

# THE EUROPEAN TOUR OF LIONEL HAMPTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA, 1953 The Recorded Concerts

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## Overview

In 1953 Hampton came to Europe for the first time.

The tour started at the beginning of September in Oslo and ended in the last days of November in Paris. Concerts were given in Scandinavia, in the Benelux States, in Switzerland, France, Germany and Northern Africa. The band did not record in a studio, but the sideman did, against the orders of the band management. Some concerts by the big band were recorded, maybe also broadcast, but not issued in those days.

Thirty years were to pass until a first LP with live recordings from this tour showed up. "Lionel Hampton European Concert, 1953", the cover said. No specific location or date could be given. However, the personnel was correctly noted. But the eagerly awaited soloists, who ranked among the young stars of the jazz scene, were hardly audible. We had to wait another twenty years, till 2002, to get access to a private tape of the Basel concert of September 25, which was recorded by the local radio station.

Finally, in 2007, TCB issued two CDs with the recordings from the Basel concert, with better sound quality than the tape, but with some titles missing including some of the more interesting ones!

## The recorded concerts

Three concerts are known to have been recorded officially. Some rumored private recordings from Paris and Zurich may exist.

The first was Stockholm, on September 14. Eight tunes have survived. They are issued on LP IAJRC 31, CD NATASHA IMPORTS NI-4010, CD ROYAL JAZZ RJD 517 and other labels, according to Lord and Bruyninckx.

The second was Basel, on September 25. This concert was entirely recorded by the radio station and is partially issued on CD TCB 02172 – Vol. 1 and CD TBC 02182 – Vol. 2. A private tape contains the unissued tunes as well.

The third was Berlin, on October 4. Parts were broadcast on October 12 and 19. Private tapes exist from these broadcasts. Today one can download most tunes free of charge from [www.lionelhampton.nl](http://www.lionelhampton.nl). The CD ROYAL JAZZ RJD 517 contains 2 or 4 of the tunes.

Two titles on the CD ROYAL JAZZ could not be attributed to one of these concerts. As they have a similar sound as the Berlin tunes, they may stem from this concert.

## The discography

Not included are: Three unknown titles from Zurich, three unavailable private recordings from Paris (THE CHASE, STOMPING AT THE SAVOY, HOW HIGH THE MOON), and at least seven further unknown titles from Paris.

1953/09/14, Konserthuset, Stockholm	
[a] medley: GATES STEPS OUT / OH ROCK	(1) (2) (3)
[b] HOW HIGH THE MOON	(1) (2) (3)
[c] I ONLY HAVE EYES FOR YOU	(1) (2) (3)
[d] MUCHACHO AZUL	(1) (2) (3)
[e] ON THE SUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET	(1) (2) (3)
[f] OPENER	(1) (2) (3)
[g] STARDUST	(1) (2) (3)
[h] SUMMERTIME	(1) (2) (3)

(1) LP IAJRC 31. LIONEL HAMPTON - EUROPE 1953  
(2) CD NATASHA IMPORTS NI-4010. LIONEL HAMPTON - SWEDEN 1953

(3) CD ROYAL JAZZ RJD 517. LIONEL HAMPTON - EUROPEAN TOUR 1953  
 All titles also on Stash (Jap) CEJCO0106, STASH (Jap) CECCO0097 (CD), Absord (Jap) ABCJ-249 (CD)

[a] titled as OH ROCK  
 [a](3) incomplete  
 [d] titled as BLUE BOY  
 [f] edited  
 [f](2) titled as THE OPENER  
 [f](3) mistitled as BLUES  
 [h](3) incomplete

