



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“ and „Take Us To The Mardi Gras“ (by Horst Schwarz).

The band has toured more than 50 countries on 4 continents and 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. When the Barrelhouse Jazzband played at the New Orleans Jazz Festival in 1968, they were one of the first bands from Europe who, in recognition of their merits, received the honorary citizenship of the birthplace of jazz.

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 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 more than a hundred leading jazz stars throughout the decades, including Albert Nicholas, Sam Wooding, Mezz Mezzrow, Jimmy Hamilton, Jay McShann, Sammy Price, Carrie Smith, Buddy Tate, Harry Edison, Joe Newman, Arnett Cobb, Buddy Tate, Al Grey, Billy Mitchell, Butch Miles, Clark Terry, Red Holloway, Jimmy Witherspoon, Art Hodes, Leroy Jones, Benny Waters, Doc Cheatham, Wycliffe Gordon, Wynard Harper, Lucien Barbarin, Dan Barrett and many others.

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SPECIAL CONCERT PROGRAMS

SPIRITUALS FROM NEW ORLEANS with US singer Harriet Lewis

SIDNEY BECHET - The Creole Jazz Genius with special guests Olivier Franc (*ss*) and Benoît de Flamesnil (*tb*)

THE BLACK VOICES meet the BARRELHOUSE JAZZBAND with US singers Harriet Lewis and Brenda Boykin

CREOLE SPIRIT INTO SWING

SWINGING THE BLUES: Blues meets Classic Jazz with US singers Harriet Lewis or Brenda Boykin

THE MUSICIANS

Reimer von Essen (cl, as, leader since 1962), **Horst Schwarz** (tp, tb, voc,) **Frank Selten** (all saxes, cl), **Christof Sanger** (p), **Cliff Soden** (b), **Roman Klocker** (bjo, git), **Michael Ehret** (dr).

WHAT FAMOUS MUSICIANS SAY

„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 North Sea Jazz Festival)

„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, Trumpeter)

„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)

THE LEADER OF THE BAND

Reimer von Essen the leader and „master mind“ of the band since 1962 describes the music of the Barrelhouse Jazzband:

“It is very rare that the general public and the most serious critics agree: ‘The Barrelhouse Jazzband is one of the best internationally’.

In the beginning (the early fifties) the Barrelhouse Jazzband copied King Oliver’s Creole Jazzband recordings note for note, as many others did in that time. We tried to

capture the rhythm, the timbres and the spirit of this unique band, adding elements of the other classic bands of black jazz of the twenties.

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, inspiration also coming from Clarence Williams and similar groups. Collective improvisation was kept up and added to the arranged and solo passages.

In the seventies, with some new members in the band, the influences of later classic recordings of heroes like Bechet, Red Allen, Armstrong were slowly absorbed, 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 as well. Luis Russell's orchestrations were studied and, eventually, we found a formula that would use a little of all these sources in different proportions for each new number of the repertoire - constantly including new ideas.

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: e.g. compositions by Morton, Russell, Ellington, De Paris, Mezzrow. Moreover, our repertoire includes boogies, ballads, and some interesting original compositions in the classic styles. Special features are our Duke Ellington and Count Basie medleys and the numbers with Caribbean rhythms, favorites of our public.

We consider what we do is quite close to the style of the original jazz masters, but with many fresh original ideas. We have 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 emceed by the leader in German, English or French) with authority, charme and humour.“