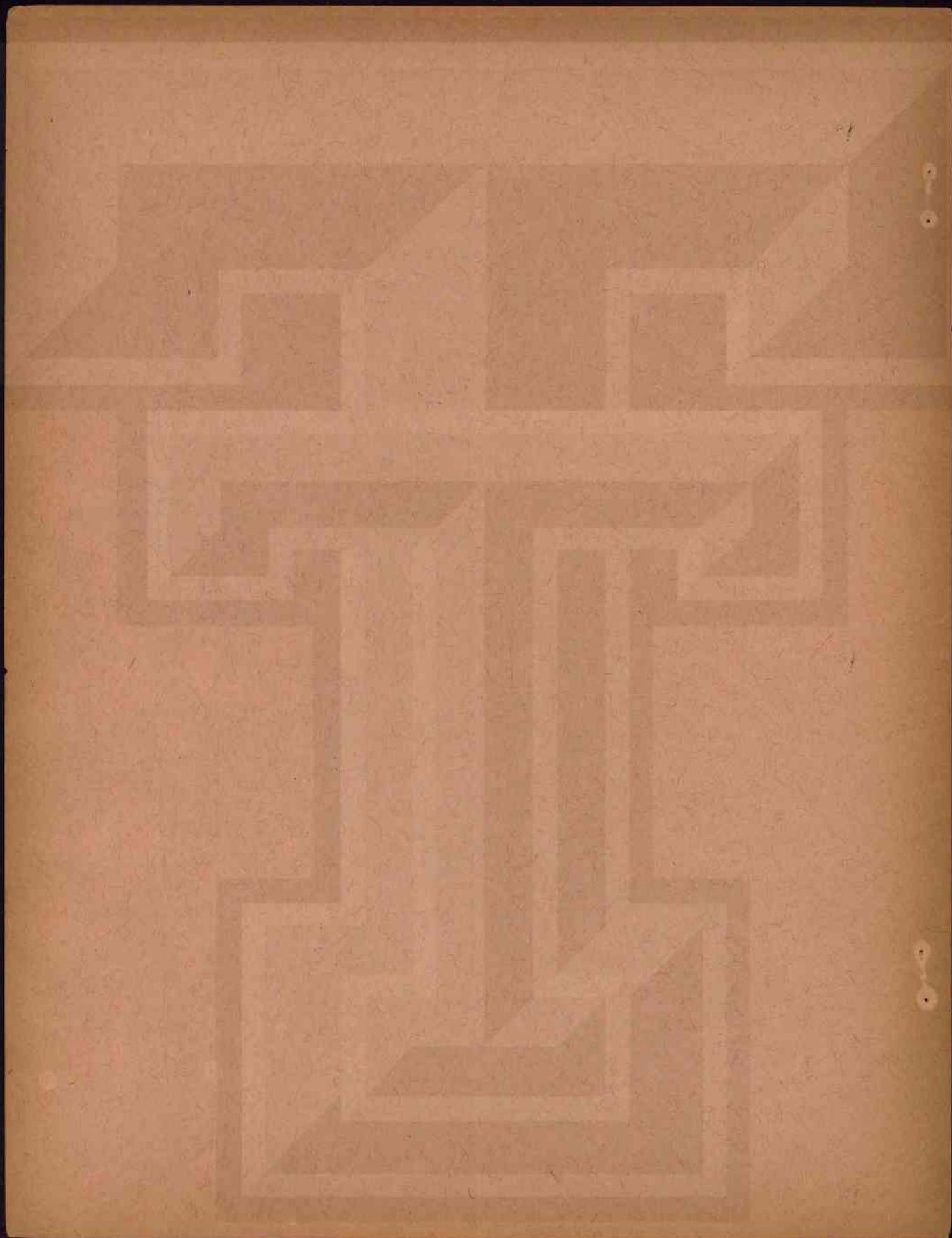


GARRIDYLOO



GARDYLOO

#7

* * * * *

The Magazine of Quiet Scholarly Discussion combined with
The Folkniks' Fumarole

Spring 60

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Cover and birds by Winnie Winston

