THE PERCUSSIVE TWENTIES

Eric Rogers and his Orchestra

TIGER RAG
WHISPERING
BLACK BOTTOM
TEA FOR TWO
AIN'T SHE SWEET
FASCINATING RHYTHM
CHICAGO
ME AND MY SHADOW
WHO?
THE BIRTH OF THE BLUES
CHARLESTON
SHE'S FUNNY THAT WAY
MUSICAL PROGRAM

"Oh, how I long to be the man I used to be!" wrote Ira Gershwin sometime in the 1920's; but, he added rather fatalistically, "Fascinating Rhythm, oh, won't you stop picking on me!" What was the "fascinating rhythm" of the twenties; and why does the public cling to its fascination for this era? Perhaps, because musically it was one of the most exciting decades of the recent past. And as music is an accurate annotator of a people's popular preferences and tastes, so the twenties is preserved in a wealth of musical notes and figures. Yet, these tastes were not all zany (the mood most often identified with the period, and erroneously so, one might add); there was often a sadder side to the period—songs that spoke as much of loneliness and insecurity. The feature of the twenties that truly documents the time, then, is this contrast between the two extremes of happiness and sadness.

The war's end, no doubt, released the zany tensions; the era is filled with the sound of ragtime, Dixie, such provocative bump 'n' grind dances as The Toddle, The Charleston, The Black Bottom, The Varsity Drag, and so many more. The up-tempos were there, a bit mad, a bit uncivilized and gingerly unpredictable. But for all the choked cymbal clashes of "Chicago," "Charleston," and "Black Bottom," there was the loneliness of "Me And My Shadow" (all alone and feeling blue), the insecurity of "Ain't She Sweet!" (ain't she? huh? I ask you, confidentially, ain't she sweet?), the bitter-sweet philosophy of "Smiles" (that make us happy, that make us blue). And this was the time the Southland Negro fasted the third and seventh of a chord and gave us the "Blues."

In his role as musical director of this album, the talented Eric Rogers has summed it all up musically: here are the twenties—a bit zany, a bit sad, and bitter-sweet.

THE PERCUSSIVE TWENTIES

Eric Rogers and his Orchestra

1. TIGER RAG
(G. & I. Gershwin—ASCAP—2:25)
The zaniest tiger ever to fall between the grooves of a record can be heard (and seen, hopping crazily back and forth across the speakers) incorrigibly intimidating every musical sound in sight—including the poor damsel who barely manages to stay one step ahead of the mad cat. After a bit of fun, some quick (left, right) glockenspiel figures herald one of the greatest "Tiger," and the damsel, unhappily, didn't run fast enough.

2. WHISPERING
(Stearnberger; Cohen; Breen—ASCAP—2:55)
The precise punctuation of the side drum, abetted by the raucous kixion and ringing bicycle bell (heard first on the left, then on the right) gets things off to a rousing start, a pace which is discouraged by the group of whispering girls (left). An obstinate front line Dixie ensemble, however, wasn't ever meant to be held back by women, so, after sitting by and listening to the clarinet (left), saxophone (right), trumpet (left), and another clarinet (right), sound off one at a time, the whole front line rebels and breaks out in bright twenties' fashion. Short-lived is this independence, however; the girls and their determined wish for a bit of quiet carry the day.

3. BLACK BOTTOM
(DeSylva; Brown; Henderson—ASCAP—3:00)
Was there ever a sound that for sheer color and atmosphere could match the jangled, de-tuned piano of the nineteen twenties? Simply arranged, and offered to you is a happy moment from the past: two pianos (listen to the expert dialogue between them), a banjo (left), and drums (right).

4. TEA FOR TWO
(Cassar; Youmann—ASCAP—3:55)
All right, my name is Gerry Grant and it's 1926, and it's Monday night, and the fool radio's got me all shook with romance, and I love my girl Eula Parker, and, all right, I'll give her a ring...

5. AIN'T SHE SWEET
(Yellen; Ager—ASCAP—3:10)
A nice cracky drum beat (left, then right), an attractive blonde (she passes by left to right), some wolf whistles, and the trumpet man (right) loses his head; twice actually (he loses it on the left the second time). Then, the whole band loses its collective head, until, watching her go by for the third time, they abandon their instruments and follow her...

