



SARAH VAUGHAN

The jazz world, instrumentally and vocally, may be said to be split into two camps. There are the followers and the followed; the imitators and the inimitable. True, there are many who have managed to graduate out of the first class into the second (didn't Dizzy Gillespie once sound just like Roy Eldridge?), but in the case of Sarah Vaughan it can safely be assumed that this talent has been *sui generis* from the very beginning; that the Newark neighbors who heard her first infant cries in 1924 could tell immediately when it was Vaughan who was wailing.

Thus, the Vaughan whom we heard as a nineteen-year-old vocalist with Earl Hines' band, back in the dear departed days when she was doubling as second pianist, was substantially no different from the Vaughan we hear in this current set of performances. There is a subtle distinction, though. The ideas that were incubating then, the instrumental use of vocal sounds, the bending of syllables to fit musical phrasing, the blend of sophistication and naively in the sound and style, all these have matured and flowered to the point where every performance has the complete assurance and confidence that sometimes used to be missing.

All this is especially clear when, as here, Sarah is accompanied by a small, compact instrumental group that can bend itself to her will instead of compelling her to fit into a set pattern. Head arrangements were used for this session, which means that the musicians threw in their suggestions and worked out routines as the date progressed.

With musicians of this caliber, nothing more was needed. Clifford Brown, the 24-year-old Wilmington wonder, [...] Paul "Vice-Pres" Quinichette, Colorado's coolest, [...] Herbie Mann, the east coast's foremost resident jazz flute virtuoso, [...].

The rhythm section is familiar to Vaughan followers. Jimmy Jones rejoined Sarah in 1954 after two years' absence due to illness; his exquisite chording first became a part of the Vaughan entourage in 1947. Joe Benjamin, from Atlantic City, worked with Mercer Ellington, Billy Taylor and Lena Home, touring for several years off and on with Lena; he has been with Sarah for two years. Roy Haynes, too, joined her in 1953; one of the most tasteful of modern drummers, he has a background of jobs with Pete Brown, Luis Russell, Charlie Parker and many combos in his native Boston and in New York.

The set opens with a tune to which it is hard to bring any new ideas: yet Sarah, adding a little wordless introduction and coda, and trading four-bar phrase, with the horns as she hops her way through one chorus, brings fresh life to the much-recorded George Shearing tune *Lullaby of Birdland*.

Vernon Duke's *April in Paris*, composed in 1932 and now a favorite standard among modern singers, is afforded a slow, pensive treatment with 16 superb bars by Jimmy Jones and eight each by Quinichette and Brown.

He's My Guy, surprisingly, comes in and goes out swinging, instead of getting the slow ballad treatment you might expect. Paul Quinichette's contribution here makes you wonder whether he may become to Sarah's record history what Lester Young was to Billie Holiday's; the parallel is strikingly effective. Brown, Jones and Mann also have 16 bars apiece. In Sarah's closing chorus, observe the flatted fifths on "while" and "smile" and the way she caresses the letter "I" in the phrase "loving me." This tune, incidentally, was written in 1942 by Don Raye and Gene de Paul.

Miraculously, *Jim* manages to retrieve his dignity, after all these years of Imogene Coca's unforgettable satire, when Sarah takes him for a very slow tour of the attractive melody and lyrics, for which Nelson Shawn, Edward Ross and [...] recording artist Caesar Petrillo are responsible (the tune dates back to 1941). Observe how gently Roy Haynes slips into a doubled tempo behind Clifford's sensitive solo, then reverts to the slow pace when Sarah returns.

You're Nor The Kind was composed in 1936 by Will Hudson, a well-known arranger and bandleader of the 1930s, and was originally performed by Sarah some eight years ago. All the horns blow full choruses. An illustration of the subtle distinction between Sarah's earlier and later work can be found in the fact that she uses the same coda idea here as on her original recording *only* this time it comes off.

I'm Glad There Is You, Jimmy Dorsey's one and only big hit as a songwriter (he wrote it with Paul Madeira in 1941) is vocal all the way through; running over five minutes as Sarah introduces the little hard verse to this superlative ballad.

The Kurt Weill-Maxwell Anderson *September Song*, though actually 17 years old, has only become a true standard in the past few years. Flute, tenor, and voice evoke the beautiful *tristesse* of the lyric as Sarah offers one of her most moving performances.

Finally, the descending harmonic and melodic progressions of Timmie Rogers' pleasant tune *It's Crazy* provide Sarah with a pleasant vehicle. This one goes at a loping gait and offers solo opportunities to Jimmy Jones and to all three horns.

It is doubtful whether anyone, including Sarah herself, is likely to be able to find any more completely satisfying representation of her work, or any more appropriate musical setting, than are offered in this LP. These sides are sure to rank among the foremost achievements of her decade as a recording artist.

Sarah Vaughan has made many wonderful records, but to me, this particular session is one of her very best. Surrounded by great musicians (even Herbie Mann rises to the occasion), excellent arrangements by Ernie Wilkins and a program of no less than good and often great songs, she gives inspired performances. Paul Quinichette has seldom played better, Sarah's working trio, anchored in Jimmy Jones's masterful and original piano, gives her and the instrumental soloist all the supported they could ask for, and Brownie has plenty of opportunities to show just how much he could say in half a chorus. He gets away on *It's Crazy*, where he and Sarah turn each other on, and she does wonders with *Jim*...

