

to the "idle" one, and he begins to sing and dance—"I saw your mouth, stained with betel nut. I love you. There is the male buffalo, and there is the female buffalo too, and I am a man and you are a woman!" The woman comes back to dance again. And so it goes on until I gave them a hundred piastres (scarcely two dollars), and after the *samlieh* music of respect and greetings I returned home.

Of course, the supreme music of Cambodia is the regular, full-scale orchestra, which is at its most perfect in the Royal Palace accompanying the dancers there. It consists of gongs and bells, drums, and ivory horns with slender bamboo reeds, and carefully tuned bamboo xylophones of several sizes. It can be of as many players as there are instruments available, but an average size is from eight to ten people. In my opinion, the Cambodian orchestra composed of these instruments is one of the most delicious and satisfying sounds there is. Sometimes it is like the lapping of waves gently splashing against the sand of a tropical beach. At other times, in its slower passages, it makes you think that if clouds had sound surely it would be something like this music. I know of nothing more genuinely tranquil and calm in a spiritual sense.

In Siemreap, you can have a concert of such music say, on the parvis of

Angkor Wat itself, or, if you prefer, by moonlight in one of the galleries of mysterious Bayon, where each of the fifty huge towers of the temple have four enormous faces carved on their sides. This is the most expensive concert you can have in Cambodia and costs around twenty dollars. The reason for this high price is that the instruments have to be rented from one of the local Chinese (who owns every musical instrument in town, except the homemade ones, as well as every dancing costume). For a few extra cents, village boys and girls will bring lighted torches of tightly-bound stalks of straw dipped in kerosene to light the musicians as they play. Since you are foreigners, the musicians will pay a special homage to you by playing a "Western" air. This is apt to be "La Marseillaise" (unrecognizable—as the scale is different and the flat, flat seventh takes away one of the melody's clearest guideposts). Then they will play "dance" music, "battle" music, "demon" music, love music, entry and exit music for heroes—and lastly, of course, the final *samlieh* of respect and farewell.

You walk away with the limpid, liquid, exotic sounds floating in your ears, wondering how it is possible for a country to be so completely spontaneous and improvisatory in such a complicated and subtle art as music.

