

MIDWEST RECORD

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ACROBAT

BILLY MAY/The Billy May Collection 1939-60: There was once a time when arrangers had followings to rival those of the singers they were working behind. Back in the day, the arranger was usually seen as the most critical part of the pop song formula. From pre WWII big band to post Korean War crooners and divas, Billy May was among the front line of those bringing up the rear and this 4 cd set is generously packed with everything from hokum and jive to serious as a heart attack stuff. While the post depression music scene was based on feel good nonsense that sounds square today, “Ida, Sweet as Apple Cider” once was the bees knees. Very much a lost art form in today’s world of electronic beats, this was the beat that set the tone. You don’t have to be a fossil to get what’s going on here. From Sinatra to O’Day to all the rest, May knew what it took and had what it takes. This is quite the grand collection for the musical music lover. Well stocked and stacked.

- CHRIS SPECTOR, Editor and Publisher