

The
GUITAR
of
ARVIN CHARLES
GARRISON

Born: Toledo, Ohio, Aug. 17, 1922
Died: Toledo, Ohio, July 30, 1960

Introduction:

Oh yes, we noticed Arv Garrison, a guitarist playing with Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis, Lucky Thompson and Howard McGhee must certainly be somebody!

History:

Taught himself ukulele at age nine and played guitar for dances and local functions beginning at the age of twelve. Led his own trio at a hotel in Albany, New York in 1941. In 1946 recorded on the West Coast (see solography). As part of the Earl Spencer orchestra, he played in a guitar section that included Irving Ashby and Barney Kessel. From 1946 to 1948 he toured with his wife, the double bass player Vivien Garry. He performed in Toledo through the 1950s. In 1960 while he was swimming, he died when he had an epileptic seizure in the water (ref. New Grove Dictionary of Jazz & Wikipedia).

ARVIN GARRISON SOLOGRAPHY

VIVIEN GARRY**LA. 1945**

George Handy (p, vo-“Where ...”), Arvin Garrison (g), Vivien Garry (b, vo-“... All”, “... Dear”), Roy Hall (dm).

Six titles were recorded for Sarco, no (g) present on “I’ve Got To, That’s All” and “I Surrender Dear” but:

Hopscotch	Intro 12 bars to solo 36 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (p). Solo 8 bars. (F)
Where You At?	Intro. Solo 32 bars. (M)
Tonsillectomy	Duet with (p). Solo 32 bars. (FM)
These Foolish Things	Solo feature for (g). (S/SM)

This session must have been forgotten or overlooked in general, because it contains highly exciting modern experimentation and introduces a fine guitarist in Arv Garrison. In fact this might possibly considered his most important session! His laidback solo on “Where ...” is very original. The interplay with piano on “Tonsillectomy” is peculiar and the following guitar solo very interesting, as is the one on “Hopscotch”, note also the cooperation with an equally important pianist. Finally a magnificent “... Things”, not many others are playing such modern oriented guitar these days. If AG already at this time is known to be so creative, it is no wonder he later was invited to record with the best of the modern bebop innovators.

LES PAUL**ca. 1945**

Sonny White (p), Les Paul, Barney Kessel, Irving Ashby, Arvin Garrison (g), Tommy Moultrie (b), Percy Brice (dm).

One title, unknown origin, live:

2:52	Honeysuckle Rose	(g)-Quartet intro 4 bars to solo 4 choruses of 32 bars to ens 32 bars. (FM)
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A great guitar performance including four of the greatest jazz guitar players of the middle forties. It is assumed that all have solo parts, but who is who and doing what is just too difficult for an old solographer who does not play the guitar himself.

DIZZY GILLESPIE JAZZMEN**Glendale, Ca., Feb. 5, 1946**

Dizzy Gillespie (tp), Charlie Parker (as), Lucky Thompson (ts), George Handy (p), Arvin Garrison (g), Ray Brown (b), Stan Levey (dm).

One title was recorded for Dial:

1000	Diggin’ Diz	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
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As hinted above; one is not invited to play guitar with these guys without having a reputation! Since the session became a mess, not so much guitar came out of it, but the solo that comes after the the three horns certainly is not inferior.

TEMPO JAZZMEN**Glendale, Ca., Feb. 6, 1946**

Dizzy Gillespie (tp), Lucky Thompson (ts), Milt Jackson (vib), Arvin Garrison (g), Al Haig (p), Ray Brown (b), Stan Levey (dm), The Three Angels (ens-vo-1004).

Five titles were recorded for Dial, 1001-E “Confirmation”, 1002-E “Diggin’ For Diz”, 1003-A&B “Dynamo A & B”, 1004-E “When I Grow Too Old To Dream” and 1005-A&B “Round Midnight”, but no guitar soli.

CHARLIE PARKER SEPTET**Hollywood, March 28, 1946**

Miles Davis (tp), Charlie Parker (as), Lucky Thompson (ts), Dodo Marmarosa (p), Arvin Garrison (g), Vic McMillan (b), Roy Porter (dm).

Three titles were recorded for Dial (a fourth title 1010-1,2,3 “Moose The Mooche” without AG), no guitar soli on 1012-1,3,4 “Ornithology” but:

1011-1	Yardbird Suite	Solo 8 bars. (FM)
1011-4	Yardbird Suite	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
1013-4	A Night In Tunisia	Solo 8 bars. (M)
1013-5	A Night In Tunisia	As above. (M)

This is where AG entered our lives! Note that the structure of the two “... Suite”s is different. The brief solo on take 1 is somewhat disconnected, while the longer take 4 flows much better. On “... Tunisia” take 5 is most successful.