Grass-Roots Rondo

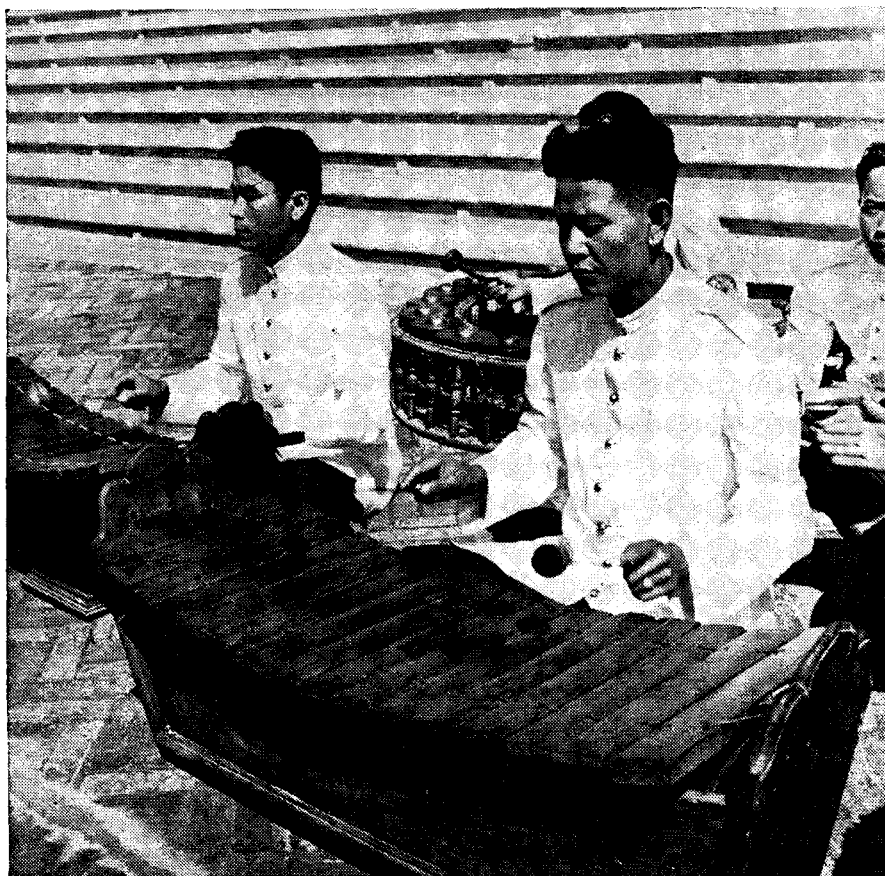
HOW Americans make music at the grass-roots level, how we shout, clap, whistle, and tap out fascinating rhythms with our fingers, is the subject of "Millions of Musicians" (Folkways FP-60), produced, recorded, and narrated by Tony Schwarz. Ignoring the professional world of music bounded by Broadway, Tin-Pan Alley, and the dead-pan alley along 57th Street, Schwarz strikes out for country stores and prison yards, taxicabs and lunch-counters, playgrounds and steel mills. Evidence of people's "musical urge, talent, ingenuity, or whatever you call it" takes a multitude of everyday forms. Speech is often musical in itself; so is the percussive *accelerando* of a boxer working out with a punching bag, the melismatic chant of sidewalk pitchmen, the rhythmic antiphons of fishermen off the Atlantic coast, an auctioneer's patter-song, a teen-age stomp session with box-and-bottle obbligato, or a Pittsburgh factory whistle playing "White Christmas" as a theremin might if it had a cold.

To record these eloquent details Schwarz has roamed far and wide carrying a battery-driven tape machine that looks like a suitcase and wearing a tiny microphone strapped to his wrist, Dick Tracy style. (Thus armed he has already made a record of children's street games and "New York 19," a report on music in his own backyard and postal zone.) Since most of his subjects are unaware that he's eavesdropping, it never occurs to them to freeze-up at the microphone.

Schwarz is a clever editor with a fine sense for dramatic contrast. His most effective sequence matches a gospel preacher soul-saving at fever pitch against a sportscaster thrown into near-hysteria by a pennant-winning home run. But not all speech is musical, especially when rehearsed; keeping it from sounding dull under studio conditions is an actor's trick Schwarz hasn't yet mastered.

To date tape recording has given rise to two distinct types of creative experimenters. The composers of *musique concrète* transform cricket chirps, human heartbeats, and drill-press rhythms into abstract patterns and "symphonies." The sonic naturalists, on the other hand, produce discs of super-realism—surf and sea LPs that smell of brine, railroad recordings that fill your living room with steam. Tony Schwarz is still close to such journalism, but he has taken the big step from straight reporting to storytelling; soon he may find a way to make poetry on tape from the human impulses behind music.

—FRED GRUNFELD.



"... one of the most delicious and satisfying sounds there is."

Ramsey

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had a better time of it in Canada, musically if not otherwise, than anyone else.

Venezuela, Volume Nine, is edited by Juan Liscano, with recordings by Liscano, Pierre Gaisseau, C. E. Muñoz Orúa, Abel Vallmitjana, Francisco Carreño, Miguel Cardona, and the Venezuelan Folklore Research Service. As with Indonesia, where music of headhunters contrasts with court mannerisms of the *gamelans*, one has the impression of going a long way from the Orinoco-Amazon jungle down to the seaports and islands of Venezuela, where the sounds are light and Spanish in texture.

