

The

ALTOSAX

and

CLARINET

of

ANDRE EKYAN

Born: Meudon, France, Oct. 24, 1907
 Died: near Alicante, Spain, Aug. 9, 1972

Introduction:

We learned first to know Andre Ekyan at the famous “Crazy Rhythm” with Coleman Hawkins from 1937, battling with Benny Carter on altosax. Later we discovered that he was one of the top vintage altosax artists in Europe.

History:

Self-taught as a musician. Led band at Le Perroquet in Paris in the 1920s, then played with Jack Hylton (London, 1930-31), Gregor (1932-33) and Tommy Dorsey (1936). Made a number of recordings as a leader between 1935 and 1946; on those from the period 1937-41 his altosax and clarinet soli were accompanied by Django Reinhardt. Also played with Tommy Benford, Benny Carter, Coleman Hawkins (1937), Ray Ventura (1938), Joe Turner, Jack Butler, Frank “Big Boy” Goudie (1939), again with Ventura (Switzerland, 1941) and with Bobby Nichols (1945) and Mezz Mezzrow. In 1950 he recorded again with Reinhardt as a member of the Quintette du Hot Club de France (ref. The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz).

ANDRE EKYAN SOLOGRAPHY

JACK HYLTON & HIS ORCHESTRA

London/Milan/Berlin/Paris, Jan.-April, 1931

Personnels including Andre Ekyan (cl, as, ts, vo).

Several recording sessions for HMV(E), some have been available, and there is no reason to believe there are any altosax soli on these quasi-jazz sessions. Postscript of May 10, 2017: But there is at least one interesting item:

London, Feb. 3, 1931

Movie short, Pathetone, "The Magic Box", illustrating the processing of HMV records:

Choo Choo

(cl)-Solo 8 bars. (F)

The solo contains a fluff but what does that matter?

FRENCH HOT BOYS

Paris, April 27-30, 1932

Personnel given: Andre Ekyan (cl, as, ldr), Rene Barry (as, vo-873), Jean Thiland (p), Didier Mauprey (b), Charlie "Chuck" Barnes (dm). However, it seems that there must be a third (cl, as) present, see below.

Two titles, "China Boy" and "Some Of These Days", were recorded for Salabert:

872-B China Boy

See below. (F)

873-B Some Of These Days

See below. (M)

These items are very interesting and represent an important contribution to early swing in France. Particularly the altosax solo on "Some ..." is high class. However, we have problems with identification. "Some ...": First altosax solo 32 bars. Then afterpiano solo, duet with two altosaxes 16 bars, immediately followed by clarinet solo 8 bars! "China ...": First clarinet solo 32 bars. Then afterpiano solo, altosax solo 32 bars, immediately followed by clarinet solo 32 bars! There must be a third reed, and at least two must play altosax. The only thing we feel confident about is that AE takes the excellent altosax solo on "Some ...", but even the one on "China ..." has unidentified performer.

GREGOR ET SES GREGORIENS

Paris, late 1932

Personnel probably including Andre Ekyan (cl, as).

One title was recorded for Polydor, not available.

GREGOR ET SES GREGORIENS

Paris, March 22, 1933

Probable personnel: Noel Chiboust, Pierre Allier, Andre Pico (tp), Andre Ekyan (cl, as), Roger Fisbach (as), Andre Lamory (as, ts), Alix Combelle (ts), Roger Allier (bar), Michel Warlop (vln), Stephane Grappelli (p-76257), Lucien Moraweck (p), Roger "Toto" Grasset (b), Mac Gregor (dm), George Kelekian (dir), Michel Emer (arr).

Six titles were recorded for Ultraphone, 76252 "Put On Your Old Grey Bonnet" and 76257 "Whispering" on AP960 have not been available, no (cl/as) on 76256 "Desormais" but:

76253-1 Free As The Air

(as)- Solo 32 bars. (F)

76254 Parle-Moi D'Autre Chose

Possibly (cl)-soli 8 and 2 bars.
Possibly (as)-Solo 4 bars. (SM)

Paris, May 4, 1933

Same/similar. Stephane Grappelli also (vln).

Twelve titles, only AP1007 & AP1009 have been available, no AE so far. Note that 76360 "Sweetness" and 76369 "Vladivostok" are reported to have reed soli.

Paris, late June 1933

Same. Six titles, only AP1202 & AP1203 have been available, no AE so far.

"Free ..." is a great, unexpected and pleasant surprise, having a full chorus of inspired and very competent altosax playing!! The straight playing on "... Chose" has only academic interest.

GREGOR ET SES GREGORIENS

Paris, Sept. 3, 1933

Personnel including Andre Ekyan (cl, as).

Six titles were recorded for Ultraphone, not available. Note that 76419 "Do Love Me, Do" is reported to have reed solo.