GARDYLOO is a folkmusic magazine of sorts and is published at irregular intervals by Lee Hoffman, basement, 54 E 7th St. New York 3, New York. It is offered for sale at 15¢ the copy, 7 issues for \$1.00, postpaid, and can be obtained by mail from the above address

EDITOR'S NOTE

As has been noted, in the past Gardyloo has carried the label "more or less monthly". Lately, this has been considerably "less" than "more". In fact, from observation, the editor has the distinct impression that it has become more or less quarterly, at the best. This is due to many factors, but primarily more pressing commitments on the part of the editor. So, until conditions change, we feel that we'd best offer the zine as "more or less quarterly". This label, while no more confining than the old one, will give the reader a more accurate idea of when to look for the next issue. It will also give the writers the prospect of more time in which to polish their deathless pronouncements.

You'll note that several pages in this issue are in different type-faces than the bulk of the zine. This is because Messrs. Bowler and Winston have submitted their works already on stencil. The editor will take no blame for typos in that copy. Neither will the editor accept blame for typos in the balance of the zine, although in most cases the responsibility is his.

THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE NOT SUBMITTED MATERIAL to this sterling journal of the non-scholarly are hereby requested to consider doing so at your earliest opportunity. There is no payment, but think of the honor and glory! Besides, we are badly in need of new points of view and fresh ideas from afield. Surely you have opinions, however far fetched. They can't have been fetched much further than some of the opinions which have appeared in this publication. So why not join the throng of those who have been immortalized in mimeography through the pages of this zine?

Speaking of opinions, it seems obvious that opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent the opinions of the editor/publisher and/or the policies of the magazine. But on looking over the copy for this issue, we feel that we'd better note it anyway.

---Lee Hoffman



AFRICAN MUSIC

You don't have to have a degree in anthropology to learn a lot about African music. Some of the smaller recording companies, such as Folkways and Riverside, have issued fine field recordings within the past few years. One of my favorites is Folkways' MUSIC OF THE ITURI FORESTS. It includes two of the most charming harop solos anyone could wish for. London Records also issues a number of African recordings. Their MUSIC OF AFRICA series is edited by Hugh Tracey, head of the African Music Society.

Tracey is a South African of English background who early became enthusiastic about African music. Although he had no formal scholastic training either in music or anthropology, by his energy and enthusiasm he has become the leader in this field. The African Music Society, which he directs, is growing fast and has enlisted the support of an extraordinarily wide range of people, from missionaries and scholars to Africans, including those in free nations such as Ghana. One can get a good picture of their activities from perusing their annual Journal (\$2.00. Order from African Music Society, P.O. Box 138, Roodeport, near Johannesburg, South Africa). There are articles on Zulu male singing, on modern popular music in Nigeria, on the question of music in African churches, and transcriptions of complicated drumming techniques. A list of LP recordings issued by the Society is also included, as well as a list of books which the society publishes.

Some of the books cover African dancing and have many pictures. My favorite book, however, is an inexpensive (\$2.00) little exposition of African music written by Hugh Tracey. The title is NGOMA and it can be ordered through Longmans Green (offices in New York City). Tracey wrote the book mainly to be read by Africans who, perhaps, were unaware of the tremendous importance of their own musical traditions and were scorning their own heritage in order to study European music techniques. The book has a number of fine photographs of African instruments, but the most important thing is the way it gets down to the roots of the differences between European and African music.

Thus he says, "We (meaning Africans) prefer:

1. uneven rhythm
2. in strict time
3. with loose melody which follows the tone of the words.

"They (meaning Europeans) prefer:

1. even rhythm
2. in loose time
3. with strict melody which follows the stress of the

words."

By tone, he was refering to the fact that most African languages are like Chinese in that the same syllable can mean different things, depending on whether it is spoken in a high, medium, or low pitch of voice.

However, to this writer, the most exciting thing about African music is not so much the differences between it and European tradition but the similarities between African musical traditions and those of the U.S.A. Certain African musical principles, such as that of having a solid beat throughout an entire song with no change of tempo whatsoever, are accepted as standard in American folk and popular music nowadays. Furthermore, we are increasingly able to trace, not only specific rhythms and instruments (such as the banjo) to Africa: but styles of singing, harmony and even certain melodies. The tune of the work song LONG JOHN has been, for example, recorded by anthropologists in the back hills of west Africa.

