

### "MUSIC OF AFRICA" SERIES OF LONG PLAYING RECORDS

A series of long playing records has been issued by Decca on behalf of the African Music Society. Most of the thirteen items included in the first records issued have been collected personally by Hugh Tracey, who will continue to issue further recordings through the International Library of African Music, of which he is Director.

It is the intention of the Library continually to publish suitable examples of African music from each of the African territories and also to issue special recordings each devoted to a particular aspect of the many kinds of music to be found in Africa, such as drumming, the music of stringed instruments, of wind instruments, choral singing and other selections of items which prove to be of special interest to musicians, students and enthusiasts everywhere.

The thirteen LP records with which this series has started include items from the Congo, Uganda, Kenya, the Rhodesias, West Africa, and the Union of South Africa.

No. I *LF 1084 TANGANYIKA.*

An excellent selection of both instrumental music and songs, with particularly interesting items from the regions of Lake Victoria and Mount Kilimanjaro as well as from the village from which David Livingstone set out on his last journey.

No. II *LF 1121 KENYA.*

The recording demonstrates the great variety of music to be found within the single territory of Kenya from the coastal regions around Mombasa over the cool highlands of the interior and down to the tropical shores of Lake Victoria Nyanza. It is a country of stringed instruments, more particularly the lyres and lutes, and of leaping dancers. The songs have strong attractive melodies.

No. III *LF 1120 THE DRUMS OF EAST AFRICA.*

The word "drum" and the name Africa are almost synonymous to the musical world outside. The variety of drumming styles to be found among the many different tribes of East Africa is almost unending, from the simple rhythms of village drummers to the great batteries of tuned drums to be found in the courts of the older established chiefs. Groups of drummers and dancers tour the countryside entertaining the people of the villages, delighting them with the unexpectedness of their changing syncopations. The complexity of the drumming is clearly demonstrated in these recordings. It is a complexity made up of several simple rhythms fitting neatly into each other like the cog wheels of a machine. The battery of fifteen Ganda drums which play tunes like a carillon of bells and the full set of tattoos played on Tutsi drums are particularly interesting.

No. IV *LF 1169 CONGO DRUMS.*

This record is the first of a series of percussion recordings which will come out of the Congo where hundreds of different varieties of drum are known to exist. One side of the record is devoted to the seven movements of the royal tattoo of the Mwami, the paramount chief of the famous Tutsi tribe of Ruanda. The other side is unique, being the only authoritative recordings of talking drums from the Congo river with full explanations by an authority, who for a lifetime has been a missionary in the country.

No. V *LF 1170 THE GUITARS OF AFRICA.*

The Guitar is not a newcomer to Africa, for the Portuguese introduced this instrument to Africans wherever they settled or traded from the sixteenth century onwards. It was not however, until recent times that it penetrated into the interior. Portuguese influence still produces the best types of African guitar music and it is largely this style of playing which is found all across central Africa from west to east that is featured in this first selection of guitar songs.

No. VI *LF 1171 THE BEST RECORDINGS OF 1952.*

The African Music Society has, through the generosity of friends, been able to offer awards for the best recordings of the year. The Osborne Award are the result, and every year a new LP will appear with the Society's choice for the previous twelve months. This selection for the first Osborn Awards will surprise and delight those who have had no idea of the intricacy and charm of the work of African composers and musicians. No better selection of African items could be presented to anyone who wishes to sample the charm of really genuine African music.

No. VII *LF 1172. CONGO SONGS AND DANCES.*

The Congo is a region of great contrasts. Its music, like its forests and its inhabitants, ranges from the giant to the pigmy. No selection of African music could be complete without including items from this country, and it is in this atmosphere of superlatives that we find the songs and dances of the Congo basin. Canoe songs, flute tunes, horns, drums, bells and rattles all feature in this present selection.

- No. VIII *LF 1173 MUSIC OF THE UGANDA PROTECTORATE.*  
Uganda has often been described as "the pearl of Africa". Musically as well as geographically it is of unusual interest, as this selection of items will demonstrate. It is one of those territories which lie within the orbit of the Nile basin, and many of those ancient instruments which are commonly associated with ancient Egypt, such as harps, lutes and lyres, are still to be found. Uganda is especially rich in bands of native musicians, several of which are represented in this selection. The items are introduced by Hugh Tracey, who recorded them.
- No. IX *LF 1174 AFRICAN STORIES (told by Hugh Tracey).*  
Stories and songs are among Africa's most charming contributions to folklore. All five stories presented in this recording were first heard by Hugh Tracey in the local Karanga language of the Fort Victoria district of Southern Rhodesia. In their English interpretation they take one into an enchanted world peopled with friendly creatures both human and animal.
- No. X *LF 1224 BEST RECORDINGS OF 1953—PART 1.*  
All twenty of the items presented on these two recordings, Nos. 10 and 11 of the Music of Africa Series, were given the honour of an Osborn Award for the best recordings of 1953. Eleven of the twenty items merited the full Award and the other nine were highly commended by the African Music Society.  
Recordings for the annual competition were sent in from all over Africa, South of the Sahara, and the present selection gives an excellent sampling of the standard of music which may be heard throughout the length and breadth of Africa when performed by its more competent musicians.
- No. XI *LF 1225 BEST RECORDINGS OF 1953—PART 2.*  
This record features ten of the twenty compositions which have been chosen by the African Music Society as the best recorded performances of the year, from a large number of entries received from all over Africa, South of the Sahara. No better introduction to the musical ability of the African peoples could be found than in these recorded items, all of which have received Osborn Awards or Highly Commended prizes.
- No. XII *LF 1254 AFRICAN DANCES OF THE WITWATERSRAND GOLD MINES, PART 1.*  
These two records of Mine Dances (of which this is the first) have been specially recorded by the International Library of African Music to provide a set of authentic sounds and dance tunes which accompany the performances of the various tribes. (Full descriptive details and illustrations of each of the Mine Dances are to be found in a book published by the African Music Society, "African Dances of the Witwatersrand Gold Mines" by Hugh Tracey, photographs by Merlyn Severn.)  
This record contains the music of four tribes, the Chopi, Tswa, Pedi and Shangaan.
- No. XIII *LF 1255 AFRICAN DANCES OF THE WITWATERSRAND GOLD MINES, PART 2.*  
The dances of the African miners who work in the Gold Mines of South Africa have become famous on account of the fact that throughout the year public performances of short extracts of the dances are given every week in the dance arenas which have been constructed for this purpose. At an Inter-Tribal Dance a dozen or more different styles of dancing may be seen in the course of a few hours.  
This record features the dance music of 8 tribes, the Baca, Zingili, Zulu, Mpondo, Mpondomisi, Nda, Xhosa and Sotho.

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These records are obtainable from the headquarters of the International Library of African Music, P.O. Box 138, Roodepoort, Transvaal, South Africa, at 22s. 6d., \$3.50 each (plus postage).