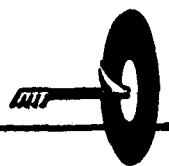


HITS AND MISSES



IT WILL be no news by this time that, in his mid-fifties, Cole Porter has been fructified by renewed contacts with the Bard. What a theatre man thinks of it you will find elsewhere in this issue (page 58) but for my ears, "Kiss Me, Kate" is one of Porter's finest and most ribald scores, as happy an addendum to Shakespeare as one could wish for. The album by the original Broadway cast (Columbia C200, \$7) is a splendid buy save for the effortful singing of the leading lady, Hollywood's Patricia Morison. This is a species of vocal tugging and hauling in unfortunate contrast to the easy power of the leading man, Alfred Drake, as well as to one's memories of the brassy clarity and gusto with which Ethel Merman used to address Porter's songs. But it is exciting to have the old master Porter rise up after years of surgery fairly bursting with delicious music—this department's favorites include a sumptuous beguine, "Were Thine That Special Face"; a lovely setting for words by William Shakespeare, "I Am Ashamed That Women Are So Simple"; a tuneful satire on the Viennese waltz, "Wunderbar," and several of those very fast patter songs for which the composer is famous.

While in the old masters' area, it may be noted that Tommy Dorsey and his orchestra have made a quietly ingratiating record of a tune by the historic Isham Jones, who wrote such durable numbers as "I'll See You in My Dreams" and "It Had to Be You." The new item is called "How Many Tears Must Fall" (RCA Victor 20-3317, 79¢) and it may hardly seem spectacular at the first spinning. But with repeated playings we have found it to possess a kind of melodic iron which is not surprising from Isham Jones.

On this page we make it a business to pay careful attention, up to a point, to musical tastes not entirely our own, and in this generous spirit we report the issuance of two impressive examples of musical dynamiting. The American esthetic has, of course, always made plenty of room for sheer blasting; one recalls the standard old vaudeville announcement: "I will now render, meaning to tear apart—" In this tradition Les Brown's skilful orchestra offers a jump version of Cole Porter's "Just One of Those Things" (Columbia 38381, 79¢) which must certainly be the most thorough shredding that classic has ever received, and

we were also struck by the great superiority of the musical material over most jump compositions. When it comes to Harry James's version of "Love (Your Spell Is Everywhere)" (Columbia 38380, 79¢) we feel that we must call upon the utmost resources of the typewriter. We have been sitting here bemused for several minutes trying to get some sort of intellectual purchase on the phenomenon. Here, mind you, is a man who is not only a trumpeter of overwhelming technique and force. He is also, actually, the husband of Betty Grable. And when he seizes his horn and renders "Love (Your Spell Is Everywhere)" the effect is nothing less than Vesuvian. We are confident, in short, that this record has important things to say to us about the erotic life and ideals of the Republic, but we are not sure what they are.

The dulcet and estimable singer Perry Como is with us this month in an album of "Supper Club Favorites" (RCA Victor P237, \$3.25) and a single of "Blue Room" and "With a Song in My Heart" (RCA Victor 20-3329, 79¢). Of these it seems needless to remark, as the first chorus of "Blue Room" will adequately demonstrate, that there are few sentimental songsters to compare. But protest must be lodged, in the language of Gimbel's advertising department, that nobody BUT NOBODY wants to hear Como preceded, accompanied, or followed by a chorus of voices mixed or unmixed. Como's is essentially a private voice, and there is nothing private about a choir.

We are very partial to the vigorous rumba playing of Noro Morales, who has just produced a mover and shaker called "El Sopon (Cuban Stew)" (MGM 10341, 79¢), and the talented composer Carl Sigman has an agreeable new number, "Careless Hands," obviously inspired by "Careless Love," well sung by Johnny Desmond (MGM 10349, 79¢); on the reverse is the popular abomination "These Will Be the Best Years of Our Lives."

The perennial problem of what to give those granite music lovers who simply do not love anything which is unfamiliar has been magnificently solved, one would suppose for all time, by an English bandmaster named Peter Yorke. He offers an album called "Songs to Remember" (Columbia C178, \$3.95) in which a dizzy and highly misleading cover, featuring a low-necked soubrette, fronts for some of the most expertly innocuous

music in the world—the selections are "Love, Here Is My Heart," "Just A-Wearyin' for You," "By the Sleepy Lagoon," "Intermezzo," "Moonlight and Roses," "Songs My Mother Taught Me," "Evensong," and "Somewhere a Voice Is Calling." Mr. Yorke has not only not ventured very far into the musical realms of gold; he has also served up his chestnuts with an orchestral sauce which must have had a luminol base. But if anyone supposes that these sides exhaust the capacity of the British phonograph industry for the provision of musical somnolence, let him be aware that London records have just placed on sale an album "Concert in Tivoli" (London LA68, \$3.75) of waltzes, mazurkas, and polkas by a Danish sub-Strauss named Hans Christian Lumbye which are of an almost asphyxiating lack of musical interest.

—WILDER HOBSON.

Both from Boston

KOUSSEVITZKY: "Valse Miniature," etc. Serge Koussevitzky, double bass, with Pierre Luboschutz, piano. (RCA Victor Limited Edition album 1, \$10.)