It is interesting to note that in present day Africa many Africans are likewise latching on to American traditions in music. Throughout many of the cities the guitar is being played in a style very similar to American country folk music such as played by Merle Travis or blues singers such as the late Big Bill Broonzy.

At the same time as we hope that some of the fine older strains of music are not driven out by modern sophistications, it will nevertheless be fascinating to see during the next few decades the combinations of European and African traditions which will be put together by young African composers.

-- Pete Seeger

BILL CLIFTON

&

THE DIXIE MOUNTAIN BOYS & others

MARCH 27 (Sunday)

Appearing at SONS OF NORWAY HALL - 8th Ave & 60th St. in BKLYN
(Sea Beach Line - 8th Avenue)

Two shows: 3:P.M. and 8:P.M.

NOTES FROM AN EXILE

Time was, when I used to go downtown a lot to pick. I still do occasionally, but am for the most part out of it by now. In general, I do not care to take part in the mass bicker and kvetch-klatches that have become so common recently among New York folkniks, but now, I have reached the point where I throw in my two cents' worth, whatever they are in this rapidly changing economy.

I'm getting somewhat tired of these discussions of "art" in folk music, pro and con. They have reached the point where they have become somewhat ridiculous. It all started, at least, as far back as I have followed it, with Roger Lass's by-now-legendary "Art of the Urban Folksinger". I suppose also that someone read a copy of that delightfully pretentious (though genuinely so) magazine, THE JAZZ REVIEW. Let me before I say anything else and have somebody yell "Why don't you go back to school and learn something or shut up?!!!" state the background I have for saying it. I have been to school. I have been a student of music for ten years. I study the piano, and composition. My professional aspiration is to be a composer. I know formal music quite well. I also pick the guitar and a couple of other things. I am, technically at least, somewhat proficient on the instrument. (Although, I suppose that I am not one of those "illuminati" that L.F. Need always implies; but how many of us are?) I enjoy folk music immensely. This last summer I worked with Winnie Winston at Buck's Rock, and am co-editor of the Buck's Rock Song Book. Alright. Enough about myself. Now, let me say something.

I must reluctantly side with L.F. Need (reluctantly, because of some unfair slurs cast upon me by him) in his criticism of Messrs. Weissman, Faier, and those who attempt to emulate them.

It is, first of all, fairly ridiculous to think, as Mr Weissman does, that one can write "serious" works for the five-string banjo; at least not in the "folk" vein that he employs. It is also ridiculous to do "artistic" arrangements of folk songs, with enriched harmonies (for instance, Weissman's EAST VIRGINIA, or God knows what by Jerry Silverman). Pete Seeger is also guilty of this idiocy when he talks of the "greatness" of folk music, and plays Bach and Beethoven on his Vega. Why? you ask?

Basically, it is a simple matter of the human mind. (The "intellect" No folk art can have the intellectual greatness of a formal art. And if you are so foolish as to say, "Well, art is not for the technical stuff; it's a matter of the emotions..." let me squelch you right there. Any decent artist considers it an insult to have his work

received on purely emotional grounds. (There is a story about this that happened between Beethoven and Schüller, which I shall not quote here due to its length.) An artist prides himself on something more than that. The reaction that he wishes is what is often called the artistic reaction: where a work communicates to the artistic whole of a man; his mind and emotions. In the artistic reaction, these two are inseparable. Yes, little girl, there is no difference between "form" and "content".

Anyone who has studied music can plainly see that folk music can only excite, from the intellectual end, a person of rather undistinguished intelligence; and here I speak of not basic intelligence, but artistic intelligence; even more so, musical intelligence. Now, at this point, somebody will remind me of "educated" (musically) folk-singers, Pete Seeger being a prime example. Well, there is more, unbelievable more to music than the simple theory that these guys know, or at least, put to use.

There is no "artistry" as they speak of it in folk music. No folk singer has ever been a conscious artist. They play, or started, (many of them now play for money) simply, for the hell of it. The man on the southern mountain farm has never done it for any other reason. (Of course, there are a slew of socio-economic, etc., reasons, but I am speaking now purely in terms of the muse, not that which gives birth to it.) It is the same in New York. And, for that matter, anyplace else.

