

The Beginning of an Odyssey

By late 1955, the Chess brothers were well aware of the pattern. Disc jockeys at radio stations that played pop music were reluctant to play anything from Chess or Checker unless it was already showing evidence of popular appeal. The Chess labels were known as "R&B labels," and for good reason, but that left them out of potentially reaching wider audiences more quickly. Therefore, they conceived of a new label that would cater to a pop audience.

That label they named Marterry, after the Chess brothers' sons: Marshall and Terry. They released one album by Al Hibbler in November 1955. After that, the Chess brothers decided that Marterry needed an official startup. On December 17th, they announced the rationale behind Marterry and an official startup at the beginning of 1956.

By that time, Leonard Chess had planned to reissue songs from the Crystalette Records (1949-1954) catalog – including specifically the pre-Capitol Kay Starr recordings that Crystalette had obtained from Lamplighter Records. That idea seemed not to get past the planning stage, for Crystalette reopened in 1956 and began pressing new singles.

Having released just one album, the plan called for Marterry to release one by Kay Starr and another by Pinky Winters. After the deal for Starr's masters fell through, Leonard Chess rethought the concept for Marterry – a label that released just two singles in February 1956. This led to Marterry becoming Argo Records.



Chess Bros.' Marterry Label To Hit Stands

CHICAGO, Jan. 28.—The first releases on the new Marterry label, to be launched here by the Chess Brothers, will hit the stands next week. Initially, the company will put out two pop singles, and two 12-inch LP's will be ready for shipment on February 15.

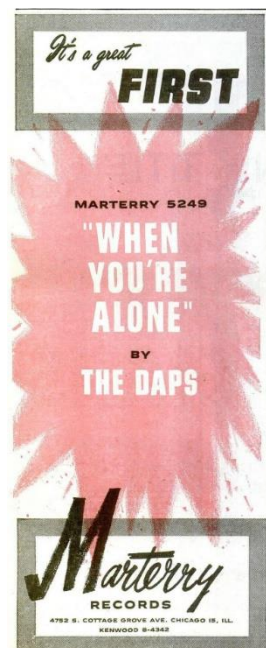
The label, which has been planned in order to insure pop coverage and exposure on material turned up by the brothers' Chess and Checker operations, will be sold thru an entirely different set of distributors (The Billboard, December 24). Chess and Checker are mainly rhythm and blues oriented.

Last week, Leonard Chess returned from a trip to the West Coast, bringing with him the entire old Crystalette record catalog, which he purchased there. This includes 28 Kay Starr masters, plus several erstwhile hits by Mr. Goon Bones, including "Sweet Georgia Brown."

In addition to the previously reported signing of thrush Savannah Churchill for Marterry, the label has inked ballad singer Bull Moose

Jackson, formerly with King, and the Daps, a vocal group. Bobby (Later Alligator) Charles, whose current hit is on Chess, will be shifted to Marterry. In the jazz line, Chess signed "cool" thrush Pinky Winters in California.

The first two LP's will carry programs by Misses Winters and Starr.



Argo Label Styles

Label 56

Black-and-white label with a drawing of the Argo, the ship that Argus constructed for the Argonauts – who sailed with Jason in search of the Golden Fleece.



Label 57

ARGO runs vertically down the left side, with “ULTRA HIGH FIDELITY.”

Mono: Black label with silver print

Some copies (from mid-1958 on) have the additional print “Audio Odyssey by Argo” at the top.

Records with and without the “Audio Odyssey” print appear through 1959.

The presence or absence of the additional words varies by pressing plant, but which printers used the additional words seems to vary from album to album.

Stereo: Gold label with black print

Albums have the print “Stereo Odyssey by Argo” at the top.

This label was used only on stereo records, beginning in 1958.



Label 60

ARGO runs vertically down the left side, with "ULTRA HIGH FIDELITY."

Mono: Gray label with black print

"Audio Odyssey by Argo" at the top.

This label was used on mono albums from spring 1960 until 1965.

Stereo: Blue label with black print

ARGO runs vertically down the left side, with "ULTRA HIGH FIDELITY."

"Stereo Odyssey by Argo" at the top.

This label was used on stereo albums from spring 1960 until 1965.



Label 64

Mustard, pink and white label

"Audio Odyssey" at the top.

This label was used (somewhat randomly) on a few albums in 1964.

It is similar to the label that Argo used on their singles.



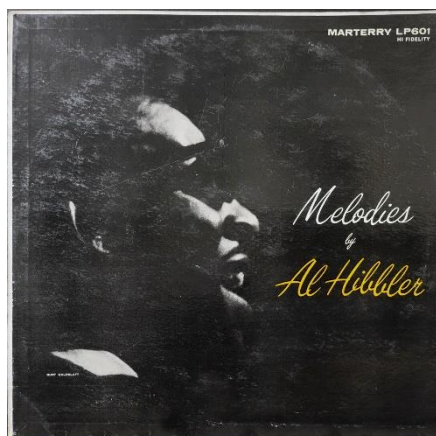
See the end of this article for Cadet label styles.

Melodies by Al Hibbler

Al Hibbler

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: November 12, 1955

This is a collection of singles that Hibbler recorded for the Sunrise label in the late 1940s, and which Chess purchased in February 1951 and reissued over the subsequent years.



"MELODIES by AL HIBBLER"—Marterry LP 601 (12" LP)

WHAT WILL I TELL MY HEART; POOR BUTTERFLY; MY LITTLE BROWN BOOK; FEATHER ROLL BLUES; I LOVE YOU; SOLITUDE; LOVER COME BACK TO ME; TREES; IT DON'T MEAN A THING; FAT AND FORTY.

It is very fortunate that sooner or later the great jazz singers are "discovered" by the non-jazz conscious record buyer—the pop music enthusiast. This year Al Hibbler made the jump when he clicked with his smash waxing of "Unchained" and he's proving that he's not a one-timer as the tune "He" continues to climb the lists. On this album, we hear Hibbler as he sounded some years ago, singing standards, blues and swing numbers. The record could be tagged a collector's item and should reveal to all of Hibbler's newer enthusiasts, the many facets of the singer's great talent. Hibbler's former fans should also enjoy this greatly.

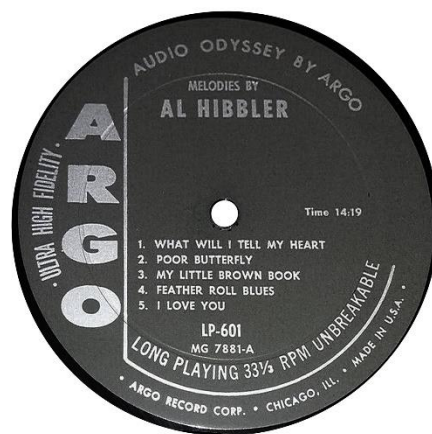
Reissued in 1957 on the Argo label:

Chess Pop Label Changes Name

CHICAGO — Len Chess of Chess and Checker Records is changing the name of his pop label, "Marterry" to "Argo".

The first release on the newly changed label, now being recorded, will feature James Moody and his alto sax with Eddie Jefferson doing the vocal chores on "Moody's Mood for Love".

After complaints from bandleader Ralph Marterie, who was based in Chicago (as was Chess), Leonard Chess suggested in mid-March that he was seeking to change the name of the label. Within two weeks, they had selected the name Argo.