Paris, Dec. 7, 1933

Similar. Six titles, one has (cl) solo:

77034 Dream

(cl)-Solo 16 bars. (M)

Rather ordinary clarinet solo here.

JEAN SABLON ACC. BY

ANDRE EKYAN ET SON ORCHESTRE

Paris, Jan. 16, 1934

Personnel including Andre Ekyan (as), Django Reinhardt (g).

Four titles were recorded for Columbia(F), three issued, 4661-1 "Le Jour Ou Je Te Vis", 4663-1 "Prenez Garde Au Grand Mechant Loup" and 4664-1 "Pas Sur La Bouche" but no altosax soli.

GERMAINE SABLON ACC. BY

MICHEL WARLOP ET HIS ORCHESTRA

Paris, Feb. 6, 1934

Personnel including Andre Ekyan (cl, as), Django Reinhardt (g).

Three titles were recorded for HMV(F), (cl) can be heard on 1296-1 "Un Jour Sur La Mer", 1297-1&2 "Ici L'on Peche" and 1298-2 "Toboggan" but straight and of no particular interest.

Paris, Feb. 26, 1934

Same/similar. One title:

1362-1 Celle Qui Est Perdue (cl)-obligato 4 and 4 bars. (S)

MICHEL WARLOP ET SON ORCHESTRA

Paris, March 16, 1934

Michel Warlop (vln, dir), Pierre Allier, Maurice Moufflard (tp), Marcel Dumont, Isidore Bassard (tb), Andre Ekyan (cl, as), Amedee Charles (as), Charles Lisee (as, bar), Noel Chiboust, Alix Combelle (ts), Stephane Grappelly (p), Django Reinhardt (g), Roger Grasset (b), McGregor (dm).

One title was recorded for HMV(F):

1415-1 Presentation Stomp (as)-Solo 16 bars.
(cl)-Solo 16 bars. (F)

If the personnel given is to be trusted, the clarinet solo should be played by AE, and therefore unlikely that he also takes the altosax solo. But one never knows.

same date

As above with Germaine Sablon (vo) added. One title, 1417-1 "La Chanson Du Large", but no AE.

JEAN SABLON

Paris, April 11, 1934

Andre Ekyan (cl), Alec Siniavine (p), Django Reinhardt (g), Jean Sablon (vo).

Two titles were recorded for Columbia(F):

4807-1 Je Sais Que Vous Etes Jolie (cl)-Straight/obligato parts. (S/M)

4808-1 Par Correspondence (cl)-Intro/obligato parts. (S/M/F)

GERMAINE SABLON ACC. BY

MICHEL WARLOP ET SON ORCHESTRE

Paris, May 12, 1934

Personnel same/similar to above.

Three titles were recorded for HMV(F), no AE on 1572-1 "Tendresse" but:

1573-1 J'ai Besoin De Toi Straight 2 bars. (S)

1574-1 Blue Interlude Straight. (S)

Just have to mention the two delightful altosax bars on "... De Toi"!

GERMAINE SABLON / AIME SIMON-GIRARD

ACC. BY MICHEL WARLOP ET SON ORCHESTRE Paris, Nov. 13, 1934

Personnel same/similar to above. Aime Simon-Girard (vo-148, 150), Germaine Sablon (vo-149, 151).

Four titles were recorded for Gramophone, no AE on 148-1 "Cocktails Pour Deux", 150-1 "L'Amour En Fleurs" and 151-1 "Je Voudrais Vivre" but:

149-1 Deux Cigarettes Dans L'Ombre (cl)-Straight acc. (g) 8 bars. (SM)

PATRICK ET SON ORCHESTRE

Paris, Dec. 12&16, 1934

Bigband personnel including Andre Ekyan (as).

Six titles were recorded for Pathe(F), but no altosax soli.

WAL-BERG ET SON JAZZ FRANCAIS

Paris, Dec. 20, 1934

Personnel including Andre Ekyan (reeds).

One title, "Horizons Nouveaux" was recorded for Polydor, but no AE.

LE PETIT MIRSHA ACC. BY

MICHEL WARLOP ET SON ORCHESTRE

Paris, Feb. 22, 1935

Personnel including Andre Ekyan (as), Le Petit Mirsha (vo).

Two titles, 330-2 "Maman, Ne Vends Pas La Maison" and 331-1 "Little Man, You've Has A Busy Day" were recorded for Gramophone, but no AE.

**COLEMAN HAWKINS ACC. BY
MICHEL WARLOP & HIS ORCHESTRA** **Paris, March 2, 1935**
Bigband personnel including Andre Ekyan (as).
Four titles were recorded for HMV(E), but no altosax soli.

