

singers none are perhaps more elegantly musical than the Ekonda, who dwell north of Leopoldville. Washington Records will, in a matter of weeks, provide an excellent sampler of their music (a rerelease of Riverside RLP 4006, "Ekonda"), recorded and edited by Professor Alan P. Merriam and his wife. "The leader-chorus pattern provides the basic organizational principle," Merriam informs us, "but it is highly elaborated into a complicated polyphony in which two or more leaders sing against both polyphonic and harmonic backgrounds expressed in as many as four or five distinct parts." Here is a schema for some of the more strikingly evolved songs on earth. "Nsi" (Fish) is a compact experience: a soloist opens the song, then merges his melodic lines with a second part in duet, and finally a full chorus of nine lend their voices to form a structure wherein, as Merriam points out, an excellent grasp of the use of dynamic indicates complete understanding of the possibilities of shading and ornament in song. Those who are "classically" oriented may find absorbing Ekonda song closings which are normally couched in an exquisitely held note followed by a descent of a minor third which is released quickly.

"Bokungu" involves eight singers, two of whom accompany the song with a grooved palm rib rubbed with a flexible stick to produce a sound quite sand-papery and not unlike the gourd percussion instrument of a typical cha-cha band. The leaders of the song deliver their verses with machine-gun celerity; obviously a great deal of virtuosity of diction is required. The tour de force of this LP is "Bobongo," an Ekonda song cycle which takes up the entire first side. The harmonic skills which are vaunted lustily stem from thorough rehearsals and help to slay a common misconception to the effect that African music is haphazard and made up on the spot never to be repeated. The musical wit of the Ekonda singers is almost uncanny; for one final instance they are wont to insert tiny climaxes into the course of their songs, release the tension, and then put the pieces together again at a slightly higher plateau of operation. This special aural trick sticks in the ear—like the surf long after it has ceased. One can only hope that after the political house has been put in order (and recently there seem to be signs that it will be) the Congo government will turn its mind to national cultural treasures and send, among many projects, Ekonda choirs on world tour in the manner of the Ballets Africains. At any rate, to Professor Merriam goes the credit for spotlighting the Ekonda reservoir of musical expertise.

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Musicians in Battle

AT THE peak of the Battle of Gettysburg, the greatest single battle ever fought on the North American continent, a British military observer traveling with General Lee scratched the following item in his diary: "When the cannonade was at its height, a Confederate band of music, between the cemetery and ourselves, began to play polkas and waltzes, which sounded very curious, accompanied by the hissing and bursting of the shells." Coming across this entry as he read himself to sleep a few years ago, Frederick Fennell's senses suddenly sharpened and there was no rest for him that night. His free-running imagination ended in a detailed plan of research submitted eventually to Dr. Howard Hanson, director of the University of Rochester's Eastman School of Music. After years of painstaking labor and an incredibly complex system of sound recordings of actual small bore and artillery fire (on 35 mm), the project soon began to take shape as "The Civil War: Its Music and Its Sounds" (Mercury LPS2-901, \$13.95), Volume I, the story of the struggle between brothers told in its cannon fire and music and the fifers, buglers, drummers, and bandmen who made that music.

First thing to strike your ear as this unusual and original stereo package begins to break upon your senses is sudden awareness that the Civil War songs, bugle calls, and sounds of battle you are hearing are being made with brass instruments and military arms that create different sounds from arms and instruments you have become accustomed to in your own lifetime. The canister and grape fired from a genuine Civil War cannon do not sound like the explosion of a French 75: there is a guttural hiss, a flat, tinny horror about this ancient weapon's sound which becomes absolutely terrifying in the solitary privacy of a fine stereo studio (I used one at the Harvey Radio shop near SR because I wanted to be certain I heard the sound of battle at its best). And not only do the weapons of war become unimaginably real, because they *are* real and because the stereo reproduction is a perfection of authenticity, but the music suddenly strikes you as different from anything you've ever heard before, and with good reason.

