



## le tamanoir

*Le Tamanoir (the anteater) is a small recording company in Montreal which has been in existence for about four years and is run by three people. They produce records of Québécois musicians and their selection covers a fairly broad spectrum of styles. One of their biggest strengths is the wealth of folk music they offer, performed both by traditional singers and musicians and by 'revival' performers. The following is a brief description of the folk music records I received when I visited them in November. More information is available from: le Tamanoir, 3466 rue St-Denis, Montreal, P.Q., H2X 3L3.*

### **"Reve du Diable" (Tam 27001)**

My first encounter with Tamanoir was in the summer of '77 in Montreal when a Québécois friend played an album called "Rêve du Diable" by a group of the same name. I was so excited by the music that I immediately ordered it. Rêve du Diable is a group of four young musicians who play Quebec traditional music—jigs, reels, tunes, songs—with incredible gusto. They are not virtuoso musicians who use the music to display their skills. Nor are they academics in the act of preserving their cultural heritage. They are simply four guys who grew up with and love this music. Their irreverence is obvious in the liner notes. Each cut is listed and described briefly (words to the songs included) and each description ends with a list of the instruments used,

e.g. "Claude, violon; Paul, accordéon; Jean-Pierre, guitare; Gervais, planche de plywood" (Gervais provides the rhythm, his feet clogging on a piece of plywood). The next cut again lists the names and instruments, finishing with "la même planche de plywood." ("the same piece of plywood"). A few cuts later the rhythm section is listed as "Gervais, pedirhythmie", and later, "la même planche de plywood que nous commençons à connaître" ("the same piece of plywood that we're getting to know"). And on the last cut they "deliberately omit the feet of Gervais and his plywood because you've already heard enough about them".

The record begins with the call of a loon. After several calls, a tentative scraping begins which slowly becomes recognizable as a fiddle. Eventually the loon fades out and the scraping becomes the title tune, "Rêve du Diable". It is followed immediately by "le Sirop d'Erable" ("Maple Sugar") which is also a reel, but the group has added words which describe a day making maple syrup. This is followed by a waltz with fiddle, accordion and guitar. Next comes the 'tour de force' of the album, "Dondaine la Ridaine", a song about a young woman who rejects a shoemaker because with his needles he might 'prick' her. The song is a typical "chanson à répondre" (answer song) where every line sung by the lead singer is repeated by the chorus. The first two lines are sung in sonorous priest-congregation style (complete with church-like echo) and then the song takes off with a five-line, tongue-twisting nonsense chorus sung at breakneck speed with Gervais' feet pounding double time

on his “planche de plywood”. The singing style is rough and sounds more like a group of loggers than professional musicians. But the savageness of the music necessitates roughness and the song would sound ridiculous sung by ‘beautiful’ voices. The entire album has a roughness which is totally in keeping with the music, and when the fiddler occasionally hits a wrong note, rather than detracting from the music, it makes it humorous and more enjoyable.

**“Riviere Jaune”** (with Rêve du Diable. TAM—27009)

More of the same from this energetic group. Unfortunately they are without their accordion player on this album, but Gervais’ feet on “la planche de plywood” are in fine form. The most hilarious cut, “La Bonne Femme Gendron” (last cut, side A) is accompanied throughout by the mooing of cows and the sounds of milking (“with special thanks to the Boutin family of St-Chrysostome for their co-operative cows”); “Good Mrs. Gendron went to milk her cows/Went to milk her cows in her pisspot/She didn’t have a strainer through which to drain the milk/So she used her apron as a strainer./The apron got clogged and the milk wouldn’t pass through it/So she took a hairpin and started pricking it./When the milk finally passed through it was a bit brown/ So she made it into cheese for ‘les Anglais’./They like shit because they’re used to eating it.”

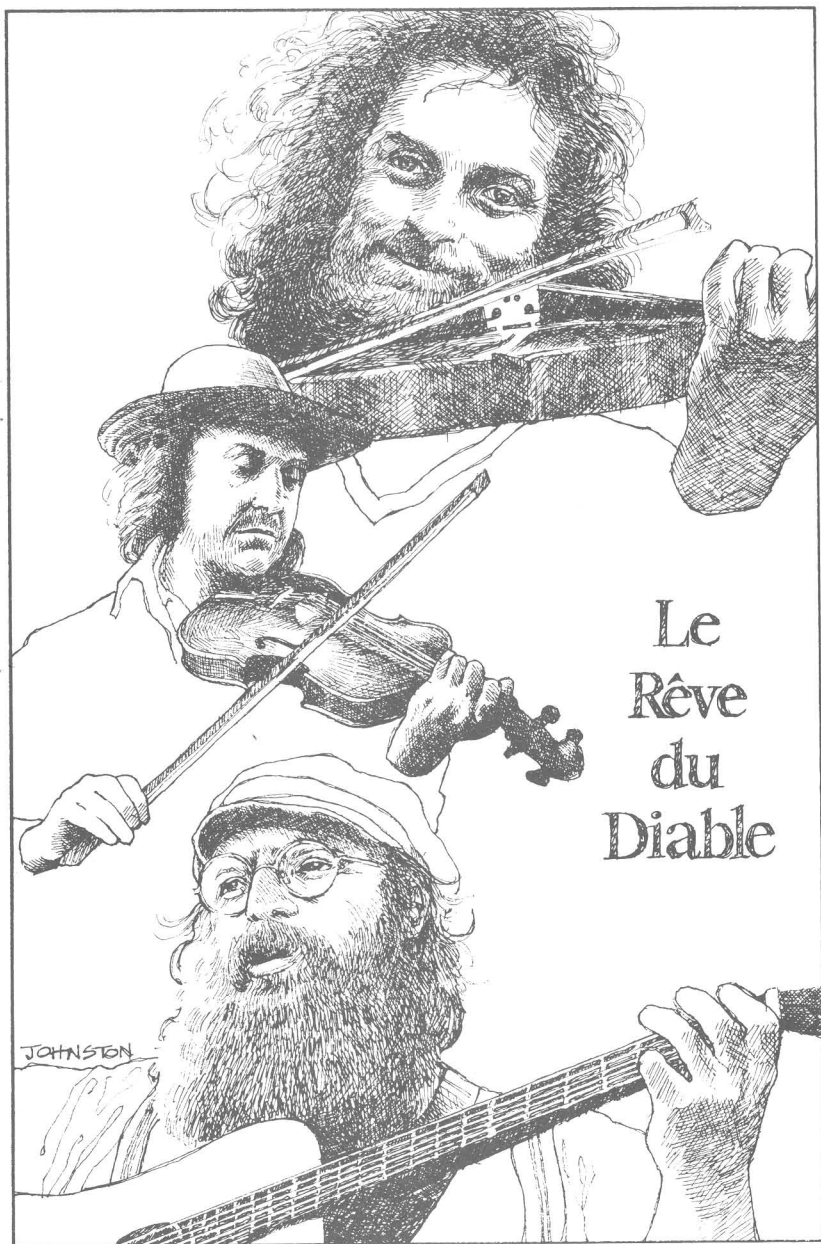
**“Portrait du Vieux Kebec”** vol. 8 (OP 251)

