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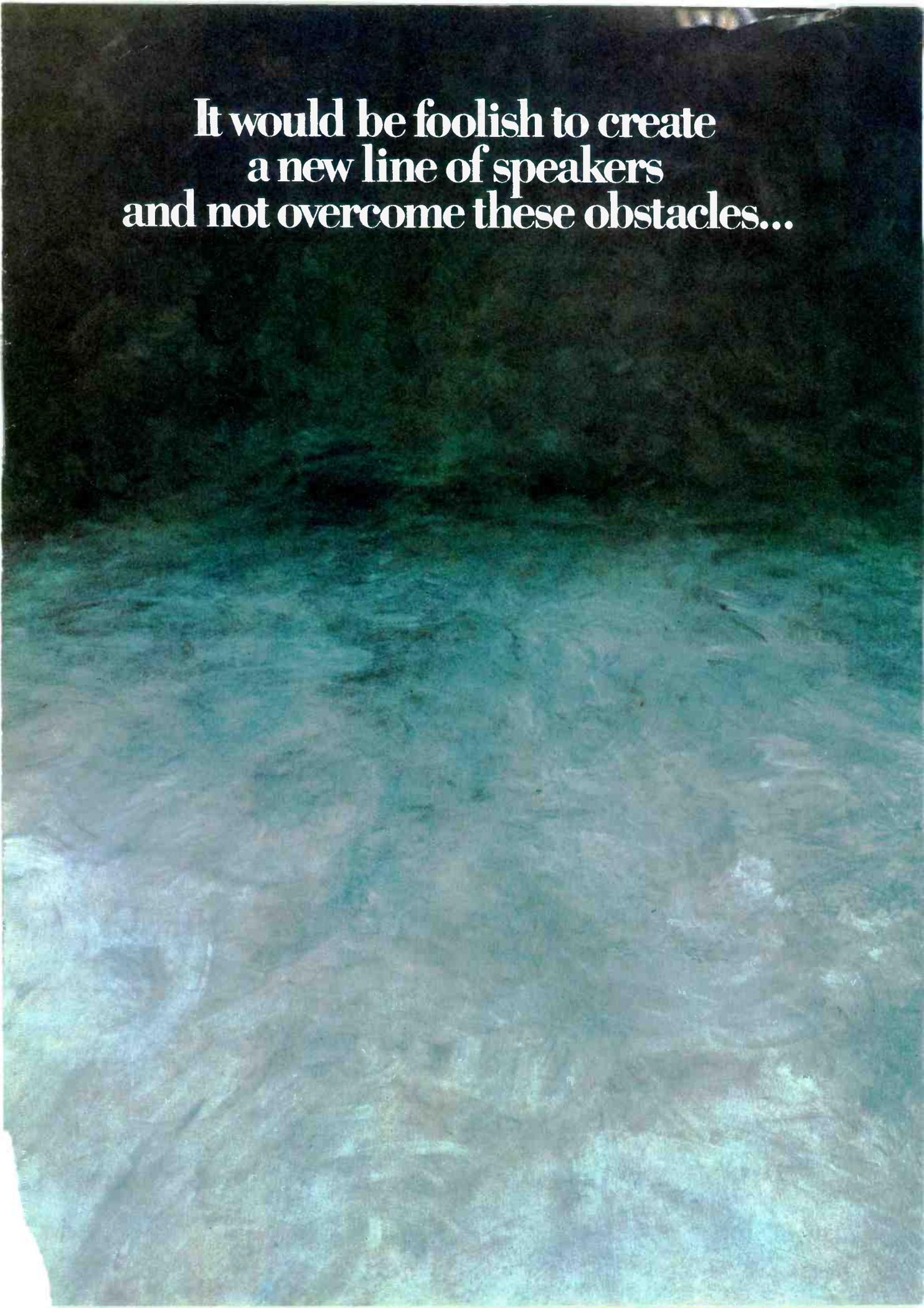
If the new HPM speakers didn't have audibly more impact, more detail, more transparency than the best previous speakers at comparable prices, our engineering effort would have been a meaningless exercise. There are certainly enough speakers on the market today.

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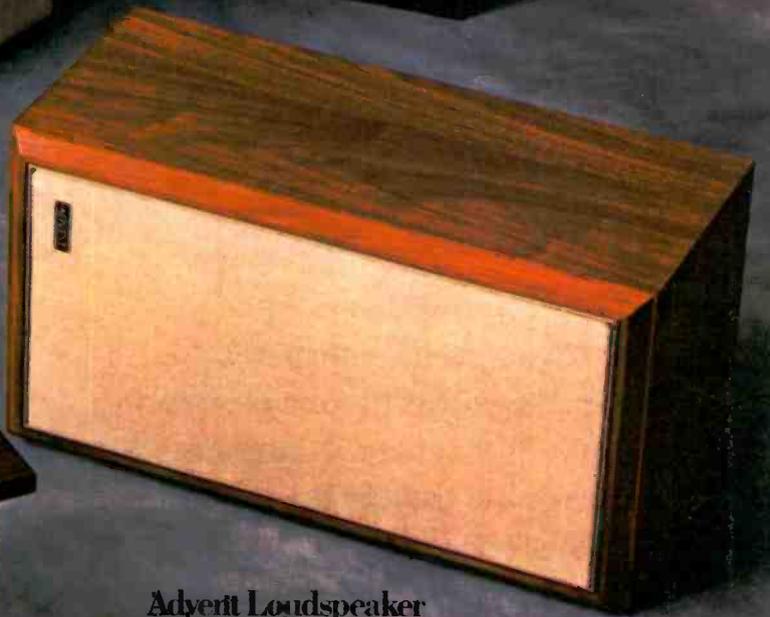
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and not overcome these obstacles...**



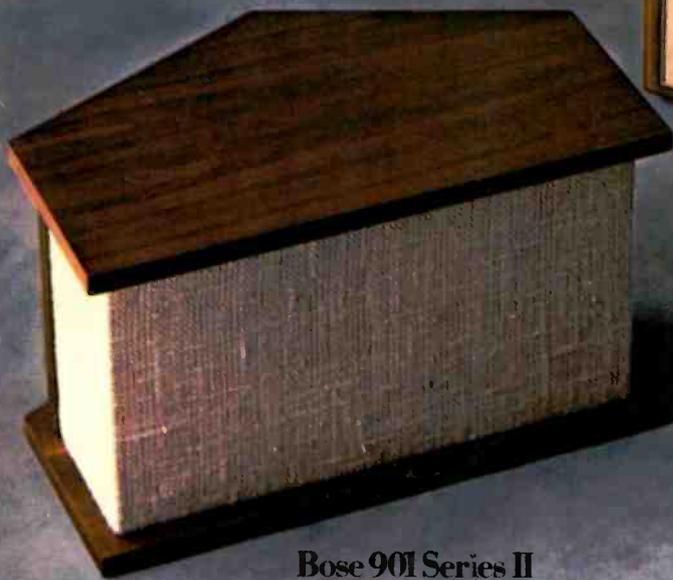
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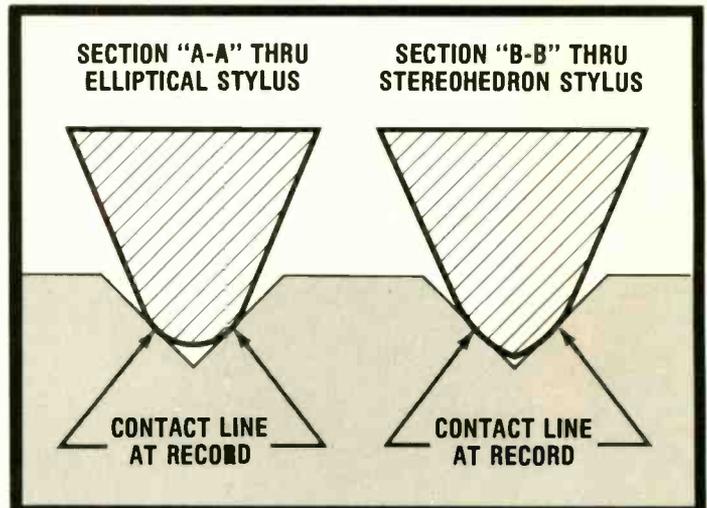
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CIRCLE 38 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



DECEMBER 1976  
VOLUME 26, NUMBER 12

# HIGH FIDELITY

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CIRCLE 11 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**HIGH FIDELITY**



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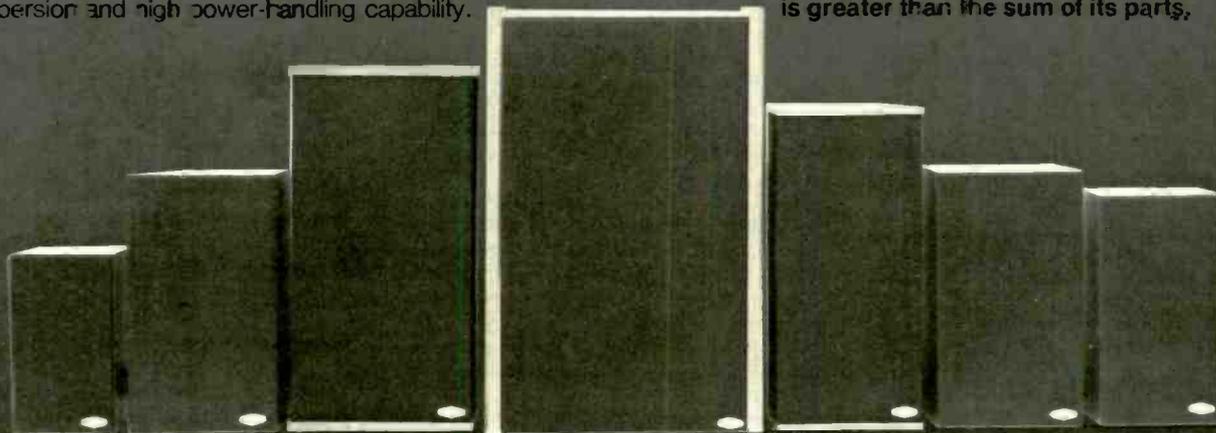
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Most listeners agree that speakers account for the greatest audible difference in the way a system sounds, but because most high-accuracy speakers require a lot of power, they spend up to twice as much on a receiver as they spend on speakers. With Synergistics, your power requirements are cut in half; you can substitute higher quality speakers for higher powered electronics at no sacrifice in low-distortion acoustic output. In test markets for any given system price range, well over 75% of listeners interviewed preferred systems with low-to-medium powered receivers and Synergistics speakers when compared to top-selling low-efficiency speakers with high powered receivers. Without any explanation from us, they heard with their own ears why we chose Synergistics as the name for our speakers. **SYNERGISTICS: Cooperative action in a system where the total effect is greater than the sum of its parts.**



For More Information Write To: Synergistics, P.O. Box 1245, Canoga Park, California 91304.

CIRCLE 51 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## COMING NEXT MONTH A Special Outsize Issue CENTENNIAL OF RECORDINGS

We mark the one-hundredth anniversary of Thomas A. Edison's historic recitation of "Mary Had a Little Lamb" and its capture on his cylinder with a gala issue. James A. Drake traces **The Parallel Careers of Edison and Alexander Graham Bell**. Historic photographs from the Edison museum and elsewhere provide an extensive view of **The Life and Labs of Edison**, and Leonard Marcus takes the reader far back into history to document the surprising abundance of **Recordings Before Edison**. Oliver Berliner describes **The Original "Nipper" Painting**, and Bridget Paolucci recounts amusing tales of **Edison's Recording Stars**. Robert Angus provides a comprehensive tabular **Recording History Chronology**. And with all of this, a full complement of our regular test reports, columns, and reviews.

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**Editorial correspondence** should be addressed to The Editor, **High Fidelity**, Great Barrington, Mass. 01230. Editorial contributions will be welcomed, and payment for articles accepted will be arranged prior to publication. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage.

# Letters



## The Heist

Your article "The Hi-Fi Heist" [September] was most interesting, but why did you stop where you did? You completely ignored the most interesting aspect of the situation—the disposal of the stolen merchandise. Where did "ex-inmate 78904" sell the goods?

I've been active in high fidelity for a good many years, and no one has ever sidled up to me whispering, "Wanna buy a good amp cheap?" Local pawn shops never seem to have anything but cheap compacts, local dealers have very limited selections of used gear, not much is advertised in the classified ads, and I never see any decent gear at yard sales or flea markets. Yet the stuff is stolen, and it wouldn't be unless there were a ready market where the thieves could get quick cash. So where is it? Let's have some information on the other end of "The Hi-Fi Heist."

William G. Martin  
St. Louis, Mo.

*Would any fence who reads this letter care to let us all in on the secret?*

I am an engineer for the telephone company, and I hope you will tell your readers that the phone company takes a dim view of leaving the phone off the hook for any length of time, as suggested in "The Hi-Fi Heist." This practice ties up various amounts of switching equipment, depending on the type being used, and could definitely result in a repair charge. Carried to an extreme, it can render an exchange inoperable.

On another subject, I think there was an error in the comments about the Luxman tube basic amplifier in "New Equipment for 1977," also in the September issue. I believe this amp is hardly intended for "sound reinforcement" applications, as you say. First, nobody would bother to develop special triode output tubes and driver tubes in order to make an amp intended only for reinforcement. Second, this amp is perhaps one of the best sounding amplifiers available.

John T. Philpot  
South Holland, Ill.

*"The Hi-Fi Heist" did in fact include an editorial comment that leaving the phone off*

*the hook is frowned upon by the telephone company.*

*As for the Luxman tube amplifier, we goofed; it is, in fact, intended for high fidelity applications.*

How is it that such a skillful writer as ex-inmate 78904 wasted his life on burglary and subsequent imprisonment? His fine writing style reminds me of a sometime contributor to your magazine. Be honest now: Has Glenn Gould been moonlighting as a components burglar?

Allen Carpenter  
Downey, Calif.

*We can assure our readers that no sometime contributor had anything to do with "The Hi-Fi Heist." But we warrant the antic Mr. Gould will be tickled by Mr. Carpenter's attribution.*

## Supertuner Scanners

When are the manufacturers of the new supertuners going to make one with a full scanner and remote control similar to the Pioneer SX-2500 receiver? I don't consider this a "frill" or a "gadget." The convenience is worth the price. I would buy one immediately if someone would make one.

John Knurr  
Delavan, Wis.

## Get Lost, Rubber Duck

My phonograph is being plagued with interference from a CB radio. After many attempts at solving the problem, I have concluded that no single or simple modification of a high fidelity system will eliminate the interference, nor is any system certain to be immune to interference. The FCC does not consider the CB operator at fault, local sales and service personnel can offer no assistance, and the CB operator doesn't care as long as his "right" to blabber is protected.

This sad state of affairs will probably continue as long as high fidelity users and manufacturers fail to exercise their influence on the FCC for fair and equitable regulations.

G. P. Gennaro Jr.  
Fair Lawn, N.J.

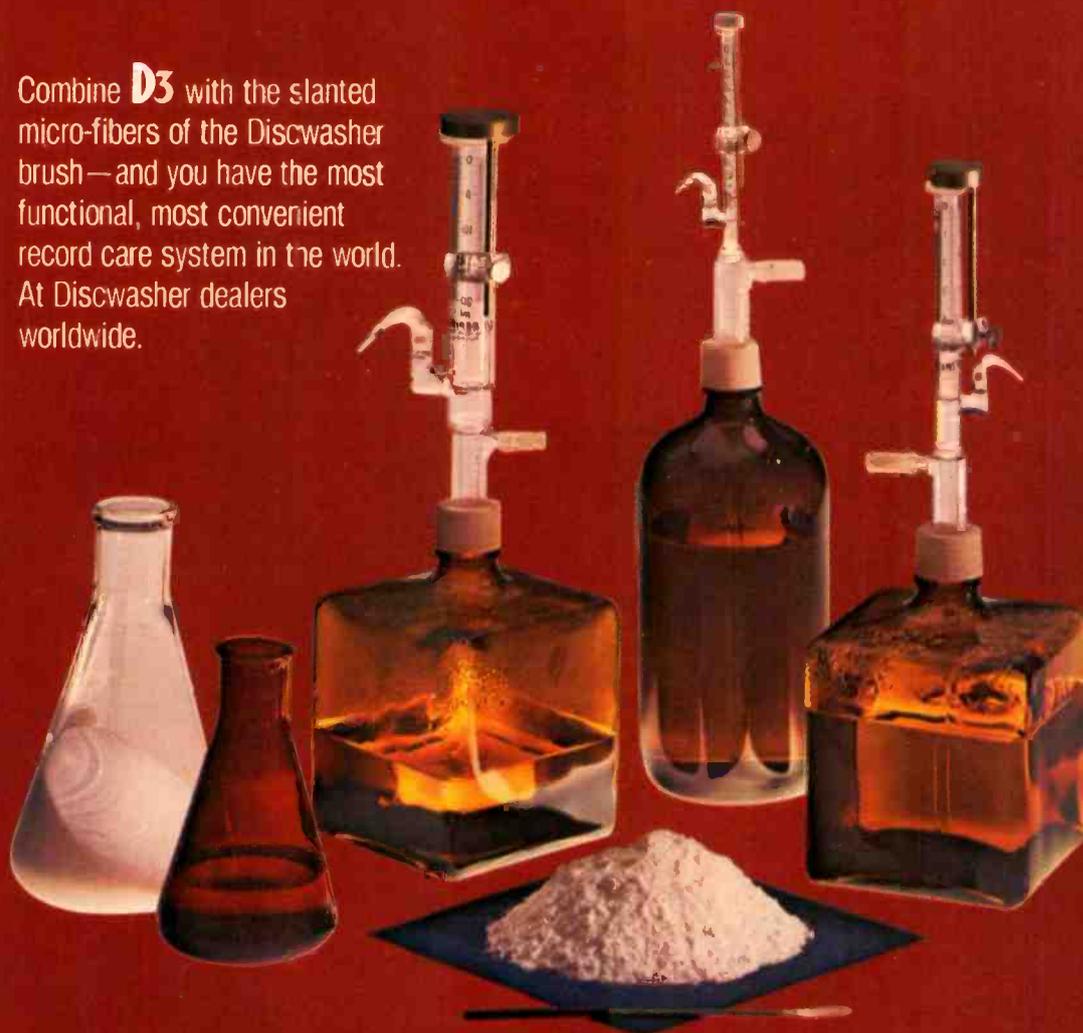
*The FCC has imposed tighter standards for out-of-hand radiation by CB radios, to become effective in January 1977, along with the expansion of the Citizen's Radio Service to forty channels. As long as the CB transmitter is within legal power limits and operated according to regulations, the user is within his rights. Our article in the March 1976 issue may offer you some help in eliminating the interference.*

## Herrmann in Stereo

Thank you for the interview with the late Bernard Herrmann [September]. But there was a mistake in the discography that I think should be pointed out. The soundtrack of "The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad" (United Artists UAS 29763, British import) is actually stereo and not mono as both the article and the record jacket state. The

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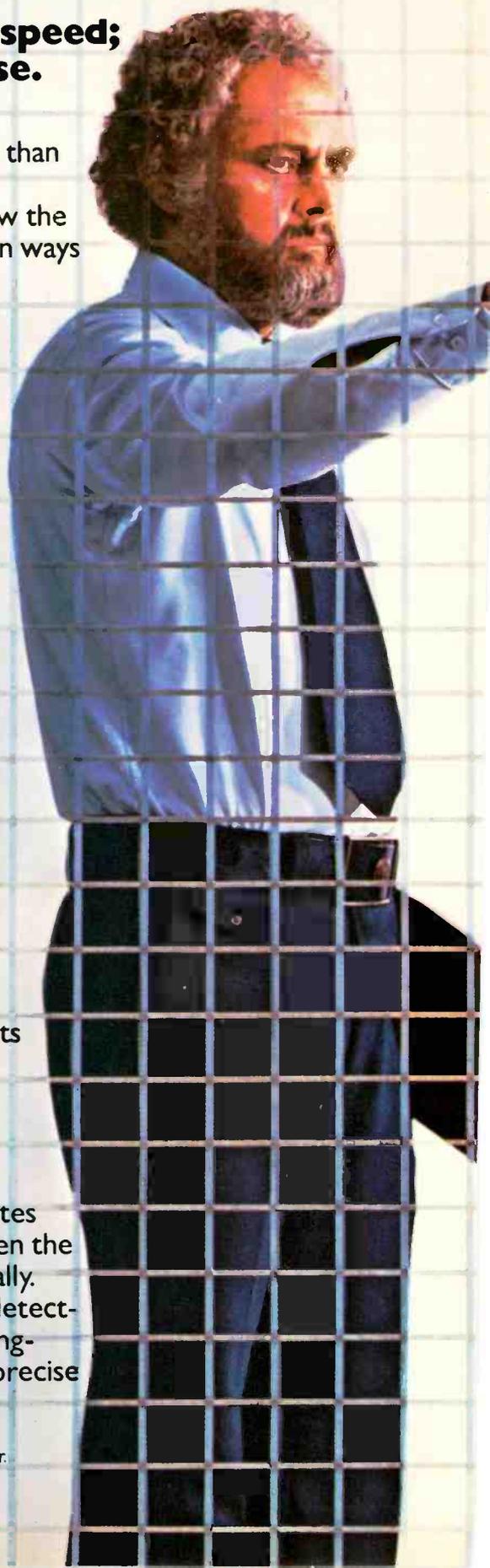
The turntable is the Philips GA 212 Electronic. It gets its go from a low-rpm, servo-controlled d.c. motor, much the way the best (read: expensive) turntables do. But then the GA 212 goes the best one better.

## **A computer to control the servo-control.**

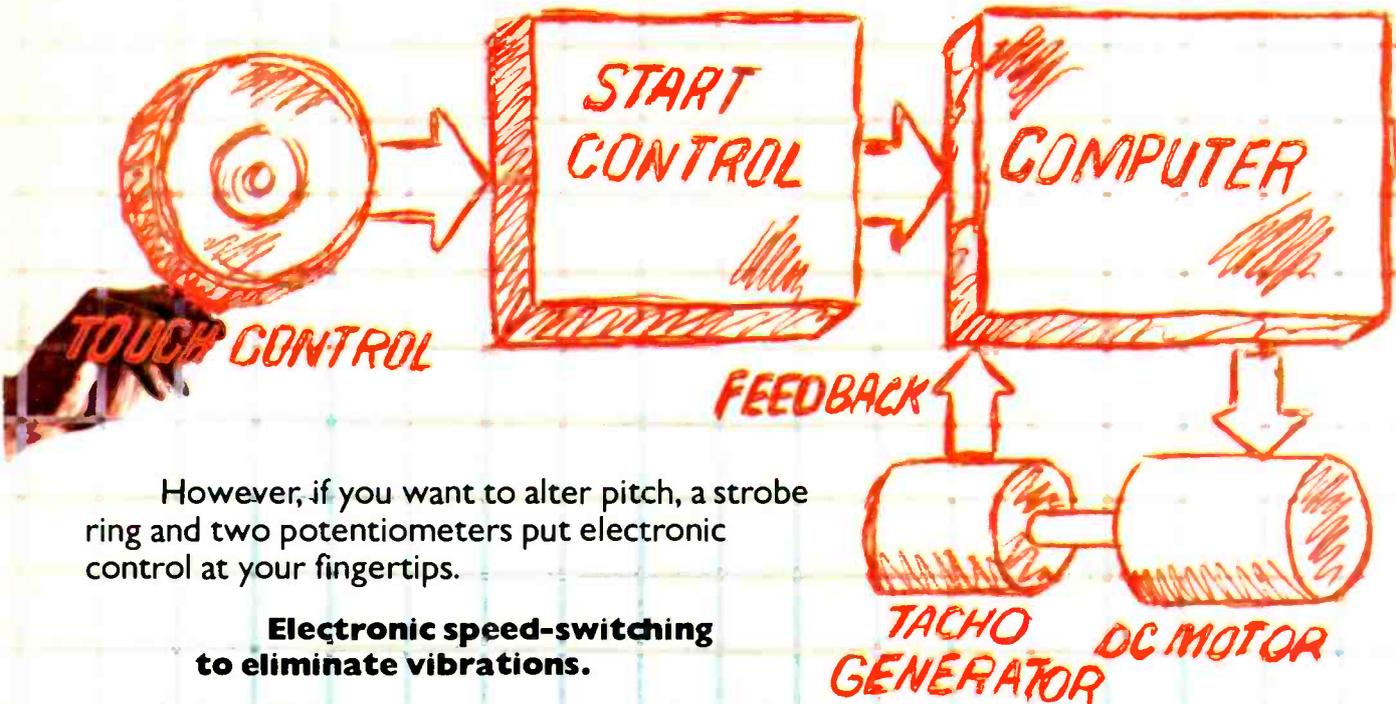
To ensure constant, accurate speed, the GA 212 regulates its motor with a mini-computer. The computer corrects even the slightest variations in speed at the speed of light. Electronically.

Wow, flutter and drift are so low as to be virtually undetectable; cartridge tracking forces, stylus/groove friction, cleaning-brush drag and line-voltage fluctuations leave the GA 212's precise speed unaffected.

\*Optional with dealer.



## COMPUTER CONSTANTLY MAINTAINS SPEED

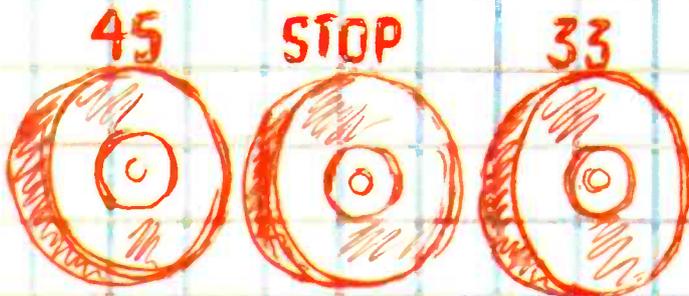


However, if you want to alter pitch, a strobe ring and two potentiometers put electronic control at your fingertips.

### Electronic speed-switching to eliminate vibrations.

Before Philips, starting, stopping and switching turntable speed from 33 to 45 rpm, were all done mechanically. The GA-212 controls all three functions electronically.

You don't push the GA 212's buttons (and maybe give the stylus the shakes), you merely touch them, featherlightly. No mechanical pressure, no vibrations.



### ELECTRONIC TOUCH CONTROLS ELIMINATE VIBRATIONS

To further immunize this remarkable turntable against mechanical and acoustic feedback, Philips engineers float the platter and tonearm on a cushioned subchassis, while rigidly mounting the motor to the main chassis. Only a shock-absorbing belt connects platter and motor. The precision-ground belt also reduces rumble to inaudibility.

### Photoelectronic shut-off stops stutters before they start.

Even to shut off the motor at the end of a record, Philips has replaced mechanics with electronics. Or, rather, with electronics and optics. For the GA 212 shuts itself off—simply and silently—by interrupting a light beam with a hidden lever that parallels the tonearm.

The tonearm, not so incidentally, is a fitting and flawless companion for the turntable. In engineering the arm, Philips eschewed seductive curves and played it straight. Because straight is the shortest (least mass) distance between two points. And less mass means less resonance.

Of course, the arm's geometry, adjustments and controls are as advanced as the motor's controls. And you know how advanced those are.

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CIRCLE 37 ON READER SERVICE CARD

sound is great (1958 vintage), and so is the pressing. Now let's hope Decca/London follows through on Herrmann's plans to record the complete *Citizen Kane* with Joan Sutherland singing the aria. This would be a most fitting tribute to the master.

Roger Grodsky  
Madison, Wis.

### Leyla Gencer

Many thanks for a long-overdue article on Leyla Gencer [September]. It is a pity that this great artist and most interesting woman has not received the recognition she deserves. This applies not only to her voice and artistry, but also to her labor of love in bringing to light forgotten musical treasures. It is also a shame that her recordings

on the Cetra label are almost impossible to obtain in the U.S.

Rafael Lopez  
Miami, Fla.

### Don't Forget Dohnányi

Many thanks to Harris Goldsmith for his positive comments on the music of Ernst von Dohnányi [September]. The neglect of his wonderfully melodic, romantic music both by record companies and by symphony orchestras is incomprehensible to me. Why isn't his name as familiar to record collectors and concert-goers as some of the so-called "great masters"?

Browsing through your preview of next year's recordings, in the same issue, I see that in 1977, the centennial of Dohnányi's

birth, only one company is adventurous enough to schedule some of his music for release. Bravo Orion! If it is not feasible to launch new recording projects, I sincerely hope that certain companies can take up the slack by reissuing past performances of Dohnányi's music in their budget lines.

Alex Hassan  
Falls Church, Va.

### ... or Rachmaninoff ...

It seems a mistake for Harris Goldsmith to lump Rachmaninoff with Dohnányi, describing them in his review as "a distinguished pair of musical reactionaries ... both illustrious pianists who live on through their highly derivative creative efforts."

Rachmaninoff, in addition to having claims to being Russia's most distinguished operatic and symphonic conductor, was a composer of formidable scope and integrated style, influencing succeeding generations of Russian composers. Prokofiev mentions works of his in his autobiography that "can be traced to Rachmaninoff," citing instances that "are related in key as well."

Rachmaninoff's influence among American composers has been acknowledged by a striking variety of figures. The list of those who have openly said that their music would not be the same but for his includes George Antheil, Ernst Bacon, Abram Chasins, Michael Brozen, Israel Citkowitz, William Flanagan, Noel Farrand, Morton Feldman, and Alexei Haieff.

One wonders if Rachmaninoff's "creative efforts" can be as "highly derivative" as Mr. Goldsmith's review would have it. After all, is there much evidence of the people named—Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Scriabin—in the work at hand (the Rhapsody) or in much of the music of Rachmaninoff's maturity?

In Scriabin's case there was an element of cross-pollination between him and Rachmaninoff, a lifelong associate with an almost identical background. Scriabin pointed out (1912) to a fanatical admirer: "You want Russian music? Then don't look for Russian peculiarity and exoticism. Take the notes of something by Rachmaninoff. Listen to it with your eyes and then hear Rachmaninoff [conduct or play it]. ... the same notes, yes, but the quality is entirely different. Unquestionably beautiful—no argument: convincing, everything sings. But reading the score you already hear the instruments, the music hidden in the human voice and the rhythms of human breathing. Isn't this the secret of Russian orchestration? And I am not the only one who has it."

Edward Patrick  
Friends of American Music  
Taos, N.M.

### ... or Havergal Brian

A message of hope for all your readers who looked in vain through the columns and columns of "Next Year's New Recordings" [September] for even one of the thirty-two symphonies of the remarkable English composer, Havergal Brian: Despair not! Just as it was little-known labels such as

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# dbx

SPA and WCFM—and not Columbia or RCA—that gave us our first complete recordings of Ives's symphonies, so another little-known label is providing us with Brian's. Several, including the monumental Gothic Symphony, have been issued on the Aries label [Dove Records, Inc., 567 W. Church St., Orlando, Fla. 32805] and are available from such places as West Coast Audio Visual Corporation and Records International. No doubt Columbia and RCA will jump onto the bandwagon later, as they did when they discovered that music-lovers really did want to hear Ives.

H. Jack Adams  
Westboro, Mass.

## A New Verdi Recording

In Andrew Porter's review of *Il Corsaro* [September], he mentioned the possibility of a new recording of *I due Foscari*. Is this in the making? If so, do you know who the artists will be? I was also under the impression that Philips was going to issue an *Oberto* with José Carreras and Katia Ricciarelli. Is this true to your knowledge? I would like to own a complete set of Verdi recordings and am hoping Philips will oblige.

David J. Crotta  
West Haven, Conn.

As reported in the October "Behind the Scenes," Philips recorded *I due Foscari* this summer in Vienna with Ricciarelli, Carreras, and Piero Cappuccilli, Lamberto Gardelli conducting. Philips a&r director Erik Smith told us earlier this year that *Oberto* is high on his priority list—as soon as he can cast a suitable bass for the title role.

## MHS—Where Are You?

What's with the Musical Heritage Society these days? I have been a member for a few years and ordered releases on an as-wanted basis. However, I have not received any announcements of new recordings since last May. Is MHS still in business? I have written to it a couple of times but have never received a reply.

C. Stanley Mahan  
Vista, Calif.

*The Musical Heritage Society is alive and well and doing business at 1710 Highway 35, Oakhurst, N.J. 07755. A spokesman for the company says your name may have been taken off the computerized mailing list if you have not been ordering on a regular basis. A letter to the new address will probably clear up the matter.*

## Alan Broadbent

Gene Lees, in his excellent column "Irene, Jackie, Roy, and the Others" [July], describes Alan Broadbent as "the young Australian pianist." Sorry, but he's wrong. Alan is from Auckland, New Zealand—a fact that some of us are quite proud of. To describe him as an Australian is rather like referring to a Texan as a Californian, although, considering Broadbent's success in the U.S., I'm sure Australia would be quite happy to claim him.

Keith Edmondson  
Wellington, New Zealand

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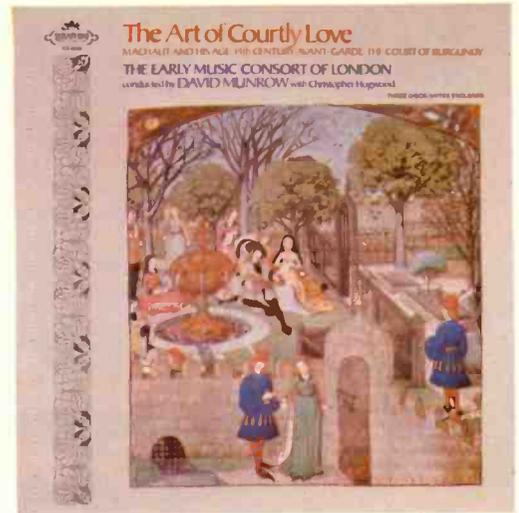
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First Prize



**BACH:** Violin Sonatas and Partitas (6). Nathan Milstein. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 047 (3).

First Prize



**THE ART OF COURTLY LOVE.** Early Music Consort of London, David Munrow. SERAPHIM SIC 6092 (3).

First Prize



**STRAUSS, R.:** Don Quixote. Mstislav Rostropovich, Ulrich Koch, Herbert von Karajan. ANGEL S 37057.

# The Ninth Annual High Fidelity/Prix Mondial International Record Awards

Koussevitzky International Recording Award



**DUTILLEUX:** Cello Concerto. Mstislav Rostropovich, Serge Baudo. (With Lutoslawski: Cello Concerto.) ANGEL S 37146.

Special Citation

**PHILIPPE BOESMANS:** Intervalles II sur mi. Orchestre Symphonique de Liège, Pierre Bartholomée, cond. MUSICA MAGNA MAG 50 010.

## The Other Nominated Recordings

**BEETHOVEN:** String Quartets Nos. 2, 4. Quartetto Italiano. PHILIPS 6500 646.

**BEETHOVEN:** Symphonies (9); Overtures. Georg Solti. LONDON CSP 9 (9).

**BRAHMS:** German Folksongs. Edith Mathis, Peter Schreier, Karl Engel, Leipzig Radio Chorus. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 057 (3).

**CHOPIN:** Preludes, Op. 28. Maurizio Pollini. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 550.

**GERSHWIN:** Porgy and Bess. Willard White, Leona Mitchell, Lorin Maazel. LONDON OSA 13116 (3).

**HAYDN:** Piano Works. Rudolf Buchbinder. TELEFUNKEN 6.35088 (6), 6.35249 (6), 6.35281 (6). Not released in the U.S.

**KORNGOLD:** Die tote Stadt. Carol Neblett, René Kollo, Erich Leinsdorf. RCA RED SEAL ARL 3-1199 (3).

**MARTIN:** Polyptyque; Ballades. Yehudi Menuhin, Aurélie Nicolet, Edmond de Stoutz, Michael Dobson. EMI 1C 065 02688. Not released in the U.S.

**MONTEVERDI:** Vespro della Beata Vergine. Soloists, Hanns-Martin Schneidt. ARCHIV 2710 017 (3).

**MOZART:** Piano Concertos Nos. 18, 27. Alfred Brendel, Neville Marriner. PHILIPS 6500 948.

**PENDERECKI:** Magnificat. Peter Lagger, Krzysztof Penderecki. ANGEL S 37141.

**RAVEL:** Daphnis et Chloé. Pierre Boulez. COLUMBIA M 33523.

**RAVEL:** Gaspard de la nuit; Sonatine; Valses nobles et sentimentales. Martha Argerich. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 540.

**SCHUBERT:** Piano Works, 1822-28. Alfred Brendel. PHILIPS 6747 175 (8). Released in the U.S. as single discs only: 6500 284, 285, 415, 416, 418, 763, 928, 929.

**SCHUBERT:** String Quartets (complete). Melos Quartet. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2740 123 (7).

**SCHUBERT:** Trout Quintet. Beaux Arts Trio et al. PHILIPS 9500 071.

**SCHUMANN:** Der Rose Pilgerfahrt. Helen Donath, Julia Hamari, Theo Altmeyer, Hans Sotin, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos. EMI 1C 193 28842/3 (2). Not released in the U.S.

**TIPPETT:** A Child of Our Time. Jessye Norman, Janet Baker, Richard Cassilly, John Shirley-Quirk, Colin Davis. PHILIPS 6500 985.

**VERDI:** I Masnadieri. Montserrat Caballé, Carlo Bergonzi, Piero Cappuccilli, Lamberto Gardelli. PHILIPS 6703 064 (3).

**VIVALDI:** Juditha triumphans. Elly Ameling, Birgit Finnilä, Julia Hamari, Vittorio Negri. PHILIPS 6747 173 (3).

**WAGNER:** Wesendonck Lieder; Tristan und Isolde: Prelude and Liebestod. Jessye Norman, Colin Davis. PHILIPS 9500 031.

**WEBER:** Euryanthe. Jessye Norman, Rita Hunter, Nicolai Gedda, Tom Krause, Marek Janowski. ANGEL SDL 3764 (4).

## Jury

Karl Breh. *Hi-Fi Stereophonie*, Germany.

Alfred Hoffman. *Muzica and Romania Literara*, Romania.

Robert Layton. *Gramophone and BBC*, England.

Leonard Marcus. *HIGH FIDELITY*, U.S.A.

José-Luis Perez de Arteaga. *Revista Musical Ritmo*, Spain.

Numa Tétaz. *24 heures Lausanne*, Switzerland.

Edith Walter. *Harmonie*, France.

## Preselection Committee

Claude Bandieri. *Le Dauphiné libéré*, France.

Luigi Bellingardi. *Nuova Revista Musicale Italiana*, Italy.

Jay Carr. *Detroit News*, U.S.A.

Georges Chérière. *Diapason*, France.

Dominique Chouet. *La Tribune de Genève*, Switzerland.

Edward Greenfield. *Guardian and Gramophone*, England.

Ingo Harden. *Hi-Fi Stereophonie*, Germany.

Roy Hemming. *Stereo Review*, U.S.A.

Tadao Koishi. *Record Geijutsu and Mainichi Shimbun*, Japan.

Louis Nicholas. *The Nashville Tennessean*, U.S.A.

Dorde Saula. *Radio Zagreb*, Yugoslavia.

Albert de Soutter. *Gazette d'Anvers*, Belgium.

Tilden Wells. *Columbus Dispatch*, U.S.A.

# Diary of an Itinerant Juror

by Leonard Marcus

MONTREUX, Sept. 3—Except for the accident that delayed traffic across the Triboro Bridge by a half hour and made me fear I would miss my flight out of Kennedy Airport, nothing exciting has yet happened on this trip. Which is just as well, considering the hassles I can look forward to here with the Prix Mondial du Disque and Koussevitzky prize and, when I get to East Berlin, those Beethoven negotiations.

I am becoming more aware during these European ventures that the only people who speak English over here are the Japanese. The British and Americans always seem to want to practice their school French or German, and thus even shopkeepers no longer feel they need to know the language of the dollar. In order to keep our native tongue alive, Americans should make it an obligation to speak English.

Sept. 4—After spending a day and a half listening to records, the jurors finally met officially this evening. Two jurors are new: Robert Layton of England and Alfred Hoffman of Romania. Robert, a BBC producer, writes for the British publication *Gramophone* and is probably best known for his "Quarterly Retrospective." He is also coauthor, with Ivan March and HIGH FIDELITY's European editor Ted Greenfield, of the *Penguin Stereo Record Guide* that John Culshaw wrote about in September. Alfred, who speaks first-rate English and, I gather, even better French, writes for *Mu-*

*zica and Romania Literara*, both based in Bucharest. He is a musicologist as well as a reviewer and seems an extraordinarily sensitive critic. He participated in the 1974 Ives celebration at Yale and spoke at the Peabody Conservatory and Johns Hopkins that year. I was reminded of another Eastern European juror we had several years ago, Ivan Vojtech of Czechoslovakia. Last time I saw him he had just been offered a position at New York University that would have let him spend part of each year in the States; then the Russians moved into his homeland, and I haven't heard of him since.

Something else new this year: Although the Koussevitzky International Recording Award has had tentative connections with the Prix Mondial ever since we helped to establish the prize nine years ago, and although Mme. Koussevitzky has on several occasions combined her ceremonies with ours, this is the first time the identical jury will decide both. The Koussevitzky goes to a living composer of an orchestral work released commercially on records for the first time during the past year—actually from May 1, 1975, to April 30, 1976, to coincide with the Prix Mondial deadline—and includes a \$1,000 cash award. One juror wondered whether, if we give a Prix Mondial for the best recording to a release that falls within the Koussevitzky strictures, we wouldn't also be forced to present it with the latter award as the best contemporary recording. Alfred points out that, just be-

cause, say, Rostropovich gives noble and excellent performances of the Dutilleux or Lutoslawski cello concertos, that is no reason why the composer must win a prize. For the Koussevitzky, we all agree that, while the recording must be worthy, we will place the greatest emphasis on the music itself. There does seem to be great enthusiasm for the two cello recordings, but we will have to spend a lot of time during the next two days listening to all the Koussevitzky contenders we haven't yet heard.

For the HF/Montreux International Recording Award itself, I am at the moment most enthusiastic about Nathan Milstein's album of the Bach solo violin sonatas and partitas. The music is incomparable, the performance is an excellent one by one of the world's great masters (I cannot believe it was played by a man in his seventies), the recorded sound is fine—and early this morning when I decided to rehear part of it I could not stop listening until I had heard all six sides. These divine aural peanuts are surely prizeworthy. On the other hand, one juror pointed out that the performance doesn't take the latest Bach scholarship into account. With such subtle yet gutsy playing as Milstein's here, I found it hard to hold my tongue—and didn't.

Nobody had much to say in favor of the operatic discs. The sleeper among the contenders is David Munrow's recording "The Art of Courty Love," a startlingly beautiful set. Robert Layton startled us even more by reporting that Munrow hanged himself this past May. What an irony if his album should win a prize—a not unlikely eventuality. I'm betting with myself on what will be eliminated during tomorrow's first round of voting.

Sept. 5—Half the recordings drop on the first ballot. I couldn't see how at least two of them got on the list in the first place. While Erich Leinsdorf never conducted better than he did for *Die tote Stadt*, René Kollo's singing simply puts the recording out of the running. And although the Italian Quartet has done some fine Beethoven, in the disc up for consideration a half-beat is missing in the Op. 18, No. 2. The multidisc sets still remaining are Milstein's Bach; Solti's Beethoven symphonies; Maazel's *Porgy and Bess*; the Monteverdi *Vespers*; the Melos Quartet's Schubert; Brendel's Schubert; Verdi's *I Masnadieri*; Vivaldi's *Juditha triumphans*; and Munrow's courtly music. The only single discs left are the Dutilleux/Lutoslawski (I'm glad Alfred made his point yesterday); Argerich's Ravel; Karajan's *Don Quixote*; Tippett's *A Child of Our Time*; and the Wagner disc with Jessye Norman and Colin Davis. I lost my bet with myself.

We returned to the listening room to rehear some recordings and to yell at each other. Concert tonight (the Bamberg Symphony, which I have never heard, conducted by somebody named Miklos Eberlyi, replacing an ailing Antal Dorati), followed by a banquet.

Sept. 6—I managed to escape the concert before the encore. I know four student orchestras back home that are consistently better by far than the Bambergers

## The Best of the Pops

Selected by HF reviewers

**CHET ATKINS AND LES PAUL:** Chester and Lester. RCA ARL 1-1167.

**COUNT BASIE AND ZOOT SIMS:** Basie and Zoot. PABLO 2310 745.

**GUY CLARK:** Old No. 1. RCA APL 1-1303

**ELECTRIC LIGHT ORCHESTRA:** OIE ELO. UNITED ARTISTS LA 630G.

**DUKE ELLINGTON:** Jazz Violin Session. ATLANTIC SD 1688.

**FLEETWOOD MAC.** REPRIS MS 2225.

**PETER FRAMPTON:** Frampton Comes Alive! A&M SP 3703 (2).

**JONI MITCHELL:** Hissing of Summer Lawns. ASYLUM 7E 1051.

**THE OMEN:** Original soundtrack recording. TATTOO BJJ 1-1888.

**THE OUTLAWS:** Lady in Waiting. ARISTA AL 4070.

**DAVID RAKSIN:** David Raksin Conducts His Great Film Scores. RCA RED SEAL ARL 1-1490.

**ROMANTIC WARRIOR:** Return to Forever. COLUMBIA PC 34076.

**LINDA RONSTADT:** Prisoner in Disguise. ASYLUM 7E 1045.

**JAMES TAYLOR:** In the Pocket. WARNER BROS. 2912.

**KID THOMAS AND THE NEW BLACK EAGLE JAZZ BAND.** GHB 145.

**GROVER WASHINGTON JR.:** Feels So Good. CTI KU 24.

**STEVE WINWOOD AND STOMU YAMASHTA:** Go. ISLAND ILPS 9387.

(Juilliard, New England Conservatory, Boston University, and the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood—and the list could undoubtedly be extended). Eberlyi was their equal.

The banquet, however, was delicious. Among the guests of honor were Alicia de Larrocha, Nicanor Zabaleta, and the president of the Swiss Confederation.

On the second ballot, half the fourteen remaining recordings disappeared: Solti's Beethoven symphonies (most of the jurors preferred other versions, although there was little agreement as to which); Monteverdi; Brendel's Schubert; *I Masnadieri* (not so "important" a work); Argerich's Ravel (one juror voiced the generally held opinion: "I love Argerich, and I love Ravel, but she overpowers their marriage"); the Tippett; and Colin Davis' too placid Wagner. Belatedly, I have won my bet. Someone pointed out that there are only two single discs remaining, and both feature Rostropovich.

The eliminations over, we voted for the prize. On the first ballot (we list three choices) both the Milstein and Munrow got a majority. How sweet an accolade for Milstein; what a tragedy for Munrow. *Don Quixote* missed by one vote, and we need a single disc. On the next ballot (now we list only one choice) Strauss beat Dutilleux/Lutoslawski by one vote. It's the first time Karajan has ever won here.

After a break for some air, we will have to spend this afternoon and tomorrow morning back in the listening room.

Sept. 7—We have heard some very striking works during the past twenty-four hours. *Victor*, actually a rock cantata although the Bellaphon record jacket bills it as a "symphonic poem," impressed us all with its moments of power, but it finally bogged down in its own clichés. Two fellows named Richard Schoenherz and Manuel Rignon wrote it—who did what was not too clear—and all the voices in the rock group seemed to be, or to imitate, Americans. *Intervalles II sur mi* by the Belgian Philippe Boesmans (on that country's Musica Magna label) grabbed everybody by its hypnotic insistence (somewhat like the finale of Ives's Fourth Symphony) and imaginative workings-out. Most controversial of all was Xavier Benguerel's *Arbor* on Hispavox, a wildly passionate leftist musico-literary tract, naively political in half a dozen languages, with quotes from everybody from Shakespeare and Goethe to Hitler and Guevara, but musically stunning and very effective.

When the smoke cleared, we had awarded the Koussevitzky prize to Henri Dutilleux for *Tout un monde lointain* and had voted a special citation to Boesmans' *Intervalles II sur mi*.

Attended a concert by Zabaleta in a chamber of the Château Chillon, believing the rumor that he was going to change his program to include a Bach partita. Instead, I heard a dull Albinoni sonata, six dull Beethoven variations on a dull Swiss tune, a dull Krumpholtz piece. Altogether, I felt like Byron's Prisoner of Chillon. During a break between sets, I escaped through the only exit, bumping into the harpist on his way back to the stage. We exchanged greetings as we went our separate ways. Strange encounter! But while Zabaleta can sometimes play like an angel, there are just so many minor harp pieces I can take at one sitting.

Sept. 8—Today, the ceremonies. Again a change. Whereas in previous years these had been formal evening affairs at the Château Chillon on Lake Geneva, today's was a luncheon at the Château Châtelard up in the Alps. Milstein has residences in Switzerland, London, New York, and God knows where, but nobody could find him, so I presented his Prix to a Swiss representative of DG. EMI (Angel) producer Christopher Bishop accepted the "Art of Courty Love" award from Robert, and from José-Luis, our Spanish juror, he accepted the prize for *Don Quixote*. Karajan sent word that it was the most important award of his career but that he couldn't interrupt his recording schedule to come.

Goddard Lieberson showed up with his wife, Vera Zorina, to accept everyone's applause and the *diplôme d'honneur* we voted him last year, and also to take the *diplôme* awarded to his friend and colleague Leonard Bernstein. A third *diplôme*, to Vladimir Horowitz, was planned to be presented to the pianist in New York. The final no-show was Dutilleux, who was having supper with President Giscard of France tonight. Instead, we sent his ad-



The jury amid deliberations in Montreux, Switzerland: Alfred Hoffman of Romania, Numa Tétaz of Switzerland, Robert Layton of England, Karl Breh of Germany, Edith Walter of France, José-Luis Perez de Arteaga of Spain, Leonard Marcus, and Nicole Hirsch-Klopfenstein, secretary general of the Prix Mondial. At right, Christopher Bishop, producer for EMI (Angel), poses with the awards his company won for *Don Quixote* and "The Art of Courtly Love." Top right, Goddard Lieberson holds the *diplôme d'honneur* he was voted for his long-standing contributions to the art of recording as he shares pleased looks with his wife, the ballerina and actress Vera Zorina.



dress to Mme. Kussevitzy, so she would know where to mail his check.

Luncheon was punctuated by three trumpeters in medieval Swiss costume, who tarantara-ed each course before it was served by similarly costumed boys. They all seemed appropriate to the occasion, and suddenly we all seemed out of place.

Tomorrow I leave for Lugano and a delayed Labor Day weekend, then on to Berlin. I wonder why in all the years I have been coming to Switzerland I have never heard anybody yodel.

BERLIN, Sept. 12—Just came back from *Meistersinger* with Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau as Hans Sachs. It was the most anticipated production of the Berlin season, since Sachs is one of the few things that F-D hadn't sung before. He's a very lyrical Sachs, possibly too soft and youthful for the father figure of a Wagner opera, but perhaps in medieval Nuremberg old men really were only fortyish. He acted superbly, and the entire production, an abnormally traditional one for Wagner these days, was as well directed—by Peter Beauvais, a television director—as a good Broadway show. Beauvais made each singer—not only the principals, but the

members of the chorus—an individual personality. Somebody must have been seeing similarly controlled opera productions at the late Walter Felsenstein's *Komische Oper* on the other side of the wall.

Gerd Brenneis was rather rough-voiced as Walther, Gerti Zeumer was somewhat more convincing as Eva. My one main reservation about the production is that it was as lovely as Fischer-Dieskau's singing. The end of Act II had the tamest riot this side of Noh drama, the Dance of the Apprentices was exactly that, with the unathletic villagers simply dancing with each other, and Sachs's slap never even got near David. I had hoped to see Eugen Jochum conduct, but tonight's performance was led by Marek Janowski. He's not at all bad.

Tomorrow, East Berlin.

Sept. 13—I'd better explain what I'm doing in East Berlin. Some of you may remember our big Beethoven issue of January 1970. Among the articles was one by Dr. Karl-Heinz Köhler, head of the music division of the German State Library (Deutsche Staatsbibliothek), on Beethoven's conversation books. These were the notebooks the deaf composer used in conversing, and there are more than one hundred of them extant, nearly all at this library. Although Beetho-

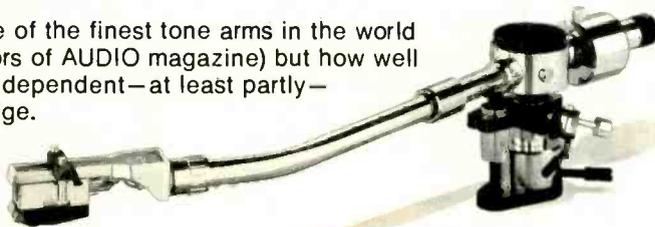
ven did write his part of the conversations from time to time, most of the writing is by his friends. It's as though you had a tape recording of early nineteenth-century private discussions (or, more usually, one side of telephone conversations) about not only music and other cultural events, but contemporary politics, education, economics, and almost anything else you can think of. And the conversationalists on whom you are eavesdropping are of the intellectual caliber of Beethoven and his circle!

Dr. Köhler's article discussed not only the contents of these notebooks, but the reasons that, incredibly, they had never been published in the approximately 150 years since Beethoven's death. Wars, among other things, aborted earlier attempts at the publishing project. Now the scholars of the Staatsbibliothek have been turning out heavily annotated editions. (When Beethoven asks how Karl is, it's nice to know *who* Karl is.) So far four of the projected eleven volumes plus index have been published, and it may take another eight years or so before the project is complete.

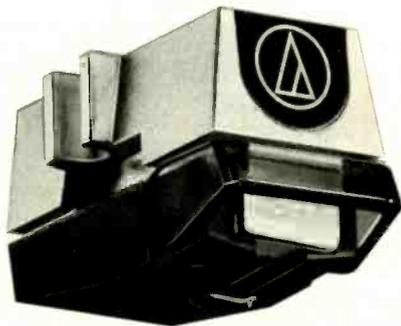
Since 1970 I had been discussing the possibility of HIGH FIDELITY's bringing out an English translation. Many things held up

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But even the finest combination of cartridge/tone arm is influenced by how clean the records may be... and how clean the stylus is. So we have both a superb manual and automatic record cleaner, and a fine stylus cleaner.



And of course the whole system works best only if it is free from such things as acoustic or mechanical feedback (especially with a cartridge having subsonic capabilities like ours), and excessive cable capacity. We solve these problems neatly and effectively with our AT-605 Audio Insulator and AT-610 Low Capacity cable set.



Finally, we also make one of the finest headphones in the world (ask Len Feldman) our incredible AT-706 that makes all the care that went before audibly worthwhile.

Any one of these components in your system can assure you of the very finest standard of performance— from that component. All of them *together* provide an unparalleled listening experience.



Start anywhere in our system. You'll soon find that as you *add* Audio-Technica products, you *multiply* enjoyment.



® INNOVATION □ PRECISION □ INTEGRITY

AUDIO-TECHNICA U.S., INC., Dept. 126H, 33 Shiawassee Avenue, Fairlawn, Ohio 44313

negotiations—one obstacle was that for years the English-language rights had belonged to an Italian publisher! Today I finished negotiations for HF to acquire the English-language rights, and as I write this a contract is being typed in preparation for its being sent to the U.S.

Now we must determine how large a print order to plan for, and here, dear reader, is where you come in. We plan to print only as many copies as we have orders, and I would like to know how many of you would seriously consider ordering these volumes. We are sending a mailing to major libraries and schools, and their response, plus yours, will determine how we proceed with the unique venture. On the one hand, it is unlikely that anyone will republish the volumes after our original publication—certainly within our lifetime. On the other hand, the set will have to cost perhaps \$400 to \$500 and will take the better part of a decade before the final volume is available. So if you are ready to place an order on an expensive set of books that won't even *begin* to appear for possibly more than a year, please write to me (at HIGH FIDELITY, The Publishing House, Great Barrington, Mass. 01230) and we will file your name until the books become available (and increase our print order by one).

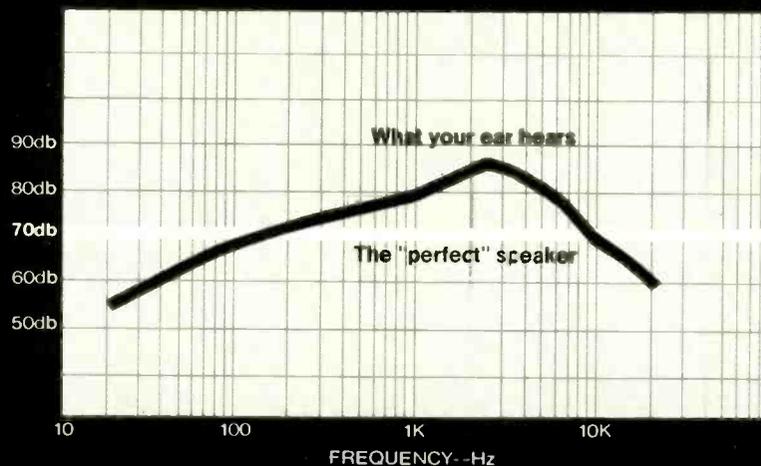
End of commercial.

