

NAME YOUR POISON

THE passionate flutterings of Sidney Bechet's saxophone running rings round the basic rhythms of the New Orleans Feetwarmers (Esquire 20-058) may not be quite to your taste, unless, of course, you remember Sidney Bechet as for long now one of the really original artists among jazz players. His thrashing and flights of improvisation would be a lesson to many a "straight" player.

On the other side of the fence, you might also find Bartok's string quartets music that doesn't go immediately to your heart. There is no doubt, however, that in the field of chamber music nothing has come our way so imaginatively written since Beethoven. If all the performances of the complete Bartok Quartets which the Vegh String Quartet are recording are as finely done as Nos. 3 and 4 (Columbia 33CX 1267), this should be a notable series.

Another notable recording, although admittedly not to everyone's taste, is *Canti di Prigonia* by the Italian contemporary, Dallapiccola, a composer who has by now placed himself firmly on the 20th Century pedestal. Written for chorus and orchestra and performed on this disc by the Chorus and Orchestra of Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Rome, conducted by Igor Markevitch (Columbia 33CX 1353), this is most impressive music, which I am sure you will feel even before you have become accustomed to Dallapiccola's idiom. On the same disc are four charming *Poemes Hindous* and *Berceuse Phoque* by contemporary Frenchman, Maurice Delage. They are attractively sung by Martha Angelici. To complete the programme, the Pascal Quartet play String Quartet No. 2 by the Brazilian composer Camargo Guarnieri. Recorded under the auspices of Unesco, this is an excellent money's worth of contemporary music.

But maybe your taste runs to something more unashamedly romantic. Then there's *Goyescas*, the famous piano suite by Granados. This is elegant pianistic poetry that takes its time over its elegance but is none the worse for that.

"Rarely has the Spanish soul revealed itself so clearly in cultured music," wrote Pedro Morales of the best known piece, "The Lover and the Nightingale." Amparo Iturbi, even on a piano that sounds on the hard side, makes the music convincing (H.M.V. ALP1320).

Hopping over the fence again for a little back garden romanticism we could take it on the vibraphone with the Milt Jackson Quartet (Esquire 32-009). In its way, this is pleasant enough playing—inoffensive anyway—and of "delicate tone and subtle taste" as the cover note describes it; but, as for me, a little of the vibraphone goes a long way. One could go quite a long way, however, with singer Pearl Bailey (Coral C10-979) who, as they say, has what it takes.

On the same "pop" side of the fence off the beaten track which is beaten enough these days, there's Phil Moore's *Music for Moderns* (Clef MGC-635) with Calvin Jackson, piano, and orchestra. Dividing his time between a grand piano, a honky-tonk piano and a celesta, Mr. Jackson romps along with great zest and some pretty fine improvisations. His exposition of Phil Moore's jazz concerto is quite something too.

By OWEN JENSEN

Add to these as music in the same line worth keeping a tag on, the Billy Taylor Trio (Esquire 32-010), piano playing a little more conservative but still with a swing, and *Delving Back with Humph* (Esquire 32-007)—the well-known trumpeter Humphrey Lyttelton with band in a good steady English beat.

People's Music

Listening to *Musique Populaire Roumaine* (London TWBV 91107) confirms again how soberly we New Zealanders take our pleasures, not the least perhaps, because we have no music of our own to enliven festive occasions. These Roumanian folk tunes will set your feet tapping and your blood tingling and you'll feel all the better for it. The gypsies at *The Festival of Les Saintes Maries de la Mer* (Columbia 33CS 11) seem to get a lot of fun out of life too. This on-the-spot recording by Hungarian and Andalusian gypsies at the 1955 festival is quite exciting entertainment. This is mostly flamenco singing. If you wish to discover the not altogether subtle difference between flamenco and the more traditional Spanish Cante Jondo, listen then to *Cante Jondo* (London WBV 91109). The singers all sound as if they were suffering from severe laryngitis, but one can become quite sympathetic to this peculiar form of voice production and admire the natural artistry that it expresses.

Liking What You Know

We're back on familiar territory with two discs of Haydn symphonies. Hermann Scherchen and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra play Symphony No. 100 in G Major ("Military") and No. 95 in C Minor (Westminster WL5045), and Scherchen and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra present "The Clock" Symphony and No. 99 in E Flat Major (Westminster WL5102). Both discs are to be recommended.

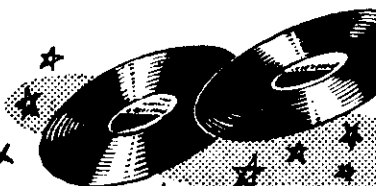
Paul Badura Skoda with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Artur Rodzinski plays the two Chopin piano concertos (Westminster WL5308). Mr. Skoda's Chopin may not be so uniquely inspired as his Mozart but this is, nevertheless, incomparably fine playing.



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