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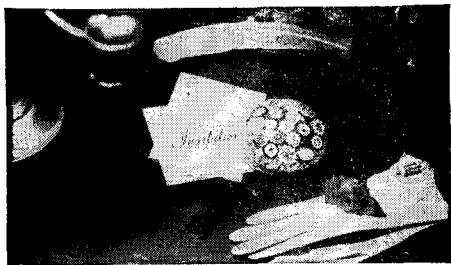
HITS OF THE MONTH

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FOR MAY-JUNE



TCHAIKOVSKY: *Marche Slav, Op. 31;*
STRAUSS, SR.: *Radetzky March, Op. 228;*
SCHUBERT: *Marche Militaire in D Major, Op. 51, No. 1;* **ROSSINI:** *William Tell, Overture and Barber of Seville, Overture;* **DONIZETTI:** *Daughter of the Regiment, Overture*
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THE AMEN CORNER

IT MUST occur to anyone who listens to a good deal of jazz that there is a fearful amount of repetition of the tunes used as thematic material. I have heard "I Can't Get Started" so many times that I desperately wish the fellow would leave the mark, and "Yesterdays" has regularly come to suggest the definite advantages of a loss of memory. I forbear to do more than merely mention "When The Saints Go Marching In." American popular music is a very rich and various literature, but you would never think so to see the constricted use made of it by the jazz improvisers and arrangers. As just a slight suggestion to the artists, I offer a dozen tunes that I think could well stand re-working. They seem to me fine tunes; I think they all lend themselves easily to jazz rhythms; and most of them, I should say, would tempt the harmonic fancy. Herewith:

"Maori" (Will Tyers) is a natural for jump rhythm, with a lovely, raggy verse and a low-down, driving chorus. "The Siren Song" is a lazy beauty and "Raggedy Ann" a haunting and subtle little plaint (both by Jerome Kern). Among the more delightfully sustained and meandering melodies we have are "An Orange Grove In California" and "Lady of the Evening" (both by Irving Berlin); "Make Believe" (Shilkret and Jerome, *not* the Jerome Kern item by the same name); "In a Boat" (Lange, Liggy & Klapholz) and "Drifting Along With The Tide" (George Gershwin).

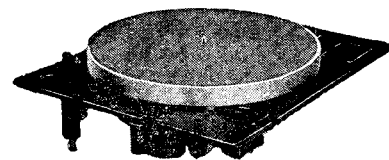
The rest of the *causerie* this month will be devoted to new records of modern jazz. Thelonious Monk, who might as well be called the father of modern jazz piano, is to be heard in a program largely of his own compositions, "Brilliant Corners" (Riverside RLP 12-226) in which he is assisted by such fine talents as Ernie Henry, alto sax; Sonny Rollins, tenor sax; Oscar Pettiford, bass; and Max Roach, drums. The ground tone heard is exceedingly blue and sophisticated, as may be gathered from the title of one number—"Ba-lue Bolivar Ba-lues-are"—which is explained as the phonetic spelling of Mr. Monk's idea of the fitting pronunciation of "Blue Bolivar Blues." Splendid! For me, the particular joys are in Mr. Monk's own piano playing. I have hitherto referred to him in this space as the Erik Satie of the jazz piano—which means to me that he is highly original, succinct,

witty, and full of fine lyric graces.

The young modern trumpet Donald Byrd—all lightness, ease and flowering figuration—continues to delight in a program "All Day Long" (Prestige LP 7081) with some of his vigorous New York colleagues, the pulsing guitarist Kenny Burrell; Frank Foster, tenor sax; Tommy Flanagan, piano; Doug Watkins, bass; and Arthur Taylor, drums. This is limber, pithy small-band jazz, the direct descendant, in the modern idiom, of the jazz of sainted Chicago memory.

The tenor saxophonist Sonny Rollins grows in interest and supple force (he is already in the forefront of the tribe) and it is especially pleasing to hear him take off on the basis of Kurt Weill's celebrated "Moritat" from "The Beggar's Opera" (Prestige LP 7079). It is, indeed, fascinating to hear him pronounce that air before taking off—a lesson in the nuances of jazz phrasing. And the disc also, contains, among other things, a superb blues and a winning West Indian

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suggestion, "St. Thomas." The supporting cast are the Messrs. Flanagan and Watkins, referred to in the previous record, and Max Roach, drums. One of the things I admire about Rollins is his steady effect of freshness, robustiousness, and inventive daring in a period when a good deal of jazz seems too polished to be alive.

Another player who plays with great spontaneity is Zoot Sims. Here the music making process seems so utterly natural that its values may at first escape notice. But in that Iron test which is repeated phonograph playing, Sims wears like iron. His virtues are quiet, warm and feelingful (Riverside RLP-228) and he has appropriate assistants in George Handy, piano and arrangements; Wilbur Ware, bass; and Osie Johnson, drums.

