You'll know why we're first, the second you hear us.
First it was DC. Then DD/DC and Super Feed-forward. Now Sansui astounds the audiophile with the greatest improvement in an amp. X-Balanced circuitry. It cancels out external distortion by eliminating the transformer to chassis ground; and decisively removes IHM.

You’ll find X-Balanced circuitry in a wide range of superior Sansui products, like our AU-G99X amp, shown with TU-D99X quartz-PLL synthesizer tuner which incorporates our new Super Linear Digital Decoder for improved rejection of spurious signals and interference. Another version of this tuner has AM stereo capability.

When it comes to digital sound, our new PC-X11 Tri-code PCM Processor is the world’s finest for any VCR. With 100 times the accuracy of any other PCM processor, it even reads blurred sections of digital material and lets you record up to eight hours of music on one VHS video cassette.

Our ingenious new XL-900C digital/analog speakers handle broad dynamic range with incredibly quick response to energy flow. Patented Tri-composite Carbon Fiber multi-layer diaphragms, plus high-polymer air-tight cores deliver higher resonance, fewer breakups and overall flat response.

There’s more worth hearing about these great Sansui components. Write: Consumer Service Dept., Sansui Electronics Corp., Lyndhurst, NJ 07071, Carson, CA 90746, Sansui Electric Co., Ltd., Tokyo, Japan.
ONLY NEC OFFERS THE BEST OF BOTH FORMATS.

Whether you're watching the movie that won the Academy Award's "Best Picture" or want to make your own video movie with the best picture possible, NEC has the video cassette recorder that's exactly right for you.

Now, you've probably heard pretty convincing arguments for the superiority of VHS versus Beta and vice versa.

THE NEC VC-N895EU VHS HI-FI VCR. This state-of-the-art VCR's features include true hi-fi audio, a 139 channel, CATV-ready PLL Quartz tuner; 14 day 8 event programmable timer; 4 heads for clear special effects; stereo recording and playback with Dolby Noise Reduction; segment recording; variable speed control; automatic editing system; picture sharpness control; electronic tape counter and full function infrared wireless remote control.

THE NEC VC-N833EU VHS VIDEO CASSETTE RECORDER. Add Dolby stereo to a high performance four-head, CATV-ready VCR and double your recording pleasure.

The Paramount Home Video Videocassettes pictured are $39.95 each suggested retail price and are supplied courtesy of Paramount Home Video.
That's because each format has its respective strengths. While VHS decks play longer, which saves tape costs; Beta video cassettes are smaller and employ a faster writing speed, making Beta the favorite of serious field and home video recordists. This is why NEC became the only VCR manufacturer to offer both formats under its own name in the United States. This includes the very finest Beta and VHS models in each category.

Suddenly, the answer to the question, "Which VCR is best?" becomes very simple.

NEC.

THE NEC VC-N40EU BETA SLIMLINE VIDEO CASSETTE RECORDER. Whatever the recording speed, it produces the best possible VCR picture available.

THE NEC BM-11EU BETAMOVIE. NEC put it all together with an integrated Color Video Camera/Video Cassette Recorder that only weighs 5.5 lbs including its battery.

THE NEC VC-739E BETA HI-FI VCR. The VCR with the picture that sounds as good as it looks. It features studio quality hi-fi audio, a 134 channel, CATV-ready PLL Quartz tuner, 21 day, 8 event programmable timer; 4 heads for clear special effects; three slow motion speeds; picture sharpness control; segment recording; electronic tape counter and full function infrared wireless remote control.

NEC Home Electronics (U.S.A.) Inc., 1401 Estes Avenue, Elk Grove Village, Illinois 60007, (312) 228-5900

Circle 49 on Reader-Service Card
Sherwood announces the latest thing in second generation CD audio technology:

Affordability

The compact disc just may be the most heart-stopping concept in sound since stereo. But the most heart-stopping feature of compact disc players has been their price. Now, with Sherwood's new CDP-100, you can relax about money and really get excited about sound.

A tradition of affordable excellence.
Sherwood is well-known for high-quality audio products at affordable prices. And our new CD player is no exception. While others were still on first generation models, we combined advanced second-generation performance with a no-nonsense array of useful features. And we did it in a way that not only makes sense, but saves you dollars as well.

Three laser beams for better tracking. Most CD players use only one laser beam. Sherwood put a three-beam laser into the CDP-100, because a three-beam system virtually eliminates distortion caused by spurious data from adjacent tracks.

Two filters, not one.
All CD's require filters, because the decoding of digital sound generates a sampling frequency which must be filtered out, or distortions will be heard.
Other CD players use one very steep analog filter; this can cause phase distortion. Sherwood's answer is to use a digital filter to double the sampling frequency, then use a more gentle type of analog filter for reduced phase distortion. The result: better sound at less cost.

Easy-to-use functional controls.
Inserting a disc is easy, thanks to a "smart" motorized drawer under microprocessor operation. (It even knows if you accidentally put the disc in upside down.)
You can easily access any selection, and there's a two-speed fast forward and backward, so you can listen while you quickly locate the spot you want to hear.
You can even set the CDP-100 to repeat the entire disc for continuous music.

Find out how advanced, easy to use, and affordable Sherwood's new CDP-100 really is at your nearest Sherwood dealer. To find him, call (800) 841-1412 during west coast business hours.

Sherwood
Quality and Innovation You Can Afford

17107 Kingsview Avenue, Carson, CA 90746. In Canada: The Pringle Group, Don Mills, Ontario
High Fidelity

VOLUME 34  NUMBER 10  OCTOBER 1984

AUDIO

Currents: Compact Discs today: Going for mass appeal .................................................. 14
CrossTalk  by Robert Long .................................................................................................. 21
Basically Speaking  by Michael Riggs
Oversampling and the Holy Grail: Should a CD player have separate D/A converters for each channel?

New Equipment Reports
Kenwood DP-1100B Compact Disc player .................................................. 24
NAD Model 4125 tuner ......................................................................................... 26
Sansui AU-G90X integrated amplifier ..................................................................... 30

* Car Stereo Special
Refrains for the Road  by Gary Stock ..................................................................... 39
Lab and Road Tests
Sony CDX-5 car Compact Disc player ...................................................................... 43
Pioneer KE-A880 receiver/tape deck ........................................................................ 46

NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Video Lab Test: Quasar VH-5845XQ VHS Hi-Fi videocassette recorder .................. 49
Sample and Hold  by Paul D. Lehman .................................................................... 56
Digital sound recording, real-time playback, and more in an add-on package for the Apple II computer

* Compact Disc Special
CD Players—How They Compare: Buying guide to 58 models  by Peter Dobbin .......... 59
Music Reviews: A sampler of pop and classical discs, from Beethoven to Bowie .... 64
Playing the Name Game: What gets released on CD  by Sam Sutherland .......... 67
Latest Pop Releases: What’s really available in the stores ........................................ 68
CD Indexing—A Classic Betrayal  by Theodore W. Libbey, Jr. ................................. 70
1985 Annual Preview of Forthcoming Recordings, Part 2—Compact Discs ........ 74

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Odd Man Out—or In?  Reviewed by Thomas L. Dixon
An assessment of György Cziffra’s recordings on the eve of some rare North American recitals

Reviews: Early Viennese Classics: Ma and Ax play Beethoven; Mehli Mehta’s debut; Star Trek III ........................................... 85
Critics’ Choice ............................................................................................................ 95

The Tape Deck  by R. D. Darrell ............................................................................... 103

BACKBEAT/Popular Music

Roots & Branches  by John Mortland ........................................................................ 104
Free-jazz founder Ornette Coleman says, **The sound is what matters, not the style.**

Pop Reviews: Prince; Laura Branigan; Elvis Costello; George Jones; Oh-OK; Tina Turner

The 12-inch Single: Ain’t No Stoppin’ It Now  Reviewed by Vince Aletti ............ 109

Jazz Reviews: Barbara Lashley; Louisiana Jazz Ensemble; Art Pepper; Mel Powell 112

DEPARTMENTS

About This Issue .................................................. 6
Letters ....................................................................................... 6
Reader-Service Card ........................................................................ 101
Reader-Action Page ........................................................................... 118
Advertising Index .............................................................................. 117
* Cover Story

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About This Issue

The Compact Disc definitely is being taken seriously by both hardware and software manufacturers. The result is a virtual deluge of CD players and releases this fall. Along with this profusion of new product has come a reduction in prices: You should be able to buy a basic player for less than $400 and discs for less than $1.5. In highly competitive areas, such as New York City, CD prices have already slipped to $13 for many releases.

To bring you up to date on what's happening in the bustling world of Compact Discs, we've dedicated a major portion of this issue to the topic. First, we've assembled a number of the comments and questions you've written us regarding the Compact Disc into a special "Letters" column. Then, Electronics Features Editor Peter Dobbin reports on the latest CD news in "Currents," and Technical Editor Michael Riggs explores the controversial topic of CD player "sampling rates" in "Basically Speaking." Following this, you'll find an exhaustive buying guide to more than 55 current CD players, ranging in price from $400 to $1,600. Salient features are called out clearly to let you easily assess what each price level offers.

Next, we bring you an in-depth lab and road evaluation of the first Compact Disc player designed specifically for car installation—Sony's CDX-5. And lastly, you'll find comprehensive coverage of CD players themselves.

Much of this section is devoted to a complete listing of nearly 500 classical titles that record companies are promising to release on Compact Disc, beginning this fall. Complementing our preview is an article by regular contributor Sam Sutherland, in which he provides an inside view of how record company executives select what will be issued on CD. Classical Music Editor Theodore W. Libbey, Jr., explores the topic of "indexing"—widely touted in the beginning as a major advantage of the CD format, but still rarely used. And starting this month, we'll be combining forces with our sister publication, The New Schwann Record & Tape Guide, to bring you the most up-to-date listings possible of new pop and classical CD releases. The criterion for inclusion in the lists is actual availability at retail, not just a record company's promise of issuance.

Elsewhere in these pages we offer a complete wrapup by "Autophile" columnist Gary Stock of the new 1985 car-stereo components, another in our series of lab tests on VHS Hi-Fi VCRs, a look at the recordings of the flamboyant pianist György Cziffra, an interview with the influential jazz performer Ornette Coleman, and reviews of new issues in today's hottest LP format—the 12-inch single. Readers of our MUSICAL AMERICA edition will also enjoy James Wierzbicki's feature on the latest record releases from CRI and more than a dozen additional reviews.—W.T.

Letters

More CD Debate

First I hear that the greatest advance in audio history has been developed. It's called the Compact Disc and must be played on something called a Compact Disc player, which sells for the same price as a baseball team franchise. Since I am not a baseball fan, I decide to invest my money in one of these new players instead. All is fine and dandy for a few weeks. Now in your March issue I read that Bob Carver has just invented a black box. And what's the purpose of the box? It's to make Compact Discs sound more like analog records. So it seems I have to buy something to make these Compact Discs sound like the old-fashioned kind I was supposed to get away from. Is someone trying to make me crazy, or what?

Howard Garrett
Bayside, N.Y.

We have read with delight and amazement your article "The Carver CD Fixer" [March], which describes in some detail the new processor that the ingenious Mr. C is concocting for those of us not entirely weaned from the time-worn vagaries of our collections of vinyl. As always, Mr. C has somehow found out what it is that makes whatever it is do whatever it is doing and found a way to change it, whether or not we were psycho-acoustically aware of it. Those of your readers who may not even know that the geeks at Mr. Carver is slaying are alive may feel some confusion at this, yet attack them he does, sometimes to the delight of all concerned.

Just think of it: For a mere price to be named later you can go right out (later) and buy a processor that turns a CD back into an LP. In fact, we of the older generation feel that there also should be choices available marked "45" and "78." This step backwards in time could be accomplished by a simple binary processor, which the owner would program by giving a few simple yes/no responses to the following questions:

1. Do you stack records for play on your changer?
2. Do you clean your records?
3. More than once a year?
4. Are there pennies on your headshell?
5. Quarters?
6. Do you call what you have a "stylus"?
7. Or a "needle"?
8. Is $19.95 too much to spend for a cartridge?

This new machine could be combined with one of Mr. C's other devices to create an Automated Surface Synthesizer/Holographic Listening Ex-

citer, which would (based on the programming), statistically at random, invert tops, clicks, and varying amounts of other synthesized surface noise into the music. Note that this is still a step ahead of the regular LP situation, wherein you always remember exactly when the next intrusion will occur and go crazy waiting for it.

Last you think that we're a couple of amateurs crackpots, we'd like to inform you that, between us, we have five (count 'em, five) versions of Mr. Jackson's "Thriller" (standard LP, half-speed mastered LP, CD, stereo VHS, and homemade mono VHS) that we have carefully ABCDE'd against each other and then F'd against the Rock-Olas at the Thruway Diner in New Rochelle in an attempt to reach the Truth. We have but one question: Is there any possibility that we could hook Mr. C's gorgeous new device into one of our systems backwards? You see, although we have, between us, four preamps, two tuners, three amplifiers, one receiver, four cassette decks, two and a half reel-to-reel decks, two real-time analyzers, seven various signal processors, six pairs of speakers, and one subwoofer, we have only one CD player. Could we share? One of us could use it northbound to make his CDs sound like 78s, while the other could use it southbound for the reverse.

Meanwhile, you might ask why this new
Technics Digital Compact Disc Players.
Lasers and computers
give you the one experience your conventional
audio system never could: Reality.

Reality: The duplication of a live musical performance. The most elusive goal of all. Yet reality is precisely what you hear with Technics digital Compact Disc players.
How? Technics revolutionary Compact Disc players have a laser instead of a conventional stylus. Because instead of conventional record grooves, digital Compact Discs have a computer code. The laser "reads" this code. And a computer instantaneously translates it into music.
What you hear is not just a reproduction of the music, but a re-creation of it. Reality.
And nothing touches the Compact Disc except the laser beam. That means there is no wear. No noise. And no distortion. All of which can plague conventional records.
All this Technics digital technology comes together in the compact latest generation of Technics Compact Disc players. The remarkable SL-P8 and SL-P7.
You can program the SL-P8 up to 32 different ways. Play any selection you want. In any order you want. Repeat the selections you like. Even skip ones you don’t.
Auto Music Scan automatically lets you hear the first 10 seconds of every selection. So finding the selection you want is easy.
The fluorescent display shows you precisely where the laser is on the disc. So you can even find the exact notes you want to hear.
And to let you do all this from across the room, the SL-P8 even has an infrared remote control.
Experience the full range of Technics digital technology. Including the SL-P8 and the affordable SL-P7.
The digital revolution continues at Technics.

Technics
The science of sound

*With purchase of any Technics CD Player from September 1 to December 31, 1984. See participating Technics dealers for details.
The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences presents the Official Grammy Awards Archive Collection

Now—the most acclaimed performances by the greatest artists of the past 25 years—in one collection for the first time


"I applaud this collection! Because these are the great performances of the best popular music of our time—and you can't get any better than that. The Grammy Award recordings will go on and on, as long as people enjoy melody and rhythm and style. That's why I said 'Count me in.' And I hope you love every minute of it."

The Grammy Award is the highest honor in the recording field. It is presented each year to the most distinguished individuals in the music world by The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, the professional organization dedicated to fostering the highest standards of artistic achievement in the field of recording.

Now, the Academy has announced that it will issue the first collection in its history—The Official Grammy Awards Archive Collection of The Greatest Recordings of Our Time. Assembled with the cooperation of every major record company, this collection will represent the best of the best. The greatest performances of the greatest music of our time—selected out of all those ever nominated for a Grammy Award, with the assistance of a special committee established by the Academy.

Twenty-five years of great music
These superb recordings have now been brought together for the first time in one complete record collection, to enjoy for years to come.
All of the favorites of the past quarter-century are included in the collection. For example:

And there are famous groups as well. The Beatles—Peter, Paul and Mary—the Fifth Dimension—the Beach Boys—Chicago—the Rolling Stones—Paul McCartney and Wings. And great instrumentalists such as Herb Alpert with A Taste of Honey, Chuck Mangione with Feels So Good, Mason Williams doing Classical Gas, and Michel Legrand’s beautiful I Will Wait For You.

Rare and out-of-issue pressings
Some of the original recordings which are included in this outstanding collection are now out of issue—and others are very difficult to come by.

The Greatest Recordings of Our
Among these rare recordings are: Nat ‘King’ Cole crooning Ramblin’ Rose. The Kingston Trio doing Tom Dooley. George Harrison and My Sweet Lord. Dionne Warwick singing Do You Know the Way to San Jose? And Ramsey Lewis with The In Crowd.

In addition, there are memorable recordings by composers performing their own songs: Carole King with You’ve Got A Friend, Paul Williams’ interpretation of We’ve Only Just Begun, Johnny Mercer singing I Wanna Be Around, and Harry Chapin’s classic Cat’s in the Cradle.

On superior proof-quality records

To produce the records for this historic collection, The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences has appointed The Franklin Mint Record Society, one of America’s leading producers of high-quality records.

These records will be pressed in a dust-free, atmosphere-controlled “clean room,” where standards of quality control are stricter than in other facilities. A special anti-static vinyl compound will be used in the production of the records, which resists the accumulation of dust in the sensitive record grooves. This exclusive compound, together with the careful pressing technique, creates a record of exceptional fidelity that is heavier and more durable than ordinary records. A record of true proof quality. (The collection is also available on high-quality tape cassettes.)

Attractive library albums provided

To protect the records or tapes, a set of custom-designed library albums will be provided as part of the collection. Each album will hold four records (or cassettes), and each will be accompanied by specially written commentaries describing the Grammy Award recordings contained in each album. The commentaries will provide in-depth information and little-known sidelights on the artists and their music, and give you an insider’s view of some actual recording sessions.

The albums will be illustrated with photographs of performers, composers instrumentalists and band leaders. Many have never been published before.

Subscribe by October 31st

The Greatest Recordings of Our Time will not be sold in any record or music stores. It is available only by subscription and only from The Franklin Mint Record Society.

There will be 100 proof-quality records in the collection, and the issue price for each proof-quality record is $10.75, with cassettes priced at $1 more.

To acquire the Official Grammy Awards Archive Collection, please mail your application to The Franklin Mint Record Society, Franklin Center, PA 19019, by October 31, 1984.

The Greatest Recordings
of Our Time

Please mail by October 31, 1984

The Franklin Mint Record Society
Franklin Center, Pennsylvania 19019

Please enter my subscription for the Official Grammy Awards Archive Collection of The Greatest Recordings of Our Time, consisting of 100 proof-quality records in custom-designed albums, at the price of $10.75* plus 95¢ for packaging, shipping and handling per record.

No payment is required now. I will receive a 4-record album every other month, and I will be billed for each album in two equal monthly installments, beginning when my first album is ready to be sent. I may discontinue my subscription at any time upon thirty days’ written notice.

*Plus my state sales tax.

☐ Check here to receive the collection on high-quality, Dolby encoded, chromium dioxide tape cassettes. Same subscription plan, $1 extra per cassette.

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Signature

All applications are subject to acceptance

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City

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Circle 47 on Reader-Service Card
I have a bone to pick about Sam Sutherland’s article, “Do CDs Sound Better?” [March]. Even though all his examples clearly are pop music and he says that he’s referring to CDs transferred from analog recordings, the piece is more an indictment of Compact Discs than a fair assessment of the sound of all CDs, classical and pop.

I am a collector primarily of classical recordings and bought a CD player a few months ago. I began with two discs and rather quickly increased that number to about fifty. All but three are classical, and most are digitally recorded. I am very pleased with the sound and have not generally experienced any of the problems that are so underscored in Mr. Sutherland’s article. In A/B comparisons with LPs, the CDs have much greater clarity, a smoother sound, and remarkable stereo imaging (including excellent depth). And I have top-of-the-line record-playing equipment. Frankly, adding a CD player to my system has made a quantum jump in my enjoyment of recorded music, and it is the first time I have experienced at home anything close to what I’ve heard in a concert hall.

Because CDs are new, not to mention expensive, I think you should present both sides of the issue so that potential buyers will not be overly swayed to the side of technology critics who are paid to find fault. My personal enthusiasm for the new medium certainly runs contrary to most of what I have read in your magazine. And the ability of the medium to realize its potential and overcome the faults that Mr. Sutherland points out depends on enthusiastic consumers.

Bill Erwin
Baltimore, Md.

“The exaggeration of sibilants by the new method is abominable, and there is often a harshness which recalls some of the worst excesses of the past. The recording of bowed strings is atrocious from an impressionistic standpoint.” A present-day critic decrying the advent of digital recording? Not at all. The quotation is from Compton Mackenzie, founder and longtime editor of Gramophone, denouncing electrical recording in the mid-Twenties.

Many readers of that distinguished magazine fully agreed; they complained that the shallow sound they were used to was giving way to the nervous stridency of the electrical process (which Mackenzie thought was peculiarly and offensively American). And truth to tell, electrical recordings did strike many as strident, partly because the process was suddenly capable of reproducing high frequencies (up to 10 kHz) that previously had been lost.

Twenty years later Mackenzie came out against long-playing records. What was so terrible about changing records? he asked. Others evidently wondered the same thing, especially in Britain, where EMI clung to 78s long after other companies had adopted the slower speeds.

Today’s somewhat worked-up controversy about digital sound rehashes much the same criticisms that have greeted every innovation in recording technology. Some didn’t like stereo when it became widely available, for it undoubtedly increased distortion and accentuated surface noise. Remember the hiss and glare of those CinemaScope movies with their special magnetic tracks?

For that matter, high fidelity itself met great early resistance—all that piercing treble, and did it have to be so loud? I can hardly wait for the next advance in sound reproduction, which I confidently expect to be met by a rear guard denouncing it as unnatural, uncomfortable, and clearly unnecessary.

Charles Britton
Manhattan Beach, Calif.

We seem to have touched a nerve. The Compact Disc is a great advance, and we have said so quite often. For the first time, it’s possible to take the sound picked up in a studio or concert hall to your home with absolutely no audible degradation. But if the microphones introduce coloration or are poorly placed, or if the signals from them are t astefully compressed and equalized, the sound will not be good. And that’s why some (not all) CDs sound unpleasant—not because they are digital, but because of carelessness and the perpetuation of production techniques developed to compensate for the shortcomings of analog records and playback systems. That’s the story we told in March.—Ed.

Letters should be addressed to The Editor, High Fidelity, 825 7th Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019. All letters are subject to editing for brevity and clarity.

Revox B225

For those who waited.

And those who wish they had.

All Compact Disc players are not created equal. This much, at least, has emerged from all the hype and hoopla.

Some CD players are built better than others. Some have more sophisticated programming features. Some are easier to use. And, yes, some do sound significantly better than others.

The new B225, from Revox of Switzerland, excels on all counts. For those who have postponed their purchase, patience has been rewarded. For those who didn’t wait, the B225 is the logical upgrading route.

First, the B225 is designed for unexcelled CD reproduction. By using oversampling (176.4 kHz) in conjunction with digital filtering, the B225 guarantees optimum sound resolution and true phase response.

For your convenience, the B225 offers programming of nearly every conceivable combination of start, stop, and loop functions, in any sequence, and using mixed combinations of track numbers and times. Cueing time is always less than 3 seconds, and a single infrared remote transmitter (optional) operates the B225 as well as all other components in the Revox 200 audio system.

Finally, the B225 is a product of refined Swiss design and meticulous craftsmanship. Behind its faceplate of functional elegance, the B225 is an audio component built in quiet defiance of planned obsolescence.

Without question, the definitive CD player has just arrived. For those who waited (and those who didn’t), now is the time to see an authorized Revox dealer.
YOU'RE LOOKING AT THE SIX BEST AUTO-REVERSING DECKS YOU CAN BUY.

STAYING AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION IN AUTO-REVERSING CASSETTE DECKS HAS BEEN AN AKAI TRADITION FOR THE PAST 14 YEARS. NOW WE'RE INTRODUCING THE ALL-NEW GX-R99, A DECK THAT HAS SO MANY ADVANCED FEATURES YOU'D HAVE TO BUY SIX OTHER AUTO-REVERSING DECKS TO GET THEM ALL.