Oh, yes, my interpreter for the negotiations was our Berlin correspondent, the American Paul Moor. Just to whet your appetite, Paul is writing an article for us about a stolen Mozart manuscript that we have traced to a highly respected collection in the U.S.

LONDON, Sept. 16—Have been visiting columnist John Culshaw, who is preparing to come to New York to produce the annual United Nations concert for television, and European editor Ted Greenfield, among others.

I've just returned from the opening night at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, where Colin Davis conducted Götz Friedrich's production of Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*. Friedrich, a Felsenstein disciple, is also responsible for the other productions in this *Ring* cycle. I can only describe the stark, highly stylized sets (Josef Svoboda) and costumes (Ingrid Rosell) at this *Götterdämmerung* as neo Flash Gordon. The fascinating tiltable, elevatable stage is a wonder to behold (and hear—it creaks). But it was a bit disconcerting to see Siegfried (the Alabama tenor Jean Cox) in a brocaded silver evening jacket, the Tarnhelm as a Dracula-like cape, Gunther with a goatee (Siegmund Nimsgern), and Brünnhilde (Berit Lindholm) with so fine a tailor that, even though she has just been abducted to the Gibichung Palace, as soon as Siegfried's body is brought in she can appear in a black mourning Valkyrie outfit replete with feathers (for a moment I thought Papagena had walked into the wrong opera). Lindholm is turning into a first-rate if not overpowering Brünnhilde, Yvonne Minton was even more impressive as Waltraute. Zoltan Kélémen was both evil and touching as Alberich, and Davis' conducting was a joy to hear.

Now all the world needs is a top-notch Heldentenor. 



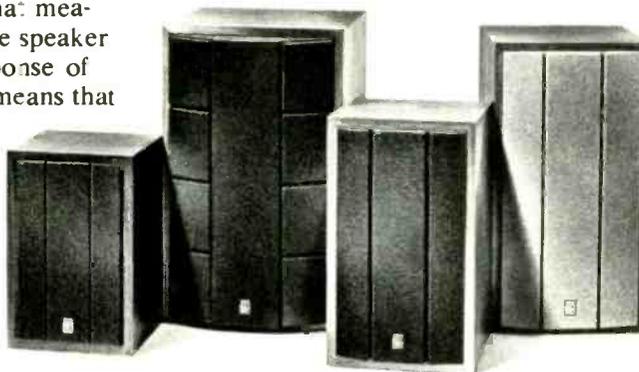
**This is the "flat" response curve  
produced by a theoretically perfect loudspeaker  
...as your ear hears it!**

Surprising? What's more, even that curve would change dramatically with the loudness of the music. That's because your hearing changes with sound pressure level, diminishing your ability to discern bass and treble tones. So, when you adjust your speaker system and amplifier tone controls to the way you prefer to listen to music in your home, that musical balance is immediately disturbed the moment you turn the level control of your amplifier for softer or louder output.

This happens with all speakers...except B·I·C VENTURI™ speaker systems with exclusive Dynamic Tonal Balance Compensation (pat. pend.). A special circuit is incorporated in our speaker systems that measures the amplifier power being delivered to the speaker and *automatically* adjusts the frequency response of the speaker to the speaker output level. This means that the sound you hear remains aurally "flat," regardless of how loud or soft you play your music. This is a more sophisticated and accurate method of solving the problem than the simple loudness contour switch on an amplifier which is a fixed rate device. That type control can never be effectively matched to speakers with differing characteristics.

This is just one of several exclusive engineering developments you will find in B·I·C VENTURI speaker systems to insure clean, extended bass; smooth, distortion-free mid and treble response; wide-angle dispersion for uncritical speaker positioning and room placement; high efficiency and high power handling capability for wider musical dynamic range and better *amplifier* performance.

Want to know more? Write to B·I·C VENTURI, Dept VZ, Westbury, N.Y. 11590 for copy of free 20-page "Consumer's Guide to Loudspeaker Performance."



Canadian inquiries to  
C.W. Pointon, Ontario.  
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S P E A K E R S Y S T E M S



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CIRCLE 9 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



# After people learn what we've done, no one will heckle our speakers.

## We're as close to the impossible as possible.

Our new speakers color sound. Anybody's speakers do.

Should someone tell you otherwise, they speak with forked frequency response.

We at Sony approached the development of the SSU-2000 with this grim reality in mind.

Thus our goal was to create a line of speakers with a minimum of coloration. With a frequency response flat and wide. With low distortion. And with repeatability. Which is critical. Which means that each speaker we turn out will sound like the one before and the one after.

## Searching and researching.

Our basic dilemma was that speaker specs don't specify much.

You can build two speakers with identical specs, and find they'll sound non-identical.

That's because your sophisticated ear can pick up differences our clumsy measurements can't.

Some examples:

*You can hear how pure water is.* The purity of the water in which the pulp for the speaker cone is pressed will influence the sound. (Spring water is the best.)

But water purity would hardly change the frequency response—or any other measureable characteristic.

Nor would the dye used to color the cone—or the glue used in gluing the cabinet.

But you'd hear the dye and the glue.

And there are dozens and dozens of elements that interact this way.

So our job was mammoth. To correlate these factors in order to

reach the goal we outlined earlier. Changing one changes the other and almost changed our minds about going into the speaker business.

But we stuck it out. And found the answer to the juggling of these variables thanks to a major technological innovation.

Trial and error.

That's why we labored for three years to bring you our speakers. While other manufacturers rushed frantically to market with theirs.

## We keep the whole world in our hands.

Once we understood how to control the sound of our speakers, we realized we had to control what went into our speakers.

So we did the only logical thing.

We built a plant.

And pursuing that logic, we built it at a place called Cofu. Which is at the base of Mt. Fuji. Where we can get all the spring water we want.

This factory does nothing but produce—under outrageously close control—the components for our speakers.

Whatever we do buy, we specify so carefully that our vendors have nightmares about us. (It's unfortunate that we can't make *everything* ourselves, but only God can make a tree, and only wood can make a fine cabinet.)

Few companies make this effort.

So it's safe to say that when it comes to exercising this kind of control, our speakers are a voice in the dark.

## Don't judge a bookshelf speaker by its cover.

As you can see, there's a lot that goes into producing a speaker that's

not easily seen. (One beautiful exception—the handsome finish on our cabinets.)

That includes the carbon fiber that we mix into the speaker cone paper.

Carbon fiber is light and strong. (Why they don't use it in girdles we'll never know.)

Light, so our speaker is more efficient. Meaning you need less power to operate it. Meaning you are closer to the ideal of converting electrical energy to mechanical energy without a loss of power.

Strong, to prevent the cone from bending out of shape in the high frequency range.

Moreover, carbon fiber doesn't resonate much. It has what's called a low Q, and it took someone with a high IQ to realize it would absorb the unwanted vibration rather than transmit it down the cone.

We also cut down on unwanted vibration (as opposed to the wanted vibration, which is music), by using a cast aluminum basket rather than a stamped, shoddy cheap metal one.

We could go on, but at this point the best thing would be for you to move on to your nearest Sony dealer. And listen.

Because the results of our three years of labor will be clear after three minutes of listening.

At which point, far from heckling our speakers, you'll be tempted to give them a standing ovation.

# SONY®

© 1976 Sony Corp. of America, Sony, 9 W. 57 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10019  
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Suggested retail prices: SSU-2000 \$150 each; SSU-1250 \$100 each; SSU-1050 \$130 a pair.

CIRCLE 44 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## Now the column reaches monitor heights

In the 14XP column system, American Monitor Company introduces column design to recording studio monitor quality speakers.

14XP captures tight bass, clear midrange, vast high frequency dispersion—and releases the precise sonic images demanded of the finest studio monitors. All in an efficient, appealing column.

Reach for the 14XP at your franchised American Monitor Company dealer soon.



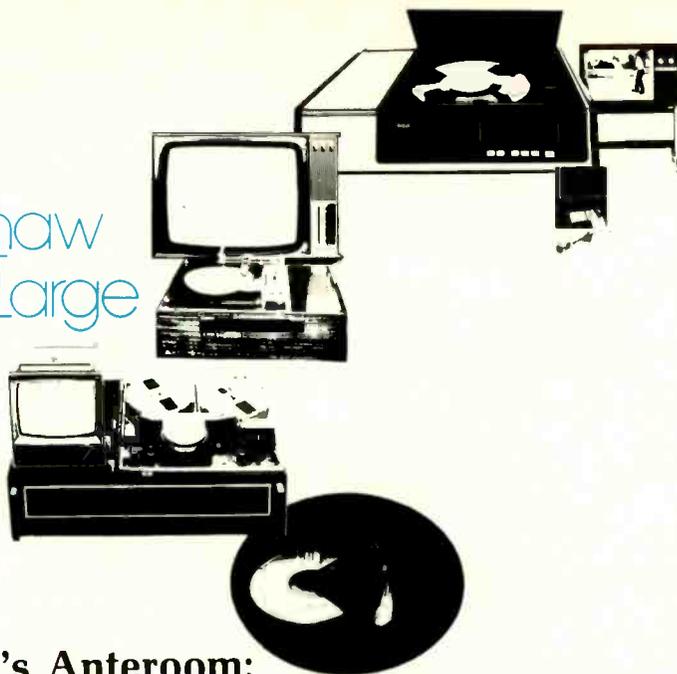
### AMERICAN MONITOR COMPANY

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Canoga Park, CA 91304

Write for dealer list  
and specifications

CIRCLE 41 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Culshaw  
at  
Large



Bedlam's Anteroom:

# Home Video Players

by John Culshaw

ABOUT EIGHT YEARS AGO, shortly after I became head of music for BBC-TV, I made myself decidedly unpopular in the trade by declaring that certain companies had taken leave of their corporate senses in their headlong rush to enter what they supposed to be an insatiable market for prerecorded domestic video. As it turned out, few of them even made it to the marketplace, although one that did—Cartrivision—promptly went bust to the tune of several million dollars. After a long silence, the noise seems to be starting all over again, with claims for this, that, or the other system being trumpeted across the land. It is therefore time for me to emulate Brangäne and issue a second warning, although it will be no surprise to me if mine has as little effect as hers. Anyway, mine is much shorter: *Caveat emptor.*

I have been refreshing my memory on what happened in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, during the Second International Music Industry Conference in April 1970, insofar as it dealt with home video. Because I was there, I can vouch for the accuracy of the reports, but they make daunting reading now. Those were indeed heady days for video.

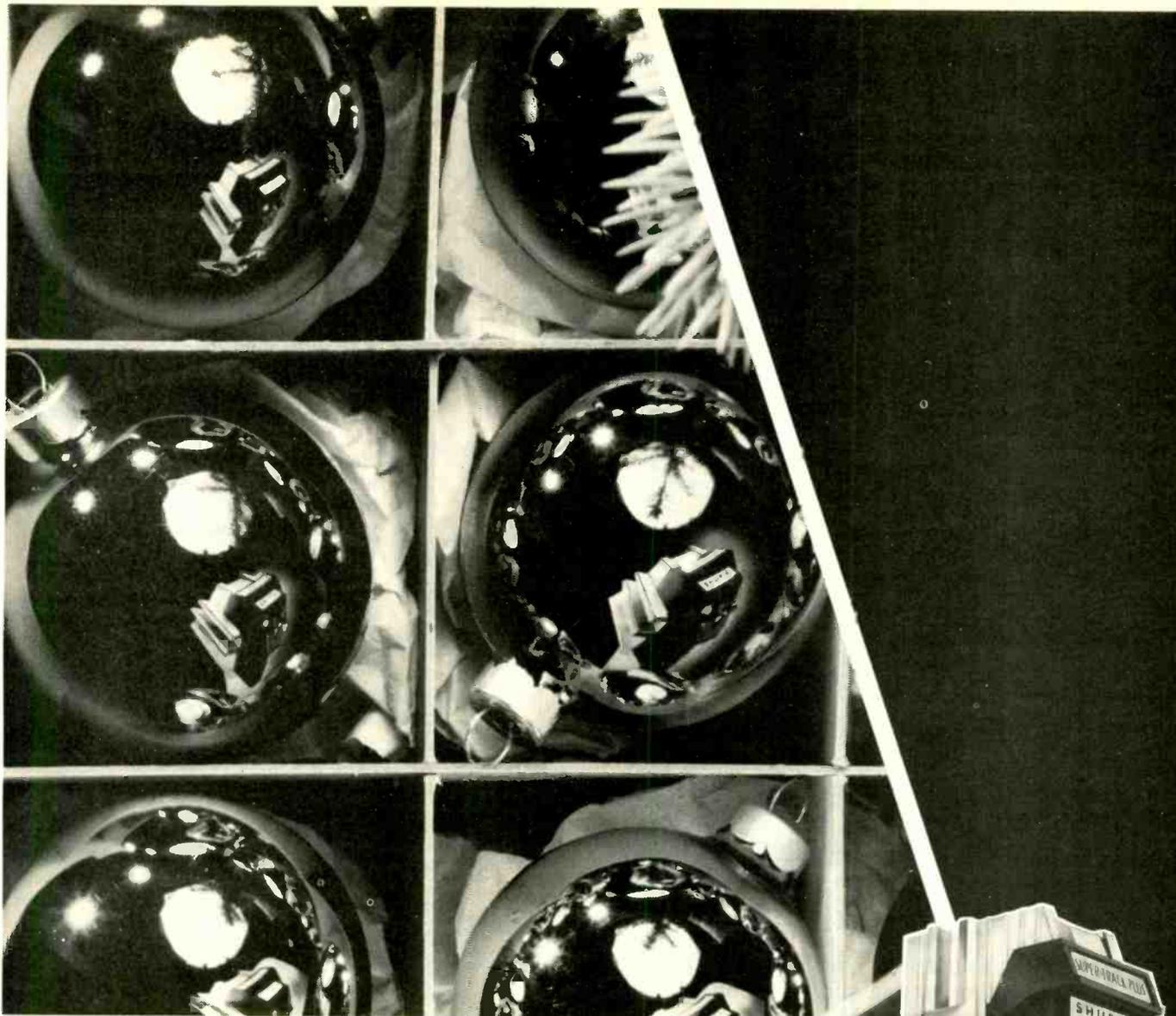
Let's start with EVR, the CBS system based on cartridge film. Robert Heron ended his speech with a pas-

sionate declaration: "EVR is study, leisure, entertainment. But, above all, EVR is here!" For all I know, that is likely to be true if he left his set behind in Palma, but there hasn't been much evidence of it elsewhere. From time to time I have heard reports of its use on ships or in schools or factories, but the point at issue is domestic use. How many of your friends own an EVR machine? Do you even remember what EVR stands for?\*

The next demonstrator was Mr. Gzenbeek of Philips, who showed us the VCR machine that he said would be selling in very large quantities by early 1972 and at a price of about \$550. In fact it now seems to be selling in rather modest quantities at a price of more than \$1,000. Then Fumio Ishida of Sony predicted enormous sales in the U.S. for its VCR by the third quarter of 1971 at a cost of \$400 "or less," thus appearing to beat Gzenbeek by at least six months and \$150. Neither prediction was accurate, but in due course both machines did appear, and the domestic market responded with a communal yawn.

Then there was RCA's video player with its holographic tape cartridge, which Robert Bitting assured us would be on the market by 1972 and would be well worth waiting for,

\*Electronic video recording.



## A cartridge in a pear tree.

A gift of the Shure V-15 Type III stereo phono cartridge will earn you the eternal endearment of the discriminating audiophile who receives it. What makes the V-15 such a predictable Yuletide success, of course, is its ability to extract the real sound of pipers piping, drummers drumming, rings ringing, et cetera, et cetera. In test reports that express more superlatives than a Christmas dinner, the performance of the V-15 Type III has been described as "... a virtually flat frequency response... Its sound is as neutral and uncolored as can be

desired." All of which means that if you're the giver, you can make a hi-fi enthusiast deliriously happy. (If you'd like to receive it yourself, keep your fingers crossed!)

Shure Brothers Inc.  
222 Hartrey Ave.,  
Evanston, IL 60204

In Canada:  
A. C. Simmonds & Sons Limited

### TECHNICORNER

#### MODEL V-15 TYPE III

Tracking Force Range: 3/4 to 1 1/4 grams  
Frequency Response: 10 to 25,000 Hz  
Output: 3.5 mV per channel at 1 KHz, 5 cm/sec

peak recorded velocity

Typical Tracking (in cm/sec peak recorded velocity at 1 gram in a Shure-SME Tone Arm):

400 Hz ..... 26 cm/sec  
1,000 Hz ..... 38 cm/sec  
5,000 Hz ..... 35 cm/sec  
10,000 Hz ..... 26 cm/sec

Channel Separation (Minimum): 25 dB at 1 KHz; 15 dB at 10 KHz

Stylus: Model VN35E Biradial Elliptical, 5 x 18 microns (.0002 x .0007 inches)

Also available: Model V-15 III G with the VN3-G Spherical stylus, 15 microns (.0006 inches)

Model VN78E Biradial Elliptical stylus, 13 x 63 microns (.0005 x .0025 inches) for mono 78 rpm.



# SHURE

Manufacturers of high fidelity components, microphones, sound systems and related circuitry.

CIRCLE 46 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

# The Sound Shaper. Because all rooms are not created equal.



You can own the finest component system and still be getting inferior sound.

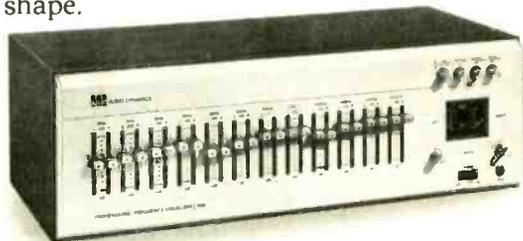
Because unless you happen to have an acoustically perfect listening room, your system and space probably don't match. Hard walls, soft carpets, glass tables, even the size of a room can change sounds.

So ADC developed the new ADC 500 Sound Shaper Frequency Equalizer.

By adjusting the twelve frequency levels you can actually shape your sound to fit the shape of the room, and compensate for spaces and textures that interfere with sound. You can even tinker with the sound just for the fun of it: bring up a singer, lose a violin, actually re-mix your recording.

The new ADC 500 Sound Shaper can get your system into great shape.

ADC



## The Sound Shaper

ADC Professional Products Group. A division of BSR (USA) Ltd., Route 303, Blauvelt, N.Y. 10913

whatever claims the Dutch and the Japanese might make in the meantime. We are still waiting. The same applies to Teldec's video disc, whose imminent arrival has been announced so often over the past seven years that, if or when it actually happens, the shock effect to the world will be the equivalent of yet another re-release of *Gone with the Wind*.

From all this it is not difficult to draw several conclusions. The first is that obviously a great deal of money has been spent—or, rather, wasted. Nothing was spared in terms of technical research, but the evidence seems to indicate that the conceptual research was carried out by a team consisting of two Eskimos because they had never seen television, three Scottish Highlanders because they disapproved of it on religious grounds, and a great crested iguana from the Arizona desert because it can run very rapidly, is very hard to catch, and has an exceedingly small brain in relation to its bulk. Nothing less than so eccentric a team could have led a great industry into the kind of muddle in which it now finds itself.

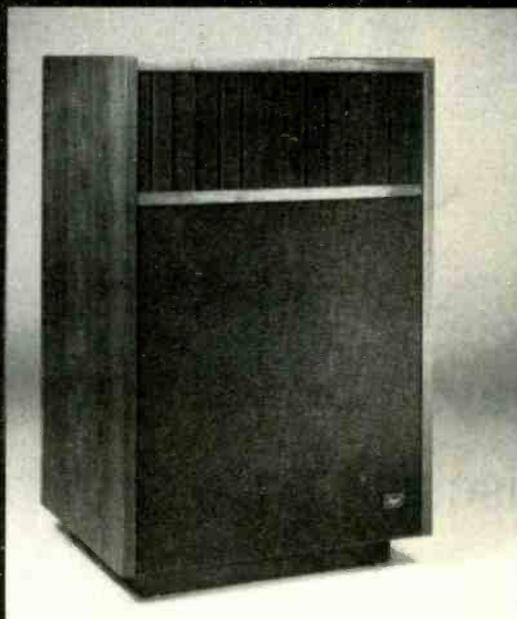
The second conclusion, the one that made me unpopular eight years ago, is even more valid today than it was then: Unless there is some degree of standardization (one disc system plus one tape system), the public will keep its money in its pocket, and quite rightly too. It is no use to argue that there are all sorts of different cars from which the public, in a free society, can choose according to the state of its pocket. All cars have one thing in common: If you supply them with the same substance, namely gas, they will move; if you don't, they won't. But you cannot play a Philips video cassette with its vertical spool mounting on a Sony machine, which uses a different tape width and runs horizontally. You can only play a Teldec disc on a Teldec machine, and the Philips video disc is, I am assured, wholly incompatible with the RCA disc that has somehow jumped ahead of Bitting's holographic cartridge, which is still said to be "in a state of development."

When large industries go mad, they tend to go very mad indeed. What I have been writing about here is the hardware end of domestic video—that is, the equipment—and it is a mere anteroom. When we come to the software—that is, the programs themselves—we enter the asylum proper, and I propose to offer a guided tour next month. ●

CIRCLE 2 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

# They're new from **Bozak**.

They're specially designed for the average-sized room.



**R**ealizing that it takes a special room to house and take full advantage of the power handling capabilities of the magnificent Concert Grand speaker system and its companion electronics, Bozak has designed a new trio of speakers, preamplifier and amplifier for the typical living room.

The quality and circuitry of these new models is typically Bozak — the best we can build. Indeed, the component speakers are identical to those in the Concert Grand. Only the number of component speakers and the power of the amplifier has been scaled down.

## **Model B-501 Concerto VII Speaker System**

Combining the robust, true bass of a Model B-199A woofer with the clear, definite mid-range of a B-209B driver and three of Bozak's new B-200Z tweeters "with the Golden Voice" for the most thrilling, shrill-free treble you've ever heard, this magnificent three-way system will make your listening room the envy of your knowledgeable music loving friends and the source of a lifetime of pleasure.



## **Model 909 Deluxe Stereo Preamplifier**

Complete flexibility for handling a variety of stereo inputs — two phono, two tape, tuner and auxiliary — provides almost professional control for mixing, tape dubbing and other functions most commonly encountered in home music systems. The audio signal quality, however, far exceeds many professional systems. Frequency response is  $\pm 0.25$ dB with 0.1% harmonic distortion and 0.1% intermodulation distortion over the frequency band from 20 Hz to 20kHz at 10 volts RMS into 200 ohms.



## **Model 939 Stereo Power Amplifier**

Using circuitry adapted from commercial power amplifiers supplied by Bozak for concert halls across the nation, this magnificent unit supplies 70-watts per channel continuous minimum sine wave power into 8 ohms from 20 to 20,000 Hz at less than 0.2% total harmonic distortion. Employs full electronic protection against short circuits and overloads and to prevent DC damage to speakers.

For information on any or all three of these magnificent units, see your Bozak dealer or ask by model number from



**BOZAK**  
Box 1166, Darien, Connecticut 06820



## FRM-3. Because one good listening spot in a room isn't enough.

With all you invest in quality components, why shortchange yourself by confining your listening to a limited area? Unfortunately, no matter how much you spend, that's what conventional speakers force you to do: accommodate your room to your speakers, instead of vice-versa.

Micro-Acoustics' new FRM-3<sup>®</sup> puts *more* listening room in your listening room. Thanks to its easily-accessible *Vari-Axis*<sup>™</sup> tweeter control that lets you optimize high-frequency dispersion to maintain precise instrumental definition, tonal balance and stereo separation regardless of speaker placement.

But the *Vari-Axis* high-frequency assembly is only half the story. The other half is an efficient, long-throw woofer operating into a balanced *twin-ducted-port* enclosure, which produces tight, fundamental bass.

The result: 'expensive' sound at a very modest price, even from low-powered receivers, backed by a warranty that's *twice* as long as the industry standard.

The proof is waiting at your Micro-Acoustics dealer... or write for our 8-page brochure, which also includes information on the FRM-1A (\$199) and FRM-2A (\$155).

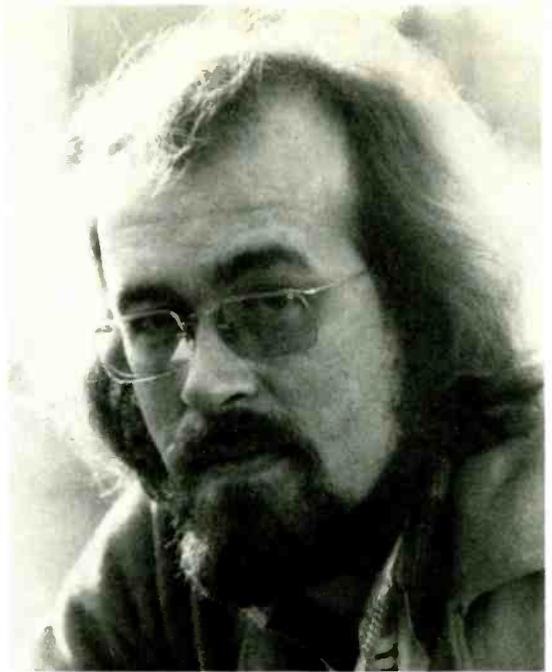
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\*\$119 All prices are manufacturer's suggested list. Prices slightly higher in West

**ma**  
**Micro-Acoustics**

The  
Lees  
Side

## Roger Kellaway:



## A Disciplined Eccentric

by Gene Lees

THERE IS PROBABLY no better way to get to know a man than to work with him. Over the past fifteen years, I have written songs with, among others, Lalo Schifrin, Antonio Carlos Jobim, Milton Nascimento, Bill Evans, and Manuel de Sica. Some of these collaborations have been close, a matter of working in a room with the man, developing melody and lyric simultaneously. Others have been quite long-range, even transatlantic.

All these collaborations have enriched me, expanding my perception—and conception—of music. Each man's thought of necessity became, for a time, my own and left its imprint in the form of heightened awareness and broader enjoyment.

Of all such relations, one of the most exciting and expansive has been that with Roger Kellaway. We recently worked together on the score of an animated cartoon adapted from Russell Hoban's delightful (and profound) novel for children, *The Mouse and His Child*, and on Barbra Streisand's *A Star Is Born*, to which I contributed two songs.

Kellaway, at thirty-six, is part of a new generation of musicians, competent in many kinds of music and inspired in those of their primary preference. He has worked with the unschooled folksinger Melanie; accompanied Joni Mitchell on a concert tour; arranged and conducted for Carmen McRae; wrote "act" music for

Barbra Streisand; recorded with George Harrison on the one hand and on the other (in an avant-garde piece) with fellow pianists Michael Tilson Thomas, Ralph Grierson, and Steve Reich (Angel S 36059); was for two years pianist and conductor for the late Bobby Darin; wrote a ballet in 1971 for George Balanchine and the New York City Ballet; is working on a symphonic commission for the Los Angeles Philharmonic; wrote and performed the piano theme you hear at the end of *All in the Family*; did the score for the aforementioned *A Star Is Born*; and is, on top of all that, one of the most individualistic and interesting jazz pianists in the last decade.

Kellaway thinks of himself as a classical musician (when asked what he most wanted to do, he said, "Conduct the Chicago Symphony!"), and it has taken a certain amount of pressure from his friends to make him accept the fact that being an important jazz pianist is something to be proud of. A native of Massachusetts, he was trained at the New England Conservatory and sang in its choir. He also performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Charles Munch in such works as the Beethoven Ninth Symphony, Honegger's *Christmas Cantata*, and Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*. This no doubt explains his sympathetic understanding of singers, conspicuous in his arrangements for the Carmen McRae album "I Am Mu-

# What you don't hear is as impressive as what you do.

Up to now the most you could expect from a medium-priced cassette deck was rather medium performance. But now there's the RS-630US. The medium-priced cassette deck with high-priced performance.

We started by going to work on the sounds you don't want to hear with any cassette deck. When we finished, we ended up with virtually inaudible wow and flutter (0.09% WRMS). Negligible distortion. Transistorized switching that reduces signal loss. And a S/N ratio where there's practically no room for noise (-63dB with Dolby\* and CrO<sub>2</sub> tape).

That's what you won't hear. What you will hear is a frequency response of 30Hz to 16kHz (CrO<sub>2</sub> tape). That means cymbals, brass and strings will sound crisp, smooth and natural. The reasons: A super alloy tape head formed under intense heat and pressure. As well as high-grade premium transistors.

You can also forget tape hiss. Because we use a two-stage direct-coupled equalizer as well as Dolby.\* So that soft musical passages will remain quiet.

The RS-630US also has highly accurate peak-check meters that let you set the recording levels without the fear of overload distortion. So you get highly accurate recordings. With excellent dynamic range.

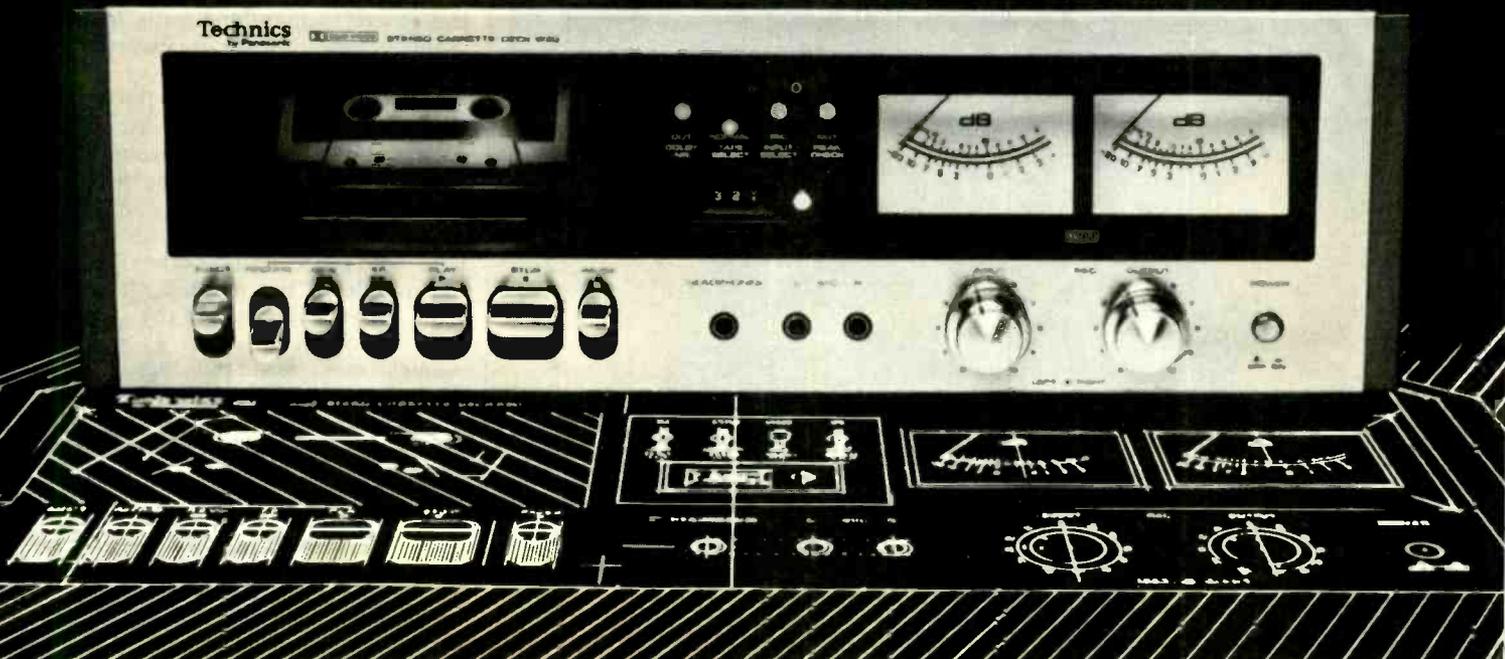
There are also dual output level controls. A CrO<sub>2</sub> tape selector switch. A lockable pause control. And Auto-Stop at the end of the tape in both record and playback modes.

So if you've been looking for a cassette deck with outstanding performance, audition the RS-630US. It only sounds expensive.

\*Dolby is a trademark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.  
Cabinetry is simulated wood.

## Technics

by Panasonic



# BSR. Finally, turntables worth building your whole system around.

When most people consider buying a stereo component system, they usually build it around either the receiver or the speakers. But when serious music lovers choose a system, they should think of the turntable first. Because the turntable dictates what comes out of the speakers. And when it comes to turntables, BSR offers more than Dual, BIC or Garrard.

First of all, the new BSR turntables are *belt-driven*, so they're engineered to be smooth, quiet and virtually trouble-free. They play automatically *and* manually.

And to really turn the tables on our competitors, BSR includes the revolutionary ADC induced magnetic cartridge, the base *and* the dust cover in the price of the turntable.

BSR gives you still more. Like a *locking umbrella spindle*

that holds up to six records. A rotating single play spindle. A continuous repeat spindle so you can play your favorite record over and over again. And a *viscous damped cueing mechanism* that's smooth and precise to help protect your records.

What's more, BSR turntables are *pre-tested and pre-assembled*. So you can get down to the serious business of listening to your favorite music right away. And also enjoy another special feature; the price.\* Under \$140 for the 200 BAX, \$110 for the 100 BAX and under \$100 for the 20 BPX automated single play turntable.

If you consider yourself

a serious music lover who wants brilliant sound reproduction, consider BSR first. For full details see your dealer or write: Consumer Products Group, BSR (USA) Ltd., Blauvelt, N.Y. 10913.



\*Suggested manufacturer's retail prices including ADC induced magnet cartridge, base and dustcover.

**BSR THE HEART OF YOUR SYSTEM.**



CIRCLE 10 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

sic" (Blue Note LA 462G; November 1975), which he also produced.

He finds no contradiction or conflict in working in several different worlds. "It's all music," he says. "The conflict happens because we live in a society that says we have to be in one box or another. Creativity comes from the center. . . . I used to ask, 'Who am I?', because I could do all these things. And finally I realized I'm me."

"Most people are willing to stay in one gear, to remain comfortable in something that makes money for them. I'm not. Every moment is new. Why shouldn't I explore everything? Why should *A Star Is Born* be a copy of anything else I've done?"

"I do find it frustrating, in that the record industry is the worst of all offenders in pigeonholing people. They don't know how to make versatility a commodity. It's too bad. There are a lot of versatile people around."

The problem is illustrated by two albums (A&M SP 3034 and 3618) made by the Roger Kellaway Cello Quartet, with Kellaway on piano, Ed Lustgarten, cello, Chuck Domanico, bass, and Emil Richards, percussion. The recordings are exquisite, and whoever hears them immediately wants copies. Yet they have sold only modestly. Why? Because no one at A&M knew how to merchandise them: as a kind of modern classical chamber music or jazz? Who cares? They're beautiful—soaringly lyrical in places, humorous in others.

While we were working on the film score at Kellaway's home in Thousand Oaks, California, I became hung up on one sequence. The surrealist scene involves a rat running on the turntable of a phonograph abandoned on the city dump. Now what kind of music would you expect to go with that scene? Kellaway wrote a crazy kind of 1930s tune. But what kind of lyric should it have? He insisted that it didn't have to make sense, only to set a mood. But some sense of duty—a feeling that to abandon the disciplines of one's craft is an act of cowardice—held me in its grip.

Just before I turned in for the night, feeling defeated by the unwritten lyric, Kellaway gave me a volume of John Cage's writings. "Maybe this will help," he said. I crawled into bed with the book and fell in love with Cage's wild, wild prose (if that's what it is). In the middle of the night, I woke up with the full concept of the lyric: a sort of *trompe-l'oeil* effect, a lyric that seems to make sense but doesn't, producing at first a "How's that again?" reaction from the listener and then laughter. I had renounced my own discipline in a disciplined way; and Roger showed me how to do that.

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Though he is one of the most disciplined and logic-loving composers I know, he is constantly attacking his own disciplines, seeking freedom from them. You will hear this in some of his bitonal blues recordings. (He had a teacher in Boston who forced students to think in two or more keys at once, so bitonality is second nature to him.)

Kellaway puzzles many people. Someone asked me if I knew him. "Yes, very well," I answered. "Then you're the only one who does," he said.

The reason for this, I think, is that Roger projects a faint and somewhat forbidding air of disapproval, both artistic and personal. It is completely at odds with his real personality. He is patient with others, even the lesser talents in rock and pop with whom he often works, and tolerant of personal idiosyncrasies. You have to get past his barrier. The effort is worth it, for he has one of the most richly explorative minds I have encountered in any professional relationship, and one of the kindest hearts.

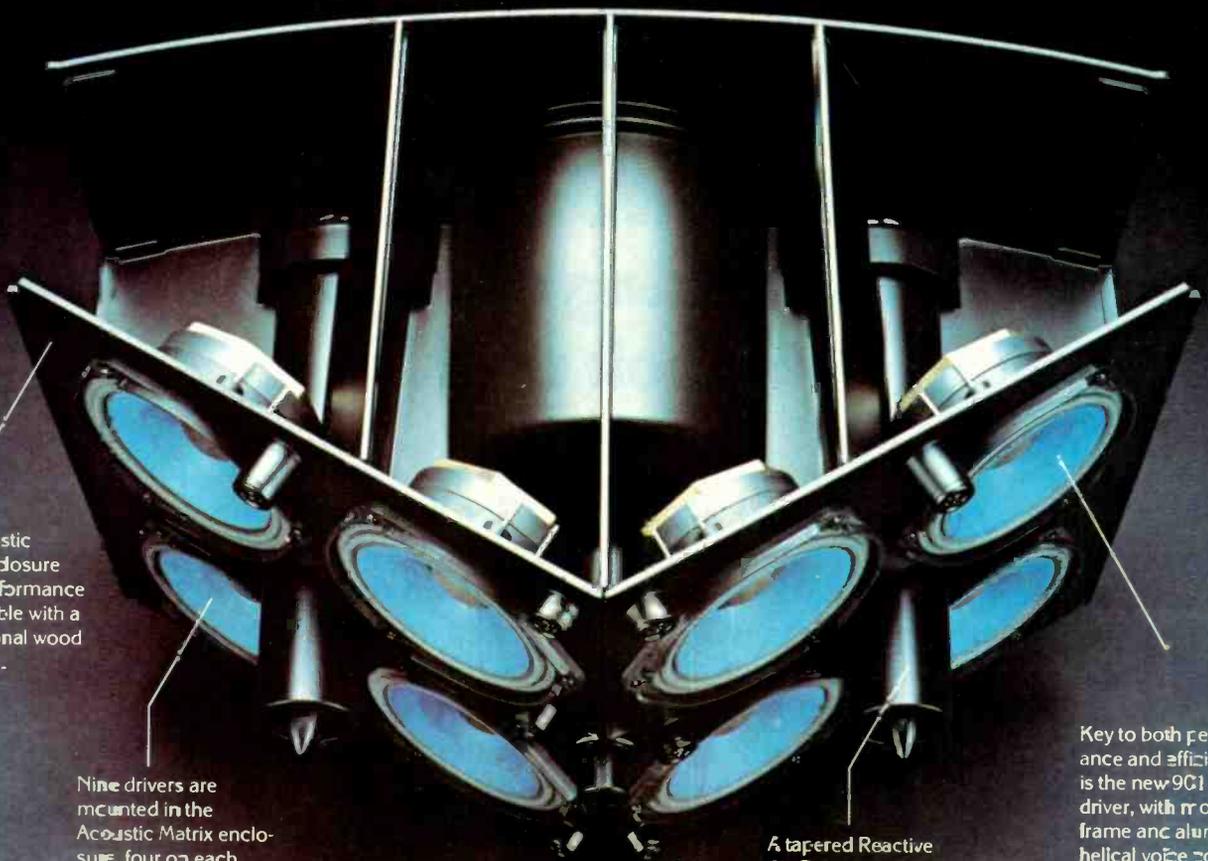
Kellaway is one of the few persons who was comfortable with Bobby Darin. Darin was very, very talented but put people off with his arrogance. I remember him telling me once that he was thinking about composing a concerto; he couldn't read music, and he certainly knew nothing about classical form. But Kellaway said of Darin:

"Bobby nearly died of rheumatic fever when he was thirteen. He never expected to live beyond thirty, and after he passed that age he figured it was all found time. And he wanted to do and be everything. If he had been able to do what I do, I wouldn't have had the job. But he couldn't do what I do, and he had great respect for it.

"He was one of the most extraordinary entertainers I've worked with. His sense of performing on a stage, his timing, his knowledge of how to handle an audience were all remarkable. I learned on-stage timing from him. And the electricity that could happen between a performer and a band—it happened with us."

If Kellaway is tolerant of the eccentricity of others, it may be because he is somewhat eccentric himself. He wears crazy clothes, often including a ten-gallon hat, figuring that, if he dresses wildly enough, the feeling will sink in and eventually he'll be as free as he looks. His eccentricity is a form of rebellion against his New England conservatism—rebellion against an inherent and very real respect for tradition. His music is wild and free but at the same time comprehensible, because Roger yearns for logical justification, in music and in life.

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# Too Hot to Handle

I read with considerable interest your review of the Vac-O-Rec record-cleaning device [September]. A few months ago I purchased one of these gadgets, but upon testing it I found that, while a onetime use may indeed remove dust from a record, repeated use results in significant record damage.

The procedure I used was to: 1) clean a new-condition record with Vac-O-Rec, following the instructions; 2) tape a part of the record; 3) put the record aside, allowing it to collect dust, clean it with the Vac-O-Rec, put it aside again, etc., performing ten cleanings in one week; 4) tape the same part of the record after the last cleaning. Comparison of the first and second tapings of the record showed a very noticeable increase in ticks and pops, presumably caused by the brushes in the Vac-O-Rec grinding some dust into the vinyl. Thus, a better name for this device might be Wrec-O-Rec.

Incidentally, an item in your "News and Views" [October 1975] was responsible for my acquiring a Zerostat, and I'm happy to report that this device does work as claimed and appears to cause no damage to records.—Robert Deutsch, Downsview, Ont., Canada. Your experiment is clever, but it is uncontrolled. Any record, no matter how it is cleaned, could be expected to show an increase in ticks and pops after such treatment. The crucial factor is the magnitude of the increase. A better procedure would have been to subject three discs to your "torture test," cleaning one with Vac-O-Rec, one with some other device, and one not at all, and then compare the results. The sonic degradation you found could then be evaluated in proper perspective. We now wish we had thought of that approach when we were working with the unit.

I have a Marantz 4270 receiver and a Tandberg 9000X tape recorder. My problem involves the use of the recorder in conjunction with the receiver's Dolby system. I have calibrated the Dolby system and set the tape recorder's input and output controls per the instructions of the receiver operating manual. However, when I play back the resultant tapes, I lose quite a bit of the original high frequencies—not only ultra-high noises that the Dolby system is designed to reduce, but some of the normal instrument highs as well. Are these results most likely due to improper calibration on my part, a defective Dolby unit, or the interaction of the Tandberg's unique metering system with the Dolby unit? If it is the metering system, what should I do to compensate?—James Strider, Newark, Del. Tandberg suggests that, when your machine is adjusted for use with a Dolby noise-reduc-

tion system, -6 VU rather than 0 VU should be used as the reference level. And if the system is to be adjusted correctly for playing prerecorded Dolby tapes, you will have to begin with a standard reference-level tape in playback and peg recording reference level to it, which should result in the -6 VU reading Tandberg suggests.

If you have done all this and still are losing highs, the trouble is most likely to be caused by a poor choice of tape for the Tandberg or, conversely, a need to have its bias and equalization adjusted for the type of tape you are using. All the causes you suggest are, of course, possible.

I have been carefully examining your evaluations of receivers and turntables, and I had almost settled on a Harman-Kardon 730 and a Technics SL-1500 when I heard from a reputable dealer some disturbing comments regarding repair records of these components. We had been discussing other products, and I have no way of knowing how accurate this information is.

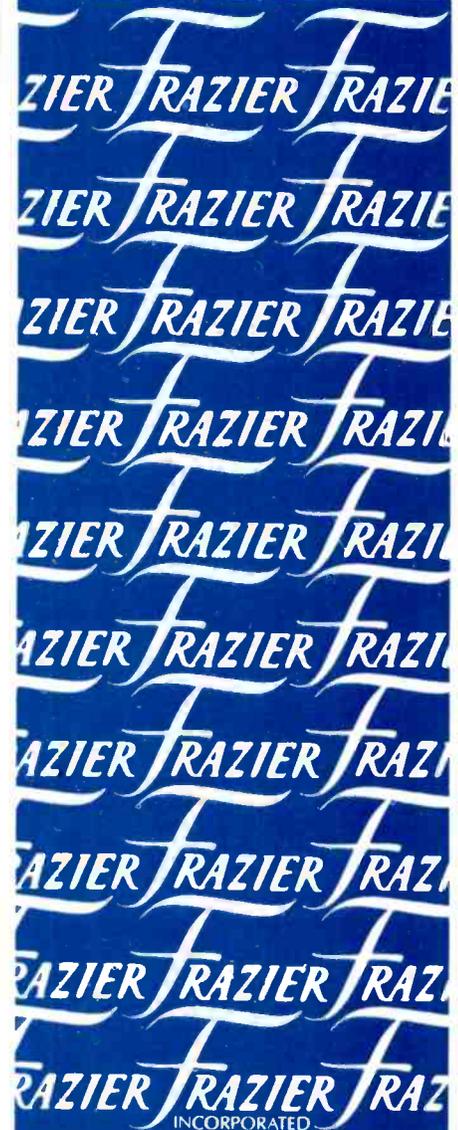
It does seem, however, that in areas of reliability and service costs the consumer is largely at the mercy of hearsay and subjective opinion. Some examples: Is there a significant difference in bearing design and quality between the belt-drive Thorens TD-160c and the direct-drive Technics SL-1500? Is there a technical reason why repairs on a direct-drive turntable should be more expensive or more likely? Does the repair record of Harman-Kardon indicate questionable quality control?

Could you not include a simple life-test in your procedures and measure, if only cursorily, performance degradation after a thousand hours of continuous operation (representing possibly two to four years of real time)? Or you might compile a frequency-of-repair record, as do some organizations testing automobiles, for leading manufacturers.—Charles R. Taylor, Bethlehem, Pa. Our testing basically is limited to audible performance (rumble, wow and flutter, etc.). Details of design can be very tricky to evaluate and provide little if any conclusive evidence of life expectancy. A direct-drive turntable, for instance, does include an electronic control section that is not present in an all-mechanical design; but while this is one more element that can fail, only Murphy would insist that it will fail. So all we can say is that nothing indicating inordinately high rates of failure in direct-drive designs or in Harman-Kardon receivers has come to our attention.

We wish it were technically feasible for us to carry on long-term testing with multiple samples of individual products to get useful reliability information. We are not convinced

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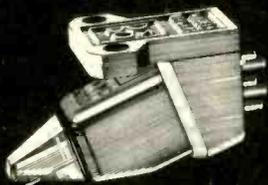
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*A Tribute to Sound*

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that frequency-of-repair records mean very  
much and note that at least one magazine  
that compiles such data on automobiles de-  
clines to do so for audio equipment.

I recently purchased a pair of ESS AMT-4s  
and now find the need to have more power  
since my receiver (Realistic STA-82) has only  
22 watts rms [13½ dBW]. I have in mind buy-  
ing a Marantz power amp, which I have been  
told could be played through the receiver's  
control-preamp section and tape monitor.  
The problem is that I already have a Sound-  
craftsmen 20-12a equalizer hooked up to the  
tape monitor. Is there any way I can make it  
possible to play the equalizer and the power  
amp simultaneously? Do any of the devices  
that can be connected to the tape monitor to  
double or triple that function help me? Or will  
it be necessary for me to buy a new preamp to  
achieve my purposes?—Sandy Felton, Rich-  
mond, Va.

Since you presumably will no longer be using  
the power amp section of the receiver and  
can't use its tone controls if you feed the  
amp from the tape-recording jacks, the out-  
put of the equalizer (which will be your only  
"tone" control) can be fed to the power amp.  
But we seriously doubt that the preamp  
stage of the receiver will do justice to a  
Marantz power amplifier, so a separate  
preamp (which need have no tone controls  
with the Soundcraftsmen in the system)  
would seem to be a better choice. For FM re-  
ception, the tape output of the receiver can  
be fed to an appropriate input of the preamp.

I have a Nakamichi 500 cassette deck.  
Though I like it very much, there's one thing  
about it that disturbs me. With the volume of  
my system turned up, when I start playback  
the noise level immediately jumps up. Then,  
when the leader on the cassette runs out and  
the tape hiss starts, the noise gets even  
higher. Apparently the first noise is in the  
deck's electronics, which are cut off when the  
deck is not in "play." While it is completely  
obscured by tape noise during the music, I  
wonder what will happen when tapes get even  
quieter than they are now. Won't the elec-  
tronic noise become the limiting factor and  
the deck obsolete to that extent?—F. E. Davis,  
Fort Worth, Tex.

While we've not tested the 500, we have  
worked with it and have noted the same phe-  
nomenon—as we have with other good  
decks, which generally achieve a dynamic  
range somewhat better than necessary with  
the best of the present tapes. A few cassette  
decks have a lower noise "floor" (the Advent  
201, HK-1000, and HK-2000 have particu-  
larly impressed us in this respect), but it's  
true that, if we were to have a drastic im-  
provement in cassette-tape noise—or head-  
room, since some other decks are notably  
limited in overload tolerance—many of the  
units currently in use would be unable to take  
full advantage of it. Cassette tapes at their  
best already are so good that it would be hard  
to find standard program material that  
would do justice to a drastic improvement in  
dynamic range; more important, it's difficult  
to see how noise floors in tape heads and so  
on could be lowered by much, if lower tape  
noise is to be accommodated, without com-  
promise elsewhere.

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utilizes the frequently "hidden" ambient material found in conventional stereo recordings and derives an effective 4-channel sound from any stereo source.

It has plug-in driver boards [to facilitate servicing], which feature an I.C. differential amplifier input for stable operation.

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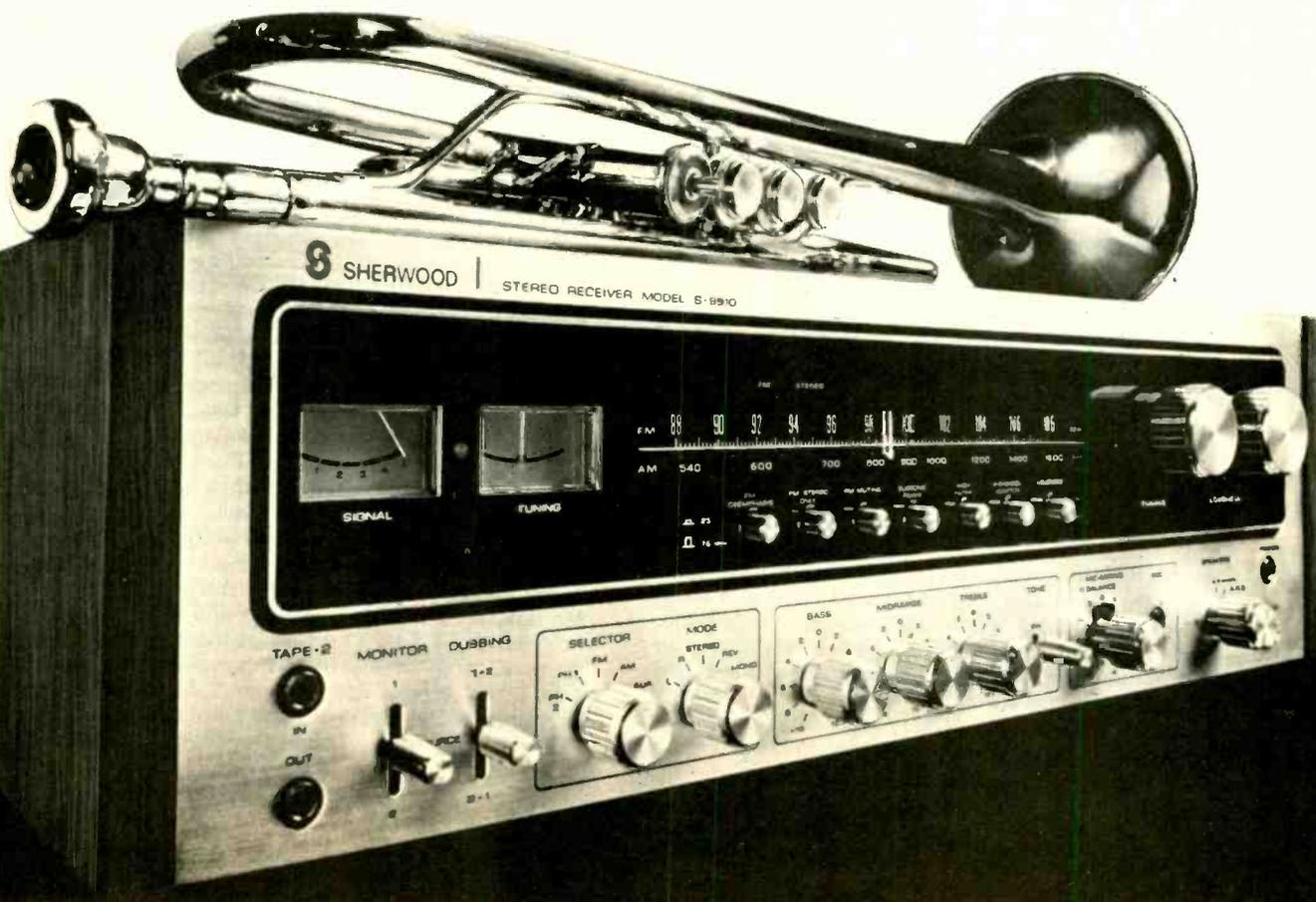
It has everything we've mentioned. It has some features we haven't mentioned.

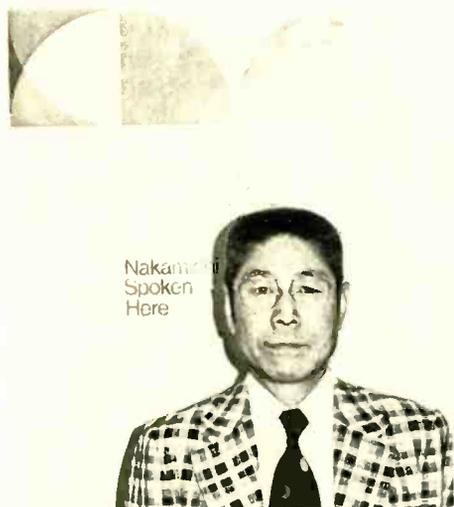
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## The Mr. E. of Nakamichi

The mystery of Nakamichi consists of its almost magical ability, despite its small size and therefore presumably limited resources, to produce equipment that solves conventional problems in unconventional ways: a seemingly inexhaustible stream of radical designs in which form and function have been rethought with an exciting and unique freshness. The answer to the riddle—as we were reminded when we joined other high fidelity writers and editors at the official opening of Nakamichi's similarly rethought New York office recently—is to be found in the personality of the company's founder and president, Mr. E. Nakamichi.

We asked a Nakamichi spokesman what the "E." stands for. The response was a sigh. The name is too difficult for international use, we were given to understand; the initial is simpler and serves to differentiate Mr. Nakamichi from his son, Ted, who as marketing director is based at the New York office (actually in Carle Place, Long Island), while his father often visits other parts of the world, including the original Tokyo headquarters.

Well, so be it. His first name does remain a mystery, but the man does not. He is possessed of an endearing warmth and mercurial enthusiasms. When language fails he is given to pantomime, a medium in which he seldom fails to make his point. And it is in this medium, more than in words (English words, at least), that his Puckish humor shows through. At the office opening, for example, he had his guests roaring with laughter as he mimicked a group of self-styled experts evaluating microphones: their wagging heads and sagacious expressions, their glibness in spinning astute-sounding phrases about each model (conveyed largely in a ponderous flood of nonsense syllables), their intense concentration on tenuous threads of sound that we almost supposed we could hear as well—and then the brilliant twinkle in the eye as the "experts" were confounded by their own misidentifications of the microphones under comparison.

