

The
TENORSAX
of
LESTER WILLIS YOUNG
“PRES” “PREZ”

PART 3

(1950 – 1959)

Born: Woodville, Mississippi, August 27, 1909
 Died: New York City, March 15, 1959

Introduction:

Quoting from original solography version: This part of the book was the most difficult to write. The topic of Lester Young's artistic development in his final decade is probably the most controversial one in jazz criticism. Prez' incredible creativity in his younger years will for many lead to the sense of continuous decline, the fifties being a period when past greatness only can be perceived with great effort. For others, Prez was an artist of continuous development, adapting his music to his physical abilities and to time itself, creating new musical universities. Personally I have belonged to the first category of critics, and I went to the fifties with great reluctance, not wanting to be negative in my treatment of one of the greatest personalities in jazz. I even considered skipping the commentary sections, only referring to Frank Büchmann-Møller's excellent indepth treatment of every Prez solo in his admirable "You Got To Be Original, Man". However, after reading his evaluations more carefully than before, I discovered there were great discrepancies in our perceptions. In general, and not surprisingly, he is more positive than I am, finding gold almost everywhere, while I am more reserved, washing the sand carefully to find the nuggets. A major point in his favour is the fact that his praise is evenly distributed with regard to tempo, while I can be panegyric in slow tempo but increasingly cool as tempo goes up. Prez' emotional power seems, to me, to have survived in ballads and slow blues, while faulting technique and breakdown of the former incredible power to connect ideas in high tempi, make these items often seem routine and without inspiration. However, intrigued by FBM's writings, I went to the task, and as many times before; when you listen closely and repeatedly to music, particularly when preparing to write about it, you become familiar with it, understanding it better. I realized that Prez' improvisational capabilities also in higher tempi still were highly present, more so than I previously realized. He is always experimenting, toying with phrases, with rhythmic elements, with the sound of his horn and different fingering. Prez' music is always full of ideas. What still is a problem for me is that many of his ideas seem so bizarre! He is heavily experimenting, but although I realize this, often I do not care so much for the results!! Prez is becoming an original in the negative sense of the word, and his chemistry does not affect me like it did before. Thus, although I shall go to my task seriously, many of you readers will probably not find my comments useful. May Prez forgive me.

History (continued):

Throughout the late 1940s and 1950s continued to lead own small groups (featured with own group at Carnegie Hall Feb. 21, 1951). Did several overseas tours with JATP, including one visit to London in March 1953, also did overseas tour with 'Birdland 1956' show. Guested with Count Basie at Newport Jazz Festival (July 1957). Lester, who neither drank nor smoked until his early twenties, had long spells of poor health for the last 14 years of his life, undergoing hospital treatment in 1947, 1955, 1957 and 1958. During his last years he worked mainly as a soloist. He began his last series of engagements at the Blue Note Club in Paris (Jan. – March 1959). Within 24 hours of his return to the USA, he died in his room at the Alvin Hotel, New York. His burial took place at the Evergreen Cemetery, Queens, New York (ref. John Chilton).

Message:

Note the many excellent books on Lester Young by Frank Büchmann-Møller and Lewis Porter!

LESTER YOUNG SOLOGRAPHY

Continued from 1949.

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET**NYC. Feb. 20-25, 1950**

Jesse Drakes (tp), Lester Young (ts), Kenny Drew (p), Aaron Bell (b), Jo Jones (dm), unknown (vo).

Large number of titles were recorded privately during a week-long engagement at the Savoy Ballroom. Below is presented the titles issued on the CD-series JazzUp-TopBox. Date is there given as Feb. 22, but obviously there are different programs.

Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Solo 16 bars (incl. start). (M)
Neenah	Solo 12 choruses of 12 bars (incl. start). (F)
I Cover The Waterfront	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 16+8 bars, (dm) on bridge to 24 bars 4/4 with (tp/dm) to duet with (tp)/ens 8 bars to coda. (M)
These Foolish Things	Solo 64 bars (first 2 bars missing) to long coda. (S)
Lester Leaps In	Solo 8 bars. Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (F)
Sunday	Solo 3 1/2 choruses of 32 bars (incl. start). Solo 32 bars to 64 bars 4/4 with (tp/dm) to coda. (F)
Destination Moon	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Soli 32, 4 and 4 bars. Duet with (tp) 8 bars to coda. (M)
Mean To Me	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (M)
Pennies From Heaven	Soli 1, 3 and 1 choruses of 32 bars. (M)
Stardust	Solo 62 bars (incl. start). Solo 32 bars to 32 bars 4/4 with (tp) to coda. (SM)
Three Little Words	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 2 choruses to 1 chorus 4/4 with (tp) to coda. (M)
On The Sunny Side Of The Street	Solo 56 bars (bridge of. 2 nd chorus missing). Solo 16 bars. Duet with (tp) 8 bars to coda. (S)
Lady Be Good	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 16 bars 4/4 with (dm). (FM)
'Deed I Do	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 2 choruses to coda, (dm) on last bridge. (FM)
Almost Like Being In Love	Solo ca. 1 1/2 choruses of 32 bars (incl. start). Solo 32 bars. (M)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Straight 12 bars. (M)
I Cover The Waterfront	Solo 2 choruses of 32 bars, (tp) on last bridge, to coda. (M)
I Got Rhythm	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 3 choruses, (tp) on last bridge. 2 choruses of 4/4 and duet with (tp) to coda. (FM)
Up And At'em	Intro 4 bars to solo 9 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 12 bars to 3 choruses of (dm/p/b) 4 bars respectively, solo 8 bars). Solo 3 choruses to coda. (FM)

Perdido	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 2 choruses to 16 bars 4/4 with (tp). (M)
One O'Clock Jump	Soli 13 and 2 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Straight 12 bars. (M)
D. B. Blues	Solo 3 choruses of 44 bars. Solo 24+12 bars, (dm) on bridge, to 24 bars 4/4 with (tp). (M)
'Deed I Do	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 16+8 bars, (dm) on bridge, to 16 bars 4/4 with (tp). (M)
Untitled Blues	Solo 24 bars to straight 24 bars. (M)
Lester Leaps In	Solo 8 bars. Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 24 bars. (F)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Straight. (F)
Blues With A Bridge	Solo 4 choruses of 44 bars. Solo 24 bars. (M)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Straight 12 bars. (M)
Seventh Avenue Romp	Solo 8 choruses of 12 bars. 36 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 12 bars to 24 bars with (tp/dm). (F)
In A Little Spanish Town	Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 32 bars to duet with (tp) 32 bars to coda. (M)
Lady Be Good	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 48 bars 4/4 with (dm). (FM)

The fifties start at the Savoy Ballroom with more than three hours of music, of which Prez takes ca. one third. The sound quality is not the very best, the piano is below par, the drums a bit too prominent at times, and it takes some effort to digest the full performance. To me, Prez' contributions range from the sublime to the ordinary, but all items have something of interest. First I suggest you go for the beautiful "Stardust", a magnificent number unfortunately with an incomplete start. Note the ending phrase of the first solo. "... Foolish ..." is also a nice, slow number, but this one has been played better before. However, I love the simple playing on "... Sunny Side", nevertheless with several fascinating details, although a part of the main solo is missing. Going up in tempo, you should stop at "Mean To Me", although the drums disturb, three excellent choruses will be found and note the end of the last bridge! And then "Perdido", a very original and well played performance, but also with strange ideas like the bridge of the fifth chorus. "D. B. Blues" is a fine variation on an old Prez favourite, note the opening of the second bridge and the rather peculiar third chorus! Going further up, there are many items competing for attention, and "Up ..." is one of my favourites, while the beginning of "Seventh Avenue ..." is another. On the very upper range is "Neenah", and here is an example of what I do not find very interesting, rather farfetched rhythmic experiments, original, yes, but ... To sum up: You will find a lot of fine tenorsax playing here but some patience is needed.

same

Note: Frank Büchmann-Møller introduces additional unissued titles in his book "You Got To Be Original, Man!" with comments. Postscript of Jan. 20, 2016: These have now been available:

Sunday (NC)	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 32+6 bars (NC). (FM)
These Foolish Things (NC)	Obbligato 48 bars, last 24 bars with (tp), to long coda. (S)
Encore + Jumpin' With SS (NC)	Solo 10 choruses of 12 bars (NC). 3 choruses 4/4 with (dm) to straight 3 choruses. (FM)
D. B. Blues (NC)	Solo 26 bars (NC). 24 bars 4/4 with (dm). (M)

Indiana (NC)	Straight 16 bars (NC) to solo 64 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to 32 bars 4/4 with (dm/tp) to ens. (FM)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid (NC)	Solo 36 bars (NC). Solo 24 bars to ens. (FM)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Straight 12 bars to solo 36 bars to ens. (FM)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid (NC)	Solo 8 bars (NC) to ens. (FM)
How High The Moon	In ens to break and solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 32 bars to 32 bars 4/4 with (dm/tp) to ens. (FM)
Up And At'em	Breaks to solo 8 choruses of 12 bars. Soli 12, 8 and 8 bars. Solo 8+24 bars. Breaks/coda. (FM)
Indiana (NC)	Straight 1 to solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 18 bars (NC). (F)
These Foolish Things (NC)	Solo 64+18 bars (NC). (M)

The reason for these items being unissued is mostly lack of completeness, or uneven speed. Prez plays his usual self, from the sublime to rather strange phrasing. The "Encore" is a good example of this mixture. Although the continuity occasionally seems to lack in a solo, there are always some fascinating details to be found, worth listening for. One of the highlights is a badly recorded very slow version of "... Things" with an unknown female vocalist, and Prez can be heard behind her with a lovely obbligato, while another version is in an usual medium, swinging tempo. Unpredictable guy!

LESTER YOUNG AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. March 15, 1950**

Jesse Drakes (tp), Ted Kelly (tb), Lester Young (ts), unknown (p), Al McKibbin (b), Buddy Rich (dm).
Five titles:

I Cover The Waterfront	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 2 choruses 4/4 with (dm) to coda. (FM)
Be Bop Boogie	Soli 2 and 3 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
D. B. Boogie	Solo 2 choruses of 44 bars. (FM)
Just You, Just Me	Solo 8 bars. Solo 64 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm). (F)
Sunday	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 2 choruses 4/4 with (dm) to duet with (tp) 32 bars to coda. (F)

Only uptempo items on this program, and to my taste "Just You ..." and especially "I Cover ..." are much too fast. Prez plays competently but not remarkably.

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET **Chi. April 2, 1950**

Jesse Drakes (tp), Lester Young (ts), Kenny Drew (p), Joe Shulman (b), Jo Jones (dm).

Recorded privately on the first night of a fortnight-long engagement at the Argyle Club. Note that "One O'Clock Jump" is wrongly titled "D. B. Blues" on JA-34 and "Blues In D-Flat" on CD JUTB 3025.

Neenah	Solo 10 choruses of 12 bars. (F)
Body And Soul	Solo 48 bars, with (tp) on last 8 to long coda. (S)
Up And At'em	Intro 2 and 4 bars, (dm) 2 bars inbetween. Solo 36 bars. For the rest see Jan. 6, 1951. (M)
Big Eyes Blues	Soli 4 and 2 choruses of 12 bars, last with (tp). (S)
One O'Clock Jump	Solo 11 choruses of 12 bars. 2 choruses 4/4 with (dm). (M)

Lester's Mop Mop Blues	Straight 1 to solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (dm) to duet with (tp) 2 choruses (M) to coda. (S)
Pennies From Heaven	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Appr. 2 choruses of 4/4 with (tp) and (dm). (M)
I Can't Get Started	Solo 64 bars to long coda. (S)
How High The Moon	With ensemble to solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Appr. 2 choruses of 4/4 with (tp) and (dm). (F)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Soli 7 and 2 choruses of 12 bars to 1 chorus with (tp) to coda. (FM)
Tea For Two	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars (incl.start). 2 choruses 4/4 with (tp) (F) except last 8 bars to coda. (S)
Blue And Sentimental	Solo 2 choruses of 18 bars. Solo 12 bars to 6 bars withens to coda. (S)
Lester Leaps In	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. (F)

This is probably the most exciting club date from this period! Prez is very inspired on this night, and even very uptempo items like "Tea ..." ("a fresh solo with plenty of joie de vivre" to quote FBM) and "Neenah" shine brightly, although "... Leaps In" seems incoherent and does not make it. The version of "One O'Clock ..." is excellent, colourful with a lot of interesting details, note the tenth chorus, and also the other (fast)/medium titles have a lot to offer. And then to the slow tempo, there are masterpieces you will play again and again: "... Sentimental", "... Soul", "... Started" (with a strange out-of-place first bridge, but a well known second one), and possibly the greatest of them all: "Big Eyes ...". Four magnificent blues choruses make the discussions on Prez' development futile, this is music for eternity!!!