The "Initiation Song" from the Orinoco jungle (Side 1, No. 11) provides, literally, the creepiest and most awesome moment of the entire Library: "They caught a lad, and the shaman passed one of the baskets of ants slowly over the boy's body, so that all the hundreds of jaws bit . . ." To any one who has encountered ants previously on a purely literary level, as in T. S. Eliot's "The Cocktail Party," where it is intimated that some one has perished on an anthill, this is a gruesome *tranche de vie*.

It is a relief to come down out of the savannahs and hear the chatty tinkling of the *cuatro* (a small, guitar-like instrument of four strings) and to take heart from a song somewhat less lugubrious:

Up yonder in the meadow
Where the lily blows
A thrush is singing
Because the whole world will die.

Other recordings from Venezuela, taken on a festival day (St. Antony's), are brilliant and colorful, and the last side of the LP winds up with African drumming taken during religious *fiestas*. Altogether the Venezuelan LP is a surprise, maintaining a high level of interest from a country whose folk music is little known to most listeners. Much of the credit for this goes to the poet Juan Liscano, who has been recording Venezuelan music for a number of years.

"Bantu Music of British East Africa," Volume Ten, is recorded and edited by Hugh Tracey of the African Music Society. His omnibus offering of eight ten-inch LPs devoted to music from British East Africa has already been released under the London imprint, and it is notable that this has left anything to say about the same territory for the Columbia collection. Instead of the more comprehensive coverage of the London

offering, this volume is a condensed sampling of instrumental, singing, and performing techniques. One distinct advantage of this presentation is that it does not suffer, as does the London collection, from Tracey's own narration. My feeling about this narration was that it was an "Empire" product, reflecting and interpreting Africans to their masters as "good bushmen."

FOLK Music from Japan, the Ryukyus, Formosa, and Korea," Volume Eleven, was edited by Genjiro Masu for the Japanese Music Institute of Tokyo; notes and texts on Japan were prepared by Ottome Daniels, R. P. Dore, and C. J. Dunn; on the Ryukyus, by F. J. Daniels; on Korea, by Zong in Sob, in London.

To these inscrutable Occidental ears this was among the least rewarding and most confusing of all the sets in the series. Some of this confusion is due to the confessed inadequacy of contemporary scholars in translating material recorded in the field. We are told, of a song from Ryukyu, "It has not been possible to discover the meaning of this refrain," and elsewhere; "It has not been possible to obtain a reliable transcription or translation of the song, but it relates to courtship, the man apparently being compared to a wild boar and to a falcon."

There is also, in the Japanese section, a story that, as related, may go down as an ultimate, and appropriately misty, bit of cheesecake in folklore. It is sung by a *geisha*, and runs along this way: ". . . all the people don't like me, so / Wondering what should happen next / I went off on a spree / I went all around Kawabata town, / Tomfool Kasuga and all the others / Tucked up their skirts and . . . / The cherry was in bloom, in bloom / *Chiichiku paachiku* / Sang the lark in the sky . . . / A *genpaku* egg-plant . . . / And this little brat!" The notes supply: "Probably a pun; *Chiichiku*—the sound the lark makes, and *Chichikuru*—to have illicit intercourse. The egg-plant also has phallic significance."

Volume Twelve of the Columbia World Library was recorded in India, with notes, photographs, and translations supplied by Alain Danielou, professor of music, University of Benares. Everything is crystal-clear here, and the examples of Indian music are both delightful and exceptionally well recorded. In passing, it presents an edifying contrast to the French volume, which is so fuzzy and antique in sound; apparently it is simpler to conduct field recording in India than in the French provinces.

Music notations are provided for almost every selection. Coverage of

the region is cleanly compressed, and the only thing that suffers here is that information about the musicians and their lives is tantalizingly scant. Some of the most exciting and wonderful sounds are supplied by wandering minstrel-bands of ascetics ("Bhajana," Side 1, No. 7) and Swami D. R. Parvatikar of Hyderabad, "an ascetic who dwells only in temples and observes a vow of silence," contributes an extremely pleasant and well developed solo on the *svaramandala*, or folk harp (Side 2, No. 12).

