

# LOS ANGELES JAZZ SCENE

## JAZZ AROUND TOWN

by Scott Yanow

### THREE FROM ACROBAT

The British Acrobat label (available from [mvdb2b.com](http://mvdb2b.com)) has a strong catalog of vintage jazz by American and British artists. Bob Crosby (the younger brother of Bing) led a big band during 1935-42 that usually had a New Orleans flavor. A combo taken out of his orchestra, Bob Crosby's Bobcats, during its prime years dispensed with most vocals and simply featured freewheeling jazz. The CD Bob Crosby's Bobcats has 25 of the group's best recordings, nearly all of the hottest sides from 1937-40 (only "Palesteena" is missing) plus a version of "Tin Roof Blues" from 1942. Featured are such greats as Yank Lawson or Billy Butterfield on trumpet, Matty Matlock or Irving Fazola on clarinet, tenor-saxophonist Eddie Miller, the underrated trombonist Warren Smith, and Bob Zurke, Joe Sullivan or Jess Stacy on piano plus rhythm guitarist Nappy Lamare, bassist Bob Haggart and drummer Ray Bauduc. Among the great Dixieland performances are heated versions of "Stumblin'," "Who's Sorry Now," "Fidgety Feet," "March Of The Bobcats," "Hindustan" and "Jazz Me Blues." The classic Haggart-Bauduc duet "The Big Noise From Winnetka" and a pair of Eddie Miller features ("Call Me A Taxi" and "I Hear You Talkin'") are also included. These recordings preceded and were an influence on the Dixieland revival of the 1940s and they are consistently exciting.

Jimmy Dorsey emerged in the 1920s as a brilliant jazz musician who was equally skilled on alto and clarinet. Often overshadowed by his younger brother Tommy Dorsey during the swing era, Jimmy's big band was usually excellent but many of their recordings were commercial. Dorsey had his greatest success with a string of hit recordings that featured the singing of both Helen O'Connell and Bob Eberle in the early 1940s. However Dorsey never lost his ability to play high-quality jazz as he shows on his I Got Rhythm CD. The 20 performances, dating from 1936-41 contain most of his finest jazz recordings of the period. Five songs have Dorsey and his band joined by Louis Armstrong (including "The Skeleton In The Closet," "Dippermouth Blues" and "Swing That Music") and other highlights include "Parade Of the Milk Bottle Caps," "John Silver," "Turn Left," "Turn Right" and Dorsey's theme "Contrasts." This is a fine collection for swing fans who already have Jimmy Dorsey's hits and want to hear him play some jazz.

The Downbeat Big Band was a legendary all-star British orchestra that existed on a part-time basis during 1956-61. Headed by the great tenor-saxophonist Tubby Hayes (arguably England's top jazz musician before 1970), the big band was lost to history, until now. It was believed that they made no recordings but Blues At The Manor 1959-60 has seven songs cut in the studio as a demo along with seven other songs from the band's only radio appearance. The previously unissued music is well-recorded, swings in a modern Count Basie vein, and features such notables as Hayes, trumpeters Jimmy Deuchar, Eddie Blair and Hank Shaw, trombonist Keith Christie, altoist Alan Branscombe, pianist Terry Shannon and either Phil Seamen or Victor Feldman on drums. Hayes takes solo honors on this historically significant and enjoyably swinging release. A very informative 32-page booklet by Hayes biographer Simon Spillett is a major plus.