FEATURES LIKE OUR COMPUTER RECORD LEVEL PROCESSING SYSTEM, THAT SETS A TAPE'S BIAS, EQUALIZATION AND TAPE SENSITIVITY, MEASURES A TAPE'S MOL, THEN SETS THE OPTIMUM RECORDING LEVEL. A SPECTRUM ANALYZER ENCOMPASSING MOL DISPLAY, WHICH DISPLAYS FREQUENCY RESPONSE WITH GREATER ACCURACY AKAI'S EXCLUSIVE AUTO MONITOR. AND OUR SUPER GX HEADS. SO SUPER, THEY'RE GUARANTEED FOR 17¼ YEARS OF CONTINUOUS PLAY.

IT'S EASY TO SEE WHY THE GX-R99, JUST ONE OF FOUR GREAT AKAI AUTO-REVERSING DECKS, IS CALLED THE DRAGON SLAYER. AND TO FIND OUT WHY IT'S GETTING MORE PRAISE THAN ALL THE OTHER GUYS COMBINED, WRITE TO AKAI, P.O. BOX 6010, DEPT. H9, COMPTON, CA 90224.
Compact Discs
Today: Going for Mass Appeal

• CD Prices Start to Tumble
  If you've been holding off buying a Compact Disc player because of the high cost of software, we have good news for you: CD manufacturers are slashing their wholesale prices. The Warner-Elektra-Atlantic family started the ball rolling by announcing an across-the-board wholesale price of $9.81 per disc, down from $11.64. Polygram responded quickly, lowering its prices to $10 for pop and jazz recordings and $11 for classical releases on the Deutsche Grammophon, Philips, and London labels. CBS is down to $10 per disc; which RCA is matching for its pop titles. (RCA's Red Seal releases are slightly higher at $10.75.) And Denon is marching in step with the majors, dropping its dealer price to $10.

  What will this mean on the retail level? J&R Music World, a major discount record chain in New York City, has already lowered its price to $12.99 for most pop and classical titles. According to Allen Peller, J&R's record manager, the downward spiral has just begun. "As soon as record companies get behind simultaneous release of new recordings on LP and CD, the format will start to generate the kind of numbers that will make it possible for prices to come down even more."

• Gearing Up
  While the giant Japanese and West German companies have been busy expanding their Compact Disc production capacities to keep up with growing demand, little Nimbus Records in England has been quietly footing the bill for the construction of its own digital mastering and pressing plant. By the time you read this, Nimbus should have its Monmouth factory up and running, with an expected production capacity of 80,000 discs per month by the end of the year.

  That figure palls, however, in comparison to Polygram's. A recent report pegs its Hanover, West Germany, plant at a daily total of 80,000 discs, making it the largest CD manufacturing site in the world. (For the record, Polygram claims to have pressed more than ten million discs to date.) With such a huge output, has quality suffered? Not in the least, says Polygram. It expected an average defect rate of 0.3 percent, but says that only one-third that many flawed discs (one per thousand) actually are leaving the plant.

  Curiously, CBS/Sony has been rather mum about the expected completion date of its domestic CD production plant. The Terre Haute, Indiana, facility was scheduled to go on-line in August, a deadline that has come and gone. According to an unofficial comment by a Sony spokesman, unexpected delays in delivery of mastering and pressing equipment have caused the postponement.

• The Digital Truth
  Though the Compact Disc is a digital medium, savvy music lovers have been quick to realize that not all CDs are created equal. Those discs that have been converted to digital from analog recordings can be accurate copies, but the word "digital" on the CD packaging does not mean that you're getting all the potential benefits of a fully digital product.

• More for the Road
  Pioneer is following hot on the heels of Sony in the race to get a car CD player on the road and claims that its CDX-1 should be available by January. (Sony's CDX-5, which we review in this issue, will hit the stores after this month.) Unlike Sony, Pioneer has adopted a two-chassis format for its player—one enclosure for the transport and another for the digital processing circuitry. (The second chassis can be stowed away under a seat.) The unit's music-access features include band stepping, scan, and repeat (for a single track or a complete disc). Its fluorescent indicators give readouts of a disc's total number of tracks, the current track, total disc play time, elapsed disc time, and high-temperature warning. Price has not yet been announced.

• Denon to the Test
  Given that Denon built its consumer reputation on a solid history of service to the audio professional, we're not surprised that it should be one of the few companies to release a CD test and evaluation disc. Intended for the serious audio hobbyist (and that means someone who, at the minimum, owns an oscilloscope), Denon's "Audio Technical CD" is best thought of as a $20 means to convert a Compact Disc player into a super-high-quality signal generator. All the signals on the disc (some 80 separate bands, consisting of sine waves, frequency sweeps, square waves, tone bursts, and..."
If your plans for the future include college, the Army Reserve can fit nicely into your plans. You’ll get hands-on training in one of hundreds of potential careers, from communications to electronics to engineering.

You’ll learn from experienced, first-rate instructors. And you’ll hone your skill by working on a Saturday and Sunday each month at a Reserve center near your college.

The money you earn (an average of $1,500 a year) will help with some of your college expenses. And besides your regular salary, you could also qualify for an additional $4,000 in student aid and a student loan repayment program.

Find out more about the Army Reserve. If you’re headed for college, it’s a step in the right direction. See your local Army Reserve recruiter today. Or call toll free 1-800-USA-ARMY.

THE ARMY RESERVE GIVES YOU AN EDUCATION AND HELPS PAY FOR ONE, TOO.
You bought a high-powered, quality audio system with speakers to match for only one purpose. Total performance. To maximize its potential, you need the ultimate high-bias audio cassette, TDK SA-X.

It's one of our Pro Reference cassettes designed to deliver unmatched performance.

Surpassing all other conventional cassettes in its class, SA-X delivers a level of sound quality, clarity and fidelity that you have never obtained before. Unless, of course, you're already using it.

SA-X's exclusive dual coating of Super Avilyn magnetic particles provides optimum performance at all frequency ranges. You get crisp, clean highs and rich, solid lows. With pure sonic pleasure in between.

SA-X will also handle high signal levels without distortion or saturation, thanks to its super-wide dynamic range and higher MOL.

And we make sure SA-X keeps on tweaking without squeaking (as some other cassettes do). Our specially-engineered Laboratory Standard Mechanism provides a smoother tape transport to assure total reliability and trouble-free performance.

It should also come as no surprise that you'll get incredible performances from two other TDK Pro Reference cassettes: MA-R metal and AD-X Avilyn-based normal bias cassettes.

Each is designed to deliver pure performance pleasure and long-time reliability... each backed by our Lifetime Warranty.

So maximize the performance of your equipment. Pick up TDK Pro Reference audio cassettes today. We've never met a speaker we couldn't tweak!

©1984 TDK Electronics Corp
much more) were created with a laboratory-grade digital signal processor. Handmade, so to speak, are the musical excerpts, which enable those of you limited to subjective test instruments (i.e., ears) to get some use from the disc as well.

And while we’re on the topic of this estimable Japanese manufacturer, we should tell you to expect several new Denon components on your dealer’s shelves this fall. Two cassette decks (the DR-M22 and DR-M11, $420 and $320, respectively) use the company’s proprietary Silent Mechanism, which not only is quieter than conventional solenoid designs, but is said to ensure consistent tape speed. Both of these two-head decks are equipped with bias fine-tuning controls and use VCR-grade five-pole DC reel-drive motors for precise tape travel and reduced cogging. Meanwhile, Denon has added two integrated amplifiers to its high-end PMA series of audio electronics. The 80-watt PMA-757 ($450) and the 100-watt PMA-777 ($625) employ the company’s non-negative-feedback circuitry and are said to have slew rates of 200 and 250 volts per microsecond, respectively. The dynamic headroom spec given for both amps is 3 dB, or twice the continuous rated output when the music demands it.

Two more turntables also join the company’s lineup this fall: The DP-61F ($500) and DP-37F ($325) are equipped with warp-fighting servo-controlled tonearms and use Denon’s magnetic-head speed-control system for a claimed rotational accuracy ten times greater than that possible with typical servo systems. And finally, three new receivers make their debut: the 70-watt DRA-750 ($550), 50-watt DRA-550 ($420), and 33-watt DRA-350 ($320). Each is said to have a heavy-duty power supply and liquid-cooled heat sinks, and the 750 is equipped with Denon’s Super Searcher tuning system—a continuously variable filter that enables you to get quieter reception by suppressing strong adjacent channels. For more information, write to Denon America, Inc. (27 Law Dr., Fairfield, N.J. 07006).

A "Lead Balloon"
No, we’re not disparaging what may well be a very effective feedback-deadening turntable stand. Arcici, Inc., the manufacturer of the 33-inch-high stand, has named it the Lead Balloon after the 25 pounds of lead bars that are used in making the delta-shaped tower. The stand accepts any three- or four-footed turntable whose feet fall within a 14-by-20-inch area. Adjustable bolts enable you to level the stand, and a spirit level is included to help you calibrate the procedure. For more information about the $195 Lead Balloon, write to Arcici, Inc. (173 Wilson Rd., Columbus, Ohio 43204).

B.E.S. The only speakers in the world that bring you music in the round.

B.E.S. speakers don't care where you sit. And unlike conventional speakers, they give you great flexibility in placing them. Their computer-designed planar diaphragms radiate sound in a near-perfect spherical pattern, to every part of the room.

That special talent means a life-like three-dimensional stereo image wherever you sit. Even the most expensive conventional cone-and-box speakers can’t accomplish that.

Music in the round. A special gift from B.E.S.

The scars of an abused child can stay with us all his life.

Many teenage drug addicts and teenage prostitutes report being abused children. So do juvenile delinquents.

And because we all pay to respond to those problems, we are all victims of child abuse.

Yet child abuse can be prevented.

The National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse is a private, charitable organization that knows how to do it. But we need your help. We need money. We need volunteers. Send us your check today, or write for our booklet.

And, remember, if we don’t all start somewhere, we won’t get anywhere.

Help us get to the heart of the problem.

Write: Prevent Child Abuse, Box 2866, Chicago, Illinois 60690

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Circle 27 on Reader-Service Card
MOST PEOPLE WOULD CALL IT OVERKILL.

The new ULTRX™ R100 receiver isn't for everybody.
You don't really need 100 watts per channel* of virtually distortionless power. Unless you like listening to today's ultra-high quality recordings at "live concert" sound levels.
And a remote-controlled digital tuner with 20-station memory is probably more than enough—unless you're a dedicated FM listener with wide-ranging tastes.
Likewise, most people could get along without the built-in dbx and DNR noise reduction systems. Except those few who've become spoiled by the almost eerie absence of noise in CD digital recordings. With the dbx, any cassette deck can make virtually noise-free recordings, while the DNR "cleans up" existing noisy signals.

Unless you're a nut about video sound quality, too, you won't have much use for the TV/VCR inputs and stereo synthesizer circuit.
The R100 is packed with features that are best appreciated by an audio perfectionist. It may be the best-equipped receiver ever built. Get an ULTRX dealer to put an R100 (or one of our other new receivers) through its paces for you.
Some people might call it overkill. But you'll call it overwhelming.

*Minimum Continuous Average Power per channel, both channels driven into 8 ohms, from 20-20,000Hz, with no more than 0.009% Total Harmonic Distortion. dbx is trademark of dbx, Inc.
© 1984 ULTRX 1200 W. Artesia Blvd., Compton, CA 90220
Two Chips—Better Than One?

At the Last Consumer Electronics Show, I
heard a dealer ask a manufacturer’s representa-
tive whether his company’s Compact Disc
player used one D/A (digital to ana-
log) converter or two. This followed by a
couple of weeks a phone call to me from a rep-
representative of another manufacturer who
insisted that the listening impressions
reported in a High Fidelity article were
faulty because the CD player involved con-
tained only one converter and was therefore
incapable of stereo reproduction. I pointed
out that the channel separation of the unit in
question measured greater than 60 dB
across the audio band, but the argument
didn’t seem to cut much ice with him.

The point is that at least some people
think the chip count is a serious issue; play-
ers are being sold and unsold on this basis.
One of the reasons given is that single-con-
verter players suffer from severe interchann-
el phase shift at high frequencies because
of an 11.3-microsecond timing difference.
The alleged result is, if not mono, at least
significantly degraded stereo imaging.

It is true that most CD players using a
single D/A converter delay one channel rela-
tive to the other by a very small amount.
This delay arises from the Compact Disc’s
sequential recording format, in which the
signals for the two channels are sampled
alternately, rather than simultaneously.
So one channel is always slightly ahead of the
other. Each is sampled at 44.1 kHz, which
means that the combined data stream comes
off the disc at a rate of 88,200 samples per
second. Thus, the offset between channels
is equal to one second divided by 88,200, or
11.3 millionths of a second.

At first blush, this might seem like a
terrible thing, but it’s really not. You can
compensate for the delay by moving the
speaker for the lagging channel forward less
than a quarter of an inch (assuming that you
have your speakers set up with such preci-
sion to begin with). As you might expect,
the difference is completely inaudible.

The delay matters only if you switch
your preamp to mono—or receive an FM
broadcast of a CD in mono. In that case, the
phase difference between channels will
cause some cancellation, and because the
phase shift increases with frequency (as
must occur with a constant delay), so will
the degree of loss. Thus, the interchannel
delay will manifest itself as a slight, but
perhaps audible, high-frequency rolloff.
This may be important to you if you’re a
purist who wants to hear early Beatles
records as they were meant to be heard or if
you own a radio station, but otherwise, it’s
hard to see why you should care.

Nonetheless, I admit that my own
sense of design propriety is offended by this
kind of unidiness, so all else being equal
(which it seldom is), I would be inclined to
choose a model with its channels in step
over one that simply lets the stagger go by.
(For the record, the player that I actually
use is in the latter category.) But this does not
require dual converters.

Some claim that CD
players with only
one converter have
audible phase shift.

To see why, let’s look at the four basic
ways the system can work. The most
straightforward, and most common, feeds
the binary codes for the digitally encoded
samples through a single converter in the
order they come off the disc. The analog
output of the converter is switched at 88.2
kHz to send the appropriate signals to each
channel—11.3 microseconds out of step.

The usual alternative is found in play-
ers employing the Philips chip set, which
provides two D/A converters. It switches
the samples before conversion, so that those
for the right channel go to one converter,
those for the left channel to the other. A
hold circuit in the leading channel delays
the samples going into its converter by the
 requisite 11.3 microseconds, so that every-
thing is in sync at the outputs.

However, some players with dual con-
verters do not incorporate such a latching
circuit and therefore perpetuate the discrep-
ancy. And there are players with only a sin-
gle converter that use an analog delay line
in one channel, after the switching circuit,
to eliminate it. In other words, counting the
chips really tells you nothing at all—at least
in this respect.

The other main argument for dual-con-
verter designs is tied up with the Philips
approach to getting from a string of num-
bers back to an audio waveform. Early on,
the inventor of the Compact Disc decided
that it would be wiser to go with a 14-bit
chip than to attempt a 16-bit IC capable of
audio-grade performance. But the Compact
Disc is a 16-bit system: A 14-bit converter
operated in the conventional way would
sacrifice 12 dB of dynamic range.

Philips’s solution was to use a tech-
nique known as oversampling, in which
each real sample is averaged with several
null samples—in this case, three. The play-
back sampling rate thus becomes four times
the 44.1 kHz used in recording, or 176.4
kHz. Because the noise is distributed over
the entire bandwidth defined by the sam-
pling rate, much more of it is in the ultra-
sonic range than it would be with a straight
44.1-kHz, 16-bit system. This, together
with another trick called noise shaping,
restores the 12 dB of signal-to-noise (S/N)
ratio given up by a 14-bit converter.

The trouble here is speed: 176.4 kHz
is very fast, and if just one chip were used for
both channels, it would have to run at a
fearsome rate of 352.8 kHz. The only way
to make the system work was to use two
converters. In fact, this is merely incidental
to what some audiophiles see as the big
advantage of the Philips approach, which is
low phase shift—not just between channels,
but also within each one.

Most players use steep “brick wall”
low-pass filters to remove the 44.1-kHz
switching component from the audio out-
put. These filters introduce relatively large
amounts of high-frequency phase shift. In
other words, if you were to pass a signal
through the filter, higher frequencies would
emerge slightly later than lower ones, even
though they went into the filter at the same
time. Because the Philips method uses a
much higher sampling rate, the analog out-
put-smoothing filter can be made to cut in at
a higher frequency and with a gentler slope,
thereby minimizing phase shift within the
audio band. Noise between 20 kHz and the
176.4-kHz playback sampling frequency is
removed by means of digital filtration,
which introduces no phase shift. Again, this
has nothing to do with the number of con-
verters used. The same thing could be
accomplished with a single chip if it could
be run fast enough.

But does it matter? Can you hear the
difference? I’ll pick up that topic next
month in a more general discussion of
phase shift. Until then, suffice to say that
although I admire the technological ele-
gance of the Philips approach, the player I
use at home is of the other persuasion—
which is not the reason I chose it.
Kenwood Meet Compact Disc


All data obtained using the Sony YEDS-7, Technics SH-CD001, Philips 410 055-2, and Philips 410 056-2 test discs.

FREQUENCY RESPONSE

It seems obligatory these days for any full-line component manufacturer worthy of the name to include at least one Compact Disc player among its wares. From such considerations is the DP-1100B, though not unique in any important respect, is hardly run-of-the-mill. For example, it counts among its features that precious rarity, the ability to seek out passages or movements by index number—if you are lucky enough to own CDs that have been indexed.

The disc drawer has finger openings at both sides so that you can easily insert or remove a CD by grasping it at opposite edges with the fingers of one hand—the preferred way, in our view. The display panel shows the band and index number to which the laser pickup is cued (or to which the random-access system is set) and either the operating mode of the player or the time—total elapsed, total remaining on the disc, or elapsed within the current band, depending on the mode to which you’ve stepped it with the TIME button. The time options work only in manual playback, not for programmed play. The latter can be set up for a sequence of as many as 16 selections either by stepping to the desired band numbers with the SEEK controls or by entering band (and index) numbers directly on the keypad beneath the drawer.

In addition to SEEK—which steps backward or forward to the beginnings of bands, depending on which of the buttons you push and how many times you do so—there are scanning controls comparable to the CUE and REVIEW on some cassette decks. They move the pickup across the disc at approximately ten times normal...
The Only Amplifiers and Receivers with Wide Dynamic Range And Low Impedance Drive Capability.

The Onkyo Delta Power Supply

In order to properly reproduce the dynamic range of today's music, your amplifier must be capable of similar dynamic range. For example, the Compact Disc has a dynamic range of over 90 dB, and this can place severe demands on your amplifier. By the same token, the impedance of your speaker system is constantly changing from one moment to the next (as the dynamics of the music change), so your amplifier must also be capable of driving a wide impedance range.

Onkyo's patented Delta Power Supply is the only answer to all of these critical requirements. First, our oversize power transformers provide additional power for substantial headroom. The ultra quiet background essential for noise-free reproduction is provided by the Delta circuitry, and substantial Low Impedance Drive Capability means that Onkyo amplifiers will comfortably handle low impedance speaker loads. In fact, our latest series of amplifiers and receivers are IHF Dynamic Power rated into 8, 4, and 2 ohms, further evidence of the outstanding power capabilities of the Delta Power Supply.

Because the Delta Power Supply effectively satisfies these critical power supply requirements, true high fidelity is possible with any source material, and choice of loudspeaker. As the name Integra suggests, Onkyo components equipped with the Delta Power Supply give the listener a sound as close as possible to the original, with all of the integrity of the live performance retained.

Shown is our new Integra TX-85 receiver. In addition to incorporating the Delta Power Supply, the TX-85 features dbx Type II Noise Reduction (Encode/Decode), APR Automatic Precision Reception, Dynamic Bass Expansion, Computer Controlled Logic Input Selection.

dbx is a registered trademark of dbx Inc.

Artistry in Sound
200 Williams Drive, Ramsey, NJ 07446
(201) 825-7950
NAD’s “Dynamic Blend” Tuner

BY NOW, IT WOULD COME AS A SHOCK IF AN NAD PRODUCT were less than a good value, not among the technological leaders in its particular niche, or cluttered or glity in its control layout. So the Model 4125 tuner isn’t even a surprise: It qualifies as a typical NAD on all counts.

The 4125’s technological credentials rest on what is probably its most intriguing feature: a dynamic high-blend that responds to the strength of both the broadcast (the RF, or radio frequency, signal strength) and its content (the modulation level). When both are low, resulting in increased hiss with little musical energy to mask it, the high-blend introduces 3 dB of quieting by recombining channels in the high treble and thus canceling the most audible portion of the noise. We have encountered automatic-blend features before, but never one quite this sophisticated.

Tuning proceeds by full-channel steps (10 kHz, for tuners sold in this country) on AM, quarter-channel steps (50 kHz) on FM. On the latter band, there is a SEEK, engaged by a separate button, that will find playing speed, sampling tiny snippets of music to help you find the passage you’re looking for. And there are the usual buttons for repeating a whole disc, or a programmed part of it, and for clearing mistaken program entries or the entire sequence.

When you program consecutive bands (or indexed passages), the pickup travels from one to the next without even the slightest faltering. This means that you can tell the player to extract one concerto from several on the same disc, all of whose movements are banded, and play it back alone as a continuous thread of sound. Few players will do this without audible breaks between bands. Of course, if you program the deck to skip forward or back within the disc sequence, there is a brief pause in the output and you can hear the pickup as it recedes—a procedure that some players seem to require even when the programmed bands are contiguous.

The DP-1100B did very well in Diversified Science Laboratories’ bench tests. Frequency response is up about ¾ dB over the top two octaves (a hair less in the right channel than in the left) and down less than half that much at 20 Hz—minuscule discrepancies compared to those found in phono cartridges, cassette decks, and other conventional program sources. The same might be said of what little distortion or nonlinearity could be measured at all. The tracking and error-correction figures aren’t up to the best, but actual behavior is a bit better than the data imply. We show the player as failing the information-gap test at 700 micrometers (μm) and the surface-dot trial at 500 micrometers. In fact, it didn’t skip until the ends of these test bands, suggesting that it might track similar, isolated flaws without problems. The mechanism is just about impervious to external shock and vibration.

The only practical cause for complaint is the headphone output. It’s provided with an output level control, which is very nice if you want to use the player plus a fine head-set as a complete music system. But the lab found that the control can’t be advanced all the way without inducing clipping at full recorded level. With an open circuit (no headphone connected), the output clips at just less than 7.5 volts; with a 50-ohm load, overload occurs at just under 1 volt. The higher the impedance of your headset (and therefore the less current it draws for a given output voltage), the higher the clipping point will be. And if, like us, you seldom or never use headphones for CD listening, the matter is inconsequential.

We like the control scheme of the Kenwood even without its supplied infrared remote control. The latter (which requires two AAA cells) duplicates all of the front-panel controls, including a SCAN to check the opening ten seconds of each selection, and can be turned off to prevent inadvertent interruption of your listening. The remote is also exceptionally small and light, making it particularly handy in every sense. Thanks in part to it, the Kenwood can find and play whatever you want from your CDs with more dispatch and precision than most players and with a sonic beauty that is the medium’s hallmark.
Luxman brings music home to Burt Bacharach and Carole Bayer Sager

For those whose lives are music, there is Luxman.

Uncompromising Luxman. Precise, elegant Luxman. The Luxman of legendary innovation and handcrafted quality; of sound pure, rich and real. If you value such music, Luxman belongs in your life.

For the dealer nearest you, call 1-800-257-4631.
In a true masterpiece, subtle details combine with unique design to become the ideal. Harman Kardon has achieved this ideal with the introduction of the technologically advanced T65C Turntable.

An example of disc reproduction excellence, the T65C incorporates a sophisticated 3-point suspension system, counter-balanced to center the moving mass at the platter spindle. This keeps the platter, tonearm, and belt drive system isolated from vibration. The T65C's AC sine-wave driven motor is crafted to turn with pure harmonic motion, a dramatic improvement over conventional turntables that use a series of DC pulses, resulting in high frequency deviations in platter rotation.

