

# THE RECORDINGS OF CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

## An Annotated Tentative Personnel - Discography

HOPKINS, Claude Driskett, piano /leader /arranger /composer

Born: Alexandria, Virginia, 24th August, 1903  
Died: Riverdale, New York, 19th February 1984

Raised in Washington, D.C., where both parents were on the staff of the Howard University. Began playing piano at the age of seven, later spent two years studying medicine and music at Howard University, gained AB degree and did further year's study at Washington Conservatory. Played in college orchestras, then led own band at Atlantic City (summer 1924), played briefly in New York with Wilbur Sweatman, then again organised own band. Sailed to Europe in September 1925, leading own band for the Josephine Baker revue, toured throughout Europe with the show, then led own band (comprised of Joe Hayman and several European musicians) in Italy and Spain (early 1926). Returned to New York in spring of 1926 and during that summer led own band at Smile-a-While, Asbury Park, New Jersey, played residencies in New York and Washington, then led own band for 'Ginger Snaps' touring revue (1927). Continued leading during the late 1920s at Roseland Ballroom, Asbury Park, Cocomanut Grove, New York, etc., was then appointed leader of the musicians then working with Charlie Skeete. Led the new band at the Savoy Ballroom, New York (1930), then long residencies at the Roseland Ballroom (1931-34), Cotton Club (late 1934-36), etc. (During the 1930s Claude Hopkins occasionally fronted the band, using Ray Durant, Mike Dishman, etc. as pianist.) From 1937 until 1940 did extensive touring, occasional residencies in New York, etc. Reorganised band in 1941, played on West Coast, New York, etc., until disbanding late in 1942. In 1943 worked as an inspector at the Eastern Aircraft Factory in New Jersey and led the company's Wild Cat Band, also led own band on tour of Canada, Ohio, etc. (September - November 1943). In October 1944 formed new band for residency at Club Broadway, New York, etc., early in 1946 own big band into Zanzibar, New York. Formed own quintet in October 1947, played in Boston and The Place, New York (1948), then led own sextet at Clun Zanzibar, New York (1950-51). Worked in Boston (1952), from 1954 began regular appearances with Henry 'Red' Allen at the Metropole, New York, also played in Herman Aurey's Trio in late 1950s and with clarinetist Sol Yaged in 1960. Regular recording sessions during the 1950s. From 1960-66 regularly led own small group, regular seasons at Nevele Country Club in the Catskills, Longwood Casino, etc. From late 1967-69 played with Wild Bill Davison in The Jazz Giants. Continues to play regularly, brief spell with Roy Eldridge at Jimmy Ryan's, New York (1970). Played many jazz festivals during the 1970s. Toured Europe with Earle Warren and Dicky Wells. *During the mid-1930s, Claude Hopkins' Orchestra appeared in the films 'Dance Team', 'Barbershop Blues', and 'Wayward'.* (J. Chilton, Who's Who 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: **Claude Hopkins**
- Probable, generally agreed, but not documented identifications are listed in italics, thus: *Claude Hopkins*
- 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: *(Claude Hopkins Orchestra)*

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 written 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 jazz recordings before 1942 - which certainly will never be possible - it is intended to fill some gaps that have not been treated before.

The following statements and the resulting list of recordings only reflect the opinion of this writer/listener and are open to discussion. More so, discussion is eagerly invited. Corrections, amendments and controversial opinions are much appreciated.

Frank Driggs, booklet to Cl. Hopkins HEP CD 1049: "Claude Hopkins remains an enigma, an often overlooked figure in the history of jazz. Although eminently successful throughout the worst years of the depression, Hopkins was tossed aside when the tidal wave of swing became the standard of the post-1935 era. Only the instrumentals, a handful of his many recordings, were collected, some of which featured Edmond Hall's New Orleans-styled clarinet solos."

CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

001	<b>CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA</b>	New York,	May 24, 1932
	Albert Snaer, Sylvester Lewis, Ovie Alston – tpt; Fernando Arbello – tbn; Gene Johnson – alt, clt; Edmond Hall – alt, clt, bar; Bobby Sands – ten, clt; Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr, arr (2); Walter Jones – bjo, gtr; Henry Turner – sbs, bbs; Pete Jacobs – dms; Orlando Roberson – voc (1); Ovie Alston – voc (4); Claude Hopkins – arr (1,2); Jimmy Mundy – arr (3)		
152199-1	(I Would Do) Anything For You	Col 2665-D,	Chronological Classics 699
152200-1	Mad Moments	Col 2665-D,	Chronological Classics 699
152201-1	Mush Mouth	Col 2674-D,	Chronological Classics 699
152202-1	How I'm Doin'?	Col 2674-D,	Chronological Classics 699
<i>Composer-credits are: 152199 (Hill – Williams - Hopkins); 152200 (Hopkins); 152201 (Mundy); 152202 (Redman – Branch)</i>			

Spike Hughes aka 'Mike', Melody Maker, Nov. 1933: "Reviewing Hopkins' 'How'm I Doin'?' he wrote: *The real honours of this record go without doubt to the rhythm section, whose delicate swing is the most thrilling thing in years. Listen to the sound of the rhythm behind the vocal passages. Now go home and come to me when you hear anything like it in any English band.*" This opinion may well apply to English bands of the 1930s of which I know too little, but when considering the driving effect, a good drummer using his various devices of his drum-set adds to the band's performance, I feel the Hopkins way of handling the rhythm much too tame and un-obtrusive, without denying their inherent swing.

I – KBR – I have been listening now (2024) for 65 years mainly to the music of Harlem - also to the music of New Orleans, Swing, and Baroque and Classics - but of all the Harlem bands I have enjoyed so much, Claude Hopkins' was the least favourite. I have a suspicion why this is so. But I won't let you know. Listen yourself! Their handling of the rhythm section may be part of it. But one of the consequences of this fact is that I never tackled Hopkins' trumpet players. To adjoin the ad-lib trumpet parts in my below "Soloists ad-lib" notes I followed Frank Driggs in his notes to HEP CD 1049 and have given the Armstrong-styled parts to Sylvester Lewis, the multi-toned horizontal muted trumpet parts containing jumping-trills to Ovie Alston (he can be recognised behind Roberson's vocal in the first title). I assume Albert Snaer to be first trumpet player, and thus without solo appearance. Yet, he might have played a few breaks somewhere (ad-lib or rather from score) which I did not recognise as such and would then have mistakenly attributed to Alston. (Sorry! if true!)

I personally like Bobby Sands' lazy and Hawkins-influenced tenor solos with their ever-changing intensity and volume in all the titles. 'Mad Moments' is too fast in my ears and does not give you the opportunity to really hear Mr. Turner's busy bass parts in the two last choruses. A pity! Instead, Henry Turner's tuba rhythm in 'Mush Mouth' is nice, together with Arbello's sharp muted trombone sound – he is a sadly very much overlooked trombonist from the early 1930s – and Gene Johnson's great "abstract" alto solo. He is on his way discovering whole-tone scales and similar things. In the last title we have nice Hopkins piano solos and Ovie Alston singing much more jazzy than Mr. Roberson, the band's singer. And also, we have great solos on tenor and on clarinet by Edmond Hall.

It should be noted that 'Mush Mouth' was selected for inclusion into Columbia's fantastic LP-set cum booklet 'The Sound of Harlem' of the early 1960s. (It is one of my best treasures!)

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tp); Fernando Arbello (tb); Edmond Hall (cl & bs); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands (s); Claude Hopkins (p & arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (b); Pete Jacobs (dm)*  
- *Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 4: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands (sax); Claude Hopkins (p, arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (bs); Pete Jacobs (d); Ovie Alston (voc)*  
- *Rust\*2,\*3: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson (alt); Bobby Sands (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno, arr); Walter Jones (bjo, gtr); Henry Turner (bbs); Pete Jacobs (dms); Ovie Alston (voc 4)*  
- *Rust\*4: Claude Hopkins -p -a -dir; Albert Snaer -Sylvester Lewis -t; Ovie Alston -t -v; Fernando Arbello -tb; Edmond Hall -as -cl -bar; Gene Johnson -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Walter Jones -bj -g; Henry Turner -bb; Pete Jacobs -d; Orlando Roberson -v; Jimmy Mundy -a 3*  
- *Rust\*6: Claude Hopkins, p, a, dir; Albert Snaer, Sylvester Lewis, t; Ovie Alston, t, v; Fernando Arbello, tb; Edmond Hall, as, cl, bar; Gene Johnson, as, bar; Bobby Sands, ts; Walter Jones, bj, g; Henry Turner, bb; Pete Jacobs, d; Orlando Roberson, v; Jimmy Mundy, a 3*  
Soloists ad-lib:

152199-1: GJ alt 16; OA m-tpt 8; GJ alt 8; SL m-tpt 16; BS ten 8; SL m-tpt 8; OR voc 32; OR scat-voc + OA m-tpt obl 32  
152200-1: CH pno 8; CH pno 32; OA o-tpt 16; BS ten 16; FA m-tbn 16  
152201-1: FA m-tbn 1+14 + 6; GJ alt 4+15; SL o-tpt 8; GJ alt 7; SL o-tpt 1; BS ten 4+ 14; OA m-tpt 2+14  
152202-1: CH pno 16 + 16; BS ten 16; OA voc 16; OA scat-voc 8 + voc 8; EH clt 16 + 16; SL m-tpt 4

002	<b>CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA</b>	New York,	May 25, 1932
	Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis – tpt; Fernando Arbello, Henry Wells – tbn; Gene Johnson – alt, clt; Edmond Hall – alt, clt, bar; Bobby Sands – ten, clt; Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr, arr (1); Walter Jones – bjo, gtr; Henry Turner – sbs, bbs; Pete Jacobs – dms; Claude Hopkins – arr (1,2)		
B-11893-A	Three Little Words	ARC uniss 78,	Chronological Classics 699
B-11894-A	(I Would Do) Anything For You	ARC uniss 78,	Chronological Classics 699
B-11895-A	Hopkins Scream	ARC uniss 78,	Chronological Classics 699
B-11896-A	Washington Squabble	ARC uniss 78,	Chronological Classics 699
<i>Composer-credits are: B-11893 (Kalmar); B-11894 (Hill – Williams - Hopkins); B-11895 (Hopkins); B-11896 (Hopkins)</i>			

This second batch of Claude Hopkins' recorded music brings us the same string of hot solos as before, with few sparsely arranged band parts, and a very retained rhythm section, which is praised very much by commentators, but is not to my favour, although it makes the band swing in an airy way.

