



THE AMEN CORNER

Results, Fellows!

THIS department's recent jazz quiz generated a degree of excitement which suggested a quiet night in a swamp, but it did lead to one powerful result. My learned correspondent Mr. Jerome Shipman of Auburndale, Massachusetts, challenges my impression that the first recorded example of the syllables "be-bop" occurred on the 1928 release of "Four or Five Times" by McKinney's Cotton Pickers. He deposes that the word is to be heard in Louis Armstrong's "Hotter Than That" which, Mr. Shipman says, was recorded on December 13, 1927. Mr. Shipman's ear is certainly accurate, and if his dates are equally so he has established his case. I have not gone into the moil of scholarship to look these matters up myself, but if I know anything about Mr. Shipman, and I think I do, he will be a stiff man to refute. Armstrong's pronunciation of "be-bop" is invigorating, to say the least, and I would like at this time to suggest the possibility that any syncopated scat singer, embarking on a passage dominated by the leading consonant "b" will be likely to arrive at "be-bop" automatically. It seems to me, indeed, that it would be hard to avoid.

It is, of course, a considerable irony that Armstrong should be in this position, in view of his frequently emphasized scorn for the be-bop school of jazz. That school has now enriched the main stream for the better part of a decade, and I am always baffled to find how many excellent musicians of the older tradition are repelled by the bebop influence. No one expects Aunt Maude, mooning away over her Chopin, to come to the support of Charlie Parker, but when a fine, inventive musical spirit can take in the best of jazz, New Orleans, Chicago and New York, up to 1940, it is difficult to understand why he cannot make the leap to, say, 1950. After that, it is easy. I am inclined to think that the reason may be, simply, lack of extended hearing. I know that it took me some time to cross the gap, but the record reviewer is obliged to listen, whether he wishes to or not, and since he is further obliged to say what he thinks, he will do his subject matter the honor of repeated audition. I have found it especially useful, in coming to terms with strange music of various sorts, to play it while occupied with something else,

such as shaving or making plans for a week-end at Ballston Spa. One is suddenly apt to realize that the fellow with the flute or the valve trombone is bringing off some pretty charming material.

With this preamble, I suggest several discs strongly suffused with bop and, for me, musical attraction. There is "Six Pieces of Silver" with Horace Silver at the piano; Donald Byrd, trumpet; Hank Mobley, tenor sax; Doug Watkins, bass; Louis Hayes, drums. As the title implies, six of the tunes are Silver originals, and there is any amount of combined crispness and ease, much polyrhythmic attraction. Fine dry wine, in short (Blue Note 1539). Now eliminate that splendid trumpet, Byrd, place Art Blakey at the drums, and add Milt Jackson on the vibraphone, and you have "Hank Mobley and His All Stars" who will continue the wine pressing with five Mobley originals (Blue Note 1544). We are here in the thick of the current New York activity—young men who are self-conscious about their work, but who retain the fine improvisatory spirit and thoroughly beguile the accustomed ear.

NO ONE has been more delicately venturesome in modern jazz than the alto saxophonist Lee Konitz, unless it be his friend the pianist Lennie Tristano. Konitz has done a great deal of musical cerebration; he seems to have gotten a good deal of dry analysis out of his system, and he is a pleasure to hear in "Lee Konitz Inside Hi-Fi" (Atlantic 1258) with rhythmic support and the lovely interplay of Billy Bauer's guitar. Konitz also assumes the tenor saxophone in certain passages; he says he enjoyed it, and I should think he would have. If I were pressed to the wall in one of those horrid demands for dogma which now and then are asked of us, I would name Billy Bauer as my favorite jazz guitarist. He is an exceedingly subtle and elaborate operator, and, apart from his degree of talent, I prefer a much simpler approach to the instrument—more chording and less linear fancy. The new man for me is Kenny Burrell (Blue Note 1543) who retains the flavor of the barrel house and never sounds like a television studio guitarist on a Bartok jag. Burrell performs this feat in many moods, one of the most striking a four o'clock in the morning impression of the classic

"Moten Swing"—the tempo is a bit slower than usual, and hypnotic.

Gerry Mulligan is back with his elegant quartet, the leader's baritone saxophone poised against the fluent valve trombone of Bob Brookmeyer, with Bill Crow, bass, and Dave Bailey, drums. I suppose this might be called the dead (or rather alive) center of modern jazz. It faces both ways, with complete success, and takes on such themes as "Baubles, Bangles and Beads" from the operetta "Kismet." (Pacific Jazz PJ-1228.) I cannot forbear to mention here that while "Kismet" is drawn from the music of Alexander Borodin, there is not a single mention on this disc of the great Russian's name.

