

Buddy Rich - Big Band Machine (1975)

Written by bluesever

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A1 Three Day Sucker 6:50 A2 Tommy Medley (11:55) A2a Eyesight To The Blind A2b Champagne A2c See Me, Feel Me A2d Miracle Cure A2e Listening To You B1 On Broadway 3:48 B2 Pieces Of Dreams 4:30 B3 Ease On Down The Road 3:30 B4 West Side Story Medley '75 5:27 Alto Saxophone – Bill Blaut Alto Saxophone [Lead] – Peter Yellin Baritone Saxophone – Roger Rosenberg Bass – Ben Brown Bass Trombone – Anthony Salvatori Congas – Ray Armando Drums – Buddy Rich Guitar – Cliff Morris, Cornell Dupree, Wayne Wright Piano – Greg Kogan Producer – Sonny Lester Soprano Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone – Steve Marcus Tenor Saxophone – Bob Mintzer Trombone – Gerald Chamberlain Trombone [Lead] – Barry Maur Trumpet – Charles Camilleri, Danny Hayes, Richard Hurwitz, Ross Konikoff Trumpet [Lead] – Lloyd Michels

Recorded in 1975, this is the original Groove Merchant recording of a jazz-funk orchestra loaded with heavyweight soloists. Indeed, it is as fine a modern band as Rich ever dished out. The disc is not as good as the Japanese P-Vine version, which has two bonus tracks and the original artwork. If this more in your budget range, get it, but be aware the import has the complete session. ---Michael G. Nastos, AllMusic Review

No, really. Keep in mind that this was the band Rich put together to record (not counting the pickup big band with Sal Nistico in '74) after disbanding the "Roar Of '74" band (1973) and going to a small combo format (Nistico, Sonny Fortune, Jack Wilkins, etc.) and a few albums with Zoot Sims and Lionel Hampton. This was our introduction to the late Steve Marcus, who turned out to be an outstanding jazz tenor for Rich until Buddy's death in 1987. Bob Mintzer is also in the section on tenor - later to become a top arranger and big band leader, himself.

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If you listen closely to the "Tommy Medley" you may not think of it as a "dated" or "cop-out" piece - From the opening bass line, congas and then Roger Rosenberg's bari (yeah, you can hear some wah-wah guitar), this chart really starts burning. The saxes state the theme, with the brass joining in. After a brief trombone solo in the second movement, Danny Hayes takes off on trumpet on a long, bopping solo. Then Rich and the congas help close it out.

"Pieces Of Dreams" is a beautiful, moody song with the saxes playing the melody with short, injected solos from the lead trumpet and trombone. A really nice, pleasant, easy-going big band arrangement (I've got it. And have played it with a big band).

"Lush Life" starts off with a very nice trumpet solo, before switching off to a trombone solo.

The bands rendition of "Ease On Down The Road" is not bad, with a tenor solo from Steve Marcus. Although the "fade" is kind of corny with Danny Hayes' trumpet in the background.

"West Side Story Medley '75" is really condensed. With only the tenor solo and then right into Buddy's solo along with the congas and a bass solo. Not one of the better editions of "West Side Story."

Still, not a bad album for a second comeback with his Big Band. ---Pat Nava, amazon.com

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