PATRICK & SON ORCHESTRE **Paris, March 4 & 8, 1935**
Bigband personnel including Andre Ekyan (as).
Six titles were recorded for Pathe(F), one has altosax:

1857-1 Miss Otis Regrets Brief break. (M)

WAL-BERG ET SON JAZZ FRANCAIS **Paris, March 12, 1935**
Personnel possibly including Andre Ekyan (reeds).
One title, "Love Again" was recorded for Polydor, but no AE.

1653wpp Love Again (XYZ Stomp) Possibly (cl)-Solo 8 bars. (FM)

JEAN & GERMAINE SABLON **Paris, May 17, 1935**
Andre Ekyan (cl), Alec Siniavine (p), Django Reinhardt (g), Louis Vola (b), Jean Sablon, Germaine Sablon (vo).
Two titles were recorded for Pathe:

520-1 Un Amour Comme Le Notre Solo/straight 4 bars. (SM)

521-1 La Petite Ile Solo/straight 8 bars. (SM)

PATRICK & SON ORCHESTRE **Paris, June 17, 1935**
Bigband personnel including Andre Ekyan (as).
Six titles were recorded for Pathe(F), but no altosax soli.

ANDRE EKYAN & SON ORCHESTRE **Paris, Sept. 1935**
Pierre Allier (tp), Andre Ekyan (cl, as), Charles Lisee (as), Alix Combelle (cl, ts), Leo Detemple (p), Roger Chaput (g), Sigismond Beck (b), Jerry Mengo (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Ultraphone:

77524 St. Louis Blues (cl)-Solo 24 bars. (FM)

77525 Moon Glow Solo 62 bars. (SM)

77526 Limehouse Blues Soli 64, 8, 8 and 8 bars. (F)

77527 You Rascal You See below. (F)

We assume that AE is taking the (cl)-solo on "St. Louis ...", since tenorsax solo follows immediately afterwards. "Limehouse ..." and "Moonglow" must be all AE, no other reeds soloing here. However, "... Rascal ..." is a problem, since there is the following reeds solo sequence: (cl) 32, (as) 16, (ts) 16, (as) 32. We think Combelle is taking both the clarinet and the tenorsax solo. It is then of course possible that AE takes both altosax soli, being the leader, but could Lisee possibly take one of them, the first one? With regard to the altosax soloing itself, this session represents the beginning of his recorded career as one of the jazz altosax greats. A cool "Moon ..." in a pleasant tempo is interesting enough, and on "Limehouse ..." he shows he is a great swinger with few Europeans on his level of artistry.

**COLEMAN HAWKINS
& HIS ALL STAR JAM BAND** **Paris, April 28, 1937**
Benny Carter (tp, as), Andre Ekyan (as), Alix Combelle (cl, ts), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Stephane Grappelli (p), Django Reinhardt (g), Eugene d'Hellemmes (b), Tommy Benford (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Swing(F), one has AE:

1743-1 Crazy Rhythm Solo 32 bars. (F)

One of the most famous recording sessions in vintage jazz Europe! AE takes the first solo before Combelle (tenorsax), Carter (altosax) and Hawkins. To compare musicians to each other is contrary to the idea of jazz solography, but in this case an exception is in order, since AE is meeting the great Benny Carter. I am happy to state that AE can be quite satisfied with the contest; this is almost a jam session. Rightly Carter's rhythm is more flexible than AE's more stiff 'on the beat' approach, as was the common status in this part of the world in the thirties. However, his ideas are high class, his solo is really pleasant and showing that he had no peers on his instrument 'over here' at this time, only equalled by Britain's Freddy Gardner.

ANDRE EKYAN **Paris, July 7, 1937**
Andre Ekyan (as), Django Reinhardt (g).
Two titles were recorded for Swing(F):

- 1890-1 Pennies From Heaven Straight with (g) acc. 32 bars. (SM)
to solo 64 bars to coda. (FM)
- 1891-1 Tiger Rag Solo 3 choruses of 64 bars to coda. (F)

This duo session is really AE's with Django only accompanying. On "Pennies ..." he takes the first chorus sweet and straight in a pleasant tempo, but then goes into two choruses uptempo, playing well particularly on the first chorus but seems a bit tired on the second. The highlight is after some heavy considering "Tiger ..." where he really wails through 2 ½ minutes of fast improvising, showing that he had little 'local' competition on his instrument in the late thirties.