For the Eastman Wind Ensemble, while playing such familiar airs as

"Hail to the Chief," "Dixie," "Bonnie Blue Flag," "Maryland, My Maryland," "Listen to the Mocking Bird," and assorted galops, schottisches, quicksteps, waltzes and marches, is reproducing this indigenous music on indigenous brass instruments. These instruments were collected painstakingly from museums all over America: an E flat over-the-shoulder alto with three string rotary valves; E flat soprano and B flat soprano cornets, over-the-shoulder models, with both string and mechanical rotary valves; an E flat alto upright horn with piston valves; a B flat tenor over-the-shoulder, a French or Viennese collector's item; E flat basses, over-the-shoulder in style and often of large bore. The B flat clarinet and D flat flute and piccolo are authentic antique winds, and the effect on the ear is first one of shock, then intense absorption, and finally total admiration for a Civil War research project in music that actually comes off. This is no fake adaptation, your ear quickly tells you. This is the real thing; and somehow all the old songs are new when played on instruments for which many of them were originally written,



—W. L. Decker

Over-the-shoulder horn (small size).

RECORDINGS REPORTS: JAZZ LPs

TITLE, PERSONNEL, DATA	REPORT
<p>"The Cannonball Adderley Sextet in New York." Julian Adderley, alto saxophone; Nat Adderley, cornet; Yusef Lateef, tenor saxophone, flute, oboe; Joe Zawinul, piano; Sam Jones, bass; Louis Hayes, drums. Riverside RLP 404, \$4.98; stereo, 9404, \$5.98.</p>	<p>The Adderley quintet—now augmented by Lateef to make a sextet—has been a spectacularly popular group. It has been able to combine the superficially appealing (if not always the best) elements in the various musics of Charlie Parker, Miles Davis, and the "soul" movement in a way which seems, somehow, <i>right</i> to many jazz listeners. Unfortunately, the band has now become so buried in its own clichés that what might have been a valuable synthesis is often very close to unconscious parody.</p>
<p>"Chicago and All That Jazz." Jimmy McPartland, trumpet; Jack Teagarden, trombone; Pee Wee Russell, clarinet; Bud Freeman, tenor saxophone; Joe Sullivan, piano; Eddie Condon, guitar; Bob Haggart, bass; Gene Krupa, drums; Lil Armstrong, piano; Blossom Seeley, vocals. Verve V-8441, \$4.98; stereo, \$5.98.</p>	<p>The album's title, as one might suspect, is inherited from a recent NBC television show in which these musicians and a number of others participated. This is not the music that was televised. Two tracks here, piano solos by Lil Armstrong, are without musical interest. Two others, sung by Mrs. Armstrong, Blossom Seeley, and Jack Teagarden, are novelty vocals with a few choruses of musical relief. Most of the other seven are Dixieland warhorses. The ensembles tend to be muddy, and Krupa's drumming is not helpful, but there are several fine solos by Russell, Freeman, Sullivan, and especially Teagarden.</p>
<p>Ornette Coleman: "Ornette!" Coleman, alto saxophone; Donald Cherry, pocket trumpet; Scott LaFaro, bass; Ed Blackwell, drums. Atlantic 1378, \$4.98, stereo, \$5.98.</p>	<p>Coleman's music lacks the conventional chorus structure and is largely random in harmony; he plays over a bass line improvised without reference to a predetermined series of chords. Hence a new listener is apt to feel lost at first. But patience is well rewarded. Coleman's playing is rich in melodic variety, rhythmic nuance, and sonority. This album contains two magnificent extended solos at the medium-fast tempo he seems to find most comfortable. One, on "R.P.D.D.," is built on simple riffs and contrasting modal figures; the other, on "C & D," contains some stunning sequences. A faster piece, "W.R.U.," is spotty. Cherry is improving, but still troubled by technical slips. LaFaro and Blackwell have one good solo each; their accompaniment is sure and functional. The ensemble themes are very raggedly stated; they deserve more care.</p>
<p>Stan Getz and Eddie Sauter: "Focus." Getz, tenor saxophone; eighteen strings; Roy Haynes, drums; Eddie Sauter, composer, Hershy Kay, conductor. Verve V-8412, \$4.98; stereo, \$5.98.</p>	<p>This is by no means simply another example of jazz-soloist-with-strings commercialism. The pieces are, in effect, small concerti for strings and improvising tenor saxophone. The scores themselves are not jazz, and so avoid the usual difficulties classically trained string players experience when attempting jazz intonation and rhythms. Sauter's writing is rich, imaginative, and mercifully free from Hollywood effects—homophonic lushness, decorative harp glissandi, and the like. Getz's playing is marvelously integrated with the compositions, assured and lyrical at all tempos.</p>