The first title features Fernando Arbello's muted trombone. Unfortunately, this is the only solo-work by Fernando Arbello at this session, and it is of the growl/dirty kind, and does not show anything of his strong lyric potentials as shown in later years. Gene Johnson shows an

exemplary fine inventive and inspired solo style, and I must wonder why he is so little known all the years since then. The muted trumpet soloist must be Ovie Alston, whereas I am uncertain of the identity of the open-trumpet soloist at the tune's very end. 'I Would Do Anything For You', Hopkins' most famous composition, is played in his own head-arrangement and presents most of the band's soloists and Ovie Alston's nice vocal. The most famous of them, Edmond Hall, only solos in 'Hopkins Scream', together with Ovie Alston and tenorist Bobby Sands. Bobby Sands sounding a bit erratic, here. And – most interestingly – it is Gene Johnson playing the clarinet solo in 'Washington Squabble' together with erratic Bobby Sands tenor and Alston's muted trumpet.

These sides were not issued in 78-times, and were first issued on Jazz Archives LP 4 in 1973.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: not listed

- Carey, *McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 4*: not listed

- Rust\*2,\*3: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson (alt); Bobby Sands (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno, arr); Walter Jones (bjo, gtr); Henry Turner (bbs); Pete Jacobs (dms)

- Rust\*4: Claude Hopkins -p -a -dir; Albert Snaer -Sylvester Lewis -t; Ovie Alston -t -v; Fernando Arbello -Henry Wells -tb; Edmond Hall -as -cl -bar; Gene Johnson -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Walter Jones -bj -g; Henry Turner -bb; Pete Jacobs -d

- Rust\*6: Claude Hopkins, p, a, dir; Albert Snaer, Sylvester Lewis, t; Ovie Alston, t, v; Fernando Arbello, tb; Edmond Hall, as, cl, bar; Gene Johnson, as, bar; Bobby Sands, ts; Walter Jones, bj, g; Henry Turner, bb; Pete Jacobs, d

- M. Selchow, *Profoundly Blue, Edmond Hall*: "Edmond Hall solos on clarinet only. Unfortunately, there is not one recorded Hall solo on alto sax, an instrument on which he was great as our sources report."

Soloists ad-lib:

B-11893-A: CH pno 32; FA m-tbn 16; GJ alt 16; OA m-tpt 32; CH pno 16 + 8; OA m-tpt 16; ?AS o-tpt 4

B-11894-A: GJ alt 16; OA m-tpt 8; GJ alt 8; SL m-tpt 16; BS ten 8; SL m-tpt 8; OA voc 32; OA scat-voc + SL m-tpt obl 32

B-11895-A: EH clt 2+2; EH clt 15; OA o-tpt 32; CH pno 32; BS ten 16; EH clt 32

B-11896-A: OA m-tpt 32; CH pno 32; BS ten 16; GJ clt 1+8; BS ten 8; BS ten 8; OA m-tpt 8

003 CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Jan. 13, 1933

Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis – tpt;

Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman – tbn;

Gene Johnson – alt, clt; Edmond Hall – alt, clt, bar; Bobby Sands – ten, clt;

Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr, arr; Walter Jones – bjo, gtr; Henry Turner – sbs, bbs; Pete Jacobs – dms;

Orlando Roberson – voc (1); Ovie Alston – voc (2,5)

152351-2 Look Who's Here Col 2741-D, Chronological Classics 699

152352-2 He's A Son Of The South Col 2747-D, Chronological Classics 699

152353-1 Canadian Capers Col 2747-D, Chronological Classics 699

152354-1 California, Here I Come Col 2741-D, Chronological Classics 699

152355 I've Got The World On A String Col unissued not on LP/CD

Composer-credits are: 152351 (Whitmer – Klages); 152352 (Razaf – Davis – Forsythe); 152353 (Chandler – White – Cohen); 152354 (De Sylva – Meyer – Johnson)

These sides show the bandleader as sole soloist on 'Canadian Capers', and at his fastest in 'California, Here I Come'. The first title decidedly has Orlando Roberson with his strange falsetto-voice singing. I feel unable to follow Rust\*6 who lists Ovie Alston as singer – although with a question-mark. The more so, I feel unable to accept a singer of Roberson's kind as a band-singer in a band based on jazz, blues and off-beat. His style in my ears is simply trashy for this kind of music and should have been attached to "sweet" bands. Mr. Hopkins himself reported that "Orlando Roberson, whose falsetto voice ... should appeal to all lovers of vocal eccentricity" (A. McCarthy, *Big Band Jazz*). I could have done without it.

There is very little soloing by Hopkins' side-men here. And there are just 8 solo-bars of Arbello on these sides. It looks like the leader did not like the trombone. Only, that Fred Norman was added to the band as a young arranger. Solo features – if there were any - seem to have been reserved for Arbello.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tp); Fernando Arbello (tb); Edmond Hall (cl & bs); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands (s); Claude Hopkins (p & arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (b); Pete Jacobs (dm)

- Carey, *McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 4*: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands (sax); Claude Hopkins (p, arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (bs); Pete Jacobs (d); Ovie Alston (voc)

- Rust\*2: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson (alt); Bobby Sands (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno, arr); Walter Jones (bjo, gtr); Henry Turner (bbs); Pete Jacobs (dms); Ovie Alston (voc 2)

- Rust\*3: Albert Snaer -Ovie Alston -Sylvester Lewis -t; Fernando Arbello -tb; Fred Norman -tb -v -a; Edmond Hall -as -cl -bar; Gene Johnson -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Claude Hopkins -p -ldr -a; Walter Jones -bj -g; Henry Turner -bb; Pete Jacobs -d; Ovie Alston -v

- Rust\*4: Claude Hopkins -p -a -dir; Albert Snaer -Sylvester Lewis -t; Ovie Alston -t -v; Fernando Arbello -tb; Fred Norman -tb -v -a; Edmond Hall -as -cl -bar; Gene Johnson -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Walter Jones -bj -g; Henry Turner -bb; Pete Jacobs -d

- Rust\*6: Claude Hopkins, p, a, dir; Albert Snaer, Sylvester Lewis, t; Ovie Alston, t, v; Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman, tb; Edmond Hall, as, cl, bar; Gene Johnson, as, bar; Bobby Sands, ts; Walter Jones, bj, g; Henry Turner, bb; Pete Jacobs, d

Soloists ad-lib:

152351-2: OR voc 32; CH pno 2+16; OA m-tpt 8; CH pno 6

152352-2: OA m-tpt 2+7; FA o-tbn 8; OA voc 32; SL m-tpt 2+32; BS ten 8; BS ten 2

152353-1: CH pno 8 intro; CH pno 16 + 16 + 32 + 32 + 16; CH pno 32; CH pno 32

152354-1: SL o-tpt 4; CH pno 8 + 32; BS ten 16; EH clt 14; CH pno 2+32 + 32 + 32 + 24; CH pno 4

004 CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Mar. 09, 1933

Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis – tpt;

Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman – tbn;

Gene Johnson – alt, bar (4); Edmond Hall – alt, clt, bar; Bobby Sands – ten, clt;

Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr, arr (1); Walter Jones – gtr; Henry Turner – sbs, bbs; Pete Jacobs – dms, vib (4);

Orlando Roberson – voc (1,4); Ovie Alston – voc (6);

Claude Hopkins – arr (1)

B-13129-A Three Little Words Br uniss 78, Chronological Classics 699

B-13130-A Shake Your Ashes Br uniss 78, Chronological Classics 699

B-13131-A	Mystic Moan	Br uniss 78,	Chronological Classics 699
B-13132-A	Just You, Just Me	Br uniss 78,	Chronological Classics 699
B-13133-A	Washington Squabble	Br uniss 78,	Chronological Classics 699
B-13134-A	Ain't Misbehavin'	Br uniss 78,	Chronological Classics 699
B-13135-A	Honeysuckle Rose	Br uniss 78,	Chronological Classics 699

*Composer-credits are: B-13129 (Kalmar); B-13130 (Hill); B-13131 (Hopkins); B-13132 (---); B-13133 (Hopkins); B-13134 (Waller – Razaf - Brooks); B-13135 (Razaf – Waller)*

Again, we hear the same unique – and sometimes strange – kind of arranging and constructing tunes as imagined and invented by Mr. Hopkins, such as ‘Mystic Moan’. Other tunes make his music extraordinary for the jazz of the 1930s, yet also – sorry! – slightly un-interesting, such as ‘Washington Squabble’ with its un-ending row of simple riffs. In ‘Ain’t Misbehavin’ we have “positive” proof of the drummer’s existence when he starts to play using his hi-hat cymbal for the very first two bars – and is then revoked. The last two choruses – at last – have him playing a fine hi-hat cymbal rhythm. In ‘Just You – Just Me’ a beautiful clarinet obligato behind the singer is played by Gene Johnson, obviously, just until the very last bar of the chorus, when relieved by Ed Hall on baritone sax. (The following sound track of the film ‘Barbershop Blues’ shows us that this practice of clarinet accompaniment was used by the band more often (see sessions 005 and 012).

These sides were not issued in 78-times, and were first issued on Jazz Archives LP in 1973.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: not listed*

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory, Vol. 4: not listed*

- Rust\*2: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson (alt); Bobby Sands (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno, arr); Walter Jones (bjo, gtr); Henry Turner (bbs); Pete Jacobs (dms); Ovie Alston (voc 1,6); Orlando Roberson – voc 4)

- Rust\*3: Albert Snaer -Ovie Alston -Sylvester Lewis -t; Fernando Arbello -tb; Fred Norman -tb -v -a; Edmond Hall -as -cl -bar; Gene Johnson -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Claude Hopkins -p -ldr -a; Walter Jones -bj -g; Henry Turner -bb; Pete Jacobs -d; Ovie Alston -v

- Rust\*4: Claude Hopkins -p -a -dir; Albert Snaer -Sylvester Lewis -t; Ovie Alston -t -v; Fernando Arbello -tb; Fred Norman -tb -v -a; Edmond Hall -as -cl -bar; Gene Johnson -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Claude Hopkins -p -ldr -a; Walter Jones -bj -g; Henry Turner -bb; Pete Jacobs -d; Orlando Roberson -v

Soloists ad-lib:

B-13129-A: CH pno 32; OR voc + EH clt obl 32; OA m-tpt 32; CH pno 16 + 8; OA m-tpt 16; ?AS o-tpt 6

B-13130-A: ?OA o-tpt 32; FA o-tbn 8; ?OA o-tpt 6; BS ten 2+16; CH pno 32

B-13131-A: BS ten 2; OA m-tpt 24; CH pno 8

B-13132-A: EH bar 30; CH pno 32; OR voc + GJ clt obl 32; EH bar 8

B-13133-A: BS ten 8; CH pno 32; OA m-tpt 16; GJ clt 8; BS ten 8; OA m-tpt 8; OA m-tpt 8

B-13134-A: CH pno 32; OA voc + EH clt obl 32; SL o-tpt 32; SL o-tpt 8

B-13135-A: OA m-tpt 2+30; FN o-tbn 2+16; BS ten 8; FN o-tbn 8; CH pno 16 +6

005 CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York, 1933

Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis – tpt;

Vitaphone film ‘Barbershop Blues’

Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman – tbn;

Gene Johnson – alt, clt; Edmond Hall – alt, clt, bar; Bobby Sands – ten, clt;

Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr, arr; Walter Jones – gtr; Henry Turner – sbs; Pete Jacobs – dms;

Orlando Roberson - voc

Mystic Moan

Harlequin HQ 2038 (LP)

St. Louis Blues - Trees

Harlequin HQ 2038 (LP)

Nagasaki

Harlequin HQ 2038 (LP)

Loveless Love

Harlequin HQ 2038 (LP)

The Hopkins band in a film-short of 1933. The scenery is a barbershop and there simply is no dramatic plot whatsoever. A quartet of step-dancers act as barbers and shoe-shine boys. And Orlando Roberson sings his famed ‘Trees’ in his very own individual style. But this is not jazz.

