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June 1973  
VOL. 23 NO. 6
Videotape and “Dueling Banjos”

An even greater obstacle to a viable home videotape or videodisc market than the incompatibility of the various systems is the programming itself. What do you actually put on any video system that a potential customer would want to buy for multiple viewings?

Instructional video has found a marketable niche in schools and industry but none of the entertainment seeds has been able to germinate in “consumer-market” soil. After all, how often do you want to see a reshooting of Mannix, or even Billy Jack? (A rental library might present some solution here.) Music, of course, can be listened to any number of times, and many people have proposed opera, or musicals, as the most likely field for home video. But, again, how many times can you bear to see Joan Sutherland scratch her nose in the opening scene of Traviata? And then there is the discrepancy, for now, between the widespread stereo sound and the small screen, not to mention the directionality of the audio compared with that spot in front of you where the video is confined. Those of you who have seen video cast of concerts that were heard simultaneously on stereo FM may have had their suspension of disbelief challenged every time the camera moved about the orchestra, or switched from a long shot to a close-up, while the sonic perspective stayed constant. I know I have. When the camera is behind the orchestra, for instance, and I see the violins on the right side of the screen, I become quite disconcerted by hearing them still coming from the left. And, to be frank, those shots of bassoonists’ fingers do get to be quite a bore after awhile.

One solution would be an expensive one: to shoot the visuals outside the concert hall, with the care and imagination that was evident in those Beatles movies (put that bassoonist in a tree? have a shot of the French horns in a field? on a roof?) and to co-ordinate the separately recorded sound as the “best of Hollywood” has been done for decades.

I must say I did recently see a musical scene so well done that I would easily buy a videotape or disc to see and hear it at my pleasure. It is the “Dueling Banjos” episode in the movie Deliverance. Never mind that the “duel” is between a banjo and a guitar, or that as I write this the music to the “Dueling Banjos” episode in the movie Deliverance. Never mind that the "duel" is between a banjo and a guitar, or that as I write this the music to the "Dueling Banjos" episode in the movie Deliverance. Never mind that the "duel" is between a banjo and a guitar, or that as I write this the music could do with visuals in connection with, say, Schubert's C major Quintet, which after all was once as improvisatory in the mind of the composer as "Dueling Banjos" is made to seem on the screen.

Next month we will spotlight a musician who has had his own share of success in a TV concert (among other things) but who has hardly been deprived of academy (NARAS) awards: THE RECORDINGS OF VLADIMIR HOROWITZ will include a list of every recording the pianist ever made, from piano rolls to still-unreleased tapes. We will also cover the sessions of HOROWITZ’ FAREWELL TO COLUMBIA as well as of "A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC," Stephen Sondheim’s new hit musical. Winthrop Sargeant will contribute some NOTES ON MUSIC CRITICISM and we will top the issue off with 10 LAB TEST REPORTS.

Leonard Marcus

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Cover photo by Roy Lindstrom
Albeit an expensive bargain, but a bargain nevertheless. For the Model Fifty-Four is without question the finest stereo receiver we have ever made. Indeed, it may well be the finest stereo receiver anyone has ever made. And if that wasn't enough, the Fifty-Four is also an absolutely incredible four-channel receiver. With 60 watts (RMS) per side in the two channel mode and 25 watts (RMS) per side in the four-channel mode, the Fifty-Four is an extraordinary power package. It's considerably more compact and sleeker than competitive models, yet it will outperform the biggest and bulkiest of them with ease.

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The Fifty-Four also features an exclusive automatic power control circuit (patent pending) that turns the receiver on and off to coincide with the operation of your automatic turntable.

All in all, we think the Fifty-Four is quite in a class by itself. But don't take our word for it. Not for $525. Go listen for yourself. And if the price still seems a bit rich, consider this: Buy the Fifty-Four and you'll never have to buy another receiver again. Now that's a bargain!

For more technical information, write to KLH Research and Development, 30 Cross Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02139. Or visit your KLH dealer.
The Heathkit AR-1500 rates

"The AR-1500 is the most powerful and sensitive receiver we have ever measured..."
- Julian Hirsch, Stereo Review, Nov. '71

"...a stereo receiver easily worth twice the cost (or perhaps even more)...
- Audio Magazine, Dec. '71

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letters

The Classical Upsurge

Peter Davis' article "The Classical Upsurge" [April 1973] presents a heartening analysis of the current state of the classical-record market, and I wish to express gratitude for his encouraging words about Nonesuch's position and my own activities in its behalf. This may also be a good time to correct an unfortunate error of understanding.

In an informal conversation with the author some months ago, I had mentioned a long-past episode concerning Nonesuch's awareness of Walter Carlos' work in progress on what eventually became "Switched-On Bach." Here, I'm afraid, Mr. Davis' memory has skipped a stitch. Contrary to his report, the album had not been offered to Nonesuch, nor was there any direct contact between Nonesuch and its creators. We were mindful of the high level of skill in the project, as well as the predictable commercial success of the album: nevertheless we concluded that its premise was not compatible with our aims. Thus no attempt was made to compete for release rights. The appellation "recorded garbage" is Mr. Davis' and would not have been applied by us: We share the general admiration for Mr. Carlos' unique talents.

Teresa Sterne
Director, Nonesuch Records
New York, N.Y.

Romantic Cuts Explained

In the April letters column, Norman Cooper protested editorial liberties in my recordings of Rubinstein's Overture and Raff's Symphony No. 3. Since this is not the only protest I have encountered, let me respond.

When Rubinstein introduced his work it had the customary four movements. Years later two more were added and later still a seventh movement was included. Thus there is no more "a" seven-movement original than "a" six- or four-movement original. (I readily concede that until now there was no five-movement original.) The original -original second movement was slow. Later a second second movement was inserted before the first second movement was slow. Another slow movement and a scherzo were inserted in the second original between the original-original third and fourth movements. The original-original third movement was fast but not a scherzo as Mr. Cooper indicates, and the order of movements in our five-movement version corresponds to the order in the third-original (i.e., seven-movement) version.

The second-original slow second movement bore thematic references to the introduction of the original-original last movement. Otherwise it was a dreadful bore. I felt, to use Mr. Cooper's phrase, that the presence of two successive slow movements early in the work severely weakened the structure and continuity of the music. As to the other deleted movement, it was picturesque, but less storm than wind. Our hope was that the five movements recorded would be listenable and win new adherents to Rubinstein.

I should add that economics did play a role

Rubinstein
How many waves make an Ocean?

The Rubinstein champions who might have purchased a seventy-five-minute version were not, in my judgment and Vox', numerous enough to offset the additional costs of recording and production. The casual listener would have been much less likely to purchase a two-record album to indulge his curiosity. Furthermore I wonder seriously whether seventy-five minutes of this work would have produced more adherents for Rubinstein. Even radio stations (who have been kind in broadcasting this recording and who still provide the best meeting place for unfamiliar repertoire and potential record buyers) would have been less likely to program a seventy-five-minute version.

In the same vein, to have recorded the work with a major orchestra (another frequent complaint) would have cost three to four times as much, even in Europe, and would simply have meant no recording at all.

With the Raff I must be more dogmatic. I love the piece—as last the movement, which I find largely noise rushing in to fill a vacuum. As we recorded, I began to wonder how far Raff could develop a C major chord; after all, he is not Mussorgsky. I worried that all except Raff's small legion of loyalists would be to the proverbial exits. I had not planned to make a cut. But providentially one appeared in my score (it may have emanated from Karl Muck, who conducted from this material in 1903), I decided to follow someone's advice and so informed the musicians—who stood and applauded.

I think Im Walde is a lovely work and a fascinating addition to the repertory. I will certainly perform it again, but I will probably make the same cut. As far as the scores I have indicated, we have made no cut in the second movement.

Richard Kpun
New York, N.Y.

Gedda: The Early Years

The reason I went to Stockholm in 1952 was to see for myself whether Issay Dobrowen (then musical director of the Stockholm Opera) had sufficiently recovered from a major operation to carry through the heavy task of our planned recording of Boris Godunov in Paris with an almost entirely non-Russian cast.

On arrival at the airport I was asked by a swarm of journalists if I were not interested in hearing their excellent young Swedish voices. Naturally I was interested, but I did not expect either the front page stories that appeared next morning or the mass of letters and almost incessant telephone calls asking to be heard. I had to ask the director of the Opera for a room for a couple of days to hear about a hundred young aspirants. The first to sing to me (at nine-thirty in the morning) was Gedda. I had, I believe, sung only once in public. He sang the Carmen Flower Song so tenderly yet passionately that I was moved almost to tears. He delivered the difficult rising scale ending with a clear and brilliant B flat. Almost apologetically I asked him to try to sing it as written—pianissimo, rallentando, and diminuendo. Without turning a hair he achieved the near miracle, incredibly beautifully and without effort. I asked him to come back at eight that evening, and sent word to my wife [Elisabeth Schwarzkopf] that a great singer had fallen into my lap and to Dobrowen that this twenty-three-year-old was the heaven-sent Dmitri for our Boris. (Among the others I auditioned and signed were Elisabeth Söderström and Kerstin Meyer.) That evening Gedda sang the Carmen aria and the two Dav Giovanni arias for Dobrowen, my wife, and me. I engaged him immediately for Dmitri and telegraphed Karajan and Dr. Ghiringhelli (then soprano of the Scala) that I had found the ideal Ottavio. Ghiringhelli at once telephoned Gedda to fly to La Scala's expense for an audition. That autumn Ghiringhelli told me that in all the years he had been director of the Scala no non-Italian singer had auditioned with such exquisitely clear and flawless Italian. He was immediately engaged for La Scala.

I am surprised that Gedda prefers his recent Wiener Blu recording to the old one. It is extremely unlikely that he will find again in his life a conductor for opera that will equal the late Otto Ackermann or Lovro von Matačic. Great conductors of Johann Strauss or the best of Lehár are rarer than men who can squeeze out the face flannel of Mahler's exhibitionistic self-pity.

Walter Legge
Geneva, Switzerland

Composing Women

I am astonished and saddened that neither Judith Rosen nor Grace Rubin-Rabson, in their contributions to "Why Haven't Women Become Great Composers?" (February 1973), has apparently ever heard of Mrs. H. H. A. Beach, whose life is almost other than any of the ladies they name to be a great composer. Born Amy Mary Cheaney in Heniker, New Hampshire, in 1867, Mrs. Beach's major works include the Gaelic Symphony, a piano concerto, a piano quintet, a sonata for piano and violin. In addition she also wrote some 150 songs, of which the most familiar are "Ah, Love but a Day" and "The Year's at the Spring.

May I add a rider or two to Edward Greenfield's excellent piece on Nicolai Gedda [March 1973]?
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The reviewers have done exhaustive reports on Zero 100. We believe they are worth reading, so we’d be happy to send them to you along with a color brochure on the Zero 100. Write to us at: British Industries Co., Dept. F-23 Westbury, N.Y. 11590.

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Lauren Goldstein
New York, N.Y.

Robeson and Totalitarianism
Roland S. Parker’s recommendation (“Letters,” March 1973) that Paul Robeson’s “efforts against totalitarianism . . . be documented while he is still alive and able to experience vindication” cannot but arouse astonishment and indignation in those who know anything at all about Mr. Robeson’s extramusical activities.

Paul Robeson has always punctuated his political activism with unqualified praise for the Soviet Union and its political system—and what better example of totalitarianism exists than that of Russia (especially Stalin’s)? Ask Ashkenazy, Makurova, or Nureyev. They were there. We would never have known the magnitude of Hitler’s crimes against humanity had we not witnessed the charred bones for ourselves. Lacking such firsthand documentation of Russia’s death camps, we can only guess at how many innocent souls were dispatched on the orders of Mr. Robeson’s heroes.

If Paul Robeson is to be honored, honor him as an artist. As an opponent of totalitarianism, he ranks with Ezra Pound and P. G. Wodehouse.

Joseph Reece
Chicago, Ill.

Demus vs. Moore
In your March issue, Harris Goldsmith says that Fischer-Dieskau, in his new DG recording of Brahms’s Serious Songs with Barenboim, surpasses “both of his earlier recordings.” I have the second of these (last on Heliodor HS 25082), on which Jorg Demus is the pianist, as well as the Seraphim Kapsis/Moore version that Mr. Goldsmith finds “miles
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ONKYO
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CIRCLE 47 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
ONE DAY my father brought home a gift someone had given him—a complete recording of Tosca. It was on that day that the world of opera was opened to me. My sister and I listened to it over and over until we had memorized all the parts and began singing them to one another. What a Sardian she made! It was a Cetra recording (1230), with Gianni Poggi and Ugo Savarese: Adriana Guerini was the Tosca. What most impressed me at the time, though, was the role of Scarpia. “If ever I should become a tenor instead. Now that my career is on the way. I unfortunately became a tenor instead. Now that my career is underway. I have a copy of DG's Oberon (2709 035) in my house for a long time and it is still unopened.

I have to limit myself severely in my record listening. Throughout my career the one area where I have listened extensively is in recordings by the great tenors. Here I have developed some special fondnesses.

First there is Caruso—what we mean when we say “Italian tenor.” It all started with him. Nevertheless, I find it paradoxical that among the many recordings of this Italian par excellence his greatest successes have been his selections from the French repertoire: from such operas as La Juive, Le Cid, Manon, Faust, and Carmen—even the aria from L'Africaine, which he sings in Italian. All except Faust are on RCA's “Best of Caruso” (LM 6056, two-disc set). Here we have innumerable interpretations. The “Rachel, quand du seigneur” carries an extra-musical impact for me when I consider that the record was made at one of his final sessions and the opera from which it is taken, La Juive, was the last new role he undertook.

As a matter of fact, in an album I made called “Domingo Sings Caruso” (RCA LSC 3251) I included a number of the arias he recorded. I also included a couple of arias that he never recorded, although he had sung the world premiere of the operas. They are the “Lamento di Federico” from L'Arlesiana, and the “Chi ella mi creda” from La Fanciulla del West.

Caruso did record the two tenor arias from Leoncavallo's La Bohème, and both are included on the album, as is “M'apari.” Marita is an opera he always liked to sing. Even though his voice became darker and even though he was getting into such heavy roles as Samson, there were three operas he kept in his active repertory until his very last days—Martha, L'Elisir d'amore, and Rigoletto—all “lighter” tenor roles. I cherish these recordings.

Not too well known, even to record collectors, is one of my favorite tenors, Galliano Masini. He sings Alvaro on the old Cetra Forza del destino (now on Everest/Cetra S 418/3). And he did a recital album for Cetra which included a selection from Fedora—not the very famous aria, but the one following Loris' account of how he killed Fedora's fiance, “Mia madre, mia vecchia madre.” For me this is the most incredibly dramatic tenor performance I've ever heard on records.
Infinity introduces
the wave of the future.

Throughout history, a few ingenious men have had insights into the nature of things that were inherently perfect. Insights like the law of gravitation or the theory of relativity.

Lincoln Walsh had just such an insight. By cutting through the compexy and compromise of existing acoustic design theory, he touched upon the basic truths of sound reproduction arc discovered how to create the perfect loudspeaker. In 1969, Lincoln Walsh was issued U.S. Patent #3,248,737 on his new concept—a concept so radically different that it’s still the only speaker design currently available that can’t be found in any known acoustic textbook.

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What does the Infinity wave transmission line tweeter sound like? No advertising adjetives, no sonic superlatives will do. You must personally experience it before its startling effect on the art of sound reproduction can be truly appreciated. Once you do, we think you’ll agree that the Walsh “pulsating cylinder” is the wave of the future.

The Infinity wave transmission line tweeter, installed in the all-new Infinity Monitor, is now being featured at the finer Infinity dealers listed. Visit the Infinity dealer nearest you for an exciting and dynamic demonstration of this innovative concept.

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*Manufactured by Infinity under license of Ohm Acoustics Corporation.
Then there was Toscanini's tenor. Aureliano Pertile. His recordings, admittedly, are notorious for their occasional excesses and exaggerations. All that sobbing at the end of "Vesti la guibba!" One wonders what Toscanini must have made of that! But if you can disregard these things, you will find that he was actually a rather refined singer. His line and his style were remarkable, and they show to special advantage in his excerpts from Manon Lescaut (EMI C 0617 644).

Another tenor who excelled in the role of Des Grieux was Beniamino Gigli. He recorded a marvelous "Guardate, pazzo son!" It was through listening to Gigli's recordings of duets with De Luca that I began aspiring to be a tenor. Soon I was listening religiously to his complete recordings, especially his Andrea Chénier and his Ballo in maschera (Seraphim IB 6019 and IB 6026).

The natural beauty of Tito Schipa's voice has been caught on many recordings. One of his more remarkable arias is "Ella mi fu rapita," though there are longer ones, and in Ballo in maschera (Seraphim E 73382), he then soars (Electrola LM 20113).

My fellow Spaniard Miguel Fleta was one of the great singers. Like Fertile, he was gifted with a vibrant temperament and a voice of great beauty. And he was a master of such technical feats as hitting a fortissimo, then reducing it to pianissimo. I especially like the way he sings "Spirito gentil!" and the aria from Zandonai's Giulietta e Romeo (Preiser LV 96).

Having spoken of a countryman, may I now say something in behalf of my country's unique variety of opera, the zarzuelas? Most zarzuelas are one-act comic operas, with spoken dialogues, though there are longer ones, and in a more serious vein.

Some zarzuelas have been recorded. London once put out a series of them, long since deleted from the catalogues. I am especially fond of the Dona Francisquita, with Alfredo Kraus and Dolores Perez. It's by one of our greatest composers, Olivero Vives, who also composed many of the lovely songs sung by Victoria de los Angeles, Teresa Berganza, and Montserrat Caballé. Another lovely song is La Den Soto del Parral, with baritone Manuel Ausensi, who has an extraordinarily beautiful voice. And finally Arrieta's Marina, one of the most famous of all zarzuelas, which was later expanded and fleshed out into an opera. There is a famous old recording of Marina (LALP 632/3, deleted) with Hipólito Lazarro—another tenor famed for his high notes—and the Spanish coloratura Mercedes Capris.
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SOUND AS CLEAR AS LIGHT
Why new Memorex sounds better than the cassette you're probably using now.

Thank MRX₃ Oxide.

MRX₃ Oxide makes new Memorex the best cassette tape you can buy for use on all equipment. Bar none.

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In short, new Memorex with MRX₃ Oxide means superior fidelity.

And, after all, isn't that what you buy a tape for?
How can you claim the HK-1000 [HF test report, March 1973] is the best cassette deck on the market when there are other units with better distortion figures?—Jeremy Starr, Binghamton, N.Y.

The Harman-Kardon HK-1000 has a non-standard head alignment that gives poor results when prerecorded tapes are played back on it. It makes me feel sick to see this vital information withheld in your test.—William P. Lesley, Peru, Ind.

The most striking thing about the HK-1000 is, as we said in the report, its frequency-response curves. When a cassette unit can produce results that look like open-reel equipment and be demonstrably better than other units we've tested in this respect, we count it as a significant achievement. We did not say that the unit is better than all others in all respects; and the distortion figures are indeed bettered by a number of competing units. But the accumulation of nonstandard head alignment is nonsense. There is only one correct way to align heads and Harman-Kardon uses it. In fact if alignment had been incorrect on our sample the fact would have shown up in our playback response curves.

I want to buy a small- to moderate-size unit with good sound, convertible to four-channel use, as that seems to be the coming thing. I don't care if the system is of U.S. manufacture or an import. Would you advise?—M. A. Rider, New York, N.Y.

We wouldn't on the basis of such a broad question. But we would note that it's a good thing you'll accept an import since there are mighty few high fidelity products on the market today that aren't in whole or in part imported—even though they may bear the names of U.S. manufacturing companies. And if you want that convertibility, we'd certainly recommend components rather than the compacts that your question seems to suggest.

Would I receive good results on a cassette deck with no bias adjustment using prerecorded Crolyn tape?—Joe Buderwitz, Scarsdale, N.Y.

First let's remind ourselves that Crolyn is Du Pont's trade name for chromium dioxide tapes, from whatever manufacturer, are very similar. Second, that word "prerecorded": We assume you don't mean commercially duplicated, since chromium dioxide isn't yet used for that purpose. So we're talking about playing back cassettes recorded on a home machine, using chromium dioxide tape. Bias is a factor only in recording (and the recording machine must have appropriate bias switching if it is to use chromium dioxide successfully); so in playback we are concerned only with the other related variable, equalization. Many machines record chromium dioxide in such a way that it will play back correctly through the standard (ferric oxide) equalization. Some (the Harman-Kardon HK-1000 and the Advent 201, for example) alter playback equalization for chromium dioxide in order to increase its effective signal-to-noise ratio. If your cassette was recorded on the first type of unit and is to be played back on the second, simply put the equalization switch in the "standard" or "ferric" position. If it was recorded on the second and is to be played back on the first, a cut in treble at your amplifier or receiver will approximate the correct playback equalization.

Just what is going on at Sony? First it was Sony. Then Sony/Superscope came along. Marantz, a subsidiary of Superscope, is with us, and now just plain old Superscope. How about it?—James Matejka, Chicago, Ill.

No need to get fussed, Mr. Matejka, though the picture is admittedly a little confusing. Superscope started out as a U.S. importing company, and made a big success here with the open-reel tape decks it found at a tiny Japanese company called Sony. Superscope still is the sole U.S. agent for Sony consumer audio tape equipment, raw tape, and related accessories. But both companies have continued to grow and branch out in the intervening years. Sony formed its U.S. subsidiary (Sony Corp. of America) to handle a host of products not imported by Superscope: components, TV receivers, videotape equipment, radios, and what have you. Meanwhile, Superscope bought Marantz (and became a manufacturer for the first time), went into the export business (originally with the Marantz products), established the Superscope Records division (discs and prerecorded tapes), bought a fifty-per-cent interest in Standard Radio of Japan, and began manufacturing its own components under the Superscope brand in the Standard Radio plant. Recent announcements suggest that the picture will get more complex over the next few years. Sony and Superscope have agreed to a new contract under which Superscope will progressively lose its exclusivity on its present Sony products, category by category, while gaining the right to manufacture and sell its own tape equipment.

My five-year-old son has been forbidden magnetic toys on the supposition that they are a potential hazard to recorded magnetic tapes, of which I have more than three hundred. Toys can (and do) turn up anywhere in the house; but am I being unfair?—Albert C. Salzburg, Providence, R.I.

Probably you are. The pros in your receiver or amplifier could be a much greater hazard to the tapes than any magnetic toys. Our solution would be to keep everything—tapes and equipment alike—on shelves that leave no extra space for temporary storage of anything (but allow adequate ventilation for the equipment of course). If you put away all your tapes immediately after use there should be minimum chance of misadventure.

I've heard that CD-4 demodulators for playing RCA's Quadradiscs get out of alignment easily. Is this true, and if so wouldn't matrixing be a better way of making quadraphonic discs for that reason? I never heard of a decoder getting out of alignment.—M.F. Weems, Greenwich, Conn.

Demodulators do have to be aligned correctly for optimum results, and we've heard similar tales of the need for constant realignment. Our experience so far does not tend to bear them out however. But we have found that Quadradiscs are cut at a lower level than matrixed discs and therefore tend to be a little noisier; and sometimes we encounter more distortion on loud passages than we would expect with stereo discs. But separate decoders (the only format in which matrix equipment that can be compared directly with the separate demodulators we've been using) can be misaligned to the extent that input balance must be matched exactly so the correct amplitude differences are to be presented to the decoder circuitry, and input levels must not overload the decoder if distortion is to be low. When either a decoder or a demodulator is built into other equipment—a receiver, for example—the necessary alignment can be done at the factory. So we see no reason why either type should be particularly prone to adjustment problems once it reaches that stage of development—though unlike decoders the demodulator will still have to be matched to the properties of the pickup cartridge in use.

I want to buy an eight-track recorder/player. Are any available with the Dolby noise-reduction system?—F. Richard Mileski, Goldsboro, N.C.

The question keeps coming and the rumors that one may be just around the corner keep flying. But it may be a long way around the corner. Most manufacturers insist that the automobile is, and will remain, a natural habitat for eight-track equipment—but not for Dolby processing.

Why haven't you answered the questions in my previous cards?—John Smith, San Francisco, Calif.

Because you gave no return address and you ask questions of insufficient general interest to bother with in print. And is that your real name?

June 1973
news and views

One of Big Two Goes for Four

The Quadradisc camp has received a big boost with the decision by Warner Communications' Warner-Elektro-Atlantic group (which also includes Reprise) to begin recording discs in the discrete four-channel format. RCA—which, with Columbia, is one of the two largest U.S. distributors of discs and tapes—joins RCA (until now the lone U.S. producer in the discrete disc format) in trying to overtake matrixed discs, especially SQ. The SQ stable has at least fifty-five equipment manufacturer licensees and more than 200 titles in SQ from Columbia. About fifty discs on five labels are available in Sansui's QS or regular matrix (RM) format. In contrast, WEA anticipates having twenty-four titles out by the time you read this, in addition to those offered by RCA (also about two dozen). Incidentally both companies will use the Quadradisc logo devised by RCA.

Explaining the WEA decision to go discrete, Jac Holzman, president of Elektra and head of WEA's joint engineering committee on quadraphonics, called matrixing "stereo and a half" and adds, "We decided to accept no compromise."

RCA has taken an either/or approach to stereo versus quadraphonic discs in the interest of holding each recording to a single disc version and says that eventually everything will be recorded and released quadraphonically only. By midsummer RCA plans to offer forty per cent of its titles on Quadradiscs, and to have about 100 titles available by the end of the year.

Holzman, on the other hand, doesn't think the single inventory idea is good: It may confuse the public, he says. So RCA also will issue stereo versions of all quadraphonic releases, although the Quadradiscs will cost $6.98—$1.00 more than stereo. (RCA is holding its Quadradiscs at $5.98, but most matrixed records sell for $6.98.) Holzman says the increase covers costs for a harder vinyl compound, more quality control, and remixing old catalogue releases.

Unlike the SQ and RM formats the Quadradisc up to this point has lacked a vocal promoter for its approach to four-channel recording. Holzman says he'll be carrying the "good news" of the discrete disc to everyone, including the Federal Communications Commission (which would have to approve any revisions necessary for discrete broadcasting) and the National Association of FM Broadcasters, some of whose members have bemoaned the costs of converting their facilities for discrete transmission. At other levels, WEA is preparing a booklet on quadraphonic discs for distribution in record stores, and Elektra says it will set up a sound exhibit room in New York City in which to demonstrate Quadradiscs to the dealers.

Right now the problem is one of limited facilities for producing the discrete discs. Into this spring, RCA was using pressing plants in Indianapolis and Los Angeles. JVC, an RCA partner in developing the discrete disc, has set up a mastering facility in Los Angeles, which is scheduled to be in operation by now. At press time, RCA had decided where it would press its discrete discs; Columbia has been pressing a considerable portion of WEA's stereo releases.

Holzman admits discrete discs still have some problems (such as noise), but says "they're in the control of the manufacturer and we believe will soon be ironed out." Walter Dean, executive vice-president of Columbia Records, has been quoted in the trade press as saying, "Unless those companies espousing the discrete four-channel approach...are able to solve their technical problems within the next year or two, forget it. We'll be so far ahead there'll be no catching up." One nontechnical problem for RCA and WEA will be the short supply and relatively high cost of demodulators and Shibata stylus to be used with Quadradiscs.

Meanwhile...

Back in the FM studio, some technical problems have emerged in broadcasting Quadradiscs—not as discrete four-channel, of course, but as stereo and mono. Several FM stations that have attempted to use the "compatible" Quadradiscs in place of the usual stereo product report the Case of the Unwelcome Whistles. The suspects are the 19-kHz pilot and 38-kHz subcarrier of stereo FM and the 30-kHz carrier on the Quadradisc, in various combinations.

One wrinkle in the case involves the 30-kHz carrier alone. Time-honored practice among engineers and disc jockeys is to cue up a disc by listening for the opening of the desired selection and then "back cue": With the motor off they revolve the platter backward until the stylus is far enough into the blank groove before the music section to allow a running start once the motor is turned on for air play. But in Quadradiscs the "blank" groove isn't blank. It contains that 30-kHz tone, which produces sound that zooms from 0 Hz to beyond audibility as the platter gathers speed. Thus any Quadradisc cut onto the air too early may offer an unwelcome whistled glissando as its opening measure.

Once the disc is up to speed, engineers at some stations say a second whistle occurs at 11,000 Hz as an apparent product of intermodulation between the 19-kHz FM pilot and the 30-kHz carrier. Others experience similar interference between the 30-kHz and the 38-kHz stereo FM subcarrier, with a resultant 8-kHz whistle.

So far it appears that these interference whistles do not plague stations that use telephone lines to deliver broadcast signals from studio to transmitter. The reason is not hard to find: Inherent frequency limitations of these "land lines" block the 30-kHz carrier and prevent it from interacting with the transmitters.

WFLN in Philadelphia is one of many stations that don't need land lines because the transmitter is located at the studio site. Moreover it prides itself on the quality of its FM signal—and on its programming of the area's leading musical organization: the Philadelphia Orchestra. But recent RCA discs of that orchestra have been available only in quadraphonic form, and the Quadradiscs produced an 8-kHz whistle at WFLN. At this writing the station's chief engineer, Tom Moyer, says RCA has come up with a filter that looks as if it will solve the problem without degrading signal quality.

All told, it appears that the problems in playing Quad-
TEAC announces a major achievement in tape technology:

A totally new transport drive system has produced the first cassette deck with record and playback wow and flutter of less than 0.07%! Measurably better than any other cassette deck in the world.
THE TEAC 450 with enhanced Dolby® system.

No other cassette deck can touch it.

Here’s why it has no peer among cassette decks and why its specs are matched by only a few reel-to-reel decks.

TEAC can now announce a remarkable achievement in sound: a cassette deck with an enhanced Dolby system, and record and playback wow and flutter of less than 0.07%! This WRMS measurement is not just an abstract statistic; it is a measurement that assures you a steady, flutter-free sound previously unheard of in cassette decks. This is measurably better than any other cassette deck in existence!

How did we do it? With a hard-headed, uncompromising philosophy of design leadership, and incredible quality control.

The heart of this accomplishment is TEAC’s new transport drive system—a system with all new parts and exceptional critical tolerances.

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The heart of this accomplishment is TEAC’s new transport drive system—a system with all new parts and exceptional critical tolerances.

Item: our new clutch

Until now cassette decks had clutches that, because they were mass produced, had variations that created unacceptable variations in tape torque and head-to-tape contact. Our new slip clutch for the supply and take-up reels has been critically machined to give optimum torque—perfect balance of tension between take-up reel and capstan. This helps eliminate another of the causes of wow and flutter, and reduces level fluctuation (drop-outs) to a new low for cassette recording.

Item: our outer rotor motor

Our hysteresis synchronous motor has the outside revolving, rather than the inside—as in a normal motor. The flywheel is exceptionally large (93 mm) and has twice the mass of any other TEAC flywheel. This increases the inertia and stability of the transport drive element which pulls the tape.

Our outer rotor motor is even dynamically balanced, to be completely free of rotation variation! It drives the capstan flywheel with a professional quality flat belt made of a new synthetic material created for minimum stretch and maximum durability.

Item: our new capstan

A newly designed capstan has a shaft with a diameter of 2.4 mm. The shaft has a critical tolerance of 0.15 microns (the accompanying diagram shows this 0.15 micron tolerance enlarged 4000 times). This perfect roundness allows the tape to be transported at a much steadier rate, smoothing the tape flow and greatly reducing one of the significant components contributing to wow and flutter.

Item: our new capstan

A newly designed capstan has a shaft with a diameter of 2.4 mm. The shaft has a critical tolerance of 0.15 microns (the accompanying diagram shows this 0.15 micron tolerance enlarged 4000 times). This perfect roundness allows the
Item: our enhanced Dolby system

TEAC has given Dolby circuitry a significant new flexibility: our exclusive Dolby FM/Copy control. In the past, when recording Dolby-ized tapes or Dolbyized FM broadcasts, the high-pitched emphasis of the encoded Dolby signal was heard as you monitored—an inaccurate and disturbing representation of the sound being recorded. The exclusive TEAC Dolby FM/Copy switch decodes the Dolby signal for monitoring, while leaving the recorded encoded Dolby signal undisturbed.

While today there are only a handful of Dolby-ized FM stations broadcasting throughout the country, TEAC has created this forward-thinking feature to enhance your enjoyment of their signal.

And for good measure, we've added an automatic output stabilizing network that maintains Dolby-ized levels despite changes in the line levels!

So what else is new?

Literally dozens of new exclusive TEAC features—both electronic and mechanical—can be found on the 450. For instance:

Three-level bias and equalization. Flick the two switches and instantly adjust for normal, high output or chromium dioxide tapes. A vital, but neglected feature in other cassette decks.

Automatic timer circuit. You can plug into an external timer and control your entire system when you're not present. The 450 will turn on automatically, come out of pause, record, then shut off any connected component, as well as its own electronics, at the end of the tape!

Mic/line mixing. A feature of reel-to-reel decks now found on the 450. Professional slide controls allow you to mix 2 mic inputs and 2 line inputs to create voice and stereo instrumental mixing.

Lighted tape run indicator. A glance at the 450 from across the room tells you the tape is flowing normally.

Two heads. A record-playback head and an erase head of a new material called Permaflux—the lowest distortion head ever made.

Solid-state triggering devices. Solid-state switching and the elimination of relays further enhance reliability.

Signal-to-noise ratio of 60dB. This important rating places the 450 with the finest in reel-to-reel decks. Which translates into superior sound.

LED. A light emitting diode backstops your 2 VU meters by warning you of transient high-level highs, and helps you avoid saturation distortion (about which we've spoken in a previous ad).

What does it all add up to?

A cassette deck that is in a class by itself. A sophistication in tape technology that is exclusive with TEAC.

The TEAC 450 has the flexibility to function as a complete record/playback unit, or as an integrated component in a total system. It is a pace-setter for the industry.

And to top it all, TEAC now offers a two-year warranty on all parts and labor—a warranty that reflects total confidence in our superior TEAC engineering and workmanship.

That 0.07% wow and flutter may be much better than anyone else's cassette deck. But it is only a hint of things to come from TEAC.

Only a hint.

Here are the specs:

- Heads
  Two, erase and record-playback, 4 track 2 channel stereo.

- Motor
  Hysteresis synchronous outer-rotor motor

- Wow and Flutter
  0.07% (wrms)

- Frequency Response
  30 – 16,000 Hz (Chromium dioxide tape)

- Signal to Noise Ratio
  60 dB (with Dolby process)

- Dimensions
  6¾” (H) x 17½” (W) x 10¾” (D)

Features and specifications subject to change without notice.

* Dolby is a trademark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.
Flip the switch to 4-channel.

The newest thing in sound is the newest Sound of Koss. And it's right at your fingertips. The switch is on to 4-channel. And only Koss gives you 4 ways to make it. With the big four from Koss. Four exciting Koss Quadrafoners that do for 4-channel what Koss Stereophones have done for 2-channel listening.

Four separate Driver Elements. On the left cup of each Koss Quadrafone is a 2-channel to 4-channel switch. Flip it to 4-channel and four separate Koss dynamic driver elements (two in each cup) surround you with breathtaking, full-dimensional quadraphonic sound from either your matrix or discrete system. If you thought the Sound of Koss was superb in 2-channel, wait until you hear it in 4-channel.

So you haven't made the switch. There are two plugs on Koss Quadrafoners. If you haven't made the switch to 4-channel, you only use one of them. The black one. Which you insert into your present stereophone jack on your 2-channel system. That automatically connects the two drivers in each ear cup in parallel. So what you'll have is nearly double the bass radiating area and an unbelievable increase in efficiency over the full range. Which should make the switch to Koss Quadrafoners worth it even if you haven't made the switch to 4-channel.

