

faculty room scene, which was in the original production but has been omitted from some revivals) is recorded in this album. . . ."

This is delivered mostly with appropriate emphasis, much spirit, and a very good average ability among the performers—of whom Lauri Peters as Moll, is one of the best, Jerry Orbach as Larry Forman is suitably inflammatory, Chris Warfield as Reverend Salvation appropriately sanctimonious, etc. They sing (vocalize) rather more than I think they should, but it is, without question, a high service to Blitzstein that so much of the complete work has been preserved. The only warning that I would issue is that it tends to be closer to the letter of the score than to its spirit. After thirty years and a transition of generations, it is all but impossible for performers today to approach such matters as "Nickel Under my Foot," "Croon, Spoon," "Honolulu," "I'm Checkin' Home Now," etc., without a touch of caricature. This is like adding seasoning to the already well seasoned—for that is the difference between parody, which Blitzstein indulged in, and caricature, which Kingsley sometimes endorses.

If there is any doubt of this, the proof is readily at hand in the American Legacy issue, which reproduces the version by the cast (very close to the original) that gave a series of performances at the Windsor Theater late in 1937. It circulated on a series of 78s bearing the Musicraft label, which some collectors still possess. These are cleaned up, acoustically, and much improved by transfer to surfaces that suppress much of the grind that characterized the first pressings. Thus more is to be heard of what is in the grooves than previously.

And from the first sound of Blitzstein's soft voice saying, "Scene one is a street corner. It is the night of a big union drive. The Moll stands at a lamp post. There is a 'phone attached to it," it is quite another thing altogether. Both in its poignance and in its crude power, it touches extremes of feeling that are only suggested in the newer, better-recorded, effort. In the product from American Legacy, the fidelity is to an original emotion rather than to the improved sound of a recreated impulse.

Moreover, though the reissue is limited to two sides, and the new issue covers four, there is not nearly the disparity of content that this might suggest. Rather than being on the order of four to two, it is more like three to two. This is accounted for by the difference in the length of material per side: American Heritage offers about twenty-six minutes per side, or a total of about fifty-three minutes, while MGM presents multiples of eighteen or nineteen, with about seventy-eight minutes for its four sides.

As a summation of values, the Ameri-



Rita Gardner, Clifford David, Wayne Tucker, and Nichols Grimes in the 1964 off-Broadway production.

can Legacy also includes a good deal of documentary material about Blitzstein, about the original production (including photos and photostats of newspaper material) that is absent from the MGM. For my taste, this contributes toward making it an indispensable source of information about a historic piece of Americana, while the MGM is merely a variably good performance of it. For those who might be puzzled by the reference, in American Legacy's Blitzstein discography, to a Columbia issue of the "1964 production," this is actually the same off-Broadway performance herein reviewed on MGM, which was originally contracted for by Columbia.

—IRVING KOLODIN.



—Alfredo Valente.

Howard da Silva (1937), the original Larry Foreman and director of the off-Broadway revival.

## The Folk Bookshelf

RECENT publications have centered upon the folk "songbook" rather than upon any serious studies of an analytical nature. Despite this all too evident lack, particularly noticeable in the blues field, a number of interesting and varied items have come to hand. The entire contemporary Nashville-country music scene is singularly characterized by a great lack of available literature. One of the few bright spots in this unfortunate plight is Thurston Moore's annual *The Country Music Who's Who* (Heather Publications, Denver, Colorado, \$5). It is essentially a country music compendium with an encyclopedic approach to the genre. Enlivened with photographs, articles, various advertisements, and discographies, it is a basic reference volume for anyone interested in this music. A valuable inclusion is the "Directory" section listing people, products, places, and services in the field. There are also a number of remarkably well-written and informative articles. Particularly illuminating are "History of the Autoharp," by A. Doyle Moore, "Memorial to John Edwards," by the noted folk scholar John Greenway, and the anonymous "The Banjo: America's Own Musical Instrument." Notwithstanding all the interest generated by the aforementioned, particular kudos must be given to the sixty-four-page section "Pictorial History of Country Music," which includes an eight-page section titled "The Civil War: Its Songs—Its Battles," in addition to countless photographic rarities, a plethora of nostalgia, and an informative text.