Instead of the band’s famous clarinetist Edmond Hall, who sits there grinning, tenor sax man Bobby Sands plays the clarinet solo in ‘Loveless Love’. And Arbello blows a fine solo in his smooth style.

Notes:

- Rust\*2, \*3, \*4, \*6: not listed

Soloists ad-lib:

MM: BS ten 1; CH pno 8

SLB: no solos

T: no solos

N: no solos

LL: OA o-tpt 12; BS clt 16; FA o-tbn 16; GJ – alt 32

006 CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Dec. 11, 1933

Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis – tpt;

Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman – tbn;

Gene Johnson – alt, clt; Edmond Hall – alt, clt, bar; Bobby Sands – ten, clt;

Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr, arr; Walter Jones – gtr; Henry Turner – sbs; Pete Jacobs – dms

B-14437-A Washington Squabble

Br 6750,

Chronological Classics 699

B-14438-A Mystic Moan

Br 6750,

Chronological Classics 699

*Composer-credits: B-14437 (Hopkins); B-14438 (Hopkins)*

The first title has nice brush-work by Jacobs behind Hopkins’ piano. The title is one of the often-played simple riff-tunes with a string of hot solos. ‘Mystic Moan’ is Hopkins’ obviously well-liked “freak” composition, which has an interesting “jungle” approach – without growl notes.

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tp); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tb); Edmond Hall (cl & bs); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands, Bill Sauls (s); Claude Hopkins (p & arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (b); Pete Jacobs (dm)*  
 - *Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 4: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands (sax); Claude Hopkins (p, arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (bs); Pete Jacobs (d); Ovie Alston (voc)*

- *Rust\*2,\*3: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson (alt); Bobby Sands (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno, arr); Walter Jones (bjo, gtr); Henry Turner (sbs); Pete Jacobs (dms)*

- *Rust\*4: Claude Hopkins -p -a -dir; Albert Snaer -Sylvester Lewis -t; Ovie Alston -t -v; Fernando Arbello -tb; Fred Norman -tb -v -a; Edmond Hall -as -cl -bar; Gene Johnson -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Claude Hopkins -p -ldr -a; Walter Jones -bj -g; Henry Turner -sb; Pete Jacobs -d; Orlando Roberson -v*

- *Rust\*6: Claude Hopkins, p, a, dir; Albert Snaer, Sylvester Lewis, t; Ovie Alston, t, v; Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman, tb; Edmond Hall, as, cl, bar; Gene Johnson, as, bar; Bobby Sands, ts; Walter Jones, bj, g; Henry Turner, sb; Pete Jacobs, d*

Soloists ad-lib:

B-14437-A: OA m-tpt 8; CH pno 32; OA m-tpt 32; GJ clt 32; BS ten 8

B-14438-A: OA m-tpt 24; CH pno 16

**007 CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA**

New York,

Jan. 11, 1934

Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis – tpt;

Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman – tbn;

Gene Johnson – alt, clt; Edmond Hall – alt, clt, bar; Bobby Sands – ten, clt;

Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr, arr (2); Walter Jones – gtr; Henry Turner – sbs; Pete Jacobs – dms;

Orlando Roberson – voc (1); Ovie Alston – voc (2)

152666-2 Marie

Col 2904-D,

Chronological Classics 699

152667-2 Ain't Misbehavin'

Col 2880-D,

Chronological Classics 699

152668-2 Harlem Rhythm Dance

Col 2880-D,

Chronological Classics 716

152669-2 Minor Mania

Col 2904-D,

Chronological Classics 716

*Composer-credits: 152666 (Berlin); 152667 (Waller – Razaf – Brooks; 152668 (Hopkins); 152669 (Hopkins)*

'Marie' starts very jazzy with solos by Hopkins, Hall, Arbello, Ovie Alston, and Bobby Sands, before being taken over by Orlando Roberson – Oh My. Rust\*4,\*6 list a singer abbreviated "DR" for 'Ain't Misbehavin'' who certainly is Ovie Alston, and not Roberson! This tune is taken at an unusually fast pace.

'Harlem Rhythm Dance' is the same tune as Andy Razaf's composition 'Shim-Sham-Shimmy Dance', recorded by Clarence Williams Jug Band on 7th August 1933, yet 'with Hopkins' composer-credit here. A bit strange, certainly. And 'Minor Mania' again is one of those unusual tunes of Claude Hopkins origin. But beautiful!

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tp); Fernando Arbello (tb); Edmond Hall (cl & bs); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands (s); Claude Hopkins (p & arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (b); Pete Jacobs (dm)*

- *Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 4: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands (sax); Claude Hopkins (p, arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (bs); Pete Jacobs (d);*

*Orlando Roberson (vcl)*

- *Rust\*2,\*3: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson (alt); Bobby Sands (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno, arr); Walter Jones (bjo, gtr); Henry Turner (sbs); Pete Jacobs (dms); Orlando Roberson (voc 1,2)*

- *Rust\*4: Claude Hopkins -p -a -dir; Albert Snaer -Sylvester Lewis -t; Ovie Alston -t -v; Fernando Arbello -tb; Fred Norman -tb -v -a; Edmond Hall -as -cl -bar; Gene Johnson -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Claude Hopkins -p -ldr -a; Walter Jones -bj -g; Henry Turner -sb; Pete Jacobs -d; Orlando Roberson -v*

- *Rust\*6: Claude Hopkins, p, a, dir; Albert Snaer, Sylvester Lewis, t; Ovie Alston, t, v; Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman, tb; Edmond Hall, as, cl, bar; Gene Johnson, as, bar; Bobby Sands, ts; Walter Jones, bj, g; Henry Turner, sb; Pete Jacobs, d; Orlando Roberson, v*

Soloists ad-lib:

152666-2: CH pno 32; EH clt 16; FA o-tbn 16; OA m-tpt 16; BS ten 16; OR voc 32; OR syllable voc 32

152667-2: CH pno 32 + 32; OA voc + EH clt obl 32; SL o-tpt 32; SL o-tpt 8

152668-2: SL m-tpt 34; CH pno 32; EH clt 8; GJ alt 8; BS ten 9

152669-2: CH pno 6 + 16; OA m-tpt 18; PJ dms 2; CH pno 6; FA o-tbn 16 + 6; BS ten 2+16; OA o-tpt 8 + 4

**008 CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA**

New York,

Apr. 06, 1934

Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis – tpt;

Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman – tbn;

Gene Johnson – alt, clt; Edmond Hall – alt, clt, bar; Bobby Sands – ten, clt;

Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr, arr (2); Walter Jones – gtr; Henry Turner – sbs; Pete Jacobs – dms;

Ovie Alston – voc (1);

Claude Hopkins – arr (2)

B-15043-A My Gal Sal

Br 6864,

Chronological Classics 716

B-15044-A Three Little Words

Br 6864,

Chronological Classics 716

*Composer-credits: B-15043 (Dresser); B-15044 (Kalmar – Ruby)*

'My Gal Sal' has Hopkins' formula again – piano and brushes ... and Orlando Roberson, and a string of nice and polite instrumental solos.

Very good, without any doubt, but so nice and clean. But: is this in fact Orlando Roberson on the first title, as all Rusts claim to be? I would rather follow Carey, McCarthy Jazz Directory and hear Ovie Alston, although – admittedly – a bit on the Roberson side! Yet, Alston's voice and timbre have much more depth and volume than Roberson's, and not that falsetto singing, and that is what we hear.

Surprisingly, they had Gene Johnson play the clarinet solo in 'My Gal Sal'.

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tp); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tb); Edmond Hall (cl & bs); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands, Bill Sauls (s); Claude Hopkins (p & arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (b); Pete Jacobs (dm)*

- *Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 4: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands (sax); Claude Hopkins (p, arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (bs); Pete Jacobs (d);*

*Ovie Alston (vcl)*

- Rust\*2,\*3: Albert Snaer, *Ovie Alston*, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson (alt); Bobby Sands (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno, arr); Walter Jones (bjo, gtr); Henry Turner (sbs); Pete Jacobs (dms); Orlando Roberson (voc 1)

- Rust\*4: Claude Hopkins -p -a -dir; Albert Snaer -Sylvester Lewis -t; *Ovie Alston* -t -v; Fernando Arbello -tb; Fred Norman -tb -v -a; Edmond Hall -as -cl -bar; Gene Johnson -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Claude Hopkins -p -ldr -a; Walter Jones -bj -g; Henry Turner -sb; Pete Jacobs -d; Orlando Roberson -v

- Rust\*6: Claude Hopkins, p, a, dir; Albert Snaer, Sylvester Lewis, t; *Ovie Alston*, t, v; Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman, tb; Edmond Hall, as, cl, bar; Gene Johnson, as, bar; Bobby Sands, ts; Walter Jones, bj, g; Henry Turner, sb; Pete Jacobs, d; Orlando Roberson, v

Soloists ad-lib:

B-15043-A: CH pno 32 + 32; OA voc 32; BS ten 2+8; GJ clt 8; BS ten 8; GJ clt 4; BS ten 4; OA voc 16

B-15044-A: CH pno 32 + 32; CH pno 16; FA o-tbn 8; OA m-tpt 16; AS o-tpt 8; OA o-tpt 8

**009 CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA**

New York,

May 03, 1934

Albert Snaer, *Ovie Alston*, Sylvester Lewis – tpt;

Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman – tbn;