Volume-Balance Controls. Slip on a Koss Quadrafone and you'll slip into any seat in the concert hall. Because Koss Quadrafoners feature volume-balance controls on each ear cup. That puts any seat in the concert hall at your fingertips. From the middle of the concert hall one minute, to front row center the next. And you don't even have to leave the comfort of your own living room.

Hearing is believing. With all that at your fingertips, it's hard to believe that you can buy Koss Quadrafoners from $39.95 to $85. But it's true. And while you're on your way to hear them at your Hi-Fi Dealer or favorite Department Store, mail us a request for our full-color catalog, c/o Virginia Lamm, Dept. HF-472. You'll find a lot more from Koss that'll switch you on.

KOSS CORPORATION, 4129 N. Port Washington Ave., Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212. Koss S.r.I., Via dei Valtorta, 21 20127, Milan, Italy
radiscs on the air—while presumably aggravating to both broadcasters and listeners—are not difficult to solve. But Quadradiscs already are handicapped in that, pending FCC approval of a discrete quadraphonic broadcast system, they must be transmitted in other than four channels—unlike the matrixed formats, which are being transmitted under existing rules.

And in New York...

WQXR-FM now is devoting an hour each Saturday afternoon to quadraphonic broadcasts of classical music. "Frontiers of Sound," as the program is called, initially relied on SQ-encoded material, but is incorporating other matrixed discs. At press time the station had yet to decide what to do about Quadradiscs, which can be broadcast by feeding their discrete-quadrophonic signals to a matrix encoder. The sound no longer is discrete that way, but it's quadraphonic.

New Source for Kirksaeter

Kirksaeter, a German company that set up an office in the Washington, D.C. area about two years ago, now has a new representative in this country: Audison of America, Inc., Lincoln Building Suite 2812, 60 E. 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10017. Some new products—both receivers and speakers—have been added to the line that is being offered to American dealers through Audison and continue the brand's emphasis of performance characteristics. The new Model RTX-120.85 receiver, for example, is rated at 85 watts per channel with less than 0.1 per cent typical total harmonic distortion into 8 ohms with both channels driven.

Circle 147 on Reader-Service Card

Will the Real Miss Jones...

When, about twenty years ago, the Otto Preminger film of Carmen Jones (the Bizet opera, reworked with English lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein) appeared, there was no doubt about its star: Dorothy Dandridge. True, she had to share the limelight with the likes of Harry Belafonte and Pearl Bailey; but she was Carmen Jones. Few people noticed—or cared—that the singing was done for her on the soundtrack by a girl named Marilyn Horne.

All that has changed. Marilyn Horne has capped a dramatic rise to operatic stardom by playing the original Carmen in the Bernstein-conducted Metropolitan Opera production that embodies the ideas of Goeran Gentile and therefore has become a memorial to the unquestioned talent and energy he would have brought to the general-managership of the Met had he lived. The recording of that production (see "Behind the Scenes," January 1973) generated a lot of excitement, particularly since Deutsche Grammophon had to borrow Bernstein from Columbia for it and because it is the first full-scale Met recording in years and the first ever on DG. So now RCA has decided to capitalize on a part of that excitement by reissuing the long-deleted Carmen Jones soundtrack disc. Who's the star now? Of course: Marilyn Horne.

Equipment in the News

Direct-drive turntable from Sony

Sony Corp. of America has announced the PS-2251, an integrated turntable-and-arm driven by an AC servomotor coupled directly to the platter. The design eliminates idler wheels, pulleys, and belts in the interests of suppressing rumble, wow, and flutter. The two-speed (33 and 45 rpm) turntable is equipped with a statically balanced tone arm that features a direct-reading stylus-force gauge, an anti-skating compensator, and a viscous-damped cue control. The PS-2251 with tone arm, wood base, and removable dust cover is priced at $299.50.

Circle 150 on Reader-Service Card

Concord unveils cartridge decks

The Model CD-8 stereo tape cartridge playback deck from Concord Division of Benjamin Electronic Sound Co. is described as the popular-priced partner in a pair of new Concord cartridge decks. The DC-8 boasts an output level control (to match its signals to those from other components in your stereo system), automatic and manual program selector, automatic and manual cartridge ejection, continuous play, and lighted track indicators. It costs $49.85. A sister entry is the Model CD-8-4, a stereo/quadraphonic cartridge deck of similar description, priced at $99.85.

Circle 149 on Reader-Service Card
A quadraphonic headset from Clark

For private four-channel listening, the David Clark Co. is offering the Clark/4 CH-A headset. It is driven from discrete or matrix-decoding equipment or—with its companion DC-2A "derived ambience" simulator—from stereo equipment. The headset has moving-coil drivers said to deliver uniform output from 30 Hz to 16 kHz. The combination of headset and DC-2A simulator is priced at $95; the Clark/4 CH-A alone is $80.

Fisher’s latest Dolby cassette deck

Technicians at Fisher Radio have designed the company’s SR-110 stereo cassette deck with Dolby noise-reduction circuitry and a narrow-gap (1.5-micron) magnetic head to capture high frequencies. Other features include a synchronous motor drive, piano-key controls, full automatic shutoff at the end of the tape or when power shuts off, two VU meters, a tape-selector switch allowing use of conventional (ferric) or chromium dioxide tapes, three-digit index counter, and two microphone jacks. The SR-110 sells for $249.95.

Heath offers decoder kit

For the kit builder who is ready to move into a quadraphonic system, Heath Co. has its newest matrix decoder, the Model AD-2022. Heath says the unit decodes all matrix-encoded discs now on the market. It also can be used to simulate quadraphonics by extracting the ambient sound that can be found in many stereo recordings. The price is $39.95.

Lowest-priced Dual changer

The new Dual 1214 record changer at $109.50 is the lowest-priced model in the line from United Audio Products. It is driven by a high-torque constant-speed motor, has a pitch control with a vernier range of six per cent (nominally ±3 per cent), and elevator-action changer spindle. The unit comes with a low-mass counterbalanced tone arm that tracks as low as 1 1/4 grams and has a built-in adjustable antiskating system preset at the factory for optimum compensation with most popular cartridges. Bases (simulated walnut-grain finish or oiled walnut) and dust cover are optional.

Radio Shack’s quadraphonic/stereo tape deck

The Realistic 494 quadraphonic/stereo three-head open-reel tape deck from Radio Shack has three transport speeds (7 1/2, 3 3/4, and 1 7/8 ips), tape (bias) selector switch, preamp output level controls, four individual-channel recording-level controls plus a master control, jacks for four microphones and for stereo or four-channel headphones, and automatic end-of-tape shutoff. The Realistic 494 with two reel locks, 7-inch takeup reel, and two patch cords is priced at $299.95.
The difference between stereo...

Stereo is great. And getting better. SQ 4-channel is even greater. The difference is like seeing the Mona Lisa in black and white, and suddenly seeing it in full color. SQ is more than good sound. It's an experience. You're enveloped by it. You feel it. You sense it.

And now Sony makes it possible for you to enjoy the full dimension and excitement of SQ 4-channel sound. The new Sony SQD-2020, full logic, SQ decoder is a major step forward in quadrophonic reproduction. Front-to-back logic enhances separation when you are listening to front-center (and rear-center) soloists. New waveform comparator logic does the same for signals on four corners.

The SQD-2020 has 4 calibrated VU meters so you can balance your system for optimum 4-channel reproduction. Rear channel tone controls let you drive your rear channel speakers with a basic power amplifier. With the Sony SQD-2020, you can enjoy 4-channel reproduction from SQ records or SQ broadcasts at their very best. Or from matrix records or broadcasts, other than SQ. Or from discrete sources. You can play regular stereo in stereo, or with quadrophonic enhancement.

The SQD-2050 is another new Sony SQ decoder. It features front-to-back logic and requires an integrated amplifier to drive the rear channel speakers. It's an excellent, low cost way to step up to 4-channel.

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THINKING BACK over some of the predictions I've made in this column over the years—that if rock were permitted to go on proselytizing drug use, the country would have an epidemic of dope; that New York City would die as a theatrical and show business center— I am emboldened to get out my high peaked hat (the one with the cabalistic signs all over it), don my long black robe with the loose sleeves, and gaze into my crystal ball.

Not that all of my predictions have been accurate. I did say in 1955 that Elvis Presley wouldn't last. On the other hand, I also said that rock would bring on violence, because the music was filled with a kind of hostile tension that I thought worked directly on the nervous system.

If my predictions about the influence of music on society (and vice versa) have been fairly accurate—and they have—it is because I've long been intrigued by, and I think understand fairly well, their mutual interaction. For example, as I discussed once in detail in this magazine, America's changing attitudes toward war are reflected in its songs. The sincere enthusiasm of Berlin's *Over There* ("for the Yanks are comin', with drum-drump-drummin' everywhere") in World War I gave way to a kind of synthetic. OWI-inspired patriotism in World War II—as witness *Comin' In On A Wing and a Prayer*. (The defenders of rock may deny the power of music to shape social attitudes, but the OWI knew better.) Korea produced no war songs at all that I can remember; and Vietnam produced mostly antiwar songs.

Now that that shabby disaster is over, people are again looking forward, which in itself improves the mood of the country. And I, for one, can feel some real changes coming in entertainment, particularly music, in the next few years. This, in part, is what I think is going to happen.

Theater itself will not die. I'm detecting in people (including myself) a desire for more than canned entertainment—TV, records, movies. More and more people, I think, want to see real performers on a real stage. The very abstraction of modern life seems to have produced a yearning for direct contact.

But Broadway, barring an unprecedented clean-up of New York City, has had it. Regional theater—Dallas, Chicago, Washington, Baltimore, Detroit. Los Angeles—will become increasingly important as places where theater originates. The unions have made New York City a prohibitively expensive place to mount shows. And producers just aren't going to put up all that dough to have their projects live or die on the doubtful judgment of a tiny handful of New York critics and the courage of an audience that has good reason to fear venturing into Times Square.

The movies, as we know them, will not recover from the present slump. The industry slit its own wrists when it went into exploitation films on the heels of *Easy Rider*. It made a lot of fast money from the hipper-than-thou crowd, but in the process they turned off a large part of the audience which simply quit going to the movies. And now they've lost the habit. No doubt some suburban movie houses will survive, but theater presentation of films will generally continue to shrink.

But the nontheater movie—meaning pictures for TV—will grow in number and, eventually, quality. Pay-TV is already a reality in many hotels—you get a new film for $1.50. Cable installations are spreading very quickly. The hegemony of ABC, CBS, and NBC over what you can and cannot see is ending. Small-audience shows—if you consider five or ten million people in a single evening a small audience—become, with cable and pay-TV, both practical and profitable.

Several technical developments, including the video disc, which is planned to be marketed within the next twelve months, will exaggerate the public's already obvious preference for being entertained at home. There is a new 3-D process, much superior to the old and much cheaper to shoot, that works not only on projected film but on TV as well. Further, according to a General Electric engineer I talked with, a wide-screen TV picture tube is now practical. And it's only a matter of time before your picture screen will be a thin slab you can hang on the wall; indeed, TV projection to the wall probably will come as the step beyond that. Wide screen, 3-D, right on your own wall, and a six-pack in the refrigerator to boot! Movie houses can't compete with that.

Music will become much more diversified than it has been in the last dismal decade.

It has long been a record-industry axiom that only kids buy records. It's no longer true. A generation that grew up on record-collecting is now anywhere from twenty-two to thirty. And they still buy records. Indeed many of them, with young children, are pinned to their homes most evenings and find home entertainment, particularly records, more precious than ever before.

But their taste has broadened. Granted that they grew up on crap—granted that some of them, perhaps most of them, will never develop a taste for anything beyond that, a substantial minority has turned its back on what it used to like. Talk to some of these people: they'll tell you: and they'll wonder aloud how they ever liked some of their superstar heroes of the 1960s. Now they're into all sorts of things: as the rising classical music sales figures show [see "The Classical Upsurge," *HF*, April]. Some of them are baroque buffs, some are classical guitar freaks, some are Renaissance collectors, some are into Stockhausen, a lot are into jazz. And a lot of them are exploring America's musical past, whether it's Rudolf Friml or Cole Porter or Charlie Parker.

A small television station in one city, pressed for material to put on the air, decided to run a Deanna Durbin film festival, just for the sake of camp. To its surprise, teenage girls flipped over the films (Miss Durbin was a better singer and actress than I remembered, by the way) and set up a Deanna Durbin fan club! They think she's the living end-all—pretty and frilly and feminine and singing those pretty songs! And a lot of them think that the never-trust-anybody-over-thirty crowd, the big Sixties heroes, are hopelessly square and old-fashioned. About which, of course, they are quite right.

No longer can the record companies say: This is it, this is the trend, this is what's happening. Because a lot of different things are going to be happening at the same time. The industry will ignore this fact at its distinct peril. GENE LEES
If they danced in the recording studio, what will they do at home?

We've gone about the serious business of designing the best possible loudspeaker for professional studio monitor use. With computers and anechoic chambers and all the rest. And, having gained a basic new insight into bass speaker performance, we've come up with what looks like a winner. The Sentry III.

We've run all the curves that prove, in a most scientific, sober fashion, that the system is really quite good. We've got polar graphs, and frequency response curves, distortion measurements, total power output curves, power handling test results, and SPL data galore.

But what happens when we demonstrate the Sentry III? Leading engineers (whose names we hesitate to divulge — but they are too men) leap about in their control rooms DANCING for heaven's sake! Snapping their fingers and feeling the sound, and reveling in the sensory pleasure of a clean first octave. And last octave too, for that matter.

And they run from one side of the studio to the other trying to find holes in the distribution of the highs... and they can't... and they LAUGH! It's very unseemly (but secretly quite gratifying). So we try to thrust our good numbers and graphs at these serious engineers, but they'd rather listen and compare and switch speakers. And make rude remarks about their old monitors.

Perhaps you, as a serious-minded music lover will stand still long enough to heed our technical story. And appreciate that the very same sonic virtues that intoxicated these recording engineers have an honest place in your home. Especially when your goal is music reproduction at or near original concert levels.

In fact, several recording engineers have ordered Sentry III speakers for their own living rooms. Some with the accessory equalizer that extends response to 28 Hz.

Please write for our technical explanation of the Sentry III. You'll also get the select list of dealers who have been entrusted to demonstrate this remarkable speaker. Pay one of them a visit... and bring your dancing shoes.

The New Sentry III Monitor Loudspeaker

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Infinity’s Omnidirectional T-L Speaker Offers Unique Tweeter Design


Comment: Infinity Systems, whose $2,000 Servo-Statik speaker and $140 Model 1001 were reviewed here in June 1970 and October 1972 respectively, has expanded its line with the present model. A three-way system, it consists of a transmission-line (T-L) loaded woofer, diffuser-screen covered midrange driver, and what Infinity calls a “wave transmission line” tweeter. Crossover frequencies are 600 Hz and 2,500 Hz. All elements are housed in an elegant upright cabinet that has black foam “grille cloth” at the top and extending down the front and back to the pedestal base. The sides, below the top section, are walnut panels.

Transmission-line speaker theory is complex, but briefly the transmission line refers to a critically dimensioned passageway behind the speaker diaphragm that improves the low-end response by smoothing it rather than by augmenting it (as with a conventional bass-reflex cabinet). The result is a relatively lower efficiency but without what the T-L advocates deridingly call the “phony fat mid-bass” of other speaker types. T-L systems may incorporate high-end reproducers of any type, depending on the designer’s choice. In the Monitor, Infinity has opted for a new kind of tweeter that resembles an ice-cream cone. Its voice coil does not vibrate a diaphragm in the usual way; rather it “plucks” the side of an aluminum surround that sends the signal through the cone structure, which in turn radiates omnidirectionally through the acoustically transparent foam about the top section of the enclosure. So from the standpoint of treble propagation there is literally no front or back to this system, and, incidentally, what nominally is “on axis” in the lab tests is perpendicular to the Monitor’s tweeter axis—a point to which we shall return. Questions of placement are largely a matter of appearance in the room, though of course placing any system close to a nearby wall or other large reflecting surfaces will reinforce its bass output. Connections, near the bottom of the rear side (with respect to the mounting of the woofer and midrange units), are color-coded binding posts; there also are two level controls, for middles and highs.

An extremely smooth reproducer, the Monitor exhibited no audible signs of erratic response from its useful lower limit of about 25 Hz to beyond audibility. Some doubling was encountered at 45 to 50 Hz but it was in sum less than we have heard from many other systems and it did not increase at lower frequencies. The bass simply rolls off smoothly, with fundamental tones still evident in the 25- to 30-Hz region. The middles and highs are exemplary, with no audible peaks or dips and with a truly omnidirectional dispersion to beyond 10 kHz. On program material this makes for a very firm stereo image that can be perceived from virtually any spot in the listening room. White-noise response varied from very smooth to fairly smooth, depending on the positions of the rear level controls. The audible pattern does not change as you walk about the speaker.

The lab measurements show a peak at 10,000 Hz which must be attributed to the application of a standard test procedure to a nonstandard tweeter design—specifically, the measurement made at 1 meter directly over the mouth of the upright cone (and therefore on its

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axis but not on axis of the system as a whole) would produce a concentration of energy. The "on-axis" measurement of the Monitor actually gives a truer picture of its omni response. So for the effective response of this system at the high end, read the on-axis curve on the graph; this produces an over-all response that can be stated as within plus or minus 5.75 dB from 40 Hz to 20,000 Hz at a reference level of about 80 dB. In normal listening the ear is roughly in the horizontal plane of the side (not the mouth) of the cone, and on a variety of recordings and using two recent high-quality pickups, we could not detect any hint of the high-end peak one might predict on the basis of the omnidirectional curve.

The measured impedance curve was possibly the smoothest we've seen, remaining at or slightly above 8 ohms (the manufacturer's rating) from 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz. The minimum average power required to produce an output level of 94 dB at 1 meter on axis was 5.5 watts; the speaker could take up to 100 watts and produce an output of 106.5 dB before distorting significantly. On pulse power tests, the speaker handled average levels of 212.5 watts to produce an output of 112.5 dB without distorting, attesting to its ample dynamic range and confirming the manufacturer's claim of its ability to handle 200 watts of power.

The Monitor sounded neutral and clean on any program material fed to it. Efficiency is on the low side, but driven by a good amplifier producing at least 25 watts per channel average sine-wave or 'RMS' power it should be ample for any size room likely to be found in the average home. With really heavyweight amplifiers, it also should do nicely in studios as an honest, uncolored reproducer for monitor use. Its tonal "authority" is less a matter of emphasizing one portion of the audio spectrum over another and more a matter of "laying it on the line"—a nice circular spread, that is.

**Big-Sounding Speaker from England**


**Comment:** The Ditton 44 is one of a series of sealed-box direct-radiator speaker systems made in England and being marketed on an organized basis for the first time in the U.S. Its three drivers (woofer, midrange, and tweeter) together with a frequency-dividing network are housed inside a neatly styled walnut enclosure designed nominally for vertical placement, although the system could certainly be positioned horizontally if desired considerations suggested such placement.

The manufacturer rates the Ditton 44's input impedance as 4 to 8 ohms, which was verified in CBS Labs' tests. The impedance dip at the nominal rating point in the low frequency range came to 3.7 ohms; from here to 20,000 Hz the impedance averaged a shade less than 8 ohms. Efficiency, for a sealed-box system, is moder-
ately high; the system needed 4.5 watts of input power to produce an output level of 94 dB at 1 meter on axis. It could take 100 watts (at 300 Hz on a steady-state basis) to produce an output of 106 dB, and a power pulse of 486.5 watts (973 watts peak) to yield an output of 116 dB. These figures attest to both the Ditton's robustness and to its excellent dynamic range which must be counted as a contributing factor to the sense of realism it is capable of when reproducing music, including the most demanding, heavily-textured works. Another factor is its generally smooth response, which was charted at plus or minus 5 dB from 42.5 Hz to 20,000 Hz (with 79 dB as the median or 'zero' reference level). The response curves show a general, but slight, tendency to a strong upper midrange with some directivity, and this was verified in listening tests: White noise response was smooth and well dispersed but with a hint of midrange emphasis; strong treble passages in music (massed strings; upper reaches of the voice) tended to sound somewhat thick on axis, but more dispersed and in balance off axis. At times we wished the system had been equipped with a high-frequency level control to cut back on the highs a little. This criticism (which admittedly is a matter of taste and room acoustics) aside, the Ditton 44 struck us as a well-balanced, full-sounding reproducer, with very good transient characteristics for the highs and an excellent bass response. On test tones the frequencies above 10 kHz remained fairly perceptible off axis. We heard some doubling at about 45 Hz, but it was distinctly less than we've heard on many other systems, and it did not increase as we went down the scale. Even when increasing the intensity of the input signal we could not get the Ditton to double more severely at 25 Hz than at 45 Hz, and we could detect fundamental bass right down to 20 Hz.

We'd say that the Ditton 44 is a speaker that could be used in just about any size room and with virtually any amplifier or receiver. Its upper midrange "forwardness" may be just the kind of sound many listeners these days prefer, and if you like everything else but that about the speaker, you can always tame it with your amplifier tone controls.

**CIRCLE 144 ON READER-SERVICE CARD**

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### The Polyhedron Scaled Down

**The Equipment:** Design Acoustics D-6, a loudspeaker system in "bookshelf"-size enclosure. Dimensions: 16½ by 24½ by 13⅓ inches. Price: $249. Manufacturer: Design Acoustics, P.O. Box 2722, Palos Verdes, Calif. 90274.

**Comment:** Although the D-6 looks like a fairly typical bookshelf system, it is not intended for use literally on a bookshelf. It radiates from both the front and back of the enclosure and therefore requires some free air space (a minimum of 2 inches according to Design Acoustics) behind it for bass propagation. It is, in fact, what might be termed a conventionalization of the same company's dramatic-looking D-12 "omni" system, which has a polyhedral shape most of whose surfaces contain drivers.

The front panel of the D-6 resembles the "sculptured" treatment presently popular among loudspeaker stylists; but the three-dimensional effect is here an intrinsic part of the acoustic design since it allows the tweeters to be angled outward in the interests of wider high-frequency dispersion. There are five tweeters all told: one in each "bevel" of the front panel and one in the center section. They cross over at 2 kHz to a 5-inch midrange driver, also in the center portion of the front panel, firing through a relatively small opening to increase its angular dispersion. Crossover to the woofer is at 800 Hz; the loading of the back-firing driver is a

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As this issue is being readied for press, Hervic informs us that a conflicting trade-name registration prevents Hervic from using the Ditton name in this country. Hence what Celestion styles the Ditton 44 in England will be known as the Celestion 44 here. This renaming process will apply to all the Celestion "Dittons" imported by Hervic.

**Ditton 44 Harmonic Distortion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output Level (dB)</th>
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<th>% 3rd</th>
<th>300 Hz % 2nd</th>
<th>% 3rd</th>
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*Distortion data are taken on all tested speakers until distortion exceeds the 10 per cent level or the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing, whichever occurs first.*
Tweeter configuration is shown in Fried article.

ducted-port system whose opening also is at the back of the enclosure.

Also on the back are the connections—color-coded binding posts appropriate for either large spade lugs or bare wires—and two switches, one marked "H.F." and the other "L.F." Both have "normal" and "-3 dB" positions. In lab tests these markings proved unusually accurate. The LF control alters bass by very close to 3 dB from about 600 Hz down to the frequencies at which the response rolls off—around 40 Hz. The HF control similarly alters level above about 5 kHz. The difference is not marked, but we preferred the normal positions of both switches in most setups.

The response curves look unusual. Above about 500 Hz they are very close to each other, confirming both the D-6's design objective and our listening tests in suggesting wide-angle dispersion. In the bass, however, the omnidirectional curve is noticeably higher than the other two (in most speakers the three curves are very close in the bass region) because the energy in this range is radiated from the back of the enclosure and the omnidirectional curve is the only one that includes measurements from the back. This sound does reflect into the room, of course, and—perhaps with somewhat more effect than usual—can be reinforced by placing the system in a corner. For this reason, the omnidirectional curve is really the significant one for assessment of bass response. And it is unusually flat for a speaker curve.

In listening to test tones we found that the D-6's claims to omnidirectionality are indeed well founded. While slight variations in intensity could be heard close-up in moving about the unit, high frequencies were equally perceptible, on average, at all frequencies whether on axis or off from normal listening distances. The bass is firm, with some doubling below about 80 Hz and little useful information below about 40 Hz. We found that the bass is sensitive to overdriving, however, so we would not recommend use of an equalizer to extend the D-6's deep-bass response.

Following the normal bass rise at resonance (50 Hz) the impedance curve as measured at CBS Labs falls to 6 ohms slightly above 100 Hz and remains close to that figure over the rest of the range. It rises slightly above 1 kHz, but falls to a minimum of 4 ohms around 10 kHz. We'd suggest you treat the unit as a 4-ohm system in multiple-speaker systems, rather than an 8-ohm system as suggested by the manufacturer's rating.

Ten watts were required to drive the speaker to 94 dB at 1 meter with broadband noise; it may therefore be described as having medium efficiency. In the steady-tone test it handled 57.9 watts before exceeding distortion limits, but handled pulses to 208.3 watts (average power). The manufacturer recommends an amplifier capable of at least 20 clean watts per channel. While apartment dwellers in particular may be able to get by with less, 20 to 50 watts per channel would appear to be an appropriate amplifier range for most purposes on the basis of the lab tests.

The D-6 certainly achieves its objective of what may be called omnidirectional dispersion from a fairly conventional-looking enclosure. In consequence it produces the broadly drawn stereo image characteristic of omnis and does so with good balance and detail. In spite of the unusually flat high end in the response curves, the highs are not particularly prominent, nor is any part of the range, though the sound has a warmth corresponding to the omnidirectional curve's slight rise in the lower midrange.

Design Acoustics D-6 Harmonic Distortion*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output Level (dB)</th>
<th>80 Hz</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>300 Hz</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 2nd</td>
<td>% 3rd</td>
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<tr>
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*Distortion data are taken on all tested speakers until distortion exceeds the 10 per cent level or the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing, whichever occurs first.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
The Heil AMT midrange/tweeter driver is illustrated in the article by Irving Fried in this issue.


Comment: The most publicized facet of the AMT-1 is its midrange-tweeter element: the Air Motion Transformer devised by Oskar Heil. This element stands atop the woofer portion of the system and at first glance resembles a large power transformer: the laminated pole pieces that reach inward from its front and back toward the accordion-folded diaphragm at the center are not unlike those in a transformer. The term Air Motion Transformer is not based on this superficial resemblance however; it is intended to suggest the way in which the transducer is designed to convert the high pressure and low velocity at the diaphragm to higher velocity and lower pressure in the room—much the way an electrical transformer converts voltage and current by raising one and lowering the other.

The woofer section at the base of the system is a fairly conventional ported design whose driver faces the front of the unit and whose ducted port is located at the bottom, near the electrical connections (color-coded binding posts that accept large spade lugs or bare wires) and a three-position brightness control (bright, normal, soft). This knob alters response by about 2 dB (up for bright, down for soft) from a little above 1 kHz to the limit of testing at 20 kHz. The audible effect is therefore extremely slight; we left it in the normal position for most of our listening and all the remaining tests.

In listening we found the effect of the AMT-1 to be particularly clear and well defined, with a somewhat bright sound and a tendency toward sibilance. If you’re not used to flat speaker response you may consider the sound over-bright and should take care to avoid pick-ups with a high-frequency peak, which may complement the usual falling speaker curve but will be emphasized by the AMT-1. In listening to the Boulez Petrushka using the B & O SP-12, which does not have a prominent high end, the speaker’s brightness translated into orchestral sparkle.

It is a fairly efficient unit, requiring 6 watts to produce the standard 94 dB at 1 meter with broadband noise. It handles steady-state signals to 105.5 watts before exceeding distortion limits and handles pulses to 360 watts (average power), the limit of the lab’s test amplifier. It is therefore capable of an excellent dynamic range. The impedance curve is flatter than average, but is on the low side for a unit rated by its manufacturer at 8 ohms. Following the bass rise it dips to 5 ohms at about 100 Hz—its rating point as normally defined—beyond which it rises to above 8 ohms in the midrange and then settles to just under 8 ohms above 5 kHz. To be on the safe side you may want to treat the unit as a 4-ohm system in multiple-speaker hookups.

Test tones proved that the midrange-tweeter really is omnidirectional. Though it is a “dipole” driver—that is, it produces sound from both front and back—no loss of audibility can be detected at the sides in the high frequencies with either test tones or music. In the bass there is some minor doubling below 80 Hz, but it is not severe and fundamentals remain audible to below 40 Hz.
### Heil/ESS AMT-1 Harmonic Distortion*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output Level (dB)</th>
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*Distortion data are taken on all tested speakers until distortion exceeds the 10 per cent level and the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing, whichever occurs first.

In testing the AMT-1 we found that some samples—far from being flat at the top—rolled off severely. The explanation appears to be that in air shipment exposure to jet-fuel fumes softens the plastic of the Heil diaphragm. Fortunately this effect appears to be only transitory; previously softened samples returned to normal behavior after a few days.

The next AMT model from ESS is slated to be one that uses the Heil driver principle for the full frequency range, dispensing with the AMT-1's conventional woofer. Considering the unblunted transients, dynamic range, and low distortion of the present model, we look forward to further development of the principle. But even in its present form it is an unusually interesting system. In listening to some chamber music recordings, for example, we sometimes were struck by its ability to resolve a stereo image in which each instrument seems unequivocally localized.

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### Leslie’s Plus 2: A Revolutionary (About 60 RPM, in Fact) Way to Hear Surround Sound


Comment: The Plus 2 concept is so at variance with anything else on the market that we almost despaired of applying our standard test approach to it at all. Not only is it mechanically and electronically unconventional, but it raises a question of proprieties. Should we ask one division of CBS (CBS Labs) to test the product of another (Electro Music)? We decided to let CBS Labs run the needed tests (which of course represent data that are open to verification, as opposed to an expression of opinion, which is not), and found it a happy decision, since the lab was of great help in solving the mechanical problems that cropped up in trying to establish a method by which useful data could be derived.

Only the cone tweeter is conventional in that it faces forward from the top center of the grille cloth. The two 6-by-9-inch midrange drivers face outward through slots at the sides of the enclosure. The 15-inch woofer faces downward toward a motor-driven wooden baffle that rotates (at about 60 rpm) about a vertical axis and causes the effective “mouth” of the speaker to revolve in the horizontal plane. Inside one of the two enclosures is a stereo amplifier plus what Electro Music calls a Space Generator—an electromechanical device capable of introducing a constantly changing degree of phase shift into the signals that pass through it. This unit includes an AC cord (to power the drive motors and the electronics), level controls for each of the channels, a stereo input jack for the signals from your stereo system (about which, more in a moment), an on/off switch, a mode switch, and a special multiconductor socket for the interconnect cable to the second (“satellite”) enclosure. The mode switch is a pushbutton that turns on (or off) the baffle drive motor and the Space Generator, and reverses channels at the same time. There are no tweeter or midrange level controls.

The exact utility of the mode switch varies with the setup; let’s begin with that for which the Plus 2 system is primarily intended. Assuming an existing stereo system, you would add the main 450 enclosure at the back left of the listening room and the satellite enclosure at the back right. Electro Music supplies a 30-foot inter-
connect cable with stereo phone plugs at each end that can be used to take signals from the headphone jack on your system and feed them to the Leslie amplifier. (We found that one receiver we used in this way had its headphone jack wired "backward" for the Leslies, so the Leslie enclosures had to be interchanged. Since manufacturers still are not agreed on whether the tip of a stereo phone connector should be the left channel or the right, you too may have to modify the instructions in this respect.) Electro Music also supplies an adapter with four wires terminated in small spade lugs. When these lugs are attached to the speaker terminals (preferably those for the remote speakers) on your system, one end of the interconnect cable can be plugged into the adapter to feed the power output to the Leslies. The necessary level compensation is made at the Leslie's amplifier controls.

Once you're hooked up in correct fashion you can begin to experience the difference between the two modes of operation. In the "normal" Plus 2 mode the Space Generator and baffle rotors are on, and the signal from the left channel is coming from the Leslie at back right while that from the right channel is coming from the back left. The purpose of all these factors is to introduce a sense of space comparable to that in listening to quadrophonics. The rotating woofer baffles are specifically intended to alter bass projection continuously to prevent the formation of standing waves in the room. In the alternative mode (with these special Plus 2 features switched off) the Leslies act simply as rearward extensions of the front speakers, with the left signal appearing at back left and the right at back right.

If you have a quadraphonic system the options multiply. The logical connection for the Leslies is to the back-channel signals. Most quadraphonic equipment will feed the same signal to the front and back channels on each side when operating in the stereo mode. The Leslies then give you the choice of either hearing the sound just that way or of introducing the Plus 2 effect. If you choose to reproduce true quadrophonics of any type, front and back signals will no longer be the same; the Plus 2 mode will have to be switched off to return the back signals to their correct positions for reproduction of the intended quadrophonic placements.

The instructions consider the 450 system only as rear speakers, and we would in fact hesitate to recommend them as prime speakers—at least with the Plus 2 features turned on—for reasons that will become apparent as we describe how the Leslies sounded in their intended configuration. The effect depends on, among other things, room size. Their physical bulk argues against using the Leslies in really small rooms, and we would in fact hesitate to recommend them as prime speakers—at least with the Plus 2 feature switched off, found them comparable to many good, conventional, large floor-standing systems we have encountered over the years. The built-in amplifiers prevented normal measurement techniques. Impedance, for example, is beside the point since your stereo system's amplifier will not be driving them directly. The lab could measure only in terms of acoustic output, of course, and not in terms of power input (which is, again, beside the point); and distortion measurements necessarily include the amplifier as well as the drivers. The cabinet also posed problems: Some measurements at the normal distance (1 meter) were so close to the enclosure as to produce unrepresentative data because of the enclosure's acoustic "shadow." The lab found it necessary to take the response curves by measuring at 2 meters and computing equivalent sound-pressure levels at 1 meter before the measurements adequately reflected the true behavior of the Leslies in a room. And in order to avoid random reinforcement effects due to the turning baffle it was necessary to turn off the Plus 2 system during measurement. The lab found it could drive the speaker to the equivalent of 104 dB at 1 meter before exceeding distortion limits.

Electro Music must be given high marks for its grit in following an individual course—and for producing a system whose virtues go beyond the novelty value of that course. Considered as an alternative to quadrophonics, however, we remain somewhat skeptical about the potential of the Leslie approach. In terms of breaking up standing waves in the listening room the idea may have virtue, but that virtue will be difficult to assess until it is available without the concomitants presently incorporated into the Plus 2 systems.

Leslie Plus 2 Model 450 Harmonic Distortion

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<th>Output Level (dB)</th>
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Distortion data are taken on all tested speakers until distortion exceeds the 10 per cent level of the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing, whichever occurs first.
Speakers An Explosion of

This year, as every other year, will find old and respected manufacturers and brand new companies alike presenting their "new," "improved," or "breakthrough" loudspeakers to the American public. Once again, you will be asked to accept each system as "the speaker of the future," one that "makes all others obsolete." Surely many new models will, like so many previous "breakthroughs," sink quietly into oblivion; the number of enduring advances in the art of loudspeakers is very small.

From time to time, however, manufacturers do manage a significant advance in basic design principles, largely by using new materials and technologies. And 1973 is such a time. I believe that some of the new loudspeakers described below will endure and find their market niches—but possibly not in the positions their proponents envisage. It does seem that every twenty years or so a wave of fruitful innovation overtakes the loudspeaker industry. The Thirties saw the first high fidelity speakers as we know them; the last such broad advance was back in the middle 1950s when the first air-suspension systems and the first successful electrostatic, ribbon, and ionic drivers appeared.