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET

Boston, probably June 4, 1950

Jesse Drakes (tp), Lester Young (ts), Kenny Drew (p), Joe Schulman (b), Connie Kay (dm), Steve Allison (mc).

Nine titles were recorded at the Hi-Hat:

Jumpin' With Symphony Sid (NC)	Solo 3 choruses of 12 bars, first with announcer. (FM)
Too Marvelous For Words	Straight 32 bars to solo 64 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm). Soli 4 and 4 bars. (FM)
She's Funny That Way	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
You Can Depend On Me	Straight 32 bars to solo 64 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm). Soli 4 and 4 bars. (FM)
How High The Moon (NC)	Solo 64 bars to fade out. (FM)
The Talk Of The Town	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
On A Slow Boat To China	Straight 32 bars to solo 64 bars. 40 bars 4/4 with (dm). (F)
Indiana	Straight 32 bars to solo 64 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to 24 bars 4/4 with (tp). (F)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid (NC)	Straight 12 bars (NC). (FM)

Boston, probably June 11, 1950

Same. Five titles:

Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars, announcer on second. (FM)
Sunday	Straight 32 bars to solo 64 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to 24 bars 4/4 with (tp). (F)

Body And Soul	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
Four Flats Furnished	Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. 3 choruses 4/4 with (dm). (F)
Jeepers Creepers (NC)	Straight 34 bars to solo 68 bars. (FM)

You will not find many surprises on these dates after being familiar with other club dates around same time. Writing these comments several years after the others, the comparisons will not be very precise, but I feel that Prez is playing quite ordinary in upper tempi, but when we come to the ballads, things are quite different. There are three beautiful examples here, "She's Funny ...", "... The Town" and "... Soul", all played in the same manner with 1 ½ chorus, highly noteworthy.

LESTER YOUNG QUARTET **NYC. late June 1950**
Lester Young (ts), John Lewis (p), Joe Shulman (b), Bill Clark (dm-except 434).
Five titles were recorded for Clef/Verve:

430-1	Three Little Words	Soli 64 and 32 bars. (M)
431-2	Count Every Star	Intro 4 bars to solo 56 bars. Solo 38 bars to coda. (M)
431-3	Count Every Star (NC)	Intro 4 bars (NC). (M)
431-4	Count Every Star	As take 2. (M)
432-1	It All Depends On You	Intro 4 bars to solo 64 bars. Solo 32 bars to coda. (M)
433-1	Neenah	Soli 6 and 4 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
433-2	Neenah	Soli 5 and 4 choruses of 12 bars. (F)
433-4	Neenah	Soli 9 and 6 choruses of 12 bars. (F) to coda. (S)
434-1	Jeepers Creepers	Intro 4 bars to solo 4 choruses of 34 bars. (FM)

The first Prez-Verve session of the fifties is to me a great disappointment. Sorry to say it, but the rhythm backing is extremely lame and passive, almost as they want to ascertain that Prez does not do anything wrong. The result is accordingly rather boring, the tenorsax playing moves along without much inspiration nor creativity. The tempi are mostly an even medium to fast medium, no ballads. "Neenah" , a blues, turns out to be the most interesting item. Take 1 seems to be not fast enough, so in take 2 the tempo is increased, but consequently the duration drops close to two minutes. In take 4 more choruses are produced in order to fill an ordinary 78 rpm. Prez plays more actively on this title. However, in general, there is not much fire on this date. Compare it to the Argyle Club session, and you will note the difference.

NORMAN GRANZ JAZZ CONCERT No. 1 **NYC. Sept. 16, 1950**
JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC
Harry Edison (tp), Bill Harris (tb), Lester Young (ts), Flip Phillips (ts-except "...
Chance"), Hank Jones (p), Ray Brown (b), Buddy Rich (dm).
Recorded at Carnegie Hall.

Norgran Blues	Solo 9 choruses of 12 bars, last 6 with ens. (FM)
Lady Be Good	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars, last 2 with ens. (F)
A Ghost Of A Chance	Solo 32 bars. (S)
Indiana	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. (F)

This concert does not belong to my favourite JATP performances, it is noisy on the brink of being vulgar, and the trumpet contributions are disastrous. LY does "... Chance" quite nicely, although there are better versions, but the uptempo items are quite ordinary with "Norgran ..." as the better one.

JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC **NYC. Oct. 1950**
Harry Edison (tp-"Blues ..."), Bill Harris (tb), Flip Phillips (ts-"Blues ..."), Lester Young (ts), Hank Jones (p), Ray Brown (b), Buddy Rich (dm), Ella Fitzgerald (vo-"Blues ...").
Two titles from movie short:

Pennies From Heaven	Intro 4 bars to solo 64 bars. Solo 8 bars to coda. (FM)
Blues For Greasy	Solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. (M)

Nice to see these guys, and good music; particularly "Blues ..." has good Prez, this item also with some extended tenorsax soloing by Flip.

LESTER YOUNG QUARTET **NYC. Jan. 6, 1951**
Lester Young (ts), John Lewis (p), Gene Ramey (b), Jo Jones (dm).
WNEW broadcast from Birdland. Six titles:

Up And At'em	Intro with (p) 8 bars. Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 12 bars to 3 choruses of (dm/p/b) 4 bars respectively, solo 8 bars), to solo 24 bars to coda (same as intro). (FM)
Three Little Words	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 48 bars 4/4 with (dm). Solo 8 bars to coda. (M)
Neenah	Straight 2 to solo 9 choruses of 12 bars. 3 choruses 4/4 with (dm) to solo 24 bars to coda. (F)
I Cover The Waterfront	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 16+8 bars, (dm) on bridge, to coda. (M)
Lester Leaps In	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. 48 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 16 bars to coda. (F)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid (NC)	Solo 4 bars (NC). (M)

The beginning of a long series of broadcasts from Birdland. Prez seems to be with good control here, playing competently on all items, although Lewis and Jones are not exactly a hand-in-gloves rhythm section. My favourites are "... Words" and "... Waterfront", the latter in a better tempo here than previously.

LESTER YOUNG QUARTET **NYC. Jan. 13, 1951**
Same personnel and place. Three titles:

Up And At'em	As Jan. 6, but 6 choruses. (FM)
Too Marvelous For Words	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 16+8 bars, (dm) on bridge, to coda. (M)
Indiana	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. 64 bars 4/4 with (dm) to coda. (F)

One notes that Prez' repertoire is rather limited, the same tunes appear again and again. This is not necessary a bad thing, the various versions being almost like "alternate takes", letting us know better the way he thinks about and executes his music. Here is a newcomer, "Too Marvelous ...", and there is good tenorsax both on this and the two other items.

LESTER YOUNG QUARTET **NYC. Jan. 16, 1951**
Same personnel. Six titles were recorded for Clef/Verve:

483-2	Thou Swell	Soli 64 and 32 bars. (FM)
483-?	Thou Swell	As take 2. (FM)
484-2	September In The Rain	Soli 64 and 8 bars. Solo 16+8 bars to coda. (dm) on bridge. (FM)
485-1	Undercover Girl Blues	Soli 36 and 24 bars. (M)
486-3	Frenesi	Solo 2 choruses of 48 bars. Solo 8 bars to coda. (M)
487-2	Pete's Cafe	Solo 6 choruses of 12 bars. 3 choruses of 4/4 with (dm) to solo 2 choruses to coda. (FM)

488-2 Little Pee Blues Solo 64 bars. Solo 16+8 bars to coda, (dm) on bridge. (FM)

This session seems to have more fire than the previous Verve one, obviously due to a more active drumming by Jo Jones. However, also here Prez mostly seems to play on routine, rarely exhibiting any ambitions of making exciting music similar to the old days. There seems no purpose to single out any particular item, they all have qualities to merit listening but a few times only, with one exception; "Undercover ...", a magnificent blues performance, note for instance the opening of the last solo! Postscript: It seems that the titles of 487 and 488 are switched, "Little Pee Blues" is a standard but "Pete's Cafe" is a blues!

LESTER YOUNG QUARTET **NYC. Jan. 20, 1951**
Personnel as Jan. 6. Five titles:

Neenah	As Jan. 6, but 5 choruses. (F)
Ghost Of A Chance	Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)
Lester Leaps Again	As Jan. 6, but 4 choruses. (F)
Up And At'em	As Jan. 6, but incl. start and 7 choruses. (FM)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	In ens 12 bars. (FM)

The fast blues "Neenah" is one of Prez' favourites at this time, and if you follow the different versions, you will encounter both the creative artist we so much enjoy, as well as the one whose creativity sometimes goes rather bizarre, as in the fifth chorus, one of the strangest he ever played! With regard to "Ghost ...", FBM says something very important here: "The solo expresses a hopelessness that perfectly matches the lyrics. This is a strong piece of evidence supporting the truth of Lester's declaration that you interpret a song better if you know the lyrics". Play this one!!

LESTER YOUNG QUARTET **NYC. Feb. 24, 1951**
Personnel as Jan. 6 except unknown (p) replaces Lewis on this session only.
Five titles:

Up And At'em	As Jan. 6. (FM)
These Foolish Things	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
Neenah	As Jan. 6, but 6 choruses. (F)
Lester Leaps In	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. Solo 16 bars to coda. (F)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)

Not much to add to the previous comments except to note an interesting, unidentified pianist, and to focus on a beautiful "... Foolish Things", "the solo is exceedingly beautiful - the highlight of this broadcast" as FBM states it!

LESTER YOUNG QUARTET **NYC. March 8, 1951**
Personnel as Jan. 6. Six titles were recorded for Clef/Norgran/Verve:

529-3	A Foggy Day	Soli 68 and 34 bars to coda. (FM)
530-1	In A Little Spanish Town	Soli 96 and 32 bars. (FM)
531-1	Let's Fall In Love	Soli 64 and 8 bars to coda. (M)
532-2	Down n' At'em	Soli 3 and 4 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
533-1	Lester Swings	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Soli 4, 4 and 8 bars to long coda. (FM)
534-1	Slow Motion Blues	Solo 36 bars. (S)

This session is recorded two months after the previous Verve one and with the same personnel. Consequently there are similarities between them, but on the average this one seems to perform better. Although it starts with a "... Foggy Day" with prominent off-key passages, there is a lot of good playing to be heard. Of the fast medium titles, "Lester Swings", a variation on "Exactly Like You", is the better one. However, as tempo slows down, Prez catches it better, and when he closes with "Slow Motion ...". he is really back on the stage. In this tempo he is in command, and while his tone does not any longer has the softness of bygone days, this is great art! Note the opening of the third chorus!!

LESTER YOUNG QUARTET**NYC. March 17, 1951**

Personnel as Jan. 6. Six titles:

Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Solo 12 bars. (M)
Up And At'em	As Jan. 6, but 6 choruses. (F)
Too Marvelous For Words	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to coda. (FM)
Neenah	As Jan. 6. (F)
Ghost Of A Chance	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
Lester Leaps In (Again)	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 3 choruses shared with (dm) to solo 8 bars to coda. (F)

Prez is in fine shape here, note for instance the lively "Up ..." and the original fifth chorus, or another swinging "Too Marvelous ..." with a lot of interesting details. And of course, a new, magnificent, emotional version of "Ghost ...", "played in a relaxed style and with great authority" to quote FBM.

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET**NYC. May 19, 1951**

Jesse Drakes (tp), Lester Young (ts), John Lewis (p), Gene Ramey (b), Jo Jones (dm).

WNEW broadcast from Birdland. Four titles:

Indiana	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to 32 bars 4/4 with (tp) to coda. (FM)
Ghost Of A Chance	Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)
How High The Moon	With ens and acc. (tp) to break and solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (tp) to coda. (F)
D. B. Blues	Solo 2 choruses of 44 bars. (M)

"Ghost ..."s on parade, another version comes along! "Of course" this one is also very beautiful but so relaxed sometimes it almost loses structure. And it has a mistake in bar 6!! Many fine details on the other three items.

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET**NYC. Aug. 4, 1951**

Personnel as May 19 except Earl Knight (p) replaces Lewis.