Gene Johnson – alt, clt; Edmond Hall – alt, clt, bar; Bobby Sands – ten, clt;

Claude Hopkins – pno, cel, ldr, arr; Walter Jones – gtr; Henry Turner – sbs; Pete Jacobs – dms;

*Ovie Alston* – voc (1,2); Fred Norman – voc (3); Orlando Roberson – voc (4)

B-15161-A Everybody Shuffle

Br 6916,

Chronological Classics 716

B-15162-A Don't Let Your Love Go Wrong

Br 6891,

Chronological Classics 716

B-15163-A I Can't Dance (I Got Ants In My Pants)

Br 6891,

Chronological Classics 716

B-15164-A Margie

Br 6916,

Chronological Classics 716

*Composer-credits: B-15161 (Hopkins - Alston); B-15162 (Whiting - Schwartz - Johnson); B-15163 (Gaines - Williams); B-15164 (Davis - Conrad - Robinson)*

'Everybody Shuffle' again is a string of soft instrumental riffs accompanied by an un-changing rhythm section. Rather un-eventful. The second title then has nice clarinet section behind *Ovie Alston*'s vocal chorus and in the last chorus alternating with the saxes. 'I Can't Dance' is Charlie Gaines' famous tune from 1932, sung by young Fred Norman in an amusing and lazy style with funny and novel lyrics. Very nice. Much more conventional than Orlando Roberson, the band's "official" singer, in 'Margie'. Bandleader Hopkins uses a celesta for the first chorus and Roberson's accompaniment. And there is a beautiful split-chorus by Ed Hall on clarinet and Fernando Arbello's smooth open trombone. It is surprising again, that there are only 16 bars for Ed Hall, their most famous soloist, to solo at the whole recording session!

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tp); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tb); Edmond Hall (cl & bs); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands, Bill Sauls (s); Claude Hopkins (p & arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (b); Pete Jacobs (dm)*

- Carey, *McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 4: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands (sax); Claude Hopkins (p, arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (bs); Pete Jacobs (d);*

*Ovie Alston (vcl)*

- Rust\*2,\*3: Albert Snaer, *Ovie Alston*, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson (alt); Bobby Sands (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno, arr); Walter Jones (bjo, gtr); Henry Turner (sbs); Pete Jacobs (dms); *Ovie Alston* (voc 1,2); Fred Norman (voc 3); Orlando Roberson (voc 4)

- Rust\*4: Claude Hopkins -p -a -dir; Albert Snaer -Sylvester Lewis -t; *Ovie Alston* -t -v; Fernando Arbello -tb; Fred Norman -tb -v -a;

Edmond Hall -as -cl -bar; Gene Johnson -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Walter Jones -bj -g; Henry Turner -sb; Pete Jacobs -d; Orlando Roberson -v

- Rust\*6: Claude Hopkins, p, a, dir; Albert Snaer, Sylvester Lewis, t; *Ovie Alston*, t, v; Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman, tb; Edmond Hall, as, cl, bar; Gene Johnson, as, bar; Bobby Sands, ts; Walter Jones, bj, g; Henry Turner, sb; Pete Jacobs, d; Orlando Roberson, v

Soloists ad-lib:

B-15161-A: OA voc 32; BS ten 8; FA m-tbn 8

B-15162-A: SL o-tpt 6; OA voc 32; CH pno 30

B-15163-A: BS ten 8; SL o-tpt 2; FN + band voc 32 + 32; CH pno 8; BS ten 3 + 8

B-15164-A: CH cel 8 intro + 32; OR voc 30; OA m-tpt 2+32; EH clt 16; FA o-tbn 16; OR voc 16

**010 CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA**

New York,

Sep. 14, 1934

Albert Snaer, *Ovie Alston*, Sylvester Lewis – tpt;

Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman – tbn;

Gene Johnson – alt, clt; Edmond Hall – alt, clt, bar; Bobby Sands – ten, clt;

Claude Hopkins – pno, vib, ldr, arr; Walter Jones – gtr; Henry Turner – sbs; Pete Jacobs – dms;

*Ovie Alston* – voc (1); Orlando Roberson – voc (2,4);

Claude Hopkins – arr (1); Fred Norman – arr (3)

38669-A Chasing All The Blues Away

Dec 441,

Chronological Classics 716

38670-A Just You, Just Me

Dec 185,

Chronological Classics 716

38671-A King Porter Stomp

Dec 184,

Chronological Classics 716

38672-A In The Shade Of The Old Apple Tree

Dec 184,

Chronological Classics 716

38673-A Who ?

Dec 185,

Chronological Classics 716

*Composer-credits: 38669 (Hopkins - Alston); 38670 (Klages - Greer); 38671 (Morton); 38672 (Williams - Van Alstyne); 38673 (Harbach - Hammerstein II - Kern)*

Most interestingly, the Chronological (sic) Classics series list Leo 'Snub' Mosley on trombone for Fernando Arbello from this session on, while the British HEP Records series list Mosley as a possible addition for the subsequent session only. All Rusts have Arbello and Norman for this and the next session.

'Chasing The Blues Away' has much more jazz solos than most of the tunes before, starting with a great Ed Hall chorus, and fine Gene Johnson on alto and Bobby Sands on tenor, as well as Fernando Arbello on muted trombone. The altoist obviously is sadly under-recorded, at least for his solo work. 'Just You - Just Me' starts with vibraphone chords which most probably are played by the bandleader as the drummer can be heard on brushed throughout the first chorus. As in session 005 the first and last choruses are played by Ed Hall on his baritone sax, and the clarinet obligato to the vocal is by Bobby Sands.

'King Porter Stomp' has good solos in hitherto un-heard succession and ends with the first "sky-scraper" trumpet section on record, ever, as I think. 'The Old Apple Tree' includes two solo breaks of the guitarist and the drummer, most surprisingly, and has good Ed Hall and Ovie Alston. 'Who' has the silliest and most trashy arrangement heard on all these Claude Hopkins sides listed. No more comment. The trombone heard in 'Chasing The Blues Away' decidedly is by Arbello in my ears.

Referring to T. Baldwin's note in Storyville 158, below: I cannot follow Mr. Baldwin's opinion as to Ed Hall's playing in 'Just You, Just Me'. I do not hear Ed Hall playing the clarinet obligato to Mr. Roberson's vocal nor do I hear Gene Johnson play the clarinet, yet rather Bobby Sands who is known for often taking clarinet duties in the Hopkins band. The clarinet harmonic arpeggios heard are not Hall's style. And the baritone parts at the start and at the end of the title are in the straight rhythm manner as usual for Ed Hall. Although I appreciate Tom Baker's fantastic reed playing, I cannot follow his relating Gene Johnson's bass-sax work on the Charlie Skeete sides with the baritone work in 'Just You, Just Me' of this session.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tp); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tb); Edmond Hall (cl & bs); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands, Bill Sauls (s); Claude Hopkins (p & arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (b); Pete Jacobs (dm); Orlando Roberson (vo)

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory, Vol. 4*: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands (sax); Claude Hopkins (p, arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (bs); Pete Jacobs (d); Ovie Alston, Orlando Roberson (vcl)

- Rust\*2,\*3: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson (alt); Bobby Sands (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno, arr); Walter Jones (bjo, gtr); Henry Turner (sbs); Pete Jacobs (dms); Ovie Alston (voc 1); Orlando Roberson (voc 2,5)

- Rust\*4: Claude Hopkins -p -a -dir; Albert Snaer -Sylvester Lewis -t; Ovie Alston -t -v; Fernando Arbello -tb; Fred Norman -tb -v -a; Edmond Hall -as -cl -bar; Gene Johnson -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Walter Jones -bj -g; Henry Turner -sb; Pete Jacobs -d; Orlando Roberson -v

- Rust\*6: Claude Hopkins, p, a, dir; Albert Snaer, Sylvester Lewis, t; Ovie Alston, t, v; Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman, tb; Edmond Hall, as, cl, bar; Gene Johnson, as, bar; Bobby Sands, ts; Walter Jones, bj, g; Henry Turner, sb; Pete Jacobs, d; Orlando Roberson, v - Storyville 158-73, T. Baldwin: "I wonder about Manfred Selchow's identification in 'Profoundly Blue' of the reed work on Claude Hopkins's 'Chasing All The Blues Away' (38669-A) / 'Just You, Just Me' (38670-A) of 14 September 1934. He gives the clarinet obligato to the vocal on 38670-A as by Gene Johnson and the magnificent baritone solo which follows as by Ed Hall. I believe these identifications should be reversed. On 38669-A there is an alto solo, clearly not Hall and thus presumably by Johnson, which relates stylistically to the baritone on 38670-A. I played these to local multi-instrumentalist Tom Baker who commented "that baritone player sounds as if he's played a lot of bass sax." On checking back I found that Gene Johnson takes a full chorus of bass sax on Charlie Skeete's 'Tampeekoe' and 8 bars on 'Deep Henderson' - which is identifiably related to the baritone with Hopkins. What do other readers think?"

Soloists ad-lib:

38669-A: EH clt 32; GJ alt 16; FA m-tbn 8; GJ alt 8; OA voc 30; BS ten 2+30; OA m-tpt 2+30 + 32  
 38670-A: EH bar 30; CH pno 2+32; OR voc + BS clt 30; EH bar 2+30  
 38671-A: BS ten 8; OA o-tpt 1+16; EH clt 8; GJ alt 8; BS ten 16; OA o-tpt 12  
 38672-A: CH pno 4; WJ gtr 2; EH clt 16; OA m-tpt 14; PJ cymbal 2  
 38673-A: OR voc 32; CH pno 16

**011 CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA**

New York,

Oct. 22, 1934

Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis - tpt;

Snub Mosley, Fred Norman - tbn;

Hilton Jefferson, Gene Johnson - alt, clt; Edmond Hall - clt, bar; Bobby Sands - ten, clt;

Claude Hopkins - pno, ldr, arr; Walter Jones - gtr; Henry Turner - sbs; Pete Jacobs - dms;

Ovie Alston - voc (1); Orlando Roberson - voc (2);

Fred Norman - arr (3,4)

38870-A Walkin' The Dog

Dec 270,

Chronological Classics 716

38871-A Sweetheart O' Mine

Dec 270,

Chronological Classics 716

38872-A Monkey Business

Dec 674,

Chronological Classics 716

38873-A Zozoi

Dec 674,

Chronological Classics 716

Composer-credits: 38870 (Brooks); 38871 (Morton - Melrose); 38872 (Norman - Hopkins); 38873 (Snaer - Norman - Hopkins)

