

throughout this particular LP, the sort of carrying-on and horseplay that has made Gillespie so charming a performer. *Umbrella Man* is an example of how the dizzy humor of Gillespie can take a drab popular song and transform it into a jazz performance that is durable. Junior Mance, one of the best of modern jazz pianists, is heard throughout, as is Les Spann, who doubles on guitar and flute. *Lorraine*, a composition with Latin overtones, is named for Gillespie's wife. R. J. C.

▲ BIG BAND BLUES—TED HEATH AND HIS MUSIC—The Ted Heath Orchestra featuring Keith Christie, Don Lusher (trombones), Ronnie Chamberlain (soprano saxophone), Henry Mackenzie (clarinet), Eddie Blair (trumpet), Bob Efford (tenor saxophone), Stan Tracey (piano). *Limehouse Blues*; *St. James Infirmary*; *Royal Garden Blues* & 9 others. London PS 172 \$4.98

Interest: Moderate
Performance: Well drilled
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: Superior
Stereo Depth: Very good

The Ted Heath band is brisk, precise and accurate in its ensemble work. The arrangements are not particularly inventive, but when performed with this unit's almost military flair and command of dynamics, they can sometimes be drivingly exciting as in the *Limehouse Blues* on the superior first side of the album. Unfortunately, however, the band does not swing and after a while, the music, for all its slick skill, becomes rather monotonous. Best soloists are trombonists Lusher and Christie although there's incisive trumpet playing by Eddie Blair. N. H.

▲ LAMBERT, HENDRICKS, & ROSS!—Dave Lambert, Jon Hendricks, Annie Ross (vocals) with the Ike Isaacs Trio featuring Harry Edison (trumpet). *Moanin'*; *Cloudburst*; *Sermonette* & 7 others. Columbia CL 1403 \$3.98

Interest: Brilliant entertainment
Performance: Annie's the centerpiece
Recording: Excellent

As the cover proclaims, this has indeed become "the hottest new group in jazz" in terms of box office in the past couple of years. Beginning with vocalized versions of Count Basie arrangements, including the solos, the trio has broadened their repertory to include a number of contemporary originals (Bobby Timmons' *Moanin'* is a particularly virgorous example here) and compositions by Jon Hendricks, who writes all the trio's lyrics.

The group is crisply, wittily entertaining. Each of the singers has been deeply immersed in jazz so that together and singly, they sing almost as if they were vocalized jazz horns. The voicings are imaginative, and the section-like riffs and counterlines behind the soloists are sometimes more imaginative than much current jazz writing for big bands. Musically, Annie Ross is the key asset. Her intonation is excellent, even in the most challenging passages; her range is remarkable; and her flexibility and control allow her to encompass high trumpet parts. The other two are not as implacably accurate, but can be sizzling scat singers. They also solo intelligently and blend firmly with Annie.

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I do think, however, that the Hendricks lyrics tend to be overestimated. It is true that his writing reflects natural speech patterns and, to some extent, the argot of the jazz in-group and many city Negroes. But the actual images—and the messages—are often banal and predictable. I have heard considerably fresher uses of metaphor "on the street" than Hendricks is capable of writing most of the time. Certainly his lyrics tell of more realistic emotions and situations than most pop tunes, but it requires yet another step to go from Hendricks' tape recorder-like ear to the more personal, creative and really brilliant popular songwriting that Jacques Prévert and Georges Brassens, among others, have accomplished in France. Hendricks has made a useful beginning step but is far from the "genius" several critics have been proclaiming him to be. N. H.

▲ GEORGE LEWIS—A NEW ORLEANS DIXIELAND SPECTACULAR. Doctor Jazz; *Burgundy Street*; *Mecca Flat Blues*; *Til We Meet Again* & 6 others. Omega OML 1053 \$3.98

Interest: Good traditional jazz
Performance: Spirited
Recording: Non hi-fi

That George Lewis is one of the most surprisingly communicative musicians in the New Orleans genre is not news to anyone who has ever heard him in person. Throughout the years, Lewis has been burdened with an unmusicianly and semipro collection of fellow New Orleanians, but despite their efforts, the classic beauty of Lewis' clarinet playing has triumphed. He brings to everything he plays such a degree of personal involvement that he literally shines. Here he is heard in two settings—with his own band in a series made originally for a small jazz label and again with a banjo-bass-cornet accompaniment. In both contexts, the thing of interest is the playing of Lewis. For my personal taste, his playing on *Mecca Flat* (which is one of the better-recorded sides) is really a moving exposition of blues playing. Anyone interested in traditional jazz, in studying the origins of jazz itself or in simply hearing the work of a fine primitive artist will find this LP wholly rewarding. R. J. G.

