

ILL WILL



2032



- *Performer*
- *Performance*
- *Perfection*

ILL WILL

The trouble with the world outlook on humor, according to former *Punch* editor Malcolm Muggeridge, is that it is “all very well to make fun of curates, but not bishops.” Warning to comedians: Why tamper with a taboo, if you can tilt at a perfectly good windmill instead?

This may be a sage rule for some comedians, but hardly for one as intrepid as “Ill Will.” From his barbs, neither bishops *or* curates are safe. Hunch-backed movie scientists and Long Island rabbis had better be wary, too, lest they lose their smocks or their frocks for the same reason.

Who is “Ill Will”? Let’s just say he’s a famous club comic who happens to be travelling incognito on this special recording. What makes him carry on this way? The simple yearning to do the kind of hip comedy where taboos are taboo. Windmill-tilting had become vexing for Ill Will. His travels on the class club circuit and *The Ed Sullivan Show* had built him a large, happy following, but, somehow, visions of curates and bishops danced in his head. What he needed were some new rascalion routines. So Ill Will, like a witch in *Macbeth*, brewed up a new series of sketches and launched them at private parties and after-hours gatherings, as comedians are wont to do. Some of these sketches, as you hear them on this record, are as pithy as black-out bits, like Will’s first tangle with a hard-boiled press agent. Others lustily lampoon the top political and show biz kids of our time. Still others, like Will’s rendering of a British commander who orders a single pilot to shoot down 400 German planes (“Good show, Pevney!”), are simply inspired nonsense. But *all* are sassy examples of the unfettered funny-man in action.

To the anthropologists of hip humor, Ill Will may be the missing link between two separate species of human comedian. Species Number One is the school of big-time TV comics—Benny, Hope, Gleason, Berle. Even today, with the stock joke and the situation comedy enjoying a well-merited recession, these comics are as famous in the American household as the Buicks and Kelvinators they sell. Species Number Two includes the bright boys with the brittle monologues, the so-called Sicknicks. When the TV comics began to tail-spin, someone found Mort Sahl at the hungry i in San Francisco (“i” for intellectual, or maybe for “id”). Someone else dug Lenny Bruce out of another off-beat San Francisco bistro. Working nights, these boys tore up the “Off Limits” signs and evolved a kind of humor so deadly that it made the old-style comedy sound like idle chatter at a YMCA bible breakfast.

Now comes Ill Will, an “old timer” of television and the night-clubs, with a new syndrome. Like the old comics, most of his sketches are carefully planned and tightly written (by Will himself, of course);

akin to the most free-form of the hippies, his material is hammered out of the banalities of the Soaring Sixties. We’ve known Will as a close personal friend for several years, since before our friendships with either Mort or Lenny began, and long before either of them had clicked nationally with their own highly personal styles of hip humor. In those days Will was playing chic spots like the Empire Room in Chicago, but even then he was doing special sick material for his close friends at parties (I remember *Twenty-thousand Leagues Over the Sea*, a parody of marijuana aboard a submarine, and a Liberace satire that will never be heard on a record). This is by way of saying that Ill Will has had a “sick” side to his nature since before it became the smart and paying thing to do, and this humor grows naturally out of Will’s own personal views of the world. Because Will is also one of the countries foremost mimics (though he uses that talent sparingly on this LP), his vocal chords can materialize, in quick succession, a maniacal German teacher, an Ex-President of the United States, Jack E. Leonard, a Japanese interrogator or Sir Ralph Richardson.

We venture that Ill Will will go far in the Land of the Hippies. We like the sound of his patter, the cut of his jib. Most of all, we like his way with curates and bishops. *Vox Vobiscum.*

—HUGH M. HEFNER, *Editor-Publisher*
PLAYBOY MAGAZINE



SIDE ONE

- | | |
|--|------|
| 1. WHEN I FIRST STARTED IN SHOW BUSINESS | 1:48 |
| 2. SOMEWHERE IN SOUTH AMERICA | 0:42 |
| 3. IKE ON TELEVISION | 1:50 |
| 4. ALL RABBIS HAVE PERFECT DICTION | 1:40 |
| 5. SAMMY CALLS HIS BEST GIRL | 1:20 |
| 6. THOSE BRITISH WAR MOVIES | 3:50 |
| 7. THE PRES. (of the Actor’s Union) SPEAKS | 0:37 |
| 8. THE JAPANESE PRISON CAMP | 5:25 |

SIDE TWO

- | | |
|--|------|
| 1. THE GERMAN TEACHER | 2:45 |
| 2. FRANKENSTEIN | 9:43 |
| 3. HOW SIR RALPH’S PICTURE GOT IN LINDY’S WINDOW | 6:45 |

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Produced by: Will Rauch
Edited by: Herb Abramson

Photography: Einsoncolor
Cover Design: Sanford Levin

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Side 1
Superlaphonic Hi-Fi

"ILL WILL"

1. When I First Started In Show Business (1:48)
2. Somewhere In South America (0:42)
3. Ike On Television (1:50)
4. All Rabbis Have Perfect Diction (1:40)
5. Sammy Calls His Best Girl (1:20)
6. Those British War Movies (3:50)
7. The Pres. (Of The Actor's Union) Speaks (0:37)
8. The Japanese Prison Camp (5:25)

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