WNEW broadcast from Birdland. Six titles:

Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	In ens. (M)
Up And At'em	As Jan. 6, but 8 choruses. (FM)
Blue And Sentimental	Solo 36 bars to long coda. (S)
Neenah	Straight 2 to solo 12 choruses of 12 bars. Straight 2 choruses to coda. (F)
Lester Leaps In	Solo 16+8 bars, (tp) on bridge, to solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to 16 bars 4/4 with (tp). Solo 8 bars to coda. (F)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	In ens 4 bars. (M)

Why Prez quotes "Jingle Bells" in "Up ..." in early autumn is a minor mystery, the solo is good anyway. Best to my taste in this program is "... Sentimental", although I agree with FBM who states that "the solo is pretty and beautiful, though without much real inspiration". The other titles are as mentioned "alternate takes".

Prez joined JATP in autumn 1951 but no recordings from the U. S. are available. He took part in the first European tour, but with one exception no recordings here neither. Thus we have almost no evidence of Prez' music for a period of eight months.

JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC**Stockholm, March 27 or 30, 1952**

Personnel probably as April 6 below.

One title:

Undecided (NC) Solo 28 bars + 3 choruses of
32 bars to fade out. (FM)

First four bars of what is probably the first chorus, are missing.

JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC

Paris, April 6, 1952

Roy Eldridge (tp), Flip Phillips, Lester Young (ts), Hank Jones (p), Irving Ashby (g), Ray Brown (b), Max Roach (dm).

Broadcast from Salle Pleyel. Three titles, one has been available:

Undecided

I Cover The Waterfront Solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)

Blues

The sound quality is not that good, but Prez at last chooses a proper tempo for this beautiful song, resulting in a fine solo "finishing with a long, excellent and elegant cadence", quote FBM.

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET

NYC. April 25, 1952

Jesse Drakes (tp), Lester Young (ts), Wynton Kelly (p), Aaron Bell (b), Lee Abrams (dm), Jo Jones (dm-guest appearance).

NBC broadcast from Birdland (opening night). Five titles:

Neenah Straight 2 to solo 6 choruses of
12 bars. Solo 1 chorus to
straight 2 choruses to coda. (F)

Ghost Of A Chance Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)

In A Little Spanish Town In ens to duet with (tp) 1 chorus to
solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars
4/4 with (dm) to 64 bars 4/4 with (tp/dm)
to duet with (tp) 32 bars and ens. (FM)

Destination Moon Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars.
32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to
16 bars 4/4 with (tp). (M)

Lester Leaps In Solo 16+8 bars, (tp) on bridge, to
solo 5 choruses of 32 bars.
Duet with (tp) 16+8 bars, (dm) on
bridge, to slow coda. (F)

NYC. April 26, 1952

Personnel as above.

NBC broadcast from Birdland. Four titles, not available, probably lost:

Tea For Two

I Cover The Waterfront

Up And At'em

Three Little Words

NYC. May 2, 1952

Personnel as above.

NBC broadcast from Birdland. Four titles:

Up And At'em As Jan. 6, but 6 choruses. (FM)

'Deed I Do Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars
4/4 with (dm). 32 bars 4/4 with
(tp/dm/ens) to coda. (FM)

How High The Moon With ens and acc. (tp) to break
and solo 3 choruses of 32 bars.
With ensemble 32 bars. (F)

Pennies From Heaven Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)

NYC. May 3, 1952

Personnel as above.

NBC broadcast from Birdland. Two titles:

Up And At'em As Jan. 6, but 8 choruses. (FM)
 'Deed I Do As May 2. (F)

Back at Birdland, Prez seems to be in good shape. His only ballad performance on these three nights, "Ghost ...", is very beautiful, and I don't agree with FBM saying that "he doesn't seem all that involved. The solo is delivered like a pretty piece of craftsmanship". Note "... Spanish Town" as another newcomer to the repertoire; there will be many alternate versions later, this one swings merrily. While it seems that his tone has changed slightly, a little more "rasping" as FBM puts it, the phrasing is fine. Note the fine trumpet playing, the underrated Jesse Drakes has never been better!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. July 29, 1952

Paul Campbell, Wendell Cully, Reunald Jones, Joe Newman (tp), Henry Coker, Benny Powell, Jimmy Wilkins (tb), Marshal Royal (cl, as), Ernie Wilkins (as, ts), Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Paul Quinichette (ts), Charlie Fowlkes (bar), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Jimmy Lewis (b), Gus Johnson (dm). Guest soloist: Lester Young (ts).

NBC broadcast from Birdland, two titles have LY:

Jumpin' At The Woodside Solo 8 bars. Break to solo
 5 choruses of 32 bars. (F)
 One O'Clock Jump Solo 24 bars (1st (ts)-solo). (M)

NYC. July 31, 1952

Same. Two titles have LY:

Every Tub Intro with orch 8 bars. Solo 8 bars.
 Solo with orch 4 choruses of 32 bars
 to coda 8 bars. (F)
 Basie English Solo with orch 32 bars. (M)

Since both Prez and Basie played at Birdland from July 24 to August 5, they teamed up together for a few occasions. "... Jump" is particularly interesting; Prez is quoting his Decca recording of 25 years back, and Paul Q is quoting Prez so you almost cannot hear the difference. However, remind you, this is not typical!!! The recently available "... English" is rather ordinary, and the extended soli on "... Woodside" and "... Tub" are competent but to my personal taste not that exciting.

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET NYC. Aug. 2, 1952

Jesse Drakes (tp), Lester Young (ts), Gil Coggins (p), Aaron Bell (b), Connie Kay (dm).

NBC broadcast from Birdland.

Jumpin' With Symphony Sid
 Up And At'em As Jan. 6, 1951 but 8 choruses. (FM)
 Ghost Of A Chance Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)
 In A Little Spanish Town As April 25, but 4 choruses and
 32 bars 4/4 with (tp/dm). (F)
 Too Marvelous For Words Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars.
 Solo 32 bars to coda. (M)
 Neenah Straight 2 to solo 9 choruses
 of 12 bars. Straight 2
 choruses to coda. (F)

Another version of "Ghost ..." with a nice quote from "London Bridge Is Falling Down" in the first bridge, but otherwise this solo seems to lack some of the charm and tranquillity of its predecessors. "... Spanish Town" and "Neenah" are played faster than before. Nothing sensational happens on this session.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Aug. 5, 1952

Personnel and place as July 29. Falsely dated as Aug. 11 and Aug. 31.

Jumpin' At The Woodside Solo 8 bars. Break to solo 5
 choruses of 32 bars to coda. (FM)

With several different details compared to July 29.

JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC**NYC. Sept. 13, 1952**

Roy Eldridge, Charlie Shavers (tp), Benny Carter (as), Lester Young, Flip Phillips (ts), Oscar Peterson, Hank Jones (p), Barney Kessel (g), Ray Brown (b), Buddy Rich, Gene Krupa (dm).

Recorded at Carnegie Hall. Falsely dated as Oct. 11.

Jam Session Blues	Solo with ens 14 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
I Can't Get Started (Ballad Medley)	Solo 32 bars. (S)
The Trumpet Battle	Straight with (ts-FP) 20+8 bars, 2/2 on last 4 of bridge. (F)
Cotton Tail	Solo 32 bars. (F)
Perdido	No solo.

Maybe it is a surprising statement, but "Jam Session ..." is my favourite item from this concert. Prez is dragged by the audience and his fellow musicians into a series of blues choruses consisting mainly of repeated notes and riffs. However, he creates a lot of surprising variations, note for instance the beginning of the 5, 12 and 13 chorus, and in general seems very inspired and having fun. "... Started" has a somewhat unconcentrated opening, and although there are many beautiful details, his tone is not nice here due to spit in the mouthpiece, and this cannot be compared to many previous versions. "... Tail" is very fast, and Prez does not really start until the second A but then plays nicely, note the beginning of the last A.

JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC**Frankfurt, Nov. 20, 1952**

Roy Eldridge (tp), Flip Phillips, Lester Young (ts), Hank Jones (p), Ray Brown (b), Max Roach (dm).

The last concert on the European tour.

How High The Moon	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)
Undecided	Solo 6 choruses of 32 bars. 2 choruses 4/4 with (tp) & (ts-FP). (F)
I Cover The Waterfront (Ballad Medley)	Solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)
Dre's Blues	Solo 13 choruses of 12 bars. (F)

On this concert "... Waterfront" is my favourite with a really beautiful solo. Of the the uptempo items, "Undecided" is particularly energetic, while "... Moon" is rather pale, and "Dre's ..." is more experimental than successful.

**LESTER YOUNG WITH
OSCAR PETERSON TRIO****NYC. Nov. 28, 1952**

Lester Young (ts, vo-890), Oscar Peterson (p), Barney Kessel (g), Ray Brown (b), J. C. Heard (dm). Falsely dated as Aug. 4.

Thirteen titles were recorded for Clef/Verve:

883-2	Ad Lib Blues	Intro 4 bars to solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 9 choruses to coda. (FM)
884-1	Just You, Just Me	Soli 4 and 3 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)
885-1	Tea For Two	Soli 5 and 3 choruses of 32 bars. (F)
886-1	Indiana	Soli 5 and 2 choruses of 32 bars. (M)
887-1	These Foolish Things	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
888-1	I Can't Get Started (NC)	Solo 1 bar (NC). (S)
888-2	I Can't Get Started	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
889-1	Stardust	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
890-1	Takes Two To Tango (NC)	Vocal. Solo 32 bars. (SM)
890-2	Takes Two To Tango (NC)	No solo.
890-3	Takes Two To Tango	Vocal. Solo 16 bars. Vocal. (SM)
891-1	On The Sunny Side Of The Street	Solo 80 bars to coda. (SM)
892-3	Almost Like Being In Love	Soli 3 choruses of 36 bars except (p) on last bridge. (SM)

893-4	I Can't Give You Anything But Love	Soli 32 and 32 bars to coda. (SM)
894-1	There Will Never Be Another You	Solo 64 bars to long coda. (S)
895-2	I'm Confessin'	Solo 64 bars to long coda. (S)

Apart from a previous JATP encounter, this is really Lester Young vs Oscar Peterson, and what a change it makes! The driving rhythm seems to inspire Prez to do one of his best sessions in the early fifties. It seems to be divided into two parts, first four extended titles in uptempi, lasting up to almost eight minutes each. Then nine ballad items in 78 rpm. format. The session lasts for one hour, with Prez catching at least two-thirds (calculate for yourself), more than the entire output of his great copatriot with Basie, Herschal Evans! To take the first part: On earlier occasions in the fifties, it is easy to argue that Prez has problems in uptempi, but not here, now he plays with great joy and inspiration, perhaps not with the same originality as before, but by all means; "Ad ...", "Just You ...", "Tea ..." and "Indiana" are all real tenorsax treasures. Then the famous "... Tango", previously unissued, an informal affair with Prez singing, having more academic and humouristic than artistic value. "Finally" eight beautiful ballads of high quality. I have a particular affection for "... Another You", although he goes too much into the upper register of the instrument, possibly because it was one of the first Prez records I learned to know in my teenage years. A lovely session, why couldn't the fifties for Prez always be like this?!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 1, 1953**
Personnel as July 29, 1952 except Gene Ramey (b) replaces Lewis.
NBC broadcast from Birdland.

Jumpin' At The Woodside	Break to solo 4 choruses of 32 bars to coda. (FM)
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Again Prez and Basie alternates at Birdland, with some cooperation. Again the same titles, yet another "... Woodside", judge for yourself which version to prefer!

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET **NYC. Jan. 3, 1953**
Jesse Drakes (tp), Lester Young (ts), Horace Silver (p), Franklin Skeete (b), Lee Abrams (dm).
NBC broadcast from Birdland. Five titles:

Up And At'em	As Jan. 6, 1951, but intro and coda with (dm). (FM)
Blue And Sentimental	Solo 36 bars. Solo 18 bars to coda. (S)
After You've Gone	Solo 4 choruses of 40 bars. 40 bars 4/4 with (dm) to 40 bars 4/4 with tp/dm/ens to long coda. (F)
In A Little Spanish Town	In ens to duet with (tp) 1 chorus to solo 2 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 32 bars to 32 bars 4/4 with (tp/dm) to duet with (tp) 32 bars and ens. (FM)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Solo 24 bars. (M)

On this broadcast Prez does not seem to be much inspired. Even such a vehicle as "... Sentimental" does not seem to work properly. His new piano player is certainly the most important musician on the date.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 3, 1953**
Personnel and place as Jan. 1.

Every Tub	Intro 8 bars. Solo with orch 4 choruses of 32 bars to coda. (FM)
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NYC. Jan. 6, 1953

As above.

