

# THE JAZZ BEAT

## DELAUNAY UP TO DATE

**I**T WAS said that fortunes were being made on the green ink concession at 14 Rue Chaptal, where Charles Delaunay was working on his *chef-d'oeuvre* (*NEW HOT DISCOGRAPHY*. Edited by Walter E. Schaap and George Avakian. New York: Criterion Music Corp. 1948. 608 pp. \$6). American soldiers back in 1944 who were fortunate enough to visit this address (the Paris cell of the Hot Club du France) in search of a few recorded kicks would notice a ration-lean figure at a desk near the window making tiny emerald words fly from his fountain pen. Totally oblivious to the din of GI collectors arguing with their Gallic counterparts, the stridencies of an Armstrong solo, or the hoarse statements of Johnny Dodds, the discographer worked on until the place began to clear out around eleven or twelve o'clock; then he would be able really to concentrate in the quiet, and many mornings found him scribbling away until he fell asleep across the reams of recording data.

Now, hard work alone never made a masterpiece, and the fact that this new book is a product of almost superhuman enterprise and diligence on the part of M. Delaunay and Messrs. Schaap and Avakian means nothing unless the result is sound. Happily it is and all participants are to be congratulated on a reference volume of lasting value to anyone even remotely interested in jazz and near-jazz recordings. It is regrettable that there was not more of the finely conceived art work by Marshall Barer, as perfectly suited a series of drawings as I have seen in many moons.

So far as I know, the idea of a *discographie*, indeed the coinage of the name itself, originated with Delaunay, with the first of these collector's bibles published in 1936. He is the thirty-seven-year-old son of the late Robert Delaunay, *avant-garde* French painter of the Tens and Twenties and, being a talented artist himself, brings an interesting esthetic sensibility and taste to jazz scholarship and criticism. In this field there is ample room, God wot.

The great number of sterile jazz offerings among the releases of the past few ban-racked months are enough to wean a body away from the phonograph. But a look at this rather staggering piece of work, a lasting monument to the jazz idiom as well as M. Delaunay himself, makes me proud

of the opportunity to listen, makes me realize that the contention between labor and capital will eventually pass, makes me know it.

**CHARLIE PARKER ALL STARS:** "Cheers"; "Carving the Bird." (Dial 1013, \$1.05.)

Charlie Parker, the alto saxophonist called "Bird" is, along with Lennie Tristano, the most brilliantly creative and generally stunning soloist now making jazz music. This is not written in the sense that I've-got-news-for-you. I am merely getting completely into the now sizable queue of Parker worshippers. This recording and the other recent Parker Dials are the only records I have received in months that I listen to regularly. I feel that the New Orleans style of jazz and its subsequent hybrids have had their say and we should be thankful to have the statements available on records for examination and enjoyment. Be that as it may, the only place that creative jazz is being purveyed today is on the bebop front with Charlie Parker as the leader.

**CLAUDE LUTER AND HIS LORENTAIS JAZZ BAND.** (Circle album S-14, \$3.90.)

This is one of the best exports of France since the chaps at Epernay and Rheims dreamed up their *méthode champenoise* and began to load the results on boats. The first time Louis Armstrong heard Claude Luter play he remarked, "Man, I thought I was looking right in Johnny Dodd's face." When you audit the records you may well agree. —GILBERT MCKEAN.

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OCTOBER 30, 1948

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# Letters to the *RECORDINGS* Editor

## Prospects Nil

SIR: I should like very much to hear:

a) The balcony scene with George Marshall as Romeo and V. Molotov as Juliet.

b) A complete recording of the "Ring" on long playing records under Toscanini, with Melchior, Traubel, Flagstad, and Kipnis.

J. DIETHER.

Santa Monica, Cal.

EDITOR'S NOTE: We'd say your chances were about equal—with a shade more probability of the former coming to pass.

## Records for GI's?

SIR: In the splendid article entitled "Parlez vous Bengali" . . . you said that certain language courses could be obtained by vets on the GI Bill. Would you please let me know how this is done? Your article has aroused much curiosity among our group and we are very interested.

