

Carolina Shout

as recorded by James P. Johnson on August 15, 1944; reissued on LP Swagie S 1211. (Drum accompaniment by Eddie Dougherty.)

This was the ultimate “test-piece” for every aspiring Stride pianist. Johnson recorded it several times, first as piano rolls (1918 and 1921). Duke Ellington as well as Fats Waller, Cliff Jackson and Joe Turner (to name only a few) learned *Carolina Shout* note-for-note from the 1921 piano roll. Ellington also considered this piece as “the most solid foundation” for him, and recorded it as a solo in 1956. Johnson composed its basic themes while working at Jim Allan’s in The Jungles (1914), and *Carolina Shout* reveals the influence of the various musical dimensions from which he drew inspiration.

The theme of the A strain originates from a traditional ragtime motive freely picked up and elaborated by various early jazz musicians. The B and the D strains are very reminiscent of the fiddle or banjo music played at set dances. The C strain is built upon a call-and-response pattern and is clearly the pianistic transposition of black religious music, featuring the high and spirited “shout” of the preacher and the ecstatic response of the congregation. The E strain reiterates these concepts.

The story of Johnson’s early recordings of *Carolina Shout* parallels the transition from the “fast-shout” style to the Stride style. *Carolina Shout* was cut on piano rolls in 1918 and in May, 1921 and then recorded on October 18, 1921 for the Okeh label. These three renditions are very dissimilar. Both the piano rolls retained some of the mechanical nature of ragtime and “fast-shout” (some of which is also due to the piano roll medium). The 1918 roll in particular has very few tenths and “back beats” in the accompaniment, it lacks the Coda, and features an odd 23-bar B strain never used again by Johnson. The 1921 roll is much more articulated both in phrasing and rhythm, featuring tenths, “back beats” and a Coda. It is very close to the 1921 Okeh recording, but does not feature the right hand variation on the A₂ strain. This variation, built on a double-third based phrasing, establishes the definitive Stride “sound,” and is featured for the first time in the 1921 Okeh recording, which is the “final” version of *Carolina Shout*.

The 1944 rendition reported here is close to this version, with a fantastic drive added.

Carolina Shout

As Performed By James P. Johnson

Fast $\text{♩} = 240$

Intro

By James P. Johnson

A1

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A2

B

The musical score consists of six systems of piano music. The first system starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a time signature of common time (indicated by '3 2'). The second system begins with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a time signature of common time. The third system starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a time signature of common time. The fourth system begins with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a time signature of common time. The fifth system starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a time signature of common time. The sixth system begins with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a time signature of common time. The score includes various dynamic markings such as 8va (octave up), 3, 4, and 5, and performance instructions like slurs, grace notes, and fermatas. The key signature changes between systems, and the time signature is mostly common time.

37

E

D₂

3

5

The image shows five staves of musical notation for piano, arranged vertically. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom three are in bass clef. The key signature changes frequently, indicated by various sharps and flats. Measure numbers are present above the first and second staves. A dynamic marking 'D3' is placed above the third staff. Measure 5 is divided into three measures (5-3) above the first staff. Measure 11 is indicated above the fifth staff.

Coda

8va
8ba

rall.
3

sf

8va
8ba