He has his profoundly serious side too, often infused with passion. He admits to being a man in the process of

seeing his dreams come true, a heady experience. Surely the astonishing progress of the last few years has been won only at the expense of frequent doubts about the marketability of products that generally are "out of line" (in both technology and price) with the competition and sometimes relatively specialized. We can only assume that immense intestinal fortitude has been required to overcome these doubts. The industry gasped when he talked of a \$1,000 monitor-head cassette deck; now it seeks to follow his lead.

But there is no hint of missionary zeal when he talks of his products. One feels that he chose to fashion them as he did in the hope that others might agree with his unusual aims—not in the expectation that they would nor in the conviction that they must. Fatherlike, he is obviously pleased when others appreciate the qualities he has passed to his products.

The missionary zeal—and much enthusiasm—does surface, however, when he discusses amateur recording. He blinks wonderingly at the apathy that most American recorder-owners show toward the possibilities of their equipment—at our habit of using discs or FM as prime program sources and at our reluctance even to purchase microphones. Live amateur recording is so easy, he says, and the results so rewarding. Why is it not as popular here as it is in Japan? When he adds, "I am an amateur! I am an amateur!" there is an exultation in the voice that suggests a man who has scaled his private Everest.

The sound room of the new office (its key feature) is the embodiment of his concept. It is designed to prevent standing waves and exclude outside noise as a space in which amateur recordists can tape amateur musicians—a room dedicated to the proposition that music-making and recording are at their best in real-time symbiosis. Nakamichi does not call it a studio (though its adjacent control room equipped with elaborate equipment—including an open-reel deck during our visit—prompted most of the opening-day guests to call it such) because he is encouraging Nakamichi dealers to install such rooms (minus the control room, of course) for similar purposes.

He believes that for a few thousand dollars the dealer can create a space in which amateur recordists could tape their friends, aspiring musicians could get demo tapes for no more than the cost of the tape, and perhaps rehearsals could be taped to allow further study by the participants, working on their own. And such a project would provide tapes not only to the participants, but to the dealers as well. Live recordings, Mr. Nakamichi believes, are the only way to evaluate sound equipment, free of the vagaries inherent in today's commercial recordings.

The music room in the Carle Place facility—officially dubbed the Sound Research Center—is to be available, free of charge, to amateurs. A similar installation, complete with a one-hundred-seat concert hall and many individual recording rooms, is abuilding in Tokyo. An architect's rendering of the Tokyo project hangs on the wall of Mr. Nakamichi's Carle Place office, and as he talked to us he glanced at it almost furtively, as though afraid it might go away. "And now that these things are happening," he said, "I am almost ready to retire." We looked back at those now-wistful eyes. In a life so full of zest, of discovery, of energy—of youth—retirement seems distant indeed.

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Every initial tonearm setting has a special touch of precision.

Stylus overhang is adjustable for optimum horizontal tracking angle. Balance is vernier-adjustable. Stylus force is applied around the vertical pivot and remains perpendicular to the record even if the turntable is not level. Anti-skating is calibrated separately for all three stylus types and is self-compensating for groove diameter.

In addition to these refinements, the CS721 tonearm has an innovation to be found on no other integrated tonearm: Vertical Tonearm Control. A vernier height adjustment over an 8mm range allows this tonearm to parallel the record with cartridges of any depth and without the use of spacers. Thus, accurate vertical tracking is assured, and the effective mass of the tonearm is kept at a minimum. Another benefit: changing cartridges is much easier.

The CS721 direct-drive system is the most advanced today for record playback. It features all-all-electronic, low speed, brushless, DC motor with Hall-effect feedback control and a regulated power supply. The motor's field coil design is unique. Two overlapping coil layers, each with eight coreless bifilar-wound coils, achieve a gapless rotating magnetic field. This eliminates the successive pulses of magnetic flux typical of all other motor designs.

Although the CS721 is Dual's most expensive model, it is hardly the most expensive turntable available today. When you make comparisons, as we believe you should, you may even consider the CS721 underpriced. Not to mention the even less expensive direct-drive CS704, with the same tonearm and drive system but with semi-automatic start and stop.

With either model, you will enjoy the advanced precision performance of the quietest turntable ever made.

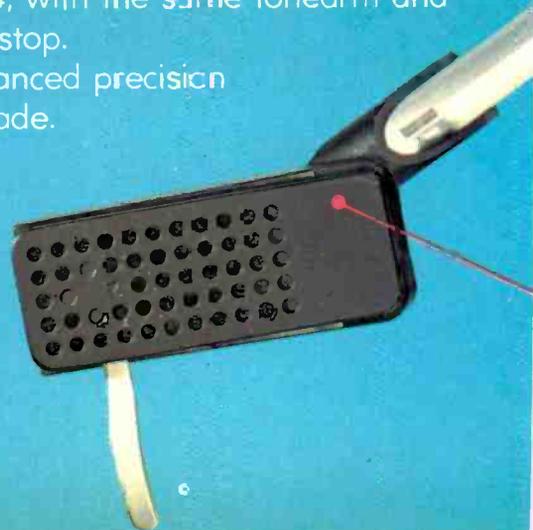


**United Audio Products**

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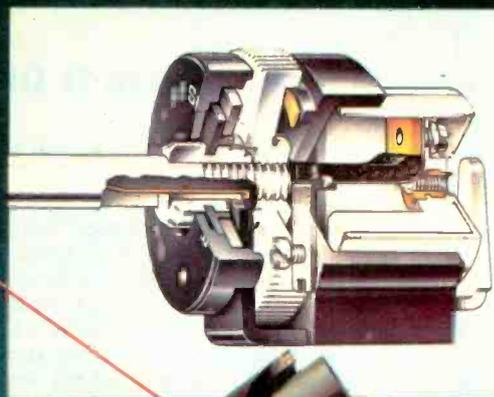
Exclusive U.S. Distribution Agency for Dual

CIRCLE 17 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



True four-point gimbal centers and pivots the tonearm mass at intersection of horizontal and vertical axes. Tonearm is dynamically balanced in all planes. The four needle-point pivots are first hardened, then honed, a process which produces microscopically smooth surfaces.

The unique counterbalance contains two mechanical anti-resonance filters. These are separately tuned to absorb energy in the resonance-frequency ranges of the tonearm/cartridge system and chassis to minimize acoustical feedback.



Cueing descent speed can be set from slow to rapid, and tonearm cueing height is adjustable. Result: complete control of stylus setdown via cue-control.

Vertical Tonearm Control sets and locks tonearm height at any point over an 8mm range. Tonearm thus exactly parallels the record with any size cartridge. Result: accurate vertical tracking without the added mass of cartridge spacers.

Straight-line tubular tonearm provides maximum torsional rigidity and lowest effective mass. With the same effective tonearm length and tangential tracking error any other shape must either sacrifice rigidity or increase mass.

Stylus pressure is applied via a longcoiled spring centered around the vertical pivot. Pressure is always maintained perpendicular to the record even if the turntable is not level.

Rigid three-point suspension locks cartridge holder to tonearm head in identical position each time it is removed and replaced. Together with adjustable stylus overhang, this assures that correct vertical and horizontal tracking angle will be maintained.

**The Dual CS721:** fully automatic, single-play turntable with an electronic, direct-drive motor. Features include: Vertical Tonearm Control; variable cue-control lift height and descent speed; 10% electronic pitch-control for both speeds (33 $\frac{1}{3}$  and 45 rpm); illuminated strobe; dynamically-balanced 12" platter; cue-control viscous-damped in both directions; continuous-repeat. Price: less than \$400, including base and dust cover. **Dual CS703:** similar, except semi-automatic. Ingenious mechanical sensor locates lead-in groove of 12" and 7" records; tonearm lifts and motor shuts off automatically at end of play. Less than \$310, including base and dust cover.

Fully-automatic, single-play/multi-play Duals: 1225, less than \$140; 1226, less than \$170; 1228, less than \$200; 1249, less than \$280. Semi-automatic, single-play Duals: 502, less than \$160; 510, less than \$200.

## Maxell Makes It Official

For some months we have been aware that Maxell would have some news for cassette recordists. We could guess what it might be: the introduction of a tape, based on the epitaxial-cobalt technology that produced UDXL, that would accept the 70-microsecond equalization and extra-high bias of chrome tapes without using chromium dioxide in the formulation. In September the official announcement came. The original UDXL is being replaced by the extremely similar UDXL I; the expected new ferricobalt, called UDXL II, is being added. The straight-ferric UD (the high-performance tape that originally brought Maxell to prominence in the American consumer market) and LN (what might be called a less-premium formulation) remain in the line.

Striking on the new UDXL packagings are stipulations as to intended bias and equalization settings—an innovation we applaud heartily. UDXL I, which has silver detailing, is specified for "normal" bias and 120-microsecond equalization; UDXL II, which has gold detailing, for "hi-level" bias and 70 microseconds. In the accompanying technical data these expressions are defined in terms of the usual ferric and chrome usages. In addition, UDXL II's shells have the extra keyways for automatic chrome switching on decks with this feature.

All of this strikes us as a big step forward. Most manufacturers rely solely on the recordist's prior knowledge to assure that tapes will be used correctly and so kept on their best behavior.

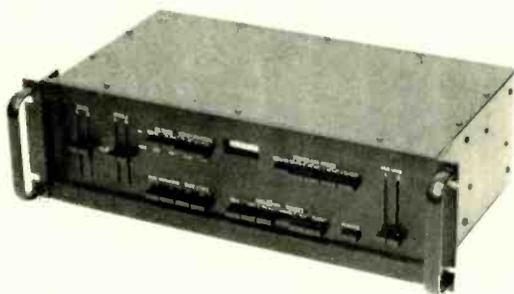
We do wish that Maxell had gone a little further.

In saying simply that UDXL I is for "normal" or "ferric" bias, Maxell implies that it is interchangeable with any ferric tape for best results. This may be largely true, since the manufacturer claims that the new formulations have an unusually broad bias-tolerance range. But since the recommended bias is that for UD—which is about 15% above the range "preferred" by most ferric formulations—and since the UD bias point often is therefore referred to as "high" while that for the more conventional tapes often has been called "normal," the terminology used is not as precise as we might have liked.

This is not altogether Maxell's fault. Until the industry can agree on some way of specifying bias (say, in so many amperes of bias current with a given head design), Maxell and those who—in short order, we hope—copy its approach will have little recourse except in using similarly equivocal expressions.

For those who are concerned with Dolby tracking on nonadjustable decks, we ran quick checks of tape sensitivity with our samples of the new tapes (one of each) and some we had on hand of competing tapes. UDXL I seems to produce a slightly higher output than UD (about 1 dB higher—not enough to warrant serious worries with Dolby). UDXL II seems matched within a small fraction of a dB to TDK's SA (the other available nonchrome tape for use with the chrome settings) and therefore about 2 dB above typical chromium dioxide tapes—a difference big enough that it does threaten audible oddities in Dolby tracking on decks adjusted for true chromes, but this probably is of concern only to the most critical recordists.

## Equipment in the News



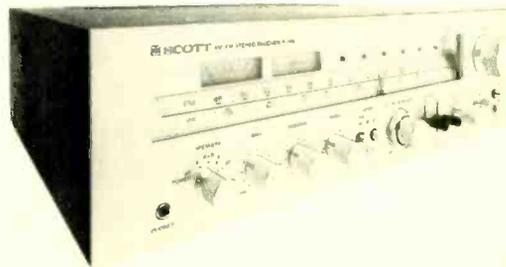
### Epicure's preamp

A stereo preamplifier with total harmonic distortion rated at under 0.005% and phono-section weighted S/N ratio of 85 dB has been announced by Epicure Products, Inc. The array of inputs includes two for phono, two for tape, and one each for tuner and aux. The tone controls—slider-operated, as is the volume control—have selectable inflection points. High- and low-cut filter with steep cutoffs, six AC convenience outlets, and a muting relay with a 10-second turn-on delay are additional features. Priced at \$449, the Epicure Four, as the new preamp is called, carries a five-year warranty for parts and labor.

### Top of the Scott receivers

Model R-376, rated at 75 watts (just under 19 dBW) per channel into 8 ohms, 20 Hz to 20 kHz, with total harmonic distortion at 0.2% maximum, heads up the new line of receivers from H. H. Scott. The unit has triple tone controls, high- and low-cut filters, and dual tape-monitor facilities that allow dubbing from one deck to another without passing signals through the receiver's electronics. A dual-gate MOS-FET RF section and phase-locked loop multiplex section are claimed to offer state-of-the-art FM sensitivity and superior separation. Model R-376, with its "clean-look" styling, is priced at \$599.55.

CIRCLE 136 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



# Micro-Acoustics 2002-e cartridge.

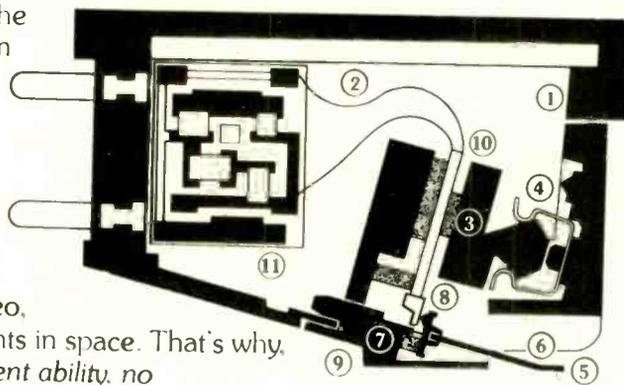
## Because good tracking isn't enough.

### Tracking is just the beginning.

While good tracking ability is vital, it's only an indication of how well the stylus keeps contact with record grooves on louder, harder-to-follow passages, at stylus pressures low enough to minimize wear. *But surprisingly, tracking ability tells almost nothing about how well a cartridge reproduces most musical sounds.*

### Transient ability is just as important.

After all, transients are what music is made of: sudden start-and-stop bursts of sound at all frequencies. From the attack of a low organ note to the bite of a plucked string. Transient information is essential to differentiate the sound of one instrument from another, and in stereo, to localize instruments in space. That's why, *without good transient ability, no cartridge can reproduce music with really lifelike clarity.*



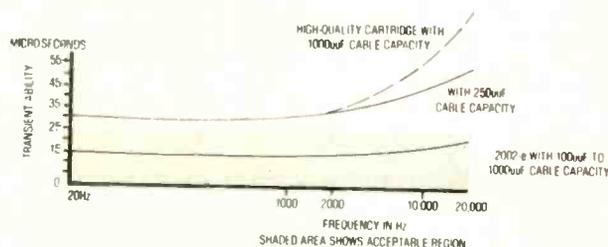
1 low mass body (4.0 grams) reduces warp flutter; 2 pure gold connecting wires; 3 mechanical damper (one of 8) helps optimize transient and tracking ability; 4 retainer spring for precise stylus assembly alignment; 5 elliptical diamond stylus ground with the same precision as our famous Micro Point recording steel; 6 beryllium stylus bar, 35% lower mass than aluminum, for optimum high frequency tracking and transient ability; 7 dual bearings and resolver for optimum high frequency tracking and precise signal resolution; 8 direct coupling of stylus bar to electret for lossless transmission of groove undulations to transducers; 9 user-replaceable stylus assembly; 10 electret transducer permanently polarized dielectric generator, linear from 5Hz-50kHz; 11 microcircuit, passive circuit makes cartridge output impedance fully resistive, eliminating effect of cable capacity shunts preamp input, reducing thermal noise.

### Until now, it was simply one or the other.

Tracking or transient ability. Popular high-compliance cartridges, on the one hand, offered good tracking ability and low record/stylus wear, but sacrificed transient ability. And low-compliance cartridges provided good transient ability at the expense of tracking ability and increased wear.

### A new technology.

Micro-Acoustics, the world's leading manufacturer of record-mastering styli, has combined for the first time superb transient and tracking ability. In the radical design of the 2002-e (patent pending), direct-coupled electrets and critical damping provide optimized transient ability, as shown in the graph. While an ultra-low-mass beryllium stylus bar and high-compliance dual-bearing suspension provide maximum tracking ability at 1 gram, for lowest possible record and stylus wear.



Transient ability best defines how accurately a cartridge can reproduce a musical burst at different frequencies. (Note that the 2002-e's results are independent of cable capacity!)

### A simple way to convince yourself.

Micro-Acoustics has prepared a unique demonstration record to help you evaluate and compare cartridge transient and tracking ability. Just send \$3.50, and we'll mail you a record postpaid. For free information and the name of your nearest dealer, just complete and return the coupon.

**ma** MICRO-ACOUSTICS CORPORATION

**MICRO-ACOUSTICS CORPORATION** List Price \$115.00  
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**Elmsford, N.Y. 10523**

- ( ) Please send me free information on the 2002-e cartridge, and the name of my nearest dealer.
- ( ) Enclosed is \$3.50. Please send me a postpaid copy of your stereo transient/tracking ability test record.



NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

HF1276

## Latest Sansui cassette unit

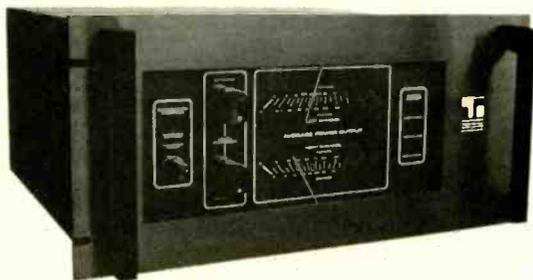
The newest member of Sansui's family of cassette decks is the front-loading SC-2002. Cassettes are loaded in an upright position for improved tape transport. The SC-2002 has separate drives for capstan and hubs plus integrated-circuit Dolby-B noise reduction. A front-panel bias/equalization switch allows selection of chromium dioxide or "normal" tapes. Rated frequency response, using chrome, is 30 Hz to 15 kHz. Signal-to-noise ratio is claimed to be 60 dB with Dolby; wow and flutter is a low 0.1%. Also equipped with an auto-stop mechanism and output level control, the deck costs approximately \$300.

CIRCLE 137 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## On the Threshold

The Threshold Model 800A class A stereo amplifier employs a proprietary bias circuit that drives it to peaks beyond 30 dBW (1,000 watts) yet allows it to idle at less than one-fifth the power used by a conventional design and is said to reduce distortion as output level decreases. Forty-eight high-power output transistors give the 800A a bandwidth to 4 MHz. Rated power is 200 watts (23 dBW) per channel from 20 Hz to 20 kHz into 8 ohms with distortion no greater than 0.1%. Front-panel features include output meters, dual gain controls, and a saturation threshold control and indicator. The 800A, finished in black anodized aluminum, is priced at \$2,165.



## Audio-Technica's second electret headset

The AT-705 electret condenser headphone from Audio-Technica has permanently polarized diaphragms that make an external energizing voltage source unnecessary. This model features a speaker/headphone switch in the plug-in adapter that matches impedances between amp and headset. Frequency response is rated at 20 Hz to 22 kHz. According to Audio-Technica, the open-back design of the earcups prevents the resonance effects found in most headphones of the closed-back style. The AT-705 sells for less than \$90.

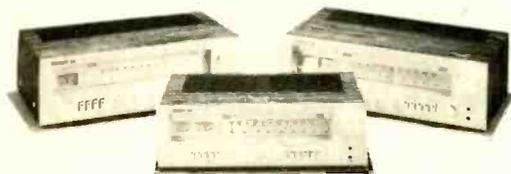
CIRCLE 138 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## New Concept in receivers

A new component manufacturer, Concept, has announced its first products, a line of stereo receivers: Models 2.0, 3.5, and 5.5 are designed for low-distortion RF and audio signal technology. The output circuitry of the receivers, according to Concept, boasts rapid rise time and minimum transient intermodulation distortion. The FM sections use dual-gate low-noise MOS-FETs in the front end. Reed-relay muting and front-panel LEDs indicate functions selected on the newly developed pushbuttons. The volume and tone controls are detented in 1-dB increments. The receivers, which come in rosewood-patterned enclosures, range in price from \$295 to \$495.

CIRCLE 139 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## Marjen's Model 1

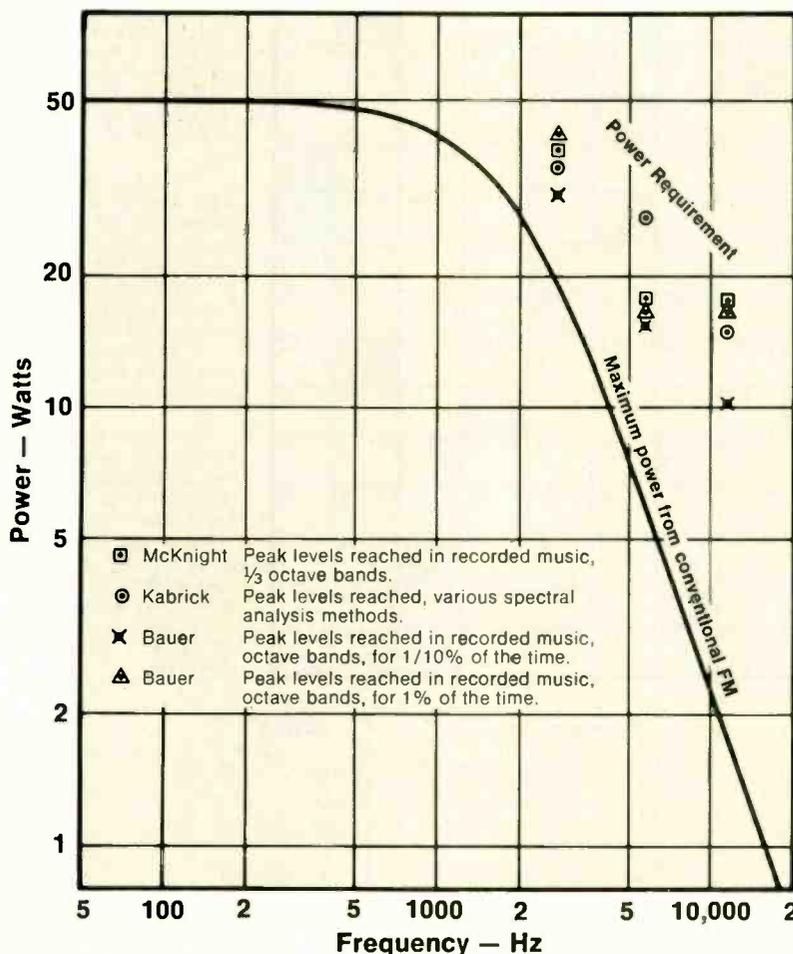
The Model 1 loudspeaker system from Marjen uses an 8-inch woofer for smooth and open sound. Two 2-inch tweeters are designed to reinforce each other, producing clear and well-defined high frequencies. Recommended power for the Model 1 is 10 to 19 dBW (10 to 75 watts). Frequency response is rated at 44 Hz to 20 kHz,  $\pm 3$  dB, into 8 ohms. Push-button switching permits three-way adjustment to room-boundary effects. The speaker has a veneered pine cabinet with black or natural grille cloth and costs \$139.

CIRCLE 140 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



# Dolby FM Ends The High-Frequency Power Shortage

Look at this graph. You wouldn't tolerate an amplifier that did this to your music. So why put up with an FM system that does this to your amplifier?



This curve shows the maximum power output of a 50-watt amplifier when fed from conventional FM. The power curve and the power requirement points are all shown with respect to full mid-frequency modulation at the transmitter and 50 watts peak power from the amplifier.

Take a typical state of the art 50-watt amplifier. It will deliver its full 50 watts over the whole audio bandwidth. Well, what would you think of a system that treated the high frequencies like the one pictured above? A droop to half-power at only 2 kHz? Or a pitiful 2 watts at 10 kHz? It sounds ridiculous. And yet this is what the conventional 75 microsecond FM broadcasting system does to the signal. It is impossible for a conventional station and a conventional receiver to do better than this.

Of course, the full 50 watts isn't needed at high frequencies. The graph

points in the high-frequency region of the drawing show how much power is actually required, according to researchers who have investigated this matter. Obviously, there is a significant difference between the requirement and what conventional FM can provide.

What does this have to do with Dolby FM? Plenty. Dolby FM provides not only lower noise but a dramatically improved power capability. In fact, the power curve of a Dolby FM receiver runs right through the power requirement points on the graph above (which is no accident). Thus Dolby FM gives you the full high-frequency power

needed for accurate reproduction of music. Brasses retain their bite. Cymbal crashes don't collapse.

If this improvement in FM broadcasting and reception interests you, then you may like to write to us for further technical details. We also invite you to consider purchasing one of the more than 30 new models of receivers with built-in Dolby FM circuits (write for receiver list and Dolby FM station list). Check with your hi-fi component dealer for details on the specific receiver models available in your area.



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J	1	K	2	S	3	L	4	E	5	V	6		O	7	P	8	D	9		K	10	O	11	H	12	P	13	W	14		
V	15	G	16	I	17	Y	18			H	19	J	20	A	21		T	22	R	23	M	24		T	25	O	26	X	27		
B	28	J	29	K	30	H	31	D	32			A	33	I	34	C	35	G	36		X	37	J	38	V	39	H	40			
R	41	D	42	K	43	V	44	W	45	T	46	I	47			J	48	O	49		Q	50	L	51	D	52		Y	53		
K	54	S	55	P	56	T	57	V	58	N	59	I	60	J	61		X	62	G	63		B	64	V	65	Y	66	T	67		
F	68	J	69			K	70	T	71	S	72	V	73			P	74	D	75		H	76	R	77	X	78	J	79	K	80	
Y	81	V	82			S	83	P	84	A	85			G	86	X	87	O	88	Y	89		U	90	B	91	D	92			
T	93	V	94	K	95	C	96	J	97	P	98			A	99	B	100	G	101		N	102	K	103	W	104	P	105			
R	106	E	107	Y	108	D	109	H	110			K	111	T	112	V	113	J	114	S	115		T	116	X	117	P	118	E	119	
		I	120	C	121	K	122	T	123			T	124	Y	125	V	126	S	127	M	128		D	129	K	130	P	131	J	132	
C	133	V	134			F	135	G	136	B	137			E	138	O	139	M	140	R	141	L	142	V	143	U	144		I	145	
K	146	T	147	J	148	S	149			K	150	H	151			X	152	I	153	N	154	O	155		V	156	B	157	A	158	
K	159	P	160	G	161	S	162	I	163	O	164	D	165	H	166	P	167			K	168	J	169	S	170		U	171	C	172	
T	173	G	174	V	175			K	176	O	177			W	178	R	179	S	180	I	181	K	182	F	183	D	184	V	185	J	186
		L	187	A	188	U	189			Y	190	N	191	K	192	P	193	V	194	C	195	U	196	R	197			E	198	M	199
K	200	O	201	O	202	Y	203	H	204			J	205	D	206	Y	207			P	208	H	209	T	210	M	211	V	212	K	213
R	214	O	215	N	216			K	217	H	218			J	219	I	220	V	221	W	222	D	223	K	224						

### DIRECTIONS

To solve these puzzles -- and they aren't as tough as they first seem -- supply as many of the Output words as you can in the numbered dashes following the Input. Unless otherwise specified in the Input, the Output consists of one English word. "Comp." means compound, or hyphenated, word.

Transfer each letter to the square in the diagram that bears the corresponding number. After only a few correct guesses you should begin to see words and phrases emerging in the diagram, which when filled in will contain a quotation related to music, recordings, or audio.

The words in the quotation are separated by darkened squares and do not necessarily end at the end of a row.

Try to guess at these words and transfer each newly decoded letter back to its appropriate dash in the Output. This will supply you with further clues.

A final clue: The source of the quotation -- the author and his work -- will be spelled out by the first letters in the Output, reading down.

The answer to HiFi-Crostic No 19 will appear in next month's issue of *High Fidelity*.

INPUT	OUTPUT	INPUT	OUTPUT
A. Christmas greenery	33 21 85 158 99 188	L. Violinist (1899-1969) who organized the Budapest Quartet	142 4 187 51
B. Opera by Lemoigne, step-mother in Rameau's <i>Hippolyte et Aricie</i>	28 100 64 137 157 91	M. In a church service, to present as a sacrifice	199 140 211 24 128
C. With Word D, the commemoration Dec 28 of the children slain by Herod	195 96 133 172	N. Composer Mitch. <i>Man of La Mancha</i>	154 59 191 216 102
D. See Word C (2 wds.)	184 206 75 42 129 52 165 92	O. Herb with showy flowers, old Christmas game of snatching raisins from burning brandy	201 215 121 26 155 35 7 88 177 49
E. As with joyful steps they sped/To that ___ manged from the carol As with Gladness Men of Old	223 9 109 32 107 138 198 5 119	P. One of Peter Cornelius' <i>Weihnachtslieder</i> (3 wds.)	56 105 167 13 84 131 118 98 160 74 8 193 208
F. Once around the track	183 135 68	Q. Moderately heavy	202 164 139 50 11
G. Schubert song, Op. 80, No. 3 (2 Ger. wds.)	16 86 63 174 36 161 101 136	R. Jan. 6 feast commemorating the coming of the Magi	141 41 214 197 23 106 77 179
H. German Christmas cookie	204 151 76 218 19 40 110 31 209 12 166	S. See Word W (3 Ger. wds.)	127 149 83 170 115 3 180 72 162 55
I. Austrian-American composer (1874-1951) <i>Friede auf Erden</i>	120 163 220 153 34 60 181 17 47 145	T. At once, instantly (4 wds., slang)	173 57 123 112 22 67 210 147 116 71 25 93 46 124
J. Italian Christmas candy (2 wds.)	1 29 48 219 38 79 205 148 186 61 20 114 97 132 169 69	U. Imitated	171 196 90 189 144
K. Documentary film about conductor Brico (5 wds.)	80 159 224 150 122 103 168 43 54 200 70 213 2 146 176 217 95 30 111 182 10 130 192	V. Christmas motet by Johann Christoph Bach (3 Ger. wds.)	44 58 134 94 15 194 175 113 39 185 126 73 6 156 221 143 65 82 212
		W. With Word S, Bach Cantata 57, for the second day of Christmas (Ger.)	178 14 45 222 104
		X. American philanthropist who founded the Houston Symphony (full name)	27 37 87 117 62 152 78
		Y. German equivalent of Santa Claus	53 125 66 89 18 108 190 203 81 207

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If you think it takes big money to enjoy the versatility and features of a separate tuner and amplifier, then take a look at Realistic® by Radio Shack. We don't play second fiddle to anyone when it comes to either innovations or value. And we'll give you a special package price on that "dream system" you only *thought* you couldn't afford. Realistic — frustrating to big spenders, but appreciated by millions of smart owners worldwide.

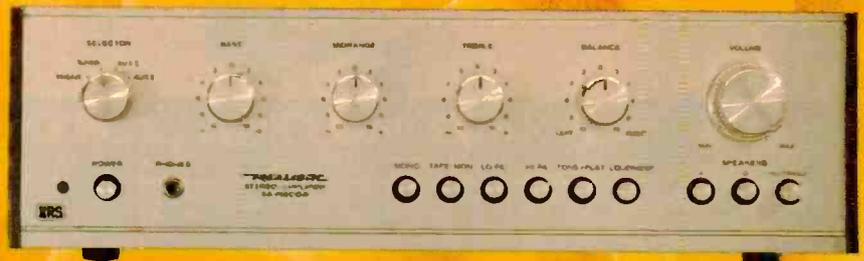
## with

Realistic TM-1000. The only tuner with Auto-Magic® circuitry for instant electronically perfect tuning on FM. Muting, signal strength meter, 75 and 300 ohm antenna inputs, and a gliding-light dial pointer that's also a stereo indicator. 2.0  $\mu$ V FM sensitivity. Only 159.95.\*



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Realistic SA-1000A. Superb sound and flexibility, modest price. Two auxiliary inputs, midrange control, tone flat switch, hi filter, exclusive Quatravox® synthesizer are just a few of its features. 25 watts per channel, minimum RMS at 8 ohms from 20-20,000 Hz, with no more than 0.5% total harmonic distortion. Only 159.95.\*



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At Empire we make a complete line of phono cartridges. Each one has



slightly different performance characteristics which allow you to choose the cartridge most compatible to your turntable.

There are, however, certain advantages, provided by Empire's unique design, that apply to all our cartridges.

One is less wear on your records. Unlike other magnetic cartridges, Empire's moving iron design allows the diamond stylus to float free of its magnets and coils, imposing much less weight on your record's surface and insuring longer record life.

Another advantage is the better channel separation you get with Empire cartridges. We use a small, hollow iron armature which allows for a tighter fit in its positioning among the poles. So, even the most

minute movement is accurately reproduced to give you the space and depth of the original recording.

Finally, Empire uses 4 coils, 4 poles, and 3 magnets (more than any other cartridge) for better balance and hum rejection.

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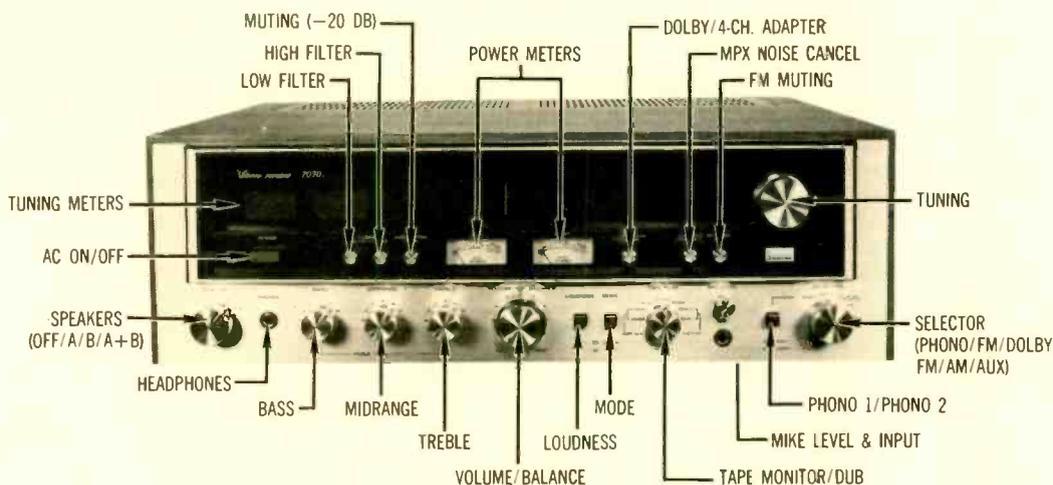
## EMPIRE

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MODEL & STYLUS COLOR	4000 D/III	4000 D/II	4000 D/I	2000Z	2000 E/III	2000 E/II	2000 E/I	2000 E	2000
FREQUENCY RESPONSE	10Hz-50KHz ± 3 db	15Hz-50KHz ± 3 db	15Hz-45KHz ± 3 db	20Hz-20KHz ± 1 db	20Hz-20KHz ± 2 db	20Hz-20KHz ± 2 db	20Hz-20KHz ± 3 db	20Hz-20KHz ± 3 db	20Hz-20KHz ± 3 db
TRACKING FORCE RANGE	¾-1¼ gm	¾-1½ gm	1-1¾ gm	¾-1¼ gm	¾-1½ gm	¾-1½ gm	1-2 gm	1¼-2½ gm	1½-3 gm
SEPARATION: 15Hz to 1KHz 1KHz to 20KHz 20KHz to 50KHz 20 Hz to 500Hz 500Hz to 15KHz 15KHz to 20KHz	28 db 23 db 15 db	26 db 21 db 15 db	24 db 20 db 15 db	20 db 30 db 25 db	20 db 28 db 20 db	20 db 25 db 18 db	18 db 23 db 15 db	18 db 23 db 15 db	16 db 21 db 13 db
I. M. DISTORTION @ 3.54 cm/sec	2% 2KHz-20KHz	2% 2KHz-20KHz	2% 2KHz-20KHz	.08% 2KHz-20KHz	.1% 2KHz-20KHz	.15% 2KHz-20KHz	2% 2KHz-20KHz	2% 2KHz-20KHz	2% 2KHz-20KHz
STYLUS	.2 mil bi-radial	.2 mil bi-radial	.2 mil bi-radial	2 x .7 mil elliptical	.3 x .7 mil elliptical	.7 mil radius spherical			
EFFECTIVE TIP MASS	4 milligram	4 milligram	4 milligram	.2 milligram	.6 milligram	.6 milligram	.6 milligram	9 milligram	1 milligram
COMPLIANCE	30x10 <sup>-6</sup> cm/dyne	30x10 <sup>-6</sup> cm/dyne	30x10 <sup>-6</sup> cm/dyne	30x10 <sup>-6</sup> cm/dyne	20x10 <sup>-6</sup> cm/dyne	18x10 <sup>-6</sup> cm/dyne	17x10 <sup>-6</sup> cm/dyne	16x10 <sup>-6</sup> cm/dyne	14x10 <sup>-6</sup> cm/dyne
TRACKING ABILITY	32 cm/sec @ 1KHz @ 1 gm	32 cm/sec @ 1KHz @ 1¼ gm	30 cm/sec @ 1KHz @ 1½ gm	38 cm/sec @ 1KHz @ .9 gm	32 cm/sec @ 1KHz @ 1 gm	28 cm/sec @ 1KHz @ 1¼ gm	28 cm/sec @ 1KHz @ 1½ gm	28 cm/sec @ 1KHz @ 1¾ gm	32 cm/sec @ 1KHz @ 2 gm
CHANNEL BALANCE	within 1 db @ 1KHz	within 1 db @ 1KHz	within 1½ db @ 1KHz	within ¾ db @ 1KHz	within 1 db @ 1KHz	within 1¼ db @ 1KHz	within 1½ db @ 1KHz	within 1½ db @ 1KHz	within 1½ db @ 1KHz
INPUT LOAD	100K ohms/channel	100K ohms/channel	100K ohms/channel	47K ohms/channel	47K ohms/channel	47K ohms/channel	47K ohms/channel	47K ohms/channel	47K ohms/channel
TOTAL CAPACITANCE	under 100 pf/channel	under 100 pf/channel	under 100 pf/channel	300 pf/channel	400-500 pf/channel	400-500 pf/channel	400-500 pf/channel	400-500 pf/channel	400-500 pf/channel
OUTPUT @ 3.54 cm/sec	3 mv/channel	3 mv/channel	3 mv/channel	3 mv/channel	4.5 mv/channel	4.5 mv/channel	7 mv/channel	7 mv/channel	7 mv/channel

Preparation supervised by  
Robert Long and Harold A. Rodgers  
Laboratory data (unless otherwise noted)  
supplied by CBS Technology Center

# New A CONSUMER'S GUIDE Equipment Reports



## The Solid Receiver from Sansui

**The Equipment:** Sansui Model 7070, a stereo FM/AM receiver in wood case. Dimensions: 19¾ by 6½ inches (front panel); 14½ inches deep plus clearance for controls. Price: \$520. Warranty: "limited," two years parts and labor, cosmetic parts excluded. Manufacturer: Sansui Electric Co., Ltd., Japan; U.S. distributor: Sansui Electronics Corp., 55-11 Queens Blvd., Woodside, N.Y. 11377.

**Comment:** Here is yet another receiver in what we have come to think of as the Sansui tradition: solid, well thought-out, neither barebones nor feature-encumbered, delivering performance that is right up there with the best for its product category (implying better-than-conventional internal design) but with sufficiently conventional cosmetics that it will offend nobody and please all but the collectors of esoterica.

Some "extras" are immediately apparent when you lay an inquiring finger on the controls. The tone knobs are stepped (for repeatable settings) and include a MIDRANGE as well as the usual BASS and TREBLE. There is provision for two phono inputs. There is a mono mike input with its own mixing level control. (Like similar inputs on a number of receivers we have examined, it is designed for public-address use and cannot be used for recording from the tape-output connections—an approach that we think is a mistake. Sansui and other manufacturers must believe, however, that a significant number of receiver buyers want to sing along with their music via the loudspeakers. If that, or something similar, is your bent, fine; we don't value the ca-

pability.) There also is output-power metering for the amplifier section.

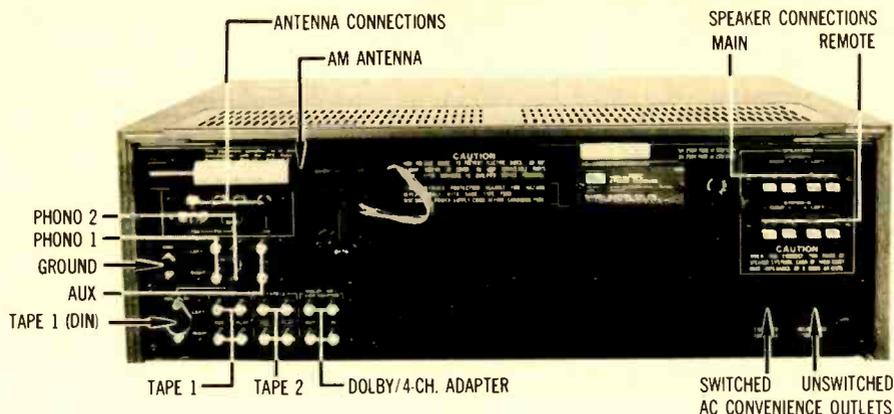
One special feature of the 7070 is its provision for outboard decoding of Dolby FM broadcasts. Two controls are used. The selector has a position for DOLBY FM ADAPTER, which takes care of the necessary change in equalization but does not switch in the adapter itself. If you have a tape deck with a Dolby-FM feature connected to the Tape 1 or Tape 2 jacks, you can use that (via the appropriate position of the monitor selector) for decoding; or you can hook up a Dolby box to the DOLBY NR/4-CH. ADAPTER connections and use the appropriate front-panel button. Note that these connections can work equally well for a QS or SQ decoder—which might conceivably be outboarded from the Dolby box if you choose to use both. The owner's manual, which is well below the (excellent) best we've seen from Sansui, is particularly opaque in this area, although it attempts elucidation in each of three languages.

The tuner section is excellent—at least good in every re-

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**REPORT POLICY** Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and controlled listening tests. Unless otherwise noted, test data and measurements are obtained by CBS Technology Center, Stamford, Connecticut, a division of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc., one of the nation's leading research organizations. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with the editors of HIGH FIDELITY. Manufacturers are not permitted to read reports in advance of publication, and no report, or portion thereof, may be reproduced for any purpose or in any form without written permission of the publisher. All reports should be construed as applying to the specific samples tested; neither HIGH FIDELITY nor CBS Technology Center assumes responsibility for product performance or quality.

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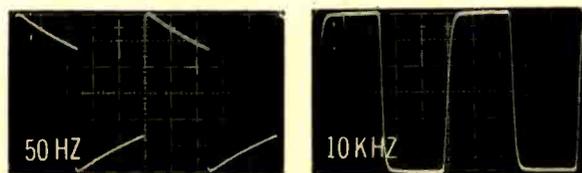
spect and near-superlative in many. The least attractive data are those for high-frequency harmonic distortion in stereo (over 2%). As we've commented before, this measurement indicates the presence of unwanted products that, in theory, you're better off without; but since these products are generally beyond audibility (the second harmonic of 10 kHz is, of course, 20 kHz) a high figure here is not the serious fault it would be at a lower test frequency. In any event CBS has measured other products, some of them very fine indeed, with far higher figures in this test.

The amplifier section is rated at 18 dBW (60 watts) per channel and actually will pump out 1/2 dB more before exceeding the distortion rating at any audio frequency. More impressive, harmonic distortion is far below Sansui's 0.3% rating at all tested power levels, exceeding 0.05% in few measurements and only at power/frequency levels where an increase in distortion is of relatively little consequence. Intermodulation too is low, with the 4-ohm data looking more like that at 8 ohms than one usually sees. (Typical amps deliver more power at 4 ohms, but only at the expense of significantly higher intermodulation through most of the useful range.)

The tone controls work well enough, though we would have liked filters that were more clearly differentiated in contour from the bass and treble curves—that is, with knees closer to the frequency extremes and with steeper slopes for sharper filtering. This is, however, an exceedingly minor matter, and one that we might pass over without comment in a receiver with which we were less impressed over-all.

But if your expectations are high, there's very little about the 7070 that we think might disappoint you. Feel and finish of the parts is excellent, as we have come to expect of Sansui. The capable amplifier section has enough power for use with two pairs of speakers if you want (and switching is provided for them); the tuner section is among the best; the ancillary functions (including tape dubbing in either direction between two decks—though not while you're listening to another source) are comprehensive and efficient. All in all, a fine value for the money.

CIRCLE 134 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Square-wave response

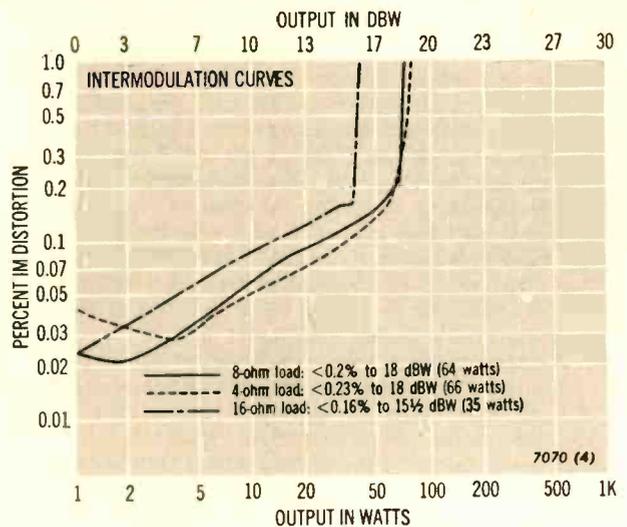
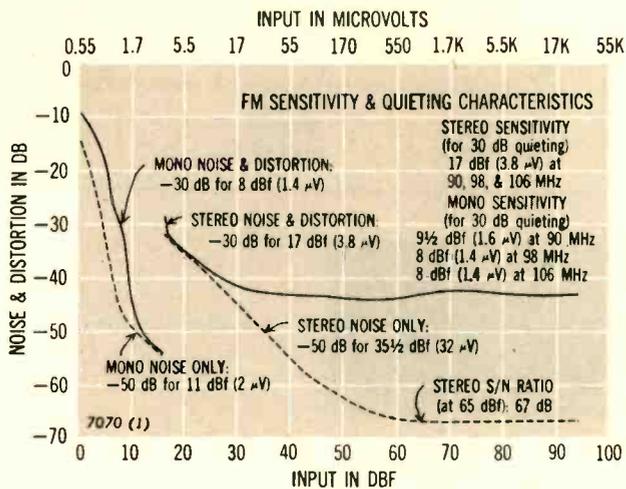
### Sansui 7070 Receiver Additional Data

#### Tuner Section

Capture ratio	1 1/4 dB		
Alternate-channel selectivity	83 dB		
S/N ratio (mono)	70 dB		
THD	Mono	L ch	R ch
80 Hz	0.15%	0.62%	0.73%
1 kHz	0.22%	0.56%	0.54%
10 kHz	0.20%	2.3%	2.5%
IM distortion	0.06%		
19-kHz pilot	-61 dB		
38-kHz subcarrier	-68 dB		
Frequency response	mono +1, -2 1/2 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz		
L ch	+1 1/2, -3 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz		
R ch	+1, -3 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz		
Channel separation	>35 dB, 25 Hz to 3.8 kHz		
	>25 dB, 20 Hz to 9.5 kHz		

#### Amplifier Section

Power output at clipping (channels driven simultaneously)			
L ch	18 1/2 dBW (70 watts) for 0.28% THD		
R ch	18 1/2 dBW (70 watts) for 0.28% THD		
Total harmonic distortion (20 Hz to 20 kHz)			
at 18 dBW (60 watts)	L ch: <0.060% R ch: <0.064%		
at 10 dBW (10 watts)	L ch: <0.019% R ch: <0.030%		
at -2 dBW (0.6 watts)	L ch: <0.051% R ch: <0.050%		
Frequency response	± 1/2 dB, below 10 Hz to above 20 kHz		
	+ 1/2, -3 dB, below 10 Hz to 65 kHz		
RIAA equalization	+ 1/2, -1 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz		
Input characteristics (for rated output at full gain)			
	Sensitivity	Noise	S/N ratio
phono 1, 2	1.9 mV	-48 dBW	66 dB
mike	2.5 mV	-54 dBW	72 dB
aux	110 mV	-66 dBW	84 dB
tape 1, 2	110 mV	-68 dBW	86 dB
Phono overload (clipping point)	160 mV at 1 kHz		
Damping factor at 1 kHz	22		



### About the dBW . . .

As we announced in the June issue, we currently are expressing output power and noise in terms of dBW—meaning power in dB with a reference (0 dBW) of 1 watt. We repeat herewith the conversion table so that you can use the advantages of dBW in comparing current products with those we have reported on in the past. You can, of course, use the figures in watts that accompany the new dBW figures for these comparisons, but then you lose the ability to compare noise levels for outputs other than rated power and the ability to figure easily the levels to which specific amplifiers will drive specific speakers—a matter explained at some length in the June issue.

If you do not have the June issue and would like a reprint of the full exposition, send 25¢ (U.S.) to:

dBW, c/o High Fidelity Magazine, The Publishing House, Great Barrington, Mass. 01230.

WATTS	dBW	WATTS	dBW	WATTS	dBW
1.00	0	10.0	10	100	20
1.25	1	12.5	11	125	21
1.6	2	16	12	160	22
2.0	3	20	13	200	23
2.5	4	25	14	250	24
3.2	5	32	15	320	25
4.0	6	40	16	400	26
5.0	7	50	17	500	27
6.3	8	63	18	630	28
8.0	9	80	19	800	29

## Empire 2000Z Plays It Cool

**The Equipment:** Empire 2000Z, a stereo phono cartridge with elliptical stylus. Price: \$100. Warranty: "limited," one year parts and labor. Manufacturer: Empire Scientific Corp., 1055 Stewart Ave., Garden City, N.Y. 11530.

**Comment:** Phono cartridges are strange beasts, and, when one considers the matter a moment, it seems that the specialized little devils have become the prima donnas of our music-reproduction systems. Not that they have become all that glamorous—power amps, preamps, and tuners, to name a few, exceed them in mystique—but from no other component do we accept quite as much in the



way of just plain orneriness. The comparatively high distortion and idiosyncratic frequency response are cases in point, as is the fussiness of installation and adjustment. Mostly, however, it is a matter of sonic personality: One

pickup sounds bright, another warm, another very detailed. The Empire 2000Z is unusually reticent about revealing its intrinsic character.

According to the data from CBS labs, the 2000Z negotiates the sweep-tone torture test with a vertical tracking force of just 0.6 gram. Using a 1-gram VTF, the cartridge exhibits good tracking of high-amplitude steady and quasi-steady signals as well. The left-channel frequency response is outstandingly flat. Surprisingly, the right channel response is less so, the entire 1½ dB of falloff being between 10 and 20 kHz. Separation is 18 dB or better up to 10 kHz, dwindling to 12½ dB at 20 kHz. This establishes no records but is certainly adequate.

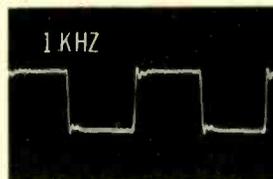
The two channels have an average sensitivity of 0.89 millivolt per centimeter per second and are matched in this respect to within ¼ dB. Lateral IM distortion is very low, while vertical IM, as is usual for pickups, is considerably higher. Second harmonic distortion is fairly low at mid-band, rising with increasing frequency but remaining within acceptable limits. A 1-kHz square wave is reproduced with a minuscule amount of ultrasonic ringing and virtually no overshoot or undershoot.

Low-frequency resonance in the SME arm is dangerously close to warp territory at 6.5 Hz. This means that the 2000Z would prefer to be mounted in an arm less massive than the SME. We also note that the cartridge body rides closer to the disc surface than that of some pickups. This could prove troublesome with severely warped discs, though we encountered no difficulties with the records we used in testing. The measured vertical tracking angle is 20 degrees—a value that seems to be in increasing use by manufacturers. The elliptical stylus tip is acceptably polished, with good geometry and alignment. Under the microscope its dimensions were measured at 22 by 5.5 micrometers (0.9 by 0.2 mil).

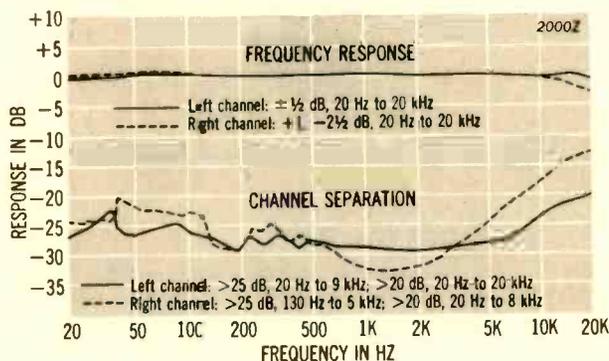
Listening to the 2000Z playing music seems anticlimactic at first. The only peculiarity we noticed was that, in our setup, connecting the turntable ground lead to the preamp increased the hum rather than lessened it. The sound struck us as in no way spectacular. Finally the light dawned: This is a neutral cartridge—it's supposed to sound that way. The highs are not subdued; they are just smooth, rather than peaky and shrill. Instrumental tim-

## Empire 2000Z Cartridge Additional Data

Maximum tracking levels (1.0 gram VTF; re RIAA 0 VU)	
300 Hz	> +12 dB
1 kHz	+18 dB
10-20 kHz	> -5 dB



Square-wave response



bres are reproduced in fine detail, but without being artificially pointed up. Thus one is able to hear soft inner voices and pastel shadings that are all but obscured by the bravura of some of the competition.

The Empire 2000Z is truly impressive. It is well worth auditioning, even though that can't be done in a hurry if you are to hear—and savor—its quality.

CIRCLE 135 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

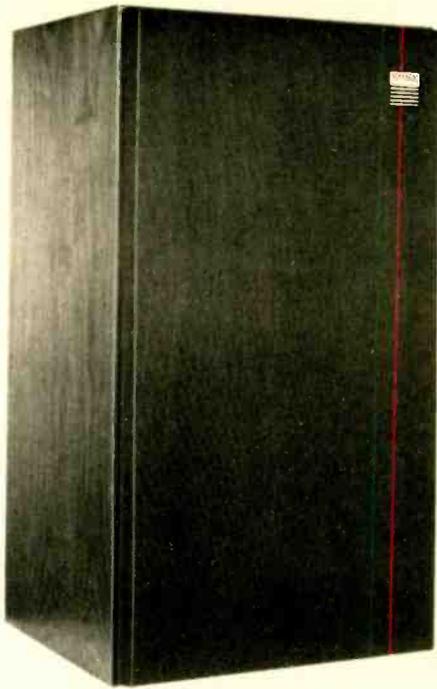
## Sony SSU-2000, a Speaker with Definition

**The Equipment:** Sony SSU-2000, a loudspeaker in wood-finished cabinet. Dimensions: 21¼ by 13¼ inches (front), 14½ inches deep. Price: \$150. Warranty: "limited," two years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Sony Corp., Japan; U.S. distributor: Sony Corp. of America, 9 W. 57th St., New York, N.Y. 10019.

**Comment:** Beneath its well-finished walnut veneer and tasteful brown grille cloth, the SSU-2000 conceals the heart of a tiger—and a persnickety tiger at that. For a floor-

standing speaker of modest size (its mass and dimensions make bookshelf placement difficult) it not only can pour out sound, but loses virtually none of its composure while doing so. The unit is not entirely free of temperament, but its willfulness is manifested chiefly in its insistence on proper placement in the listening environment.

All the SSU-2000 requires to make its roar heard is amplifier power, and not too much of it is needed. Testing at the CBS Technology Center showed that an electrical input of 0 dBW (1 watt) is capable of driving the system to an



average sound pressure level of 90 dB in the range of 250 to 6,000 Hz at 1 meter on axis. The ultimate continuous SPL before audible breakup (buzzing) is 105 dB, from an input of 17½ dBW (57 watts). The speaker thus has about ½ dB of headroom in excess of its rated maximum input.

A pulsed input of 27½ dBW (545 watts) peak—the limit of the test amplifier—is taken in stride by the loudspeaker and results in a peak output of 115 dB SPL. This indicates excellent dynamic range, especially since harmonic distortion remains low until the system is really driven past its limits.

According to the measured impedance curve, the Sony can be rated nominally at 6.6 ohms, reasonably close to the 8 ohms specified by the manufacturer. The curve is smooth and never dips below this value, making two of these loudspeakers in parallel a load that most solid-state amplifiers will tolerate with equanimity. (Amplifier connections, incidentally, are made via spring-loaded, color-coded terminals on the back panel that are designed to accept bare—preferably tinned—wires.)

