

RECORD REVIEWS

Undine Smith Moore Song Book. Virginia State College Concert Choir; Dr. Carl Harris, Jr., conductor. Richmond Records 4112N10 (Afro-American Heritage Series, vol. 3) Available from Virginia State College, Box 352, Petersburg, Virginia.

It seems impossible that Dr. Moore had served the students of Virginia State for forty-four years prior to her retirement in 1972 until one looks at the several generations of major musicians who proudly acknowledge themselves as her graduates. It is certainly proper that this tribute from her institution should join with the many honors which have come to her, well before her creative talents are ready to take any sabbatical.

Her formal education at Fisk, Juillard, Columbia, Eastman and the Manhattan School of Music did not discourage her from paying honor to her heritage. Apart from her teaching, she is best known for her choral writing—especially in the area of the spiritual, in which she excels.

Her settings of this repertoire appear so natural and reasonable that one is struck more by the conviction of expression than the techniques toward that end, yet one would be ill-advised to regard the arrangements out of the light of craft and sophistication.

Their effectiveness, of course, depends very much on the performers. Dr. Harris's choir surely joins Nathan Carter's group at Morgan State as heirs of that unquestionably unique tradition which includes such classic figures as R. Nathaniel Dett, Hall Johnson, and William Dawson. The thirty-nine-voice chorus sings with secure intonation, firm attack, strong voices and clear enunciation, readily communicating the emotional ideas inherent in Dr. Moore's scores, and their precision within the spirit of rhythmic relaxation adds all the more to the strength and infectious spirit of the music. The composer is not afraid of taxing the basses, for example in *Let Us Make Man in Our Image* (which sounds from the start as if it were written for and performed by a Russian chorus), nor does she hesitate to ask the sopranos and tenor to soar into the upper registers. But these demands do not discourage the Virginia singers.

Several solo voices are heard in the course of the twelve works of the *Song Book* we have heard soloists in earlier recordings of black groups and have wondered how these talents are being employed now. Within a few years, perhaps we will hear more from those who contributed to make this recording such an enjoyable and experience.

There is little doubt, however, about the accomplishments of Dr. Harris during his three years at Virginia State. The public is waiting for more. Meanwhile, he has taken these excellent works of Undine Moore and turned a recorded concert into a prayer meeting.

Dominique-Rene de Lerma
Afro-American Music Opportunities
Association

Africa in Revolutionary Music. LSM Records R-1. Available from Box 94338, Richmond, B. C., Canada.

The contents of this most interesting anthology of music opens and closes with Dorothy Masuka and the Zimbabwe National Choir, including en route performances of Ken Mtshwa and the African National Congress Musicians, Makonde street musicians from Tanzania, students from the Bagamoyo Secondary School in Mozambique, street musicians from northern Brazil, and Angolan villagers with Hoji ia Henda (whose singing is accompanied by sounds of the 1968 attack of the MPLA on the Portuguese barracks at Karipande, the battle in which Henda was killed).

Quite aside from the sociological and political documentation provided in this album, the music features a contrast of languages (including English and Portuguese) and styles. Call and response is certainly not absent, but there are also instances of homophonic choral singing. Dorothy Masuka's contribution might come as a surprise to some, particularly with regard to the effective voice leading of "This Land is Mine", even if the ensemble work and intonation of other groups — whose music is not without Western influence — might stimulate some thoughts on the philosophy of performance practice.

The disc also offers a chance to hear the African National Congress anthem, the national anthem of Frelimo (Mozambique's Liberation

front), and that of the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola).

It is not packaged and presented as an ethnomusicological document but, when coupled with research, can serve that function. It nonetheless should be considered a recording of historical and musical significance.

Dominique-Rene de Lerma
AAMOA

Images of Blackness. By Gary D. Hines. Sounds of Blackness. Sound 80 \$80-719-35765. Available from Sounds of Blackness, 1156 Emerson North, Apartment A304, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55411.

The Sounds of Blackness is a choral and instrumental group based in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, consisting of college and community personnel under the current and past leadership of Gary Hines and John Patton. The ensemble, whose repertoire ranges from

classic spirituals to innovative soul arrangements, has been featured in combination with the Jackson Five, the Edwin Hawkins Singers, the Hampton Hawes Trio, Betty Everett, The Blackbyrds, The Pointer Sisters and other distinguished groups. Tours have taken them from Minneapolis to Ohio, Georgia, California, Illinois, Colorado and other states.

This recording provides an opportunity to hear the ensemble in a series of ten arrangements by Hines, including "Lift Every Voice" and "Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel?," as well as tunes by Stevie Wonder and Ray Charles. The variety of the contents is wryly suggested by the whimsical and poetic jacket photos. Needless to say, a great deal of talent is evidenced in the singing of the chorus and their several soloists. The recording, seemingly not available through the regular marketing channels, merits consideration by all individuals and libraries interested in Afro-American music.

Dominique-Rene de Lerma
AAMOA

EXCHANGE PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

African Social Research. Edited by Jaap van Velsen and Mubanga Kashoki. Lusaka, Zambia: University of Zambia, Institute of African Studies, 1974. Published semi-annually.

Ethnomusicology. Edited by Gerald Behague. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The Society for Ethnomusicology, 1975. Published three times a year.

Freedomways. Edited by John Hendrik Clarke, Ernest Kaiser, and J. H. O'Dell. New York: Freedomways Associates, Inc., 1975. Published quarterly.

Jazzband. Publicación de cultura afro. Edited by Alberto Consiglio. Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1974.

Journal of Jazz Studies. Edited by Charles Nanry and David A. Cayer. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers Institute of Jazz Studies, 1975. Published semi-annually.

Living Blues. Edited by Jim and Amy O'Neal. Chicago: Living Blues Publications, 1975. A Journal of the Black American Blues Tradition. Published bi-monthly.

Musart. Edited by Sister Jane Marie Perrot, D.C. Hyattsville, Md.: The National Catholic Music Educators Association, 1975. Published monthly.

Record Research. The Magazine of Record Information and Statistics. Edited by Len Kunstadt and Bob Colton. Brooklyn, New York, 1975. Published bi-monthly.

Yearbook for Inter-American Musical Research. Edited by Gilbert Chase. Austin, Texas: University of Texas, Department of Music and Institute of Latin American Studies, 1974.