

GROOVE

A PRODUCT OF RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA
MADE IN U. S. A.

Groove RECORDS

Produced by
Frank Daniels

1. Album listings
(LG-1000 to LG-1005,
GM/GS-1000,
and a few EPs)

Some History and Some Records

As RCA Victor was organizing "Label X" in 1953, which would become their jazz subsidiary, they determined to move their Rhythm & Blues offerings into a new label as well. This label they christened Groove, and they organized Groove and X together in their corporate structure.

RCA to Intro Groove Label

NEW YORK, Jan. 9. — RCA Victor will introduce its new Groove label, a series devoted exclusively to rhythm and blues disks, in February. This will mark the end of rhythm and blues issues on the RCA Victor label. Still to be ironed out is the distribution set-up for the Groove label. Plans are expected to call for offering the line to the current group of RCA Victor distributors, but not insisting that they carry the line. Some Victor brass believe that it would probably mean that many independent disk distributors would wind up handling the Groove label, since some of the Victor distributors consider themselves not set up to do the best merchandising and selling job on r.&b. disks. The artist and repertoire duties for Groove would be handled by Danny Kessler, currently in the same position for the parent label.

shortly. . . . The first Groove records, new r.&b. label started by RCA Victor, will be available February 8.

THE DU DROPPERS

Speed King 78
GROOVE 0001—Joyous item about a speedy operator gathers excitement as it spins. Side ought to earn much juke loot. (Park Ave, BMI)
Dead Broke 72
Carefree blues is handed a spirited performance by the group. Another good side. (Raleigh, BMI)

New Det. Distrib to Handle 'X,' Groove

DETROIT, Feb. 13. — A new record distributing company formed recently, the ARC Distributing Company, to distribute RCA labels "X" and Groove, began shipping to dealers January 25. Prior to its opening, it held an open house at which practically every disk jockey in town was present, as well as Hamish Menzies and the Gaylords. Representing label "X" were Joe Delaney, national sales manager; Jimmy Hilliard, a.&r. chief, and Bill Darnel, first artist to be featured on "X". The company plans to carry other labels for distribution in the near future.



At first, Groove devoted itself entirely to singles, with their first record coming out in February 1954. That single was the Du Droppers' "Speed King"/ "Dead Broke" (Groove G-0001). However, the relative popularity of Sam Butera's offerings prompted them to release four of his selections as an EP in September/October 1954.

Sam's Reverie

Sam Butera

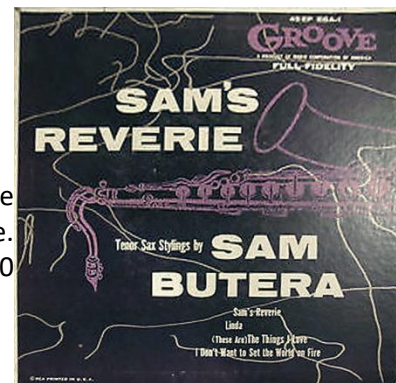
Released September/October 1954.

EGA-1

The year ended with Groove's 38th single, and with the decision to move Groove away from X Records, placing it under the main RCA Victor line. For this reason, Groove singles began a new numbering system with 0100 in January 1955.

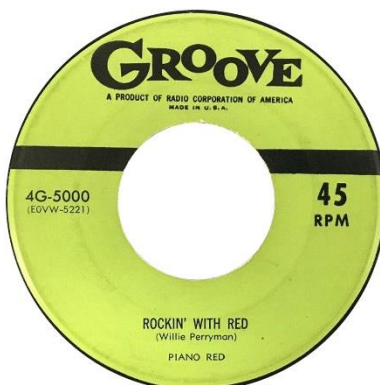
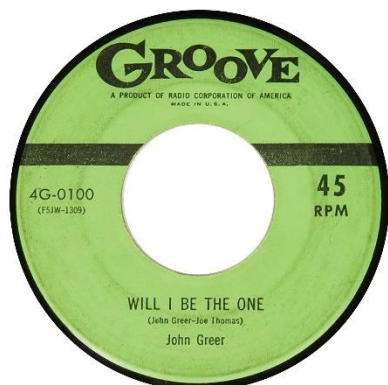
JOHN GREER
We Wanna See Santa Do the Mambo 74
GROOVE 0038—Cute idea here and Greer sings the novelty ably to good, rhythmic backing by the ork. This figures to attract a goodly number of spins, and it could sell some. Pop and folk versions of the ditty have also been released. (Regent, BMI)
Wait Till After Christmas . . . 68
John Greer asks for a delay of a planned walk-out. Okay performance. (Copeland Music)