**1953/09/25, Mustermesse, Basel**

[a] signature tune	(1)
[b] THE CHASE	(1)
[c] medley: FRIO / GATES STEPS OUT / OH ROCK	(1) (2)
[d] MOONLIGHT IN VERMONT	(1) (2)
[e] MULE BOOGIE	(1) (2)
[f] HOW HIGH THE MOON	(1) (2)
[g] TENDERLY	(1) (2)
[h] MUCHACHO AZUL	(1) (2)
[i] IMPROVISATION IN BLUES - BLUE BOY	(1) (2)
[j] RIFF BEAT	(1) (2)
[k] PRISONER OF LOVE	(1)
[l] HONEYSUCKLE ROSE	(1) (2)
[m] SUMMERTIME	(1) (2)
[n] GRYCE SUITE (BROWN SKINS)	(1) (3)
[o] JAZZ GROUP	(1) (3)
[p] medley: SETTING THE PACE / FLYING HOME	(1) (3)
[q] HEY-BA-BA-RE-BOP	(1) (3)
[r] AIR MAIL SPECIAL	(1) (3)
[s] HAMP'S BOOGIE WOOGIE	(1) (3)
[t] medley: KINGFISH / DRINKING WINE SPO-DEE-O-DEE	(1) (3)
[u] JELLY ROLL	(1)
[v] CURLEY	(1) (3)
[w] ON THE SUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET	(1) (3)

(1) private tape  
 (2) CD TCB 02172. LIONEL HAMPTON - BASEL 1953 VOL. 1  
 (3) CD TCB 02182. LIONEL HAMPTON - BASEL 1953 VOL. 2

[c] titled as FRIO  
 [h] mistitled as FLYING HOME  
 [n] also known as BROWN SKINS  
 [n](1) titled as GRYCE SUITE  
 [o](3) incomplete  
 [p](1) titled as FLYING HOME  
 [t](1) titled as DRINKIN' WINE  
 [t](3) titled as KINGFISH (DRINKING WINE)

**possibly: 1953/10/04, Sportpalast, Berlin, concert**

[a] MUCHACHO AZUL	(1)
[b] TENDERLY	(1)

(1) CD ROYAL JAZZ RJD 517. LIONEL HAMPTON - EUROPEAN TOUR 1953

[a](1) mistitled as BOOGIE WOOGIE

**1953/10/04, Sportpalast, Berlin**

[a] AIR MAIL SPECIAL	(1) (3)
[b] ALWAYS	(1) (2) (3)

[c] DRINKING WINE SPO-DEE-O-DEE	(1)	(3)
[d] HEY BA-BA-RE-BOP		
[e] HOW HIGH THE MOON	(1)	(3)
[f] I ONLY HAVE EYES FOR YOU	(1)	(3)
[g] improvised blues	(1)	(2) (3)
[h] JELLY ROLL	(1)	(3)
[i] medley: FRIO / GATES STEPS OUT / OH ROCK	(1)	(3)
[j] PINEY BROWN BLUES		
[k] STARDUST	(1)	(3)
[l] SUMMERTIME		(3)
[m] unknown riff tune		(3)

(1) download from www.lionelhampton.nl  
(2) CD ROYAL JAZZ RJD 517. LIONEL HAMPTON - EUROPEAN TOUR 1953  
(3) private tape

[b](1) mistitled as DINAH  
[c] probably incomplete: thought to be the 2nd part of a medley with KINGFISH  
[g](1) mistitled as HAMP'S BOOGIE WOOGIE; incomplete  
[g](2) mistitled as I'M BEGINNING TO SEE THE LIGHT; edited  
[g](3) edited  
[h] mistitled as MR. JELLY ROLL  
[i](1) titled as MEDLEY: STOMPING AT THE SAVOY - WHEN THE SAINTS (MORE)  
[m] sometimes mistitled as THE MESS IS HERE

### The personnel

Walter Williams, Art Farmer, Clifford Brown(tp), Quincy Jones(tp, occasional p from September 22 onwards), Al Hayse, Jimmy Cleveland, Buster Cooper(tb until October 15), Anthony Ortega(as,fl), Gigi Gryce(as), Clifford Solomon(ts), Clifford Scott(ts,cl), Oscar Estelle(bs), George Wallington(p until September 21), Billy Mackel(g), Monk Montgomery(eb), Alan Dawson(dr), Curley Hamner(dr,vcl), Sonny Parker(vcl), Annie Ross(vcl until September 20), Lionel Hampton(ldr,vbs,p,dr,vcl).