The first title has nice Edmond Hall on clarinet, Hopkins soloing sparingly, and jazz vocal by Ovie Alston. Jelly Roll Morton's 'Sweetheart Of Mine' gets a beautifully soft treatment by the band, ending with a strong swinging band chorus. 'Monkey Business' is one of the unusual riff-based titles of the Hopkins/Norman production - well-known now for the ardent listener - with good solos by tenorist Sands, developing a rhapsodic style the Hawkins-kind, and a multi-toned staccato trombone solo, quite unlike Arbello's style. Likewise, the last title 'Zozoi' starts with a solo by the same trombonist, who should then be seen as Fred Norman, Hopkins' young protégé as arranger and trombonist. This change of style probably may be seen as a sign of Arbello's departure from the Hopkins Band, and his replacement by Leo 'Snub' Mosley. Rust\*4 does not list trombonist Mosley for this session and Rust\*6 lists him - surprisingly - for the fourth title of this session only. This certainly does not really make sense, and I would opt for Mosley's presence here as section leader for the band's future, the solos being played by Norman. But this my opinion is not confirmed anywhere. But now that they have incorporated Hilton Jefferson into the band - as the discographies say - where is he? There are none of Jefferson's extraordinary poetic alto solos here.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tp); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tb); Edmond Hall (cl & bs); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands, Bill Sauls (s); Claude Hopkins (p & arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (b); Pete Jacobs (dm); Orlando Roberson (vo)

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory, Vol. 4*: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands (sax); Claude Hopkins (p, arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (bs); Pete Jacobs (d); Ovie Alston, Orlando Roberson (vcl)

- Rust\*2: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson (alt); Bobby Sands (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno, arr); Walter Jones (bjo, gtr); Henry Turner (sbs); Pete Jacobs (dms); Ovie Alston (voc 1); Orlando Roberson (voc 2)

- Rust\*3,\*4: Albert Snaer -Ovie Alston -Sylvester Lewis -t; Fernando Arbello -tb; Fred Norman -tb -v -a; Edmond Hall -as -cl -bar; Gene Johnson -Hilton Jefferson -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Claude Hopkins -p -ldr -a; Walter Jones -g; Henry Turner -sb; Pete Jacobs -d; Ovie Alston -v; Orlando Roberson -v

- Rust\*6: Claude Hopkins, p, a, dir; Albert Snaer, Sylvester Lewis, t; Ovie Alston, t, v; Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman, tb; Snub Moseley, tb (4); Edmond Hall, as, cl, bar; Gene Johnson, as, bar; Hilton Jefferson, as, cl; Bobby Sands, ts; Walter Jones, bj, g; Henry Turner, sb;

*Pete Jacobs, d; Orlando Roberson, v*

Soloists ad-lib:

38870-A: *EH clt 12; CH pno 16; OA voc 16 + 16*  
 38871-A: *EH bar 16; OA m-tpt 8; CH pno 1+6; BS ten 2+6; OR voc 30*  
 38872-A: *BS ten 16; SL o-tpt 7; EH clt 8; FN o-tbn 8*  
 38873-A: *FN o-tbn 2+7; OA m-tpt 32; EH clt 16; SL o-tpt 8; BS ten 8*

012 **CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA**

New York,

Nov. 09, 1934

Sylvester Lewis, Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston – tpt;

Snub Mosley, Fred Norman – tbn;

Hilton Jefferson, Gene Johnson – alt, clt, *flt*; Edmond Hall – clt, bar; Bobby Sands – ten, clt;

Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr, arr (1); Walter Jones – gtr; Henry Turner – sbs; Pete Jacobs – dms;

Orlando Roberson – voc

38986-A Mandy

Dec 353,

Chronological Classics 716

38987-A Do You Ever Think Of Me ?

Dec 353,

Chronological Classics 716

*Composer credits: 38986 (Berlin); 38987 (Kerr – Cooper – Burnett)*

Again, we have the Hopkins band with their retained but rhythmically intricate arrangements, obviously the work of bandleader Claude Hopkins who also likes to play three-quarter rhythms over the basic four-quarter beat. For the first time we find proof of Hilton Jefferson's presence with the Hopkins band playing a nice solo at the end of 'Mandy'. The second title has a most curious arrangement in that it has the first chorus - after intro and vamp - as a two-part voicing of trumpet and clarinet. Most interestingly, I hear a flutist playing an obligato behind the vocal in the second chorus. (I am not one-hundred percent certain of this assumption and would like everybody interested to listen very attentively!) A flute is not listed anywhere in the discographies, and I assume him to be Gene Johnson possibly, as Ed Hall had enough doubling on baritone and clarinet and it is not his style, and Bobby Sands reputedly was a rather un-organized character and never had shown a business with a flute on record before or later. M. Selchow lists these sounds as clarinet played by Hilton Jefferson. Might it thus be conceivable that Jefferson perhaps had a hidden love for the flute, and was able to let it out here in this new environment? I fear we will never know now. But listen to this very rhythmically varied and interestingly structured last chorus! I'd love to know the arranger! Fred Norman, perhaps?

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tp); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tb); Edmond Hall (cl & bs); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands, Bill Sauls (s); Claude Hopkins (p & arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (b); Pete Jacobs (dm); Orlando Roberson (vo)*

- *Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 4: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands (sax); Claude Hopkins (p, arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (bs); Pete Jacobs (d); Ovie Alston, Orlando Robison (vcl)*

- *Rust\*2: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson (alt); Bobby Sands (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno, arr); Walter Jones (bjo, gtr); Henry Turner (sbs); Pete Jacobs (dms); Ovie Alston (voc 1); Orlando Roberson (voc 2)*

- *Rust\*3,\*4: Albert Snaer -Ovie Alston -Sylvester Lewis -t; Snub Mosley -tb; Fred Norman -tb -v -a; Edmond Hall -as -cl -bar; Gene Johnson -Hilton Jefferson -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Claude Hopkins -p -ldr -a; Walter Jones -g; Henry Turner -sb; Pete Jacobs -d; Ovie Alston -v; Orlando Roberson -v*

- *Rust\*6: Claude Hopkins, p, a, dir; Albert Snaer, Sylvester Lewis, t; Ovie Alston, t, v; Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman, tb; Snub Moseley, tb (4); Edmond Hall, as, cl, bar; Gene Johnson, as, bar; Hilton Jefferson, as, cl; Bobby Sands, ts; Walter Jones, bj, g; Henry Turner, sb; Pete Jacobs, d; Orlando Roberson, v*

- *M. Selchow, Profoundly Blue, Edmond Hall: "Solos: The cl-obligato to the vcl on 'Do You Ever Think On Me' is by Hilton Jefferson."*

Soloists ad-lib:

38986: *BS ten 18; CH pno 18; OR voc 18; FN o-tbn 16; HJ alt 16*

38987: *CH pno 8; CH pno 4; OR voc + ?GJ or ?HJ flt obl 32; OA m-tpt 16; FN o-tbn 7; OA m-tpt 6; BS ten 2+8*

013 **CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA**

New York,

Feb. 01, 1935

Sylvester Lewis, Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston – tpt;

Fred Norman, Snub Mosley – tbn;

Hilton Jefferson, Gene Johnson – alt, clt; Edmond Hall – clt, bar; Bobby Sands – ten, clt;

Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr, arr (1); Walter Jones – gtr; Henry Turner – sbs; Pete Jacobs – dms, bells;

Orlando Roberson – voc;

Claude Hopkins – arr (1)

39320-B Trees

Dec 374,

Chronological Classics 716

39321-A Love In Bloom

Dec 374,

Chronological Classics 716

39322-A June In January

Dec 441,

Chronological Classics 716

*Composer credits: 39320 (Rasbach – Kilmer); 39321 (Robin – Rainger); 39322 (Robin – Rainger)*

I am sorry, but in my ears this session is pure trash, not only Mr Roberson's expertly sung vocals, but also the arrangements. The only spotlight for me is on the all too few bars of Hilton Jefferson's alto in 'Love In Bloom'. His playing is of a rare beauty and is bitterly misplaced on these sides. The clarinet obligato in 'Trees' as noted by M. Selchow I can only find in the first eight bars of the second vocal chorus, but this seems to be scored and not improvised. The same would apply to all clarinet spots 'June In January'.

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tp); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tb); Edmond Hall (cl & bs); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands, Bill Sauls (s); Claude Hopkins (p & arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (b); Pete Jacobs (dm); Orlando Roberson (vo)*

- *Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 4: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Fernando Arbello, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands (sax); Claude Hopkins (p, arr); Walter Jones (g); Henry Turner (bs); Pete Jacobs (d); Ovie Alston, Orlando Robison (vcl)*

- *Rust\*2: Albert Snaer, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis (tpt); Snub Moseley, Fred Norman (tbn); Edmond Hall (alt, clt, bar); Gene Johnson (alt); Bobby Sands (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno, arr); Walter Jones (bjo, gtr); Henry Turner (sbs); Pete Jacobs (dms); Ovie Alston (voc 1); Orlando Roberson*



- Rust\*3,\*4: Albert Snaer -Ovie Alston -Sylvester Lewis -t; Snub Mosley -tb; Fred Norman -tb -v -a; Edmond Hall -as -cl -bar; Gene Johnson -Hilton Jefferson -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Claude Hopkins -p -ldr -a; Walter Jones -g; Henry Turner -sb; Pete Jacobs -d; Ovie Alston -v; Orlando Roberson -v

- Rust\*6: Claude Hopkins, p, a, dir; Albert Snaer, Sylvester Lewis, t; Ovie Alston, t, v; Snub Mosley, Fred Norman, tb; Edmond Hall, as, cl, bar; Gene Johnson, as, bar; Hilton Jefferson, as, cl; Bobby Sands, ts; Walter Jones, bj, g; Henry Turner, sb; Pete Jacobs, d; Orlando Roberson, v

- M. Selchow, *Profoundly Blue*, Edmond Hall: "Hall plays the cl-break in 'June In January', the cl-obligato to the vcl on 'Trees' possibly is by Hilton Jefferson."

Soloists ad-lib:

39320: no ad-lib instrumental solos  
39321: OR voc 32; HJ alt 2+8; OR voc 8  
39322: no ad-lib instrumental solos

014 CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York, prob. Jun. 23, 1935  
Paramount-film 'Broadway Highlights No. 4'

Russell Smith, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis – tpt;  
Fred Norman, Henry Wells – tbn;  
Hilton Jefferson, Gene Johnson – alt, clt; Edmond Hall – clt, bar; Bobby Sands – ten, clt;  
Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr; Walter Jones – gtr; Henry Turner – sbs; Pete Jacobs – dms;  
Orlando Roberson – voc (3); unknown – step dance (1,4,5,6)

unidentified title	not on LP/CD ?
unidentified title	not on LP/CD ?
Cocktails For Two	Harlequin HQ 2038 (LP)
Nagasaki	Harlequin HQ 2038 (LP)
Truckin'	Harlequin HQ 2038 (LP)
unidentified title	not on LP/CD ?