<p>Dizzy Gillespie: "An Electrifying Evening with the Dizzy Gillespie Quintet." Gillespie, trumpet; Leo Wright, alto saxophone and flute; Lalo Shifrin, piano; Chuck Lampkin, drums; Bob Cunningham, bass. Verve V-8401, \$4.98; stereo, \$5.98.</p>	<p>These four pieces were recorded at a Museum of Modern Art concert a year ago. Two, "Salt Peanuts" and "Night in Tunisia," are classic Gillespie bop lines; "The Mooche" is a venerable Ellington tune, and "Kush" is a repetitious piece of Eastern-flavored exotica. Both "The Mooche" and "Kush" are tediously arranged. There are trivial solos by Wright and Shifrin, and even Gillespie doesn't always have everything together. However, he can be expected to play at least one brilliant solo in every program, and the one here on "Salt Peanuts" is easily enough to make the concert memorable and the record worth having. Its first three choruses are Gillespie at close to his best.</p>
<p>Claude Hopkins: "Let's Jam." Joe Thomas, trumpet; Buddy Tate, tenor saxophone; Hopkins, piano; Wendell Marshall, bass; J. C. Heard, drums. Prestige/Swingville 2020, \$4.98; stereo, \$5.98.</p>	<p>Fine and mellow, if not exceptional, performances by swing-era veterans. The most important soloists, of course, are Tate and Thomas; Tate's huge, tumbling phrases are as joyful as usual, and Thomas, whose golden lyricism recalls <i>that</i> side of Louis Armstrong, is again in good form after years of neglect and relative inactivity. Hopkins's playing at up-tempos, a staccato transformation of stride and Basie, is sometimes stiff, and he is best on the slow ballads, one of which, "I Surrender, Dear," he has to himself.</p>
<p>Robert Johnson: "King of the Delta Blues Singers." Johnson, vocals and guitar. Columbia CL 1654, \$3.98.</p>	<p>A collection of records made in 1936 and 1937, when Johnson was hardly more than a boy (he died in 1938, not yet twenty-one). Some folk-blues enthusiasts consider him one of the finest performers in the genre, but I am less enthusiastic. His music is crude and rhythmically unsure, even judged by the special standards of the style and the time. Nevertheless, there are moments of intense beauty. The lyrics concern women, fear, and loneliness, and contain some cruelly poetic lines.</p>
<p>Gary McFarland: "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying." McFarland, arranger and vibraphone; five trumpets; three trombones; five reeds; Hank Jones, piano; Jim Hall or Kenny Burrell, guitar; George Duvivier or Joe Benjamin, bass; Mel Lewis or Osie Johnson, drums. Verve V-8443, \$4.98; stereo, \$5.98.</p>	<p>Starting with what might be thought (except by the Verve sales department) unpromising material—tunes from the musical "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying"—McFarland has arranged an imaginative and unusually varied big-band album. The musicians are among the most competent craftsmen in New York. McFarland's greatest gift so far is that of pacing—the balancing of section work, solos, breaks, accompaniment devices, and different rhythms to achieve a constantly changing texture. The music is rarely very serious and sometimes pretty funny. Clark Terry, trumpet, Bob Brookmeyer, trombone, and Phil Woods, alto saxophone, contribute the best solos.</p>
<p>Art Tatum: "The Essential Art Tatum." Tatum, piano. Verve V-8433, \$4.98.</p>	<p>Tatum is the fourth great jazz musician (after Charlie Parker, Billie Holiday, and Lester Young) whose "essential" recordings on Norman Granz's various labels have recently been collected on a posthumous memorial album. He was an erratic genius whose music varied widely in quality, and unfortunately this collection seems to have been made with little understanding of its special beauties and failings. As though chosen at random, the pieces range from the excellent ("Would You Like to Take a Walk," "Willow Weep for Me," "You're Blasé"), through the interesting but imperfect ("Tenderly," "Jitterbug Waltz") to the downright bombast of technical display ("Elegie") which was Tatum's greatest weakness. He was merely hindered by accompanying musicians, but one pleasant example of his group work is included—"My Ideal," with tenor saxophonist Ben Webster and a rhythm section.</p>
<p>Lennie Tristano: "The New Tristano." Tristano, piano. Atlantic 1357, \$4.98.</p>	<p>These piano solos are bound to be controversial. Some listeners will find them emotionless and chilly; others will be intrigued. Except for one standard, "You Don't Know What Love Is," all the pieces are Tristano's, and vary from chordal out-of-tempo playing to the stark extreme of "Bud," which is a single unaccompanied line at a fast tempo and with tediously few relieving rests. In other pieces Tristano simultaneously plays a steady bass line in the right hand and relentlessly long lines in the left. This is an extremely demanding improvisational procedure, and works really well only in "C Minor Complex," where the effect is that of baroque counterpoint combined with modern harmony and metrical dislocations.</p>

—MAIT EDEY.

in tempos suited to the cadence of a soldier at work or leisure.