New members were Clifford Brown (for Eddie Mullens), Gigi Gryce (for Bobby Plater), George Wallington (for Elmer Gill) and Annie Ross.

### The soloists

32 different titles are available from one or more concerts. 13 titles feature Hampton mainly, on vibes, piano, vocal and drums. The other 19 titles are instrumentals with solo space for the sidemen. All sidemen except for Monk Montgomery, Alan Dawson and Annie Ross can be heard soloing. We know that Annie Ross was featured on two titles, but neither of them has survived.

An unexpected surprise is the rediscovery of Quincy Jones as trumpet soloist. Hugues Panassié, who saw five concerts in Brussels and Paris, describes Quincy with respect to his "pleasant interpretation" of PRISONER OF LOVE as a gifted soloist with a nice sound. Careful listening to this tune leads to the possible attribution of a further trumpet solo to Quincy, on RIFF BEAT.

The following listing counts the number of solos by soloists. It shows that Hampton did not want to push his new stars, Clifford Brown and Gigi Gryce, too much into the foreground.

tpArFa 4 solos

tpWaWi 3 solos

tpQuJo 2 solos

tpClBr 3 solos

tbBuCo 2 solos

tbJiCl 1 solo

tbAlHa 1 solo

asAnOr 4 solos

asGiGr 2 solos

tsClSo 5 solos

ts/clClSc 4 solos

bsOsEs 1 solo

pGeWa 1 solo  
gBiMa 3 solos  
vclSoPa 3 solos  
dr/vclCuHa 3 solos

### **The repertoire**

A substantial number of the tunes features Lionel Hampton on vibraphone or piano in memorable interpretations, such as HOW HIGH THE MOON or STARDUST.

Then there are instrumental blockbusters such as FLYING HOME and the vocal numbers like JELLY ROLL.

New instrumentals with nice modern arrangements are FRIO (based on STOMPING AT THE SAVOY), RIFF BEAT and GRYCE SUITE (with a CHEROKEE part), arranged by Quincy Jones and Gigi Gryce respectively.

### **Medleys**

The four known medleys need some explanation.

Medley 1 was played in Stockholm. It combines GATES STEPS OUT with OH ROCK. The interpretation starts with vibes improvisation over an eight bar rhythm changes form, followed by GATES STEPS OUT (8+32+8 bars). This is followed by vibes improvisation over the blues format and three blues riffs of OH ROCK. It ends with 3 blues choruses played by the whole band. The whole medley is played in the key of Eb. OH ROCK, by the way, contains a quote from OH WHEN THE SAINTS.

Medley 2, performed in Basel and Berlin, is an extension of medley 1. It starts with FRIO, to be followed by GATES STEPS OUT and OH ROCK. FRIO, the first part, starts with vibraphone improvisation over a 8 bar structure reminiscent of WELL YOU NEEDN'T, in the key of Db. A combo arrangement of a Quincy Jones tune based on STOMPIN' AT THE SAVOY follows. The name of this nice tune may be FRIO. Then baritone saxophonist Oscar Estelle plays a long solo over these chords. When the key switches to Eb, the melody of GATES STEPS OUT is played by the band. It is followed by Hampton's vibes improvisation over blues in Eb, and finally goes into OH ROCK with its blues riffs.