Our English cousins have sent us a musical salute to the estimable beers of Albion, "Pub Crawling with Jimmy Deuchar" (Contemporary C3529). The tunes are named for the beers in question—"IPA Special," "Colne Springs," "E," "Treble Gold," "Bass House" and "Final Selection." The nearest approach I have made to this roster is Bass ale; in any event, Mr. Deuchar's excellently free and easy modern jazz is Empire salesmanship of the first order, his own trumpet blends most effectively with Derek Humble, alto and baritone saxes; Tubby Hayes, tenor sax; Ken Wray, trombone; Victor Feldman, piano; Lennie Bush, bass; and Phil Seamen, drums. Mr. Deuchar composed and arranged the entire program, and is welcome at any time to hoist his awning in my back yard. Case goods included.

My sins of omission include no previous tribute to the New York café singer and pianist, Bobby Short. He is such a buttress of the temples of chi-chi that he has probably not noted my lapse. He is also a musical artist of impeccable wit, grace, rhythm and flourish. To my knowledge, he has made the finest recording of "Bye Bye Blackbird" ever pressed (Atlantic 1230), his "Sand In My Shoes" in the same album is a popular masterpiece, and his "At Long Last Love" in a later waxing (Atlantic 1262) must be the kind of thing Cole Porter dreams of.

—WILDER HOBSON.



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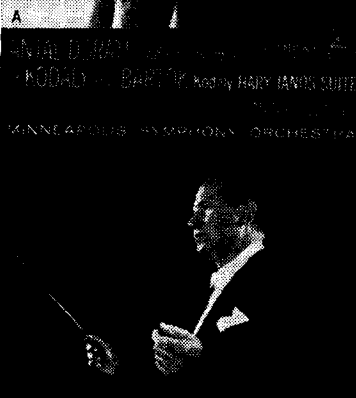
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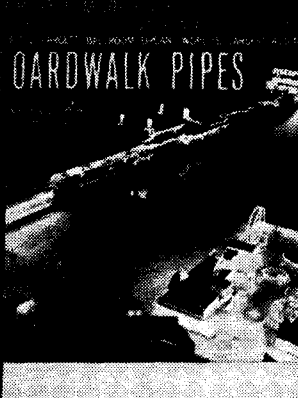
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A: KODÁLY HÁRY JÁNOS SUITE: BARTÓK HUNGARIAN SKETCHES
(FIRST RECORDING) AND ROUMANIAN DANCES. MINNE-
APOLIS SYMPHONY, DORATI CONDUCTING. MG 50132

B: BOARDWALK PIPES; ROBERT ELMORE PLAYING THE WORLD'S
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C: CARPENTER ADVENTURES IN A PERAMBULATOR; PHILLIPS



SELECTIONS FROM MCGUFFEY'S READERS. EASTMAN-
ROCHESTER SYMPHONY, HANSON CONDUCTING. MG 50136

D: KHACHATURIAN GAYNE BALLET SUITE: MOUSSORGSKY NIGHT
ON BALD MOUNTAIN; BORODIN PRINCE IGOR OVERTURE: ON
THE STEPPES OF CENTRAL ASIA. HALLE ORCHESTRA, WELDON
CONDUCTING. MG 50137



Recordings in Review

Omnibus Espagnol

GURIDI: "Ten Basque Dances." **ALBENIZ:** "Navarra." **TURINA:** "La Procession del Rocio," "La Oracion del Torero." Ataulfo Argenta conducting the Orquesta Nacional de España. London LL 1585, \$3.98. **RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF:** "Capriccio Espagnol." **GRANADOS:** "Andalusia." **CHABRIER:** "España," and **MOSZKOWSKI:** "Spanish Dances (Nos. 1-5)." Argenta conducting the London Symphony Orchestra. London LL 1682, \$3.98. **FALLA:** "Three Cornered Hat." **TURINA:** "Sinfonia Sevillana." Argenta conducting the Orquesta Nacional. London LL 1683, \$3.98. **GIMÉNEZ:** "La Torre del Oro" (Intermezzo) "El Baile de Luis Alonso" (Intermezzo), "La Boda de Luis Alonso" (Intermezzo). **CHAPÍ:** "El Tambor de Granaderos" (Prelude), "La Revoltosa" (Prelude). **GRANADOS:** "Goyescas" (Intermezzo). **LUNA:** "La Picara Molinera," and **BRÉTON:** "La Dolores" (Jota). Argenta conducting the Orquesta de Camera de Madrid. London LL 1689, \$3.98.

FOR THOSE TO whom the music of Spain is as much a special taste as black olives or tarragon vinegar the appearance of these four discs will be enough to keep them provided with their favorite fare for months to come. For others—poor souls—who can take it or leave it, one might paraphrase the ancients' advice on wine, "take a little, for thy mind's sake."