The anechoic frequency response of the SSU-2000 is characterized by a smooth rolloff from about 80 Hz upward. From 12.5 to 18 kHz, the upper limit of testing, the decline becomes more rapid but remains smooth. The tweeter level control (accessible on the front panel with the grille cloth removed) is capable of boosting response by 2 dB over the NORMAL setting (where the measurements were made) from about 2 kHz upward. At its low extreme, this control cuts off response above 5 kHz almost entirely, so a gentle hand must be used in reducing the high-frequency output. On the whole, as one might expect, the acoustic output of the system becomes increasingly directional at higher frequencies. But the transition is very gradual, and even at the highest frequencies dispersion remains adequate close to 45 degrees off axis.

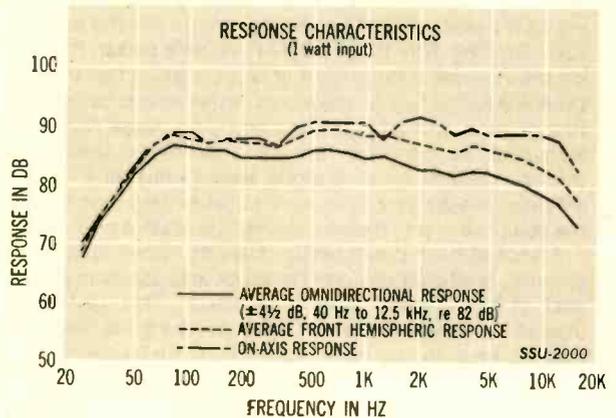
In listening tests, we found ourselves struck by the transparency and outstanding transient response of this system; the wealth of musical detail it exposes to the ear is simply breathtaking. It did seem to us at first, however, that

in achieving such detailed reproduction of transients, the Sony engineers had sacrificed a bit of the bass response, which tended to sound overdamped. We sought to cure this with a gentle bass boost (using tone controls), and the SSU-2000 accepted this with no protest other than introducing a barely perceptible heaviness in the upper bass.

The real problem was that we had mounted the speakers too far off the floor. By placing them directly on the floor (as the instructions suggest) we were able to generate an excess of bass without help from the tone controls. Obviously, then, the optimum location in the vertical plane lies somewhere between bookshelf height and the floor—depending in part, we suspect, on how far the units are from the nearest walls of the room. Fine tuning of the location is well worth the effort, for it results in bass output that is abundant and yet "tight." The vertical dispersion of the tweeter is such that high frequencies are but slightly influenced by any reasonable vertical placement. The stereo image presented by a pair of SSU-2000's is stable and accurate with respect to horizontal direction. The sense of depth is not outstanding, but it is nothing to complain about either.

It might be said that the performance of the SSU-2000 is akin to that of a fine judo practitioner—strong, yet refined and precise in the application of muscle. And frankly, what we heard astonished us. With this new design, Sony has given the state of the art for this price point a noticeable push forward.

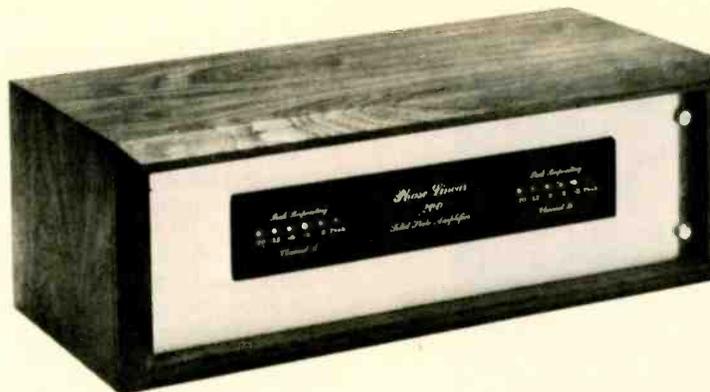
CIRCLE 132 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



### Sony SSU-2000 Speaker Harmonic Distortion\*

Output Level (dB)	Frequency			
	80 Hz		300 Hz	
	% 2nd	% 3rd	% 2nd	% 3rd
75	0.15	0.20	0.15	0.20
80	0.19	0.22	0.14	0.26
85	0.27	0.32	0.21	0.25
90	0.45	0.36	0.42	0.25
95	0.85	0.43	0.55	0.25
100	3.7	2.3	0.90	0.30
105			1.6	0.25

\*Distortion data are taken on all tested speakers until distortion exceeds the 10% level, the output level reaches 100 dB at 80 Hz, the input power reaches 100 watts at 300 Hz, or the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing, whichever occurs first.



## Phase Linear's "Son of Superamp"

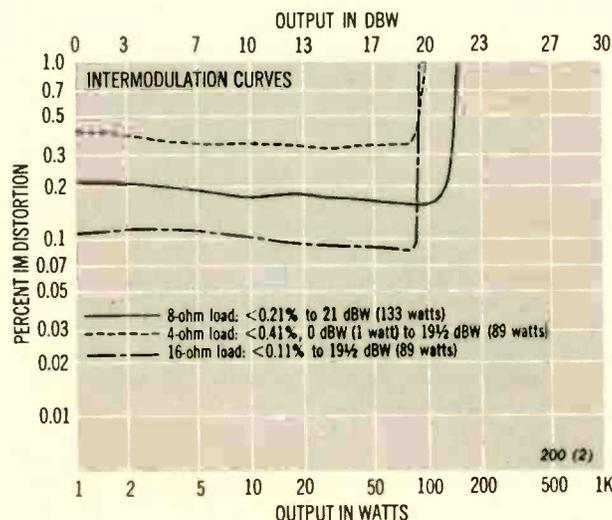
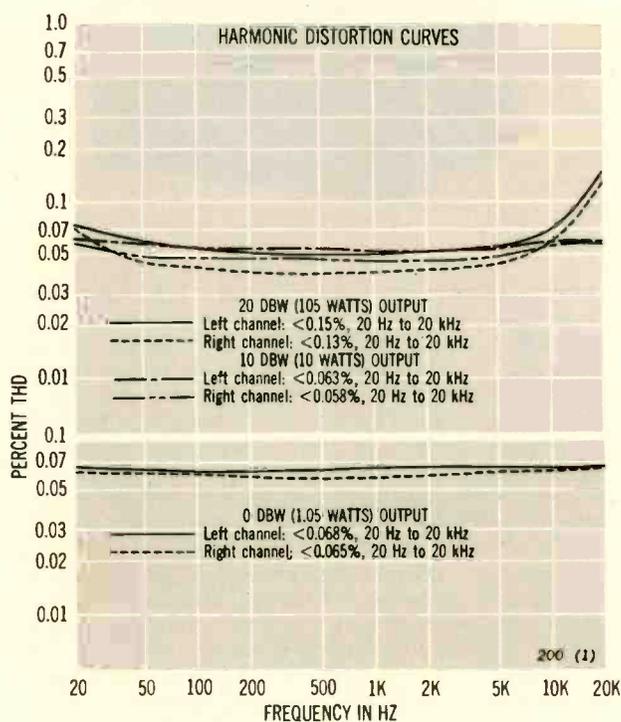
**The Equipment:** Phase Linear 200, a stereo power amplifier in metal case. Dimensions: 19 by 5½ inches (front panel); 8¾ inches deep, plus clearance for ventilation. Price: \$389; optional wood case, \$37. Warranty: "limited," three years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Phase Linear Corp., 20121 48th Ave. W., Lynnwood, Wash. 98036.

**Comment:** Jaded as we tend to become on the subject of amplifier power, we are tempted to contemplate a unit rated at a mere 105 watts per channel—especially from Phase Linear—with mild condescension: to pat it gently on the head and say, "Well now, sonny, this is a job for a big amp. Where are your brothers, the 400 and 700?" Speeding to the rescue, Captain Decibel points out the error in such thinking. With its 20 dBW of available power, the 200 is within 5¼ dB of the largest of its siblings—a fact that we think will not be lost on the ear once this amp is connected to a preamp and loudspeakers and the volume control is advanced. To convince remaining doubters, there is a front-panel light-emitting-diode array (adjustable for 10-dB extra sensitivity via the back-panel switch) that relates the power output to the sound pressure level at one's ears.

A second back-panel switch, the only other control on the unit, is labeled VELOCITY FEEDBACK and serves to cancel part of the internal current feedback. This feature is unique in our experience. In theory, lowering the feedback may increase steady-state distortion, reduce transient intermodulation, and increase the already high damping. In practice we could not detect significant differences in these respects with our speakers—but you may with yours, and the added flexibility is welcome.

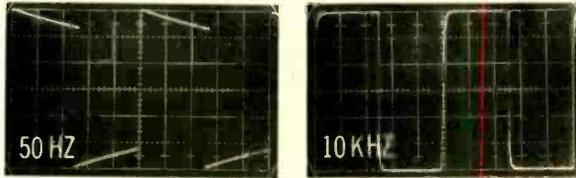
Harmonic distortion of the Phase Linear 200 is well below the level (0.25%) specified by the manufacturer. The worst figure encountered in testing is 0.15%—at full power with a 20-kHz driving signal. At levels of 0 and 10 dBW (1 and 10 watts), which represent more realistic conditions of actual use, 0.06% is the worst THD that could be wrung from the amp. IM distortion is less superlative, measuring between 0.16 and 0.21% for an 8-ohm load from -9 to about +21 dBW, with the highest figure right around the 0-dBW point. As one might expect, a 16-ohm load improves IM, while at 4 ohms it is considerably worse. Still, listening to fairly efficient (nominal 8-ohm) speakers driven by the 200, we did not notice any deficiency in sound quality that we could attribute to IM.

Frequency response, taken at 0-dBW output, is  $\pm 1/2$  dB, 20 Hz to beyond 100 kHz, and at 10 Hz no more than 1½ dB of rolloff is found. The signal-to-noise ratio of 102½ dB (equivalent to -82½ dBW of internally generated noise) is excellent, and the 1.8 volts needed to drive the amp to full



power is no problem for a good preamp. The gain of the amp (24 dB) is not adjustable—except via the feedback switch. (With less negative feedback there is, of course, more gain.)

The Phase Linear 200 is easy to install and, with its ample heat sink, requires no more than normal ventilation. To our ears its sound is very clean. The appearance of the unit is pleasant, and the power output monitor is informative indeed. Additional niceties, such as delayed activa-



Square-wave response

tion of the speakers to guard against thumps, round out the package in fitting fashion. Over-all the 200 strikes us as a very good little big amp.

CIRCLE 133 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

### Phase Linear 200 Additional Data

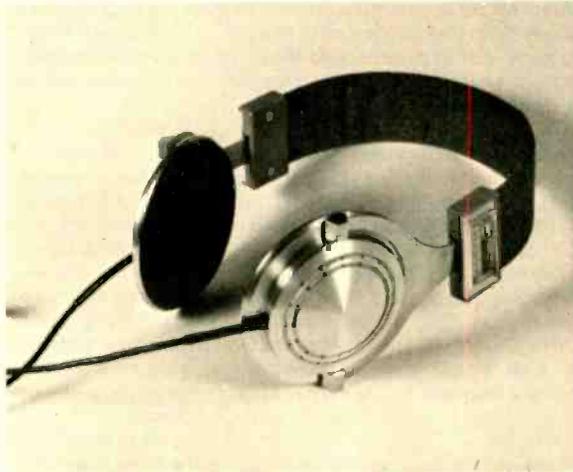
Power output at clipping (both channels driven)  
 L ch 21 dBW (130 watts) for 0.075% THD  
 R ch 21 dBW (130 watts) for 0.069% THD

Input characteristics (for rated output at full gain)  
 Sensitivity 1.8 V  
 Noise -82½ dBW  
 S/N ratio 102½ dBW

Frequency response  
 ± ½ dB, 20 Hz to above 100 kHz  
 + ½, -1½ dB, 10 Hz to above 100 kHz

Damping factor at 1 kHz 228

## A Lightweight Headset from Stanton



**The Equipment:** Stanton Stereo/Wafer Model XXI, a stereo headset. Price: \$70. Warranty: "limited," one year parts and labor. Manufacturer: Stanton Magnetics, Inc., Terminal Drive, Plainview, N.Y. 11803.

**Comment:** The Stereo/Wafer Model XXI marks a new direction in Stanton headphones in that it is the company's first on-the-ear, as opposed to around-the-ear, design. With its light weight (7¼ ounces, excluding the cord), delicately padded earpieces, and easily adjustable headband, this model sets a new standard for comfort in the Stanton line. And since the auditory performance of the Model XXI is characterized by wide frequency response and unusually low distortion, the sense of hearing is treated as well as is the tactile sense.

As we normally do with headsets, we checked the frequency response of the Model XXI by ear, using recorded bands of one-third-octave pink noise. The only notable departure from flat response we can find is a moderate peak centered at 3 kHz and extending from about 2 to 4 kHz. Interestingly, we were not able to relate this peak directly to any coloration (there is little in any case) of reproduced music. The high-frequency response extends smoothly to the upper limit of the test signals at about 15.6 kHz, and the bass response is solid to somewhere between 30 and 40 Hz. Part of the weakness in the 30-Hz band can be attributed to the fact that the earpieces are not coupled very tightly to the ear. Increasing the pressure gives a little more bass and a lot less comfort, so we are inclined to credit Stanton's designers with having made a good compromise. Actually, since the rolloff is very gentle and the distortion very low, equalization is unusually well tolerated. Thus a gentle adjustment of the tone can easily satisfy all but the most ardent bass freaks.

The overbrightness that we have often found in the high-frequency range of headsets is hardly evident in this model. To our ears the top end sounds very smooth, open, and airy. The transient response seems precise without giving an impression of being overly clinical, and the dynamic range is fine.

Having a high sensitivity and a nominal impedance of 100 ohms, the Model XXI does not present any significant problems to its driving source. The unit is not at its best driven from the relatively high impedance of a preamp or tape recorder monitor output, but when it is, it won't lead you down the primrose path, either. If you have been waiting impatiently for Stanton to produce an up-to-date open-air headset, you'll probably agree that the Model XXI has been worth the wait.

CIRCLE 131 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**We invite rebuttal from those who produce the equipment we review. The comments printed here are culled from those responses.**

**Sherwood S-9910 stereo receiver (September 1976):** The review takes Sherwood to task for the design of the mike/mixing section. Because the mike signal enters after the tape-recording jacks, the report opines that this makes the mike circuit useless for recording purposes. Had Sherwood elected to inject the mike signal before the tape-recording jacks, as HIGH FIDELITY suggests, there would have been no way to mix the mike with the tape sources. This would prohibit voice over tape in a public-address situation or when dubbing from one deck to another. If the reviewers had consulted page 19 of the owner's manual, they would have seen that, to record from the mike/mix circuit, the user is told to connect the recorder to the four-channel output jacks. This permits the mike to be mixed with any source on the selector and fed to a common output for recording the mixed signals. Therefore the S-9910 has double flexibility: 1) the mike/mix used as a PA voice-over system, and 2) mike/mix circuit for recording should the user's recorder have no such facilities.

The review's plots of harmonic distortion are not characteristic of our product measurements. At 100 watts at 20 Hz, measurable distortion is typically between 0.05 and 0.07%, not 0.58% as stated in the report. These points aside, however, we find it rewarding—after the considerable time and effort we've spent in developing the S-9910—that your opinion matches ours.

THOMAS PICKETT  
Sherwood Electronic Laboratories

**HF replies:** Our criteria for mike-mixing circuits in receivers are based on home high fidelity use alone, not on public-address use. Judging from reader mail, the most common use for such a feature is in adding live sound to records—singing along with instrumental recordings, adding commentary to background music for such things as slide-film audio, and so on—and, usually, recording the result. If the mike mixing were ahead of the tape connections, this purpose would, in our opinion, be better served, and mike/tape mixing still would be possible by connecting the output of the deck supplying the pretaped signal to an AUX input—a change involving two leads, not four, as would be required with a monitoring deck at the 4-CH. connections. We did not say that the mike feature was useless, only that it was less useful for high fidelity purposes than it might have been, a viewpoint that has not changed. But we did misidentify the correct spot for hooking in the recording deck with the S-9910 as it exists. The 4-CH. connections suggested in the manual seem more appropriate than the PRE-OUT/MAIN-IN connections mentioned in the review.

The distortion as measured in the lab does appear to be much higher (even allowing for differences in measurement technique) than typical—and also, we now understand, than was measured on our sample before Sherwood sent it to the lab. By no stretch of the imagination, however, can it be considered unacceptably high. The cited 0.58% was found only in one channel, only at 20 Hz, and only at full rated power output. With normal musical signals even our measurements indicate that distortion would be much lower and, in fact, no higher than the range quoted as typical by Sherwood. Since the distortion was inaudible in both theory and practice, and since at the time it appeared quite possible that the disparity was due solely to difference in measurement techniques (if, for example, Sherwood had derived its 0.1% distortion spec with only one channel driven; we find, however, that—like CBS labs—it drives both channels in this test), we saw no reason to assume malfunction in our sample. If malfunction it be, as Sherwood suggests, it is an exceedingly minor one.

**Sonus Blue Label phono cartridge (September 1976):** Conventional measurements tell only a small part of the story. Critical listening, using a wide variety of program material and varied associated equipment, should have revealed a superiority of sound reproduction, not necessarily predictable from the limited test procedures available. Your review would lead readers to assume that the product does not live up to the claims we make for it. Quite sincerely, I believe that, taken all around, the Blue Label cartridge is capable of the finest (i.e., most musically accurate) reproduction obtainable from discs today. Being subjective, this must of course remain a matter of opinion. However, we have literally thousands of unsolicited testimonials (most on warranty cards) that this is indeed the case. They have been received in much greater abundance and are more enthusiastic than I've ever experienced before.

PETER E. PRITCHARD  
Sonic Research, Inc.

**HF replies:** Mr. Pritchard enclosed many samples of the user comments, which are indeed impressive. It may be to the point to note that none of the users happens to have duplicated any of the test setups in which we tried the Blue Label cartridge, though with none of our setups did we feel that the pickup entirely merited the extreme superlatives that, elsewhere, have been used to characterize it.

**Hartley Holton Jr. loudspeaker system (October 1976):** The principal weakness I find with your review is the lack of data interpretation. It is not enough just to state numbers. We must be able to relate these numbers to what we ultimately hear. It is obvious from the varied reactions of the listening panel that they could not make any definite interpretations. Their recommendation that the Holton Jr. must be auditioned carefully by each listener is sound advice.

RICHARD SCHMETTERER  
Hartley Products Corp.

**HF replies:** We believe that different readers will respond quite differently to the qualities of the Holton Jr., just as our listening panel did. In deference to these legitimate differences of opinion, we would repeat the recommendation seconded by Mr. Schmetterer.

**Sonab OA-14 loudspeaker system (June 1976):** While the factory has published a one-year warranty (as specified in your report), a supplemental warranty furnished by the U.S. subsidiary (Sonab Electronics Corp.—which is not, as the report puts it, a "distributor" in the technical sense) extends the warranty to five years. The OA-14 does not have casters in the ordinary sense, and your use of the term could be misleading to some of your readers. They are, as the manual says, "sprung rubber feet to prevent vibration." Also, the OA-14 does have a control for high frequencies: a three-position jumper plug that changes response by 1½ dB per step.

CAL GARNICA  
Sonab Electronics Corp.

**HF replies:** We must apologize for using the word "casters." The mistake was caught before the issue went to press, but for some reason the change was not made as we had indicated. Though the feet permit easy movement of the speaker, they most definitely are not casters.

The high-frequency control, we were given to understand, is set at the factory on the basis of performance with the specific unit—that is, the factory setting may not be the same from one sample to another—and therefore we do not consider it as a user control in the usual sense. This is, perhaps, a semantic point; but if the intent is to let the user tailor response to the room with this jumper, its operation seems more problematic than that of conventional controls. Even more a question of semantics is our use of "distributor." We mean simply the organization in charge of distributing a foreign product to the U.S. market, whether that organization be a subsidiary, an importer, a distributor, or whatever.

# WHY MOST CRITICS USE MAXELL TAPE TO EVALUATE TAPE RECORDERS.

Any critic who wants to do a completely fair and impartial test of a tape recorder is very fussy about the tape he uses.

Because a flawed tape can lead to some very misleading results.

A tape that can't cover the full audio spectrum can keep a recorder from ever reaching its full potential.

A tape that's noisy makes it hard to measure how quiet the recorder is.

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And a tape that doesn't sound consistently the same, from end to end, from tape to tape, can make you question the stability of the electronics.

If a cassette or 8-track jams, it can suggest some nasty, but erroneous comments about the drive mechanism.

And if a cassette or 8-track introduces wow and flutter, it's apt to produce some test results that anyone can argue with.

Fortunately, we test every inch of every Maxell cassette, 8-track and reel-to-reel tape to make sure



they don't have the problems that plague other tapes.

So it's not surprising that most critics end up with our tape in their tape recorders.

It's one way to guarantee the equipment will get a fair hearing.

**Maxell. The tape that's too good for most equipment.**

Maxell Corporation of America, 30 West Commercial Ave., Moonachie, New Jersey 07074.



# How I Choose a Component System

## Six Experts at Work Within Three Budgets

When we asked our six experts to pick high fidelity systems for us, we had no idea what they would come up with. We had begun with three price points, chosen our writers on the basis of diversity of interest and life styles, and assigned two of them to each of the price points. We had hoped that they would come to quite different conclusions about how the money should be spent, and they didn't disappoint us.

But we explained to them that we were less interested in what they chose than in why they chose it. It's of little value to a reader to know that Expert A admires Brand Z—unless the reader also happens to have the same high fidelity objectives and priorities as Expert A. Our purpose in publishing such an article at all is to help readers explore the rationale of component-choosing, and it is the process of mind rather than the final choice that we believe to be revealing for this purpose.

You may even be misled if you pay primary attention to the models that found their way onto our experts' final lists. Where, for example, is JBL? Where is McIntosh? How come nobody chose Pioneer or Akai or Sansui or BIC or Tandberg or SAE or Nakamichi or Sherwood or ESS—to name only a few of the best-known brands that one might logically expect to find in these systems? It's not that our experts are unaware of the qualities that, in appropriate systems, these brands have to offer; their exclusion is simply a matter of the objectives, priorities, budgets, and in some cases the prejudices (about which our authors tend to be quite frank) at hand.

We should also add a note about prices. Some of our authors consulted price lists, some consulted their files of product announcements, some investigated the subject with local dealers. Since the Federal Trade Commission has all but outlawed "list prices" (though it has sanctioned the "nationally advertised value" as a way of disseminating the same information), pricing today is more confusing than, perhaps, it has ever been in high fidelity. Some prices fluctuate radically from place to place and from time to time. So all the figures shown are only approximate at best, and some of the specified systems might be bought well under budget by some readers while others might find that the going price exceeds budget. But, again, the point is not to be found in such specifics; it is in the reasoning—or, perhaps, the want of it—that leads individual experts to make their highly individual choices.



# Ivan Berger Chooses a \$1,000 System

*A New York apartment-dweller and man-about-audio (for such publications as Popular Mechanics and Saturday Review), Mr. Berger explores the wilds of photographic and electronic technology with the gusto of a big-game hunter.*

SHOULD A FRIEND ask me to suggest a \$1,000 system for him, my first comment would be, "Bless you!" I'm that tired of friends who ask for "something really good" at \$119.95.

After that, I'd start asking him about his wants and needs, his likes and dislikes: whether he wants tape and, if so, why; how much he listens to FM, how much to records; whether he's primarily interested in classical music or in rock.

But since my friend is hypothetical, I can't design a system for him. So I'll design one for myself. Because 90% of my time listening at home is devoted to records, I think I'll splurge the whole grand on a phonograph system and add tape and FM later.

I'm an opera nut, so I'll want a changer. And since I also have a collection of such ancient recordings as Henry Burr's "You Remind Me of My Mother," it'll need to be a changer that plays 78s. That seems to restrict me to a Dual 1229Q or a Miracord. A three-speed Miracord costs less, but having to remove the spindle to flip the records over drives me up the wall, so the Dual 1229Q is it. [Dual has recently discontinued the 1229Q, but some units may still be available in stores.—Ed.] I'll also need a stereo cartridge for which a 78-rpm stylus is available. Shure's V-15 Type III and Stanton's 681EE both qualify and sound good, too. Let's arbitrarily choose the Stanton.

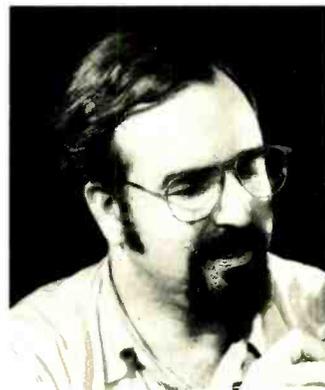
But now I've already used up a frightening chunk of my budget, with a turntable that costs \$270 with base and dust cover and a cartridge that adds about \$75—at least if I buy the whole system at once. This leaves me with only about \$655 for speakers and an amplifier.

That's a toughie. Because my budget's getting tight, and because I consider 18 dBW (60 watts) per channel optimum—above that, the cost of extra power rises more rapidly than its benefit; below that the difference is more often audible—I'll build Dynakit's: The PAT-4 preamp kit and Stereo 120 power amp will cost me about \$348 together, leaving me \$307 for speakers. (If my budget were \$1,100, though, I'd probably get the Heathkit AR-1500A receiver; for \$96 more, I'd get the same power, plus FM and AM.)

Now for the speakers—another challenge, since I have only \$153.50 per speaker left to spend. Luckily, the \$150 range is, to my mind, a breaking point like the 18-dBW point in amplifiers. Beyond this, you have to spend a great deal more to get a major sound improvement, while below it every penny pinched screams audibly.

Before committing myself and my money to any specific pair of speakers, I'd have to spend a great deal of time listening and making A/B comparisons. But I've heard enough speakers from enough companies to start with a long list of candidates. I've actually heard many of these speakers; as for the rest, I've either heard good things about them or liked other models made by the same companies. And it's quite possible that I might discover something else along my route that sounds better. But here's my starting list:

Acoustic Research AR-2ax	\$165	Hegeman H-1AV	\$318/pr.
Advent	\$132	Infinity 1001A	\$139
Audioanalyst A-100X	\$147	Janszen 210ah	\$150
Beovox Phase-Link S-45	\$135	KLH-6	\$150
Dynaco A-40XL	\$149	Lafayette Criterion 2002	\$150
Electro-Voice Interface B	\$325/pr.	Pioneer HPM-40	\$150
	Heathkit AS-1373	\$150	



At least, I'd try to listen to them. The list is far too long to be managed, so I'd doubtless drop—with relief—those speakers for which I couldn't find a conveniently located dealer. Sounds unheard may well be sweetest, but not to spend your money on, thank you. For the time being, let's pencil in the least expensive (the Advent) and plan to use the saving for a 78-rpm stylus.

This budget is, quite frankly, lopsided. I'm obviously stinting myself on speakers to splurge on my turntable. If I didn't collect 78s, I'd have a much wider choice of less expensive—but still good—changers, giving me about \$150 more to spend on speakers (and probably resulting in changing every speaker on the list above for something else). If I would settle for a single-play turntable, I could cut the turntable budget perhaps \$25 to \$50 more.

And there's no resemblance here to my usual advice that half a stereo system's budget should go for its speakers and that, since the speakers are paramount, one should pick them first. But that's just advice—not an iron rule.

Now that I'm at the bottom line, I'm surprised how much of a straitjacket \$1,000 has been. In my real-world system, I have some idiosyncratic choices that would not have fit within this budget: two turntables, so I can make A/B comparisons of different performances of the same work (I wish the changer were a Technics SL-1350, so I could easily swap cartridges between it and my manual turntable—quite an idiosyncratic reason right there!); a Pioneer four-channel preamp that was the only one available at the time I bought it; a preference for rack-mountable equipment because a rack is an easy place to mount a patchboard, which I need for all the stuff I have to take home, test, and then unplug again; omnidirectional speakers in the back channels because my sofa's back against that wall; tons of kit-built stuff because editors don't make much money and kit reviewers get to keep what they've built; an NAB-reel, 15-ips tape deck because I used to do live recording and 15 ips is still the easiest speed to edit; a Wollensak 7-inch-reel deck because I needed quad playback but could get by with stereo recording and because the controls were the sweetest I'd seen this side of relay operation; and so on.

#### Estimated Local Prices

Dual 1229Q record changer (with base & dust cover)	\$270
Stanton 681EE cartridge	75
Dynaco PAT-4 preamp kit	139
Dynaco Stereo 120 power amp kit	209
Advent speakers (2)	264
Approximate system price	\$957
Accessory 78-rpm stylus	25
Total	\$982

## William Radford-Bennett Chooses a \$1,000 System

*A professional musician living near Washington, D. C., Mr. Radford-Bennett is probably best known as a conductor; readers of HF and other publications may think of him as an audio commentator with a particular affection for the cassette.*



THE SELECTION of a quality stereo system costing approximately \$1,000 is complicated by my insistence on having tape as the focal point of the setup. I enjoy making tapes, especially of longer works where I can eliminate the breaks that should not be there. I'm also extremely annoyed by the pops and ticks that even well-cared-for records accumulate, so I want to tape discs the first time they are played.

Initially it seems an insurmountable problem to have both a turntable and a tape deck in a modest system. Is it really possible? Yes, but only after some juggling, a few compromises, and a specific plan for future upgrading and addition, designed to protect the initial investment.

Since the system must be high in quality (I like to hear the pianos in the Saint-Saëns Third as much as the organ) and tape is essential, I would start with the deck: a cassette unit, since the better decks can make amazingly good recordings and a portable is possible. I could put a player in the car and sing along with *Trovatore* or Joni Mitchell—anything but the local Top Twenty stations—as I fight Interstate 95. In the Advent 201 I think I've found a deck that would be suit-

able even with a far more expensive system and one that I need not worry about replacing for quite a while.

The next item would appear to be a receiver. But as I consider ways to economize I realize that I would seldom use the tuner section. There are many interesting broadcasts in the area, but the quality of the signals distresses me so much when I hear them on a good system that I'd just as soon use the kitchen radio and listen only for content. So an integrated amplifier will be fine for the stereo system and will realize an appreciable saving as well.

In selecting an amplifier I will have to make a compromise, for on my budget I can't get quite as much power as I know I eventually would like. So the choice is made on the basis of clean sound and presumed trade-in value. It also must have the controls, inputs, and outputs to suit my needs. The Yamaha CA-600 looks like a good bet on all counts.

I would select a quality manual turntable that will survive other system changes, much as I expect the cassette deck to. In avoiding the blandishments of the automatics I'm not really making a compromise—just applying good common sense. Remember that I plan to play records only once and tape them as I do; if I were in the habit of playing discs repeatedly, I might have made a different choice. My final choice—the Philips GA-212 with an ADC Q-321 pickup—is based partly on the availability at a saving when they are purchased together, partly on the basis of listening tests (using the speakers that, by now, I would already have selected) to compare the ADC with others that the dealer is offering for a similar price. Aside from its match to the speakers, however, the pickup is not too critical, because it is the easiest component to upgrade later.

The speaker selection is influenced by my listening room, which is long and narrow. From experience I know that such a room can be deadly with highly directional speakers, so I looked about for models that would fit the budget and be as nondirectional as possible. The Genesis II meets these requirements. It also would fit the built-in bookcases I inherited with my living room or could be used—on a small stand, which I would have to build for each—as a floor-standing model.

Even though I shopped carefully in developing this system, the price exceeds budget by almost \$100. That means it's time to haggle. And I find that, by buying the system at one time and one store, I can get it for almost \$60 less. It's still \$40 over budget, but I hope the editor will let it pass. [We did.—Ed.]

#### Estimated Local Prices

Advent 201 cassette deck	\$340
Yamaha CA-600 integrated amplifier	330
Philips GA-212 turntable with ADC Q-321 pickup	170
Genesis II speakers (2)	258
Total, if bought separately	\$1,098
Total, bought as a system	\$1,040

## Alfred W. Myers Chooses a \$3,000 System

*An ardent quadophile—and author of last month's article on the present state of four-channel sound—Mr. Myers has painstakingly assembled a system for his apartment in suburban New York.*

WITH \$3,000 TO SPEND, one can have an exceptional stereo or four-channel system. Since I prefer even poor quad to good stereo (and at \$750 per channel, you can have one of the best sounding quadriphonic systems around), limiting my setup to two channels would be unthinkable.

Naturally the heart of any audio system is the electronic center. As a practical matter, I'm limited to an all-in-one receiver. (At present I can find only two quad preamps on the market: the Bose 4401 at \$600 and JVC's professional JPV-1000 at \$2,500—and there goes the budget.) In a top-drawer quad system, one-third of the budget should go for the receiver. Although there are several fine quad receivers available (from Pioneer, Sansui, and Lafayette), my choice would be the Kenwood KR-994. At 17 dBW (50 watts) per channel it is the most powerful and has almost all the features one could want: full logic vari-blend SQ, an RM matrix decoder (not, unfortunately, Vario-Matrix) for QS discs, and a CD-4 demodulator.



Unlike other models that feature wired-in demodulators, the Kenwood's demodulator is a black plastic "cartridge" that slips into a recess on the back of the receiver. Any breakthroughs in CD-4 demodulating technology can be accommodated with a new slip-in unit. Future developments in matrix decoders can be admitted through the tape-monitor jacks; there are two full sets as well as auxiliary inputs. Like most quad receivers, the 9940 has an FM DET OUT jack for use with an external FM processor—if the FCC ever gets around to approving discrete-quad broadcasts.

Although a quad receiver (or pickup cartridge or turntable) seldom costs twice as much as a comparable stereo unit, four speakers always cost twice as much as two (special deals and adept haggling aside). Regardless of what you've read, all four speakers should be the same for best quad sound. Ideally it should envelop you, with no breaks in the sound field along the sides or across the back. Some of the most interesting and spatial quadriphonic effects make use of phantom channels (center right, center left, center back). For this reason I find omnidirectional speakers a must, and my choice would be the Bose 901s. Although capable of handling 24 dBW with ease, they can be driven satisfactorily with the Kenwood's 17 dBW provided you don't want lease-breaking volume in a gigantic living room. Two pairs of 901s do not come cheap, but they will provide breathtaking four-channel sound.

While many quad-setup illustrations show an "X marks the spot" dead-center listening position, this is impractical (if not impossible) in the average living room. But if you can live with your sofa about 1½ feet away from the back wall, the 901s will spread the sound very nicely in back of you. This is why horseshoe-shaped listening areas are becoming standard for quad. Bose offers metal pedestals, which not only hold the speakers at the ideal listening height, but also simplify initial setup and subsequent readjustment of speaker placements.

Pickup choices are restricted to models suitable for Quadrads. That means frequency response to at least 45 kHz and a Shibata or similar stylus. Although there are many fine CD-4 cartridges on the market, my choice is the Audio-Technica AT-20sla. It is handpicked by the manufacturer's engineers and judged for flattest frequency response and best (lowest) crosstalk characteristic.

Good CD-4 playback requires almost perfect tracking. Noise and distortion can easily result from skating and tracking errors. There are now two straight-line tracking turntables available, the B&O Beogram 4002 and the newer Harman-Kardon Rabco ST-7. Both are fine, but with the ST-7 you are free to choose any cartridge you want. (With the Beogram you must use B&O's.) The ST-7 comes equipped with low-capacitance cables—a must for CD-4—and automatic arm lift at the end of the discs.

While not actually considered record playing "equipment," disc-cleaning devices are extremely important for quad listening. Dirt on a disc or vinyl particles on a stylus can cause distortion in CD-4. So I would devote part of the budget to a Discwasher and stylus cleaner.

Based on manufacturers' suggested prices, I have now spent almost all of my allotted \$3,000. No doubt you have noticed the absence of tape machines. Because of restrictions imposed by Philips, there are no discrete-quad cassette decks or cassettes. There have been a very few matrixed cassettes, but not enough to warrant saying that quad cassettes have really arrived. In a system limited to \$3,000, there is no way to include a quad open-reel deck and really good sound (unless you can wangle a fantastic deal). Tape is something to plan for. Of course there are several quad cartridge decks and plenty of Q-8 cartridges around, but they remain primarily an automobile-audio product and have not gained wide recognition or acceptance in home systems.

Several companies have quad headphones, but few solve the problem of getting the sounds to come from in front of and behind the head, not inside it. One of the most impressive is the Telephonics Fixler Effect TEL-101F. There are rumors that this item may be discontinued, but, if you want a quad headset, this is the one to get.

Chances are that you'll be able to find some of the equipment for a bit less than list prices. With the money you save (depending on your bargaining exper-

#### Estimated Local Prices

Kenwood KR-9940	
quadriphonic receiver	\$ 975
Bose 901 speakers (4)	1,196
Bose speaker pedestals (4)	100
Audio-Technica AT-20sla	
phono cartridge	175
Harman-Kardon Rabco ST-7 turntable	400
Discwasher D-II and stylus brush	20
Total system	\$2,866
Optional Telephonics TEL-101F	
headphones	90
Total	\$2,956

tise), you may have enough left to get a tape-cartridge deck, a display scope, or some other goody. Or you can stock up on quad records. If, on the contrary, your dealer wants to charge you extra for speaker wire when you're already spending close to \$3,000 for the system, go shop somewhere else.

## Robert C. Marsh Chooses a \$3,000 System

*Our contributing editor and record reviewer, a music critic (Chicago Sun-Times) whose apartment is crammed with an astonishing collection of high fidelity hardware, subtitled his entry "Music for the Analytic Ear."*

WHEN I DESIGNED a playback system for record reviewing two years ago, I began with the room, carefully selecting surface treatments and establishing dimension ratios. What I wanted—and got—was control-room sound. I listen to my speakers (four are available) and can judge the quality of the material, with the room itself adding minimal coloration or reverberation. Comparison is provided by a more conventional home-playback situation in a nearby living room.

Options of this sort are restricted to occasions in which a house or apartment is under construction. Most of the time speakers must be made to work as best they can in an existing room with a variety of furnishings competing for floor space. Several new designs seem to me to set fresh standards for accurate reproduction of source material, and one can choose freely among them as the individual situation dictates. Acoustic Research speakers ideally call for shelves, about four feet off the floor, or floor stands. Allison speakers, produced by a designer long associated with AR, presume the availability of corners or open wall spaces.

The most versatile speaker I know is the AR-10 $\pi$  (\$850 a pair), a three-driver system with an environmental control for each driver. Properly adjusted, it will provide well-balanced sound from almost any location in a room and thus, if you change homes with some frequency, can be counted on to work well in whatever room you have at your disposal. You can save \$200 a pair by committing yourself to placing the speakers on shelves and choosing the less-expensive AR-11. If you have two corners, a little more than \$500 will fill them with Allison Threes, a speaker notable for clear, clean sound. It readily mixes and matches with the Allison One (\$360), which has a triangular cabinet about three and a half feet high that projects sound into the room on an angle and which is intended to stand against a wall and make use of nearby reflecting surfaces.

A blindfold comparison test of the AR-10 $\pi$ , the AR-11, and the Allison Threes would—if all three systems were properly installed—produce few substantial differences in sound. Assuming that you have available corners for the Allison Threes, you can use the money saved toward an option once the rest of the system is selected. Failing usable corners, you might choose the Allison Ones—though, again, if you're given to frequent changes of domicile or even decor, you might be better off with the AR-10 $\pi$ s.

The best speaker may still fail to give you the precise sound you want from a particular recording. For that you need fine control over the relative intensity of not merely bass and treble, but all ten octaves of the scale: in short, a preamplifier that contains an equalizer. I suggest the Soundcraftsmen PE-2217 (\$500), which offers all the control of sound intensities you are ever likely to need at home in a remarkably flexible and well-designed package.

The advantage of big amplifiers is that you can drive them very hard and still spare your ear the distortion of clipping on volume peaks. How big an amplifier you need depends, of course, on how loud you normally play music. The



Marantz 240 with 21 dBW (125 watts) per channel is an exceptionally good buy at \$400. If you want it in a fancier dress and have a real use for power output meters on the front, you can get the 250M at \$200 more. My preference for Marantz amplifiers among the many fine units on the market reflects the prejudices of twenty years of use during which Marantz equipment has proved to be exceptionally durable and trustworthy.

An FM tuner is a piece of equipment that clearly can be matched with the situation in which it is to be used—a situation that can be greatly altered by the choice of an antenna. The Dynaco AF-6 can easily be built from a kit or is available prewired at about \$100 more. In most urban locations where transmitters are nearby, it will work well on a minimal antenna, and if greater performance is required you might well debate whether a more efficient antenna is not a more practical solution than a costlier and more sensitive tuner.

Since there are a great many records around that were recorded slightly off-pitch, I prefer turntables that permit easy correction. I like simplicity too; I believe that every belt, idler wheel, spring, lever, and gizmo omitted from a design is one part less to cause problems. For that reason I like the Marantz 6300 DC direct servo-drive table (\$270), a very nicely designed unit with just enough automation to provide a pleasant assist at parties or when you're unable to give the player your complete attention. I realize there are some very fine record changers on the market, but they do not fit my habits.

What about tape? I could not function without an open-reel machine. (Here my choice goes to the Sony dual-capstan drive and the lovely things it does at slow speeds.) But for many these days, open reels are a drag. The advantages (like easy editing) are canceled by the need to thread tape, flip reels, and the like. In deference to that viewpoint, and with an eye on the budget, I'd choose a cassette deck. The Yamaha TC-800GL (\$390) stands out for its unusual design—which includes, of all welcome features, a pitch control so slow-running cassettes can be accurately reproduced—and its ability to double as a portable for live recording. (Even the best battery-operated equipment will give you an off-pitch cassette from time to time.)

At this point, and despite some deliberate economies, there are only a few hundred dollars left in the budget. Now, I would take a first-quality system any time over one in which the quality of the components has been compromised to squeeze in a four-channel rig. But this system can be expanded to include quadraphonics, and that possibility may govern your choice of a pickup for the Marantz turntable.

Sound quality plus reliability have made Shure cartridges my reviewing standard for many years. Any of the top-of-the-line units is likely to meet your expectations (the differences are quite small), but the new M-24H offers the possibility of adding CD-4 at a later date without having to buy a second, expensive cartridge. With that in mind, this is the one I've selected. A further advantage of some Shure models is that they can be used—with special styli, available from Shure—to play 78s. (You would, of course, need a turntable with that speed; I use an old Thorens.) But if you want the *elliptical* stylus for 78s, of which I've heard good reports, you'll have to spend a few dollars more and get the V-15 Type III, the only Shure pickup that will accept it, but one that is not designed for use in playing Quadrads. Take your pick.

That brings in my stereo system about \$500 under budget (though you may prefer some of the more expensive options I've indicated). The leeway can be used to begin collecting equipment for an eventual quad conversion. A Sony SQD-2020 might be a good choice for a decoder/control-center. If you're to use the CD-4 capability of the Shure M-24H, you'll also need a demodulator; the Technics SH-400 is one of the best. For the remainder you might simply duplicate the power amp and speakers of the front channels. But if you're going to skimp, the back channels is the place to do it. A Dynaco Stereo-80Q would be

#### Estimated Local Prices

Allison Three speakers (2)	\$500
Soundcraftsmen PE-2217 preamp/equalizer	500
Marantz 240 power amp	400
Dynaco AF-6 tuner (wired)	350
Marantz 6300 turntable	270
Yamaha TC-800GL cassette deck	390
Shure M-24H cartridge	75
Total (stereo)	\$2,485
<b>Quadraphonic Conversion</b>	
Sony SQD-2020 decoder/control	\$230
Technics SH-400 demodulator	170
Dynaco Stereo-80Q amp (wired)	300
Allison Four speakers (2)	350
	\$1,050

more than adequate for this purpose. (You can build it as a kit for under \$200.) Its Dynaquad feature, incidentally, would simply go unused in such a setup because the SQD-2020 provides for quad simulation from stereo material. The Allison Four should be a good lower-budget complement to the Allison Threes (or Ones) of the front channels; another good bet for the back channels might be the AR-7.

Obviously you can't do all this without exceeding the \$3,000 budget, but you can plan to add the back channels piecemeal, as available cash and coveted quad recordings dictate.

## Harry R. Zwicker Chooses a \$5,000 System

*As an active member, and president, of the Boston Audio Society, Mr. Zwicker is used to having folks sidle up and say, "I wonder if you could suggest some components. . . ."*

FIVE THOUSAND audio dollars can provide a lot of freedom in designing a system—either two or four channels, tape facilities, selection of signal-modifying accessories—but even in this price range one cannot afford an “ultimate” system in today's \$2,000-per-component market. I've stayed, conservatively, with mostly time-proven components; less conservatively, I've made it a four-channel system including several signal-processing units, an approach that attacks the most serious limitations on realistic sound reproduction in the home: the listening room and the vagaries of source material. Designed for listening, the system is not for showing off to the neighbors and would never have been compiled by a glamor magazine; it does, however, make music sound like the real thing.

The system is built entirely from separate components to allow for change, growth, and repair without major trauma. The resulting cost appropriation is unusual—the lion's share is in electronics, whether you consider all four channels or only the front stereo system, and the tape equipment costs less than that for playing records—but the system will work well in almost any living room. The emphasis is on reproduction of symphony-hall ambience and sound levels and of deep organ bass, and on unobtrusive installation in a modest space (perhaps 13 by 20 by 9 feet) that must remain available for entertainment and other purposes.

The first component is the FM antenna. Whatever the tuner, it will benefit from an elevated, rotatable, moderately directional antenna. The Finco FM-4G is the classic choice for smooth response over the FM band, although for extreme directivity the FM-5 can be used. The CDE AR-33 rotor is beautifully convenient to use and is both rugged and quiet in operation. Add shielded downlead and installation costs for a really minimal \$200 outlay, and throw out those rabbit ears forever.

Current FM tuners are a gold mine of performance for relative pennies. The discontinued Pioneer TX-9100 led the way with the “1310” phase-locked loop IC, and several under-\$400 designs from Yamaha, Kenwood, and Onkyo outclass any from only a few years earlier. The listed Accuphase T-100 is an incredible performer for one additional step up, and only the availability of superb live and master-tape broadcasts in my area makes such supertuner overkill desirable.

Preamplifier selection is more problematical, as the breakthrough to a next-



generation phono stage is only just beginning. For \$5,000 total one cannot buy the best separate phono-stage and control section, but several preamplifiers at \$300–\$500 are very fine. The Soundcraftsmen PE-2217 boasts a good phono stage with broad control flexibility—plus, in my opinion, the best available equalizer—and is my preference at \$530. The Dynaco PAT-5 is also superb, while the Marantz line offers historically excellent preamps at higher prices; either must be combined with a separate equalizer. If I went this way, the equalizer I would choose would again be Soundcraftsmen, at \$300–\$370, for proven reliability and fine audible performance. For me the octave-band equalizer is necessary if I am to live with the many recording philosophies extant, adjust grossly nonstandard older recordings, and attempt limited room/speaker equalization.

A dynamic-range restorer is similarly essential if today's compressed records and FM broadcasts are to be made tolerable. All noise-suppression and dynamic-range enhancers are compromises, but the listed DBX 119 (or perhaps the new, more flexible Model 128) can do the most good for the least cost and is nearly inaudible in operation. In addition to providing noise reduction and realistic crescendo impact, the unit can be used instead of Dolby in the tape recording chain.

Selection of the power amplifier is affected by the choice of loudspeakers. For realistic sound levels from most modern inefficient, deep-bass units, 23 dBW (200 watts) per channel is an optimum price/performance point. The Dynaco Stereo 400 is a solid choice for superb sound, good stability and safety with most loudspeakers, and reasonable price (and if you build the kit, you can save about \$200). The Phase Linear is good at a lower price, and many other domestically made amplifiers can be purchased with confidence. Like tuners, it is hard to go wrong here, and (fortunately?) one cannot enter the tubes-vs.-transistor fray in this price and power range.

With my budget, I would pick the turntable and arm separately, primarily because the Shure/SME 3009-II arm would be my choice without question. It is low in mass and friction, well balanced, easily installed and set up, has no finicky quirks, and performs well with almost all cartridges not requiring extra damping. Choose the nondetachable headshell version unless you really do intend to interchange cartridges often.

For the turntable there is no perfect choice. Almost all current quality designs offer inaudible rumble and speed variations, yet almost all suffer from poor sound-and-vibration isolation. The differences between belt and direct drive are inaudible, so the proven Thorens TD-125 (in spite of its awkward dust-cover design) is a good choice, especially at its currently depressed price. The Model 126 will probably be as good, and Sony offers an excellent and convenient alternative. The new Rabco/Harman-Kardon might set new standards, but I'd prefer to await reliability data. For any turntable, the Netronics subbase provides added vibration isolation above about 6 Hz and is a must.

For this system two cartridges stand out: the "classic" Shure V-15 Type III, with its fine tracking, and the evolutionary ADC XLM Mk. II, with its sound. Both provide a valid balance of performance and failings, and either may be selected for one's taste. Moving-coil cartridges are more than just a resurgent fad, but high added cost removes them from consideration here.

A \$5,000 system should include tape facilities. For recording of symphonic broadcasts, and with neither live recording nor purchase of prerecorded tapes a factor, a modest open-reel machine has the best value without requiring the critical bias settings and level adjustments of the cassette medium. The Sony TC-377 is a good, reliable choice. It has inaudible speed variations, acceptable frequency response and headroom, and—when used with DBX or Dolby—offers near-perfect FM transcriptions. DBX already is provided for; the Sony Dolby

unit will not be redundant if you can receive Dolby-FM broadcasts, which it is equipped to decode. Greater expense is not justified, although for longer uninterrupted recordings Tandberg's 3¼-ips performance is a plus.

For the back-channel electronics, a Harman-Kardon Citation XII is the selected power amplifier, although superb models from Quad or Crown are as good. The back amplifier has 6 dB less power than the front, which is about right for the level difference appropriate to ambience simulation, assuming reasonably matched loudspeaker pairs and placement of the back speakers close to the listening position. The very inexpensive Dynaco PAT-4 preamplifier is not really needed, but it can be included to allow decoder selection, switching to dual-stereo, and limited tailoring of back-channel tonal balance. Quad decoders often include some of these functions, but because of their constant state of flux they are treated here as expendables, and no matrix-decoder is listed.

My present unequivocal choice for ambience recovery (from stereo sources) is a time-delay system, represented by two equally valid but audibly different alternatives: the Sound Concepts SD-50 and the Audio Pulse Model 1. Either provides realistic concert hall (or smaller) three-dimensional ambience without the quirks that mar surround-sound decoders. [Since the two models are virtually identical in price and our October-issue report gave the edge to the Audio Pulse, we have arbitrarily chosen it for the equipment list.—Ed.]

Finally, the loudspeakers. Here real problems of taste, space, and "optimum" performance are encountered. For installation of a four-channel system in a modest living room, most of the "advanced" speaker designs, however fine they may be, suffer from gargantuan proportions and/or from critical placement requirements. Planar-panel designs, with their immaculate sound and realistic imaging, also tend to need a separate deep-bass speaker and amplifier. Since deep bass with small size is considered necessary, speaker selection becomes limited to bookshelf or small floor-standing models of acoustic-suspension, transmission-line, or loaded-port design. The ability to produce high loudness levels without strain is another requirement. There arises one standout compromise, the AR-11 (or the 10 $\pi$ , if necessary), which has an added benefit of a 4-ohm impedance and thus an increase in available amplifier power. Other possibilities include the Allison One (which is placement-critical), the Celestion 66 (which has a steep subresonance rolloff and is not colored to my taste), double Advents in each channel (bulky), or perhaps an I M Fried design (limited dynamic range). The AR-11 is a superb-sounding bookshelf system, although with more space a bookshelf unit would not be my design of choice.

For the back channels, smoothness and bass are required, along with very small size. Treble response is less important because the back-channel signals are intentionally rolled off by either of the ambience simulators. Coloration in the back speakers should be kept similar to that in the front to prevent back signals from seeming to pop in and out. The AR-6 (or perhaps its replacement AR-16) is a good match to the AR-11, and its thin, short shape allows placement in any available cranny.

The total price comes to almost \$400 over budget. That doesn't worry me much because many of the items can be bought at discount prices and, particularly if they're purchased at one time, might easily make it under the wire. And even if your favorite store sells only at list prices, the difference can easily be made up by dropping the second preamplifier and building the Dynaco 400 from the kit.

The system is reliable, is genuinely suited to use in a modest home, and offers the most realistic sound I can find for \$5,000. Others may prefer simpler two-channel systems with "better" speakers up front, but conventional stereo can never touch the three-dimensional realism of this four-channel ensemble.

#### Estimated Local Prices

Finco FM-4G FM antenna	\$ 25
CDE AR-33 antenna rotator	70
Shielded antenna lead, cable, mast, installation	100
Accuphase T-100 FM tuner	700
Soundcraftsmen PE-2217 preamp/equalizer	530
DBX-119 expander/noise-reduction unit	200
Dynaco Stereo-400 power amplifier (wired)	725
Shure/SME 3009-II tone arm	140
Thorens TD-125 turntable	325
Shure V-15 Type III phono cartridge	80
Netronics Acousti-Mount subbase	18
Sony TC-377 open-reel deck	400
Sony NR-115 Dolby unit	130
Harman-Kardon Citation XII power amplifier	325
Dynaco PAT-4 preamp (wired)	230
Audio Pulse Model 1 ambience simulator	600
Acoustic Research AR-11 speakers (2)	600
Acoustic Research AR-6 speakers (2)	200
Total	\$5,398

## Larry Zide Chooses a \$5,000 System

*Well known to New York audiophiles via his weekly radio program Adventures in Sound on WQXR, Mr. Zide produces his own tapes in the basement of his exurban home when he is not busy editing (for, among others, the trade magazine db) or writing articles on both professional and consumer audio.*



HAVING THIS much money to spend may seem, at first glance, to permit selection of the *ne plus ultra* components. But a perusal of list prices for this exalted category gives pause. As an example, a Mark Levinson preamplifier alone could cost well over \$2,000. So, even with a budget of \$5,000 in mind, one must be careful to find the best mix of components—that is, the best sound—for that money. I wrestled first with the separates-vs.-receiver argument; the additional versatility of separate components—preamp, power amp, tuner—won out, although there is sonic equality between the two camps.

I feel that the most significant purchase is the speaker system: It should claim up to a third of the total budget. I also have in mind a decent-sized living room, so I am seeking speakers with full range and power-handling ability. The final candidates all are floor-standing units, each a multispeaker system with good dispersion: The AR LST (\$600 each), Duntech DL-15 (\$500), Magnepan (\$625), and RTR DR-1 (\$895). The AR and the Duntech represent the extremes of the range of sound quality. AR's philosophy goes toward smooth, soft naturalism, whereas Duntech's sound is much more forward-projected, but with sparkling clarity. Speakers are truly a matter of taste; there is no perfect model. Since this is my system—and since they're the least expensive—the Duntechs are the ones.

There is something of a price spread in the three preamps I would consider. I think that each will provide the high quality of sound that our budget dictates, but the preamp is also the system's control center, and some units have more switching capability than others. The Phase Linear 4000 (\$600) offers special features such as the Autocorrelator for noise reduction and a dynamic-range expander. The Luxman C-1000 (\$895) has very well thought-out, highly versatile switching facilities. The Crown IC-150A is more bare-bones but still has eminently useful, if basic, switching. I'll pick the Crown, the least expensive of the three, and use the saving elsewhere.

Since I'm thinking of a fair-sized room—perhaps 13 by 20 feet or larger—I have selected a group of amplifiers that will supply sufficient power for the Duntechs in such a room. The power spread between 22 dBW (150 watts) and 23 dBW (200 watts) is minimal and need not be considered. I am tempted by the Yamaha B-1, a field-effect-transistor amplifier of very fine design, but its \$1,600 price will entail too sharp a sacrifice elsewhere—probably forcing the elimination of a tape deck from the budget. The BGW 500D, at \$840, is attractive; but since the Crown

DC-300A and GAS Ampzilla cost less (\$800 apiece), I'll pick the latter—for its intriguing name, if nothing else, but its extra 1-dB of output won't hurt.

I have two important criteria for tuners. First, the tuner must offer truly high performance. Second, it must include Dolby decoding, as many quality stations are now using this system, with more coming aboard all the time. Very few tuners meet both needs. I've chosen one made by Lux; either Sequerra tuner would fit our category, but the prices are beyond my budget. And I think the Luxman T-310 will provide almost as fine performance capability.

All the turntables I would choose from are single-play, semiautomated models of extremely high quality. There are easily a dozen on the market that are nearly identical in cardinal specifications, such as inaudible flutter and rumble. The units selected come with tone arms and bases. High on the list are the Philips GA-209 (\$300) and the Dual CS-701 (\$400)—both sold without cartridges. In the B&O Beogram 4002 the cartridge is part of the system. The B&O also offers straight-line tracking. Each of these turntables permits some programming, since it will start automatically, find the beginning grooves, and return to rest after play is finished. The Accutrac 4000 (\$500) by ADC can be programmed to find selections on the record in any sequence, but I haven't chosen it—only because it still is too new to have developed a track record. [The pun, we trust, was unintentional.—Ed.]