Why do ethnics remain unheeded by "artistry" while the city folk try artistically as hell to imitate them? Very simple. The urban folk singer has shown himself to be generally more intelligent, or at least, "learned" than his ethnic counterpart. Thus, his mind, which has taken in a smattering (and often more) of the arts, and of the general wide world of the human mind, will try to place it on an equal footing with all the other intellectual things that he does.

As I have said before, I am a formal musician. (I refrain from the word "classical", because in the world of music, it has a completely different meaning; one which few outsiders could hope to understand, due to their limited knowledge of the subject.) Therefore, I can take it all with a grain of salt or two. I enjoy folk music. It was once fun to pick and sing. It is fun to read Gardyloo. It was once fun to go to Guild meetings and read CARAVAN. BUT: those who take folk music so seriously, are in my mind, out of their heads. Folk music is not, and can never hope to be an art, for reasons too numerous to mention here. To all those who aspire toward artistry, let me say, "Don't be idiots. Enjoy it; have fun; even be a bit scholarly if you so choose. But let's not kid ourselves!"

--Joshua Rifkin

Billy Faier

WHO NEEDS NEED NEEDS NOTHING

Dear Nosepicker,

A good friend advised me not to answer your article hastily. "Wait until you've cooled off, man." So I waited and found that it was very pleasant just sitting and devising appellations with which to begin this letter. "Nosepicker" is a quaint term, a folk term, I might add, currently in use among the hill folk of the Eastern Catskills where I reside. It doesn't mean that you pick your nose necessarily, but its simplicity of expression appeals to me. Besides that I don't think Lee would have printed what I really wanted to call you.

I must confess that when I read your article I was with you and found it quite amusing. There is a kind of healthy ridicule which keeps the mightiest in line and no one of us can fail to benefit if we would just see ourselves through the sense of humor of another. I agree that no one should take themselves too seriously all the time.

And so, when I read your piece I felt,--well it isn't really good humor, but he is trying--.

But when I came to the end and realized that you were serious (or is it really possible that you are stupid enough to expect an attempt at humor not to be taken seriously when directed at a specific group or individual. I don't think so--after all you can write.) I realize it means wading through the same muck which you create.

Your article is typical of many that have been appearing in Gardyloo recently (and used to appear in Caravan), in which the writer, wishing to see his name in print--one among many possible reasons--creates an issue where none existed before, by distorting, stretching, and exaggerating the facts, and also making up new facts to suit his thesis. These articles are usually written in a somewhat pedantic vein enabling the writer to pretend that he is not saying what he really means in order to keep from insulting people. Actually, the writer, in these cases, doesn't really mean anything, having had no thoughts worthwhile on the subject, because he is too busy making up meaningless noise. Writing to see himself read, as it were. Your article fits this description almost perfectly and I would have passed

it over as not worth bothering about were it not for the fact that you make an obvious reference to Dick Weissman and myself at the end. Apparently you haven't studied the formula well enough.

My purpose here, therefore, is to show by analysis that your piece, "Art and the Five String Banjo" is inherently a product of unsound and erroneous thought (if any thought was involved at all). In doing so I will not take into consideration that fact that you don't like banjo compositions.

You start your piece with a hackneyed journalistic device that has never had the respect of any but the most unintelligent of readers, categorizing the entire folk music group into sub-groups, "Ethniks", "Leading Authorities", and "Art Types", the last being apparently your own invention. At no point in your piece do you define these categories, a major error, but not surprising, since these categories exist only in the mind, their sole usefulness as concepts being limited to making points about vague generalities in casual conversation. If you had any understanding at all of the many approaches to folk music (or any other art form) you would realize that no approach is mutually exclusive in the life of the participant. It is important in the healthy growth of the individual involved in an art or in life to investigate the many concepts and approaches possible. One individual will pass through all the possible approaches in a lifetime of study. A small percentage, usually the young get sidetracked into a dogmatic defense of one or another "school", but if they stick around long enough they find their way out into another, coming away from the old wiser and more able to evaluate the new. The ultimate, of course, is simply to find one's own personal approach, incorporating the old and in rarer cases, actually creating a new approach. The worse thing about this constant reiteration of categories is that the young reader or listener manytimes will feel it necessary to "take sides" when no "sides" really exist in the long run.