Jumpin' At The Woodside	Break to solo 5 choruses of 32 bars to coda. (FM)
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NYC. Jan. 7, 1953

As above.

Every Tub As July 31, 1952. (F)
NYC. Jan. 8, 1953

As above.

Pres Break to solo 6 choruses
of 32 bars to coda. (FM)
NYC. Jan. 10, 1953

As above.

Jumpin' At The Woodside Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars
to coda. (F)

A mixture of energetic playing and peculiar constructions, so typical for the period.

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET **NYC. Jan. 10, 1953**
Personnel and place as Jan. 3. Five titles:

Lullaby Of Birdland Solo ca. 32 bars. (M)

Indiana Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars.
Solo 32 bars to 32 bars 4/4 with
(tp/dm/ens) to slow coda. (F)

Almost Like Being In Love Solo 3 choruses of 36 bars.
Duet with (tp) 12 bars to coda. (M)

Neenah Straight 2 to solo 9 choruses of
12 bars. Solo 3 to straight
2 choruses to slow coda. (F)

D. B. Blues Solo 2 choruses of 44 bars. Solo with
ens 24 bars to slow coda. (FM)

The new signature tune for Birdland is in place! However, this is not Prez' night, he seems rather lost and with lack of control. One may find some interesting details here and there, but possibly this is his weakest session till now. But listen to Silver!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 13, 1953**
Personnel and place as Jan. 1.

Jumpin' At The Woodside Soli 8 and 8 bars. Break to
solo with orch 4 choruses
of 32 bars to coda. (F)
NYC. Jan. 14, 1953

As above.

Every Tub As July 31, 1952. (F)

Good start on "... Woodside" but runs out after a chorus or two. Another version of "... Tub" is no particular sensation.

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET **NYC. Jan. 15, 1953**
Personnel and place as Jan. 3. Three titles:

Lullaby Of Birdland No solo. (M)

Up And At'em As Jan. 6, 1951. (FM)

Too Marvelous For Words Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars.
Solo 32 bars to coda. (M)

As above. Four titles:
NYC. Jan. 17, 1953

Lady Be Good Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. Soli 8
and 4 bars. With (tp) to coda. (F)

A Foggy Day Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars.
Solo 32 bars to 4/4 with
(tp) and ens to coda. (M)

In A Little Spanish Town In ens to duet with (tp) 1 chorus
to solo 4 choruses of 32 bars.

Solo 1 chorus to duet with
(tp) 1 chorus to coda. (FM)

Lester Leaps In

Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars.
Solo 8 bars. (F)

Seen as a whole, the Jan. 1953 Birdland broadcasts show that Prez in this period has slipped from his artistic level at the same club 1 1/2 - 2 years earlier.

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET

Boston, Feb. 1, 1953

Jesse Drakes (tp), Lester Young (ts), Horace Silver (p), Franklin Skeete (b), Connie Kay (dm).

Two titles were recorded at the Hi-Hat:

Up And At'em

Intro with (dm) to solo 9 choruses
of 12 bars. Soli 12, 8, 8, 8 and
24 bars to coda with (p). (FM)

Blue And Sentimental (NC)

Solo 36 bars. Solo 6 bars (NC). (S)

A very nice version of Evans' "... Sentimental". "... Adam" is more or less what we are used to hear.

JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC

Paris, March 3, 1953

Lester Young (ts), Oscar Peterson (p), Barney Kessel (g), Ray Brown (b), J. C. Heard (dm).

Recorded in concert at Theatre Alhambra. Three titles:

These Foolish Things (NC)

Solo 32 bars (a few
introductory notes missing). (S)

I Cover The Waterfront

Solo 32 bars. (S)

Lester Leaps In (NC)

Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars
(last 8 bars missing). (F)

same date

Personnel as above plus Charlie Shavers (tp), Willie Smith (as), Flip Phillips (ts), Ella Fitzgerald (vo-"... In").

Two titles:

Blues In C

Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars,
last 2 with ens. (M)

Lester Leaps In

Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars,
last 2 with ens. (F)

Peculiar opening on the first "... Leaps In", otherwise very fast with too much drums. "I Cover ..." has a fine solo with a surprising opening, while "... Things" is beautiful in a very passive way. My favourite is the lovely "Blues In C"!

JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC

Lausanne, Switzerland, March 14, 1953

Personnel as Paris above.

Concert at Theatre de Beaulieu, four titles, no LY on "Cottontail" but:

C Jam Blues

Solo 11 choruses of 12 bars,
last 4 with ens. (FM)

I Cover The Waterfront

Solo 32 bars. (S)

Lester Leaps In

Solo 8 choruses of 32 bars,
last 3 with ens. (F)

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET

NYC. April 15, 1953

Jesse Drakes (tp), Lester Young (ts), Horace Silver (p), Franklin Skeete (b), Connie Kay (dm).

NBC broadcast from Birdland, three titles:

Lullaby Of Birdland (Theme)

In ens with announcer 32 bars. (M)

Up And At'em

As Jan. 6, 1951. (FM)

Too Marvelous For Words

Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars.
Solo 32 bars to coda. (FM)

Good version of "Up ...", while the main solo on "... Words" is not, however the final chorus here is pretty nice.

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET**NYC. July 4, 1953**

Jesse Drakes (tp), Lester Young (ts), Gildo Mahones (p), Leroy Jackson (b), Connie Kay (dm).

NBC broadcast from Birdland. Three titles:

Up And At'em	As Jan. 3, but 7 choruses. (F)
I Can't Get Started	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 16+8 bars, (dm) on bridge, with (tp) to coda. (M)
Lester Leaps In	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Soli 8, 4 and 4 bars. (F)

Another brilliant pianist almost steals the show! However, Prez is in better shape compared to January. This time he chooses to play "... Started" in medium tempo, and although he obviously is inspired, the idea is not particularly good. On "... Leaps In" he shows he still has got technique.

METRONOME ALL STARS**NYC. July 9, 1953**

Roy Eldridge (tp), Kai Winding (tb), John LaPorta (cl), Lester Young, Warne Marsh (ts), Terry Gibbs (vib), Teddy Wilson (p), Billy Bauer (g), Eddie Safranski (b), Max Roach (dm), Billy Eckstine (vo-507,509,510).

Four titles were recorded for MGM:

507	How High The Moon Pt 1	Obbligato 12 bars. (SM)
508	How High The Moon Pt 2	No solo. (F)
509	St. Louis Blues Pt 1	Obbligato 12 bars. (S)
510	St. Louis Blues Pt 2	Solo 24 bars. (FM)

The obbligati on this session are just lovely, of a quality I believed belonged to the late thirties! The only solo, however, is not particularly noteworthy.

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET**NYC. July 11, 1953**

Personnel and place as July 4. Four titles:

Lullaby Of Birdland (NC)	In ens. (M)
Indiana (NC)	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Soli 8 and 4 bars. (F)
In A Little Spanish Town	In ens to duet with (tp) 1 chorus to solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 32 bars to 32 bars 4/4 with (tp/dm) to duet with (tp) 32 bars to coda. (FM)
New D. B. Blues	Solo 2 choruses of 44 bars. (FM)

This is the last live recording with Prez' own band for the following three years (postscript of 2016: Not quite correct), and on these titles he shows that he still can play with inventiveness and inspiration.

JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC**NYC. Sept. 19, 1953**

Lester Young (ts), Oscar Peterson (p), Herb Ellis (g), Ray Brown (b), J. C. Heard (dm).

Concert in Carnegie Hall. Date also given as Sept. 23. Place and date also given as Bushnell Memorial Auditorium, Hartford, Conn., May 1953.

Up And At'em (Lester's Blues)	As Jan. 3, but 8 choruses. (FM)
I Cover The Waterfront	Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)
Lester Leaps In (Lester Gambols)	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 16+8 bars, (dm) on bridge. (F), to coda. (S)

To have these old Prez favourites with good sound is quite different from the mostly mediocre recorded club dates! In fact, I believe that we are more influenced by recording quality when evaluating music than we realize. However, it seems Prez really have an excellent evening here, rarely have "... Leaps In" been played

with a swing like this, and Oscar with friends should share the praise. This version of "... Waterfront" is also one of the most beautiful! So dig this session!

same date

Personnel as above plus Charlie Shavers, Roy Eldridge (tp), Bill Harris (tb), Willie Smith, Benny Carter (as), Ben Webster, Flip Phillips (ts).

Two titles:

One O'Clock Jump	Solo 8 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
Flying Home	No solo.

The "... Jump" is magnificent with regard to the first 3 choruses, but then simple riffs take over, and although Prez may have thought them revolutionary, the listener may easily find them boring.

LESTER YOUNG & HIS "QUARTET"**Boston, Dec. 15, 1953**

Jesse Drakes (tp), Lester Young (ts), Gildo Mahones (p), Tony Henry (b), Connie Kay (dm). Date unknown but the presence of Mahones and Kay indicates suggestion above.

Broadcast from Storyville, five titles:

Lullaby Of Birdland	With ens. (M)
Just You, Just Me	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm). Solo 4 bars. (FM)
It's Only A Paper Moon	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Soli 32 and 4 bars. (M)
I Cover The Waterfront	Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)
Up And At'em	Intro 8 bars 2/2 with (dm) to solo 8 choruses of 12 bars. (M)

Although we know this music well from numerous sessions, any new discovery is received with pleasure!

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET**NYC. Dec. 21, 1953**

Jesse Drakes (tp), Lester Young (ts), Gildo Mahones (p), Gene Ramey (b), Connie Kay (dm). Date falsely given as Dec. 11.

Eight titles were recorded for Clef/Norgran:

1395-2	Willow Weep For Me	Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)
1396-1	This Can't Be Love	Intro 4 bars to solo 64 bars. Solo 32 bars to coda. (M)
1397-1	Can't We Be Friends?	Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)
1398-3	Tenderly	Soli 64 and 32 bars to long coda. (M)
1399-2	New D. B. Blues	Solo 2 choruses of 40 bars. Solo 24 bars. (FM)
1400-2	Jumpin' At The Woodside	Break to solo 4 1/2 choruses of 32 bars. Duet with (tp) 8 bars to coda. (F)
1401-1	I Can't Believe That You're ILWM	Soli 64 and 32 bars to coda. (M)
1402-1	Oh, Lady Be Good	Solo 64 bars. Solo 32 bars to 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 16 bars. Duet with (tp) 8 bars to slow coda. (F)

A session with fine variation in tempi and musical material. Prez seems to be in good shape, and consequently all titles have something to offer. However, as said many times before, he is best in slower tempi, evident on "Willow ..." and "... Friends", beautiful performances! Nevertheless he masters the upper tempi quite well, note for instance "... Woodside", yes even "... Be Good", executed in an insane fast tempo not productive for music, has its merits. A satisfactory session.

Although there are no known recordings for close to one year, Prez is active with his band on various clubs all over the U. S..

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 25, 1954**

Wendell Cully, Reunald Jones, Thad Jones, Joe Newman (tp), Henry Coker, Bill Hughes, Benny Powell (tb), Marshal Royal (cl, as), Ernie Wilkins (as, ts), Frank Wess (fl, ts), Frank Foster, Lester Young (ts), Charlie Fowlkes (bar), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Eddie Jones (b), Gus Johnson (dm).

Two titles:

Pennies From Heaven	Solo 64 bars to long coda. (SM)
Jumpin' At The Woodside	With orch 1 chorus to solo 5 choruses of 32 bars to coda. (F)

Fine feeling in a beautiful tempo on "Pennies ...", while "... Woodside" runs out of inspiration rather early.

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET **NYC. Dec. 10, 1954**

Jesse Drakes (tp), Lester Young (ts), Gildo Mahones (p), John Ore (b), Connie Kay (dm).