Songbooks have become a by-product of the entire folk music boom. In many instances they are specifically directed toward the pop-folk, commercially oriented reader and listener, but on occasion publishers do devote their efforts to the more serious and dedicated aficionado or scholar. *The New Lost City Rambler's Song Book* (Oak Publications, \$4.50), although rather expensive for a soft-covered edition, is a scholarly volume of white country music commercially recorded during the 1920s and 1930s. Each song is preceded by a short historical note concerning the background of the offering, recorded and otherwise, and many rare photographs and publicity flyers are also exhibited. Four short articles make up the introduction: "Styles in Old-Time Music" (John Cohen), "Some Thoughts About Old-Time Music" (Mike Seeger and Paul Nelson), "A Musical Note" (Hally Wood), and "Adapted and Arranged in the Public Domain" (Cohen). All are essential thoughts basic to the understanding and appreciation of the material presented. Overall, this is an invaluable

(Continued on page 62)

# RECORDINGS REPORTS: JAZZ LPs

TITLE, PERSONNEL, DATA	REPORT
Count Basie: <i>Pop Goes the Basie</i> . Basie, piano and leader, with sixteen-piece band. Reprise 6153, \$3.98; stereo, \$4.98.	Reprise evidently believes that the big band's road to success is paved with pop tunes, and it may be right. Even in their heyday, the bands mixed ballad hits with originals, but then, of course, more of the songwriters were professionals. Arranger Billy Byers has translated the chosen material ably with frequent amusing or original touches, such as Wallace Davenport's trumpet simulation of a church choir's soprano. The band has recently been enriched soloistically by the return of Lockjaw Davis and Al Grey, both of whom are abundantly featured, but to anyone with a taste for expressive understatement the pianist remains the star. He and Davis stretch out on the final number, "At Long Last Love," which is by far the most exciting performance. Some interesting remnants from an earlier Basie period are gathered together on one side of <i>Roulette 52117 (Big Band Scene '65)</i> , the reverse being by Maynard Ferguson, and Verve V6-8605 ( <i>Our Shining Hour</i> ) has the band behind Sammy Davis, who suits it rather better than Frank Sinatra.
Duke Ellington: <i>Ellington '66</i> . Ellington, piano and leader, with fourteen-piece band. Reprise 6154, \$3.98; stereo, \$4.98.	Consisting of ten recent song hits, "Satin Doll" and one original, this set makes an interesting comparison with that by Basie reviewed above. The textures are generally more velvety and the deficiencies of the songs more thoroughly disguised in these enchanting Ellington-Strayhorn transformations, but the special virtues of each band are curiously emphasized by the other's. Ellington's remarkable gallery of soloists is well displayed, the honors going to Paul Gonsalves on "Days of Wine and Roses" and to Johnny Hodges and Harry Carney in a duet on "The Good Life." What must be heard to be believed is the crazy magic the band and the arranger have worked on the Beatles' hit, "I Want to Hold Your Hand."
Benny Goodman: <i>Featuring Great Vocalists of Our Times</i> . Goodman, clarinet and leader, with orchestra, and vocalists: Buddy Clark, Ella Fitzgerald, Johnny Mercer, Jimmy Rushing, Martha Tilton, Helen Ward. Camden 872, \$1.98; stereo, \$2.49.	Of the six singers heard in these ten reissues from 1935-39, the most impressive are Ella Fitzgerald on "Goodnight, My Love" and Jimmy Rushing on "He Ain't Got Rhythm." A second side by Miss Fitzgerald is a rare one from 1936, "Did Ja Mean It?" Besides the leader's clarinet, there are delights for the band's devotees in the form of solos by Harry James and Bunny Berigan, not to mention Fletcher Henderson's wonderful arrangement of "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea."
Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young: <i>Classic Tenors</i> . Hawkins, tenor saxophone, with trio (four titles) and sextet (four titles); Young, tenor saxophone, with sextet (four titles). Contact CM-3, mono only, \$4.98.	This excellent collection was originally recorded for Signature in 1943 when Hawkins and Young jointly ruled the world of tenor saxophone. Oscar Pettiford and Shelly Manne were on both Hawkins sessions, with Eddie Heywood at the piano on the first and Ellis Larkins on the second. Among the great performances that resulted were "The Man I Love" and "How Deep Is the Ocean?"—the latter being a marvelous example of Hawkins's musicality, singing flow, and emotion-filled form of expression. The titles with Lester Young were first issued under the name of Dicky Wells, and that imaginative trombonist is in fine form here, along with Bill Coleman on trumpet, who also plays on the earlier Hawkins session. Well recorded before Young's damaging term in the Army, this disc finds him at a peak; ideas stream effortlessly from his horn, and there are times when he flies beyond swing with a special kind of aerial mobility.
