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Jack Benny Program (10-Hour Collections)



Elegant Touches



Synopsis

10 CD's

Book Information

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Audio CD

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Customer Reviews

10 CD's

Excellent thank you

Any discussion or poll regarding who gets crowned as the greatest comedian of all time will always include names like Chaplin, Keaton, Lloyd, Chase, Normand and Arbuckle, just to mention a few. Though I have to concede that it is very much like comparing apples to oranges, to me it is not even a close contest. The man voted the greatest personality in radio history easily wins that battle. The Jack Benny show was on the air for 25 straight years and every Sunday night people's lives got brighter and funnier thanks to Benny and his gang. Using the silence rather than the sound made on radio Benny got more laughs than anyone. The joke was often on him, or rather his radio persona of a skinflint who fancied himself, among other things, a big movie star, a great violinist, a ladies man, and the world's funniest radio star. In real life he was only the latter. This fantastic collection offers 10 hours of famous guest stars, always a staple of the program. Many big names like Welles and Stanwyck were on often, and good pals. Others jumped at the chance when asked to appear because they knew they would be the ones getting the laughs, while Jack's character would be the

brunt of the laughter. Jack once stated that he knew the next day no one would remember the exact jokes, only that the Benny show had been a riot. Some great stars appear here, including Stanwyck and Ann Sheridan, Welles and Robert Taylor, Bob and Bing, Joan Bennett and the great Tyrone Power, Skelton and Jimmy Stewart, Peter Lorre and Jane Wyman, and more. It is Benny's cast of regulars, however, which make these shows so very entertaining. Mary Livingston, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, Dennis Day, Phil Harris, and Don Wilson all helped to make the Jack Benny Show the absolute best. Having listened to them all, I believe the shows from the 1940's here edge out the 30's ones in hilarious moments, but none of them are duds, to be sure. A few of the shows are from bases where Benny and the gang were entertaining the troops during the war. Benny would do this extensively and contract pneumonia in 1943, with a young Orson Welles guest hosting an entire month while Jack recovered. All the stars have chances to shine during their stint. Al Jolson gets to perform April Showers and You Made Me Love You while he and Phil Harris have a running gag about Eddie Cantor and Larry Parks. Tyrone Power and Mary recalling their time in London with Jack is a riot. Jack takes a couple of cadets to see the wonderful Stanwyck. Sheridan and Bennett remind the boys what they're fighting for at military camps. If I had to pick a favorite episode here, however, it would probably go to the show where the guest star was a complete surprise, even to Jack himself! In a show from 11/21/48 Jack spends nearly the entire show on hold while an operator attempts to contact someone at BBD&O advertising agency. Of course there's a lot going on around him with the gang while he waits for lots of laughs. Jack had decided to use his writers at the end but Don Ameche substituted for one of them as a joke and when he read the final gag as a Spanish parking attendant, Jack looked over and went into hysterics. He couldn't even manage to sign off he was laughing so hard! You'll be laughing that hard too and fall in love with Benny and the gang. A fabulous booklet by Anthony Tollin accompanies the set. Listeners must know that the sound quality here is excellent. However, the Smithsonian has mislabeled one of the shows! The show with Jane Wyman is actually the show with Ann Sheridan and the show labeled Sheridan the one with Wyman. Everything is here and wonderful though. A must have for old-time radio fans!

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