

Jazz, from New Orleans to Swing, presented in an entirely original form by the leading classic jazz group in Germany.

BARRELHOUSE JAZZBAND

www.barrelhouse-jazzband.com

Founded in 1953 and active ever since, the BARRELHOUSE JAZZBAND has gained national and international renown and ranks among the top groups of the European scene.

The BARRELHOUSE JAZZBAND presents a special blend of elements from all phases of traditional jazz, with predominant accents from the early big band style of the Twenties, the small band style around 1930 and the New Orleans Renaissance. All numbers are played in new original arrangements, the band also plays many original titles written by members of the band, some of them became very popular, like "The Barrelhouse Showboat" (Horst Schwarz) and "Louisiana Café" (Jan Luley).

The band has toured more than 50 countries on 4 continents appeared at all major jazz festivals in Europe, e.g. The Hague, Breda, Nice, Paris, San Sebastian, Ascona, Zurich, Lucerne, Cracow, Cork, Birmingham, Copenhagen, Oslo, Berlin and many more. In the U.S.A. they played at the New Orleans Jazz Festival, where in 1968 the Barrelhouse Jazzband received, as one of the first bands from Europe, the honorary citizenship in recognition of their merits.

The band has recorded more than 30 albums and has received - beside other awards - the "German Phono Academy Award" for the best Traditional Jazz Record of the year (Quotation: "Highly intelligent old jazz, full of vitality, enlightened music, always with that beautiful black feeling").

Eubie Blake, the famous Ragtime-pianist and composer, heard the band in 1978 and commented: "Everything that I write I mean from the bottom of my heart: This is one of the best for a small orchestra that I have ever heard. And I am hearing bands since 1902!".

The Barrelhouse Jazzband has featured dozens of leading jazz stars throughout the decades, including Albert Nicholas, Sam Wooding, Mezz Mezzrow, Jimmy Hamilton, Jay McShann, Sammy Price, Carrie Smith, Harry Edison, Joe Newman, Arnett Cobb, Buddy Tate, Al Grey, Clark Terry, Jimmy Witherspoon, Art Hodes, Leroy Jones, Wycliffe Gordon, Wynard Harper, Lucien Barbarin and many others.

Special concert programs featured by the Barrelhouse Jazzband: "LOUIS ARMSTRONG - KING OF JAZZ" with ROD MASON (tp and voc) as special guest (also available on CD). - "SPIRITUALS FROM NEW ORLEANS" with US singer ANGELA BROWN - "SIDNEY BECHET - The Creole Jazz Genius" with special guests OLIVIER FRANCO (ss) and BENOIT DE FLAMESNIL (tb).

THE MUSICIANS: Reimer von Essen (cl, as, leader since 1962), Horst Schwarz (tp, tb, voc), Frank Selten (all saxes, cl), Jan Luley (p, voc), Michael Ehret (dr), Roman Klöcker (bjo, gt), Cliff Soden (b).

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Famous musicians talk about the band:

"This is one of the best, for a small orchestra, to me that I have ever heard. And I am hearing bands since 1902!"
(*Eubie Blake, Ragtime-Pianist and composer, after hearing the band at the NORTHSEA jazzfestival*)

"Within five seconds of the start of a record by Louis Armstrong, Sidney Bechet, or Duke Ellington's Orchestra, one can say "that's Louis", "that's Sidney", "that's Duke". The Barrelhouse Jazzband is one of the very few European bands that has this instantly recognisable, individual quality"
(*Rod Mason, Bandleader, Trompetist*)

"I've always enjoyed your playing, and the quality of the players in the band is excellent. I believe the Barrelhouse Jazzband compares favourably with some of the bands I've heard in the States"
(*Art Hodes, Jazz- and Blues-Pianist*)

About the BARRELHOUSE JAZZBAND, by the leader of the band.

The BARRELHOUSE JAZZBAND is the rare case of a band on which the general public and the most serious critics agree: It is one of the best internationally. About its career the material attached will tell you the most important facts - but what about its music?

Let Reimer von Essen, the leader and "master mind" of the band since 1962 (!), describe it for you:

In the beginning (the early 50ies) the BARRELHOUSE JAZZBAND copied the King Oliver Creole Jazzband recordings note for note, as many others did in that time. We also tried to capture the rhythm, the timbres and the spirit of this unique band, adding other material of the classic bands of black jazz of the Twenties eventually.

In the second decade our attention turned to the early Duke Ellington Orchestra, and, when we found ourselves without a trombone player in 1963, orchestral arranging seemed the answer, more inspiration coming from the Clarence Williams and other similar groups, but collective improvisation was kept up and added to the arranged and solo passages. In the seventies, with some new members, influences of later classic recordings of the original heroes were slowly absorbed, Bechet's, Red Allen's, Armstrong's and so on, and through the visit to New Orleans, in 1968, also the rhythms and sounds of the New Orleans music of that time.

Jelly Roll Morton's later recordings seemed a good example how to integrate all of these sources, and Wilbur de Paris's efforts showed us interesting possibilities. Luis Russell's orchestrations were studied, and finally a formula was found that would use a little of all of the sources in different proportions for each new number of the repertoire. The numbers are carefully arranged, very well rehearsed, delivered with great enthusiasm and professional virtuosity, including vocals by band members. Most of them are rarely played by today's bands: compositions by Morton, Russel, Ellington, de Paris, Mezzrow, but also boogies, ballads, and some interesting original compositions in the classic styles. Special features are the medleys of Ellington music (there's also a Basie one) and the public's favourites are numbers with Caribbean rhythms.

We consider what we do is quite close to the style of the original jazz masters, but with many fresh original ideas, using what practically none of the masters had: A band that keeps together through the decades and never stops learning. It makes us different from any others and still very clearly a traditional jazz group.

The concerts are all emceed by the leader (in German, English or French) with great authority, charme and humour.