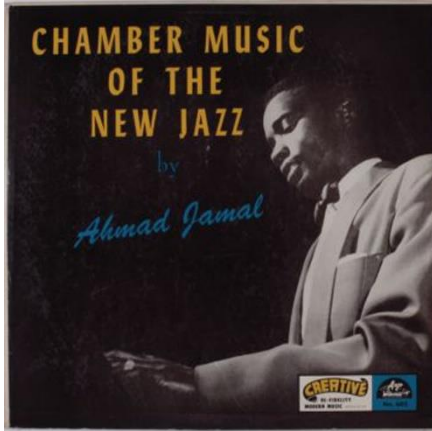


Chamber Music of the New Jazz

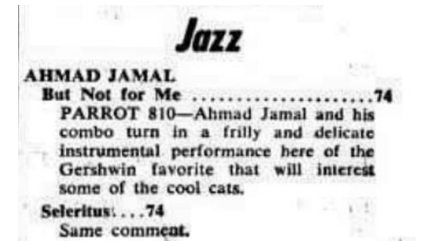
Ahmad Jamal

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: August 18, 1956

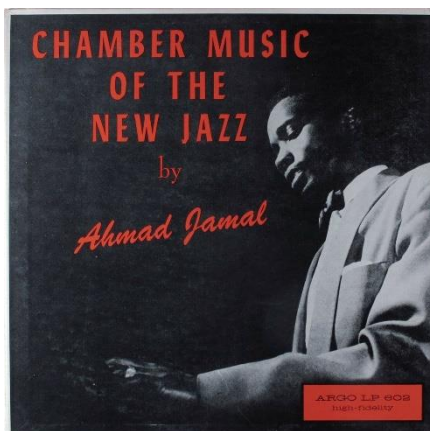
Label 56



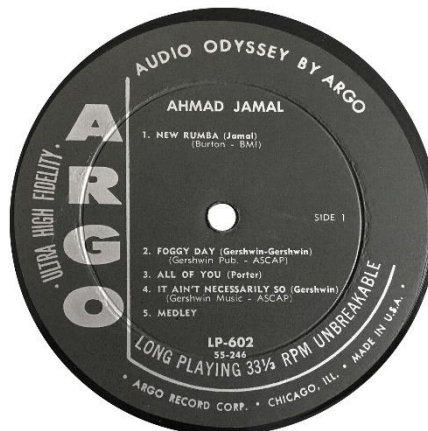
After some success in early 1955 on the Parrot label, Ahmad Jamal recorded an album, which was released later in the year. Argo bought the masters for the album and signed Jamal to a recording contract. *Chamber Music of the New Jazz* was Argo's release of the Parrot album.

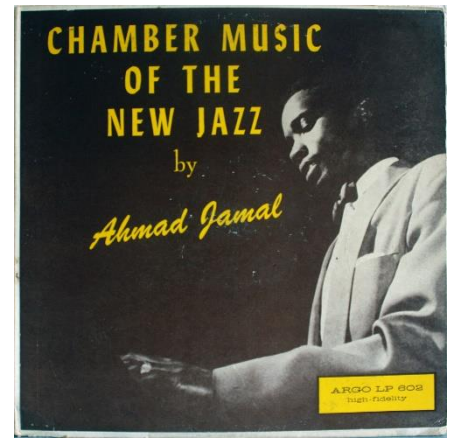
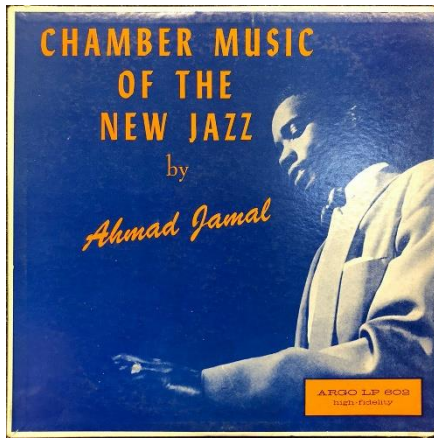


Label 57



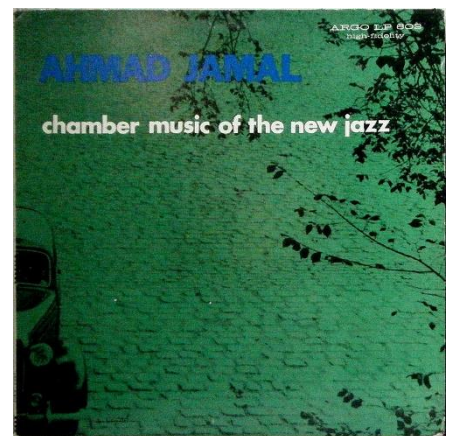
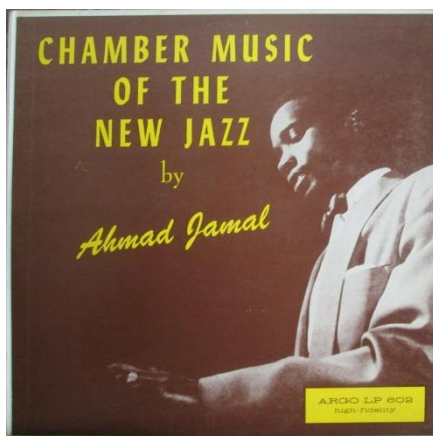
LP-602





Beginning in 1957, Argo reissued the album several times. The first major change replaced the “Creative” tag on the front cover with what was then a more typical Argo designator. The album cover changed color configurations several times, with the last one appearing to be the one with yellow print.

Label 60



In about 1960, Argo redesigned the album’s sleeve art.

Cadet reissued the album in rechanneled stereo in 1967 (Label 65) and again in 1975.

ARGO

The home of
"CREATIVE"

Hi-Fidelity Modern Music.

●

WHERE TOP-SELLING
ALBUMS ARE
CREATED
MORE OFTEN
FOR YOUR
PLEASURE.

ARGO #602
LP ALBUM
"CHAMBER MUSIC OF
THE NEW JAZZ"
(12 live selections)
with
AHMAD JAMAL

Piano music at its best with one of the country's
top musicians.
\$3.98 LIST

ARGO #603
LP ALBUM
"FLUTE 'N THE BLUES"
(10 fine selections)
with
James Moody
and his flute
Eddy Jefferson, vocal

The finest combination of its kind making music that
hits the hearts of everyone. Should be a big seller.
\$3.98 LIST

ARGO #604
LP ALBUM
"LONELY ONE"
(11 beautiful selections)
with
Pinky Winters (Miss)

One of the finer feminine voices that has ear appeal
—mellow and soothing. A great album.
\$3.98 LIST

ARGO #605
LP ALBUM
"WITHOUT SAUCE"
(12 top selections)
with
The Dick Lane Quartet

One of the most versatile groups in the country.
Vocal and Instrumental.
\$3.98 LIST

ARGO RECORD CO. 4750 South Cottage Grove Ave., Chicago 16, Ill., Phone: KENwood 8-4342

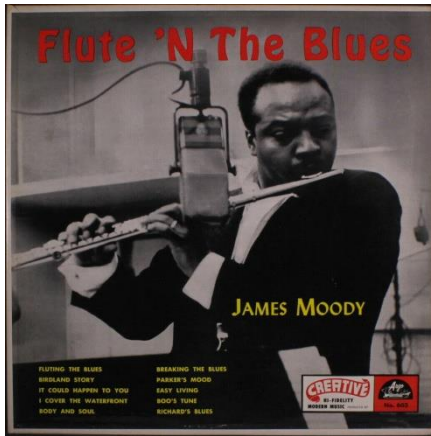
Flute 'n the Blues

James Moody

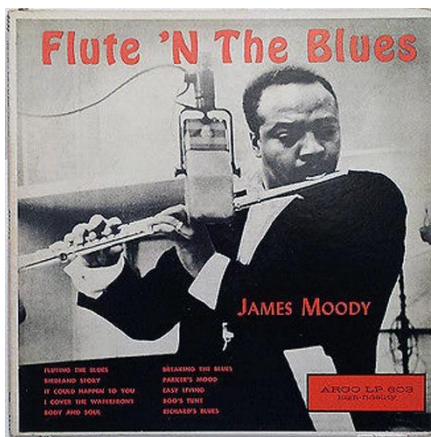
First Appearance in Trade Magazines: August 18, 1956

ALP-603

Label 56



Label 57



LP-603



Label 60



Cadet reissued the album in rechanneled stereo in 1967 (Label 65), in 1971, and again in 1975.

Lonely One

Pinky Winters

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: August 18, 1956

Label 56

ALP-604



The album was reissued later in 1956 with a different front cover. It did not appear on any of the later Argo label styles.



Ms. Winters (Phyllis Wozniak) recorded only two albums during the 50s. This album from 1956, and a ten-inch LP from 1954 (Vantage VLP-3).

Without Sauce

Dick Lane Quartet

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: August 18, 1956

Label 56

ALP-605



Argo Releases 7 LPs

CHICAGO—Argo prexy, Phil Chess, opened the gate on a raft of jazz LP's this past week. The seven LP's, packaged in attractive full color albums, read like an all-star jazz revue.