Volume Thirteen, "Spanish Folk Music," was recorded in Spain by Alan Lomax and Jeannette Bell; notes are by Lomax and Eduardo Torner. It is my favorite in the Library, and one which I would gladly nominate for selection as one of the best LPs of folk music released in this or any other year. It is a high achievement, and one which I particularly identify with Lomax's genius for ferreting out the best from any region and presenting it so as to make the music both intelligible and palatable.

SOME of this is due to the fact that Spanish folk music, compared to British, is palatable *per se*; but it is significant that material actually taped in the field by Lomax (and his field-recorded contributions to the Library are limited to a mere three—Ireland, Scotland, and Spain) comprises the cream of the collection. Scholars, museums, regional authorities, broadcast networks, and ethno-musicological groups notwithstanding, it would seem, from the evidence of this series, that the most convincing contributions have been made by one man. Perhaps this is because of an intangible, the *rapproch* which a sympathetic person can establish with folk performers. It may also be due to qualities of perseverance which Lomax possesses. It takes a lot of this to go for thousands of miles with heavy recording equipment; to set it up and break it down; then to keep on going. On the other hand, it must be admitted that very few scholars and museums are provided by their governments with adequate assistance. This goes for both equipment and operational budgets. As it is, we can be thankful that at least one person had the backing to do well by three countries.

The thing that is especially revealing about the Spanish LP is that, although we have had Spanish music with us for a long time, through stars of *flamenco*, ballet, and concert offerings, and through operatic distillates of the raw mash ("Carmen" is what we have in mind here), this particular collection reveals so much that is new, and all of it is good.

Revealing, too, is the sort of writ-

Volga and Volynka

ng contributed to the notes on Spain, which can bring reality to what is, after all, only a short band of recorded sound: "The Poverty of Galicia," Lomax writes, "is nowhere more bitter than in such coastal towns as Corcubión. These singers know what it is to be more or less hungry the year round, and cold all winter. They work as farm laborers or ten pesetas (twenty-five cents) a day, and live with their animals, husbands, and thin children in houses that are mere piles of smoke-blackened stone. But when they sang—huddled together like so many starved sparrows in their thin ragged dresses—a fragile one-eyed woman beating her tambourine like a frenzied *houiri*—the leader stirring them on with fresh lines—a girl with pale gold hair saving herself for the high parts—all the work-hardened hands perfectly in rhythm—the fire of the great Gallegan dance, the *muiñeira*, warmed the room."

Especially notable, in an LP of notables, are the "Fandango" (Side 2, No. 21) sung unaccompanied by Alfonso Gavino and Anastacio Baque Ruiz; the "Saeta" (Side 2, No. 23) sung by an unknown woman in the streets of Seville; the "Salve de San Antonio" (Side 2, No. 27) sung by Juan López Sánchez and nine other members of the *campañilleros* of Monteagudo, Murcia; the "Parado de Selva" (Side 2, No. 32) sung and played by the *dansadors de pont d'Inca* at Palma, Mallorca.

After the fire and spice of the Spanish recordings it is pretty hard to take the next volume, Yugoslavia, which comes as Fourteen in the World Library. However, any one interested in this music will audition it separately, and perhaps its merits will shine to better advantage when it is taken solo. Music from this region was recorded by Peter Kennedy with the aid of the Yugoslav Council for Science and Culture. The notes, texts, and translations, which are good, were supplied by Albert Lord, a professor at Harvard. Some of the photographs were taken by Jaap Kunst, who was probably on hand to study the relationship of Indonesian to Dalmatian music, referred to above.

The recordings are uniformly soggy and limited in range, and were taken at the folk festival prepared for the 1951 meeting of the International Folk Music Council in Opatija. The lame excuse for not providing live field recordings is that, "Only a long journey would show such a range of excellent songs and performers." Our point is that only a long journey would have provided anything comparable to the Spanish volume, which is the result of only a long journey.