The Hopkins band again in a film-short of 1935. The film was filmed on location of the Cotton Club. No comment possible.

Notes:

- Rust\*2,\*3,\*4,\*6: not listed

015 CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York, c. Oct. 18, 1935

Russell Smith, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis – tpt;  
Fred Norman, Henry Wells – tbn;  
Hilton Jefferson, Gene Johnson – alt, clt; Edmond Hall – clt, bar; Bobby Sands – ten, clt;  
Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr; Walter Jones – gtr; Henry Turner – sbs; Pete Jacobs – dms;  
Ovie Alston – voc (3,5,6,17,24); Fred Norman – voc (4,8,21,27);  
Phil Land – arr (11); Fred Norman – arr (9,12,19,20); Jimmy Mundy – arr (10)

Nagasaki	HEP CD 1049
Canadian Capers	HEP CD 1049
Yankee Doodle Never Went To Town	HEP CD 1049
Somebody Else Not Me	HEP CD 1049
Put On Your Old Grey Bonnet	HEP CD 1049
You Stayed Away Too Long	HEP CD 1049
What 'll I Do?	HEP CD 1049
The Traffic Was Terrific	HEP CD 1049
Hodge Podge	HEP CD 1049
Swingin' And Jivin'	HEP CD 1049
Farewell Blues	HEP CD 1049
Minor Mania	HEP CD 1049
Washington Squabble	HEP CD 1049
Singin' In The Rain	HEP CD 1049
Nola	HEP CD 1049
Back Beats	HEP CD 1049
Chasing The Blues Away (Sweet Horn)	HEP CD 1049
Aw Shucks	HEP CD 1049
Just As Long As The World Goes 'Round And Around	HEP CD 1049
Truckin'	HEP CD 1049
The Preacher And The Bear	HEP CD 1049
In The Shade Of The Old Apple Tree	HEP CD 1049
That's A Plenty	HEP CD 1049
Everybody Shuffle	HEP CD 1049
I Would Do Anything For You	HEP CD 1049
Broadway Rhythm	Jazz Archives LP-27 (LP)
Lazy Bones	Jazz Panorama LP-13 (LP)

Composer credits: CC (White – Chandler – Cohen); N (Warren – Dixon); YDNWTT (Freed – Hanighen); SENM (Hanley – McDonald); POYOGB (Murphy – Wenrich); YSATL (Whiting – Schwartz – Johnson); WID (Berlin); TTWT (Loesser – Bernier – Motzan); HP (Norman); SAJ (Hopkins – Norman); FB (Mares – Pettis – Schoebel); MM (Hopkins – Norman); WS (Hopkins); Sitr (Brown – Freed); N (Arndt); BB

(Norman); CTBA (Hopkins); AS (Williams – Farley); JALATWGRAA (Woods); T Koehler – Bloom); TPATB (Arzona); ITSOTOAT (Alstynne – Williams); TAP (Pollack); ES (Carter); IWDAFY (Hill – Hopkins – Williams); BW (?); LB (?)

It should be questioned whether all these titles were recorded on one single day – the CD booklet says “Oct. – Nov. 1935”. Out of my LP collection I saw myself equipped to increase the number of titles recorded at these transcription date(s) to 27.

The sound of these transcriptions discs is much more brilliant than the usual shellac discs, and we can even hear the soft snare-drum and cymbal sounds of drummer Pete Jacobs. The jazz content of all these sides, yet, is somewhat indigent. No wonder, as they were aimed at the use of radio companies to send them on the air, and not for the commercial market. This music obviously was great for dancing and thus did not need hot playing and rapture. In my ears – and eyes – this all is a bit rather disappointing for a lover of hot jazz music. To be harsh (I’m sorry!); it is often boring. And I feel unable to understand Frank Driggs’ often exuberant praise he renders to this music in his various LP cover-texts. Also, I know much better alto solos by Hilton Jefferson than the one in ‘Just As Long As The World Goes Round And Round’. But Fred Norman’s Bert Williams copies are great.

Notes:

- Rust\*2: not listed

- Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: Albert Snaer -Ovie Alston -Sylvester Lewis -t; Snub Mosley -tb; Fred Norman -tb -v -a; Edmond Hall -as -cl -bar; Gene Johnson -Hilton Jefferson -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Claude Hopkins -p -ldr -a; Walter Jones -g; Henry Turner -sb; Pete Jacobs -d; Ovie Alston -v; Orlando Roberson -v; -Phil Lang -Jimmy Mundy -Bob Sylvester -a;

- Frank Driggs, booklet to HEP CD 1049: “These studio transcriptions recorded in October and/or November, 1935 near the end of Hopkins’ stay at the Cotton Club, allow the listener to hear a good part of the Hopkins repertoire. Many of the arrangements are by Fred Norman, some by Hopkins, and others by white arrangers on Broadway including an atmospheric ‘Farewell Blues’ done by Phil Lang, a well regarded arranger downtown. There are plenty of Hopkins piano solos even aside from show off pieces like ‘Canadian Capers’, ‘Nola’ and ‘Singin’ In The Rain’. It is rewarding to listen to the big-tones tenor sax of Bobby Sands, who always played well and consistently throughout. In another band he might have become a star. Trumpeter-vocalist Ovie Alston who started his own Hopkins-styled big band late in 1936, has some good muted solos and takes care of all the rhythm vocals. Sylvester Lewis plays the more fiery open horn.

A special treat are the three Bert-Williams-styled vocals by trombonist-arranger Fred Norman on ‘Preacher And The Bear’, ‘Somebody Else (Not Me)’ and ‘The Traffic Was Terrific’. When Claude Hopkins heard these for the first time some twenty years ago he howled with delight. The trombone solos here are by Henry Wells.

For me the best individual solo is by Hilton Jefferson’s alto sax on Harry Wood’s ‘Just As Long As The World Goes Round And Round’, a brand new tune that year and I think it is the best thing he ever recorded.

One might have expected to hear more of Edmond Hall’s fine New Orleans clarinet, but he and Hopkins were not getting along at this time and in fact Hall left the band before the Cotton Club engagement was concluded in January, 1936. He plays behind Ovie Alston’s vocal on ‘Sweet Horn’ (also known as ‘Chasin’ The Blues Away’), has a typically stringent solo (the second) on ‘That’s A Plenty’.

Many of these selections show off the overall Hopkins band and how well he was served by his rhythm section. ‘Everybody Shuffle’ is a good example of a smoothly meshing rhythm team at work, and tells the listener just why Hopkins was held in such high regard at least up to 1936.”

Soloists ad-lib:

N: CH pno 32; BS ten 16; GJ clt 8; BS ten 8; FN o-tbn 8; SL o-tpt 8  
 CC: CH pno 32 + 32 + 16 + 30 + 2+2 + 32  
 YDNWTT: OA voc 12 + 36; SL m-tpt 16  
 SENM: CH pno 4; FN speech voc 36 + 36 + 2; no ad-lib instrumental solos  
 POYGB: BS ten 2+16; HW o-tbn 16; CH pno 4; OA voc 16; OA voc + GJ clt obl 16; BS ten 2+14; OA m-tpt 2+16 + 16; GJ clt 16 + 14  
 YSATL: OA voc 26; HJ alt 1+12; FN o-tbn 1+5  
 WID?: FN o-tbn 16 + 8  
 TTWT: FN speech voc 32; no ad-lib instrumental solos  
 HP: BS ten 16 + 8; SL o-tpt 24  
 SAJ: HW o-tbn 1+7; BS ten 16 + 8; SL o-tpt 16  
 FB: BS ten 16; SL o-tpt 16; CH pno 16 + 16; GJ clt 16; BS ten 4  
 MM: CH pno 6; OA m-tpt 18; PJ dms 2; CH pno 6; FN o-tbn 16 + 6; BS ten 2+16; OA m-tpt 7  
 WS: OA m-tpt 8; CH pno 32; OA m-tpt 32; GJ clt 32; OA m-tpt 8  
 SITR: CH pno 32 + 30; BS ten 16; HJ alt 3 + 6; CH pno 32  
 N: all solo parts/spots by CH pno  
 BB: CH pno 32; OA m-tpt 16; FN o-tbn 8; OA m-tpt 6; CH pno 6 + 6 + 4; SL o-tpt 8; BS ten 8  
 CTBA: GJ clt 30; HJ alt 16; FN o-tbn 8; HJ alt 7; OA voc + pno obl 32 + 31; BS ten 2+31; OA m-tpt 30 + 32  
 AS: HW o-tbn 1+7; BS ten 16 + 8; SL o-tpt 16  
 JALATWGRAA: BS ten 1+8; HJ alt 8 + 4 + 32+4  
 T: BS ten 16; PJ dms 4  
 TPATB: FN speech voc 32 + 32 + 20 + 32; no ad-lib instrumental solos  
 ITSOTOAT: CH pno 4; WJ gtr 2; OA m-tpt 16; FN o-tbn 14; PJ dms 2; CH pno obl 30  
 TAP: CH pno 16 + 16; GJ clt 12; SL o-tpt 4; EH clt 16  
 ES: OA m-tpt 32; OA voc 32 + 15; BS ten 8  
 IWDAFY: CH pno obl 32 + 32  
 BR: no ad-lib instrumental solos  
 LB: FN speech voc 32 + 32; no ad-lib instrumental solos

016 CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

1935

Russell Smith, Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis – tpt;

Vitaphone-film ‘By Request’

Fred Norman, Henry Wells – tbn;

Hilton Jefferson, Gene Johnson – alt, clt; Edmond Hall – clt, bar; Bobby Sands – ten, clt;

Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr; Walter Jones – gtr; Henry Turner – sbs; Pete Jacobs – dms, bells;

Orlando Roberson – voc (3); Tip Tap Toe – step dance (4)

Chasin’ The Blues Away

Harlequin HQ 2038 (LP)

California Here I Come

Harlequin HQ 2038 (LP)

To Call You My Own

Harlequin HQ 2038 (LP)

Medley: Shine - About A Quarter To Nine

Harlequin HQ 2038 (LP)

Chinatown, My Chinatown

Harlequin HQ 2038 (LP)

The Hopkins band again in a film-short of 1935. The scenery probably is a ballroom. A trio of step-dancers act under their name Tip Tap Toe. Their actual name is 'Tip, Tap and Toe'! (Please, note!) And Orlando Roberson sings 'To Call You My Own' in his very own individual style. But this is not jazz, yet, it seems to "intoxicate" the listening lady! I only hope that this lady was not contaminated, afterwards.