The LP's are titled as follows: "Doorway To Jazz" featuring Cy Touff and Miff Mole; "Norman Simmons Trio", Norm Simmons' piano; "Zoot", Zoot Sims; "Chicago Scene", Sandy Mosse, Ira Schulman, and Eddy Baker; "Count 'Em 88", Ahmad Jamal; "Ramsey Lewis And His Gentlemen Of Swing"; "I'm In The Mood For Love", James Moody.

"While all of these albums have not been released to the retail stores, our distributors have heard and ordered," Chess offered.

"In fact," he went on, "initial orders have been more than gratifying. New York and Chicago are leading at the moment."

Doorway to Dixie

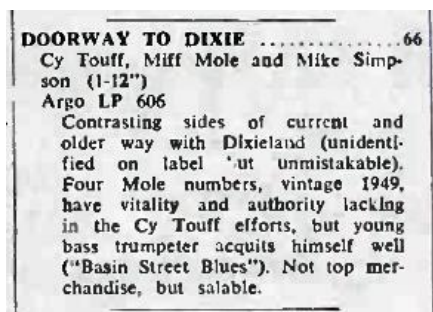
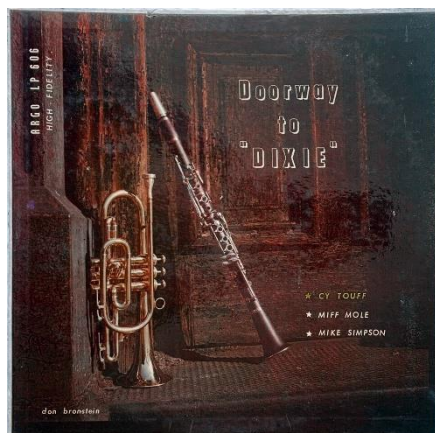
Cy Touff & Miff Mole

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: March 23, 1957

Reviewed April 29, 1957

LP-606

Label 57



Norman Simmons Trio

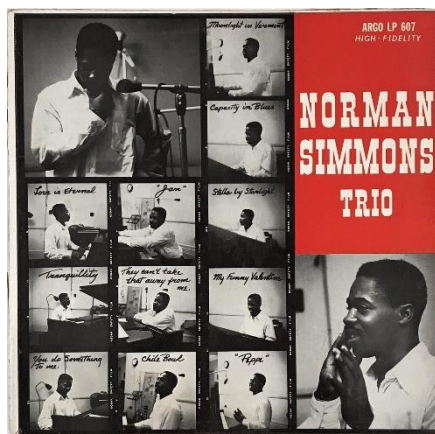
Norman Simmons Trio

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: March 23, 1957

Reviewed April 29, 1957

LP-607

Label 57



Zoot

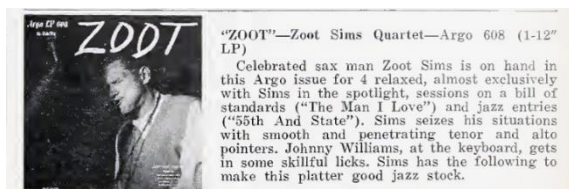
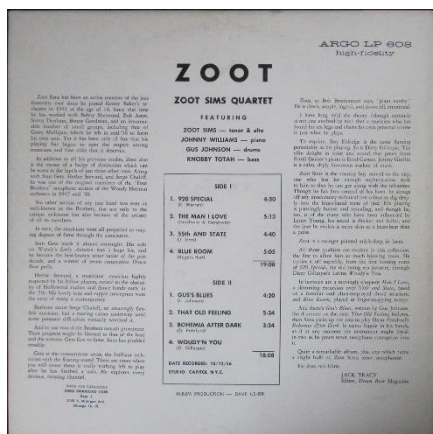
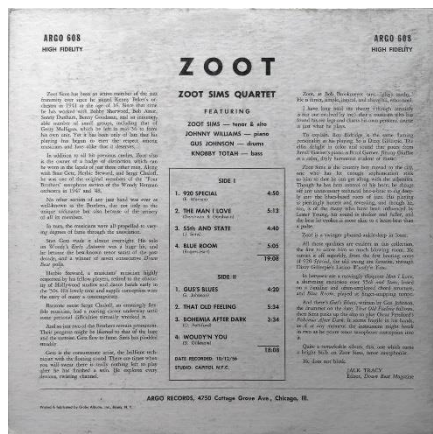
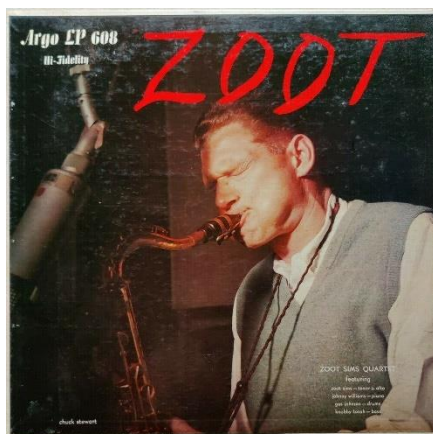
Zoot Sims Quartet

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: March 23, 1957

Reviewed: May 4, 1957

Label 57

LP-608



The second back cover has the album number at the top and bottom written in what would be the standard typeface that Chess/Checker/Argo used. In addition, Argo added a credit to Dave Usher for production and changed the address.

Label 60



Cadet reissued the album in rechanneled stereo in 1975.

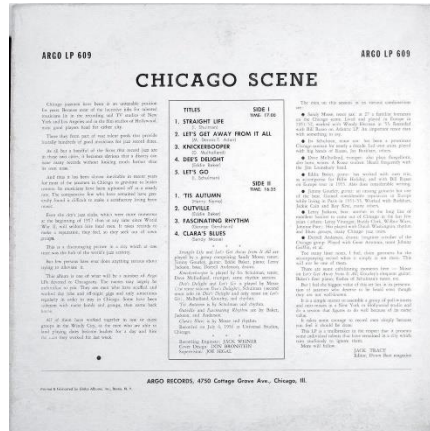
Chicago Scene

Sandy Mosse, Ira Schulman, Eddie Baker

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: March 23, 1957

Reviewed: May 2, 1957

Label 57



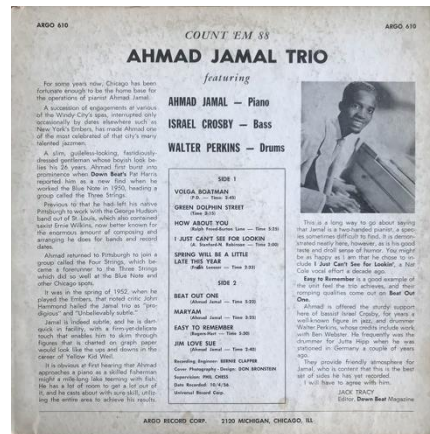
Count 'Em 88

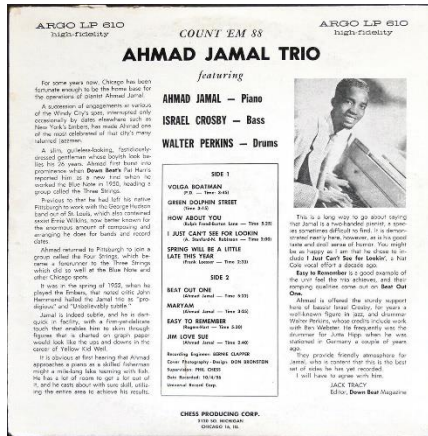
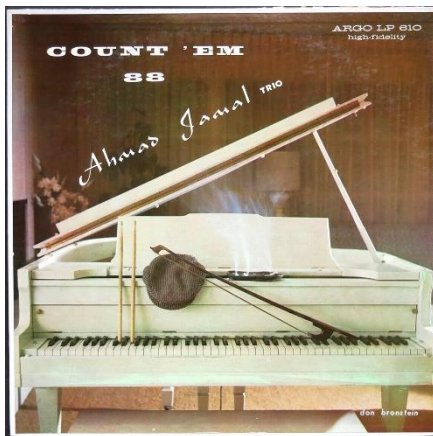
Ahmad Jamal Trio

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: March 23, 1957

Reviewed: April 18, 1957; May 20, 1957

Label 57





Label 60



Cadet reissued the album in rechanneled stereo in 1971 and 1975.

