

Basic Detail Report



Double Bass Formerly Owned by Fred Maddox, early 1940s

Date

1940-1945

Description

This stand-up bass belonged to Fred Maddox (1919-1992) who was the manager and bass player for the Maddox Brothers and Rose, known as "America's Most Colorful Hillbilly Band," who performed from 1937-1956. Despite this moniker, the group was also a Rockabilly, Boogie-Woogie, Honky-Tonk and proto-Rock'n'Roll band. In short, they were an innovative group that combined musical styles to create something new and were sonically ahead of their time. Fred Maddox had a flare for salesmanship and a desire to push Hillbilly music beyond its limits. He could barely play the bass when he started getting the family band jobs on the radio and in venues near their home base of Modesto, California. He started slapping the bass like he had seen Hillbilly musicians do, in part to cover up his lack of skill, but the backbeat created by the slapped bass ended up as an innovation that helped shape the sound of Rock'n'Roll. Slapping the bass is a technique used by many Hillbilly bands since at least the 1920s and it came into popular use during the 1940s.

Slap-bass provides a strong downbeat when the string is plucked and a strong backbeat when it slaps back onto the fingerboard of the bass. It creates a very percussive sound and adds a lot of drive that is particularly good for dance music. Seminal Rock'n'Roll musician Bill Haley (1925-1981) taught the slapping bass technique to his bass players and the backbeat created by slap-bass became a staple element of Rock during the early 1950s, with drums eventually taking over the role. Note: a dollar was found inside this double bass and is tracked separately as an unnumbered component.

Dimensions

Overall (HWD) (overall): 38 1/8 × 190 5/8 × 64 13/16 in. (96.774 × 484.125 × 164.592 cm)