The T65C's tonearm exemplifies Harman Kardon's technological know-how. A straight, tapered tube to suppress natural resonances, it features a weight and wire anti-skating mechanism for additional precision. Its high mass pivot assembly acts as a high frequency vibration filter, and a lateral balancer on the tonearm compensates for unlevel surfaces.

A carbon fiber headshell provides low resonance and vibration damping. The T65C's massive 3.3 pound platter, disc stabilizer, capacitance trim and optically-sensed auto-lift further illustrate Harman Kardon's commitment to the art of high fidelity. A commitment that is reflected in all Harman Kardon products.

Harman Kardon...Dedicated to mastering the fine art of high fidelity.


CIRCLE 38 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
the next receivable station above or below the frequency you're tuned to, depending on whether you push the up or down tuning button. Though many stations sneak by the skirts of the IF (intermediate frequency) filter and thus can be received several notches on either side of their true center frequencies, the SEEK never misjudges them, and the decimal point in the frequency readout flashes whenever you do manually. The manual tuning offers the usual one-step-per-tap option or a "fast wind" when you hold the button in. The small FM step size makes the process a little more tiresome than average, but not seriously so.

Aside from station frequency, there are only two indicators in the readout panel: a green power pilot and a red one to signal stereo reception. There are no aids of any kind for antenna orientation except the blinking decimal point, which also responds to multipath severe enough to make the circuitry "think" it's detuned. (The purpose of this feature evidently is to assist tuning with the more confusing frequency assignments used in Europe; in this country, you simply look for an odd multiple of ten to the right of the decimal point.) Five stations from each band can be memorized for pushbutton selection.

The remaining front-panel buttons choose the band and the FM reception modes (automatic blend, stereo/mono, and muting) and switch on the power. There is no muting of weak AM stations—just the usual progressive fading as they fall below reach of the AGC (automatic gain control)—and no AM SEEK.

The back panel has a pair of pin-jack outputs and a row of four screw terminals: for AM antenna, ground, and the two sides of a 300-ohm FM twinlead antenna. In addition, there's a coaxial F connector for 75-ohm lead-in—a touch we appreciate. The owner's manual, for all its brevity, provides an excellent discussion of FM antennas and even waxes so brash as to suggest that the supplied "floppy" dipole antenna be used only as a stopgap unless you're blessed with wondrous natural reception—a sensible but rarely expressed attitude that other manufacturers would do well to cultivate.

The matter of the AM antenna is less straightforward. The manual says a three-foot length of wire is supplied for the purpose. Our test sample came with a ten-foot length, which delivered only fair reception. We judged a three-foot length to be even less effective, and the usual loop antenna (we tried two models) proved entirely unsatisfactory. So plan on having a length of wire hanging down in the back of your equipment or strung up along the wall molding. In any event, the AM section performs no better than the standard utility-grade designs built into most receivers.

The FM section is a different story, at least partly because of the automatic blend. When you defeat it, you can hear a hard edge return to the noise under difficult signal conditions. We happened on one program—a male chorus—in which a slight pumping of the high-frequency hiss was audible in response to the music's dynamics. This required just the right combination of signal strength and varying loudness, plus a lack of high treble in the music to mask the pumping. It occurred only once, and we might have listened for months without encountering that particular set of circumstances again.

On strong signals (and also on fairly weak ones in the mono mode) the sound of the tuner impresses us as particularly clean and quiet. Stereo sensitivity without the blend feature is very good, but not exceptional, so the extra 3 dB of noise suppression that the blend can afford is a welcome, if modest, improvement when signal strength approaches the borderline region. Subjectively, the tuner seems a little more sensitive to impulse interference (automatic ignition noise, for instance) on moderately weak signals than the excellent AM-suppression figure suggests.

Channel separation is superb at 'full' signal strength (65 dBf or more), as indicated by the graph in our data column. When Diversified Science Laboratories checked at moderate signal strength (40 dBf) to examine the behavior of the automatic blend, it found that separation with the blend off had dropped to a little more than 30 dB (still excellent, and more than adequate for good stereo imaging). With the automatic blend on, separation appeared to decrease by about 5 dB per octave.

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Sansui's X-Balanced Integrated


RATED POWER 21 dBW (130 watts) channel

OUTPUT AT CLIPPING (at 1 kHz; both channels driven) 8-ohm load 22½ dBW (170 watts) channel 4-ohm load 22½ dBW (180 watts) channel

DYNAMIC POWER 8-ohm load 21½ dBW 4-ohm load 22½ dBW 2-ohm load 24 dBW

DYNAMIC HEADROOM (re rated power, 8-ohm load) 2½ dB

HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD; 20 Hz to 20 kHz) at 21 dBW (130 watts) 0.04% at 0 dBW (1 watt) 0.01%

"With speaker-matching switch at its low-impedance setting. See text.

Textbooks will tell you that what drives a loudspeaker is a difference in electrical potential (or voltage) between the amplifier terminals to which it is connected. The greater the difference, the greater the current that flows through the load presented by the speaker. In most amplifiers, one terminal of each channel—the "hot" one, normally red—varies in potential with respect to chassis ground, to which the other terminal is connected. The circuit is thus called unbalanced, as is any in which the two sides aren't reciprocal.

Sansui has designed its X-Balanced amplifiers from the premise that reciprocal circuit elements are inherently more linear than nonreciprocal ones. The output is bridged—meaning that in each channel it functions as two amplifiers "pumping" in opposite directions. As one half, attached to one of the output terminals, develops a positive voltage, the other develops a negative one. In fact, the entire circuit is kept "floating," because a conventional ground plays no part in it and therefore has no opportunity to act as a conduit by which an electrical event in one portion of the amplifier can perturb response in another. Even the power supply is balanced, and symmetrical feedback loops around the amplifier reach opposite sides of the differential input stage.

The significance of such thoroughgoing reciprocity, according to Sansui, is outstanding immunity to external influences—magnetic induction, for instance—because whatever affects one side of the circuit in one way will create an opposite and therefore canceling result in the other side. But, like all bridged amplifiers, the AU-G90X must be treated somewhat specially. The lack of a common ground prevents use of some speaker-switching devices, for instance, so you must use the options (for two speaker pairs) built into the amplifier. The speaker terminals aren't marked "hot" and "ground," incidentally, but "hot" and "cold." This may cause a smirk at first glance (and isn't an entirely apt description of the terminals' functions), but it helps to dramatize the unusual nature of the design.

The AU-G90X is one of the two top models among the five X-Balanced integrated amps that Sansui announced this year, and with a power rating of 130 watts per side, it's an intimidating beast. Besides an unusual number of features, it boasts high-gloss wood-grain end pieces that make a striking and handsome appearance.

There are separate monitor (labeled "input") and recording selectors, with pro-


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Introducing Audia.
The result of an uncompromising devotion to absolute performance.

Absolute performance is not just an attitude that can be created overnight. Audia was born out of 40 years of Clarion's expertise and success.

Audia is an entirely new and unique line of high end, no compromise speakers, amplifiers, equalizers, receivers and tuners, that meet the needs of even the most critical car audio purists.

Perfecting Performance in the Automotive Environment.

The FM Diversity Tuning System, a feature pioneered by Clarion, constantly monitors two FM front ends, picking out the strongest signal in multipath conditions to virtually eliminate annoying "picket fencing" noise.

Typically, automobile interiors create an undesirable harmonic response in the low frequency ranges. The 180 Hz Acoustic Compensation Control returns the bass to its original deep, clean sound, while it allows the amplifier to run cooler.

The Auto Reverse Deck with Dual-Direction Automatic Azimuth Adjustment is more than just a convenience feature. It precisely adjusts the tapehead to achieve zero-azimuth in both directions so you won't sacrifice high end frequency response.

Extend Your Limits of Perfection.

The entire Audia line represents total flexibility. It will easily interface with other components, allowing you to upgrade at any time and to create the most esoteric sound system.

Audia. A state of the art accomplishment that results from a philosophy of absolute performance.

AUDIA
The Art of Sound in Motion.
4 out of 5 Sony car stereo owners would go down the same road again.

It seems there is one road that most Sony owners would gladly travel again. The road to a Sony car stereo.

In a recent survey, an overwhelming majority of Sony car stereo owners contacted gave Sony the ultimate testimonial. They said they would be more than willing to buy a Sony again. As one Sony owner, Ronald Dokken of Minneapolis, Minnesota, volunteered, "When there's a car stereo that sounds as good and works as well as a Sony, why would you want another one?"

In fact, most Sony car stereo owners when asked went so far as to say that they would keep their car stereos longer than they'd keep their cars. Or, in the words of Valerie Roussel of New Orleans, Louisiana: "My car was in the shop for a few weeks. I missed my car stereo a lot more than my car." And Mark Share of Tempe, Arizona, added, "I have two cars and two kinds of car stereos. I find myself driving the car with the better sounding one—the Sony."

Which is not at all surprising, considering the fact that Sony car stereos are not just engineered to perform reliably. They are also engineered to deliver brilliant high-fidelity stereo sound. Because they take advantage of the same experience and innovative technology that goes into Sony's home stereos.

So if you're in the market for a car stereo, it makes sense to go down the same road that 4 out of 5 Sony owners would travel.

Buy the Sony.
About the dBW...

We currently are expressing power in terms of dBW—meaning power in dB with a reference (0 dBW) of 1 watt. The conversion table will enable you to use the advantages of dBW in comparing these products to others for which you have no dBW figures.

<table>
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<td>900</td>
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The power amplifier meets its 130-watt rating with plenty of room to spare: Note particularly the 2½-dB dynamic headroom measurement, which is unusually generous. Even more power can be dumped into low impedances, though Sansui provides a back-panel impedance-matching switch to avoid too much of a good thing. It has two calibrations, one for driving two pairs simultaneously. The markings suggest that if you have all 8-ohm speakers, you should alter the switch depending on whether you're running one or two pairs at the moment. (The markings would preclude simultaneous use of two 4-ohm pairs.) Leaving it at the lower mark seems an easier solution. It may reduce maximum available power into a single pair, but the amp has so much to spare that you probably won't notice. DSL made all measurements, except those for 2- and 4-ohm power output, with the switch in the 8-ohm position. The high-impedance setting might have yielded even greater power into the low-impedance loads, but at the risk of excessive current through the output stage and consequent damage to the amplifier.

Distortion is below our reporting threshold at 0 dBW (1 watt) and only slightly above it at rated power. The third harmonic dominates the latter readings, but the quantities involved are too small to be of audible significance. Bandwidth is extreme—covering as much of the proverbial DC-to-light range as we're prepared to measure. In fact, response rises ever so gradually in the ultrasonic range, to a peak of +3½ dB at 215 kHz. The damping factor also is noteworthy, being not only quite high (especially for a bridged amplifier), but also essentially uniform across the audio band. Even at 20 kHz, it is down only about 25 percent from the 50-Hz value, which is extraordinary. Under most circumstances, this characteristic is of little or no importance, but it will forestall any tendency to treble rolloff when the amp must drive electrostatic or other loudspeak-
ers whose impedances are very low at high frequencies. The signal-to-noise (S/N) ratios are not among the very best DSI has measured, but they should be more than adequate.

As Sansui's own literature remarks, amplifiers were awfully good even before the X-Balanced circuit came along. So while we find the sound very fine, we're not surprised that we can document no major improvement over other good amplifiers. In fact, it's conceivable that the difficulty of testing bridged amplifiers (the frequency sweeps, though not the ultrasonic response checks, were made through a calibrated transformer, for instance) has resulted in figures that are a shade less spectacular than they might otherwise have been, despite DSI's diligence. However, this is hardly a matter of concern, for as they stand, they reveal an amplifier of good to excellent performance, capable of delivering ultrahigh power into even low-impedance loads.

The State of The A-T Art


The progress in phono cartridges over the last decade is remarkable compared to the much more gradual pace of development through the preceding quarter-century. This advancement has not been without its costs, in the literal sense, but today's higher prices only hint at the precious materials, exotic manufacturing techniques, and astonishing precision that have made it possible.

A case in point is Audio-Technica's new flagship model, the AT-160ML. Four coils, in what A-T calls its Paratordoidal Signal Generator, are wound around laminated pole pieces, and the assemblies for the two channels are separated by a permalloy shield to minimize inductive crosstalk, for maximum channel separation. Independent magnets for each channel (an Audio-Technica hallmark) are mounted on the stylus cantilever at its damped fulcrum. Compliance is adjusted individually for each pick-up. The cantilever itself is a thin, hollow, gold-plated beryllium tube. A-T says the gold plating helps the cantilever approach the ideal of an utterly rigid structure with no mass or resonance.

The nude diamond tip is ground to Audio-Technica's MicroLine shape—the latest generation in an evolutionary sequence beginning with the Shibata stylus that vaulted the company to international prominence a decade ago. The working tip is shaped almost like a pyramid that has been squeezed together front-to-back, creating a much sharper pair of angles at the groove-wall edges than at those facing forward and aft. The actual contact surface is not formed by the edges themselves, but is worked into a microscopic half-round "molding" or "nosing" whose contour is the scanning radius. Because the contour up and down the groove wall is almost straight (following the corner edge of the "pyramid"), the contact area is exceptionally long and narrow. As a result, its makers claim, the stylus not only will resolve high-frequency detail in new discs with exceptional clarity, but will contact virgin portions of the groove in worn records, restoring some of their former glory.

The pickup comes, for once, in a box that has a long-term practical function. In a socket near the cartridge is a plug-in headshell (for a standard S- or J-shaped arm), and there is a second socket so that the box can be used as a dust-free caddy for two mounted pickups. Provision of the headshell also means that if you arm is of the appropriate type, you can put your newcomer to work without unmounting an old cartridge or searching for an extra, high-quality shell, which can be hard to find in some stores. To further aid in the process, Audio-Technica gives you the usual screws, washers, and nuts in a resealable tube, instead of the usual plastic bag that

Tonearm/Cartridge Matching Graph

By means of this monograph, you can quickly and easily determine the compatibility of any cartridge and tonearm you have tested. Ideally, the arm/cartridge resonance frequency (indicated by the diagonal lines) should fall at 10 Hz, but anywhere between S and 12 Hz will assure good warp tracking and accurate bass response. (It is usually okay to let the resonance rise as high as 15 Hz, although we don't normally recommend this.)

Begin by looking up the weight and dynamic compliance shown in the cartridge report and the effective mass listed in the turntable or tonearm report. Add the weight of the cartridge to the effective mass of the tone arm to get the total effective mass. Then test the point on the graph where the vertical line for the total effective mass intersects the horizontal line for the cartridge's dynamic compliance.

When necessary, you can back-figure compliances and effective masses for cartridges and tonearms tested before we began reporting these figures directly (in January 1983). For cartridges, look up the vertical resonance frequency (measured in the SME 3009 Series II Improved tonearm) and the cartridge's weight. Add 15 grams (the SME's effective mass) to the cartridge weight to get the total effective mass. Then feed the intersection of the vertical line representing that mass with the diagonal line representing the measured resonance frequency. Now you can read off the compliance from the horizontal line passing through the point of intersection.

For tonearms, look up the vertical resonance frequency as measured with the Shure V-15 Type III cartridge. Find the intersection of the diagonal line for that frequency with the horizontal line representing the Shure's dynamic compliance of 2.5 x 10^-9 cm per dyne. Reading down the vertical line on which the point of intersection lies will give you the total effective mass of the arm with the Shure V-15 Type III mounted on it. Then subtract 6.3 grams (the weight of the V-15 Type III) to get the tonearm's effective mass.

Because of differences in measurement techniques, manufacturers' specifications for compliance and effective mass often differ from our findings and may therefore yield inconsistent results if used with this graph.
A Touch of The Continent, From ESB

Although you've probably never heard of it, ESB is not a new company. The U.S. distributor for its products says that it commands 25 percent of the Italian loudspeaker market. It is, however, new to this country. The Model 7/08 is the smallest of the four floor-standing ESBs being imported here and the only three-way. A ten-inch acoustic suspension woofer crosses over at 600 Hz to a two-inch midrange dome, which handles everything up to 6 kHz, where a one-inch soft-dome tweeter takes over. Fuses for each driver are recessed into the back of the enclosure, along with color-coded binding posts that will accept banana plugs, spade lugs, or bare wires. The cabinet is beautifully finished in walnut on all of its exposed surfaces, including the back.
A key element in the design of all the Series 7 speakers is what ESB calls DSR (for "distributed spectrum radiation"), which is intended to maintain accurate, consistent stereo imaging over a wide listening area. Vertically, this is achieved first by building the mid- and high-frequency drivers on a single mounting flange, minimizing the distance (and therefore the interference) between them, so that they act as nearly as possible like a point source. The resulting driver unit is then positioned on the enclosure at a carefully calculated distance from the woofer.

The method ESB uses to stabilize the image horizontally is a refinement of a familiar technique. Toeing in a pair of speakers so that their forward radiating axes cross slightly in front of the listening position usually broadens the area in which you can sit without the stereo image collapsing into the speaker nearer to you. It works by trading off the two cues the brain uses to localize sound sources: timing and intensity.

A sound that is louder at one ear than at the other or arrives at it sooner is perceived as coming from that direction. Moving nearer one speaker than the other necessarily results in its output arriving earlier and the other’s later. But if the speakers are conventional direct-radiating models canted inward at an appropriate angle, moving to the left or right will also take you increasingly off the axis of the near speaker’s tweeter and onto the axis of the far one’s, so that at high frequencies (where intensity cues are most important) the more distant speaker will tend to be somewhat louder. The timing and intensity cues thus tend to offset one another (instead of reinforcing each other, as they would if the speakers were pointed straight forward), thereby enlarging the area in which one can hear a proper stereo image.

ESB gives you the desired toe-in automatically by means of a small baffle section that slants toward the wall behind the speaker, aiming the upper-range drivers into the room at a carefully calculated angle. To minimize potentially confusing early reflections, the adjoining baffle area is covered with a layer of felt that absorbs energy radiated in its direction.

Although ESB recommends that the Model 7/08 be placed at least a foot from any walls, Diversified Science Laboratories found that the speaker’s room-corrected third-octave response was more extended in the bass and slightly smoother overall when it was backed up against a wall than when it was placed in the lab’s other calibrated test position, four feet out into the room. DSL therefore made all other measurements with the speaker against the wall.

As you can see, the response in this position is remarkably uniform, especially “off axis” (approximately on-axis to the high-frequency drivers in the 7/08), where it is within + 4/4, - 24 dB from 40 Hz to 20 kHz and within + 4/4, - 24 dB from 50 Hz to 16 kHz—one of the narrowest spreads we’ve seen. On axis (by which we mean the axis of the cabinet, not the drivers), response is within + 5/4, - 3/4 dB from 40 Hz to 16 kHz, which is good, though not as impressive as the off-axis measurement.

The 7/08’s sensitivity is about average for a good modern loudspeaker, and its impedance is, in every sense of the word, moderate, with a maximum value of 15.1 ohms at bass resonance (about 45 Hz) and a minimum of 5.8 ohms at 110 Hz. Just as important is the smoothness of the curve, which indicates that the loudspeaker is not a highly reactive load. All told, it should be an easy load for any decent amplifier to drive.

In our 300-Hz tone-burst test, the 7/08 accepted the full 64-volt peak output of DSL’s amplifier (equivalent to 27 DBW, or about 500 watts, into 8 ohms). This indicates excellent midrange power-handling capability. And distortion is quite low across the board. At a moderately low sound pressure level (SPL) of 85 dB, total harmonic distortion (THD) averaged less than 0.1 percent from 100 Hz to 10 kHz (the upper frequency limit of our distortion testing). Although THD increases at higher output levels, it still averages only about 0.1 percent above 100 Hz at a very loud 100 dB SPL. Distortion naturally is worse in the very deep bass, but not drastically, and certainly to a lesser degree than commonly is the case for loudspeakers.

We tried the 7/08s in a number of positions in our listening room before settling on essentially the same one used by the lab. The speaker’s overall balance is basically neutral, with a tendency to warmth that is most readily apparent on vocals. The effect is not large, however, and is rather attractive on some recordings. As advertised, the 7/08’s strongest suit is its imaging, which is consistently first-rate over a wide range of listening positions. (It’s easy to forget the importance of precise, stable, three-dimensional localization in creating a convincing sonic illusion, until you hear a speaker that carries it off as well as the ESB 7/08 does. In short, this is a relatively big, relatively expensive loudspeaker, but a very good one that merits strong consideration by the serious listener.

**CORRECTION**

In our June review of the ADS L-570 loudspeaker, we mistakenly reported that the cabinet has a vinyl finish. It actually is a genuine wood veneer.
ONLY ONE AUDIO DEALER IN TWENTY WILL CARRY THE KYOCERA R-851 TUNER/AMPLIFIER WITH MOS FET AMPS.

Very simply, our R-851 is not for everyone. Not for every dealer. Not for every audio buyer. Only for those who demand the best. Those who want sound that's pure and distinctive... who hear subtleties others miss. For those discriminating listeners, the R-851 is well worth the quest.

Hear the silence before you hear the sound.
Absolute silence (of course, you'll get sound on AM/FM). The silence is the mark of a great receiver. And great engineering.
The kind of quiet an audiophile loves to hear.

Sound that takes you closer to the source.
We've turned on the R-851 for some very experienced—even jaded—audio ears, and all we can say is it stops 'em every time. The sound is different. The sense of being there is almost overpowering. All this comes from 85 watts per channel of power* (with dynamic power far above this figure) and some of the most sophisticated circuitry in the business. Above all, it uses MOS FET's, the new breed of output transistors, in the amplifier section. They can handle the transients, the power surges, the power requirements of present-day sound (and tomorrow's digital sound) better than bipolar transistors ever could—and give you a sonic purity like no other (many claim MOS FET's have picked up the warm, rich sound of the great tube amps and gone a step beyond!).

Fine tuned for every audio need.
From front end to output jacks, the R-851 offers every feature an audio enthusiast might want. The most commonly used controls are right up front—the more esoteric ones are placed behind a neat flip-down front panel. There's microprocessor-controlled quartz-locked tuning with 14 station programmable memory (7 AM & 7 FM); automatic station seek; 3-band parametric-style equalizer; fluorescent display panel; and two-way tape monitoring and dubbing.

*85 watts RMS per channel. Both channels driven, at 8 Ohms with no more than 0.015% THD from 20-20,000 Hz.
In today's Army, you learn to accept challenge, handle responsibility, and make the most of any given situation. And that's much of what it takes to be a good college student.

So if you're planning to attend college, maybe you should think about how spending some time in the Army can help you get there. Not only will you be better prepared to handle the challenge, you can also be better prepared to handle the costs. By taking advantage of the Army College Fund.

In just three years, if you qualify, you can accumulate as much as $20,100 for college costs. (In two years, you can accumulate $15,200.)

The Army College Fund works like a savings plan. For every $1 you save from your Army salary, the government adds $5 or more.

Call toll free 1-800-USA-ARMY for your free Army College Fund booklet. And find out how the Army can contribute to a very worthwhile cause — your college education.

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Early June and it’s time to head for Chicago’s immense lakeside convention center to eyeball the amazing variety of sexy new car-stereo goodies at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show. But staggering though the show was in sheer quantity of product introductions, traditional car components (front ends, amps, speakers) were not fundamentally different from last year’s in technology. Instead, manufacturers with high-tech expertise have concentrated their talents on products in two hot new categories: mobile communications systems and protection devices. Butting my way down the crowded convention center aisles, I was accosted by a veritable army of publicists, all eager to show off their clients’ cellular telephones, low-cost emergency CB transceivers, and car security systems.

But we mobile-music enthusiasts can take heart at the news that this year’s car stereo components display a growing degree of refinement. Better human engineering, an overall increase in the performance-per-dollar ratio, and good looks are hallmarks of this season’s gear. The car system you buy today may not sound different from the one your friend bought last year, but it will almost certainly be a better value overall.
New Shapes, New Sizes

Think of a typical car-stereo component, and the image of a cluttered, garish faceplate is inevitable. Well, thanks to some innovative ideas from designers willing to use microprocessors and integrated circuits in creative new ways, the glitz and silliness of some old models may be on the way out. Blaupunkt, for example, made news last year with an equalizer mounted on a flexible stalk—a design that, though eye-catching, tended to give other motorists the impression that you were traveling with E.T.

