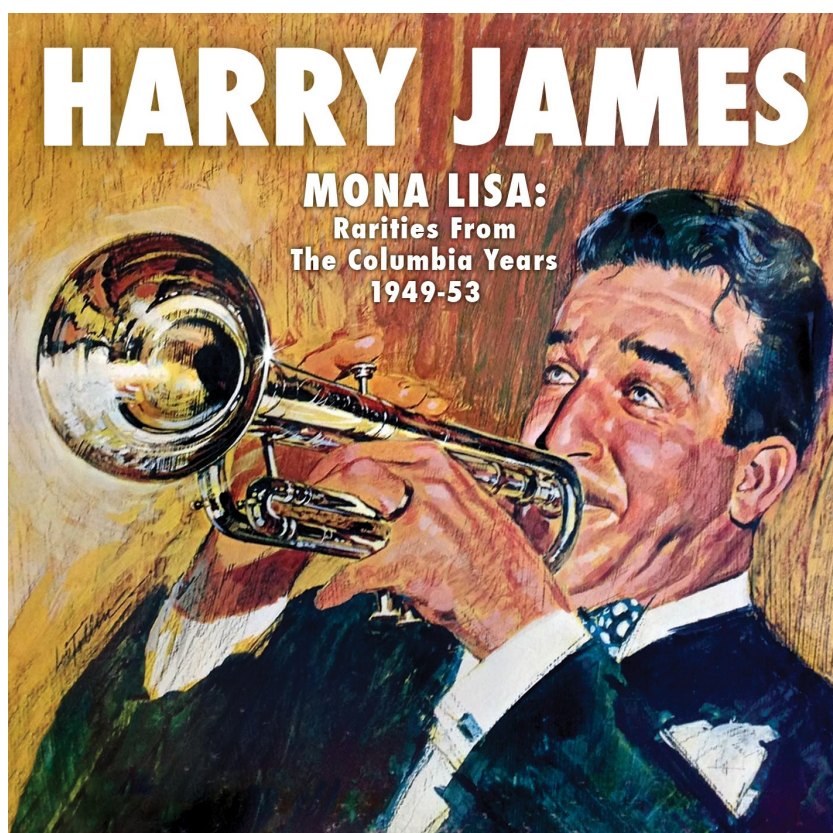
OCTOBER 2018



BIG BAND NEWS

by Music Librarian **CHRISTOPHER POPA**

Handsome Harry and His Heavenly Horn!



This month's most highly-recommended compact disc is "Harry James: Mona Lisa: Rarities From The Columbia Years 1949-53," Sepia 1331.

The title "Mona Lisa" is especially fitting for several reasons— not only was it a popular song of the early 1950s, it was one of Harry's very last charted singles. And, like Leonardo da Vinci's famous oil portrait, the cover illustration by Lou Tollin and the rare performances contained inside, which give a musical portrait of Harry as he neared the end of his contract with Columbia Records, are works of art.

Besides *Mona Lisa*, the songs and instrumentals include *Deep Night*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Blacksmith Blues*, and *You Blew Out the Flame (In My Heart)*.

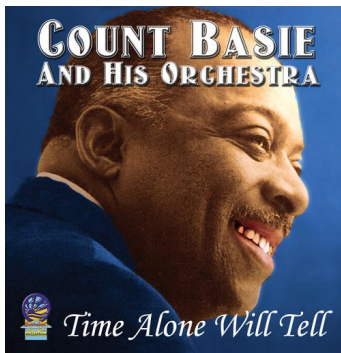
There are 28 rare high-fidelity singles in all, and only two were ever previously issued on CD. Frank Sinatra, Jerry Vale, and accordionist Art Van Damme are special guests, with arrangements by Ray Conniff and Neal Hefti.

Of course, as is Sepia's custom, the sound has been reproduced with care and is very clear. And full band personnel, recording session information, period illustrations, and other details are provided.

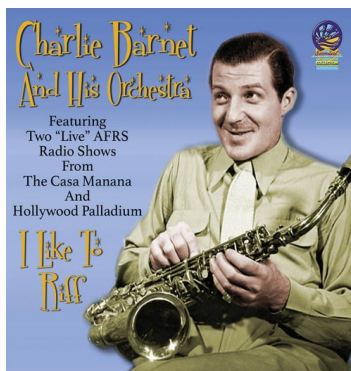


This is the photo on which the cover illustration was based.

MORE NEW COMPACT DISCS



Some AFRS "One Night Stand" radio broadcasts by Count Basie and His Orchestra are on "Time Alone Will Tell," Sounds of YesterYear DSOY 2115. The music, including *Beaver Junction*, *Let's Jump*, *Red Bank Boogie*, and *Paging Mr. Green*, emanated from the Hotel Lincoln in New York City in 1944 and 1945.



