

DISQUES VOGUE P.I.P. 1950's – early sixties PRODUCTIONS JAZZ – DISQUES – 54, RUE D'HAUTEVILLE – PARIS X

INTRODUCTION

Vogue was a French record label founded in 1947 by Léon Kaba and Charles Delaunay, active in the field of jazz and popular music (n.b. John Lewis' composition "Delaunay's dilemma"). The label was based in Paris and later in Villetaneuse (Seine). In London, in the fifties, there was also a Vogue Records operation. I don't know whether they were legally independent or whether the U.K. operation was an affiliate of the French organization. I think the latter. There were obvious links: the name, the label (logo), which was similar, although not 100% identical; artists recorded by French Vogue were also issued by Vogue London and vice versa. However each followed a distinct commercial policy, their catalogues were different. And Vogue U.K. was not present on the Continent.

French Vogue, of course, was present in France, but also in Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Italy and Germany. (Later in the sixties Vogue Deutschland was created.) I suppose they were also represented in Spain, but not in Scandinavia.

One should know that in the fifties the West European markets were not open. If a manufacturer wanted to sell in another European country, he would create an affiliate to distribute his products or choose an exclusive independent importer (agent) responsible for that country. All sales needed to be channelled through the exclusive distributor or agent and no parallel imports were allowed. The retail prices were set by the manufacturer, importer or exclusive agent. Hereunder I will limit myself to Disques Vogue, the Continental operation. Also, I will not discuss Traditional Jazz, although the New Orleans artist Sidney Bechet was one of the label's major assets, a real cash cow. I will only discuss albums issued in the fifties and early sixties, not the later Mode and Jazz Legacy series.

The purpose of this study is not to add just another label discography in catalogue or alphabetical order, but to place the label in its historical context: Paris-based, founded just after WWII, American musicians starting to visit Paris for concerts, or to become residents, the development of a local Paris modern jazz scene (Martial Solal, Henri Renaud, Barney Wilen, Bobby Jaspar) and of a European modern jazz scene (Lars Gullin, Hans Koller, Jimmy Deuchar) and a growing appetite of the West European public for jazz recorded in the US, direct imports of the originals being (almost) non-existent.

Two remarks:

1. this is only an introduction to this important label, I don't pretend to be complete and exhaustive. I give my very personal view on the development and meaning of the label for West Europeans, but also for Americans (see under chapter 4).

2. regarding Vogue's series, there were 5 in the fifties and early sixties:

10": 1950 – 1955/56

-Vogue general series Longue Durée LD 001 through LD 222 (jazz and popular music)

-Swing M. 33.301 through 33.353 ? (only jazz, French or US recorded)

-Jazz Sélection JSLP 50.001 through 50.042 ?(only US recorded jazz)

12": 1955 – 1960's

-Swing LDM 30.001 through 30.102 (only jazz, French or US recorded)

-Vogue general series LD 494-30 through 697-30 (popular music and some jazz).

The structure of this article is as follows:

1. the role played by the label in spreading of American jazz to West European listeners;
2. Henri Renaud's 1954 trip to New York for recording purposes.
3. Disques Vogue's stimulation of European talent by giving them ample opportunities to record.
4. Closing of the circle: Vogue's lease of their recordings to major US jazz labels.

Chapter 1.

THE SPREADING OF AMERICAN JAZZ TO WEST EUROPEAN LISTENERS.

Vogue's role in this respect was two-fold:

- a. By recording American artists, either (1) visiting the Continent, or (2) having taken up residence there.
- b. By issuing US recorded jazz under licensing agreements with US record labels.

Ad 1 a. (1) American visitors to Paris):

the most tangible result of Lionel Hampton's touring of the Continent was a number of recording sessions in Paris for Vogue (also in Stockholm for Metronome), by the Hamp himself (Vogue LD 166, 167 and 168) and by his sidemen. (Despite Hamp's ban on any recording by his sidemen). The sidemen: George Wallington Vogue LD 171; Gigi Gryce – LD 173, Gigi Gryce/Clifford Brown - 175 and Clifford Brown - 179).