This year, the company is continuing to rethink traditional formats, but has wisely decided to apply its expertise to a more sedate look. One result is the BEQ-MS equalizer ($100). Just slightly larger than a matchbox, it has five control bands and can be placed in or under the dash. The Blaupunkt boys are also leaders in another trend—the use of oversize, digital-watch-style liquid-crystal readouts. To my eyes, these LCD panels—which are also showing up in front ends from Kraco and Vector Research—are far more readable than traditional LED displays. They don’t get “washed out” in bright daylight, and backlighting makes them easily visible at night.

Aiwa, an old hand at designing high-performance home audio equipment, attracted attention at the SCES with its first line of mobile sound gear. Its best front end is an impressively original model that gains a degree of theft-resistance via a hinged panel that folds over the escutcheon to camouflage the unit. The savvy designers at Aiwa, however, have another use for the panel. When opened, it cradles a control pad that can be operated in situ or handed to the backseat music critic who keeps demanding that you change stations. If remote control is appealing to you, Blaupunkt’s Houston ($600) is also worth a look.

Speakers, too, are changing in shape and format. Sparkomatic joins those companies (Pioneer and Sansui, to name just two) that offer rear-deck speakers with angled, forward-facing drivers. Its new models use a superstructure reminiscent of radar-dish supports to position the midrange and treble drivers. The ASK-4010 ($250 per pair) even gives you controls for adjusting tonal balance.

In the Digital Domain

Considering all the prerelease publicity car CD players have been receiving, it’s surprising that the stores aren’t packed with them yet. Obviously, it has taken the Japanese and European electronics giants longer than expected to perfect road-worthy systems. Be that as it may, car CD decks moved a step closer to reality at the SCES. Sony, Pioneer, Technics, and Fujitsu Ten all had players on display. Sony says its two models—one with and one without an AM/FM tuner section—will be available by the time you read this. (See test report of the Sony CDX-5 car player on page 43.) Pioneer claims its CD/radio will be shipped to dealers in January. How much will you have to pay for digital playback on the road? Though refusing to pin themselves down, most manufacturers say that first-generation machines will fall in the $700 to $900 range.

But do you really need a CD player for digital playback on the road? According to the publicist for a major Japanese company that has not announced a car CD player, the answer is no. His solution: Schlep aboard a PCM processor and a battery-operated VCR, plug the outputs into your car amp, and you’re all set.
Though slightly ludicrous, such a system might prove more forgiving of road shocks than some car CD decks. Time will tell.

So You Need New Speakers

Not to worry: As usual, there are lots of models to choose from. This year’s crop continues the overall trend of years past—new materials and processes for the manufacture of diaphragms, and some new driver formats. This year’s best-publicized Wonder material is graphite. Rather prosaically described by JBL as “a soft, gray-black stone,” its allegedly miraculous properties emerge when it is mixed with paper pulp in a process said to yield a cone of unusual rigidity. You can hear the graphite difference for yourself in JBL’s ER/G series—four speakers ranging in price from $70 to $160 per pair.

Alpine’s new speakers combine two ideas that were hot in the early days of high fidelity—a cone with a fluted “tangential” edge (said to reduce flexure) and a “Uni-Axial” driver array. The latter involves mounting the tweeter concentrically within the midrange driver, which in turn sits concentrically within the bass cone. This kind of wheels-within-wheels arrangement should theoretically reduce phase interference between drivers and give a more uniform output. Among the Alpine speakers to include both design elements is the 639J, which drops into a standard 6-by-9-inch hole. The company’s other big idea at the SCES made lots of noise, but could hardly be called hi-fi. For the record, Alpine now has an extensive line of car security systems.

Finally, Infinity continues to transfer its home speaker technology to the automotive realm. New this year are an 8-inch polypropylene subwoofer ($85) and an EMIT planar-film tweeter ($95 per pair).

Hot Looks, Cool Prices

It was inevitable that the sleek, knobless appearance of top-of-the-line front ends would eventually filter down into mid-priced equipment, but I had not expected it to happen quite so quickly.

Most-Promising Newcomer status belongs to the Targa line of equipment introduced by Haitai, a large Asian manufacturer of electronics and appliances. Despite being reasonably priced, the Targa stuff looks as though it were designed in Stuttgart. It has the black-on-black cosmetics and orange night illumination favored by BMW and Audi, as well as all the microprocessor-controlled tuning and tape-handling features offered by the big names. The company’s most expensive front end (HT-7001) sells for only $380. Another flashy-looking, mid-priced front end that caught my eye is Autotek’s 5770, a $400 flat-faced piece made to fit a European dash opening. Sanyo’s flat-faced FT-ED7 has an exceptionally high-tech look and sells for just $350.

One of the most intriguingly computerized front ends comes from JVC. Its KS-RX910 ($650) is equipped with a programmable music-seek that counts the selections on the tape, giving you access to songs up to five “cuts” apart.

And More

A variety of other less easily categorized developments drew this reporter’s attention as well. The four competing stereo-AM broadcasting systems have kept consumers confused and manufacturers cautious. Sansui’s response is a front end capable of decoding all four, while Pioneer has announced that it will join with Delco in supporting the Motorola multiplex AM system.

Tape makers seem to be paying more attention to the car (where some surveys say 30 percent of all cassettes end up), with formulations and shells specifically designed to withstand the rigors of the road. Fuji offers GT-II, a high-bias (Type 2) version of its GT-I ferric car tape, and Loran has reformulated its high-bias products specifically for automotive use. In accessories, Monster Cable has introduced one particularly clever item—a multiconductor cable that contains both power and signal wires for remote amplifiers and speakers.

With No Apologies

Though trade shows are hardly classy affairs, every year one manufacturer pulls out all the stops in an effort to win my Most Questionable Taste Award. Well, the judging was tougher than usual this year, but it would be unfair not to bestow top honors on Kenwood. Attempting to attract dealers and the press, Kenwood proudly used a $100,000 show car developed by the king of customizers, George Barris, as the centerpiece of its booth. Supposedly designed for actress Bo Derek, the “Barrister” (as this bit of vehicular horror is called)

The Winner: Kenwood’s $100,000 show car. Bo Derek (right), hubby John (left), and customizer George Barris share the honor.

sports flaring fenders, a wildly protuberant grille, a fully visible chrome engine exhaust, and (of course) a Kenwood sound system. While film critics may argue about Ms. Derek’s talents, there’ll be no debate about her taste should she cruise down Sunset Strip in this monster. HF
State-of-the-Artist Performance

Bring a cassette tape recording of your favorite artist to any Ford or Lincoln-Mercury dealer and hear it for yourself.

The Ford Electronic Stereo Cassette System heads an all star cast of high performance sound systems with sophisticated audio features.

Only Ford factory installed sound systems are designed, manufactured and quality tested specifically for your new Ford or Lincoln-Mercury.

Ford Electrical and Electronics Division
SO N Y  C D X - 5
COMPACT DISC PLAYER


FORECASTS OF THE arrival of car Compact Disc players have been blowing hot and cold ever since the first home decks were announced. On the one hand, the relative indestructibility and random-access features of the CDs themselves sounded like a giant improvement over Compact Cassettes; on the other, the susceptibility of some home CD players to shock and vibration caused eyebrows to raise whenever the subject of a mobile version came up. Now with the Sony CDX-5, we can give this application a first-hand try.

I should warn you right off the bat, however, that one model—and particularly this one—doesn’t answer all the questions. We had a few days with a single and evidently preproduction sample. (Normally, we receive two production samples and work with them for much longer.) There was no manual with it, all of its leads were unlabeled, and the Sony contact through whom we arranged the loan was short on information about how it should work. Consequently we’re reduced to guesswork in some areas, and Sony says that at least one weakness in our sample will be corrected in final production.

Power wires to the player terminate in round connectors (male in all but one case). It was easy to determine which were the ignition and battery lines (equipped with 3.15- and 1-amp fuses, respectively), but the other two were more problematic. Evidently the idea is to wire the CDX-5 between the preamp output of your front end and the input of your separate amplifier, using two attached pairs of in-line female pin connectors. Assuming that your front end has a 12-volt takeoff designed to switch on the power amp, you connect this to one of the remaining CDX-5 leads and attach the other (with the female connector) to the amp’s on/off connection.

Such a setup functions as a regular radio/tape ensemble as long as the front end is turned on and delivering 12 volts to the CDX-5, which will simply
pass the radio or tape signals straight through without alteration to the amp. Turn off the front end, and the CDX-5 comes to life when the 12-volt control signal stops. It now takes over, injecting its own audio and control signals to the power amp. The only other connection is the ground wire, which was fitted with a spade lug in our test sample.

The chassis is designed to the new DIN size spec, so it can be dash-mounted in some cars. But because the player will probably supplement your front end, you're more likely to want it under the dash. When you slip a CD into the narrow "mouth," rollers in the player "suck" it in the rest of the way, ejecting it only on request. (At the end of the disc, the laser pickup retracts to the beginning and goes into STOP PAUSE..., waiting for further instructions.) If you don't retrieve the disc within a few seconds of ejection, the player is supposed to retract it for safety's sake.

Depending on how level the player is at the moment (and possibly other considerations), this last operation may not work. I mounted the player beneath the dash, tilting up the front slightly for better visibility, and found that every time I tried to grasp the CD by its edge the deck pulled it away. (I had to touch the playing side to get it out.) But even when it's level, the player sometimes ejects the disc a little too far to retract it later, and if the front of the player is slanted down it won't retrieve at all. Perhaps—as Diversified Science Laboratories commented when it encountered the phenomenon on the test bench—this is just a question of mechanical fine-tuning for final production.

There are the usual stoppers for cueing the pickup band by hand in either direction and audible fast-cue controls that move the pickup across the disc at ten times normal speed. Sampling as it goes and letting you hear the result at reduced level. The display can be switched between present band number and elapsed time. REPEAT options are "all" or "1" (the track currently playing). The faint red indicators are very difficult to read—even on the test bench with low ambient light—and useless while you're driving. Sony, too, has noticed this, and a representative assures us that the indicators will be brighter in production units.

The volume control, like the narrow and almost inaccessible balance ring behind it, has a center detent. The mid position may represent a rather meager level with some systems, but there's plenty of room to turn it up. Just below the VOLUME are two pop-out tone-control knobs. (Remember that the CD signals don't pass through your front-end controls.) At maximum rotation, the BASS introduces about 10 dB of cut or boost at 100 Hz and even more at lower frequencies. The TUNE reaches the same spread at approximately 6 kHz but is a little more restrained toward the frequency extremes.

The bench data make it clear that we're not dealing with a Mickey Mouse knockdown of home CD players: This is the real thing in every sense. Datum for datum, it can stand comparison with even the best decks we've tested. The one oddity the lab encountered was inconsistent behavior in the fingerprint test, mistracking on one pass and then playing the same area perfectly on the next.

But the big question was whether the deck would prove excessively tender. The lab tried its regular shock test, with excellent results. So did I, confirming the player to be utterly rock-steady. But that was on the bench. After several miles on the road, I hit a bump that caused mistracking. Then another. Even a seemingly small bump induced a glitch. In all, there were four audible mistrackings in 21 miles—not at all bad, I'd say, considering that much of the route was chosen for its stressfulness and that I enjoy tooling around the hairpin curves. But it's still disappointing after the deck's superb benchside manners.

When I started the road test, I was prepared for a certain amount of sonic overkill. I wondered what a dynamic range of 80 dB or more would mean in a moving car. Surely this would not be the venue for ultra-fi. Wrong! All I can say is that in all my road testing to date, I've never heard it so good. Some of the tape equipment has come pretty close, but I don't remember experiencing quite the same sort of bloom. It's true that some pianissimos get lost in the road noise, but the same can be said of many a well-recorded tape. And in the hushed interior of a sedately moving limousine, the unit may really show its breeding. But such luxury is not cheap. Expect to pay from $650 to $750 for the CDX-50.
Indulge in truly exceptional auto sound.

Indulge in a technologically forward, feature-fabulous car stereo/cassette deck, equalizer, amplifier and speaker system.

Indulge in Fujitsu Ten Car Audio.

The best sound on wheels.
PIONEER KE-A880
RECEIVER/TAPE DECK

Pioneer KE-A880 AM/FM/cassette receiver, with automatic cassette reverse, Dolby B and C noise reduction, and built-in clock. Dimensions: 7 by 2 inches (chassis front), 5¼ inches deep; escutcheon, 7½ by 2½ inches; “nose,” ¾ by 1½ inches; main shafts, 5 or 5½ inches o.c. Connections: round male for ignition, battery, lighting, accessory amplifier power; flat female for power antenna; round male and female for front and back speakers; female pin connectors for preamp output; standard coaxial female for antenna input. Fuses: 4-amp in ignition line, 0.5-amp in battery, lighting, and accessory-amp lines. Price: $400. Warranty: “limited,” one year parts and labor. Manufacturer: Pioneer Electronic Corp., Japan; U.S. distributor: Pioneer Electronics (U.S.A.), Inc., P.O. Box 1760, Long Beach, Calif. 90801.

HERE ARE TWO details in Pioneer’s top-of-the-line KE-A880 that set it apart from most front ends. First, its control shafts, flanking the nosepiece, are provided with two spacings and escutcheon inserts that snap into place to keep the appearance neat no matter which spacing you choose. Second, and more unusual, is a separate hookup wire that connects to the dash lighting switch so that full illumination comes on only with the car’s lighting.

However, I wish more thought had been given to the brightness of the frequency/clock display, whose faint green LEDs are unusually difficult to read in strong daylight. Also difficult is the manipulation of the middle rings (for bass and manual/seek tuning) on the control shafts, which require a caliperlike touch if you’re not to move the adjacent elements. On the plus side, the control scheme assigns only one function per pushbutton, except during tape play. In that mode, three of the station presets serve other uses—Dolby, EQ, and SEARCH.

The six presets actually enable you to tune 18 stations: six AM and 12 FM. (Though I found no mention of it in the owner’s manual, you get to the second FM group by pressing the FM button twice.) When the FM tuner is set for automatic mode switching (the normal, stereo position), noise remains very low. Diversified Science Laboratories’ tests show that this is achieved by limiting separation, even on strong stations, to no more than is needed for good imaging and by decreasing it quite rapidly as signal strength drops. Separation (and therefore stereo) is gone before signals fall to 40 dBf—and before the signal-to-noise (S/N) ratio deteriorates to the stereo sensitivity rating point of 50 dB. With stereo modulation, output already is down almost 10 dB at 40 dBf, and output begins attenuating even with mono modulation just below this signal strength.

As a result of all this signal manipulation, I experienced very little “spitting” and no “ballooning” stereo in the most multipath-ridden portion of my road test. But the low and fluctuating signal strength during this run caused gross station fadeout, almost to inaudibility at many points. Aware that this would happen with weak stations, Pioneer has done more...
Our twelve millionth sound system just found a new home.

Audiovox made the very first custom in-dash radio for audiophiles nearly 20 years ago. Since then, we've made over twelve million custom sound systems for automobiles. One at a time.

Today, our top-of-the-line Hi-Comp matched stereo components produce a response so remarkable they are wooing Mercedes owners away from the most famous European system.

For instance, the Audiovox Hi-Comp HCC-1250 receiver/cassette being installed here is only 5" deep. Yet it's back-lit panel displays not only frequency and time, but all other functions just as though you had a small personal computer at your fingertips.

You get Dolby noise reduction from the deck, plus a music search system that permits scanning of cassette programs in both the forward and reverse modes. And a further refinement is the solenoid soft-touch operating buttons usually found only on the most expensive home cassette decks.

With enormous power and the least cluttered control panel extant, this receiver/deck is designed for minimal eye movement combined with all the listening satisfactions of the home system.

But Audiovox hasn't stopped at sound systems in bringing motorists the comforts of home. Whether you're considering our new Audiotel™ mobile cellular phones or our electronic car security systems, Audiovox leads the way with a host of features the competition hasn't even considered yet. Audiovox. We've made cars more livable for a whole generation of drivers.

Audiovox Corporation, 150 Marcus Boulevard, Hauppauge, NY 11788. (516) 231-7750.

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than blend channels in the mono mode, which retains almost the full audible output down to below 20 dB (very weak, indeed). The noise floor does fluctuate audibly (according to signal strength), which is what the output attenuation in the stereo mode is designed to inhibit, but in mono you can listen through the noise with much less chance of losing the station altogether.

This radical difference between modes thus has genuine advantages, particularly in an FM section whose overall performance, as documented in our data column, is very good in all important respects. The LOCAL setting, incidentally, affects only the sensitivity of the SEEK, eliminating weak stations that may be subject to fading. Stepping is by full channels on both bands: 200 kHz for FM, 10 kHz for AM. The latter section certainly isn’t a match for the FM. Despite the restricted bandwidth and the good sensitivity figure that this helps make possible, on-the-road reception did not strike me as especially quiet, though many stations came through in listenable fashion. (The fact that the standard test yields no reportable selectivity figure is unimportant.)

Behavior of the tape transport (which disengages the drive but does not automatically eject the cassette when you turn off the power) is superior. The deck is very insensitive to road shock, and I am delighted at the inclusion of EQ switching and both Dolby options (plus off). Amplitude agreement with the test tape is excellent in the forward direction, but a shade off in reverse. Incidentally, Pioneer subtitles the 70-microsecond EQ setting “metal” (actually, it’s equally appropriate for chrome, ferricoberals, and ferrichromes), which is a step ahead of the common practice of letting the insufficient “metal” designation stand alone.

The LOUDNESS introduces progressive bass boost (to more than 12 dB below 50 Hz) as level is reduced and adds some treble boost (to more than 6 dB at 15 kHz) as well. The tone controls—conventional in design, with minimal influence on each other’s range—can be used to supplement or replace the loudness contour.

Understanding and correct application of the unit’s built-in amplifier are critical to successful installation. The owner’s manual is inadequate in this respect for most do-it-yourselfers. In addition to the preamp outputs (which can be used, with an accessory amp, either to supplement or to bypass the power section), there is provision for direct hookup to two or four speakers. The four-speaker configuration (stereo pairs front and rear, controlled by the fader) involves a regular hot-plus-ground setup.

Pioneer also gives you the option of switching to a bridged configuration for considerably more power when you’re driving only one stereo pair from the built-in amp. In this mode, a chassis switch enables you to invert the phase of the signals through one pair of amps, and a separate set of connections supplies the inverse output to what would otherwise be the ground side of the speakers. Thus, one side of the speakers can be safely grounded in the four-speaker setup, but not in the bridged alternative.

To add to the confusion, the speaker wires (together with the ground and the main ignition supply—misidentified in the manual, but not on the wire itself, as the battery supply) pass through a black box with similarly color-coded wires emerging from both ends. You must carefully connect the 12 speaker terminals attached to the box, choosing from four possibilities: hooking them to the four terminals that emerge from the KE-A880’s chassis, to each other, to the speakers, or none. You will have to try them all. The connection scheme is very different depending on which speaker configuration you select. And if you’re working with a unit from the first production run, you’ll have to cope with a short jumper on the end of the ignition supply cable. The only instructions, repeated verbatim in several places, defy correct interpretation. Pioneer says that both the jumper and the instructions are omitted from later production. In the unlikely event that you get them, ignore them.

By all means, seek professional help with this installation. Its complexity, however, does give you more options and more power than could otherwise be squeezed from a 12-volt supply without heroic electronic measures. Pioneer rates the amplifier section at an adequate 3.2 watts (5 dBW) per channel in the four-speaker mode, 10 watts (10 dBW) bridged. DSL measured 10.6 watts (10% dBW) in the latter mode—still not thunderous, but more than enough to satisfy most tastes inside a car. (Plus the KE-A880 makes it easy to add an outboard amp.) It is, overall, a very attractive receiver, whose shortcomings are more evident in the installation bay than on the road.
Quasar VH-5845XQ VHS Hi-Fi VCR

Quasar VH-5845XQ VHS videocassette recorder (available in black as VH-5846XE), with cable-ready 14-day/8-event programmable tuner/timer, wireless remote control, and VHS Hi-Fi high fidelity stereo audio recording and playback capability.


STANDING AT THE TOP of Quasar's VCR line, the VH-5845XQ provides VHS Hi-Fi sound and then some. For example, it's the first such deck we've tested that is capable of recording edge-track stereo as well as playing it back—a real plus if you or any of your friends already has a non-Hi-Fi stereo VHS deck. And unlike some other models, the VH-5845XQ records at all three VHS speeds (another feature that may or may not matter to you).

Special playback effects—freeze frame, frame advance, slow motion, and search—work best at the highest and lowest speeds (SP and EP), but SEARCH produces at least a
NEW TECHNOLOGIES VIDEO

VCR SECTION

Except where otherwise indicated, the recording data shown here apply to all three speeds—SP, LP, and EP (DP). Data tested for standard edge-track recording were taken with the Dolby B noise reduction engaged. All measurements were made at the direct audio and video outputs, with test signals injected through the direct audio and video inputs. For VHS Hi-Fi, the 0-dB reference input level is the voltage required to produce 3 percent third-harmonic distortion at 315 Hz, for the standard audio recording mode. In 10 dB above the voltage at which the automatic level control (ALC) produces 3 dB of compression at 315 Hz. The 0-dB reference output level is the output voltage from a 0-dB input.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VHS Hi-Fi Record/play response (in 20 dB)</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 kHz: 3 dB, 39 Hz to 19 kHz</td>
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<tr>
<th>Standard record/play response (in 20 dB)*</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 kHz: 3 dB, 39 Hz to 19 kHz</td>
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<tr>
<th>Audio S/N ratio (in 0-dB output, R/P, A-weighted)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SP: 53 dB</td>
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<tr>
<td>LP: 52 dB</td>
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<tr>
<td>EP: 50 dB</td>
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<tr>
<th>Indicator Calibration (315 Hz, VHS Hi-Fi)</th>
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<tr>
<td>for -10-dB input</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>for -10-dB input</td>
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<td>-2</td>
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<tr>
<th>Distortion (THD at -10-dB input, 50 Hz to 5 kHz)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Standard VHS Hi-Fi</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP: ≤ 0.5%</td>
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<td>LP: ≤ 0.6%</td>
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<td>EP: ≤ 0.6%</td>
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<tr>
<th>Channel Separation (315 Hz)</th>
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<tr>
<td>VHS Hi-Fi</td>
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<td>70 dB</td>
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<th>Indicator ‘ballistics’</th>
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<tr>
<td>Response time</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 msec</td>
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<td>Decay time</td>
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<td>≥ 350 msec</td>
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<th>Flutter (ANSI weighted peak, R/P, average)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Standard VHS Hi-Fi</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP: ≥ 0.1%</td>
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<td>LP: ≥ 0.1%</td>
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<td>EP: ≥ 0.1%</td>
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<tr>
<th>Sensitivity (in 0-dB output, 315 Hz)</th>
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<tr>
<td>VHS Hi-Fi</td>
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<td>0.94 mV</td>
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<tr>
<th>Audio output level (from 0-dB input, 315 Hz)</th>
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<tr>
<td>VHS Hi-Fi</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.6 volts</td>
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<tr>
<th>Audio input impedance (VHS Hi-Fi)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Line input</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 ohms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mic input</td>
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<td>100 ohms</td>
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Recognizable picture in LP. At SP and EP, the special effects are about the best we’ve seen, with only very narrow noise bars in SEARCH and seldom even a trace of one in the other modes. And this without resorting to the “slow” tracking control that Quasar has thoughtfully provided in addition to the normal-speed TRACKING.

SEARCH can be operated at the VCR by pressing FAST FORWARD or REWIND from PLAY or at the wireless remote by means of separate buttons (whose placement, unfortunately, makes them subject to accidental activation). Slow motion (forward only also can be controlled either locally or from the remote, but you can adjust its tracking only at the front panel and its speed only at the remote. And only the remote has a keypad for punching in a channel directly; although scan tuning in either direction is available at the front panel as well. Other functions accessible either way include the usual transport modes, antenna/VCR selection, and power switching.