Woody Herman: <i>Woody's Big Band Goodies</i> . Herman, clarinet, alto saxophone and leader, with fifteen-piece band. Philips 600-171, \$3.98; stereo, \$4.98.	Recorded live in Hollywood and Lake Tahoe, this includes several remakes of successes of the 1945-46 Herd. It is especially interesting to hear Phil Wilson and Billy Hunt in, respectively, the solo roles of Bill Harris and Sonny Berman on "Bijou" and "Sidewalks of Cuba." Hunt plays well, too, in Nat Pierce's arrangements of "Poor House Blues" and "You Dirty Dog." The tenor saxophone solo by Andy McGhee in the former, disciplined and well executed, is probably his best on record to date. The elevating effect of Herman's own alto lead on the saxophone section is noteworthy in the same number.
Toshiko Mariano: <i>Jazz in Japan</i> . Toshiko Mariano, piano, with duo, quartet, quintet and fifteen-piece band. Vee-Jay 2505, mono and stereo, \$4.98.	It is Big Band Month in Nippon, too, and here a Japanese group of the usual instrumentation proves itself decidedly competent. The presence of two Americans in the rhythm section—Paul Chambers (bass) and Jimmy Cobb (drums)—counts for much, as does that of the experienced Toshiko Mariano at the piano. Apart from her opening arrangement of a traditional Japanese melody, the material is also by Americans, and her husband's blues, "The Shout," is excitingly interpreted. In terms of sections, the lessons have been well learned. Of the soloists, the most immediately striking are the saxophonists, Akira Miyazawa, Sleepy Matsumoto, and Shigeo Suzuki.
Oscar Peterson: <i>Canadiana Suite</i> . Peterson, piano; Ray Brown, bass; Ed Thigpen, drums. Limelight 86010, \$4.98; stereo, \$5.98.	Peterson is a Canadian who lives in Toronto, and this eight-part suite is a personal but evocative tribute to his country. That he has written it in terms of jazz is not less appropriate "than it is," annotator Gene Lees points out, "for Aaron Copland to portray the Appalachian Mountains in terms of European classical music." The Laurentians and "the Land of the Misty Giants" (the Rockies) are depicted in pretty, impressionistic sketches, whereas the prairie and Toronto ("Hogtown") are surveyed through the earthy media of the blues. The playing is impeccable and Limelight's elegant packaging does it justice.
Shirley Scott: <i>Travelin' Light</i> . Shirley Scott, organ; Kenny Burrell, guitar; Eddie Kahn, bass; Otis Finch, drums. Prestige 7328, mono and stereo, \$4.98. Stanley Turrentine: <i>Hustlin'</i> . Turrentine, tenor saxophone; Shirley Scott, organ; Kenny Burrell, guitar; Bob Cranshaw, bass; Otis Finch, drums. Blue Note 4162, \$4.98; stereo, \$5.98. Shirley Scott: <i>Everybody Loves a Lover</i> . Shirley Scott, organ; Stanley Turrentine, tenor saxophone; Bob Cranshaw, bass; Otis Finch, drums; and on three titles: Howard Collins, Barry Galbraith, guitars; Willie Rodriguez, Latin percussion. Impulse 73, \$4.98; stereo, \$5.98.	The frequency with which Shirley Scott, her husband, Stanley Turrentine, and Kenny Burrell nowadays appear on records bespeaks popularity. Their formula appears to require that the music be warm, tasteful, and easygoing rather than frantic and far out. The Prestige album, indeed, might well have been described by one of the titles in it—"Nice and Easy." For all the mellowness of tone and the feeling of relaxation that prevails, the playing of Miss Scott and Burrell is adroitly inventive. The Blue Note benefits from Bob Cranshaw's bass, and here the beat is at times more positively defined. Ira Gitler refers very aptly in the notes to Burrell's "controlled fire." The Impulse set is distinguished by its unusual breadth of repertoire, which includes "The Lamp Is Low," as adapted from Ravel's music, and three originals.
Joya Sherrill: <i>Joya Sherrill Sings Duke</i> . Joya Sherrill, vocal; Cootie Williams, trumpet; Johnny Hodges, alto saxophone; Paul Gonsalves, tenor saxophone; Ernie Harper, piano; John Lamb, bass; Sam Woodyard, drums; and, on four titles: Ray Nance, cornet and violin; Billy Strayhorn, piano; Joe Benjamin, bass; Shep Shepherd, drums. 20th Century Fox 4170, \$3.98; stereo, \$4.98.	Joya Sherrill scored a big personal success on Benny Goodman's famous State Department tour of Russia. She was also one of the best singers ever employed by Duke Ellington, and in this program of songs associated with him she is accompanied by a contingent from his band. Her warm, appealing voice, good articulation, and intelligent comprehension of the lyrics make the performances very enjoyable. Of the musicians heard in solos and obligati, Williams and Nance sound the most committed. The latter's violin, which is such an asset on "Daydream," can be heard to more extensive advantage on an inconsistent but rewarding album by Ahmed Abdul-Malik called <i>Spellbound</i> (Status 8303). The solo on "Song of Delilah" suggests that Nance's full potential on the instrument has not yet been realized in the record studio. —STANLEY DANCE.