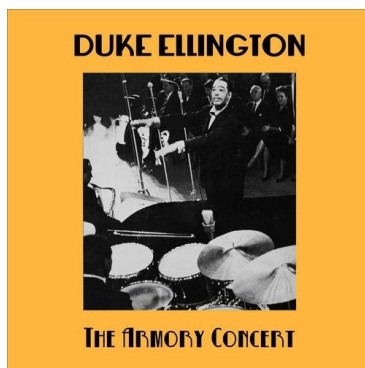
On "I Like To Riff," Sounds of YesterYear DSOY 2116, Charlie Barnet gets equal treatment with his own AFRS "One Night Stand" broadcasts: #375 from the Casa Manana in Culver City, California in 1944 and #4966 from the Hollywood Palladium in 1958. The former features vocalist Kay Starr, the latter arrangements by Bill Holman.



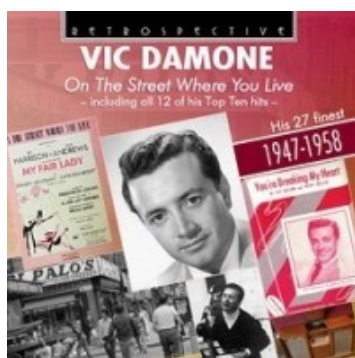
Sounds of YesterYear also presents Guy Lombardo on “Enjoy Yourself It’s Later Than You Think,” DSOY 2117. The 26 selections, mostly familiar songs, includes a number that have been on other Lombardo CDs already, so check what you have before considering it.



While we’re talking sweet bands, here is “Hit Parade: Platinum Collection: Sammy Kaye: Swing & Sway,” from the Dynamic label. It offers more than two dozen of Kaye’s biggest numbers from 1938-50, including *Daddy*, *Harbor Lights*, and *The Old Lamp-Lighter*. I think the reason this CD looks somewhat familiar—even though it’s new—is that the same photo of Kaye has been used on at least three other of his CDs.



Eight selections by Duke Ellington and His Orchestra at the Armory in his home town of Washington, D.C. in 1955, including the extended *A Tone Parallel to Harlem*.



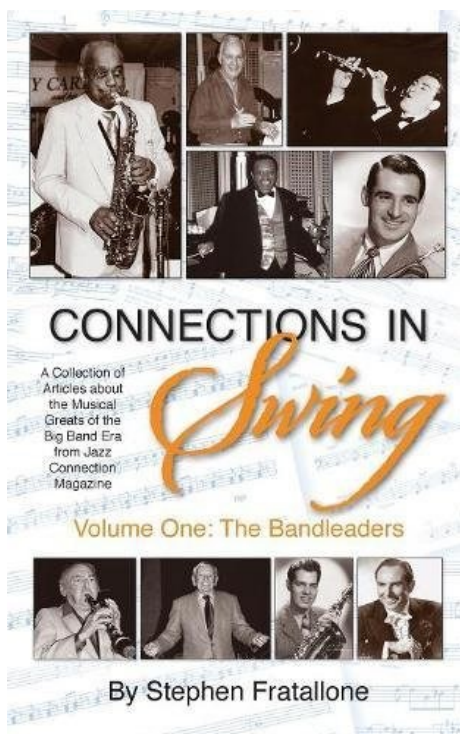
Though a very fine singer, Vic Damone is normally out of the scope of my website, as he was not known for working with the big bands. But he did make four sides, *I Have But One Heart*, *Ivy*, *You Do*, and *Angela Mia*, with bandleader Jerry Gray, all of which are on Retrospective RTR 4333.



The first album which featured vocalist Joe Williams with Count Basie and His Orchestra, made in 1955 for Verve, has been reissued on CD and LP by the Jazz Images label. It's an attractive package, front and back, but the music has been around before.



How about something totally new instead? Concord Jazz releases “All About That Basie,” a new CD, catalog number CJA00109, by The Count Basie Orchestra directed by Scotty Barnhart, featuring such talents as vocalist Carmen Bradford and Stevie Wonder. Can you imagine the Basie band playing songs made famous by Adele or Leonard Cohen?



Author Stephen Fratallone has compiled a bunch of the interviews he did with various bandleaders for Jazz Connection Magazine into a 500-page book, Connections In Swing: Volume One: The Bandleaders, published by Bear Manor Media of Albany, Georgia. And he has added a few lines about each bandleader, as updates to what he earlier wrote. It's available in hardcover or softcover.