



Cootie Williams 1911-1985.

Facts about this Recording

Transferred from a RCA 2 Track Tape

Producer: Fred Reynolds / Engineer: John Norman

Date of Recording: March 1958

Venue: Webster Hall, New York

Mastered in



HIGH DEFINITION TAPE TRANSFERS



**COOTIE
WILLIAMS**
in
STEREO



Cootie Williams in Stereo

COOTIE WILLIAMS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Just in Time (Comden-Green-Styne) • Summit Ridge Drive (Artie Shaw) •
Nevertheless, I'm in Love with You (Ruby-Kalmar) • On the Street Where You
Live (Lerner·Loewe) • I'll See You in My Dreams (Jones-Kahn) Caravan (Elling-
ton·Tizol-Mills)

In the spring of 1929, Charles Melvin (Cootie) Williams joined the Duke Ellington orchestra, replacing Bubber Miley in the trumpet section. He was twenty one at the time, and although he was filling a rather large pair of shoes in the Ellington group, he succeeded so admirably that his departure from the band eleven years later was commemorated by Raymond Scott with a recording called "When Cootie Left the Duke."

Williams, a native of Mobile, Alabama, became interested in music very early in life, and was a budding drummer in his teens. He soon switched to trumpet and made his professional debut on that instrument at the age of seventeen with the Eagle Eye Shields band in Florida. His pre-Ellington experience included two years with Alonzo Ross, during which he came to New York. He

worked briefly with Chick Webb, somewhat longer with Fletcher Henderson, then moved into the Ellington Cotton Club orchestra.

Scores of records bearing his solos were issued during those years with the Duke, and his rich, warm open trumpet sound slowly became overshadowed by the now famous gutty, muted growl. When Cootie left the Duke, it was to join Benny Goodman, in whose band he stayed about a year. During the war years. Cootie headed his own band and did reasonably well until the band business collapsed. He pared down to a small group and eventually drifted into the musical half world somewhere between jazz and rhythm and blues. With recordings such as this and with guest appearances such as the one at the 1958 Newport Jazz Festival. Cootie has been drawn back into active jazz playing.

The years have mellowed the bite of his horn, but the marrow of his growl style and the dark luster of his open horn sound still remain. And when he adds his little growling comments to the melody, it brings back the memory of Duke's band in its glory, with the spotlight on a figure in the trumpet section working a plunger casually, almost indolently, around the bell of his horn.

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