ANDRE EKYAN **Paris, May 24, 1939**
Andre Ekyan (cl, as), Django Reinhardt (g), Lucien Simoens (b).
Two titles were recorded for Swing(F):

- OSW73-1 Dream Ship (cl)-Straight.
Solo 32 bars to long coda. (SM)
- OSW74-1 I Can't Believe That YILWM Solo/straight 32 bars
to solo 64 bars. (M)

same date
As above with Frank "Big Boy" Goudie (tp, ts), Joe Turner (p), Tommy Benford (dm) added. Three titles:

- OSW72 The Sheik Acc. (tp). Solo 64 bars. (F)
- OSW75 At The Darktown Strutters Ball (cl)-Acc. (tp).
(cl)-Solo 40 bars. (FM)
- OSW76 Blues Of Yesterday Solo 24 bars. Acc. (tp). (M)

Please excuse me, but I (JE) love this "Dream ...", straight and sweet and far away from the hot improvisations we usually are looking for. And, when Benny Carter can get away with similar performances, why cannot AE? But "... Believe ..." needs no excuse, this is all AE at his most elegant, pushed forward by Django, but definitely capable to define his own terms. His long solo on "The Sheik" is also some of the best he has ever done. The two other items are not that important for AE, but a sweet and nice blues on "... Yesterday", and he plays very good clarinet on "... Ball".

FRANK "BIG BOY" GOUDIE & HIS ORCHESTRA **Paris, May 28, 1939**
Jack Butler (tp), Andre Ekyan (cl, as), Frank Goudie (ts), Joe Turner (p), Norman Langlois (g), Ernest Wilson Myers (b), Tommy Benford (dm).
Five titles were recorded for French Swing:

- OSW77-1 You And I Babe (as)-Solo 32 bars. (FM)
- OSW78-1 You In My Arms And Sweet Music (cl)-In ens. (FM)
- OSW79-1 Heebie Jeebies (cl)-Solo 18 bars. (FM)
- OSW80-1 It's A Sin To Tell A Lie (as)-Solo 16 bars. (M)
- OSW81-1 Who's Sorry Now? (as)-Solo 32 bars. (FM)

This is an excellent swing session in all respects, lovely soli by all participants, treated already in the Jack Butler and Frank Goudie solographies. Now it is AE's turn! Three excellent altosax soli, note the elegance with which he executes "... Babe" and "... Lie", and how he swings "... Sorry ..."! How many contemporary performers on this instrument can really match this, a handful?

ORCHESTRE MUSETTE SWING ROYAL **Paris, March 20, 1940**
Philippe Brun (tp), Andre Lluís (cl, ts), Andre Ekyan (as), Gus Viseur (acc), Joseph Reinhardt or Jean Ferret (g), Maurice Speilleux (b), Maurice Chaillou (dm).
Two titles were recorded for Polydor:

- 5283 Josette Solo 16 bars. (FM)
- 5284 Philippe's Stomp Solo 64 bars. (F)

A swinging session, and particularly "... Stomp" should be noted as a magnificent solo effort in high tempo, defining AE as one of the greatest vintage altosax artists.

ANDRE EKYAN **Paris, March 22, 1940**
Andre Ekyan (as), Django Reinhardt, Joseph Reinhardt (g), Emmanuel Soudieux (b).
Four titles were recorded for Swing(F):

- OSW114-1 Rosetta Solo/straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars.

- Solo 64 bars to coda. (F)
- OSW115-1 Sugar Solo/straight 32 bars.
Solo 64 bars to coda. (FM)
- OSW116-1 A Pretty Girl Is Like A Melody Solo/straight 32 bars (SM) to solo
64 bars to coda. (FM)
- OSW117-1 Margie Solo/straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars.
Solo 64 bars to coda. (F)

Now this swings, but how could it be otherwise with this personnel! Django is not satisfied with only accompaniment here and has some brilliant solo contributions. The tempi are all up and higher here, but AE really uses all his confidence to present a number of excellent altosax soli. I cannot select one item among the four as a particular highlight, all items here are highly noteworthy and part of altosax history in general, not only in Europe.

DJANGO'S MUSIC

Paris, March 22, 1940

Philippe Brun, Pierre Allier, Alex Renard, Al Piguille (tp), Guy Paquinet, Gaston Moat, Pierre Deck (tb), Andre Ekyan (as), Alix Combelle (bsx), Charlie Lewis (p), Django Reinhardt, Pierre Feret (g), Emmanuel Soudieux (b).
One title was recorded for Swing(F) (three more without AE):

- OSW119-1 Limehouse Blues Solo 64 bars. (F)

A fine, long, swinging solo on this bigband "Limehouse ...".

ANDRE EKYAN

Paris, Sept. 11, 1941

Andre Ekyan (as), Django Reinhardt, Eugene Vees (g), Emmanuel Soudieux (b), Pierre Fouad (dm).
Two titles were recorded for Swing(F):

- OSW225-1 Hungaria Solo 64+8+64 bars to coda. (F)
- OSW226-1 Le Nulle Part Straight 32 bars with (g) acc.
to solo 32 bars to long coda. (SM)

Great examples of AE's artistry! After one chorus of guitar solo, AE takes over "Hungaria" and shows his superb control, over his instrument in fast tempo. On "... Part" which is an uncammouflaged "Out Of Nowhere" he starts with a elegant and straight presentation with an active Django behind him, and then takes a soft and delicate chorus, of the kind that only oldtimers like us readers here can appreciate...

