

SR RECORDINGS SECTION

HIGHLIGHTS

THE TRUST FUND STORY
By Irving Kolodin 51
MUCH ADO ABOUT "KATE"
By Sam and Bella Spewack 54
MAJOR MINORS
By Herbert Weinstock 56
ALTO RHAPSODY
By John Culshaw 57
RECORDINGS IN REVIEW
By the Editor 58
THE SPOKEN WORD
By Irwin Edman 78

How Good Music Can Pay Its Way

The Trust Fund Story

By IRVING KOLODIN

CONSIDERING the quantity and quality of recordings now available and the likely additions to the lists before Christmas, it is not immediately alarming news that another record ban is imaginable by January 1, 1954. At that time the agreement dating from 1948 between the record makers and the American Federation of Musicians will expire. If negotiations to extend it have been undertaken, we haven't heard about them.

It is even possible that some makers might welcome an enforced period of idleness, to direct attention to a number of excellent issues which have been overlooked in the "record" tide of the last year and to work off the contents of the industry-wide icebox. Moreover, those with the strongest European affiliates would suffer little inconvenience, while those whose merchandise comes almost exclusively from abroad—such as London, Westminster, and Urania—would have a clear field for as long as the production was restricted here.

To be sure, bans of this sort have been promulgated in the past to penalize the manufacturers where, it was supposed, it would hurt them most—in the making of popular records. But the increased dollar volume in music of more durable value has given it a much larger share of importance

than ever, and the recording performers who have profited from it will be penalized if imports continue unabated while they remain idle.

The fundamental fact is that the occasion for negotiation of a new contract brings to prominence a number of issues that have been dormant too long. Each of them relates directly to the kind of records we are going to have when the next contract is eventually negotiated—there will be one, sooner or later—and some of them have far-reaching possibilities affecting the musical life of the country as a whole.

There is, in the first place, the question of whether AFM (American Federation of Musicians) members may take part in European recordings. At present, they are forbidden to play or conduct performances not sanctioned by the AFM, on penalty of union reprisal. This is an unrealistic, unworkable prohibition which has had but one result: to transfer job opportunities from Americans to Europeans. The essential absurdity is illustrated by the production of contemporary American music in Vienna—it would not be economically feasible to do the work in this country—under the direction of such Viennese conductors as Hans Swarowsky or Felix Prohaska, rather than Walter Hendl, Leonard Bernstein, or Howard Hanson.

The union cannot control the output; it can only control the—so to

speak—human input. The present restriction inhibits quality, and it deters the AFM's own members from work and the rewards created by the demands of an increasing market. Fortunately, the European countries have not responded in kind.

This consideration is closely tied to another that needs close study in the negotiation of a new agreement. That is the arrangement by which 1 per cent of the selling price of every record made in America by those participating in the agreement is paid into the Music Performance Trust Fund, of which Samuel R. Rosenbaum is the Trustee. As those who have lived with the history of this development will recall, it came into existence in 1945 as a royalty paid by the makers to the union for the privilege of resuming work after a lengthy stoppage. Enactment of the Taft-Hartley Law in 1947 made this illegal, and another stoppage ensued until a new formula was contrived. The manufacturers "created" the Trust Fund, and the Trustee supervises the spending of the money. In its original form the money was spent by the union through its locals. In the new form the continent is divided into 654 areas (Canada's performers are included in the agreement). By an odd "coincidence" the geographical areas are almost identical with the jurisdictional division of the old "local" setup.