I'd like to begin this survey of some of the more interesting new loudspeakers with those systems whose basic driver principles are the main subject of interest. I'll try, whenever possible and for the sake of the record, to mention past products that bear a resemblance. Manufacturers' claims for their products always are difficult to assess until the products themselves can be evaluated fully (a few of the models are covered in this issue's reports), and a certain extravagance is to be expected in someone who has worked hard on what he considers to be a successful design. The many quotes, some of which come from product literature, rather than directly from engineers and company executives, are to be understood in this light.

The most radically different new loudspeaker is the Ohm A. Invented and patented by the late Lincoln Walsh, famous in high fidelity history for his Brook all-triode amplifier, it has no direct antecedents in the art (though some claim the Hegeman tweeters of the Fifties worked on the same principles). The Ohm A driver looks like an inverted funnel, the large end of which is fastened to an infinite baffle box. The funnel, or cone, is made of copper and titanium, forming a composite cone of rather large size and heavy mass. The theory of operation is, for the bass below 200 Hz, that of mass loading; and, for the midrange and treble, high-velocity wave-train propagation down the cone, with radial propagation of all frequencies of musical interest.

The Ohm A has been publicly demonstrated and is in limited production. It is very inefficient, but when driven by amplifiers of sufficient power seems to give a good account of itself, according to many auditioners. Traditionally the British metal-cone speaker designs of the past (G.E.C., Jordan-Watts, and Jordan) have been lauded for their clarity while drawing some complaints of a metallic edge to high-frequency sounds. None has been precisely of the Ohm A shape, of course, and it will be interesting to see what the final evaluations of the Ohm A will be.

Very similar in design and built under the same basic Walsh patents—but intended only for treble propagation—is the Infinity Wave Transmission Line tweeter, which is used in the new Infinity Holosonic Monitor [see test report, this issue]. Replacing the electrostatic drivers that have characterized the company's deluxe offerings, the tweeter also resembles a funnel, but with the large diameter upward. This cone is made of plastic with a thin aluminum skin—a laminate that, it is stated, will support a sound transmission speed of 11,000 feet per second (about ten times that of sound in air). A voice coil at the cone apex "plucks" it, causing it to emit waves orthogonally: i.e., in circles, spreading outward from the cone surface. The design objective is the simulation of that Grail of speaker theory, the perfect pulsating sphere.

As incorporated into the Monitor of Infinity, the tweeter is intended to handle up to 200 watts of program input and is said to display a flat imped-
Some of the most revolutionary innovations
in years are hitting the market in 1973.
Here’s how and why they work.

New Designs
by Irving M. Fried

...
Most strikingly “different” of all systems discussed in this article is Ohm A (above), which drives full frequency range from the conical element shown here. Most other new driver elements (like the electrostatic elements that some seek to replace) appear more appropriate to one end of the frequency range than the other—at least in presently available products. The Infinity tweeter (top, facing page) is related to the Ohm A’s operating principles, though the

Pioneer), huge magnetic systems (SAE), and laminated magnets (LDL). None of these, properly speaking, is a new idea, though some appear to have been patentably innovative in their present forms. Two points are interesting here, however. First, the emphasis on unconventional refinements in magnetic structures surely represents a step forward from the insistence on sheer magnet mass that characterized loudspeaker advertising only a few years ago. Second, manufacturers are now agreeing that woofers as well as tweeters need improving. To recoin a phrase: A woofer and a tweeter do not a speaker make—meaning that as one art advances so must the other, and that the advances must be coordinated.

Other new loudspeakers, rather than presenting new drive principles as such, seem primarily to be concerned with the way in which the energy at the driver is presented to the air in the room—and hence to the ears of the listener. Some of the systems we have discussed—the Ohm A and the Heil Air Motion Transformer for example—adopt unusual means to this end, of course; and there are others.

Leslie, heretofore known for its electric-organ speakers, has a new design for home use, including its own built-in amplifier (see test report, this issue). A baffle in the woofer system of these speakers slowly rotates, “sweeping” the room. Built into the electronics is a phase-shifting system; as a unit the baffle and phase shifter is intended to subdue standing waves in the listening room. The phase shifter, which can be turned off, also is intended to produce quasi-quadruphonic spatial effects when a pair of Leslies are used in the back of the room, supplementing a conventional pair at the front.

Several new companies have combinations of small drivers, generally in omni or reflecting arrays—each product with its own special claims and virtues, though some readers doubtless will see the interest in this type of design as a reflection of the phenomenal success the Bose 901 system has enjoyed. Design Acoustics uses small drivers on multiple intersecting planes, operating above a conventional woofer which faces vertically. Epicure Products has its various “tower” loudspeakers. APL (Applied Physics Laboratories) uses sixteen full-range drivers, each one “individually equalized” for optimum performance. The Array 12 employs eleven 4½-inch drivers, each with its own...
cone orientation is reversed; it is used with a transmission-line woofer system. The Heil Air Motion Transformer (opposite) presently handles midrange and highs in conjunction with a conventional ducted woofer system; ESS, which produces it, is said to be at work on a full-range Heil system. It is the woofer system of the Leslie Plus 2 (top, facing page) that is most striking: the driver faces downward into a revolving baffle that "sweeps" the room. The Design Acoustics D-6 (right) is one of many systems that angle tweeters for broad dispersion.

"special network"—to smooth the midrange, claimed by Array to be rough in all comparable multidriver systems. The eleven drivers are in a ducted enclosure; a high crossover feeds a single tweeter described as a polycarbonate dome. LDL, whose novel magnet system was mentioned earlier, says its multiple-driver array may be used without an equalizer.

In complete contrast to all the above is a fascinating new approach demonstrated last September at the New York High Fidelity Music Show. It is the product of a new group headed by Saul Marantz (founder of Marantz, which now is owned by Superscope). The unit is called the Jon Dahlquist loudspeaker after its designer, and it should be available this year. The Jon Dahlquist Phased Array speaker is planar. (The first samples looked like the Quad electrostatic.) It is not, however, a dipole (or doublet), radiating front and rear; Dahlquist strongly rejects such concepts. Rather he states that the flat shape is a device to avoid the diffraction distortions common to conventional enclosure loudspeakers. Mounted on the flat baffle are five dynamic speakers, each chosen for a special range of frequencies. These are joined by a complex crossover network, which equalizes their on-axis response with special compensation for on-axis time-delay distortions. The purpose of all this is to keep all phase relationships coherent—that is, in step with each other at all frequencies—just as they would be in radiating from a live source.

Mr. Dahlquist believes that a good loudspeaker should only operate on the frontal hemisphere, and never backward; that good dispersion forward is a virtue, but that it is better to have poor dispersion than to let any signals be reflected. Indeed, the design concept of the loudspeaker is to keep from "wasting energy" in other directions and to keep from confusing the stereo image. Mr. Dahlquist, it might be noted, speaks from a vast background of research and development on other kinds of loudspeakers—and sounds like a spokesman for the English (BBC) school of speaker research, or the corresponding French (ORTF) school. His ideas and his patented speaker represent a divergence from the prevailing U.S. school of wide, or even omnidirectional, dispersion. The design is a refreshing restudying of the principles of sound propagation and of the relationship of the speaker to the room and to the listener. I suspect that the
Dahlquist will have a lasting effect on speaker design.

Despite some evidence of a trend away from electrostatics, two speakers have come out with that ever-glamorous drive in new formats, each claiming to correct all the problems of its predecessors.

The Crown International Auralinear is a hybrid. It has paralleled electrostatic cells used for the full range above 350 Hz, with dynamic woofers in acoustic-suspension enclosures used below that frequency. The cells stand free in the room, radiating electronic protection circuits are built into the crossovers. Crown claims from both front and back. Electronic protection frequency. The cells stand free in the room, radiating acoustic -suspension enclosures used below that fre-

range above 350 Hz, with dynamic woofers in It has paralleled electrostatic cells used for the full range. Each speaker has eight electrostatic cells mounted in two ranks, one above the other, and with provision for coupling the cells in various ways, depending on the configuration that best suits the room’s acoustics. Normally, each cell is used full range. The driver assembly is encased in a plastic bag filled with a nonconductive gas. Designer Dayton-Wright claims to have solved problems “inherent in other electrostatics”—lack of efficiency, nonlinearity; inability to handle extreme dynamic range—by eliminating insulating sheathing in the drivers in favor of the nonconductive gas so that the speaker can take high signal voltages and produce long excursions without arcing and thus be low in distortion and high in output. He also says his design eliminates the phase distortion of crossovers and keeps wave fronts from the various elements coherent.

While Crown and Dayton-Wright have developed interesting (and expensive) new designs, some manufacturers are trying to get better performance from less floor space—an important practical consideration, particularly in quadrphonics. Noteworthy are the JBL sound columns and the EPI Microtower, two adaptations of the tuned columns that date back to high fidelity’s earliest days. The results are excellent in terms of cost and space and show how much one can improve on old designs with modern materials and know-how.

The search for more realistic bass reproduction in speakers takes several forms; most manufacturers are offering “new approaches” of varying complexity and cost. Perhaps most newsworthy are the various transmission-line loudspeakers turning up in the deluxe sector of the market.

The transmission-line concept is not new; old hands will remember the Stromberg-Carlson acoustical labyrinths of the late Thirties and early Fifties. A decade or so ago the British revived the idea of enclosing a driver in a long tube leading from the back of the driver. According to its proponents, the principle can be used wherever the criterion is more natural bass propagation, or wherever it is more accurate midrange or bass propagation. Thus some manufacturers have adopted transmission lines for both bass and midrange, justifying the complexity and expense by the more accurate reproduction made possible by high-quality drive systems. Properly executed, the technique provides a dead acoustic environment for the driver, killing reflections back to it from the enclosure and sound feed through enclosure walls. In addition, bass lines can be tuned like organ pipes, lowering the free-air resonance of a driver (to get deeper fundamentals in the bass) and smoothing the impedance characteristics of the loudspeaker (thus making more efficient the transfer of power from the amplifier).

All of these virtues contribute to the transient performance claimed by transmission-line advocates. There are some vices, however, lowered overall efficiency and susceptibility to subsonic disturbances being the most important. But the designers have been busy, and a number of successful transmission-line systems are available from Infinity Systems, ESS, Radford (and Audionics, U.S. importer of Radford products), Music and Sound, and IMF. The configurations vary of course from model to model.

A related idea, again from England, is the active-line loudspeaker. The transmission lines we have been discussing are passive—i.e., driven from one end only. In the new IMF ALS-40 loudspeaker the bass line is driven conventionally at the top end, and driven at its “port” end by a subsonic-resonance woofer through a complex phase-shifting network. The design team at IMF makes the following claims for the active-line principle: that it reduces cabinet size for equivalent performance; that it increases efficiency and power-handling capacity (i.e., acoustic power into the room); and that it eliminates subsonic problems.

Certainly no one has repealed the laws of physics, though speaker designers are wont to accuse each other of claiming to do so. All that can be said about the current state of the loudspeaker art is that some manufacturers are succeeding in making sonic advances, by a better understanding and application of the laws of physics, acoustics, and psychoacoustics. In short the art is not standing pat even though the laws within which it operates are. We are seeing more and more fresh design ideas; and some of them are. I think, better solutions to the eternal quest for the ideal loudspeaker. At the worst, there is a rebirth of excitement in loudspeaker design, and the purchaser this year is given some real choices. I for one look forward to the final verdicts on today’s new designs—the verdict of the marketplace!
Build Your Own

From kits or from scratch, the do-it-yourselfer can construct a growing number of speaker systems.

In this age of exotic loudspeakers is there still room for people who want to roll their own? Definitely; and although these do-it-yourselfers aren't of the same ilk as the trail blazers of twenty-five years ago, their numbers are slowly growing. The real pioneers were basically experimenters, painstakingly altering hand-built enclosures in size, configuration, and acoustical packing in their search for better reproduction. Loudspeaker manufacturers soon added a helping hand by offering pretested plans and even speaker-system kits. But when electronics kits suffered an eclipse concurrent with the introduction of transistorized circuitry and printed circuit boards, speaker kits too seemed to enter a decline. For one thing, some looked just too homemade when compared to factory-finished units. By two or three years ago sales of all kits, including speaker systems, had dipped sharply from the twenty-five per cent of the market they claimed in the early Sixties. Today, however, most manufacturers see harbingers of a renewed growth in the market.

A chief deterrent to building speaker systems from scratch (drivers themselves require too much precision of assembly to allow home building of course) has been the need for a solid woodworking and acoustical background. There is no way to pretest how speakers bought separately will behave in-
Today's typical kits—here represented by Heath AS-104—include a collection of parts (upper left) that must be assembled (upper right) to make crossover/control unit. Enclosure comes preassembled. Crossover unit is mounted at back, acoustic stuffing added (lower left), drivers mounted on front panel (lower left and previous page). When grille cloth is placed over drivers the system is complete.

side your home-brew enclosure. As the individual drivers must be matched among themselves and the crossover and enclosure (including damping material) matched to the drivers, scratch building of a multidriver system is a major project, and there's no guarantee of attaining sound quality comparable to that of a production-line model. In building a kit, however, you bypass most of these problems and will need only a few hand tools to do the job. An additional attraction is the twenty per cent or more you may save over the cost of a comparable preassembled model. And some designs are intended for installation in closets or walls, eliminating the need for separate enclosures.

If you are planning to build without benefit of kits, some manufacturers of raw speakers and crossovers offer extensive information for constructing enclosures to match their products. If you want to design your own, you generally must rely on books such as How to Build Speaker Enclosures by Alexis Badmaieff and Don Davis (published by Howard Sams) or Abraham B. Cohen's Hi-Fi Loudspeakers and Enclosures (Rider), considered two of the standard works on this subject.

Most home builders (and certainly all novices) will prefer the kit approach, however. In the past several years a growing number of kits have been offered with prefinished and precisely precut enclosure parts or fully preassembled enclosures in which only the baffle, crossover and control panel, and drivers have been left unmounted.

A sign of the times, perhaps, is the one-year-old acoustic-suspension kit line of National Tel-Tronics of Great Neck, New York. It offers a two-way system (CK-20-2, $60) and a three-way system (CK-20-3, $70) and now is expanding with a smaller two-way and a larger four-way system. Designed for the real novice builder, they don't even require the use of a soldering iron. "Nothing is needed but a screwdriver and glue," says a company spokesman. The enclosure comes as a string of mitered side pieces held together by a walnut-grain veneer overlay. To assemble the cabinet you simply apply glue and fold the panels over, fitting front and back panels into grooves precut in the sides. All crossover and speaker connections use slip-on sleeves. The company expresses enthusiasm over the potential market for these kits but believes
that the public must be educated to think in terms of kits for speakers. To this end it offers photos of a sweet young thing zipping through one of its kits.

About four years ago CTS of Paducah, which has supplied drivers to the speaker industry for many years, began offering speaker-system kits under its own brand name. CTS offers speakers ($5.00 to $27) only—no enclosures—but includes a wiring schematic and a detailed drawing of the recommended enclosure and driver mounting for each system. The company says it is too soon to forecast how much public acceptance its approach may achieve.

What about the more familiar names? A number are active in this area, though with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Jensen, a company whose drivers have been used by do-it-yourselfers for more than twenty years, has discontinued its line of single-cone component speakers and now lists only a half dozen coaxial and triaxial driver assemblies. General instructions for enclosures, including duct-tube and port-area dimension tables, are included with each speaker. The company offers more detailed plans for specific enclosures for these drivers and instructions on tuning a bass-reflex enclosure.

University, another old-timer, is phasing out some of its broad line of separate drivers during the next few months, but the Mustang series will stay intact. Free plans for enclosures, available through University's customer-service department, are geared to the average handyman according to the company. A spokesman adds that from University's viewpoint the separate-driver market has been decreasing slowly, although he says he still gets several calls every day on speaker-system construction questions.

Electro-Voice is encouraged by the separate speaker business, and a shift in advertising emphasis to separate speakers has yielded results. "I'm amazed at the inquiries; we've received more per ad than on any other product we're advertising," E-V marketing executive William Sutherland told us. E-V (which manufactured one of the earliest folded-horn system kits some two decades ago) offers a mini-booklet with each driver describing how to use the driver and how to build enclosures. A more detailed booklet, including step-by-step cabinet assembly instructions, is available at a nominal cost, and full blueprints for constructing any of a half dozen coaxial and triaxial driver assemblies. The company offers more detailed plans for specific enclosures for these drivers and instructions on tuning a bass-reflex enclosure.

Radio Shack has also added a new speaker kit (28-4301, $50) with a preassembled cabinet. The customer-service department, are geared to the average handyman according to the company. A spokesman adds that from University's viewpoint the separate-driver market has been decreasing slowly, although he says he still gets several calls every day on speaker-system construction questions.

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company says its separate driver sales are "phenomenal," posing problems of keeping up with the growth. No enclosure instructions or plans are offered with its speakers.

Radford, a British company whose products now are available here through Audionics of Portland, Oregon, offers systems in what might be called semi-kit form. The Radford/Audionics package includes drivers, crossovers, a measured quantity of sound-absorbent stuffing, enclosure plans, and instructions (including recommendations for alternate finishing methods) designed for the more advanced constructor. One model available in this form, for example, is the Radford TL-90, a tower-shaped system with transmission-line bass, selling for about $300; the kit costs only $140 (plus the materials for the enclosure, of course). Other models, as well as variants of the basic TL-90 are available. Though Audionics has just begun offering these kit packages, Radford itself has offered them in England for some time, apparently with considerable growth. No enclosure instructions or plans are offered with its speakers.

Heath, a company that by virtue of its almost single-minded devotion to the interests of kit builders can claim a special position in the field, is steering away from knockdown cabinets. "Judging from responses in the past, people who want to put speaker kits together are not necessarily woodworkers," says a spokesman. Heath offers several separate drivers and has two new acoustic-suspension kits this year (AS-104, $90; AS-105, $65 unfinished or $70 in walnut finish). Kit directions include a booklet with detailed pictorial and written instructions, along with suggestions on what to check if the speakers fail to function once the kit is assembled. All cabinets are preassembled, and separate speakers come with cabinet recommendations. "Response has been very good," says Heath executive Earl Brohier. But an important thrust of the Heath speaker kit line in recent years has been the inclusion of designs from the major speaker specialists. Represented are AR (the AS-103A, based on the AR-3a), Altec (the AS-101 floor-standing system), Bozak (the AS-102, in a similar floor enclosure), and James B. Lansing (the AS-38 and AS-48 bookshelf systems, which resemble JBL Lancer systems).

James B. Lansing itself predicts a major resurgence of do-it-yourself speaker building within the next five years. Currently JBL offers separate drivers and enclosures. An enclosure instruction manual is available free, and detailed plans for four enclosures, each of which can handle six different driver lineups, cost $2.00 to $3.00 per enclosure. As an additional service, for $15 the factory will install the speaker-system kit of the buyer's choice in an enclosure. Also available is the M12 Expander Kit ($70), which allows upgrading of the 88 Plus bookshelf system to the equivalent of a Century L-100.

Besides a kit available through Heath, Bozak has individual speakers, panel-mounted systems based on speaker systems in its regular catalogue but for installation in a wall or buyer-supplied enclosure, and two enclosure kits. A comprehensive assembly manual is provided. Consumer interest is described as "good" although sales are slightly off from the peak of five years ago.

Barzilay of California offers an extensive "audio furniture" line, including speaker enclosures and equipment consoles in both preassembled and kit form. Lafayette has separate speakers and three enclosures, including one knockdown floor-standing model (20 P 01493WX, $45). No enclosure plans are offered with the speakers, but basic instructions are supplied with enclosures. Lafayette says it assumes a basic woodworking knowledge on the part of the customer. Tannoy offers speakers and enclosures, along with technical instructions on installation.

One company on the fringe of speaker kits is Klipsch, which offers a Decorator series with raw wood enclosures. But an assistant to Paul Klipsch adds that the company is vehemently opposed to kits or plans as such because they cannot match the quality and precision of preassembled models. Another company, Dynaco, offers kits in all its product categories except speakers. Dynaco's Bob Tucker explains that automation has reduced factory construction time to less than thirty minutes; hence if it were to offer kit versions of its speakers the saving to the customer would be less than $10. He also suggests that having four exactly identical speakers is desirable for four-channel listening, and it would be almost impossible for any home builder to tune four kits (for Dynaco's speaker systems) to the close tolerances that result automatically from factory building.

So where does this leave the aspiring speaker-kit builder? Probably in a better position than he was five years ago—or at any time for that matter. His choices range from selecting and matching individual drivers and constructing an enclosure from scratch to one of building a prepared kit that can be assembled in about thirty minutes and requires little if any woodworking or electronic knowledge. And they can offer good value in spite of the minimal savings to be expected by contrast to comparable preassembled units. Also important, certainly, is the fact that kits give the builder a certain sense of accomplishment without involving him in the highly technical field of loudspeaker-system design. Yet for the venturesome that field—strewed though it is with potential pitfalls—probably will never lose its unique allure.

Readers wishing more information about the products outlined in this article may write us for a list of manufacturers' addresses, specifying which of these three categories interest you: kits, plans, or enclosures.
I venture into this topic with some trepidation, I must admit. Mating amplifier, loudspeaker, listening room, and listener is no simple matter—a fact to which the dearth of articles on the subject will attest. Many of the variables cannot be pinned down to the hard numbers with which the scientist prefers to work. For example the amount of amplifier power needed depends not only on the loudspeaker’s efficiency and how loud you like your music, but on the type of music you like, the size and shape of your listening room, and how it’s decorated. Of this whole complex, only the loudspeaker efficiency can be expressed in unequivocal mathematical terms, and even then the efficiency varies with frequency.

Determining whether a loudspeaker and amplifier are “compatible” is a little easier, but not much. Numbers should be available to characterize the loudspeaker’s efficiency and short-term power-handling capability. You probably will have difficulty getting them from the manufacturer, but they have been measured and are available to you in the High Fidelity test reports. What isn’t available (for obvious reasons) is the length of time that the loudspeaker will handle these input powers before being destroyed—and that can be of some concern to you if you have a high-powered amplifier. Though it may be impossible to establish universal rules to determine the precise power requirements of your system, guidelines can and must be set down if you are to select your equipment rationally.

The System Approach

Where do we start? The theoretical method of establishing your system requirements is to begin with an estimate of the acoustic power needed. Once that is determined you can tentatively select a loudspeaker and determine, via its efficiency, the required amplifier power. Then you had better check back to see that the loudspeaker can handle the power level you are planning to feed it. If it won’t, you’ll have to select a different loudspeaker and start over. By following this approach you have some assurance that the loudspeaker-amplifier system will be able to produce the sound levels you want. If you consider loudspeaker efficiency alone,
or power-handling capability alone, you can be misled. It's the two together that determine how much sound you can produce—and that's what really counts.

What we've just laid out is the best approach if you are about to invest in both an amplifier and in loudspeakers. Of course if you have one and are looking for the other, the procedure will have to be altered accordingly. For example, if you're already committed to an amplifier rated at 20 watts per channel but are in the market for new loudspeakers you will have to choose from among models with a high enough efficiency not to overtax your present amplifier. That may or may not pose a problem.

**Acoustic Power Levels**

The real trick is in translating these neat theories into practice. How much acoustic power do you need? It's very difficult to estimate. If you follow the recommendations of RCA's pioneer audio researcher and theoretician Harry Olson, the maximum requirement for concert music in a 3,000-cubic-foot room is about 24 dB above 1 milliwatt. That's about one quarter watt of acoustic power (not amplifier power, as we shall see).

Olson's recommendations are based on public address system installations. Are they directly applicable to a home high fidelity system? My judgment would be that his estimates are on the low side. For one thing public address systems are generally of limited bandwidth. You might be wise to double his estimate for a wide-band system (that is, one handling the full audio frequency range) depending upon the content of the program material. And your living room is not an auditorium. Depending upon the content of the program material and the noise level in the room.

In general the audiophile tends to increase the volume until the room noise no longer intrudes during quiet passages. During loud sections the music masks the room noise, but during pianissimos, if the volume is set low, the room noise will predominate and mask the music; you will feel the need to turn up the volume until the music re-establishes its supremacy. And this of course makes greater demands on the system during the fortissimos. The greater the dynamic range of the program the more power you'll need to handle the loud passages and still keep the quiet ones above the background. This is why classical music in particular requires power reserves. Pop and rock are usually compressed in dynamic range so there is little variation from loud to soft. Although they're generally listened to at a high level and the synthetic instruments used in the arrangements generate substantial amounts of high-frequency energy, they don't need the reserve capability that classical music requires.

What sort of power demands result from these personal factors? Your intuitive evaluation may run like this: "I listen to music at about twice the loudness levels that Joe does, so I must need twice the power." Seems logical, but unfortunately matters are much worse than that. If you're really listening at what the ear would evaluate as twice Joe's level you need approximately 10 dB more power than he has. Since the dB scale is logarithmic rather than arithmetic, that works out to ten times his power—not twice!

So now you see the problem. The imponderables are so large and have so much effect on power requirements that it's practically impossible to give firm estimates of required power on a generalized basis. If we start off with Olson's 24 dB (re 1 acoustic milliwatt), what should we add for the extended bandwidth of a high fidelity system? Perhaps 3 dB? Okay. Now what about room absorption? Another 1 or 2 dB? Doesn't sound like much, does it? How about something for variations in background noise or personal preferences? Another 5 dB perhaps. These allowances would then add up to maybe 10 dB. That's a total of 34 dB above 1 milliwatt, or 2.5 acoustic watts—ten times Olson's power of one quarter watt. And, more important, the calculated power requirement would have been quite different with a different set of assumptions. Suppose we drop the 2 dB for room absorption. Then we only need 32 dB above 1 milliwatt or 1.58 watts—6 1/2 times the starting point. If we put in only 2 dB reserve for personal preference rather than 5 dB, we cut the requirements in half! But we know it takes about 10 dB to double the loudness, not 2 dB or even 5 dB. What it all comes down to is that you can get pretty decent sound with a relatively small acoustic power level, but if you take all the contingencies into account the "requirements" become
enormous. That's the difference between high fidelity and the table radio.

**Electrical Power**

Until now, all the specified power levels have seemed small because we've been talking about acoustic power—that is, the number of watts of power that appear in your room as sound. Now we want to translate this into amplifier power requirements: How many watts must your amplifier be capable of delivering? That depends on the efficiency of the loudspeaker system and here again there is a wide spread. Horn loudspeakers of about 40 percent efficiency have been developed, but not for home high fidelity systems. Still, the horn-loaded loudspeaker remains the most efficient of high fidelity transducers. In its home version, a good one probably comes in at about 10-per-cent efficiency. That means you'll need an amplifier with a power rating that is ten times your desired acoustic output. If we take our previous acoustic power calculations, a 25-watt amplifier would be needed if we are to achieve 2.5 acoustic watts in the room.

If we go to the smaller and more popular loudspeakers that operate on the acoustic suspension principle, efficiency falls off to perhaps 1 to 3 percent. A 1-per-cent-efficient unit will require 250 electrical watts from the amplifier to generate 2.5 acoustic watts, and 25 watts even to generate a mere one quarter acoustic watt! The moral is simple. If you want to use a relatively low-powered amplifier you had better select a loudspeaker of at least moderate efficiency or resign yourself to low-level listening. Here the statements about transducer efficiency published in HIGH FIDELITY's test reports are very useful.

**The Saving Grace**

What happens to all that extra power? If we have a loudspeaker efficiency of 1 per cent and an input of 250 electrical watts to get 2.5 acoustic watts out, what happened to the other 247.5 watts? The answer is that they are converted to heat. And that's a lot of heat—about one quarter the amount your iron or toaster generates. Can the loudspeaker take these power levels? Not for long, but luckily it doesn't have to.

The power levels of music are not constant. When you listen to music, it is obvious that the loudness level varies considerably. When you remember that it takes at least ten times as much power to double the loudness level, you will realize that the long-term average power is pretty low compared with the maximum power on fortissimos. Even if we assume that the dynamic range of classical music will be limited to about 40 dB and further assume that the long-term average power is 20 dB less than (that is, only 1/100 of) the maximum power, our long-term average power input to the 1-per-cent-efficient transducer is only 2.5 watts. If we consider transducer efficiency of 2 1/2 per cent (probably more typical) the long-term average power is about 1 watt and the maximum power is about 100 watts during the fortissimos for the acoustic conditions we assumed previously. Of course the compressed range of rock music puts the average and maximum power levels closer to each other.

A little aside is necessary here to clarify the power terms we're using. There has recently been considerable controversy in power terminology mainly because of ill-defined and carelessly used terms. When we referred to "maximum power" in the previous paragraph we meant the greatest average power needed for relatively short-time durations—say, no more than a second or two. We did not mean peak power, which is the highest power achieved by an amplifier on an instantaneous basis. By "long-term average power" we mean the power averaged over a considerable length of time to include both pianissimos and fortissimos. Obviously it is much lower than "maximum power."

If it weren't for the big difference between maximum power and long-term average power, loudspeakers would burn up regularly. In electric guitar applications, where the average power is very high, loudspeakers are destroyed at a rate that would shock the audiophile even though these loudspeakers have an especially rugged construction. You should be keenly aware of the distinction between long-term average and maximum power ratings. Your amplifier and loudspeaker may be "compatible" in the sense that the loudspeaker requires and can handle short-term average power levels (what we have termed maximum power) of perhaps 50 watts and you are using a 50-watt amplifier. But while the 50-watt amplifier can deliver 50 watts indefinitely, the loudspeaker may not be able to accept it indefinitely! If the amplifier should break into oscillation or if you were to run your tape recorder in a fast mode with the tape in contact with the head you might deliver continuous power levels that the loudspeaker could not handle. It is very easy to destroy a tweeter under these conditions.

You are well advised to adhere to the loudspeaker manufacturer's ratings and recommendations regarding the appropriate amplifier power levels to use with his unit. He should recommend the minimum amplifier power that will give a reasonably undistorted sound level under average conditions and he should state the maximum power level his unit can withstand. You are also well advised to fuse the loudspeaker circuit so that if the maximum level is exceeded on a long-term
basis the fuse will open and protect the loudspeaker.

The Audibility of Amplifier Clipping

Even if you use a relatively powerful amplifier—say 50 watts per channel—with a medium-efficiency speaker system, it is likely that the peak power level of the music will exceed the amplifier’s capabilities on occasion. Whether you hear the distortion that results will depend a good deal on how the amplifier recovers from the overload. This is a complex characteristic that would be difficult to state in useful terms, and so it normally goes unmeasured. Yet it can be the source of an audible difference between amplifiers. Some amplifiers recover from an overload almost instantaneously and they will sound “cleaner” and more powerful than an amplifier that can deliver the same undistorted power but breaks into a temporary oscillation during clipping or one that suffers a loss of output during or even immediately after overload. Sometimes the very protective circuits that are triggered during amplifier overload can create audible effects.

Matching the Amplifier and Loudspeaker

From our discussion of acoustic power requirements, we saw how difficult it is to determine the precise power level needed. Personally, I would rather err on the side of too much than of too little. This is not to say that good sound cannot be achieved with 25 watts per channel of amplifier power and relatively small loudspeakers, but you can’t expect the sound to match that of a large and powerful system. Since I don’t think you can really have too much power (presuming adequate safeguards are taken to protect the loudspeakers from the dangers of a misused superpowered amplifier) I would let my pocketbook be my guide in the last analysis.

Regardless of the power level you pick, your best results will be achieved by matching the power level of the amplifier with the loudspeaker’s efficiency and the recommendations of its manufacturer. Remember that it may be less expensive to choose a more efficient loudspeaker and a lower-powered amplifier. If the choice is between a bookshelf loudspeaker with 1½-per-cent efficiency and a unit with 3-per-cent efficiency the latter will produce the same sound level from a 25-watt amplifier as the former would from a 50-watt unit. Be cautious though. The difference in price between the 25-watt amplifier and the 50-watt amplifier may reflect more than just the difference in power capability. The 25-watt amplifier may be a bottom-of-the-line set with fewer features and poorer overall performance. The relatively low cost per watt in solid-state amplifiers has encouraged the development of low-efficiency loudspeakers, but this philosophy can be carried too far; so judge each combination on its own merits.

If you intend to operate extra speaker pairs from the same amplifier, you had better provide extra power for them. You will also have to be careful with their rated impedances. While typical solid-state amplifiers will function with a wide range of load impedances, there is usually a recommended minimum load to prevent either damage to the amplifier or triggering of protective devices at relatively low output levels. The normal minimum is about 4 ohms. If you wish to connect extension loudspeakers in parallel with your present pair, both the main set and the extension set must be rated realistically at 8 ohms or more to stay above the 4-ohm load limit. Occasionally, loudspeakers rated at 8 ohms dip significantly below that value at some frequency. If your amplifier has a 4-ohm minimum load specification, you shouldn’t use such loudspeakers in multiple connections without adding some series resistance. The loudspeaker test reports in High Fidelity will advise you if the loudspeaker impedance drops below nominal.

When selecting loudspeakers for secondary use, it is wise to buy units that either match or exceed your main loudspeakers’ efficiency. If the efficiencies are closely matched, you will probably find that the sound level in both locations is pleasing with the same setting of the volume control. If the efficiency of the remote units is higher than the main ones, a pad (volume control) can be installed in the remote units to reduce their level. Generally the pad will reduce the damping factor of the amplifier as seen by the remote units. Better there than at the main loudspeakers, which I presume are of paramount importance to you.

Frequently a solid-state amplifier will deliver more power into a 4-ohm load than into an 8-ohm load. The amount of extra power available varies from model to model. If you’re going to use extension loudspeakers, check the 4-ohm rating of the amplifiers you are considering. One model may be better in this respect than another even though both have the same 8-ohm rating.

The Final Choice

I’ve pretty much limited myself to a single aspect of amplifier and loudspeaker selection, namely, one based on power requirements. There are many more considerations—frequency response, transient response, dispersion, distortion of the loudspeaker system—that cannot be ignored. But perhaps I’ve shed a little light on why one audiophile feels 100 watts is inadequate while another is getting perfectly acceptable sound from a 20-watt amplifier!
TIME HAS A WAY of elevating the trivial, or at least I hope it has. A few weeks ago I came across a not very distinguished book about Wagner published at the turn of the century. It is only worth mentioning because of an appendix in which the author describes his experiences backstage at the first Bayreuth festival in 1876, and he is positively apologetic about recounting such things as squabbles between the artists, difficulties with the mechanics of staging, and in-fighting between members of the orchestra. By hindsight it is all fascinating and revealing; yet the author felt apologetic because what he was describing seemed trivial in relation to what eventually emerged from Bayreuth. I share his reticence. Nothing would have induced me to publish accounts of the incidents which follow at or close to the time when they happened. I can only hope that the passage of time in terms of one or two decades has given some of them a sort of period charm, while the rest may help to clear up some long-standing mysteries about operatic casting.

Friday, December 20, 1946. A perishingly cold night in the Royal Albert Hall, London, where an innovation is supposed to be taking place. British Decca has had the idea of recording several works and then promoting a concert at which they would be played. The purpose of the exercise is to invite distinguished members of the audience into the Prince Consort room after the concert to hear advance pressings of the recordings, thus inviting a direct comparison between what had just been heard in live conditions and the ultimate in high fidelity, which was then a large piece of furniture called the Decola. The soloist on that cold night was Paul Schoeffler who had recorded Wotan's Farewell the week before, and who now sang it again to a sparse and shivering audience.

Afterwards the gathering in the Prince Consort room was indeed distinguished, though whether by virtue of the promised playback or by the prospect of free food and drink remained unclear, since those were still the days of domestic rationing. Eventually the man in charge of demonstrations stood up and made an impassioned speech about the new reality of concert music in the home: about full-frequency range recording and about how we were going to hear something which would be indistinguishable from what we had just heard in the expanses of the Albert Hall, although it had not in fact been recorded there. He then loaded four 78-rpm test pressings of Wotan's Farewell on the Decola and a great silence came over the room. People stopped eating. The demonstrator added a final flourish and flicked the mains switch. There was a loud bang, and a cloud of blue smoke came out from the Decola. It turned out that the Royal Albert Hall was one of the few buildings in London still using DC as distinct from AC mains electrical supply. The guests finished off the rest of the food and never did hear the record. A pity, because it was rather good and in any event miles better than the concert.