Medley 3 combines KINGFISH with DRINKING WINE SPO-DEE-O-DEE. This medley is known from Basel. It was probably also played in Berlin, whence only part two, DRINKING WINE, has survived. The performance starts in the key of Bb with Hampton improvising on the blues. Then the melody of KINGFISH – a blues - is stated. An abrupt change of mood from be-bop to rhythm & blues and a change of key from Bb to F indicate the beginning of DRINKING WINE. This is built on a 8 bar structure, interrupted by a 12 bar blues chorus. Featured are Walter Williams on trumpet and Sonny Parker the vocalist.

Medley 4 combines SETTING THE PACE, a Dexter Gordon composition, with FLYING HOME. After a short percussion intro the band starts with a melody that is continuously repeated and slightly modified until it can be identified as SETTING THE PACE (part A only, not the bridge). FLYING HOME follows with a long tenor solo by Clifford Solomon.

### **Titling**

MUCHACHO AZUL is mostly titled BLUE BOY. IMPROVISATION IN BLUES – BLUE BOY, performed in Basel immediately after MUCHACHO AZUL, is an encore of this tune: After Hamp's improvisation on vibes the final part is played again.

Some tunes are oddly titled. MUCHACHO AZUL is sometimes called, incorrectly, FLYING HOME or BOOGIE WOOGIE. An improvised blues is called I'M BEGINNING TO SEE THE LIGHT.

### **Editing**

Some tunes are incomplete. Rather often the first bars are missing, as in SUMMERTIME and OH ROCK on CD ROYAL JAZZ, or as in JAZZ GROUP on CD TCB.

The improvised blues from Berlin comes to us with a premature end. There, in order to avoid an abrupt ending, a creative editor has added two fragments of ensemble playing which probably do not all belong to the same title or even to the same concert, as the sound characteristics are different.

A whole part may have been eliminated in DRINKING WINE SPO-DEE-O-DEE from Berlin, which was probably performed as second part of the medley KINGFISH / DRINKING WINE SPO-DEE-O-DEE.

A real patchwork is OPENER, an improvisation by Hampton on vibes without horns and with no predefined melody. It consists of three fragments. The first two of them follow the chord structure of WELL YOU NEEDN'T, the third is different but may belong to the same interpretation, as key and tempo remain unchanged.

### Titles, issues and soloists: A synoptic chart

The chart shows the surviving tunes, the soloists, where and when the titles are recorded, and on which medium they are extant in my collection. Timings – sometimes with, sometimes without applause – are given as well as divergent title names.