A single, large fluorescent panel gives an exceptionally complete overview of system operation, displaying the transport mode and channel in characters large enough to be read easily from across the room. These are supplemented by motion indicators—left- and right-facing arrows and a center square that lights when the tape is stationary. A blinking arrow denotes fast-wind, and when it is accompanied by the PLAY legend, it indicates SEARCH (high-speed playback) in that direction; the center square and PLAY together signify freeze frame. The same alphanumeric display also serves as a dew indicator.

Illuminated legends elsewhere on the display tell when the deck is in the audio-dub mode (edge track only), when it’s in the VCR mode, when a tape is loaded, the operating speed, and when MEMORY REWIND is set. This last function is used in conjunction with the display’s four-digit electronic counter. Below the counter is a clock, complete with day-of-the-week legends, and a set of program-number indicators—1 through 7, plus “W” for weekly automatic recording. A battery backup maintains the correct time for one hour in case of power failure.

The VH-5845XQ’s eight-event tuner/timer can be programmed as much as two weeks in advance, and you can review any preset with a single press of PROGRAM CHECK, which sequentially displays the start and stop times, accompanied by a flashing channel number. In addition to its regular programmer, the deck includes "one-touch recording." The first time you press OTR (behind a front-panel door), the clock switches from current time to countdown time and the display’s OTR legend illuminates. Each additional press on OTR advances the countdown by 30 minutes, to a maximum of four hours. The deck records the currently tuned program until the sand runs out in the timer, at which point recording ceases, the VCR turns itself off, and the clock reverts to normal.

The Quasar’s tuner is “cable ready.” You choose broadcast or cable reception with a four-position switch behind the door. In its broadcast mode, the tuner handles all the standard VHF and UHF frequencies (Channels 2 through 83); if you have cable, one of the three CATV positions should accommodate your service. When set for cable (indicated by a CATV legend on the display panel), the tuner receives the usual VHF channels (2 through 13) and CATV Channels A through W, AA through EEE, A-A through A-1, and 5A, which lies between Channels 4 and 5. The last can be received only on the HRC and IRC cable systems that use it.

The back panel supplies the normal complement of inputs and outputs: coaxial F connectors for VHF and cable, twinlead terminals for UHF, and pin jacks for direct audio and video connections. In addition, there’s a subminiature phone jack for remote pause from a camera and a five-pin DIN connector for Quasar’s optional VE-585UQ CATV adapter, which is said to permit full use of the VCR’s functions (including programmability and watching one channel while recording another) with regular TV and cable channels plus one scrambled channel. Presumably, the adapter enables you to loop a cable decoder box into the RF feed to the VH-5845XQ’s tuner or your television set, with automatic switching by the VCR. A multiposition “pay TV” switch is supposed to be set to the output channel of your descrambler box, if you’re using one. We assume the switch is intended primarily for use with the CATV adapter, but the
Yamaha's proprietary LSI technology provides audiibly superior playback and added programming power.

Introducing the CD-2 compact disc player. And the brains that set it above all other compact disc players.

We're referring, of course, to our proprietary LSIs (Large Scale Integrated circuits). And the approach they use to process digital signals.

Most CD players convert the digitized signals at a standard sampling rate of 44.1kHz. So they are forced to use a very sharp 50db/octave analog filter to cut off the unwanted frequencies above 20kHz generated by the 44.1kHz carrier signal.

This process creates phase anomalies which degrade the harmonic structure of your music. You hear this as a loss of dimensionality.

So we came up with an intelligent solution. Our YM-2201 LSI. It doubles the sampling rate to 88.2kHz and uses an on-chip digital filter.

This over-sampling eliminates phase distortion and maintains the harmonic integrity of your source. With no loss of dimensionality. You can actually hear a more natural, spacious sound from your discs.

A related benefit of our proprietary LSI technology is user convenience. You can choose from three different playback modes. Program the random-access memory system in moments. And search for selections (or individual passages within a selection) at the touch of a button.

You also get wireless infra-red remote control. Our 3-beam laser with LSI-based servo-control for extraordinary tracking accuracy. And a sleek, component-sized package.

What's more, if you don't require the CD-2's random access programming, or a remote, you can enjoy all this sound-improving technology in the CD-X1. At an even lower price. (CD-2, $599*; CD-X1, $499*)

So visit your Yamaha dealer today. And hear for yourself why our CD-2 is the most intelligent way there is to listen to compact discs.
VIDEO RECORD/PLAY RESPONSE

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>$P$</th>
<th>$EP$</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>at 500 kHz</td>
<td>$+1.4$ dB</td>
<td>$+1.4$ dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at 1.5 MHz</td>
<td>$-1.4$ dB</td>
<td>$-2.4$ dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at 2.0 MHz</td>
<td>$+6$ dB</td>
<td>$-7.4$ dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at 3.0 MHz</td>
<td>$+10$ dB</td>
<td>$-13$ dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at 3.58 MHz</td>
<td>$-19$ dB</td>
<td>$-19$ dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at 4.2 MHz</td>
<td>$11$</td>
<td>$11$</td>
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SHARPNESS CONTROL RANGE

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<th>$3.38$ % at $2.0$ MHz</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$1.5$ MHz</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$4$ dB</td>
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<tr>
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<td>$-7.4$ dB</td>
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<td>at 2.0 MHz</td>
<td>$5$ dB</td>
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<tr>
<td>at 3.0 MHz</td>
<td>$-3$ dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at 5.86 MHz</td>
<td>$-100$ dB</td>
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</table>

LUMINANCE LEVEL

- $8$ % high
- $2$ % non-linear

GRAY SCALE NONLINEARITY (worst case)

- $12$ %
- $25$ %

CHROMA LEVEL

- $0$ %
- $5$ %

CHROMA DIFFERENTIAL GAIN

- $0$ %
- $25$ %

CHROMA DIFFERENTIAL PHASE

- $0$ °
- $+5$ °

MEDIAN CHROMA PHASE ERROR

- $0$ °

TV TUNER SECTION

All measurements were taken at the direct audio and video outputs, with the automatic level control (ALC) turned off except where noted.

AUDIO FREQUENCY RESPONSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>500 kHz</th>
<th>1.5 MHz</th>
<th>2.0 MHz</th>
<th>3.0 MHz</th>
<th>3.58 MHz</th>
<th>4.2 MHz</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALC turn off</td>
<td>$-2.4$ dB</td>
<td>$-13$ dB</td>
<td>$-13$ dB</td>
<td>$-13$ dB</td>
<td>$-13$ dB</td>
<td>$-13$ dB</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALC on</td>
<td>$+6$ dB</td>
<td>$+10$ dB</td>
<td>$+10$ dB</td>
<td>$+10$ dB</td>
<td>$+10$ dB</td>
<td>$+10$ dB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COLOR ACCURACY of the VCR section (left) is the best we have seen, with all six color vectors (the white blobs near the edge of the grid) precisely on their targets. The tuner's performance (right) is less impressive, but still good. Some loss of chroma level (color saturation) is evident, as is a small and moderate amount of phase (hue) error. However, most of this (the attenuation, especially) can be eliminated with a monitor's color and tint controls.

Audio inputs and outputs are in stereo pairs. Audio output is selected using three mutually exclusive pushbuttons, which determine whether playback is in stereo or the left- or right-channel signal is fed to both outputs. Another pair of buttons selects Hi-Fi or edge-track playback. But even if you choose Hi-Fi playback, the VH-5845XQ automatically switches to the edge track if it can't find a VHS Hi-Fi signal. A series of lamps indicates your selections.

When the deck's four-position input switch is at its audio setting, the VCR generates its own video synchronization signals, enabling you to use it as a straight audio recorder. The line setting selects the direct audio and video inputs for rerecording, audio dubbing, and camera recording. The tuner position is used for regular TV recording with monaural sound, whereas "audio two-channel" enables you to record video from the tuner and audio from another source, such as an FM tuner receiving a simulcast transmission.

You also can choose whether to use the VH-5845XQ's automatic level control (ALC) or manual recording-level sliders. When active, the ALC determines the levels on both the edge and VHS Hi-Fi tracks. You also have the option of using Dolby B noise reduction on the edge track, which causes a green lamp on the front panel to light.

Because the VH-5845XQ records in stereo on the edge track as well as VHS Hi-Fi, Diversified Science Laboratories made all its audio measurements in the stereo mode. In the past, DSL has detected small amounts of mistracking in the operation of the VHS Hi-Fi noise reduction system, but it found no such anomaly in the Quasar, whose Hi-Fi frequency response is the same at all recording levels within the test range of $-10$ to $-40$ dB. This leads us to conclude that the gradual rolloff below $100$ Hz and the broad peak centered on $10$ kHz are errors contributed by the audio electronics or the VHS Hi-Fi modulator/demodulator circuitry. And though negligible by normal standards (certainly inaudible), measurable amounts of flutter were evident at the SP and LP speeds in the VHS Hi-Fi mode—a first in our experience.

Naturally, flutter is much worse on the edge track, but we are very impressed with the VH-5845XQ's non-Hi-Fi frequency response, which is the smoothest and most extended we can recall for any VCR running in its linear recording mode. What's more, the response with Dolby (shown in the data column) is virtually identical to that without, so there's no reason to forget the marked and clearly audible improvement in signal-to-noise (S/N) ratio that it affords. And considering the narrow, closely spaced tracks used for stereo recording in this mode, the measured separation is remarkable.

As usual, DSL set VHS Hi-Fi recording levels with the recording-
A to B in 0.2 secs!

Quick-Reverse: Aiwa's latest innovation in digital-ready cassette decks.

CONTINUOUS PLAYBACK AND RECORDING.

Auto-reverse was a great idea. Quick-Reverse is a better one. It not only changes tape sides, it does something even more miraculous. It eliminates interruption between sides.

Aiwa engineers achieved this remarkable feat two ways: First, Aiwa's AD-R550 does its changing act fast: just 0.2 of a second from one side to the other! That's just half the story.

Just before the tape leader reaches the heads, a photoelectric sensor activates Aiwa's Quick-Reverse mechanism. That way, instead of giving you 15 seconds of leader, Aiwa gives you something unheard of... continuous playback and recording!

DOLBY HX PROFESSIONAL

With Dolby* HX Professional, normal bias cassettes you record on the AD-R550 will actually outperform expensive chrome position tapes recorded on conventional decks! What's more, they can be played back on any deck, with the same superior results.

UNPARALLELED PERFORMANCE MATCHED BY UNEQUALLED CONVENIENCE.

Activate Aiwa's unique Blank Skip feature and the AD-R550 will automatically move into Fast Forward mode when it senses more than 12 seconds of blank tape. That way it skips any long pauses.

The Aiwa Quick-Reverse AD-R550. Catch it at your Aiwa dealer.

*Dolby is a trademark of Dolby Labs.
COLOR CONSISTENCY of the VH-5845XQ's recorder section (left) and for its TV tuner (right). In each case, the ideal would be for the cluster of dots toward the left edge of the grid to be a single dot at the intersection of the nine-o’clock axis with the circumference. The radial spread of the dots indicates chroma differential gain—a measure of how much chroma level (color saturation) varies with changes in scene brightness (luminance). The angular spread shows the chroma differential phase, which tells how much chroma phase (hue) shifts with changes in brightness. The VCR's performance is, again, perfect, and the tuner's is excellent, with nearly all of the error concentrated at the highest brightness level.

sharpness control on the side of the deck functions only for playback but does provide a means of heightening detail (with some increase in video noise) or reducing graininess (at the expense of crispness). Its maximum effect is around 2 MHz, but the total range extends from 500 kHz to 3 MHz. Chroma level is right on the money, luminance level very close to standard, and there's no measurable color error or chroma differential gain and phase. The TV tuner’s video performance is quite good, too. Response holds up very well to 3 MHz and is down just slightly at 3.58 MHz, suggesting that it could deliver a horizontal resolution of close to 300 lines if connected directly to a good monitor. Luminance level is almost exactly on standard, and gray-scale linearity is much better than average. There’s a bit of chroma differential gain (indicating variation of color saturation with scene brightness), but only at the highest luminance level, where it’s likely to pass unnoticed. Chroma differential phase (hue variation with brightness) is lower than average, and color accuracy is quite good in both phase (hue) and level (saturation). A slight touch-up at a monitor’s tint and color controls is all that’s required to produce a very good picture.

As with the VCR section, audio performance is less impressive than the video. For example, the VH-5845XQ exhibits no measurable scan whistles, but at the expense of a high-frequency rolloff that becomes quite steep above 10 kHz. The low end also falls off prematurely, and DSL noted substantially more distortion than we normally find in a TV tuner. Fortunately, it consists mainly of the relatively benign second harmonic. The Quasar VH-5845XQ is not a perfect VCR (we haven't found one yet), but in several important aspects of video performance it is among the best we have tested. Plus it's very flexible and, despite apparent complexity, easy to use. Audio performance is not all we might have hoped for, but the Quasar's VHS Hi-Fi system is unusually free of tracking error. Certainly it makes recordings far superior to what you could get on the edge track. So if you want a versatile unit combining excellent video performance and high fidelity audio recording capability, the VH-5845XQ deserves your serious consideration.
The New NAD 7140 Digital Stereo Receiver.

"Take one part Schotz tuner wizardry, lots of dynamic headroom and the bargain price, and you get one h--- of a receiver."

(Stereo Review Magazine)

The 7140 represents the best value in a receiver in NAD's history. Rated at 40 watts per channel with 3 dB of IHF dynamic headroom, this powerful new receiver is able to deliver twice its rated power (80 watts/channel) over short peaks. Add to this NAD's unique Dynamic Separation circuit, bass EQ and remarkable sensitivity and you have a product that Julian Hirsch of Stereo Review Magazine calls "unmatched at its price."

*Suggested retail is under $500. Prices may vary according to dealer.

For more information on the NAD 7140 and a list of dealers, send us the coupon below.
A fascinating and inexpensive introduction to digital sound creation, the DX-1 sound processing system from Decillionix differs from most other computer music-making systems by virtue of its ability to record real sounds, which then become the digital building blocks for a variety of interesting effects. You need an Apple II computer to use the system, but the combination gives you a degree of creative control usually found only in dedicated professional devices.

The DX-1 package ($239) consists of a circuit card, which plugs into one of the expansion slots inside the Apple, and several disk-based programs. The circuit board contains the necessary analog-to-digital (A/D) and digital-to-analog (D/A) converters, a mini jack for line-level or microphone inputs, and a rotary control to adjust the sensitivity of the system for different inputs. Audio output appears at a standard RCA phone jack, and a cable is provided for routing the signal to an amplifier or tape recorder.

You begin your session with the DX-1 by booting the program disk, which automatically loads the Apple’s memory with the control program and a preset library, or “soundbase,” of eight high-quality percussion instruments—snare drum, bass drum, wood block, cowbell, two tom-toms, and two cymbals. The main program menu then offers you three options for accessing the percussion sounds.

First, you can tie the sounds to one of 12 rhythm patterns and adjust speed and volume to your liking. In the second option, you can arrange the sounds into any of eight special-effects patterns, three of which I found particularly interesting. “Cycle” plays each of the preset instruments in sequence with increasing speed and pitch. “Falling Object” repeats one sound faster and faster, as if it were a ball bouncing on the floor. And “Forward Backward” plays a sound normally and then in reverse, an effect similar to that obtained by rocking an open-reel tape back and forth.

“Real Time Record/Play,” the third menu option, is where things really start to get exciting. In this mode, an individual sound can be played in real time by tapping the Apple’s keyboard. The sound appears on a pair of keys, enabling you to trill or “roll” it quickly.

The two-key approach is also integral to the recording feature. With the system in the recording mode, you begin by

Digital sound recording, real-time playback, and sequencer functions in an add-on package for the Apple II computer.
striking the left-hand key of a pair turns on the recording function for a specific chunk of memory. The system waits until it "hears" a sound, either from a microphone or an external line-level source. The sound is then digitized and loaded into memory. When the allocated memory space is full, the Apple's speaker beeps and the recording stops. Striking the right-hand key of the pair then lets you play back your digital recording. Loading a sound into a section of memory erases what's already there, but since each new sound can be saved on disk, nothing need be lost.

The software gives you a great deal of control over the recording and playback functions. The amount of memory set aside for each sound can be specified individually—anywhere from one byte to a maximum of 24,000 bytes (the total amount of memory left after the DX-1 control program has been loaded). The sampling rate also is adjustable, from 780 Hz to 23.2 kHz (for a maximum signal bandwidth of 11.6 kHz). At the slowest sampling rate, the system can store about 31 seconds of sound, but with very poor quality. At the fastest speed, maximum recording time is slightly more than one second.

The playback rate for each sound can be specified as well, which enables you to alter pitch over a range of more than five octaves. The "trigger" level of the recording input is adjustable so that stray noises do not accidentally activate the recording function.

But recording and real-time playback are just part of the DX-1's appeal. The system's built-in sequencer program helps you create some fairly complex compositions. As many as eight sounds can be individually controlled in pitch, duration, volume, and direction. You can order the whole sound or just a part of it to be played, or string it together with another sound. Once all that's done, the sequencer gives you 16 control steps. Each is capable of ordering one of the eight sound events to repeat as many as 254 times before moving on to the next one. Sequences can be stored on disk, and because they are handled separately from the soundbuffers, they can be used to play any group of sounds.

Another program available for use with the DX-1 hardware has been developed by Paul Swearingen, an independent software writer. Decillionix sells his single-disk program, called Echo, for $150. Echo takes incoming analog sounds and loops them through the Apple's memory in a variety of ways to create real-time sound effects—some of which can be very complex and spacey. Its functions are adjusted with game paddles or the Apple's keyboard, or you can even set the program so that it operates randomly. The Echo documentation is sketchy, but Swearingen says that's the point: The program can make sound jump through literally an infinite number of hoops, and it's up to you to discover them.

The DX-1 is a remarkable device for computer hobbyists and those of you who are looking for an economical way to experiment with digital sound recording. With the proper interface, sounds recorded by the DX-1 could be passed on to more complex synthesizer programs, such as the AlphaSynthauri, for elaborate modification and keyboard-based playback (see "The Alpha and the Apple," September 1983). And it's not hard to imagine some enterprising "hacker" coming up with a whole generation of special-effects devices built around the system, including phasers, flangers, digital delays, and reverberators.

For more information about the DX-1, you can call Decillionix at (408) 735-0410. The prerecorded message you'll hear gives you a guided tour through the DX-1's functions.
WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT IT COULD TRIGGER A REVOLUTION IN SOUND.

Remember when laser technology was the stuff that made for good science fiction? Well, it isn't fiction anymore. Because Pioneer has harnessed the same laser technology that used to blow space creatures away, we made the P-D70. A compact disc player that reproduces music so realistically you'll think you were at the original recording session.

Since a sophisticated optical laser never makes contact with the disc, all surface noise from dust and scratches is eliminated.

And because the music is processed digitally, distortion is essentially nonexistent, resulting in the drama of a live performance.

In addition, the P-D70 contains all the ultra-convenience features of a player so sophisticated and futuristic.

But of course, it's what you should expect from a compact disc player from Pioneer.

After all, we developed laser optics and digital electronic technology for our revolutionary LaserDisc™ brand video disc player.

And that was back when most people were of the opinion that lasers were more fiction than science.
CD PLAYERS
HOW THEY COMPARE

THOUGH THE COMPACT DISC system delivers remarkable and strikingly uniform performance from player to player, its capabilities have resulted in anything but uniformity in convenience and music-access features. Unlike analog record players and cassette decks, whose performance and features usually are tied to price, CD players today defy such categorization. Even a cursory glance at the accompanying guide to 58 models reveals the extent of the diversity, with some very inexpensive models vying in features with ones costing much more.

For your convenience, we have organized the guide by price. As with other audio components, however, published CD player prices are hardly absolute. Considering the volatility of the market, don't be surprised to see some of the expensive players (especially those first-generation machines introduced more than a year ago) being offered at retail for several hundred dollars less than shown here. Still, bargains are relative to what you get for your money, so the important part of our guide is the description of each player.

Most of the features we cite relate to a player's ability to get to the music you want to hear. With an LP, it's relatively easy to find a specific cut: Just eyeball the grooves, then move the tonearm to the desired band. A Compact Disc has no visible marks to point you in the right direction; instead, all the data about what's on the disc are contained in a directory coded into its beginning. Several CD players will display some of this information, giving you the total number of selections and the full playing time. And during play, some machines will show you the elapsed or remaining time.

But that's only part of the story. The universe of CD players is divided, rather roughly, into three music-access categories: players that let you skip across bands (forward or backward) via a stepper, those that combine sequential stepping with a programmable memory for automatic playback of desired selections, and those that provide a keypad for direct access to any band and the ability to program selections via band number.

Which music-access system is preferable? In our experience, classical music discs rarely contain more than a handful of handed selections, so steppers are easy to live with. But for pop CDs, most of which have at least ten selections, steppers can be a nuisance. Programmability can be thought of in a similar way. Pop music listeners may feel hamstringed without a way to separate the wheat from the chaff on a typical recording. Classical listeners, however, must also consider the vexing CD indexing situation.

According to standards formulated by Philips and Sony for the Compact Disc system, electronic index marks can be used by the producer of a CD to delineate selections contained within a longer, banded work. An opera recording, for example, might contain bands for each scene and index numbers for quick access to favorite arias within them. Without index-search capabilities, a CD player is blind to these notations, and finding the desired selection (via fast-forward controls, a standard feature on all decks) can be painfully slow. Even more frustrating is attempting to find such selections without the help of an audible search function that lets you know when you're getting close. And there are CD players that will display index numbers but that give you no way to reach them automatically.

Theodore W. Libbey, Jr., our classical music editor, has more to say on the topic in "CD Indexing: A Classic Betrayal" (page 68).

The remaining features called out in this guide are less critical to the music lover—except, in some cases, remote control. In several players, the numerical keypad for direct access and programming is built into the remote, not the deck itself. We have not noted these players separately, preferring instead to describe the capabilities of the whole system. "Loop" is our term for a sequential memory function that enables a deck to play or repeat any continuous segment of a disc. With such a feature, you can even order a player to repeat a phrase just two or three seconds long. A repeat button serves a different purpose, causing either the whole disc, a band, or a programmed sequence to replay indefinitely. Pitch control is a very rare feature, but if playing or singing along to recorded music is your thing, you might want such adjustability. And whether you intend to stack your player among other components or keep it separate (or atop the stack) is the important factor when deciding between a deck with a horizontal, front-loading drawer or one with a top-mounted disc well. Players with vertical front-loading systems are quickly disappearing.

Finally, though we have tried to be as accurate as possible in our features breakdown (an effort not made any easier by some manufacturers who remain remarkably confused about the capabilities of their own machines), this listing cannot tell the full story of a complicated player's capabilities or limitations. Because of the comparative nature of the guide, players as exceptional as the Toshiba XR-Z70 lose some of their uniqueness. In our test of the machine (July), we were particularly delighted at its programming ease and flexibility (via keypad or stepper). So use this guide as a first step in your shopping efforts, but when choosing between machines with similar capabilities, only hands-on experience and a thorough reading of the owner's manual (or our test report) will tell you which deck is for you.

Peter Bobbio

OCTOBER 1984
## CD Players
### How They Compare

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<thead>
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<th>Feature</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
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1. Two-step sequential memory. Enables you to program any continuous segment of a disc.
2. Disc-loading formats: Vertical (toaster style), Horizontal (disc drawer), Top (hinged compartment).
3. In programmable players, a display that enables you to see the next "scheduled" selection. Includes decks that allow you to double-check the full contents of the programmed memory before beginning the play cycle.
4. Manufacturer claims a 99-selection memory capacity, which we doubt.
## CD Players
### How They Compare

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The SL-P15 is a changer, capable of automatic playback of 50 discs. A 12-step memory gives you access to specific discs and tracks.