Eight titles were recorded for Norgran/Verve:

2107-1	Another Mambo	Duet with (tp) 16 bars to solo 64 bars. (FM). Coda with tp. (S)
2108-1	Come Rain Or Come Shine	Solo 48 bars to long coda, (tp) on last 16. (S)
2109-2	Rose Room	Intro 8 bars to solo 64 bars. 16 bars 4/4 with (tp) to duet 16 bars to coda. (M)
2110-2	Somebody Loves Me	Intro 2 bars. Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (tp) to 8 bars duet and coda. (FM)
2111-2	Kiss Me Again/Touch Me Again	Acc. (tp) 16+8 bars, (p) on bridge. Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Duet with (tp) 16+8 bars to coda, (dm) on bridge. (FM)
2112-2	It Don't Mean A Thing	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars, first with (tp). 32 bars 4/4 with (tp) and ens to coda 4 bars. (FM)
2113-1	I'm In The Mood For Love	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
2114-2	Big Top Blues	Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. Duet with (tp) 24 bars. (FM)

One year has passed since the last Verve session, and what is the verdict? It seems to me that Prez manages quite well even in faster tempi, although his melodic constructions alter between close disasters and neat professional phrasing. He experiments continually but not always successfully, note for instance the opening of the bridge of the third chorus of "... Loves Me". In general his sound seems to be more sad than before, but this might be an illusion. "Come Rain ..." is a case to the point, not much "shine" here, so utterly sad but to me utterly effective and moving. However quote the CD-liner notes: "a version of "Come ..." that starts out in a mood of suicidal gloom, hesitant and aimless, with the plastic reed doing its worth". A good case for looking different at things, here I find the plastic reed for once very effectful, and while gloomy, the solo does not seem hesitant nor aimless. Listen for yourself! "... Mood For Love" is of the same kind, lovely even with the plastic!!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Dec. 16, 1954**

Personnel as Sept. 25.

TV broadcast from Birdland.

Jumpin' At The Woodside	Solo 8 bars. Break to solo 5 choruses of 32 bars to coda. (F)
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NYC. Dec. 17, 1954

Personnel as above.

WOR Mutual broadcast from Birdland.

Jumpin' At The Woodside	As above, but 4 choruses. (F)
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Two versions of "... Woodside" with good sound, being more inspired than I can remember from earlier club versions. Particularly the last version has some nice details in the beginning.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA**Chi. Feb. 20, 1955**

Wendell Culley, Reunald Jones, Thad Jones, Joe Newman (tp), Henry Coker, Bill Hughes, Benny Powell (tb), Marshal Royal (cl, as), Bill Graham (as), Frank Wess (fl, ts), Frank Foster, Lester Young (ts), Charlie Fowlkes (bar), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Eddie Jones (b), Sonny Payne (dm), "Pee Wee" Marquette (mc).
 "Birdland Stars of '55" tour, concert at the Civic Opera House, three titles:

Jumpin' At The Woodside	As below but one more chorus before break. (F)
I'm Confessin'	As below. (SM)
Every Tub	As below. (F)

Topeka, Kansas, Feb. 25, 1955

Same personnel.

"Birdland Stars of '55" tour, concert at the Municipal Auditorium, three titles:

Jumpin' At The Woodside	Solo 8 bars. Break to solo with orch 3 choruses of 32 bars. (F)
I'm Confessin'	Solo 64 bars. (SM)
Every Tub	Intro 8 bars. Solo 8 bars. Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars to long coda. (F)

These concerts is a fine way to start the late fifties; he is obviously in good shape, but in my opinion he should not choose fast vehicles like "... Woodside" and "... Tub", making comparisons to the "originals" not too encouraging. However, these versions have the Count very active, also with verbal comments, creating a particularly fine and inspired atmosphere. And the "Confessin"'s have a lot of the Prez we treasure so much, well constructed and delicate soli! And note how different they are! In fact, since the two concerts have exactly the same three titles, comparisons show that Prez is heavily improvising, never repeating himself (as did we ever believe that ...).

LESTER YOUNG QUARTET**NYC. April 2, 1955**

Lester Young (ts), Horace Silver (p), John Ore (b), Art Blakey (dm).

Charlie Parker Memorial Concert from Carnegie Hall, one title, unissued, not available:

I Can't Get Started

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. May 6, 1955**

Personnel as Feb. 25 plus Buck Clayton (tp).

Concert at Carnegie Hall. One title:

Lady Be Good	Acc. (tp) 1 chorus of 32 bars to solo 3 choruses. Solo 1 chorus to 1 chorus 4/4 with (tp-BC), to orch 16+8 bars, solo 8 bars on bridge. (F)
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One of the better Prez recordings from the fifties of this famous title, probably he is ignited by an inspired Buck!

BILLIE HOLIDAY**same date**

Buck Clayton (tp), Lester Young (ts), Count Basie (org), Carl Drinkard (p), Eddie Jones (b), Buddy Rich (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).

One title:

Stormy Weather	Faint obbligato parts during vocal 1 1/2 choruses of 32 bars. (S)
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Quoting Frank B-M: "Lester is badly recorded. Only sporadically such as in the final bars of the bridges and in the third A, are beautiful details clearly audible". Would have been nice to be there though!

**LESTER YOUNG WITH
NORMAN SIMMONS TRIO****Chi. July 22 - Aug. 11, 1955**

Lester Young (ts), Norman Simmons (p), unknown (b), (dm).

Private recordings from the Bee Hive Club, no info.

JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC**NYC. Sept. 17, 1955**

Dizzy Gillespie (tp), Lester Young (ts), Oscar Peterson (p), Herb Ellis (g), Ray Brown (b), Buddy Rich (dm).

Concert at Carnegie Hall, two titles:

Chris'n Diz (The Modern Set)	Solo 4 choruses of 40 bars, except for the last 12 bars. (FM)
I Didn't Know What Time It Was	Solo 1 ½ choruses of 36 bars to long coda. (S)

Put Prez wasn't dead, on the contrary, swinging merrily with creative ideas on "... Diz". The construction is somewhat unusual, being on AABA with blues As and a 4 bars quasi-bridge. Possibly Prez is not quite familiar with it, because the last A is taken by Oscar's piano. But anyway, he plays with great inspiration! And this version of "... Time ..." is beautiful!

JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC

Chi. Oct. 2, 1955

Dizzy Gillespie, Roy Eldridge (tp), Lester Young, Flip Phillips, Illinois Jacquet (ts), Oscar Peterson (p), Herb Ellis (g), Ray Brown (b), Buddy Rich (dm).

Concert at the Civic Opera House, issued on Verve, three titles:

The Blues	Solo 8 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
Chris'n Diz (The Modern Set)	Solo 4 choruses of 40 bars. (FM)
I Didn't Know What Time It Was	Solo 1 ½ choruses of 36 bars to long coda. (S)

This "... Diz" is played slightly faster than the previous one and is not at all as inspired and successful, and also "... Time ..." seems to be a little less inspired than in Carnegie Hall. "The Blues" is what one may expect, rolling along with some interesting details here and there.

LESTER YOUNG AND HARRY EDISON

LA. Nov. 1, 1955

Harry Edison (tp), Lester Young (ts), Oscar Peterson (p), Herb Ellis (g), Ray Brown (b), Buddy Rich (dm). Date falsely given as Dec. 1.

Eight titles were recorded for Verve, no 78 rpm.:

2532-1	Mean To Me	Solo 64 bars. 64 bars 4/4 with (tp) to coda. (M)
2533-1	That's All	Soli 32 and 16 bars to coda. (S)
2533-2	That's All	As above. (S)
2534-1	Red Boy Blues	Soli 36 and 48 bars to coda. (SM)
2535-1	Pennies From Heaven	Solo 64 bars. Solo 32 bars to 32 bars 4/4 with (tp) to coda. (M)
2536-1	She's Funny That Way (NC)	Solo 64 bars. (M)
2536-2	She's Funny That Way	Solo 64 bars. Solo 32 bars to 32 bars "chase" with (tp) to coda. (M)
2537-2	One O'Clock Jump	Soli 7 and 5 choruses of 12 bars to coda. (FM)
2538-2	It's The Talk Of The Town	Soli 32 and 32 bars to coda. (S)
2539-1	I Found A New Baby (NC)	Solo 2 bars (NC). (FM)
2539-2	I Found A New Baby (NC)	Solo 6 bars (NC). (FM)
2539-3	I Found A New Baby	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 64 bars 4/4 with (tp) to coda. (FM)

Prez' first recording session in the late fifties is close to a disaster, showing that his health now has deteriorated to a point where he almost is unable to play anymore. CD liner notes states: "One is entitled to wonder why the session was allowed to continue at all, with one of its principal soloists in such a distressed state", and these are not strong words. Prez is unconcentrated, note how he does not realize there are two chase choruses on "Mean ...", or the messy start on "Red Boy ..." (should have been stopped immediately) or the unstructured finish of "... That Way" – take 2. But worse is the fact that he is really playing badly, just note "Mean ...", "One O'Clock ..." and "... New Baby", all old vehicles of the thirties with immortal music, here strange constructions with little sense nor taste. Usually he manages slower tempi better, but even the sad "... Town" does not work. There are some better days to come, but this sessions shows how deeply Prez has fallen.

THE JAZZ GIANTS '56**NYC. Jan. 12, 1956**

Roy Eldridge (tp), Vic Dickenson (tb), Lester Young (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Freddie Green (g), Gene Ramey (b), Jo Jones (dm).

Five titles were recorded for Verve:

2646-2	I Guess I'll Have To Change My Plan	Solo 2 choruses of 20 bars. Acc. (tp) 8 bars at the end. (S)
2647-2	I Didn't Know What Time It Was	Soli 2 and 1 choruses of 36 bars. (M)
2648-4	Gigantic Blues	Soli 4 and 10 choruses of 12 bars to coda. (F)
2649-2	This Year's Kisses	Solo 2 choruses of 28 bars. Solo 16 bars to coda. (SM)
2650-2	You Can Depend On Me	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars, last acc. by (tp). (M)

During two hectic days Prez has found his final, true indian summer, never again to play like this! During the fifties he has worked with self chosen quartets/quintets, and his music just got less interesting year by year. And then Teddy Wilson and old swing friends invite to a real mainstream session, and we meet a new man! Not that we are comparing with the thirties and early forties, no way, but Prez seems to be happy, playing with inspiration and success on all items in all tempi. It seems that his health at this point is good, and that his command of the instrument is at a peak compared to so many dull sessions. My favourites are "I'll Guess ..." and "I Don't Know ...", listen closely to how he plays simply and movingly, making the right choices. Even the uptempo "... Blues" seems to pose no particular problems, and it is nice to hear old "... Kisses" again, in fact the comparison with 1937 isn't that farfetched!! A fine solo on "... Depend ..." concludes the session. To me it seems that whatever artistic power Prez possesses at this point of time, he is able to realize it successfully. Adding the wonderful contributions of his fellow musicians, this is one unique session to be treasured by all of us!!!

LESTER YOUNG AND TEDDY WILSON**NYC. Jan. 13, 1956**

Lester Young (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Gene Ramey (b), Jo Jones (dm).

Seven titles were recorded for Verve:

2657-1	Pres Returns	Soli 6 and 5 choruses of 12 bars. (SM)
2658-1	Prisoner Of Love	Soli 64 and 32 bars. (S)
2659-1	Taking A Chance On Love	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (M)
2660-1	All Of Me	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 2 choruses. (F)
2661-1	Louise	Soli 64 and 32 bars. (M)
2662-2	Love Is Here To Stay	Soli 64 and 32 bars. (SM)
2663-1	Love Me Or Leave Me	Soli 3 and 2 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)

One might think the preceding day had taken all of Prez' strength, and that the absence of Roy and Vic would make this session a stepdown; as the solo horn his shortcomings of the late fifties would be more transparent. But not at all, the quartet format functions well, no problems, he and Teddy alternate with beautiful soloing on all items. My favourites are the lovely "Prisoner ..." as well as the hard swinging "All ...", note the second chorus!! On this session you hear a sick man approaching his final chorus with only a fraction of his genius left, and nevertheless there is so much behind his sore tone. Imagine this session taking place fifteen or twenty years earlier ... Can you really imagine? Then you will understand what opportunities and music have been lost forever.

LESTER YOUNG QUARTET**Unknown loc., Feb. 1956**

Lester Young (ts), unknown (p), (b), (dm).

TV-show, one title:

Pennies From Heaven	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars to coda. (FM)
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Good but not outstanding solo here.

LESTER YOUNG AND HIS QUINTET**NYC. Aug. 7, 1956**

Don Ferrara (tp), Lester Young (ts), Bill Triglia (p), Gene Ramey (b), Gus Johnson (dm).

ABC broadcast from Birdland. Six titles:

Lullaby Of Birdland	Straight 16 bars. (M)
Lester Leaps In	Straight 16 + 8 bars, (tp) on bridge, to solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. Straight 16+ 8 bars, (dm) on bridge, to coda. (F)
Polka Dots And Moonbeams	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
Up And At'em	Intro with (p) 8 bars. Solo 9 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 12 bars to 3 choruses of (dm/p/b) 4 bars respectively with solo 8 bars, to solo 12 bars to coda (as intro). (FM)
In A Little Spanish Town	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)
Lullaby Of Birdland (NC)	Straight 16 bars. (FM)

After an absence of more than ½ year Prez is back on the air, this time on Birdland, and he is in good shape. His soloing here is among the best of the late fifties, few problems and many interesting details in uptempi, particularly “Up ...” should be noted with a long, colourful solo. His ballad playing on “Polka ...” is beautiful as ever, but Frank B-M has a point when he says: “Nothing outstanding happens and the tempo is so slow that Lester’s interest seems to decrease, so the listener gets the impression that he too is maybe getting bored”.