6. FASCINATING RHYTHM
The twenties is as much this song as it is any single tune written in that decade. Thrilling, unpredictable, on the beat, off the beat, Eric Rogers has turned out a first-rate arrangement which says magnificently: I'm the nineteen twenties, friend; I'm fascinating rhythm.

SIDE 2

1. CHICAGO
(Pinker; ASCAP—2:15)
The cries, shrieks, howls and piercing activities of CHICAGO-1920 are thrillingly captured in the planned chaos of Eric Rogers' brilliant arrangement of this superb song. (Have a field-day with your set and pick out the left-right sounds!) Further zany colors come from the men in the band who sing "CHICAGO" (holding their noses) (left and right), the bright top of the xylophones (left and right) and, again, that front-line Dixie sound which was so much a part of the twenties. The song is excitingly wrapped-up in an avalanche of sound.

2. ME AND MY SHADOW
(Bose; Jolson; Dreher—ASCAP—2:15)
The lonely me is the tap dancer (who enters on the right), and the shadow, echoing (on the left) all of the tap's aloneness, is a soft-shoe. The bright play (between speakers) of the glocks and vibes above the main melody, which never loses its smooth, lyrical quality (listen to how beautifullyintoned are the statements by the clarinet, right, and the bass clarinet, left), gives the song a peculiar quality of two moods. But aloneness wins out. When the tap leaves (exit right), the soft-shoe "all alone and feeling blue," scurries away too (left to right).

3. WHO?
(Kern; Harbach; Hammerstein—ASCAP—3:00)
WHOH! You! That's who! Gerry Grant: boy
Eula Parker: girl

4. THE BIRTH OF THE BLUES
(DeSylva; Brown; Henderson—ASCAP—3:25)
From that first trumpet hawking (right) to the second trumpet answer (left), this great song stays right in character: Blue, low-down 'n dirty moon-mood. Even the delicate glock figures (nicely exchanged between the speakers) don't detract from the basic expressive movement of the plow-paced blues.

5. CHARLESTON
(Mack; Johnson—ASCAP—3:40)
What do you need to know about this one?

6. SHE'S FUNNY THAT WAY
(Whiting; Moret—ASCAP—3:00)
We've made this the most modern sounding. The 20's were coming to an end—and the plaintive alto sax (left) tells you so, and so does the lonely clarinet (right). Eric Rogers has written in some heavy chords (left) when the trumpet takes its turn at the melody (right); these heavy chords, appropriately have a ring of finality about them. The 1930's were around the corner, and the harmonies were due for a change.
THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHASE 4 STEREO

Since the introduction of the revolutionary stereo record in 1958, the art of recording has undergone a rapid evolutionary process.

PHASE 1 STEREO: "Concert Hall Realism." In this phase (1958 to 1961), stereo recordings were made to recreate a true stage presence. The instruments of the orchestra were recorded "soundwise" in their normal positions, with the result that for the home listener the propinquity and movement of the sounds of these instruments were recreated, so to speak, as if they originated from an imaginary soundstage spread between the listener's two loudspeakers. The record buyer no longer needed to be content with listening to his favorite artists in a restricted medium of "compressed" monophonic sound; the directional sound of stereo was now available to bring the artist into the listener's home. It was a question of balance, inner direction and movement, together with the "leakage" from left to right speakers and back again electronically . . . without the orchestral players ever actually leaving their seats. Again, the technician had a field day with this type of stereo recording device, and in many recordings the music became subservient to the overwhelming "gimmick" of moving sounds. However, in another application, as in certain opera, drama and musical comedy recordings, the voices of the protagonists could be moved moving before one's ears in a true-to-life stage presentation.