ANDRE EKYAN

Paris, prob. Oct. 1941

Aime Barelli (tp), Hubert Rostaing (cl), Andre Ekyan (as), Charles Teddy "Coco" Kiehn (ts), Charlie Lewis (p), Eugene Vees (g), Emmanuel Soudieux (b), Pierre Fouad (dm). Date earlier given as Aug..

Note: The session earlier given as Brussels, 1943, is in fact this one, thus removed from below.

ABC Jazz Club session, four titles, no (as) on 660 "Irene" (fine tenorsax here!) but:

- 659 Palm Beach Solo 32 bars. (M)
- 661 Place Blanche Solo 64 bars. (FM)
- 662 Bugle Call Rag In ens. Solo 40 bars. (F)

Strong swing session of best French quality! AE is in excellent shape here and gets ample solo opportunities, resulting in some of his very best recordings. All three items here are altosax masterpieces of the vintage era, but forced to give a favourite, it must be the groovy and swinging "... Blanche", great!

ANDRE EKYAN

Paris, Dec. 18, 1941

Andre Ekyan (cl, as), Jean Ferrier (p), Jean "Matelot" Ferret, Gaston Durand (g), Jean Storne (b), Maurice Chaillou (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Odeon(F):

- 9299-1 Dinah (as)-Soli 64, 32, 4, 4 and 4 bars. (F)
- 9300-1 Caravan (cl)-Straight 64 bars. (cl)-Solo
16 bars to straight 16 bars. (F)
- 9301 Fascination / Frou Frou (cl)-Solo/straight 64,
48 and 8 bars. (FM)
- 9302 Le Sheik (as)-Intro 8 bars to solo 62 bars.
(as)-Solo 62 bars to coda. (F)

Another fascinating session with great altosax playing on “Dinah”, one of his masterpieces. He takes it from the beginning and gets two swinging choruses, then returning for more. Good clarinet playing in “Caravan” and “Fascination”. Postscript of May 2017: And a magnificent altosax explosion in “... Sheik”, one of the greatest AE vehicles par existence!!

RAY VENTURA & SES COLLEGIENS

Zürich, 1941

Bigband personnel including Andre Ekyan (cl, as).

Two titles:

Ah, Que C'Etait Bon	(cl) with orch. (M)
I Hear A Rhapsody	Intro 4 bars. Solo 8 bars. (M)

Of no particular importance.

PIERRE FOUAD

Paris, July 8, 1942

Harry Cooper (tp), Andre Ekyan (as), Alix Combelle (cl, ts), Roger Chaput (g), Emmanuel Soudieux (b), Pierre Fouad (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Swing(F):

OSW295-1	Paralleles	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
OSW296-1	Bizarre	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
OSW297-1	Divertissement	Solo 12 bars. (SM)
OSW298-1	Palm Beach	Solo 32 bars. (FM)

Great swing session! The artistry of AE is elegant, as is demonstrated in the blues “Divertissement”, blending easy going with some slashing runs in bar 8. The three others, all in fast medium, have excellent altosax soli, the highlight might be “Paralleles”.

ANDRE EKYAN & HIS SWINGTETTE

Paris, July 22, 1942

Andre Ekyan (cl, as), Jean Ferrier (p), Jean Matelot Ferret (g-solo), Gaston Durand (g), Jean Storne (b), Maurice Chaillou or Pierre Fouad (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Odeon(F):

9384-1	Standard Swing	(as)-Solo/straight 48, 56 and 16 bars to coda. (F)
9385-1	Etude Rhythmique	(cl)-Straight 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. Straight 28 bars to fade out. (FM)
9386-1	Tcha-Tcha	(cl)-Solo/straight 8, 8, 32, 8 and 8 bars. (FM)
9387-1	Ekyanologie	(as)-Solo/straight 32 and 64 bars to coda. (FM)

Fine clarinet soloing on this session should be noted. “Standard ...” however is a peculiar piece, an exercise in scales, impressive technique but having little to do with proper jazz. This item is only saved by a rare and long guitar solo by JMF. Better then is “Ekyanologie”, although also this one more a showcase than a real jazz item.

EDDIE BARCLAY ET SON ORCHESTRE

Paris, Feb. 1, 1945

Arthur Briggs (tp), Hubert Rostaing (cl), Andre Ekyan, Charles Lisee (as), Max Hugot, Chico Cristobal (ts), Jacques Dieval (p), Pierre Gerardot (g), Lucien Simoens (b), Jerry Mengo (dm), Johnny Desmond (vo), Eddie Barclay (arr, cnd).