Ramsey Lewis and his Gentle-Men of Swing

LP-611

Ramsey Lewis

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: March 23, 1957

Ad: March 30, 1957

Label 57



ARGO
RECORDS PRESENT

A NEW RECORDING STAR

Ramsey Lewis
AND HIS TRIO

with their first LP
Argo #611

**"THE GENTLE-MEN
OF SWING"**

Label 60



Argo reissued this album in 1966 as *Swingin'* (Argo LP-711). They reissued it in rechanneled stereo with the new title in 1967 and 1975. Later in the 70s, they returned the album to its original cover and title and reissued it again in rechanneled stereo.

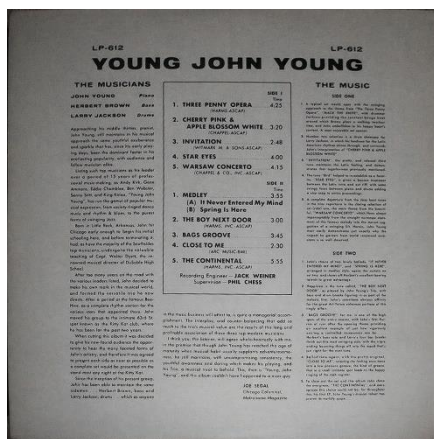
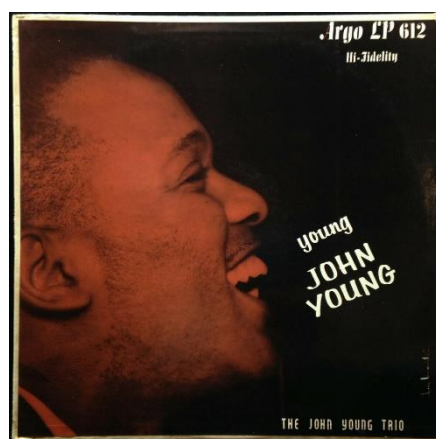
Young John Young

LP-612

The John Young Trio

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: June 22, 1957 (Advance)

Label 57



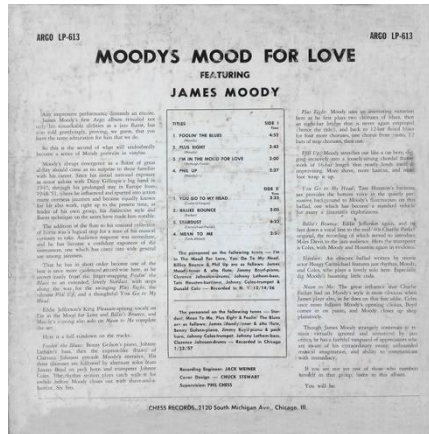
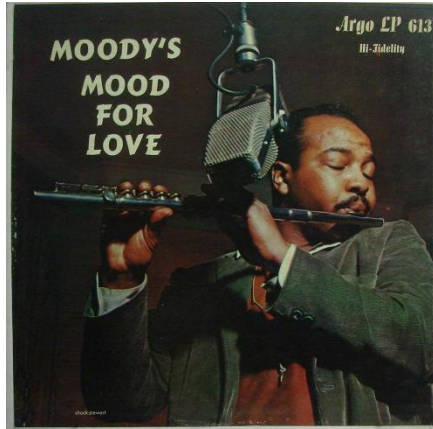
Moody's Mood for Love

Ramsey Lewis

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: March 23, 1957

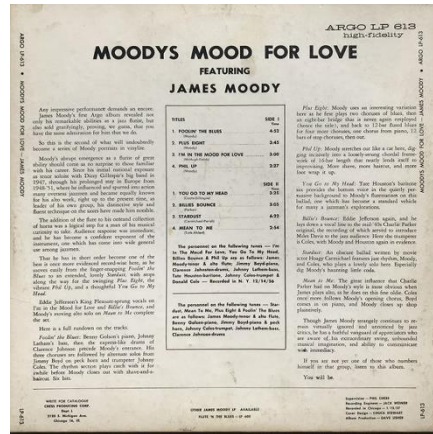
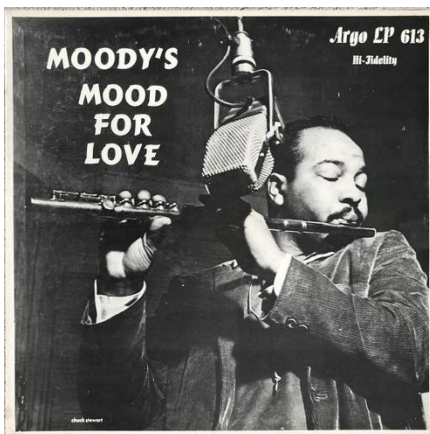
Comments: August 10, 1957

Label 57



ing set-up, Superior Sales. Sam Weiss says they are doing very well with "He's Gone" by The Chantels on End; "Sun Is Shining" by Jimmy Reed on Vee-Jay; and "Moody's Mood For Love"—the Argo LP.

Label 60



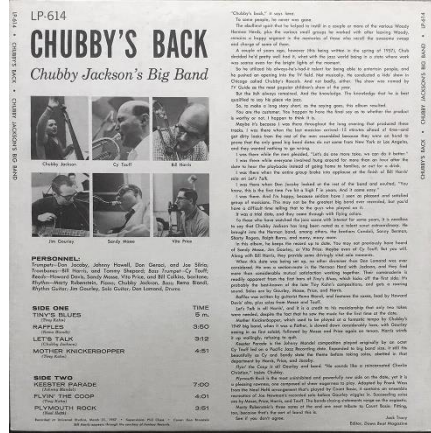
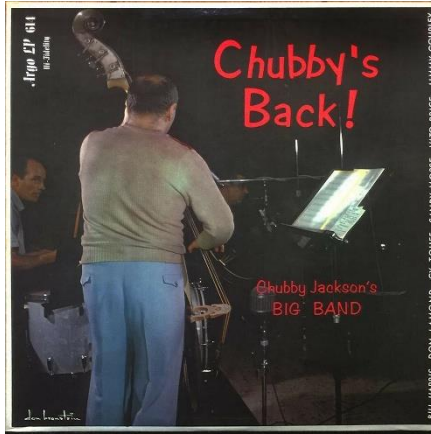
Cadet reissued the LP in rechanneled stereo in 1968, 1971, and 1975.

Chubby's Back

Chubby Jackson's Big Band

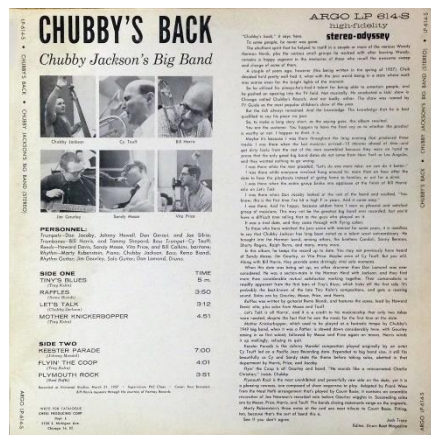
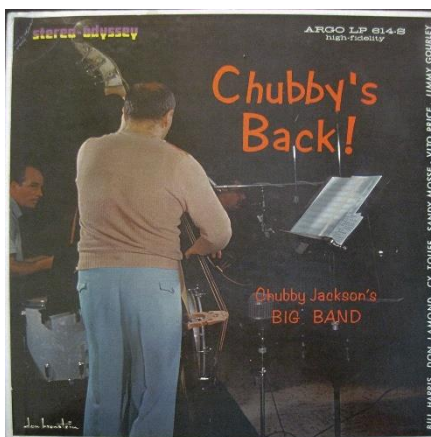
First Appearance in Trade Magazines: September 30, 1957

Label 57



CHUBBY'S BACK (1-12)—Chubby Jackson's Big Band. Argos LP 614—Excellent big band disk made in Chicago by several Herman vets, plus talented natives. Soloists include Bill Harris, Cy Touff, talented tenorman Vito Price and highly-touted Sandy Mosse. Style is Woody Herman tempered by Basie—modern, but swinging and accessible. Will interest collectors.

Argo pressed Chubby's album in stereo in summer 1959.



Cadet reissued the album in 1965.