Why ceramics? They’re rigid and inert, so they provide uncommon stability and resistance to mechanical vibrations from audio feedback. They’re non-ferrous, so there are no chassis eddy currents to cause electrical hum.

The handsome ceramic-compound resin base of the DA-910 CD player is actually the chassis—supporting and housing all components and isolating vibration. Resonance from the cabinetry is almost non-existent. But Kyocera doesn’t stop there. Digital audio’s technical requirements demand unprecedented circuit capability so we use fine ceramics throughout to further conquer vibration. For example, all discrete hi tolerance audio components and the 3rd order Bessel analog filters are ceramic encased.

There are other material differences. Instead of an ordinary laminated E frame, we use a solid ferrite cutlass power transformer to cut eddy currents, minimize flux leakage and improve voltage regulation. And instead of ferrous metals, we use 100% aluminum and zinc chassis construction including a diecast laser head and a precision disc drive mechanism.

What else does the DA-910 offer?

- Infrared wireless remote control system.
- Three separate power supplies to allow complete isolation to critical circuits.
- Direct coupling (audio stages) for excellent low frequency response.
- Floating horizontal motorized disc loading to further improve stability and accuracy from external feedback.
- Separate digital to analog conversion for left and right channels.
- 176.4 Khz quaduple over-sampling technology.
- Quality digital and improved analog filtering for superior phase distortion performance.
- Full feature programmable keyboard entry.

Even before Kyocera added ceramics, the DA-910 CD player provided remarkable purity. With ceramics, the results are truly astounding. Put it to the test at a selected Kyocera dealer now.

Kyocera International, Inc., 7 Powder Horn Drive, Warren, New Jersey 07060, (201) 560-0060

BETTER SOUND BASED ON CERAMICS.
**REVIEWS**

Pop and classical music releases on videodisc, videocassette, and digital Compact Disc

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**POPOULAR COMPACT DISC**

**DAVE GRUSIN:**

Night-Lines.

Dave Grusin & Larry Rosen, producers. GRP Records GRP D 9504 (fully digital Compact Disc) LP. GRP A 1006

**DAVE GRUSIN AND THE NY-LA DREAM BAND**

Dave Grusin & Larry Rosen, producers. GRP Records GRP D 9501 (fully digital Compact Disc, LP. GRP A 1003)

**JOE BECK:**

Friends.

Joe Beck & Tom Jung, producers. DMG MUSIK DMG CD 446 (fully digital Compact Disc, Cassette: C 446).

Jazz producers were among the first advocates of digital recording. But as these three discs attest, the quality of true digital-to-digital CDs varies widely.

Dave Grusin, a successful film and television composer and seasoned studio player, releases only true digital recordings on his GRP label, using his own multitrack equipment. These CDs, however, you may wonder why he and coproducer Larry Rosen go to such trouble.

The instrumental format of "Night-Lines" mitigates any substantial improvements in the transfer to CD. Its emphasis on keyboardist Grusin's layered synthesizer textures limits bold dynamic changes; the differences between this and analog disc or tape versions are barely audible. Guest vocalist Phoebe Snow does enjoy added bite to her luscious vocals, as does David Sanborn's alto sax, but engineer Rosen's preference for a balanced but somewhat distant ensemble mix downplays any added nuance.

The live "Dream Band," offering studio heavies Lee Ritenour, Steve Gadd, Eric Gale, and Anthony Jackson, suffers the same fate. Grusin's breezy, upbeat fusion charts are well recorded and mixed—there's just nothing dramatic about them that might show off CD's technical abilities.

**GRUSIN & SNOW:** Are they blowing out true digital sound in "Night-Lines"?

By contrast, the latest from Tom Jung's tiny DMP line takes full advantage of its two-track digital master. Whether that documentary format is intrinsically superior to more elaborate systems, guitarist Joe Beck's ensemble brings out the CD's superior distortion and signal-to-noise characteristics. There's nothing comparable on the Grusin "Dream Band" tracks to the visceral presence of drummer Gadd on "Friends," or the exploitation of CD's open bass response by two evocative players, Jay Leonhart on acoustic double bass and Mark Egan on fretless four- and eight-string electric.

Add Michael Brecker's reliably expressive tenor sax. Don Grolnick's lush acoustic piano, and leader Beck's electric guitar—which neatly spans both fluid jazz and denser, rock-inflected timbres—and the results are impressive, technically and musically. While Grusin's objectives in preparing his masters were doubtless shaped in part by the need to create conventional albums, DMP's emphasis on CDs (the label also offers real-time cassette versions, but no LPs) apparently freed Jung and Beck to concentrate on a level of sonic realism that shines on Compact Disc. —SAM SUTHERLAND

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**DAVID BOWIE:**

Let's Dance.

David Bowie & Nile Rodgers, producers. EMI AMERICA COP7 40022 (analog recording, digital Compact Disc) LP. SO 17033, reviewed 7/83

The sleek but visceral production finish of David Bowie's first collaboration with Chic's Nile Rodgers proved to be one of its commercial trump cards, giving the set a dance-oriented punch missing in the rock star's late '70s work. The album's evocative use of various subtle signal-processing methods, from echo to compression, seemed to promise a digital delight, but the actual results are more of a draw. While "Let's Dance" demonstrates how smart production sidesteps the potential pitfalls of analog recording, it also minimizes opportunities to exploit digital techniques.

If anything, the liberal use of echo on drums and vocals tends to mitigate any substantial improvement, as well as to obscure much of the putative reduction in background noise. Hints of a positive transfer occur only during the quietest passages of Without You and between the blaring, staccato phrases of the title track;

For additional reviews of Pop and Jazz recordings, see BACKBEAT.

64
Music just met its Master.

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...like Captain Brooke Knapp, is dedicated to nothing less than excellence in its performance.

Captain Brooke Knapp is soaring to new heights, breaking every flight record in the books—currently 103 records to her credit, including the fastest time ever around the world—and championing the worldwide UNICEF charity for the world's children. That's what being the best is all about. It means out-performing the competition. Going above and beyond the expected. And knowing that "good enough" never is. That philosophy is behind every Hitachi product. Which is why it was no surprise we were the first to introduce a consumer color camera with no tubes. Powered by an MOS image sensor chip, we revolutionized video camera performance forever. Our color televisions are among the finest in the world, due in great part to "Signal Tracker Control," another Hitachi exclusive. For better video recording, we developed our 5-head PORTADECK VCR, Hitachi's smallest, lightest, most advanced ever. It's a portable VCR that truly is one. And our Compact Disc Player is a technological breakthrough in audio history. Virtual perfection in sound reproduction. This is just the beginning. We're setting a new standard in quality home electronics. And it's all up from here.
Paul Simon: still dynamically effective

Simon and coproducers Russ Titelman and Roy Halee add mimetic sound effects—typewriters, automobiles, and synthesized accents—as dramatic devices. Such an array provides an ample foil for this Compact Disc release, a fittingly crisp, full rendering of one of the year’s finest pop recordings.

Simon has always had a broader dynamic sensibility than most of his peers. Here, Allergies moves from a hushed, dreamy prologue into a propulsive, syncopated up-tempo work. Muted synthesizers behind his opening vocal emerge from virtual silence, while the emphatic drum accents that cap each verse cascade crisply from one side of the stereo array to the other.

That stereo separation and signal-to-noise ratio should prove impressive is a testament to the high quality of the recording and the equipment used. Simon and his team have created a CD that is both listenable and enjoyable.


to the other.

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given for this configuration. What might have been more problematic are such half-heard but evocative elements as the quiet instrumental details and shimmering echo. Fortunately these remain unaffected, leaving the overall ambience of the original intact.

Credit the producers’ use of digital mixdown from analog tracks for at least part of this CD’s unquestionable success.

— S.S.

NEW POP CDs

Because no store we know of carries every new pop CD, each month we will present a list of the latest releases. Most retailers can order your selections, even if they don’t stock them. The list is compiled for us by the editors of The New Schwann Record & Tape Guide from CDs that they have received—not from a record company’s roster of scheduled releases, which may or may not be available.

ALABAMA
My Name’s in Alabama
RCA PCD 1 3644

DAVID BOWIE
Fame & Fashion (All-Time Greatest Hits)
RCA PCD 1 4919

Young Americans
RCA PCD 1 0998

The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust
and the Spiders from Mars
RCA PCD 1 4702

JOHN DENVER
Greatest Hits
RCA PCD 1 0314

DARYL HALL & JOHN OATES
Greatest Hits: Rock ‘n’ Soul, Part 1
RCA PCD 1 4908

JEFFERSON STARSHIP
Nuclear Furniture
RCA PCD 1 4921

RONNIE MILSAP
Inside Ronnie Milsap
RCA PCD 1 4311

THE OUTLAWS
The Outlaws
RCA PCD 1 1321

POINTER SISTERS
Break Out
RCA PCD 1 4720

STYX
Best Of
RCA PCD 1 2967

SYLVIA
Just Sylvia
LCA PCD 1 4312

DOHNANYI debuts with the Cleveland Orchestra in Beethoven and Schubert.

CLASSICAL COMPACT DISC

BEETHOVEN:
Symphony No. 3, in E flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica").

This is a puzzling introduction—at least for me—to the Cleveland Orchestra’s new music director, and a curious tilt at Beethoven’s most torch-bearing work.

To begin with the obvious, Christoph von Dohnanyi allows some of the most startlingly casual string work and off-tune brass playing I’ve heard from this orchestra, once praised by Stravinsky for playing “right in the middle of the note.” Admittedly, the Trio’s horn calls are mercilessly exposed—and yes, Beethoven’s race-you-to-the-end finales (the Ninth, the Appassionata, Fidelio) are hard to play in time and in tune—but this sounds like a Haymarket Anarchists’ convention.

Still, one could excuse as nongatory a few hasty errors in the white heat of passion. But that hardy seems the point here. There’s certainly speed in the outer three movements, but at the sacrifice of gravity and of shaping detail.

The first movement is particularly maimed, its quick bursts of energy bound and gagged. Beethoven’s explosive sforzandos, diminishing only with equal suddenness, are here soundly muted. Jagged contrasts in texture are smoothly out, contours eroded, fault lines concealed. And Dohnanyi everywhere softens the rhythms. Where some conductors in effect double-dot, he does the opposite, shortening quarter notes, lengthening sixteenths. The result is an Eroica that is no revolutionary fanfare-for-the-19th-century, but a work eminently ... well, respectable.

Comfortable. There is no sense here of perilous harmonic energies overcome, of foreign key areas faced and conquered.

Perhaps Dohnanyi feels the opening Allegro’s Prometheus exhortations have been overrated. In any event, the exception to this lean-cuisine approach is the imprint and import of his conducting in the Marcia Funere. Right from the start, Dohnanyi offers a bleak portrait of post-holocaust exhaustion. Eighth-note rests are held just long enough to suggest the difficulty of continuing, the slowness of the journey to rebuild. Constant triplets evoke the ritual shuffling of a funeral cortège. Even the dramatic brass calls (as at measures 159ff) suggest the grief of Milton’s fallen angel, “Vaunting aloud, but rakìt with deep despair.” The final expressive playing of fragmented string phrases returns us wearied to the burning lake. It is not this hero’s life, but his death we remember.

If only the surrounding movements weren’t so bleached out ...

—THOMAS W. RUSSELL III

BEETHOVEN:
Symphony No. 8, in F, Op. 93.
SCHUBERT:
Symphony No. 8, in B minor, D. 759 ("Unfinished").

A lot of eyes and ears are directed at Cleveland this season as Christoph von Dohnanyi takes over the orchestra there, challenging the shadow of George Szell and the more recent and still reverberating presence of Lorin Maazel [see last month’s MUSICAL AMERICA edition]. Judging from this recording, Clevelanders old enough to remember the Szell days, as well as listeners of fresher vintage, will have some adjusting to do. The air fairly crackled in Severance Hall in years gone by; today, it promises to be somewhat more soothing.

The Beethoven Eighth offers a happy basis of comparison, as Cleveland versions by all three conductors are now available. The contrasts are easily perceived. Dohnanyi emphasizes smooth surfaces, creamy tone, a sober and urbane handling of rhythm (nothing exaggerated, nothing unkempt), and has a tendency to let inner and sometimes bass voices drop into (Continued on page 72)
NOT JUST ANOTHER PRETTY FACEPLATE.

There are a lot of people putting their names on the front of cassette decks these days.

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So ask yourself this: Do you want a row of matching faceplates, or do you want a cassette deck that can't be matched?

TEAC MADE IN JAPAN BY FANATICS.
CD Indexing: A Classic Betrayal

It was touted as a way to make Compact Discs easier to play than conventional LPs, and some manufacturers have taken full advantage of it. But the world's largest CD producer has left listeners in a lurch by not using the feature as it said it would.

When Sony and Polygram launched the Compact Disc, they understood that its commercial success would depend to a significant extent on the "hard-core" classical audiophile, traditionally the bellwether of the audio industry. As a result, they designed the disc/player protocol a number of features intended to appeal to him, one of the most important of which was indexing. Not quite two years into its evolution, it is obvious that the industry giants have betrayed the classical listener on the subject of indexing, even though he has borne the CD standard loyally.

Internal indexing, as originally conceived, was to be a secondary and highly useful method of random access to the program material encoded on a CD—making the CD, in theory at least, more convenient to use than the LP. According to guidelines Polygram drew up before it began production of Compact Discs, band numbers were to be given to each composition on a multiwork disc and index points were to be assigned to separate movements or constituent parts of each composition. Where a single work appeared on a disc, band numbers would be used for the movements, and index points could, at the producer's discretion, mark important subdivisions within those movements. This makes sense, since many classical CDs offer multiple works, each with multiple movements, while some contain larger symphonic works with lengthy movements that invite access at various middle points, such as tempo changes, important thematic statements, and the like.

Unfortunately, the software manufacturers—led by Polygram—have progressively dispensed with the internal indexing feature. (Indeed, I cannot think of a single Polygram CD that ever used it.) The rationale appears to be one of convenience: not for the listener, but for the manufacturer. Polygram has embarked on a confused policy of providing little or no access to parts of works that clearly call for it, or, in recent issues, of substituting extra bands for index points.

The prime example of inadequate access, often cited, is Decca/London's stupendous CD of Daphnis et Chloé, with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra under Charles Dutoit. The disc has one band and no index points. Thus the only way to get to the Danse générale, the ballet's brilliant concluding section, is by fast-forwarding through 50 minutes of music, which on some machines can take a good 20 minutes of your time. Decca should have banded each of the ballet's three tableaux and indexed each of the dances—or, at the very least, indexed each of the tableaux if it felt it had to present the whole ballet in a single band. Ravel himself published the third tableau, consisting of three parts, as Suite No. 2—but Decca/London's CD does not permit the listener to hear that way.

This example of index phobia is a particularly bad one, but there are many others, including several from outside the Polygram group. For instance, Telarc fails to index the Poco Adagio of Saint-Saëns's Organ Symphony. True, sections of this symphony are meant to be played through without a pause, but that doesn't mean that they shouldn't be individually and directly accessible.

Anyone who spent extra money for a CD player with index capabilities in the days when indexing was a highly touted feature has every right to feel cheated by these developments. And that listener now finds himself in the middle of a vicious circle, because today, only a handful of machines are being offered with indexing. Polygram must shoulder much of the responsibility for that, too, because the hardware manufacturers are building their machines to conform with what the major record companies are putting out.

Even if you don't have the index feature on your CD player and don't want it, you could be inconvenienced by Polygram's current band-it-instead-of-index-it philosophy. One of the most offensive examples of this is Deutsche Grammophon's new CD-only version of the Mahler Ninth, recorded live by the Berlin Philharmonic under Charles Dutoit.

MAURICE RAVEL (1875-1937)
DAPHNIS ET CHLOÉ
(Complete Ballet • Ballet complet • Vollständiges Ballett)
Orchestre symphonique de Montréal
Choeur de l'Orchestre symphonique de Montréal
Chorus director • Maître de chœur • Chorleiter: René Lacourse
Solo flute • Flûte solo • Soloflöte: Timothy Hutchins
CHARLES DUTOIT
Part 1 • 1er tableau • Teil 1
Part 2 • 2ème tableau • Teil 2
Part 3 • 3ème tableau • Teil 3 (55.57)

Recording Producer • Directeur artistique • Aufnahmeleiter: Ray Minshull
Sound Engineer • Ingénieur du son • Toningenieur, John Dunkley.
Cover • Couverture • Titelseite: Shepherd watching a Sleeping Shepherdess
by François Boucher by permission of the Wallace Collection, London.

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POLYGRAM'S CD of Daphnis et Chloé offers the nearly hour-long ballet in a single band. The tableaux are listed on the liner, but the disc denies access to them.
Philharmonic and Herbert von Karajan. The first movement is divided into eight bands, the second into seven, the third into seven, and the fourth into eight. Admittedly, this is better than having just four bands, with no access points within each movement—but it is still unacceptable. Suppose you want to hear the second movement only. Simple: Just load the first disc and press 9—that's right, 9—and hope that your machine doesn't hiccup six times, between bands 9 and 10, 11, 12, 11, and 12, etc., all arbitrarily (but intelligently) selected points marking tempo changes or important cues within that movement.

The real problem occurs if you want to repeat a single movement—say, the first. CDs and CD players were designed to make this easy: Theoretically, you program your machine to memorize the band number of the movement you want to hear again, and then press "repeat play" or an equivalent command. But to repeat the first movement of DG's Mahler Ninth, on just about any player in existence, you must enter band numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 separately into the machine's memory and hope it can replay the whole sequence. If the disc had been formatted the way Polygram guidelines say it should be, the first movement would have been Band 1 and each of the divisions would have been indexed—making repeat play a simple matter on any machine, while still enabling the listener with a player equipped for indexing to advance or return to any major point in the movement with a single command.

There is marvelous potential for the indexing feature in opera CDs, but so far, it hasn't been tapped. Take Philips' highly praised CD rendition of Il Barbiere di Siviglia. The absence of indexing is only the most distressing of several shortcomings in the set's presentation, all of which point to a lack of concern for the listener: The libretto booklet contains no references to band numbers; the band information printed on the discs is not always correct; and the disposition of musical passages among the three discs verges on the illogical (specifically, the break between Discs 1 and 2 occurs after Una voce poco fa, which is not part of the opening scene, even though there's room for the aria on Disc 2, where it could go with the material with which it does belong).

The solution? In operas comprised of scenes or "numbers," those passages ought to be banded, and sections within them (recitatives, arias, ensembles) separately indexed. Where excerpts or parts of two or more acts are contained on a single CD, or where the music is continuous, each individual excerpt or the complete act should carry a band number and the important subdivisions should be indexed. Polygram is precisely because of differences in indexing capability. So how about, Polygram? Instead of beating a disorganized retreat, why not lead the way? And while you're at it, how about remastering and replacing all of the unindexed discs you've made to date? —Theodore W. Libbey, Jr.

Editor's note: Polygram was offered an opportunity to present its views on indexing and to answer the criticisms made in this article, but its comments failed to reach us in time for inclusion here. The company's response will appear in a forthcoming issue.
obscurity. In the exceptionally lush CD sound here, details sometimes blur—a
picky but important example being the
beginning of the second subject of the first
movement, where the staccato opening note
is scarcely heard as such, but melts into
itself as it is repeated back-to-back. Just
how much of this is due to the recorded
sound is hard to say, but a similar lack of
articulation is bothersome in the third
movement Trio, where the horns operate in
a kind of golden blur. It’s a beautiful blur,
but one wishes for greater definition.

Against this satiny performance put
Szell, and buckle your seat belt. Taut to the
point of ferocity, cutting incisively to the
bone, incomparably distinct in every note, it
is a rendition that quickens the pulse. And
somewhere between Szell and Dohnanyi
stands Maazel, much closer to the former
than the latter. I myself can’t imagine any
other choice than Szell, for all the grittiness
of the recorded sound. But as any
Southerner knows, grits are good for you.

The story is much the same with the
Schubert Unfinished—seamless, serene, and
self-possessed. At the risk of sounding
geriatric, I must say again that an older
performance reveals more of what this
symphony can mean: Try Bruno Walter
with the Columbia Symphony [soon to be
released on Compact Disc by CBS] for a
sense of propulsion and dynamism that
Dohnanyi fails to convey (the tension
Walter builds into the crescendo leading to
the famous second subject, for instance).
Walter expresses the foundations of the
form with a kind of rock-bewn strength;
Dohnanyi shapes the movements
voluptuously in some more malleable
material. That’s not to say that the
Clevelanders don’t play beautifully for their
new conductor: They do—witness the
ineffable woodwind solos just before the
development in the second movement.
But looking beyond beauty, those older guys
still have the edge.

BERLIOZ:
Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Claudio Abbado, cond. (Raner
Brck, prod) Deutsche Grammophon 410 959-2 (fully digital Compact
Disc: UP 410 959-1)

With its vivid orchestration and large
masses of sound, the Symphonie
fantastique has always been a favorite with
hi-fi buffs. (RCA’s first stereo 7½ ips opens
reel tape of it, with Charles Munch and the
Boston Symphony, was the centerpiece
of many a stereo show.) One would suspect
that with today’s “advanced” recording
techniques a new account would equal the
best of extant versions, at least in sonics if
not interpretively. Claudio Abbado’s,
recorded in February 1983 in Chicago’s
Orchestra Hall, doesn’t quite make it.

There are many felicities of orchestral
detail that clearly show the Chicago
Symphony as one of the great orchestras of
the world; the brass playing, in particular,
is dazzling. But Deutsche Grammophon has
not added reverberation, which is
unfortunate; the dry acoustic robs the strings
of their beauty, the brass of its bite, and the
low percussion of its impact.

Because the final three movements,
with a playing time of almost 33 minutes,
are placed on Side 2 of the LP version,
sonic impact in that format is limited. The
CD version has no such limitation.
The finale, with bells recorded in Hiroshima
and dubbed in, is bandaged in four sections.

—ROBERT E. RENSEN

KARAJAN: expansive Zarathustra

STRAUSS:
Also sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30; Don Juan, Op. 20.

Berliner Philharmoniker, Herbert von Karajan, cond. (Guh-
termann, prod) Deutsche Grammophon 410 959-2 (fully digital Compact
Disc: UP 410 959-1)

Herbert von Karajan has recorded this
music before with both the Vienna and
Berlin Philharmonics, still available,
respectively, on London’s budget-priced
Stereo Treasury label (STS 15083) and
Deutsche Grammophon (253 040-2).
Neither of those LPs offers a filler. The
Maestro apparently wanted to record it yet
again, digitally, and here is the result—the
fourth Zarathustra to be issued on Compact
Disc.

The score, with its familiar “Sunrise”
section utilized so effectively in Stanley
Kubrick’s 2001: A Space Odyssey, has had
generally wretched luck on records during
the past few years. It has been characterized
by either unimaginative interpretations,
prosaic orchestral playing, or poor recorded
sound—and sometimes all three, as is the
case in Zubin Mehta’s version with the New
York Philharmonic on CBS (Compact Disc:
MK 35888). Seiji Ozawa’s with the Boston
Symphony on Philips (Compact Disc: 400
072-2) is scarcely better, a vacuous reading
far removed from the powerful and
pioneering Koussevitzky recording made
with the same orchestra nearly five decades
earlier. (Both the CBS and Philips
recordings are particularly poor values on
CD, as neither has a filler. You pay dearly
for very little in playing time, in addition to
the interpretive and sonic deficiencies.)

Karajan’s new account is one of the
most expansive Zarathustras ever put on
disc, approaching 37 minutes. The opening
section sounds a bit shaky, with rather
tentative trumpet calls, timpani just a shade
off the beat, and a truncated climax.
The high point comes in the massive climax
of the “Dance-Song,” with its solid, metallic
Midnight Bell. [Don’t miss the best of Karajan’s
reading to be rather boring. Don Juan,
while beautifully played, lacks impulse.