For the units that need phono cartridges, I would budget \$100 or so, which should get one fine cartridge. There is surprisingly little difference among the top-of-the-line models from any of the established manufacturers. Actually, the point is moot, since I'm going for the B&O with its straight-line tracking.

I would expect any tape deck in such a fine system to be used for creative original recording, rather than just to copy discs and radio broadcasts. Accordingly, only an open-reel machine truly has the needed quality. (A cassette deck is just as good for copying, so if I were interested only in that, a saving would be possible here. Many fine cassette decks can be had for perhaps half the price of the open-reel models listed.)

Three stereo decks, all "semiprofessional" in that they do make tapes fine enough for pro use, are the Otari MX-5050 (\$1,450), Revox A-700 (\$1,800), and Teac A-7300 (\$1,450). Here again, the choice is dictated by need. The listed Revox is a highly sophisticated deck with multimixing of inputs, phono inputs, etc. The other two—particularly the Otari—are simpler, yet full-featured. All three are ruggedly constructed. The Revox will very likely put me over budget; I'll go with Otari since its features strike me as most professional of the three.

I have listed no accessories. But I do feel that some of the products of DBX—expanders and noise-reduction systems—as well as Dolby encode/decode boxes, graphic equalizers, etc., belong in a quality system. And to use an open-reel tape deck for master recording, one must have microphones—but they will have to wait. Not much is needed in the way of cables, since virtually every component made (including all those chosen) comes with enough to permit interfacing with the other components. Some No. 16 or larger "zip" cord will be used to hook up the speakers; the skinny No. 18-20 wire offered for lamps is not adequate for runs of more than 20 feet. But in a \$5,000 budget that's a negligible item.

Estimated Local Prices

Duntech DL-15 speakers (2)	\$1,000
Crown IC-150 preamp	350
GAS Ampzilla	800
Luxman T-310 tuner	595
B&O Beogram 4002 turntable (with cartridge)	690
Otari MX 5050 2-track	1,450
Total	\$4,885

9090

DOLBY FM

Stereo receiver 9090



# How much



5050



6060



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7070



8080

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Power is, of course, one of the most important characteristics in the quality of a receiver. But it is only one of them. There is also the tuner section which should offer especially high sensitivity and selectivity, and a great stereo separation. And the Sansui 9090 does: sensitivity of 9.8 dBf (1.7  $\mu$ V); selectivity of better than 85dB; stereo separation of



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7-position tape copy switch, and a Dolby\* 25  $\mu$ sec de-emphasis. Of all receivers available today only in the Sansui 9090 and 8080 will you find all of these desirable elements.

\*fm, Dolby Labs

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The other models in this outstanding new line of stereo receivers share many of the same fine characteristics as the top of the line models.

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\*Approximate nationally advertised value. The actual retail price will be set by the individual dealer at his option.

The 9090 is a superior value at less than \$750.\* If the 9090 is more than you need ask for the 8080 with 80 watts per channel, min RMS, both channels into 8 ohms, from 20 Hz to 20 kHz with no more than 0.2% total harmonic distortion at less than \$650.\* Or the 7070 with 60 watts per channel, min RMS, both channels into 8 ohms, from 20 to 20,000 Hz with no more than 0.3% total harmonic distortion at less than \$520.\* Or the 6060 with 40 watts per channel, min RMS, both channels into 8 ohms, from 20 to 20,000 Hz with no more than 0.4% total harmonic distortion at less than \$420.\* Or the 5050 with 30 watts per channel, min RMS, both channels into 8 ohms, from 20 to 20,000 Hz with no more than 0.5% total harmonic distortion at less than \$320.\* 9090 in walnut veneer. All other cabinets in simulated walnut grain.

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7070



8080



# Pirates, Prima Donnas, and Plain White Wrappers



Bruce Na Durbak 76

*The Record Underground from  
Mapleson to the Seventies*

**by Robert Angus**

I GUESS IT'S GOOD to know that the early Seventies were the heyday of something other than political scandal. According to the Record Industry Association of America (RIAA), record piracy peaked in these years. One out of every three commercially recorded cassettes or cartridges purchased by music lovers during the period was a counterfeit, and all the while pressing plants were grinding out hundreds of thousands of other unauthorized long-playing records, some drawing on commercially available material but sporting a pirate label, others offering dubbings of recordings made in concert halls and opera houses on battery-operated tape recorders by do-it-yourselfers. Then in early 1972 Congress passed an omnibus copyright reform bill that included recordings, and one state legislature after another subsequently outlawed the manufacture and sale of unauthorized recordings. An era may have ended, and a profession with an illustrious past if somewhat shaky ethical underpinnings may have perhaps not died but at least greatly contracted.

The popularity, low cost, and easy availability of tape recorders in the late 1960s had introduced a new element into the piracy industry. Suddenly it was possible for anybody to duplicate hit albums in his garage or basement. Piracy became a multifaceted industry.

There was the counterfeiter, who duplicated a recording exactly, including a reasonably authentic reproduction of the record or tape label and its container, thus often violating the law covering registered trademarks. There were the mainstream bootleggers, who duplicated (usually on tape) complete commercial recordings but would use their own trademark, if they dared, and their own art work on jackets and labels.

And there were those who thrived on illicit concert tapes, air checks, or long-deleted recordings. Technically bootleggers, these entrepreneurs frequently saw themselves as patrons of the arts, catering to the legitimate demands of collectors. Until the rock movement came along, the sales never amounted to more than a few hundred copies of any given title, hardly enough to upset most performers and record company executives. In fact,



some artists, well aware of what these bootleggers were up to, were secretly pleased with the notoriety they were getting and the prices their recordings were fetching on the black market.

"The pity of it," my friend Max observed, "is that the Mafia gave unauthorized recordings a bad name. They were in it for the fast buck, and they did it without style." Max is a man to whom style is all-important. Son of the founder of a small independent record pressing operation in New Jersey, he has been involved in unauthorized recordings ever since he can remember. Max's exploits, less colorful than some, include the re-pressing of some BBC symphonic and operatic transcriptions in the early 1950s, a bootleg disc of the Beatles at their height, and some current albums featuring complete radio broadcasts of Fred Allen and of Orson Welles as *The Shadow*.

"The RIAA bad-mouths unauthorized recordings," he notes, "but my industry gave opera lovers the first complete *Ring* cycle. If it weren't for Lionel Mapleson, the inventor of bootleg recordings, you'd never know how Jean de Reszke really sounded. . . . The New York Legislature recently made what [Mapleson] did illegal—the use of a recording device inside a concert hall without the permission of the management."

Mapleson, the librarian of the Metropolitan Opera at the turn of the century, received a cylinder recorder from Thomas Edison. He took his gift up into the flies on several occasions during the

Met's 1901-3 seasons and recorded bits of the performances. Although his machine was a long way from the stage and his medium had limitations (his cylinders ran for only a few minutes at a time, making it impossible to capture all of a long aria or duet), he produced a remarkable number of unique recording documents.

True, Mapleson was making his cylinders for his own enjoyment and presumably with no thought of selling them. But during the early days of the long-playing record, hundreds of collectors were eager to pay good money for LP transfers of these amateur recordings. The significance of the Mapleson cylinders was that they provided "snapshots" of actual performances during that period, giving collectors a chance to hear some singers who never appeared on commercial recordings, others in roles they didn't duplicate on authorized discs.

The general effect of these cylinders, James Hinton Jr. wrote in *HIGH FIDELITY* some twenty years ago, "is of listening from backstage, through a door that keeps suddenly opening and closing, to bits and pieces of performances. The vantage point is at a little distance from the singers, and they seem to be heard through a certain amount of backstage clatter; sometimes they move out of the line of hearing, and sometimes the noise obscures the voices. But mostly, they can be heard quite well enough for the listener to get a very definite sense of personalities and occasionally of the full impact

of virtuosity that, in terms of the opera house today, is quite literally beyond the wildest imaginings." What Hinton was describing was the fascination bootleg recordings have held for collectors for three-quarters of a century.

Eventually bootlegging moved beyond the private citizen with a recorder in the auditorium. For instance, Opera Discs, a budget-priced series of recordings by Caruso, Melba, and others, appeared on the shelves of record stores in the years immediately following World War I. The titles were identical to those for which the Victor Talking Machine Company was asking \$2.00 and \$3.00; collectors quickly discovered that the recordings were identical as well. The source of these unauthorized discs was no small-time independent pressing plant or eccentric entrepreneur, but the giant Deutsche Grammophon plant in Hannover, Germany, which was using masters originally supplied by Victor and His Master's Voice. DG had been the German affiliate of those companies prior to the war, and it simply continued to press records from the masters it had acquired legally.

Victor and HMV considered this piracy and instituted legal proceedings to stop the pressings and imports. On one level, HMV created a new German subsidiary, Electrola, to compete with DG in Germany; on another, Victor warned its dealers that if they were caught with Opera Discs in stock they'd lose the Victor franchise. That threat effectively removed Opera Discs from the shelves of the nation's record dealers—and put them onto the shelves of variety stores, bookstores, and other outlets that didn't have a Victor franchise to lose. It took about five years, but Victor finally won its legal battle, and Opera Discs disappeared.

If Mapleson can be said to have been the patron saint of unauthorized recordings, the late Eli Oberstein can be said to have been the towering genius in the field. Oberstein got his start in the record business as an accountant with Victor in 1924. In a few short years he had created the first "race" and "hillbilly" record catalogues for that company and had become one of its corporate officers. His plan was simplicity itself. He would check into a hotel in a medium-sized southern town like Huntsville, Alabama, or Memphis, Tennessee, place an ad in local newspapers for "race" (i.e., black) and country entertainers, and check with the radio stations to see which hillbilly bands had a local following. With the help of a recording technician, he'd convert one of the hotel's parlor rooms into a studio and record all comers, paying each performer \$2.00.

Officials at Victor's offices back in Camden, New Jersey, were horrified with such extravagance. What were they going to do with these records? People thought of Caruso and Mischa Elman when they thought of Victor—what would they think now? As Oberstein related many years later, "The

music and record stores in the South couldn't display these race records on their shelves. But there was always a black boy who swept out the stockroom, and he'd be selling them out the back door to his friends. The people who came in for Victor's classical records and dance music didn't know what was going on out back. For some of those stores, the back-door trade represented the difference between staying in business and going bankrupt."

Oberstein's unorthodox methods won him no friends at Victor, and by the spring of 1943 he was running his own company. These were bad years for record companies in general, not only because of wartime shortages, but because the American Federation of Musicians in 1942 had forbidden its members to record. The ban hurt the majors, although Victor could always reissue some recordings by Caruso or Tommy Dorsey and, along with Decca and Columbia, had stockpiled a substantial number of masters before the ban went into effect. Independent producers like Oberstein generally were required to use non-Federation talent: actors reciting Shakespeare, folksingers from the country, or amateur organists and pianists. But his business at the time was hits, and that meant recording professional musicians.

The music director of a major label recalls an experience with Oberstein in 1943: "I was just a kid, in New York from Ohio for the first time looking for a break in the music business. I was a pretty good pianist and had played with a couple of bands touring the Middle West, and I had done arrangements for them. When I came to New York, I thought I was going to get a job right away with one of the big bands. Well, after making the rounds for a couple of months, I realized that I was just one of hundreds of kids with the same idea. So I took whatever jobs I could get—a senior prom in Westchester, a wedding reception in Jersey. Anyway, one day I found this ad for an arranger. . . . I was told to report to a certain room at the Hotel Claridge at 9 that night, . . . and there was Eli Oberstein. In the room with him was a nine-piece orchestra and a disc cutter. Eli had hung blankets over the windows so that the noise from the street wouldn't be too loud and had stuffed towels under the door so that we wouldn't bother other guests. Between 9 and 6 the following morning, that band must have cut a dozen hit tunes. I sat right there and did the arrangements, and they sight-read them. Eli paid us all in cash as we left. I don't know who those guys were, but they were good."

Oberstein is much better known as the producer of the first complete *Ring* cycle on records. In 1954, Allegro Records released the four operas in Wagner's *Ring* on eighteen discs for the bargain price of \$56.05. Although the label credited the performance to "soloists, Dresden State Opera Orch. & Chorus, cond. Fritz Schreiber," reviewers in the



*American Record Guide* and *Saturday Review* thought they detected the voice of Regina Resnik as Sieglinde—and so did Resnik herself, who happened into a New York record shop when the disc was playing. She had sung the role the previous summer at the Bayreuth Festival, in company with Martha Mödl, Hans Hotter, Ramon Vinay, Wolfgang Windgassen, and Hermann Uhde, and it had been broadcast at the time. Other members of the Bayreuth cast stepped forward to identify themselves on Oberstein's albums, and critics complained not only about bad editing and pressing, but about passages blurred by static and interference from other radio stations.

Without batting an eyelash, Oberstein withdrew the package. He was ready with an explanation of how it all had happened. It was his practice, he said, to buy tapes in bulk from a supplier in Europe who warranted that he had the recording rights and transferred those rights to Oberstein at the time of sale. "He really took me," Oberstein said with a chuckle a short time before his death. "He sold me thousands of hours' worth of tapes. After the *Ring* cycle affair, I went back and listened to every record I'd released from his tapes. Do you know that dozens of them were taped off the air and had static or other interference? Some were live performances, like the Bayreuth Festival. But lots were broadcasts of commercial recordings from other companies. We had Renata Tebaldi in several of our 'opera highlights' albums, and not one critic knew it."

The long-playing record and the pentup demand for large catalogues of classical music after World War II brought forth literally hundreds of exam-

ples of unauthorized recordings. One of the first to come to light was the release in October 1951 of two complete operas by Classic Editions. One of them, CE 5001, was a three-record set of Verdi's *Un Ballo in maschera*, allegedly recorded in Rome with Maria Caniglia, baritone Carlo Tagliabue, and tenor Galliano Masini. The recording was a first on LP. But it turned out to have taken place in New York, not in Rome, and to have come from a 1947 broadcast. And the cast included Jan Peerce, Leonard Warren, and Daniza Ilitsch with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus. The other, CE 5002, featured the first complete recording of *Lakmé* (the next was not to appear for two years), ostensibly by the Paris Opera, with César Vezzani, André Pernet, and Andrée Neouvlas. In fact, Lily Pons was the featured singer, in a Met broadcast, also from the 1946-47 season. As Oberstein was to do, Classic Editions president Irving Kratka called it a mistake and withdrew both albums. Collectors have been searching for copies ever since.

Somewhat bolder was one Dante Bolletino, a youthful jazz enthusiast who got his start in the record business right after the war. Bolletino was an admirer of such performers as Louis Armstrong, Count Basie, and Josephine Baker and had amassed a sizable collection of their 78s. Just before the LP appeared in 1948, he decided to defray the cost of maintaining his collection by pressing 78-rpm copies of some of his prized discs. The trouble was that the masters were owned by the likes of Victor, Columbia, and Decca. Nonetheless, Bolletino proceeded to transfer a number of his releases to LP—with the aid of RCA Records' custom pressing division—and they appeared under the banner of the Jolly Roger.

Then Columbia took him to court. In his defense, Bolletino cited the 1909 copyright law, which at that time contained no provision for recordings. Eventually, they settled out of court—Columbia because it feared the possibility that it would lose and that the floodgates for unauthorized copying would be opened, Bolletino because he simply didn't have the financial resources to battle a corporate giant.

It was the Cold War that made possible the exploits of Bruno G. Ronty, an expatriate Central European who introduced David Oistrakh and the Bolshoi Opera to U.S. audiences. He was perhaps the first to realize that the Soviet Union had failed to sign international copyright agreements. The Soviets took the position that copyrights and royalties were nothing more than capitalist tricks, that art belonged to the masses. The ardently anti-Communist Ronty agreed, at least insofar as Communist art was concerned, and he set about releasing as many Russian recordings on his Colosseum label as he could lay his hands on. These included the first complete *Boris Godunov*, Dmitri Shostakovich playing his own music, and recitals by Emil

Gilels. Ronty's source of supply for these commercial long-playing and 78 discs released by Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga, the Soviet recording trust, was the Four Continent Book Shop on lower Fifth Avenue, which had New York's largest stock of Russian books and records.

In the early 1950s, the Soviets had yet to learn about polyethylene bags, shrink-wrapping, or even properly designed sleeves. Many of the records Ronty bought came in heavy paper envelopes with cutouts for the labels, not unlike those used for 78 discs a few years before. As a result, they weren't always free of dirt and scratches, which appeared as ticks and pops on Ronty's virgin pressings.

Lest any Colosseum record purchasers fear that they might wind up on a list of Communist sympathizers or as a target for investigation by Senator Joseph McCarthy, Ronty inserted the following box in the liner notes of each disc: "No part of the proceeds from this record inures to the U.S.S.R. or any of its agents or representatives." In other words, you could be damn sure that Oistrakh and Gilels weren't going to see a penny—and neither were the people who had produced the originals.

"Now that's frankness on the part of an unauthorized record producer," my friend Max says with admiration.

While Bolletino and Ronty conducted their businesses in the open, there were several bootleg pop labels that thrived in the shadows. One was AFN, a mysterious label whose star attraction was the late Glenn Miller. Somehow AFN had obtained air checks of the band's broadcasts in Britain shortly before Miller disappeared. The Miller estate and RCA jointly managed to persuade AFN to take its master tapes and steal away. Others mining the same vein were Jazz Panorama and Jazz Time.

Probably the most notorious bootleg item to surface in the Sixties was the collection of Bob Dylan performances widely merchandised in a plain jacket with the words "Great White Wonder" stamped on the front. One report has it that this was the best-selling bootleg recording of all time, garnering up to 75,000 purchasers. (There is no reliable count, obviously.) On it were Dylan songs not available commercially—demonstration cuts, studio outtakes, a telecast, and home recordings. In the last category were five Dylan performances with the Band, and the success of the disc was no doubt a major factor in Columbia Records' decision in 1975 to release these, along with other material of the same kind, in its two-disc album candidly called "The Basement Tapes." Columbia scored commercially with the collection, largely, one guesses, because it contained material unavailable on bootleg discs, but partly because the sonic quality was much better than bootleg level.

Record manufacturers, performers, and the

RIAA launched a vigorous effort in the late Sixties to stamp out piracy. One part of the campaign was to arrest bootleggers and to sue retail stores that sold their products. The first such action was taken by the Czech government on behalf of Supraphon Records against the aforementioned Ronty and Colosseum. Instead of suing Ronty, however, the Czechs sued two retailers, Sam Goody and Record Hunter. Ronty skipped across the New York State border into Connecticut, where he founded Bruno Records, a company that offered many of the titles previously available on Colosseum. But notably absent from the Bruno lists were performances from Czechoslovakia.

Word spread quickly within the trade—if you stocked Colosseum, you ran the risk of a lawsuit and seizure of your inventory. Various companies and the RIAA took legal action, putting a number of stores out of business and forcing other dealers to get rid of unauthorized titles.

A second front was opened, too: a drive to get Congress to pass copyright laws. Besides succeeding in extending the general copyright protection to recordings, these efforts resulted in the 1974 federal act aimed at making all forms of disc copying illegal, not just counterfeiting. And in a growing number of states it is illegal for concertgoers to use recorders without permission, presumably making it more difficult for unauthorized live performances to show up on tape or disc.

Apart from the legal risks, Max says, the record pirate operates under "a financial risk every bit as great as that of the big companies, albeit of a different kind. He usually has his own money invested in the project. He usually has to charge more than an RCA or London for his product because his market potential is so much smaller. And he can't advertise to sell it."

"The artist in this field," he says, "recognizes something that's rare and beautiful in the trash bin of discarded material—masters that have been allowed to go out of print, tapes and transcriptions that were never intended for commercial release—rescues it and polishes it up and makes it available to a public that would hear it no other way."

And he reminds me that bootleggers are arguably responsible for many innovations in the legitimate record industry. They released the first complete recordings of several operas. They encouraged the major labels to start programs to reissue opera and demonstrated the economic viability of reissuing jazz. They offered the first "budget" labels, forcing the major companies to create their own. And they brought record makers out of the studio and into the concert and recital halls to document live performances. The shade of Lionel Mapleson must blush occasionally at the dark side of the phenomenon those Metropolitan Opera cylinders spawned, but there is much to be proud of, too. ■

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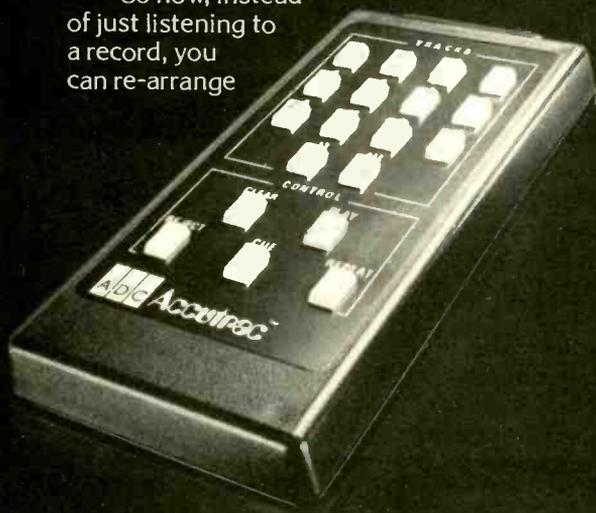
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## Behind The Scenes

**There are no small roles, only...** Operatic impresarios perennially face the problem of casting roles too short to justify the services of a front-line performer, yet too demanding and/or exposed to withstand an ordinary house comprimario singer. This past summer's London recording schedule showed some luxurious casting indeed: CBS could boast Ileana Cotrubas as Suor Genoviva in Puccini's *Suor Angelica*, while RCA had Gwendolyn Killebrew as Madelon in Giordano's *Andrea Chénier* and Kurt Moll as the Marquis of Calatrava in Verdi's *Forza del destino*.

**RCA.** The most adventurous of RCA's summer operas, Montemezzi's powerful *Amore dei tre re*, had added significance in the casting of the central role, the blind king Archibaldo: Incredibly enough, bass Cesare Siepi had not recorded an operatic role in some fifteen years, dating back to his second *Sparafucile*. Perhaps fittingly, Archibaldo's son Manfredo was sung by a baritone making his first operatic recording: Pablo Elvira (heard in Columbia's recording of Pablo Casals' *El Pessebre*). Anna Moffo and Placido Domingo played the ill-fated Fiora and Avito, with Ryland Davies as the servant Flaminio. Nello Santi conducted the Ambrosian Singers and London Symphony.

The aforementioned *Forza* and *Chénier* were both conducted by James Levine, with Domingo and Sherrill Milnes on hand for both. The *Forza* cast also included Leontyne Price as Leonora, Bonaldo Giaiotti as Guardiano, and Gabriel Bacquier as Melitone, with the John Alldis Choir and the London Symphony. For *Chénier*, Renata Scotto sang Maddalena, and the orchestra was the National Philharmonic.

**CBS.** In addition to *Suor Angelica*, Gianni Schicchi was recorded, thus comprising two-thirds of the *Trittico*: *Il Tabarro* is in the talking stage. *Suor Angelica* had Renata Scotto in the

title role and Marilyn Horne as the Zia Principessa. (Horne and Scotto also sang together in Meyerbeer's *Le Prophète* for CBS.) After her cameo contribution to *Suor Angelica*, Cotrubas moved into the spotlight as Gianni Schicchi's daughter Lauretta, with Tito Gobbi tackling the title role for the second time on records and Placido Domingo as Rinuccio. One might stretch that big-names-in-small-roles phenomenon to Schicchi's Gherardino, sung by a Domingo, but the Domingo in question was eight-year-old Alvaro, the tenor's son—who, we are told, held up bravely under the rigors of a tight recording schedule.

Both Puccini operas were conducted by Lorin Maazel, no longer tied exclusively to Decca/London. He has already recorded Massenet's *Thais* for EMI, and CBS has ambitious plans for him. Next in line: Brahms's *German Requiem*, which would have been the conductor's first CBS project had illness not forced him to cancel earlier in the year. Cotrubas is to be the soprano soloist, Hermann Prey the baritone, with the New Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra.

**Summer operatic miscellany.** The first stereo recording of Cimarosa's *Il Matrimonio segreto* has been made in London by Deutsche Grammophon, with Daniel Barenboim conducting the English Chamber Orchestra. The cast is headed by Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau in the buffo role of Geronimo, with Julia Varady and Arleen Auger as the sisters Elisetta and Carolina, Julia Hamari as the widow Fidalma, Alberto Rinaldi as Count Robinson, and Ryland Davies as Paolino.

• Varady had earlier been an eleventh-hour addition to the cast of what might waggishly be called the *Pav/Gav/Cav*. In Decca/London's new *Cavalleria rusticana*, Varady sings Santuzza opposite Luciano Pavarotti's Turiddu, with Gianandrea Gavazzeni conducting the Mascagni opera.

• Meanwhile in Dresden, EMI has undertaken two coproductions with East Germany's Deutsche Schallplatten. Theo Adam sings the title role in Berg's *Wozzeck*, conducted by Carlos Kleiber, with Brigitte Fassbaender, Peter Schreier, and Karl Ridderbusch in the cast. Edda Moser was scheduled for the title role in *Leonore*—i.e., the unrevised version of Beethoven's *Fidelio*—conducted by Herbert Blom-

# Some of the rather special adjectives the test labs have been using to describe LUX.

Unless this is the first high fidelity publication you have read, you know that equipment reviews are almost always favorable. We don't suggest that the reviews are inaccurate or that they don't reflect the editors' sincere judgments. Rather, we understand that the publications prefer to use their limited space for equipment that they can recommend to their readers.

Thus, the problem for the discerning reader is to distinguish between the adequate, the good and the truly superb. As of this date, four LUX products have been the subject of test reports in high fidelity magazines. Aside from confirming excellent specifications and exceptional sonic performance, the reviewers left little doubt as to which descriptive category they meant to apply.

For an apt example, the Hirsch-Houck report (in *Stereo Review*) on the Luxman L-100 integrated amplifier concluded: "Obviously the performance and operating characteristics of the Luxman L-100 require the use of superlatives for an adequate description... Externally, internally and in respect to performance, (it) must be considered a simply beautiful product. The harmonic distortion (THD) at 1,000 Hz and 10 watts output was 0.0087 per cent and it remained at that figure up to the rated 110 watts..." (Our claimed THD at rated power, 20 to 20,000 Hz, is 0.08 per cent).

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*High Fidelity* magazine's report was on the C-1000 preamplifier. They found "the performance... virtually impeccable. Clipping occurs at 13 volts. The data from the CBS Technology Center shows that, at a more reasonable 2 volts, THD is less than 0.0064% for all conditions, and intermodulation distortion is 0.002% or less." *High Fidelity's* conclusion: "It is more a Rolls-Royce than a Ferrari. But if you are a sybaritic audiophile with a budget to match, the C-1000 will pamper you as few preamps can."

*FM Guide* reported on the Luxman T-110 tuner, also with unequivocal conclusions: "...the FM purist's tuner... emphasis is totally on absolutely top FM performance... in most of our listening tests we were being limited by the quality of broadcast signals... without a doubt, the best performing tuner we have ever seen at this price."

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The Luxman  
C-1000.

The Luxman C-1000. "If you are a sybaritic audiophile with a budget to match, the C-1000 will pamper you as few preamps can." ..... *High Fidelity*

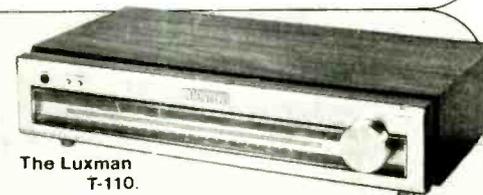


The Luxman  
L-100.

The Luxman T-110. "It was obvious in most of our listening tests that we were being limited by the quality of broadcast signals and not by the capabilities of this superb tuner." ..... *FM Guide*

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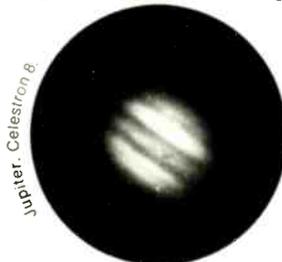
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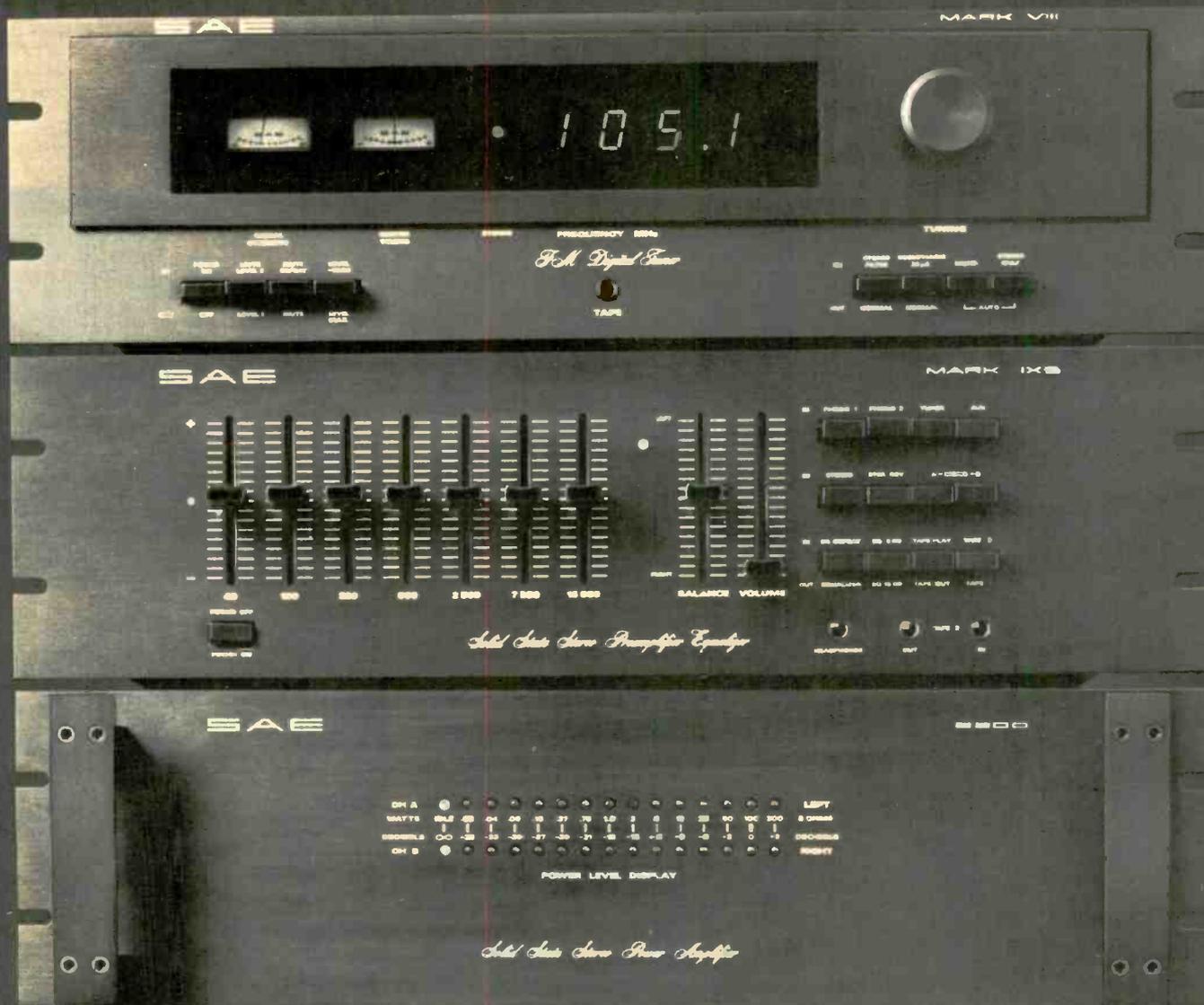
**Levine's Brahms.** There is good news for admirers of James Levine's Brahms First Symphony with the Chicago Symphony, which number includes our Abram Chipman, who greeted it in May as one of the "really great ones" that "happen barely once in a decade." RCA was obviously pleased too, for Levine and the Chicago Symphony have now taped the Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies.

**Paris Opera on disc?** The most striking shift in the international operatic balance of power in recent years has been the sudden emergence of the long-muddling-through Paris Opera into the limelight. Not so coincidentally, the company's turnaround began in 1973, when Rolf Liebermann arrived from Hamburg to become general administrator.

Little secret has been made of one of the key ingredients in Liebermann's formula: money. Using the prospect of the Opera's return to international glory, he has managed to put together enough financial support to guarantee him first crack at the world's leading operatic artists. Or so it seemed until this summer, when the company found itself facing a cash crisis at an especially inopportune moment: In September the company was to undertake its monumentally expensive U.S. visit (a bicentennial gift from the French government), and a stagnant economy has placed the government's arts subsidies under fierce pressure.

In mid-August an increased subsidy (reportedly more than \$22 million) was granted, guaranteeing the U.S. tour and the coming Paris season. But at the same time it was announced that a series of Opéra board meetings would devote serious consideration to fundamental artistic and financial questions concerning the company's future. And one of those questions may result in a windfall for discophiles: During the company's intensifying crisis, one proposal advanced for monetary relief was a program of commercial recordings to generate new income; at this writing an October board meeting is scheduled to explore the possibility of creating a company to record and market Opéra performances.

# In the Black



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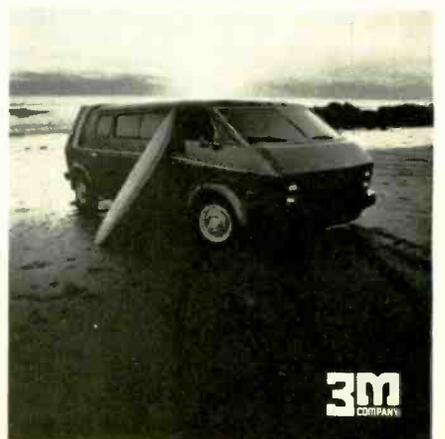
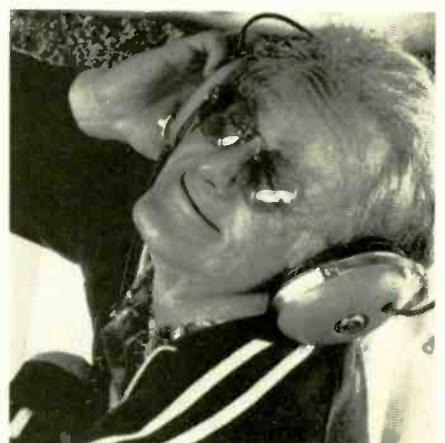
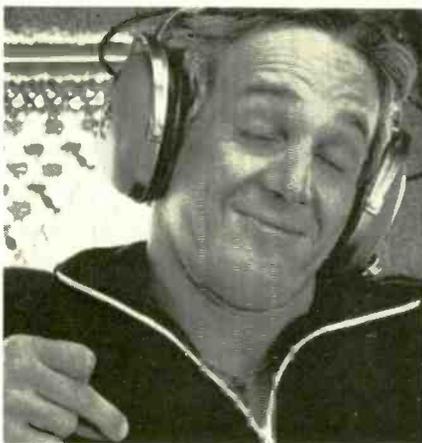
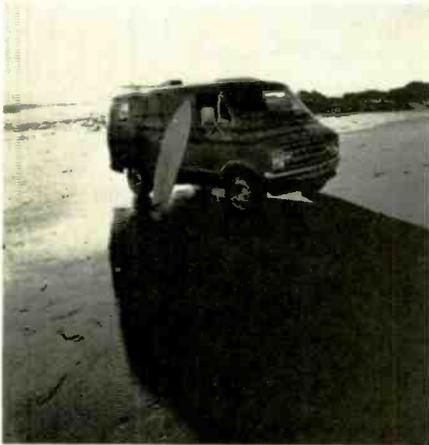
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## The Carmen Revolution Gathers Force

*Solti's dialogue-version London recording sets new standards for musical sense, but the full dramatic sense remains unrealized.*

by Conrad L. Osborne

LIFE GROWS STEADILY more complicated for us all, but especially for record buyers and record critics. Critics, I grant, thrive on complication—we foster it, perhaps we even invented it. But even for us, complication is hitting a threatening level, and nowhere is the matter more serious than in the case of the Bizet/Meilhac-Halévy / Mérimée / Guiraud / Oeser-Felsenstein *Carmen*.

The information explosion is to blame. *Carmen's* information exploded a few years back, and in considering recordings of this work, we must now weigh not only all of the many performance factors, but the judgment exercised with respect to the myriad variations of both musical and verbal text—a matted thicket that each of us waters and prunes according to personal aesthetics.

London's new recording brings to four those that have opted for some version of the dialogue *Carmen*, without Guiraud's recitatives, since the appearance of Oeser's inclusive but scholastically slippery variorum edition of the full score. (The Frühbeck de Burgos/Angel recording, with no specific ties to Oeser, came first in 1970, followed by Maazel/Eurodisc and Bernstein/DG.) There is also a pre-Oeser dialogue

version, dating from the late Forties, with forces of the Opéra-Comique under Cluytens, preserving what I gather was the performing edition used in that house for many years—no Guiraud, but some connective scraps of dialogue. Released domestically as Columbia SL 109, then as a Pathé import (FCX PM 35020/2), it is a strong, flavorful performance that might well bear a low-priced reissue.

Since detailed comparison of even these five recordings is impossible at less than truly discographic length, I will strike a small blow for simplicity by referring readers to David Hamilton's thorough discussions of musical text decisions in his reviews of the Maazel and Bernstein performances (HF, January 1972 and July 1973, respectively), and to Winton Dean's elucidating commentary on Oeser's work and on Bernstein's Oeser (*The Musical Times*, November 1965, and *Musical Newsletter*, October 1973, respectively).

Readers can also refer to essays by Dean and by Georg Solti in the booklet that accompanies the new recording. Indeed, Solti's article, in which he details the major textual choices as between the 1875 Choudens score and Oeser's, and argues for his own selec-



Metropolitan Opera

"The sillification of Mérimée's savage originals": In the Met's 1951-52 production, Remendado was Alessio de Paolis (seated) and Dancaire, George Cehanovsky. Lucine Amara (crouching) was Frasquita, Margaret Roggero was Mercédès, and Risé Stevens was Carmen.

tions, is a model both of how record companies should deal with their public (this is a real "truth in marketing" issue) and of how musicians ought approach problems in this area—namely, by seeking out all available evidence, ascertaining the reasoning behind conflicting viewpoints, then adding the lessons of one's own performance experience and a measure of trust in one's own musical and dramatic intuitions in arriving at decisions.

I would defend this approach even if I disagreed with its results, but as it happens I find Solti's reasoning persuasive both on the page and in performance in almost every instance, which is just another way of saying that, of the dialogue-version recordings, this one makes the choices in musical text that, on the whole, are closest to what my own would be. Of the eighteen major discrepancies between Oeser and Choudens cited by Solti (there are a number of minor ones, as well), Solti has gone with Choudens ten times and with Oeser seven. (The eighteenth, the longer version of the José/Escamillo fight, appears in both Oeser and Choudens 1875, though not in any of the other scores, beginning with Choudens 1877.)

In terms of performance effect, the most important decisions are those in favor of the Choudens edition at the ends of Acts III and IV—particularly the latter where, as can be verified by reference to the Maazel recording, the Oeser options in passages leading up to and embracing the death of Carmen have a catastrophically palliative effect on the climax of the entire drama. Having now heard all the additions included by Solti (one way and another) several times, I find them all welcome. I particularly agree that the more extended versions of the Act II finale and of the José/Escamillo scene are important—the former musically, the latter dramatically. And the Act I extensions, principally atmospheric, are certainly pleasing, if less essential.

The Choudens options are primarily in the direction of concision, and among them I would strongly support Solti's choice of the shorter (more familiar) development of the Fate Motive just after the *Haba-*

*nera*. It should be noted that one significant omission is not mentioned in Solti's article, presumably because neither Choudens nor Oeser represents it as integral (it is included in the Anhang of the Oeser score). This is the extended scene for Moralès and various pantomime characters among the townsfolk in Act I. It is heard only on the Frühbeck recording, to which we must be grateful for aural confirmation that it adds very little except length to an already long first act.

But there is another really crucial textual matter—in fact, a whole area of consideration—that is not very completely dealt with in any of the materials available with recordings, or in commentaries thereon, and I should like to forgo more detailed discussion of the musical text to at least touch on this question of the dialogue. Just as no single version represents all the available music of *Carmen*, none represents its complete libretto, either. In fact, all of them put together do not contain the full verbal text. If we are taking *Carmen* seriously as a theatrical as well as musical entity (as any recording of a dialogue version at least purports to do), and if we are granting that literary and dramatic texts are as entitled to integrity as musical texts (can we argue otherwise?), then the libretto deserves close and respectful attention.

Once again, the current recording can be given relatively high marks: It retains about as much of the dialogue as the Frühbeck version (though the choices are not identical)—that is, rather more than the Bernstein/Met performance, considerably more than the old Cluytens/Opéra-Comique, and far more than the Maazel. I also support the decision to allot the dialogue to the singers, instead of to a separate cast of actors.

Admittedly, the only opera singers likely to really fulfill the dialogue are native French performers with inborn attachments to the flow of dialogue, *mélodrame*, and song peculiar to the *comique* form (as some of our Broadway performers have for the equivalent blends in the American musical comedy).

This cast of international stars does, on the whole, no better than the Met's as heard on DG. But modern actors, French or no, really have no greater sensitivity to the requirements than do most singers—the style is just as foreign to them, they must stretch just as far, they fail just as consistently. And (an emperor-with-no-clothes observation), they are clearly different people, so that two unsatisfactory performances, not merely one, are alternately taking place—a patent theatrical absurdity that undermines any chance of believability from the start. This is another point well documented by the Frühbeck version, as well as by numerous recordings of other works that pose the same problem, such as *Fidelio* or *Zauberflöte*.

But, if opera singers only indicate the dialogue whereas many of them sing accompanied recitative quite decently, and since Guiraud's recitatives are actually well-written, often inventive, and well within the score's style, what are the justifications for selection of a comique version in what is otherwise an international grand-opera context?

Solti cites one of them in his essay, and I quote his clear statement of it: "... because of the balance between words and music that Bizet used to such brilliant dramatic purpose. *Carmen* is, of course, a fusion of comedy and tragedy. In the opening act the lightness is maintained by the use of the dialogue, with only hints at the seriousness to come, and then as the tragedy deepens the dialogue gets less and less and the music takes over to heighten the emotion. ..." He is talking about tone, balance, and pace. These are the considerations we might expect to loom large in a musician's reactions, and they are real and important.

But I would submit that there is another, more crucial advantage to the dialogue *Carmen* (for nearly a century, after all, none of us have felt anything seriously wrong with the tone, balance, and pace of the recitative version). This advantage lies in the far greater amount of information conveyed to the audience by the full dialogue, and the greater consistency (and, consequently, believability) of that information with the sources from which the characters and happenings are drawn. In general, the information is of two kinds: 1) plot specificity, enabling the audience to establish a stronger sense of what has transpired before the rise of the curtain and what transpires off-stage during the action, and 2) character specificity, enabling the audience to more completely understand the behavior and motivations of the principal figures.

In his accompanying essay, Dean notes that "for obvious reasons the dialogue in this recording has been heavily cut." I don't find the reasons so obvious. If length is at issue, we can dismiss the problem, for the inclusion of every word of the libretto would add, at the outside, ten to twelve minutes to the full running time of the opera, and, if anything, improve the feeling of proportion and pace in the work. But I would not in any case argue for the unedited text in performance, for I believe that just as professional musical minds must make informed decisions not only about what is authentic, but about what is effective and truly contributory among the musical materials, professional theatrical minds must make equivalent choices. In the case of the libretto, I

would suggest that this involves judgment mainly as to which of the librettists' inventions spring from an attempt to dramatize Mérimée or (just as valid) to represent the significant changes from Mérimée in character relationships they decided to make as purely artistic choices, as distinguished from those changes intended primarily to appease either the Du Locle management or the specific audience of his theater—an audience whose viewpoint and taste we no longer, in many respects, share.

In the latter category I would place much of the business involving Dancaire and Remendado. These two characters are necessary as plot devices, and Bizet wrote delightfully for them. But the main reason for the libretto's emphasis on the smugglers (types who would be at home in Auber, Offenbach, almost in the feebler G&S), and for the sillification of Mérimée's savage originals, was the need to take the curse off the stage-realistic treatment accorded to gypsies, bandits, deserters, and other unsavory sorts deemed rough trade for a theater dealing in entertainment rather than art. The authors specifically assured the management that, though it would be necessary to represent gypsies, they would be "comic gypsies," and so here they come, at full vaudeville cliché gallop, ho-ho, very funny. But they aren't funny, they are a collective pain in the neck, and, unless perhaps a production can offer us the operatic counterparts of a Sid Caesar/Howard Morris, Jackie Gleason/Art Carney duo, it is hard to press for their more extended presence.

A greater portion of the dialogue, however, concerns itself with prehistory of the characters (mostly José) and the interactions among them, and I think it is worth inspecting the most important sequences and their treatment on records. I shall here compare primarily the Frühbeck, Bernstein, and Solti performances, since the Cluytens and Maazel contain so little—inexcusable in the case of the latter, which is post-Oeser and not based on any stage tradition.

Act I: In the original José/Zuniga interchange, we are given almost all the essential facts about José's situation: that he is Basque (from the town of Elizondo in Navarre); that he has been forced to leave his country and come south to join the Spanish army because of a violent quarrel over a match of *jeu de paume*; and that his aged mother has also relocated, in a village not far from Seville, along with Micaëla, a young orphan girl whom she has taken in.

It is vital that we understand these things, and, if possible, that we understand some of their significance. (To be a Basque, for instance, is very different from being an Andalusian Spaniard. The distinction, and its psychological implications for José, are emphasized repeatedly in the novella and in the libretto, but totally disappear in the Guiraud *Carmen*.) It also helps to have José's reactions to the forward, mocking ways of Andalusian women, stated earlier in the dialogue, and (most importantly of all) we must comprehend the nature of the dependency between José and his mother, the guilt he feels about her position, and the nature of his relationship with little Micaëla (which Guiraud seriously distorted by inserting the assertion that José "loves" her). The powerful off-stage presence of the mother, the existence of her stage second Micaëla,

and the greatly increased importance of the toreador antagonist are the most significant changes from novella to libretto, and they hold a profound emotional logic for the characters.

The Frühbeck version contains the fullest and best selection here, preserving at least some mention of all these matters. (The booklet, however, unhelpfully translates *jeu de paume* as "a kind of fives." It is the Basque form of *pelota*, played with the bare hand and with deadly macho seriousness.) The Solti edition explains José's origin, the quarrel, the mother's move, and Micaëla, shortening mainly the early exchanges about the cigarette makers and Andalusian women. The Bernstein seriously adumbrates the whole dialogue, leaving out entirely the mother and Micaëla, and substituting for the quarrel story a hokier fabrication ("Zuniga: Ah, it's you who killed . . ."). In DG's German translation (but not, curiously, the English), José is identified as Basque rather than specifically Navarrese—probably more indicative to a foreign audience.

The next crucial sequence comes after the *Habenera*, when Carmen interrupts José as he works on his equipment and throws the cassia blossom at him. This dialogue is much reduced from the fine exchange in Mérimée, so shrewd in characterization and rich in sexual imagery, but is still a theatrically superb and enlightening moment. Frühbeck includes it, and so does Cluytens; Bernstein and Solti do not, presumably because this little exchange (which, oddly, is often the only dialogue to survive in Guiraud performances) is placed in the *Anhang* by Oeser. The little soliloquy moment for José that follows (Guiraud's "*Quels regards! Quelle effronterie!*" etc.) is omitted completely in Bernstein, and included by the others in condensations that much weaken the characterization value of it.

After the José/Micaëla duet, José reads aloud the text of the letter Micaëla has brought from his mother. Its recitation requires ninety seconds if taken at a gradual rate, and does more than any other single passage to explain José's emotional predicament, bringing his relationship to his mother and his commitment to her to marry Micaëla on-stage just as his relationship with Carmen is beginning. None of the recorded versions accords it more than three lines, though again the Angel selection is more to the point, including at least a snippet of the mother's words. The Guiraud recitative is here stronger and more specific, unless the letter is read at length.

The last important dialogue in Act I (I here skip over sequences that have only incidental bearing on the main characters, such as José's report of the fight in the factory and the related responses) occurs between José and Carmen just before the *Seguidilla*. Again, something is lost from novella to libretto (including the indication that the conversation is held in the Basque tongue), but more than enough is left to add greatly to our understanding of Carmen's mode of coping with circumstances and of the nature of the attraction she holds for José. It is also one of the few bits of evidence (badly needed) that José is not without some perspective and sense of humor, and that he shares some of Carmen's underlying attitudes. Here the Angel and London versions are of about the same length, each omitting some nice commentary

contained in the other; the London choice is better, I think. DG's is again far skimpier.

The patterns established so far continue in Acts II and III, and I shall not examine the remainder in detail. I do wish to note, though, the treatments of two small but crucial moments: the brief Carmen/Escamillo exchange after the "Toreador Song" in Act II, and Micaëla's Act III entrance.

In the first instance, it is of primary importance that we understand the precise nature of Carmen's reply to Escamillo's proposition. He asks her what she would reply if he were to ask permission to love and be loved by her; she answers that he may love her if he pleases, but that "as for being loved by me in return, one mustn't dream of that for the moment. It's like that." A specifically temporary put-off; Escamillo recognizes the implicit future invitation, and she reinforces his understanding by adding, "It's not forbidden to wait, and hoping is always agreeable." Here the Angel and London versions are both essentially complete, while DG's, for reasons I cannot imagine, includes almost everything except Carmen's reply, which is replaced by having Carmen whispering something (we don't hear what) in Escamillo's ear.\*

The Act III sequence is the scene between Micaëla and her mountain guide. It is a beautifully concise little bit of dialogue, at once emphasizing Micaëla's considerable courage in seeking out the spot and giving us a premonition of Escamillo's impending arrival. (The guide: ". . . just a while ago when we found ourselves in the midst of that herd of wild bulls led by the famous Escamillo, you didn't tremble. . .") It also neatly prepares the text of the soprano aria that follows, in which Micaëla confesses that though "I say that nothing frightens me . . . in the depths of my heart, I'm dying of fear." Guiraud's recitative, and the instrumental lead-in to it, are among the best such inventions in all opera, and there is no advantage whatever to the dialogue if no more is to be included than what is given in the Angel and London versions. But at that, DG's is again the really objectionable nonsolution, including neither a single line of dialogue nor a single bar of music: Micaëla simply materializes and begins singing an aria. The Cluytens performance, by the way, here reverts for the only time to Guiraud, a perfectly sensible choice if the scene isn't to be rendered in full.

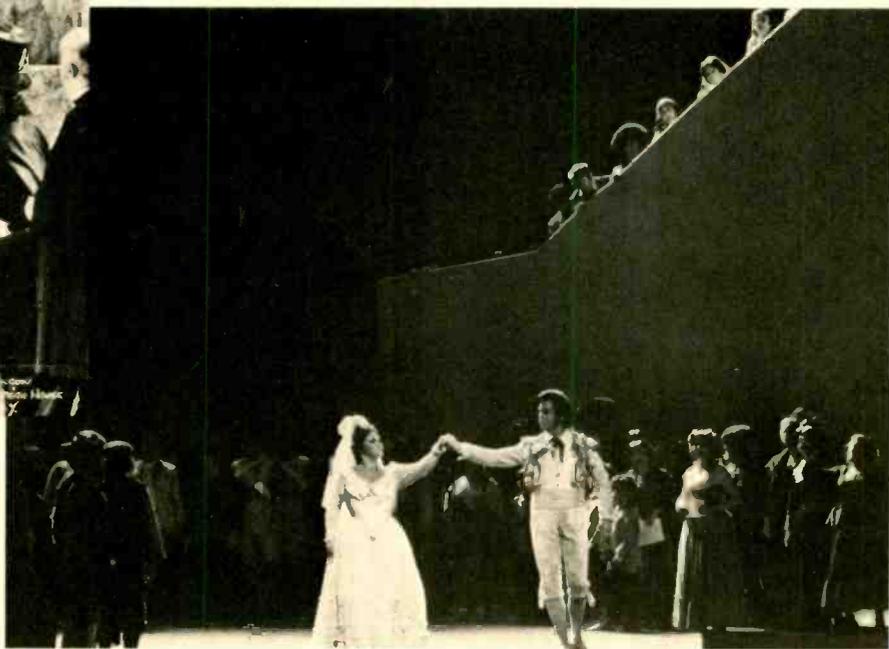
There is much more that could be said on these matters (concerning, for instance, the vital dialogue scene between José and Carmen near the opening of Act III), and I don't at all intend to single out the new recording for complaint—on the contrary, things are clearly getting better. Though Angel's is on balance a slightly more informative dialogue edition, London's is nearly as good, and far more straightforward in supplying indications (through Solti's and Dean's comments) with respect to the elisions. I only observe that the full dialogue contains much that is, at the least, highly desirable from a dramatic point of view and is still not to be found on recordings; that the obstacles to inclusion are, so far as I can tell, largely illusory; and that if omissions are to be made,

\*Actually, Carmen whispers, "*J'aime un soldat, Don José*," a line spoken during the editing sessions not by Marilyn Horne, but by a DG recording engineer. Although indistinguishable in the stereo version, it is understandable on the never-released four-channel version.—Ed.



Guiraud's recitatives were used in the Met's controversial 1967-68 production directed by Jean-Louis Barrault. (Grace Bumbry—seen at center—sang Carmen.) But for the 1972 Gentile/Igesz production with Marilyn Horne and with Tom Krause as Escamillo, a heavily revised version of the dialogue, roughly the equivalent of that on the DG recording, was used.

Photos: Louis Melancon



there is still no good reason why the printed librettos cannot contain the full text. And that though we are dealing with a dramatic work that contains important elements that are purely dramatic, decisions are still being made by musicians—no director is hired or consulted.

Given all the admirable aspects to London's approach to the work, and the careful thought Solti has devoted to it, I wish I could respond more enthusiastically to the performance. Here, too, the results of artistic thinking are everywhere apparent, for there is a consistency and balance of casting, a true integration of artistic outlook, that is extremely rare in operatic performances, live or recorded. For once, just about every decision seems to have been made with a view to really carrying out the interpretive choices of a prominent conductor who knows the piece well.

But these choices seem to remain on an intellectual, nearly an abstract musical level, and the performance, which is at almost any given moment quite lovely, ends up by deadening a work in which basic gut involvement is *sine qua non*. Possibly reverence is to blame: Solti places *Carmen* in a category with *Meistersinger* and *Don Giovanni*. In terms of artistic quality, I quite agree, but this does not mean that qualities that might be welcome in those

scores will necessarily do the trick for this one—and at that, I don't enjoy churchlike rendition of Wagner or Mozart, either.

As can already be gathered, this is not the brash, hyperenergetic Solti we have met at certain junctures in the past. In this reading, there is a solid balance among the elements, an excellent proportion among tempos (generally, as in many recent readings of this work, inclining to the slow side), a steady regard for structure, and a welcome eschewal of empty effect or eccentricity. In short, one is never startled.

But startlement can be nice. Going back over my notes in some dispiritment and puzzlement at the performance's lack of impact, I find repeated observations (beginning with the tripping little accompaniment to Micaëla's first entrance, a typical spot) over a lack of dramatic variety, a failure to mark changes in tone, to pick up or alter the pace at points of transition. Examples from Act I: 1) Micaëla recounting the mother's instructions to her (p. 62 in the Schirmer vocal score), "*Votre mère avec moi*"—no sense of anything being recounted or conveyed; then, at the *allegro moderato* where she quotes the mother, no suggestion of characterization or change of tone. 2) Two pages later, where she gives José the kiss from the mother: a careful *rallentando*, purely as a musical effect; no setup of the dramatic moment, no sense



DOG

Tatiana Troyanos



London

Georg Solti

of simplicity or tenderness. 3) Later, during the added section of the factory fight and the moment when the fight breaks out again, cited by Solti as dramatically important: "Hard to picture what's going on—where is sense of change, of sudden disturbances and quietings?" say my notes.

Or in Act III, the "Quant au douanier" ensemble: "Plays right through center section as if there were no change of any sort. Everything smoothed over this way." Or: "B section of Micaëla's aria made to sound, miraculously, just like A and repeat." In short, I find a lack of flexibility, of sense of light and shade or indeed any coloristic principle, an unresponsiveness to the dramatic cues in the music, and, finally, a heaviness. It is all too rational. A curious outcome in view of the lightness and pace Solti says he feels in the work; but for these qualities, and for the suppleness and piquancy that give the music its most essential spirit, we must best look back to the Cluytens and (among grand-opera versions) Beecham (Angel SCL 3613) performances.