Swingin' Down the Lane

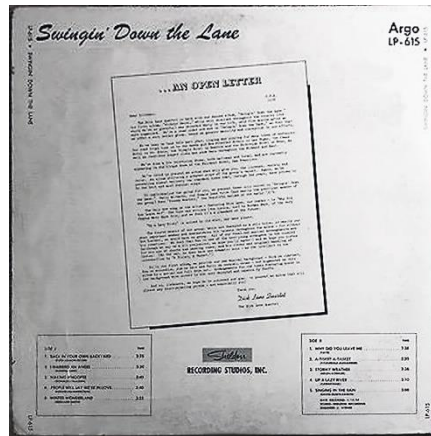
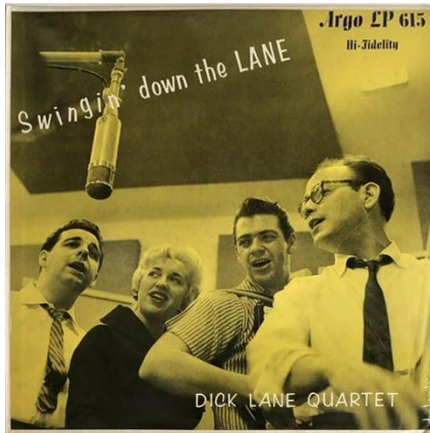
LP-615

Dick Lane Quartet

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: no show (released spring 1958)

Recorded January 15, 1958

Label 57



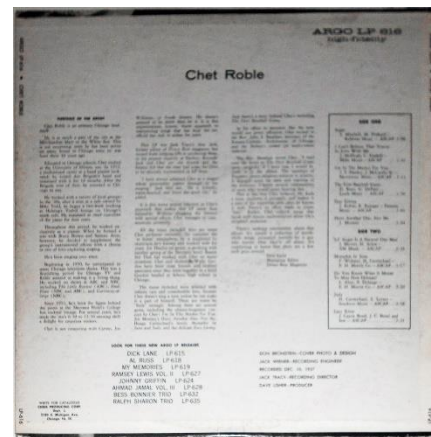
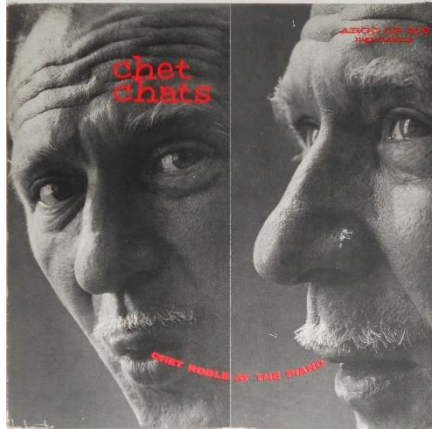
Chet Chats

LP-616

Chet Roble

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: October 4, 1958

Label 57



Chess Releases Chet Robles LP

CHICAGO—Leonard Chess, prexy of Chess Producing Company, this city, announced the release last week of jazz pianist Chet Robles' album "Chet Chats" on the subsidiary Argo label.

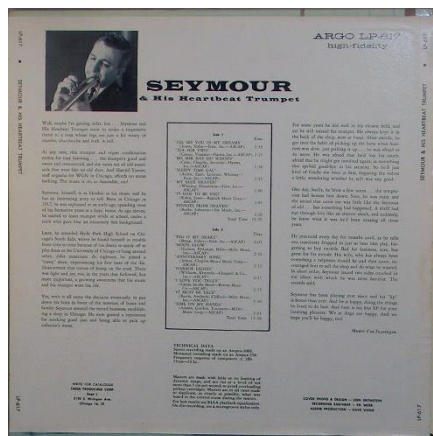
Robles, a popular jazz pianist and raconteur, has made the scene here for years in intimate clubs, and via radio and television.

Chess advises that he plans to increase considerably the skedding of jazz LP's during the remainder of the year on Argo.

Seymour and his “Heartbeat Trumpet”

LP-617

A color photograph of a harbor scene. In the foreground, a man wearing a hat and sunglasses stands on the deck of a white sailboat, looking out at the water. The sailboat has the name 'Seymour' on its side. The harbor is filled with many other sailboats and yachts. In the background, a city with a large, prominent domed building is visible on a hillside, surrounded by mountains. The sky is clear and blue. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.



★★★ TIME ON MY HANDS
Seymour and His "Heartbeat Trumpet."
Argo LP 617. Sweet, melodious trumpet work by Seymour in the old Henry Busse-pre-swing style, that should appeal to many. Seymour plays over the organ accompaniment of Harold Turner and the sound is attractive. Tunes include old favorites such as "Tea for Two," "Peg 'o My Heart," "It Had to Be You," and "Time on My Hands."

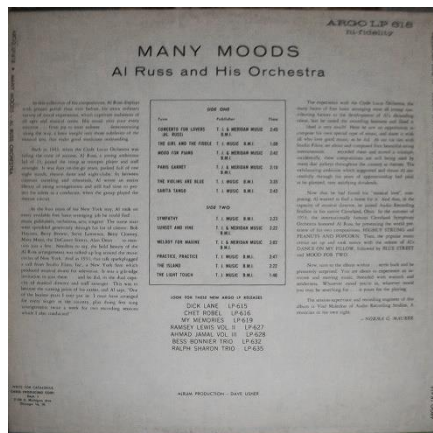
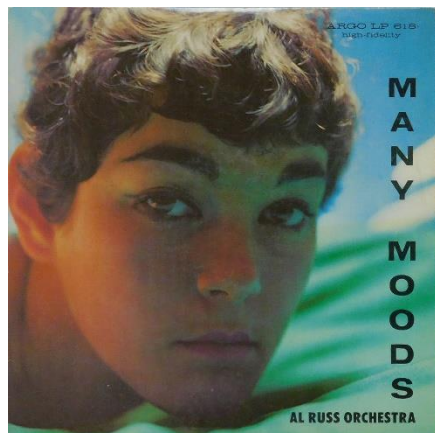
Many Moods

Al Russ and His Orchestra

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: August 18, 1958

Label 57

LP-618



AHMAD JAMAL

jazz best-sellers
1. Ahmad Jamal, But Not For Me (Argo 628)

SEPTEMBER 4, 1958

LP628 BUT NOT FOR ME
LP602 CHAMBER MUSIC OF JAZZ
LP610 COUNT EM "88"
EP1076 MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC
45-5294 BUT NOT FOR ME/MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC

NEW RELEASES
SONNY STITT
LP629
SWINGIN' THE LOOP
VITO PRICE LP631
CHUBBY'S BACK
CHUBBY JACKSON LP614
CHUBBY SAYS
CHUBBY JACKSON LP625
THEME FOR THE
TALL ONE
BESS BONNIER LP632

AUDIO CATALOG
601 AL HIBBLER
603 JAMES MOODY, VOL. 1
604 PINKY WINTERS
605 DICK LANE, VOL. 1
606 DOORWAY TO DIXIE (MIFF MOLE & CY TOUFF)
607 NORMAN SIMMONS
608 ZOOT SIMS
609 CHICAGO SCENE
611 RAMSEY LEWIS, VOL. 1
612 JOHN YOUNG TRIO
613 MOODY'S MOOD FOR LOVE, JAMES MOODY, VOL. 2
615 DICK LANE, VOL. 2
616 CHET ROBIE
618 MANY MOODS, AL RUSS & HIS ORCHESTRA
620 OUT ON A LIMB, CLARK TERRY
621 MJT + 3
622 THE JAZZ EXPONENTS
623 MAX
624 JOHNNY GRIFFIN
626 COOKIN, PAUL GONSALVES
627 RAMSEY LEWIS, VOL. 2
630 JIMMY WOODE
633 THIS IS ME J.C., J. C. HEARD
634 LATEEF AT CRANBROOK YUSEF LATEEF
635 2:38 AM, RALPH SHARON TRIO

