

Disc's profits to blind

Precision playing key to piano by ear

By
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Piano playing by ear can be a painful test for the sensitive listener. Someone who has caught a tune bangs it out, sloshes it around with sentimentality, cuts sections, sticks to the same and may never stop playing.

Pianist Deane Nesbitt keeps to the same keys, but in his new recording *On the Black Keys and By Ear*, he varies his styles enough and plays with such carefully gauged precision that he comes off as a model of ear playing.

Nesbitt has recorded several popular tunes and themes, *Comme un soleil*, *The Entertainer*, *Solace*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Lili Marlene* and others, for the benefit of the Montreal Association for the Blind (MAB).

Since Nesbitt himself, a Montreal businessman and lawyer, footed the bill for the recording, all proceeds from sales of the disc go directly to the MAB.

In an interview this week, Nesbitt explained his connection with the MAB.

"It all came from a tie-in with music. I started playing for groups at the MAB when I was just starting my law practise and had time to spare. It's a special way to reach a blind person."

Through piano, Nesbitt has become a director of the Association and is happy and surprised at the successful early sales of the record.

He has played piano by ear since he was a child and specializes "on the black keys." Because they're raised they make playing by touch easier. He has no formal music training and doesn't read music, using his ear and fingers as guides.

"If the music had to be written down you could do it," says Nesbitt, "but each time I play, the fingers fall in different patterns. At any-

ON THE BLACK KEYS AND BY EAR



Pianist and businessman Deane Nesbitt has added painting album cover to repertoire.

time it can be different, unlike written music."

With ear and fingers as guide, Nesbitt tested and developed his repertory for this recording.

"Some pieces I tried I thought sounded great, but then I would record them and find that I had to drop or change them. Recording and listening to the original again helps. I found I had left out a whole section of *Comme un soleil* after listening to the original again.

"On the recording I've avoided playing the same way for each piece. Since they're usually in the same key, I tried to make differences in tempo and style."

On the Black Keys and by Ear is playing by ear as it should be, varied, tasteful, clean and well worked out. Nesbitt is obviously a keen judge of sound.

The record is on sale for \$5 at the Montreal Association for the Blind offices, 7000 Sherbrooke St. W. with phone orders being accepted at 489-8201. Also at Brick-

point Studios, 1248 Greene Ave., Tere reserve-Montreal Trust at Place Ville Marie, and Montreal Trust at Fairview Shopping Centre.