The cast carries through the assignment—round, mellifluous, full-bodied voices singing smoothly and with frequently appealing tonal result, but not much sense of theatrical engagement. This is especially true of the women. Tatiana Troyanos, a very solid singer with a fine, large mezzo of almost ideal weight and timbre for the part, sings musically, conscientiously, attractively, but with remarkably little change of tone and with a sameness of color that drags her aural characterization down (I have not seen her do the role). Like Solti's, her performance is full of virtue—she avoids ranting, superficial sneer-

ing or shouting, sticks to the music, is never embarrassing. At moments in the dialogue, she shows a sense of stage life and a seductiveness that make one wonder why more of these qualities are not to be found in the singing.

Kiri Te Kanawa, also bouncy and even urgent in some of the dialogue, is almost unvarying in her treatment of the music and has little light to throw on the text when singing. Except for a dry moment or two in the lower-middle range, her sound is always full and warm, and in the aria often really ravishing—it is a special voice.

Plácido Domingo is on balance the most effective of the principals, simply because, although he takes a basically lyric approach to the part, he brings more metal and temperament to his music. As is often the case, his dusky tenor sounds a bit uneven, a bit vague and even tremulous when he is trying to sing a clean, even legato, but straightens up nicely when he leans into the voice for the more dramatic passages; for this reason, his performance becomes progressively more persuasive. His French is just borderline passable, but he too has moments in the dialogue that show the level he might reach with perceptive direction. José van Dam, also the Escamillo of the recent Erato set, again sings it with a silky bass-baritone nap and ample thrust, and again pointlessly shouts most of the downbeats in the "Votre toast" (the wrong sort of "dramatic involvement"). Like the others except for Domingo, he seems unable to much vary the attractive timbre of his voice.

The supporting singers fill out the frame, for the most part singing pleasingly and warmly, and without much point or vitality. An exception, I was happy to find, is the Dancaïre of Michel Roux, a baritone who was a capable Escamillo and Golaud on records back in the Fifties, now much reduced of voice, but not of spirit. Michel Sénéchal's name on the cast list is a hopeful sign, but his Remendado, though entirely competent, is a predictable stock type.

London's sound is just about exemplary—expansive, warm, well in agreement with the dun tones of the performance. There are no acoustical gimmicks; this is very musical engineering. All told, there is nothing one can fault in the effort that has gone into this production, and very little, moment by moment, that can be faulted in the performance. But from all these moments must issue an outcome, and to my ears, at least, this is more an accurate, sensible, not-quite-complete report on Curmen than a performance of it.

**BIZET: Carmen.**

Carmen	Tatiana Troyanos (ms)	Escamillo	José van Dam (bs-b)
Micaëla	Kiri Te Kanawa (s)	Remendado	Michel Sénéchal (t)
Frasquita	Norma Burrowes (s)	Dancaïre	Michel Roux (b)
Mercedes	Jane Berblé (ms)	Moralès	Thomas Allen (b)
Don José	Plácido Domingo (t)	Zuniga	Pierre Thau (bs)
		(plus speaking roles)	

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**Comparisons:**

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Moffo, Corelli, Maazel/Deutsche Oper Berlin	Eur. 80 489 XR (1/72)
Horne, McCracken, Bernstein/Metropolitan Opera	DG 2709 043 (7/73)



Ray Charles (using a braille score) and Cleo Laine

by John S. Wilson

Whether the stars are Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald or Ray Charles and Cleo Laine, *Porgy and Bess* get lost in the shuffle.

## Louis and Ella and Ray and Cleo

NORMAN GRANZ is, at the least, persistent. In 1957 he made a two-disc album of songs from *Porgy and Bess* with Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald (newly re-circulated in Polydor's Verve reissue series). Now, nineteen years later, he has done it again for RCA, this time with Ray Charles and Cleo Laine.

The immediate question raised concerns the philosophy behind such projects. Both contain an extensive sampling of the score—far more, for example, than would be offered in a typical Broadway original-cast album—and the selections (not quite identical) are by no means confined to the two title characters. Yet in each album only two singers are responsible for all the songs—including, in Fitzgerald's case, one written for a man (quite successful). Why record this much of the score in a format that allows the performers no opportunity to establish any sense of the characters?

Granz's explanation, in a note for the Armstrong/Fitzgerald set, is that, "since we were not recording the entire opera but instead only the best-known excerpts," the best approach was to use only two voices. This is the kind of explanation that explains nothing, except that in both cases Granz has made an album in which a pair of popular singers sing relatively familiar songs (although "They Pass By Singing," "The Buzzard Song," and "Oh, Doctor Jesus" can scarcely be considered well known).

Even accepting that premise, having done it once, why do it again? About all that can be said for the new recording is that it offers an opportunity to compare Ray Charles and Louis Armstrong—if it is worth \$14.98 plus \$7.98 to do it. Both are protean performers who manage to fit their particular talents to whatever they are involved in, which is why Charles has been able to make soul hits out of country songs and why Armstrong was able to wind up his career in a glow of mass popularity singing "Mack the Knife" and "Hello, Dolly."

In the *Porgy and Bess* albums, both Armstrong and

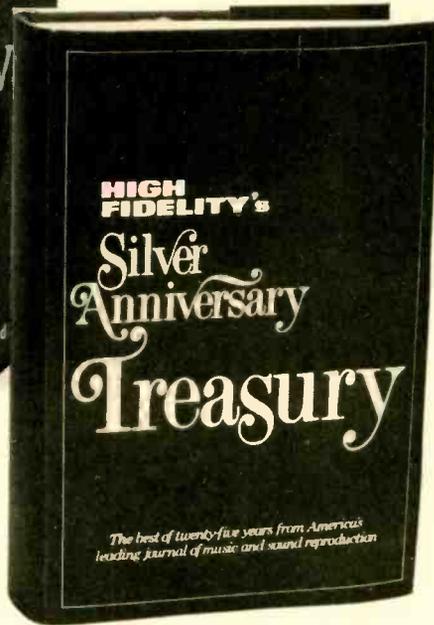
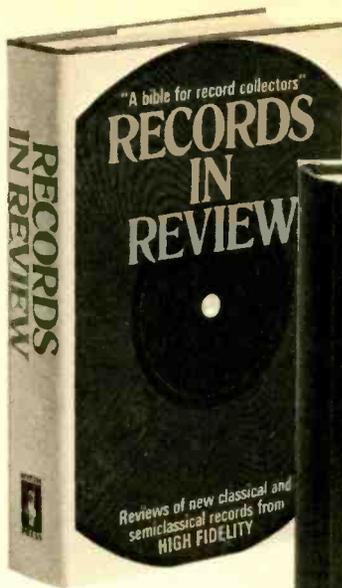
Charles bring characteristic qualities to all the songs they sing. Both add instrumental solos, Charles on piano and electric piano, Armstrong on trumpet. And both have gritty, grainy voices that can be stretched to remarkable projections of expression. If one has a mind for that sort of thing, there is a fascination in finding how these two essentially similar singers cope with the same material, how they bring the stronger points of their talent to bear on some songs and simply fade out on others, generally with little relevance to the characters portrayed.

But between Ella Fitzgerald and Cleo Laine there is no such interesting comparison. Again, characterization is largely missing, and Fitzgerald is simply a better and a more convincing singer than Laine, who is extremely conscious of her highly mannered style. Laine uses the songs as vehicles to be manipulated, with no apparent recognition of their individual values (or even sense). And, while one can easily accept Fitzgerald vis-à-vis Armstrong, Laine's British accent scarcely relates to Charles's down-home, black American earthiness.

The Armstrong/Fitzgerald set is a pleasant collection, the Charles/Laine set is essentially irritating. And Laine's atrocious performance of "I Loves You, Porgy" (omitted, for some reason, from the older recording) makes one acutely conscious of the absence of the female singer who could have played most provocatively opposite Charles: Nina Simone.

**GERSHWIN:** *Porgy and Bess* (excerpts). Cleo Laine, vocals; Ray Charles, vocals and keyboards; instrumental ensemble, Frank De Vol, cond. [Norman Granz, prod.] RCA VICTOR CPL 2-1831, \$14.98 (two discs, automatic sequence). Tape: ●● CPK 2-1831, \$14.95; ●● CPS 2-1831, \$14.95.

**B** **GERSHWIN:** *Porgy and Bess* (excerpts). Ella Fitzgerald, vocals; Louis Armstrong, vocals and trumpet; instrumental ensemble, Russell Garcia, cond. [Norman Granz, prod.] VERVE VE 2-2507, \$7.98 (two discs, manual sequence) [from VE 6040-2, recorded 1957]. Tape: ●● CT 2-2507, \$9.98; ●● 8T 2-2507, \$9.98.



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**BACH:** Concertos for Harpsichord(s) and Strings. Raymond Leppard, Andrew Davis, Philip Ledger, and Blandine Verlet, harpsichords; English Chamber Orchestra, Raymond Leppard, cond. PHILIPS 6747 194, \$23.94 (three discs).

**Concertos for One Harpsichord:** No. 1, in D minor, S. 1052; No. 2, in E, S. 1053; No. 4, in A, S. 1055; No. 5, in F minor, S. 1056. **Concertos for Two Harpsichords:** No. 1, in C minor, S. 1060; No. 2, in C, S. 1061. **Concertos for Three Harpsichords:** No. 1, in D minor, S. 1063; No. 2, in C, S. 1064. **Concerto for Four Harpsichords:** in A minor, S. 1065.

Leppard takes an original approach to the question of what to include in a set of the Bach harpsichord concertos. The standard group comprises thirteen works: seven for one harpsichord, three for two, two for three, and one for four. The budget-priced Gerlin/Douatte and Veyron-Lacroix sets (respectively Nonesuch HE 73001 and Musical Heritage MHS 1024/8, both five discs) add the A minor Triple Concerto for flute, violin, and harpsichord; Gustav Leonhardt (Telefunken 56.35049, five discs) instead adds a solo Concerto No. 8, his completion (from cantata movements) of the S. 1059 fragment; Igor Kipnis (Columbia M4 30540, four discs, with Neville Marriner conducting) omits the multiple-harpsichord concertos but adds the A minor Triple Concerto, his completion of S. 1059, and the Fifth Brandenburg.

Instead of adding to the thirteen "standard" concertos, Leppard subtracts four: those that survive in an earlier format. All Bach's harpsichord concertos have been conjectured to be arrangements of one sort or another, but only four "originals" survive: The E major Violin Concerto, the Fourth Brandenburg, the A minor Violin Concerto, and the D minor Two-Violin Concerto became, respectively, the Harpsichord Concertos Nos. 3, 6, and 7 and the Two-Harpsichord Concerto No. 3. The Two-Harpsichord Concerto No. 1 (S. 1060) is included; though generally presumed to be arranged from an original for two violins or violin and oboe, no original exists. (The popular violin/oboe reconstruction shows how effective the work is in that form.)

What remains, of course, is some marvelous music. S. 1052 is the *Eroica* of keyboard concertos, and the heraldic elegance of S. 1055, S. 1061, and S. 1064 will brighten any festive occasion. Moreover, the Philips performances are superbly on the mark in intonation, balance, dynamic nuance,

rhythmic thrust, and an over-all combination of liteness and weight. I would prefer a more uptempo S. 1052 (I like Anthony Newman's tempos on Columbia M 32300 but cannot accept his one-player-to-a-part accompaniment), and in the multiple concertos I miss the dramatic stereo spread of both harpsichords and violins in the grandly invigorating Janigro performances (Bach Guild BGS 70659 and 70660). Leppard's ideally weighted string body is superbly disciplined. The notes are somewhat skimpy, but the sonics are warm, the pressings splendid.

Obviously the new set does not compete directly with any of the older ones. For the complete concertos, an attractive choice would be the spry, sparkling Kipnis performances of the solo concertos and the Janigro discs of the multiple ones. The Leonhardt readings—straightforward, dryish, with a small ensemble of period instruments—can be recommended to partisans of that approach, and the energetic if not especially subtle budget-priced sets have their attractions. But most collectors are apt to have original-format recordings of the four works omitted by Leppard; for them, the Philips set is a particularly attractive offering. A.C.

[Alternative "performing editions" of the harpsichord concertos for which no original form exists are reviewed below.]

**BACH:** Concerto Reconstructions (ed. Hogwood). William Bennett, flute; Neil Black, oboe and oboe d'amore; Tess Miller, oboe; Carmel Kaine, Ronald Thomas, and Richard Studt, violins; Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner, cond. [Michael

Bremner, prod.] ARGO ZRG 820\* and 821\*, \$6.98 each. Tape: ●● KZRC 820 and 821, \$7.95 each.

**Concertos for Oboe and Strings,** in F, from S. 1053; for Oboe d'Amore and Strings, in A, from S. 1055; for Flute and Strings, in G minor, from S. 1056\*; for Violin, Oboe, and Strings, in D minor, from S. 1060\*; for Violin, Oboe, and Flute, and Strings, in D minor, from S. 1063; for Three Violins and Strings, in D, from S. 1064\*.

These discs are devoted to ultrapurist "reverse transcriptions" that rebuke the greatest of all Bach transcribers, Johann Sebastian himself. It is now generally supposed that all of Bach's harpsichord concertos are arrangements of one sort or another; editor Christopher Hogwood is only one of the "derangers" who have dared to hypothesize "originals" of those works for which none survives. Hogwood's annotations provide a scholarly apologia for what he has done, along with a general survey of Bach transcription practices, but the best justification for such reconstructions rests, of course, on how persuasively they can plead their own cases in performance.

A stern jury might bring in an adverse, or at least "not proven," verdict on two of them. Even William Bennett's superb playing can't convince me that a flute (restricted too often to its low register) is what Bach first had in mind for what we know as the Fifth Harpsichord Concerto, S. 1056. And except for its virile last movement, neither the present violin/oboe/flute nor the familiar three-harpsichords version of S. 1063 is wholly satisfactory—perhaps because the original materials may have been by someone other than Bach himself.

But everything else is sheer delight. A violin/oboe version of S. 1060 long has been preferred to that for two harpsichords, even in performances that don't approach the piquant lilt of Marriner's. And while I haven't heard Baumgartner's three-violin reconstruction of the S. 1064 three-harpsichord concerto (recorded by Ristenpart for Nonesuch a decade ago), I can't imagine its matching the glorious exhilaration of the Hogwood/Marriner triumph. The S. 1053 and S. 1055 solo harpsichord concertos (Nos. 2 and 4) haven't been recorded before in oboe and oboe d'amore scorings, as far as I know, but once heard (at least as played with Neil Black's artistry and delectable timbre coloring) it's almost impossible to argue that these aren't their ideal—original or not—versions.

Even listeners who disagree with the propriety of these—or any—reconstructions

## Explanation of symbols

Classical:

- B** Budget  
**H** Historical  
**R** Reissue

Recorded tape:

- Open Reel  
●○ 8-Track Cartridge  
●● Cassette

are likely to find that listening to the sometimes flabbergastingly different variants provokes potentially freshened relish of the familiar solo and multiple harpsichord concertos [for which readers are directed to the preceding review of the new Leppard/Philips set]. Most others not only will enjoy such illuminating revelations of old friends, but will find the reconstructions incalculably rewarding for their own sake. R.D.D.

**BARTÓK:** Concerto for Orchestra; Hungarian Sketches. Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Zubin Mehta, cond. [Ray Minshull, prod.] LONDON CS 6949, \$6.98.

**MAHLER:** Symphony No. 1, in D. Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Zubin Mehta, cond. [Ray Minshull, prod.] LONDON CS 7004, \$6.98.

Decca/London's vivid engineering—from the glistening upper harmonics to the darkly thunderous bass transients—ruthlessly exposes orchestral playing that would be barely tolerable for a one-shot concert performance, surely unworthy of documentation on record. And in the two large works, Mehta seems cavalier in his thinking-through of architectural and spiritual meaning: balances left to whim, nervous speedups when loudness increases and note values shorten, awkward slow-downs for quieter passages.

Bartók's *Hungarian Sketches*, the set of miniatures orchestrated from piano originals, comes off with almost adequate point and character, perhaps because Mehta doesn't have to think here in such large structural units. Still, Reiner's Chicago version (Victrola VICS 1620) has an elegance and finish that are hard to beat. Better editions of the *Concerto for Orchestra* abound—with my list headed by Kubelik (DG 2530 479), Boulez (Columbia M 32132), and Solti (London CS 6784). Mehta's Mahler First is inferior to some half a dozen versions without even considering the outstanding ones of Horenstein (Nonesuch H 71240), Walter (Odyssey Y 30047), Haitink (Philips 6500 342), and Bernstein (Columbia MS 7069). A.C.

**BEETHOVEN:** Missa Solemnis, Op. 123. Heather Harper, soprano; Janet Baker, mezzo; Robert Tear, tenor; Hans Sotin, bass; New Philharmonia Chorus, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini, cond. [Christopher Bishop, prod.] ANGEL SB 3836, \$13.98 (two SQ-encoded discs, automatic sequence).

**Comparisons:**

Klemperer / New Philharmonia	Ang. SB 3679
Toscanini / NBC Sym.	AT 200 (see text)
Böhm / Vienna Phil.	DG 2707 080
Jochum / Concertgebouw	Phi. 6799 001

The *Missa Solemnis*, though it contains much that is universal, is one of Beethoven's most subjective masterpieces. For that reason, the listener's own subjective reactions are always arising to complicate a cool-headed assessment of performances.

In November 1975, for example, I dismissed the Böhm/DG edition for its easygoing, unassertive outlook and backward instrumental detail; ironically, the new Giulini version is even more yielding

and shares a similar reticent placement of such things as the all-important trombones, and yet I find myself riveted by the controversial interpretation! Moreover, while further listening leaves unchanged my preference for the Klemperer/Angel and Toscanini Missus (with the reservations noted in the aforementioned review), I am now inclined to reverse my positions on the Böhm and Jochum/Philips sets. This is purely a subjective response: the previous objective observations stand: Böhm is a trifle drab in outlook, Jochum does manage certain tempo transitions (e.g., the *meno allegro* in the Gloria) more smoothly, and Philips' sound is more brightly vivid and detailed. Yet I am more moved by Böhm's litheness of motion and simple devotion than by Jochum's more detached and analytical, less deeply felt approach. And certainly Böhm, of the two, has the better blended, more consistently opulent vocal quartet.

Giulini's account is at its most controversial in the two opening movements, and the impression here—after six or so hearings—is that his performance grows in authority as it progresses. The opening chord of the Kyrie is, in truth, a bit ragged, and the tempo for the Gloria is astonishingly relaxed. When, at certain climactic chords, Giulini holds back even more, the forward motion comes to a dead halt and even threatens to start moving backward. This

kind of performance style is reminiscent of typical late Furtwängler—e.g., the finale of his 1954 Vienna Philharmonic Beethoven Fifth Symphony—but as with Furtwängler, Giulini's personal fervor and sheer depth of musicianship somehow manage to hold one's interest in spite of his metaphysical introspection and sheer perversity. The *meno allegro*, taken at a still more protracted tempo, is positively slow motion, and the final presto is completely comfortable and without any of its hysterical energy.

The Credo, which everyone but Toscanini takes too slowly, here receives perhaps its slowest performance on records. The choral outburst at "*Et resurrexit*" has none of the terror of Toscanini's 1953 version, and its effect is further spoiled by just a hint of pre-echo in the *ppp* that precedes it. Nor does Giulini generate anything like the necessary power in the concluding "*Et vitam venturi*" fugue. But even in his most underpowered moments, he bathes the music with radiant spiritual glow. His deeply felt vision never falters, and the listener is caught up in his communicativeness.

The two final movements are splendid. Granted, the trombones are too unassertive at "*Osanna in excelsis*" and the violins a bit backwardly balanced in that contrapuntal place in the *Agnus Dei* that sounds so much like the finale of the Op. 132 String Quartet. But apart from these momentary disap-

## Critics' Choice

The best classical records reviewed in recent months

- BACH:** Violin Partita No. 2; Sonata No. 3. Chung. LONDON CS 6940, Oct.
- BEETHOVEN:** Triple Concerto. Suk, Chuchro, Panenka; Masur. SUPRAPHON 1 10 1558, Oct.
- BEETHOVEN:** Violin Concerto. Suk. Boult. VANGUARD EVERYMAN SRV 353 SD, Oct.
- BEETHOVEN:** Violin Sonatas (10). Suk, Panenka, SUPRAPHON 1 11 0561 / 5 (5), Oct.
- BRAHMS:** Haydn Variations. **ELGAR:** Enigma Variations. Jochum. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 586, Aug.
- BRUCKNER:** Requiem in D minor. Beuerle. NONESUCH H 71327, Nov.
- CHOPIN:** Preludes, Opp. 28, 45, posth. Perahia. COLUMBIA M 33507, Nov.
- CHOPIN:** Preludes, Opp. 28. Pollini. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 550, Nov.
- DEBUSSY:** Etudes. Jacobs. NONESUCH H 71322, Oct.
- DUKAS:** Symphony; Sorcerer's Apprentice. Weller. LONDON CS 6995, Sept.
- GRIEG:** *Orchestral Works*, Vol. 1. Abravanel. Vox QSVBX 5140 (3), Nov.
- HANDEL:** *Concerti grossi*, Op. 6. S.W. German Chamber Orchestra. Angerer. Vox OSVXB 558 (3), Oct.
- HANDEL:** *Messiah*. Leppard. RCA RED SEAL CRL 3-1426 (3), Sept.
- IVES; BARBER:** String Quartets. Cleveland Qt. RCA RED SEAL ARL 1-1599, Oct.
- LEHÁR-LANCHBERY:** *Merry Widow* Ballet. Lanchbery. ANGEL S 37092, Nov.
- MOZART:** *Haffner Serenade*. De Waart. PHILIPS 6500 966, Nov.
- NIELSEN:** *Saul and David*. Christoff; Horenstein. UNICORN RHS 343 / 5 (3), Nov.
- SCHUMANN:** *Frauenliebe und Leben*. **SCHUBERT; BRAHMS:** *SONGS*. Baker, Isepp. SAGA 5277, Nov.
- STRAUSS, R.:** *Horn Concertos*. Damm; Kempe. ANGEL S 37004, Nov.
- STRAVINSKY:** *Oedipus Rex*. Cocteau. Stravinsky. ODYSSEY Y 33789, Sept.
- TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Piano Concerto No. 1*. **CHOPIN:** *F Minor Fantasy*. Solomon; Harty. BRUNO WALTER SOCIETY IGI 333, Nov.
- TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Songs*. Vishnevskaya, Rostropovich. ANGEL S 37166, Sept.
- VERDI:** *Il Corsaro*. Gardelli. PHILIPS 6700 098 (2), Sept.
- VERDI:** *Luisa Miller*. Maag. LONDON OSA 13114 (3), Sept.
- WAGNER:** *Die Meistersinger*. Furtwängler. EMI ODEON 1C 181 01797 / 801 (5), Sept.
- WALTON:** *Façade*. Randall; Fiedler. COLUMBIA M 33980, Sept.
- CARUSO:** *Legendary Performer* (Soundstream reprocessings.) RCA RED SEAL CRM 1-1749, Nov.

pointments, one must praise the exquisite tone color Giulini obtains before the Benedictus, the eloquently played violin solo of Rodney Friend, the conductor's increasing firmness of line, and the gorgeously sonorous, sustained singing of the soloists (who benefit throughout from an unusually proximate microphone balance).

Giulini's way with the *Missa* may lack some of the harsh austerity and strength found in the Klemperer and Toscanini versions, but against that must be balanced a lyrical, almost operatic, tensile quality at least the equal of Toscanini's and far greater than Klemperer's (which sometimes, particularly in the Credo, sounds rather stolid and flat-footed). It is a more distinctive version than either the Böhm or the Jochum. Toscanini's 1953 commercial recording, incidentally, has been restored to listenability in its German RCA incarnation (available from German News Company). Its sound is solid, equalized toward the bass, and not unpleasantly shrill, though disappointingly damped-down and opaque when compared with the earlier, no longer available pressing of the domestic version (stampers numbers 14S/17S/12S/14S); as noted in 1975, the current domestic edition should be avoided. H.G.

**BEETHOVEN:** Symphony No. 7, in A, Op. 92. Hungarian State Orchestra, János Ferencsik, cond. [István Juhász, prod.] HUNGAROTON SLPX 11791, \$6.98.

The veteran Ferencsik has now recorded all the Beethoven symphonies: Nos. 2 and 4 with the Czech Philharmonic for Supraphon (SUAST 50367 and 50421, respectively); the rest with his Hungarian State Orchestra for Hungaroton (Nos. 1 and 8 on SHLX 90002, No. 3 on SLPX 11551, No. 5 on SHLX 90020, No. 9 on SLPX 11736/7)—No. 6 has not yet appeared but is listed in sequence with No. 7 as SLPX 11790.

This is one of the really fine Sevens available: judiciously phrased, toughly rhythmic, strongly lyric. For once, there is spring and dancing impetus in the pulse of each movement, even when the tempos *per se* are a trifle deliberate. Ferencsik builds the first-movement introduction (*Poco sostenuto*) auspiciously, and the ensuing *Vivace* has the requisite pounding momentum. The *Allegretto*, likewise built along classic lines, has breadth without lapsing into heavy, four-to-a-bar inertia. The scherzo is rollicking and suitably unbuttoned; the trio is slowish-to-moderate (far slower than the prescribed half-note 84), yet avoids the "traditional" droopy sentimentality and maintains some sobriety and shape. The finale has toughness and controlled momentum. Repeats are not taken, save for one extra one in the scherzo and one in the trio the first time around.

The Hungarian State Orchestra plays with admirable discipline and a cultured, if not overtly "beautiful," tone. It is superbly served by a recording that pinpoints detail, gives the wind and brass plenty of brightness and "cut," and supplies a hearty combination of bright, firm strings and impactive timpani. I wish more engineers—and musicians—would strive for this sort of unpretentious compactness in Beethoven. H.G.

**BIZET:** Carmen. For an essay review, see page 89.

**BLOCH:** Symphony for Trombone and Orchestra\*; Suite symphonique. Howard Prince, trombone\*; Portland Junior Symphony Orchestra, Jacob Avshalomov, cond. [Carter Harman, prod.] COMPOSERS RECORDINGS SD 351, \$6.95.

Here's a substantial entry in the discography of one of twentieth-century music's splendid isolates. Both works stem from Bloch's years in Oregon, whose half-century-old Portland Junior Symphony Orchestra plays with enormous affection and no little skill.

The 1944 *Suite symphonique* is very attractive music, well scored and lively, but its three movements could perhaps be mistaken for one another. There is a powerful

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Overture in grave-allegro sequence, then a Passacaglia that changes gears abruptly like the preceding movement. Fewer neobaroquisms are found in the riotous finale. The 1954 *Trombone Symphony* is probably the more significant of the two works. There is a dazzling panoply of Oriental color in much of the orchestral writing and a few meditative interludes, but most of the time the trombone snaps and harangues angrily at the pulsating and agitated orchestra like some hoary Old Testament prophet. It is the most vigorous concerted work for this instrument I've run across, and it also has much to say.

Howard Prince, who was a senior at Juilliard when this was made, handles his solo role with great aplomb. Jacob Avshalomov, in addition to his podium duties, also contributes some warmly personal, if unabashedly partisan, liner notes.

The engineering is an example of what is sometimes regarded as honest amateur

recording—just plunk down a couple of good mikes in a tolerable-sounding hall, set your levels, and let the music play. Considering some of the "professional" excesses of the big labels nowadays, this approach sounds positively refreshing. A.C.

**BRAHMS:** Sonata for Piano, No. 2, in F sharp minor, Op. 2; Variations on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 35. Claudio Arrau, piano. PHILIPS 9500 066, \$7.98.

The F sharp minor Sonata, with its bizarre key relationships, hammered chords, and whatnot, is a problematical work. Arrau's is the first recording by an international heavyweight (Katchen's light, salon style certainly doesn't qualify for that category even if his renown did), and his solution turns out to be just what the sonata needs: His phrasing is thoughtfully introspective, his tempos a little slower, his sonority just a bit more massive than usual. As a result, the work sounds genuinely intense, not febrile and percussive. The same spacious approach also does wonders for the *Paganini Variations*. Their etudelike character is not exactly avoided, but rather tempered by thoughtful musicianship. Arrau's *Luftpausen* and other customary theatricalities lend interest to the material, and his solid, bronzed tone is recorded a little more distantly than it sometimes has been in the past. (Each book of Op. 35, incidentally, is prefaced by its own statement of the Paganini theme.)

This is truly important, not merely portentous, playing, and the disc is warmly recommended. H.G.

**CHOPIN:** Piano Works. Bruce Hungerford, piano [Joanna Nickrenz, prod.] VANGUARD VSD 71214, \$6.98.

Sonata No. 3, in B minor, Op. 58. Etude in F minor, Op. 25, No. 2. Nouvelles Etudes, No. 1. In F minor. Mazurka in C sharp minor, Op. 50, No. 3. Nocturnes: in D flat, Op. 27, No. 2; in E flat, Op. 55, No. 2. Waltz in A flat, Op. 34, No. 1.

From a Beethovenian of Hungerford's persuasion, I would have expected rather severe, tightly structural Chopin. Instead he proves quite excitable, favoring bright colors, voicing that one might think too garish, and very elaborate, even flamboyant, rubato. However much one may take issue with some details, the approach always holds interest, and after the initial surprise one can hear the line of descent from Hungerford's onetime teacher, Ignaz Friedman.

I particularly like some of the shorter pieces. The F minor Etude from Op. 25 is fleet and beautifully articulated, every note glistening and the total line spinning. The D flat Nocturne is cogently done, with pellucid, shimmering sound, and the big C sharp minor Mazurka is ardent, structurally well organized, and almost symphonic in scope. Less immediately attractive are the A flat *Valse brillante* (too much contrived tempo fluctuation and a bit of awkward stiffness in its gait) and the B minor Sonata (too arbitrary in its stop-go rubato and unsubtly excavated inner voices).

Hungerford's characteristic vibrant, pingy tone sounds to me to have been captured at close range and then given an overlay of artificial reverb. H.G.

**DVOŘÁK:** Quartets for Strings: in F, Op. 96 (*American*); in A flat, Op. 105. Prague Quartet. [Franz-Christian Wulff, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 632, \$7.98.

**DVOŘÁK:** Quartet for Strings, in F, Op. 96 (*American*)\*; Quintet for Strings, in E flat, Op. 97\*. Guarneri Quartet; Walter Trampler, viola\*. [Max Wilcox\* and Peter Dellheim\*, prod.] RCA RED SEAL ARL 1-1791, \$6.98.

Expectations are confounded here. I have found the Guarneri's previous recorded Dvořák consistently superb, the Prague's Op. 106 distinctly inauspicious. Yet in the *American* Quartet, it is the Prague performance that gels into an act of joyous commitment and originality. The Guarneri's tempos are sensible; intonation is satisfactory; balances are judicious; ensemble can't be faulted. But a pervasive overrefinement, even preciousness, wraps the music in a straitjacket. The lack of thrust, heft, and accent in phrasing turns intelligent musicianship into antiseptic routine.

One can still find things to pick at in the Prague Quartet's work: the first violinist's occasionally harsh sound in the upper reaches, the dominance of viola and cello in the texture, the rhythmic liberties. Yet the performance works. Those oddities of balance bring out all manner of harmonic subtleties and textural details. The recurrence of the scherzo's trio makes beautiful sense with the extra degree of gossamer softness at its reappearance. The slow movement's ending is deeply affecting thanks to the quartet's willingness to become slower and more expressive. Over-all proportions are well managed: The mercurial bounce and lightness of the scherzo (a perfect foil for the Budapest's gruff deliberation) provide ample balance for the weight of the other three movements. (As in the Kohon and Italiano recordings, the first-movement repeat is observed.)

The Guarneri/Trampler Op. 97 Quintet is handsomely played, aristocratic, and elegant, but the work emerges as no more than a skilled *divertissement*. The Budapest/Trampler version (Columbia M 32792, also coupled with Op. 96), with its added gravity, more nobly arching lyric line, and even more rugged, ethnic flavor, presents a deep and grand masterwork.

The Prague Quartet plays Dvořák's last quartet (Op. 105 was written after Op. 106) with the homespun authenticity, grace, and flexibility noted in its Op. 96. Yet I feel that this flawed work, with its somewhat rambling outer movements, needs more driving discipline. Here the Guarneri (RCA LSC 2887, one of the group's first records) gives a vital performance free of the bloodless detachment of the new disc. And the Guarneri Op. 105 is coupled with as fine a performance of Smetana's *Aus meinem Leben* Quartet as we have. A.C.

**ELGAR:** Enigma Variations, Op. 36\*; Serenade for Strings, in E minor, Op. 20\*; Elegy for Strings, Op. 58\*. Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond.\*; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Ainslee Cox, cond.\*. [Raymond Few and Tim McDonald, prod.] LONDON PHASE-4 SPC 21136, \$6.98.

As a 1929 letter to the composer reproduced



The Prague Quartet—joyous commitment to Dvořák

on the sleeve reminds us, Stokowski has long admired Elgar's *Enigma* Variations. In this performance, recorded in concert in Prague in 1972, he shows an infectious feeling for the work's whimsy and playfulness and never overdoes its sentiment. Traditionalists may find some startlingly unfamiliar touches: Variation 6 is faster than usual, No. 11 softer in contour, No. 9 less intense and inward. A work that so abounds in coquettish woodwind writing is a natural for the Czech Philharmonic, and I find unmitigated delight in the sound of the clarinets in Variation 8 and the "Romanza," to say nothing of the oddly effective bassoon vibrato in No. 10. Over-all ensemble is usually dazzling, despite some tiny imprecisions. This *Enigma* is very nearly in the exalted class of Beecham (Columbia, OP), Monteux (Stereo Treasury STS 15188), and Jochum (DG 2530 586, August 1976).

The two fillers, for strings alone, were recorded in London by Ainslee Cox, who was Stokowski's associate with the American Symphony. The *Elegy*, Op. 58, is a very dull piece unless you worship every note Elgar wrote. The E minor Serenade, however, is a light and wistful piece, and Cox wisely plays it that way. Other conductors have gone searching for hidden profundities that aren't there.

Fortunately, the engineering is free of the "thrills" normally associated with Phase-4. Less fortunately, the Stokowski letter to Elgar takes up so much room on the liner that the notes are skimpy, lacking even a guide to the individual variations. A.C.

**FELDMAN:** For Frank O'Hara; Rothko Chapel—See Recitals and Miscellany: Modern American Music Series.

**GERSHWIN:** "Gershwin Plays Gershwin" George Gershwin, piano, other performers [Peter Dellheim, reissue prod.] RCA VICTROLA AVM1-1740,

\$3.98 (mono) [from various originals, recorded 1924-29].

*Rhapsody in Blue* (Gershwin, Paul Whiteman and his Concert Orchestra; 6/10/24). *An American in Paris* (RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra, Nathaniel Shilkret, cond.; 2/4/29). *Three Preludes* (Gershwin, 1928). Oh, Kay! Do-Do-Do; Maybe; Someone to Watch over Me; Clap Yo' Hands. Tip-Toes; Looking for a Boy; Sweet and Low-Down; That Certain Feeling; When Do We Dance? (Gershwin; 1926).

**GERSHWIN:** Piano Music. André Watts, piano. [Larry Morton, prod.] COLUMBIA M 34221, \$6.98.

*Rhapsody in Blue* (solo-piano version). *Three Preludes*. *Gershwin Song Book*; Swanee; Somebody Loves Me; Who Cares?; I'll Build a Stairway to Paradise; The Man I Love; Nobody but You; Do It Again; 'S Wonderful; Oh, Lady Be Good; Sweet and Low-Down; That Certain Feeling; Liza; I Got Rhythm.

**GERSHWIN:** *Rhapsody in Blue*\*; *An American in Paris*\*. George Gershwin, piano\* (from piano roll, recorded 1925); Columbia Jazz Band\* and New York Philharmonic\*, Michael Tilson Thomas, cond. [Andrew Kazdin, prod.] COLUMBIA M 34205, \$6.98 (SQ-encoded disc). Tape: ●● MT 34205, \$7.98; ● MA 34205, \$7.98. [For a limited time offered at reduced price in all formats, with X prefix.]

**GERSHWIN:** *An American in Paris*. **GROF:** *Grand Canyon Suite*. NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond. [Peter Dellheim, reissue prod.] RCA VICTROLA AVM 1-1737, \$3.98 (mono) [from RCA VICTOR LM 9020 and LM 1004, recorded 1945].

It seems as if everyone, alive or dead, is recording Gershwin this year. Columbia has even concocted a collaboration between the composer and a band conducted a half-century later by Michael Tilson Thomas, who wasn't even born when Gershwin died. It's a sobering thought, too, to realize that nearly twice as many years have elapsed since Toscanini recorded *An American in Paris* than passed between the score's composition and that recording.

For all that, chronology is no secure guide to musical value, whether your beliefs about the history of performance tend to

the Darwinian or to the Spenglerian. Even the composer nodded on occasion—for instance, the 1928 recording of the *Three Preludes*, in which he conspicuously ignores his own dynamic markings. Still, anyone tempted to moon over the second piece in this set—a category that includes André Watts—ought to check out this recording, which goes rather faster than the metronome marking. If you suspect, as I long did, that Gershwin's tempo might have been conditioned by the exigencies of 78-rpm timings, then compare the air check on Mark 56 667; he really did mean it to go this way. Watts, of course, brings to it a degree of subtle keyboard control far exceeding what Gershwin commanded (at least on this particular, rather casual day), but his rubato (decidedly *molto*, rather than the specified *poco*) brings us closer to the world of the nocturne than that of the blues. Something similar, if not as easily verbalized, happens to the two faster pieces in Watts's versions.

Gershwin's performances of the songs from two shows are another matter, and not really comparable to the published transcriptions that Watts plays, although the elements of the published versions often appear in them (except for "Liza" and "I Got Rhythm," only one chorus of each song appeared in the *Gershwin Song Book*.) In his improvisations, the composer usually offers one chorus, the verse, and then an additional chorus or two—all fascinatingly embellished and varied. The tunes sprout cadential and transitional tags, the harmonies shift and shimmer, the keyboard textures are laid out with the hands of a master. (All of this material, including the preludes, is already available on Monmouth/Evergreen 7036 and 7071, coupled with the London original cast recordings of *Lady Be Good* and *Primrose*; the surfaces are on the noisy side, for the masters are evidently no longer available and only used commercial pressings were available for dubbing.)

Watts plays the published transcriptions, with a few printer's errors uncorrected, and some curious modifications: In "Swanee," "Oh, Lady Be Good," and "I'll Build a Stairway to Paradise," he repeats some phrases, upsetting the symmetry of the songs, to no particularly good end. Perhaps he's troubled by the brevity of the pieces, but then that's precisely the interpretive challenge they present: to accept them as miniatures that take off on a flight of fancy and come back down to earth again in just thirty-two bars, and to present them just so. In fairness, Watts sometimes succeeds in this, albeit in very personal terms: He plays "Do It Again," for example, Langorously rather than Plaintively (Gershwin's marking) and makes a rather lovely thing of it. But the precision of the dotted rhythms in "The Man I Love" seems fussy, the precise distinction between dotted and triplet subdivisions generating a mannerist excess of rhythmic activity. (Again, a Gershwin air check, in Mark 56 641, comes to the rescue, confirming that he meant something closer to triplets.)

In many of Watts's performances, there is a tendency to moon, to distend the fabric of the songs and their continuity. For all his keyboard polish, he misses the point of Gershwin's prefatory note: "Our popular

music asks for *staccato* effects . . . the rhythms of American popular music are more or less brittle. . . . The more sharply the music is played, the more effective it sounds." The syncopations of "Who Cares?" and "S Wonderful," the inner voices of the "Liza" arrangement, are all more coherent in William Bolcom's snappier readings on Nonesuch H 71284, which also includes the five transcriptions that Watts omits.

The issue here isn't one of "authenticity" (as the producer's rather defensive liner note seems to fear), but effectiveness, coherence, continuity. Indeed, one would hardly cite Gershwin's recorded improvisations as counter-examples against Watts, for those were made at fox-trot tempo so they would be suitable for dancing. And Bolcom's choices are ultimately preferable, not because they were approved by Kay Swift, Gershwin's closest musical friend, but because they work, because they make the pieces hold together as single musical gestures.

The solo version of the *Rhapsody in Blue* doesn't make a very satisfactory concert piece, useful though it has certainly proved over the years as a staple of student recitals and home musicales. In the original, there is a pretty consistent contrast between the relatively grandiose material assigned to the orchestra and the predominantly in-souciant commentaries of the piano. If a performance of the solo version is to retain some of the range of character and contrast in the original, then this distinction needs to be carefully preserved—and here I think Watts errs, for he broadens and sobers up a

good deal of the witty writing. The opening pages are taken very moderately indeed, with the result that the arrival of that snappy trumpet tune with the flutter-tongues requires an abrupt speedup—you simply can't take this any slower without demolishing its character altogether. Later, the jaunty presentation of the theme in the piano solo preceding the Big Tune comes out sluggish and pensive. For all of Watts's really formidable technical address (notably in the cadenza), the whole emerges somewhat one-sidedly.

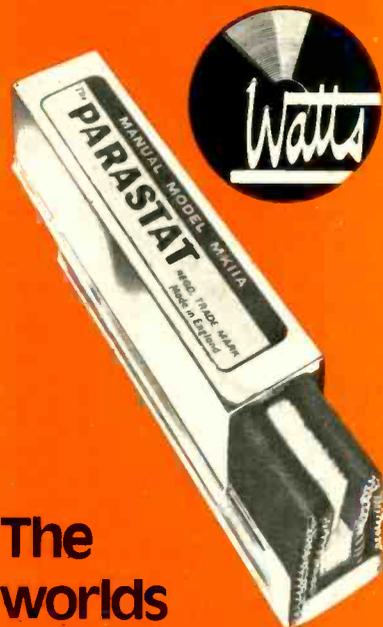
How one-sidedly becomes immediately clear upon audition of Gershwin's own first recording of the *Rhapsody* with the White-man orchestra, an abridged version taken down in June 1924, just four months after that famous concert in Aeolian Hall. An acoustic recording, this has been rehabilitated by the Soundstream process and comes out sounding remarkably clean, though it lacks the frequency range of the slightly less zippy 1927 remake on RCA Victor LPV 555. It's brassy and saucy, played with considerable freedom and fantasy; despite the cuts, it's great fun—and that's at the heart of the difference between it and the Watts performance, which may be often lovely but is not often high-spirited.

A more elaborate attempt at Gershwin rehabilitation comes from Columbia. In an effort reminiscent of Victor's dubbed accompaniments for Caruso forty-five years ago (and English Decca's more recent ones for Kathleen Ferrier), producer Andrew Kazdin and his predecessor Thomas Shepard conceived the idea of combining Gershwin's Duo-Art piano rolls of the *Rhapsody*



George Gershwin and Michael Tilson Thomas Together at last—almost

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with a freshly recorded orchestral part (or, strictly speaking, "band part," for Ferde Grofé's original 1924 scoring is used, not his later, more common symphonic version). From a mechanical standpoint, it's remarkably successful.

It cannot have been easy. To begin with, the piano rolls had to be doctored, for Gershwin's solo version included the orchestra material as well, and so lots of notes had to be taped over on the rolls. Fortunately, in many complex piano-orchestra passages the roll incorporated, by some mechanical equivalent of "overdubbing," both the piano and orchestral material rather than just the published reduction, which in certain tutti passages favors the orchestral part rather than the piano figurations. In at least one place (at rehearsal number 14), however, the roll doesn't appear to include the piano notes, and Kazdin's notes don't explain how he managed to get them into the recording.

Nor does he explain how the playing speed was determined. I'm not complaining, just curious—the tempo of the performance, admirably synchronized, is perfectly plausible. Surprisingly, it's identical to that of the Mark 56 dubbing of this roll, which I found uncomfortably fast—and still do, evidently because the uneven action of the Mark 56 piano makes the fast passages come out impossibly choppy. But Columbia has a better instrument, if one not as bright-toned as we hear on Klavier's rather slower dubbing of the roll (KS 124).

As I've said, this is remarkably well put together and often great fun, the excellent players sailing through their parts with great panache and precision. But the shiny new frame has a curious effect on the old picture: Some of the piano roll's playing sounds, in this context, rather casual (those descending octaves shortly before the Big Tune, for example), and the live surroundings certainly throw into pronounced relief its lack of dynamic and tonal subtlety. Even the first piano entry is a letdown after the introductory measures, played with real swing. Charlie Russo's clarinet solo full of verve and insinuation; and other, similar letdowns follow. By the side of Victrola's real Gershwin, Columbia's effort, though note-complete, remains something of a curiosity—more fun than the piano roll alone, but something short of a convincing musical whole.

Filling out three of these records, we have three performances of *An American in Paris*, spanning the work's nearly fifty years. Nathaniel Shilkret's was the first recording ever, only two months after the premiere (under Walter Damrosch), just days after the radio premiere (under Shilkret himself). Despite an eight-bar excision (between rehearsal numbers 26 and 27), a few scrappy bits of ensemble, and the limited frequency range, this is a lively and stylish performance. More string portamento is used than in later recordings, to good effect, and the individual players contribute some nice touches (e.g., the trombone solo, not far into the blues section). At long last the label reads correctly in regard to the most celebrated participant: For years, issues of this set have declared "George Gershwin at the piano," though there is no piano part in the score and none can be heard; actually, he was drafted to

play the insignificant celesta part. Some significant differences of scoring will be noted vis-à-vis the published edition, which bears the rubric "Edited by F. Campbell-Watson." Perhaps someone will someday elucidate the history of those tamperings.

Still other differences emerge from the Toscanini recording, such as a mysterious dash of celesta added to the bass clarinet solo just before the final resumption of the walking music. In some details, the Italian conductor is surprisingly idiomatic: Though there's no sophistication in the score, he allows his trumpeter (a very fine player) to slide into the blues theme, and the chromatic fiddle solo is seasoned with an almost continuous glissando. But the other fiddle solo (Deems Taylor's "unhallowed episode") is as strict and charmless as one of De Gaulle's bodyguards, and the tuba solo near the end is resolutely unfunny (though surprisingly marred by a "clam"). The entire proceedings, in fact, are on the unrelenting side, for all the clarity and brilliance of the execution. Though somewhat congested in climaxes, the sound is neither dry nor harsh—one of Victor's better Toscanini efforts, slightly less clear in this transfer than in the original LP issue. (The same is true of the Grofé suite, if it matters to you—for me, this mélange of tawdry ideas and slick scoring, all wrapped up with a textural ripoff of the *Tonhäuser Overture*, is past bearing.)

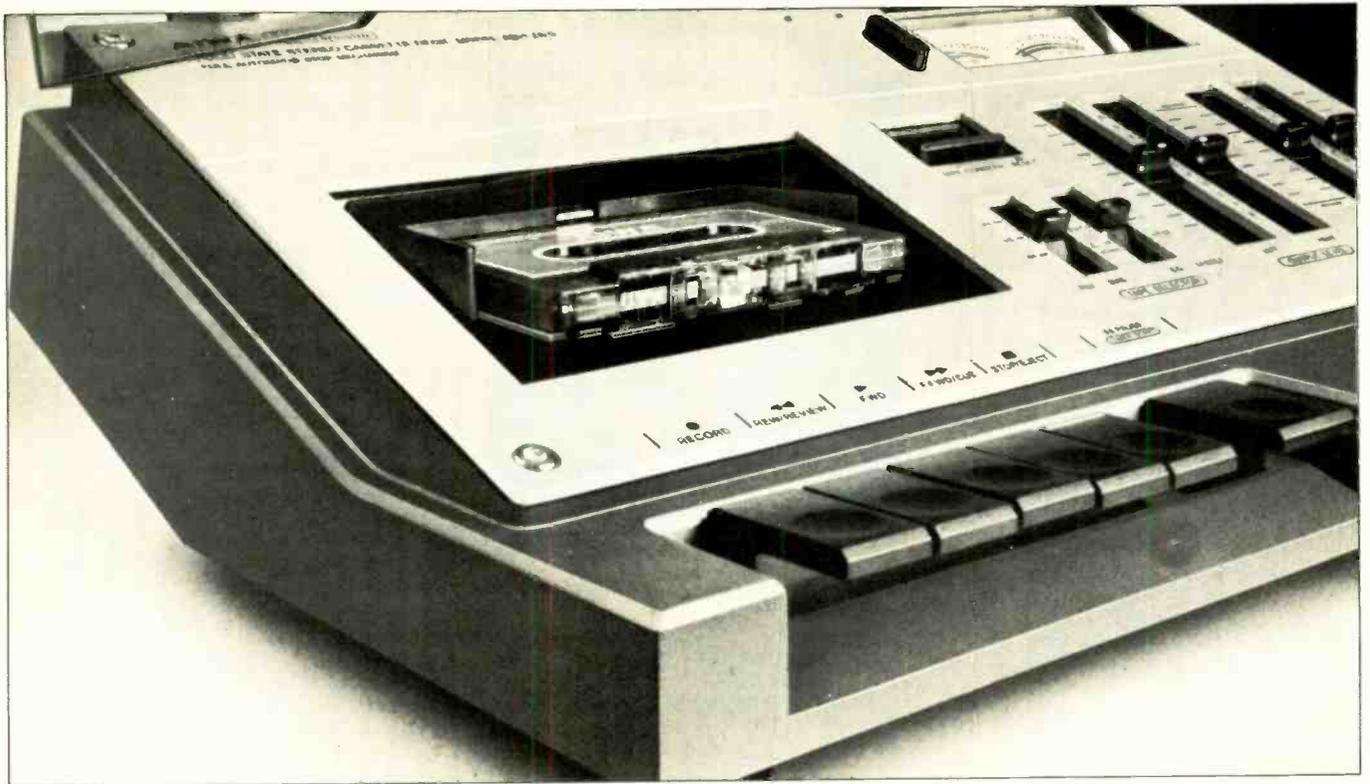
Finally, we have Michael Tilson Thomas' lively, apposite performance, which would have been still more enjoyable had there been less enthusiasm in the playing and/or recording of the percussion—here's the noisiest American ever to hit the City of Lights, and he's awash in cymbal vibrations and drum strokes for most of his visit. Maybe this tells us something about ourselves over the last half-century? D.H.

**HAYDN:** Concertos for Cello and Orchestra: in C, H. VIIb:1; in D, H. VIIb:2. Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Mstislav Rostropovich, cello and cond. [David Mottley, prod.] ANGEL S 37193. \$6.98 (SQ-encoded disc).

Rostropovich was one of the first cellists to play (in concerts and for recording) the Concerto in C, that serendipitous lost-manuscript discovery in the Prague National Museum in 1961. Here he demonstrates even more eloquently than before (in his 1965 London version with Britten conducting) what magnificent music the barely thirty-year-old Haydn could write when he entered Esterházy's service and was given his first opportunities of composing for genuinely skilled solo and orchestral instrumentalists. Rostropovich himself, enjoying the support of undoubtedly even more skilled present-day players, makes the most of both the music's proud nobility and its infectious vitality. He and the Academy are magnificently recorded, too, with the soloist's full-blooded tones never allowed to swamp the ensemble's now crisp, now warm sonorities. The only cause for niggling criticism is the retention of the cadenzas Britten wrote for the earlier recording, but even they are effectively virtuosic, for all their stylistic anachronisms.

However, even Rostropovich—playing

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and recorded just as well, if with less humor and relish—can't persuade us that the long familiar but infinitely more bland and banal Concerto in D, written some twenty years later, is really worthy of Haydn. No wonder it was long ascribed to the Esterházy chief cellist, Anton Kraft, before musicologists finally reconciled themselves to the fact that it is indeed authentic Haydn—a Haydn going through the motions with three-fourths of his mind concerned with something else entirely! At least Rostropovich discards the long *de rigueur* editorial finagling by Gevaert, writes his own cadenzas, and as both soloist and conductor gives what is very probably its finest recorded performance to date.

The stereo-only sonics throughout are so exhilarating that quadriphony of the ambience-only type adds relatively little.

R.D.D.

**H** **HOLST:** *The Planets, Op. 32.* Women's voices of the Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia Chorus; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. [Jay David Saks, prod.] RCA RED SEAL CRL 1-1921, \$4.98. Tape: ●● CRK 1-1921, \$6.95; ●● CRS 1-1921, \$6.95.

**RIMSKY-KORSAKOV:** *Scheherazade, Op. 35.* Erich Gruenberg, violin, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. [Richard Mohr, prod.] RCA RED SEAL ARL 1-1182, \$6.98. Tape: ●● ARK 1-1182, \$7.95; ●● ARS 1-1182, \$7.95.

*Comparison—The Planets:*  
Haitink/London Phil. Phil. 6500072

*Comparisons—Scheherazade:*  
Stokowski/London Sym. Lon. SPC 21005  
Haitink/London Phil. Phil. 6500410

These two symphonic favorites, written just over a quarter-century apart, have in common the exceptional capacity to display the full sonic-spectacularity powers of ultravirtuoso conductors, orchestras, and recording engineers. Moreover, each is already represented on records by several notably impressive versions, topped (in my judgment, anyway) in each case by Haitink's for Philips. RCA's new versions also have in common outstandingly fine sonic qualities, distinctively individual as the American/British orchestras and recording engineers unquestionably are. But in other significant characteristics they are markedly different.

The Philadelphians are apparently recording Holst's showpiece for their first time, and while few if any of the world's other best orchestras have ever sounded better in this work, or if few other conductors have observed every score detail as scrupulously as Ormandy, the Americans reveal regrettably little true idiomatic or interpretative empathy with the music. They have none of the roast-beef-of-old-England gusto of Sir Adrian Boult; they can't match the magisterial authority, grace, and luminosity of the superb Haitink *Planets*. And even the RCA recording, vivid and powerful as it is, is less crisply focused than Philips'. Nevertheless, the Philadelphia version is a consistent delight to one's ears, not least in the hauntingly achieved lingering *morendo* of the finale's wordless female chorus.

Stokowski and *Scheherazade* are of



Leoš Janáček

*Sustained impact and individuality*

course old comrades: This is at least his fifth recording, preceded most recently (and spectacularly) by the 1965 London version with the London Symphony. It's scarcely surprising that the new, decade-later audio technology makes even the sensational Phase-4 sonics seem less luminous, less equally balanced over the frequency spectrum, and above all more "spotlighted" and less auditorium-authentically "natural." What is decidedly unexpected is that the now ninety-four-year-old Stokowski has learned to correct at least most of his earlier excesses in both interpretation and score-finagling. With the exception of a still over-mannered, overromanticized third movement, the present reading is generally less arbitrary, more graceful, and more to the musical point than before. Even Erich Gruenberg, who is again the solo violinist, is less sentimental, if still a bit too suave for my taste, which honors Haitink's Rodney Friend as the ideal voice of Rimsky's tale-spinner. To be sure, there is still one defiant cymbal-crash addition to the score, but most of the gong and other graffiti defacements are now wisely discarded. Although what for me are the superlatively fine *Scheherazades* of first Ansermet for London (CS 6212) in 1961 and then Haitink for Philips in 1974 remain securely incomparable, this latest Stokowski version is both endlessly fascinating in its own right and outstanding as an exemplar of the Old Sorcerer's undiminished, in some ways even increased, personal powers.

The simultaneously released cassette editions of both Ormandy's *Planets* and Stokowski's *Scheherazade* seem—in direct A/B comparisons—to be exact sonic equivalents of the disc editions in every respect save one: the tapes' smooth but inescapably evident surface noise. R.D.D.

**JANÁČEK:** *Choral Works.* Various soloists; Czech Philharmonic Chorus, Czech Philharmonic Orchestra members, Josef Veselka, cond. [Jaroslav Krček and Zdeněk Zahradník, prod.] SUPRAPHON 1 12 1486, \$6.98.

Wolf Tracks, Kašpar Rucký; *Hradčany Songs; Rikadla*

Supraphon's collection of largely female Janáček choruses is even better than its distinguished male-chorus predecessor (now on Nonesuch H 71288): more varied in mood, technique, and scoring (vocal and instrumental), with more sustained impact and individuality.

