

Smolian, Steven. A Handbook of Film, Theater and Television Music On Record, 1948-1970. New York, 1970. 1970. The Record Undertaker; P. O. Box 437; New York, New York 10023
Two sections in binder, each 64 p.
(Available from The Record Undertaker at the above address - \$6.00 ppd.)

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If you are a collector of theatrical, screen or home-screen music then this is an invaluable reference source. If your interest is an academic one, concerned with the idiosyncracies of recording companies, this book will shed much light on the "irrational" of "cutouts: in the strangest of all recording fields: the musical stage-film-TV entertainment. Mr. Smolian, who together with many other related activities, deals in recordings, and particularly in recordings of this type, presents an amazing amount and variety of information.

His book takes up, basically, where the Schwann Catalog leaves off, and each recording can be located in two places. The first section main entries are alphabetical by formal title (with cross-references where necessary) and contain more information than any other catalog has ever offered up to now. There are eight columns arranged horizontally across the page. Each title is given one line per recording (some have ten, twelve or eighteen entries) and the information is given in the following order: Category (Original Cast, Soundtrack, Revival Cast, Partial Original Cast, etc.); Date (usually date of premiere or revival of work, sometimes date of release); Title and Composer (also occasional information on which member of a company qualifies it for entry in this catalog); Label; Monaural Number; Stereophonic Number; Issue Date; Cut-out Date.

In his introduction to the book, Mr. Smolian establishes his "guidelines for inclusion". The records are all LP Disks "containing music for theatre, film and television, as performed by those associated with a full production from which the disc contains at least three selections." Moreover, Mr. Smolian enumerates his omissions. Recordings containing less than three selections from any one work, recordings of specially organized casts, rehearsal or private recordings, 78's, 45's, or tapes, imports, opera and ballet scores, nightclub shows and special sponsored

television show recordings are not included in the Handbook. A recording such as the Kurt Weill-Paul Green Johnny Johnson, though not an actual cast recording had as its conductor Samuel Matlovsky, who conducted the revival of the show. In as many cases as possible where a show of importance would otherwise not fit into Mr. Smolian's strict order of things, he has made exception in order to include them in his reference volume.

The second section is comprised of two different series of listings. The first lists, in much abbreviated form, all recordings in the section, one except that here they can be located by record company and number. The across-the-page arrangement is used once again, with the information given in the following order: Monaural Number; Stereo Number; Title; Issue Date; Cut-out Date. There follows an alphabetized composer listing, with each work mentioned in the main body indexed under its composer. These additional listings make for easy information cross-reference. Included also is brief comment about the Collector's Record Market, dealing with the value of records as affected in the process of cut-out and re-issue. This concise picture of the record dealer's position on nominal value and market value should be read carefully by every collector in every field of recordings.

I have found that this volume provides an excellent short cut for cataloging a collection of records in this field. A simple checkmark or asterisk can indicate inclusion in a collection; all the other work (with the exception of cast lists, musician credits and contents breakdown) has already been done. The volume itself is slim and approximately the size of a small notebook. The binder is a dark turquoise blue.

Most of the information has been culled from the Schwann Catalog with additional data culled from record company catalogs, press releases, James Limbacher's volumes on entertainment records, Miles Kreuger, The Library of Congress, and the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound at Lincoln Center. Mr. Smolian points out to us, also, that this book is not a "definitive" work. It is a "gathering of available information." There are some minor errors, but effort is already underway to correct some, and there may be future amendments to the original volume.

This book offers, by the way, some choice minutiae for those looking for that extra-special bit of "camp" to throw into a conversation at the next cocktail party; i.e., Albert Peckinpaw's Revenge, a 1968 pornographic musical film was released in recorded form under the title Wife Child (Sidewalk T/ST 5907) and was only on the shelves for one year (wonder why?).

Mr. Smolian, his contributors and his editors have done an excellent job of compiling information, honing and refining it and presenting it for consumption in a sane and useful manner. This book should be on every phonorecord reference shelf--private or institutional.