title	timings & remarks									solos & soloists
	location	Konserthuset, Stockholm			Mustermesse, Basel		Sportpalast, Berlin			
	date	14.09.1953			25.09.1953		04.10.1953			
issue	IAJRC	NATASHA	ROYAL J.	tape	TCB	tape	internet	ROYAL J.		
AIR MAIL SPECIAL				05:45	05:43					drLiHa, tpArFa?, asGiGr, tbBuCo, tsCiSo
ALWAYS						04:04	05:19	03:35		vbLiHa
CURLEY				02:08	02:11					vcCuHa, tsCiSo, drLiHa, drCuHa
DRINKING WINE SPO-DEE-O-DEE				medley3 pt2		03:51	03:39			tpWaWi, vcSoPa
FLYING HOME				medley4 pt2						tsCiSo
FRIO				medley2 pt1		medley2 pt1				vbLiHa, bsOsEs
GATES STEPS OUT		medley1 pt1		medley2 pt2		medley2 pt2				vbLiHa (Basel & Berlin: no solo)
GRYCE SUITE				06:02	06:12					tpCiBr
HAMP'S BOOGIE WOOGIE				03:45	03:52					gBiMa, pLiHa
HEY BA-BA-RE-BOP				02:53	03:00					vcLiHa
HONEYSUCKLE ROSE				06:48	06:44					pLiHa, tbBuCo, clCiSc, vcSoPa
HOW HIGH THE MOON	04:35	04:34	04:34	05:49	05:44	03:46	03:36			vbLiHa (Berlin: vbLiHa, gBiMa)
I ONLY HAVE EYES FOR YOU	04:30	04:28	04:30			03:52	03:36			vbLiHa
IMPROVISATION IN BLUES - BLUE BOY				06:12	06:03					pLiHa, gBiMa
improvised blues						3:18 (ed.)	1:39 (inc.)[d]	2:33 (ed.)[e]		vbLiHa
JAZZ GROUP				03:15	3:13 (inc.)					asAnOr, drLiHa, drCuHa, vcCuHa
JELLY ROLL				02:57		03:24	3:03 [f]			vcSoPa, asAnOr (Berlin: vcSoPa, asAnOr, pLiHa)
KINGFISH				medley3 pt1						vbLiHa
medley1: GATES STEPS OUT / OH ROCK	7:10 [b]	7:05 [b]	7:01 (inc.)[b]							for solos see medley parts
medley2: FRIO / GATES STEPS OUT / OH ROCK				10:20 [g]	10:23 [g]	11:01	10:54 [h]			for solos see medley parts
medley3: KINGFISH / DRINKING WINE SPO-DEE-O-DEE				7:09 [i]	7:11 [i]					for solos see medley parts
medley4: SETTING THE PACE / FLYING HOME				08:05	08:04					for solos see medley parts
MOONLIGHT IN VERMONT				03:50	03:38					vbLiHa
MUCHACHO AZUL	9:23 [j]	9:19 [j]	9:20 [j]	7:18 [k]	7:18 [k]			7:21 [l][o]		gBiMa, tpArFa, asAnOr, tpCiBr, tsCiSc (Basel: vbLiHa, pLiHa, tpArFa, tpCiBr, tsCiSc, Berlin: vbLiHa, tpArFa, tpCiBr, tsCiSc)
MULE BOOGIE				03:23	03:15					asAnOr, tsCiSo, tpArFa
OH ROCK		medley1 pt2		medley2 pt3		medley2 pt3				vbLiHa
ON THE SUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET	04:05	04:04	04:03	05:59	05:50					tsCiSc, vcLiHa, tpCiBr? (Basel: tsCiSc, vcLiHa, vbLiHa)
OPENER	4:12 (ed.)	4:13 (ed.)[m]	4:10 (ed.)[n]							vbLiHa
PRISONER OF LOVE				04:53						tpQuJo
RIFF BEAT				08:26						tpQuJo?, tbAlHa, tsCiSc, tpWaWi?
SETTING THE PACE				medley4 pt1						drCuHa?
signature tune				03:00						-
STARDUST	03:55	03:53	03:53			05:03	04:56			vbLiHa
SUMMERTIME	03:57	03:57	3:53 (inc.)	04:14	04:07	04:02				vbLiHa, pGeWa, tbJiCi (Basel & Berlin: vbLiHa, tbJiCi)
TENDERLY				04:12	04:00			5:54 [o]		vbLiHa
THE CHASE				03:46						tpArFa, asGiGr, tsCiSo, drLiHa
unknown riff tune						1:53 [p]				tpWaWi

[a] sometimes mistitled as DINAH  
 [b] titled as OH ROCK  
 [c] mistitled as HAMP'S BOOGIE WOOGIE  
 [m] mistitled as I'M BEGINNING TO SEE THE LIGHT

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[k] mistitled as FLYING HOME  
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 [n] mistitled as BLUES  
 [o] possibly from another concert  
 [p] sometimes mistitled as THE MESS IS HERE

### Literature

- Bruyninckx discography
- Tom Lord discography
- Gigi Gryce discography by Cohen & Fitzgerald
- Evensmo's History of the tenor sax
- Lionel Hampton 1951-53 by Otto Flückiger
- Hans Philippi's notebooks
- www.lionelhampton.nl
- Bulletin du Hot Club De France, October 1953
- Jazz Hot (of France) 1953
- Pittsburgh Courier, November 14, 1953
- Recording protocol of the Basel concert, September 25, 1953

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