

# SOUND ON DISC

BERLIOZ, the musicologists will tell you, never really understood the liturgy, nor was he interested in it. They cite as an example his massive *Requiem Mass*, and particularly the earth-shaking *Tuba mirum*. This is an academic view — and misses the point completely. For the great congeries of musicians and singers that expressed the Berlioz temperament and sensibility, though unorthodox, precisely reflect the catholicity of a ritual which goes beyond the set limits demanded by the musicologists.

It might be said that the *Et incarnatus est* of Mozart's *Great Mass in C* is not valid because it is theatrical. But all outward religious expression is, in a sense, theatrical; only the point at which the spark leaps across the chasm separating man from his Maker can be blunted by the just trappings of music.

All of this is but introduction to the good news that Columbia has issued a refulgent recording of the Berlioz *Te Deum*, for which let us all rejoice. According to legend, the

*Te Deum* originated in the ecstasies of St. Ambrose and St. Augustine at the moment of Augustine's baptism, a religious improvisation of sudden inspiration. The technical grandiosity which sometimes afflicts Berlioz is well controlled in this work, giving free rein to a pounding statement of faith, interspersed with passages of Mozartian delicacy. The *Judex Crederis*, with its climactic impact, is the Day of Judgment in music, evoking some awe, some terror, and much understanding.

A special word should be said for the perceptive vigor of the performance by the Royal Philharmonic, the London Philharmonic Choir, the Dulwich College Boys Choir, and especially for Sir Thomas Beecham, conducting. Recording, as such, is excellent (Columbia ML 4897).

What M-G-M calls "three of the very most popular selections in the whole symphonic literature" are combined on one record. They are: *Grieg's Peer Gynt Suites, Nos. 1 & 2*, and Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*.

These are the war horses of the concert repertory, but they have lived because something in their plain meters appeals to people. I am not one to sneer at this. If you lack these works, and want them, you can do no better than the newest version in which Hans-Jurgen Walther and the Philharmonia Orchestra of Hamburg perform in sprightly fashion (M-G-M E3139).

*Encores in a Quiet Mood*, played by that talented pianist, Menahem Pressler, falls into somewhat the same category. On one record you get a Poulenc *Pastourelle*, the Albeniz *Córdoba*, and Ravel's *Pavane*, and other small works by Granados, Satie, Chabrier, Bartók, Griffes, and Respighi (M-G-M E3129).

TWO MANIFESTATIONS of the popular spirit deserve some mention:

In those dear, dead days — allegedly beyond recall — there was a young man with a megaphone named Rudy Vallee. Vallee was the first "crooner" — for those who have forgotten, crooning was a thin-voiced evasion of singing, a polite rebuttal to the robust style of American jazz. Vallee captivated the girls and infuriated the boys, but he was immensely popular. Now, Capitol has issued an album of the tunes which made Vallee famous — *My*

*Time Is Your Time, I'm Just a Vagabond Lover, Betty Co-ed, and Vieni Vieni* in atrocious Italian. Amplification and technique have given Vallee's voice more body, but the old inflection and gentle spoofing are still there. That wonderful Noel Coward novelty, *Mad Dogs and Englishman*, is neatly done — and so are some others (Capitol H 550).

Off the movie sound track comes

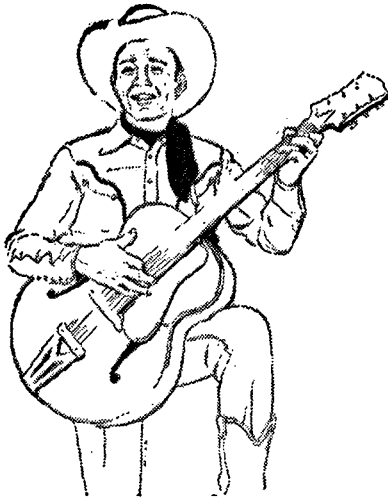
the musical score of *Brigadoon*, late of Broadway, sung by Gene Kelly, Van Johnson, and others. It is all quite pleasant — the best of synthetic Scotch has been distilled by

composer Frederick Loewe and lyricist Alan Jay Lerner. *Once in the Highlands, The Heather on the Hill, Almost Like Being in Love, and There But for You Go I* — plus some others of the show's songs — are excellently done by an excellent cast. Johnny Green handles the orchestral backgrounds with his usual skill (M-G-M X-263).

But I wish, I wish, I wish that the American musical comedy would go back to being the American musical comedy. When the new musical comedy comes in, it will stem from the old, not from this *potpourri* of outlandish folk elements which are better done by the folk themselves.

As for me, I keep on playing *Pal Joey, On Your Toes, and Of Thee I Sing*.  
R. DE T.





# A MAN, A HORSE AND A GUITAR

By  
DUANE VALENTY

A TALL, rangy fellow walked into a Cincinnati pawnshop and paid twenty dollars for a guitar that was hanging in the window. Smiling uncertainly, he twanged the dusty strings as he left the small shop.

That was many years ago and since that day, Leonard Slye has made that guitar pay big dividends. It became an Aladdin's Lamp that was to carry him on to fabulous heights he'd never even imagined. It was to change his name from Leonard Slye to Roy Rogers, King of the Cowboys, and bring him wealth, fame, and the adulation of millions of children everywhere.

A farmhand at home in Duck Run, Illinois, the future screen cowboy had taken to the road to see what lay over beyond the farther pasture. He'd driven a truck, worked in a shoe factory and been a

cowhand. When it looked as though there'd never be enough money to fulfill his life's ambition of becoming a dentist, reluctantly he gave up that dream and let the Fate that guides cowboys take over.

As a dust-covered "ranchero" the young fellow learned to ride, round up cattle and shoot. Tired and dusty after a day's work, he looked no different from a hundred other grimy cowpunchers. On the side, however, he was becoming proficient with his twenty-dollar guitar and exercising his vocal chords. Joining a singing group known as the "Texas Outlaws," he first sang at a Lion's Club dance, then on small radio stations, and in between he'd call square dances.

Driving to California in a truck that was about to break down all the way, Roy did odd jobs and finally