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CONTEMPORARY SERIES

New
Music
of
ALEC
WILDER

MUNDELL
LOWE
and his
Orchestra



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New Music of
Alec Wilder
composed for
MUNDELL LOWE and his Orchestra

Mundell Lowe, guitar; Joe Wilder, trumpet; Jim Buffington, John Barrows, French horns; Don Hammond, flute; Jerry Roth, oboe; Jimmy Carroll, clarinet and bass clarinet; Harold Goltzer, bassoon (on *Side 1, #5; Side 2, #1, 2, and 5* only), or Bernard Garfield, bassoon (on all other selections); Milt Hinton, bass (on *Side 1, #1, 2 and 6; Side 2, #4* only), or Trigger Alpert, bass (on all other selections); Ed Shaughnessy, drums. Recorded under the personal supervision of Alec Wilder. New York; June 12 and 19, and July 19, 1956.

Notes by FRANK SINATRA

To me, Alec Wilder has always represented the finer things in music. So I find it a source of considerable pleasure now, as it has always been in the past, to know that there is new Wilder music to listen to.

I have admired Alec's work ever since I first became aware of his music, which makes it difficult for me even to attempt to decide what the relative position of the compositions in this album might be in the overall Wilder picture. But I can say with certainty that, like just about everything Alec has done, this is important and fascinating music.

It does seem to me that this recording bears a similarity to his Octets—but with a very distinctive sound all its own. It is as if this material belonged to the period of Alec's life in which he wrote the Octets (or perhaps it would be more accurate to say: belongs to the same frame of mind as that out of which the Octets were written), but with the addition of a certain feeling of contemporary jazz that has brought it completely up to date.

Two of these pieces, above all, impress me: *Tacet for Neurotics* for its freshness and modernity, and *Mama Never Dug This Scene* for its wonderful, effortless movement.

Those, of course, are no ordinary titles. I have always liked Alec's choice of titles for his work. They are like no others in the world, just as Alec's music is really like no other. And they are always remarkably descriptive: some are sad, others are sweet with a touch of bitterness, and still others are wonderfully humorous.

These dozen pieces, as I understood it, were written with Mundell Lowe specifically in mind, to be recorded by this ten-man orchestra chosen by Alec and Lowe. The lineup turned out to be what must be a unique mixture of jazz and concert musicians: men able to meet the considerable technical demands of these scores and also able to play them with the necessary swing. And I would also say that the results show that all these men share one additional thing: a real affection and respect for Alec's music.

SIDE 1

1. Suggestion for Bored Dancers
2. She Never Wore Makeup
3. What Happened Last Night?
4. Walk Softly
5. Let's Get Together and Cry
6. Mama Never Dug This Scene

SIDE 2

1. Pop, What's a Passacaglia?
2. No Plans
3. The Endless Quest
4. Around the World in 2:34
5. An Unrelenting Memory
6. Tacet for Neurotics

I make no claim to being an impartial judge of Alec's work. I have known him well since 1943 (when he wrote arrangements for a good many of my early recordings), and I feel that in that time Alec's music and his appreciation of music have helped my own musical conceptions to reach a higher plane than would have been possible without him.

Among his many impressive qualities is his remarkable change of pace: from pop songs to compositions like these, covering almost every conceivable mood and tempo. This makes things difficult for those who like to put everything into neat,

A High Fidelity Recording (Audio Compensation: RIAA Curve). Produced by Bill Grauer and Orrin Keepnews. Cover photograph by Paul Weller; typographic design: Gene Gogerty. Engineer: Jack Higgins (Reeves Sound Studios).

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simple categories. Alec's music just doesn't classify easily. But if I were pinned down, I would describe his work as jazz (which after all is a word with a wide range of meaning and lots of change of pace of its own)—with veins of music much deeper and more serious running through it.

Alec has made many rich contributions to American music, largely because of four rare qualities, all very much in evidence in this recording. They are his ability to combine seemingly contradictory ingredients into a single unified work; the 'change of pace' I've already noted; his variety of color in orchestration; and his intellectual approach to music in the jazz idiom—a field that could well stand many more composers with the refinement (in the very best sense of that word) of Alec Wilder.

(Riverside Records is deeply grateful to Frank Sinatra for graciously finding time, in a particularly crowded schedule, to prepare these comments on the music of Alec Wilder.)

The distinctive tone and imaginative jazz ideas of Mundell Lowe, one of today's top jazz guitarists, are featured on two other 12-inch Riverside LPs:

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LONG PLAYING

MICROGROOVE

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SIDE
1

1. SUGGESTION FOR BORED DANCERS
2. SHE NEVER WORE MAKEUP
3. WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT?
4. WALK SOFTLY
5. LET'S GET TOGETHER AND CRY
6. MAMA NEVER DUG THIS SCENE

(RLP 12-219 A)

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SIDE
2

1. POP, WHAT'S A PASSACAGLIA?
2. NO PLANS
3. THE ENDLESS QUEST
4. AROUND THE WORLD IN 2:34
5. AN UNRELENTING MEMORY
6. TACET FOR NEUROTICS

(RLP 12-219 B)

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