To judge from the slight amount of

What's New on Columbia Records

NOVEMBER RELEASES:

| COMPOSER, WORK | PERFORMER AND NUMBER | COMMENT |
|--|---|--|
| Casals Festival At Prades Vol. II: Schubert: Quintet in C Major, Op. 163 | Isaac Stern, violin; Alexander Schneider, violin; Milton Katims, viola; Pablo Casals, 'cello; Paul Tortelier, 'cello. | The world's great virtuosi join legendary Pablo Casals in history making performances. Casals' ideals and purpose have moulded individual talent and temperaments into superb chamber music ensembles. |
| Schubert: Trio No. 1 in B-Flat Major, Op. 99. | Alexander Schneider, violin; Pablo Casals, 'cello; Eugene Istomin, piano. | |
| Schubert: Trio No. 2 in E-Flat Major, Op. 100. | Alexander Schneider, violin; Pablo Casals, 'cello; Mieczyslaw Horszowski, piano. | |
| Schubert: Sonata No. 5 in A Major For Violin and Piano ("Duo"), Op. 162. | Joseph Szigeti, violin; Dame Myra Hess, piano. | |
| Schubert: Variations on "Trock'ne Blumen" from "Die Schöne Müllerin," Op. 160. | John Wummer, flute; Leopold Mannes, piano. (4-12" Ⓟ) (Regular Edition) SL-183. | |
| * * * | * * * | |
| Casals Festival At Prades Vol. III: Schumann: Fünf Stücke Im Volkston, Op. 102. | Pablo Casals, 'cello; Leopold Mannes, piano. | |
| Schumann: Trio No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 63. | Alexander Schneider, violin; Pablo Casals, 'cello; Mieczyslaw Horszowski, piano. | |
| Brahms: Trio No. 1 in B Major, Op. 8. | Isaac Stern, violin; Pablo Casals, 'cello; Dame Myra Hess, piano. | |
| Brahms: Trio No. 2 in C Major, Op. 87. | Joseph Szigeti, violin; Pablo Casals, 'cello; Dame Myra Hess, piano. (3-12" Ⓟ) (Regular Edition) SL-184. | |
| Beethoven: Concerto No. 3 in C Minor For Piano and Orchestra, Op. 37. | Rudolf Serkin, piano, with The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. ML 4738. | A brilliant new performance of the 3rd concerto by two of America's greatest talents. |
| Wagner: Music from "Tristan and Isolde" (Prelude, Liebesnacht, Liebestod) and "Die Götterdämmerung" (Siegfried's Funeral Music and Immolation Scene). | Margaret Harshaw, soprano, with The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. ML 4742. | |
| Bach: Complete Works For Solo Violin: Sonata in G Minor, Partita in B Minor, Sonata in A Minor, Partita in D Minor, Sonata in C Major, Partita in E Major. | Rolph Schroeder, violin, using the Curved Bow. (3-12" Ⓟ) SL-189. | Music made for the Philadelphians! Margaret Harshaw, making her second appearance on the Columbia label, sings the Immolation Scene with conviction and beauty of tone. |
| Bach: The Well-Tempered Clavichord, Book I: Vol. 1 — Preludes and Fugues 1-8; Vol. II — Preludes and Fugues 9-17; Vol. III — Preludes and Fugues 18-24. | Isolde Ahlgrimm, harpsichord. (3-12" Ⓟ) SL-191. | A new name in the recording field, Rolph Schroeder, plays Bach's solo violin works as they were originally conceived. The curved bow produces rich, full chords impossible to play with today's modern violin bow. |
| Bach: French Suites: Suites No. 1 in D Minor, No. 2 in C Minor, No. 3 in B Minor, No. 4 in E-Flat Major, No. 5 in G Major, No. 6 in E Major. | Isolde Ahlgrimm, harpsichord. ML 4746. | Isolde Ahlgrimm, another new name to record buyers, uses an instrument similar to one owned by Bach himself: the pedal harpsichord. The French Suites — all six on one "Lp"! — as well as the Preludes and Fugues receive excellent recording to match these performances. |
| Celebrated Tenor Arias. | Richard Tucker, tenor, with the Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Assn. conducted by Fausto Cleva. ML 4750. | The beautiful voice of a great tenor brilliantly reproduced! |
| Black Magic: That Old Black Magic, Mad About The Boy, Our Waltz, Little Girl Blue, Some Day, Out Of This World, Easy To Love, Limehouse Blues. | Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. ML 4741. | Kostelanetz's sheer magic stars in these all-time favorites. High fidelity recording adds luster to an already famous orchestra. |
| Shostakovitch: Symphony No. 5, Op. 47. | Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of N. Y. ML 4739. | Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic in an ear-stirring hi-fi performance of this popular Shostakovitch symphony. |
| Janáček: On An Overgrown Path; October 1, 1905; In The Threshing House. | Rudolf Firkusny, piano. ML 4740. | First and only recording of the complete piano music of Janáček on one 12" "Lp". |

"Columbia," Ⓢ Reg. U. S. Pat. Off. Marcas Registradas.

