

people associated with the company and its founder, Tom Saffady, who died in 1954. A detailed discography from the same source also is included, along with a price guide developed by Mr. Curry. Values assigned to individual issues range from \$40 to \$400, the highest being reserved for numbers R713 (which no one has ever seen) and R784. A relative rarity chart indicates how many copies of each Vogue were actually located among a sample of collectors.

The production values of the book are exceptionally high, with an easy to read layout and a full color cover that is guaranteed to catch the eye—as did the original Vogues. It is a pleasure to see a self-published book designed and executed in such a professional manner.

This reviewer has no financial interest in the book (permission to reprint the text materials was willingly granted without charge), and one doubts that Mr. Curry will make much on it either, given the high cost of production. Quite a few Vogue collectors contributed illustrations and information to the project. The result is a comprehensive study of a minor, albeit colorful, part of record history that anyone interested in the subject should see. *Reviewed by Tim Brooks*

The Complete Library of American Phonograph Recordings.

By Jerry Osborne. Port Townsend, WA, Osborne Enterprises, 1987-. Three volumes published so far: 1959 (1987, 244 pp., \$24.95 plus \$2 p&h), 1960 (1987, 226 pp., \$24.95 plus \$2 p&h), 1961 (1990, 239 pp., \$29.95 plus \$3 p&h). Available from Jellyroll Productions, P.O. Box 29, Boyne Falls, MI 49713.

Osborne's *Complete Library* is a welcome addition to the documentation of the microgroove recording era, which is now drawing to a close. A series of annual volumes is planned, eventually to cover 1950 to date. While by no means "complete," they are probably the most comprehensive general listings published so far of LP, 45 rpm and EP recordings issued in the U.S.

The main portion of each volume is arranged by artist, showing issued recordings on 7-inch singles, EPs, and LPs during the year. This is followed by a label index displaying output in numerical order and a title index. All three sections are easy to read and should be useful to the researcher, depending on the project at hand. About a thousand labels and 10,000 individual releases are listed for each year. The principal virtue of this series is, in fact, its breadth of coverage—many obscure labels are covered, along with the majors.

The principal drawback is the depth of information, or rather, the lack of it. Essentially, these are simple release lists—artist, title and record number is all you get. Even that information is sometimes truncated. Only the principal artist is noted; if several appeared on an LP, the *Complete Library* may just say "various." Contents of LPs and EPs are not given, and there is no indication of release date closer than the year. Sometimes the description is rather misleading. For example, how would one know that the LP *Hey Boy, Hey Girl* (actually the correct title is *Hey Boy! Hey Girl!*), which is listed simply as by Louis Prima & Keely Smith, is actually the soundtrack of the 1959 movie of that name?

Probably the worst offense, however, is the author's decision to strip the prefixes off of all catalog numbers. Thus we don't know if a listed RCA LP number is in the LPM, LOC, EL, LOC, LSP, LES or LSO series. Prefixes are essential to understanding stereo vs. monaural recordings, issue series (e.g. RCA Red Seal vs. black label), and often to simply find the record.

A preface discusses in general terms the prefixes used by the major labels, which sometimes helps and sometimes does not. Regardless, prefixes are an essential part of a label's identification system and belong with the catalog number, not in the compiler's waste basket. This seems to be another unfortunate example of the sloppy research practices that are all too common in the rock field.

How complete is the *Complete Library*? In the introduction the author modestly asserts that this is "the first attempt in the history of music or recording publications to provide the reader with a **year-by-year compilation of every known record release, of every possible type, by every conceivable record label!**" (sic). Well, not quite. First, the entire field of classical recording is omitted. This may not bother popular researchers (though it should be stated), but it does provide some surprising anomalies. Since classical *series* (not necessarily repertoire) are what is omitted, you will not find classical-series recordings even if they crossed into the popular field. A good example is RCA's bestselling *60 Years of Music America Loves Best* (LM-6074), a two-LP set containing both popular and classical tracks dating from 1907 to 1956 that shot to the top of the charts in late 1959 and stayed there for a year and a half, peaking at number two. It's not here because it was on Red Seal. A follow-up Volume III is represented by its popular half (LOP-1509), but not the classical half (LM-2574).

To get a fix on the *Complete Library's* coverage of the rest of the recording universe, I checked the "New Listings" pages of the April, 1959 *Schwann* catalog. This of course covers only LPs.

The *Complete Library* had three of the six LPs listed in *Schwann's* New Spoken and Miscellaneous category; two out of four Musical & Film LPs; four out of 11 Folk/Country issues; and 49 out of 53 new jazz releases. In the all-important popular section, 126 of *Schwann's* 162 listings turn up in the *Complete Library*—about 78%. To be fair, some of the missing titles might actually be 1958 releases, and a few may be on import labels (which *Schwann* includes, but the *Complete Library* does not). But most were smack in the middle of 1959 releases by known U.S. labels. For example, there are quite a few holes in the *Complete Library's* listing of RCA's LPM-1900s and Coral's 57200s, which can be readily found in the *Schwann* listings. Among smaller labels, the *Complete Library* seems to have no 1959 entries at all for Monitor, Tikva or Bruno, though each had new releases in April 1959. (No, I had not heard of those last two labels either, but both are listed in Galen Gart's valuable *American Record Label Directory and Dating Guide*.) A spot check of 1960 Dot and Kapp LP catalogs in my collection filled in a few additional holes in the *Complete Library's* listings.

So the *Complete Library* is by no means complete. One hopes that for future editions the author will check all available sources, including *Schwann*, the company catalogs found in major research libraries, and above all the record companies' own files. And by all means, put the prefixes back where they belong.

However even if the current version of the *Complete Library* contains only 75 percent of each year's non-classical releases, that is more than any other source and it makes these volumes undeniably valuable resources.

The physical production of the books is excellent, with sturdy hard covers, good binding, and an easy-to-read layout. They belong on the shelves of any researcher or library concerned with this period of recording. *Reviewed by Tim Brooks*