

# NEW ORLEANS NORTH PROVIDES A SWINGING HISTORY LESSON



## DISCourse

with Bill Polonsky

Back in high school, I had a brief introduction to Dixieland music as a bass player. It was a tough gig as, overnight, I had to learn to sight-read the bass clef on an instrument I had never studied. Clarinetist Lloyd Arntzen fronts New Orleans North, a group of Whitehorse musicians who pay tribute to the music they have loved and studied for years.

The selection of songs on this CD is a survey of New Orleans jazz. The tempo and timbre of the cuts evokes the best of what Dixieland music was all about. The other musicians in this group include Graeme Peters on drums, Alan Matheson on trumpet and other brass and Grant Simpson, of Frantic Follies fame, on piano.

The tunes swing with all the right phrasing and enthusiasm that made this kind of music so influential in the first place.

For the un-initiated, New Orleans jazz, or Dixieland jazz as it is commonly called, is the progenitor, the Rosetta stone, of almost all popular music on the North American continent of the last century.

It has the basis of jazz, contains the rhythm of swing, the orchestration of big band and the improvisation of the blues.

Of course these forms do have other influences, but the pedigree for these forms is cast in New Orleans jazz.

Our very own purveyors of this music, the fellows of New Orleans North, have poured their love of this music on this CD with accomplished aplomb and a sure-handed style.

Among the tracks by such perennial favourites as King Oliver, Jelly Roll Morton and Louis Armstrong, are four original tracks by Matheson, Arntzen and Simpson, each with their own jazz styling and feeling for the form.

The showstopper on the album is the title track, *Born 40 Years Too Late*. This song relates a story – well more of a tall tale – of how New Orleans jazz comes to Bad Lake, Saskatchewan.

It is a funny and musically dramatic yarn, Arntzen has only to add a Rudy Valee style megaphone to his vocal to create a



**Born 40 Years Too Late, a loving tribute CD to Dixieland music by New Orleans North, will be officially released at the Yukon Arts Centre Sunday, Sept. 24, at 7:30 p.m. All proceeds will go to the Jazz Yukon Scholarship Program.**

complete picture ... but that is another story.

The feeling in this album is very authentic and the instrumentation and arrangements harken back to the feel of an old 78 recording with the one advantage of modern recording.

At this mention, I would point out the neat and all-surrounding sound of this album.

Arntzen's vocals are a treat to

listen to, his style is of a time when vocalists were dubbed "crooners" and intonation and enunciation were the norm.

This level of detail and technical delivery lend an added authenticity to this recording.

With every word and note, this group of talented musicians demonstrate its joy, love and respect for New Orleans jazz.

There will be a CD release concert at the Yukon Arts Centre Sunday, Sept. 24, at 7:30 p.m. All proceeds will go to the Jazz Yukon Scholarship Program. For more information, check out [www.neworleansnorth.ca](http://www.neworleansnorth.ca).

You can pick up a copy of New Orleans North's CD, *Born 40 years Too Late*, at Rose Music or through its website.

Questions? Comments? Got a CD that you would like to see reviewed in this paper? Email Bill Polonsky at [strangethingsdone@hotmail.com](mailto:strangethingsdone@hotmail.com).

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