LESTER YOUNG AND HIS QUINTET **NYC. Aug. 15, 1956**
 Unknown (tp), Lester Young (ts), Bill Triglia (p), Gene Ramey (b), Gus Johnson (dm). Date falsely given as Sept. 5 and Sept. 15.
 ABC broadcast from Birdland. Five titles:

Lullaby Of Birdland	Straight 14 bars (NC). (FM)
Three Little Words	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Soli 8, 4 and 4 bars. Straight 12 bars to coda. (FM)
These Foolish Things	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
Blues In G (Lester’s Mop Mop Blues)	Solo 12 choruses of 12 bars. Straight 24 bars to coda. (FM)
Tea For Two (NC)	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars to 12 bars (NC). (F)

Another week, another broadcast, still in a happy mood (must have been with the unknown trumpet companion ...). The solo on “Three ...” is played “with a delightful swing” as Frank puts it and has many interesting details, and “Tea ...” is also fine, although played too fast for my taste. I like his version of “Blues ...”, this one really flows along nicely!! And a slow “... Things” is beautiful, but again, it is even slower than “Polka Dots ...” from the preceding broadcast – so the number comes dangerously near to being boring, despite Lester plays in beautiful, exquisite phrases”. Now is the time to visit Europe!!

**LESTER YOUNG WITH
 RENE URTREGER TRIO** **Paris, ca. Oct. 12-25, 1956**
 Lester Young (ts), Rene Urtreger (p), Pierre Michelot (b), Christian Garros (dm).
 TV show, one title:

Pennies From Heaven	Straight 1 to solo 2 choruses of 32 bars to 4 bars and coda. (FM)
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Paris, Oct. 13, 1956

Personnel as above.
 Recorded at Palais de Chaillot, one title:

Jumpin’ With Symphony Sid	Soli 7 and 3 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
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Same date as the bigband session below, and Pres is in very good shape here, treating this so often used vehicle in an inspired way from beginning to end, with only a piano solo in the middle. Postscript of July 2016: Also a successful version of “... Heaven”!

LESTER YOUNG WITH THE SDR BIG BAND **Paris, Oct. 13, 1956**

Bigband including Ernst Mosch (tb), Lester Young (ts), Horst Jankowski (p), Ervin Lehn (cnd) and others.

Recorded at Palais de Chaillot as "Jazz Aux Champs-Elysees", one title:

Lester Leaps In Solo 6 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)

This "... In" is different from others, having a bigband introduction, then brief trombone and piano soli, concluding with a long and inspired tenorsax solo in a tempo somewhat slower than usual.

LESTER YOUNG / RENE URTREGER **Paris, Nov. 1, 1956**

Lester Young (ts), Rene Urtreger (p), Pierre Michelot (b), Christian Garros (dm).

Broadcast from Theatre des Arts, three titles:

Three Little Words Straight 1 to solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 8 bars to coda. (F)

I Cover The Waterfront Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)

D. B. Blues Straight 1 to solo 2 choruses of 44 bars. Solo 24+12 bars to coda, (dm) on bridge. (S)

Pres is in very fine shape here, not only giving "... Waterfront" excellent and beautiful treatment, but he swings "... Words" and particularly "... Blues" to complete satisfaction.

BIRDLAND SHOW **Paris, Nov. 2, 1956**

Miles Davis (tp), Lester Young (ts), Rene Urtreger (p), Pierre Michelot (b), Christian Garros (dm).

Concert at Salle Pleyel. One title:

Lady Be Good Duet with (tp) 32 bars to solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 12+32 bars to 32 bars chase/duet with (tp) to coda. (F)

Interesting to hear Miles and Pres jamming together! The proceedings opens in an organized manner with Pres taking a competent solo, handing over the stage to Miles with 6 choruses. Then however when it is time for a piano solo, everything dissolves into chaos.

LESTER YOUNG QUARTET **Frankfurt a.M., Nov. 9, 1956**

Lester Young (ts), Lasse Werner (p), Al King (b), Lex Humphries (dm).

Private recordings from the Jazz Keller. Five titles:

Lester Leaps In Solo 9 choruses of 32 bars. Soli 8 and 32 bars to coda. (FM)

These Foolish Things Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)

There'll Never Be Another You Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. Acc. (b) to solo 32 bars to coda. (M)

Lester's European Blues Solo 39 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)

Lullaby Of Birdland Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)

This is a sensational session!! It does not belong to the 1930s but gives us a faint idea on how Prez may have behaved in his prime and more happy days. He is obviously in a most happy mood here though, and in "... Blues" he goes on continuously for nine minutes, the longest solo ever preserved not only by him, but without competition in my six tenorsax volumes covering the first forty years of recorded black tenorsax jazz. And not only the length but also the ideas are abundant, he really makes an effort, or maybe say no effort, to swing along with all kinds of small interesting details. Again, we are in the late fifties, and not everything is equally tasteful and overwhelming, like his famous "Willow Weep For Me" of 1941, but nevertheless showing that Prez on his best was "the best" (almost), until the day he died! The other titles here confirm this impression, maybe the best "... Things" in the fifties, a more inspired "... Leaps In" than I can remember, and two other fine titles. Before you make your final opinion on Prez and particular post-war Prez, dig this session!! However, one twisted point; realizing he really could play like this, many of the sessions in the fifties may be considered rather mediocre!!

**LESTER YOUNG WITH
RENE URTREGER TRIO****Freiburg, West Germany, Nov. 12, 1956**Lester Young (ts), Rene Urtreger (p), Pierre Michelot (b), Christian Garros (dm).
Südwestfunk telecast from Stadthalle. One title:

Indiana Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars to coda. (F)

Interesting version this one!

BIRDLAND ALL STARS**same date**

Miles Davis (tp), Lester Young (ts), John Lewis (p), Milt Jackson (vib), Percy Heath (b), Connie Kay (dm).

Same broadcast. One title:

How High The Moon Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars.
In chase. (F)

A rather pensive solo with many good details, and of course it is particularly interesting because Miles Davis is next. And MJQ too! But the chase is a mess.

**MILES DAVIS AND LESTER YOUNG WITH
THE KURT EDELHAGEN BIGBAND****same date**

Bigband including Miles Davis (tp), Lester Young (ts), Milt Jackson (vib), Percy Heath (b), Connie Kay (dm), Kurt Edelhagen (cnd).

Same broadcast. One title:

Lester Leaps In Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars.
In chase. (F)

Interesting primarily because of the unusual surroundings; bigband with soloing by Miles and a lot of other people!

**LESTER YOUNG WITH
RENE URTREGER TRIO****Zürich, Nov. 19, 1956**

Personnel as Nov. 12.

"Birdland Show" concert from Kongresshaus. Four titles, "Jumpin' With Symphony Sis" has not been available but:

Polka Dots And Moonbeams Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)

Three Little Words Straight 1 to solo 3 choruses of
32 bars. Solo 8 bars. Solo 16+8 bars
to coda, (dm) on bridge. (FM)Lester Leaps In Solo 5 ½ choruses of 32 bars.
Solo 8 bars to coda. (F)**same**

Same with Miles Davis (tp) added. One title:

Lady Be Good Duet with (tp) 32 bars to solo 64 bars.
Solo 8 bars to duet 8 bars and coda. (FM)

Recent access to this concert (postscript of July 2016), and the quality is generally good, a swinging "... Words" and "... Leaps In" with several surprising details. "Polka ..." is played beautifully as ever. Finally this version of "Lady ..." is shorter but much better organized than the one of Nov. 2.

LESTER YOUNG / RENE URTREGER**unknown place, Nov. 1956**

Same personnel. TV-casted Jan. 2, 1957. Three titles, two have been available:

Polka Dots And Moonbeams Solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)

Lester Leaps In Solo 3 ½ choruses of 32 bars
(start missing) (F) to coda. (S)

Three Little Words

Lousy sound, taped directly from TV, but who cares when one gets one of the most beautiful "... Moonbeams" ever!! "... Leaps In" is played in utterly fast tempo, but no problems, and it swings more than usual these days!!

**LESTER YOUNG WITH
THE BILL POTTS TRIO****Washington D. C., Dec. 7&8, 1956**

Lester Young (ts), Bill Potts (p), Norman Williams (b), Jim Lucht (dm).

Private recordings from Olivia's Patio Lounge.

Large number of titles issued on 5 CDs:

Vol. 1	A Foggy Day	Solo 1 chorus of 32 bars to break and solo 3 choruses. Solo 32 bars to long coda. (FM)
	When You're Smiling	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (dm) to 8 bars and coda. (FM)
	I Can't Get Started	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
	Fast B-Flat Blues	Straight 2 chorus to solo 9 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 3 choruses to straight 1 chorus and close. (F)
	D. B. Blues	Solo 3 choruses of 44 bars. Solo 24 + 12 bars to coda, (dm) on bridge. (M)
	Tea For Two	Solo 6 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. Solo 32 bars to coda. (F)
	Jeepers Creepers	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 32 bars to long coda. (FM)
Vol. 2	Lester Leaps In	Solo 6 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 8 and 32 bars to coda. (F)
	These Foolish Things Confessin'	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S) Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 32 bars to coda. (M)
	Three Little Words	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. Solo 16 + 8 bars, (dm) on bridge, to coda. (FM)
	Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Solo 11 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 3 choruses to coda. (FM)
	Almost Like Being In Love	Solo 3 choruses of 36 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (dm) to 12 bars and close. (M)
	Lullaby Of Birdland	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 16 + 8 bars, (dm) on bridge, to coda. (FM)
Vol. 3	Just You, Just Me	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 8 and 32 bars to coda. (M)
	Sometimes I'm Happy	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 4, 4 and 16 bars to coda. (M)
	Indiana	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 32 bars (F) to coda. (S)
	Up'n Adam	Duet with (p) 2 choruses of 12 bars to solo 10 choruses. 24 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo/straight 2 choruses to coda. (M)
	There'll Never Be Another You	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 8 bars and coda. (FM)
	G's If You Please	Solo 9 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 3 choruses to coda. (M)
Vol. 4	Talk Of The Town	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 32 bars to coda. (M)
	I Cover The Waterfront	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
	Pennies From Heaven	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 8 bars and coda. (M)
	G's If You Please	Solo 8 choruses of 12 bars.

		Solo 4 choruses to coda. (M)
	Almost Like Being In Love	Solo 3 choruses of 36 bars. Solo 32 bars to coda. (M)
	Confessin'	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 16 + 12 bars to coda, (dm) on bridge. (M)
	D. B. Blues	Solo 3 choruses of 44 bars. Solo 24 + 12 bars to coda, (dm) on bridge. (M)
Vol. 5	(D. B. ??) Blues	Solo 13 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 3 choruses to fade out. (F)
	Three Little Words	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 8 bars and coda. (FM)
	Pennies From Heaven	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 16 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 16 bars and coda. (FM)
	When You're Smiling	Inc. start 8 bars to solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 16 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 16 bars and coda. (FM)

Washington D. C., Dec. 8, 1956

Same plus Earl Swope (tb).