And it was learned this week that RCA Victor brass, at their semi-annual sales meeting, laid plans for Victor to take back the Groove label on January 1 and allow "X" Records, which had been running Groove, to issue r.&b. sides on its own.



The reorganized Groove label began releasing new singles in March 1955, with John Greer's "Will I Be the One." As the year rolled on, in July they initiated a 5000 series with two oldies from Piano Red.

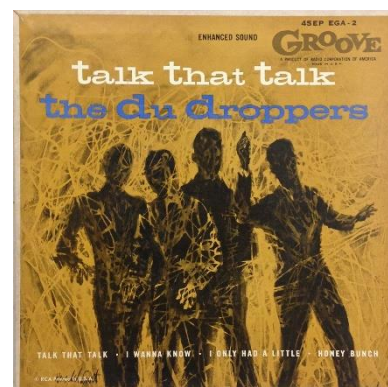
By that time, though, Groove had put out two more EPs.



Talk That Talk
The Du Droppers
Released June 1955.

JUMP MAN JUMP70
Piano Red (1-EP)
Groove EGA-3
Here's one of the first EP's put out by the revived Groove label, and it wisely features the strong-selling title tune, in addition to three others which amply display Piano Red's driving style, mixed with equal parts of humor, brightness and rhythmic impulse. A good item for the infant r.&b. package industry and juke ops looking for exciting EP wax.

EGA-2



Jump Man Jump
Piano Red
Released June 1955.

EGA-3



For the time being, Groove stopped releasing unique EPs, as they were preparing their first album releases for later in the year. Most of the Groove EPs from this point on would be selections from the Groove albums.

PIANO RED
Rockin' With Red76
GROOVE 5000—A personable vocal by Piano Red and his usual showmanly job on the ivories on a catchy little ditty. Both sides are reissues of 1947 platters. (St. Louis, BMI)
Red's Boogie....76
An infectious paced instrumental on a bouncy boogie theme. Both sides should grab off lots of juke play. (St. Louis, BMI)

Groove Sets 1st Releases

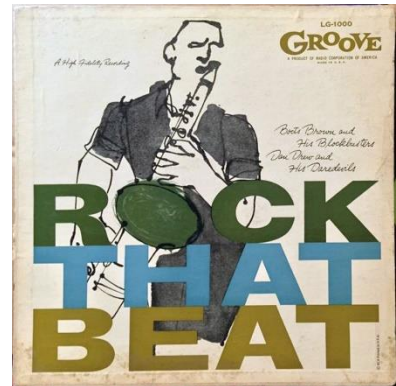
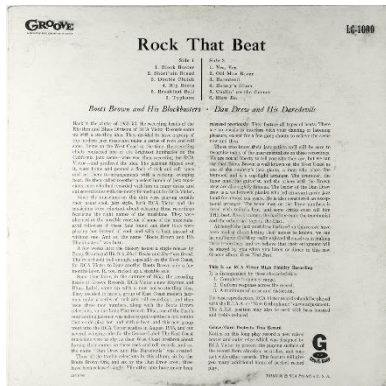
NEW YORK, Feb. 26.—Groove Records, RCA Victor's reactivated rhythm and blues label, is readying its first releases under the operation's new management. Initial sides cut by John Greer and Piano Red under the direction of Bob Rolontz, artist and repertoire director, will hit the market by March 10.

Ray Clark, Groove chief, is meanwhile pacting independent distributors who will handle the line in key Northern markets. Regular Victor distributors will carry Groove in most Southern territories. In a move to add to his artist roster, Rolontz has signed the Sonics, a new vocal group who will cut their first sides for Groove next week.