Like marriage and divorce, it is easy to commit oneself to a point of view but hard to break away from it. You always have to live down the past. The longer you wait, the harder it is. The current urban folk music scene is so intensely a social one that social pressures come into play in determining the kind of music an individual will make. This stifles the natural attempt at expression and the young individual who has not yet learned that he is a person and is wonderful will remain boxed into this trap of social pressure until he or she reaches AN INTELLECTUAL (and not necessarily a verbal) UNDERSTANDING OF THE MECHANICS OF THE TRAP; that is, he must see, or feel, its workings. Eliminate the social pressures and you eliminate the categories. It may be argued that the individual finds his way into the social group because he or she likes the kind of music going on there. But how can a person make a decision as to what they like or dislike within a field of music until they have experienced the many different kinds. I am talking now of the serious participants and not the casual fan to whom the social aspect is more important than the music.

Your fourfold delineation of the approach of the so-called "art type" is so completely correct that I suspect that you are a person harboring a deep inferiority complex, if not actually inferior. This is typical of the type who delights in tearing down what they are unable to comprehend or achieve. In order to be a real artist in any field one must have complete faith in oneself; "Folk music is good." Correct. The artist must believe in and love his art. 2. "I am wonderful". Correct. The artist must believe in and love himself. Not a narcissistic love (though it is true that that is often part of the personality of the great artist) but a deep rooted respect for oneself and one's personal and artistic integrity. 3. "I am an artist". The line between "I want to be an artist" and "I am an artist" is sometimes thin but it is the point at which the individual realizes the power of himself when expressed in his chosen medium. "I will make wonderful art out of folk music." Unless he is a commercial hack the artist certainly has the desire to further his art.

Since you ascribe these motivations to the objects of your ridicule I am sure that you do not apply them to yourself. I quite agree. Knowing that you are incapable of attaining the stature of a true artist because of your lack of these four essential motivating factors (which are most easily recognized by those who lack them. Many a great artist has gone through life unaware of them. They are called modest.) you ridicule the objects of your envy by laughing at their approach. Sour Grapes!

Your kind admission that "This approach has doubtless produced worthwhile results from such improvers on folk themes as L. Beethoven, J. Bach, B. Bartok, et al." is worth looking at for what it really means in terms of your own realization of your own inadequacies. After ascribing the fourfold approach to your "Art Types" (whom you later attempt to define as experimentors and composers on the five string banjo) you then admit that this approach has worked for the world's greatest composers (majority opinion). Your use of the word "doubtless" makes it a sort of grudging or condescending nod to the virtues of this approach. It is also the key to the understanding of your real unconscious purpose in writing the piece. It is a juvenile cry on anger and jealousy because you are not one of the so-called "greats". (I saw no reference to any as yet unknown "Art Types". Surely there are some. If not then my thesis is that much stronger since you are ranting away only at the "greats".) Your use of the phrase "improvers on folk themes" shows your ignorance of what art consists of. Beethoven Bach or Bartok did not "improve" on folk themes any more than the sculptor "improves" the wood or the painter the paint. The only thing that they, or any great artist improves upon is their ability to express their own personality through their medium to a point where they become outstanding.

There are no 1920 Hillbilly records. The record that is generally conceded to be the first in the long series of hillbilly recordings was a disk of Fiddlin' John Carson and was recorded in 1923.

The first page of your drivvle (as printed) was bad enough. The second is composed of the most flagrant untruths, lie, verbal diarrhea

Faier - 4

that I have ever seen. It stinks up my house just being there. Since when is it impossible to be both a serious artist and a folksinger at the same time, as you carefully imply in the first paragraph? I am both, you nosepicker; so is Dick Weissman, and so are dozens of others, both known and unknown that I could name. As for "clinging to the ragged edges of the folk scene", the "art types" you villify are comfortably near the center, thank you. Furthermore, if people like you would get the Hell out the edges wouldn't be so ragged.

As for your description of the banjo in the second paragraph, it is a monument to calculated insensitivity. Also, most of it is simply untrue. The next paragraph, devoted to banjo composition, is nothing more than your own subjective reactions (to the music) couched in seemingly objective terms.