This record features traditional dance tunes from Ile d’Orléans played by three fiddles, an accordion and piano. Each side of the record comprises the music for complete

quadrilles (side A—“Quadrille le Caledonia”; side B—“Quadrille le Lancier”). The liner notes are very informative, giving a brief history of folk dances in Canada, of the Quadrille in particular, concluding with a history of the two quadrilles featured on the record. As dance music the record is probably very useful, but to sit and listen to it is somewhat unsatisfying because the combination of instruments makes the music sound muddy and monotonous. My impression is that the record is not designed for listening but for use by folk dance groups, and, as such, fulfills its purpose very well.

**“Portrait du Vieux Kebec”** vol. 9 (OP 251)

Ferdinand Dionne is a fiddler from Ste-Anne-de-la-Pocatière in Kamouraska county on the lower St. Lawrence River in Québec. He has played since childhood and comes from a very musical family and community. This album contains twelve tunes from his repertoire—jigs, reels, waltzes and ‘galopes’, some of which are Kamouraska versions of tunes known throughout Quebec (“Reel du Pendu”, “Partie de Lancier”) and some of which are unique to the region (“Valse de la Kermesse”, “Coltillon de la Tante Ernestine”)—played by Ferdinand, accompanied on piano (the accompanist is not named). The music is very enjoyable, but, like volume 8 of this series, illustrates the contradiction inherent in sitting and listening to music that is meant to be danced to; you tend to listen intently to the first two tunes and then you begin to talk or read the paper. Some of the tunes are quite humorous because the accompanist is thumping away on the piano and often doesn’t



Le  
Rêve  
du  
Diable

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change chords at exactly the right places. Whether or not this is intentional, I don't know, but it sure made me chuckle.

### **"Rejouissances" (TAM-31298)**

Last year Tamanoir put on a huge concert at the Outremont Theatre in Montreal, involving musicians they have recorded. This two-record set comprises excerpts from that evening, including such groups as Rêve du Diable, Quebreizh and Beausoleil Broussard as well as people like Alain Lamontagne, Michel Garneau and many more. Musical styles range from individual singer/songwriters with guitar to the 'folk-pop' sound of Beausoleil Broussard to traditional jigs and reels which had the audience dancing in the aisles. There are sixteen people and a dog on stage at the same time and the music moves from group to group very fluidly. Judging by audience response it was a very exciting evening and this comes across on the record. It is also a very good picture of what is happening in Quebec music today.

### **"C'est dans la Nouvelle-France" (TAMX-27005)**

This record was reviewed here (vol. 1, no. 2) in French by Robert Bouthillier, but for the benefit of anglophones I will mention it again. It is a collection of seventeen songs and tunes performed by traditional singers and musicians and collected by Marc Gagné of the Centre d'Etudes sur la Langue, les Arts et les Traditions populaire (CELAT at Laval University) in Beauce County, Quebec, between 1970 and 1977. This is the most beautifully produced and comprehensively annotated record I have ever seen. The jacket has photographs of rural Quebec and inside is a

forty-page booklet with a map of Beauce County, a description of M. Gagné's seven-year research (during which he collected more than 2,600 documents), words and music to each song accompanied with the text written phonetically (to illustrate the Beauce dialect), notes on each song and excellent photographs of each singer. Included are love songs, courting songs, dance songs, songs about war and 3 fiddle tunes. The album succeeds superlatively on three levels: a) it is enjoyable to listen to—M. Gagné has chosen some fine singers to be represented and the recording quality is superb; b) for those interested in learning songs it is an ideal source with its accompanying texts and clear recording quality; c) it is hard to imagine a better document of the history and folklore of Beauce County. In short, an excellent album!

*Rika Ruebsaat*



Sukay-Edmond & Quentin Badoux travelled in Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador learning and researching the folkmusic of the Andes.

They produced a tape cassette and album each with different selections including pan-pipes, kena, charango, bombo, rondador and other instruments typical of these regions.

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These recordings are only available after their concerts or through this ad.

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