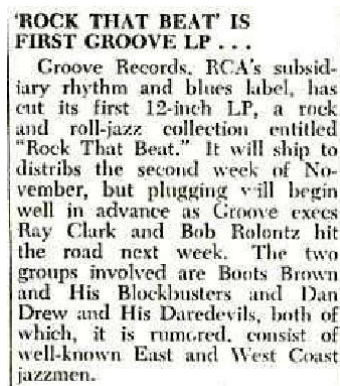
Rock That Beat

LG-1000

Boots Brown and his Blockbusters/Dan Drew and his Daredevils
Released November 1955.



Groove's first album consisted of one side (six songs) from Boots Brown and one side (six songs) from Dan Drew.



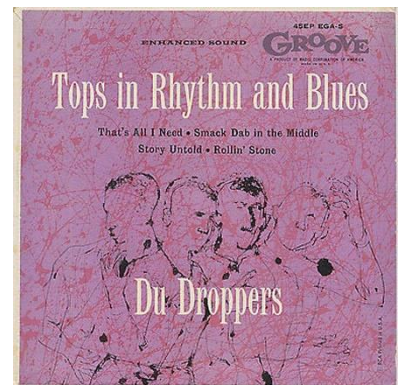
"ROCK THAT BEAT"—BOOTS BROWN & his Blockbusters and DAN DREW and his Daredevils—Groove LG1000 (12" LP)
BLOCK BUSTER; SHORTNIN' BREAD; DOUBLE CLUTCH; HIP BOOTS; BREAKFAST BALL; TYFHOON
—YES, OLD MAN RIVER, BARBECUE, DANNY'S BLUES, COOLIN' ON THE CORNER, SLOW JIN.
The popularity of rock 'n' roll music continues to grow stronger each day, and to meet the demand for good rhythm and blues dance music in album form, Groove issues this LP featuring two groups. "Boots Brown and his Blockbusters" is the pseudonym for a line-up of some of the West coast's leading jazz men and the "Dan Drew" moniker is for a top array of East coast jazz stars. Both groups divert from their usual "cool" technique and really drive hard on this disk. Swinging sides sure to appeal to the young hoofers.

Tops in Rhythm and Blues

EGA-5

The Du Droppers

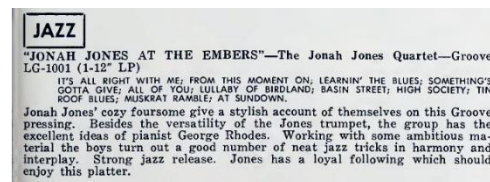
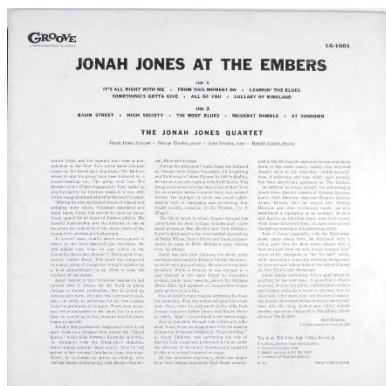
Released May 1956.



At the Embers

Jonah Jones

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: June 2, 1956



Jonah Jones recorded his Groove album not live in concert but in RCA Victor's Studio 3 in New York City on two dates in February 1956.

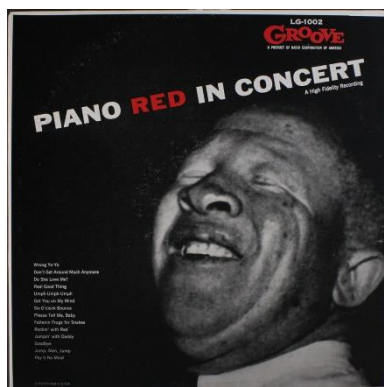
The Jones album survived the close of Groove Records, finding its way first onto the Vik subsidiary and then onto the main RCA Victor label.