Other Paris visitors:

Bob Brookmeyer: Vogue LD 216

Buck Clayton: Vogue LD 157, 182
Frank Foster: Vogue LD 209
Dizzy Gillespie: Vogue LD 077, 132, 134 and Swing 33.310, 33.324
Roy Haynes: Swing 33.337
The Herdsmen (Cy Touff, Bill Perkins): Vogue LD 204, 205
Johnny Hodges: Vogue LD 021 and 089
Jimmy Jones trio (with Roy Haynes): Swing 33.336
Lee Konitz: Vogue LD 169
Wade Legge: Vogue LD 133
Thelonious Monk solo: Swing 33.342
Jimmy Raney: Vogue LD 194, 197, 201
Max Roach: Vogue LD 014
Arnold Ross: Vogue LD 075
Zoot Sims: Vogue LD 170
Mary Lou Williams: with Don Byas Quartet LD 186
Mary Lou Williams quartet: Swing M 33.339
All the above are 10" albums.
12" albums in this category of visiting American artists recording in Paris are:
Les Kentonians: Escale à Paris: Carl Fontana, Curtis Counce, Mel Lewis with
Martial Solal: Swing LDM 30.044
Réunion à Paris: Billy Byers, Allen Eager with Martial Solal: Swing LDM 30.048
Clifford Brown "Mémorial": Swing LDM 30.068 and vol. 2 on Vogue LD 607-
30. (The rest of the Brown/Gryce sessions was issued later on 4 albums, Mode
LP 9558 and 9560, and Jazz Legacy 17 and 52)
Johnny Hodges LD 588-30 (from LD 021 and 089)

Ad 1 a. (2) Paris residents:

Jay Cameron: Swing 33.341
James Moody: Vogue LD 018 (red vinyl); LD 036
Bud Powell: Vogue LD 523-30
Lucky Thompson: Swing LDM 30.030, 30.039

Ad 1 b (Licensing agreements with US record companies).

The list of US labels with which Disques Vogue had contracted licensing agreements is impressive. Having access to the music of all these labels gave the label a key position in Western Europe. This does not imply however that the label issued all the records of a given label, Vogue made a selection. For Contemporary, for instance, they choose to issue none of the Art Pepper albums, whereas Vogue U.K. had them issued all. I will not bother the reader with all the licensed albums, but give a listing of the US labels of which albums were issued by Disques Vogue, with the main artists featured.

10": (on Vogue, Swing or Jazz Sélection)

-Apollo: Sir Charles Thompson, Illinois Jacquet

- Blue Note Miles Davis, Clifford Brown, J.J. Johnson, Elmo Hope, Gil Mellé, Horace Silver
- Contemporary: Lennie Niehaus, Shelly Manne, Howard Rumsey, Barney Kessel
- Debut: Paul Bley, Thad Jones, Quintet of the Year (Bird, Diz), Oscar Pettiford, Jazz Workshop (4 trombones)
- Dial: Bird
- Discovery: Eddie Bert, Art Pepper, Dizzy, Paul Smith, George Shearing
- Esoteric: Charlie Christian, Monk (Minton's Playhouse)
- Fantasy: Brubeck, Mulligan
- Gene Norman Presents: Clifford Brown/Max Roach, Mulligan, Lyle Murphy
- Mercer: Duke Ellington/Johnny Hodges
- Pacific Jazz: Clifford Brown, Chet Baker, Mulligan
- Roost: Stan Getz, Bud Powell
- Storyville: Lee Konitz
- United (Chess): Gene Ammons

Note: the Blue Notes came first in the general Vogue LD series (Miles vol. 1 – LD 122 = BLP 5013; vol. 2 – LD 172 = BLP 5022), Milt Jackson LD 138, Horace Silver trio LD 176. Later on Blue Note was issued in the Jazz Sélection series (Clifford Brown, Gil Mellé and J.J. Johnson).

Ditto for Discovery.

Fantasy: first in Vogue LD series, but later on in the Swing series.

Pacific Jazz only in the Swing series; Contemporary and GNP only in the Jazz Sélection series with yellow CR, resp. white/blue GNP labels, the regular Jazz Sélection labels being greenish.