The last two paragraphs, embodying your conclusions, are made up of unimportant and obvious statements about composers "drawing" upon folk music, followed by more sour grapes in the form of bad humor.

While my equanimity did not last through the entire analysis of your blather, I think the above will suffice.

I quite realize the possibility of the article in question being written completely tongue in cheek, with the specific purpose of getting a reaction. If so, the shot was well aimed. This, however, does not change one little bit my opinion of you, the writer, Nosepicker Need. Your own pitiable frustrations and jealousies find a broader avenue of expression through the medium of your so-called humor than if you were trying to actually use your mind and be serious.

--Billy Faier
Composer of
"Lute Song for
the Five-String
Banjo"

A NEW FOLK MUSIC MAGAZINE!

THE LITTLE SANDY REVIEW is published by Paul Nelson, 3220 Park Avenue, South, Minneapolis, Minn. The price is 30¢ per copy, 12 issues (one year) for \$1.00. The first issue runs 32 pages, mostly of record reviews. Cover is a photo of Ed McCurdy and Billy Faier. Duplicating is excellent, and reviews are most interesting. This 'zine looks well worth while. Highly recommended, especially to those persons interested in keeping track of the folkmusic records nowadays. The coverage is fine. And the editor informs us in his editorial that future issues will contain discographies, articles and reviews of folkmusic concerts in the midwest.

TWO LETTERS

My dear Mr. Shapiro:

Won't you ever learn? Goddammit Dan, stop throwing my name around. Why not mention someone like Clyde Franklin, or haven't you heard of him? It's not that I object to being mentioned, but I dislike being involved in such an absurdly farcical, idiotic contest of wits (?) as has been seen in the past few issues of Gardyloo.

So, Mr. Shapiro- if you want to shoot your mouth off and make a damn fool of yourself, fine. But for God's sake don't involve me,

My dear Mr. L.F. Need:

After reading most of the articles which have appeared in the past few issues of Gardyloo, I have been witness to much foolishness and name calling, and very little effort on the part of the authors to give conclusive proof of whatever points they were trying to make. Now, Mr. L.F. Need, I was quite annoyed by the treatment you gave the banjo in the last issue. As far as the matter of "correctness" in banjo composition is concerned, I will not dispute you. It is not my intention to start bickering. (However, may I recommend that you consult S. S. Stewart's Banjo, Guitar and Mandolin Guide Vols. XVI #2 through XIX #4 as well as Dobson's New School for the Banjo. You might be interested in many compositions for the banjo which are found in them. There is an article, by the way, on downpicking in Vol. XVIII #8. Also give a listen to the playing of many old banjoists like Fred Bacon.) But, I disagree with many statements that you make. First of all, you imply that the banjo is easy to play. Since when? Of course one can say that any instrument is easy to play, but anyone who plays banjo with any amount of proficiency will admit that it is not the easiest instrument to master. The banjo is an instrument which, if you want to play it well, takes time and patience.

Secondly, you mention that the banjo has no dynamic range. Again, I dispute you. The dynamic range of the banjo is brought out in both the playing of Mr. Faier and Mr. Weissman and the playing of countless others who utilize the banjo as an instrument rather than as a noise-maker. Now if you dislike the playing of either of the guys I mentioned, O.K. But don't condemn the instrument which they use. By the way, the banjo is played in many different ways, some which are not "folk". Witness the playing of Paul Cadwell. Not liking some types of playing gives you no justification to make generalizations about the instrument.

(cont.)

Winston (2)

As far as sustaining tone goes, may I advise you to investigate a banjo made by C. Edgar Dobson, aptly called "the great echo". This instrument could sustain tone for a long time, because of the peculiar tone chamber construction. Anyway, what kind of criteria is "sustaining tone"? Surely none of the stringed instrument can sustain tone for long, and neither can any of the woodwinds. Let us not use vague terms.

Now, let's consider harmonic range. Musically, the banjo has as much harmonic range as any instrument with four strings plus a drone could have. Taking the term in its broadest sense witness the following:

In general, the tube-a-phone construction increases the low frequency response with a more solid fundamental frequency response. . . The Whyte Laydie ring, on the other hand attenuates the lower frequencies, and also increases the harmonic content so that the resultant tone is more brilliant.