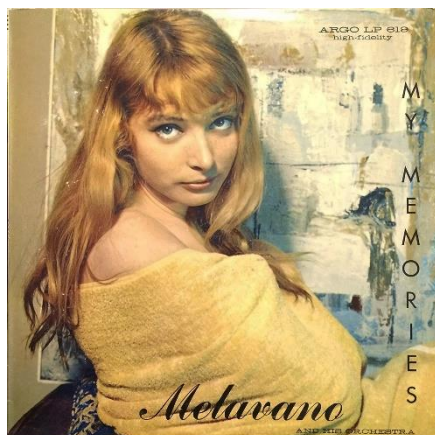
My Memories

Melavano and His Orchestra

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: November 10, 1958

LP-619

Label 57



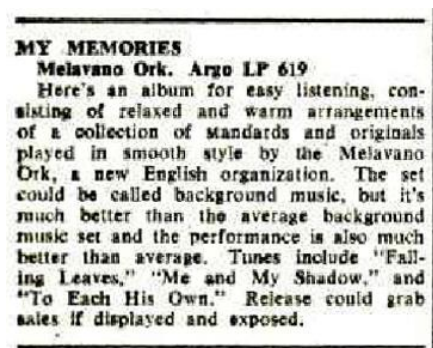
My Memories

Melavano and His Orchestra

Stereo

LP-619S

Label 57



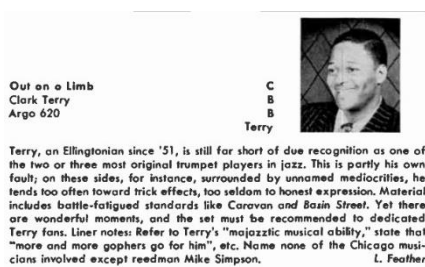
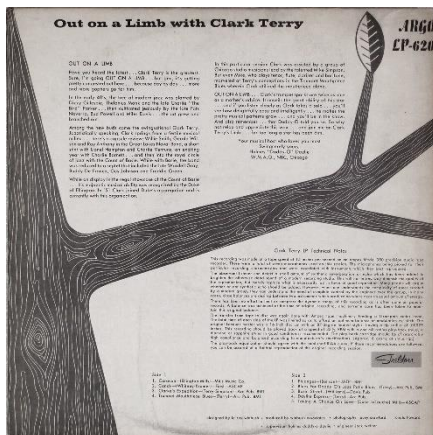
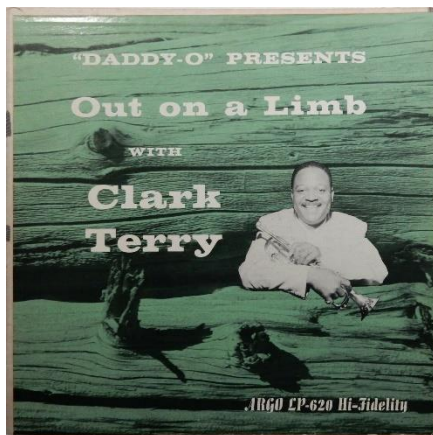
Out on a Limb

Clark Terry

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: May 1958

LP-620

Label 57



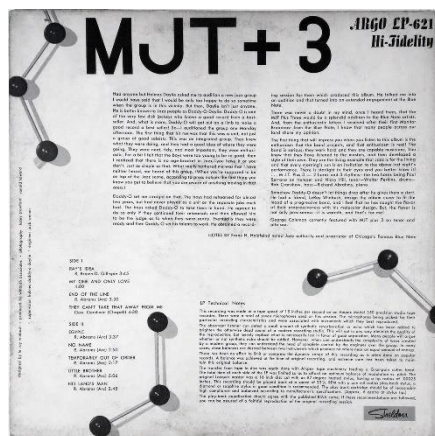
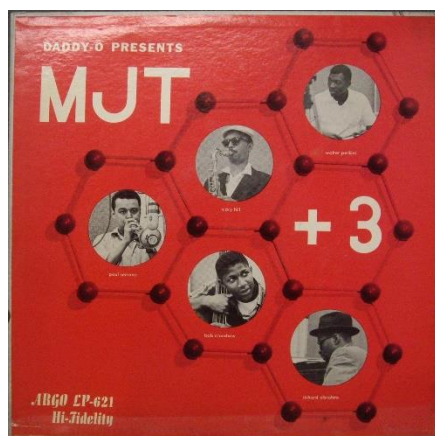
MJT + 3

LP-621

MJT + 3

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: July 24, 1958
Probably released in June.

Label 57



Paul Serrano-Nicky Hill

MJT PLUS 3—Argo 621: Ray's Idea; My One and Only Love; End of the Line; They Can't Take That Away from Me; Bessie; No Name; Temporarily out of Order; Little Brother; No Land's Man.

Personnel: Serrano, trumpet; Hill, tenor; Richard Abrams, piano; Bob Cranshaw, bass; Walter Perkins, drums.

Rating: ★★★½

MJT Plus 3 is a combo that had been rehearsing in Chicago for a couple of years before playing an extended engagement in the Blue Note during a period unspiced in Frank Holzfeind's interesting notes.

Though both Serrano and Hill play forceful solos in the nine numbers recorded, the main strength and appeal of the group is felt in their ensemble work on the original lines written by pianist Abrams—pleasant modern tunes with occasional boppish overtones. All the numbers except *Ray's* and *They Can't Take That Away from Me*. Both trumpet and tenor sustain a close rapport in every case.

Of the principal soloists, Serrano is the more forthright. He plays with authority and authoritativeness in either open or muted context. Hill shows nice tone, good technique, and acceptable taste, especially on his ballad solo (*Love*). Abrams is a strong, Garnerish player with considerable originality and a full, two-handed approach. (J.A.T.)

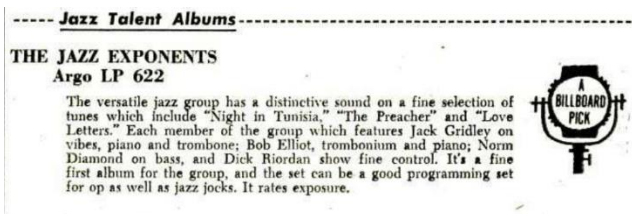
The Jazz Exponents

LP-622

The Jazz Exponents

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: November 10, 1958

Label 57



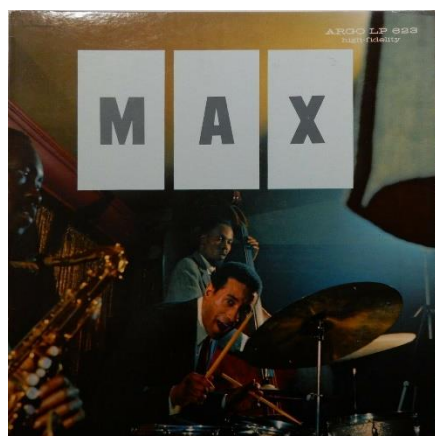
"MAX"

LP-623

Max Roach Quintette

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: November 15, 1958

Label 57





Label 60



Cadet reissued the album in mono on Label 65 and in rechanneled stereo on Label 75.

The Johnny Griffin Quartet

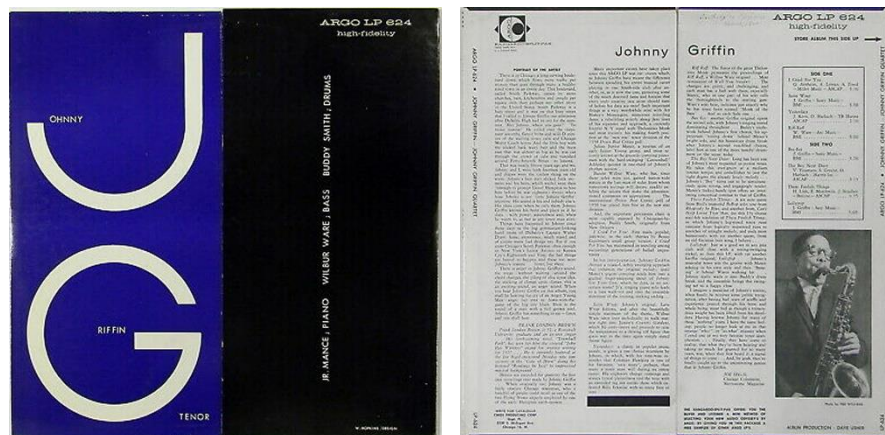
LP-624

The Johnny Griffin Quartet

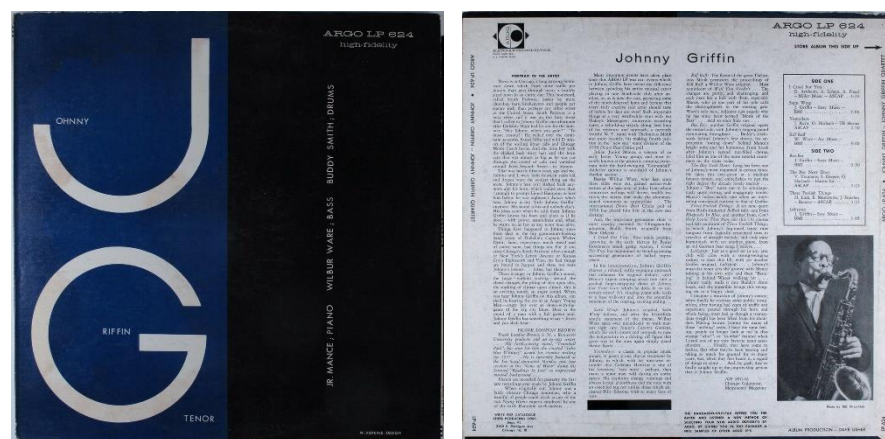
First Appearance in Trade Magazines: March 5, 1959

Probably released in February 1959.