Splendid as is the band music of Union and Confederate troops here, the problems of recording it must have been pretty staggering, and occasionally some of the ropes and pulleys show through, though this simply makes the thing more authentic than ever. All of the musicians involved had, of course, been raised in an era dominated by the direct, bright sound of cylindrical brassy. Now, playing the deeply sonorous, straight-over-the-shoulder horns, there was a mellow diffusion of sound and there was also a projection to the rear which greatly complicated the seating arrangement. Some horn players had to face front, some sideways, some with their backs to the conductor, the bells of their instruments pointing like so many up-turned witches' hats directly at him. Another hurdle was the water problem: brass instruments have long since been equipped with keys to permit quick discharge of condensed moisture. Over-the-shoulder horns of Civil War days had no such keys. At frequent intervals during the recordings, therefore, someone would look desperately at Dr. Fennell and shout "water!" Then would follow a long wet pause while all would pull out the three tuning slides, dump them, blow the instrument free of moisture, then carefully return the slides to pre-calculated tuning positions. Since tuning was a continuous problem there are here and there a few imprecise notes, yet they are, far from being unpleasant, rather homey and lend that happy outdoor, amateur reality one can remember well from band concerts in a small town many hot, wet summer evenings ago.

Besides band music there are camp, garrison, and field songs played on museum-piece drums and fifes ("The Girl I Left Behind Me," "Liverpool Hornpipe," "Gary Owen," etc.), cavalry bugle signals some of which are first played without drum, then with drum, parade style; and finally Martin Gabel's patriotic narration of "The Sounds of Conflict." This fourth side tells something of the story of Gettysburg, effective if highly oversimplified, including what history calls "Pickett's charge," but which was in reality no charge at all but a simple, massive, frontal assault on an impregnable position, doomed to failure before the first fatal bugle blew it forward. The opening note of "The Sounds of Conflict" is one tremendous explosion from a Confederate mortar that reverberates down and down valley and ridge and field as though it were trying to go back a whole century to bring to life and health again the brave 51,000 who fell during three bloody, fantastic days in a little town in southern Pennsylvania that nobody had ever heard of.

—RICHARD L. TOBIN.

Cage, Bussotti, Berio

THE NEWEST entry in Time's Contemporary Sound Series offers John Cage's "Aria with Fontana Mix," Sylvano Bussotti's "Frammento," and Luciano Berio's "Circles," an e.e. cummings setting (58003, \$4.98 or S/8003, \$5.98). No texts are provided. There are, however, many photographs of the performers, who include Mr. Berio, three also with John Cage (two with smirk, one with hearty laugh), and we are offered some extraordinary annotations which I fear will not after all be the last word in illiteracy and pretentious muddle-headedness.

Mr. Cage's oeuvre, as the notes call it, is actually two separate oeuvres "capable of being performed simultaneously as has been done and recorded here." Appalling both in its cynicism and its tedium, it is another in the series of jokes on which the Cage career has been built. While Cage accompanies the voice with prerecorded tape, Bussotti contents himself with piano. We are informed, however, that the piano part is actually reduced from an orchestral score, but also that "the piano adaptation was written by the composer himself, who thereby thought to establish the piano arrangement as an autonomous compositional genre." It is a relief to be offered this assurance of Mr. Bussotti's having thought about anything at all in connection with this piece. Both in Bussotti and Cage, the text is macaronic and deliberately incoherent.

Berio's work by contrast is that of a responsible musician, and in context I am grateful for at least the honesty of the very minor work of art he has produced. His musical language is dreadfully cliché-ridden, a mass of those familiar attractive and tiresome percussion noises and spectacular vocal acrobatics. Precision and economy are far from his art: nearly twenty minutes and his complex color spectrum are a considerable outlay for a work that hardly produces the artistic impact of one of Duparc's lesser songs.

The star of this album is Cathy Berberian (Mrs. Berio), who vocalizes all this music. Limitless technique and an irresistibly aggressive personality serve the composers gloriously. The recording is superb and one can presume the performances to be authentic and representative. As a historian I am grateful to Time records for its work in keeping the suicide of Western music so superlatively documented. As a musician, I wonder, not without bitterness at past and present neglect, when we will do as much for composers whose musical objects are less immediately titillating.

—MICHAEL STEINBERG.

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