SONGS OF THE RUSSIAN COSSACKS. *Alexandrov Song and Dance Ensemble. The Sveshnikov National Chorus Of Russian Songs.* (CRLP-143).

SONGS OF THE ZAPOROZHKY COSSACKS. *Alexandrov Song And Dance Ensemble. National Ukrainian Ensemble Of Bandura Players. The Veroyovka Ukrainian National Chorus Of Kiev. The Ukrainian National Chorus "Dumka" Of Kiev.* (CRLPX-014).

FOLK DANCES—SONGS; BALALAIKA—ACCORDION. *Piatnitsky Song And Dance Ensemble. Voronezh Russian Folk Song Chorus. Rudneva Russian Folk Song Chorus.* (CRLPX-013).

THE three LP Colosseum albums of folk music, part of the company's series of "worldwide reports," are a big order for anyone except a curiosity collector or a nostalgic refugee. For the new additions to already well-known musical numbers are not well selected. From the "Alexandrov Song and Dance Ensemble" program of nineteen songs, half will be welcome; in a *melée* with other choral, dancing, and orchestral organizations' products a few of Piatnitsky's deserve their usual due; and as for the Ukrainian songs, they are really no better than a single song of their neighbors. It is a pity, for both the Alexandrov and the Piatnitsky "Ensembles" are excellent. I happen to have heard and seen them in the flesh—the dazzling virtuosity of their choruses and dancers, and the colorful staging of some old songs have thrilled many audiences.

I must admit that, personally, I am against presentations in bulk of musical compositions. Many a time, listening to a pianist playing Chopin's twenty-four Etudes, or twenty Mazurkas to be taken in one gulp, I have fervently wished he would play one of them properly and be done with it. But *chacun tue ses puces à sa façon*, and from the three-hour-long entertainment of the latest LP's, the following information is owed to folk-music enthusiasts.

These Ensembles differ from the well-known Don Cossacks, at one time their "closest relatives" in art. The more they travel around the world and the more their success depends on the different tastes of their audiences the more the Don Cossacks

have become "arty" and "Carnegie Hall-like." Since the Soviet Ensembles do not sing in foreign countries, they can not indulge in any such antics, and therein lies their cardinal virtue. But in the Ukrainian collection even this does not save them from the mournful monotony of the ballades and the lack of true national character. Unlike the Armenian, Georgian, and Turkmen songs, with their pronounced Oriental tinge, these are so Russian (except, perhaps, for "Come Now, O Lads," side B, No. 7, which is more Polish) that if one were to substitute Russian words for the Ukrainian text no one would be the wiser.

The Piatnitsky group is the oldest and most experienced and has not been surpassed in their perfection of performance. But, unfortunately (perhaps not for everybody), practically the whole second side of the record is devoted to Russian dances played by virtuosi à la Heifetz, concertino players, accordions, and balalaikas.

Musicians might be interested in hearing an old instrument, *volynka*, a Russian version of bagpipes, and those who are still impressed by the relationship of Russian folklore and symphonic music might be surprised or gratified to hear here and there a bit of Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, and Stravinsky. Of course, the legitimate "borrowing" was done the other way around. "The Wide, Wide Street," and "Zhuravel" have become classics and "Such As You Are," perhaps (the dates are not given), was inspired by Konstantin Simonov's poem "Wait For Me"—famous during World War II. But the prize in this collection is Piatnitsky's "And Who Knows . . ." a most charming song which made a great hit in Russia during the years immediately following the last war. Thanks to the mechanics, it is the first song on side B and therefore one need not scratch up the disc searching for it.

The Alexandrov Ensemble opens with the inevitable "Volga Boatmen" singing in chorus. Their selection of material is by far the best, even if, as I have said, only half of the program is interesting. They show a remarkable achievement in chorus work and the "folksy" interpretations of the soloists ring true despite their artistic perfection. There are only two war songs, and the first one on side B of the record, "The Meadowland," was popular in the United States during the last war. —VICTOR SEROFF.