Notes:

- *Rust*\*2, \*3, \*4, \*6: not listed

Soloists ad-lib:

CTBA: EH clt 32; OA voc 32; SL m-tpt 32 + 32

CHIC: SL o-tpt 2 + 4; CH pno 4+32 + 32 + 8

TCYMO: OR voc 30 + 4

M: no ad-lib instrumental solos

CMC: CH pno 30; BS ten 4

017 CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Feb. 02, 1937

Shirley Clay, Jabbo Smith, Lincoln Mills – tpt;

Floyd Brady, Fred Norman, Vic Dickenson – tbn;

Gene Johnson, Chauncey Haughton, Ben Smith – alt, clt; Bobby Sands – ten, clt;

Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr; Walter Jones – gtr; Abe Bolar – sbs; Pete Jacobs – dms;

Beverly White – voc

61567-A Sunday

Dec 1153,

Chronological Classics 733

61568 No No Nora

Dec unissued

not on LP/CD

61569-A Swingin' Down The Lane

Dec 1153,

Chronological Classics 733

Composer credits: 61567 (Miller – Cohn -Stein – Krueger); 61569 (Jones – Kahn)

Now, that the Claude Hopkins band is back in the Decca studios with a splendid brass section of first-class trumpet players and trombonists, nothing happens solo-wise, and it still is mostly Hopkins' piano, a girl-singer, and 4 (four!) bars of tenor sax on one of two sides. This is shabby in my eyes/ears. But, at last, we have nice and swinging brush-work by Mr. Jacobs, the band's drummer for eight years, who was all but audible all this time.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Shirley Clay, Lincoln Mills, Jabbo Smith (tp); Floyd Brady, Fred Norman, Vic Dickinson (tb); Chauncey Haughton, Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands, Ben Smith (s); Claude Hopkins (p & arr); Walter Jones (g); Abe Bolar (b); Pete Jacobs (dm); Baby White (vo)

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory, Vol. 4*: Shirley Clay, Lincoln Mills, Jabbo Smith (tpt); Floyd Brady, Fred Norman, Vic Dickinson (tbn); Chauncey Haughton, Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands, Ben Smith (sax); Claude Hopkins (p, arr); Walter Jones (g); Abe Bolar (bs); Pete Jacobs (d); Baby White (vcl)

- *Rust*\*2: Shirley Clay, Jabbo Smith, Lincoln Mills (tpt); Floyd Brady, Fred Norman, Vic Dickinson (tbn); Chauncey Haughton, Gene Johnson, Ben Smith (alt); Bobby Sands (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno, arr); Walter Jones (gtr); Abe Bolar (sbs); Pete Jacobs (dms); Baby White (voc)

- *Rust*\*3, \*4: Shirley Clay -Jabbo Smith -Lincoln Mills -t; Floyd Brady -Fred Norman -Vic Dickinson -tb; Gene Johnson -Chauncey Haughton -Ben Smith -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Claude Hopkins -p -ldr -a; Walter Jones -g; Abe Bolar -sb; Pete Jacobs -d; Beverley White -v - A. McCarthy, *Big Band Jazz*: "There was a two-year gap between 1935 and 1937 during which the Hopkins band made no commercial recordings. Then early in 1937 it made two sessions for U.S. Decca. Numerous changes of personnel had taken place in the interim, the line-up now including trumpeters Shirley Clay and Jabbo Smith and trombonist Vic Dickenson. Smith is something of a legendary jazz figure and Mr. Hopkins once told me that he was still playing brilliantly at this time, invariably stirring the public with a feature entitled 'Trumpet Mania' that, unfortunately, the band never recorded."

Soloists ad-lib:

61567: CH pno 32 + 32+2; BW voc 32; BS ten 4; BW voc 16

61569: BW voc 31; CH pno 30; PJ dms 2 + 2

018 CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Apr. 21, 1937

Shirley Clay, Jabbo Smith, Lincoln Mills – tpt;

Floyd Brady, Fred Norman, Vic Dickenson – tbn;

Gene Johnson, Arville Harris, Ben Smith – alt, clt; Bobby Sands – ten, clt;

Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr; Walter Jones – gtr; Abe Bolar – sbs; George Foster – dms;

Beverly White – voc

62140-A Honey

Dec 1316,

Chronological Classics 733

62141-A June Night

Dec 1286,

Chronological Classics 733

62142-A Church Street Sobbin' Blues

Dec 1286,

Chronological Classics 733

62143-A My Kinda Love

Dec 1316,

Chronological Classics 733

Composer credits: 62140 (Simon – Gillespie - Whiting); 62141 (Baer - Friend); 62142 (Lada – Cawley – Nunez – Williams); 62143 (Alter – Trent)

It seems that Claude Hopkins tries to save his minimalistic big band style over into new eras of big band Swing. But his recordings become less interesting, the more so as the soloists do not appear at any length soloing. Jabbo Smith, a hero of the late 1920s with his fantastic 'Rhythm Aces', is heard for eleven bars on this session, as the only one of the high-quality trumpet section. And there also are only 18 bars by young trombonist Vic Dickenson, as I believe. But, at least, Mr. Hopkins sets great value on having nicely arranged scores for his very good trombone section.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Shirley Clay, Lincoln Mills, Jabbo Smith (tp); Floyd Brady, Fred Norman, Vic Dickinson (tb); Arville Harris, Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands, Ben Smith (s); Claude Hopkins (p & arr); Walter Jones (g); Abe Bolar (b); George Foster (dm); Baby White (vo)

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory, Vol. 4*: Shirley Clay, Lincoln Mills, Jabbo Smith (tpt); Floyd Brady, Fred Norman, Vic Dickinson (tbn); Arville Harris, Gene Johnson, Bobby Sands, Ben Smith (sax); Claude Hopkins (p, arr); Walter Jones (g); Abe Bolar (bs); George Foster (d); Baby White (vcl)

- Rust\*2: Shirley Clay, Jabbo Smith, Lincoln Mills (tpt); Floyd Brady, Fred Norman, Vic Dickenson (tbn); Arville Harris, Gene Johnson, Ben Smith (alt); Bobby Sands (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno, arr); Walter Jones (gtr); Abe Bolar (sbs); George Foster (dms); Baby White (voc)

- Rust\*3,\*4: Shirley Clay -Jabbo Smith -Lincoln Mills -t; Floyd Brady -Fred Norman -Vic Dickenson -tb; Gene Johnson -Arville Harris -Ben Smith -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Claude Hopkins -p -ldr -a; Walter Jones -g; Abe Bolar -sb; George Foster -d; Beverley White -v

Soloists ad-lib:

62140: CH pno 15; BW voc 16 + 16; ?GJ clt 12  
 62141: ?GJ clt 6; BW voc 32; CH pno 1+8  
 62142: BS ten 1+19; JS o-tpt 11; GJ clt 10; GF dms 2 + 2 + 4  
 62143: CH pno 16; ?BS alt 8; CH pno 7; BW voc 30; VD m-tbn 2+16; BW voc 16

019 CLAUDE HOPKINS

New York, Oct. 02, 1939  
 broadcast from Carnegie Hall Concert

Shelton Hemphill, Bernard Flood, Henry 'Red' Allen – tpt;  
 Wilbur de Paris, George Washington, J.C. Higginbotham – tbn;  
 Rupert Cole, Charlie Holmes - alt, clt; Joe Garland, Bingie Madison – ten, clt;  
 Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr; Lee Blair – gtr; Pops Foster – sbs; Big Sid Catlett – dms;  
 Beverley White - voc

I'd Do Anything For You

Collectors Classics CC 18 (LP)

This broadcast from the Carnegie Hall presents us Claude Hopkins' most renowned own composition, and it has become somewhat of a jazz standard. It is obviously played by the Louis Armstrong band that anyhow was on the stage of this concert at Carnegie Hall, New York. The arrangement is Hopkins', as we know it for many years now, and he decidedly is the piano soloist. A girl-singer sings two choruses of this Hopkins "trademark", but I am unable to identify the lady. May she perhaps be Beverley White, known from the last two recording sessions by Decca, and becoming of age a bit?

Yet, we certainly know the drummer heard on this side. And this is - without any doubt - Big Sid Catlett, fantastic drummer of the Armstrong Orchestra, that also was part of this concert's package. This fact must make us conclude that it is the Armstrong band under Hopkins' name!

The tune includes three choruses, only, one by the piano, and two by the singer. The only other musician playing ad-lib behind the singer, is a trumpeter who is not 'Red' Allen. He may thus be Bernard Flood.

For me, this recording is a very fascinating discovery, as it gets us to hear one other record of Sid Catlett's total opus.

Notes:

- Rust\*2,\*3,\*4,\*6: not listed

Soloists ad-lib:

IDAFY: CH pno 32; ??? voc + ?BF o-tpt obl 32 + 32;

020 CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York, c. Mar. 04, 1940

Albert Snaer, Russell Jones, Herman Autrey – tpt;  
 Ray Hogan, Norman Greene, Bernard Archer – tbn;  
 Howard Johnson – alt, clt; Norman Thornton – alt, clt, bar; Ben Waters, Bobby Sands – ten, clt;  
 Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr; Walter Jones – gtr; Elmer James – sbs; Big Sid Catlett – dms;  
 Orlando Roberson – voc (2,4, 6); Herman Autrey – voc (5)

AM 604	Yacht Club Swing	Ammor 116,	Chronological Classics 733
AM 605	The Singing Hills	Ammor 114,	Chronological Classics 733
AM 606	Out To Lunch	Ammor 115,	Chronological Classics 733
AM 607	A Little Rain Must Fall	Ammor 116,	Chronological Classics 733
AM 608	I'd Believe You	Ammor 114,	Chronological Classics 733
AM 609	What's The Matter With Me?	Ammor 115,	Chronological Classics 733

Composer credits: 604 (Autrey – Johnson); 605 (David – Sanford – Mysels); 606 (Hopkins – Hicks); 607 (Green – Little – Kaye); 608 (Hopkins – Johnson); 609 (Lewis – Shand)

These are the last big band recordings of the Claude Hopkins band of the 1930s. The personnel had changed drastically since the early 1930s, although Hopkins was able to hold his musicians together for long periods. But he still had his equivocal singer Orlando Roberson with his band.

