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(L 4544) Album No. A-661
8 sides—1
Instrumental
Be Bop

MINGUS FINGERS
(Charles Mingus—Lionel Hampton—Curley Hammer)

LIONEL HAMPTON
And His Orchestra

24428 A
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Album No. A-661

8 sides—2

Instrumental

Be Bop

MUCHACHO AZUL
(Blue Boy)
(Herman McCoy-Gladys Hampton)

LIONEL HAMPTON
And His Orchestra

24428 B
THREE MINUTES ON 52ND STREET

(Lionel Hampton)

LIONEL HAMPTON
And His Orchestra

24429 A
MIDNIGHT SUN
(Sonny Burke-Lionel Hampton)

LIONEL HAMPTON
And His Orchestra

Instrumental
Sweet Be Bop
CHEROKEE

(Ray Noble)

LIONEL HAMPTON
And His Sextet

24430 A
#2 RE-BOP AND BE-BOP

(Lionel Hampton)

LIONEL HAMPTON
And His Sextet

24430 B
RE-BOP'S TURNING BLUE
(Gladys Hampton - Lionel Hampton - Curley Hamner)

LIONEL HAMPTON
And His Sextet

24431 A
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Album No. A-661
8 sides—8

ZOO-BABA-DA-OO-EE
(Charles Mingus-Lionel Hampton)

LIONEL HAMPTON
And His Sextet

24431 B
BE BOP, THE NEW MOVEMENT

American jazz has never been a static music. Ever since it first emerged from the raucous honky-tongs of New Orleans around the turn of the century, it has been undergoing one change in style after another. Some of these styles have been named for the city or region in which they were developed, as in New Orleans jazz, Kansas City and Chicago jazz. Other styles merely have been given colorfully descriptive names, as in the case of Ragtime, Barrelhouse, Swing and Boogie Woogie. All of these jazz idioms have been built upon their predecessors—each has left behind something of enduring worth.

Today, American jazz is undergoing the birth-throes of what may prove to be the most important style change of all. In Lionel Hampton's words, this New Movement, popularly known as Be Bop, is “an entirely new outlook in jazz music—an outlook in tune with the times.”

Although this latest addition to the jazz repertoire is an offspring of standardized jazz, it has not exactly been welcomed with open arms by its parents. Many veteran jazzmen stand back and gaze in amazement at what they describe as the “thumping and blaring” of the Be Bop style. (This is not to say that they are not listening and learning, for what we are talking about today is not a new music but the first attempt to express some of the elements of jazz with the traditional solo expression, without sacrificing the merits of either.

Lionel Hampton, long one of the more progressive forces in popular jazz and now a leader of the New Movement, is a well-qualified spokesman for this new music. As such, he is less concerned with conflicting definitions than in translating these into music that will be understood by the listening public—music that will define itself. Hampton believes that this new jazz will become generally accepted once it is given a chance to develop. Towards that end, he is doing what he can to bring the New Movement out of the back alleys of jazz into the theaters, dance halls and homes of America. Such is the purpose of this album.

No opportunist seeking novelty for novelty's sake alone, Lionel Hampton believes the New Movement represents a serious trend forward in music. He sees it as a logical development of the times, as a step in the direction of a modernized complex American jazz—one with universal appeal which may eventually replace the numerous old schools of jazz, each catering to small groups. He feels that a style of music in which jazz must strain if it is to survive in our changing civilization.

But unlike some others who are experimenting in new fields of jazz, Hampton does not belittle the old from which the new idiom has evolved. He feels, instead, that the old Negro spirituals, the old New Orleans jazz, and the music which later followed have all been products of the environment and culture of the times which produced them. Thus, they form indispensable links in the chain of music. Hampton does feel, however, that the old-school jazzmen in that he refuses to wrap this chain around and confuse his musical expression within its limits. As long as our culture and interests continue to develop, the chain can never be considered complete.

“The New Movement,” Hampton explains, “is a product of the younger musicians who have been fortunate enough to obtain a musical training most of the old-timers lacked. These boys are now capable of expressing their basic ideas and ideals in a new and more relevant idiom.”

He cites the blues to explain his point. Rooted in the soil of slavery and oppression, the blues emerged as sorrowfully depressing, yet apparently vivifying in ungrammatical language; the blues of today can be appreciated as milestones of the past, they no longer sound to them with the emotional fervor of old. Likewise, today's forward-looking composers, themselves the product of a different environment, no longer can write blues with the sincerity such music demands. Though he does not advocate turning the blues into a medium of escape, Hampton feels that they can be interpreted more freely... that they can develop with current happenings... that they certainly needn't be uniformly cloaked in woe.

How then, are men like Hampton translating this philosophy into music? A definitive description of Be Bop is not yet possible: its vocabulary is too fluid, too quickly changing, too indefinite. The Be Bop musicians themselves cannot agree on the meaning of the terms they use. Therefore, as has been said before, the only way to grasp a Be Bop New Movement is to listen to it and sense it for itself. But it is possible, however, to make several generalizations as to the form the new music in this album is taking.

First, the New Movement represents an attempt to raise the standards of jazz composition. Composers are attempting to utilize their understanding of music theory to write good jazz on a new and elevated scale comparable to that of symphonic composition. The skillful use of harmony, atonality, counterpoint and thematic development characterize this effort. Hampton, for example, is already using integrated thirteenth chords and experimenting with integrated fifteents.

Secondly, the New Movement places great emphasis on rhythm. In contrast to so-called standardized jazz, Be Bop improvises on the rhythm as well as the melody of a tune. It accents the best in unusual and unexpected places.

A third important characteristic of Bop as played by Lionel Hampton's orchestra is the freedom of individuality that its performers are able to express. As the instrument's statistics, the Be Bop style and the soloistic expression of each member. For instance, it is the manner in which he can express himself with current happenings that gives the Be Bop style its appeal. Hampton, for example, is already using integrated thirteenth chords and experimenting with integrated fifteents.

Whether you're watching Lionel Hampton leading his orchestra or just talking to him, you can't help sensing the man's sincere enthusiasm for music. He really gets a kick out of playing his music—next to playing, he most enjoys talking about it.

On stage, he alternates on the vibes, drums and piano. He stamps his feet, jumps into the air, and occasionally leaps atop a drum to punctuate the highpowered rhythm his boys develop. When playing a theater date, he is liable to lead the band in a parade up and down the aisles, tapping on the seat backs with a pair of drums to drum it out of his head.

Aside from his ballroom and theatre engagements, Hampton has appeared in concert at Carnegie Hall and in several motion pictures, among them Samuel Goldwyn's “A Song Is Born.” In addition, he compares and arranges many of the numbers played by his orchestra and owns a thriving music publishing firm. Business not being Lionel's forte, the management of his various enterprises is handled by his capable and attractive wife Gladys, a former Hollywood modiste.

Hamp was born in Louisville, Kentucky, and attended high school in Chicago, where he played bass drum in the Chicago Defender school band. At sixteen, he moved to Los Angeles, where he financed his music studies at USC by playing in night clubs and working as a soda jerk in his spare time. His big break came in 1936, when he joined the famous Benny Goodman Quartet as vibraphonist. Now fronting his own orchestra for seven years, Lionel Hampton is, at 35, one of America's most successful musicians and showmen.

Irwin Tar