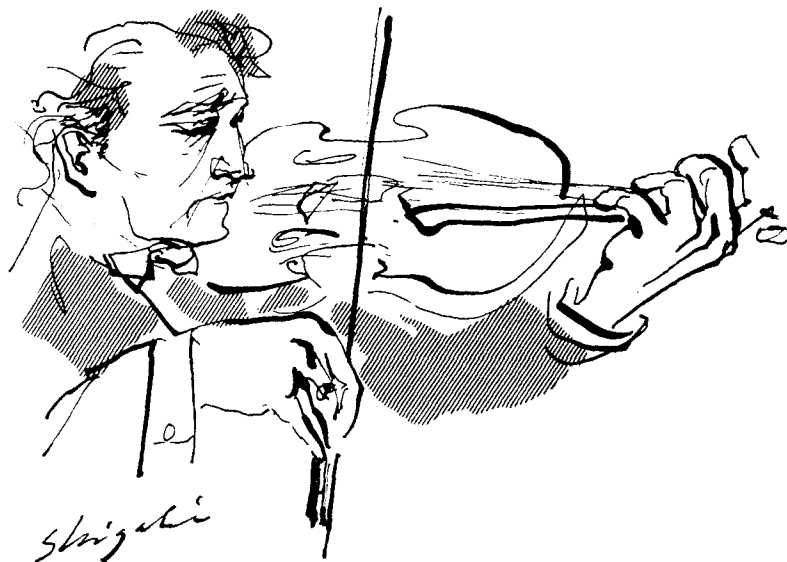
publicity that has attended this five-year program, one would imagine that the expenditure has been trifling, the results negligible. Actually, the amount paid out has now risen to \$2,000,000 a year; or, in the five-year period, a substantial \$7,000,000. The apparent reluctance of the record makers to make much of the benefits thus bestowed on the American people bespeaks two things: either they regard the money as an impost, a kind of customs tax for getting their merchandise on the market, and thus resent it, or else they feel that they cannot set up conditions for its expenditure without violating anti-trust laws.

HOWEVER, it is apparent that some such arrangement will remain a *quid pro quo* for a contract, and it would seem in the manufacturers' interest (1) to participate more actively in the operation of the Trust Fund, and claim the credit to which they are entitled; (2) to further the development of the fund so that its potentiality for good work is increased.

At the present time, allocation of the money for projects of all kinds is based, roughly, on the percentage paid into the fund on the sale of equivalent records. That is to say, so-called "serious" music receives, in benefits, about 20 per cent of the total expended. Since it is a provision of the agreement that money can only be spent for performances to which no admission is charged, some of this has been allocated for free chamber-music series in various parts of the country or to aid civic symphony orchestra by underwriting fund-raising concerts or to extend employment opportunities for members of the smaller symphony orchestras through concerts in high schools, etc., to which admission is not charged.

As to the 80 per cent which is expended on dance music, band concerts, music in hospitals, etc., the results are as confusing as the motivation. In theory, this kind of activity gives employment to musicians deprived of work by juke-boxes and other mechanical forms of music making. Since juke-boxes themselves are not taxed, it is clear that the record-buying public is—to say the very least—sharing part of a load which it did not create.

However, with the sales of recorded music in the "serious" category steadily rising, and every indication being that they will continue to climb both in absolute figures and in relative proportion to other kinds of records, the consideration should be not with the 20 per cent of \$2,000,000 presently allocated for such expenditure, but with the 30 or 35 per cent of



a much larger sum in the next few years.