PHASE 2 STEREO: "Separation of Sound." In this phase (1959 to 1961), stereo recordings proved that an orchestra could be "split in half"; that voices could be "full left" while the orchestra was "full right"; that a ping-pong ball could be heard hitting the table on the left and then on the right, and that sounds could be reproduced "left-right" without any center "leakage." As with all new technological advances, it was only a matter of time before the technicians became of great interest in itself, and technicians became familiar with all of the varied technical possibilities inherent in this type of reproduction. Sounds emanating from two loudspeakers lent themselves to a seemingly endless variety of juxtaposition, separation, and other strictly mechanical processes, and a fascinating display of unusual sound pyrotechnics it was that followed . . . bongos jumped from left to right speakers while saxophones and trumpets answered back and forth between speakers. It was the technical "gimmick" that was in command, the technique was the end-in-itself.

PHASE 3 STEREO: "Moving Sounds." In this phase (1961), it was demonstrated that the sounds of a whole section of an orchestra or a single instrument could be moved (in varying degrees of velocity) and followed by the listener's ears as the sounds passed through the space from left to right speakers and back again electronically . . . without the orchestra players ever actually leaving their seats. Again, the technician had a field day with this type of stereo recording device, and in many recordings the music became subservient to the overwhelming "gimmick" of moving sounds. However, in another application, as in certain opera, drama and musical comedy recordings, the voices of the protagonists could be followed moving before one's ears as in a true-to-life stage presentation.

PHASE 4 STEREO: "New Scoring Concepts Incorporating True Musical Use of Separation and Movement." In this phase (1962), arrangers and orchestrators re-score the music to place the instruments where they are musically most desired at any particular moment and make use of direction and movement to punctuate the musicality of sounds. The effect is more sound—more interest—more entertainment—more participation—more listening pleasure.

PHASE 4 stereo is not "background" music. PHASE 4 stereo recording (and this term is used in its broadest sense here to include the arrangements—the musicians—and the engineers) allows you to enjoy the musical activity. Recording in this fashion (see more detailed descriptions on the opposite page) is made possible technically as a result of London's new 4 Track Master recording system. Now, for the first time, the musical arranger, as well as the listener, is given a whole new technical capacity with which to work, and with which to create new musical entertainment and enjoyment.

To take advantage of this new musical framework afforded him, the musical arranger (who up until now was accustomed only to writing musical figures in the conventional way on ordinary two dimensional manuscript paper) now has to envision the sounds he hears in his head as they relate to each other in the extra dimension of space afforded by stereo reproduction. This is not unlike the student of plane geometry (accustomed to only two dimensional forms) who, as he advanced to the mathematics of solid geometry, had to create in his mind the image of a third dimension, the new dimension adding countless new geometrical forms and possibilities. And just as the student of geometry had to employ ordinary two dimensional paper to depict and convey three dimensional figures and thinking, so the musical arranger, restricted to two dimensional musical staves, had to create new forms of musical annotation and scoring to convey his full musical concept.

With complete scores and control sheets in hand, the arranger, the A & R man, the performing artists, and the engineers have to pore over the complex scores until they are confident all can feel and "hear" what the arranger has in mind. Through a complicated network of microphones, switches and dials, the music envisioned by the arranger comes to life as the engineer captures on 4 Track Master tape, the complete and true microphones, switches and dials, the music envisioned by the arranger. With completed scores and control sheets in hand, the arranger, the A & R man, the performing artists, and the engineers have to pore over the complex scores until they are confident all can feel and "hear" what the arranger has in mind. Through a complicated network of microphones, switches and dials, the music envisioned by the arranger comes to life as the engineer captures on 4 Track Master tape, the complete and true microphones, switches and dials, the music envisioned by the arranger. With completed scores and control sheets in hand, the arranger, the A & R man, the performing artists, and the engineers have to pore over the complex scores until they are confident all can feel and "hear" what the arranger has in mind. Through a complicated network of microphones, switches and dials, the music envisioned by the arranger comes to life as the engineer captures on 4 Track Master tape, the complete and true microphones, switches and dials, the music envisioned by the arranger. With completed scores and control sheets in hand, the arranger, the A & R man, the performing artists, and the engineers have to pore over the complex scores until they are confident all can feel and "hear" what the arranger has in mind. Through a complicated network of microphones, switches and dials, the music envisioned by the arranger comes to life as the engineer captures on 4 Track Master tape, the complete and true microphones, switches and dials, the music envisioned by the arranger.
INNOVATION IN SCORING—the arranger's new and unique method of PHASE 4 scoring.