A marvelous story was told in the late 1940s about the Geneva reconciliation of Igor Stravinsky and Ernest Ansermet, and was authenticated by Ansermet himself—surprisingly, since a sense of humor was not his strongest quality. It may be recalled that despite his advocacy of Stravinsky's works in the Diaghilev days, Ansermet had made no bones about his distaste for the composer's later music and had been rash enough to go into print on the subject. In the years after the war Ansermet recorded on 78 rpm virtually all the Stravinsky he cared about, and one day when the composer was scheduled to visit Geneva a meeting with Ansermet was diplomatically engineered. (According to Ansermet it took place on a streetcar, but I find that a little too bizarre to accept.) It was evidently an occasion of some emotion, and ended with Ansermet inviting Stravinsky to his apartment to hear the recordings. Since Ansermet recorded exclusively for British Decca he had been given a Decola, and it was upon this machine that one afternoon he began to stack the auto-couplings of Firebird, Petrushka, Rite of Spring, and various other highly praised Stravinsky recordings he had made. Stravinsky listened in silence, his head cupped in his hands. From time to time it was necessary for

Formerly a noted record producer, John Culshaw is now head of music programs for the British Broadcasting Corp.
Ansermet to invert the pile of records, or to reload. Eventually, after some hours, the last record came to an end. Stravinsky did not move, nor did he say a word. It must have seemed evident to Ansermet that the composer was deeply touched, and he was not inclined to break the silence. In the end he could no longer contain himself. “What,” he asked, “do you think?”

Stravinsky’s head came out of his hands. “I think,” he said, “that you need a new pickup.”

In June 1951 two operas—Manon and Carmen—were scheduled to be recorded in Paris. These were entrusted to a charming man called Max de Rieux, who some time earlier had had a modest career as a tenor and who later turned his attention to stage production. He was engaged for the operas presumably because he had absolutely no recording experience. By the end of the second week in June some very strange stories indeed began to reach London about certain goings-on in Paris, where Manon was supposed to be in progress. There was, for example, a bulky invoice for an actor who could not possibly play any part in Manon as one knows it. As I was going to Paris on June 17 to make orchestral recordings with Roger Desormière I was asked to investigate discreetly just what was happening to the operas.

There was a heap of trouble. The French had taken strong exception to the casting of a German, Martha Mödl, in the role of Carmen. Strike action was threatened by the orchestra, and there was an ultimatum from the chorus. I was only on the periphery of things, but it seemed that Miss WW1 was not unduly disturbed by the prospect of a cancellation in Paris, since in less than a month she was due to sing Brünnhilde and Kundry at the reopening of the Bayreuth festival.

“Who on earth is going to replace her?” I asked Max de Rieux. “And with less than three days’ notice.”

“Ahhhh!” he said, and glided away. The resident Carmen in Paris was Solange Michel, but she had already recorded the opera for French Columbia. In London we had Edith Coates and Constance Shacklock, both of whom were dismissed out of hand.

I then discovered the nasty secret about Manon. Max had written a sort of running commentary in French which was read by an actor (hence the invoice) to describe the scenes and the action of the opera. Since there were no multitrack tape machines in those days, and since the commentary had been recorded mostly over music there was nothing anyone could do to save Manon from disaster; but maybe something could be done for Carmen.

Sure enough, I found Max’s script of which he was extremely proud. It was full of things like: “Now she comes down the factory steps . . . now she lights a cigarette . . . now she casts a burning glance at Don José.” There were pages of it, based on the theory that at all moments when nobody is actually singing the listener’s attention needs to be diverted from the music. I called my superiors, but nobody was prepared to take issue with Max: He had been given the assignment, and that was that. I also mentioned that to the best of my knowledge we had no Carmen. As a last resort I called Remy Farkas in our New York office because he was rather good at raising hell, which he immediately did, once he had recovered from his utter incredulity about the commentary idea. Max was ordered to drop the commentary in Carmen.

“Right,” I said, “but who is going to sing Carmen?”

“I have engaged a most distinguished singer from the Opéra,” Max said. “Her name is Suzanne Juyol.”

“Mezzo?”

“Her voice will have no difficulty.”

“What does she usually sing?”

“Brünnhilde,” he said gracefully, “and Isolde, and lots of that sort of thing.”

The summer of 1951 was not a happy one in Paris, and neither opera survived very long in the catalogue, though Carmen deserved a place on the shelf if only for Janine Micheau’s marvelous Micaëla.

* * * * * * *

The extent to which a recording producer can or should influence an artist obviously depends on
their relationship and respect for each other. In Amsterdam in 1952 I had been threatened with a baptism of fire in the form of working with George Szell for the first time. As it happened we hit it off at once; and so, perhaps emboldened by the experience, I went further than I might otherwise have done in the next series of sessions with Eduard van Beinum, who was the chief conductor of the Concertgebouw. We were concerned with Brahms’s First Symphony, and when we reached the last pages of the finale Van Beinum made the familiar ritardando in the bars before the final brass chorale and during the chorale itself. I have never really understood why conductors do this. The build-up to the climax is marked piu allegro, and there is nothing in the score to indicate that Brahms wanted either a ritardando before the chorale or, worse still, a riteno, which is an immediate slamming on of the brakes, when the trombones come in. It seemed to me that a strict adherence to accents and dynamics would take care of the climax without necessitating an unwritten change of tempo. and I made this observation gently to Van Beinum. He looked utterly astonished but not in the least offended. Finally, he made a bet: He would play it that way once, and if on listening back he found it convincing then it would be champagne all round for the crew and the orchestra. He did, and it was; and he ended the symphony pretty much that way for the rest of his life.

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Most sane recording producers come to dread working with Italian tenors, and the more experience you have the less rational the exercise seems. It was therefore with genuine pleasure that I looked forward to working with Jussi Bjoerling in Un Ballo in maschera during the summer of 1960. We were to make it in Rome with Nilsson and Simionato in the cast, and with Solti conducting. I had never met Bjoerling, so about a month before the Ballo project I went to Vienna where he was recording the Verdi Requiem with Fritz Reiner. Bjoerling was in excellent voice and seemed friendly, but he had a heart condition and was drinking very heavily. I was more than a bit apprehensive about how he would make out in the July heat of Rome, but he did not seem too concerned.

Solti is meticulous about rehearsal, and a careful schedule had been prepared. To some extent it had been built to accommodate Bjoerling who did not want to stay longer than necessary in Rome, and he duly turned up for the first rehearsal on July 8. It was evident immediately that he was not going to get on with Solti because he was beyond the stage where he was prepared to reconsider any aspect of his performance. He had sung Riccardo all over the world and often with no rehearsal at all. so he saw little reason for it now. On July 9 he skipped rehearsal on the grounds of feeling unwell, but sent a message suggesting that instead of having separate rehearsals we should rehearse immediately before each session, thus saving him a double journey from the hall to his hotel.

Solti did not like this at all, and with good reason: The hall we were using in Rome was not air-conditioned. The strain of a three-hour session in such conditions is bad enough for a tape operator, but simply appalling for an active conductor: therefore the idea of adding another hour or ninety minutes of rehearsal immediately before the session was at the very least undesirable. Yet for the
sake of preserving a good working relationship with Bjoerling, Solti agreed; and a colleague of mine went over to Bjoerling's hotel to say that there would be a sixty-minute rehearsal immediately before the first session on July 10.

"Tell me something about Solti," Bjoerling said. "Is he a fairy?"

When my colleague had recovered from the shock he told Bjoerling that nothing could actually be further from the truth.

"Then why does he call everyone 'my dear'?

Bjoerling asked.

The next day Solti and the cast turned up for the rehearsal one hour before the session; Bjoerling didn't. He arrived some little time after the session had started, and wanted to interrupt whatever we were doing to try one of his arias. Solti kept his temper, and we recorded a few passages before Bjoerling decided he wanted to go home. On July 11 Solti wanted to quit and I didn't blame him for a minute. Yet he has extraordinary self-control in a crisis, and in the end he tried to reason with Bjoerling on the telephone. I went over to Bjoerling's hotel and begged him to make even a token gesture by coming to the rehearsal that night. I said how important it was to get his marvelous Riccardo down for posterity and that—whatever their differences—Solti felt the same way. On the other hand, I had to say that if things got any worse I might have to abandon the opera or look for another tenor. He did not think we would dare to do the former, and as for the latter.... However, he agreed to come to the rehearsal. Needless to say, he did not.

On July 12 we abandoned Bullo, and on September 9 Jussi Bjoerling died. In the following year, 1961, the opera was completed with Carlo Bergonzi as Riccardo.

Meanwhile, there had been trouble in London where Sir Thomas Beecham had embarked upon his sensational Messiah for RCA, which at that time had a close relationship with British Decca. It was of immense importance to RCA that they should borrow Joan Sutherland for the recording, and this was duly arranged. Unfortunately, some sense of the importance RCA attached to Sutherland's participation in the venture may have reached Sir Thomas' ears, and after a very short time he demanded a replacement.

I was dispatched to his hotel to plead with him. He was jovial enough, and offered me an enormous gin and tonic at ten in the morning. I told him that, quite apart from anything else I might say, a very senior executive from RCA in New York was at that moment on his way to London in the hope of resolving the situation.

"Alleluia!" Sir Thomas said.

But he would not budge. The senior executive came and went; and so for that matter did Joan Sutherland. Her place was taken by Jennifer Vyvyan.

By casting Ettore Bastianini as Iago in the Karajan Otello in 1961 we were taking a calculated risk. He had never sung the role on stage, but his voice was in marvelous condition and he was enthusiastic about the idea. Yet he was a strangely inhibited man, and his fears may have been increased by the knowledge that he would be working with Tebaldi and Del Monaco, both of whom had vast experience in their parts.

Karajan is extraordinary in his way with singers. If he likes a singer he can be enormously attentive and helpful, and he is a brilliant accompanist in the highest sense of that word: He knows just what to do; he can think of something to make the singer along with him. On the other hand when he does not like someone he can be ruthless. This liking or disliking is rarely a personal thing, but is entirely concerned with professional competence. Quite rightly he is no longer in the business of teaching singers the rudiments of their art.

The trouble with Bastianini, which became evident only gradually, was that he did not know his part. Worse still, he did not appear to know the opera. "What's all this business about a handkerchief?" he asked Del Monaco at one stage. We all thought this was a joke at the time, but it turned out not to be. The crunch came in the 6/8 passage in Act III ("Questa è una ragna") which he seemed not to be able to sing at all. Karajan demanded Aldo Protti as a replacement, partly for the practical reason that he was in Vienna, and partly because Protti had sung the part so many times with him in the theater. The choice provoked much grumbling from the critics later on, but at the time there was really no other option short of abandoning Otello, and you can't abandon an opera unless both management and the conductor agree.

I treasure a cable sent to me many years ago in a moment of terrible Viennese crisis by a colleague who had never had anything to do with classical recordings, but who had heard of our predicament.

We were trying to record Arabella (which I personally considered a mistake in the first place), it was to be conducted by Karl Bohm, but in the event it turned out to be Solti's first operatic recording and his first encounter with the Vienna Philharmonic. The two leading ladies were not to put it mildly, on the closest of terms; and the schedule was continually wrecked by illness or misfortune. Word of some of this must have got back to London, and so the cable arrived. It said: IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO OVERESTIMATE THE UNIMPORTANCE OF PRACTICALLY EVERYTHING. That, I think, just about sums it up.
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The 400 millisecond miracle. More proof that Revox delivers what all the rest only promise.
The recent recording boom is notable more for quantity than for quality.

The arrival of Igor Zhukov's complete collection of the Scriabin sonatas (minus the two posthumous works recorded by Ponti and Szidon) provides a good opportunity to survey this and the three other complete cycles, plus the host of individual versions (most of them relatively recent) listed in Schwann. Two general observations before beginning: First, of all the recordings only Laredo's renditions (Connoisseur Society) offer sound you might mistake for a real piano. The Ponti set (Vox) comes in a distant second, realistic enough in the low and mid-ranges but pretty tinny in the upper. Going from Laredo or Kuerti (Monitor) to Szidon (DG) or Zhukov is like going from an LP to a 78. Second, neither Laredo nor Szidon comes up with any really bad interpretations, while Somer's playing (in Nos. 4, 7, and 9, Mercury) offers little competition.

The first two sonatas offer every bit as much interest as No. 3, although they get played nowhere nearly as often. All three are strongly marked by an opulent, almost decadent romantic writing that seems highly derivative until you become better acquainted, upon repeated hearings, with the short, often upward-moving melodic lines, the distinctive rhythmic patterns, and the particularly rich chordal structures and progressions that give Scriabin's early musical language its deep and captivating personality. For No. 1, Zhukov very nearly measures up to Szidon, who combines an excellent sense of balance and detail with a relaxed, mellowly romantic approach beautifully suited to this music. While avoiding some of Szidon's volume excesses, Zhukov nonetheless has a harsher approach to the piece that destroys some of its line. Laredo has Szidon's mellowness without sharing his clarity, while Ponti's detached and ridiculously mannered interpretation belongs altogether to another world that was never, one supposes, inhabited by Scriabin.

Sonata No. 2, in G sharp minor, Op. 19 (Sonata-Fantasy).
Szidon particularly impresses here with his ability to bring out the highly emotional lyrical subtleties buried in the second of the work's two movements. All of the others, particularly Ponti, skim over it, although Laredo produces some good rhythmic effects. In the first movement Ponti executes some of the rippling upper-register figures with such perfect evenness and such bell-like clarity that one almost forgets a mere piano is producing these iridescent sonorities. The Zhukov version, while not bad, is probably the least attractive of the four.

Sonata No. 3, in F sharp minor, Op. 23.
Probably the most often recorded of any Scriabin sonata, the Third has still not received, to my mind, anything near the ideal performance. Certainly Zhukov offers one of the worst. He generally overstates the work, rarely giving the music room to breathe and rarely going more than surface deep in spite of his impressive tech-

by Royal S. Brown

The Scriabin Sonatas on Records

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE
nique. And anyone who throws away those marvelous harmonic shifts in the second movement the way Zhu-
kov does should be sent back to sensitivity school.
Gould, the only pianist to take the second movement's grace notes seriously, offers a performance so studied
that it almost dries up and blows away. But at least Gould
makes a better case for an extremely slow first movement
than Szidon, and for all his calculation Gould does give
the work a definite profile. Horowitz' approach strikes
me as curiously disinterested, and if you buy a recent
pressing you'll have to put up with one of RCA's new su-
perwarp discs. Only Ponce comes close to what I would
consider an idiomatic performance, and even here he
gives in to a few too many excesses to make his perform-
ance entirely successful. Laredo's rendition is sonorous
and moves well but lacks contrast.

Sonata No. 4, in F sharp, Op. 30.
Nos. 4 and 5 seem to form a kind of second, transitional
period in Scriabin's sonata output. Both are character-
ized by a greater textural complexity and a much more
ambiguous formal structure than the earlier sonatas, and
the Fifth, like all the following sonatas, has but one
movement (the Fourth has two). On the other hand,
both—unlike the later works—have key signatures and in
fact depend greatly on the movement of groups of
simple triads and their inversions; and both greatly lack
the tonal ambivalence and the mystical, instinctive de-
ployment of thematic material that mark Nos. 6 through
10. The Fourth benefits from two superb performances—
by Laredo and Kuerti—while suffering from two partic-
ularly bad ones by Ponti and especially Zhukov, whose
glib run-through of the second movement seems to re-
sult from a classic case of mismatched temperaments.
Laredo's slower tempo in the last movement accentuates
the rather jazzy rhythms of this 1903 composition while
also creating a slight atmosphere of sadness not inap-
propriate here. Kuerti produces a colder but equally effec-
tive interpretation.

Sonata No. 5, in F sharp, Op. 53.
Not even Richter can touch Laredo here. Laredo's strong
point is her ability to bring out the full, dramatic tone of
the sonata's dynamic chord movements, which are sim-
ply staccatoed to death, in varying degrees, by the other
pianists. There is also a strong feeling of a kind of expan-
sion/contraction alternation that Laredo likewise cap-
tures to perfection. Zhukov offers one of the better ver-
sions here, particularly in the opening. If the Richter
performance, recorded live, benefited from the engi-
neering of the Laredo disc, the Russian pianist's tone
quality would possibly match Laredo's, but Richter ap-
proaches the sonata in quite a linear fashion that does
not seem wholly justifiable.

Sonata No. 6, Op. 62.
With Nos. 6 through 9, Scriabin entered the most
strongly mystical phase in his sonata work. None of these
four sonatas maintains anything resembling tonality; yet
each is steeped in its own distinctive harmonic idiom—
based on a chordal rather than a scale structure—that im-
parts to each work a kind of obsessive unity within
which fragments of themes, rhythmic patterns, and
chord progressions appear, disappear, and reappear in
a rising spiral whose ending seems almost arbitrarily de-
determined. The Sixth, probably the gloomiest of the four
(and never performed in public by the composer/pian-
ist) receives, like the Fourth, superlative interpretations
from Laredo and Kuerti (and also from Richter on a de-
leted MK disc). Ponti, on the other hand, can be dis-
missed not only for his overly headstrong performance of
the Sixth, but for his general failure to make the tran-
sition from the dynamic romanticism of the early so-

natas to the more expansive, pensive nonmovement of
these later works, culminating in an Eighth that repres-
ts one of the most absurd, dismal examples of insensi-
tivity to a style I have ever heard. One can only sit back
and remain aghast at Ponti's brilliant but completely
inappropriate display of technique in these four sonatas.
Zhukov gives a performance that is dry without at the
same time capturing the atmospheric coldness that per-
vades Kuerti's version in particular. Szidon falls some-
where in between.

Sonata No. 7, Op. 64 (White Mass).
Zhukov fares somewhat better here, although still basic-
ally lacking the essential quiescence that envelops La-
redo's version—the best available—of this White Mass.
Like Ponti, Szidon commits some sins against tone but
basically seems to identify quite closely with the work's
mysticism, thus giving his technique, which is similar to
Ponte's, a raison d'etre.

Sonata No. 8, Op. 66.
The longest and probably the strangest of the one-move-
ment sonatas, the Eighth apparently also was never per-
formed by Scriabin. In many ways, the work seems remi-
niscent of the Poem of Fire, particularly in a dancelike
figure introduced toward the middle of the work; yet
there are also certain more conventional elements, such
as the Debussyesque runs of parallel fourths and the ris-
ing whole-note motive, which seem oddly juxtaposed
on the structure of this piece. Zhukov here turns in his best
performance (along with his First). His tempos are per-
fected; and he succeeds particularly well in balancing such
incongruous elements as the parallel-fourth motive
against the over-all atmosphere of this complex sonata. I
find Laredo's interpretation absolutely stunning in the
limpidity and depth of sound she produces, and as with
all of the "mystical" sonatas, she sensitively captures the
diverse nuances of Scriabin's vision, although she does
occasionally lose some of the detail because of her atten-
tion to sonority. Szidon approaches Zhukov but here
lacks the depth of the latter's general conception.

Sonata No. 9, Op. 68 (Black Mass).
For this bleak Black Mass, Vladimir Horowitz envelops
the work in an ice-cold shroud that will doubtless remain
unique in the recorded literature. Laredo offers a more
dramatic approach that is quite a few degrees warmer.
While both Szidon and Zhukov have their strong points,
they do not match up to either Laredo or Horowitz (in
either the latter's newer version on Columbia or his
mono-only rendition on the RCA set).

Sonata No. 10, Op. 70.
With the leaner, less complex textures of his last sonata,
Scriabin seemed to be moving away from the directions
of the work's immediate predecessors (although one
might have drawn the same conclusions in a different
way if the Eighth had been the last). Even the introd-
cution, while recalling the shimmering stillness of earlier
Scriabin, 
Mascot of the Cosmonauts

The Soviet view of the mystical composer is quite different from the one that has propelled his recent popularity in America.

by Faubion Bowers

Different countries; different ears. Different eras, new understandings. Few composers in history have illustrated this more clearly (or with more confusion) than Alexander Scriabin. The gyrations over how the Soviet Russians hear his music, and how we now receive it, are so divergent as to be spectacular, for the starting points of Scriabin appreciation in the two countries are far distant one from the other. Irreconcilably so. The tooth of history is indeed venomous, and it would seem that a spoon of antidote has been needed by both countries.

It was extraordinary enough that for the 1972 centennial year of Scriabin’s birth the powerful World Peace Council in Moscow decreed that “all mankind in these days observe the hundredth anniversary of this great Russian composer.” And although Scriabin was not designated a “Soviet” composer, as Pushkin is sometimes referred to as “the Soviet poet,” still the government issued a four-kopeck postage stamp (the equivalent of our eight-cent one for ordinary mail) honoring the composer. People’s Artist Dmitri Shostakovich as Chairman of the Jubilee Committee composed an accolade of words which, under the title “Pride of Russian Music,” was widely quoted in even the most ordinary of Soviet newspapers and periodicals.

The legacy of Scriabin was needed for the construction of a new society and necessary for it to live and to continue to live for many generations. . . . Scriabin is close to us today not only as one of the precursors of the cleansing storm of Revolution, but as a musician-innovator who strove to open up new sources of musical expressiveness and discover new means of affecting audiences. In truth, he succeeded in creating a uniquely personal musical language, a special world of sound-images, . . . Scriabin is dear to us for his faith in the transforming power of art and its ability to ennoble the soul of man and bring harmony into the life of the people.

For those of us who remember the Stalinist 1940s, when Shostakovich was decrying Scriabin as “our bitterest enemy” and affirming that he was “decadent . . . neurasthenic . . . hypersexualized,” these latest encomiums are passing strange. It is right and rightful that Scriabin is elevated to a niche of esteem, but the reasons for this are not exactly as we would think them.

In Soviet rationale, Scriabin is a visionary artist foreseeing outer space travel. His Fourth Sonata Op. 30 written in 1903 is a case in point. Scriabin described it as “a flight to a distant star,” and in teaching the piece he said of the second movement (marked prestissimo volando), “I want this still faster, as fast as possible, to the limit of possibility. It must be flight, the speed of light going straight to the sun, to the sun!” Small wonder, then, that Scriabin has in recent years become a cosmonautic mascot. In 1961, when Yuri Gagarin shook the world with his first flight in space, the composers of the All-Union Soviet Radio expressed their excitement by broadcasting “into the ether” a program of Scriabin music. When Gagarin was triumphantly welcomed in Red Square on April 15 (the day after Scriabin’s forty-sixth death anniversary), The Poem of Ecstasy was the official composition. Three days later the Second Symphony was given a nationwide broadcast continuing the celebrations. As Alexander Rekembezh observes in his monograph on Scriabin issued in 1972 as one of the “Lives of the Great” series designed for the Communist “Young Guard,” “Radio performances of Scriabin’s music are for the most part associated with Cosmonaut Days.”

Scriabin was certainly obsessed with flight. In 1914 he contemplated writing a sixth symphony or poem to be called Icarus. In it he planned using an airplane motor, much as George Antheil later in 1927 actually did in a revision of Ballet mecanique. To Americans, however, it is the ending to the text of the Fourth Sonata which most fascinates. As Scriabin flies through space toward that “far distant star,” suddenly and mysteriously it becomes a sun. Scriabin swallows its “sea of light” and becomes “My Self-of-Light.” In this visionary poetry Scriabin foretells as much as anything the hallucinogenic drug cult.

When Scriabin first announced that the opening of his Prefatory Action would begin with bells suspended from clouds, half his followers thought him quite simply mad. The other half continued following him in full trust. When the dirigible became widespread, Scriabin’s adherents felt themselves vindicated. The scheme was now feasible. This rationalization after the fact has become a pattern in Soviet thinking. Perhaps Mikhail Mikhailov, the distinguished professor of musicology at Leningrad University, expresses this idea best in his biography of Scriabin updated and re-released as part of celebrations of the centenary year.

Much of what appeared in Scriabin’s lifetime as only beautiful, fetching dreams, but impractical of realization, today in principle can be fulfilled. Several of the composer’s bold imaginings seem prophetic and foreguess what has since become possible in our era of great radio-electronic advances.

The existence of many different electronic music instruments now achieve those unprecedented orchestral timbres the composer dreamed of. The “like thunder” sound of the human voice Scriabin attempted in the Prefatory Action today is easily effected by ordinary microphones. The “sound of bells ‘from the clouds’” can be realized by means of modern day stereophonic techniques. Similarly, so can many more of Scriabin’s musical ideas—his thoughts on unifying music vertically (melodically) and horizontally (harmonically), on using untempered sounds, of choral whispers, etc., all of which were nonexistent expressive means at that time, only to be realized in the music of the succeeding period of history.

Mikhailov also finds “prophecy” in Scriabin’s color-music. It anticipated by a generation the science-fiction novel by I. Efremov, The Darkness of Andromeda, where the compartment of astronauts flying toward unknown, distant worlds, is filled with music accompanied by “symphonies” of lights and colors.

Sovietskaya Rossiya, an official organ in the Soviet Union, pointed out during the centennial celebrations that “The soul of Scriabin the seeker is close to our own times of wing-spreadin scientific research, of deep experimentation in art.” But today’s Russians hear socialism in Scriabin’s music. Scriabin accompanies most television shows and films depicting the 1905 Revolution. The concept without which the subsequent Revolution of 1917 could not have happened. Russians further hear Scriabin as profoundly Russian, while we in the West think him cosmopolitan, a sort of international passportless maverick.

Certainly the bright, healthy, sunny aspect of Scriabin’s music exists. One of his positive goals was the triumph of man over circumstance. But for Americans at least, Scriabin continues to stand resolutely in a world of mysticism, madness, drugs and sex . . . areas which are anathema to Soviet perceptions. I rather think it is these dubious arenas of Scriabin’s genius that explain the extraordinary resurgence into vogue of Scriabin’s music among young people here during the past decade.
openings, has an almost threadbare transparency that immediately sets it apart. The descending chromatic motive that opens the allegro section, on the other hand, strikes me as much more Romantic than anything to be found, for example, in the Ninth. The Horowitz rendition, now included in an all-Scriabin program (reviewed separately) is one of the great Scriabin recordings. But Szidon's execution of the Tenth represents one of his very best efforts—everything falls together perfectly, from his beautifully smooth and controlled playing of the sonata's many trills to his ability to give relief to the divergent rhythmic lines of this essentially linear work. Zhukov again comes quite close to Szidon without ever diverging in the manner of the Tenth. But the listener is completely enveloped in Horowitz' performance in one that has long been considered the best. Zhukov is probably to be preferred to Szidon, if for no other reason than that the former is easier on the ears. But the latter is still said about that particular piece the better.

The complete cycles: a few conclusions.

Zhukov is at his worst, which is pretty bad, in the Third and Fourth, otherwise, his performances are generally good but not as convincing as others, except for the First and Eighth. You can't go wrong with Laredo for Nos. 4 through 10, although she comes in second best in several instances. Ponti obviously identifies (usually) with Scriabin's early style and is equally obviously oblivious to the composer's wavelength in the later works. For the Fantasia in B minor, Zhukov is probably to be preferred to Szidon, if for no other reason than that the former is easier on the ear. But the latter is still said about that particular piece the better.


Selected comparisons:

Laredo
Con. Soc. 2032, 2034, 2035
Ponti
Vox 5461
Szidon
DG 2707 053 and 2707 058
Gold (No. 3)
Col. 7173
Horowitz (No. 3)
RCA 2005
Horowitz (No. 9)
RCA 6014; Col. M2S 726
Horowitz (No. 10)
Col. M2S 727 or 31620
Kuerti (Nos. 4 and 6)
Mon. 2134
Richter (No. 5)
DG 138 849
Sommer (No. 4)
Mer. 90520
Somer (Nos. 7 and 9)
Mer. 90525

New Scriabin from an Old Master

It is when you listen to a recording such as this one that you realize how totally superfluous it is to say that a Michael Ponti, for example, is the "new Horowitz." This is not to imply that everything Horowitz does is absolute perfection, but there is a completeness about Horowitz' approach to most everything he plays that transcends in a way few other pianists can, even if you don't always agree with the interpretation. Consider his performance of the tenth of the Op. 8 Etudes, for example. There is a dryness to Horowitz' style here that does not seem altogether appropriate to the piece's more fully-bodied romanticism, and this serio approach is even more distracting in the fifth of the Op. 42 Etudes. Yet the manner in which Horowitz perfectly times his rubatos, in which he manages to balance the left-hand passages against the right instead of throwing them off as mere accompaniment as so many pianists do, and in which he scrupulously follows Scriabin's various dynamic markings to blend the episodes into a convincing whole must surely not be very far from what the composer desired.

These same qualities pervade Horowitz' performances of the Feuillet d'album and the other etudes on Side 1, which have been particularly well selected. Even more impressive, however, is Horowitz' rendition of the Tenth Sonata, recorded in concert and previously available on Columbia's two-record "Horowitz in Concert" set (M2S 757). Besides executing with perfect evenness and absolute clarity the many trills passages that run throughout this terse and yet almost achingly poignant work, Horowitz also weaves the various thematic motives in and out of the sonata's off-shifting textures in a way that gives the most possible meaning to the work's complex movement.

This is certainly one of the finest performances available on any Scriabin work, and the same can be said about Horowitz' Vers la flamme, a Scriabin "poem" that starts off somberly enough but rises to an almost frenzied, chordal climax that can be totally ruined by anything short of a perfect tone. Although not known as a "tone" pianist, Horowitz manages to create volume through balance, a balance that is so perfectly conceived within the structure of the repeated chords that he does not have to hammer the piano to death—unlike Roberto Szidon, for example. Yet the listener is completely enveloped in sound.

Particularly welcome too are the two Op. 69 Poems, not otherwise available to my knowledge. The second seems almost like an introduction to the Tenth Sonata, which immediately followed it, while also offering some especially lighthearted dance-like motives—typical of much of Scriabin's later music—that Horowitz executes brilliantly. The recorded sound for this disc is good enough, although I've heard better. The liner notes, on the other hand, grate: I'm tired of being told what an "in" composer Scriabin is. What is great about his music is that it transcends relevance. And few pianists drive this point home more convincingly than Vladimir Horowitz.

R.S.B.
by Andrew Porter

Joan of Arc Italian Style

With Caballé as the Maid, James Levine conducts Verdi's early opera.

Milnes, Caballé, Levine, and Domingo ponder a point during the recording of Giovanna d'Arco.

With this, the first commercial recording of Giovanna d'Arco, Angel joins Philips in the "crusade" for early Verdi. Giovanna (1845) was Verdi's seventh opera. After his collaborations with Piave on two dramas concerned in the main with private emotions—Ernani and I due Foscari—he worked again with Solera, the librettist of Nabucco and I Lombardi, on an "epic" subject. There is a great deal of chorus in Giovanna d'Arco: choruses of angels and of demons, choruses of populace and army, and all of them are brought together—voices from heaven, earth, and hell join those of the three principals—in a grand finale around the dying maid while supernatural radiance streams down upon her. (She did not officially become a saint until 1920.) Giovanna is large but it is not long (this performance, quite uncut, lasts just six seconds under two hours). Solera protested that he had devised "an entirely original Italian drama" but in effect he took Schiller's play and, in the culinary phrase, "reduced rapidly." Schiller's Die Jungfrau von Orleans, patterned on Shakespeare's histories (there are echoes from Henry IV and I), turns on a situation familiar to every operagoer: a conflict between amorous inclination and patriotic duty. Joan, on the battlefield, feels a sudden attraction toward the handsome young English knight Lionel, and spares his life instead of killing him. She feels that the purity of her mission has been sullied by this moment of sensual weakness, and so is unable to reply when—before the crowds assembled for the Rheims coronation of the Dauphin, Charles—her father charges her with diabolic practices. Dishonored, captured by the English, she recalls Samson and with superhuman strength bursts her bonds and leads the French to victory, though dying herself on the battlefield.

Solera dropped Lionel, along with a dozen or so other characters, dropped the standard situation, and transferred Joan's transitory affection to Charles. At the end, her father, not heavenly power, strikes off her chains. Solera also provided words for Joan's "voices," which in Schiller are imagined. The operatic demons tempt her in a lilting 3/8 chorus, "Tu sei bella, pazzarella," whose fresh prettiness carries no infernal overtones—but since the temptation is precisely that Joan should continue in pastoral bliss, rather than take up arms, the effect is not strictly inappropriate. The character of Joan is simplified, but not spoiled, in the reduction. She is still David, the shepherd who rose to lead a people to freedom, and Samson, the champion who yielded to sensual love but repented and destroyed his foes. Jacques, Joan's father, is also the kind of torn personage that Verdi delighted in: a fanatic who sets religious rigor above patriotism and above filial affection—an Azucena rent by loftier emotions. Charles (here King, not Dauphin) is a fairly successful compendium of several Schiller characters, and Verdi found for him chivalrous, graceful, manly music, somewhat akin to Rudolph's in Luisa Miller. On these three the opera depends; Talbot is a secondo basso whose
In the two live performances I have encountered, I was bowled over by Giovanna d'Arco. I found that I wrote, after a student production at the Royal Academy of Music in London, that "every number in this score is filled with life, with feeling, there is no flinty mechanical writing along approved models for easy effect. All is bold, vigorous, alive, and marked by that response to character which always fired Verdi's imagination." The naive and the crude passages could be taken in the stride of the whole; "one need have no shame in finding them rather stirring too." That judgment may strike someone who listens to the Angel recording as overenthusiastic. Indeed it strikes me as such. It was made only seven years ago. I've grown wiser, perhaps; the heady excitement of encountering another Verdi opera for the first time no longer obtains; and Julian Budden's finely discerning chapter on Giovanna (in his recently published The Operas of Verdi, from Praeger) may have had some influence, for it is persuasively argued. Mr. Budden sums up by saying: "Whereas Errante and I due Foscari for all their faults show a homogeneity of style and structure, Giovanna d'Arco remains a work of brilliant patches. At its worst it is provincial and childishly pretentious. But [Mr. Budden is also appreciative] the best things in it surpass anything Verdi had written up to that time. In the heroine he has created a soprano part of rare distinction, in which all the solo numbers and most of the ensembles are of a high caliber. At no point does Giovanna descend to the level of an ordinary prima donna. Almost everything she has to sing carries her own unique blend of simplicity and majesty."

In the opera house, I believe my original, all but uncritical enthusiasm would readily blaze again. What the recording lacks is drama. It was made by the "standard Verdi cast" of our day during that summer in London when all three of them were hopping from studio to studio and from role to role. Their work in Giovanna is by no means perfunctory—not at all—but it does not have the vivid quality that comes, probably, only after the experience of bringing a role to life in the theater. And the same applies to the chorus. When the BBC records an opera for future transmission, it tapes a concert performance given before an invited audience, doing the work from beginning to end, and then afterwards redoing, if necessary, any passages that have gone seriously wrong. The Toscanini operas and the Furtwangler Ring were made similarly. And increasingly I sympathize with friends who have gone over to collecting "live" recordings rather than the synthetic products of the recording studios. All this matters most when an artist is tackling a role for the first time. I am aware of the glorious exceptions, of the splendid performances that have been assembled piece by piece; and also of the practical reasons that make piecemeal execution cheaper, more convenient, and more efficient from everything but an artistic point of view. And let me add that it was only after noting that this performance of Giovanna did not surfe forward irresistibly through the scenes that I read, in an Angel handout, that "there was no resemblance between the sequence of items as they follow each other in the score and their order in the recording plans."