Private recordings from Olivia's Patio Lounge. Four titles:

Vol. 5	Lady Be Good	Duet with (tb) 1 chorus of 32 bars to solo 3 choruses. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to 16 bars 4/4 with (tb). Solo 8 bars to coda. (FM)
	Up'n Adam	Solo 9 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 12 bars to 16 bars 4/4 with (tb). (FM)
	Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Solo 9 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 3 choruses to coda. (M)
	Lullaby Of Birdland	24 bars 4/4 with (tb). (FM)

Washington D. C., Dec. 8, 1956

Same. WOR-Mutual broadcast from Olivia's Patio Lounge. Three titles:

	Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 3 choruses to coda. (FM)
	These Foolish Things	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
	Three Little Words	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 16 + 8 bars to coda, (dm) on bridge. (FM)

No, Norman Granz didn't kill him!! Prez was under contract, and a project like the Potts recordings really shouldn't exist. However, "we got the biggest bottle of Hennessy cognac available and had it gift-wrapped with a "Thank you" card". That did it, and thus we have the best examples of Prez' club playing in the fifties, in fact ever! It is obvious that he thrived with the all-white trio which by fate he got the chance to work with six full nights. After their successful playing and friendship during the first four nights, the recordings started. The results show us Prez in better shape than ever in the middle/late fifties. Of course, we do not forget this is not the thirties, or early forties, but that's not the point here. The fact is that this is in general happy and inventive tenorsax playing with an appreciative and supporting rhythm section, in fact more so than several of those with "names" supporting Prez during this decade. There is so much stuff here that items and details are almost impossible to comment upon (read FBM's excellent book!), but there is a swinging "D. B. ..." and a "Tea ..." with some deep notes never heard before, one of the best "... Leaps In" ever and a lovely "... Foolish ...", a relaxed "Confessin'", which bring me to the middle of CD2, hopeless! Try again; fine "Almost ...", a rare version of "... Birdland", usually heard only as a theme, a delightful version of the old "... Happy", the best of swinging blues on "... Please"! One might think the

three first CDs exhausted the best material, but what then about a most colourful “Pennies ...”, or another bluesy “... Please”, or a swinging “Confessin” or Note that many items start with drum brushes, giving them a relaxed start, Prez obviously liked that. To sum up; these days are not jazz world history, nor the best of Prez ever, far from it, but they contain historical very valuable material, as well as showing that Prez could go for it until the end, as long as he had fine people to play with!

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET**NYC. Dec. 15, 1956**

Idrees Sulieman (tp), Lester Young (ts), Sinclair Raney (p), Gene Ramey (b), Willie Jones (dm).

WOR-Mutual broadcast from the Cafe Bohemia. Three titles:

Lester Leaps In	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. (F)
These Foolish Things	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
Three Little Words	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. (F)

NYC. Dec. 22, 1956

Same. Three titles:

Pennies From Heaven	Straight 1 chorus to solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (M)
Polka Dots And Moonbeams	Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)
Indiana	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. (F)

Beautiful ballads on Bohemia, new fine versions of “... Things” and “... Moonbeams”! As also the uptempo playing works, for instance a more than usual version of “... Leaps In” and an exciting “... Words”, these broadcasts must be considered worthy of attention.

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET**NYC. Dec. 29, 1956**

Same. Three titles, unissued:

Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Solo 9 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
A Ghost Of A Chance	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
Tea For Two (NC)	Solo 1 and 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 8 bars behind announcer. (F)

Note particularly a beautiful version on “... Chance” with a quite unusual ending. For once, a “... Sid” made for improvisation, and Prez takes the whole thing. On “Tea ...” however, everybody have the chance to solo.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA**Newport, R. I., July 7, 1957**

Personnel as Feb. 25, 1955 except Jo Jones (dm) replaces Payne. Guest soloists: Roy Eldridge (tp), Lester Young, Illinois Jacquet (ts), Jimmy Rushing (vo).

Concert at Freebody Park, Newport Jazz Festival.

Thirteen titles, six have LY:

Polka Dots And Moonbeams	Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)
Lester Leaps In	Solo 8 bars. Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars to coda. (F)
Sent For You Yesterday	Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars to obligato 12 bars (vo-JR). (M)
Boogie Woogie	Obligato parts to solo 4 choruses of 12 bars to obligato parts. (FM)
Evenin'	Obligato parts to solo 32 bars to obligato parts. (M)
One O'Clock Jump	Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. (M)

More than one half year since Prez' last appearance, and he is, for awhile, in very good shape. This “Polka Dots ...” is confident and well played, and the “... Leaps In” and “... Jump” are some of the best versions from the fifties. Nevertheless, I am most thrilled by the three vocal numbers, JR's strong vocal on these old favourites from the thirties obviously inspires Prez to do his best, and the fact that the Basie band swings like mad does not make things worse either! He lures in the background behind the singing, listen closely to “Evenin'” as an exciting example of an “old” Prez of maximum inspiration!! To quote FBM: “All in all very good,

solid and extremely well-swinging performance”, yeah, some of the best Prez in his last years!!!

LESTER YOUNG SEXTET

LA. July 31, 1957

Harry Edison (tp), Lester Young (cl, ts), Oscar Peterson (p), Herb Ellis (g), Ray Brown (b), Louis Bellson (dm).

Six titles were recorded for Verve:

21205-1 alt.	St. Tropez	Clarinet solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. Clarinet duet with (tp) 3 and 3 choruses to coda. (SM)
21205-2 orig.	St. Tropez	Clarinet soli 3 and 8 choruses of 12 bars. Clarinet duet with (tp) 4 choruses to coda. (SM)
21206-1	Flic	Solo 8 choruses of 12 bars. 4 choruses 4/4 with (tp) to duet with (tp) 2 choruses to coda. (FM)
21207-2	I Cover The Waterfront (medley)	Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)
21208-2	Love Is Here To Stay	Soli 64 and 32 bars to coda. (SM)
21209-3	Sunday	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 2 choruses 4/4 with (dm) to duet with (tp) 16+8 bars to coda, (dm) on bridge. (F)
21210	Perdido (NC)	Solo 64 bars. Solo 4 bars (NC). (M)

Judging from the previously unissued titles “Perdido” and “Sunday”, as well as “Flic”, all in medium tempo and up, this session is close to a catastrophe. Prez plays incoherently and lackluster, difficult to avoid pointing it out so bluntly. And even “Love ...” is sad from several points of view. However, in slow tempo his ballad playing still seems to work, “... Waterfront” shows that an emotional artist is hidden behind obvious physical constraints. And then finally “St. Tropez”, Prez is back on clarinet!!! It is not difficult to support FBM is his statement to take 1 that “It is obvious that Lester has not yet accustomed to the clarinet, as both embouchure and fingerings lack exercise ... plays simple phrases and figures ...”. However, there is something undefinable important and original in Prez’ clarinet playing which never failed to impress deeply almost thirty years earlier and which still is present. “St. Tropez” is a blues and take 2 is “the better version ... first solo is well constructed, coherent and with a rising intensity”. I agree but would call it “minimalistic”. He has great problems with the three first choruses though. Possibly I am duped by nostalgia, or compensating my disappointment with his tenorsax playing into considering his clarinet playing as a kind of salvation, who knows? Judge for yourself.

”NORMAN GRANZ” CONCERT

LA. Aug. 2, 1957

Harry Edison (tp), Ben Webster, Lester Young (ts), Oscar Peterson (p), Herb Ellis (g), Ray Brown (b), Louis Bellson (dm), Jimmy Rushing (vo-”... Street”, ”... Chicago”, “... Woogie”). Date also give as Aug. 22.

Third Annual Jazz Concert at the Hollywood Bowl, six titles have LY:

Blues	Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
Polka Dots And Moonbeams	Solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)
I Got Rhythm	Solo 64 bars. (FM)
On The Sunny Side Of The Street	Solo 32 bars. (M)
Goin’ To Chicago	Weak obligato parts. (S) Solo 36 bars. (M)
Boogie Woogie	Solo 36 bars. (M)

same date

Bob Brookmeyer (vtb), Gerry Mulligan (bar) added, June Christy (vo) replaces Rushing, new rhythm section, possibly Christy’s: Benny Aronoff (p), Joe Benjamin (b), Dave Bailey (dm). One title, jam session:

How High The Moon	Acc. (bar). Solo 64 bars. (FM)
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Another “Polka Dots ...”, nice but shorter this time. Otherwise Prez is in reasonably good shape without creating particular highlights. Nevertheless, there is a certain charm associated with the vocal titles; Prez is stomping on “... Chicago”, maybe he has forgotten to be “serious”, just dreaming himself back to, ... not Chicago but

good old Kansas City? Postscript: A strong opening on "... Woogie", the first 8 bars again bring our thoughts back to his past. On "... The Moon" he has a few ok details but seems in general to be rather lost.

JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC**NYC. Sept. 14, 1957**

Personnel given as: Sonny Stitt (as), Lester Young, Flip Phillips, Illinois Jacquet (ts), Oscar Peterson (p), Herb Ellis (g), Ray Brown (b), Jo Jones (dm). However I seem to hear a second (as) but no Flip?
Concert at Carnegie Hall. One title:

The Slow Blues

Solo 12 bars. (S)

This is what Prez could do to his friends, play the slow blues in a most beautiful manner!

JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC**Chi. Sept. 29, 1957**

Lester Young (ts), Oscar Peterson (p), Herb Ellis (g), Ray Brown (b), Jo Jones (dm). Date also given as Oct. 19.
Concert at the Civic Opera House. One title:

Polka Dots And Moonbeams

Solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)

Beautiful, but all "Polka ..."s seem rather too similar to me, more variation would have been exciting.

JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC**LA. Oct. 25, 1957**

Sonny Stitt (as, ts), Lester Young, Flip Phillips, Illinois Jacquet (ts), Oscar Peterson (p), Herb Ellis (g), Ray Brown (b), Jo Jones (dm).
Date has been given as Oct. 9 and Oct. 19.
Concert at the Shrine Auditorium, three titles, two have been available:

The Slow Blues

Solo 24 bars. (S)

Merry Go Round

Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. (F)

Polka Dots And Moonbeams

same date

Personnel as Sept. 29, adding Ella Fitzgerald (vo).

Stompin' At The Savoy

No solo.

Lady Be Good

No solo.

Another "... Slow Blues", twice as long, particularly the first chorus is very nice! On "Merry ...", however, he enters 8 bars too late, and the total result is not too exciting.

COUNT BASIE ALL-STARS**NYC. Dec. 5, 1957**

Emmett Berry, Doc Cheatham, Roy Eldridge, Joe Newman (tp), Vic Dickenson, Frank Rehak, Dicky Wells (tb), Earl Warren (as), Lester Young, Coleman Hawkins (ts), Harry Carney (bar), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Eddie Jones (b), Jo Jones (dm), Jimmy Rushing (vo).
CBS-TV "Sound of Jazz" rehearsal.

I Left My Baby

Obbligato 24 bars. (S)

Dickie's Dream

Solo 32 bars. (F)

Blowing in the background he gives Rushing's vocal another dimension, everything sounds great, and don't bother to go into the details, it's the atmosphere that counts here! "... Dream" however is just too fast for him.

BILLIE HOLIDAY WITH**MAL WALDRON'S ALL STARS****same date**

Doc Cheatham (tp), Vic Dickenson (tb), Lester Young, Ben Webster, Coleman Hawkins (ts), Mal Waldron (p), Danny Barker (g), Jim Atlas (b), Jo Jones (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).
Same rehearsal.

Fine And Mellow

Obbligato 12 bars. Solo 12 bars (1st (ts)-solo). Obbligato parts. Coda. (S)**NYC. Dec. 8, 1957**

Roy Eldridge, Doc Cheatham (tp), Vic Dickenson (tb), Lester Young, Ben Webster, Coleman Hawkins (ts), Gerry Mulligan (bar), Mal Waldron (p), Danny Barker (g), Milt Hinton (b), Osie Johnson (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).

CBS-TV broadcast "The Sound of Jazz".

Fine And Mellow

Solo 12 bars (2nd (ts)-solo). (S)

Viewing the movie with the camera on Billie's face listening to Prez' solo is an unforgettable experience, equally moving every time. Listening to the solo on record diminishes it somewhat, it is not quite vintage thirties after all, but nevertheless a fine construction, and it is better than the rehearsal one three days earlier, when Prez also does some background playing.

LESTER YOUNG SEXTET

NYC. Feb. 7, 1958

Harry Edison (tp), Lester Young (ts), Lou Stein (p), Herb Ellis (g), Ray Brown (b), Mickey Sheen (dm).

Three titles were recorded for Verve:

21926-1	Waldorf Blues	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Soli 8, 4, 4 and 8 bars to coda. (M)
21926-2	Waldorf Blues (NC)	No solo.
21926-3	Waldorf Blues (NC)	No solo.
21926-4	Waldorf Blues	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 16 bars 4/4 with (tp) to duet 8 bars and coda. (M)
21927-1	Sunday	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 48+8 bars to coda with (tp), (dm) on last bridge. (M)
21928-1	You're Getting To Be A HWM alt.	Solo 2 choruses of 24 bars. Solo 16 bars. Coda with (tp). (S)
21928-2	You'e Getting To Be A HWM orig.	Solo 1 chorus of 24 bars. Solo 8 bars to coda. (S)

I can find few merits from Prez on this session, neither "Waldorf ...", which is not a blues but a slightly camouflaged "Jeepers Creepers", nor "Sunday" offer anything of particular artistic coherence. The latter's first chorus may perhaps be considered interesting because of its uttermost laziness, but the next chorus shows how bad is his shape. The ultraslow "... Habit ..." is a kind of exception though, in this tempo, as said before, Prez always has something to say.