Piano Red in Concert

Piano Red

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: June 16, 1956



This time, side one of the album was actually live – recorded in concert in Atlanta in March 1956. However, Red recorded the remaining songs on two recording dates in spring 1955 in a studio in Nashville. Four selections from the album also appeared as EGA-6, and another four appeared as EGA-7. While EGA-8 seems to have been reserved for the remaining four selections, the EP was likely cancelled.

"PIANO RED IN CONCERT"—Groove LG-1002 (1-12" LP)
 WRONG YO-YO; DON'T GET AROUND MUCH ANYMORE; UMPH-UMPH-YMPH; GOT YOU ON MY MIND; FATTENIN' FROGS FOR SNAKES; ROCKIN' WITH RED; JUMP MAN JUMP; DO SHE LOVE ME; REAL GOOD THING; PAY IT NO MIND; SIX O'CLOCK BOUNCE; PLEASE TELL ME BABY; JUMPIN' WITH DADDY; GOODBYE, GOODBYE, GOODBYE.
 This disk was pressed at a concert in Atlanta, Georgia, where Piano Red enjoys an impressive following. With 14 R&B selections in the offering, Red and the group fashion a number of tempests in the exciting rock n' roll spirit. Look for generally solid sales to Red's fans and the R & R crowd.

After a few months, Groove was prepared to end the year with a bang, as their ads from October revealed the release of three new albums.

HEAR THESE EXCITING NEW PERSONALITIES ON

"THE MANY MOODS OF ANN"
Great Vocal Singer ANN GILBERT LG-1004, EGA 12, 13, 14

"COOL GABRIELS"
Cool Trumpets LG-1003

"REAL GEORGE"
Sensational Piano GEORGE RHODES LG-1005

GROOVE ALBUMS

And still as exciting as ever... "JONAH JONES AT THE EMBERS" "ROCK THAT BEAT" "PIANO RED IN CONCERT"

Ask your Groove Distributor about the profit-packed "Sound Buy" Deal!

COOL GABRIELS76
 Conte Candoli, Nick Travis, Dick Sherman, Bernie Glow, Phil Sunkel, Don Stratton, Al De Risi, Trumpets (1-12")
 Groove LG 1003

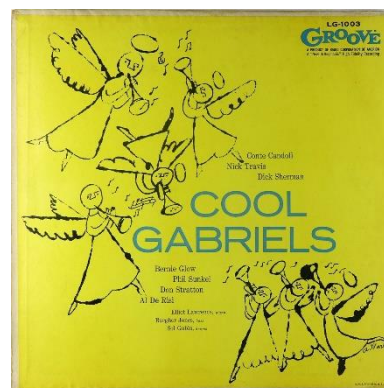
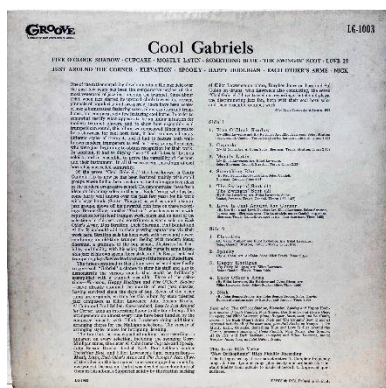
A sizable collection of modern trumpeters, with all but Glow and De Risi featured in jazz solos. Between the solos there is some brilliant trumpet ensemble. Elliott Lawrence, pianist (and arranger of most selections), plus drums and bass, provide the backing. The individual solos are short, because of the plethora of titles. Still, there's the opportunity for interesting comparisons, and Sherman and Candoli make the best showing. An unusual set that could sell.

Cool Gabriels

LG-1003

Cool Gabriels

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: October 27, 1956



This album by a jazz trumpet ensemble is better known for its front cover, drawn by Andy Warhol.