12" (Swing incl. GNP, Contemporary and Jazz Sélection labels; all in the 30.001 series)

- Aladdin: Lester Young
- Contemporary: Barney Kessel, Sonny Rollins, Howard Rumsey
- Dawn: Zoot Sims, Paul Quinichette
- Debut: Miles Davis, Quintet of the Year (Massey Hall), Jazz Workshop (4 trombones)
- Dial: Bird
- GNP: Clifford Brown/Max Roach, Tenors West/Giuffre, Frank Morgan
- Pacific Jazz/Jazz West Coast Anthologies: Jack Montrose, Art Blakey, Mulligan, Bob Brookmeyer, Chico Hamilton, the Mastersounds; JWC Anthologies, vol 1-3 (see note end of this article)
- Transition: Donald Byrd with Blakey, Mobley.

Chapter 2. Henri Renaud on a shopping spree - New York 1954.

Vogue went one step further and sent one of their top artists, a French Al Haig oriented piano player, Henri Renaud, to New York to organize recording sessions with the New York school, with or without his own participation. He

recorded his idols Al Haig and Duke Jordan each in their own settings. The trip was fruitful and produced seven LP's:

Swing M 33.320: Henri Renaud All Stars: Bags and J.J. , Al Cohn, Percy Heath

Swing M 33.321: ditto, vol. 2

Swing M 33.322: Henri Renaud – Al Cohn quartet, Denzil Best, drums, Gene Ramey b.

Swing M 33.323 Duke Jordan trio

Swing M 33.325 Al Haig trio

Swing M 33.326 Oscar Pettiford sextet, Al Cohn, Kai Winding, Henri Renaud, Tal Farlow, Max Roach

Swing M 33.327 Henri Renaud Band: with Gigi Gryce, J.J., Al Cohn, Jerry Hurwitz, Curley Russell.

A few years later, a selection out of the above 7 LP's appeared under Swing LDM 30.050 entitled "Wizard of the vibes" – Milt Jackson. A rather sorrow fate to this beautiful cross-Atlantic adventure. But these sessions will re-emerge in chapter 4!

Chapter 3. Recording local Paris and European talent.

Disques Vogue, with Metronome in Stockholm, Tempo and Esquire in London, were giving a chance to local talent and promoted them. This was a commercial risk, since many European collectors with a limited budget preferred the "real thing", jazz by American artists. In general, the number of printed copies was low, that is why Eurojazz is so very expensive to collect.

To cover the European scene, Vogue started the "New sounds from....."-series:

New Sounds from England, Jimmy Deuchar, Vogue LD 130.

New Sounds from France: Henri Renaud, Vogue LD 131.

New Sounds from Sweden: Lars Gullin, Vogue LD 139.

New Sounds from Belgium: Bobby Jaspar, Vogue LD 143.

New Sounds from Germany, Hans Koller, Vogue LD 144.

The local Paris scene was very much alive and well represented on vinyl:

Henri Renaud with Bobby Jaspar play Gigi Gryce (a gem!) Vogue LD 174

Henri Renaud trio: Vogue LD 178

Bobby Jaspar's « New Jazz » Swing M 33.333, M 33.338 and M 33.351

Martial Solal: Vogue LD 200 and Swing M 33.340;

Swing LDM 30.060 (solo); Swing LDM 30.099 (big band)

André Hodeir's Jazz Group de Paris: Swing M 33.343 and Swing M 33.353

Henri Thomas (guitar): Vogue LD 210

Barney Wilen "TILT": Swing LDM 30.058 (one of the most expensive records existing)

Fats Sadi Combo (vibes) : Vogue LD 212
Fats Sadi/Martial Solal quartet : Swing LDM 30.046.

Chapter 4. Return to the starting point. Lease of French Vogue material to US labels.

With this chapter the circle is round: France sends back French recorded jazz to the cradle of jazz, the USA. It is a puzzle to figure out how their policy has been, it is difficult to establish a logic pattern. So I will just take the licensees in alphabetical order.