Three of the four works date from 1916. *Wolf Tracks* is a concentrated visit to the world of Janáček's tragic operas, or perhaps *The Diary of One Who Disappeared*. With piano, soprano, and tenor solos joining the chorus, this tautly lamenting ballad weaves a tale of cuckoldry and revenge, with the metaphorical use of nature and animal life so beloved of Janáček. *Kašpar Rucký* turns from the grim reportage of human events to bizarre, though partly tongue-in-cheek, supernaturalism. The title character is a folk hero and rascal who winds up as a fragmented corpse pursued endlessly by a bevy of goats, cats, and witches. Something of the spirit of the Glagolitic Mass, the string quartets, and the Sinfonietta is previewed here in the work's rhythmic asymmetry and cruelly exposed pyrotechnics. The three *Hradčany Songs* are in the composer's most introspective and quasi-impressionistic vein, as they describe the faraway secrets of Czech history, dreams, and sorrows hidden in the alleys, the fountains, and the summer residence surrounding Prague's imposing castle. The only instrumental color is provided by a solitary flute and harp in, respectively, the second and third songs, both of which also include a soprano solo.

A decade later, Janáček fashioned the *Rikadla* (*Nursery or Nonsense Rhymes*) for mixed chorus (rarely in unison) and a chamber ensemble (rarely in unison) of piano, two flutes, two clarinets, two bassoons, ocarina doubling piccolo, double bassoon, double bass, and percussion. The *Rhymes* consist of eighteen brief couplets to drolly whimsical texts, framed by an instrumental prelude and postlude. So fresh and pungent are the textures, so spiky the rhythms, and so delectable the general spirit that I regret only the piece's brevity (a mere sixteen minutes).

The performances under Josef Veselka are as extraordinary as the works themselves. The chorus has the speech rhythms in its heritage and has mastered these volatile moods with hair-trigger precision. Every shading is delivered with incredible polish, and at the same time the renditions are ablaze with spontaneity. The *Nursery Rhymes* enlist the services of some magnificent players from the Czech Philharmonic. The sound is excellent, and full texts and translations are included in an insert. A release of considerable importance. A.C.

**MAHLER:** *Symphony No. 1—See Bartók; Concerto for Orchestra*

**MENDELSSOHN:** *Songs.* Peter Schreier, tenor; Walter Olbertz, piano. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 596, \$7.98.

Op. 8: No. 8, *Hexenlied*. Op. 9: No. 1, *Frage*; No. 5, *Im Herbst*. Op. 19: No. 1, *Frühlingslied*; No. 3, *Winterlied*; No. 4, *Neue Liebe*; No. 5, *Gruss*. Op. 34: No. 1, *Minnelied*; No. 2, *Auf Flügeln des Gesanges*; No. 3, *Frühlingslied*; No. 6, *Reiselied*. Op. 47: No. 3, *Frühlingslied*; No. 6, *Bei der Wiege*. Op. 57: No. 2, *Hirtenlied*; No. 5, *Venetianisches Gondellied*; No. 6, *Wanderlied*. Op. 71: No. 4, *Schifflied*.

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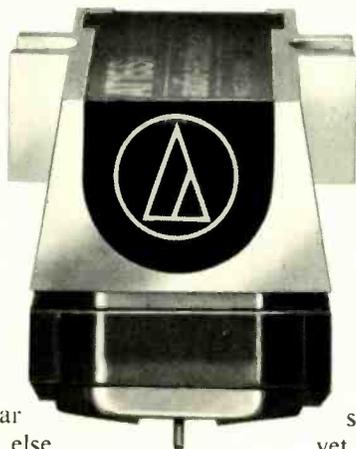
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**MENDELSSOHN: Songs.** Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Wolfgang Sawallisch, piano. [Suvi Raj Grubb, prod.] EMI ODEON 1C 193 02180/1, \$15.96 (two discs; distributed by Peters International).

Op. 8: No. 4, Erntelied; No. 8, Hexenlied. Op. 9: No. 6, Scheldend. Op. 19: No. 1, Frühlingslied; No. 2, Das erste Veilchen; No. 3, Winterlied; No. 4, Neue Liebe; No. 5, Gruss; No. 6, Reiseslied. Op. 34: No. 1, Minnelied; No. 2, Auf Flügeln des Gesanges; No. 3, Frühlingslied. Op. 47: No. 1, Minnelied; No. 2, Morgengruss; No. 3, Frühlingslied; No. 4, Volkslied; No. 6, Bei der Wiege. Op. 57: No. 1, Alld deutsches Lied; No. 2, Hirtenlied; No. 4, O Jugend; No. 5, Venetianisches Gondellied; No. 6, Wanderlied. Op. 71: No. 1, Tröstung; No. 3, An die Entfernte; No. 4, Schilflied; No. 5, Auf der Wandschaft; No. 6, Nachtlid. Op. 84: No. 1, Da lieg' ich unter den Bäumen; No. 3, Jagdlid. Op. 86: No. 1, Es lausche das Laub; No. 4, Allnachtslich im Traume; No. 5, Der Mond. Op. 99: No. 1, Erster Verlust; No. 5, Wenn sich zwei Herzen scheiden. Op. posth.: Der Blumenkranz; Schlafloser Augen Leuchte; Das Waldschloss; Pagenlied; Warnung vor dem Rheine.

Except for some unpublished album-leaves, and six songs by his sister Fanny that were published among Felix's early opus numbers, Mendelssohn's solo songs number seventy-three. Until recently, they have been but scantily represented on records. Elisabeth Schumann included some among her later recordings for Allegro (now apparently available as Everest 3268, though I would not vouch for the quality of the phony stereo), and Judith Raskin devoted a side of Epic BC 1305 (deleted) to them, but the only current listings under "Songs" in *Schwann-1* (August) are red herrings: One is of part songs, the other of vocal duets.

In September 1970, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau got around to Mendelssohn, and the results of those sessions, with Wolfgang Sawallisch officiating admirably at the piano, have been available for several years as an imported two-disc album: forty songs in all. And now Deutsche Grammophon has picked up an East German Eterna recital by Peter Schreier containing twenty-two songs, of which nineteen are also in the

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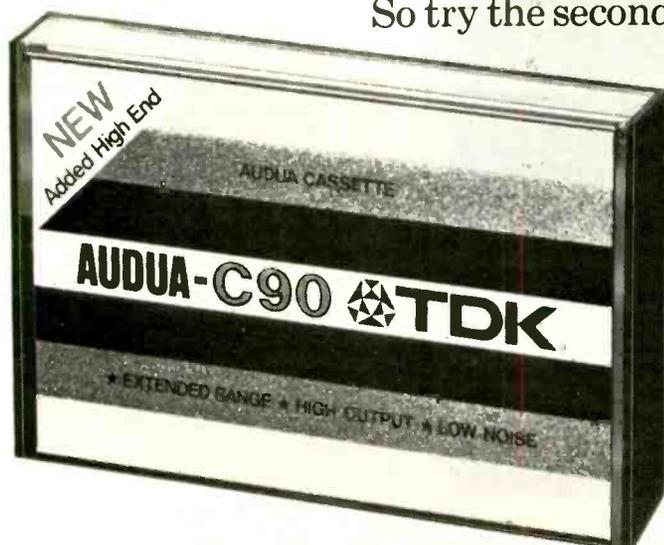
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Though invariably well crafted and pleasantly formed, Mendelssohn's songs are rarely touched by the genius their composer manifested in other genres. The majority are conservative in style, reflecting the strophic *Volkslied* style of Carl Friedrich Zelter and the Berlin school—not surprisingly, for Zelter was Mendelssohn's teacher. Within that framework, to be sure, the level of invention is superior to Zelter's, and every now and then there breaks out a hint of what Schubert had done, what Schumann was about to do in the Lied: "Die Liebende schreibt" is a famous example, written in 1831 but prefiguring the Schu-

mann of 1840. (A woman's song, it isn't in either of the present sets, though Elisabeth Schumann sang it quite touchingly on her disc.)

Given the prevalent simplicity of the material, there is a great deal to be said for Schreier's elegant and straightforward singing. He sets out both words and melodic lines firmly; the tone is sweet, the rhythm firm, and Walter Olbertz plays with style and facility. I'm not at all sure that these songs require anything more in the way of "interpretation."

Still, Fischer-Dieskau gives us more, much more. The dynamic range is very wide, the sforzandos explosive, the line

kept busy with multiple pointings and shadings. There are exceptions: "Bei der Wiege" is delicately restful (though here and elsewhere Dieskau gives us less than Schreier, for stanzas are omitted). And of course there are more songs, some of them very fine: I would not want to be without "O Jugend, o schöne Rosenzeit" or "Da liegt ich unter den Bäumen," for example. (On the other hand, only Schreier offers Mendelssohn's last song, "Altdeutsches Frühlinglied," a lovely piece.) One further consideration: Although one can hardly quarrel with the transposition of individual songs, there's no doubt that most of these were written for high voice, and the brighter, lighter sound of the tenor certainly corresponds more closely to what Mendelssohn had in mind.

For repertory, then, you might want to go for the Dieskau set, but for performance (and for a good initial sampling of the repertory) try Schreier. Both sets include texts and translations (though Electrola commits the solecism of retranslating the German versions of Moore and Byron rather than giving us the originals), and Electrola includes notes in English by Phillip Radcliffe.

D.H.



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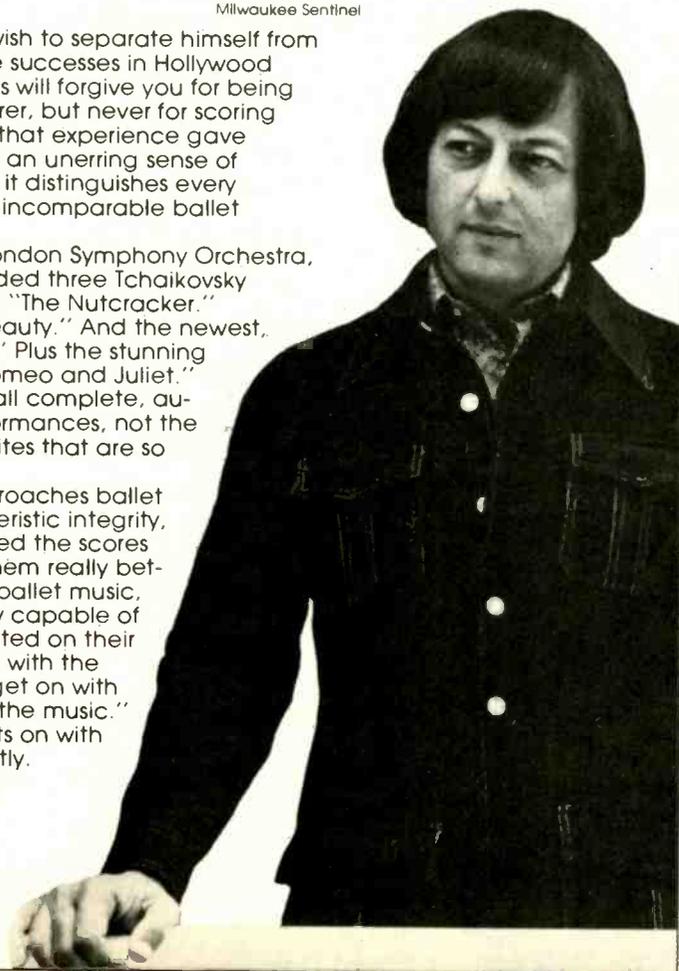
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**MUSSORGSKY:** Pictures at an Exhibition; Schetzo in B flat (arr. Liapunov); Turkish March (arr. Chernov). Michel Béroff, piano. [Eric Macleod, prod.] ANGEL S 37223, \$6.98.

My previous encounters with Béroff left no doubt of his sheer mechanical competence but, interpretively, suggested IBM. No such accusation could be sustained by the present beautifully played, sympathetically phrased, gorgeously colored Mussorgsky performances.

Béroff remains a controlled, scrupulous sort of player, and his limpid sound, imaginative voicing, and clearly defined rhythms stress a kinship that I have often felt between Mussorgsky's piano writing and Schubert's. Béroff gives the *Pictures* an exciting presentation, full of vibrant contrasts, sharp accents, and massive applications of sonority, but for all his kinetic impetuosity his treatment remains completely tasteful and disdainful of rhetorical hyperbole. In many ways, he reminds me of that nonpareil of *Pictures* interpreters, Sviatoslav Richter, though his beautifully recorded disc (one of the clearest piano recordings I have heard from EMI/Angel) lacks the haunting, manic psychoacoustics of Richter's murky, cough-ridden Bulgarian classic.

The *Pictures* turnover occurs at midpoint during "Catacombs," just before the tremolando that heralds the final return of the promenade motif. This is probably the least obtrusive place for an interruption since "Catacombs" is supposed to follow the "Market Place at Limoges" without pause and lead, likewise, into the hut of "Baba Yaga." In fact, having to turn at this point increases the musical interest—bravo for an imaginative solution to a persistent problem.

The Scherzo in B flat is an orchestral work arranged for piano solo by Sergius

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Liapunov; the *Turkish March* is likewise heard in a tasteful arrangement by one Chernov. H.G.

**ORFF:** Choral Works. Czech Philharmonic Chorus, instrumental ensemble, Václav Smetáček, cond. [Eduard Herzog, prod.] SUPRAPHON 1 12 1137, \$6.98.

Veni creator spiritus; Der gute Mensch; Concerto di voce; 3, Sermio; Nanie und Dithyrambe; Vom Frühjahr, Oeltank, und Vom Fliegen.

**ORFF:** *Carmina Burana*. Celestina Casapietra, soprano; Horst Hiestermann, tenor; Karl-Heinz Stryczek, baritone, Dresden Boys' Choir, Leipzig Radio Chorus and Symphony Orchestra, Herbert Kegel, cond. PHILIPS 9500 040, \$7.98. Tape: ●● 7300 444, \$7.95.

A little over a year ago (November 1975). I

reviewed a batch of Orff recordings that represented three quite different facets of the German composer's work. Now Supraphon offers us a glimpse of still another Orffian "face": the still-apprentice composer varying his then most significant *Schulwerk* labors with more tentative concert works for chorus (with mostly pianos and percussion accompaniment), preliminary sketches that in a few years were to be transcended by the far more assured and daring *Carmina Burana*.

The present presumably first-ever recorded examples include two quite substantial cantatas on texts by Franz Werfel, both of 1930: a set of three Bertolt Brecht text settings ("*Frühjahr*," "*Oeltank*," and "*Vom Fliegen*," of 1931); two much later Schiller settings ("*Nanie*" and "*Dith-*

*yrambe*" of 1956); and the third section of a Catullus cycle for which no date is given in the release's notes-and-texts booklet. On the strength of such unusual and (for historians and specialists) illuminating contents, this disc is obviously important for every institutional and Orffian library. Even there, though, it is not likely to be played often or for immediate enjoyment only. For the most part it's early German modernism at its dullest, enthusiastically but roughly sung and played, powerfully but thickly recorded. There are some redeeming imaginative and arresting moments, of course, but unfortunately even the best of these merely pre-echo the techniques Orff was to exploit so much more brilliantly in later works.

The best known of these already has been recorded so often and so heavily plugged as a sonic-spectacular demo that even its admirers are apt to consider superfluous a third new version within the last couple of years. That skepticism is almost a certainty among listeners familiar with Herbert Kegel's only so-so previous *Carmina Burana* (issued on Heliodor a decade ago). On the other hand, those who know Kegel's 1975 recording of *Catulli Carmina* (the second work in the trilogy begun with *Carmina Burana*), on Philips 6500 815, are aware how much the conductor has matured in both authority and persuasiveness.

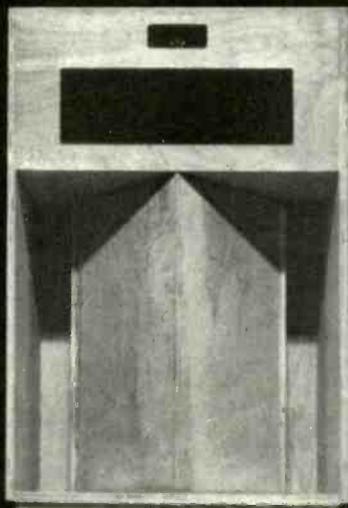
The new *Carmina Burana* is if anything even more tautly yet vibrantly controlled, dramatically pointed, and infectiously zestful. Again the Leipzig chorus is exceptionally good, as are the soloists, among whom baritone Karl-Heinz Stryczek excels all of his more famed competitors and soprano Celestina Casapietra (who has lately been heard on a number of East German recordings) achieves a more magical "*In Trutina*" than perhaps anyone since Sylvia Stahlman on the Vanguard edition of many years ago.

Add magnificently transparent, often blazingly brilliant, and always solid engineering, and I, for one, am forced to reconsider my previous preference rankings of the *Carmina Burana* discography. The Ozawa/Boston version (RCA LSC 3161) remains unique for its grandeur, and the Thomas/Cleveland version (Columbia M/MQ 33172), especially in quadriphony, remains electrifyingly provocative. But for sheer all-around musicianship as well as galvanic excitement, and for tonal attractiveness as well as sonic sensationalism, Kegel wins—for the moment, at least—top ranking. R.I.D.

**PROKOFIEV:** Sonatas for Piano: No. 2, in D minor, Op. 14; No. 8, in B flat, Op. 84. Tedd Joselson, piano. [Peter Dellheim, prod.] RCA RED SEAL ARL 1-1570, \$6.98.

Joselson shows obvious affinity for this music and delivers both sonatas in a warmly romantic manner, with robust rhythm, sonorous tone, and attractive lyricism. The recording is close enough for impact but sufficiently removed to allow a certain reverberant ambience to temper percussive attack. If anything is lacking from these earnest, forthright, often poetic readings, it would be the elusive ingredient called (for lack of a better word) "sophistication." Surely Prokofiev's music, for all its gregar-

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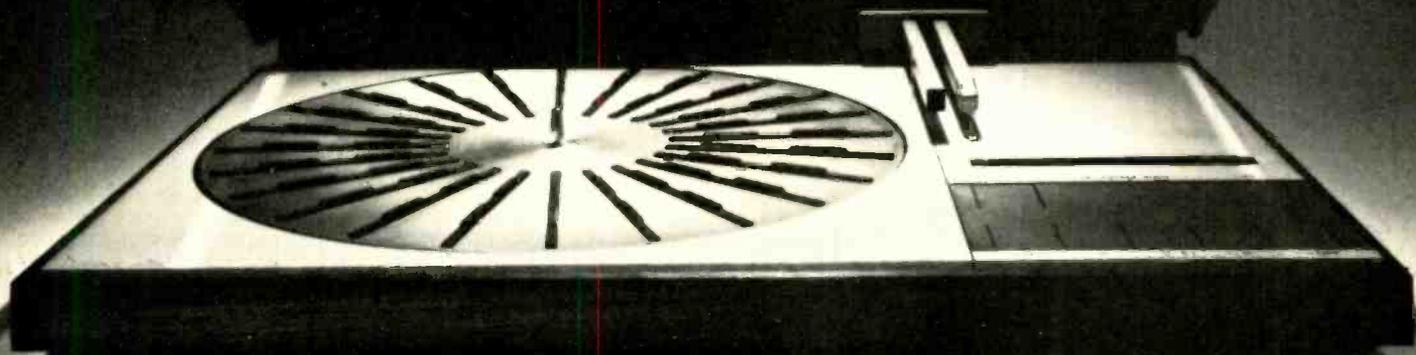
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iousness, boasts a certain toughness. Furthermore, there is a substantial difference between the open-hearted D minor Sonata of 1912 and the more cynical lyricism of the B flat major (one of the three World War II sonatas), but you would never guess it from Joselson's rather generalized, similar readings.

I recall more *diablerie* in the old Gilels and Graffman versions of the D minor, but since both are unavailable Joselson's admirable statement can, for the moment, go unchallenged. (I am not familiar with the integral György Sándor/Vox set.) As for the B flat, Joselson gives it the same sort of interpretation it got from Berman (DG 2530 678), whose version must be given the edge for finesse and even for reproduction. (The DG engineering is truly superb, the RCA "merely" excellent.) But more and more, I think that Gilels' tautly organized, sardonically modernistic approach (Columbia/Melodiya M 33824) is the right one. If the Ashkenazy and Richter recordings too outclass Joselson's, it is no disparagement to note that he is not yet up to such stringent competition. H.G.

### PUCCINI: Tosca.

Flora Tosca	Galina Vishnevskaya (s)
A Shepherd	boy soprano
Mario Cavaradossi	Franco Bonisolti (f)
Spoletta	Mario Guggia (t)
Baron Scarpia	Matteo Manuguerra (b)
Sacristan	Gulido Mazzini (bs)
Cesare Angelotti	Antonio Zerbini (bs)
Sciarrone	Domenico Versaci Medici (bs)
A Jailor	Giacomo Bertasi (bs)

Maîtrise de Radio France, Choeurs de Radio France, Orchestre National de France, Mstislav Rostropovich, cond. [Cord Garben, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2707 087, (two discs, manual sequence) \$15.96.

Galina Vishnevskaya's single appearance as Tosca at the Metropolitan Opera two seasons back remains very vivid to me. Despite the daringly large scale of her stage manner, she never lapsed into melodrama, staying always human, warm, and vulnerable, a creature with whom one inevitably empathized and suffered. Her singing, it must be plainly said, was not pleasing. It was, however, so unflinchingly musical and so dramatically apt as to be inseparable from the total effect of her utterly convincing characterization. On records, of course, the voice must carry the burden of conviction on its own.

Vocal faults that in the opera house can be diminished by stagecraft, by brilliant acting, or by the intensity of personality obtrude themselves unmercifully upon the listener at home. A souvenir of Vishnevskaya's Tosca adequate to its splendors would have to include the visual along with the aural. Certainly, few people could guess at the power of her performance from the present recording alone.

There are, to be sure, some wonderful moments here, moments when voice and dramatic intentions fuse unforgettably: in Act I, for example, when her jealousy capitulates with infinite tenderness before the evidence of Cavaradossi's love, and, later, at the end of the scene with Scarpia, when she refers with hushed humility to God's forgiveness. There are, too, many places where her musical objectives, if not the results she actually achieves, are clearly those of a considerable artist, as witness the phrasing of "Vissi d'arte."

But on the whole, listening to her Tosca—so strident, strained, and unsensual in sound—is so painful an experience that sympathy, and consequently conviction, is vanquished. On records, moreover, Vishnevskaya is guilty every so often of unseemly overemphasis. Tosca's famous epitaph to Scarpia, "E avanti a lui tremava tutta Roma" ("And before him all Rome trembled"), is delivered with such hamminess, complete with an absurdly rising inflection on the final pair of notes, as to produce an effect exactly opposite to that intended by the composer. To paraphrase Oscar Wilde, one would need to have a heart of stone not to laugh here at the anguish of Flora Tosca.

Franco Bonisolti is even less of a pleasure to listen to. Not that the voice itself is a trial, though it is dry in quality and rather clumsily handled, but his style throughout—noisy, lachrymose, and portamento-ridden—is unredeemably provincial. In this respect, however, he is outclassed by Guido Mazzini, a Sacristan whose notion of comic characterization is largely confined to squealing.

Mstislav Rostropovich, who might have mitigated the disadvantages of these performances (and that of the exceptionally weak jailer) by the vividness and conviction of his musical conception, does little to help. Like his wife, he is an artist of considerable stature. Some of his phrasing, espe-

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cially in orchestral passages, is astonishingly beautiful (e.g., the short postlude to "Recondita armonia" and the page that follows upon the death of Scarpia), and he secures splendid playing from the Orchestre National. Nevertheless, I simply cannot trace any coherence in his conception of the score, which sounds quite arbitrary in both dynamics and speed. Some of his tempos are dispiritingly slow, the entrance of Cavaradossi in Act III almost aspiring to the condition of stasis.

But there are some compensations. Mario Guggia's Spoletta is good: quick, intelligent, graphic. More important, the Scarpia of Matteo Manuguerra is a pleasure to listen to. This may not be the most expressive Scarpia on records, but it is certainly among the best sung—secure and ample, es-

pecially at the top, where the voice sounds remarkably commanding. Manuguerra's performance, moreover, is distinguished by a mastery of legato that in this particular company places him in a separate and distinctly superior category.

Libretto and notes are included, the latter, however, without any biographical information on any of the performers apart from Vishnevskaya and Rostropovich. The recording is below DG's usual standards, the balances being unsatisfactory and the aural relationships unclear (the Shepherd Boy, for example, sounds as close as the Jailer). Fine pressings. D.S.H.

**RIMSKY-KORSAKOV:** Scheherazade—See Holst: The Planets.

**SCHUBERT:** Sonata for Piano, in D, D. 850; Ländler (4), D. 336. Vladimir Ashkenazy, piano. [James Walker, prod.] LONDON CS 6961, \$6.98.

Every now and then a recorded performance comes along carrying with it a resolute aura of inevitability. This reading of Schubert's Beethovenian D major Sonata is one such. From the very start of the swirling first movement, Ashkenazy's fire, authority, and sheer technical flair suggests that this indeed is the version we have all been waiting for. His tempo for the aforementioned Allegro vivace is well-nigh perfect—fast enough to convey all the dazzling energy, yet not so fast as to sound flippant (cf. Istomin's deleted Columbia version). His fleet playing has all the clarity and directness of Richter's old edition (Monitor MC 2043) without its bland objectivity, and also much of Artur Schnabel's dynamic, sophisticated phrasing (Angel, deleted) without his occasional blurring and pretentious distortions.

The second movement, marked only "Con moto," is always treacherous, for Schubert's elaborate variations perhaps go on a bit long. Brendel (Philips 6500 763) solved the problem of sustaining interest by taking a rather swift tempo: Ashkenazy's pace is more moderate and brooding, but he keeps rhythms pointed and phrase shapes alive—a superb, comprehending reading. In the scherzo, he hints at Schnabel's pointing but never lapses into eccentricity. (Istomin exaggerated Schnabel's mannerisms to the point of grotesque caricature.) The central trio section—the most typically Schubertian episode in the entire piece—is played a notch slower but fits together admirably. If there is half a quibble, it must be with the finale, where Ashkenazy's insistence upon the qualifying "moderato" almost loses the more crucial ambience of a true Allegro. But even here, the structure is solid, the textures clear and glistening.

The D. 336 Ländler are played with straightness and crystalline delicacy. London has supplied close, impactful, wonderfully bass solid piano tone. A wonderful record. H.G.

**SCHUBERT:** Sonata for Piano, in G, D. 894; Scherzos (2), D. 593. Radu Lupu, piano. [James Mallinson, prod.] LONDON CS 6966, \$6.98.

Schubert's G major Sonata, even more than the posthumous B flat, D. 960, is a work especially prone to—and harmed by—excessive meditation. Since the work is particularly introspective and since performers are further misled by the subtitle "Fantasy," one has come to expect shapeless, sleepy renderings—not a very encouraging prospect with a pianist who managed to daydream his way through even so unlikely a score as Beethoven's *Waldstein* (London CS 6806, July 1974).

In fact, Lupu's reflectiveness is well under control here and, as such, completely appropriate to the material. Although he follows Peter Serkin (RCA LSC 2874), Ashkenazy (London CS 6820), and Badura-Skoda (Victrola, deleted) in observing the long first-movement exposition repeat, he keeps matters aloft by setting a buoyant,

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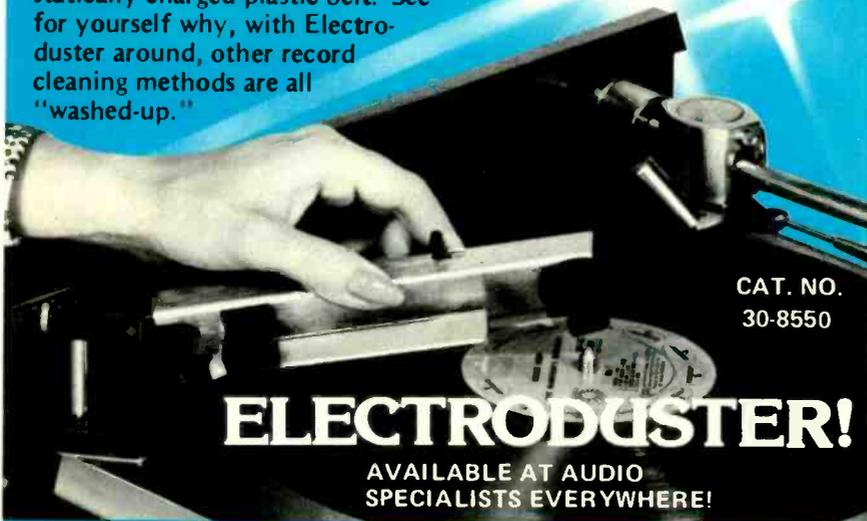
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decidedly mobile tempo. Having avoided the dangers that caused the otherwise admirable Serkin and Ashkenazy accounts to sound disjointed, Lupu presents a genteel reading of the Andante and a mildly rhetorical scherzo—the italicization never impedes the basic rhythmic flow, as it often does. The central trio section has a gentle, lilting quality. The final Allegretto sparkles in a subdued way with excellent articulation and transparency of texture and a suitably ebullient pace.

In sum, a fine version with more poetry and élan than Kuerti's admirable Monitor version (MCS 2109), but without quite the characterization of Brendel's (Philips 6500 416), which by omitting the first-movement repeat is also able to include a memorable account of the unfinished C major Sonata, D. 840. I hope that Kempff's excellent DG version is only temporarily out of the catalogue.

The two early scherzos are done with great finesse and a refreshingly wide dynamic range. London's reproduction is warm and a bit plummy, altogether a less heroic sound than that accorded Ashkenazy in D. 850 (reviewed above). H.G.

**STRAUSS, J.:** Orchestral Works. New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. [John McClure and Richard Killough, prod.] COLUMBIA M 34125, \$6.98.

Waltzes: Rosen aus dem Sueden, Op. 388; G'schichten aus dem Wienerwald, Op. 325. Overtures to Die Fledermaus, Der Zigeunerbaron.

Bernstein's first Johann Strauss waltz program (Columbia MS 7288, 1969) was notable both for its painstaking avoidance of the usual idiomatic errors of most American interpreters and for its punctilious attention to orchestral score details often skimmed by even the best Europeans. In the present two waltzes there is more of the same—much more indeed, for the combination of such conductorial circumspection with an indefatigable observance of all the marked repeats results in the longest recorded versions I've ever encountered of these two favorites. Vividly as well as powerfully recorded, they are undeniably impressive, at least until their lack of spontaneity is exposed in comparisons with the warm, more personally involved, and even sonically grander London Phase-4 versions by Fiedler (SPC 21144, August 1976) or the more relaxed and intimate smaller-scaled versions by Boskovsky and other Austrian specialists.

For the two familiar overtures, Bernstein seems to have studied in a Berlin war college rather than any Viennese theater. Here his over-all treatments are so unconscionably deliberate, humorless, and fiercely muscular that they brutally stamp out every suggestion of the operetta master-composer's genius for endearingly gemütlich musical entertainment. Can this be the same Bernstein whose *Rosenkavalier* enchanted operagoers in Vienna itself, whose 1969 recorded Viennese *Blood* waltz was a delectable little masterpiece? R.D.D.

**VIVALDI:** Concertos for Violin or Oboe and Strings (12), Op. 7. Heinz Holliger, oboe (in Nos. 1 and 7); Salvatore Accardo, violin (in the remaining works); I Musici. PHILIPS 6700 100, \$15.96 (two discs, manual sequence).

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Like Opp. 11 and 12, Vivaldi's Op. 7 is one of his "nameless" concerto sets, lacking the titular enticements of Opp. 3 (*L'Estro armonico*), 4 (*La Stravaganza*), 8 (*Il Cimento dell'armonia e dell'invenzione*), and 9 (*La Cetra*). And like I Musici's set of Opp. 11 and 12 (Philips 6747 189, October 1976), the present Op. 7 is a first integral recording—and hence another invaluable addition to the Vivaldi discography. But the new set has even livelier and wider appeals than the earlier one, which I could recommend to nonspecialists only with serious reservations.

The music of Op. 7 is more varied, both among the ten violin concertos and through the inclusion of two oboe concertos—probably at the insistence of the Amsterdam publisher wanting to capitalize on the popularity of some Albinoni oboe concertos he had published only a couple of years before, in 1715. These Vivaldian oboe works would be delectable even in routine performances; in the superb ones by Heinz Holliger, they are priceless treasures. Violinist Salvatore Accardo is (as in Opp. 11 and 12) no less expert a technician, but he is no match for Holliger in either poetic eloquence or stylistic authenticity. For me, Accardo's overexpressivity and incessant vibrato are anachronistically sticky-sweet, although I must concede that his bravura passagework virtuosity is indeed spectacular.

The Musici ensemble, however, is less vehemently heavy-handed than before and, more helpfully still, the earlier impression of tonal hardness is effaced here in markedly more transparent and vibrantly vivid recording. The oboe concertos have been recorded before, though never as superlatively well; most of the violin concertos may be new to records. They present some examples of Vivaldi the indefatigable routinier, but more of Vivaldi the daringly imaginative experimenter, while the oboe works must rank with his masterpieces.

R.D.D.

## Recitals and Miscellany

**AMERICAN ORCHESTRAL WORKS.** Louisville Orchestra, Jorge Mester, cond. [Andrew Kazdin, prod.] LOUISVILLE LS 753 and 754, \$6.95 each (Louisville First Edition Records, 333 West Broadway, Louisville, Ky. 40202). LS 753: CONVERSE: *Endymion's Narrative*, Op. 10; Flivver Ten Million. CHADWICK: *Euterpe*.

LS 754: FOOTE: *Francesca da Rimini*. BIRD: *Carnival Scene*. ORNSTEIN: *Nocturne and Dance of the Fates*.

No American orchestra has done more than the Louisville Orchestra to keep the music

of today before the public. These records, however, find it looking into the past in search of neglected worthy American orchestral works.

LS 753 resurrects two members of the so-called "Boston school," George Whitefield Chadwick (1854–1931) and his onetime student Frederick Shepherd Converse (1871–1940). Converse is not otherwise represented in *Schwann*, and this is a pity, because his romance for orchestra *Endymion's Narrative*, composed in 1901 and first performed by the Boston Symphony on April 11, 1903, turns out to be a fascinating work. I wish I could say the same about his *Flivver Ten Million*, "a joyous epic" first played by the BSO on April 15, 1927, but it is a weak piece. About halfway between these two works in artistic stature is Chadwick's concert overture *Euterpe*, which the BSO introduced on April 22, 1904, with the composer conducting. It is a well-made piece, somewhat resembling second-rate Brahms, and it is in any case good to have the music of these founding fathers on record.

The greatest curiosity on LS 754 is the first recorded orchestral representation of Leo Ornstein (born 1895), the onetime enfant terrible who suddenly disappeared from view in the Thirties and has only recently been "rediscovered" and recorded. I do not think that the *Nocturne and Dance of the Fates*, first performed by the St. Louis Symphony under Vladimir Golschmann on February 12, 1937, stands much of a chance to achieve immortality—it wears out its welcome long before the final cadence is reached.

Arthur Foote's *Francesca da Rimini*, on the other hand, turns out to be pretty substantial music. The BSO introduced it to the world on January 24, 1891. Even though inspiration flags from time to time, the tone poem deserves an occasional performance.

The *Carnival Scene* by the expatriate Arthur Bird (1856–1923), first performed on June 3, 1886, in Sondershausen by the Allgemeine Deutsche Musikverein, became a favorite throughout Europe and the U.S. in the 1880s and 1890s for reasons that are obscure to me. It is a boisterous romp with little to recommend it except a great deal of energy. I.L.

**BERNARD HERRMANN: A Musical Garland of the Seasons.** Thames Chamber Choir, Louis Halsey, cond.\*; National Philharmonic Orchestra, Bernard Herrmann, cond.\* [Gavin Barrett, prod.] UNICORN RHS 340, \$7.98 (distributed by HNH Distributors, Box 222, Evanston, Ill. 60204).

HERRMANN: *For the Fallen*; *The Fantasticks*\* (with Gillian Humphreys, soprano; Meriel Dickinson, alto; John Amis, tenor; Michael Rippon, bass). DELIUS: *A Late Lark* (with Amis). WARLOCK: *Four Motets*\* (with Stephen Hicks, organ).

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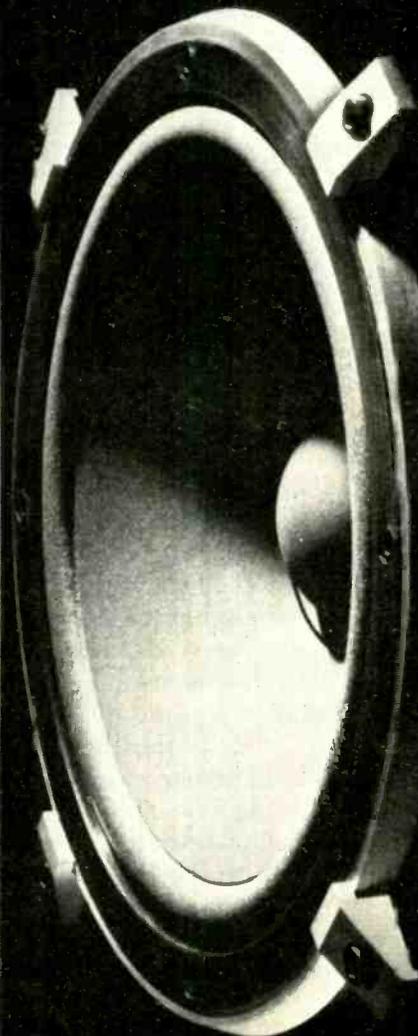


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CIRCLE 59 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



From the concert works by Bernard Herrmann that may be heard on disc, it seems apparent that the late composer was rarely if ever drawn by choice to express the snarling, sometimes violently morbid side of his personality that was unleashed in certain of his film scores. Instead, what is communicated in such works as *For the Fallen* (1943), a haunting, barcarolish lullaby for the World War II dead, and *The Fantasticks* (1944), a song cycle for voices and orchestra based on five Nicolas Breton month-poems (January through May), is a moody, sad personality always ready to be led, at least temporarily, into moments of nostalgic warmth. Even the subdued, aching tragedy of *For the Fallen* is mitigated, at the end, by a quotation from Handel ("For he shall feed his flock"), perhaps implying some sort of salvation. Similarly, the bleak, cold bass-and-sustained-strings ambience of the "January" movement from *The Fantasticks* ultimately metamorphosizes, through movements given successively to the contralto, tenor, and soprano, into the mellow springtime joy of May, where the chorus and orchestra perform music recalling the *Welles Raises Kane* suite. I might add that *The Fantasticks* contains some particularly attractive instrumental effects, notably the winds, vibraphone, and harp accompaniment for "February."

The extremely welcome *Four Motets* by Peter Warlock (1894-1930)—the first two a cappella, the last two with organ accompaniment—are reminders of the tremendous debt owed the English for this type of music. Except for the less convincing final one, the motets are basically carols

touched with a strain of twentieth-century pessimism communicated through bleak, open intervals and a general feeling of harmonic nonresolution. The first motet, which paints a rather dreary picture of late autumn, is almost painfully moody (it is easy to see why these works attracted Herrmann) and closes with a sostenuto passage quite unique in its starkness.

The Delius *A Late Lark* for tenor and orchestra is a late work, quite typical of the composer's amber-colored, muted style. But in this performance enjoyment of the music is rendered all but impossible by tenor John Amis' awful singing.

Indeed, most of the performances leave much to be desired, with the chorus in the Warlock somewhat poorly recorded to boot. (It is unclear whether Herrmann or the Thames Chamber Choir's permanent conductor, Louis Halsey, wields the baton here.) Herrmann's tendency to draw the music out (most damaging in the Delius) exasperates on occasion, and there is little precision in the playing. But all the works save the Delius survive quite nicely. Both the Herrmann pieces count among his finest. The Warlock motets are something of a revelation and should be nicely suited to the Christmas season. R.S.B.

**CLIVE LYTHGOE:** American Piano Works. Clive Lythgoe, piano. PHILIPS 9500 096, \$7.98.

**GRIFFES:** Sonata. **IVES:** Three-Page Sonata. **DETT:** In the Bottoms.

Here is pianist Clive Lythgoe once again

with another selection of early-twentieth-century American music. The big work on the disc is, of course, Charles Tomlinson Griffes' 1919 sonata, in many ways the composer's most original and prophetic composition. According to Lythgoe's jacket note, "this work may be regarded as the very peak of neo-Romanticism in American keyboard music." Hm. I wonder.

Lythgoe gives the Griffes a super-romantic treatment, which I found somewhat off-putting, but he leaves no doubt about his enthusiasm for the sonata. And since the sonics are infinitely better than the only other available recording, by Leonid Hambro (Lyricord 105), it will have to do until a less sentimental reading comes along.

The competition in the Three-Page Sonata of Charles Ives is considerably stiffer, and even though Lythgoe's performance is quite listenable, if you were buying the disc solely for what one bemused critic called "the ragtime of Olympus," I'd search elsewhere.

The most interesting work here turns out to be R. Nathaniel Dett's *In the Bottoms*, a suite of five pieces evoking moods and scenes peculiar to black life in the river bottoms of the Deep South. Dett (1882-1943) majored in composition and piano at Oberlin, and he was the first black to earn a bachelor of music degree. Such strangely assorted musicians as Percy Grainger and Nadia Boulanger particularly admired his music. I do not recall any other recording of Dett's piano music, and, fortunately, Lythgoe plays *In the Bottoms* without too much expression. I'd buy the record for the Dett alone. I.L.

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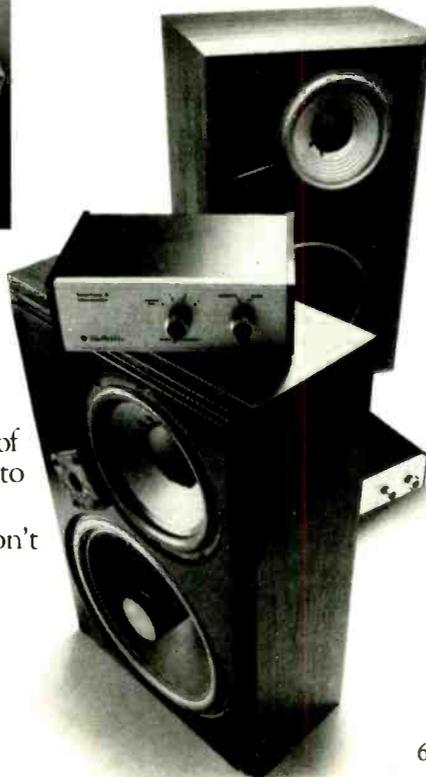


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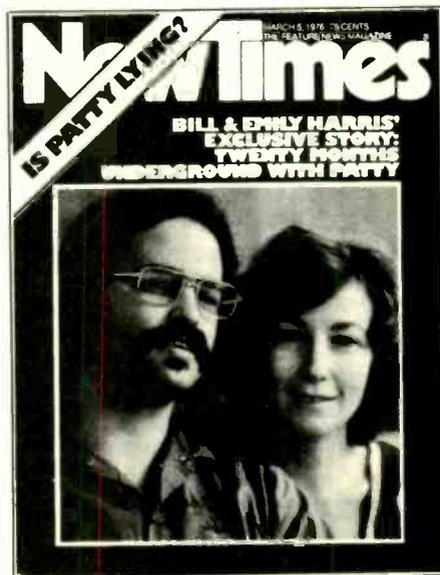
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### B MODERN AMERICAN MUSIC SERIES. ODYSSEY—various numbers, \$3.98 each.

Y 34138: **FELDMAN:** For Frank O'Hara (members of the Center of the Creative and Performing Arts, State University of New York at Buffalo, Jan Williams, cond.); Rothko Chapel (Karen Phillips, viola; James Holland, percussion; Gregg Smith Singers, Gregg Smith, cond.). [Paul Myers and Steven Epstein, prod.]

Y 34158: **SUBOTNICK:** Until Spring (created on the electric music box).

Y 34139: **CANN:** Bonnylee. **GRESSEL:** Points in Time. **KREIGER:** Short Piece. **LANSKY:** mild und leise. **SEMEGEN:** Electronic Composition No. 1. **WRIGHT:** Electronic Composition. **ZUR:** Chants.

Y 34140: **SUDERBURG:** Concerto: Within the Memory of Time (Béla Siki, piano; Seattle Symphony Orchestra, Milton Katims, cond.). [Glenn White, prod.] **SCHUMAN:** Symphony No. 8 (New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.). [John McClure, prod.; from COLUMBIA MS 6512, 1963.]

Morton Feldman's *For Frank O'Hara* is one of the most masterly achievements of his very special style. Feldman is quoted in the jacket notes as saying his primary concern is always "to sustain a 'flat surface' with a minimum of contrast," and that is what he has done superbly in this great work for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, and percussion. There are no separate events; everything is blended into one hypnotic, edge-to-edge event, with a kind of dark, rich radiance and transparency that, strangely enough, comes closer to the feeling of Mark Rothko's paintings in the chapel of the University of St. Thomas in Houston than the work Feldman specifies as a musical homage to those visual masterpieces.

*Rothko Chapel* is scored for viola (Karen Phillips, for whom Feldman has written so much), chorus, and percussion. It's a good piece, but for me it becomes a bit of a bore

after awhile; its very variety of effect is against it. Feldman is the great monotonist of modern music, and I mean that as high praise.

Morton Subotnick's *Until Spring* is a ride on one of the damnedest musical roller coasters going. Subotnick calls the instrument for and on which the work was composed "the electric music box." It is a synthesizer that has everything, and the composer is not one bit hesitant about using it all. The title indicates that spring has not yet arrived, but the work was surely not composed in Subotnick's winter of discontent. It is marvelously exuberant, colorful as all get-out, and recorded in the high, wide, and handsome style of the discs that used to be issued to show you how lifelike and ten-dimensional a stereo disc could be. But this is not just fun and games. It is a big, sweeping, grandly scaled composition. In an era when most electronic composers are content to squeeze out three minutes of sound, Subotnick goes in for at least forty-five, and all of it is fabulously interesting.

The League of Composers in New York conducted a competition for electronic works in 1974, and the seven pieces heard on Y 34139 are the winners. Two of them are quite good. Maurice Wright's piece, called simply *Electronic Composition*, makes very deft, whimsical, and pointed use of the medium. Paul Lansky's *mild und leise* takes the medium into new territory as strikingly as the opera (Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*) from which its title is taken. It avoids the usual blip, poof, and squeak entirely in favor of sustained sounds slowly and wonderfully changing in timbre and harmony and really progressing; it gets somewhere. A beautiful piece.

The other five works on the record, by Joel Gessel, Daria Semegen, Menachem Zur, Richard Cann, and Arthur Kreiger, repeat the usual clichés and the usual heady theoretical justifications for them.

The new work on Y 34140, Robert Suderburg's piano concerto titled *Within the Memory of Time*, is a bloated, old-fashioned virtuoso piece, like something Rachmaninoff might have written in his youth and thought better about publishing. It was actually composed in 1974 and was presumably recorded around that time, although the quality of the registration is as far behind the times as the idiom of the music.

This sad botch is unfortunately coupled with a really good piece. William Schuman's *Eighth Symphony* dates from 1962 and was recorded then; this is a reissue, but it sounds much more up to date than the recording of the Suderburg.

When the Schuman first appeared (coupled with Barber's *Andromache's Farewell*), I wrote a review of it for this magazine that is quoted in the jacket notes of the reprint. I then called it "one of the most somber, profound, monumental, and moving symphonies composed in recent years." Fourteen years later I see no reason to alter that opinion. The Fifties and Sixties were a good period for the American symphony, with people like Harris, Piston, Schuman, Copland, and Sessions all working grandly within the form. Things have changed since then, and not for the worse, but it is good to be reminded of what Schuman and his generation stood for. A.F.

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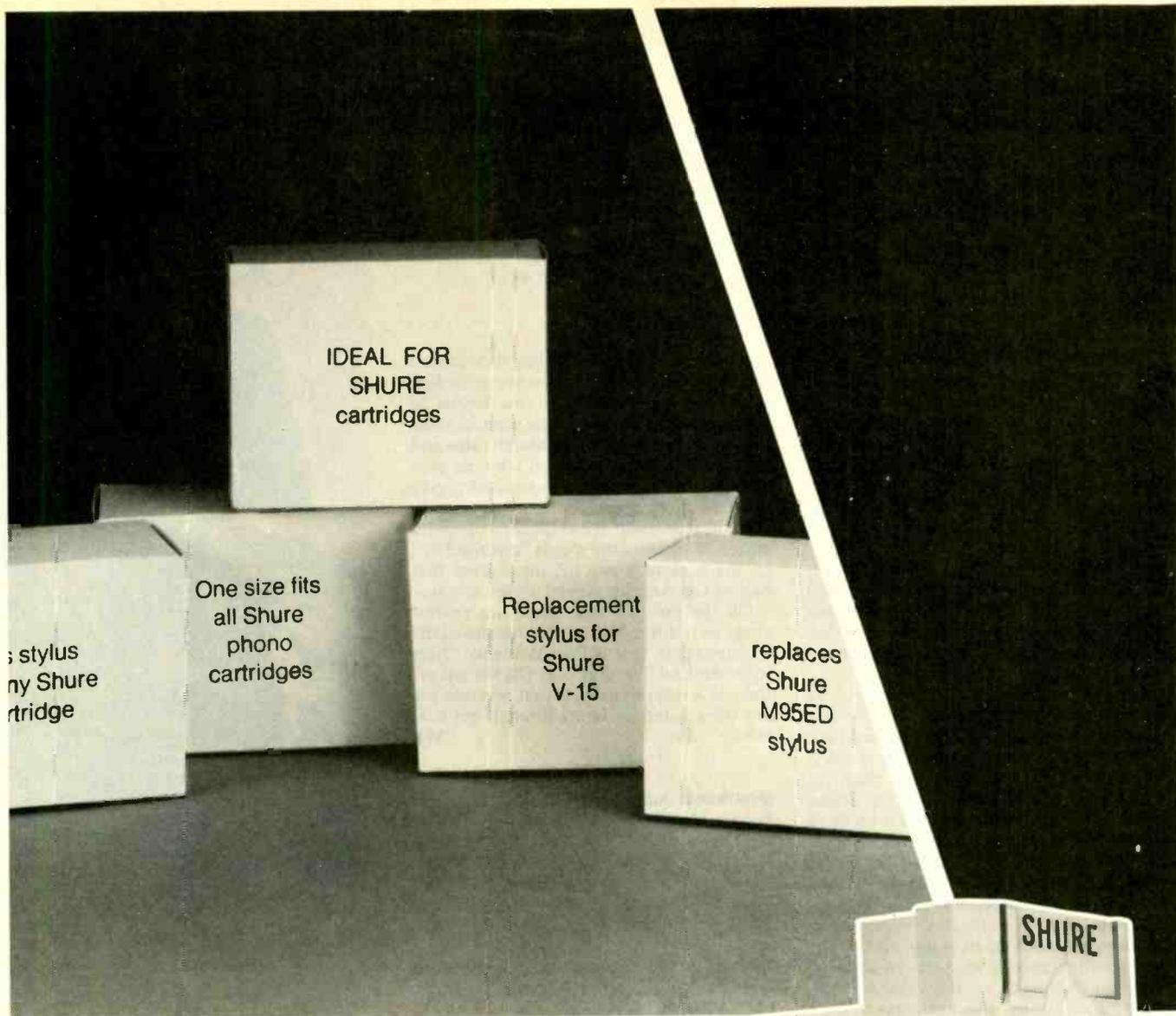
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**\* BARBI BENTON: Something New.** Barbi Benton, vocals; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Something New; Needing You; In the Winter; # 1 with a Heartache; Lucky One; Riding on a Rainbow; Staying Power; Ride Baby Ride; San Diego Serenade; He's a Rebel; Thinking of You.* [Robert Appere, prod.] PLAYBOY PB 411, \$6.98. Tape: ● PBT 411, \$7.98.

When Barbi Benton made her debut recording in 1975, she was a country singer, and not a bad one at that. While her voice was neither as practiced nor as deep as most, she more than made up for the lack with energy.

On "Something New," Benton is no longer singing country music. One or two tunes, such as Herb Greenfield's excellent "# 1 with a Heartache," classify as country, but most of the others are pop rock, for which producer Robert Appere has added aggressive instrumentation and a brace of backup vocalists. The best indication of this new direction for Benton is the choice of Elton John's rhythm section—Davey Johnstone on guitar, Dee Murray on bass, and Nigel Olsson on drums—to back her. She is every bit as adept at pop rock as she is at country, and for the same reason—enthusiasm. Although her soft voice is somewhat masked by the instrumentation, Benton's élan shines through.

The high points of the LP are two ballads, "San Diego Serenade" by Tom Waits and "In the Winter" by Janis Ian. On both tunes, Benton shows a vocal sensitivity only hinted at in her first album. M.J.

**HELEN REDDY: Music, Music.** Helen Reddy, vocals; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Music, Music; Gladiola; Mama; Hold Me in Your Dreams Tonight; Get Off Me Baby; I Can't Hear You No More; Ladychain; Music Is My Life; Nice to Be Around; You Make It So Easy.* [Joe Wissert, prod.] CAPITOL ST 11547, \$6.98. Tape: ●● 4XT 11547, \$7.98; ●● 8XT 11547, \$7.98.

Helen Reddy has a strong, expressive voice that deserves better than it has been getting in the way of material and instrumental arrangements. She can sing jazz ballads and blues. And while she isn't Billie Holiday, or even Carmen McRae, she needs no more than a good tune and a handful of musicians to play it.

Yet Reddy, like so many young pop singers, finds herself saddled with big-deal arrangements that are at best unnecessary, at worst foolish. For example, "Get Off Me Baby," by Holly Near and Jeff Langley, is a superb blues that would be served best ac-

companied only by a rhythm section and perhaps a piano. That is how the recording starts out. Yet as soon as one begins to settle into this fine and simple song, in come the violins, as heavy as the March rains and just as dampening. Why, oh why, do producers and arrangers feel compelled to give work to every musician they know every time they get a gig? It has reached the point where, if one sees the words "arranged by" on the back of a pop LP, one knows that half of Los Angeles played on the session.

On the positive side, there are several songs on "Music, Music" that transcend the arrangements. One is Paul Williams' "Nice to Be Around." And in "Get Off Me Baby," there is a marvelous lyric that reverses the sex roles found in the traditional "get lost, honey" tune. M.J.

**MONTROSE: Jump on It.** Bob James, vocals; Ronnie Montrose, lead guitar; Jim Alcivar, keyboards; Dennis Carmassi, drums. *Let's Do; What Are You Waitin' For; Tuft-Sedge;* five more. [Jack Douglas, prod.] WARNER BROS. BS 2963, \$6.98. Tape: ●● M 52963, \$7.97; ●● M 82963, \$7.97.

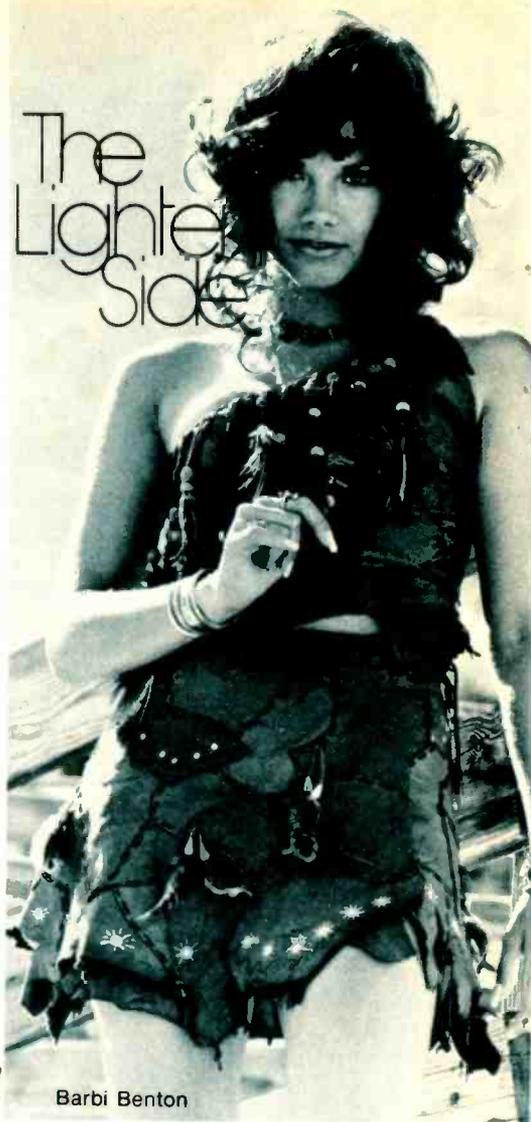
Let me say it at the outset: Ronnie Montrose is probably the finest rock-and-roll guitarist to come down the pike in the last five or six years.

