

occasional first-rate help from Tony Glover, playing the mouth-harp. I like everything Ray does, although on occasion I do get just a little bit uncomfortable about some of the conscious inflections of Negro sung-speech. I admire his honesty and humility when he says of "Silver City Bound," "Lead plays it about half my speed. I wish I had his slowness." It seems now, though, as if it were time to begin listening anew to Ray and his companions for another quality which they demonstrate and expose -- the sheer, exuberant quality of being young, and the joy of exploration of a fascinating literature, fully shared.

THE BLUES PROJECT/"A Compendium of the very best on the urban blues scene" with John Koerner, Geoff Muldaur, Dave Ray, Danny Kalb, Ian Buchanan, Mark Spoelstra, Eric Von Schmidt (Elektra EKL-264). Valuable and penetrating compendium of what's with this field. Paul Nelson's down-to-earth notes bring it all together in intelligent fashion. This is not one to let glide by.

BARBARA DANE SINGS THE BLUES WITH 6 AND 12 STRING GUITAR (Folkways FA 2471). Miss Dane is "assimilating" like crazy, and as a report from a stop along what may be a long way for her, it bears watching and a little assimilation of our own.

JUNKANOO BAND -- KEY WEST (Folkways FL 4492) Recorded by Marshall Stearns. Documentation of hybrids found at Key West, Florida, by instrumentalists playing maracas, saw, homemade drum, claves, bell, conga drum. Altogether fun and rewarding.

MARY LOU WILLIAMS (Mary Records, released by Folkways, FJ 2843). Playing with superb technical control and brilliance, Mary Lou demonstrates here as always that no matter what she does, she knows how to do it. She is working in composition and performance with hymnodic material and her purpose, I believe, is that of the many composers and performers who have set to music aspirations and spiritual expressions of the Catholic Church. It is novel and

original work of the highest order of passion, tonal sensuality, and musicality.

ONE STRING BLUES (Portents 2) Edited by Samuel B. Charters and recorded by Frederick A. Usher. A report from Skid Row blues singers and instrumentalists, featuring Eddie "One String" Jones, playing a self-built zither-monochoord, and "Poor, Traveling" (sic) Edward Hazelton, playing the harmonica and singing. The locale is Los Angeles, the documentation careful. More of a human document-cum-music than music-cum-human, but the record must be heard by all who pretend to an understanding of, or a desire to understand, the folk process.

THE HOLY MODAL ROUNDERS (Prestige Folklore 14031) Peter Stampfel and Steve Weber. Parody of folk song and folk content, or of anything else, has never done any harm -- often it's a beneficial form of housecleaning. This is parody, but parody with a sort of fear written into it -- fear of coming out into the open as serious performers. The notes by Stampfel are singular for their honesty.

THE RURAL BLUES/A Study of the Vocal and Instrumental Resources (RBF 202X). The indefatigable Charters is at it again, and here's more of the remarkable stuff he's been partially responsible for bringing back to the folk scene. RBF 202X is a monumental breakdown of the ways and means of the singers, with tape-cut examples of all the devices known and perhaps hitherto unsuspected, of their approach and repertoire. Still to be solved: when is a rural blues not a country blues, and vice versa?

GOLD RUSH DAZE (Stereoddities C-1901) and REUNION IN RAGTIME (Stereoddities C-1900). REUNION brings together Eubie Blake, Joe Jordan, and Charles Thompson. The presentation, by the producer of the recordings, and narration, by "Ragtime Bob" Darch, could have been dispensed with. Why ragtime has to be touched up with red-garter nostalgia and tinkly keyboards, when musically it can stand on its own, is a ques-