

BUDDY COLLETTE

B I G B A N D

in Concert at the Lincoln Theatre

Washington, D.C. June 6, 1996

- 1 MAGALI** (7:11)
composed by Buddy Collette; arranged by Garnett Brown
- 2 ANDRÉ** (7:04)
composed by Buddy Collette; arranged by John D. Stephens
- 3 MR. AND MRS. GOODBYE** (3:09)
composed and arranged by Buddy Collette (lyric by Viki King)
- 4 BLUES NUMBER FOUR** (4:26)
composed and arranged by Buddy Collette
- 5 JAZZ BY THE BAY** (11:56)
composed and arranged by Buddy Collette
- 6 BLUES IN TORRANCE** (8:00)
composed and arranged by Buddy Collette
- 7 POINT FERMIN FROM
"FRIENDSHIPS SUITE"** (7:02)
composed and arranged by Buddy Collette
- 8 BUDDY BOO** (7:01)
composed and arranged by Buddy Collette

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All compositions published by Veda Music (ASCAP).



Buddy Collette's *Friendships Suite: Sixty Years of Musical Togetherness, (Part One*, heard on this disc), pays tribute to something remarkably durable in a world of constant change. Commissioned by the Ira and Lenore S. Gershwin Foundation in the Library of Congress, it is a salute to personal and professional fellowship that started in the late 1930s and continues to this day. This exceptionally talented and dedicated bunch of Los Angelans couldn't have known then that their association would endure through six decades.

Collette says that "when Patricia Willard and I were planning this concert for the Library of Congress, Patricia wanted to know what kind of suite I was writing and who would come with me to Washington D.C.. I said I would bring many of my friends that I have worked with for most of my life. Chico Hamilton, Gerald Wiggins, Jack Kelson, Brett Woodman, Fred Katz and Al Viola. This is my opportunity to keep the story honest about our music, about our life... I can see these musicians' faces as the notes go down... These notes are just jumping onto the paper—different than ever before...I can hear how each player will sound...will inspire the others...It's about bringing people together."

Photo opposite, l-r: Jack Kelson, Chico Hamilton, Buddy Collette, Brett Woodman, Gerald Wiggins, and Fred Katz - June 6, 1996, Washington, D.C.

They were all still in high school when they became acquainted - and soon turned professional. Charles Mingus was in the mix then, trading in his cello for a bass. Everyone loved and admired the youthful yet highly polished Woodman Brothers' Band. Buddy Collette, Jack Kelson and Chico Hamilton joined forces and played day and night for many of the shows at the Million Dollar Theatre in Los Angeles. After his stint in the service, Gerald Wiggins settled in the area. And then Fred Katz, who had worked with Chico back East, and had become such a powerful part of the Chico Hamilton Quintet, and Al Viola, who joined the family as well.

And through the years the connections have been maintained. Though Brett and Chico would take up residence in New York, the brotherhood has remained intact. From the early days in Watts to the studios of network television, motion pictures and recording companies, to concert halls and jazz festival bandstands all over the world, there has always been an enduring respect for each other's musicianship and stature. So here's to the Library of Congress: thank you for providing the participants and the public the opportunity to experience this special reunion of lifelong friends.

- Richard H. Simon

MAGALI begins quietly in this Garnett Brown arrangement, with flute, guitar and bass playing the tune. A drum fill leads to a counter line played by the bass instruments, with the winds and brasses entering for a full statement. Louis Taylor wails a tenor sax solo and the band comes in with background and a second tenor solo by Steve Carr. A bass trombone solo by Maurice Spears leads to a Gerald Wiggins solo dominated by chromatic parallel chords. The tune returns--culminating in a unison line, a short drum fill, and a big ending.

ANDRÉ, a classic Collette number, is heard in an arrangement by John Stephens. Buddy Collette remarks: "John is a fine woodwind player who plays baritone saxophone in this band and has his own big and small bands that are much in demand." After an introduction the saxophones play Collette's line, the brass and rhythm section supporting to keep things swinging. Buddy Collette's tenor sax solo is followed by an interlude by the band to introduce a flugel horn solo by Al Aarons. Then a trombone solo by George Bohanon ups the voltage, leading to a drum solo by Ndugu Chanler. The saxophones play the bridge again and the whole band takes it out.

MR. AND MRS. GOODBYE "This arrangement of *Mr. And Mrs. Goodbye* was made," says Buddy Collette, "to showcase the skills of Jack Kelson, a great clarinetist who should be heard more often." The introduction, for clarinet and guitar and is improvised.

"Jack gives guitarist Al Viola some chords and starts playing some beautiful lines over them. Jack makes a transition to the tune, the saxes, trombones, and rhythm section accompanying while Jack continues his fine clarinet solo."

BLUES NUMBER 4 features Garnett Brown, who plays a solo statement on trombone. The band enters with a bang, helping him finish the idea he started. Garnett plays twelve bars with the rhythm section and is then supported by the sax section with a harmonized line, giving a double time feeling. Garnett continues his solo and the full band comes in with the out chorus as the saxes play an ending and Garnett Brown improvises over the held final chord.

In **JAZZ BY THE BAY**, Ndugu Chancler's percussive artistry is a wonder of virtuosity and subtlety. Chancler's first drum solo sets up Ann Patterson for an alto solo followed by a trumpet solo by Nolan Shaheed. Then comes a twelve bar piano solo by Gerald Wiggins followed by another trumpet solo by Ron Barrows with the saxes playing background for support. Gerald Wiggins solos again and leads into a re-statement of the theme, which leads to another remarkable Ndugu Chancler drum solo. For the ending, the band enters with strongly accented chords, the reed section holding an unresolved final chord. Chancler continues playing, using his kit to say, 'Not yet... I'll tell you when.'