Six titles were recorded for Blue Star, five issued, no AE on 1237 “A Lovely Day To Spend An Evening” and 1239 “Paper Doll” but:

1236	Goodnight Wherever You Are	Intro 2 bars. (SM)
1238	I'll Walk Alone	Solo with orch 8 bars. (SM)
1241	Blues For Sale	Solo 24 bars. (M)

Commercial sides of only academic AE value. Postscript of Jan. 2024: Good medium blues by AE on “... Sale”.

EDDIE BARCLAY ET SON ORCHESTRE

Paris, March 19, 1945

Bobby Nichols (tp), Hubert Rostaing (cl), Andre Ekyan, Charles Lisee (as), Gaston Rahier, Raymond Gaija (ts), Jacques Dieval (p), Roger Chaput (g), Emmanuel Soudieux (b), Jerry Mengo (dm).

Five titles were recorded for Blue Star:

1276	You Belong To Me	Solo 16 bars. (M)
1277	Body And Soul	Solo 4 bars. (S)
1278	Rosetta	Solo 16 bars. (M)
1279	One O'Clock Jump	Solo 24 bars. (M)
1280	I Got Rhythm	Solo 34 bars. (F)

Two brief but good altosax soli here, most interesting is "Rosetta". Postscript of Oct. 8, 2023: Two additional fine items with good solo on "... To Me". Postscript of Jan. 2024: And a very fast "... Rhythm", impressive!

JACK CONNER & HIS ORCHESTRA

Paris, July 10, 1945

Hubert Rostaing (cl), Andre Ekyan (as), Jack Conner (vib), Leo Chauillac (p), Paul Mattei (g), Emmanuel Soudieux (b), Pierre Fouad (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Swing, no AE on 406-1 "After You've Gone" (solo feature for (vib)) but:

407-1	Stompin' At The Savoy	With ens 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. (M)
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This session highlights vibraphone, but good work from AE on "...Savoy".

ANDRE EKYAN

Paris, July 10, 1945

Christian Bellest (tp), Hubert Rostaing (cl), Andre Ekyan (as), Leo Chauillac (p), Paul Mattei (g), Emmanuel Soudieux (b), Pierre Fouad (dm).

Four titles were recorded for French Odeon:

9701-1	Blue Smoke	Solo 36 bars. (M)
9702-1	Royal Garden Blues	Solo 48 bars. (FM)
9703-1	Take The A Train	Solo 32 bars. (M)
9704-1	Stardust	Solo 64 bars to long coda. (S)

Paris, 1945

Same/similar with Henri "Andre" Salvador (vo).

Four titles, no AE on 9922 "Cement Mixer, but:

9923-1	Hey Ba Ba Rebop	Solo 24 bars. (M)
9924	I Should Care	Solo 26 bars. (SM)
9925-1	Saturday Night	Solo 16 bars. (M)

French vintage jazz now blends with the trends of the times, but AE as the main and most important soloist represents a sort of continuity. Three fine blues chorus on "... Smoke" in a relaxed medium tempo opens the ball, and continues in the same tempo with three equally professional and laidback altosax soli. AE is still one of the very best altosax players in Europe, and this delicate version of "... Care" with bigband confirms this. Postscript of April 10, 2017: Also "Royal ..." has high class soloing, and "Stardust" is a jewel, starting with the piano simulating stardust before AE alone takes the rest, two sweet and in our opinion lovely choruses!

Paris, 1945?

Same/similar.

Four titles were recorded for Odeon, "Perfidia" and "Stars In Your Eyes" on 281804 have not been available but:

9988	Perdido	Solo with orch 16+8 bars, orch on bridge. (M)
9990	Mop Mop	Solo/straight 32 bars. (M)

The changes of the bigband approach is notable from the previous session, new times and ideas are pressing forward. AE has a good solo on "Perdido" without that lift he got before from his companions. Some of the same is felt on "... Mop".

JAM SESSION No. 2

Paris, Oct. 24, 1946

Vincent Casiano (tp), Andre Ekyan (as), Charles Hary (cl, ts), Bernard Peiffer (p), Lucien Gallopain (g-5,6), Eugene Vees (g-7,8), Stanislas Gzabanick (b), Armand Molinetti (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Swing:

SWK5-1	Nuages	Solo 14 bars (S) to 4+36 bars (FM) Coda. (S)
SWK6-1	Jammin' The Blues	In ens. Solo 24 bars. (FM)

- SWK7-1 Blues Solo 2 choruses of 12 bars (SM)
to solo 6 choruses to coda. (FM)
- SWK8-1 All Together (Crazy Rhythm) Solo 64 bars. (F)

The swing era is still very much alive in France! This is AE's session, taking much of the solo space, as on the feature number "Blues", starting in a slow medium tempo and then changes to uptempo, great! "Nuages" is much of the same, a highly noteworthy performance. "All ..." gives him two hot choruses on an uncannily disguised "Crazy Rhythm". The most ordinary item, to use that expression, is "Jammin'..." with everybody getting their solo share. To sum up: This is one of AE's really great sessions!

