

as well as available in the major musical events. referred to specifically as "folk festivals". Whatever your tastes in music, it's all enjoyable, and all an important part of Canada's cultural scene.

John Leeder
Guest editor

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Regarding an article in the CANADIAN FOLK MUSIC BULLETIN issue of December 1987 [21:4, p. 3], entitled "Toward a Unified Voice and a Clear Song", a paper presented by Lisa Ornstein at the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Folk Music Society held in Quebec City, 31st October 1987:

I'd like to quote the gist of the article in paragraph 3: "A problem central to the clarification of the CFMS mandate is our nationwide confusion regarding what folk music is."

What I'd like to know is, did the CFMS pursue the issue? Has the CFMS adopted a "clear and concise definition of the term 'folk music'"? Did you give up? Is this issue yet unresolved?

As a resident of Seattle, which claims to have the biggest "folk festival" in the United States, this question has been burning me up. Also, as a traditional-style musician from the rural milieu of Idaho, I find myself at a loss as to containing my anger when "folk music" is used as a licentious label for failed pop music.

I've got my own definition of

"folk music", but I'd sure like to see someone else's solution to the sophomoric question "What's folk music?"

Zachary Murphy

[At the time when the question was raised, opinion was strongly divided on whether there was a need for a definition, let alone what the definition would be. My own opinion, along with others, was to "let the field define itself". However, a number of responses were published in the 1988 issue of the CANADIAN FOLK MUSIC JOURNAL under the title "What is Folk Music?" (#16, p. 32). There was no obvious consensus, the original proponents of the question lost momentum, and then the issue was rendered less relevant by our merger with the Canadian ethnomusicologists' organization and the alteration of the name of the organization to the "Canadian Society for Musical Traditions".

[Personally, I can live with the fact that various groups apply the label "folk music" to various kinds of music, most of which I enjoy to one degree or other, although like you I favour the traditional end of the spectrum. —J.L.]

CORRIGENDUM

In the song "History of the Boots" (vol. 25, no. 4, p. 20), in the third verse, the sixth line was omitted; it reads:

"In the waltz and the do-si-do"

In the fifth verse, fifth line, "where tacked" should read "were tucked"; in the seventh line, "songs" should read "sons".