Montserrat Caballé makes her way somewhat cautiously through the cavatina "O fatidica foresta" she sings with much delicacy and beauty—sounding at times astonishingly like Joan Sutherland in her adaptation of drooping portamento and melting cadence, and often too in actual timbre. The affecting little phrase in the finale, "Oh mia bandiera!" when Joan's standard is placed in her dying hands, is beautifully done (people who heard Tebaldi in the title role still recall her at this moment). Caballé is in good voice almost throughout: ample, not strident, not lazy. It is a big, shiny performance, with much delicate, finely turned singing in it. Placido Domingo turns in a tasteful, accomplished account of the tenor part. In his first air he simplifies Verdi's cadenza; he does not seem to have the big duet with Joan which closes Act I quite securely in his voice. Sherrill Milnes rather lets things down. The baritone role is grandly written. The first aria carries the indication grandioso declamato and the second mounts to a grandioso. A Battistini seems to be called for, or at any rate something closer to Battistini's splendor than the less than grand tones of Mr. Milnes.

Sometimes I feel that young Verdi is best entrusted to old conductors. James Levine made a great impression with the Welsh National Opera in Cardiff and later at the Metropolitan, and this, his first opera recording, shows all his virtues of vigor, energy, care for detail, and care for the shaping of a movement. But the music in Giovanna which is cheap, and the episodes which are clumsily scored, are mercilessly revealed as such—where a conductor like Tullio Serafin, by driving them less hard and coaxing the singers to give the words and phrases shape, not merely rhythmic precision, could have made them resolute and stirring.

Quite a lot of music is set offstage—not just the supernatural choruses, but also most of the Gran Marcia triumfae that opens Act II and the hymn that launches the second finale. It was a mistake in the recording, I think, to make these passages sound so remote. A hint of distance is enough during a long episode, which we must listen to without any stage spectacle to take first attention.

All Verdi's will be glad that Giovanna d'Arco is now available in the regular catalogue. There is a great deal to enjoy in it. If the performance shows up some passages of the score as tawdry, it also draws attention to the more adventurous things Verdi essayed, and the fine musical architecture of especially, his first and second finales, and almost the whole of Act III. There are some noble melodies. Of its kind the performance is spirited and accomplished. The recording took ten days. The rules of the British Musicians' Union allow, I believe, only twenty minutes of published "take" to result from each three-hour session, but whether this can be averaged out over a series of sessions I am unsure. I can't help wondering whether something more gripping might not have resulted had there been (if there could have been), say, eight days of rehearsal, and then a complete performance made for the record on the ninth—with a session and the tenth day still in hand to touch up anything that might have gone badly wrong.

VERDI: Giovanna d'Arco.

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<th>Role</th>
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<tr>
<td>Carlo VII</td>
<td>Placido Domingo (t)</td>
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<td>Giovanna</td>
<td>Montserrat Caballé (s)</td>
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<td>Ernani</td>
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<td>Robert L. Lloyd (b)</td>
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Ambrosian Opera Chorus; London Symphony Orchestra, James Levine, cond. Angel SCL 3791, $17.98 (three discs).
And Now Xerox Reproduces Personalities

Eleanor Roosevelt, Martin Luther King Jr., Maurice Chevalier, and Oscar Hammerstein II "in conversation with" Arnold Michaelis

by Murray Kempton

Their corporate patrons have chosen to step off what promises to be an extended parade of Xerox Recorded Portraits with an uncommonly disparate vanguard: Eleanor Roosevelt and Martin Luther King, who are large historic personages, and then Maurice Chevalier and Oscar Hammerstein II, for whom our memories cannot urge much more than that the former gave pleasure to many persons and the latter no offense to any.

All are in the grave, all are missed, and all except Mrs. Roosevelt molder here in the hands of Arnold Michaelis. We cannot of course judge future portraits, but the promise is not cheering. The project appears depressingly dependent on what Michaelis has managed to put in his vaults after a pursuit of the notable that has been steadfast in everything except discrimination.

Portraits have a way of belonging to their painters more than to their subjects. What we can learn here is most often what Michaelis wanted to learn, and I do not think his curiosity sufficient to animate the rest of us. He is, for one thing, the kind of court painter who disproves the nonsense about no man being a hero to his valet. He does not so much engage his subjects as have them "sit"; he settles "comfortably" with Mrs. Roosevelt and with King in their living rooms; he "visits" with Chevalier and Hammerstein. The posture in each case is sedentary, the questions those of a most respectful guest, and the replies gracious but infected with the tedium of holding the facial muscles in the pointed ceremonial expression.

Mrs. Roosevelt escapes these bindings because she was more used to "sitting" and still managing activity, being uniquely a grand lady who had made of herself a great adventurer. Since she was so much more at ease in her court robes than the others, she can lead Michaelis most dexterously through those measures of small talk. Their conversation is the only one of the four that achieves the domestic and approaches the candid. Eleanor Roosevelt talks about her grandchildren while Oscar Hammerstein II talks about poetry and Maurice Chevalier...
valier about God. There is very little that is dramatic and even less that is intimate in these talks; and we can thank Mrs. Roosevelt for a great part of what there is of both just in the three and one half seconds of silence after Michaelis has asked her about her mother-in-law, as she arrays herself for an answer that will not disguise her ambivalence and yet will decently dress it.

She had been required to live a considerable portion of her life with great resentments; she had conquered them all and was able, with or without skillful probing, to turn those wounds into discourses of a sweet transparency. She had won her way past the necessity of any mask. The mere goodness of Michaelis' character is displayed in his determination to protect any subject who sits for him; the greatness of Mrs. Roosevelt's showed itself in her refusal ever to protect herself.

But Martin Luther King still needed his mask. He may very likely be remembered as a larger figure than Mrs. Roosevelt, and he was almost as aristocratic a one. But he was still young when Michaelis came upon him; and his own interior quarrel was far from being settled. She could look back upon her resentments, while he must still engage an anger that would grow larger until he died. It is true that in 1965, the year of this conversation, he had the fresh recollection of being made a Nobel Laureate and of hearing the President of the United States cry out to Congress, "We shall overcome." But even that early, King could feel the indifferenceness of the larger society, he could hear his seniors in the civil-rights effort ridicule him as a visionary, and he could see his juniors begin to wander away at the call of a music madman the act of the person but not the person himself?"

Yet Michaelis gives no sign of suspicion that a quarrel with self might lie behind a countenance and a cadence like King's, the one wiped smooth of every sign that might betray the feelings, the other marching to a stately measure that made it certain no rebelling thought could break ranks. Such containment does, after all, suggest a special need to contain.

It is Michaelis' disarming innocence that he remains so comfortably one of those persons to whom it never occurs that ill temper is a common attribute of sainthood and that it becomes a particular agony for saints never to be sure whether the summons to be wrathful comes from God or Satan.

Thus he drew from King a most Christian expression of distaste for capital punishment and then followed it with one of those questions of his that are really only commentaries:

"Isn't this part of what I suspect is your attitude of hating the act of the person but not the person himself?"

Oh, yes, King answered; and not even the vividly recent weeks when he had been harried and his comrades beaten by Sheriff Jim Clark of Selma, Alabama, had altered his feelings of charity.

"I'm not concerned with battling Jim Clark just to battle with him. He was taught this way. His whole culture taught him. . . . Probably his church taught him. So that somehow I could maintain an attitude of understanding goodwill towards Jim Clark while hating every evil deed that he did."

Now this reply is certainly noble and indubitably heartfelt but still far less interesting for the single question it answers than for the rush of new ones it raises in the process. Martin Luther King watched the sheriff of Dallas County push an unoffending Negro down the courthouse steps; could there not have intruded the vaguest diminution of goodwill toward the sinner? How, in such circumstances, immediately tell the sinner from the sin? Might it not be possible, even sensible, quite to dislike Sheriff Jim Clark? King had here offered us sound reason to believe that some such worm had tried his innards; he would hardly otherwise have offered us the excuse of the conditioning forces that directed Sheriff Clark to sin. One thinks of King as trying always to teach us that to understand is to forgive, and it is reasonable to assume that he would not have worked so hard to understand if it had not also been steady work for him to forgive. But what is the explanation that is to assist our understanding? "Probably his church taught him." But Sheriff Clark and Martin Luther King were, presumably, Southern Baptists. But what is this church that separates into a branch that taught Jim Clark to be what he is and taught Martin Luther King to be what he was? Manfully, Michaelis turned from this suddenly, almost irresistibly relevant question and began asking King about the logistics of the civil-rights march from Selma to Montgomery. They trailed off to talking about portable toilets: You have informed us, oh, Apostle, about the loaves and the fishes, now tell us what the Savior did for bathrooms. And suddenly we know we have been cheated; we see the snaffle and the bit, but we can't see the horse.

Given the fact of Michaelis' failure with King, it hardly makes any substantial difference that he does better with Chevalier and Hammerstein. Both were men heavily dependent for their effects on techniques of packaging; take away the music and there is very little that either do with the lyrics. Even so, Hammerstein interspersed his conversation with recitations of his lyrics—they run to couplings of "eyes and ears" with "hopes and fears"; and you would have trouble imagining any companion except Michaelis insensitive enough to encourage a self-seriousness so embarrassing in someone so plainly decent in every way. As for Chevalier his memories were an inextricable and ultimately unappetizing mixture of Collette and Jeanette MacDonald. Life was an audience—"these thousands of hearts beating as one great heart." This was a narcissism so unrelieved that you almost have to admire the patience of this listener who not merely endures but even brings enthusiasm to the ordeal. Chevalier remembered great personages; but to him they were indistinguishable for all those other approving and applauding faces in the mirror. He would mention "great movies" and then call to witness The Smiling Lieutenant.

The effect of Chevalier's part is the effect of a whole that seems to work almost insistently at inflating those who were trivial and reducing those who were consequential. It is a melancholy thought that these Portraits may survive to persuade our children's children that their ancestors must have been dull dogs to attend seriously to a collection of representative men as dull as this latest of Xerox processes makes these seem.

XEROX RECORDED PORTRAITS: Eleanor Roosevelt, Martin Luther King Jr., Maurice Chevalier, and Oscar Hammerstein II in conversation with Arnold Michaelis. Xerox 1001, 1002, 1003, and 1004, $6.98 each. Tape: 1001, 1002, 1003, and 1004, $7.98 each (available from Xerox Recorded Portraits, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106).
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Bach: Cantatas: No. 49, Ich geh' und suche mit Verlangen; No. 84, Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Glücke. Agnes Giebel, soprano; Jakob Stämpfli, bass; Westphalian Choral Ensemble and Chamber Orchestra, Wilhelm Ehmann, cond. Nonesuch H 71273, $2.98.

Except for an out-of-print Scherchen recording of No. 84, this is the only recording of these cantatas, though these performances have been available on the German Cantate label for a number of years. Both works date from Bach's Leipzig years—and they must have been lean years judging from the modest vocal and instrumental requirements of these two scores. No. 84 is a soprano solo cantata with oboe and strings, the chorus coming in only for a closing chorale. No. 49 is a "dialogue" cantata for bass and soprano (representing Jesus and the soul), also scored for oboe and strings. In addition, a violoncello piccolo (or viola pomposa on this recording) is given an obbligato part in the soprano aria, and the organ plays an obbligato in three movements (the opening sinfonia of this cantata later became the first movement of the E major Harpsichord Concerto). Of the two works, No. 49 is the more vital, colorful, and varied—and would be a great favorite if it were better known.

Agnes Giebel, as usual, sings with gentle restraint and elegance, and Stämpfli too performs with finesse. Ehmann leads the small chamber group with sensitivity and good taste, and I would recommend the reading more enthusiastically if only there had been a little bit of intensity or vitality displayed somewhere. Instead he ambles dreamily and coolly right through both performances without arousing so much as a flicker of interest in any of the marvelous details with which Bach has filled these works, especially in the No. 49.

What we have then is scarcely more than a pale reflection of these two masterpieces, but to be sure, it's not the distorted image Scherchen gave us on his Westminster disc. C.F.G.

Bach: Cantatas: No. 49, Ich geh' und suche mit Verlangen; No. 84, Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Glücke. Agnes Giebel, soprano; Jakob Stämpfli, bass; Westphalian Choral Ensemble and Chamber Orchestra, Wilhelm Ehmann, cond. Nonesuch H 71273, $2.98.

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Beethoven: Quartets for Strings, Nos. 1-6. Bartók Quartet: Quatuor LPX 11423/5, $17.94 (three discs). No. 1, in F; Op. 18, No. 1; in G; Op. 18, No. 2; in D; Op. 18, No. 3; in C; Op. 18, No. 4; in A; Op. 18, No. 5; in B flat; Op. 18, No. 6.


Selected comparisons: Amadeus Quartet: DG 2720 010; Guarneri Quartet: RCA VCS 6159 and 6415; Hungarian Quartet: Sera 6005 and 6006.

These two sets, including respectively the six early and five middle quartets of Beethoven, comprise the first two thirds of a planned integral recording by the Bartók Quartet. The Bartók, a Hungarian group, is a fine ensemble, and these discs make a welcome addition to the catalogue. Their rather aggressive, driving approach to the music is reminiscent of that of the Amadeus Quartet, although the Bartók does not quite match them for consistency. But they do communicate the same kind of forceful engagement with the music. And their ensemble is generally excellent: Attacks are usually right together, and there are only rare lapses in intonation. Particularly good are the readings of the earlier, less complex works, especially the faster movements, such as the finale of Op. 18, No. 1.

Despite the good points, however, the performances do not quite measure up to the level of the best of the currently available recordings. The players are not as well matched as a quartet, for example, as are those of the Guarneri. This is evident in the lack of timbral balance between individual instruments (especially noticeable in movements such as the Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando of Op. 59, No. 1, where the melodic material is frequently passed from instrument to instrument), as well as in the overall textural balance (in which the bass is particularly weak). Nor are they able to project the individual voices in polyphonic passages—such as the middle section and coda of the second movement of Op. 95—with the clarity, say, of the Hungarian Quartet.

Both sets come with illustrated booklets containing interesting historical and analytical information. R.P.M.


Bizet: Carmen: Suites Nos. 1 and 2. Grieg: Peer Gynt: Suites Nos. 1 and 2. New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. Columbia M 31800, $6.98. Tape: MA 31800, $6.98. DG's complete opera. I just hope this laserdisc version will soon be available in a similar two-disc complete set. Since it was Deutsche Grammophon and not Columbia that recorded last fall's highly publicized Bernstein/Met Carmen, the latter company has to settle for a straphanger's spot on the pressed-surfaced gravity train by rushing out these instrumental selections in advance of DG's complete opera. I just hope this extensive Querschnitt (ten items), which was probably recorded several years ago, doesn't reflect the conductor's current interpretative approach to Bizet's music, for while his robust vigor rouses considerable excitement, he is surprisingly heavy-handed at times and almost entirely lacking in the Gallic grace that so notably distinguishes Munch's treatment of most of the same excerpts. I prefer too the more transparent Phase-4 sonics to Columbia's laserdisc version.

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Explanation of symbols:
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• Historical
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JUNE 1973

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An impressive debut, indeed. Erika Luk, a twenty-five-year-old Hungarian pianist clears both of these formidable but very different pianistic huddles with almost indolent ease. She has a good architectural sense and harmonic orientation that stands her in good stead for the Brahms variations. Her rich, vibrant sonority is as welcome here as in the Ravel, and the various horizontal lines of the writing are revealed with grand, though never fusty, clarification. Rhythmically, this is rock-solid, large-scaled, very echt-sounding Brahms indeed. Some of the more lyrical variations in the Klezmer may be slighted, it is true, but I will gladly accept that minimal sacrifice for the forward impetus that Miss Luk succeeds so well in obtaining. The last three variations before the fugue are terrifically exciting as she plays them here. My only quibble with her performance is her treatment of trills in the first movement. While Colburn plays them here, Miss Luk proper-ly relaxes her sense of form and eases the car with lavish warmth and coloring. She gets the tricky syncopation in the first piece, while Oiseaux tristes emerges from her very personal yet poignant reading with altogether touching sensitivity. The only slight disappointment is the Alborada del gracioso, which is a bit too free and lyrical for my taste (Lupita's reading with its driving, severely drawn contours is the classic).

Hungaroton's reproduction is one of the finest piano recordings I have ever heard—full-bodied and multileveled— with a glowing bass and clangorous h:ut never percussive treble. The instrument itself is obviously splendid and Miss Luk really makes it sing.

H.G.


Selected comparison (Casadesus).

Johannesen

Selected comparisons (Berg).

Kuerti

Webster

How much greater a tribute this recording would have been to the late Robert Casadesus had it included one of this pianist/composer's still unrecorded works. Grant Johannesen, to whom the Second Sonata, composed in 1945 and 1946, was dedicated, offers a dynamic performance on the Golden Crest label, and Carl Orff's interpretation here simply does not justify the existence of a second disc of the same composition, particularly when a number of others have not yet reached the medium.

Colburn, who incidentally studied under Johannesen, holds her own as well in the quieter passages, such as the poignant second theme of the first movement. But she is no match for her mentor in the more dynamic passages, particularly in the opening of the first movement, which Colburn plays rather unevenly, and in the last movement, with its herky-jerky rhythmic base. The sonata is well worth having in any version, but I would recommend the Johannesen, if you can get it.

Except for some excessive loudness in certain passages, such as at the beginning, which I feel should be much more subdued. Colburn has beautifully captured the spirit of Berg's controlled but haunting lyricism in his early sonata. But Colburn again has strong competition (from both Webster and Kuerti), and the frequent distortion that mars the otherwise excellent recorded sound does not help matters any. As for the Eister Klavierstucke, Colburn here has a free field, since there are no other recorded versions to my knowledge; but I'm not sure these sterile and rather colorless pieces were worth the effort.

R.S.B.

CANTELouve (arr): Chants d'Auvergne—See Chaussaur Poeme de l'amour et de la mer.

CHAUSSEAU: Poeme de l'amour et de la mer. CANTELouve (arr): Chants d'Auvergne—See Chaussaur Poeme de l'amour et de la mer.

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A few years ago a distinguished if misguided composer declared that "Vivaldi wrote the same concerto 400 times." To the unfamiliar ear Corelli's sonatas may sound uniform—if you know them all. They are mandatory for a first-class performance. Victoria de los Angeles, in better voice than on her Hunter College recital with Adele de Lartigue, lavishes all her seductive tonal gifts on Chaussaur's outpouring of emotion. The soprano's tone, if not completely steady, is generally very satisfying, at least in midrange. In the region of E to A flat, where the composer tends to locate his sustained lyrical climaxes, she is hard-pressed and at times sounds minimally, but disturbingly, under pitch. Furthermore, she has lost the ability to articulate words at the top of the range. At times like these the songs consequently turn into troubled vocalises. This is a failing De los Angeles shares with Dame Maggie Teyte, who also recorded this music, though in slightly abbreviated form. One thing Dame Maggie has over De los Angeles, however, is a vivid apprehension of Maurice Bochsa's texts. Except in the tricky high passages the older singer invests these faded poetic effusions with renewed passion and immediacy. She makes something memorable and touching out of links like "Quel son tamourable et surveur/Fa sonner l'heure de l'aube et de l'aurore/les feulles mortes"—whereas De los Angeles glides over such passages with sweet abstraction.

In the still pleasurable, though possibly overworked, Songs of the Auvergne De los Angeles holds her own. As always, she shows a regrettable inclination to sentimentalize these folk songs, to sweeten and smooth them out to a degree that even the refined Cantelouve seems not to have envisioned. There is (for me, at any rate) something too ladylike about the entire performance—too much musing, too little vigor. Jacquillat leads a responsive Lamoureux Concerts Orchestra effectively enough, but so far the soloist is concerned he might have guided more and followed less.

D.S.H.


A few years ago a distinguished if misguided composer declared that "Vivaldi wrote the same concerto 400 times." The unfamiliar ear Corelli's sonatas may sound uniform—if you know one you know them all. These unvarying "correct" and technically unexceptional performances of Op. 5 may reinforce such a view; yet we are dealing here with the classically rounded and refined music that was the apex reached by Italian chamber music during the harque era. His contemporaries called Corelli: "the very Orpheus of our time." Vivaldi, Geminiani, and others hung on every measure he composed, and so did many musicians beyond the Alps, notably Handel. While what Corelli's style a classical summimg up of seventeenth-century thought on mental music was the remarkable unity of form and content he achieved by compelling the suave Italian melodies—supported by sweet harmonies and elaborated with the aid of a polyphony far more resilient and "free".

Continued on page 76.
How Do You Like Your Chopin?

Assortments like the Seraphim grab bag are fun because of the kaleidoscopic effect of distinctive styles (especially in Chopin) in rapid juxtaposition. Since Seraphim identifies selections and artists only on the sleeve and my initial review copy came without the jacket, I listened to the disc "blindfolded." It was an instructive experience. Some of the artists are so individualistic that their styles are immediately recognizable. Heading this list is Cortot, whose Marcia funebre sounds ghostly and almost ferocious with its spooky pedal effects and terse, large-scaled contouring. The 1953 version of the sonata from which this movement was taken was not one of the veteran pianist/conductor's finer phonographic efforts but this section was probably its best part. Cortot's earlier version of the prelude (which was one of his triumphs) is similarly irreplaceable but a more abstract sense of the slenderer dimensions of the piece. Its sonority is blunt and angular, the anticipation with the left hand modest enough but still slightly antiquesque. Another great individualist was Gieseking, whose square-cut, superluous detachment in the Berceuse is unfortunately re-produced here at an appropriately loud level that kills the piece's ethereal tranquility. The early Horowitz (in the C sharp minor Mazurka—a marvelously intense, fresh-sounding reading) and the midcareer Rubinstein (two nocturnes from his first set—I find his playing of them less bloodless but with a better structured today) are also decided "presences" even without formal I.D. cards! Dinu Lipatti's two waltzes were easily identifiable, but only because I already knew these renditions intimately: Actually Lipatti's style—full of pristine symmetry and patrician elegance—is a rather spare, objective way of dealing with this subjective music. Malczynski (the A flat Polonaise) and Shura Cherkassky (the Revolutionary Etude and Fantasie-Improv) both opt for the woolly, exaggerated Chopin style made familiar by Paderewski and a score of other "subjective" practitioners. These are excellent performances of their kind but not really so "personal" after all—I couldn't identify them with certainty until the finished album came. Artur's leisurely, expansively ruminate, and very beautifully played É major Etude makes me eager to hear his long-deleted complete set from which it was excerpted. Geza Anda's études are similarly finished and expert pianistically but as cold as ice. I doubt whether I could ever have guessed him. Considering that these recordings span a time period from 1933 to 1959 (the Malczynski Polonaise), Seraphim has produced a remarkably consistent-sounding disc. My only surprise is that EMI—an English-based firm—could produce a "Great Pianists of the Century" Chopin recital without including a single example of Solomon! Surely this is a case of chauvinistic neglect.

Stephen Bishop turns out to be an exquisite Chopin player. To be sure, his style contains a certain amount of cerebration—a deliberation that sounds at times almost surgical—but this analytical control only enhances the sharpness and lucidity of the score's compositions. Along with the incisive control are a sense of vivid contrast and drama (note the stirring eruption in the middle of the B major Nocturne, the granitic and effective buildup of tension in the hard-to-hold-together Polonaise—Fantaisie, the near-volcanic ending of the muted C sharp minor Mazurka), a fine feeling for nuance and color (the central section of the Barcarolle, the caressing trills at the end of the aforementioned nocturne) and an altogether touching warmth of feeling that is never permitted to spill over into maudlin sentimentality or neurotic hysteria. For all its studied introspection, Bishop's playing here has plenty of impulsive fervor. It is rare to find a younger artist so able to combine a probing harmonic intellect with a real flair for poetic subjectivity (e.g., the amazingly slow tempo and hushed serenity of the F minor Mazurka). To my mind, this collection represents real growth for Bishop—this is by far the finest playing I have heard from him. Phillips' imported pressing reproduces his distinctive pianism with magnificent impact and sensitivity. A masterful disc.

Graffman's work is hard to classify. He gives a finely proportioned, modern Chopin with spare pedaling, consequent detail, and coiled-spring forward momentum. Heard over headphones, the dry-point attack and symmetrical fingering have a scintillating impact that somehow vanishes when the disc is played over speakers at normal listening level. Jacking up the volume of this rather low-level recording scarcely makes the sonority less bloodless but only brings up back-ground noise and turntable rumble to an unpleasant degree. Graffman's scrupulous, tasteful phrasing and well-judged tempos are fine in themselves, but Chopin ideally requires a less monochromatic sonority and a greater willingness to take risks. Yet Graffman, in his bleak, unassertive way, accomplishes some near miracles of pianism. Listen, for instance, to the breathtaking precision of his détaché fingering in the middle of the G minor Ballade. I wish I could muster greater enthusiasm for this brilliantly played, intelligently interpreted recital.

H.G.


than the Germans—to merge into a balanced relationship, an architecture at the same time simple and noble. Corelli organized not only single works but his entire lifework, progressing through the sonatas to his concerti grossi, the culmination and the most valuable and influential part of his oeuvre. Aside from these, all the others are trio sonatas; even this set of "solo" works follows the basic baroque chamber-music pattern, because the continuo cello takes an active part in the proceedings. But there are important differences: The polyphony is markedly lessened in the solo sonatas while the concertante element and virtuosity are markedly increased, and in the slow movements the songful expression is pronounced.

Archive picked a very good violinist for this exacting task. Eduard Melkus has the ability to cope with all technical demands with ease; he is always secure, his intonation unerring; the double stops are remarkably clean and in tune. What he does not have is the southern tone, the warmth and the flexibility of expression this music demands. His tone becomes somewhat metallic in the upper regions. The long-breathed baroque melodies in the slow movements are a little constrained, not because Melkus's bow technique is faulty (it is excellent, but because he does not phrase like a singer, he does not "take breaths." Despite the identity of the general formal scheme, these sonatas have their own individuality, which the uniformity of the performance tends to erase. To the Italians everything is song, even when the writing is idiomatically instrumental, and singers have never sung by watching a metronome. Here everything is in good order, but also fairly four-square: there is less attention to baroque pathos and expressiveness than to the embellishments, and these are not always convincingly integrated. The performances are most successful in the rapid virtuoso numbers, where the mobility of both Melkus and the first-rate cellist, Goro Atmacayan, can be utilized to good advantage. Huguette Dreyfus furnishes a good harpsichord continuo, and her organ playing is even better. The sound is good.

**De La Vega:** Segments for Violin and Piano—See Sessions: Sonata for Violin Solo

**Dowland:** Lute Songs and Dances. Hayden Blanchard, tenor. Frederick Noad, lute. Ruth Adams, viola da gamba. Orion ORS 72102. $5.98


**Elizabethan Lute Songs and Solos:** Frank Patterson, tenor. Robert Spencer, lute. Philips 6500 282. $6.98


One of the high points, quite possibly the peak of song composition in English, was reached in the Elizabethan age. Thomas Campian.

Philip Rosseter, and above all John Dowland were the Schuberts and Schumanns of our own language. In a flexible union of word and tone, the lute lyre could express every nuance of feeling from light-hearted charm to deep-felt passion. Yet it is a part of their perfection which keeps them from being better known today. The lute accompaniment with its quasi-polyphonic lines and delicate balance with the voice is as essential to the finished work as the piano was to the great Lieder composers, but while there are plenty of pianists who can at least thump through a Schubert song, lutenists are few and far between. Moreover, the sound of the instrument is lost in even a medium-size hall, making concert performance a chore for the listener. The lute song was written for an intimate audience, and fortunately for us, the medium of recordings can bring singer and lutenist right into the living room, making this an ideal way to get acquainted with this delicate art.

Both these discs present an admirable selection of songs, some familiar, some less so. In darkness let me dwell and I saw my lady weep are just famous, but the beautifully controlled sweep of Go crystal tears and the intense feeling of Come heavy sleep make them also among Dowland's finest songs. The rhythmical variety of Morley's delightful pastoral scene Thyrsus and Milla is in no way inferior to his popular It was a lover and his lass, and for sheer charm it would be hard to beat Dowland's graceful galliard Awake sweet love. Compared to the songs, the lute solos seem a bit thin, though the subtle melodic shapes of Cutting's Galliard breathes some of the same spirit as the minor-keyed dance songs.

A glance at the cover photos of tenors Frank Patterson (turtle neck, tweed jacket) and Hayden Blanchard (concert tailcoat) reveals the difference in their approach even before the disc is unsealed. Blanchard is very serious about his recital. Not surprisingly he is at his best in the slow sustained numbers. He has a warm expressive voice, a fine legato, and a breathing control to handle Dowland's unbelievably long lines. He is a sensitive musician with emotional depths equal to the longing of Come heavy sleep and a sense of phrasing and diction to put across the strophic songs, in which by the way, he sings all the verses. If he has not Patterson's elan with the more sprightly numbers, he still sings them with adequate spirit. His diction is admirable, in fact he seems to be able to do anything he pleases with it. so one wonders why in this most English of repertories he has chosen to use a grating Middle Western American "r" throughout and a flat "z", which makes the word "Shuts" sound like "laffs".

Patterson, on the other hand, is an Irish tenor with a sweet, bright sound and more than a touch of green in his pronunciation. His casual style is perfectly suited to the light-hearted side of this music which makes up most of his disc, though he shows the ability to cope with more serious matters in his moving performance of the mighty lament In darkness let me dwell. Patterson's cheerful devil-may-care presentation leads him into some unpleasant mispronunciations, however Scooping up to high notes for effect as he does in Fine knacks for ladies may work once in the concert hall, but heard over and over it loses its spontaneity and becomes merely irritating.

Lutenist Robert Spencer and Frederick Noad both cope splendidly with the intricate delicacies and the more robust support of the accompanying parts. But I found the addition of a viol to the bass line was not a great help. Coupled with the generally muffled sound of the Orion release, the reinforcement of the bass merely aggravated the trouble I had adjusting the sound. The Phillips recording is brighter, capturing the crisp clarity of the voice and lute without distortion. Generally good performances of excellent music.


Selected comparison (same coupling): Kertész/LSO. Lon 6525

Now that the superlative Rowicki/LSO/Philips Dvořák symphony series has finally seen completion, the two earliest installments (Nos. 3 and 6, which appeared on the now defunct bargain-priced World Series label) have disappeared from the catalogue. Also there seems little chance of their being resuscitated at premium rates.

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- response is within ±2dB over the entire range. Audio
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- The XLM went through the usual torture test at 0.4 grams (some top models require more than a gram). High Fidelity
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Distortion readings are almost without exception better than those for any other model we've tested. High Fidelity

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- At 0.6 grams the distortion was low (under 1.5 per cent). Stereo Review

**Hum and noise**
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- The cartridge had very good shielding against induced hum. Stereo Review

**Price**
This would be a very hard cartridge to surpass at any price. Stereo Review
- We found it impossible to attribute superior sound to costlier competing models. High Fidelity
- Priced as it is, it is a real bargain in cartridges. Audio

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**Audio Dynamics Corporation**

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sprawling, less distinguished London engineering of a decade ago. This symphony is a particularly fine example of Dvořák's early mastery (Dvořák was thirty-two at the time of its completion, with an additional eight years' under his belt after his Second Symphony). The Husitska Overture, on the other hand, is the work of an internationally celebrated master. This fiery work (no pun intended, even if its program is about the burning at the stake of Jan Hus!) was commissioned in 1883 by the Prague National Theater. It is the first—and only completed—part of a projected trilogy dealing with the Hussite wars in the fifteenth century. Both scores are well worth knowing, particularly in such disciplined, impassioned readings. Rowicki has become beyond question an important symphonic maestro, with cultivated, personalized views and virtuoso control over his players. I hope that Philips will assign other work to him.

As usual, the imported Philips pressing boasts faultless processing. H.G.


**ELIZABETHAN LUTE SONGS AND SOLOS.**—See Dowland: Lute Songs and Dances.

**FRANCK:** Symphonic Variations—See Rachmaninoff: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2.

**GLAZUNOV:** Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in A minor. PROKOFIEV: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1, in D. Yefim Sivo, violin, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Horst Stein, cond. London CS 6736. $5.98. Selected comparison (Glazunov): Milstein, 20th Century, SR 40098. $8.68.

This happens to be the only pairing of these concertos in the catalogue, and it is an apt one. The works offset each other nicely. You can be snooty if you wish about the Glazunov—its romance does become Hollywoodian at times—but it is so well made for the instrument and summons forth so many nice little details in its orchestration that only a very high-falutin' ear could remain deaf to its blandishments. Sivo does splendidly by it; he moves into the sinuous opening line with total naturalness and proceeds from there with tenderness, which never drips over into gush. The idiom seems second nature to him, and in the first movement he is quite on a par with another persuasive exponent of the work, Nathan Milstein. In the second movement he is both deft and zestful, but he falls just a hair short of Milstein's virtuoso bite and absolute rhythmic definition. But it is just a hair. The Suisse Romande backs him beautifully—those myriad decorative tendrils sprouting from flute and oboe in the first movement are finely delineated, and so is the horn contribution to the second subject of the Allegro.

Beside the Glazunov, Prokofiev's First Concerto is almost austere, elegant. Sivo does splendidly well to its somewhat different demands: His tone is always firmly focused, and he captures with perfect understanding the sardonic twist necessary to the first movement. There is drive and thrust aplenty in the development section. The scherzo calls for a silverly, humming-bird shimmer, and the violinist delivers it beautifully. The album notes, as a matter of fact, describe Sivo as "a born virtuoso." and they are correct.

S.F.

**GRIEG:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 16; Poetic Tone Pictures, Op. 3. Viktor Yeresko, piano; Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, cond. Melodiya/Angel SR 40193, $5.98. Selected comparison (Glazunov): Milstein, 20th Century, SR 40098. $8.68.

Yeresko takes a rather free, untrammeled approach to the concerto. Instead of the conventional bravura reading, the present interpretation features refreshingly cool, fleet passagework, rather flowing, lightweight sonorities, and an outlook that immediately made me think of such Grieg Lyric Pieces as the Little Bird and Butterfly of Op. 43. With the folklorish elements thus brought to the fore, the music becomes vernal and indescribably lovely. Rozhdestvensky's vital, structural support assures musical cohesiveness. I was reminded of Walter Gieseking's two recordings of the Grieg Concerto (although neither of them were at hand for comparison). The six Poetic Tone Pictures are early ef-
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watch, but in this case the slow tempos are the key to the performance. Only Klemperer’s most devoted admirers are likely to find this pacing of the work anything other than per vence or lethargic.

In the C minor Symphony, the strongly affirmative character of Klemperer’s statement of the opening phrase is impressive, but again the tempo is quite slow and it is too much to hope to sustain the work at this slow speed. In this case there is a Szell performance in print, and the bravura and vitality he brings to this music demonstrate the true style of the piece.

By the standards of the Dorati or Szell discs, the Klemperer performances are not brilliantly recorded. The Angel engineers seem reluctant to work in close to the orchestra, and the ear often seeks greater clarity and definition. R.C.M.


Haydn’s piano trios are now appearing in an Urtext edition—for the first time, astonishingly—published by the Verlag Doblinger in Vienna. This edition includes forty-five trios: in the new chronological numbering the present works are Nos. 41 (H.XV:31), 42 (H.XV:30), and 45 (H.XV:29). Thus they are late works, composed in 1795 and 1796. During or after the last year Haydn spent in England. The new Philips recording is based on the Doblinger Urtext edition.

Phileps is embarked on a series of Haydn trios. This is Vol. 2: Vol. 1 (6500 023, very much available but for some reason not listed in Schumann) contained three late trios, including the famous one with the Gypsy Rondo (H.XV:25). They could hardly have found a group better suited than the Beaux Arts Trio for the music. The group’s recording of the Beethoven trios (formerly available on World Series) is one of the finest Beethoven sets on record. The Beaux Arts is equally good in Haydn. The group obviously made a detailed study of this very elusive music, which is among Haydn’s greatest but least compromising: It is really music for the players, and the outside listener is almost an interloper. All those wild enharmonic modulations and third-related keys are not for casual listening. The music needs to be studied thoroughly if it is to be understood.