LESTER YOUNG ALL STARS

NYC. Feb. 8, 1958

Harry Edison, Roy Eldridge (tp), Lester Young (cl, ts), Hank Jones (p), Herb Ellis (g), George Duvivier (b), Mickey Sheen (dm).

Seven titles were recorded for Verve:

21929-7	Romping	Solo 9 choruses of 12 bars, last 4 with ens, to coda. (M)
21930-1	Gypsy In My Soul	Soli 64 and 24 bars. (FM)
21931-2	Please Don't Talk About Me WIG	Acc. (tp-RE) 16 and 8 bars. Solo 32 bars. Acc. (tp-HE) 16 and 8 bars to coda. (M)
21932-9	They Can't Take That AFM	Clarinet solo 16+12 bars, (p) on bridge. Clarinet duet with (tp-HE) 16+12 bars to coda, (g) on bridge. (S)
21933-2	Salute To Benny	Clarinet solo 11 choruses of 12 bars, last 6 with ens, to coda. (M)
21934-3	Blue And Sentimental (medley)	Solo 36 bars to coda. (S)
21935-2	Mean To Me	Soli 64 and 40 bars. (M)

Not much improvement from the day before, except from the refreshing presence of Little Roy. Prez does not even manage the medium blues on "Romping", and "Gypsy ..." is a mess. He even struggles with the slow "... Sentimental". If anything should be noted, then "Please Don't ..." and the surprising rhythmic twists on "Mean ...". Again the clarinet is saving the session from oblivion to being important, at least for its rarity. On the medium blues "Benny ..." he opens very nicely in the low register, and as FBM notes, the seventh chorus is good. The slow "They Can't ..." is also an important Prez item, whether you feel "Lester's tone on the clarinet is thin and cool" or not.

LESTER YOUNG ALL STARS**NYC. March 23, 1958**

Lester Young (cl, ts), Oscar Peterson (p), Herb Ellis (g), Ray Brown (b), Louie Bellson (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Verve, unissued.

LESTER YOUNG**NYC. between June 17 and July 6, 1958**

Curtis Fuller (tb), Lester Young (ts), Junior Mance (p), Paul West (b), Willie Jones (dm).

WOR-Mutual broadcast from Birdland. Four titles:

Lullaby Of Birdland (NC)	In ens 24 bars with ann. (M)
Three Little Words	In ens 32 bars to solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Soli 8, 4 and 4 bars. (F)
I Can't Get Started	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
Blues In F (NC)	Solo 12 choruses of 12 bars. (F)

The key to the success of this session is in my opinion the excellent work of Fuller, Mance and the others. They seem to inspire Prez to play up to his maximum capacity of now. The beginning of the "Lullaby ..." is missing. He attacks "Three ..." in fast tempo and swings it well, no sensations but relaxed and inspired with several nice details. "... Started" is played in a slow, too slow really, tempo and is nice as ever but seems to lack the extra to make it memorable. The "Blues ..." is like "Three ..." swinging in uptempo. I would like to quote Frank Büchmann-Møller on this one: "This solo is also varied in many ways. The fourth and the tenth choruses, for example, form relaxed contrasts to the driving, energetic choruses which surround them. Repeated notes are also used in the fifth, eighth, ninth and eleventh choruses, and alternate fingerings can be heard in the fifth and twelfth choruses, but most outstanding are the brilliant figures that open the seventh chorus. All in all good and solid performances – though not outstanding – by Lester".

NEWPORT ALL STARS**Newport, RI, July 5, 1958**

Buck Clayton (tp), Jack Teagarden (tb), Pee Wee Russell (cl), Lester Young (ts), Don Ewell (p), Tom Bryant (b), Jo Jones (dm).

Concert at Freebody Park, Newport Jazz Festival. Four titles, no LY on "Royal Garden Blues" and "Muskrat Ramble" but:

I Cover The Waterfront	Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)
Jump The Blues	Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)

Prez is not in good shape here, "... Waterfront" sounds frustrated (ref. Frank B-M) and unhappy, while "Jump ..." is almost non-sense, he cannot or will not join the happy crowd here, where the piano is the highlight!

LESTER YOUNG QUARTET**unknown location, ca. summer 1958**

Lester Young (ts), probably Nat Pierce (p), Doug Watkins (b), Willie Jones (dm).

One title:

Prez' Mood	Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. 2 choruses 4/4 with (dm) to solo 2 choruses (FM) to coda. (S)
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Interesting discovery this one! A crisp rhythm section sends Prez along on the fast medium blues, and the solo is among the better ones. Note the beginning of the very last chorus before the coda, surprising detail!

ART FORD's JAZZ PARTY**Newark, NJ. Sept. 25, 1958**

Collective personnel: Charlie Shavers, Red Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Pee Wee Russell (cl), Lester Young, Coleman Hawkins (ts), Harry Shepherd (vib), Willie "The Lion" Smith (p), Dick Thompson (g), Vinnie Burke (b), Sonny Greer (dm).

WNTA-TV/Broadcast, fifteen titles, five issued, two have LY:

Mean To Me	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars, last one with ens. (M)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. 3 choruses 4/4 with (ts-CH). (M)

After a brief piano intro "Mean ..." is all Prez, and he seems to be inspired by this rare jam occasion as well as by the stride piano backing. Although he has got some serious problems in the second chorus, this is a Prez item out of the ordinary. "... Sid" however is the really outstanding jam session item, really wish I had been

there! Prez is jumping on this one, and particularly the third chorus, encouraged by somebody shouting, is exciting! Knowing that he had only one half year left, and that this is his last recorded encounter with his great counterpole Coleman Hawkins, the chase they undertake is both historical and wistful.

LESTER YOUNG QUARTET **NYC. Nov./Dec. 1958**
Lester Young (ts), Valdo Williams (p), Doug Watkins (b), Willie Jones (dm).
Recorded at the Five Spot. One title, not available:

Lester's Mop Mop Blues

**LESTER YOUNG WITH
THE JODIE CHRISTIAN TRIO** **Chi. Dec. 28, 1958**
Lester Young (ts), Jodie Christian (p), Bob Cranshaw (b), Walter Perkins (dm).
Private recordings at the Pershing Hotel, six titles:

Mean To Me	Straight 1 to solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 1 ½ choruses 4/4 with (dm). Solo 12 bars to coda. (FM)
D. B. Blues	Solo 3 choruses of 44 bars. Solo 20 bars to coda. (M)
Polka Dots And Moonbeams	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
Three Little Words (NC)	Straight 1 to solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. (F)
Blues (NC)	Solo 15 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
I Cover The Waterfront (NC)	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars to 10 bars (NC). (M)

Quoting FrankBM: "These private recordings have a lovely friendly atmosphere, almost like that of the 1956 Washington recordings". Yes, that's right, and there is good Pres here! "D. B. ..." is really very exciting, and "Polka ..." is again lovely played. He takes the fast "... Words" with ease, and "Blues" is really an original performance, evidence of the creativity and experimental attitude Pres still possesses. Quoting again on "... Waterfront": "The phrases are varied in length, alternating between long lines and short outbursts – so all in all this is an original, refreshing and inspired performance, showing that Lester was trying out new means of expression even at this late time in his career".

LESTER YOUNG BAND **Paris, Feb. 1959**
Lester Young (ts), Jackie Knuddle (p), Jimmy Gourley (g), Jean-Marie Ingrand (b), Kenny Clarke (dm).
Broadcast from the Blue Note, four titles, three have been available:

Lester Leaps In	Straight 1 to solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Straight 16+8 bars, (dm) on bridge (F) to coda. (S)
Mean To Me	Straight 1 to solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. Solo 16+12 bars to coda, (dm) on bridge. (M)
Lester's Mop Mop Blues	Straight 12 bars. Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (dm) to straight 24 bars to coda. (M)
Lullaby Of Birdland	

Pres is tired now, playing mostly on routine, and there are long soli by the other participants in the quintet. Nevertheless there are nice details to be found, as on the beginning of "... Mop Mop ...".

LESTER YOUNG QUINTET **Paris, March 2, 1959**
Lester Young (ts), Rene Urtreger (p), Jimmy Gourley (g), Jamil Nasser (b), Kenny Clarke (dm).
Twelve titles were recorded for Verve:

26575-2	I Didn't Know What Time It Was	Solo 2 choruses of 36 bars. Solo 16+24 bars to coda, (dm) on bridge. (M)
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26576-2	Oh, Lady Be Good!	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 16+8 bars to coda, (dm) on bridge. (F)
26577-2	Almost Like Being In Love	Solo 2 choruses of 36 bars. Solo 12 bars to coda. (M)
26578-1	Three Little Words	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 16+8 bars to coda, (dm) on bridge. (FM)
26579-1	I Cover The Waterfront	Soli 64 and 16 bars to coda. (M)
26580-1	I Can't Get Started	Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)
26581-5	Indiana	Solo 64 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 32 bars and slow coda. (F)
26582-2	Pennies From Heaven	Soli 64 and 20 bars to coda. (M)
26583-1	New D. B. Blues	Solo 36 bars. (M). Coda. (S)
26584-2	Lullaby Of Birdland	Solo 64 bars. Solo 16+12 bars to coda, (dm) on bridge. (M)
26585-2	There'll Never Be Another You	Solo 64 bars. 16 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 32 bars to coda. (F)
26586-1	Tea For Two	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 32 bars to coda. (F)

Prez' last recording session, only thirteen days before he passed away. The liner notes of the "Complete Lester Young Studio Sessions on Verve" put it like this, comparing this "Oh! Lady ..." with his very first recording in 1936: "Listen to the the records in succession and you could be hearing two different players, two people who had never even met or had dealings with each other. The first is a young man who, like all healthy young people, assumes himself to be immortal. The second is a prematurely aged man who knows he is dying. In 1936 he takes up to eight bars in a single breath without the slightest difficulty; in 1959 the phrases are gasped out, rarely more than two bars long, mere contingent fragments. Nothing connects with anything else. ..." Further: "The prospect of a Paris recording by the revered Lester Young is likely to have obliterated all caution or common sense." Now, these are strong, negative words, and although I belong to those that consider Prez' career one long decline, this is not fair. Prez is still an artist who deserves respect. He is no longer able to construct those incredible, monumental soli of the past, but he still has some fine details to show, and he has his personality and integrity. I am surprised he chose to play so much uptempo, because his technique cannot cope with it properly anymore, but in slow tempo his greatness occasionally still comes through. The emotions and experiences accumulated during a long life come out beautifully through "... Get Started", the only ballad here. FBM says "this version consists mainly of routine phrases, but it has a nice coherence and is presented with a tone that is moving because of its weakness." Again too negative, Prez is moving because no matter his physical and mental condition, he is a great artist through and through. And no tough life could take that away from him.

LESTER YOUNG BAND

Paris, March 11, 1959

Lester Young (ts), Oscar Dennard (p), Jimmy Gourley (g), Jamil Nasser (b), Buster Smith (dm).

Broadcast "Carrefour du Jazz" (broadcasted March 21), one title:

D. B. Blues (NC) Solo 2 choruses of 44 bars. (M)

Routine playing here.

LESTER YOUNG BAND

Paris, March 11, 1959

Lester Young (ts), Harold Kauffman (p), Jimmy Gourley (g), Jean-Marie Ingrand (b), Kenny Clarke (dm).

Broadcast from the Blue Note, three titles, two have been available:

I Cover The Waterfront (NC) Solo ca. 38 bars (NC). (M)

There Will Never Be Another You Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars.
Soli 8 and 4 bars.
Solo 32 bars to coda. (M)

Lullaby Of Birdland

This is the last session, the signature tune has not been available, and of “... Waterfront” there is only a fragment, start and end missing. Therefore it is with tears almost that we can enjoy an attractive “... Another You” with Prez in surprisingly good shape, playing a fine, long solo, not at all indicating bad health.

Final quote from FrankBM: “In the interview Francois Postif made with Lester at the Hotel d’Angleterre in Paris on February 6, 1959 Lester says that he was still trying to develop his playing. The recordings made in France justify this claim. He had returned to a simplicity of melodic line that was one of the hallmarks of his solos in the 30’s, but he had also begun to experiment with the rhythmic aspects of his playing, as is especially noticeable in his interpretations of the tunes. Lester stayed young until the last day of life”.

No further recording sessions.

Lester Young returned to the U. S. on March 14 and passed away the following day. He will never be forgotten as long as music exists.

...ooo...