Sonically, this recording offers the
orchestra-in-a-vacuum approach popular
with many of today’s producers and
engineers—which is misguided technology,
to say the least. As there is virtually no hall
resonance, strings lack sheen and there is
little bloom to any of the instruments. It is
unfortunate, too, that the recording was
not made in a hall where there was a
satisfactory organ, or that the sound of a
real organ was not dubbed in to avoid the
wheezy electronic monstrosity heard here.

There is currently only one other CD
of Zarathustra, on London with Antal
Dorati and the Detroit Symphony, which
offers Strauss’s Mucbella as a filler (410
146-2). It is superior sonically to the
Mehta, Ozawa, and Karajan recordings, but
interpretively somewhat lacking. Lorin
Maazel’s fine performance with the Vienna
Philharmonic on DG is not now available
on CD, and probably won’t be for some
time, nor is Georges Prêtre’s interesting
Philharmonia Orchestra version on RCA.

Still, to hear what Zarathustra is really
about, we must go back to the LP. The
earlier Philips recording by Bernard Haitink
and the Concertgebouw on Philips (650
062-4, deleted), the Fritz Reiner/Chicago
Symphony version on RCA (ATL 1-4286),
and the Eugene Ormandy/Philadelphia
Orchestra digital recording on Angel (DS
37744) are all superlative accounts of this
music. Ormandy’s also uses an electronic
organ, but the hall resonance makes the
sound more acceptable.

For additional reviews of classical
recordings, see Classical Reviews.

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Compact Disc REVIEW

In this roundup of Compact Discs—Part 2 of our preview of the forthcoming year's classical recordings—you will find more than three times as many titles as appeared last year in this space. The numbers—counting approximately 450 releases listed here and another fifty or so expected from Angel (but not, as yet, specified)—tell the story far better than words. The coming months will see a veritable tidal wave of CDs, including many important historic recordings newly remastered. Anyone who doubts that the medium is for real need only look at what follows.

Please note our use of abbreviations, alone or in combination. For performing forces: P (Philharmonic), R (Radio), S (Symphony), T (Television), O (Orchestra), C (Chamber), Ch (Chorus, Choir), St (State), Op (Opera), Ac (Academy), E (Ensemble), Qr (Quartet), Gn (Quintet), Fest (Festival), or their foreign-language equivalents. For production and packaging: Where known, number of discs in multidisc sets is given in parentheses at end of listing; other parenthetical symbols include a (single disc rather than set), e (analog recording), I (live recording). Initials and first names appear only as needed.

ACCENT (Belgium)
(distributed by AudioSource)

Beethoven: Piano Works. Immerscel.
Handel: Telemann; Galuppi; Janitsch; Bach, J.C.: Chamber Works. The Passasus E.

ANGEL

EMI anticipates having 75 titles available by December. 1984.
Angel Records, 1750 N. Vine St., Hollywood, Calif. 90028.

ARCHIV
(released by Deutsche Grammophon)

Bach: The Art of Fugue; Goldberg Canons. Musica Antiqua, Köln.

ARGO
(released by London Records)

Mozart: Coronation Mass; Missa Solemnis. Marshall, Murray, Covey-Crump, Wilson-Johnson; King's College Ch. Cambridge; English CO. Cleobury. Christmas at King's. King's College Ch. Cambridge; Cleobury.

AUDIOSOURCE

See Accent. Audiosource, 1185 Chem Dr., Foster City, Calif. 94404.

BIS (Sweden)
(distributed by Qualiton Imports)

Román: Violin Concertos; Symphonies. Sparf; Orfeus CO.
Sibelius: Complete Orchestral Songs. Hynninen; Hägander; Gothenburg SO. Pinula.
Teleman, Vivaldi: Double Concertos; Concertos for Baroque Bassoon and Recorder. McCraw, Pehrsson; Drottningholm CE.
Vivaldi: The Four Seasons. Sparf; Drottningholm CE.

Elizabethan Songs. Högan, Lindberg.
4-Foot Organ. FuguS, Sanger.
Kromatn Hits Again—Works for Flute and Percussion. Wiesler; Kromatn Percussion E.

CAPRICE (Sweden)

Distributed by International Book & Record Distributors, 4011 24th St., Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.

CBS MASTERWORKS

Bach: flute concertos. Rampal; ArS Rediviva Prague, Munchinger.
Bach: Gamba Sonatas. Ma, Cooper.
Bach: Sonatas for Piano and Cello Nos. 3, 5. Ax, Ma.
Glass: The Photographer.
Haydn: Three Favorite Concertos. Ma, Marsalis, Lin.
Lecona: Songs. Domingo.
Mahler: Symphony No. 2. Norman, Marton; Vien-
na PO, Maazel.
Mahler: Symphony No. 4. Battle; Vienna PO, Maazel.
Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 26, Perahia; English CO.
Mozart: Piano Concertos Nos. 19, 23. Perahia; Eng-
lish CO.
Mozart: Three Piano Concertos, K. 107. Perahia; English CO.
Puccini: La Rondine. Te Kanawa, Domingo, Ren-
dall, Nucci; Ambrosian OpCh, London SO, Maazel.
Puccini: Turandot. Marton, Carreras, Ricciarelli; Vienna PO, Maazel (I).
Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4. Cleveland O, Maazel.

CBS Masterworks, 51 W. 52nd St., New York, N.Y. 10019.

CENTAUR

Bach: Harpsichord works. Paxton.
Brahms: Paganini Variations; Six Intermezzi. Rodriguez.
Dvóřák: String Quartets Opp. 51, 105. New World Qr.

HIGH FIDELITY

Janácek: The Two String Quartets. New World Qr.
Schubert: String Quartet No. 15. Manhattan Qr.
Schubert: Piano Sonata in D; Two Impromptus.
Steigerwald.

Shostakovich: String Quartets Nos. 3, 8, Manhattan Qr.


Centaur Records, Inc. P.O. Box 23764, Baton Rouge, La. 70893

CLAVES

(distributed by Qualiton Imports)

Music for Trombone of the German Baroque. Stampfl, Dähler, Müller, Weninger, Wahlich, Stokar Trombone Qr.
Old German Christmas Songs. Haefliger; Consilium musicum. Angerer. Terzeta Berganza: Sings Music of South America (works by Villa-Lobos, Braga, and Guastavino).

CONSORTIUM

See Laurel Record. Consortium Recordings, 2451 Nichols Canyon, Los Angeles, Calif. 90046.

DELLOS

Bach: Cello Suite. Sor: Sonata No. 2; Sonata Op. 15; Themes of Mozart’s Magic Flute. C. Handel Qr.


Liszt: Sonata in B minor; Dante Sonata; Petrarch Songs. Browning.

Mozart: Serenade in B flat, K. 361, Chicago SO Winds.


Mozart: Clarinet Concerto; Clarinet Quintet. Shiriìn; Mostly Mozart Festival Op. 1, Schwartz.


DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON


Bernstein: West Side Story. Cast to be announced.

Brahms: Double Concerto; Academic Festival Overture, Kremre, Maisky; Vienna PO, Bernstein.

Brahms: Piano Concerto No. 2. Zimmermann; Vienna PO, Bernstein.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 8. Vienna PO, Giusti.

Haydn: Symphonies Nos. 88, 92. Vienna PO, Bernstein.

Mahler: Symphony No. 7. Chicago SO, Abbado.


ABBADO conducts Mahler on 00.

Mozart: Sonata Concertante. Violin Concerto No. 1, Kremer, Kashkashian; Vienna PO, Haranoencourt.

Mozart: Symphonies Nos. 38, 39. Vienna PO, Bernstein.

Mozart: Piano Sonatas. Perlman, Barenboim.

Mozart: Violin Concerto No. 1; Rondos; Perlman, Vienna PO, Levine.


Orff: Carmina Burana. Anderson, Creech, Weikl; Glen Ellyn Children’s Ch., Chicago SQ&Ch, Levine.


Kashmannoff: Piano Concerto No. 3. Argerich; Boston SO, Ozawa.


Schuman: Symphonies. Vienna PO, Bernstein.


Stravinsky: Sonata Domestica. Vienna PO, Maazel.

Stravinsky: Suites: Firebird, Pulcinella. Israel PO, Bernstein.

Tchaikovsky: Capriccio italiano; Marche slave; Waltz and Polonaise from ‘Eugen Onegin’; Hamlet Overture. Israel PO, Bernstein.

Tchaikovsky: Symphonies Nos. 4, 5, 6. Vienna PO, Karajan.

Verdi: Don Carlos, Domingo, Rizzi, Nucci. Raimondi, Valentini-Terrani; Ch&O of La Scala, Abbado.

Verdi: Il Trovatore. Popp, Faschaender, Domingo; Ac San Cecilia, Giulini.

Verdi: Requiem. Vienna PO, Karajan.

Wagner: Overtures and Preludes. Berlin PO, Karajan.

Widor: Symphony No. 5. Vienna; Carillon de Westminster, Preston.


Gorán Söllcher: Cavatina and other popular pieces.

Christmas Carols. Westminster Abbey Ch., Preston.

Released by Polygram Classics, Inc., 810 7th Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019.

ERATO

(distributed by RCA)

Berlioz: Symphonie, New Swingle Singers; French National O. Boulez.

Charpentier: Médée, Norman; Lyon Op, Corboz.


Delalande: Symphons pour les soupers du Roi. Paillard O.

Dukas: Symphonie; La Peri. Suisse Romande O, Jordan.


Handel: Complete Organ Concertos, Koopman.

Enescu: Two Rhapsodies. Roumanian poet. Monte Carlo PO, Foster (a).


Liszt; Dante Symphony. Rotterdam PO, Conlon.

Mozart: Arias: Baker; Scottish CO, Leppard.

Mozart: Three Cantatas. Paillard O.

Mozart: Symphonies Nos. 38, 39; Scottish CO, Conlon.

Scarlatti: Stabat Mater. Monteverdi Ch; English Baroque Soloists, Gardiner.

Torke: Songs. Raimondi; I Soloisti Veneti, Scimone.


Vivaldi: Motets. Gasdia; I Soloisti Veneti, Scimone.

Arias from French Operas. Horne; Monte Carlo PO, Foster (a).

ETCETERA

(distributed by Qualiton Imports)

Ives: Songs. Alexander; Crone.

Purcell: Songs. Dalton.

FIFTH CONTINENT


HUNGAROTON (Hungary)

(distributed by Qualiton Imports)

Bach: Cantatas Nos. 211, 212. Laki, Gáti, Fülöp; Capella Savaria, Németh.

Bartók: Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta; Diversimento. Franz Liszt CO, Rolla.

Bartók: String Quartets Nos. 1-6. Takács Qr.

Bolò: Nerone. Tokody, Takács, Nagy, Miller Dene, Gregor; Hungarian R&TCh, Hungarian StO, Queler.

Donizetti: Don Pasquale (excerpts). Kalmár, Bándi, Gáti, Gregor; Hungarian R&TCh, Hungarian StO, Fischer.


Handel: Duets. Zákóri, Esswood; Ella, Falvy.

Mozart: Piano Concertos Nos. 17, 23. Kocsis; Franz Liszt CO, Rolla.

Puccini: Gianni Schicchi. Melis, Kalmár, Gulyás, Gáti, Gregor; Hungarian StO, Ferencisk.

Ravel: Sonatine; Valses nobles et sentimentales; Prélude; Menuet sur le nom de Haydn; Gaspard de la nuit. Ránki.


Verdi: Simon Boccanegra (excerpts). Kincais, Nyer, Miller, Gregor; Hungarian StOch&O, Patané.

An der schönen, blauen Donau. Hungarian StO, Ferencisk.

The Choral Music of Kodály, Vol. 1. Miller; Hun-
garian R&TCh, Ferencsik
Vespere (16th century). Schola Hungarica.
Zigeunerweisen. Kálmán Vörös and his Gipsy Band.

**INTERSOUND**

See Pro Arte, Teldec, Intersound, Inc., 14025 23rd Ave. N., Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

**LABEL "X"**
distributed by Fifth Continent Music:

Green: Raintree County. MGM Studio O, Green (a).
North: Cheyenne Autumn. Rome SO, Savina (a).
North: Drakoner; National PO, North (a).

**LAUREL**
distributed by Consortium:

Bloch: String Quartet No. 1. Pro Arte Qr (a).
Bloch: String Quartet No. 2. Pro Arte Qr (a).
Debussy: Dvořák: Trios. Western Arts Trio (a).
Szymanski: String Quartets Nos. 1, 2. Pro Arte Qr (a).

**LONDON**

Bartók: Piano Concerto No. 3. Prokofiev: Piano Concerto No. 3. Ashkenazy; London PO, Solti (a).
Beethoven: Fidelio. Behrens, Ghazarian, Hofmann, Adam, Riddervud; Chicago S&Ch, Solti (21).
Beethoven: Piano Concertos (5). Ashkenazy; Vienna PO, Mehta (4).
Berlioz: Nuits d'été. Ravel: Shéhérazade. Behrens; Vienna S, Travi;
Boitin: The Met; Gavavati, Ghiaurov, Freni, Calabi;
National PO, De Fabritius (3).
Brahms: Symphony No. 1. Chicago SO, Solti (a).
Brahms: Symphony No. 2. Chicago SO, Solti (a).
Canteloube: Songs of the Auvergne. Vol. 2. Te Kanawa; English CO, Tate.
Chopin: Eudes. Ashkenazy (a).
Debussy: La Mer; Nocturnes; Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune. Suisse Romande O, Ansermet (a).
Donizetti: L'Elisir d'Amore. Sutherland, Pavarotti; English CO, Bonyng (21).
Donizetti: Lucia di Lammermoor. Sutherland, Pavarotti, Ghiaurov, Milnes; Royal Opera O, Bonyng (3).
Giordano: Andrea Chénier. Pavarotti, Caballé, Nucci; National PO, Chailly (3).
Granados: Concentraciones. St. Martin's; Savina (a).
Janácek: Jenůfa. Soderstrom; Vienna PO, Mackerras (2).

**SOLTI: His Ring is on the way.**

List: Fantasia on Hungarian Folk Themes; Totentanz: Madeleine. Bolet; London SO, Fischer.
Mahler: Symphony No. 1. Chicago SO, Solti.
Mahler: Symphony No. 5. Der Nesch; Chicago SO, Solti (2).
Mahler: Symphony No. 8. Chicago SO, Solti (2, a).
Mahler: Das Lied von der Erde. Ferrier, Patat; Vienna PO, Walter (a).
Mozart: Horn Concertos Nos. 1-4. Tuckwell. English CO.
Orff: Carmina Burana. Greensborg, Bowman; Robert, Berlin S&Ch, Chailly.
Pachelbel: Kanon. Albiniom, Adagio; Bach; Handel; Gluck; Boccherini; Haydn. Instrumental Works. Stuttgarter CO, Munchinger.
Puccini: Tosca. Te Kanawa, Aragul, Nucci; Solti (2).
Puccini: Turandot. Sutherland, Caballé, Pavarotti; London PO, Mehta (2, a).
Ravel: Boléro; La Valse; Valses nobles et sentimentales; Rapsodie espagnole; Alborada del gracioso. Suisse Romande O, Ansermet (a).
Ravel: Ma Mère l'Oye; Pavane pour une infante défunte; Le Tombeau de Couperin; Valses Nobles et Sentimentales. Montreal SO, Dutoit.
Ravel: Ma Mère l'Oye; Pavane pour une infante défunte; Le Tombeau de Couperin; Valses nobles et sentimentales. Montreal SO, Dutoit.
Schoenberg: Moses and Aaron; Maura; Langridge, Haugland; Chicago SO, Solti.
Schubert: Trout Quintet. Schiff; members of Hagen Quartet.
Sibelius: Symphonies Nos. 5, 6. Philharmonia O, Ashkenazy.
Strauss: Also Sprach Zarathustra; Don Juan; Till Eulenspiegel. Chicago SO, Solti (a).
Stravinsky: Symphony of Psalms; Chand du Rossignol; Fireworks; Zvezdoliki. Berlin R&SO, Chailly.
Verdi: Rigoletto. Sutherland, Pavarotti, Milnes; London SO, Bonyng. (2, a).
Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera. Pavarotti, Price; Bruson, Ludwig, Battle; National PO, Solti.
Wagner: Das Rheingold. London, Flagstad, van Holm; Vienna PO, Solti (3, a).
Wagner: Siegfried. Windgassen, Hotter, Nilsson; Sutherland; Vienna PO, Solti (4, a).
Ave Maria (a).
Brass Splendor. Philip Jones Brass E (a).
Dance of the Hours (a).
Famous Waltzes (a).
Great Love Themes (a).
Imaginary Classics (a).
Ode to Joy (a).
O Holy Night. Pavarotti (a).
Opera Gala (a).
Pomp and Circumstance (famous marches) (a).
Prima Ballerina (a).
Romantic Violin Melodies (a).
Further historical reissues are expected to include a Backhaus/Brahms 2nd Piano Concerto and Bohm's Bruckner 4th.

Released by Polygram Classics, Inc., 810 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019.

**MOBILE FIDELITY**

Strauss: Don Juan; Rosenkavalier Waltzes; Till Eulenspiegel: Dance of the Seven Veils. Cincinnati SO, Schippers (a).
My Fair Lady. Shelly Manne Trio (a).
The Best of Mr. David Foster (a).
The Newport Blues Festival (2, a).

Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab, P.O. Box 919, 21040 Northford St., Chatsworth, Calif. 91311.

**MOSS MUSIC GROUP**

Beethoven: Overtures. Minnesota O.
Skrowaczewski.
Chopin: Mazurkas; Waltzes; Polonaises. Moravec; Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue; Concerto in F; Second Rhapsody; Siegel; St. Louis SO, Slatkin.
Haydn: M. Symphonies. Bournemouth Sinfonietta; Farberman.
Mendelssohn: A Midsummer Night's Dream; Schwann from the Octet, Rochester PO, Zinman.
Offenbach: Concerto Rondo for Cello and Orchestra; Waltzes and Polkas. Harnoy; Cincinnati Pops, Kunzel.
UCHIDA plays Mozart on Philips.

London SO, Davis (a).
Rossini: Petite Messe Solennelle, Ricciarelli, Zimmermann, Carreras, Ramey; Ambrosian Singers, Sheppard, Berkowitz, Nunz, Scimone (2).
Schubert: Symphonies (10). St. Martin’s Ac. Marinier (6).
Schubert: Winterreise; Lieder (8). Fischer-Dieskau, Brendel (2).
Schumann: Amusing, Ameling; Gewandhaus O, Masur.
Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite; Serenade for Strings. St. Martin’s Ac, Marinier.
Tchaikovsky: 1812 Overture; Romeo and Juliet. Telemann, Violin Concerto. Brown; St. Martin’s Ac.
Telemann: Horn Concerto. Baumann, T. Brown, Hill, I. Brown; St. Martin’s Ac.
Verdi: Falstaff (complete). Taddei, Panenie; Vienna St (Op), Karajan (3).
Verdi: Il Trovatore (highlights). Carreras, Ricciarrelli, Masurok, Toczyska; Royal Opera House, Davis.
Verdi: Overtures, Vienna P7, Sonopoli.
Vivaldi: Nine concertos, I Musici.
Vivaldi: Sammartini, Telemann: Recorder Concertos. Petri; St. Martin’s Ac, Brown.
Wagner: Die Walküre (complete). Nilsson; Bayreuth Fest O, Bohm (a).
Wagner: Scenes and Arias. Escudero, Bundschuh; Reh, Berlin OP O, Fricke.
Wagner: Tristan and Isolde. Behrens, Hoffman; Bavarian RSO, Bernstein (5).
Famous Overtures—works by J. Strauss (von Suppé, Auber, Smetana, Overture Nossay. St, Martin’s Ac, Marinier.
Gulda Plays Gulda.
Sentimental Me—music by Gershwin, Ellington. Ameling, Clayton, Van Dijk.
Serenata, Ameling, Janzen.
Released by Polygram Classics, Inc., 810 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019.

PRO ARTE
(released by Intersound)
Bach: Magnificat in D. Hoffmann (attrib. Tele-

mann: German Magnificat. Bryden, Baird, Gall, Hofmeister, Opolach; Bach E, Rifkin.
Bach: Mass in B minor, La Petite Bande, Kuijken (2).
Bach: Orchestral Suites. La Petite Bande, S. Kuij-
en (2).
Barber: Violin Concerto; Overture to The School for Scandal; Essay for Orchestra No. 2; Prelude and Intermezzo from Vanessa. Utah SO, Silverstein.
Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 1. Sherman; Czech P. Neumann.
Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 2. Sherman; Czech P. Neumann.
Beethoven: Symphonies Nos. 1, 2. Dresden PO, Kegel.
Beethoven: Symphonies Nos. 3. Dresden PO, Kegel.
Beethoven: Symphony No. 3. Columbia Aurum.
Beethoven: Symphonies Nos. 4, 6. Dresden PO, Kegel.
Beethoven: Symphonies Nos. 5, 8. Dresden PO, Kegel.
Beethoven: Symphony No. 7. Dresden PO, Kegel.
Beethoven: Symphony No. 7. Columbia Aurum.
Beethoven: Symphony No. 9. Dresden PO, Kegel.
Bernstein: Complete works for solo piano. Tucco.
Brahms: Symphony No. 1. North German RSO, Wand.
Chopin: Preludes; Barcarolle, Sherman.
Copland: Appalachian Spring; Short Symphony. Ives: Symphony No. 2; Paul CO, Davies.
Debussy: EEnfant prodigue; La damnation de Faust; Norman, Carreras, Fischer-Dieskau; Stuttgart RSO, Bertini.
Mahler: Symphony No. 2. Czech P. Neumann (2).
Mahler: Symphony No. 3, Czech P. Neumann (2).
Mahler: Symphony No. 8, Czech P. Neumann (2).
Mahler: Symphony No. 9, Czech P. Neumann.
Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto; Overtures, Utah SO, Silverstein.
Nazareth: Brazilian Waltzes and Tangos. Lima.
Vivaldi: The Four Seasons. La Petite Bande, S. Kuijken.
American Festival. Milwaukee SO, Foss.
Argentine Tangoes. I Salonisti.
Bach Meets the Beatles. Bayless.
Brazilian Streetside Waltzes and Tangos. Lima.
Cafehus: Music of the classic cafehus. The Sal-
on O.
Music of the Grand Salon. The Salon O.
Pachelbel Canon and other Baroque Hits. Colle-
gium Aurum.
Serenata: Music of the Grand Salon. 1 Salonisti.

PREAMBLE
(distributed by Fifth Continent Music)
Anthill: Airplane Sonata; Sonata Savage. Grofe: Three Shades of Blue. Gershwin: Three Prel-
ludes. Gianattasio.
Whitborn: New York Days and Nights; El Camino Real; Valse de concert. Kozar.
This new label will be devoted exclusively to chamber and orchestral works by American com-
posers. Particular emphasis will be paid to world premières of neglected works by little-known composers from the early 20th century.
QUALITY
See Bits, Claves, Excetra, Hungaroton. Qualiton Inn., 39-28 Crescent St., Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.

RCA RED SEAL
Beethoven: Choral Fantasy; Sonatas Opp. 57, 57. Ax; New York PO, Mehta (a).
Chopin: Nocturnes and Waltzes. Rubinstein (a).
Chopin: Piano Concertos Nos. 1, 2, Ax; Philadelphia P, Ormandy (a).
Chopin: Schumann; Serkin: Piano works. Horowitz.
Mahler: Symphony No. 3. Horne; Chicago SO, Levine (a).
Mahler: Symphony No. 4. Blegen; Chicago SO, Levine (a).
Morgenyk: Pictures at an Exhibition. Tomita (a).
Prokofiev: Cinderella. St. Louis SO, Slatin.
Prokofiev: Symphony No. 5. St. Louis SO, Slatin.
Sondheim: Pacific Overtures (original Broadway cast) (a).
Sondheim: Sunday in the Park with George (original Broadway cast).
Sor; Agudo: Guitar works. Bream.
Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No. 1. Ciburn; Symphony O, Kondrashin (a).
Christian with the Canadian Brass and the Great Organ of St. Patrick's Cathedral.
Placido Domingo and the Vienna Choir Boys (a).
Turned-On Broadway (a).
James Galway: Nocturne.
James Galway with Henry Mancini.
Best of the Classic Film Scores. National PO, Gerhardt.
Placido Domingo: Bravissimo, Domingo! (a).
RCA Records, 1133 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10036.

