

THE RECORDINGS OF SPIKE HUGHES AND HIS NEGRO ORCHESTRA

An Annotated Tentative Personnel - Discography

HUGHES, Spike (Patrick Cairns) double bass player, composer, writer Born: London, 19 Oct. 1908; Died: London, 2 Feb. 1987
He was a self-taught double bass player and first worked with the Night Watchmen (1929-30). In the early 1930s he performed and wrote arrangements for the impresario C.B. Cochrane (1931), toured with Jack Hylton (1931-32), and recorded in New York with his All American Orchestra (originally known as the Negro Orchestra, 1933), which included Henry "Red" Allen and Coleman Hawkins. He contributed material for, and appeared in, several films, and from 1931 to 1944 wrote for 'Melody Maker' under pseudonym Mike. Hughes later abandoned playing professionally to concentrate on writing criticism, and was of enormous importance in establishing a place for American bands and their recordings in England. Although he was seriously involved with jazz for only four years, he made numerous delightful recordings in England, with such groups as the Decca-dents and the Three Blind Mice. His American recordings, which include his compositions 'Arabesque', 'Pastorale', 'Nocturne', and the popular 'Donegal Cradle Song', are undeservedly neglected by critics. Among Hughes' larger works are 'A Harlem Symphony' and the jazz ballet 'High Yellow'. (Digby Fairweather, *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*)

This personnel-discography is based on RUST, JAZZ AND RAGTIME RECORDS 1897 - 1942.

Personnel are taken from this source, but modified in the light of earlier or subsequent research or on the strength of my own listening, discussed with our listening group or other interested collectors.

- Documented, most certain and aurally absolutely obvious identifications are listed thus: Spike Hughes
- Probable, generally agreed, but not documented identifications are listed in italics, thus: *Spike Hughes*
- Not attributable identifications – although the musician in question might be an otherwise well-known person – are listed thus: unknown
- If a possible identification for an otherwise unknown musician is suggested by the author without the possibility to prove the factual evidence, it is listed thus: (*Spike Hughes*)

When feeling certain without a musician's documented presence, I have not refrained from altering Rust's statements without using italics.

In any case, my statements are open to discussion and I would appreciate any contribution - pro or contra!

As always in my discographies on this website I have listed recording sessions with their headings, dates, titles and names of musicians in italics, whenever I am convinced that the eponymous musician of this discography is not part of the accompanying group of this session!

Documented names of musicians if known – in recording ledgers or on record labels – are listed in bold letters.

This discography still is - and will certainly be - a work in progress for a long time, if not eternally. Yet, on the way to a definite discography of all Harlem jazz recordings before 1942 - which certainly will never be possible - it is intended to fill some gaps that have not been treated before.

Spike Hughes and his Negro Orchestra were nothing but Benny Carter's Orchestra lent out to British enthusiast/bassist/ composer/ arranger Spike Hughes for the purpose of recording his own musical compositions and arrangements with the best open-minded jazz musicians at hand.

And the results of this enterprise are nothing more than fantastic big band jazz music with a very special European flavor performed by the contemporary crème of Harlem jazz musicians. Jazz devotee John Hammond had a hand in getting these sides recorded.

SPIKE HUGHES AND HIS NEGRO ORCHESTRA

001 SPIKE HUGHES AND HIS NEGRO ORCHESTRA

Benny Carter – alt, clt, dir;

Leonard Davis, Bill Dillard, Shad Collins – tpt;

Wilbur de Paris, George Washington, Dicky Wells – tbn;

Wayman Carver, Howard Johnson – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;

New York,

Apr. 18, 1933

'Nick' Rodriguez – pno; Lawrence Lucie – gtr; Ernest Bass Hill – sbs; Kaiser Marshall – dms;

Benny Carter – voc (2); Spike Hughes – arr, comp

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|-----------|------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| B-13257-A | Nocturne | Dec F-3563, | Chronological Classics 522 |
| B-13258-A | Someone Stole Gabriel's Horn | Dec F-3563, | Chronological Classics 522 |
| B-13259-A | Pastorale | Dec F-3606, | Chronological Classics 522 |
| B-13260-A | Bugle Call Rag | Dec F-3606, | Chronological Classics 522 |

Composer credits: B-13257 (P. Hughes); B-13258 (Washington – Hayes – Mills); B-13259 (P. Hughes); B-13260 (E. Schoebel – J. Pettis – B. Meyer)

This is the contemporary Benny Carter band "occupied" by British band-leader, bassist, composer and arranger Spike Hughes. Hughes uses the somewhat strengthened Carter band as a vehicle for his own compositions/arrangements, and what a vehicle this is. Probably the best he could have found world-wide!

