

# TOMMY DORSEY ORCHESTRA

In retrospect- and in Big Band history Tommy Dorsey's Orchestra must be recognized as one of the best all-around dance bands of them all. It could swing with the best of them, and no other band could come close to Tommy's when it came to playing ballads. Tommy Dorsey, "The Sentimental Gentleman Of Swing," was a master at creating moods warm, sentiment and forever musical moods- at superb dancing and listening tempos. And what's more, Tommy selected arrangers who could sustain the moods: Paul Weston, Axel Stordahl, and Sy Oliver. He showcased singers who could project those moods wonderfully: Jack Leonard, Jo Stafford, the Pied Pipers, Frank Sinatra, and others.

Jack Leonard sang with the band for almost four years recording such fine sides as For Sentimental Reasons Dedicated to You, If It's the Last thing I Do, Little White Lies, You Taught Me To Love Again, Once In A While, and probably the most famous side of all, Marie. The Marie side, with the band singing vocal rifts as Jack emoted a straight lyric, was so successful that he recorded several more standard tunes with the same formula: Who, Yearning, and East of the Sun. The other side of Marie was also a huge Dorsey hit, Song of India.

Frank Sinatra blossomed with Dorsey, and with Sinatra the band became more successful than ever. Frank has often admitted that listening to Tommy helped him develop his phrasing, his breathing, his musical taste, and his musical knowledge. Dick Jones, once a Dorsey arranger and later a close friend of Sinatra's says simply, "Frank's musical taste was developed at Tommy's elbow."

Sy Oliver infused the band with new musical spirit. It was sort of a gentler version of the rocking, rhythmic sounds that he had created for Lunceford, now toned down somewhat and played with more precision by the Dorsey Band. But swing they did, including some great original pieces Sy wrote for the band. Things like Easy Does It, Quiet Please; Sing High; Yes Indeed; Swingin' On Nothing; Well, Get It; and Opus N 1.

Oliver also had a unique way of approaching a straight pop tune, injecting a soft, "two-beatian" feeling into it. This he did with resounding success in such arrangements as What Can/ Say After I Say I'm Sorry For You, Swanee River, Mandy, Make Up Your Mind, Chicago, and On The Sunny Side of the Street. As for the singers, they worked individually and they worked together, turning out a slew of hits, all of them superior quality.

Thus, there was Sinatra's Violets for Furs and This Love of Mine; Jo Stafford's For You

and Embraceable You; the Pied Pipers and Sinatra's There Are Such Things; Just as Though You Were Here; Street of Dreams; Oh, Look at Me Now; and, of course, their biggest hit of all, the one that established vocal groups forever, I'll Never Smile Again. This was the era in which the band was at its best. In the summer of 1941, it outranked every other band to finish first in one of the most indicative of all popularity polls, Martin Block's Make Believe Ballroom contest. Actually, this may have pleased Tommy less than most people suspected, because for years he had subscribed to the theory that it's best not to be Number One, because once you get there, you have no place to go except down. Jack Egan reports that, at one time, on Tommy's instruction, he went out on the road and extolled the virtues not of Tommy's band, but of Artie Shaw's because Tommy feared that he himself might be getting too popular.

By late 1946, it was becoming apparent that the band's business was getting worse and worse. In the single month of December 1946, eight top bandleaders announced they were calling it quits: Woody Herman, Benny Goodman, Harry James, Les Brown, Jack Teagarden, Benny Carter, Ina Ray Hutton, and Tommy Dorsey.

For all intents and purposes, this was the official end of the Big Band Era and yet it was Tommy Dorsey, more than any of the other big names, who in the years immediately following was to fight the cause of the Big Bands with words and action. Less than two years later he was fronting a formidable new group. "It's about time somebody gets things going again." Tommy said at one time. "You can't expect to have, any real interest in dance bands if the bands don't go around the country and play for the kids."

And so it continues, The Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, is traveling throughout the country playing for the kids (of all ages).

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## BUDDY MORROW

BUDDY MORROW, conductor of the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, is recognized one of the all-time great trombone player. His great musicianship has been evident through the years and first came to the public eye when he was featured with leading orchestras such as Tommy Dorsey Paul Whiteman, Artie Shaw and Jimmy Dorsey and staff musician with many of the major radio and television shows.

Born in New Haven, Connecticut, his future as a musician was virtually predestined, since his family had been musicians for generations and had played in leading orchestras all over Europe. By the time he was thirteen, he was already playing with dance groups, and at fifteen he joined the Yale Collegians and toured the East Coast playing college dances and parties. After high school, he went to New York to try his luck as a musician and shortly thereafter auditioned for a scholarship at the Julliard School of music. So brilliant were his improvisations that he was awarded the scholarship.

Jazz-great Bunny Berigan heard him sitting in on a jam session and was so impressed that he recommended him to Artie Shaw who hired him for his newly formed orchestra. Later he joined Eddy Duchin and then Paul Whiteman. During his stay with Whiteman, he was featured on his Chesterfield Radio Show. Next came a call from Tommy Dorsey to join the orchestra, the beginning of a friendship that lasted throughout the years. He later joined CBS as a staff musician and freelances in the recording, radio and television industries.

After a hitch in the Navy, it was back to the Dorseys. This time he joined the Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra and got his first taste of an orchestra leader when Jimmy took off sick and Buddy filled as leader of the band. Through the years, Buddy Morrow had become so highly regarded in the music world that RCA- Victor signed him to form an orchestra and record under his own name. Buddy began experimenting with style and instrumentation and took a band on the road.

One night in Detroit, Buddy came across an exciting rhythm and blues number and insisted that the band record it. The song was "Night Train," and it became a national sensation selling over a million copies. The Buddy Morrow Orchestra had established itself as one of the big musical attractions on the road. They set attendance records in leading ballrooms and theaters from coast to coast. Then followed hit records that included "One Mint Julep," "I Don't Know," and "Hey Mrs. Jones." Among Buddy's albums are "Night Train," "Big Band Guitar," "New Blue Scene," "Impact," "Double Impact," "Campus After Dark," and several albums in tribute to both Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey.

Buddy also conducted for the Jimmy Rogers Television Show and was on staff at NBC for years as a featured player on its "Tonight Show." He was later a familiar featured artist on the Arthur Godfrey Radio Show. Buddy is also an active brass clinician and guest soloist and has toured worldwide representing a leading band instrument manufacturer. Recently he was featured at the Aspen Music Festival.

Buddy Morrow as conductor of the one and only Tommy Dorsey Orchestra insists that the band retain the authentic sound and style of the late Tommy Dorsey and still have the elasticity to meet almost every musical situation. They can play a college prom, a country club, a scholastic clinic or policeman's ball, or even play a jazz concert for non-dancing audiences, all with expertise.

The band's repertoire embraces not only the classics of the original Tommy Dorsey Orchestra but the spectrum of popular music from Dixieland rhythm and blues and intricate ballads to progressive jazz or current rock tunes, and it's library also has a nostalgic representation of those familiar tunes of the 40's so irreplaceable to the many who loved and still remember "Big Bands."

Buddy Morrow is one of the rare Big Band leaders of today; a man whose skill on his horn is both an inspiration on his band and a thrill to audiences where he appears. The Combination of The Tommy Dorsey Orchestra and Buddy Morrow is as natural as peaches and cream, and we trust you will agree that what comes out best is what's put in naturally.