He is the guitarist who cut his chops with Van Morrison and Boz Scaggs before appearing on Edgar Winter's breakthrough LP, "They Only Come Out at Night." Although few people knew Ronnie's name at the time, they came away from Winter's concerts dazzled by Montrose's blinding speed and wickedly tasteful soloing; critics and fans concurred that he was one of the few guitarists who could energize Winter's act in a way that Rick Derringer could only dream about.

When he premiered his own band, Montrose, three years ago, it was everything any hard-rock fanatic could hope for. On its debut disc, Ronnie's guitar gleefully shared the spotlight with Sammy Hagar's blistering vocals. The results were a classic tour de force of hard-edged music-making. The second disc, "Paper Money," kept up this tradition, though it in part showed the band veering in a bluesier—but equally captivating—direction.

Last year, Montrose dumped his original band, assembled a group that included a keyboardist, and issued "Warner Brothers Presents Montrose." Everyone should be allowed one mistake, and I thought that was Ronnie's one. Unfortunately the new offering, "Jump on It," makes two.

Why a guitarist of Montrose's caliber



Playboy

Barbi Benton

would want to relegate himself to being "just one of the guys" in a band of merely competent musicians is beyond me. The solo work here, for example, is restrained to the point of being inconsequential.

Secondly, why one of the best powerchorders extant would be satisfied playing the most diluted kind of "just bury me in the mix" rhythm work is unfathomable. Throughout his career, Montrose has played the kinds of high-powered rhythms that have kicked singers into delivering top-notch performances. His rhythm work on "Jump on It" is merely of the garage-band variety, and those songs that could have proved passably interesting inevitably flounder.

Montrose should take a crash course in ego-building from Richie Blackmore and push his backup band to the back where it belongs. Until then, only the first two Mont-

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rose LPs demonstrate the legitimate achievements of an immensely talented guitar wizard. H.E.

**\* MICHAEL FRANKS: The Art of Tea.** Michael Franks, vocals and songs; Larry Carlton, guitar; Wilton Felder, bass; John Guerin, drums; Michael Brecker, tenor saxophone; David Sanborn, alto saxophone; Joe Sample, keyboards; Nick De Caro, string arrangements. *Eggplant; Nightmoves; I Don't Know Why I'm So Happy I'm Sad;* six more. [Tommy Lipuma, prod.] REPRISE MS 2230, \$6.98. Tape: ●● M 52230, \$7.97; ● M 82230, \$7.97.

This album may be a hit by the time the magazine reaches print. It's already insinuating itself onto the charts. That's due at least in part, I think, to the conspicuous lack of the audio appurtenances that are de rigueur for your average hit album. There's no overpowering disco beat, no background singers, no string glissandos at the beginning of every phrase.

What it does have going is Michael Franks's ingenuous, totally unaffected manner. He's so natural and unstylized, it's like you or me singing in the car when no one else can hear.

The songs are an extension of the singer. Some are very personal, some are very amusing, some seem to be just for the hell of it. "Eggplant" is about a girl who cooks that ugly vegetable so well and so variously that Franks is crazy about her. "Nightmoves" tells its story in cinematic terminology, from titles fading out to The End. "I Don't Know Why I'm So Happy I'm Sad," a jumbled free association of words and phrases trying to pin down a feeling, makes its point by being full of mismatched metaphors and struggling similes. In virtually every song he manages to come up with at least one line that sets up an empathic vibration on some nerve end. The backup band comprises extremely capable players whose names may be familiar.

Franks may have hit a home run here in his first album by following the basic baseball batting adage: Don't try to kill it, just swing easy and make contact. J.G.

**ORLEANS: Waking and Dreaming.** John Hall and Larry Hoppen, vocals and guitars; Wells Kelly, drums; Lance Hoppen, bass; Jerry Marotta, percussion. *Reach; What I Need; If I Don't Have You;* seven more. ELEKTRA 7E 1070, \$6.98. Tape: ●● TC5 1070, \$7.97; ● ET8 1070, \$7.97.

There's something of a fine art to being both a commercially oriented band and one with authentic musical quality. Which explains why the number of such groups to come to prominence in the past few years can be counted on one hand. The Doobie Brothers, the Eagles, and Three Dog Night come to mind; one would be hard-pressed to list three more.

When Orleans made its debut last year, it looked like a sure addition to this list. Two singles on the disc, "Dance with Me" and "Let There Be Music," possessed exactly the kind of infectious sound that could keep you awake and smiling during a drive home at 3:30 in the morning. (And isn't keeping people awake the reason AM radios were

put in cars in the first place?) In addition to those singles hits, that LP featured a dose of professional pop in much the same vein, highlighted by calculatedly enthusiastic vocals by John Hall and competent—if somewhat lackluster—musicianship all around.

"Still the One," the hit single on Orleans' followup LP, "Waking and Dreaming," is fully up to the level of those earlier songs, but the same cannot be said of the remaining filler. This group seems to have caught a bad case of America, displayed by its Kahlil Gibran-ish incantations in cuts like "Reach" and "The Path." For example, the melodic chord-oriented intro to "Dance with Me" is only faintly echoed on "If I Don't Have You," while the double guitar work, tasteful and thoughtfully executed, is limited to two appearances—and short ones at that.

Should Orleans continue this course, the consumer is best advised to wait for a "Greatest Hits" package. Only there would one be likely to get an album that is thoroughly engaging. H.E.

**FLO & EDDIE: Moving Targets.** Howard Kaylan, vocals; Mark Volman, vocals and guitars; Phil Reed, guitar; Andy Cahan, keyboards; Eric Scott, bass; Craig Krampf, drums; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Mama, Open Up; The Love You Gave Away; Hot; Best Friends; Best Possible Me; Keep It Warm; Guns; Elenore; Sway When You Walk; Moving Targets.* [Ron Nevison, Skip Taylor, Mark Volman, and Howard Kaylan, prod.] COLUMBIA PC 34262, \$6.98. Tape: ● PCA 34262, \$7.98.

Flo & Eddie are Mark Volman and Howard Kaylan, two California rock singers who performed with the mid-Sixties pop-rock group the Turtles before drifting into Frank Zappa's Mothers of Invention, at which time they acquired their pseudonyms.

Volman and Kaylan sing a congenial sort of hard rock during which they attempt to say something. That something is not entirely literate. Their lyrics, like the music all self-written, are odd bits and pieces of thoughts. Some of them are iconoclastic in the manner of the Mothers of Invention,

such as "Guns" and "Hot." Others are sensitive and intriguing. "The Love You Gave Away" is a peculiar but endearing song wherein the narrator thanks another man whose wife he stole. It sounds dreadful in the telling, but in the doing the lyric works well.

Most hard-rock groups don't bother to think, and most thinkers wouldn't be caught rocking. To be honest, Volman and Kaylan rock better than they think. But the interesting and praiseworthy thing about them is that they try. M.J.

**\* BONNIE BRAMLETT: Lady's Choice.** Bonnie Bramlett, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. *Think; Hold On, I'm Coming; You Send Me;* eight more. [Johnny Sandlin, prod.] CAPRICORN CP 0169, \$6.98. Tape: ●● M 50169, \$7.97; ● M 80169, \$7.97.

Throughout most of her career, Bonnie Bramlett, like virtually every other white female singer with deep roots in rhythm and blues, has tried very hard to sound black. Like few of her contemporaries and much to her credit, she is very convincing at it.

In much of her work as Delaney Bramlett's professional and marital better half, Bonnie was relegated to giving his limp, near-anemic vocals some much-needed punch. Even in her solo spots, her vocals lost much of their potency to the whiter-than-white musicianship that backed them up. Her previous solo efforts—especially the "Sweet Bonnie Bramlett" disc for Columbia, which featured instrumental support by the Average White Band—showcased her voice to much better advantage. "Lady's Choice" continues in that vein.

Those songs that are driven mostly by Bramlett's vocal line—Dylan's "Forever Young" and Fred Lincoln Wray's "You Really Got a Hold on Me"—come off best. She makes full use of dynamics, and her soaring voice makes her covers of those gritty tunes sound fresh and vital. The numbers that rely on her collection of session musicians for a tough, funky groundwork don't fare as well. Both drummer Roger Hawkins and bassist David Hood have

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## Critics' Choice

The best pop records reviewed in recent months

- AEROSMITH: Rocks.** COLUMBIA PC 34165. Sept.  
**CLAIRE AUSTIN: Goin' Crazy with the Blues.** JAZZLOGY 52. Nov.  
**HOYT AXTON: Fearless.** A&M SP 4571. Sept.  
**THE BEATLES: Rock 'n' Roll Music.** CAPITOL SKBO 11537. Oct.  
**BLUE OYSTER CULT: Agents of Fortune.** COLUMBIA PC 34164. Sept.  
**DAVE BRUBECK: All the Things We Are.** ATLANTIC SD 1684. Oct.  
**JUDY COLLINS: Bread and Roses.** ELEKTRA 7E 1076. Nov.  
**DOLENZ, JONES, BOYCE, & HART.** CAPITOL ST 11513. Oct.  
**THE MONKEES: The Monkees' Greatest Hits.** ARISTA AL 4089. Oct.  
**J. R. MONTEROSE: Straight Ahead.** XANADU 126. Sept.  
**THE OUTLAW JOSIE WALES.** WARNER BROS. BX 2956. Nov.  
**STUART SCHARF RECORDING CLUB: The Disguises Album.** LAISSEZ FAIRE 01. Nov.  
**CARLY SIMON: Another Passenger.** ELEKTRA 7E 1064. Oct.  
**IRA SULLIVAN.** HORIZON SP 706. Sept.  
**STOMU YAMASHTA, STEVE WINWOOD, AND MICHAEL SHRIEVE: Go.** ISLAND ILPS 9387. Nov.
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their Motown/Stax chops down cold, though they never quite gel with guitarist Johnny Sandlin (who would do well to listen again to some of Cornell Dupree's sessions) and keyboard man Berry Becket. Sandlin, who doubles as the album's producer, comes nowhere near duplicating the Motown ambience that Bramlett's material demands.

Guest appearances by various and sundry Allman Brothers spruce up the liner credits nicely but don't add too much to the musical proceedings. No matter; "Lady's Choice" is Bonnie Bramlett's show, and she handles herself wonderfully. H.E.

**ALBERT KING:** Albert. Albert King, vocals and guitar; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Guitar Man; I'm Ready; Ain't Nothing You Can Do; I Don't Care What My Baby Do; Change of Pace; My Babe*; three more. [Bert de Coteaux, prod.] UTOPIA BUL 1-1731, \$6.98. Tape: ●● BUK 1-1731, \$7.95; ●● BUS 1-1731, \$7.95.

No one ever accused Albert King of taste, which may be the only thing he hasn't been accused of. In fact, King on occasion has used marginal taste to advantage. His best blues guitar is raw, rough, impolite, and, in concert, frequently too loud. But it's exciting and moving, which is what the blues must be.

King's newest LP, however, is not only tasteless, but has none of that excitement or movement to save it. The album opens with a soul rhythm and a couple of female backup vocalists chanting, "Let's get it on." A few tracks later, violins appear like an ill wind out of Vegas. On the few cuts that can be identified as blues, King sleeps through. His reading of the standard "I'm Ready" is about as disinterested as one can get. His voice is dreary and bored, his playing uninspired; on the few occasions when it is inspired, it is hidden beneath an excess of instrumentation.

The blues is an enduring but delicate thing. King has distorted it into something else in this lamentable outing. I know now why so many white men play the blues: So many blacks have deserted it. M.J.

**DEADLY NIGHTSHADE:** F&W. Helen Hooke and Ann Bowen, guitars and vocals; Pamela Brandt, bass and vocals; *Comin' Thru; I'm Feelin' Fine; Murphy's Bar*, seven more. [Joel Diamond and Charlie Calello, prod.] PHANTOM BPL 1-1370, \$6.98. Tape: ●● BPS 1-1370, \$7.95.

For all the hoopla that surrounded the Deadly Nightshade's first release a year ago, the fact remains that it was musically inferior, a heavy-handed effort that gave only indications of the defiantly feminist group's good-timey concert sound.

On "F&W," Deadly Nightshade takes on more subtle subjects and deals with more delicate emotions; the result, if uneven, is a step in the right direction. In addition, though the production approach remains unchanged from the debut disc, producers Joel Diamond and Charlie Calello nonetheless have sought to capture the down-home concert ambience and are for the most part



Stanley Clarke  
A progressive thrust of ideas

successful. Indeed, "No Chicken Today" and "Murphy's Bar" sound as if they were recorded on somebody's back porch; the only effect missing is the muted mooing of cows in a barn down the road.

As a studio entity, though, the group does seem to have more to offer. For example, "One Day at a Time" (a tune that Linda Ronstadt would have given her eyeteeth for), "Show Me The Way Back Home," and "I'm Feelin' Fine" would all have been distinguished singles had they been given a more delicate mix. As it stands, the lead vocals are spatially indistinguishable from the instruments, and the harmonies have been rendered as sterile as the most muted church choir.

Let anyone think that the trio's rabid feminism has been diluted over the past year, there are "Ain't I a Woman" and "Johnny the Rock 'n' Roll Star" to prove otherwise. Lyrically leaden feminist dirges, these two cuts are humorless enough to offset the more optimistic mood that prevails.

Chalk all of these mistakes up to inexperience. "F&W" is a major step in defining as well as refining Deadly Nightshade's sound. For all its flaws, this disc still beats Carly Simon's latest entry hands down. H.E.

✳ **BOSTON.** Tom Scholz, guitar, bass, organ, and clavinet; Brad Delp, vocals and guitar; Barry Goudreau, guitar; Fran Sheehan, bass; Sib Hashian, drums. *More Than a Feeling; Peace of Mind; Foreplay/Long Time; Rock & Roll Band; Smokin'; Hitch a Ride; Something About You; Let Me Take You Home Tonight*. [John Boylan and Tom Scholz, prod.] EPIC PE 34188, \$6.98. Tape: ●● PET 34188, \$7.98; ●● PEA 34188, \$7.98.

Rock follows closely the developments in technology. A short time after a new electronic device is patented, someone figures out a way to hook up a guitar to it. Most of the time, such an amalgam of music and electronics produces what electronics can produce on its own: static. Rock musicians playing with big amplifiers and synthesizers often have no real knowledge of how to use their newfound tools. They know how

to make weird sounds, but then so do orangutans.

Boston is a new heavy-rock group that knows how to use such media as extreme amplification and "special effects guitar" to advantage. Presumably this ability relates to leader Tom Scholz's master's degree in mechanical engineering and experience as a designer for Polaroid.

Like many heavy-rock groups, Boston favors long instrumentals and somewhat inconsequential vocals and lyrics. It should be advised to make the singing even less important than it is on this disc and concentrate on musicianship, at which the members excel. Longer tunes are in order, such as was common a decade ago when heavy rock first poked its head out of those vinyl plates. It would be nice to hear an eighteen-minute cut again, especially if the leads are taken by such good players as Scholz and Barry Goudreau. The pair whip up a proper storm on guitars here, playing some of the finest duets heard from a rock band in years.

Boston also returns the old-fashioned rhythm guitarist to his proper stature. In recent years the second guitar has come to be a first guitar who isn't as pretty, rich, or influential as the head man, spending more time vying with No. 1 for attention than playing chords. Such is not the case with Boston. Brad Delp's work on rhythm guitar is rhythmic indeed.

All things taken into consideration, this debut LP is a successful one. I don't think it too risky to predict that we will be hearing more from Boston. M.J.

✳ **STANLEY CLARKE:** *School Days*. Stanley Clarke, electric bass guitar, acoustic bass, piccolo bass, and piano; David Sancious and George Duke, keyboards; John McLaughlin, Raymond Gomez, and Icarus Johnson, guitars; Billy Cobham, Steve Gadd, Gerry Brown, and Milt Holland, drums and percussion. *School Days; Quiet Afternoon; The Dancer*; three others. [Stanley Clarke and Ken Scott, prod.] NEMPEROR NE 439, \$6.98. Tape: ●● CS 439, \$7.97; ●● TP 439, \$7.97.

This is the first album by Stanley Clarke in which all the compositions were composed, arranged, and conducted by the bass prodigy. Of course many of his pieces have been heard on his own and others' discs, and his imposing presence as a bassist has been recorded many times, particularly during his tenure with Chick Corea and Return to Forever.

Clarke's range of expression goes from straight-ahead jazz (witness his recordings with tenor man Dexter Gordon) to a mastery of classical technique and covers everything in between. His large hands give him the capability of chording and reach on the bass as if it were a guitar. Augmenting the physical aspects of his technique are his imagination and his concept, which make him one of the outstanding musicians in the contemporary vernacular. And this is demonstrated on "School Days."

This music incorporates the high energy and velocity of rock in many aspects, particularly in the use of amplified and electronic instrumentation and the hard-edged

drumming of Cobham, Gadd, and Brown. But mere rock and roll it is not.

"School Days" is a confluence of some of the most advanced players and thinkers in modern music. These are musicians who can move easily and readily from rock to jazz to classical and back again in the blink of an eye, but who are no longer confined by the limitations of any one discipline. And though most, if not all, have matriculated through rock, this music is the progressive thrust of ideas that have emerged as the music and the musicians mature. J.G.

## Theater and Film

**\* THE BINGO LONG TRAVELING ALL-STARS AND MOTOR KINGS.** Original film soundtrack recording. Composed by William Goldstein; Thelma Houston, vocal; All-Star Band, William Goldstein, cond. [William Goldstein, prod.] MCA 2094, \$6.98. Tape: ●● C 2094, \$7.98; ●● T 2094, \$7.98.

Composers must have a blast writing film scores such as this. Ragtime, Dixieland, blues, boogie-woogie, even gospel sing—all are eminently lovable styles in which it is becoming harder and harder to compose sincerely without a pretext such as a film of the *Bingo Long* variety.

This movie about a black barnstorming baseball team in 1939 obviously provided William Goldstein with more than ample justification, for every number on this disc has a buoyant, authentic ring that almost never sinks to the level of campy pastiche. It is all performed with obvious relish and with skill, and the recorded sound has perfect thump. A fine blast was had by all, including this listener. R.S.B.

**LOGAN'S RUN.** Original film soundtrack recording. Composed and conducted by Jerry Goldsmith. [Harry V. Lojewski, prod.] MGM MG 1-5302, \$6.98.

**THE BLUE MAX.** Original film soundtrack recording. Composed and conducted by Jerry Goldsmith. [Tony Thomas and Len Engel, prod.] CITADEL CT 6008, \$6.98.

Ten years separate the films for which these two Jerry Goldsmith scores were composed. Three centuries separate their subject matter, and it does not take more than a few seconds of listening to become aware of this gap.

For *Logan's Run*, a science-fiction "chase" film, Goldsmith blends a standard symphony orchestra and various electronic sounds, the latter a device that one would expect to run rampant on sci-fi soundtracks but that, no doubt because of producer conservatism, has been used rather sparingly. The composer further takes advantage of obvious associations by limiting the electronic and electronic-plus-orchestra sounds to the "city" sequences, while the

music that backs the rediscovery of the long-lost outer world is played solely by the orchestra.

The score is fairly intriguing. The title theme, with its solo trumpet coming in over an electronic ostinato, has a slight *Zarathustra* ring to it and sets a strong mood of which the film, unfortunately, is not the equal. Particularly gripping is the sustained-string interplay (a Goldsmith trademark) heard in the "On the Circuit" sequence. The purely electronic sounds, especially in "Love Shop," ingeniously establish a disquieting, gnawing ambience, although a marvelous electronic toccata heard toward the film's beginning has been stupidly omitted here. Less ingratiating are the somewhat bloated Respighi-isms of "The Sun," a sequence that later turns in more gratifying Stravinskian directions. The recorded sound is better when the instrumentation is reduced than in the tutti passages.

If *Logan's Run* makes limited use of sonorous string configurations, the score for John Guillermin's 1966 *The Blue Max* thrives on them. The modal, unison main theme, one of Goldsmith's best inventions, can be described only as "soaring," and its appropriateness to this air-ace film should be obvious. In general, the score is sweepingly symphonic. An extended battle sequence contains a rather Dies Irae-ish *passacaglia* (though for the life of me I cannot hear anything resembling a true *passacaglia* in the Side 1 cut so titled). And there is one cut ("First Flight") where the resemblance to Benjamin Britten's *Four Sea Interludes* is so close that I cannot help but feel it is deliberate.

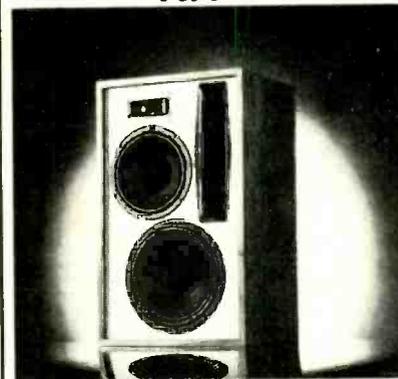
The Citadel recording of *The Blue Max* is not exactly a reissue of the original Mainstream release (56081), as the producers went back to the music-track tapes. It is a better document of this outstanding score: It adds some music not offered on the earlier disc, presents the musical sequences in their original order in the film, and eliminates the source-music marches worthlessly included by Mainstream. The very tubby sound keeps this recording from being a revelation, but it is well worth having. R.S.B.

**WUTHERING HEIGHTS.** Original film score by Alfred Newman. Elmer Bernstein, cond. and prod. FILM MUSIC COLLECTION Album 6, \$8.00 plus 60c handling to members only (annual membership \$10; Elmer Bernstein's Film Music Collection, Box 261, Calabasas, Calif. 91302).

William Wyler's 1939 version of *Wuthering Heights* is one of those quintessential pieces of cinematic romanticism that helped make the reputation of Hollywood during the early years of sound. Certainly, few melodies support both the warmth and poignancy of this romanticism with quite the immediacy of "Cathy's Theme," appearing in many guises in the musical score by Alfred Newman. And Newman's use of the by now classic device of presenting the theme in greatly reduced instrumentation to suggest Cathy's waning health and death is deeply moving.

The score works extraordinarily well for

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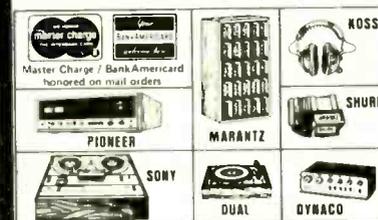
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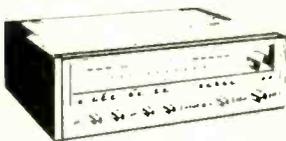
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the film. Unfortunately, most of it—at least in the excerpts chosen and performed by Elmer Bernstein on this disc—is less impressive on its own. To begin with, none of the other melodies comes close to showing the inspiration of “Cathy’s Theme”; the title theme is particularly dreary. Furthermore, a good deal of the more nonthematic background music, especially on Side 1, has little breadth or depth, and by itself it sounds more like filler for a spineless suburban melodrama than background for a sumptuous, brooding classic.

If much of this can be blamed on Newman himself, some of the fault certainly is Bernstein’s. Even though much of the score calls for reduced forces, the sound that comes across is generally too small to do full justice to the composer’s vision. And by limiting his selections mainly to the more intimate orchestrations (a vocal chorus does briefly appear once or twice), Bernstein greatly restricts possibilities for dramatic variety. The disc is quite well recorded. R.S.B.

**RICH MAN, POOR MAN.** Original television soundtrack recording. Composed by Alex North; Alex North and Harold Mooney, cond. [Sonny Burke, prod.] MCA 2095, \$6.98. Tape: ●● C 2095, \$7.98; ● T 2095, \$7.98.

That Alex North has produced some of the best scores to come out of Hollywood (*Spartacus* and the still unrecorded *Cheyenne Autumn*, to cite but two) certainly cannot be fathomed from the generally innocuous music on “Rich Man, Poor Man,” including an unbelievably bad title theme. Some of North’s true talent begins to surface toward the middle of Side 2 where, presumably, the action of the long (twelve hours) television film begins to get more dramatic. Here the shifting textures, the fleeting motives, and the tense, almost bitter thematic material that characterizes the composer’s best offer welcome respite from the salon-music blandness of the earlier parts of the score.

The ragged performances do not help, and I have heard better sound fidelity on twenty-year-old recordings. R.S.B.



✳ **PAUL BLEY:** Live at the Hilcrest Club, 1958. Don Cherry, trumpet; Ornette Coleman, alto saxophone; Paul Bley, piano; Charlie Haden, bass; Billy Higgins, drums. *Klactoveedsedstene*; *I Remember Harlem*; *The Blessings*; *Free*. INNER CITY 1007, \$5.98.

One wonders whether this record might better have been released when it was made, in 1958, or whether, all things considered, it is more important that it is being issued now.

This apparently is Ornette Coleman’s first recorded work beyond his very early rhythm-and-blues period with Pee Wee Crayton. His initial release under his own

name, made for Contemporary Records at approximately the same time (with the same group, minus pianist Paul Bley) and released in January 1959, was our introduction to the avant-garde of the Sixties. Primarily because of Coleman’s “weird” style (an adjective that had been applied to Thelonious Monk fourteen years earlier) on his well-publicized white plastic alto saxophone, the record launched the greatest schism in jazz tastes since the bop-vs.-moldy-fig controversy of the Forties.

Unlike that first Contemporary disc, what this record shows quite clearly is Coleman’s relationship to the preceding jazz era. He was not—as ultimately became apparent even to those who went into shock on his arrival—coming totally out of left field. This disc is a perfect explanatory bridge. It opens with Charlie Parker’s “Klactoveedsedstene” and ends with Coleman’s now familiar “Free.” The opening piece shows how much his playing was based on Parker’s and, in the course of the twelve-minute performance, also shows him moving away from basic Parker into what has become basic Coleman. On “Free,” he is totally on his own—the scourge of the Sixties.

The anchor on “Free” is, strangely, the nominal leader, pianist Paul Bley. Avant-gardist though he may be now, Bley contributes a familiar approach that, despite sound balance that has the piano constantly off-mike, keeps bringing the performances back to a kind of center for those who may feel things are slipping away.

Today this all sounds quite normal—nothing strange, easily communicable. The only complaint might be Coleman’s attenuated solo on “Klactoveedsedstene,” which forecasts the thin, wearying, long, long solos that were to come in the later Sixties. J.S.W.

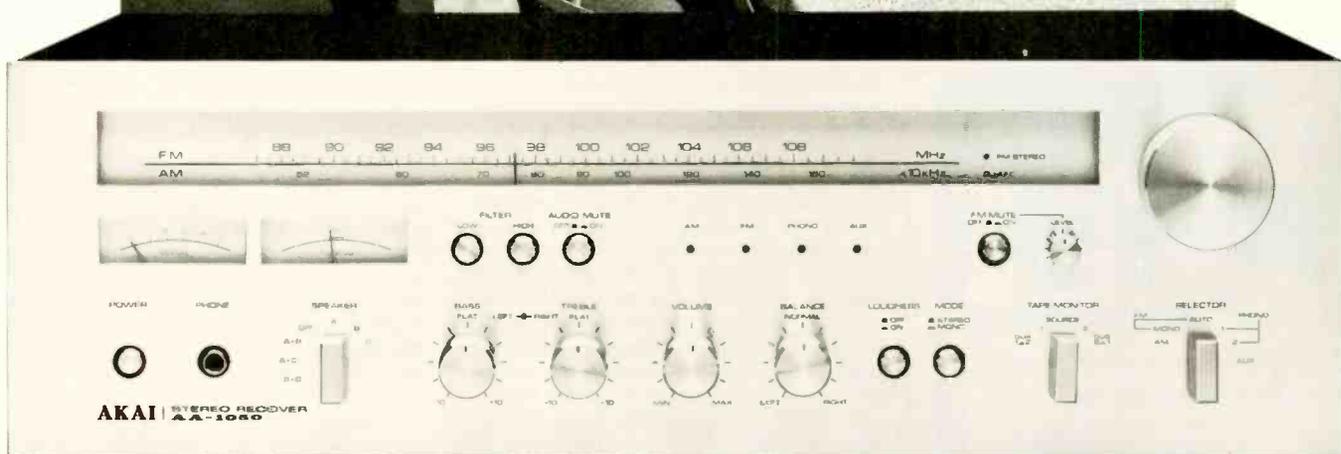
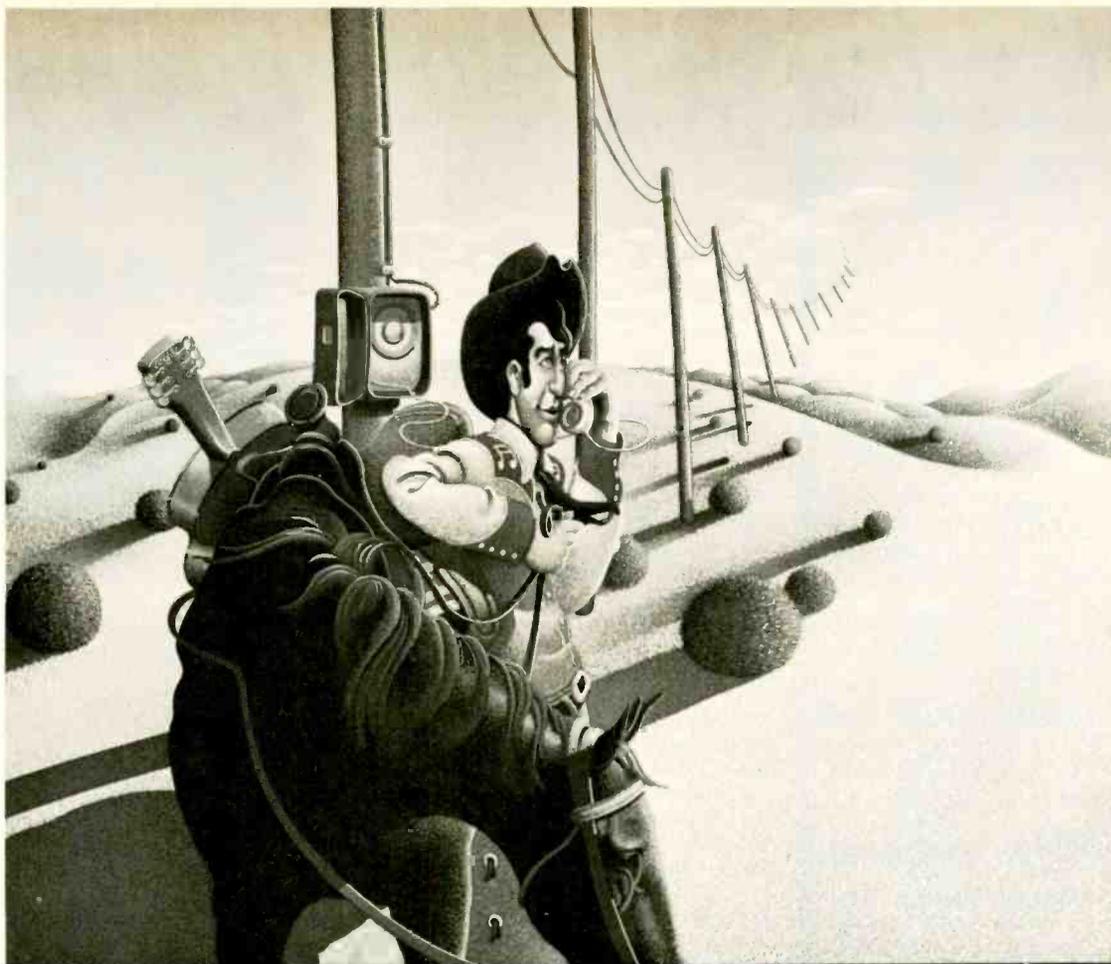
**PORGY AND BESS** (excerpts). For an essay review, see page 95.

**HANNA-FONTANA BAND:** Live at Concord. Bill Berry, trumpet; Carl Fontana, trombone; Plas Johnson, tenor saxophone; Dave McKenna, piano; Herb Ellis, guitar; Herb Mickman, bass; Jake Hanna, drums. *Sweet and Lovely*; *I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart*; *Jumpin’ the Blues*; four more. CONCORD JAZZ 11, \$6.98.

The band that drummer Jake Hanna and trombonist Carl Fontana jointly led at the Concord Music Festival in Concord, California, in the summer of 1975 turns out to be a strangely on again-off again group in this recording of its performance at the festival.

Hanna is a solid, energizing drummer, and he shows it on “I Found a New Baby” and an exuberant “Jumpin’ the Blues.” But there is not much he can do with such lumpy material as “A Beautiful Friendship” or the soporific “Old Folks.” Fontana’s clipped, slippery, staccato style, rooted in J. J. Johnson’s spitball technique, is apt to lock him into periods of aimless, fussy muttering, but it also provides him with the virtuosity to leap agilely through stop-time solos, which he does on a couple of occasions.

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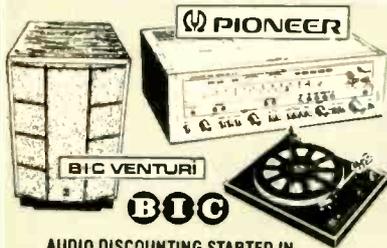
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rests on Dave McKenna, a wonderfully vital pianist who takes charge of almost every piece with his rolling, running, urgent attack. Whenever he can get his teeth into a number, he takes complete command, carrying the rest of the musicians along on some fascinating joyrides. Aside from McKenna, the most interesting performer on the disc is a visitor, saxophonist Plas Johnson, escaping briefly from his customary studio work to uncork some strong southwestern swing on "Jumpin' the Blues" and "Take the 'A' Train." He uses a big, billowing tone on these pieces, but it turns limp and heavy in the slow limitations of "Old Folks." J.S.W.

\* **RAY BROWN:** Brown's Bag. Blue Mitchell, trumpet; Richie Kamuca, tenor saxophone; Art Hillery and Dave Grusin, pianos; John Collins, guitar; Ray Brown, bass; John Guerin and Jimmie Smith, drums. *Blues for Eddie Lee; Surrey with the Fringe on Top; You Are My Sunshine*; three more. CONCORD JAZZ 19, \$6.98.

Without Ray Brown's virtuosity, this might be just another ad-lib jazz gig—everybody playing competently but with nothing of particular note happening. Brown's presence, however, makes all the difference in the world. It is not simply the power that he gives to the performances through his bass accompaniment, but even more the solo passages that provide introductions to otherwise routine developments and his melodic solos, whether in the ethereal ballad vein on "A Time to Love" or in a blithe swinging mood on "You Are My Sunshine." Brown is a communicative bassist. It is not enough for him to simply show he knows the chords—he dances on and around them. He sets a tone that the other members of the two groups involved here fall into.

Blue Mitchell, who is locked into a dreadful contract situation in which RCA is merchandising him as a disco type, gets an opportunity to play some crisp solos. Richie Kamuca, a Lester Young descendant, never gets far off base, although his playing has an airy lift. One of the more provocative aspects of this LP is the presence of Art Hillery, a relatively unknown pianist who is strictly from rhythm-section style until he emerges with a brief solo on "Keep on Pumpin'"—single-finger prodding and punching that builds to Hinesian trills—that makes one want to hear more. J.S.W.

\* **EDDIE HENDERSON:** Heritage. Eddie Henderson, trumpet and flügelhorn; Julian Priestler, trombone; Patrice Rushen, keyboards and synthesizers; Hadley Caliman, saxophone and flutes; Mtume, Mike Clarke, Billy Hart, and Woody Theus, drums and percussion. *Inside You; Acupuncture; Time and Space; Nostalgia*; three more. [Skip Drinkwater, prod.] BLUE NOTE LA 636G, \$6.98. Tape: EA 636H, \$7.98.

For nearly twenty years, it has been all but axiomatic in contemporary American music that where Miles Davis treads others will follow. Just as Miles took his lessons from Fats Navarro, Clifford Brown, Charlie Parker, Ahmad Jamal, and others and then



Blue Note

Eddie Henderson  
*Totally rewarding music*

followed his own inspiration, so he has fostered much of the pattern of modern-day jazz because of his influence (and confluence) with so many of the shapers of current jazz modes.

Which brings us to Eddie Henderson. Henderson is clearly a stylistic descendant of Davis and for a time was the trumpeter with Herbie Hancock, another disciple. Now he is emerging confidently as his own man, both as a trumpet player and leader of considerable force and as a composer of music that embraces the principles of the so-called "fusion music." Another label! The term, as I understand it, means a fusing of traditional jazz values with contemporary rhythm, harmony, and instrumentation. If you can accept that definition, the next step is to accept the music itself. That may seem difficult to many jazz fans who cleave to more conventional traditions, even though those hallowed traditions were, in their time, thought to be daring, startling, and subversive.

My suggestion is to listen without prejudice. There are solos by Henderson, Hadley Caliman, and Patrice Rushen that are superbly wrought, embodying the roots of the old tradition as well as pioneering the new. Henderson is a player of extraordinary ability; Caliman, urgent and earthy; Rushen, a youthful prodigy of the keyboards. Interesting, varied percussion is provided by a battery of outstanding players.

It is music guided by the force of intelligence, executed with musicianship of a high order, propelled by visceral intensity, and flavored with a rich variety of nuance. I think Parker, Coltrane, Powell, and others in the pantheon of jazz would approve. I find it totally rewarding. J.G.

**JEAN-LUC PONTY AND STÉPHANE GRAPPELLI.** Jean-Luc Ponty and Stéphane Grappelli, violin and viola; Maurice Vander, piano; Philippe Catherine, guitar; Tony Bonfils, bass; Andre Ceccarelli, drums. *Bowing-Bowing; Golden Green; Memorial Jam for Stuff Smith; Violin Summit No. 2; Valerie*. INNER CITY 1005, \$5.98.

Stéphane Grappelli, an old jazz master of the violin, and Jean-Luc Ponty, a young

master whose early development was influenced by Grappelli, meet for the first time on this recording, made in 1973. They meet on Ponty's terms, since he wrote and arranged all the numbers, but Grappelli more than holds his own. In fact, some of the most successful sections are the duet passages, whether they are building with stronger and stronger intensity on "Bowling-Bowling" or developing a lush, flowing romantic line on "Valerie."

Grappelli's lean, graceful, melodic style is in strong contrast to the manner adopted by Ponty through much of the disc—a dark, intense, grating use of his electrified violin with emphasis on wah-wah effects that make his solos strident and shrill. The contrast is deliberately established on "Golden Green," a charming waltz on which Ponty's contribution as violinist scarcely helps Ponty as composer. But in "Memorial Jam for Stuff Smith," after Grappelli has evoked his Hot Club Quintet days and Ponty has had his electrified shrillness, they come together for a joyous ensemble attack that would have delighted Smith, who could produce some strange sounds on his own electrified violin. J.S.W.

**TEDDY WILSON:** Striding After Fats. Teddy Wilson, piano. *Ain't Misbehavin'*; *Blues for Thomas Waller*; *Squeeze Me*; eight more. BLACK LION 308, \$6.98.

The prim, precise piano style of Teddy Wilson might seem the very antithesis of the exuberant, striding manner of Fats Waller, in which case Wilson playing Waller would be a self-defeating exercise. This disc provides an interesting yes-and-no answer to this proposition.

Certainly, the bubbling, bumptious Waller is not present in Wilson's interpretations. Such pieces as "Zonky" and "Handful of Keys" are delivered with clarity and precision but not with the exultant joy that flowed from Waller. On the other hand, Wilson has a lyricism, a relaxed sense of swing, that gives the gently torchy ballads—"I've Got a Feeling I'm Falling," "Blue Turning Gray Over You," and "Black and Blue"—a warm, easy feeling that Waller himself could not quite evoke. Mockery was rarely entirely absent from Fats's voice when he sang these songs, although it did not creep into his piano playing. Wilson's light touch on piano brings out nuances that Waller's heavier, more solid approach missed.

The set includes two Wilson originals, a blues and a piece called "Striding After Fats," a title which suggests that it is in the Waller stride mold. Far from it. It is typical Teddy Wilson bounce, the implication being either that the stride style is outside of his ken or that, after Fats, it was transformed by pianists such as Wilson. In either event, it is a very minor effort and much too weak to be used as the opening selection on the disc. But the blues, while not as bluesy as Fats and a lot of others might have made it, is a valid and varied development in Wilson's own style. J.S.W.

**QUIRE.** Christiane Legrand, Claudine Meunier, José Germain, and Michel

Barouille, vocals; rhythm accompaniment. *Blue Rondo à la Turk*, *Misty*; *Django*; *Take the 'A' Train*; *Body and Soul*; five more. [Christiane Legrand, prod.] RCA BGL 1-1700, \$6.98.

If you dug Lambert, Hendricks, and Ross, or recall fondly the Double Six of Paris or the Swingle Singers, you will love this album. Quire's four singers are all alumni of the Swingle Singers, whose vocal interpretations of Bach a decade ago were such a delicious treat. The group is directed by Legrand, one of the founding members of the Double Six and the sister of composer/pianist Michel Legrand.

Backed by a subtly swinging rhythm section, Quire re-creates eleven classic jazz performances. Not with words as Lambert, Hendricks, and Ross (or King Pleasure and Eddie Jefferson), but solfeggio style, singing all the notes of the original recordings from Erroll Garner's "Misty" to the full Ellington band version of "Take the 'A' Train." With only four voices, they had to overdub a lot to reconstruct each solo part, every complete chord, and every ensemble part.

Listening to the finished product, one can only admire the dedication, skill, and hard work devoted to the project. Quire is one delight after another: on "Honky-Tonk Train," the rippling right hand of Meade Lux Lewis trilled by the girls' voices, the men singing the left hand; Claudine Meunier portraying Paul Desmond's alto; José Germain vocalizing Illinois Jacquet's jazz at the Philharmonic solo on "Body and Soul." And, incredibly, all the notes are sung precisely as originally played! No tape speed variations, no mechanical tricks were used.

Instrumentalists often observe that they strive to reach the quality of the human voice. Quire's almost inhumanly perfect voices re-create not so much the sound of the instruments as the spirit of the performance, all in good fun. And good music. J.G.

**\* BUD SHANK:** Sunshine Express. Bud Shank, alto saxophone and flute; Bobby Shew, trumpet and flugelhorn; Mike Wofford, piano; Fred Atwood, bass; Larry Bunker, drums. *Sunshine Express*; *Film Flam*; *Here's That Rainy Day*; *John C.*; three more. [Bud Shank, prod.] CONCORD JAZZ 20, \$6.98.

The Sunshine Express is a quintet of Los Angeles studio musicians stretching out and exercising their chops away from their daily routine work. Which is something akin to a postman entering a walkathon. These five men in particular are in such constant demand for studio work that I don't know how they found time to record this album.

What a pleasure it is to hear Bud Shank's virile alto sax in its own idiom again. With that Charlie Parker-cum-Cannonball edge to his tone, he plays with a vigor and confidence that show his innate jazz senses are not dulled a whit. He retains the fire that made him such a standout in the Charlie Barnet and Stan Kenton sax sections. Bud doubles on flute and plays it as if it were his only instrument. Though he doesn't do it here, I can attest that he's an equally terrific tenorist and blows a blistering baritone as

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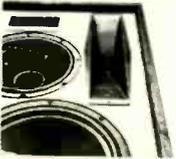
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well. (Maybe in the next album, Mr. Jefferson?)

Bobby Shew's clarity of tone and facility of execution make him an excellent frontline partner with Shank. Fred Atwood and Mike Wofford are superb in either solo or ensemble. As for Larry Bunker, there may be more famous drummers, but there's hardly any better. He's a driving, sensitive, constant element in any context.

My personal favorite tracks are "John C." "C'est What," and "Sunshine Express." It's an album of exuberant, joyful jazz that eschews the affectations and clichés of avant-gardism (or derrière-garde, for that matter) and finds its expression in a solid statement of the belief that it don't mean a thing if it ain't got that you-know-what. J.G.

## In Brief

**BLOOD, SWEAT, & TEARS:** More Than Ever. COLUMBIA PC 34233, \$6.98. Tape: ●● PC 34233, \$7.98; ●● PCA 34233, \$7.98.

The reconstituted Blood, Sweat, & Tears (only drummer Bobby Colomby is a hold-over from the original group) benefits greatly from the return of the lusty-voiced David Clayton-Thomas and from the arranging/producing skills of Bob James. Augmented by strings and a gaggle of heavy-caliber New York studio musicians, the group produces a high-powered, richly recorded amalgam of jazz and rock. "More Than Ever" is BS&T sounding better than ever. J.G.

**HARRY CHAPIN:** Greatest Stories: Live. ELEKTRA 7E 2009, \$7.98 (two discs). Tape: ●● C5 2009, \$8.97; ●● T8 2009, \$8.97.

As the title says, Harry Chapin singing songs like "W-O-L-D," "Taxi," and "Cats in the Cradle" live in concert, and eleven other tunes in this two-disc set. M.J.

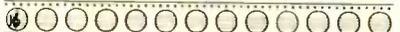
**WILLIAM D. SMITH:** A Good Feelin'. WARNER BROS. BS 2911, \$6.98. Tape: ●● M 52911, \$7.97; ●● M 82911, \$7.97.

For his solo debut, Smith has the splendid fortune to be produced by Allen Toussaint, the greatest. Smith plays piano, sings, and writes, sounding warm, funky, and honest. Star tracks include "I'll Be Rolling with the Punches" and "I Feel So Good with You" by Toussaint and Smith's "Down the Back Stairs" and "We Flew Away." His is an immediately likable voice; I'm rooting for him. M.A.

**NANCY WILSON:** This Mother's Daughter. Capitol ST 11518, \$6.98. Tape: ●● 4XT 11518, \$7.98; ●● 8XT 11518, \$7.98.

From her earliest, strongly jazz-oriented albums, Nancy Wilson has been a prolific and popular recording star. She is an exquisitely polished performer—up there, when she's on top of her game, with the best of the dramatic chanteuses. She always brings her keen intelligence to bear on the lyrics, and her voice is at her absolute command to do whatever. She has ten chances to get you in this album, and her aim is very good. J.G.

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## Christmas Shopping Guide



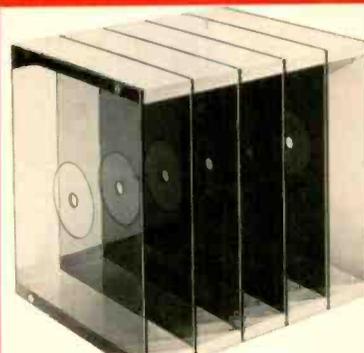
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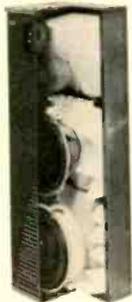
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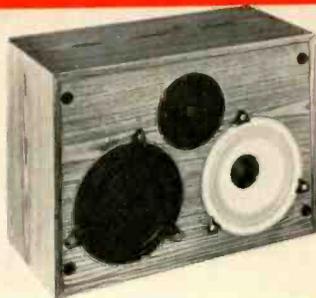
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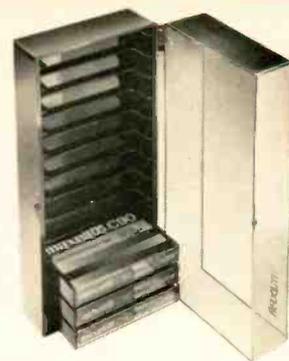
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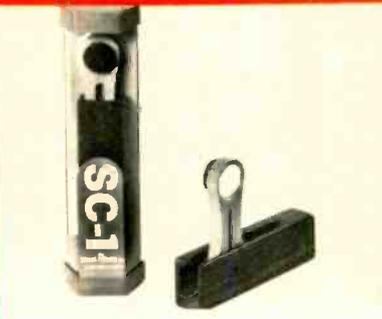
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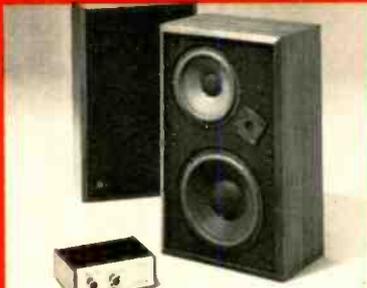
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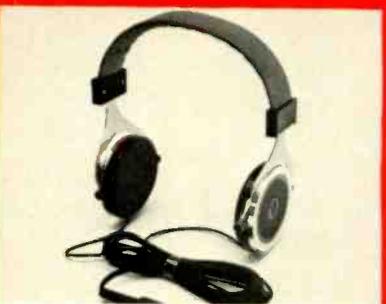
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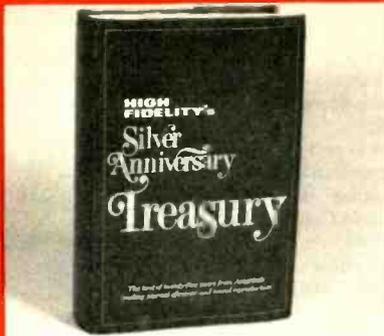
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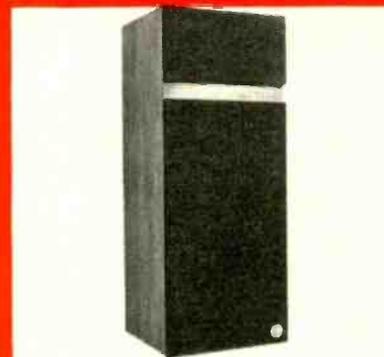
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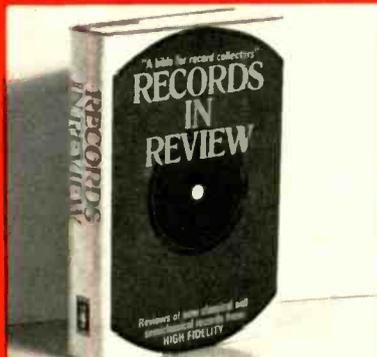
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CIRCLE 25 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**Christmas-tree Prestige Boxes.** The latest batch of Deutsche Grammophon Prestige Boxes includes three varied programs (symphonic/concerted/operatic) running to three Dolby-B musicassettes and a \$23.94 list price each. The Karajan/Berlin Philharmonic set of all five Mendelssohn symphonies (DG 3371 020) adds the charming little First, written at the age of only fifteen, and the cantata-like *Lobgesang* Second (actually the fourth in chronological order) to the much more familiar *Scotch, Italian, and Reformation* Symphonies previously available on two separate cassettes. Their widely acclaimed recorded performances are well matched in the newer tapings, with a trio of vocal soloists and the Chorus of the Deutsche Oper Berlin making the most of the fervent Lutheranism of the Second Symphony's *Hymn of Praise* choral finale.

DG 3371 021 is a compendium of the four great violin-concerto recordings, 1964-67, which did so much to consolidate the European fame of the German virtuoso still too little known and esteemed in this country: Christian Ferras. He and Karajan's Berlin Philharmonic offer authoritatively German Romantic versions of the Brahms and Tchaikovsky that rank among the best on records. Their Beethoven is close to the top, and if their Sibelius is less idiomatic as a reading, it too is masterly in its actual execution.

The third box (DG 3371 019) proffers the 1974 Salzburg Festival performance of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* featuring Janowitz, Fassbaender, and Grist as the three women, Schreier, Prey, and Panerai as the men, with the Vienna State Opera Chorus and Philharmonic Orchestra under Karl Böhm, celebrating his eightieth birthday. Regular operagoers, relishing the actual performance spontaneity here, will take in stride both the stage-action noises and score cuts. But there is no real challenge to the best studio recordings: Solti for London, Davis for Philips. Unfortunately, however, neither these nor any other complete *Così* is currently available in any tape format.

**Marriner under two flags.** In the October issue I welcomed the American release of a whole batch of imported Argo cassettes by Neville Marriner and his Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields ensemble, giving precedence to his Elgar and Vaughan Williams programs—along with two simultaneously released Marriner programs appearing under the Angel XDR aegis. This month he's again busy under two labels: in Mozart concerted works and symphonies for

by R. D. Darrell

## The Tape Deck

Argo, in later Mozart symphonies and Beethoven for Philips.

One doesn't have to be a member of this remarkable British conductor's fan club to recognize that his recorded performances are well-nigh ideal small-scaled ones of Mozart's familiar *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, the K. 364 Sinfonia Concertante (with violin/viola soloists Loveday and Shingles), and the overturelike Symphony No. 32 (all in Argo KZRC 679); and the coupling (in Argo KZRC 706) of the tragic "little" G minor Symphony, No. 25, with the exuberantly cheerful Symphony No. 29 in A (Dolby-B cassettes, \$7.95 each).

In his larger works for Philips (also two Dolby-B cassettes, \$7.95 each), Marriner wisely doesn't compete directly with the many fine "standard" symphonic versions. His Mozart *Haffner* Symphony No. 35 and great G minor Symphony No. 40 (Philips 7300 086) give us the rare opportunities of hearing the original scorings of both works without clarinets and, in the *Haffner*, without flutes too. His Beethoven Fourth Symphony and *Grosse Fuge* (Philips 7300 456) provide almost as rare opportunities of hearing the former in an engagingly intimate rather than robustly unbuttoned approach, and the *Great Fugue* done by forces scaled midway between the original string quartet and the full symphonic string-choir favored by Toscanini, Karajan, and other maestros.

**Knitting up the Ravel'd sleeve.** . . . The full extent of the loss of Jean Martinon is made poignantly evident in one of his last and greatest recorded legacies, the complete Ravel orchestral works for Angel. As yet, Vol. 5 is the only one to enjoy XDR/Dolby-B cassette processing (4XS 37151, \$7.98), and even its technological brilliance can't distract from the sensitivity with which Martinon and the Orchestre de Paris accompany Ciccolini's readings of the two piano concertos: unusually restrained in the jazzy one in G, lucid and dramatic in the Concerto in D for left hand alone. Of the earlier, non-XDR cassettes, I've heard only Vol. 1 (Angel 4XS 37147, \$7.98), which includes not only idiomatically authentic versions of the *Rapsodie espagnole*, *La Valse*, and *Bolero*, but also a fascinating if immature student work, the *Shéhérazade* Overture.

*nola, La Valse, and Bolero*, but also a fascinating if immature student work, the *Shéhérazade* Overture.

In contrast to such keenly empathic readings, Ozawa's *Bolero*, *Rapsodie espagnole*, and *La Valse* seem unduly literal, redeemed only by the vivid recording of the Boston Symphony's superb playing (Deutsche Grammophon 3300 459, Dolby-B cassette, \$7.98). And Maazel's complete *Daphnis et Chloé* ballet seems lacking in probing insights, despite the sonic enchantment with which the recording engineers have captured the kaleidoscopically colored Cleveland Orchestra and Chorus performance (London CS5 6898, Dolby-B cassette, \$7.95).

**Young lions on the piano keys.** Born only three years apart—Cliburn in 1934, Ashkenazy in 1937—both the American and the Russian virtuoso first won fame in international competitions, then went on to acclaimed concert and recording careers. Yet while Ashkenazy has demonstrated consistent growth in poetic insight and dramatic magnetism, Cliburn has remained, at least for me, little changed as an interpreter of narrowly limited range. That's not to say he doesn't continue to display prodigious technique and warm romantic feeling in his current Liszt program, featuring the mighty B minor Sonata along with shorter pieces (RCA ARK/ARS 1-1173, cassette/cartridge, \$7.95 each). But one listens in vain for any genuinely imaginative insights. And in the ARK/ARS 1-1176 cassette/cartridge "Romantic Collection" of short pieces by Rachmaninoff, Chopin, Granados, Debussy, Schumann, Liszt, Tchaikovsky, and Ravel, Cliburn veers between the extremes of pretentiousness and sentimentality. Yet he never fails to capture magnificent piano sonorities, recorded with ringing authenticity.

Ashkenazy not only reveals more wit and sensibility in Prokofiev's delectable Third Piano Concerto than Cliburn did some years ago for RCA, but goes on to give us the other four Prokofiev concertos in distinctively personalized versions with the London Symphony under Previn (London CSA5 2314, three Dolby-B cassettes, boxed, \$23.95). And for full measure he joins clarinetist Puddy and the Gabrieli Quartet in the wry *Overture on Hebrew Themes*, then leaves the keyboard for the podium to conduct the familiar *Classical* Symphony and the hitherto unrecorded early but evocative orchestral rhapsody, *Autumnal*. To be sure, he's still awkwardly immature as a conductor, but at least he's willing to take a chance—and as pianist he's both persuasive poet and provocative ironist. ●

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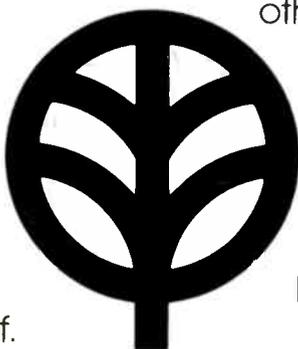
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