It is surprising to discover, for one thing, that the merchandisers whose material originates out of this country do not contribute to the fund as it is now constituted. There is, of course, no way of compelling them to do so, since the union has no jurisdiction over the musicians they employ. (Of course, "they"—London, Westminster, Decca, or whoever—pay, the same as others, on records made by AFM musicians here, but that is, in several instances at least, a small fraction of their total business.)

At least one of the manufacturers has assured me that if the money were spent in a way he regarded as "more constructive" he would go along with his competitors and pay into the fund on the sale of his European catalogue, even though it is not required of him. Whether others would take a similar view voluntarily, I cannot say; but if they in return received a *quid pro quo*, perhaps they would be more amenable to suasion where force cannot be applied. I mean, in this instance, the permission to use American conductors and instrumentalists, at their own option, in European recordings.

The evident fact is that the amount available to the Trust Fund would be increased substantially at once, on the volume of business being done now, and in the very area where the increase has recently been the greatest—on records of serious music. For it is the American connoisseur of good music who has opened the way for the creation of new catalogues from abroad, with such others as Epic and Angel now added to the ambitious producers who will appeal to that market.

Considering the need of American producers of "live" music for aid in meeting the increased costs of pro-

ducing their year's work, with an obvious ceiling on ticket prices and a literal ceiling on the numbers of people who can be accommodated in the existing halls, it seems shocking that this very applicable source of income should be denied to them. It is, after all, public money, derived from the sale of a product in the open market, and public interest should determine how it is expended. Since the consideration of subsidy from a Government source is remote—and the restrictive effects of Washington jitters on the inclusion of Aaron Copland's "Lincoln Portrait" on the program of the last Inaugural makes one think it is just as well—the Trust Fund could have a function much broader than it has at present.

It is not inconceivable, with an expanded market and all of those who are servicing that market paying into the fund, that the allocation of money for serious music could rise to a million or more dollars a year. That wouldn't pay all the deficits, to be sure, but it would be a healthy start on some of the more urgent ones. Considering the affiliation of RCA with the Boston Symphony, or of Columbia with the Metropolitan Opera and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony or the Philadelphia Orchestra, or of Capitol with the Pittsburgh Orchestra and Mercury with the Minneapolis—to mention but the obvious ones—there is no question that an identity of interest exists.

What seems to me of the first importance is for the record makers to realize the utility of the mechanism at their disposal, and thereafter to see that it operates in the way that the presently non-paying producer describes as "more constructive." Certainly, the Trust Fund offers a greater possibility for helping good music pay its own way than any other development in our time.

Much Ado About "Kate"



Cole Porter's verbal collaborators in "Kiss Me, Kate" offer some irreverent advice on how to write a musical comedy—and how to collaborate with Cole Porter. This article is drawn from the introduction to the text of "Kiss Me, Kate," to be published by Alfred A. Knopf on November 9.

By SAM AND BELLA SPEWACK

THE WRITING of musical comedy is a craft in itself, just as writing a play or a screenplay is. But they all have three things in common: situation, dialogue, and hard work.

In the realm of the musical show there are: first, the play with music; second, the operetta; third, the musical comedy; and fourth, the spectacle or extravaganza with music. In the first and last categories the songs do not carry forward the plot—or shall we say the story? In the operetta (and in the opera, for that matter) the songs do. In the musical comedy the songs should serve a similar function, but occasionally they serve a mood function instead; someone feels happy or sad and you get "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning!" or "Why Was I Born?"

Musicals can be based on anything. "The King and I" had for its predecessor "Anna and the King of Siam," the experiences of an Englishwoman assigned to teach the children of the King of Siam during the last century. It was a best-seller as a book and an equally successful film before it was equipped with songs and a ballet. "My Darlin' Aida" emanated from the opera without "My" and "Darlin'." The adaptation kept the original music, but showed the events as occurring in the South during the Civil War, A.D., instead of in Egypt, B.C. "Pal Joey" is based on a fiction series of letters from a heel of a hooper to a friend, which first appeared in *The New Yorker*.