Contrary to all former discographies, Kaiser Marshall was the only drummer on this session (see below)!

Berger, Berger, Patrick, Benny Carter, A Life in American Music: "Spike Hughes had been impressed by the musicianship of the Carter orchestra at a rehearsal and the band became the nucleus for these three sessions of his music. Soloists like Henry Allen and Coleman Hawkins were added. Carter is not heavily featured as a soloist but as Raymond Horricks observes, "No one else but Carter ... would have been capable of leading a saxophone section on to produce such a unique variety of tonal blends. Throughout all these sessions, the composer and rehearsal leader complemented each other perfectly, so that their names became inseparable". The label of the original issue of 'Someone Stole Gabriel's Horn' lists Monette Moore as vocalist; Carter filled in when she failed to appear."

'Nocturne' with it's romantic theme is introduced by Dicky Wells on his muted trombone, and then taken over by a very soft and elegiac Coleman Hawkins on tenor sax, replacing the band's actual tenor man Chu Berry. This title's verse has very nice muted trumpet cum trombones playing cautiously-atonal chords.

'Gabriel's Horn' has a vocal by the still young Benny Carter, the actual bandleader, after him

the more common Hawkins on tenor and Dicky Wells - as we have got to know him - in the B-part of the tenor chorus, and later fine Benny Carter on alto sax. And again, the arranged parts are unfamiliar and play with atonality against customary tonality. Very interesting.

'Pastorale' has a pentatonic melody in the A-parts of the chorus – played muted by Bill Dillard – with the saxophone section taking over for the B-part. After a dissonant interplay it is Benny Carter majestically soloing, followed by Dicky Wells on trombone and by Coleman Hawkins later.

And then we have 'atonal 'Bugle Call Rag', very unfamiliar and exceptional and with great solos all over – and a celestial

Benny Carter on his alto. They even let Marshall play a four-bar break. Absolutely great! (I have developed a favour for dissonances and atonality in the last years – KBR!)

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Shad Collins, Leonard Davis, Bill Dillard (tp); Dicky Wells, Wilbur de Paris, George Washington (tb); Benny Carter, Wayman Carver, Howard Johnson (as); Coleman Hawkins (ts); Rodriguez (p); Lawrence Lucie (g); "Bass" Hill (b); Kaiser Marshall (dm)(1,2); Sid Catlett (dm) (3,4)

- Rust*2: Shad Collins, Leonard Davis, Bill Dillard (tpt); Dicky Wells, Wilbur de Paris, George Washington (tbn); Benny Carter, Wayman Carver, Howard Johnson (alt); Coleman Hawkins (ten); Red Rodriguez (pno); Lawrence Lucie (gtr); Ernest Hill (sbs); Kaiser Marshall (dms)(1,2); Sid Catlett (dms)(3,4); Spike Hughes (dir, arr); Benny Carter (vcl), NOT Monette Moore as per label!

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Shad Collins -Leonard Davis -Bill Dillard -t; Dicky Wells -Wilbur de Paris -George Washington -tb; Benny Carter -Wayman Carver -Howard Johnson -cl -as; Coleman Hawkins -ts; Rod Rodriguez -p; Lawrence Lucie -g; Ernest Hill -sb; Kaiser Marshall -d (1,2); Sid Catlett -d (3,4); Spike Hughes -dir -a; Benny Carter -v, deputising for Monette Moore.

- Johnny Simmen, Ernest 'Bass' Hill tel que je l'ai connu, *Le Point de Jazz* 6-40: "Au fait, cela me rappelle une erreur discographique inexplicable qui a perduré jusqu'à ce jour: Kaiser Marshall joue dans tous les quatre morceaux de la première session du avril et non seulement – comme on le prétend partout – dans 'Nocturne' et 'Somebody Stole Gabriel's Horn'. Kaiser et Bass ont affirmé tous deux avec conviction que Big Sid n'avait pas joué du tout à cette session-là."

