

June Christy - Big Band Specials (1962)

Written by bluesever

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A1 You Came A Long Way From St. Louis 2:16 A2 Swingin' On Nothin' 2:23 A3 Is You Is, Or Is You Ain't My Baby 2:46 A4 Prelude To A Kiss 2:53 A5 Skyliner 2:57 A6 A Night In Tunisia 2:50 B1 It Don't Mean A Thing 1:43 B2 Frenesi 2:19 B3 Stompin' At The Savoy 2:29 B4 Good-Bye 3:03 B5 Time Was (Duerme) 2:52 B6 Until (The Mole) 2:46 Arranged By, Conductor – Bill Holman, Bob Cooper, Shorty Rogers Bass – Joe Mondragon Drums – Mel Lewis Piano – Jimmy Rowles Saxophone – Bill Perkins, Bob Cooper, Bud Legge, Charlie Kennedy, Jack Nimitz, Joe Maini Trombone – Dick Nash, Frank Rosolino, John Halliburton, Ken Shroyer, Lew McCreary, Vern Friley Trumpet – Al Porcino, Conte Candoli, Lee Katzman, Ray Triscari

By the time this album was recorded in 1962, singer June Christy had already cut the great bulk of her discography. Many, critics especially, put her past her prime. This album demonstrates that the critics were wrong and the "Misty Miss Christy" was still at the top of her form. Her instantly recognizable voice takes the listener through a roster of tunes associated with the big bands. And she has a big band backing her that is made up of some of the best players on the West Coast -- or any coast, for that matter -- many of whom were habitués of the Stan Kenton band before Kenton's music became pretentious. The charts also came from former Kenton chart makers, Bill Holman, Shorty Rogers, and husband Bob Cooper. Most everything on this disc is done up-tempo. But things slow down a bit for a track or two, especially a typical Christy haunting version of "Goodbye" and a medium-tempo "Frenesi." The list of players in the band itself speaks eloquently of how good they sound. There are eloquent solos by Cooper, and Bob Mondragon basslines stand out on a few of the tunes. Jimmy Rowles and Mel Lewis round out the rhythm section. With Christy singing in her inimitable manner, backed by a big band of five star performers with top of the list charts, there's no way this album wasn't going to be successful. Originally issued on the Capitol label, the LP was reissued as a CD on Blue Note in 1999. A must for any jazz/pop vocal collection. ---Dave Nathan, AllMusic Review

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I've had this on LP ever since 1962 when it first came out. Unfortunately my copy is now full of clicks, pops and surface noise. Particularly annoying on a vocal album. Imagine my surprise when I spotted this new release on CD. Aside from the fact that Christy is in fine voice, the big attraction for me is the arrangements and big band backing her. Arrangements are by Bill Holman, Shorty Rogers and Bob Cooper and the band, which fits Christy like a glove, consists of people like Conte Candoli, Frank Rosolino, Bud Shank, Bob Cooper, Bill Perkins, Jimmy Rowles and Mel Lewis. Christy goes through 12 standards that all have been associated with the bands of Ellington, Jimmy Dorsey, Artie Shaw, Ray McKinley, Goodman, Dizzy, Harry James and Charlie Barnet. Just check out the titles. Recording quality is excellent and you become very aware that this is one of those recordings with a big band and a vocalist where the band does not overpower the singer. A real joy. ---Ron Meyers, allaboutjazz.com

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