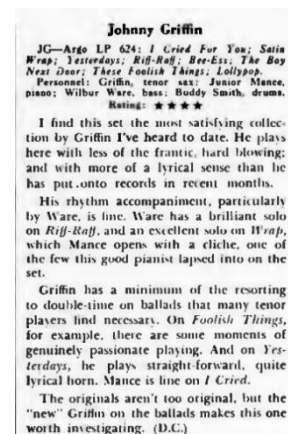
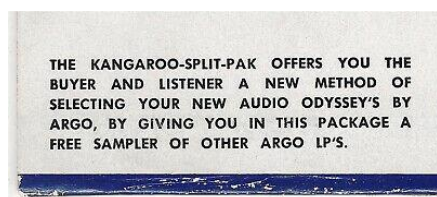
Label 57



Griffin recorded this album in May/June 1955 for the Parrot label. The first pressing came in a "Kangaroo Split-Pak" cover which opened in the middle (by separating into two halves). These contained copies of a sampler EP (Argo S-100) which contained selections from Argo albums 636, 624, 635, 633, and 622.



A few later copies contained the EP in a more traditional cover. This second cover had an additional cardboard separator, being composed of three pieces of cardboard instead of two. Most later copies had standard covers and no EP. Cadet reissued the album on Label 75.



I'm Entitled to You

Chubby Jackson's Big Band

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: July 28, 1958

LP-625

Label 57



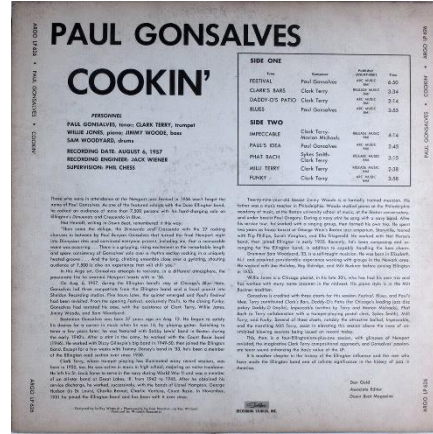
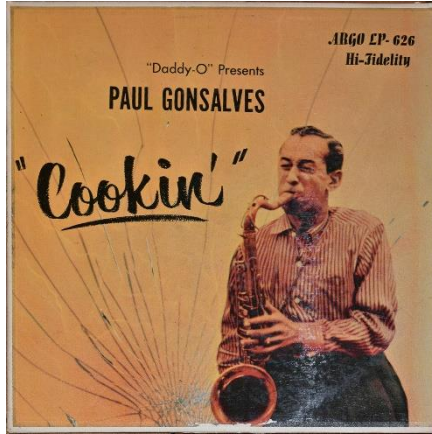
Cookin'

Paul Gonsalves

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: February 1959

Label 57

LP-626



Cookin'

Paul Gonsalves
Argo 626

Gonsalves achieved much of his success through a performance with Ellington at Newport that aroused the audience to a frenzy. As a result he seems to have a tendency, at least on fast tempos, to try to create the same mood again. Actually he is at his best in a more relaxed groove, at slow tempos in which his horn is pleasantly reminiscent of Ben Webster. His teammates here are three fellow Ellingtonians, all of whom offer first class first-aid: Jimmy Woode, bass; Sam Woodyard, drums; and trumpeter Clark Terry, who also wrote most of the original tunes. The group is completed by Chicago pianist Willie Jones, who seems to have been frightened by Milt Buckner. Notes: Don Gold. Good.

B
B
A

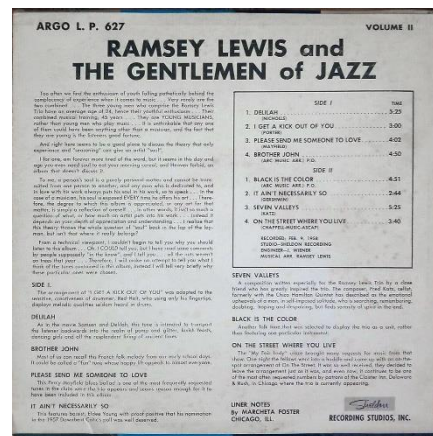
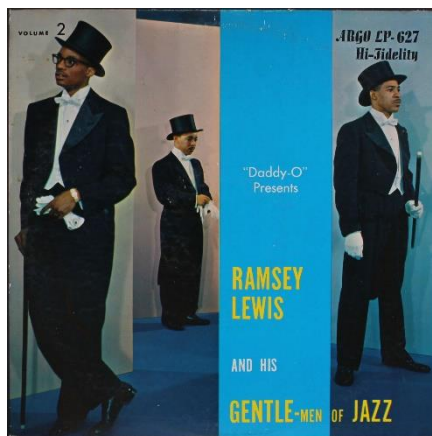
Gentle-Men of Jazz

Ramsey Lewis

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: June 9, 1958

Label 57

LP-627





RAMSEY LEWIS AND HIS GENTLEMEN OF JAZZ
(1-12") Argo LP 627

Ramsey Lewis and his Gentlemen of Jazz have been getting a lot of attention in Chicago via their appearances at the Cloister Inn in the windy city. This is their second LP for the label. Trio features Lewis on piano, R. Holt on drums and E. Young on bass. The trio plays some interesting music, a sort of cross between modern and cocktail style. Tunes on this set include folk

Label 60



Cadet Label 65



Rechanneled stereo release dates to 1967.

Cadet Label 75



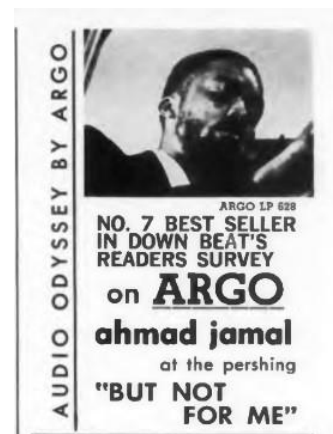
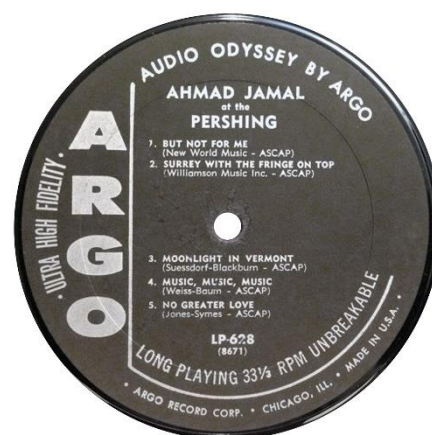
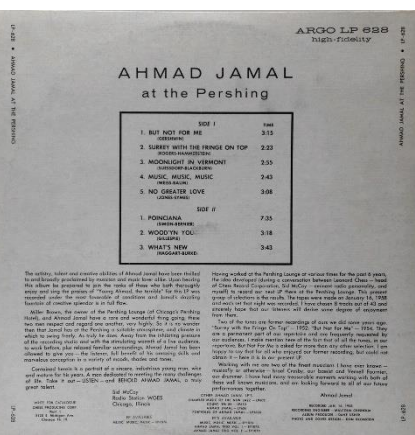
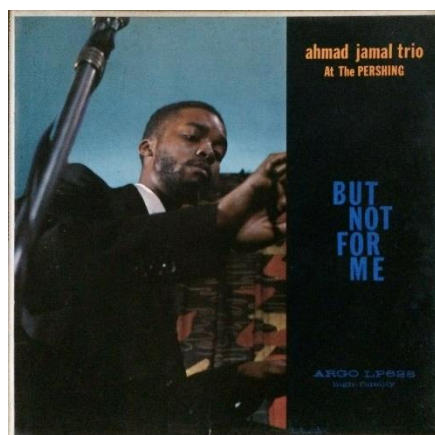
Ahmad Jamal at the Pershing