- Storyville 135, L. + P. Wright, "That Cat Stopped My Show Cold", An interview with "Nick" Rodriguez, p. 86: "Then up came this business with Spike Hughes, who wants to come out here and get some Americans to do his jazz because the English boys don't please him playing his jazz. And I'm the pianist in this band and I made those sessions except for one when I think Luis Russell filled in for me, and part of them was a jam session with Spike."

Tunes structures:

B-13257-A *Nocturne* Key of C Decca

(Intro 4 bars ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA DW m-tbn 16 – ens 8 – DW m-tbn 8)(Vamp 4 bars ens)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA CH ten 16 – BC clt 8 – CH 8)(1/2 Chorus 16 bars BA ens 8 – DW m-tbn 8)(Tag 2 bars ens)

B-13258-A *Someone Stole Gabriel's Horn* Key of F / Eb / C / A Decca

(Intro 8 bars ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA ens)(Vamp 8 bars ens)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA BC voc + SC m-tpt obbl)(Vamp 8 bars ens)(Chorus 3 32 bars AABA CH ten 16 – DW o-tbn 8 – CH ten 8)(Vamp 10 bars ens)(Chorus 4 32 bars AABA ens 8 – BC alt 8 – ens 8 + 8)(Tag 2 bars ens)

B-13259-A *Pastorale* Key of Ab Decca

(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA BD m-tpt 16 – saxes 8 – BD m-tpt 8)(Vamp 8 bars ens)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA BC alt 14 – DW o-tbn 2+8+8)(Vamp 4 bars ens)(Chorus 3 32 bars AABA ens 8 – saxes 8 – CH ten 8 – BD m-tpt 8)(Tag 2 bars BD m-tpt)

B-13260-A *Bugle Call Rag* Key of Bb Decca

(Strain A1 12 bars ens)(Strain A2 12 bars ens)(Strain A3 12 bars ens)(Strain A4 12 bars ens)(Strain B1 16 bars CH ten)(Strain B2 16 bars SC m-tpt)(Strain B3 16 bars BC alt)(Strain B4 16 bars DW o-tbn)(Strain A5 12 bars ens)(Strain A6 12 bars KM dms 4 – ens 8)(Strain B5 16 bars ens)(Strain B6 16 bars ens)(Tag 6 bars ens)

002 SPIKE HUGHES AND HIS NEGRO ORCHESTRA

New York,

May 18, 1933

Benny Carter – alt, clt, dir;

Leonard Davis, Bill Dillard, Henry Red Allen – tpt;

Wilbur de Paris, George Washington, Dicky Wells – tbn;

Wayman Carver – alt, clt, flt; Howard Johnson – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins, Chu Berry – ten, clt;

Luis Russell – pno; Lawrence Lucie – gtr; Ernest Bass Hill – sbs (1,2,3,4); Spike Hughes – sbs (5); Sid Catlett – dms;

Spike Hughes – arr, comp;

Personnel for last title: Carter, Allen, Carver, Berry, Hawkins, Wells, Russell, Lucie, Hughes, Catlett

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| B-13352-A | Arabesque | Dec F-3639, | Chronological Classics 522 |
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| B-13353-A | Fanfare | Dec F-3639, | Chronological Classics 522 |
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| B-13354-A | Sweet Sorrow Blues | Dec F-5101, | Chronological Classics 522 |
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B-13355-A Music At Midnight Dec F-3836, Chronological Classics 522
 B-13356-A Sweet Sue – Just You Dec F-3972, Chronological Classics 522
 Composer credits: B-13352 (Hughes); B-13353 (trad. arr Hughes); B-13354 (Hughes); B-13355 (Hughes); B-13356 (Harris – Young)

This again is the Benny Carter band performing Spike Hughes' music and compositions.

Following "Nick" Rodriguez' recollections in Storyville 135, Luis Russell is the pianist on all titles of this session. And it certainly would be rather unlikely that there had been two pianists on this one session – as given in all Rusts. As all piano work on this session is played rhythmically only, there is no cause to assume Rodriguez on this fifth side. The more so, as Luis Russell was no great soloist on piano and mostly played rhythm in all his recordings, while soloing very sparsely.