ANDRE EKYAN QUARTET Paris, Feb. 25, 1948

Andre Ekyan (as), Raymond Berard (p, vo-"Tout ..."), (b), (dm).
Broadcast "Cabaret Le Schubert", three titles:

- 4:48 Tout Chante L'Amour Solo/straight 36 bars. Obligato 36 bars.
Solo 16 bars. Obligato 20 bars. (M)
- 0:57 Body And Soul (NC) Solo 24 bars to coda. (NC). (SM)
- 3:43 Stompin' At The Savoy (NC) Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars.
Solo 64 bars. (FM)

Postscript of Feb. 28, 2022: This is a very pleasant discovery!! Unfortunately most of "... Soul" is missing, but beautiful as it is, the loss is not catastrophic, because the two other items are magnificent. Some listeners may find "Tout ..." too sweet and more local french music than jazz, which in my opinion is completely wrong, it is just delicate and lovely! But we should all agree that this "... Savoy" is a perfect demonstration of AE's capabilities, and that he ranks very high among the vintage alto sax players.

DJANGO REINHARDT Geneve, Switzerland, Oct. 25, 1949

Andre Ekyan (cl, as), Francois Vermeille (p), Django Reinhardt (g), Jean Bouchety (b), Gaston Leonard (dm).
Eight titles recorded for Radio Geneve:

- Nuages (cl)-Straight. (S)
- Black Night (cl)-Straight. (M)
- Danse Norvegienne No. 2 (cl)-Straight. (SM)
- Micro (as)-Solo 64 bars. (F)
- Dream Of You (cl)-Straight. (M)
- Place De Broukere (cl)-Solo 6 choruses of 12 bars,
partly with ens. (F)
- Manoir De Mes Reves (cl)-Straight. (S)
- C Jam Blues (as)-Solo 24 bars. (FM)

As you can guess, there is a lot of interesting music here! However only three demonstrate AE's improvisational capabilities, all in high tempo. The highlight is the blues solo on "C Jam ...".

ANDRE EKYAN late 1940s/early 1950s

Maurice Meunier, Hubert Rostaing (cl), Andre Ekyan (as), Stephane Grappelli (vln), Joseph Reinhardt, probably Eugene Veas (g), possibly Alf Masselier (b).
Movie soundtrack, one title:

- Minor Swing Solo 16 bars. (FM)

Interesting discovery! Nice runs on the last eight! And so nice to see the guys playing with great closeup of AE!

JOE CALLAGHAN Paris, ca. early 1950s

Andre Ekyan alias Joe Callaghan (as), unknown (vib), (p), (b), (dm).
Four titles, at least two issued on Ducretet Thomson:

- Sometimes I'm Happy Solo/straight 64 and 32 bars. (M)
- Cheek To Cheek Solo/straight 72 and 16 bars. (M)

Pleasant semi-jazz, no sensations but AE still knows how to play his saxophone.

DJANGO REINHARDT ET LE QUINTETTE DU HOT CLUB DE FRANCE Rome, April-May 1950

Andre Ekyan (cl, as), Ralph Schecroun (p), Django Reinhardt (g), Alf Masselier (b), Roger Paraboschi (dm).

Twentyfour titles were recorded for Italian RCA:

CW1	Anniversary Song	Soli/straight 64 and 64 bars. (M)
CW2	Stormy Weather	Solo/straight 32 bars. (S)
CW3	Russian Songs Medley	Solo/straight 48 bars. (M) Soli 32 and 40 bars. (F)
CW4	Jersey Bounce	Soli/straight 32 and 32 bars. (M)
CW5	Dinette	(cl)-Straight. (as)-Solo 32 bars. (M)
CW6	Sophisticated Lady	Soli/straight 32 and 16 bars. (S)
CW7	Micro	Solo 64 bars. (F)
CW8	Dream Of You	(cl)-Straight. (M)
CW9	Nuages	(cl)-Straight. (S)
CW10	At The Darktown Strutters' Ball	Soli/straight 40 and 20 bars. (M)
CW11	Danse Norvegienne	(cl)-Straight. (S)
CW12	A-Tisket, A-Tasket	Soli/straight 64 bars. (M)
CW13	House Of My Dreams	(cl)-Straight. (S)
CW14	Place De Brouckere	(cl)-Straight. (cl)-Solo 60 bars. (F)
CW15	September Song	Solo/straight 32 bars. (SM)
CW16	Royal Garden Blues	Solo/straight 72 bars. (M)
CW17	St. Louis Blues	Soli/straight 40 and 24 bars. (SM)
BL101	Sweet Georgia Brown	Soli/straight 64 and 64 bars. (FM)
BL102	Minor Swing	(cl)-Straight. (cl)-Solo 32 bars. (FM)
BL103	Double Whisky (Scotch)	Solo 32 bars. (M)
BL104	Artillerie Lourde	Soli 8, 32 and 8 bars. (M)
BL105	St. James Infirmary	(cl)-Solo/straight. (S)
BL106	C Jam Blues	Solo 48 bars. (FM)
BL107	Honeysuckle Rose	Soli/straight 32 and 64 bars. (M)