As Argenta has long since established himself as the day's finest conductor of the authentic Spanish music—his recordings of Turina's "Danzas Fantasticas" and Falla's "Three-Cornered Hat" left no doubt of that—the omnibus issue has the special interest of showing his orientation to the synthetic kind of Rimsky, Chabrier, even, save the marquis, Moszkowski. To my taste, the mixture of ingredients is so well-balanced, the taste of the conductor so consistently appealing that a treatment of Debussy's "Iberia" would seem in order forthwith (an inquiry revealed that is a current project for Argenta). To put it in more musical terms: he does not share the view—being a Spaniard himself—that it is an "exotic" idiom, hence he does not have to make the castanets in Rimsky rattle ominously, or the dance rhythms jangle. The percussion is bumped lightly, not banged; the strings are caressed, not scraped; the winds not overblown. It is of special interest that he does these things

not with an orchestra of natives, but with the English gentry of the London Symphony.

So far as the numerous other items are concerned, Argenta is as good as the material permits him to be. That is to say, in such a consistently fine score as Falla's "Three-Cornered Hat" (a brand-new performance, incidentally, not a reissue) he is consistently vital and rewarding, also in "La Oracion del Torero." The "Sinfonia Sevillana" being a less consistent piece, he sometimes loses our interest, but where Turina permits it is lively listening. Likewise the "Basque Dances" of Guridi, which are of variable quality.

For those to whom the zarzuela is still a closed book, the disc of intermezzi mainly drawn from them (the works of Bréton and Granados are more properly operas) should form a provocative introduction. Abundant in melodic appeal, colorfully orchestrated and, of course, performed with distinction, they have something of their own to offer the listening ear. London is to be congratulated on the project, and the fine-sounding way in which it has been realized.

Post-"New World" Dvorak

DVORAK: *Quartet in A flat, opus 105.* Janáček Quartet. Decca DL 9919, \$3.98.

THOUGH IT IS the common impression that Dvorak wrote no music of consequence after those products of his "late" years, the E minor ("New World") Symphony and the F major ("American" or "Nigger") quartet, this is not quite the case. There is, for example, this fine quartet, begun in New York in 1895 but not completed until after his return to Prague and his resumption of work at the Conservatory there in the fall. It is replete with suggestions that he felt himself liberated, at last, from a trying experience, happy enough to exchange the "new world" for the old.

In addition to its stream of sentiment, the warmth and freshness of the melodic material, it is a superb piece of chamber-music writing. A string player himself, Dvorak had not only written a dozen published chamber-music works by 1895, but probably as many more that were not published. The mastery of the writing is implicit in the rich, natural texture from first to last, but especially apparent in the closely stranded lento.

No little of the delight conveyed by this work relates to the playing of the Janáček Quartet which, being composed of men named Jiri Trávínček, Adolf Sykora, Jiri Kratochvíl (viola), and Karel Krafka, has a pungent native feeling for it. But they are also individuals of high technical skills and an ensemble to compare with any in the world today.

Court of the Waltz King

WALDTEUFEL: "Les Patineurs," "Mon Rêve," "Estudiantina," "Grenadiers," "Pomone," and "España." Henry Krips conducting the Philharmonica Promenade Orchestra. Angel 35426, \$4.98.

LEHAR: "Gold and Silver." **WALDTEUFEL:** "Les Patineurs." **IVANOVICI:** "Waves of the Danube." **ZIEHRER:** "Vienna Maidens." **ROSAS:** "Over the Waves." **WALDTEUFEL:** "Ganz allerliebst." **FETRAS:** "Moonlight on the Alster." **ZIEHRER:** "Hereinspaziert." Anton Paulik conducting the Volksoper Orchestra. Vanguard VRS 1002, \$4.98.

IF JOHANN STRAUSS, JR. is truly the waltz king—a designation universally accepted—then there must be a court surrounding him, with its lines of descent and a peerage of the realm. Here in this collection of Waldteufel and the non-Strauss Viennese we see that there are those of the blood royal, and others who are merely petty princes, if at all above the status of commoner—which, in this particular realm, is no mean station at that.

Certainly Waldteufel is a loyal subject who, in a long life (1837-1915), devised a few innovations of his own. Such was the paraphrase of Chabrier's "España" which owes virtually all of its content to the original, though the adaptation of it to waltz style is ingenious. As for "Les Patineurs" ("The Skaters") and "Estudiantina," they are so famous that many people don't even know they have names. Krips (the younger brother of Josef) has a lively sense of style, especially in the pacing of the introductions and conclusions which are ambitiously Straussian.

For that matter, the revered master rarely wrote a better waltz than (Archduke Franz) Lehar's "Gold and Silver," an orchestral coin he minted perhaps just to show that he could do it more often if he weren't devoting his major efforts to operettas. Ivanovici's "Waves of the Danube" and Rosa's "Over the Waves" have rarely been given such considerate treatment as Paulik accords them, and they respond with almost audible contentment. The treatment is also