LP-628

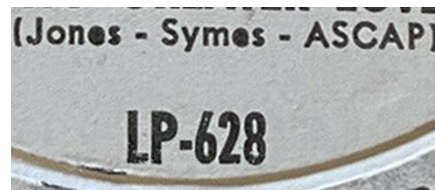
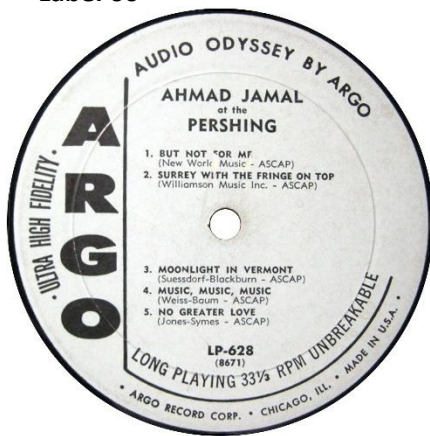
Ahmad Jamal

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: August 21, 1958

Label 57 (mono)



Label 60

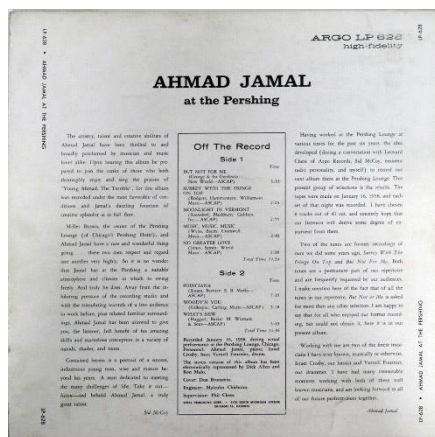


new releases
on **ARGO**

LP616 Chet Robel
LP623 Max Roach
LP624 Johnny Griffin
LP631. Swinging the Loop
 Vito Price
LP633. This Is Me, J. C.
 J. C. Heard
LP634. Lateef at
 Cranbrook Yusuf Lateef

Write for Argo LP Catalog
ARGO RECORDS
Department D
2120 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago 16, Illinois

Label 60 (stereo)



The RCA matrix prefix M08Y- indicates that Argo offered the album for sale in stereo in 1961. In the middle of 1960, Argo switched to a light gray label for mono LPs and a blue label for stereo ones.

Cadet Label 65



Cadet Label 71



Cadet Label 75



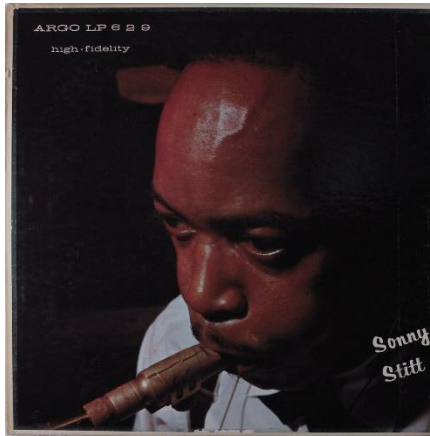
Sonny Stitt

LP-629

Ahmad Jamal

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: August 9, 1958

Label 57



Label 60



Cadet reissued the album in rechanneled stereo on Label 65, Label 71, and Label 75.

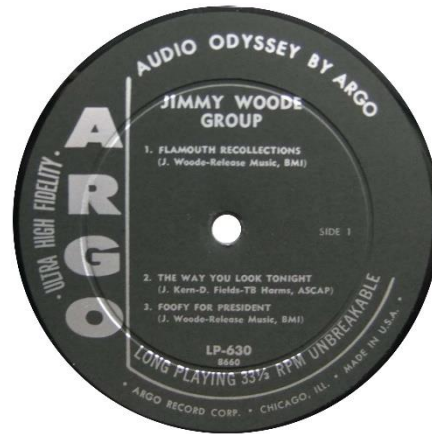
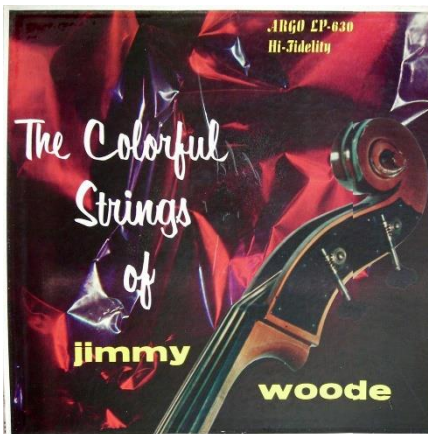
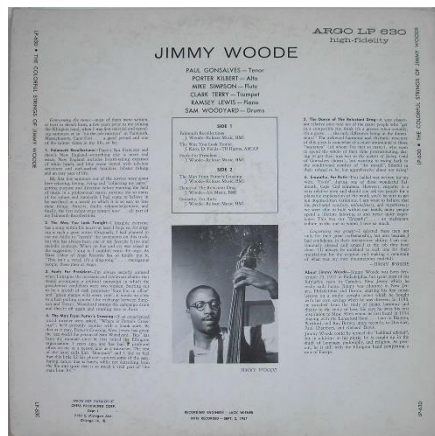
The Colorful Strings of Jimmy Woode

LP-630

Jimmy Woode Group

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: January 5, 1959

Label 57



After some discussions with a British record label that was also named Argo, Chess decided to switch immediately to a new name – one that began with “C” like Chess and Checker. The Cadet label released new albums until 1971 and continued to reissue the earlier Chess/Checker/Argo material through the end of the 1970s. The most recent reissues were from the All-Platinum Record Group, which purchased Chess in August 1975.

CADET
CHESS-CHECKER-ARGO

A NAME IS EASY TO CHANGE; A REPUTATION ISN'T. WE'VE BEEN KNOWN AS ARGO RECORDS FOR TEN YEARS AND DURING THAT TIME WE'VE BUILT AND ENJOYED A REPUTATION FOR PRODUCING PHONOGRAPH RECORDS OF UNSURPASSED EXCELLENCE. BUT NAMES ARE NOT UNIQUE, AND IF AN ORGANIZATION FINDS THAT THEY ALONE NO LONGER ANSWER TO AND FOR THE RECORD OF THEIR NAME, AND THAT THEIR INDIVIDUALITY IS AT STAKE, A NEW IDENTITY MUST BE ESTABLISHED. OUR NAME WAS ARGO—OUR NEW NAME IS CADET. THE NAME AND ONLY THE NAME HAS CHANGED.



There's a World of Excitement on Cadet

Cadet Label Styles

Label 65

Blue, white, and red label with CADET across the top.



Label 71

Yellow, pink, and blue label with Cadet at the left. Rim print reads "A GRT Record Group Co., Div. of GRT Corp."



Label 75

Yellow, pink, and blue label with Cadet at the left. Rim print reads "A Division of All Platinum Record Group."



All-Platinum Buys Chess From GRT

ENGLEWOOD, N.J. — Joe Robinson of All-Platinum Records has bought the Chess, Checker and Cadet Record Companies from GRT. Or as the official announcement states it, the three Chess labels were bought by the Platinum Record Company, Inc., parent company of All-Platinum Group thru one of its subsidiary firms, Astroscope Records, Inc. The purchase was made from the GRT Group of Sunnyvale, Calif. which purchased it a number of years ago from the estate of the late Leonard Chess, founder of the label. The financial aspects of the agreement were not revealed.

Included in the purchase were all 25,000 masters in the catalog. The deal was officially concluded Aug. 20. All logos of Chess, Checker and Cadet as well as all existing artist contracts are now the property of Platinum Records. Platinum plans to maintain "the great Chess name," as a spokesman for the label stated last week.

How the Chess product would be distributed in the U.S. was not yet determined. But it was announced that GRT of Canada would continue to market both Chess records and tapes in that country.

Another stipulation of the sale agreement was the granting of an additional 5 years of tape rights to GRT of all Chess product.

The spokesman for All-Platinum also advised that the industry will be seeing immediate activity in the TV area on Chuck Berry who was recently the #1 inductee into the Rock Hall of Fame, announced a week ago on Don Kirshner's "Rock Awards Show."

Chess Records was the early home of many legendary music stars including: Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, the Dells, Etta James, Ramsey Lewis, Ahmad Jamal, Sonny Stitt, Gene Ammons, Jack McDuff and a host of others.