Dan Morgenstern

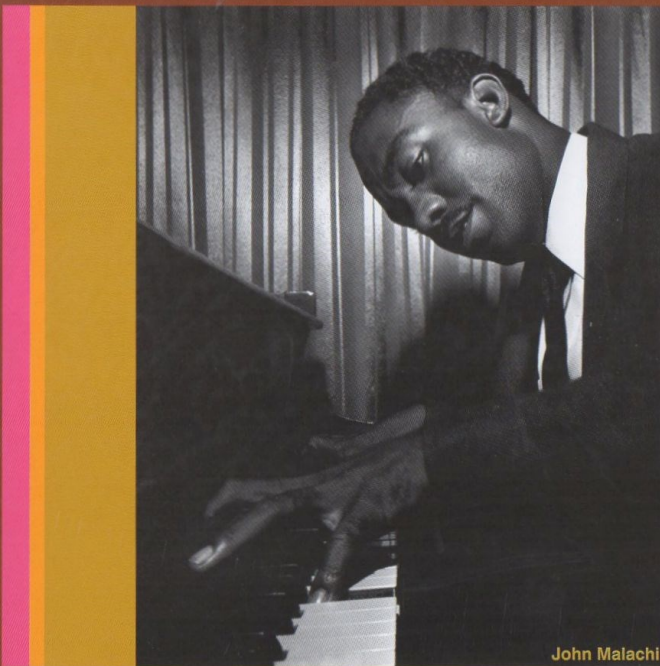
In our edition, we have included as bonus tracks a session which complements to a tee these essentially jazzy recordings by Sarah Vaughan. It consists of 8 titles which were recorded in the spring of 1954 with the accompaniment of a trio made up of the pianist John Malachi (who, by the way, is credited with having invented the nickname of "Sassy") and the same bass player and drummer that would participate in December in the two sessions with Clifford Brown. What we are dealing with here are some splendid interpretations, in which a special mention should be made of the outstanding work of Malachi, who Sarah met in the mid forties in Billy Eckstine's orchestra, and who formed part of Sarah's trio between 1952 and 1954.

An unjustly forgotten refined pianist, John Malachi dedicated the major part of his activity to accompanying top jazz-oriented singers. He was born in Red Springs, North Carolina in 1919, and he worked with Illinois Jacquet, Trummy Young, Louis Jordan, and the aforementioned Billy Eckstine, in addition to accompanying singers such as Dinah Washington, Carmen McRae, Pearl Bailey, Joe Williams, and Al Hibbler. He died in Washington, DC on the 11th of February of 1987.

In these recordings it can be said, just as someone anonymously once wrote: "All in all this is Sarah at her best. But when has she ever been anything else?"

John Flanagan

Design: jaSS
Photos: X



John Malachi

01. September Song (Anderson-Weill) 5:46
02. Lullaby Of Birdland (Shearing-Weiss) 4:00
03. I'm Glad There Is You (Dorsey-Mertz) 5:11
04. You're Not The Kind (Hudson-Mills) 4:44
05. Jim (Petrillo-Samuels-Shawn) 5:54
06. He's My Guy (DePaul-Raye) 4:13
07. April In Paris (Duke-Harburg) 6:21
08. It's Crazy (Fields-Rodgers) 5:06
09. Embraceable You (Gershwin-Gershwin) 4:51
10. Lullaby Of Birdland (alt. take) (Shearing-Weiss) 3:58 (*)
11. Lover Man (Davis-Ramirez-Sherman) 3:19 (*)
12. Shulie A Bop (Treadwell-Vaughan) 2:42 (*)
13. Polka Dots And Moonbeams (Burke-VanHeusen) 2:36 (*)
14. Body And Soul (Hayman-Sour-Eyton-Green) 3:15 (*)
15. They Can't Take That Away From Me (Gershwin-Gershwin) 2:44 (*)
16. Prelude To A Kiss (Ellington-Gordon-Mills) 2:48 (*)
17. You Hit The Spot (Gordon-Revel) 3:03 (*)
18. If I Knew Then (What I Know Now) (Jurgens-Howard) 2:33 (*)

(*) Bonus Track
Total time: 73:06

Personnel:

1-10: Clifford Brown (tp), Herbie Mann (fl), Paul Quinichette (ts),
Jimmy Jones (p), Joe Benjamin (b), Roy Haynes (d),
Sarah Vaughan (vcl); Ernie Wilkins (arr, dir).
New York, December 16 [# 1-4, 10] & 18 [# 5-9], 1954

11-18: Sarah Vaughan and her Trio: Sarah Vaughan (vcl),
John Malachi (p), Joe Benjamin (b), Roy Haynes (d).
New York, April 2, 1954



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RECORDINGS

WITH CLIFFORD
BROWN

SARAH
VAUGHAN

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Recorded in New York City, 1954

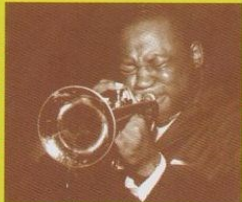
FEATURING
HERBIE MANN
PAUL QUINICHETTE
JIMMY JONES
AND ROY HAYNES



 "Sarah has made many wonderful records, but to me, this particular session is one of her very best."
 - Dan Morgenstern

Design: JASS

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