

How is louis daniel armstrong remembered by his contemporaries

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Louis Daniel Armstrong was a campaigner of purity in melody and tone and was the originator of the rhythmic step or “ swing” (7). He was disdainful of the “ minstrels” but enjoyed the traditional humor of the blacks. He was able to balance humor judiciously with emotional gravity and broke through the Dan Trucker stereotype. He was self-confident, almost arrogant, transcending racial inferiority on stage and was sometimes criticized for his “ clowning”. He made Rhapsody in Black and Blue in 1932 about a hen-pecked husband who goes to heaven and has Armstrong play at his command. He signed a seven-year contract with Jack Kapp’s Decca Records and produced some of his best works during this time. Armstrong emerged as one of the few free agents after the recording ban of 1942. He became the first black performer with a network radio series after completing a major Paramount film, Pennies from Heaven, with Bing Crosby and a couple of other films in 1936-7. For the next ten years recorded a series of exceptional trumpet concertos.

Louis Armstrong was a great admirer of Bill Robinson and considered him one of the greatest performers of his race and loved to share the stage with him. He was “ mesmerized by the spotlight” (110) but never overwhelmed by it. He married Lil Hardin in 1924. His colleagues in the band were jealous of Armstrong because he had married a woman who was “ educated, older and desired by everyone in the band”(50). He was critical of Freddie Keppard more out of loyalty to Oliver King who he admired greatly. The only other soloist to achieve anything close to his popularity was Charlie Parker in 1940 because of his “ country boy” (52) style and humor.

Armstrong was very moved by the death of his manager and long term friend Joe Glasner, whom he referred to as “ God”. Glasner was instrumental in Armstrong’s signing most of his lucrative contracts and also emerging successful through the recording ban. Armstrong recorded Hawaiian songs, jazz, pop, country, western and spiritual music. His phrasing alone could make his songs unique. He could transform simple ditties into inspirational songs, for eg. Hoagy Charming’s “ Jubilee” became a masterful display of music and “ Skeleton in the Closet” from Pennies in Heaven became an example of varying pitch and rhythm and outstanding trumpet sonata. Armstrong was from New Orleans and his Brooklynesque accent was well recognized and very original. He disliked “ colored” pronunciation to be thrust upon black performers by the choirmasters. He may be called the originator of rap music from the 1940s. In 1938, he made the first jazz cover of a spiritual song “ When the Saints Go Marching In”.