The Trio in E flat minor, a very ouvâr key, is in two movements. The first a very Romantic set of variations and the second a lean Allegro with characteristic rhythmic drive. To see what I mean about the highly intellectual key relationships, consider the first movement in E flat minor (six flats). One part of this Andante cantabile is a lush violin solo in B major (five sharps). This relationship (a submediant) is such that you must imagine E flat minor enharmonically as D sharp minor, D sharp being the third of B major. This is typical of these hooded late-Haydn chamber works.

The Trio in E flat (H.XV:30) was composed in late 1795 and early 1796. It was dedicated to Theresa Bartolozzi, for whom he also composed his last three piano sonatas in 1794. The trio starts out with an entire slow movement, like an old church sonata, and has some of the reserved, opaque emotional quality typical of these late trios. The second movement is in another outlandish key, B major, while the finale, marked “in the German style,” is a fantasy on a German dance of Haydn’s fertile invention.

The Beaux Arts is equally good in Haydn. The performances are, as indicated, outstanding. If you don’t know these trios—and unless you are a great connoisseur of late Haydn, you won’t—he record will be a genuine revelation. And if you would like to know more about these late trios, I recommend Charles Rosen’s fascinating book, The Classical Style, just out in paperback (Norton); it ought to be required reading for everyone interested in Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. H.C.R.L.

MENDELSSOHN: Symphonies for Strings Nos. 1-12; Symphony Movement In C minor. Amsterdam Chamber Orchestra, Marinus Voorberg, cond. Telefunken SK-B 25074-T/1-4, $23.92 (four discs).

Selected comparison (Nos. 9, 10, and 12): Marriner Argo 5467

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These products of the boy wonder's early teens, here recorded for the first time in extenso (if marginally less than in toto), chart a pretty fascinating course of development. From the neutral, rather carefully modeled first examples, where a not-quite-secure command of harmonic rhythm is manifest, we come eventually (say, from No. 7 on) to the expected Mendelssohnian suavity and grace of phrasing, elegance and ingenuity of string writing. The models are often palpable: the Bach and Rossini that were enthusiasms of Meister Zelter, the Handel, Haydn, and Mozart that were the common inheritance of the times. Some movements are so characteristic of these predecessors that they promise to be

useful fodder for stylistic guessing games ("Name the Composer"), but the personality of the last works is very genuine.

Aside from their historical interest, the first half dozen of these symphonies don't really promise to command sustained hearings for the casual listener, Marriner's recording of Nos. 9, 10, and 12 (Argo 5467) would be a more reasonable investment. And for those who want the complete set, a caveat is in order:

In Europe, another recording has been issued by Archive, which includes the alternate version (with winds) that Mendelssohn made of No. 8. I can't, in all conscience say that the Telefunken performances are very appealing: efficient, certainly, but in a relentless, occasionally jumpy way. The sound doesn't help much. For it shares the disadvantages of both close, dry focus and distant resonance. God only knows how this peculiar mixture was achieved, but the effect is as if the ensemble were poised on a knife-edge between one's listening room and St. Paul's Cathedral. The fierce highs can be tamed with some treble cut, but the other half of the problem is irreparable. It's probably worth waiting to see if Archive will issue its set over here.

D. H.
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Mozart: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 24, in C minor, K. 491. Quintet for Clarinet and Strings, in A, K. 581. Gyula Kiss, piano; Orchestra of the Hungarian Radio and Television; Gyorgy Lehel, cond. (in the concerto); Bela Kovacs, clarinet; Tatral Quartet (in the Quintet) Hungaroton LPX 11511, $5.98.

Gyula Kiss is the young (male) Hungarian pianist who made an excellent recording of Liszt’s A major Concerto and B minor Sonata several years ago. His Mozart is broadly lyrical, a bit romantically inflected, but nevertheless stylishly knowledgeable and enlivening. Trills begin from the upper auxiliary (giving them the requisite biting emphasis they need), and many details in the left hand are brought out in a way that suggests that the soloist is listening to what is going on in the orchestra. The sound per se is superb—silken pure strings, woodwinds well forward, and a warm, rich, but still intimate piano.

The overside quintet (actually an ideal coupling) is similarly well presented. Bela Kovacs, the clarinettist, has a very straightforward tone with no vibrato, and his phrasing and breath control are in the exceptional class. The Tatral Quartet is pretty exceptional too—perfectly unamid, and true intention. Some may find their exceedingly metrical, vibratoless playing uncomfortable, though too much like a medieval consort. While I am quibbling, some but not all the repeats are omitted in the final variation movement. The close bright sound is superb and the surfaces are ideally silent.

All in all, a very fine record indeed. The Hummel cadenzas are used in K. 491. H.G.


There have been times when Mozart’s chamber music was better represented in the domestic catalogue. The five-disc Amadeus box is therefore tempting, presenting the final ten quartets in chaste, classical style with elegance, taste, and respect for the text. Unfortunately the Amadeus has a lean, wiry tonal quality that makes one ready to be seduced by the sheer gorgeousness of the playing of the Quartetto Italiano. It may be too suave, too sophisticated for the purest classical style, but still it seems quite in harmony with Mozart’s ideas. And the truly exceptional polish and refinement of the playing are utterly ravishing.

The quartets offered here are not from the composer’s most famous set (the six works dedicated to Haydn, Nos. 14-19, written between 1782-85) but are the quartet of 1786 and the first of the three King of Prussia Quartets, from 1789-90. This is an ideal record for those who have the Haydn Quartets in an acceptable recording, such as the deleted Juilliard version on Epic, and want to add the later quartets.

Both works give an unusually important role to the cello, and a successful performance requires a thoroughly unified ensemble in which themes can be swapped back and forth without any loss of accent or emphasis. On this record four musicians of the highest achievement are working together as if of a single mind, and in K. 375, with its suggestions of Haydn jokes and its profusion of rhythmic figures and contrapuntal play, their artistry is put to the kind of severe test that makes their success all the more impressive.

This record is part of a Mozart quartet cycle. Two records have already appeared: Nos. 1-4 (6500 142) and Nos. 5-8 (6500 172). Clearly this is a notable series—something to follow and acquire.

R.C.M.


Imagine that Mr. Woolgrant, the merchant prince, plans to marry off his daughter: what will he do? A big wedding in church culminating in the playing of the wedding march from Lohengrin in a wretched transcription for organ. Then the wedding party adjourns to the country club for a splendid reception, the music furnished by Chuck Plopping’s band complete with a moaning electric guitar. They did it differently in the eighteenth century. When Sigmund Haffner, a rich but enlightened merchant and former burgomaster of Salzburg gave his daughter Elise in marriage, an original composition commissioned for the occasion was performed; it was later to be known as the Haffner Serenade, K. 250. The proportions of the work—twice as long as any of Mozart’s symphonies—as well as the relatively large orchestra show that Mozart wanted to deliver an ambitious composition to the knowledgeable patron. While it can not be denied that this serenade is a bit drawn out, the Rondo especially being too long, it is also very attractive: rich in moods, beautifully composed.

The moods range from the energetic, full-blown symphonic Allegro, and the scintillating virtuosity of the Rondo, to the almost frighteningly dark accents of the first Minuet in G minor. The performance is excellent, vigorous without being heavy. Iohn phrases aristocratically, the orchestra (except for the thin oboes) is splendid, the sound very good.

The author of the notes for the Argo release warns us that “the intellectual demands are not severe” in these serenades, and that in the case of the Notturno we are dealing with a work “musically on a lower plane.” Old prejudices die hard. He adds that “Mozart limited himself to three movements.” Mozart did not in fact “limit” himself; the piece is obviously thematic and the final Rondo loose. But let us look at the “lower-plane” echo play. The first orchestra plays the melody, the second echoes the second half of this melody, and the third ensemble (each of them consists of strings and two horns) half of the already abbreviated musical idea. This leaves the fourth orchestra with the last few notes, usually the cadence, so that the original melody gradually evaporates. This is not just an innocent game but a carefully thought-out artistic scheme. The serenade abounds in humor, as in the Minuet when the eight horns get in each other’s way. This pleasant piece is a witty take-off on an old convention, and I suspect that Gluck’s Orfeo was included in the spoof. I am also convinced that a certain visual element is needed in the performance, because after a while the piece does become a little monotonous. The engineers attempted to create spatial illusion, but as the echo gradually diminishes the volume of sound, it also diminishes aural definition; the fourth orchestra is pretty insubstantial. I believe that in the concert hall the Notturno comes off much better and with fuller sound. But the performance is fine. Marriner forgets about the reduced intellectual demands, giving both the humor and the craftsmanship their due.

While Mozart almost always respected the serenade character and tone in the outer movements of his works in this genre, in the middle he just as often indulged his own Karl Böhm—Ambitious marriage music by Mozart aristocratically phrased.
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crously at one point. Tuckwell, characteristically, is brisker and less personal here.

In fact, the Rondo makes an excellent band for comparisons. Because the movement exists mainly in sketch form, both players undertake to complete the scoring. Tuckwell’s is open in texture and more eighteenth-century in am-bience, possibly here as throughout the concertos he and/or Marriner decide to augment the bass line with harpsichord. Civil’s version of the Rondo gives oboe and other winds more prominence, and in fact the Philips engineering usually places his horn more naturally within the orchestra; Tuckwell’s is moved forward into star position.

Both the Civil and Tuckwell versions outclass previous stereo recordings of the concertos and any choice must be resolved on grounds of style and taste. It is necessary to keep the Dennis Brain/Karajan version separate, of course, for St. Dennis is not to be chal-lenged. His recording remains an invaluable classic of mono days. But Civil/Klemperer may be ruled out by the fat orchestral sonority and generally heavy-footed tempos and ac-cent. Civil/ Kemeny holds up well in most ways, though it too is thick in sound and square of phrase compared with either of the Marriners. Tuckwell/Maag, also quite accept-able for anyone who doesn’t demand such dubious refinements as a harpsichord in the accompaniment, might even be preferred by one whose tastes in Mozart horn playing run to the slightly more reticent Tuckwell style of some years ago. In the tossup, fringe consider-a-tions might come to be important. The Philips disc is banded between movements: the Angel is not. Philips also gives full details on the label, while Angel continues its inscrutable policy of confining all but the most elementary information to the jacket. But all in all the vote is still for Tuckwell/Marriner—by a surprising-ly slim margin.

D.J.H.

MUSORGSKY: Boris Godunov—See Recitals and Miscellany, Chalapin.

PAGANINI: Quartet for Violin, Viola, Cello, and Guitar, No. 1; Four Sonatinas for Violin and Guitar. Piero Gobbi, guitar; Quartetto di Torino. Spark SPA 04, $5.98.

This disc is billed as a world premiere per-formance, and it suggests that there are still a lot of little gems in the Paganini archives wait-ing to see the light of day. According to the al-bum notes, the Quartetto di Torino first played these works, among others, at a concert in Genoa in October 1971, and subsequently made this recording.

The quartet will hold no surprises for any-one familiar with the numerous Paganini works for this combination of instruments al-ready recorded. It is one of those quartets that guitarists like to label “for guitar and strings”—a designation utterly misleading, for the guitarist is low man in the heap, and simply plucks out his thankless accompaniment while the violin runs away with the show. It is a good show, to be sure, with an abundance of songlike melodic lines for the fiddle, occa-sional bursts of virtuosity (even runs in double stops, à la the Caprices), and a number of vig-orous boosts from the violin. Nor does Paga-nini disappoint in the Theme-and-Variations movement. The beginning is a typical moonlight-on-the-Mediterranean scene, with gentle waves rocking ever so pleasantly be-neath the violin’s serenade.

The four sonatinas for violin and guitar fol-low the same philosophy concerning balance of power: It is all on the side of the violin. The titles of the movements (each sonatina has two) tell you all you need to know about the music—Romanza amabile, Placidamenta con grazia, etc. The remarkable thing is that none of the music is perfunctory; it always manages to convey the idea that Paganini was really there and that he cared. And so we care too.

The performances are clean, vigorous, and never overromanticized. In an effort not to be indulgent, in fact, the quartet ensemble comes across as slightly tight-lipped; a little more be-guilement wouldn’t have hurt. But it’s an in-teresting disc, very respectably played. S.F.


La Serva padrona, which helped to change the course of opera, especially in France, is now little more than an engaging trifle. Given a good performance, though, it still exerts a cer-tain amiable charm—depending largely on the
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Both singers attempt to characterize their roles—e.g., Miljaković's slight hesitation before "multurne"—when lying about her lover at the beginning of Part Two—but the results are only minimally successful. Miljaković lacks earthliness, Süss comic dignity. Neither, in any case, commands much variety of vocal expression. In addition, both are rather taxed by the music. Miljaković (a Salzburg and Vienna Sussanna and Papagenal) sounds thin and insubstantial of voice. The A above the staff in her first aria, "Sissano, mio sissano," gives her trouble. Süss, though sometimes hard-pressed by the top Fs in "Sempre in contrasti," sounds more baritone than bass. Anything from B downward is very weak.

Although it is difficult to speak with conviction about such matters on the basis of a recording alone, Previn seems to handle the problem of the unfair match between guitar and orchestra with considerable sensitivity. His orchestration blends and contrasts the materials with such skill that one is often able to overlook the essential banality of what is taking place.

The idea behind the contest is perfectly good of course. Orpheus soothing the beasts, as in the slow movement of Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto, is among the most successful examples of the type. But as treated by Previn, the notion seems merely a vulgar attempt to keep up with the times. Strange that Williams did nothing of the sort. Previn, cond. Columbia M 31963, $5.98. Tape: MA 31963, $6.98; MT 31963, $6.98. Quadraphonic: MO 31963 (5Q-encoded disc), $6.98; MAO 31963 (Q-cartridge), $7.98.

This recording is the story of two collaborations: Segovia's with Ponce in 1941 and Williams' with Previn just thirty years later. In each instance, a nonguitarist composer worked closely with a virtuoso in producing his score. On the face of it, however, it seems clear that Segovia did more for Ponce, even as an instructor in technical possibilities, than Williams did for Previn. Not that the Ponce is all that striking a piece; either, it merely sounds far more like an authentic concerto than Previn's rather disjointed and meaningless piece. The American launches his threemovement work with a descending arpeggio that bears a strong intervallic kinship to Debussy's "Maid with the Flaxen Hair," and through most of the first two movements a late-Romantic idiom and mood are sustained. Although it is difficult to speak with conviction about such matters on the basis of a recording alone, Previn seems to handle the problem of the unfair match between guitar and orchestra with considerable sensitivity. His orchestration blends and contrasts the materials with such skill that one is often able to overlook the essential banality of what is taking place. Technically undemanding for the soloist by comparison with, say, the Ohana Concerto, the Previn nevertheless makes easy listening for the first two movements. The third, however, turns into a tiresome exercise in faddism: An electric guitar, and electric bass, and an extra drummer, acting in consort against the orchestra and acoustic guitar, enter the concerto and interrupt the Romantic proceedings at unpredictable intervals until finally charmed (or perhaps bored) to silence.

The idea behind the contest is perfectly good of course. Orpheus soothing the beasts, as in the slow movement of Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto, is among the most successful examples of the type. But as treated by Previn, the notion seems merely a vulgar attempt to keep up with the times. Strange that Previn, with his heavy history of performing and writing pop music, should not be able to provide something better at this point than some slack-jawed pseudo-jazz riffs. Self-satire, perhaps.

At any rate, Williams plays with his usual precision and musicianship, both in the Previn and in the Ponce. The only other version of the

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Photograph of Shakespeare First Folio
courtesy of Harvard College Library

JUNE 1973
CIRCLE 12 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
latter, Segovia’s with Jorda and the Symphony of the Air, came out fifteen years ago and is still available. Williams, if anything, plays more cleanly than the elder master did at that relatively late stage of his career, and the final movement has a rhythmic bite in the Williams performance that is not matched by Segovia. Jorda and company adopt a more reticent performance a soft-edged elegance and dreamy atmosphere in the slow pieces that seem congenial to the Mexican composer’s unassertive character. Williams, on the other hand, and the First Symphony on the other.

Surprisingly for such vintage it displays a minimum of verbosity and a maximum of structural inventiveness within its brief (sixteen minutes) duration. Basically using variation format, Rachmaninoff got plenty of mileage and diversity from a wayward, measure-long motif that is punctuated by a triplet figure. Though the work was originally titled “Capriccio for large Orchestra based on Gypsy Themes,” there is more than an occasional touch of the Hispanic intersected within the dominantly Slavic idiom.

If Caprice bohémien lacks the ultimate assurance and polish of Tchaikovsky’s and Rimsky’s aural snapshots of Italy and Spain, it certainly ought to serve occasional relief duty for them in the repertoire. It seems silly that The Rock has been exhumed four times on records before the superior present opus could premere. Our thanks to De Waart for bringing it to us in such a well-realized version.

The set of three Symphonic Dances is of course Rachmaninoff’s swan song, imbued with that special intensity, craftsmanship, and juxtaposition of the yearningly lyric and the diatonic bruit that signify his later style. It may be dirty pool to label this music “Mahlerian” but if that’s what it takes to make it “in” with the arbiters of fad and fashion, so be it. The work is an unequivocal masterpiece, and De Waart’s reading is certainly adequate—and, wisely, uncut. However, the conductor’s stylistic and technical inexperience shows in many spots. In the first dance, for example, where the saxophone introduces that haunting tune, the ensemble jogs sound tentative and unflowing as the other winds in turn take up the ensuing material. In many cantabile passages, De Waart clumsily broadens the tempo and distends phrasing rather than obliterating lyric warmth by such subterfuge means as coaxing a singing vibrato from the players. Texture and balance are porous and fat—what passes for Russian or “romantic” sound. Philis’ engineering and pressings however are, as always, exemplary.

If you are mainly after the Symphonic Dances, Kondrashin is generally more animated and responsive to the wild mood of this music. Ormandy—who gave the world premiere—displays a flair for textual nuance and pointing of phrases not usually associated with him. As time goes on, however, my personal preference grows for the edition by the Dallas Symphony under Donald Johanos, who is cognizant above all of the music’s balletic character. His rococòlike objectivity and pulsating rhythm linearity permit the expressive and coloristic aspects to emerge unobtrusively and therefore with impressive nuance. Turnabout’s recording is a paragon of dynamic range, high signal-to-noise ratio, stunning squarewave transients, and a tight, low-resonant hall ambience that makes for ideal clarity and stereo localization. The Dal-
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Sergei Rachmaninoff and Eugene Ormandy—the outstanding collaboration continues.

Of these three new recordings of Rachmaninoff’s finest and most popular piano concerto, Rubinstein’s seems most successful in separating the “good” notes from the “bad.” There is a kind of broad authority in his playing, a soaring “rightness” and proportion that—although it differs in detail—makes me think of Rachmaninoff’s own magnificent 1929 version with Stokowski and the Philadelphians. Rubinstein at eighty-seven is just amazing. He still has youthful vitality and a romantic soul; his technique is as clean and controlled as ever. A comparison with the 1934 Golschmann and 1955 Reiner versions shows his interpretation to be more accurate and better judged than before. For example, his account of the trencherous passage at figure 28 of the finale on the new record, if still a bit subsonic sounding, seems to contain many more of the (bad but necessary) notes than the older versions.

While I would rank the new RCA disc as my favorite modern version of the piece, I think in a very minor details Rubinstein’s playing still falls short of the composer’s own. He is a bit lightweight and matter-of-fact in the alla marcia recapitulation of the first movement, and his final chords (in both the first and last movements) are a shade indecisive, lacking the magnificent resolution of Rachmaninoff’s own. Then too all the tempos in the finale—the allegro scherzando, the accelerandos, and the presto—are on the sedate side. I hasten to add that advanced age has nothing to do with any of these quibbles. All of them— and more— apply equally to his earlier recordings.

Ormandy is a most considerate colleague—he too has a basic, rare affinity for the music at hand, and he too lets you hear only the “good” notes. RCA’s engineering—the first of their new compatible quadraphonic pressings to come my way (although I can play it only stereophonically)—features full-bodied, elegant piano tone and lush, generalized orchestral likenesses that softly-pedal detail.

Weissenberg and Karajan are much more detail-conscious. Karajan, who seems to be making his debut as a Rachmaninoff conductor, unexpectedly finds rare sympathy for many aspects of the idiom. His lapidarian
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finesse is put to good use, as are his cultivated ear for sonority and scrupulous attention to often unheeded instructions. All sort of fleeting niceties abound in his revealing direction: the pungent touch of flute in the first movement one measure before un poco più mosso; the rhythmic cello/bass pizzicato two bars before the motto precedente in the development section; the brass detail followed by the timpani figuration in the first buildup to the second theme. The Berlin Philharmonic plays breath away.

Weissenberg unfortunately goes in for un poco più mosso; the rhythmic cello/bass pizzicato...
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ROSSINI: Petite Messe Solennelle. Karl Lovats, soprano; Brigitte Fassbaender, mezzo; Peter Schreier, tenor; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Munich Vocal Soloists; Reinhard Raffalt, harmonium; Hans Ludwig Hirsch, piano. Wolfgang Sawallisch, piano and cond. Eurodisc 66 321 XK. $11.96 (two discs).

Selected comparison: Berlioz

"Petite" only in the performing forces it calls for, and "solennelle" for only parts of its considerable length. Rossini's Mass still breathes the air of the theater, although composed decades after the Swan of Pesaro had sung his last operatic song. The new recording deriving from a Bavarian TV presentation last summer at the monastery church in Bamberg, seems to have missed that point and to have maddened some others, so that the result is something close to a star-studded mess.

Following too slavishly the original performance specifications, Sawallisch uses his four soloists plus an additional double quartet for the tutti passages—which might work if the voices in question really blended into some sort of homogeneous choral sound. They don't, and still worse, the double quartet is rather vaguely recorded, some distance back from the very prominent soloists; since the male stars come out louder than anyone else, there are passages in the "Cum sancto spirito" fugue that sound like duets for Schreier and Dieskau with off-stage chorus. Elsewhere, the vagaries of intonation and unanimity are serious, and much of the choral writing is more or less unpleasant to hear.

Equally debilitating is the spirit of stifling reverence that weighs heavily, even upon Rossini's most histrionic moments. One hasn't previously ever heard that barrel-organ natural of La "Domina Deus," treated after the fashion of an art song, but Schreier does just that, and all of Rossini's natural art evaporates in the process. Dieskau falls into the same trap, and his isn't even the bass voice that's called for: When Rossini makes a melodic climax by descending to a low note, our versatile baritone is literally out of his depth. Miss Fassbaender rises fairly well to the climax of the Agnus Dei, but is not really at her usual best, and the soprano makes choppy, short-breathed lines instead of long flowing ones as well as singing persistently flat.

In sum, this won't do: for all the cure and affectation that is audible in Sawallisch's playing of the lead piano part, the spirit is misguided, the forces weak. After hearing this, I turned with relief to the Old Record version (now on Everest) directed by Giulio Bertola, in which Renata Scotto and Fiorenza Cossotto show how Rossini lines should be sung—and, not so incidently, demonstrate that Italian singers can be every bit as musically precise as Germans, if not more so. In fact, Karl Lovats (and many more renowned sopranos) should listen daily to Scotto's singing of the "Crucifixus" until they learn how to distinguish accurately between eighth- and sixteenth-note upbeat beats. Berlioz's normal-sized chorus is a bit musically recorded, but there is some homogeneity, and the male soloists (Alfred Kraus and Ivo Vinco) are more than adequate. In fact, my only reservation about this set is that the Everest pressings tend to deteriorate under the repeated playings that I've subjected them to: over the years, they aren't nearly as smooth as the silky Eurodiscs—but it's what's in the groove's that counts.

D.H.


Erich Graf's liner notes speak of Franz Schmidt (1874-1939) as the "ultimate master" of the Viennese school, one assumes he means ultimate in the sense of "last," not "greatest." Schmidt's music has an undeniable charm. Bruckner is the chief model, but Bruckner and Mahler managed to extend Wagner in a way that the less original Schmidt could not. And mixed with the earnest tone there is sometimes a disconcerting whiff of the operetta. Schmidt composed in an already-dying tradition, and he lacked the strength of artistic personality to create with full conviction within an isolated subculture.

After attending the Vienna Conservatory, Schmidt played cello in the Court Opera orchestra for fourteen years, taught piano and composition at the Vienna Academy of Music from 1910, and served as director of the Academy from 1925 until his retirement in 1937. The Fourth Symphony, completed in 1933, has a somber, even tragic character: in form and harmony it is characteristic of Schmidt's work at its best. The uninterrupted four movements can be analyzed as a continuous, large-scale sonata movement. The harmonic vocabulary is completely tonal, with a chromaticism that never equals Mahler at his mildest. The expert orchestral writing is full of variety and color, with unsurprisingly especially attractive opportunities for the first cellist. This may not be a great undiscovered twentieth-century masterpiece, but it is certainly an appealing way to spend fifty minutes.

Aside from the often-recorded Intermezzo from the opera "Naive Dame," Schmidt's music has been rather spottily represented on records. Of the four symphonies apparently only the Fourth was previously recorded—by Rudolf Moralt and the Vienna Symphony on mono with Philips. A dim-sounding Munich version of the oratorio "Der Buch mit sieben Siegeln," with Julius Patzk, has been available in import shops. But Mehta's Fourth represents the first easily obtainable stereo recording of a major piece on a major label with a major orchestra. It is, fortunately, first-class all around. The Vienna Philharmonic is completely at home with this music; Schmidt's symphonies have never fallen out of Viennese concert programs. Mehta spent his student days at the Vienna Academy of Music, and has already revealed a strong feeling for music of this sort in his fine Bruckner recordings. The result is a convincing, sympathetic interpretation, on which London has lavished its usual excellent sound.

J.R.

SCHUBERT: Sonata for Piano, in A, D. 959.
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Brendel's playing on this disc is full of professional point-making, but his lack of subtlety makes the listener resentfully aware that he is being "taught". The performance of D. 959 suggests that Brendel has developed some bothersome mannerisms. Some are only slightly annoying: e.g., the tendency to arpeggiate certain left-hand chords and the playing of left hand before the right in the unfilament manner of Paderewski. Others, such as the constant toyng with tempo (accelerando for every buildup, rallentando for every pianissimo), sound disastrously out of place in a work that requires an almost Beethovenian strength and pulse. Brendel has also developed the habit of drawing up full stop at every new structural group—not only at obvious places like important second themes, but also at relatively trivial episodes. Sometimes these liberties contradict Schubert's explicit directions vis-a-vis dynamics, tempo modifications, and even notes.

On a more subjective level, I am disturbed by many interpretive details such as the leaning on the first note of the triplets (first movement, bar 12) and the cutely, teasingly flip-pant phrasing (shortly thereafter, at bar 16 et seq.). He also seems to think he knows better than the composer on matters such as where to place a tempo marking, thereby turning sentimentality. There are, nevertheless, some rarefied and wonderful things in Brendel's playing: the many instances of real leggiero pianissimo; the pristine clarity and balance of some thickly scored chordal passages; the plastic shaping and perfect legato in the middle of bars when the main tune appears—awkwardly—in the upper part of the left hand (pianists are trained from the cradle to bring up the bass line, i.e., the bottom part). In the German dances, the tricky rubato and great finesse are affecting; in the sonata, with its great architectural problems, I find it simply affecting.

The straightforward and seemingly rather plain Földes performance provides an illuminating contrast. Földes has a penchant for understatement and favors a certain sobriety. As is the case with any sensitive musician, he plays around with tempos and accents (note his stretching of bars 70-79 in the scherzo), but paradoxically because he isn't always trying to make points he scores more of them. One or two places do seem prosaic, but for the most part Földes' D. 959 is supremely accomplished and richly satisfying. His technique is, like Brendel's, superb: his clean part-writing and translucency of texture are a pleasure, and his sonority—thicker, less tactful and penetrative in forte than Brendel's, more robust in pianissimo—is more to my taste in this particular work. And though the Odeon disc offers the remarkably generous bonus of the "little" A major Sonata (which Földes rightfully interprets in a more flowing, less Beethovenian manner than D. 959), room is found for the exposition repeats of both sonatas (omitted in Brendel's D. 959).

Although my favorite recorded D. 959—Schubert's is presently in limbo, all three of the comparisons listed above are worthy. Serkin gives a very measured performance—oppressively four-square at times, but full of spiritual grandeur. A strangely moving, exalted account. Kempff's (available only in the DG set of the complete sonatas) is a bit faster in the first movement and more leisurely in the third, and is more nuanced and atmospheric than Serkin's, though it too maintains a degree of Teutonic metrical rigidity. Hungaroton opt for a light, cutting sonority la Brendel, and begins by making an emphatic rubato stress. In general, though, he favors faster tempos and stricter adherence to textual markings. Serkin, like Földes, makes the repeat: the others eschew it.

Both of the new discs are imported pressings with an elegance of processing seemingly incapable of duplication on this side of the Atlantic: Surfaces are velvety smooth and silent; high transients are crisp and low frequencies wonderfully solid. H.G.

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Their point of rhythmic departure were an irregular mottro perpetuo, evading any commitment to phrasing. The allegro of the opening movement moves along without any distribution of relative weight among the notes, and thus remains without shape. The expertise of the players is certainly not worthy, but this isn't Stravinsky's Apollo.

In the Barbirolli, the style is more a function of virtuosity and polish, so the Karajan approach yields more positive results; a carefully register, impeccably played reading. Since Riemann and Boulez generate more physical excitement at no sacrifice of clarity and accuracy, they would be my preference—especially the former, on the bargain Victrola label. D.H.

The addition of the late (1960) Movements to the logical although not often observed coupling of Stravinsky's two "neo-classic" concertos ranks as a thoughtful gesture, even if these performances don't move to the head of the class. Actually, the only current direct competition on the concerto and Capriccio is the leaden Ansermet; even at half price, Magaloff's precise playing cannot offset the soggy playing, especially from the crucial winds. And the "official" recording by Entre- mont (with Stravinsky and Craft conducting the concerto and Capriccio, respectively) was such a disaster that its present nonavailability hardly constitutes a deprivation.

Beroff and Ozawa get better results in the Capriccio, for the pianists' fluent and vividly colored work counts for more here. But the muddiness that afflicts lower-register sounds as recorded is a more serious problem in the concerto, where the piano writing often lies low (as at the beginning of the slow movement). The orchestra's imperfectly see articulation is a problem, notably in the introduction to the concerto's first movement, and there is a tendency to let things run away in the last passages of the Capriccio. Oddly, Ozawa commits one major error of tempo judgment, in the piu mosso oboe theme that follows the cadenza of the concerto's slow movement: This is far too slow, by both the metronome marking and musical common sense. Movements (absurdly titled with the French Mouvement, although the score is quite clearly labeled in English) scores some few points of orchestral smoothness over the composer's version, but the latter enjoys the much more sharply profilied solo work of Charles Rosen.

In the two longer scores, it seems to me that two performances from Britain, despite their own shortcomings, get far closer to the spirit of the music: Bishop and Davis in the concerto, Ogdon and Marriner in the Capriccio—although the latter is quite clearly labeled in English) scores some few points of orchestral smoothness over the composer's version, but the latter enjoys the much more sharply profilied solo work of Charles Rosen.

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front cover is, recognizable, Stravinsky's rather than Bernstein's. This is not an endeavoring practice — but such is the way of the record industry, even with "stravinsky conducts Stravinsky" — covers, one has the feeling that the Stravinsky who conducted is expected to have more sales appeal than the one who composed.

He does this as it may. The Rite has always been a house specialty (or perhaps I should say "house specialty") Bernstein, although Stravinsky reportedly did not find his tempo well chosen, I am troubled not so much by the tempos themselves as by certain related matters. For one thing, this score is remarkably free of tempo transitions — only one such gradual change in the whole piece: the accelerando leading up to "Glitteration of the Chosen One." All other ritards and the like are brief, temporary articulations without further consequence, followed by returns to Tempo I or by new tempos that start from scratch.

This is basic to the rhythmic conception of The Rite, it is made up of discrete sections, without smooth gradations from one to the next. (That one accelerando occupies a special place, signaling the resumption of activity after the nocturnal repose that begins Part II.) New tempos start abruptly and should remain steady, because a firm pulse is the essential background to the expansion and contraction of melodic cells that constitute Stravinsky's most common developmental technique (the bassoon line at the beginning is a good example of this process, but even clearer are the famous repeated chords soon afterwards, starting the "Dance of the Adolescents": a "phrag" of three notes that bend, stretched to six, then on to three, four, five and three — the "melodic cell" in this instance being a single chord).

Bernstein has a tendency to indulge in exactly the kind of tempo transitions that undermine the requisite firmness. The wind phrases under the flute trills at the start of "Spring Rounds," for example, gradually slow down to "prepare" the new tempo for the dragging syncopated chords. In this respect, his new recording doesn't differ much from his New York Philharmonic predecessor — but there are other, rather important differences, most notably a smoothing out of articulation and contrast, a more legato emphasis in the playing. At the start, the bassoon solo is sweeter, sleeker, contrasting less with the clarinet tone, and later the violin as well as a machine-finished, decidedly unprickly character that seems far less relevant than the edgier, drier playing in Bernstein's earlier version. (Not to mention Stravinsky's uniquely spiky performance). One of the ways tension builds in The Rite is through the cumulation of different rhythmic patterns (the "Corage of the Sage") is a prime example. Similar these simultaneous patterns don't all sound clearly, a significant part of the effect is lost.

That such passages aren't clear here is surely due in part to the recording, a most peculiar and unreal affair dominated by a reso-
mucilaginous mass of sound. This isn't just the real, percussive and horns. In the "Dance of the Adolescents" these punctuating horn chords virtually sound twice: vast echoes invade the pauses after loud chords, and fierce activity from the battery usually envelops the rest of the orchestra in a mucilaginous mass of sound. This isn't just "too much bass," of the kind that can be tamed with the tone controls: it's acoustic mud, floating around the studio and into the grooves.

Whether it may result from the fact that the original was designed for quadraphony, I can't say (perhaps the almost inaudible duets from muted trumpets near the beginning of Part II are also a casualty of the mixdown), but the result, in simple stereo, is far from satisfactory. Bernstein's earlier Rite seems to me a basically better piece of engineering to begin with, and that performance, if also marred in certain respects, was more Stravinskian in sound as well.

D.H.


Selected comparisons:

Goossens Ev. 3035
Svetlanov Mel. Ang. 40028
Toscanini Vict. 1315

Manfred dates from 1885. between Tchaikovsky's Fourth and Fifth Symphonies. It is curious that while much was made of the threadbare and spurious "Seventh Symphony," Manfred—a line and completely authentic work—has never been listed among the composer's symphonies. It certainly is a symphony with the conventional four-movement layout and all the other trappings of the formal. But because of its Byronic program, Tchaikovsky dubbed it a "symphonic poem." Arno Toscanini, one of Manfred's staunchest champions, likened the music to "an opera without human voices." Igor Markevitch's fine Philips performance (now unavailable but most certainly deserving of release) is highly balletic in its approach. Whereas Toscanini had his instrumentalists "sing" with declamatory fervor, Markevitch used fast tempos and finely tapered rubato phrasing. When his version first appeared, I found it admirable but a bit nervous and lacking in weight. On re-hearing, I find that I missed the point; his approach is actually highly dramatic in its special way and quite subtle.

Mazee's reading too is excellent, but again quite different from either Markevitch's or Toscanini's (available on Victor in repackaged stereo that does only moderate damage to the surprisingly vibrant 1949 original). Mazee sees the work in soundly symphonic terms, although there are chamber-music purity and refinement. In general, Mazee is interested in clarity. His tempos are occasionally — as in the scherzo — a bit steady, even staid. He carefully differentiates the various instrumental components, strings from winds, winds from brass, etc., thus clarifying the complex scoring. Articulation is supple, and all the figurations are set forth with a kind of pure obsessiveness that will undoubtedly find excuse for such highly romantic a work. The Vienna Philharmonic, unusually reproduced, plays superbly.