Blue Note: they contracted the Clifford Brown – Gigi Gryce material and issued in 10”:

- 5047- (ex Vogue LD 179)
- 5048- (ex Vogue LD 175)
- 5049- (ex Vogue LD 173)
- 5050- (ex Disques Vogue, but issued in U.K. only as Vogue LDE 113)
- 5051- (ex Disques Vogue, but issued in France on 12”, as contents of BLP 5050),

Further they issued, also in 10” format:

- 5005- James Moody (= Vogue LD 018)
- 5010- Max Roach/Kenny Dorham (from Vogue LD 014)
- 5017- Dizzy Gillespie (from Vogue LD 077)
- 5031- Wade Legge (= Vogue LD 133)
- 5046- Lionel Hampton “Jazztime Paris” (from Vogue albums LD 166-168)
- 5061 – Fats Sadi (= Vogue LD 212)

Contemporary: In correspondence dating back to the early sixties, Contemporary’s president Lester Koenig, gave me info on the following four 10” albums ex Vogue:

C2502 – Henri Renaud All Stars, Modern Sounds: France (= Vogue LD 131)

C2504 – Dizzy Gillespie (= Swing M 33.324)

C2507 – Mary Lou Williams ex Vogue U.K. LDE 022, also issued by Disques Vogue

C2512 – Martial Solal, Modern Sounds: France (= Vogue LD 200).

(C2519 (Martial Solal, vol.2 = Swing M 33.340), not mentioned by Lester, but printed in Contemporary’s Spring Catalog 1955, apparently has not been issued by Contemporary.)

C3502 12”- Hamp, Lionel Hampton Swings in Paris (from Vogue albums LD 166-168).

Fantasy: 3-201 – the Herdsmen play Paris (= Vogue LD 204 + 205)

Mercer: LP 1006 (ex LD 021/089)

Period: The Birdlanders # SLP 1211, 1212, 1213 (a selection from Henri Renaud’s NY sessions)

Pacific Jazz:

PJ 1210 – Gerry Mulligan “Paris Concert” (= Swing LDM 30.008)

PJ 1236 – Sidney Bechet – Martial Solal quartet with Kenny Clarke (= Swing LDM 30.065)

Various sources give Pacific Jazz (10”) LP 18 as the US equivalent of Swing M 33.325 – Al Haig trio. We have never seen evidence of the existence of PJ LP 18.

Pacific Jazz EP 4-17 is a curiosity: it says “A Vogue P.I.P Production, Paris, France” and was recorded in Stockholm, 1954. The title: Bengt Hallberg ensemble, featuring Lars Gullin. This EP album was neither issued in France, nor in Sweden!

Roost:

LP 414/LP 2214 – Dizzy Gillespie Paris Concert ex Swing M 33.310/Vogue LD 574-30

LP416 – Lee Konitz Jazztime Paris (= Vogue LD 169)

Conclusion : the mere existence of Vogue, their entrepreneurship, combined with a love for jazz, have enabled one generation of Europeans to get acquainted with the best of modern jazz, American, yes, 100%, but also European tinted, the best of both worlds. The writer of these notes has particular fond memories of the label: his first long play albums of Miles Davis, Clifford Brown and Chet Baker were on Vogue LD 122 [BLP 5012], resp. Swing 33.348 [PJ 19] and Swing 33.350 [PJ 9]. These and other albums opened a complete new panorama for the average European, and were available in any shop, just around the corner. Was not that fantastic? Merci Léon, merci Charles!

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Note regarding Jazz West Coast, An Anthology of California Music, vol. 2, JWC-501. The French equivalent on Swing LDM 30.078 is not identical for contractual reasons. On JWC-501, track 2 on side 1 is a Chet Baker Quartet version of “Summertime”, recorded in Paris by Barclay Records. Since Vogue p.i.p. could not release a Barclay track, an appealing solution was found: on LDM 30.079 the issued Chet Baker track on side 1:2, “Sweet Lorraine”, was taken from a 26/7/1956 Pacific Jazz session featuring Chet Baker with Art Pepper and Richie Kamuca, with Pete Jolly, Leroy Vinnegar and Stan Levey. This track was completely unknown at the time, no trace of it in Jepsen or in Bruyninckx. So that was a major discovery, which went unnoticed. The track showed up much later in 1989 on the Pacific Jazz CD “the Route”, produced by Michael Cuscuna, who wrote in the liner “Finally, in 1989, with the discovery (sic!) of “Sweet Lorraine”, all eleven tunes are finally under one roof”. The session was scattered on various US LP compilations (Playboy, JWC).