HAYDN: "Missa Solemnis" ("Harmoniemesse"). Ludwig Berberich conducting choir, organ, and orchestra of Munich Cathedral. (Haydn Society, \$15.75.)

The above-noted Koussevitzky discs are those swan songs recorded by the eminent conductor in the late Twenties, following which he virtually gave up performance on the instrument. Re-recorded to reinforce the bass, and pressed on Vinylite, the sounds attest both to the remarkable facility of Koussevitzky on the cumbersome instrument, and to his post-Glazunow inclinations as a composer of such items as an andante from a Contra-Bass Concerto, a "Chanson Triste," as well as this "Valse." Also offered are pieces by Eccles and Laska. The six sides are priced at \$10, with the profits earmarked for the Koussevitzky Twenty-fifth Anniversary Fund.

Of the Haydn Mass, we know nothing other than it is a first recording and sales are limited to 500 copies by subscription. Specifications are: seven twelve-inch records, on Vinylite, with an orchestral score of slightly larger than the usual miniature size included. No test pressings being yet available, we pass the information on merely as such. Orders should be sent to 179 Cambridge Street, Boston 14, Mass.

Recordings Reports on Current Pop Releases

PERFORMER, SONG, DATA	REPORT
Carle, Frankie: "Sweet Sue." Columbia 38388, 79¢.	Bright dance tempo treatment of Victor Young's masterpiece; in both this and the overside "Let a Smile Be Your Umbrella" Carle's stylized piano is remarkably reproduced by post-ban techniques.
Clarke, Buddy, and Doris Day: "Powder Your Face with Sunshine." Columbia 38394, 79¢.	Couesh philosophy, delivered with good humor and musical taste by a new "me and you" team. Overside is "I'll String Along with You," which tends to get a bit sticky at the slow pace favored.
Cugat, Xavier: "Peter Peter Pumpkin Eater." Columbia 38389, 79¢.	Virtuoso variations on the familiar nursery tune, done up in guaracha rhythm. Not the least attraction is the opportunity it gives for the anonymous masters of Cugat's orchestra to distinguish themselves.
Durante, Jimmy, and Betty Garrett: "Any State in the 48 Is Great." MGM 30176, 79¢.	Like most of the great man's better specialties, this one is credited to Durante as composer. It is far from high Durante, but it has its patriotic charms and the kind of brash vaudeville melody for which Schnozzle is famous. Miss Garrett cannot match her partner's exuberance, but who can?
Harvey, Jane: "So in Love." MGM 10359, 79¢.	Of the two sides devoted to "Kiss Me, Kate" tunes ("Always True to You" is the other), Miss Harvey manages better with this, treated as it is to an elaborate Latin background by the orchestra under Hugo Winterhalter's direction. The Harvey voice quality is good, as those who recall her Goodman records will attest, but she strives a little too hard for a manner—especially in "Always True to You," which sounds like Kate Smith imitating Dorothy Shay. Both sides are well reproduced.
Hawkins, Erskine: "Corn Bread." RCA Victor 20-3326, 79¢.	Good specimen of a genre believed out-moded—big band playing of a fast blues over a boogie background. Real beat, and no bop, despite the numerous solo opportunities. All there is to justify the title, incidentally, is the whole band, at the very end, saying: "Corn Bread!" Nothing much to hear in "Bewildered," on the other side, which has Jimmy Mitchell singing a doleful chorus.
Martin, Freddy: "Once in Love with Amy." RCA Victor 20-3324, 79¢.	The jaunty tune from "Where's Charley?" done in the Martin manner, which means more for the manner than the tune. However, it's danceable, to use a word now become an accolade. Like many others of this list, a post-ban job and thus much better quality recording than pop tunes formerly enjoyed. "You Was" occupies the other side, for those who care to know that "you was" rhymes with "knew was."
Sinatra, Frank: "Once in Love with Amy." Columbia 38391, 79¢.	Another tribute to Amy, this time with more care for Loesser's lyrical intention, done with the best of Sinatra's naturalness and effortless command of tune and text. "Sunflower," which extols Kansas and one of its daughters, is the partner, and neat extolling, too.
Stone, George, and Sextet: "What Is This Thing Called Love?" MGM 10360, 79¢.	What happens to Porter's moody lament is best indicated by mention of the overside title: "Goofin' with a Ghost." This sextet, in which a pair of sax men are most prominent, not only kick the tune around but eventually out of hearing altogether, in favor of some wild elaborations. "Knocked out" is, I believe, the word for such doings, especially those of the brilliant tenor man. Good Basie-ish piano, too, and fine "walking bass." "Goofin'" is dirgeish, but well-phrased, blue-blowing.
Thornhill, Claude: "My Dream Is Yours." RCA 20-3337, 79¢.	Dulcet doings, defeated by some inferior tune material. The overside "Wind in My Sails" might be suggested as No. 2 in a "Wind Suite" for Beatrice Lillie, whose "Wind 'Round My Heart" is justly famous.
Young, Eva: "Laughing Boy." RCA Victor 20-3335, 79¢.	Speaking of "Suites," here is a second movement for "Nature Boy," done with pastoral charm by Eva Young. (The author, however, is not Eben, etc., but Jack Segal.) "I Can't Think of a Thing to Do" engages Miss Young on the other side, but not very profitably.

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