The Many Moods of Ann

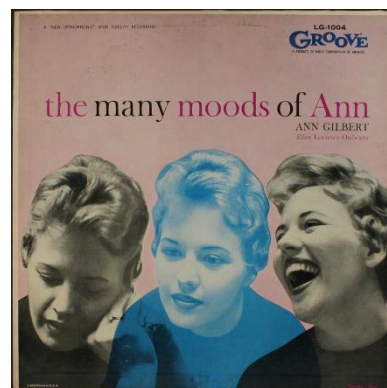
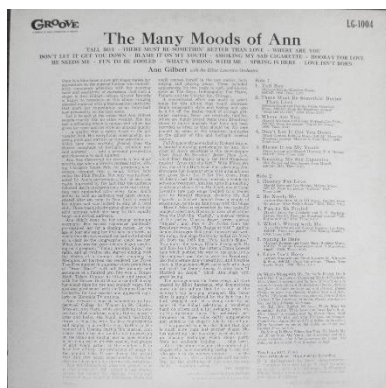
Ann Gilbert

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: October 27, 1956

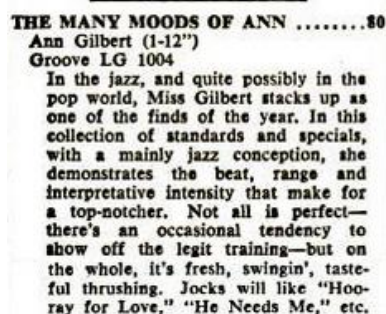
LG-1004

ANN

NOT FOR
SALE



This album was also available as three EPs, numbered EGA-12 through EGA-14. Although EPs numbered 9 through 11 were reserved for Cool Gabriels, none was issued.



Real George

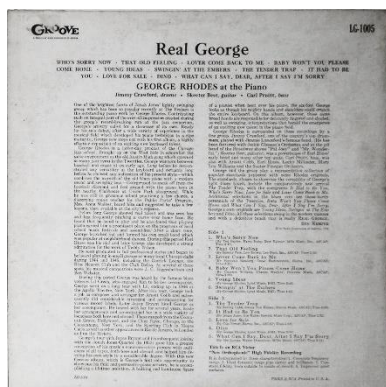
George Rhodes

Released October 1956

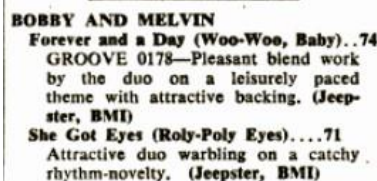
LG-1005

E

NOT FOR
SALE



This album was also available as three EPs, numbered EGA-12 through EGA-14. Although EPs numbered 9 through 11 were reserved for Cool Gabriels, none was issued.



Love is Strange
Mickey and Sylvia

EGA-18

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: February 9, 1957

Although the Groove label was closing down, RCA Victor released this one EP in 1957 – corresponding to the lone hit single on the label. RCA Victor announced in December that they were reorganizing the relationship between the labels, with the Groove label essentially being absorbed into RCA Victor and Vik. However, the success of the Mickey and Sylvia single, “Love is Strange,” kept the Groove label around simply for copies of that record. After it fell off the charts, Groove simply vanished.



Victor Realigns Groove & Vik Personnel

NEW YORK—RCA Victor has realigned the duties of personnel involved in the Vik and Groove firms.

Jack Lewis has left the company and his job of assistant to Herman Diaz has been assumed by Bob Rolontz. Rolontz will continue to act as A&R man for the Groove label. Ray Clark will also assume additional duties to his salesmanship of Groove. He will act as liaison man between Vik, Groove and RCA Victor and in addition will take over some of the duties that Harry Jenkins performed before he was promoted.

While these shifts indicate the eventual end of the Groove label, there are no definite plans to discontinue it at this time. It has been no secret in the trade that Groove was scheduled to be discontinued early in 1957 but now that the label has a hit, “Love Is Strange” by Mickey and Sylvia, all such plans have been indefinitely postponed.

Victor Discontinues Groove

Other Organization Changes Announced At Same Time

NEW YORK, N. Y.—First-of-the-year organization changes in the RCA Victor Record Division were announced this week by Howard Letts, Vice President and Operations Manager.

At the same time Letts announced the discontinuance of Groove Records, a two-year-old Victor subsidiary label which specialized in rhythm and blues material. Artists under contract to Groove have been shifted to RCA Victor and Vik labels.

Four Years Later

Without any obvious indication that Groove would be returning, RCA Victor decided in fall 1961 to bring back the name. This time, Groove Records would release a variety of music, with the intent that the new Groove singles would sell at a significant discount over most of the line. The initial release was a new version of Sonny James’ hit, “Young Love,” with the Groove single appearing in November.