▲ MEMPHIS SLIM AT THE GATE OF HORN—Memphis Slim (vocals and piano) and unidentified small band. *The Come Back*; *Slim's Blues*; *Sassy Mae* & 9 others. Vee Jay LP 1012 \$3.98

Interest: Hard-driving blues
Performance: Best on slow blues
Recording: Adequate

Memphis Slim (Peter Chapman) is originally from Memphis and is one of the most assertive of contemporary blues singers and pianists, hammering out his numbers with a penetrating, steel-like voice and touch. His blues are direct, uncomplicated, and deal mostly with women—the woes they bring and the pleasures they sometimes bestow. Included in his program, presumably recorded at the Gate of Horn in Chicago (although I hear no audience noise) is an original by him, *The Come Back*, which became a Count Basie hit with Joe Williams.

Slim is at his best in the slower blues but can shout hard on the up-tempo. His

accompaniment is unfortunate, a mediocre rhythm and blues band. The combo is rhythmically limited; and while the tenor saxophonist blows with raw emotion, his conception is thin. Slim is best served by his own piano, and it's heard too seldom in this collection. Vee Jay would be wise to add just bass and drums to Slim and let him do an album emphasizing more reflective blues. This collection, though, is worth having if you're fond of full-strength blues singers. N. H.

▲ THELONIOUS ALONE IN SAN FRANCISCO featuring the solo piano of THELONIOUS MONK. *Ruby, My Dear*; *Blushawk*; *There's Danger In Your Eyes*; *Reflections* & 6 others. Riverside RLP 12 312 \$4.98

Interest: Brilliant modern jazz
Performance: Peerless
Recording: Excellent

Thelonious Sphere Monk is one of the most original and important talents in modern jazz. One of the innovators (with Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie) of the whole modern jazz movement, Monk has only in recent years begun to attain a popular reputation comparable to the one he has always had among jazz musicians. The numbers that he has written have almost all become standard material for performance by modern jazz musicians. This LP, recorded in San Francisco in October, 1959, while Monk was playing at the Black Hawk, is piano alone. During that time (a particularly successful time for Monk's playing), he customarily played entire evenings of only his own music and an occasional standard ballad. Here, the ratio of original to standard ballads is 6-to-4. Of the half-dozen Monk originals, several are new versions of old ones—*Ruby, My Dear* and *Blue Monk*—and of the standards, Monk seems to have the most fun with *There's Danger In Your Eyes Cherie*. Listening to Monk is like listening to Duke Ellington; it takes practice to fully appreciate the subtleties and many shades of meaning. For instance, Monk is capable of great humor in an almost slapstick sense, as when he plays the standard ballads. He delights in the unexpected chord, the sudden, almost mistaken change. On his own tunes, he is inclined to be alternately joyous and brooding. In any case, he has yet to make an album that wasn't worth owning. This is among the better ones. R. J. G.

▲ ART PEPPER + ELEVEN. *Move*; *Groovin' High*; *'Round Midnight*; *Walkin'* & 8 others. Contemporary 3568 \$4.98

Interest: Top rank modern jazz
Performance: Inventive
Recording: Excellent

This reviewer enjoyed and continues to enjoy this album, both for the fact that a fine collection of nostalgic jazz numbers from the early days of what has come to be called bebop comprises the repertory and for the fact that it is all in very good taste. Marty Paich, who does the arranging throughout, is one of the most adept practitioners of the art of charting the course for jazzmen to follow; the men whom he chose to play the music are all first rate studio musicians with solid jazz roots, interspersed with jazzmen who play nothing else and all of this arranged to

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