Coleman Hawkins is responsible to present the theme of the first title 'Arabesque' (carrying a dedication to the famous Joseph Szigetty, forward-looking violinist of the time). After an exceptional four-bar bridge for the brass, Dicky Wells plays the three A-parts of the chorus using occasional lip-trills, the B-part taken by the reeds, followed by half-a-chorus by the brass and Carver on flute. Hawkins then, the obvious favourite of "bandleader" Spike Hughes, finishes the beautiful title softly.

'Fanfare' is in 12-bar blues form. Chu Berry starts proceedings with one rather tame chorus and Hawkins taking over for the second chorus. Both men rather retained, here, for friendly reasons? Then two choruses by Mr. Wells in his romantic style, superb, the band then changing over to a minor mode, and top-notch 'Red' Allen, lent from Mills Blue Rhythm Band, plays two sizzling choruses, followed by Benny Carter on clarinet, obviously feeling forward into atonal fields in his first chorus.

'Sweet Sorrow Blues' has a minor blues chorus presented by the ensemble between the soloists. The soloists then improvise on major changes, starting with Dicky Wells – still on the minor path, then hot but reflective 'Red' Allen on trumpet, and Coleman Hawkins on tenor sax, he also in the four-bar coda.

The majestic Mr. Wells on his unbelievable trombone – the true successor of the late Jimmy Harrison – reigns the first half of 'Music At Midnight'. After an ensemble interlude with Carter improvising on alto, Chu Berry and Hawkins share a chorus, and Carter on clarinet and 'Red' Allen have short solo parts.

This all is supported by a great rhythm section, with Luis Russell here on piano. And don't undervalue the young Sidney Catlett, here. He drives the band along with press-rolls on his snare-drum like "nobody's business".

The fifth title recorded on this session was performed by a small unit with Red Allen, Dicky Wells, Carter, Carver, Hawkins, Chu Berry, and the rhythm section with Spike Hughes sitting in for Bass Hill. And it is only here that we can hear Wayman Carver for a whole beautiful chorus on his flute.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: Leonard Davis, Bill Dillard, Henry Allen (tp); Dicky Wells, Wilbur de Paris, George Washington (tb); Benny Carter (as & cl); Howard Johnson (as); Wayman Carver (as & flute); Chu Berry, Coleman Hawkins (ts); Luis Russell (p); Lawrence Lucie (g); "Bass" Hill (b); Sid Catlett (dm); Rodriguez (p) and Spike Hughes (b) on fifth title*

- Rust*2: Henry Allen, Leonard Davis, Bill Dillard (tpt); Dicky Wells, Wilbur de Paris, George Washington (tbn); Benny Carter, Wayman Carver, Howard Johnson (alt); Coleman Hawkins, Leon "Chu" Berry (ten); Luis Russell (pno); Lawrence Lucie (gtr); Ernest Hill (sbs); Sid Catlett (dms); Spike Hughes (dir, arr); Benny Carter doubles on clt; Carver doubles on flt

- Rust*3: Henry Allen -Leonard Davis -Bill Dillard -t; Dicky Wells -Wilbur de Paris -George Washington -tb; Benny Carter -Howard Johnson -cl -as; Wayman Carver -as -f; Coleman Hawkins -Chu Berry -ts; Luis Russell -p; Lawrence Lucie -g; Ernest Hill -sb; Sid Catlett -d; Spike Hughes -dir -a; Red Rodriguez -p (5)

- Rust*4,*6: Spike Hughes -dir -a; Henry Allen -Leonard Davis -Bill Dillard -t; Dicky Wells -Wilbur de Paris -George Washington -tb; Benny Carter -Howard Johnson -cl -as; Wayman Carver -cl -as -f; Coleman Hawkins -cl -ts; Chu Berry -ts; Luis Russell -p; Lawrence Lucie -g; Ernest Hill -sb; Sid Catlett -d

- Storyville 135, L. + P. Wright, "That Cat Stopped My Show Cold", An interview with "Nick" Rodriguez p.86: "Then up came this business with Spike Hughes, who wants to come out here and get some Americans to do his jazz because the English boys don't please him playing his jazz. And I'm the pianist in this band and I made those sessions except for one when I think Luis Russell filled in for me, and part of them was a jam session with Spike."