Then there is the matter of cuts. There are problems with this music, especially the last movement, which rambles, sometimes lapsing into Tchaikovsky's celebrated reliance on banal, sequential repetition. Toscanini made a whopper through skillfully executed—excision (if you didn't know it, you would never suspect that anything was missing) and undoubtedly tightened the movement. He also, though, removed some of Manfred's most interesting, albeit inconsistent, music. Among the cajoleries of the maestro's abbreviation, there are slow passages that remarkably foreshadow late Sibelius, some engaging instru-

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mentals on the "orgy" music and a fugato based on the movement's opening thematic material. Markeverich, Maazel, and Stelvanov (in his inferior Melody/Angel edition) play the work in its entirety. Groos'ers' (on Everest) was cut to ribbons.

One further point: Tchaikovsky, in an epilogue depicting Manfred's death and absolution, asks for a harmonium, which Markeverich provides. Toscanini and Maazel substitute an organ, and the total effect on my ears, is more compelling. The organ is particularly solid and well registered in the new London recording.

Toscanini, Markeverich, Maazel: three very dissimilar accounts of a problematic piece, each eminently satisfactory by itself; there were no other versions to choose from. Because of Toscanini's cut, I would pick Maazel or Markeverich on general principle—but then I listen anew to the magnificent, surging, impassioned NHC strings in the trio of the second movement and I waver!

H.G.

The idea of recording this collection—the entire contents of Editions Peters' volume of Ausgewahlte Lieder by Tchaikovsky except for the song of the gypsy girl, Op. 60, No. 7—is attractive. The songs range from Tchaikovsky's fourteenth year to the last of his life and give a welcome reminder of his proficiency in this field. We have too few recordings of Tchaikovsky's songs and none in the current catalogue by a tenor. The tenor voice suits Tchaikovsky's individual cast of melody. The high bright sound accords well with the composer's predominant mood of lyric regret. Russian tenors like Sergei Lehechev used to make something wonderfully touching out of a song like O star!

In this recital Robert Tear makes a gallant effort to accommodate his vocal and linguistic talents to this still far too unfamiliar material. Though he deserves credit for his intentions, he cannot be said to succeed on either count. The voice is dry and rather slow in responding to his demands on it. As a result, expressive nuances tend to sound clumsy, like the important diminuendo at the end of Great Deeds and in the penultimate phrase of Cradle Song.

Robert Tear is obviously a very musical singer, but his vocal means are not up to his interpretative ambitions. His enunciation of the text is particularly solid, with his tone, though here he does use some apt rubato (which occasionally seems to have taken the conductor by surprise). The cabaletta is churned out regardless of sense or situation, and a closer attention to the pp do/ce would obviously help here. I am less than buoyant. In "Ella milli rapita" his easy, unforced tone comes less than buoyant. In "Ella milli rapita"...
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Borkh's Verdi is neither very distinguished nor

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This is another in Richmond's "Great Singers" series. Cavatina: The overselling of the younger generation is now being matched by the overselling of the older generation. Borkh was no doubt about it—a useful artist. During the 1950s and 1960s, first in Stuttgart and later in Munich, she sang a wide variety of roles—Fidelio, Eglantine (Euryanthe), Tosca, Turandot, Lady Macbeth, Senta—and she did so with effectiveness and skill. She made a specialty of certain Strauss parts: Salome, Elektra, the Egyptian Helen, and especially the Dyer's Wife. It was in the latter part that during the opening season of the rebuilt National Theater in Munich she enjoyed probably the greatest success of her career. (This Frau ohne Schatten, under the uninspiring baton of Josef Keilberth, is available on DG 2711 005.) On the international circuit, however, Borkh was best known in her prime for her Elektra—an assured, cool performance, remarkable no less for her dispassionate vocal efficiency than for her neatness of appearance and red-lacquered nails. Borkh's striking air of disengagement comes through clearly on this recital, where the singing manages at every point to keep the drama at arm's length. Borkh's voice was a clear high soprano, girllish and light in timbre, though capable of penetrating easily Strauss's most fearsome orchestral climaxes. As is revealed by the opening selection, the charming Song to the Moon from Rusalka, Borkh lacked variety of tone color, an instinct for effective phrasing (she makes nothing of the melody's climactic passage), and, sad to say, charm. "Divinités du Siel" is robbed of its majesty by Borkh's weak lower voice and the tameness of her attack. Borkh's Verdi is neither very distinguished nor
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very idiomatic. Especially in unsupported passages the voice is not as steady as it might be and some of the detail is clumsy. On Side 2 (a different recording session from Side 1) Borkh has difficulty in picking the music accurately. High notes come out sharp—e.g., the A’s and the C at the climax of “Ma dall’ardore”; also the A sharps on the rising phrase “non mi lasciar, pietà” in “Madre, pietosa Vergine.” The best singing on the disc is Lia’s aria from L’Enfant prodigie, where Borkh’s grasp of style and good French are very pleasing. No texts or translations.

D.S.H.

FRANS BRÜGGEN PLAYS SEVENTEEN RECORDERS, Frans Brüggen, recorder; Marie Leonhardt, Aida Stuurop, Antoinette van den Hombergh, and Lucy van Dael, violin; Anner Bylsma, cello; Fred Nijenhuis, double bass; Nikolaus Harnoncourt, gamba; Gustav Leonhardt, harpsichord and organ. Telefunken SMA 25073T 1/3-$1.97 (three discs).


COUPERIN: Pieces de clavecin. Book III. Le Rossignol en amour. PENUS: Sonata No. 4 in F (from SAWT 9487).

If Frans Brüggen is not the world’s most skilled and most musical recorder player, he’s at least equal to the finest in every respect. Listening to his warm and silvery tone and complete technical mastery of these seventeen different recorders from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is sheer delight in itself. It’s easy to overlook the fact that the ratio of musical masterpieces to mere baroque-ish noodlings is not as high as we might wish for. It’s also true that uninterrupted listening to three full records of recorder solo and recorder with continuo will soon become tedious to all but the most dedicated recorder buffs (only in two works on the third record is Brüggen joined by other instruments). But then it’s primarily recorder buffs who will be interested in this handsomely produced box, with a twelve-page booklet (full of information about the seventeen recorders, an interview with Brüggen, and brief notes about the pieces) and a poster-size photo of this strikingly handsome young artist. The more casual recorder fan should know that though two of these records are available separately the third and most interesting (SAWT 9582) has not yet been released singly in this country.

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again. These recordings remain among the phonograph's great triumphs.

The four Boris excerpts (including the overwhelming eleven-minute-plus Farewell, Prayer, and Death recorded live at Covent Garden in 1928) leave no doubt of Chaliapin's stature. True, he was not a polished singer; he did not offer the gorgeous line of a Ghiaurov. But even as sheer sound the voice is irresistible; add the tragic intensity of, for example, his tortured Act II monologue and you have the stuff of which legends are made—quite apart from his legendary stage presence.

Going from Boris' Death, which opens Side 1, to Farlaf's bumptious Rondo, which begins Side 2, is an object lesson in versatility. All the Side 2 excerpts are fascinating cameos—in particular the bold, direct rendering of Khan Konchak's familiar aria from Prince Igor. The LP transfers are excellent. Surely this is as irresistible as Carnaval or Kinderszenen, and it more flexible than the original elegance. A similar chanson, A propos de vous, shows up as the accompaniment to a Renaissance basse dance, and Lasso's rowdy rustic Margot labourez les vignes becomes a proper parlor song when it is arranged for soprano and guitar.

In the last few years Kreisleriana has truly made the "big time," with recordings by Horowitz (Columbia) and Rubinstein (RCA), a no less musically one by Klien (Turnabout), and now these three new versions. In short, Kreisleriana is now as popular as Carnaval or Kinderszenen, and it looks as if the Davidbnderlein (or Davidbnderle, as Schumann's later edition calls it) is about to follow suit. This is really a surprise since the last-named, one of Schumann's most introverted and autobiographical (as well as longest) compositions, has been a slow starter with music lovers outside Schumann's orbit.

Some things about Kempff's new recordings lead me to suspect that, nearing eighty, he is probably past his technical prime. His fingers are noticeably less incisive than of yore, his tempi are slower, his rhythm less firm and driving. He seems less willing to take risks. But well-honed conveniences of tape editing, he manages to minimize losses and actually effect a few gains. There are few wrong or missed notes, and even now Kempff has much more style and artistry backbone than ninety per cent of his colleagues. In fact, although some of the former crispness and driving energy of his older readings is lacking here, in its place one finds greater breadth, more tenderness and repose, a rather inward glow that suits this music to perfection. As before, Kempff brings a Beechhovenian nobility to the thickly scored declamatory passages and in fact, it is the very beginning of Kreisleriana, with its tumultuous passage-work, is less sparkling and sharply etched than on the older recording, it still sounds with impressive solid authority. As before, Kempff adheres to the composer's more thoughtful and less exacting readings. Gestures fail, on the older recording, it still sounds with impressive solid authority. As before, Kempff adheres to the composer's more thoughtful and less exacting readings. Kempff's more measured interpretation is an admirable performance but I am somewhat disappointed. Alongside the probity of Kempff's poetic vision, the chaste severity of Walter Klien's deeply intellectual reading and the absolutely breathtakingly splendid and imaginative of the Horowitz, De Lauro's account—impresses me as being just slightly superficial and ordinary. The over-view of her disc contains an unusual make-weight in the impassioned B minor Allegro; a lush but unmannered air of the popular romance, and a very potent, forthright rendering of the hard-to-hold-together F sharp minor Novelette. The last-named is in actuality several unrelated ideas juxtaposed into one. London has supplied full-bodied but rather over-resonant piano sound—while piano and pianissimo come forth with chinking fullness, forsooth tends to be a bit swimming and overbright.

I like Anton Kuerti's bargain-priced Kreisleriana a good deal better than London's more expensive one. Kuerti came to the United States from Vienna at an early age and studied at Curtis with Rudolf Serkin, winning the Levittown Award in 1957. Of late he has been residing in Toronto. While most of Serkin's many pupils emulate his most conspicuous mannerisms, few have succeeded in catching his humanity and passionate intensity. Temperamentally and pianistically Kuerti comes closer than most. Both of these CBC radio performances—well reproduced, albeit slightly unresonant—are replete with scaring, volcanic urgency and brilliance. Kuerti doesn't dwell on the pretty, purple prose of other works; he is more than capable of nuance and tenderness.

The special electricity of this Kreisleriana falls between the virtuoso brilliance of Horowitz and the reflective sobriety of Mme. De Larrocha's Kreisleriana is in the more familiar free-wheeling romantic style. She gets a round, fluent sonority and uses considerable rubato. In the main, she gives more heed to extended generalities than introverted specifics. In its way, hers is an admirable performance but I am slightly disappointed. Alongside the probity of Kempff's poetic vision, the chaste severity of Walter Klien's deeply intellectual reading and the absolutely breathtakingly splendid and imaginative of the Horowitz, De Lauro's account—impresses me as being just slightly superficial and ordinary. The overside of her disc contains an unusual make-weight in the impassioned B minor Allegro; a lush but unmannered air of the popular romance, and a very potent, forthright rendering of the hard-to-hold-together F sharp minor Novelette. The last-named is in actuality several unrelated ideas juxtaposed into one. London has supplied full-bodied but rather over-resonant piano sound—while piano and pianissimo come forth with chinking fullness, forsooth tends to be a bit swimming and overbright.

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Kempff. Kuerti's treatment may be less analytical and revelatory than Klein's, but I think it is more exciting. He gives comparable charge to the F minor Sonata, and it is his truly remarkable playing that supplies what little pleasure I get from that heavily sentimentalized and uninteresting sequential composition. Kuerti uses the revised four-movement version, which omits one of the two original scherzos. If you must make Quest devenu sound more like a product of the 1950s than of the 1590s, love in its various guises—none too serious—is the subject of most of these selections, but there are occasional exceptions like Lasso's musical evocation of the dawn in the splendid La nuît froide et sombre, a stanza from an ode of Du Bellay. "Amorous Dialogues of the Renaissance" chooses to present a form and a subject rather than a period and a country. The program, which is equally well arranged to divert the listener with fine music, also provides an international glimpse of love clad in quite different national costumes. The Germans are very foursquare and direct about it. Hasler's Mein Liebwill mir nie kriegen is an unadulterated tradition of folklike love songs from Isaac to Schumann and Brahms. The rather obvious jokes of the Demantius echo pieces (although the Latin text of Echo responsam si vis is very clever) with their simple choral homophony, reinforce the straightforward no-nonsense Germanic approach to the subject. Lasso, an interesting composer, has the ability to slip into any style he chooses, and his French chansons are elegantly modeled to the prevailing goût. Typically the dialogue elements in these sophisticated jewels are more subtly expressed than they are in the music from the North.

It is in the wealth and decadence of the small Italian courts that music and poetry reached full agreement in serving the amorous complications of the small groups of would-be lovers. Bound together in artificial groups ruled by Machiavellian innuendo. Erotic suggestion is the basis for most Italian madrigals. Subtly handled at first in works like Willaert's dialogue of the lover and her soul (Che fai alma), the lowered glance becomes a sly wink in Gabrieli's Parusia dunque, culminating in the outright pornography of Giacchle de' Wert's marvelous setting of Tiri morir vol ti.

Thomas Morley, that tireless admirer of the Italians, borrows their poetic pastoral dialogue with its double entendres and their expressive musical forms in Phileas I feare would die now, but despite his dutiful imitation of the Italian style, he misses the point and his shepherd-erences as a live sheep girl rolling in the hay rather than a sophisticated lady of the court suggesting some more subtle dalliance.

The performances on both discs are excellent. As I have pointed out before in these columns, there is a splendid assortment of singers in England with the voices, the technique, and the stylistic experience to do full justice to this music, but they require good direction to weld their various talents into a single interpretation. Grayston Burgess is emerging as a

Kempff. Kempff's Davidsbündler is, alas, no match for his Kreisleriana. His brusque treatment has a few saving graces: He gets clear textures, firmly sprung rhythms, and a just about ideal translation into sound of the con impatienza marking for No. 4. But there is a great deal missing from his grace playing, which here sounds hard, unasutable, and deficient in warmth and poetry. The four romances are similarly promising in warmth and poetry. They are similarly promising in warmth and poetry. The four romances are similarly promising in warmth and poetry. They are similarly promising in warmth and poetry. The four romances are similarly promising in warmth and poetry. They are similarly promising in warmth and poetry. They are similarly promising in warmth and poetry. They are similarly promising in warmth and poetry. They are similarly promising in warmth and poetry. They are similarly promising in warmth and poetry. They are similarly promising in warmth and poetry. 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tasteful and imaginative conductor of the Renaissance repertoire, one who is not afraid to let the listener revel in beautiful sound while paying his respects to the formal niceties of the music. The elegant phrases of the chansons are finely carved and beautifully balanced. Over half the selections are performed a cappella and the intonation is a joy to hear. I also want to mention Andrew Davis’ delightful accompaniment to the four-voice version of Au pres de vous which opens the first side.

It is always good news to get a new record by Denis Stevens who can be counted on for a high level of music and musicality. The singers of the Accademia Monteverdiana maintain a consistently high standard. The basses in particular deserve special commendation for their clear and expressive singing in the lowest tessitura in Willaert’s Chelai alma. The recording on both albums is of a uniformly high quality as are the notes and translations provided.

S.T.S.

WALTER KLIEN: Piano Dances. Walter Klien, piano. Turnabout TVS 34482. $2.98.

BEETHOVEN: Alla tedesca in A. Three Contredanze. Waltz in C. Waltz in B. Ecosaisse. HAYDN: Four Pieces from "Flötenuhr." S: Waltz, Op. 18. Damenlandler Op. 67. Eight Ecossaises. Valses sentimentales. Op. 50. Waltz in F. Op. 127. Trio in E. Eight Landler. Grazier Galopp. Two German Dances. The Viennese tend to get a bit arch and possessive about their own music, and Klien—usually an uncommonly direct, unaffected player—does once or twice overpoint a rhythm. However, he plays with so much relish and gusto, such refreshing dynamic range and basic musicality (quite a different thing from acquired "musicianship," which Klien also has in good measure) that I am quite willing to overlook the few excesses. This is light music of the best sort—ranging from the popular Beethoven Ecossaise (here played in a reliable edition) to the harmonically more unusual Schubert specimens. The Haydn pieces are demure and civilized, benefiting from Klien’s purity, sophistication, and taste.

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Continued on page 122
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119
BASF Plugs a Historical Vocal Gap

by Dale S. Harris

The increasing availability of historical vocal material (either through commercial or underground sources) is encouraging for anyone who believes in the informing power of the past. Such material helps to establish the continuity of performance, to create a context for our present-day efforts. It is especially fascinating to see what was happening in the Third Reich, a period when so much first-class talent was either forced, or chose to go into exile. The opening selections from Don Giovanni on the sampler disc that initiates BASF’s historical series are not reassuring. Sung, like everything else here, in German these excerpts are conducted by Karl Elmendorff with heavy-handed efficiency. Even though Kurt Böhm was later to become a fine Baron Ochs the comic antics of a basso buffo were never natural to him and as Leporello he sounds merely bovine. Matteus Ahlersmeyer’s Don is unsungrating and Elfriede Weidlich is a not very charming soubrette. But to hear the wonderfully solid, suave tones of Gotlob Frick, the great Hagen and Hunding of the next two decades, expended on the role of Masetto is both startling and pleasing. Roswaenge as Tamino in 1944 under Steinkopf is not as easy as he was in 1938 under Beecham. And in the Pamina-Papageno duet Arthur Rother phrases the music with less grace than Beecham had done for Lemnitz four years earlier. Karl Schmitt-Walter, a famous Papageno of that time, upholds his reputation, as do most of the other celebrated names: Berger and Anders in Martha and Strienz and the remarkable Hann in The Merry Wives are especially delightful. Klose is a phlegmatic Orfeo, however, and Walther Ludwig an uneasy Fenton. Both Teschemacher and Cebotari sound acidulous in the Letter Duet, but here and in the Entführung and Fidelio excerpts Karl Böhm controls the performances with great distinction. It is, moreover, good to hear Scottsford before she succumbed to her own charms and took refuge in coyness. The only selection to originate outside the studio is the Berlin Staatsoper’s 1942 Loehengrin, an almost exact reincarnation of the hugely successful 1936 Bayreuth production, of which highlights were recorded at the time on 78s. Maria Müller, the Metropolitan Opera’s first Maria Boccanegra ten years before, is very lovely, though Volker’s voice, once a beautiful instrument, has developed a pronounced beat in the six years after Bayreuth. The performance from which this comes, like the Böhm Figaro, is currently available complete on Preiser. The Martha, Merry Wives, Fidelio and Orfeo, however, though all once obtainable complete on LP have long been deleted. Some of these sets deserve to be reissued in full-length form. BASF promises the complete Hugo Wolf Corregidor the strongly cast 1944 performance formerly on Urania, but otherwise announces only excerpts discs. In the case of the 1944
Klarwein. At the world premiere however Klarwein sang the comic part of the Italian tenor, the Flamand being Horst Taubmann. I suspect that it is the latter who actually sings it here. Certainly this tenor sounds quite different from the Klarwein who sings the Steersman on the 1944 Krauss Dutchman. Viorica Ursuleac (Krauss’s wife) who was also the First Arabella is authoritative but vocally ungainly.

The sound on all these discs is boxy and a little congested, as one might expect. But that fact should not obscure the achievement of the German technicians who developed the tape recorder so early and of the German radio authorities who put it to such good use. Both records and jackets are manufactured in the United States. There are no texts.

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Schwann Record & Tape Guide

137 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass. 02116
Continued from page 118

season dramatically compressed into one disc.

The side devoted to Advent, the period of anticipation before the birth of the Lord, is especially well conceived. The joyful rising lines of Palestrina's *Ad te levavi* announce the introit or entrance of the season. Next Victoria, the great Spanish mystic, pictures the intimate solemnity of the moment where the angel Gabriel announces Mary's mission, gently reassuring her with the words *Ne timeas Maria* (fear not, Mary). The following motets by less famous contemporaries, the Spanish Juan Esquivel, Maximilian's court composer, Jacobus Vaet, and the Roman Stefano Bernardi, continue the feeling of expectancy. Only the Counter-Reformation bombast of Bernardi's *Benedixisti Domine* strikes a stylistically jarring note in the beautifully balanced mood of the moment. This is quickly set aright by the flowing Gregorian antiphon *O radix Jesse*, one of the acclamations greeting the Lord which are sung at the Magnificat during the week before Christmas. Palestrina's tenderly beautiful *Ave Maria* for five voices is followed by two triumphal cries: "Blow the trumpet in Sion..." "Throw wide the doors... let the King enter..." ending the joyful Alleluias of the Byrd motet.

The dawning baroque is particularly appropriate to illustrate the splendor and joy of Christmas day itself. Schein, Asola, Aichinger, Monteverdi, and finally Giovanni Gabrieli express the enthusiasm of Christ's reception into the world in more directly harmonic fashion, while Byrd and Victoria reflect the wonder of the incarnation in their exquisite motets *Bene viscera* and the ever popular *O magnum mysterium*.

I have emphasized the Christmas connection with this record because the selection of pieces is so extraordinarily fine, giving an added dimension to the disc. It is in fact a superb Christmas record, but it is also an excellent selection of Renaissance music beautifully balanced, magnificently sung, which can be enjoyed all year round. One does not after all avoid scenes of the Nativity in a museum just because it happens to be April or August. As usual John McCarthy conducts the Ambrosian Singers with sensitivity and style. Their tone is ravishing in the quieter numbers and suitably brilliant and full bodied in the more majestic moments. My only regret is in Oiseau-Lyre's packaging. The irrelevant cover and lack of texts (though Alec Robertson's notes are splendid) hardly matches the devotion and care which have gone into producing this fine disc.

S.T.S.


This release is enough of both a short- and long-term outdated curio to justify skipping what would seem to be its logical discussion among the Lighter Side reviews and calling it here to the attention of readers who are possibly more historically or technologically oriented. The disc's special jacket sticker features the inclusion of the "Olympic Fanfare as heard in the ABC telecasts of the Olympic Games from Munich," but the disc appears...
The Art of Ina Souez. Ina Souez, soprano. Glyndebourne Festival Chorus and Orchestra, Fritz Busch, cond. (in the Mozart); London Philharmonic Orchestra, Alberto Erede (in the Puccini and Verdi) and John Barbirolli (in the Bizet and Beethoven), cond. Orion OPs 7293, $5.95 (rechanneled stereo; recorded in the 1930s).


American soprano Ina Souez is a historically important singer. Souez played a key role in the success of Glyndebourne. After all, she sang the Fiordiligis and Donna Annas in every major repertory of the house. Though last season's Metropolitan revival of Queen of Spades was not very distinguished, it was wonderful to hear this intriguing score again, and chasting to realize all over again how narrow our operatic experience is.

Tchaikovsky's ballets, and orchestral music in general, do not lack exposure or appreciation in this country, but the operas are seldom seen. Vishnevskaya's recital makes clear how much beautiful music we are on that account denied. Apart from the opening pair of selections by Rimsky-Korsakov everything comes from Tchaikovsky operas, and of these only Queen of Spades is ever performed here. It is possible that only Russian audiences would be able to appreciate a work like The Oprichnik, which combines strong dramatic action with unsuitably meditative and lyrical music—but it would be nice to have the chance to judge for ourselves. Perhaps this disc will help. There is no selection here that is uninformed by Tchaikovsky's melodic individuality. The Queen of Spades is unacceptably unfamiliar nowadays, and the Farewell from The Maid of Orleans sometimes figures in recitals, but the other pieces—the Mazepa lullaby and Iolante's arioso, for example—are equally deserving of popularity.

Vishnevskaya is in very good voice. Sometimes the tone gets a bit strident and hard at the top, but she is a wonderfully expressive artist, full of fire and commitment and utterly communicative. Even with the slightly harsh sound that creeps into her top register (an occupational hazard with seemingly all modern Russian sopranos) Vishnevskaya is nevertheless capable of a thrilling, sustained, ringing high B in the Sorceress excerpt. The Maid of Orleans aria is really very beautifully done. Both Khainik and Melik-Pashayev bring great warmth to this music. Highly recommended. Notes, texts, and translations.

D.S.H.
in brief

BEETHOVEN: Duos for Violin and Cello, WoO. 27: No. 1, in C; No. 2, in F; No. 3, in B flat. Ruggiero Ricci, violin, Mihaly Vadasz, cello. Decca ORS 7299. $5.98.

Here we have two excellent musicians—one well known, the other just beginning to attract attention—wearing their talent on important music not even written for their instruments. If anything, Beethoven deserves oblivion, surely is these inconsequential duos. Of interest to scholars and counterpoint students, these are meaningless as music simply to listen to. They are written to please the thin-veiled Haydn, and Beethoven did not even copy his teacher at his best. If you must revive something like this, at least use the composer's instrumentation; in fact the duos were composed for clarinet and bassoon. It might be nice to hear the pieces in their original form, in this anonymous transcription we get little idea of the intended sound. The performances are excellent, the sound good.

A.M.

HANDEL: The New Messiah, Andy Bellingerr, arr. and cond., assisted by Michael Elliott. Columbia KC 31713. $5.98.

I won't list the rest of the cast; they are probably honest musicians who simply earned a few needed dollars by collaborating in this atrocity. I will, however, name the Department of Choral Music of the University of California, Los Angeles, for its ungrammar, and of course, for the second. and that is precisely the kind of music in which André Previn excels. The fast, madrigal and troubadour songs by Adam and his contemporaries, poet-musicians like Bernard de Gombert, are stirred together in a manner which somehow makes musical sense and provides a challenge to your hi-fi set such as few other compositions this side of Xerxes are likely to offer.

The anonymous person now writing the liner notes for the Louisville records is doing the best job of anybody in America and should take a bow. A.F.


Karel Husa's Music for Prague 1968 is actually a symphony in four movements. It is a work of considerable eloquence and power, in an essentially conservative idiom, based very largely on an old Hussite hymn associated with the freedom struggles of the Czech people. Its elegiac slow movement and its Interlude (for percussion alone) are especially beautiful. Gene Gutchie's Genghis Khan is a buoyant, vigorous, snotty little piece in keeping with the legend of its hero; it is well calculated to bring the palms of audiences together at pop concerts. Penderecki's De natura sonoris is typical of its composer in its radiant streams of color and its consisting timbral contrasts: whistling, sliding, roaring, banging, cooing, tinkling, and all kinds of other sounds are stirred together in a manner which somehow makes musical sense and provides a challenge to your hi-fi set such as few other compositions this side of Xerxes are likely to offer.

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A.M.

LISZT: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in E flat. Fantasia on Hungarian Themes for Piano and Orchestra. Earl Wild, piano; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Andre Kostelanetz, cond. Columbia M 31962. $5.98.

These are traditional-style performances in that they stress brilliance and extraverted momentum. Lesurely and passages lack the voluptuous instrumental sonority (cellos in particular are brought to the fore at the smallest excuse), while glittery passagework is accelerated to the point of near hysteria. The ultra-close miking clarifies all of Liszt's masterful concertante writing, and for all their heart-on-sleeve obviousness the performers stay well within the confines of good taste. Wild, a fine technician, has the many notes of the piano part down pat and Kostelanetz keeps a firm, experienced hand on his expert orchestra (probably mostly players from the New York Philharmonic).

This E flat Concerto lacks the expansive sublety of Richter's virtually definitive performance (for Philips), nor does it feature such intellectual penetration and structural cohesion as the recently released Rosen/Prieural (Odyssey). Likewise, there is more sullen sonority in the Cherkassky/Kurzaj Hungarian Fantasia (for DG). Still, the Wild/Kostelanetz team is worthy of respect and serious evaluation: this is a decided highbrow record despite its semi-pop presentation.

H.G.

STRAUSS FAMILY: "From Vienna with Love": New Year's Concert. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Willi Boskovsky, cond. London CS 6731. $5.98.

One of a record reviewer's hardest tasks is to find some way of saying something arrestingly new about the latest addition to a long and almost uniformly excellent series. My present problem is how to praise the latest Boskovsky New Year's Concert program without merely repeating what I—and other reviewers—have been saying for years about this conductor's and orchestra's unchallenged supremacy in the realms of Viennese dance music and about London's ever more sparkling, transient, and aurally delectable recording. But if I can't find any fresh words of praise for the present performances and sonics, I can at least point out the exceptional programmatic novelty here. Even Straussian connoisseurs will find only a few familiar, familiar selections—and even these Accelerationen and Frei und Ungestraft Walzes. Athen und Frühmorgen: Polkas are scarcely hackneyed choices! Everything else is not only likely to be brand new to most American listeners but so appealing that one must wonder why it hasn't been played and recorded far more often. Pass this recording by at your own inculcable loss!

R.D.D.


Walton's De Millean superspectacular Belshazzar's Feast is given a rousing, brilliant performance here. It is the kind of work that makes a great impression on one hearing but leaves nothing for the second, and that is precisely the kind of music in which André Previn excels. The short Improvisations is cut from the same cloth.

A.F.

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A.F.

An entertaining selection of popular music from the thirteenth century sung and played with great elan by a talented group from the Boston area. The fresh sound and versatile musicianship of the ensemble makes the Cambridge Consort a group to watch. A highlight of the disc is the medley of medieval music called La Iunta de Robin es Marion, but the folks more polyphonic motifs, troubadour and trouvère songs by Adam and his contemporaries, pact-musicians like Bernard de Ventadorn.

S.T.S.
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Harry Chapin: Sniper and Other Love Songs. Harry Chapin, vocals, guitar, and songs, rhythm accompaniment. Steve Chapin, arr. Barefoot Boy; Winter Song, And the Baby Never Cries; six more. Elektra 75042, $5.98.

Harry Chapin is a storyteller disguised as a singer/musician. They used to call them troubadours. Chapin deals with human emotions that are ageless, set in stories that are heavily into the present. All are good and some are killers.

The Sniper is an intricately structured tale based on recent headlines concerning a campus sniper. The track is nearly ten minutes long and deserves to be.

Burning Herself is a painfully real character study. "She" is strictly a big-city phenomenon, a girl with "marks upon her body and marks upon her mind." moving too quickly and understanding too slowly, one blind step away from suicide. Sunday Morning Sunshine, on the other hand, is as bright as its name.

The most touching story of all is Better Place to Be, in which a man in a bar tells a friend her story, how he found a lovely lady who was so sad she was "long gone long and well-nigh on to lost." The story winds itself out beautifully and must be heard.

On the inside of the double-fold album cover, all lyrics are written out in prose form, which suits them well. They are superbly illustrated by artist Roh White. (Before I forget— the album includes Chapin's latest hit song, All My Life's A Circle.)

I am not crazy about Harry Chapin's musical sense of humor. His music is better than his words, but he is a splendid tale-teller, as honest and real as anyone I can think of. M.A.

**THE KINKS: The Great Lost Kinks Album**

The Kinks, music, lyrics, vocals, and all instrumentation. Til Death Do Us Part; There is No Life Without Love; Lavender Hill; twelve more. Warner Bros. BS 2127, $5.98. Tape: ● M82127, $6.95; ● M52127, $6.95.

In 1969 the Kinks were scheduled to release an album entitled "Four Respected Gentlemen." The LP never hit the record stores and several of its selections were released on the group's "The Village Green Preservation Society" album. Fans, however, dubbed the never-released "Four Respected Gentlemen" "The Great Lost Kinks Album." This "Great Lost Kinks Album" is now "Four Respected Gentlemen" but fourteen Kinks tracks left over from the days when the group was recording on the Warner Bros. label.

Why haven't these tracks ever been released? There is no more whimsical, perverse, clever showman in all of rock-and-roll than Ray Davies, lead singer and head songwriter of the Kinks. This Mad Hatter has muted the spirit of the British music hall to rock music. It is this feeling for English vaudeville that makes the Kinks' music so special. These "lost" tracks typify that streak of the Kinks' talent, so much so that perhaps these numbers may not have seemed commercial at the time they were recorded. The public is just beginning to catch up with this particular aspect of the Kinks' magic. "The Great Lost Kinks Album," filled with Ray Davies' comedy and pathos which he expresses in a mellow, lilting singing voice, is a delight. A tribute to both Davies and a segment of the public that is finally beginning to realize that a rock band does not always have to rock.

That public should be enthralled by these fourteen "lost" numbers, which include the Brecht/Weillish Til Death Do Us Part; the fantasy-titled Lavender Hill, and the cornball but charming Mr. Songbird. (What other rock-and-roll star but Davies would give himself this fes title? When I Turn Off the Living Room Light is a typical Kinks grotesquerie: funny, sad, revolting, touching—all at the same time. On Where Did My Spring Go?, a classic tale of growing old, Ray Davies asks plaintively: "where did my 'go' go?"

Judging by the set of "lost" tracks, Davies' "go" is in mighty fine shape.

H.E.

**JOHN WAYNE: America, Why I Love Her.**

John Wayne, narrations; Jack Halloran Singers; Billy Liebert, arr. and cond. The People; An American Boy Grows Up, Pledge of Allegiance; seven more. RCA LSP 4828, $5.98. Tape: ● P8S 2112, $6.95.

If ever I make a western, John Wayne has every right to have at me. For the moment, he has made a blatant propaganda statement in the guise of a record album. I figure that puts the job was a comfortable one. The music it—

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**John Wayne in the white hat**
of his recent recordings. His voice is deep and masterful one. The former Kingston Trio with Capitol and Warner Bros. is predictably a only in losing. Thus are our children trained to be ready for the next war. When in doubt, simply face the flag, and later send it to the war widow and let her face it.

Another track is entitled, Why Are You Marching, Son. It is the only profound question in the set.

This album does not share; it tells. It does not entertain; it testifies. It does not inform; it glorifies. If the listener is self-directed, it offends.

JOHN STEWART; Cannons in the Rain. John Stewart, vocals and guitar; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Durango; Chilly Winds; Armstrong; Spirit; Lady and the Outlaw; six more. RCA LSP 4727, $5.98 Tape. P8S 2111, $6.95. PK 2111, $6.95.

Stewart's debut LP for RCA after brief stints with Capitol and Warner Bros. is predictably a masterful one. The former Kingston Trio singer now has carved for himself a niche as an original, not the standard folksong) are the best. John's best moments, however, came in his first and second albums. "Elton John" and "Tumbleweed Connection." But in all this is quite good.

ELTON JOHN: Don't Shoot Me, I'm Only the Piano Player. Elton John, vocals and keyboards; Davey Johnstone, guitar; Dee Murray, bass, Nigel Olsson, drums, vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Daniel: Elderberry Wine. Crocodile Rock; High Flying Bird; six more. MCA 2100, $5.98.

This latest Elton John outing is a good one, and appears to continue the trend to strident, hard rock represented in his previous LP, "Honky Chateau." The several up-tempo rockers are fine, notably Crocodile Rock: a song that reminisces about the 1950s, done appropriately in 1950s style. Among the ballads, Daniel and High Flying Bird (the latter an original, not the standard folksong) are the best. John's best moments, however, came in his first and second albums. "Elton John" and "Tumbleweed Connection." But in all this is quite good.

ANDY AND DAVID WILLIAMS. Andy and David Williams, vocals, arranged and conducted by Arti Butler and Al Capps. Out of My Head; Fly Pretty Baby; Satisfied; nine more. Kapp 3673, $4.98 Tape. K8-3673, $6.98. KT-3673, $6.98.

Andy and David Williams are cute. They're about twelve or thirteen years old, blond, twins, nephews of Andy Williams, already into the vanilla-family tradition. They sing okay. Their album arrived with lots of photos in addition to the two on the front and back of the jacket. The visual thing is very important in the subteen market, as it is called by those who service it.

There have to be a certain number of David Cassidy's per season. The best float to the top, after which the business wheels go into motion. That's the deal. The reason is that the subteen market, known to some as children, is very successful at hugging Mommy and Daddy for the money to buy albums and products advertised on kid TV shows.