L to R: Al Viola, Richard Simon and Buddy Collette

BLUES IN TORRANCE was written for the city of Torrance, California. The piece starts out with Buddy Collette on flute, and Anne King on muted trumpet playing an intro which leads to the main tune, with background from the rhythm section and a few instruments. Buddy Collette follows with a flute solo which leads into a trumpet solo by Anne King, and then a trombone solo Collette calls "just beautiful" by Les Benedict. Guitarist Al Viola swings a lazy solo with the trombone section laying down a soft chordal background, and the rest of the band soon follows along. The saxophones, and then flute and muted trumpet play the main theme, bringing the piece to its conclusion.

POINT FERMIN is a section of Buddy Collette's *Friendships Suite*, a work premiered at this concert and commissioned by the Ira and Lenore S. Gershwin Fund in the Library of Congress. He relates that "this melody was written in San Pedro while I was sitting in my camper at the park, watching people." *Point Fermin* opens with a big introduction and a bass solo by Richard Simon, setting up a laid back swing. Collette plays the tune on clarinet and is joined by Al Viola on guitar. The full band enters and the reeds harmonize the tune. Collette takes a lovely chorus followed by a George Bohanon trombone solo, and an Al Viola, guitar solo. Ndugu Chancler interrupts, changing the time signature from 4/4 to 6/4. The reed section enters and the band is back in 4/4 time with Collette re-capping the theme. The whole ensemble reprises the intro in chorus, and *Point Fermin* ends quietly.

BUDDY BOO has jazz luminary, and long time Collette collaborator, Chico Hamilton, sitting-in on drums. *Buddy Boo* opens with the tune played by saxophones. The brasses come in swinging their riffs, Ernie Fields Jr. plays an exciting tenor solo, and the band begins to jam. Collette says "I wanted this tune to be a happy closing number with solos by Al Viola on guitar, George Bohanon on trombone, and Gerald Wiggins on piano". At the end Buddy Collette picks up his clarinet and joins in. The band starts to play an ending—but the inertia of the moment keeps the group charging forward with yet one more enthusiastic chorus.

—David Starobin, with Buddy Collette

William Marcell 'Buddy' Collette, born in Los Angeles on August 6, 1921, is an accomplished and dedicated artist, committed to the creation, perpetuation, and documentation of jazz. His talents as performer, composer, arranger, educator and jazz historian have earned him international recognition in the jazz world. A lifetime resident of Los Angeles, Mr. Collette began his studies and musical career as a saxophonist during the 1930s in the midst of the thriving nightlife of Central Avenue. Association with luminaries such as Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Charlie Parker, Lester Young, Coleman Hawkins, Dexter Gordon, Dizzy Gillespie, Art Tatum, Erroll Garner and countless others, have had a motivating and lasting influence on Collette's work

More than 31 albums featuring Buddy Collette have been recorded, in addition to the two volume *Buddy Collette Songbook*, which contains over 85 original compositions. A comprehensive Collette discography, *Man of Many Parts*, compiled by Coen Hoffman, was published in 1985 in the Netherlands. In addition to his musical work, Mr. Collette has been seen on screen— playing jazz—sometimes ever so briefly, in motion picture productions including *Citizen Kane* (1941), *Kitty Foyle* (1940), and *Tom, Dick, and Harry* (1941). In the 1941 Cole Porter-scored *You'll Never Get Rich*, starring Fred Astaire and Rita Hayworth, Mr. Collette played clarinet on screen with an all-star jazz combo of drummer Chico Hamilton, guitarist



A. Harold Grant, trumpeter Red Mack, and bassist Joe Comfort. In 1949, Buddy Collette joined Groucho Marx's "You Bet Your Life" television orchestra.

Mr. Collette has been an activist for jazz and for social causes throughout his life. In 1948 he was one of the founders of the sixty-member, interracial Humanist Symphony Orchestra. In the early 1950s he was one of a small but stalwart contingent of black and white musicians who fought successfully for the amalgamation of the segregated Los Angeles locals 767 and 47 of the American Federation of Musicians—thereby achieving equal employment and benefits for all members.

In 1990, Los Angeles mayor, Tom Bradley, proclaimed May 23, 1990 "Buddy Collette Day," describing him as "a woodwind player of deserved legendary status and one of Los Angeles's most important musical native sons." In observation of Mr. Collette's 74th birthday, a celebration attracting thousands of well-wishers, the Los Angeles City Council lauded his achievements, recognizing him as "a positive role model for the youth of today."

Buddy Collette's autobiography, *Jazz Generations, A Life in American Music and Society*, written with Steven Isoardi, will be published in June, 2000 by Continuum.

THE BUDDY COLLETTE BIG BAND

William "Buddy" Collette, Music Director

Woodwinds

Steven Carr
Jackie Kelson
Ann E. Patterson
John D. Stephens
Louis V. Taylor, Jr.
Ernie Fields, Jr. on *Buddy Boo*

Trombones

Les Benedict
George R. Bohanon
Garnett Brown, Jr.
Maurice R. Spears
Brett B. Woodman

Trumpets

Albert N. Aarons
Ronald Barrows
Anne King
Nolan Shaheed

Piano

Gerald Wiggins, Sr.

Cello

Fred Katz

Guitar

Alfred F. Viola

Bass

Richard H. Simon

Drums

Leon Ndugu Chancler
Chico Hamilton* on *Buddy Boo*

*Chico Hamilton appears courtesy of
Joyous Shout Productions

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Anne McLean, (Music Division, The Library of Congress)

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Photo of Groucho and Buddy, courtesy of Buddy Collette

Photo of Al Viola, Richard Simon, and Buddy Collette: Becky Starobin

Photo of June 6, 1996, Washington, D.C.: Don Hamilton

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