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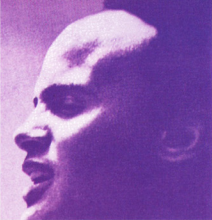
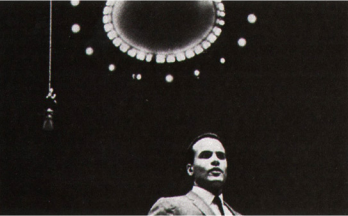
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BELAFONTE  
AT CARNEGIE HALL  
THE COMPLETE CONCERT

Photo: Lee Friedlander

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Orchestra conducted by ROBERT CORMAN

Produced by BOB BOLLARD

# BELAFONTE AT CARNEGIE HALL

## RECORDING NOTES

You can count on one hand the number of times recording microphones happen to be “on the scene” at the right time and the right place to capture an inspired moment of performance. This is one of those few.

What started as an almost reckless recording risk turned into another giant statement in the Belafonte story. The idea of taping the two Carnegie Hall Benefit performances\* was not Harry’s; we asked for it, part hunch, part wild gamble.

Recording hazards were many:—immense preparations and permissions with musicians, stage hands and the hall, microphoning a performer who roamed all over the stage, shouted, whispered, provoked audience singing,—accompaniments which varied from a 47-piece symphony to a single guitar and bongos,—and, above all, the one-time-only chance for a good pickup and performance.

What happened April 19th and 20th is historic even at Carnegie. There are always ways of explaining and analyzing after the fact. There must have been a special performance challenge in Belafonte’s first Carnegie Hall program, for example. There was also the sharp exhilaration for soloist and audience sharing the same emotional setting: a huge house packed two nights in a row for a splendid charity. (Belafonte’s singing contributed \$58,000 on one night alone to the Wiltwyck School which works with emotionally disturbed boys.) And each song was a familiar and famous high spot from a remarkable career.

All of these undoubtedly added their impetus and made this concert soar. The exciting fact is that we can actually hear it as it happened. Belafonte’s spontaneous sorcery with an audience is on disc for the first time. Through the expectant audience hush, the beating introduction, the opening shots of *Darlin’ Cora*, the Belafonte high voltage mounts by the moment. This is Belafonte “live.”

Almost one whole side has been reserved for the concert climax: the famous uncut Belafonte treatment of *Matilda*. All Carnegie Hall sings and rocks—the same mighty crescendo which took place at a packed Waldorf Ballroom, Lewisohn Stadium and personal appearances everywhere. But this time for all of us via microphone and tape machine.

There has been no re-recording of rehearsals or second tries, no splicing (there rarely is even on Belafonte studio performances). This is what actually happened. The same songs were programmed both evenings. Performances selected here are about equally divided between the two nights.

BOB BOLLARD

## ACT I—MOODS OF THE AMERICAN NEGRO

### SIDE 1

#### INTRODUCTION

#### DARLIN’ CORA

*Wake up, Wake up Darlin’ Cora  
The sheriff and his hound dogs comin’  
I gotta move on down the line.*

A recent addition to Belafonte’s programs, *Darlin’ Cora* has been used as an opener since Fall 1958. It is a good example of a folk fragment which was cooperatively developed by Belafonte and his musicians.\*\* The pulsing accompaniment was created after hours of work with all players contributing. Further changes evolved in performances.

#### SYLVIE

*She brought me little coffee  
She brought me little tea  
Well she brought me nearly every damn thing  
But she didn’t bring the jail house key.*

Based on a Southern chain-gang song. This was on one of Belafonte’s earliest records, the song of a prisoner’s longing for his Sylvie.

#### COTTON FIELDS

*When them cotton balls get rotten  
You can’t pick very much cotton.*

The unique Belafonte treatment: a relentless five-minute rhythmic crescendo. Introduced last year in Las Vegas.

#### JOHN HENRY

*There lies a steel drivin’ man, Lord, Lord  
There lies a steel drivin’ man.*

A newer version which has evolved from several years of performance. The John Henry legend is based on fact: a man who met his death doing construction work on the Big Ben Tunnel of the C & O Railroad in West Virginia around 1873.

#### TAKE MY MOTHER HOME

*I think I heard Him say  
As He was givin’ up the ghost  
Please, take my mother home.*

The Negro spiritual which Belafonte sang originally in the Broadway production “Three for Tonight.”

#### SIDE 2

#### THE MARCHING SAINTS

One of the most familiar of all the songs in the Belafonte repertoire. This is an example of how Belafonte refreshes well-worn selections. This new version including the madrigal introduction also dates from the “Three for Tonight” show.

