

MINI-REVIEWS

Acquisitions. Toronto, etc. : Canadian Music Centre, 1989 and 1990 editions.

This annual catalogue of new Canadian works, essential for every music collection, was last reviewed here in 1988. The inconsistencies noted then (in the classification of reductions of orchestral works; in the use of titles in the list of the living, but not of deceased composers; in the anomalous "Published works section) have mainly been removed over the last two years. As in many bibliographic efforts, however, lots of oddities remain. For example, it's time to complain about the absence of a table of contents. There is an unnumbered page, between ii and 1, which outlines the classification scheme and the pages on which music for various forces can be located, but it doesn't indicate the presence of the introductory material, the index by composer, or the list of associates. In the 1989 edition, there are 30 pieces for piano catalogued in English, and in the notes this medium is expressed in five variants: "For piano solo", "For solo piano", "For piano", "Piano solo", and without note. In the 1990 edition there are 50% more entries, but a firmer hand ruled, and almost all are designated "For piano solo." But in another comparison, opening the two issues at the centre fold, there is one typo on p.10-11 of 1989, but at least four on p.18-19 of 1990.

The 1990 edition has a slightly larger typeface in the body of the catalogue, and a substantially larger one in the introductory material. This change will no doubt be much welcomed by persons older than myself. A new category this year is a seven-page listing of the beginnings of an archive of electroacoustic music. Sixty-seven cassettes of works created between 1965 and 1989 are listed, twenty-two of them devoted to works by David Keane: there is no apparent indication of the criteria for inclusion.

Q : Résonance : Concordia Electroacoustic Composers Group tape collection. Montréal : Concordia University, 1988. (xii, 194 p. : ISBN 0-88947-016-2)

Before the beginnings of the CMC archive and its listing in sober AA2 format of a few works, the Canadian Electroacoustic Community had already taken matters into its own hands and issued this elegant, exuberant catalogue of 700 pieces by over 200 Canadian and some international composers, recordings donated to and held at Concordia.

The volume is just the width of a compact disc, or a floppy, and double the height, so it fits the hand with a disconcerting familiarity. Using what the editor, Jean-François Denis, rightly calls "marvellous technology", the catalogue is a model of design (harmonious and expressive typefaces, economical but balanced white space) imposed on a rather uneven contents. Information has presumably been supplied, or not, by the composers, and the elements included in the entries vary from all down to one or two of an extensive list of possibilities: for composers, date of birth, performing rights affiliation, residence and biography; for works, title, year of composition, duration, studio(s), premiere, program notes, and format. Librarians and others for whom consistency is a value above all others will unhappily have to look elsewhere for the birthdates and bios of Henry Kucharzyk and Rodney Sharman for example, or program notes on "In search of prey" by Nash the Slash.

Near the end are indexes by composer and by title, and both include entries from the appended history of the CECG, and list of works performed in its concerts, whether or not they are held in the tape collection. The editorial material appears in French and English, and the works entries in the language of the composer, sometimes with translation.

Best festivals of North America : a performing arts guide / Carol Spivack & Richard A. Weinstock. 3d. ed. Ventura, CA : Printwheel Press, 1989. (208 p., \$12.50) ISBN 0-916401-08-1

The musical categories in this travel guide are "classical mix", classical music, chamber music, opera, jazz, folk music and bluegrass, and occupy just under half the pages. The first four may seem rather arbitrary and unnecessary distinctions, creating additional sequences to be searched: chamber music performances, for example, occur in festivals listed in several other categories. On the other hand, indexing by festival name, location, and time period, plus "attractions" nearby makes specific information easy to find. The other festivals described are for dance, theater, film, "ethnic" and children, and most of these include music.

Listings concisely characterize both the contents and ambiance of events, as well as giving all expected basic information. The criteria for inclusion are many and varied. Substantial length is the first, since the book is directed toward the arts-loving reader who is choosing a vacation spot. Although there are listings throughout the year, most are summer events. Another is geographical representation: of the states, I think only the Dakotas are festival-less; but in the 25 Canadian listings (of 200 in all) only six provinces are covered.

Judging by these Canadian entries, this seems to really be a guide to the best-known, or best-established tourist attractions, skewed somewhat by that desire to represent geographical areas. In Ontario, Stratford, Shaw, Guelph, Blyth (mispelled), Mariposa, and several others are there, so probably some quota prevents the inclusion of other major ones like Elora, the Festival of the Sound, Sharon, and the Toronto film Festival of Festivals. And I wish the crunchier ones, celebrating specific cultures (e.g. the Six Nations Festival

in Brantford) or traditional music other than bluegrass (e.g. Caribana, in Toronto) had made it in. But within a modest number of pages, and for an audience for whom a nearby recreation area for the kids as well as cultural self-improvement are significant considerations, this would be a cheerful companion to February fantasies, or even serious holiday planning.
-ed.



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