A NEW small combination from the Pacific is headed by bassist Curtis Counce and plays highly refined, rhythmic music in both brisk and languorous moods. The agile, silvery trumpet of Jack Sheldon is present, as well as Harold Land, tenor sax; Carl Perkins, piano; and Frank Butler, drums. This group might be said to veer somewhere between modern barrelhouse (I don't find the popular word "funky" very suggestive in this connection) and the ultra refinement of much modern chamber jazz (Contemporary C 2526). For a prime example of the latter there is "The Flute and the Oboe of Bud Shank and Bob Cooper" (Pacific Jazz PJ-1226) in which those gentlemen are joined by Howard Roberts, guitar; Don Prell bass; Chuck Flores, drums; and a four-piece string section. All the arrangements are by Mr. Cooper and the tunes include such standards as "They Didn't Believe Me" and "Gypsy In My Soul." Some of the music is not jazz, in the sense that it is not based on common time. When it is so based, it is perfectly clear that this combination, which might seem to be designed to perform in an orangerie, nevertheless deserves to be called a jazz orchestra. That is because the Messrs. Shank and Cooper as they have demonstrated before, are adepts in jazz rhythm and have solved the problem of using the gentler instruments in jazz style. This is, essentially, a matter of forgetting the traditional European use of strings and woodwinds, and employing them only in such ways as will contribute to, or at least not interfere with, the eccentric rhythmic momentums called swing. The results here, as in the music of Chico Hamilton's little group, seem to me to add considerably and seductively to the dimensions of jazz.

—WILDER HOESON.

who said

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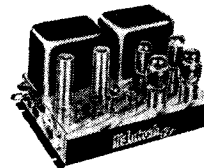
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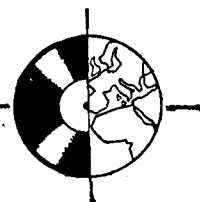
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STEREO DISC DEVELOPMENT—A "NEW" FERRIER

LONDON.

IF NO single exhibit "stole the show" at this year's Audio Fair in the Waldorf Hotel as the Quad Electrostatic Speaker did last year, the most significant demonstration was that given by A. R. Sugden of Brighouse, Yorkshire, renowned manufacturers of "Connoisseur" transcription turntables and pick-ups. The single-groove stereo idea has proceeded, on and off, since the early days of electrical recordings, but Arnold Sugden, after five years of endeavor, has now reached the stage where records and equipment are ready to be marketed, and it looks as though either Sugden's or "one of the big record companies" (Decca?) will be producing the first commercial stereophonic discs by autumn.

Sugden's demonstration came as no surprise to those who attended last year's exhibition by the British Sound Recording Association, but few of us then imagined this idea could be brought to its present, marketable stage in so brief a period. On the face of it the principle, though simple in theory, would appear to be beset with practical difficulties. The microgroove holds two signals, one recorded laterally, the other "hill and dale." A specially designed pick-up contains a single diamond stylus capable of tracing both signals in such a way that the lateral and the vertical components of its complex movement can be transmitted to separate amplifiers with the minimum of mutual interference. (Technical minded readers may like to know that Sugden's claim to have achieved a "channel separation" of about twenty-five dbs.). As in the case of stereo tape, the output from the two amplifiers is fed to a pair of identical speaker systems placed several feet apart.

The difficulties of this method do not exist with stereo tape; once overcome, however, the stereo disc becomes a far more practical proposition. The average music-lover will find it simpler to handle, there is virtually no loss of playing time compared with monaural recordings and the cost of the discs should be of the same order as conventional LPs. Nor is the equipment which Sugden's propose to market prohibitive in price: a top-grade transcription turntable is, of course, essential since motor-rumble would be a serious source of interference for the "hill and dale" signal;

the special pick-up, designed to play ordinary microgroove records as well as stereo discs, is to cost £16 (inclusive of diamond stylus and British purchase tax) and Sugden's complete amplification system is priced at £69.

The *pièce de resistance* of Sugden's stereo demonstration was a magnificent recording of massed brass bands (which flourish in Yorkshire as perhaps nowhere else), and I found this as convincingly three-dimensional as the finest stereo tapes I had heard—the sound seemed magnificently "alive" and the spatial separation of the instruments was quite excellent. It has long been held by some audio experts that, in listening to stereo reproduction, limitations of frequency range and a given level of distortion are of far smaller significance than in the case of monaural reproduction, and this view was strongly borne out when a normal disc was played through one of the two speakers. Used singly, the particular units showed some disagreeable coloration which seemed to vanish, as though by magic, when they were paired stereophonically.

Decca's announcement of its first RCA Victor release is expected in a few days' time when the company will also submit, to a conference of retailers, new schemes for the distribution of Decca group records as well as the launching of a "Star Dealer" system on American lines. The latest issues under the parent label include, in addition to a splendid recording of Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* (An-

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