## ACT II—IN THE CARIBBEAN

### DAY O

*Come Mr. Tally Man  
And tally me banana.*

The calypso number which many credit with starting a national

\*\*The small group of musicians seated downstage from the orchestra are almost as closely identified with specific songs as the notes in the arrangements. Millard Thomas and Raphael Boguslav are on guitar. Danny Barrajanos is featured on bongos and songs (in addition to his vocal solo on *Matilda*). The bass which starts *Cotton Fields* and *The Marching Saints* is played by Norm Keenan.

trend. *Day O* is based on the traditional work songs of the gangs who work the banana boats in the harbors of Trinidad. The men come to work with the evening star and continue through the night. They long for daybreak when they will be able to return to their homes. All their wishful thinking is expressed in the lead singer’s plaintive cry, “Day O, Day O....”

#### JAMAICA FAREWELL

*I’m sad to say I’m on my way  
Won’t be back for many a day.*

A haunting West Indian love song which Belafonte introduced in the same calypso album.

#### MAN PIABA

His amusing “facts of life” song. This famous calypso explanation of love to a boy of seven has defied translation and intrigued audiences for years.

#### ALL MY TRIALS

*Hush little baby don’t you cry  
... all my trials, Lord, soon be over.*

A moving West Indian lullaby, authentic and one of the most poignant goodbyes set to music.

#### SIDE 3

#### MAMA LOOK A BOO BOO

*That is your Daddy;  
Oh no, my Daddy can’t be ugly so.*

First heard by Belafonte in the West Indies while filming “Island in the Sun.” *Boo Boo* was an unprecedented hit in Trinidad, the land of calypso. The Belafonte version later swept the U. S. as well. The place of calypso in Belafonte’s career is perhaps clearer in this Carnegie Hall program than most others. The subject of several albums and immense acclaim, it is still but a part of a broader purpose—the attention and dramatic impact he brings to folk material from every varied geography and tradition.

#### COME BACK LIZA

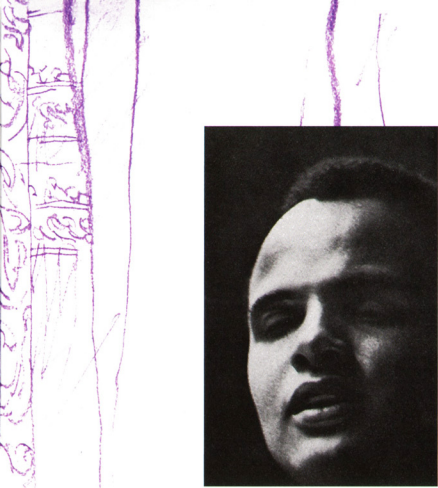
*Come back, Liza, come back girl  
Wipe the tear from me eye.*

A song of universal meaning and appeal, the longing of all parted lovers.

#### MAN SMART (Woman Smarter)

*Please listen when I say  
She smarter than the man in ev’ry way.*

The other side of the calypso coin, here are all the delicious digs, the loving barbs—as only the calypsonian can frame them—in the eternal war between the sexes.



## ACT III—ROUND THE WORLD

### HAVA NAGEELA

*Let us rejoice . . .*

An Israeli *Hora* which has been in Belafonte’s programs for years.

#### DANNY BOY

A remarkable example of a song which has been mutilated and violated by every conceivable kind of performance and arrangement. Nevertheless, the melodic purity and appeal remain as Belafonte sings it in the spirit in which the song was written. As Belafonte says in his spoken introduction, referring to Ireland’s troubled times, “there were songs for those who lived and those who died.”

#### MERCI BON DIEU

Written by Frantz Casseus, one of Belafonte’s early guitarists, this is an excerpt from his “Haitian Suite.”

#### SIDE 4

#### CU CU RU CU CU PALOMA

A love song symbolically about two doves, from a traditional Mexican folk song. The cooing sounds are expressed in the title phrase.

#### SHENANDOAH

*Oh Shenandoah,  
I long to see you.*

One of the most famous songs from Belafonte’s earliest repertoire in its original version. The lone guitar accompaniment is by Millard Thomas.

#### MATILDA

*Matilda, Matilda  
She take me money and run Venezuela.*

The now famous tragi-comedy saga of a jilted Jamaican lover. This kind of audience participation started in the early days in clubs with such songs as *Donkey Want Water*. Today’s *Matilda* has become something of a full-scale institution including singing participation by everyone from the line-up of waiters at the Waldorf to the orchestra on stage at Carnegie Hall.

*Recorded at Carnegie Hall, April 19 and 20, 1959. Recording Engineer: Bob Simpson*

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\*Benefit performances for The New Lincoln School, April 19, 1959; Wiltwyck School, April 20, 1959.