



Released in the spring of 1954, *Chet Baker Sings* widened the Oklahoma-born, California-based musician's commercial appeal and audience, reaching people who were perhaps immune to jazz instrumentalists but gravitated to torchy crooners. The album sold so well that, in 1956, Dick Bock expanded it to 14 tracks for a 12" reissue on his World Pacific imprint.

Six more vocal tracks, all taken from *The Great American Songbook*, were laid down in Los Angeles at the Forum Theatre on 23 and 30 July 1956. Of Baker's sidemen, only Russ Freeman was retained from the 1954 session, with Jimmy Bond coming in on bass and Peter Littman and Lawrence Marable sharing the drum stool (they played on three tracks each).

The blithe swinger 'That Old Feeling', which became the opening cut on the new iteration of *Chet Baker Sings*, continued the mellow vibe of the original album and featured a Freeman piano solo that precedes Baker's own on

trumpet. 'It's Always You', 'Like Someone In Love' and Frank Loesser's 'I've Never Been In Love Before' are slow ballads that benefit from the dreamy, languorous quality of Baker's voice. So does 'My Ideal', which features Freeman playing crystalline arpeggios on a celeste. In contrast, the more rhythmic 'My Buddy' finds Baker playing delicate muted trumpet in between his soft vocals.

The album was a landmark release for Baker, conferring on him the kind of fame that eludes most jazz musicians. But its success couldn't prevent him from falling into a damaging spiral of drug addiction that plagued his career until his death in Holland at the age of 58, in 1988. *Chet Baker Sings* offers a vivid reminder of the musician's formidable twin talents. "His singing, like his playing, stands apart from the run of the mill," wrote jazz writer Will MacFarland in the album's original liner notes. He wasn't wrong.

# Chet Baker Sings

- 1 That Old Feeling 3:02
- 2 It's Always You 3:33
- 3 Like Someone In Love 2:24
- 4 My Ideal 4:20
- 5 I've Never Been In Love Before 4:26
- 6 My Buddy 3:19
- 7 But Not For Me 3:02
- 8 Time After Time 2:45
- 9 I Get Along Without You Very Well 2:58
- 10 My Funny Valentine 2:18
- 11 There Will Never Be Another You 2:59
- 12 The Thrill Is Gone 2:50
- 13 I Fall In Love Too Easily 3:19
- 14 Look For The Silver Lining 2:40

Recorded by Pacific jazz

October 27, 1953, February 15, 1954, July 23, 1956, July 30, 1956

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For more info e-mail us:  
[admin@highdeftapetransfers.com](mailto:admin@highdeftapetransfers.com)  
or visit our website:  
[www.highdeftapetransfers.com](http://www.highdeftapetransfers.com)