



SIR JOHN GIELGUD (above) has the leading role in *Present Laughter*, the comedy by Noel Coward which will be heard in ZB Sunday Showcase on November 10. He plays Garry Essendine, a charming and irresistible matinee idol who likes peace, quiet, and the companionship of his four friends, and his ex-wife. His peaceful existence is complicated by the pretty young girls who insist on losing their latch-keys and—less pleasantly—by a mad young writer who haunts his flat. But the temperamental actor, who seems so harassed by his friends and admirers, secretly relishes their attentions. Liz, his ex-wife (played by Nora Swinburne), is the only person who can cope with his idiosyncrasies.

The part of Joanna Lyppiatt, his manager's lovely but predatory wife, is taken by Mary Wimbush, and Margaret Webster is heard as Essendine's secretary, Monica Reed. The part of the persistent playwright Roland Maule is taken by Frank Duncan. The play, one of Noel Coward's wartime successes, was adapted for radio by Cynthia Pughe and produced by Peter Watts for the BBC.

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for the idea at first, but I find that the change from the speaking voice to the music is a pleasant one. Auden's note on the record envelope makes one wish that he had more space to extend his discussion of the music.

Finally, don't miss keeping in touch with the Archive series of the Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft, and don't think that because these pictures of music are chosen for their historical importance they are not masterpieces of music delightfully performed. For example, we find on EPA 37029 Mozart writing what sounds suspiciously like space music—if the *Earth in Peril* had a beautiful blonde surely Mozart's Adagio and Rondo for a quintet, one member of which is the glass harmonica, would suit her down to the asteroids. Again, on EPA 37059 Palestrina is superbly sung by the Aachen Cathedral Boys' Choir, with moving dignity. This Archive Series will be a wonderful collection of records when it is complete.

The week's prize goes to Bill Haley of Rock 'n' Roll fame, who says, "The great attraction lies not in the moronic phrases shrieked by a crew-cut sub-intelligentsia, but in the fundamental rhythm itself. The noise rises to a crescendo, the monotonous beat hammers into your head, the people around you convulse rhythmically. Upon the bandstand a singer will be screaming, gyrating to the music, his arms waving. To us all it's just good clean fun."

N.Z. LISTENER, NOVEMBER 1, 1957.

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