FRANKIE LAINE VOCAL
ACC. BY THE VIVIEN GARRY TRIO **Hollywood, early April 1946**
 Wini Beatty (p), Arvin Garrison (g), Vivien Garry (b).
 AFRS Jubilee & V-Disc, one title:

JB171 "It Ain't Gonna Be Like That" Intro 4 bars. (M)

unknown

Same/similar. Broadcast & V-Disc, "I'm Confessin'", but no guitar solo.

VIVIEN GARRY TRIO **Hollywood, ca. May 1946**
 Wini Beatty (p, vo), Arvin Garrison (g), Vivien Garry (b, vo).
 Four titles were recorded for V-Disc, two issued:

Where You At? Break to solo 32 bars. (FM)

Baby I'm Gone Solo 16+8 bars, (p) on bridge. (SM)

Two very good guitar contributions here.

LEO WATSON VOCAL WITH
THE VIC DICKENSON QUINTET **L.A. Sept. 7, 1946**
 Vic Dickenson (tb), Leonard Feather (p), Arvin Garrison (g), Vivien Garry (b),
 Harold "Doc" West (dm).
 Four titles were recorded for Signature, no guitar soli on 101-4 "Sonny Boy" and
 104-3 "Jingle Bells" but:

102-1 Tight And Gay Solo 16 bars. (FM)

103-1 Snake Pit Solo 32 bars. (F)

Far from bebop this time, great entertainment by the-one-and-only Leo Watson,
 but room for two quite typical guitar solo, particularly "... Gay" is nice.

RALPH BURNS **L.A. Oct. 1946**
 Bigband personnel including Arvin Garrison (g).
 One title "Introspection" was recorded for Mercury, but no guitar solo.

GEORGE HANDY **L.A. Oct. 1946**
 Bigband personnel including Arvin Garrison (g).
 One title "The Bloos" was recorded for Mercury, but no guitar solo.

HOWARD McGHEE **Hollywood, Oct. 18, 1946**
 Howard McGhee (tp), Teddy Edwards (ts), Dodo Marmarosa (p), Arvin Garrison
 (g), Bob Kesterson (b), Roy Porter (dm).
 Four titles were recorded for Dial:

1041-4 Dial-ated Pupils Solo 32 bars. (F)

1041-5 Dial-ated Pupils As above. (F)

1042-4 Midnite At Minton's Soli 8 and 16 bars. (M)

1043-1 Up In Dodo's Room Solo 24 bars. (M)

1043-2 Up In Dodo's Room As above. (M)

1044-2 High Wind In Hollywood Solo 32 bars. (F)

From the point of volume, this is AG's most important session, soloing at length
 on all existing six items. Quoting Mosaic's liner notes: "AG, the guitarist married
 to singer/bassist Vivien Garry, was also an underrated talent who was very much
 at ease with the bop idiom – he was to die a few years later in a swimming
 accident – cutting short what would have turned out to be an interesting career".
 From the point of quality this is also possibly his most important one. "... Pupils"
 and "High Wind ..." are perhaps a bit too fast to show his best, nevertheless the
 difference between the takes on the former shows AG's improvisational qualities.
 This is even more evident in the medium tempo of "... Room", and the highlight
 "Midnite ..." with an elaborate and highly individual solo. Only too bad we did
 not get a ballad. Even so sad that this is the actual end of Arvin Garrison's
 recording career, only twenty four years old. One gets the feeling that he was a
 great talent that never was properly realized. Nevertheless he lived for quite many
 years, how did he spend his days locally?

EARLE SPENCER /
THE ARVIN GARRISON QUINTET **Hollywood, Oct. 19, 1946**
 Arvin Garrison, Barney Kessel, Irving Ashby, Tony Rizzi, Gene Sargent (g),
 Artie Shapiro (b) (large to be a quintet?...) with bigband.
 One title was recorded for Black & White:

529 Five Guitars In Flight Solo 8 bars. Straight chording. (M)

Quite disappointing, cannot see any purpose with this. Why collect all (almost) the top guitarists at the time and end up with nothing but unison playing and a trumpet solo? Even the brief solo cannot with certainty be attributed to AG.

No further recording sessions.

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