Subteen heroes are always boys because subteen consumers are girls. They may sing anywhere from well to harmlessly. There was a time when David Cassidy, of the Partridge Family, didn't sing at all. His early vocals were performed by a studio singer—the same man who faked for the Monkees before that; and for Gary Lewis and the Playboys before that. Cassidy has since learned to sing for himself.

Subteen heroes must be cute and preferably blond above all they must not be sexy. Subteen girls are not ready for sexiness in heroes and reject it quickly. Sexuality does not appear in singer/heroes until about eighteen. Obviously it is time to find a replacement for David Cassidy. He is becoming a man, a market for which he has not been designed. He will soon have to sink or swim on his own among the adults, while the networks and record execs go to work on the image of his successor(s). I wouldn't be surprised if a TV series was in the works for the Williams twins.

While there is some professional vocal support on this album, it is slight. The Williams twins do their own singing and have a sweet, unoriginal, virginial sound. Choice of material is tricky. Most love songs are automatically out; those included are strange to hear, such as Paul Williams' and Roger Nichols' tender and very grownup / Won't Last a Day Without You. One choice was a natural: Baby Love by Holland-Dozier-Holland. It was once a hit by the Supremes, but of course it works beautifully in this context.

This is a carefully designed package. No chances were taken. The twins sing standard pop fare in unison or simple harmony. Some songs are yawns (Falling Falling Gone by. of all people, Rhonda Fleming). Two of L.A.'s best arrangers were hired for the tight, well-written, middle-of-the-road pop charts: Arti Butler and Al Capps.

The children's market is one of the most efficient areas of the music business. It is all business. Perhaps a twelve-year-old is less likely to give the bosses trouble by asserting his own feelings. Kids are used to taking orders. They are pawns in this game and ultimately they are the losers. I sigh for them.

JERRY LEE LEWIS: The Session. Jerry Lee Lewis, vocals and piano, Alvin Lee, guitar; Klaus Voormann, bass; Kenny Jones, drums, Rory Gallagher, guitar. Matthew Fisher, organ. Delaney Bramlett, guitar, vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Baby What You Want Me To Do; Bad Moon Rising; Sea Cruise; Big Boss Man; Memphis, Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On; Sixty Minute Man; Rock 'n' Roll Medley; eleven more. Mercury SP/2-803, $5.95 (two discs). Tape. MCTB 2-803 $9.95. MCT4 2-803. $9.95.

Apparently patterned after Chess Records' highly successful "London Sessions" series, this two-disc set matches Jerry Lee Lewis with some of Britain's best-known rock musicians. Recorded over a four-day period, the LP covers many familiar rock songs from both the 1950s and the 1960s. My guess is that they started the tape and kept it rolling as long as possible, because everything on these two discs sounds the same. Lewis' vocals are at times lackluster, at times just shoddy. His reading of Baby What You Want Me To Do is dreadful. But the rock backup is competent and, at times, exciting. Still it's the same old stuff, and not done in a new or even a very interesting manner. The best way to hear Lewis is on his "Original Greatest Hits." Vols 1 and 2 (Sun).

THEATER AND FILM


Everything seems to be of some sort of a piece in Bernardo Bertolucci's film of passionless passion. Last Tango in Paris, except Gato Barbieri's score of contemporary jazz tangos. Harsh, abrasive, and obtrusive, they leap from the soundtrack to plague the viewer with their unrelenting cheapness.

Bertolucci's film with its startling, provocative Marlon Brando performance, its three perverse sex sequences, its stylized Kabuki-like dance rituals, its stereotyped secondary characters, its improvised "method" monologues and its melodramatic, almost trashy denouement, is an uneven, complex, unnerving film experience. Because of its complexity
MORE and BETTER and the name of your nearest dealer.

Barbieri, however, has gone straight to the core of Bertolucci's melodrama. These jazz tangos, a series of moody compositions in carry arrangements that emphasize Barbieri's whining, piercing saxophone, suggest the chiched Paris of those cheap imported films on local late late shows. they're the perfect accompaniment for a low-budget European "B" film dealing with the restless, purposeless, promiscuous sexual escapades of European "B" film" heroes and heroines on the make. The Last Tango in Paris-Tango, which occurs over and over again, is insinuating in a cheap, gaudy way. Locked into its jazz tango mold, this score does show a healthy amount of musical variety and does build to an effective jazz waltz variation on the Last Tango theme, accentuated by a pounding sound of Latin-esque percussion effects, which effectively accompanies the frantic Last Tango dance of despair that occurs on screen.

There are those who think that this anti-erotic sexual epic is a "masterpiece"; there are those who detest it. No one, however, considers it a "B" film, even though it has the musical sound of one. Barbieri has composed his score from the point of view of the Marlon Brando character. This angry, aging, randy goat of a man ultimately displays an honest sentimental streak that urges him to propose marriage to his nameless mistress. These jazz tangos capture this bedrockSentimentality with startling exactness. Throughout the film Brando, dedicated to a sexual relationship devoid of love, enacts the role of the hero of the "B" film" that exists in the fantasies of all too many men. His sexual parting partner in the film, Maria Schneider, plays a mindless, thrill-seeking contemporary teenager who has her own brand of sentiment and "B film" movie magic rooted in her consciousness. (The tawdry relationship excites her because it is an adventure plucked from the pages of a paperback porno novel.)

Barbieri's jazz tangos effectively portray both the sentiment of this contrary "love story" and the tawdry, gritty movie's sordid, ugly quality of the behavior and fantasies of the film's two central characters. Still, the obviousness and obtuseness of these jazz tangos make this score a disquieting one; it's a disquieting score to accompany an altogether disquieting motion picture.


It was inevitable that Richard Rodney Bennett would be asked to score Robert Bolt's Lady Caroline Lamb. Film composers get typecast like everybody else. Well, Bennett wrote just what was required of him: a nostalgic, poignant score filled with a bucolic opulence whose secret only English composers seem to know. Oh yes: There is also a main theme, a very attractive one that is used nicely throughout the film score itself but run into the ground in the concert piece Elegy for Caroline Lamb, which fills out Side 2. All in all, Bennett has composed a score that, like his music for Schlesinger's magnificent Far from the Maddening Crowd, stands up exceptionally well divorced from the film—which is just as well in this case.

R.S.B.
The music of Berlioz. A.F. Dickinson. Illus. Musical examples. Against the literary and social background of Berlioz's times, Dickinson examines the music with technical thoroughness. Both the broad aspects of style and the more minute details of tonal analysis come into play. The author draws on many sources not available in English. No. 353... $23.50

The glory of the violin. Joseph Wechsberg. Illus. Famous New York author Wechsberg writes of his great love, the violin, and touches many bases. The great makers, the secrets of wood and varnish, the business of buying, selling (and cheating), the mysterious matter of tone, the noted virtuosos—all are dealt with in lively style. A fiddle fancier's delight. No. 341... $8.95

Records in review. 1972 edition. The 17th annual edition of this "bible for record collectors." Hundreds of the authoritative, detailed reviews which appeared in High Fidelity in 1971 are arranged alphabetically by composer, subdivided by category of music when releases of his music were considerable. A section on Recitals and Miscellany too, and an Artists' Index to all performers reviewed during the year, as well as those mentioned only in the text. No. 285... $9.95

Chopin. Collected letters. Beautifully produced reprint of the translation of three hundred letters, from the original Polish and French (collected by Henryk Opienski), first published in 1931—an almost indispensable guide to Chopin's life and his music. No. 331... $12.00

Caruso. Stanley Jackson, Illus. Index. Bibl. A popular biography of the legendary singer revealing episodes and relationships in his life, romanticized or almost completely ignored in previous histories. Jackson separates the man from theأعمال which he encouraged. The great artist is here, also the many faceted character and personality. No. 2114... $7.95

Divas. Winthrop Sargeant, Illus. The veteran music critic writes with liveliness and often intimate knowledge about six great singers: Sutherland, Horne, Sills, Nilsson, Price, and Farrell. The profiles, five of which appeared in The New Yorker, are part interview, part career-sketch, part canny observation. An assortment of photographs with each subject. No. 352... $7.95

Jolson. Michael Freedland. Illus. Index. An unashamed story of Jolson's life and career. The boy sneaked into his first Broadway theater at 12; lived in a Catholic Boys Home (with Babe Ruth and Bogarties Robinson); worked in burlesque at 14; the man became a legend as one of the greatest entertainers in Broadway history. No. 332... $8.95


Encounters with Stravinsky. A personal record. Paul Horgan. Illus. Photos. Index. For anyone who has felt the impact of Stravinsky's music on his own aesthetic responses, this is a book to treasure. As Horgan writes in his foreword, it is "an act of homage to a transcendent artist who for almost four decades indirectly and impersonally brought aesthetic fulfillment to my life and learning—an experience which then for another decade and a half was crowned by personal friendship with him and his wife. " It is not intended as a work of musicology or complete biography, rather a sketchbook, rich in detail and anecdote, by a loving friend with the novelist's eye and ear for character and scene. No. 2910... $7.95

Brahms: a critical study. Burnett James. Burnett James, moreover, has not written the usual dates and places biography, but rather a loosely biographical exegesis on Brahms's life and music. The book is highly discursive for James likes to make analogies and to conjure up ideas we range from the composer to such figures as Freud, Hemingway, Sibelius, and Bach. —Patrick Smith. HIGH FIDELITY: MUSICAL AMERICA No. 333... $10.00

Dancing on the seats. Andrew H. Meyer. A wise and even witty book on the ins and outs of producing concerts on a college campus, covering both in musical terms any performance. The author, former producer of a college concert promotional firm, deals primarily with rock concerts, but his information applies to other types as well. A valuable handbook for every new college concert chairman. No. 342... $6.95

The dance band era: the dancing decades from ragtime to swing, 1910-1950. Albert McCarthy. Four decades of bands and bandleaders examined in musical terms and in their social and economic context. Unlike previous histories, this includes the great English and European bands. Lists of selected recordings with each chapter. No. 299... $10.00

The recordings of Beethoven. As viewed by the critics of High Fidelity. To celebrate the Beethoven Bicentenary High Fidelity edited an almost indispensable guide to the deeds, words, and persons involved in its realization. No. 2116... $10.50

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CIRCLE 65 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

THE HARDER THEY CAME. Original motion picture soundtrack recording. Music and lyrics by Jimmy Cliff, Derrick Harriott and D. Scott. B. Dove and F. McNaughton, the Slickers, Desmond Dekker, and F. Hibbert; performed by Jimmy Cliff, Scotty, the Melodians, the Maytals, the Slickers, and Desmond Dekker. You Can Get It If You Really Want; Draw Your Brakes; Rivers of Babylon; nine more. Mango SMAS 7400, $6.98. Tape: e,qxt 7400, $6.98, rr,qxt 7400, $6.98.

Paul Simon's huge hit Mother and Child Reunion featured the compelling reggae beat. Johnny Nash's recent two-million-copy seller I Can See Clearly Now was another reggae tune. Reggae (pronounced reg gay), the music that throbs through the island of Jamaica, has finally launched a full-fledged international invasion; the public (and rightly so) is offering no opposition to this rhythmic onslaught.

The music is as languid as that proverbial tropical breeze; yet it has an insistent beat that makes it not only totally compelling but also perfect for toe-tapping and dancing. The beat—the product of a throbbling bass line and a drum beat that rocks steadily and unexpectedly on the off beat—gives reggae a distinctive musical style. Reggae is the beat that pervades the new feature film The Harder They Came. This is the tale of a Jamaican country boy who comes to Kingston, makes a hit record, gets ripped off, becomes a powerful marijuana dealer, and winds up as a living legend. Rather like Jimmy Cliff, one of Jamaica's top-notch reggae performers, sort of a reaper-pulling Jamaican Jesse James. The score of the film is not only made up of Cliff's hits over the past three or four years, but also features such other famous Jamaican reggae rockers as Scotty, the Melodians, the Maytals, the Slickers, and Desmond Dekker. The soundtrack disc, a sampler of these reggae hits, is a primer for the uninitiated. The listener will be enveloped by the sinuating island sound; he will also discover that reggae lyrics can be undiluted consciousness raisers. Sometimes hard to understand because of the island accent, the lyrics deal with the necessity of crime for survival, the quest for freedom, the horrors of slavery, and the indignity of poverty. "Well the oppressors are trying to keep me down/ Trying to drive me underground/ And they think that they have got the battle won/ I say forgive them Lord they know not what they've done/ Cause as sure as the sun will shine/ I'm gonna get my share now/ what's mine/ The harder they come/ The harder they fall/ one and all," sings Cliff in the film's title tune, a song of his own composition. It is no wonder that Jamaica's middle and upper classes hate this music from the island's ghettos, and think of it as a major source of class discord in Jamaica.

The music will probably not have the same social effect here. Nevertheless, it is bound to be a powerful new musical trend. The Rolling Stones have just completed recording in Kingston. With the blessings of white superstars and with its own natural infectiousness, reggae should join "soul" and "blues" as a recognizable label for a recognizable musical style. This soundtrack's reputation as basic source material is bound to grow in direct proportion to reggae's success. Be the first on your block to hear this new sound. Listen to "The Harder They Come."

CIRCLE 33 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

THE RULING CLASS. Music from the motion picture soundtrack. Music by John Cameron, Giuseppe Verdi, and others. Peter O'Toole, John Cameron, cond. Avco AV 11006, $4.98.

The critical neglect of Peter Medak's The Ruling Class in favor of such in-group twaddle as Francois Truffaut's Two English Girls will forever remain one of those less than sweet mysteries of life. If it has a few flaws, The Ruling Class is so original, funny, and iconoclastic that it could be forgiven a good deal more. Not the least striking element is the soundtrack, which uses music ranging from John Cameron's appropriate pop-Bach main theme to an incredible variation on the theme of "I Can't Give You Anything But Love" composed and performed by the Dave Brubeck Quartet.

This soundtrack's reputation as basic source material is bound to grow in direct proportion to reggae's success. Be the first on your block to hear this new sound. Listen to "The Harder They Come."

CIRCLE 65 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

THE CECIL HOLMES SOULFUL SOUNDS: The Black Motion Picture Experience. Tony Camillo, producer, Petr, and cond. Super Fly; Shaft; Trouble Man T Stand for Trouble; six more. Buddah BDS 5129, $5.98.

FRANCK POURCEL: Western Movie's Greatest Hits. Robert Colby, producer. The Magnificent Seven; How the West Was Won; Bonanza; nine more. Paramount PAS 6045, $5.98.

CIRCLE 33 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

High Fidelity Magazine
concert with the white power structure, the best black musical artists have been marshaled to provide theme music for these movies. Curtis Mayfield's score for Super Fly and Isaac Hayes's score for Shaft are rhythmic, highly charged, pulsating, soulful musical experiences. This disc features music from these two films as well as a selection from Marvin Gaye's score for Trouble Man, a selection from Billy Preston's score for Slaughter, Bobby Watson's theme from Across 110th Street, the theme from Ben, Michel Legrand's mushy Theme from Lady Sings the Blues, and the theme from 2001. (Did Stanley Kubrick really know his space epic was a "black motion picture experience"?) A polite, unvarnished, orchestral reading has been given to each of these selections, robbing them of the energy and stylish high jinks that have made them world famous. Perhaps this kind of performance is the only way to introduce "easy listening" audiences to this music; still, would have appreciated an album compiled of the original artists performing their compositions. That would have made for a truly soulful album.

Add "The Black Motion Picture Experience" to the list of obvious exploitations. For shame, Cecil Holmes!

Yup, partners, "Western Movie's Greatest Hits" is one more entry in the film-music nostalgia sweeps. These themes taken from epic Westerns of the Fifties and Sixties will be familiar to anyone who has ever listened to a "middle-of-the-road" radio station. Once again the listener can be stirred by the lush, lively themes from The Magnificent Seven, Bananza, High Noon, and The Big Country, as well as The Green Leaves of Summer from The Alamo, and two lively, spunky themes from two of the classic spaghetti Westerns, A Fistful of Dollars and The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly, both written by Ennio Morricone. Italy's answer to Dimitri Tiomkin.

Franck Pourcel has sold more than nineteen million records. His large audience is pleased with his listenable interpretations of contemporary popular music. They will not be displeased by this new Pourcel effort. Pourcel gives the impression of Alfred Newman, Victor Young, and Elmer Bernstein a lavish, musically articulate treatment. Each theme is harmonized with the utmost dedication and full attention to musical detail. While one has heard it all before, it still sounds fresh.

Whether you want to add another performance to your record collection of The Magnificent Seven and these other themes is an individual matter, but if you're looking for another performance, this disc definitely fits the bill.

H.E.

**Jazz**


This is not a reissue, which may seem remark-

able since Clifford Brown and Richie Powell, the group's pianist, were both killed in an automobile accident in 1956. It is a tape made by the group as a demonstration in 1953 (it got them a contract with EmArcy) but never released before. It brims with the fresh spirit of five musicians in the first flush of creating something that is their own. It was, as Nat Hentoff points out, a joyous band, and in this setting Clifford Brown gives a marvelously all-encompassing demonstration of his talent as a crisply inventive, incisive trumpet player who could generate electric waves of excitement or explore a ballad, such as Ghost of a Chance, with the kind of probing imagination that one would be more likely to expect of a pianist such as Bill Evans. Even though this was just the beginning of the group, it was very much together—you hear it on Joyspring, a marvel of relaxed, flowing togetherness.

The group made only a handful of records, and these are some of the best.

J.S.W.

**LOUIS ARMSTRONG:** The Great Soloists. That Rhythm Man; Dallas Blues; Dinah, nine more. Biograph C5, $5.98.

**LOUIS ARMSTRONG:** Mr. Armstrong Plays the Blues. Louis Armstrong, Hocie Thomas, Chippie Hill, Clara Smith, Sippie Wallace. Gambler's Dream; Low Land Blues; Lazy Man Blues; eleven more. Biograph C6, $5.98.

Two more products of Arnold Caplin's unique arrangement with Columbia Records to reissue material from the Columbia files. The emphasis on these two discs is on Armstrong as a blues accompanist. On the first side of Disc 5 the entire first side and two selections on the second side are by Armstrong's early big band of 1929-1932. Oddly enough, the vocal accompaniments come off better than the big-band pieces, which seem unusually thin in these reproductions (and which, because they have been readily available, are of less importance in this release than the other material). Armstrong was a superb accompanist, and even the least of these vocal pieces benefits from his presence.

There are some absolutely superb pieces here: Clara Smith's Court House Blues, recorded while Armstrong was in New York with Fletcher Henderson's band (and with Henderson on piano); Chippie Hill's Kid Man Blues; and Sippie Wallace's Flood Blues. Hocie Thomas, who has the entire first side of Disc 5, has an earthy voice but none of the spark that appears from time to time in the work of these other singers. On Disc 5 the vocalists are quite secondary—Eva Taylor sings Cake Walkin' Babies from Home in a performance in which the honors are easily taken by Armstrong, playing cornet, and Sidney Bechet on soprano saxophone, while young Victoria Spivey is clear-voiced but unimpressive on a routine song called How Do They Do It That Way. J.S.W.
Paul Gonsalves, and Harry Carney, saxophone; Duke Ellington, piano; Ernie Shepard, bass; Sam Woodyard, drums. Perdido, Cop Out, Happy-Go-Lucky Local, thirteen more. Atlantic 2-304, $6.98 (two discs).

After something of a starvation diet of Ellington records during the Sixties, the floodgates seem to have been opened—in a very relative manner of speaking. That is, two Ellington sets issued in the fall of 1972—"Latin American Suite," recorded in 1968, and "Togo Brava Suite," recorded in 1971 (which won a Grammy as the best big band performance of 1972)—have been followed by this amalgam of pieces from four concerts by the Ellington band at the Olympia Theater in Paris in 1963. Unlike "Latin American Suite" and "Togo Brava Suite," in which the title numbers were recorded for the first time, there is nothing really new in this collection. But there is a redefining of enduring Ellington standards. Cootie Williams is heard, still fresh with the joy of rejoining the Ellington band after an absence of twenty years, in a marvelously stated version of Concerto for Cootie and in the Duke's welcome back composition, Tinti for Cootie. There is a generous (most of one side) segment of the late Johnny Hodges both in familiar pieces (Swanee Side of the Street and All of Me) and in his melodic expression of the relationship of Romeo and Juliet. Star Crossed Lovers, which was rarely played in Ellington concerts. Along with the short pieces are two Ellington extended works—Suite Thursday, played with great aplomb (even more than in the excellent Columbia recording that preceded this concert by three years) and Tone Parallel to Harlem, played with such uncertainty that it would seem the band had not looked at it for a while. Despite this lapse, the two-record set is an excellent summation of the Ellington band in the Sixties. And the Duke has rarely sounded as openly exuberant. J.S.W.

RAY BRYANT: Alone at Montreux. Ray Bryant, piano. Gotta Travel On: After Hours; Greensleeves; eight more. Atlantic 1626, $5.98.

CLAude Hopkins: Soliloquy. Claude Hopkins, piano. Indiana. Crazy Fingers You're Driving Me Crazy, eight more. Sackville 3004, $4.50 (Sackville Recordings, 893 Yonge St., Toronto 5, Ontario, Canada).

Unaccompanied solo pianos don't get around much any more. Not on records, at least—the presumption being that if you've got enough money to hire a studio you can also afford bass and drums to help out. Or maybe it is the memory of that master of the unaccompanied solo, Art Tatum, who scares off today's pianists. Whatever the reason, two solo albums by two very different pianists have turned up almost simultaneously. Claude Hopkins, an emigrant from Washington to Harlem in the Twenties, was part of the Harlem school of pianists. the days when a pianist played alone more often than not. Playing in a light, swinging style, he goes back to those days in his Sackville collection, mixing the standard pop tunes that were part of a pianist's repertoire then and later with three of his own compositions. Much of his playing has an appropriately reflective, after-hours feeling, even when he is swinging along through Safari Stomp, a tune that was a real splash when he recorded it with a small group several years ago. Hopkins' own Late Evening Blues sums up the spirit of the collection and, along with Hoagy Carmichael's New Orleans, shows him at his relaxed best.

Ray Bryant did his soloing before the audience at the Montreux Jazz Festival in 1972. His strong, two-handed playing, as opposed to Hopkins' easygoing fingerstyle, seems determined to make up for the absence of a rhythm section. He is forceful, even in the blues, using a style that commands attention, although there are times when he overplays the forceful role—his Liebestraum Boogie, for example, on which he beats what might be an amusing idea into the ground. His own Cabana Chant, on the other hand, is an excellent instance of his ability to handle strong rhythms with finesse. Like Hopkins, Bryant also finds a very visible sound behind him. His Rockin' Chair turns out to be an ideal vehicle for Bryant's satchmo's etched, strongly stated lines.


Something old and something new from James P. Johnson—which may seem odd, particularly the "something new:" since Johnson died in 1955. The "new" on these discs is the collection on Folkways, taken from sessions between 1943 and 1945, a few takes of which were issued on the Asch label. But the performances in this collection have never been issued before. The contrast disc on Biograph is made up of 1917 piano rolls (with one exception, a 1939 recording) and transferred extremely well to disc. Both discs have their points of interest—the Biograph for Johnson's marvelous performance of Steeplechase Rag; the Folkways for a buoyantly bright Lucky Local; the perpetual rhythm of Keep-Me-On; and a definitive performance of Jess Pickett's 1896s. The Dream. Both discs include some James P. classics—Carolina Shaw on the Biograph, which comes across strongly but with the mechanical feeling of a piano roll. Snowy Morning Blues on the Folkways, played with relaxation and ease. There are opportunities for comparison on Twilight Blues, done in bright and airy style on the Folkways but rushed to ridiculous degree (and not, apparently, Johnson's fault) on the Biograph. Daintiness Rag, performed well on both discs but a bit more relaxed on the Folkways. Aside from the roaring attack on Steeplechase Rag, the Biograph is fairly well tied to the limitations of the player piano, but the Folkways has the freedom that the phonograph brought—although the reproduction (particularly of three W. C. Handy numbers) is not always as clear and full-dimensional as the Biograph.

J.S.W.

THOMAS VALENTINE: At the Kohlman's Tavern. Thomas Valentine, trumpet; Louis Nelson, trombone; Emanuel Paul, tenor saxophone; Charlie Hamilton, piano. Joseph
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6/73
The band led by Thomas Valentine, more commonly billed as Kid Thomas, is usually heard in concert programs (as The Preservation Hall Band) and on records playing what has come to be the expected New Orleans mixture of old jazz tunes, hymns, a blues, and a couple of pop songs. There's nothing intrinsically wrong with such programs if they did not revolve around the same increasingly tired tunes. This record, produced by the English trumpeter and Orellephonophile Clive Wilson, focuses on the freshest, least emphasized aspect of the old New Orleans bands--their dance hall repertoire.

This is a wonderfully relaxed, unhurried music, played for easy shuffleing around the floor with all the musicians nudging their way through solos and supporting roles. Charlie Hamlin's piano tickles through the background. Louis Nelson's trombone sighs at times and sings soulfully, and Kid Thomas' trumpet erupts with arrogant flashes of melody, while Sammy Penn and Joseph Butler keep the beat bouncing. The charm of this record is that it shows a New Orleans band playing what, in the normal course of events, it would actually play rather than according to what has become the tourist impression of New Orleans jazz.

And Kid Thomas' band shows that, in these circumstances, New Orleans jazz still has real vitality.

J.S.W.

in brief

Stevenson: 16 Greatest Hits. Dunhill DSX 50135, $5.98 (two discs). Tape: P M8023-50135, $6.95; M5023-50135, $6.95.


Two of Dunhill's best sellers are recapitulated in these LPs. Steppenwolf, now defunct, has a nice set here; their "regular" LPs contained too much chaff. Three Dog Night, still operational, has in this two-disc set a nice in-concert recording--if you happen to like in-concert rock recordings.

M.J.

Hoyt Axton: Less Than The Song. A&M SP 4376, $5.98.

Hoyt Axton is best known as the writer of that large Three Dog Night hit Joy to the World. Axton is a writer with considerable talent, versatility, and feeling. His singing style is deep-voiced, and rough-edged with plenty of down-home country flavoring. This release, with its very special title tune, is filled with the stuff that new hits are made of.

H.E.

Gram Parsons: GP. Reprise 2123. $5.98. Tape: P M2123, $6.95; MS2123, $6.95.

Gram Parsons made his name with the original Byrds, then the Burrito Brothers. His inclinations and his roots are solidly in country music, and in this album he finally does just what he wants. Though he's only twenty-five, Parsons' solo debut was long in coming and worth the wait. Presence comes with experience. Congratulations. M.A.

Blue Oyster Cult: Tyranny and Mutation. Columbia KC 32017, $6.98. Tape: CA 32017, $6.98; CT 32017, $6.98.

Ignore the pretentious title, the pretentious jacket design, and the pretentious inscription on the inner sleeve ("See page from deep black, brittle experiment which failed and transformations too hard to find," etc. etc.). These cuts are basic rock-and-roll played with all the ferocity this band with the weird name can muster up (which, by the way, is plenty). Now, if you hate basic rock-and-roll and you also hate pretension, this is one album you should avoid on both counts.

H.E.

Taro Meyer: RCA Victor LSP 4832, $5.98.

Another questionable debut from a fragile tal-
Safety belts, when you think about it, it's a nice way to say I love you.

M. A.

CHUCK BERRY: Golden Decade Vol. 2. Chess 2CH 60023, $6.98 (two discs). Tape: • C 8033-60023, $7.95; • C 6033-60023, $7.95.

Most of Chuck Berry’s best-known hits were exhausted in Vol. 1 of this series; these discs do include, however, seven of the twenty-five Berry epics that found their way onto the Top 100 charts during the Founding Father of Rock-and-Roll’s “golden decade” 1955-1965. Included also are tastes of Berry’s instrumental blues, and Christmas songs as well as some numbers that have since been performed by the Beatles and Rolling Stones. Serious rock scholars will find this set a must.

H. E.

B. B. KING: The Best of B. B. King. ABC ABCX 767, $5.95.

Nine songs from several King albums. His best-known songs are represented here all in excellent versions.

M. J.

THE MONKEES: Re-focus. Bell 6081, $4.98.

The generation that grew up during the Sixties is probably the first generation to willingly sponsor a wave of nostalgia for its own adolescence less than ten years after it has left its teens. These “greatest hits” each less than seven years old, are so dated and so pedestrian that nostalgia is probably the only thing one can feel about them. Here are the Monkees singing “Last Train to Clarksville” and “I’m a Believer.” Here are those songs by Neil Diamond, Carole King, and Barry Mann before these composers became recording “artists.” The only word I can apply to these synthetic manufactures is embarrassing. The thought that this LP is provoking even a nostalgic response is genuinely depressing.

H. E.

NANCY WILSON: I Know I Love Him. Capitol ST 1131, $5.98. Tape: • 4XT 11131, $6.98; • 4XT 11131, $6.98.

No surprises here. Nancy Wilson’s performance is— as usual— cool, crisp, lyrical, and romantic. “I Know I Love Him” is a lovely disc; still one does long for some hint of musical experimentation. Even if the formula is a successful one. talent as rich as Ms. Wilson’s deserves the chance to grow.

H. E.

RICK NELSON, Garden Party. Decca DL 75391, $4.98.

“Garden Party” is the recent hit single that rescued Rick Nelson from the oblivion of being just another “golden oldies” parvenu. On this disc, Nelson displays an attractive set of country-rock skills. Whether he has the staying power to be a major contemporary writer-performing star is still to be seen.

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H. E.
Dolbyized Reels at Budget Prices. Capping its successful debut earlier this year of Dolbyized open-reel processes, Ampex now is beginning to augment its familiar-label releases by a bargain-price series under its own label. Drawn from a European catalogue, the new programs are exceptional in today's American tape world in that they are not available here on discs. And while they originate from a relatively minor company (Primatone, I believe) and feature musicians of mostly South German provenance, some of whose names may be unfamiliar here, the examples I've heard so far clearly meet normal standards of professional artistic and technical competence—quite apart from the sui generis added attraction of Dolby noise reduction. Especially rewarding are these two:

C. P. E. Bach Concerto Firsts; Bruckner Second Uncut. Tape has given Bach's most famous son such a dirty deal in the past that there must be a special welcome for two of his most interesting concerto: the one for harpsichord and Hammerklavier (an early piano), in E flat, W. 47, and the delectable Flute Concerto in D minor, W. 22 (Ampex X 6006, 7½-ips reel; cassette, X 56006; 8-track cartridge, X 86006. $5.95 each). The vivacious performances are by the Pro Arta Chamber Orchestra under Kurt Reidel, with well-balanced keyboard soloists Rudolph Zartner and Ernst Gröschel in W. 47, and a very engaging flutist, Karl Leder, in W. 22. Both works are cleanly and brightly if quite closely recorded, with a few overintense moments in the former, more warmth in the latter (which some listeners may remember in a 1964 Decca disc version, now out of print, in which Reidel played the dual role of soloist/conductor).

A second Bruckner Second Symphony on tape isn't as supererogatory as might be assumed by admirers of Jochum's dramatically played and recorded 1977 DG/Ampex reel. Swarowsky's able South German Philharmonic performance may be less overtly eloquent and the present sonatas may command a shade less expansiveness, weight, and bite. Nevertheless, devout Brucknerians well may prefer this version (Ampex X 6016. 7½-ips reel; cassette, X 56016; cartridge, X 86016, $5.95 each). For, in addition to its price and Dolbyization attractions, this reel boasts the powerful musicalological one of adhering to the original score of 1871–72, whereas Jochum inexplicably chose the 1877 New York edition with its mutilating cuts. But whether you opt for authenticity or are willing to accept Jochum's cuts for the sake of his greater edge in sheer excitement, the Second is an invaluable bridge from the "easier" Symphonies Nos. 0 and 1 to the more "difficult" and lengthy later masterpieces.

Reeling Along with RCA/Magtec. Digging deeper into the big batch of first Stereotape/Magtec open-reel processes of RCA Red Seal recordings (which I had time only to sample last month), I've given precedence to one program brought to tape for the first time in any format, and to two others making their first appearance in reel format. The first is a significant addition to the sparse contemporary repertory on tape: the sonically avant-garde yet often profoundly impressive Penderecki Utrenja, The Euthanasium of Christ, a recorded first by soloist/ Temple University Choirs, and the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy (RCA/Magtec ERPA 3180 C, 7½-ips reel, $7.95; notes-and-English-text leaflet included). There is no electronic gimmickery here, only human voices and familiar instruments exploited in unorthodox ways that are at worst unconscionably pretentious, at best arrestingly imaginative with quite extraordinary sheery sonic appeals.

Ever since I reviewed the Ozawa/Boston Symphony disc of Orff's Carmina Burana back in October 1970, I have remained so dazzled by its spectacular glitter that I felt undeniably let down by my first hearing of its long-anticipated reel version (RCA/Magtec ERPA 3161 C, 7½-ips reel, $7.95; notes-and-English text leaflet included). In the end I've come to feel that the tape edition may have achieved better over-all spectrum balance—and certainly provides warmer, more solid lows and less sharp-edged highs. But I still miss the truly shattering brilliance of the disc sonics—a brilliance not so much lost here as unmistakably tamed down. The exceptional lucidity of this recorded performance has not been blurred, however, and while I regret the lowered thrill quotient, Ozawa's version remains my decisive choice among the several first-rate tapings of Carmina Burana.

I've never heard the early 1972 disc and cartridge editions of Julian Bream's Villa Lobos program featuring the Brazilian's charming guitar concerto along with five preludes and two other solo pieces, so I can't compare its reel transfer (RCA/Magtec ERPA 3231 C. $7.95). But surely the soloist and orchestra (London Symphony under Previn) couldn't be any more exquisitely balanced and differentiated than they are here, nor could the solo playing be captured with more naturally vibrant tang. As usual the guitar itself is so closely miked that there is a good deal of musically extraneous snapping noise (which guitar aficionados conveniently filter out of their minds if not their ears), but this is a minor nuisance to everyone captivated by Bream's skill and lyric artistry.

Bream fans will also want his two other RCA/Magtec reels (ERPA 3247 C and 2730 C, $7.95 each). The former comprises the duo program with John Williams which I relished last August in RCA's own cartridge and cassette editions. The latter brings back from the out-of-print reel limbo (FTC 2172 of 1964) the superb Rodrigo/Vivaldi/Britten concerto-and-dance program that has been so potent in establishing Bream's fame.

Opera: On the Road... The 8-track cartridge catalogues shy away from tackling complete operas and almost always restrict their "highlights" programs to mass-public standards. Hence opera fans who relish listening while they drive will have a warm welcome for a generous sampling of Verdi's Don Carlo. But even further warmth will be engendered on first hearing, since the source is the exciting 1971 complete (on discs) Covent Garden version led by Giulini and starring Caballé, Domingo, Verrett, Raimondi, and Milnes. And since the recording itself is exceptionally rich and glowing, this cartridge (Angel 4XS 36918, $7.98) proves to be one of the most satisfactory of all operatic traveling companions.

...And in the Living Room. At home the programmatic breaks, almost inevitable in endless-loop tapings of large-scale works, give preference to the cartridge edition (Angel 4XS 36918, $7.98) which I haven't yet heard. Of course no true connoisseur will be satisfied with bits and pieces, and will be forced to turn (since there is no reel edition of this performance) to the fine earlier Don Carlo in its entirety (London/Ampex V 90116) conducted by Solti and starring Tebaldi and Bergonzi.

Best of the more recent complete-opera tapings that have reached me is the sequel to the Abbado/DG Rossini Cenerentola of last November: the first new Barbero di Siviglia in many years, starring Berganza, Alva, and Prey (DG/Ampex X 7041. two 7½-ips reels, $21.95; notes and texts included). Not quite as irresistibly detectable as its predecessor, it has some minor, especially vocal shortcomings, but its orchestral playing and recorded sonics are zestful.
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