Rome, April-May 1950

Probably same. Six titles, three issued:

WL202	Reverie / Improvisation on Debussy	(cl)-Straight. (S)
WL204	Black Night	(cl)-Straight. (SM)
WL205	Boogie Woogie	Solo 36 bars. (F)

I have to admit that I am not particularly fond of this group, nor Django's playing around this time, nor the wooly sound quality of the recordings, although of course there are many good moments. AE seems to take his presence seriously without being close to the inspiration we have heard so many times before. From the solo notations above, one can easily predict items of alto sax interest, but it does not hurt to mention "Dinette", "Sweet Georgia ...", "C Jam ...", "... Rose", "Jersey ...", "Royal..." and "Darktown ...". For clarinet lovers, "Place ..." and "... Infirmary" have much to offer.

ANDRE EKYAN

Paris, probably 1954/55

Andre Ekyan (cl, as), Maurice Vander (p), Victor Apicella (g), Alf Masselier (b), Arthur Motta (dm).

Nine titles were recorded for Vega:

Crazy Rhythm	(cl)-Soli 64 and 64 bars. (FM)
I Got Rhythm	(as)-Straight 34 bars to solo 34 bars. Solo 68 bars to coda. (FM)
Vega Blues	Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
How Deep Is The Ocean	Solo/straight 64 bars. (SM)

Lola (Lullaby Of Birdland!)	Straight. (M)
Cherokee	Intro 4 bars to straight with (p) 64 bars to solo 32 bars. Straight 48 bars. (FM)
My Funny Valentine	Straight. (S)
Lady Is A Tramp	Straight 48 bars to solo 48 bars. Straight 16 bars. (F)
L'Etranger Au Paradis	Straight. (SM)

The golden vintage years are long gone, and the accompaniment is quite different from the active guitars of the Django tradition. Nevertheless, the jazz contents of these items is higher than one might expect. When AE is soloing, he shows that he has his artistic abilities intact. From the solo notation one can easily see which items that are most interesting, but "I Got ..." and "Lady ..." should certainly be mentioned.

ANDRE EKYAN ET SON ORCHESTRE 1955

Personnel including Andre Ekyan (as), (strings).

Date also given as late 1940s.

Ten titles, issued on CD as "Serenade Mediterranee", available on Spotify, nothing similar to jazz, but at least we can hear AE's sweet altosax among the strings.

ANDRE EKYAN QUARTET Paris, Feb. 20, 1956

Georges Jouvin (tp), Andre Ekyan (as), Leo Chauliac (p), Jerry Mengo (dm).

Broadcast "La Joie De Vivre - Roger Pierre et Jean Marc Thibault" from Theatre de la Gaite Lyrique, sent March 4 (75 minutes), one title from this group:

2:51	Blues	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
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Postscript of Feb. 2022: Not particularly exciting but showing that AE still can play fine jazz.

HENRY CROLLA ALL STARS Paris 1958

Hubert Rostaing (cl), Andre Ekyan (as), Stephane Grappelli (vln), Geo Daly (vib), Rene Urtreger, Maurice Vander (p), Henri Crolla (g), Emmanuel Soudieux (b), Pierre Lamarchand, Al Levitt (dm).

Ten titles were recorded for French Vega, four have altosax:

Minor Swing	Solo 32 bars. (M)
Artillerie Lourde	Soli 8 and 32 bars. (M)
Anouman	Soli/straight 34 and 10 bars to coda. (S)
Place De Brouckere	Solo 36 bars. (F)

Eight years have passed since AE's last session (with one exception), but this one shows that he still is in good shape. His soli in medium tempo on "Minor ..." and "... Lourde" are relaxed, logical and well constructed, and the fast blues on "Place ..." shows also good technique. "Anouman" is a feature number for altosax, sweet, nice and beautiful but mostly straight played.

There are at least ten CDs from the late fifties and sixties on the internet (Spotify) but none of them have any jazz contents, being only dance music and popular entertainment. There are some occasional clarinet and altosax to be heard but always straight and of no interest to us, believe us!

No further recording sessions.

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