R. E. CARVER.

Greenville, S. C.

EDITOR'S NOTE: To Mr. Carver and other vets who inquired, we pass on the information that this possibility has been advanced by the companies involved (Cortinaphone and Lingua-phone). It appears that one cannot obtain the albums entirely, at one time, but by enrolling for a course in which these records are utilized, they can be financed under GI Bill of Rights provisions. The companies themselves would be the best source of information.

## New Records?

SIR: May I bother you to clear up a point about which I am confused? It is my understanding that there exists at present, and has existed for some time, a ban on new recordings. In the face of this, what are these new recordings which are reviewed?

GERALDINE GLUCKMAN.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The "new" recordings now being issued were all made prior to January 1, 1948. Since the industry had been warned two months before that the contract would not be renewed, vast preparations were made to record materials in all categories prior to the shutdown. Of course, more recent material continues to come in from abroad, where musicians have never ceased recording.

## "Highest Bidder" and Cut-Outs

SIR: In "Sold to the Highest Bidder," of your last issue, a brief paragraph is devoted to one "answer, or rather palliative," to the problem caused by the deletion of records from the catalogues. This suggestion is a central archive where recordings of historical and musical importance could be preserved for study and comparison. I read this with special interest as, though few people know

about it, just such an archive was started in the Music Division of the New York Public Library . . . some ten years ago. . . . It embraces not only all kinds of standard and folk music, but popular and dance recordings as well. . . . But, with its present shortage of funds, the Library simply cannot make the collection available.

PHILIP L. MILLER,  
Music Division,  
New York Public Library.  
New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: What Mr. Miller is too modest to say is that he has done a staggering job of collating record information from all over the world and the record collection is a treasure trove of material. Either a city appropriation or an endowment is needed to service this material, and we herewith subscribe the first \$50. That leaves about \$14,950 of the amount needed for a year's operations. Are there 299 more archivists in the house?

## More About LP

SIR: Your disapproval of Columbia's Eighth Symphony of Beethoven on two sides of a ten-inch long playing record (instead of being coupled with something else on a twelve-inch disc) is noted and condemned. Long players should not be made the vehicle of forcing a tie-in sale on customers. Lots of people may want Beethoven's Eighth by Weingartner, for example, who don't want Beethoven's First by Weingartner, or whatever else the coupling may be. As far as possible—and I mean very far—the rule should be one record, one work. . . . Do the long players have an ungrooved blank between movements of a sin-

gle work all on one side? If not, they should.

"PARSIFAL."

Washington, D. C.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Like every LP record, this discussion has two sides. Do we want continuous music at the jeopardy of an undesirable tie-in or do we sacrifice continuity (beyond a movement or two) for mere selectivity? For our part, we prefer continuity with a reasonable coupling, such as a Weingartner Beethoven No. 1, to which "Parsifal" objects. Perhaps Columbia can solve the problem by issuing an "Eighth" in two forms; on one side of a twelve-inch LP, and on two sides of a ten-inch—thus making everybody happy: except somebody who doesn't like Beethoven anyway. To the second query, the answer is an emphatic YES. All separate items on LP records are separated by blank grooves.

## A Hand for an Arm

SIR: I was transferred from the States before I could find out whether the Columbia album of Madeleine Grey's "Chants d'Auvergne" was finally made available again or not. Can you give me the album number and a possible source from which to purchase it? If my letter can do any good, add me as a buyer post-haste for Schönberg's "Gurre-Lieder." . . . I'd give my right arm for it.

JAMES H. DAY,  
Sergeant, U. S. Army.

Seoul, Korea.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Sgt. Day's arm is not in jeopardy, for RCA Victor notes that the "Gurrelieder" is a fourteen-record album (at present quotations, an \$18.50 buy) and there are simply not enough prospective customers for a reissue. The "Chants d'Auvergne" are now noted as album 758 in the Columbia catalogue, and as items of general stock should be available from any shop with a full inventory.

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