(letter from W.W. Nelson, pres. Vega banjo co.)

After experimenting with various banjos, I have backed up Mr. Nelson's statements. I used a faribanks-vega tube-a-phone banjo and fed the sound through an oscilloscope. I then stopped up the holes with cotton and masking tape and repeated the experiment. My results were not necessarily conclusive, but this much I found:

- 1) The tube-a-phone tone chamber absorbs and amplifies the second and third harmonics of the fundamental frequencies.
- 2) When the holes are covered, the harmonics are no longer absorbed and the banjo loses the harmonic content which it had. This absorption accounts for the tube-a-phone's characteristic full and hollow sound. The old mastertone (flat top) used a similar construction, but the use of a triangular tube altered the size of the air column and thus altered the harmonic range.

So, Mr. Need. If you hold a grudge against those who compose original themes for the banjo, it is fine with me. But let us not take the grudge out on an instrument which, in itself, is very wonderful and interesting.

Winnie Winston

NOTICE: I am working on a definitive history of the banjo. Any information as to dates of manufacture of various makes; tone rims, and general opinions about the instrument would be greatly appreciated.

Winnie Winston
48 Sunlight Hill
Yonkers, N.Y.

a letter...

Dear Lee:

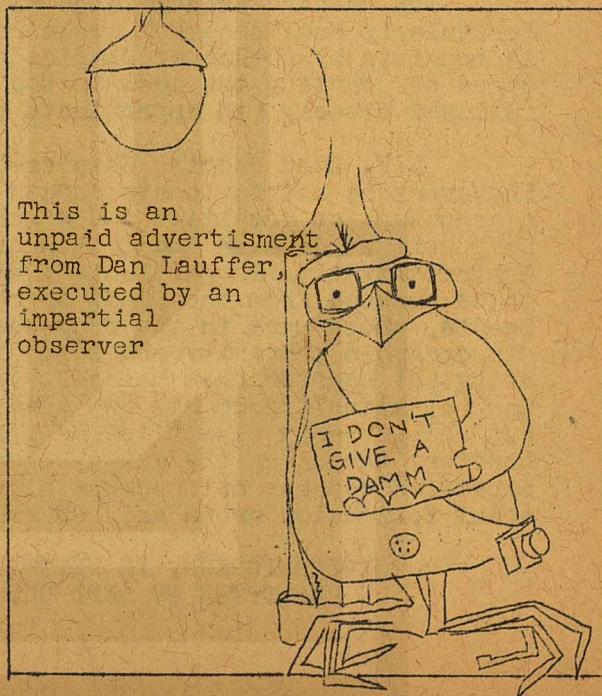
The other day I sat down to read my latest Gardyloo (#6) and thoroughly enjoyed it, especially David Beadle's A DILLER, A DOLLAR. When I got to BILLY FAIER WRITES, I had to read it five times and then refer back to G'oo #5 to find out what Dan Lauffer had said to so irritate Billy Faier.

I figured it out and it appears that the only error on Dan Lauffer's part was that he judged the HELL BOUND TRAIN by folk music standards. Now, I have heard Billy Faier sing THE HELL BOUND TRAIN on a folk music program at Carnegie Hall, but, unfortunately, there were no notes or explanation to tell me that it was not to be considered a folk song. Nevertheless, I surmised that since Billy Faier is the editor of a folk music magazine, and is writing a folksong book for Ballantine publications and is generally well-known for his interest in folk music, naturally HELL BOUND TRAIN is a folk song. Besides, I had heard people speak of it as such, though it was the first time I had actually heard the song. Despite all the build-up I had for this song, I didn't think it was very good.

Of course, now that I realize I had judged it wrongly (that is, as a folk song) I decided to judge it on its merits just as I would any other song. I still don't think it is very good.

Here's to Gardyloo #7,
Long may it wave.

Kiki Greenhaus



A FOX

on

GARDYLOO'S
CONTRIBUTORS

&

OTHERS
of
LIKE
PERSUASION

—
by a
Member
of
that
sturdy
band
—
..