INNOVATION IN RECORDING TECHNIQUE—TRACK MASTER recording.

Reproduced above is a fragment of an arranger's control sheet actually used at a PHASE 4 recording session. Note the "left hand" and "right hand" markings used to indicate "left" and "right" microphone placement. "Take 1" and "Take 2" markings indicate instrumentation recorded on 2 separate tracks for each microphone placement.

From the 4 track master tape to your 2 loudspeakers is a complex process. This graphic illustration reduces to its simplest elements the capturing of 4 separate tracks of musical sound on tape and how they are ultimately funneled through your 2 speakers. In this particular illustration, the observer may note the channeling of some sound from tracks 1 and 2 to both speakers because, in this recording, tracks 1 and 2 (left microphone—take 1, and right microphone—take 1 on control sheet) were recorded simultaneously through "open" left and right microphones. Tracks 3 and 4 are distinctly left (track 3) and right (track 4), each having been recorded separately through left and right microphones respectively, giving complete separation to the particular instruments recorded on these tracks.

PHASE 4: TECHNICAL REPORT

This PHASE 4 record is a high precision product reflecting the utmost care in manufacture from recording in the studio to the finished disc.

The microphones used in PHASE 4 recording include the following:
- NEUMANN M-50
- NEUMANN M-49
- NEUMANN KM-56
- NEUMANN KM-53
- TELEFUNKEN C-12
- LONDON (custom built) FR-1A
- LONDON (custom built) FR-1B

The signals from the microphones are fed into a 4 track, 10 channel console mixer (custom built by London). Each channel has its own preamplifier with built in equalization and echo facilities (switchable to electronic reverberation or chamber reverberation). Each channel is switchable to any track. Each track is individually monitored and metered and is capable of being "limited" individually. The mixer console utilizes a London custom built limiter and Cinema equalizers on each channel which can vary any part of the frequency spectrum by ±8DB.

The master lacquer disc is cut from the original 2 track master tape (under the supervision of both engineer and musical staff) utilizing a Teldec cutting head with London custom built amplifiers feeding the cutter which is mounted on a Neumann lathe equipped with fully automatic variable pitch and electronic depth control systems.

Preparatory to electroplating, the master lacquer disc is thoroughly cleansed with utmost care to insure that the silvered master is a perfect facsimile of the original master lacquer. In each stage from master to mother to stamper, the stripping of metal parts is performed under rigorously controlled conditions to constantly make certain that the delicately recorded wave forms of the recorded groove retain their original characteristics, thus eliminating the introduction of distortion. The strictest quality control is employed at every stage of processing to such an extent that the 500,000th record produced is identical in sound performance with the very first copy pressed! Not only the specially trained personnel who are expertly adept in visual and microscopic inspection, but also the studio engineer and musical staff employ their authority as guarantors of a recorded musical performance, etched in the grooves of the finest quality virgin vinyl pressing, comparable in minutest detail to the arranger's original PHASE 4 musical concept.
THE PERCUSSIVE TWENTIES

Band 1 — TIGER RAG (The Original Desseland Jazz Band)
Band 2 — WHISPERING (M. & J. Schonberger, Coburn, Rose)
Band 3 — BLACK BOTTOM (De Sytia, Brown, Henderson)
* Band 4 — TEA FOR TWO (Garzke, Yonmann)
Band 5 — AIN'T SHE SWEET (Yeelen, Azer)
Band 6 — FASCINATING RHYTHM (George & Iris Gershwin)

ERIC ROGERS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

with Edie Parker and Gerry Grant
THE PERCUSSIVE TWENTIES

Band 1—CHICAGO (Fisher)
Band 2—ME AND MY SHADOW (Jolson, Dreyer, Rose)
Band 3—WHO (Kern, Hammerstein, Harbach)
Band 4—BIRTH OF THE BLUES (De Sylye, Brown, Henderson)
Band 5—CHARLESTON (Mack, Johnson)
Band 6—SHE'S FUNNY THAT WAY (Whiting, Morell)

ERIC ROGERS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

with Ella Parker and Gerty Grant