Tunes structures:

B-13352-A Arabesque Key of Eb Decca
 (Chorus 1 32 bars AABA CH ten + ens)(Bridge 4 bars ens)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA DW o-tbn 16 – saxes 8 – DW o-tbn 8)(Chorus 3 32 bars AABA ens + flt 16 – CH ten + ens 16)

B-13353-A Fanfare Key of Bb/Bbm (blues changes) Decca
 (Chorus 1 12 bars ens)(Chorus 2 12 bars ens)(Chorus 3 12 bars CB ten)(Chorus 4 12 bars CH ten)(Chorus 5 12 bars DW o-tbn)(Chorus 6 12 bars DW o-tbn)(Chorus 7 12 bars minor changes ens)(Chorus 8 12 bars HRA o-tpt)(Chorus 9 12 bars HRA o-tpt)(Chorus 10 12 bars BC clt)(Chorus 11 12 bars BC clt)(Chorus 12 12 bars ens)(Tag 2 bars ens)

B-13354-A Sweet Sorrow Blues Key of Eb/Ebm (blues changes) Decca
 (Chorus 1 12 bars ens minor changes)(Chorus 2 12 bars DW o-tbn minor ch.)(Chorus 3 12 bars HRA o-tpt major ch.)(Chorus 4 12 bars ens minor ch.)(Chorus 5 12 bars CH ten major ch.)(Chorus 6 12 bars ens minor ch.)(Tag 4 bars ens – CH ten)

B-13355-A Music At Midnight Key of Eb Decca
 (Intro 16 bars ens + DW m-tbn)(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA DW m-tbn 16 – saxes 8 – DW m-tbn 8)(Interlude 24 bars ens 8 – BC alt 12 – ens 4)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA CB ten 16 – CH ten 16)(Vamp 2 bars ens)(Chorus 3 32 bars AABA ens 4 – BC clt 4 + 4 – ens 4 – HRA o-tpt 8 – ens 8)

B-13356-A Sweet Sue – Just You Key of G Decca
 (Chorus 1 32 bars AABA HRA o-tpt)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA CB ten)(Chorus 3 32 bars AABA WC flt)(Chorus 4 32 bars AABA DW o-tbn)(Chorus 5 32 Bars AABA BC alt)(Chorus 6 32 bars AABA HRA o-tpt 16 – CH ten 8 – HRA o-tpt 8)

003 SPIKE HUGHES AND HIS NEGRO ORCHESTRA

New York,

May 19, 1933

Benny Carter – alt, clt, sop (3), dir;

Leonard Davis or (Bill Dillard), Howard Scott, Henry Red Allen – tpt;

Wilbur de Paris, George Washington, Dicky Wells – tbn;

Wayman Carver – alt, clt, flt; Howard Johnson – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins, Chu Berry – ten, clt;

Nick Rodriguez – pno; Lawrence Lucie – gtr; Ernest Bass Hill – sbs (1,2,3,4); Spike Hughes – sbs (5); Sid Catlett – dms;

Henry Red Allen – voc (5);

Spike Hughes – arr, comp

Personnel for last title: Carter, Allen, Carver, Berry, Hawkins, Wells, Rodriguez, Lucie, Hughes, Catlett

B-13359-A Air In D Flat Dec F-5101, Chronological Classics 522

B-13360-A Donegal Cradle Song Dec F-3717, Chronological Classics 522

B-13361-A Firebird Dec F-3717, Chronological Classics 530

B-13362-A Music At Sunrise Dec F-3836, Chronological Classics 530
 B-13363-A How Come You Do Me Like You Do Dec F-3972, Chronological Classics 530
 Composer credits: B-13359 (Hughes); B-13360 (Hughes); B-13361 (Hughes); B-13362 (Hughes); B-13363 (Austin)

The only source listing Howard Scott for this session is Rust. I do not know where his information came from. But it is obvious that - whether he really participated or not - his job had only been to play second trumpet, Leonard Davis very probably - not Dillard - on first chair as lead trumpeter and Henry Red Allen in the third chair taking all the solos. Thus, there is no chance to hear Scott as soloist as usually the second chair player's duty is to play the middle part of the chords and give them their timbre. Since Davis was one of the well acclaimed first chair players of the 20/30s and thus not to be waived, it is obvious that Scott must have replaced Bill Dillard.