GROOVE LABEL'S VARIED HISTORY

NEW YORK—The Groove label was originally started by Victor in 1953 by the late Manie Sacks as the firm's rhythm and blues label. The first a.&r. man for the label was Danny Kessler. Label had its first big success with Mickey and Sylvia's record of “Love Is Strange” in 1956 which sold close to 800,000 copies. Label was retired shortly after that in 1957, and its artists moved to Vik and Victor. Among the Groove roster prior to its retirement were, in addition to Mickey and Sylvia, Jonah Jones, Varette Dillard and Piano Red. Billboard Music Week Associate Music Editor Bob Rolontz was the last a.&r. man for the old Groove operation.

Reactivate Groove Name To Carry Low Price Tag

Subsid to Present Pop, R.&B., Country Material; Line Kicks Off October 30

NEW YORK — RCA Victor on October 30 will debut a 49-cent singles line, Groove Records. Groove, years ago an RCA vehicle for rhythm and blues repertoire, will be an all-purpose label carrying pop, country and r.&b. material. The price to the distributor and dealer will be 27 cents and 31 cents respectively, and the line will be handled by RCA distributors only. Two records will comprise the initial release.

The parent Victor label will continue to sell for 98 cents. The RCA Victor move, of course, is tremendously meaningful to the entire industry and represents the most dramatic effort to date to come to grips with the “singles problem.” The decision climaxes a long period of study by RCA and reflects the company's profound belief that a total record business—in order to be healthy—entails a vital, thriving singles business.

The reactivation of the Groove name, therefore, represents a bold effort to broaden the base of singles sales; to infuse new excitement into the singles market.

LP Promotion Tool
 Also implicit in the Victor philosophy (Continued on page 6)

After just seven singles, in spring 1962, RCA Victor determined that the half-priced singles market was not the place for the Groove label. By late June (trade magazines dated July 7), Groove was re-introducing itself at full list price with a single by Lennie Miles.

LENNIE MILES
★★★★ Stay With Me—GROOVE 0001—
 A touching ballad reading by Miles on this first entry of the re-activated Groove label at full list. The side is nicely fashioned with choral and ork backing. (Suffolk, BMI) (2:37)
★★★★ Hercules—The lass makes Miles feel like a strong man. It's dramaballed that builds nicely as it moves along against bright backing containing strings and horns. (Tobi-Ann, BMI) (2:35)

POP SPECIAL MERIT
CHARLIE RICH
 Groove GM 1000 (M); GS 1000 (S)
 Charlie Rich is a fine artist in the Memphis rockabilly school and has enjoyed single chart items in his earlier Memphis-based label affiliation. Now with his first album it would seem only a matter of time until the next hit, because these are solid performances, full of drive, and they are accomplished to effective backings by both Bill Justis and Anita Kerr. "Big Boss Man" is one of the better sides.



The newly-constituted label eventually released just one album, although some sites report the planned release of a second.

Charlie Rich

GM-1000 (mono)

Charlie Rich

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: February 22, 1964

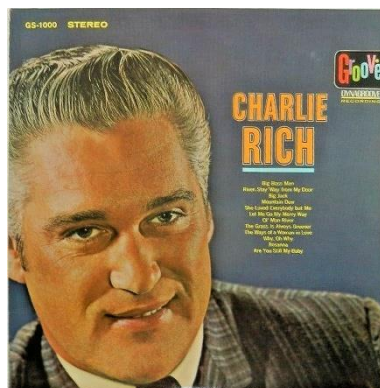


Charlie Rich

GS-1000 (stereo)

Charlie Rich

First Appearance in Trade Magazines: February 22, 1964



Although Groove released almost two dozen singles in 1964, by spring 1965 RCA Victor was wrapping up the Groove operation – having determined that the label never truly found its own groove. The trades in early April report the few singles near the end, while Shelley Shoop and the Shakers put out their final single – also in April. With several reorganizations along the way, the Groove ride was a wild one.

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