Upon all who have made of Gardyloo a house organ of intellectual incest -- a veritable sink of ill-informed Billingsgate -- I cry fie! damn! and blast!

My reading acquaintance with The World's Second Most Irregularly Published Folkmusic Periodical convinces me that it consists by nature of Shapiro and Lauffer (who stand accused of starting the mess in the first place in G'loo 4), followed closely (in approximate order of appearance) by:

L.F. Need damning Shapiro-Lauffer; Billy Faier damning everyone not fortunate enough to be a musician, an artist, a composer, an archivist and a scholar (i.e., a Billy Faier); Lori Holland damning Shapiro in particular and steam-heated instrumentalists in particular; Winnie Winston cravenly asking to be excused from the frame of reference; an interloper named Beadle, whose part in the fray seems to have arisen through mimeographic proximity and editorial whimsy; Shapiro dissociating (a) Lauffer from himself, (b) himself from Lauffer, and (c) himself from his own ideas (surely one of the neatest and probably wisest triple ploys of the season); and Lauffer, taking up the green, green sword of absurdity in embattled defense of numerous hitherto-undiscovered facts about folkmusic, urban and suburban.

(INTERMISSION, IN WHICH THE PARTICIPANTS ARE
PERMITTED TO SEND OUT FOR REFRESHMENT)

(A FOX)

Followed by: Shapiro damning Holland; Need damning everybody impartially, and Faier and Weissman (who is entitled to a free throw, having been a noncombatant) partially; a reprise by folk-music publication's leading titleholder, contending among other things that "You can't criticize it because I modulated;" Beadle damning Lauffer; and so on, into the night....

Far from overlooking notable accomplishments deserving of credit, I would be the first to congratulate the combatants for having brought to some sort of new peak a really outstanding art-form -- folk-quibbling. The instrumentalists in particular will benefit; to the constellation already graced by Scruggs, Travis, flat, three-finger, thumb and Cotton picking a new and brilliant star has been raised -- Nit picking.

Howsobeit, the unmitigated and self-perpetuating exhibition of ego-flexing and overdeveloped head-muscles palls.

Folklore, anyone?

-- G. Westcott Bowler IV

IN WHICH I PLAY THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE....

After rehearsing them on the February 10 PERRY COMO SHOW, (which is apt to brand me as artistically unreliable in the first place), I would like to say a few kind words about a group, the castigation of which has become a shibboleth for admission to 'nik circles -- the Kingston Trio.

To say they are not "folk" performers is to say nothing. But judged as popular entertainers -- which is not much more than they claim to be -- they are a smooth, pretty palatable hunch, and so long as they avoid the tasteless lapses that mark their COPLAS, they are a good cut above 95% of the current offerings -- their host's, for instance.

These lapses were avoided in the show in question, and the result was pleasant, if not earthshaking. Dave Guard's banjo playing has improved and the singing of all three might well serve as a model for a goodly portion of our own beloved 'niks, folk- and art- alike. If this be treason....

--The Illege Videot

Inter Diabolus Et Virgo

Wol the here a wonder thyng
Betwyxt a mayd and the fovle fende?

Thys spake the fend to the mayd faier (hem hem)
Therys noe newe material annewhaire

Mayd faier, mote ye thi leman be
Improvinge ye folke y will tetch the

All the wysse dom off the world
To yow in sith y will onfure

What ye hyer that ye the fee
We pae for popllaritee

What ys rarer than ye ytem
That ys nott recordede ad infinitum

What ys worser than ye folke
Who synghe lyke wyth their larnyx brokke

Who is lower thann ye creepe
Downe att ye bottom of ye heap

But thou now answer me
Thu schalt for sothe my leman be

Then thys faier mayd wyth eyes kest downe
Wyth thombe pikks pynned hym to ye grond

Scholarshippe's hyer than ye fee
We pae for popularitee

Yowr fakts are rarer than ye ytem
That ys nott recordede ad infinitum

Ye "improvers" yt ys an nott ye folke
Who synghe lyke wyth their larnyx brokke

And yow ys lower thann ye creepe
Down att ye bottom of ye heap

Now thu fende styl thu be
Nelle ich speke no more with the

--Paul Nelson

*Apologies to MacEdward Leach's THE BALLAD BOOK and Child #1