The muted trumpet solo in 'Air In D Flat', yet, seems to be played by Leonard Davis, but might nevertheless be possibly the work of Howard Scott. The tune starts with a nice saxophone section in the A-parts. And again, we have great Dicky Wells, sharing a chorus with Coleman Hawkins. In the last chorus we hear the trombone section in harmony.

'Donegal Cradle Song' starts with a softly-set muted trumpet part, taken over by the clarinets for the B-part. The tenor-sax solo with its beautiful clarinet background in 'Donegal Cradle Song' is generally attributed to Coleman Hawkins, but I have some minor doubts. The soft playing and the smooth and even tone could as well be Berry's! The B-part is occupied by the trombone section. 'Bass' Hill accompanies the whole title on bowed bass.

In 'Firebird' Benny Carter leads the saxophone-section on soprano sax. "Unfortunately, Benny had pawned his soprano saxophone some years before; he had not only long ago lost the ticket, of course, but he had also forgotten the name of the pawnbroker" But: "... it was allowed out of the pawnshop only on condition that it was returned immediately after use!" (S. Hughes, Second Movement). But the resulting sound really is extraordinary and most beautiful. Hawkins starts improvising proceedings, 'Red' Allen succeeding in his own individual way. And Mr. Wells again on trombone, and a last chorus with the middle-eight by the flute.

'Music At Sunrise' seems to be the first tune in classic jazz without the general structure of chorus - verse or different strains. Instead, the structural elements are in parts without the usual 4-bar units (the A-part of the first chorus, for instance, has 9 bars!), and thus are more European, perhaps, in composition and structure (I have to excuse possible mis-interpretations of the elements of 'Music At Sunrise' in my "Tunes Structures" below, if necessary). Dicky Wells and Coleman Hawkins are the only - short - soloists in this title.

The fifth title recorded on this session was performed by a small unit only as before, this time with Nick Rodriguez on piano. And great soloing!

Finally, I'd like to point the listener to the wonderful reissue of all these Spike Hughes Negro Orchestra recordings on the Dutch Retrieval CD RTR 79005, remastered by the great John R.T. Davies. Wonderful.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Leonard Davis, Bill Dillard, Henry Allen (tp); Dicky Wells, Wilbur de Paris, George Washington (tb); Benny Carter (as & cl); Howard Johnson (as); Wayman Carver (as & flute); Chu Berry, Coleman Hawkins (ts); Rodriguez (p); Lawrence Lucie (g); "Bass" Hill (b); Sid Catlett (dm); Spike Hughes (b) on fifth title

- Rust*2: Henry Allen, Leonard Davis, Bill Dillard (tpt); Dicky Wells, Wilbur de Paris, George Washington (tbn); Benny Carter, Wayman Carver, Howard Johnson (alt); Coleman Hawkins, Leon "Chu" Berry (ten); Red Rodriguez (pno); Lawrence Lucie (gtr); Ernest Hill (sbs); Sid Catlett (dms); Spike Hughes (dir, arr); Benny Carter doubles on clt; Carver doubles on flt

- Rust*3: Henry Allen - Leonard Davis - Howard Scott - t; Dicky Wells - Wilbur de Paris - George Washington - tb; Benny Carter - cl - as - ss; Howard Johnson - cl - as; Wayman Carver - as - f; Coleman Hawkins - Chu Berry - ts; Rod Rodriguez - p; Lawrence Lucie - g; Ernest Hill - sb; Sid Catlett - d; Spike Hughes - dir - a

- Rust*4,*6: Spike Hughes - dir - a; Henry Allen - Leonard Davis - Howard Scott - t; Dicky Wells - Wilbur de Paris - George Washington - tb; Benny Carter - cl - as - ss; Howard Johnson - cl - as; Wayman Carver - cl - as - f; Coleman Hawkins - cl - ts; Chu Berry - ts; Rod Rodriguez - p; Lawrence Lucie - g; Ernest Hill - sb; Sid Catlett - d

Tunes structures:

B-13359-A *Air In D Flat* Key of Db / Gb / Db Decca
 (Chorus 1 32 bars AABA saxes 16 - brass 8 - saxes 8)(Bridge 4 bars ens)(Interlude 16 bars ?LD m-tpt)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA DW o-tbn 16 - CH ten 16)(Chorus 3 32 bars AABA ens 16 - tbn 8 - saxes 8)(Tag 2 bars ens)

B-13360-A *Donegal Cradle Song* Key of Bb Decca
 (Chorus 1 32 bars AABA m-brass 16 - clts 8 - m-brass 8)(Bridge 4 bars m-brass)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA CB ten 16 - tbn 8 - CB ten 8)(1/4 Chorus 8 bars A m-brass)

B-13361-A *Firebird* Key of C / Eb Decca
 (Intro 8 bars ens)(Verse 1 32 bars AABA saxes 16 - brass 8 - saxes 8)(Bridge 8 bars ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AA' CH ten)(Chorus 2 32 bars AA' HRA o-tpt)(Chorus 3 32 bars AA' DW o-tbn)(Verse 2 32 bars AABA ens 16 - WC flt 8 - ens 8)(Tag 8 bars ens - SC cymbals)

B-13362-A *Music At Sunrise* Key of C Decca
 (Strain A 34 bars AABA' ens)(Interlude 8 bars tbn 2 - ens 2 - tbn 2 - ens 2)(Strain B 20 bars saxes 8 - ens 2 - saxes 8 - ens 2)(Strain C 20 bars DW o-tbn 8 - saxes 8 - ens 4)(Strain D 1 20 bars ens)(Interlude 8 bars CH ten)(Strain D 2 20 bars ens)

B-13363-A *How Come You Do Me Like You Do* Key of Bb Decca
 (Chorus 1 16 bars AA'BA ens)(Chorus 2 16 bars AA'BA CB ten)(Chorus 3 16 bars AA'BA HRA voc + BC clt obl)(Chorus 4 16 bars AA'BA DW o-tbn)(Chorus 5 16 bars AA'BA NR pno)(Chorus 6 16 bars AA'BA Ch ten)(Chorus 7 16 bars AA'BA WC flt)(Chorus 8 16 bars AA'BA ens)

SOURCES:

- Berger, Berger, Patrick, Benny Carter, Vol. 1, p.114: "Those recordings of Hughes's work came in April and May of 1933 at a time when Carter's band was fairly busy. Soon after arriving in New York, Hughes went to a rehearsal. "Benny Carter's band," he wrote, "was producing a sound which I had never realized existed As a compliment to my arrival in Harlem, Benny Carter took his band through a performance of 'Six Bells Stampede'.... Benny, it clearly appeared, knew even better than I what I was driving at; but, with the innate sense of good manners so characteristic of Harlem, he offered his version of my tune for my approval."

In his turn, Carter appreciated Hughes' musicianship. "Before Spike came to New York, John Hammond told me of his forthcoming visit. After we recorded his music, I felt it was a pity that we had so little of it. He had a great deal of talent that went unrepresented in actual music, probably because he had other interests." Hughes was taken with Carter's personality as well as his talent. He found Carter "quiet,

dignified and utterly charming,” with a “quick sense of humor.” It was strange, he said that Carter could not get the “break he deserves” even though he was, after Ellington, musically the “most important person” in America and his name was a “household word in Europe.” Hughes offered the explanation that Carter was an “idealist” who would not accept just whatever came along. As a leader, Carter was extraordinary, Hughes observed. “He has more authority over his players than any other leader in Harlem. . . . Duke suggests rather than rehearses his band, but Benny expects and maintains perfect discipline, in such an unassuming manner” that one does not realize how intensively he drills his band.

Hughes was delighted with the Carter band’s recording of his compositions and arrangements. In his memoirs, published in 1951, he says that American Negro bands did not really understand his music; they had simply played it in their own way. But Hughes pointed out, “because together we got under the skin of what I had written, the records made by Benny Carter’s orchestra were as nearly perfect as anything I could have hoped for.”

- If interested, the reader/listener is recommended to read Spike Hughes, ‘Second Movement’, Museum Press Limited, London. The space given to the recording of the above listed sessions is too voluminous to be copied here. But it is fascinating reading, and gives a good impression of Harlem – and its music scene - as seen in the eyes of a European.

K. - B. Rau
08-04-2024