And yet the musical comedy cannot revolve around just anything. It must not only be about something; it must also be entertaining. Unlike the straight play, this form is elastic—provided it can be made to serve the ear and the eye.

For example, "Leave It to Me" can

be called a play with music, for none of the songs that Cole Porter wrote for that comedy of ours advanced the story one iota. "My Heart Belongs to Daddy" merely repeated what Dolly had already told Buck Thomas: that she had to leave him because she listened to her heart and not her head. When it was sung by Mary Martin, who cared if she had already told her reasons? Of the musical fact that her heart belonged to Daddy the public could not get enough. Incidentally, that was Mary Martin's first appearance on Broadway and the first time a strip-tease took place in snowbound Siberia.

But in "Kiss Me, Kate" Cole Porter's songs served the story, especially in Shakespeare's "Shrew," the play within the play. When Petruchio sings "I've Come to Wive It Wealthily," or when Lucentio, Gremio, and Hortensio join with Bianca to sing "Tom, Dick, or Harry," Shakespeare's deathless words of plottage go into limbo. Where Porter's melodious substitution takes about five minutes with encores, Shakespeare takes twenty.

For in order to keep the actors in his stock company loyal and contented, Shakespeare frequently padded the parts of his lesser characters, and the audience did not object because in those days nobody had to make the 11:20 to the suburbs.

There was plenty of misgiving when "Kiss Me, Kate" was about to open in England, Shakespeare's own land. Would the English be offended or would they appreciate that we had been faithful to the Bard in our fashion? The tryout was in Oxford, and if the New Theatre had been triple its size it would still not have been adequate accommodation for the crowds who wanted to see it. In London there were one million paying customers at the Coliseum despite the handicap of a stage where the Old and New Testaments could be played simultaneously. And on tour in Eng-

land, Scotland, and Wales, "Kiss Me, Kate" has to date played for fourteen months—with an all-British cast. A second touring company starts next month.

Whatever was used of Shakespeare was used *à la mot*. Only two lines were borrowed from other Shakespeare sources—one from "Hamlet" and one from "Macbeth." You find them.

ORDINARILY we write plays—just plays. But about every ten years we tiptoe with typewriters into musical meadows. Thus, in 1938 we emerged with "Leave It to Me," a study of a Kansan who is made Ambassador to Soviet Russia against his will, and who devotes himself to the business of getting recalled. This was before the era of the New Art Form. So we ran a year in New York and a year on the road.

In 1948 we wrote "Kiss Me, Kate." Definitely New Art Form.

For both, Cole Porter provided wonderful music and lyrics.

Ergo, if we all live long enough, 1958 should see a third collaboration.

But while we're still fresh and in our right senses we want to contribute our mite to the study of the New Art Form.

You may remember that the old musical comedy consisted of a story (book), songs, dances, scenery, girls, and boys. On the other hand, the New Art Form consists of a story (book), songs, dances, scenery, girls, and boys.

But there is an indefinable "something else" in the New Art Form. Is it the product of a mysterious blending of kinetics, plastics, social significance, abstractionism, atonal atavism, a fluid capitalist structure, and plenty of money in the hands of the wrong people?

We realized when we embarked on "Kiss Me, Kate" that just having fun with Victor Moore as an Ambassador to Russia would not be enough. That was all right in 1938. But 1948 was made of sterner stuff. The New Art Form required a message.

For instance, "Call Me Madam": money ain't everything. "Pal Joey": don't be a heel. These crusades, articulated for the first time in the New Art Form, have had a profound effect upon our society. We have a message, too. It's Shakespeare's: slap your wife around; she'll thank you for it.

Sociologists have not yet measured the influence of "Kiss Me, Kate" upon domestic relations, but when they do get around to it they will discover that a preponderant number of wedding anniversaries (ranging from the first to the fiftieth) were celebrated by happy or resigned couples scattered nightly throughout the audi-