On these sides Hopkins also had Bennie Waters on first tenor sax with the band. By listening I assume that Waters was confined to section playing, and not to solo. All tenor sax solos on these sides sound to be played by Bobby Sands with his strong but somewhat erratic style. Benny Waters in his book 'The Key to a Jazzy Life' lets us know that "Bobby Sands was out of tune, he never did have much control." The short clarinet solos in 'Out To Lunch' may also be played by Sands, as he was responsible for clarinet playing in the band in earlier years when Edmond Hall had to switch to baritone sax. There is a baritone solo in 'I'd Believe You' which is played by Norman Thornton, as Waters writes "Norman played alto as he did with Claude Hopkins, but most of the time he was playing baritone sax. He was a good baritone player, he just wasn't a good soloist, not a fantastic one anyway."

I have attributed all trumpet solo parts to Herman Autrey, but I am not certain whether some of them – the more horizontal ones – are the work of Albert Snaer.

Bennie Waters: "After Claude Hopkins had got me into Jimmy Lunceford's band, I went all over with Jimmy."

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Albert Snaer, Russell Jones, Herman Autrey (tp); Ray Hogan, Norman Green, Bernard Asdier (tb); Howard Johnson, Norman Thornton, Bobby Sands, Ben Waters (s); Claude Hopkins (p); Walter Jones (g); Elmer James (b); Walter Johnson (dm)

- Rust\*2: Albert Snaer, Russell Jones, Herman Autrey (tpt); Ray Hogan, Norman Greene, Bernard Asdier – tbn; Howard Johnson, Norman Thornton (alt); Bobby Sands, Ben Waters (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno, arr); Walter Jones (gtr); Elmer James (sbs); Walter Johnson (dms);  
 - Rust\*3: Albert Snaer -Russell Jones -Herman Autrey -t; Ray Hogan, -Norman Greene -Bernard Archer -tb; Howard Johnson -Norman Thornton -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Ben Waters -cl -ts; Claude Hopkins -p -ldr -a; Walter Jones -g; Elmer James -sb; Walter Johnson -d;  
 Orlando Roberson -v

- Rust\*4,\*6: Claude Hopkins -p -a -dir; Albert Snaer -Russell Jones -t; Herman Autrey -t -v; Ray Hogan -Norman Greene -Bernard Archer -tb; Howard Johnson -Norman Thornton -as; Bobby Sands -ts; Ben Waters -cl -ts; Walter Jones -g; Elmer James -sb; Walter Johnson -d;  
 Orlando Roberson -v

Soloists ad-lib:

AM 604: CH pno 4; HA o-tpt 8; BA o-tbn 16; BS ten 8; BA o-tbn 8; HJ alt 32; ?HA m-tpt 32 + 32  
 AM 605: OR voc 32; CH pno 8; OR voc 2 + 2+4+2  
 AM 606: CH pno 6; ?HA m-tpt 16; BS ten 8; ?HA m-tpt 8; ?BS clt 16; CH pno 8; ?BS clt 8; CH pno 6  
 AM 607: BS ten 1+7; OR voc 30; CH pno 11  
 AM 608: CH pno 2; HA o-tpt 8; HA voc 32; BS ten 16; ?BA o-tbn 8; NT bar 8; CH pno 16  
 AM 609: OR voc 32; CH pno 2+7; OR voc 1+8

021	<b>CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA</b>	New York,	1945
	possibly: Kenneth Roane, Shirley Clay – tpt; Joe Evans, Pinky Williams – alr; Joe Garland, Ted Barnett – ten; Johnny Ricks – bar; Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr; John Brown – sbs; Wilbert Kirk - dms		
	Low Gravy	Rainbow 10035	not on LP/CD ?
	Too Big Papa	Rainbow 10035	not on LP/CD ?
022	<b>CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA</b>	New York,	1945
	Prince Robinson – ten; Claude Hopkins – pno, ldr; Jimmy McLinn – gtr; John Brown – sbs; George Woods – dms; Betty McLaurin – voc (1); Henry Wright – voc (2); Lucille Linde – voc (3); Buddy Brees – voc (4)		
	Crying My Heart Out	unissued	not on LP/CD
	Are You Forgetting Love?	unissued	not on LP/CD
	You're Different	unissued	not on LP/CD
	Somebody Mentioned Your Name	unissued	not on LP/CD

**Claude Hopkins worked and recorded prolifically as soloist and pianist of his own bands of smaller size until the 1980s. His recordings from these years might be found listed in Tom Lord's Jazz Records.**

OOO

**The below listed recordings of Ovie Alston and his Orchestra are off-shoots of the Claude Hopkins Orchestra – even including Hopkins himself as pianist – under the name of the band's former trumpet and vocal star Alston. They are the only recordings under this name, and are added because of the strong relationship to the earlier Claude Hopkins Orchestra.**

023	<b>OVIE ALSTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA</b>	New York,	Oct. 14, 1938
	Ovie Alston – tpt, voc, ldr; Robert Cheek, Sylvester Lewis – tpt; Ray Hogan – tbn; Floyd Blakemore – alt; Ben Richardson – alt, bar; Cliff Glover – ten; Claude Hopkins – pno; Rudolph Williams – gtr, e-gtr; Abe Bolar – sbs; George Foster – dms		
	23583-1 Junk Man's Serenade	Voc 4448,	Chronological Classics 733
	23584-1 Twinkle Dinkle	Voc 4577,	Chronological Classics 733
	23585-1 Ja Da	Voc 4448,	Chronological Classics 733
	23586-1 Walkin' The Dog	Voc 4500,	Chronological Classics 733
	<i>Composer credits: 23583 (Alston); 23584 (Alston); 23585 (Carleton); 23586 (Brooks)</i>		

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography*, 1948: Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis, Robert Cheek (tp); Horace Hogan (tb); Ben Richardson, Floyd Blakemore, Cliff Glover (s); Claude Hopkins (p); Rudolph Williams (g); Abe Bolar (b); George Foster (dm)  
 - Rust\*2: Ovie Alston (tpt, vcl); Sylvester Lewis, Robert Cheek (tpt); Horace Hogan (tbn); Ben Richardson, Floyd Blakemore (alt); Cliff Glover (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno); Rudolph Williams (gtr); Abe Bolar (sbs); George Foster (dms)  
 - Rust\*3,\*4: Ovie Alston -t -v -dir; Sylvester Lewis -Robert Cheek -t; Ray Hogan -tb; Ben Richardson -as -bar; Floyd Blakemore -as; Cliff Glover -ts; Claude Hopkins -p; Rudolph Williams -g; Abe Bolar -sb; George Foster -d  
 - Rust\*6: Ovie Alston, t, v, dir; Sylvester Lewis, Robert Cheek, t; Ray Hogan, tb; Ben Richardson, as, bar; Floyd Blakemore, as; Cliff Glover, ts; Claude Hopkins, p; Rudolph Williams, g; Abe Solar (sic), sb; George Foster, d  
 - A. McCarthy, *Big Band Jazz*: "Trumpeter/vocalist Ovie Alston ... joined Claude Hopkins and was a side-man with him until he formed his own big band late in 1936, leading it at the Plantation Club, Ubangi Club and the Roseland Ballroom over the next five years. ... in October 1938 he twice recorded for the U.. Vocalion label, producing a total of eight titles. 'Ja-da' and 'Walking The Dog' are typical of his 1938 out-put, both featuring husky vocals and Armstrong-influenced solos by the leader. The band sounds well rehearsed and possessed an excellent rhythm section that provided a light, fluid beat."

Soloists ad-lib:

23583: CH pno 4; BR bar 8; OA m-tpt 1+32; BR bar 32; CH pno 32; BR bar 8  
 23584: RW e-gtr 4 + 16; CH pno 8; RW e-gtr 1+6; OA voc 32; RH o-tbn 16; BR bar 16; OA voc 16  
 23585: RW e-gtr 4; RW e-gtr obl 16 + 16; OA voc 16 + 16; RH o-tbn 16; CH pno 16; GF dms 4  
 23586: CH pno 16; RH o-tbn 16; CH pno 16; OA voc 16; OA m-tpt 14

024 **OVIE ALSTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA**

New York,

Oct. 14, 1938

Ovie Alston – tpt, voc, ldr;

Robert Cheek, Sylvester Lewis – tpt; Ray Hogan – tbn;

Floyd Blakemore – alt; Ben Richardson – alt, bar; Cliff Glover – ten;

Claude Hopkins – pno; Rudolph Williams – gtr; Abe Bolar – sbs; George Foster – dms;

Frohsine Stewart – voc (1)

23604-1 I Let A Tear Fall In The River

Voc 4462,

Chronological Classics 733

23605-1 Spare-Ribs And Spaghetti

Voc 4577,

Chronological Classics 733

23606-1 Home-Cookin' Mama

Voc 4500,

Chronological Classics 733

23607-1 How Much Do You Mean To Me?

Voc 4552,

Chronological Classics 733

*Composer credits: 23604 (David – Webb - Livingston); 23605 (Alston); 23606 (Bishop – Scott La Fréniere); 23607 (Adams - Levant)*Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Ovie Alston, Sylvester Lewis, Robert Cheek (tp); Horace Hogan (tb); Ben Richardson, Floyd Blakemore, Cliff Glover (s); Claude Hopkins (p); Rudolph Williams (g); Abe Bolar (b); George Foster (dm)

- Rust\*2: Ovie Alston (tpt, vcl); Sylvester Lewis, Robert Cheek (tpt); Horace Hogan (tbn); Ben Richardson, Floyd Blakemore (alt); Cliff Glover (ten); Claude Hopkins (pno); Rudolph Williams (gtr); Abe Bolar (sbs); George Foster (dms); Frohsine Stewart -v

- Rust\*3,\*4: Ovie Alston -t -v -dir; Sylvester Lewis -Robert Cheek -t; Ray Hogan -tb; Ben Richardson -as -bar; Floyd Blakemore -as; Cliff Glover -ts; Claude Hopkins -p; Rudolph Williams -g; Abe Bolar -sb; George Foster -d; Frohsine Stewart -v

- Rust\*6: Ovie Alston, t, v, dir; Sylvester Lewis, Robert Cheek, t; Ray Hogan, tb; Ben Richardson, as, bar; Floyd Blakemore, as; Cliff Glover, ts; Claude Hopkins, p; Rudolph Williams, g; Abe Solar (sic), sb; George Foster, d

Soloists ad-lib:

23604: RH o-tbn 16; OA m-tpt 8; RH o-tbn 7; FS voc 32; ?SL o-tpt 4; FS voc 3+2

23605: CH pno 4; OA o-tpt 8; OA m-tpt 16; ?FB alt 16; CH pno 32; OA o-tpt 8+1

23606: CH pno 8; OA voc 32; BR bar 16; RH o-tbn 8

23607: OA m-tpt 15; RH o-tbn 1+7; OA voc 30; OA o-tpt 7 + 1+4