SOUTHERN CROSS
(distributed by Fifth Continent Music)
Herrmann: Sitters. Herrmann (a).
Steiner, M.: King Kong (1933). National PO, Steiner (a).
Hollywood Brass Ensemble, Fred Steiner: Celloboid Fanfares. World Premiere commissioned works by Addison, E. Bernstein, Duning, Fried, Gold, Green, Jarre, Mancini, Raskin, Rosenman, Roza, Schirfin, F. Steiner, Smeaton, J. Williams.

TELARC
Beethoven: Piano Concertos 7, 5. Serkin; Boston SO, Ozawa (3a).
Handel; Messiah. Erickson, McNair, Hodgson, Humphrey, Stilwell; Atlanta SO&Ch, Shaw (a).

SLATKIN: something new from RCA
Handel: Messiah (highlights).
Respighi: Pines of Rome; Fountains of Rome; The Birds. Sibelius: Symphony No. 2; Finlandia. Cleveland O, Levi.
Ein Straussfest—Waltz, Polkas and Marches by the Strauss Family, Cincinnati Pops O, Kunzel.
Organ Recital by Michael Murray. Works by Bach, Messiaen, Franck, and Dupré. (Premiere recording of the new Raffetti Organ in Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco.)
The Many Moods of Christmas.
Telarc Corporation, 23307 Commerce Park Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44122.

TELDEC
(distributed by Intersound)
Bach: Orchestral Suites Nos. 1, 2. Concertus Musicus Wien, Harmoncourt.
Bruckner: Symphony No. 4. Frankfurt RSO, Inbal.
Chopin: Ballades; Scherzos. Karsan.
Dvorak: Slavonic Dances, Czech P, Neumann.
Handel: Messiah. Concertus Musicus Wien, Harmoncourt (3).
Haydn: Horn Concertos. Cleveenger, Franz Liszt CO.
Mendelssohn: Concertos. Zetehmair, Karsan: Franz Liszt CO.
Mozart: Idenmenc, Concertus Musicus Wien, Harmoncourt (3).
Rachmaninov: String Quartets. Franz Liszt CO.
Original Instrument Harpsichord. Leonardt.
Pachelbel Canon and Gigue (Popular Classical Pieces). Franz Liszt CO.

VANGUARD
Saint-Saëns: Symphony No. 3 ('Organ'). Minger; Baltimore SO, Comissiona.
Vanguard Recording Society. 71 West 23rd St., New York, N.Y. 10010.

VARESE SARABANDE
Beethoven: Symphonies Nos. 7, 8. OS del Estado de Mexico; London SO, Bátiz.
Beethoven: Symphony No. 9. Araiza, Valente, Yauger, Sarabia; Ch of the Universidad Veracruzana, OS del Estado de Mexico, Bátiz.
Copland: Symphony of the PRAIRIE; An Outdoor Over-
Barber: Capricorn Concerto; First Essay for Orchestra. Ives: Overture from the Third Or-
concerts. Pacific SO, Clark.
Dvorak: Symphony No. 9; Carnival Overture. Lon-
SO, Bátiz.
Falla: The Three Cornered Hat; Nights in the Gar-
dens of Spain. Salinas, Zúik; OS del Estado de Mexico, Bátiz.
Herrmann: North by Northwest (selections). Lon-
don Studio SO, Johnson.
Korgold: King's Row (symphonic suite). National PO, Gerhardt.
Harris: Symphony No. 6. Ricci; Pacific SO, Clark.
Rossa: Spellbound Concerto. New England Con-
certo; Overture from The World, the Flesh and the Devil'; Pierce; Jonas; Utah SO, E. Bernstein.
Saint-Saëns: Symphony No. 3. Mendelssohn: Fin-
gal's Cave Overture. Rawsthorne; Royal Liver-
PO, Tjeknavorian.
Takemitsu: In an Autumn Garden. Takemitsu.
Vaughan Williams: Toward the Unknown Region; Norfolk Rhapsody No. 1: Tallis Fantasia; Vari-
ants on Doves and Lazarus; other orchestral works. City of Birmingham SO, Del Mar; Bournemouth SO, Hurst.
Williams: The Star Wars Trilogy—Suites from 'Re-
Turn of the Jedi'; 'Star Wars' and 'The Empire Strike Back'. Utah SO, Kojian.
Williams: The Empire Strikes Back (selections). National PO, Gerhardt.
Camelot—the 1982 London cast with Richard Harris.
Morton Gould Conducts. Works by Ravel, Shostak,
Wieninger, Granados, Turina, and Gi-
ner. London SO. Music from Alfred Hitchcock Films. Suites from scores by Tormkin, Waxman, and Will-
liams. Utah SO&Ch, Ketchem.
Vivaldi’s ‘Mandolin Concerti’
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Odd Man Out—Or In?

Cult figure or bad boy of the keyboard, György Cziffra is a pianist to be reckoned with.

Reviewed by Thomas L. Dixon

Cziffra converted a chapel into a recital hall; at the piano, he can transform the familiar into the extraordinary.


Who remembers much about the Hungarian Revolution of 1956? Who cares? Who recalls a debut recital in Vienna that year by a newly arrived refugee, a concert so startling that it was reported even in The New Yorker? Apparently, few Americans do, particularly those in charge of concert management in New York. However, when Jacques Leiser invited György Cziffra to come to North America for the first time in 15 years, wiser heads and more courageous spirits in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Toronto remembered, because that is where the pianist is giving recitals during September—recitals that, to judge from past recordings and the eleven under consideration here, should provoke audiences to reactions that are anything but neutral.

Record collectors remember him; in fact, those with sharp ears have never forgotten him. His long absence from the American scene notwithstanding, Cziffra remains possibly the most flamboyantly personal pianist alive. The only other artist still playing who resembles him (slightly) is Shura Cherkassky, and the only pianist of the past with whom he might be compared is Ignaz Friedman. Cziffra is an honored national figure in France, his concerts are “events” in Japan, but we have yet to truly rediscover him here.

Well then, lacking his regular presence as a concertizing artist, what do we make of these discs? They were all kindly supplied by Pathé-Marconi directly from Paris; however, they should be available in many import shops or by direct order from International Book and Record Distributors (40-11 24th St., Long Island City, N.Y.)
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SCHUBERT: Impromptu, D. 899, No. 4.

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LISZT: Piano Works (6).


BALLADE No. 2, in B minor; Valse oubliee in F sharp; Étude de concert ("Ronde des lutins"); Liebestraum No. 3; Legende No. 1 ("St. Francis of Assisi Preaching to the Birds"); Valse impromptu in A flat; Polonaise in C minor.

LISZT: Hungarian Rhapsodies: Nos. 1–16; No. 19.

GYÖRGI CZIFFRA, piano. Pathé-Marconi 167 14013 (3 discs, stereo recording).

LISZT: Années de pelerinage (complete).

GYÖRGI CZIFFRA, piano. Pathé-Marconi 167 14081 (3 discs, stereo recording).

Cziffra's recent activities have not been limited to the keyboard. A fine autobiography, Cannons and Flowers, has appeared in French... definitely a book worth translation. What other pianist has taken the time, effort, and money to convert a medieval chapel into a concert hall, with the desire to use it to present aspiring artists? What other pianist allows time at the conclusion of his recitals to personally introduce young pianists and offer them a hearing? There is more that could be said, but since the message of this review is first and only way, we are in great need of the fearless individualism that he brings to every page of his fellow Hungarian's works.

It is a pity that Cziffra has not been allowed to find his overdue place in the top echelons of our concert life, because he could provide the kind of corrective vision that is so lacking, especially among many members of the youngest pianistic generation. Although he will no longer accept orchestral engagements (out of memory to his late son, György Cziffra Jr., a conductor), his great artistry, even in solo recital, would speak profoundly to our need for individualism, spirit, and commitment.

The evidence from all these extraordinary records proves the point.

Liszt's Liebesabend No. 5: 'Rondas de los licántropos' is a party in C major, E flat, and A flat.

Looking back over the last few months, I see that I have heard a dozen well-known pianists of various ages and degrees of tal...
Early Viennese Classics
From the Camerata Bern

Reviewed by K. Robert Schwarz

THE EARLY VIENNESE SCHOOL.

Heinz Holliger, oboe; Thomas Füri, violin; Thomas Demenga, cello; Camerata Bern, Tho-
mas Füri, dir. [Andreas Holschneider and Steven
Paul, prods.] ARCHIV 410 599-1 (three discs, digi-

ALBRECHTSBERGER: Quartettsüge in C.
DITTERSDORF: Concerto for Oboe and
Orchestra, in G; Sinfonia in A minor, MONN:
Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in B flat; Sin-
fonia in B. SALIERI: Triple Concerto for Violin,
Oboe, Cello, and Orchestra, in D. STARZER:
Divertimento in C. VANHAL: Sinfonia in G
minor. WAGENSEIL: Sinfonia in D. ZIMMER-
MAN: Sinfonia in C.

Few issues in music history have engen-
dered as much controversy as the origin of
the Classical style. To begin with, na-
tonalist pride blinded generations of well-
meaning historians—the Germans claimed
priority in the rise of Classicism with Stam-
itz and the Mannheim School, the Austrians
with Monn and his Viennese descendents,
the Italians with Pergolesi and Sammartini,
the French with Gossec. In truth, none of
these viewpoints was completely correct:
The High Classic style that we associate
with Haydn and Mozart was a miraculous
synthesis of German counterpoint, Austrian
formal rationality, Italian melody, and
French instrumental color—a truly interna-
tional achievement.

Yet, because Haydn and Mozart were
both closely associated with Vienna, it is
the rise of the peculiarly Viennese Classi-
cism that has most fascinated musicians.
The producers of this three-record set have
coined the term “Early Viennese School”
in order to “represent the Viennese forerun-
ers of the High Classic style, the unde-
servedly obscure group of pre-Classical
composers who lived and worked mainly in
and around Vienna during the reign of
Maria Theresa.” There are at least two
good reasons why these composers should
be of interest to us. One is that a great deal
of competent, viable music was being cre-
ated in mid- and late-18th-century Vienna
by musicians whose names we are hardly
aware of today. The rediscovery of a group
of unjustly neglected composers would be
cause enough for celebration, but we gain
one additional dimension: insight into the
development of Haydn’s and Mozart’s
styles. Neither composer worked in a vac-
um; they were products of their time,
actively involved in all aspects of musical
life, selectively absorbing the best that the
music around them had to offer. Thus we
can never hope to understand their achieve-
ments until we become familiar with the
work of the lesser masters who preceded
and worked alongside them—composers
without whom the great heights of Viennese
Classicism would probably never have been
reached.

Matthias Georg Monn (1717–1750) was
often described by pro-Austrian histor-
i ans as being the Viennese fount of Classi-
cism. While this claim may have been
exaggerated, the two works presented here
are of sufficient quality to make one wonder
how this young genius would have devel-
oped had he lived longer. Both the Sinfonia
in B and the Violin Concerto in B flat
(1747) display striking mixes of old-fash-
ioned Baroque and more progressive Classi-
cal traits, but the result is not the disjoi-
ted stylistic hodgepodge of so many mid-
18th-century works. Monn’s firm grasp of
formal structure, his sprightly, distin-
guished thematic material, and his harmo-
nic excursions all stamp him as an inspired
composer. Georg Christoph Wagenseil
(1715–1777), who lived to complete a life-
time of service in Vienna as imperial court
composer, seems just as capable but far less
inspired. His Sinfonia in D, written several
decades after Monn’s work, appears com-
monplace, despite its capable control of
form and thematic development.

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Ma (left) and Ax: sumptuous sonorities, and an emphasis on the lyrical aspects

I have saved the finest work for last. Johann Baptist Vanhal (1739–1813). Czech by birth, moved to Vienna in the 1760s and was friendly with all the musicians of his day, including Haydn and Mozart. Mental illness prevented him from realizing the potential he showed as a young man, but his Sinfonia in G minor is a masterwork, worthy of comparison with Mozart's Symphony No. 25, in G minor, and Haydn's minor-key works of the 1770s. Here, in contrast to the Dittersdorf Sinfonia, we have a symphony that maintains its impassioned tone throughout. Its imaginative orchestration, potent thematic material, rhythmic and harmonic surprises, and emotional intensity indicate a composer of true genius—one who deserves a retrospective set all his own.

Not surprisingly, this fine work also evokes the best performance of the set. It finds the Camerata Bern at their most committed, producing a reading of tremendous excitement and rhythmic drive. Elsewhere, however, the performances can seem more polite than compelling, and I cannot help wondering if some of the less inspired works recorded here would seem more interesting in other hands. Nevertheless, the accounts are models of clarity, whatever they may lack in intensity. Although playing on modern instruments, the performers are careful to ensure that the interpretations are historically and stylistically appropriate: Articulation is crisp and clean, vibrato is narrow, slides and swells in the strings are kept to a minimum. Sensitive dynamic and rhythmic manipulations enliven the proceedings. The four soloists are superb, having an opportunity to demonstrate their gifts not only in the three outright concertos, but also in the several symphonic slow movements (Dittersdorf, Vanhal, and Zimmernman) that call for solo instruments.

"The Early Viennese School" is a sequel to the Camerata Bern's prior collection, "The Mannheim School" (Archiv 2723 061). One hopes that more volumes are to follow, allowing us to mine the ore of the later Classical period. How about Viennese contemporaries of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, such as Eybler, Gyrowetz, and Förster? How about a set devoted to those neglected composers straddling the Classic and Romantic eras, such as Viotti, Dussek, Hummel, and Reicha? The possibilities are intoxicating, with both listeners and historians having an infinite amount to gain from such projects.


RCA has lent Emmanuel Ax out to CBS to make the continuation of this impressive collaboration possible; the jacket refers to the set as "Volume 2." The sumptuous sonorities of both young artists, faithfully recorded, command attention from the very beginning, and their easy technical mastery of the music makes the disc an attractive one. Both emphasize the lyrical aspects of these works whenever the composer presents them, and cellist Yo-Yo Ma extracts ample poignancy from that descending minor-seventh figure in the earlier sonata's third movement.

I found the big D major work somewhat less successful. From the outset, an unusually snappy tempo—metronomically main-
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tained, even beyond Beethoven's indication of Allegro con brio—keeps things bright, lightweight, even superficial. Also, I question the musicological authenticity of Ax's mordents in the development section. He and Ma play the second movement Adagio, all right, but with molto sentimento d'affetto! Hardly. One misses the noble resignation, the element of almost high tragedy implicit in the movement. (Cellists never want to believe that Casals, inimitably, recorded the entire slow, four-part opening theme with his left hand motionless, totally free of vibrato—but I saw it myself in 1953 at the French Pyrenees Abbaye de St.-Michel-de-Cuxa, outside Prades.) Ax and Ma play the awesomely powerful final fugue of the D major Sonata almost like a country folk dance in triple meter. If you prefer your late Beethoven real cool, man, you may find this right up your alley.

Beethoven himself originally labelled these two sonatas, like their three companion pieces, "für Pianoforte und Violoncello," not the other way around. The sleeve—embellished by two extraordinarily arresting photographs by Bill King, showing the two young artists in rambunctious action—gives the artists equal billing, but the copy sent me contains a separate p.r. bio of Ma and none of Ax, which at least implies "for cello with piano accompaniment." Ax has ample reason to raise hell.

So with a level of individualism, passion, and vision that is regrettably rare among his contemporaries. This quality is foreign to Lupu's recordings, though in this account of Brahms's Piano Sonata No. 3 the fourth-movement Intermezzo startlingly the listener in the midst of a business-as-usual interpretation: Lupu's reserved introspection begins to creep and crawl, taking on almost hallucinatory qualities.

That movement alone is enough to make this LP worth its price, though the recording has a number of other merits as well. Sir Clifford Curzon's beautifully distilled reading on London Stereo Treasury (STS 15272) is still the preferred version of this youthful though sprawling sonata; but while Curzon tends to mask the work's shortcomings (which sometimes means giving its verbose passages an Olympian once-over-lightly), Lupu embraces its excesses along with its strengths and attempts to prove—with varying degrees of success—that the twenty-year-old Brahms knew exactly what he was doing.

The tip-off comes when Lupu takes the exposition repeat in the first movement, no doubt to give the movement a weight and grandeur it needs to keep from being dwarfed by the equally long but more melodically enticing Andante. In most performances, this heart-melting second movement is the work's primary attraction, and after Lupu's luxurious account, the oth-

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**Lupu: embracing Brahms's excesses**


Radu Lupu, piano. (Michael Haas, prod.) London LDR 71061 (digital recording).

There are moments in Radu Lupu's concerts when he drops his customary politeness and transforms whatever he is playing into a Kafka-esque nightmare. And he does so with a level of individualism, passion, and vision that is regrettably rare among his contemporaries. This quality is foreign to Lupu's recordings, though in this account of Brahms's Piano Sonata No. 3 the fourth-movement Intermezzo startlingly the listener in the midst of a business-as-usual interpretation: Lupu's reserved introspection begins to creep and crawl, taking on almost hallucinatory qualities.

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er three movements could easily be a long denouement. But by using slightly slower tempos and striking a grander musical posture than Curzon in the third-movement Scherzo and fifth-movement Allegro, Lupu achieves a greater sense of symmetry and unity. The first, third, and fifth movements become pillars—large, dramatic musical gestures—with the second and fourth movements as their introspective foils.

Occasionally, Lupu’s dramatic sense sounds manufactured, if not overheated, and his reflective moments sometimes wander into obscurity. But he is certainly onto something in this recording, and I suspect he may very well prove Brahms right in years to come. As for now, he has given us a good second choice to the Curzon recording, worth hearing depending on how much you are interested in a sonata that masquerades as a symphony.

The filler is Brahms’s piano transcription of the slow movement from the String Sextet, Op. 18, and it finds Lupu on best behavior.   

DAVID PATRICK STEARNS

DAVID: Trio. HUTCHESON: Nocturnes of the Inferno.

Verdehr Trio. [Walter Verdehr, prod.] CRYSTAL S 644.

The standard repertoire pieces for the ensemble of violin, clarinet, and piano can be counted on the digits of a single hand—or perhaps a hand and an extra thumb if one includes with Bartók’s 1938 Contrasts, Milhaud’s 1936 Suite, Khachaturian’s 1932 Trio, and Ives’s 1902 Largo the arrangements Stravinsky and Berg made, respectively, of the L’Histoire du soldat suite and the slow movement of the Chamber Concerto. Obviously, that’s not enough to keep the members of the Verdehr Trio fully occupied and challenged, so since its founding in 1972 the group has commissioned a bevy of new works from composers on both sides of the Atlantic.

In 1978 the prolific Viennese composer Thomas Christian David provided the group with a Classically designed Trio that maintains the formal rigor and heated intensity (but apparently not the dodecaphonic constructive techniques) of his early-20th-century compatriots. Jere Hutcheson, a colleague of the Verdehrs on the faculty of Michigan State University, offered them Nocturnes of the Inferno in 1976, a set of highly coloristic movements whose sonic vocabulary and evocative subtitles (“Cries and Murmurs”; “In a Dream”; “Night Creatures”) put the work in line with the mood music George Crumb was producing c. 1970. These are effective pieces, and superbly performed by the virtuosos for whom they were created, but the recorded sound is rather persistently hissy.

JAMES WIERZBICKI

DEBUSSY: La Mer; Trois Nocturnes.


The more I listened to this recording (within earshot of the Pacific surf at Carmel, coincidentally), the more the phrases “you husky-nois’d sea” and “the hoarse surging of the sea” plucked insistently at the sleeve of my conscious mind—not because they apply to this performance, but because, to my perplexity, they do not. Finally, the source of the two quotations surfaced: Walt Whitman’s Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking, specifically that section of the poem that Frederick Delius excerpted for his choral/orchestral masterpiece, Sea Drift.

Off onto a literary tangent, and for purposes of comparison, I subsequently pulled out my treasured 1951 Toscanini recording of La Mer, for which RCA Victor had the inspiration to commission album notes from the late naturalist Rachel L. Carson, author of that poetic masterpiece The Sea Around Us. In those notes she wrote of “one who makes a long ocean voyage—when day after day he watches the receding rim of the horizon, ridged and furrowed by waves; or when he stands alone in darkness on the deck at night, in a world compounded only of water and sky, and feels the brooding presence of the sea around him.” She concludes that “surely the sense of these things was in Debussy’s mind when he composed La Mer, capturing in immortal music the shining beauty, the awful power, and the eternal mystery of the sea.” André Previn, to my way of thinking, has concentrated on the shining beauty of the sea, but I feel relatively little interest on his part for its eternal mystery, and even less for its awful power.

Atmosphere, generally speaking, gets comparatively short shrift in his performance of both these marvelous works. In the first Nocturne, Previn keeps his clouds scudding almost briskly along, crowding the little solo sensitively played by one of the most beautiful-sounding English horns I have ever heard. (James Harding signs himself responsible for these album notes; have we his jaws to box, or his proofreader’s, for their reference to “a sad little theme on the French horn?”) In the second, Fêtes, the leisureliness of all the tempos contradicts the festiveness specified by the title. The end of the third Nocturne finally attains a remarkable atmospheric quality, but only after having passed over the rapturous climax in a manner almost matter-of-fact.

The orchestra and chorus both perform superbly, but all the surface sheen somehow fails to compensate for a curiously abstract overall detachment.   

PAUL MOOR

DOWLAND: Lute Music.

Paul O’Dette, lute. [Michael Bernstein, prod.] ASTREE AS 90 (digital recording) (distributed by AudioSource, 1185 Chess Dr., Foster City, Calif. 94404).

The Shomakers Wife, a Toy; La Mia Barbara; The Lady Clifrons Spirit; Mrs Clifrons Almaine; Alo; Queen Elizabeth, her Galliard; Wallsingham; A Galliard (upon Wallsingham); Semper Dowland semper dolens; Fantasia; A Fancy; Mr John Langtons Pavon; The Lady Rich, her Galliard; Winter Jumps; Mistris Whittes thinge; Mrs Whittes nothing; Lachrimae; Galliard to Lachrimae; Farewell Fantasia.

Lute music is by nature intimate, but not necessarily introspective, as Paul O’Dette
demonstrates with his peppy performances of the stylized dance numbers that make up the first half of each side of this disc. The foot-tappers represent only one aspect of Dowland’s musical personality, although melancholy was apparently this 16th-century composer’s dominant humor, and it is in works such as the Lachrimae pavane and the autobiographical Semper Dowland semper dolens (the anguished effect of their chromatic notes heightened by their acoustic conflict with the mean-tone tuning system) that we find Dowland’s most individualized writing. In these more doleful pieces, too, O’Dette has just the right touch, and the contrasts in emotional intensity between one group and the other are remarkable. This is a beautiful recording; the microphones seem to have been placed very close to the instrument, but the occasional sighs they pick up are not at all intrusive.

JAMES WIERZBICKI

LAMBERT: Airs de cour.


The shepherds, shepherdesses, and other folk dealt with in these 14 works (one femme fatale named Iris gets apostrophized several times) weep, sigh, and languish, all for sweet love, but they do it with considerable grace and charm. Personally, I rather doubt that couples in Michel Lambert’s lifetime (c.1610–1696) rarely went farther than holding hands; these works leave the question open as to whether they got even that far.

The names connected with the vocal and instrumental ensemble Les Arts florissants reveal it is a polyglot group: William Christie directs it, and its singers include Agnes Mellon, Jill Friedman, and Philippe Cantor, but also Guillaume Laurens, Michel Laplénie, and Etienne Lestréningant, with Konrad Junghänel playing the theorbo, one of those double-necked lutes. They do it all with great style and polish, with the female singers, especially Laurens, demonstrating an arresting melismatic flexibility in the ornamentations. Do not expect much variety of tempo or spirit, for this selection and this ensemble show little interest in the luster type of music of the period, which so enthroned David Munrow and his merry men and women.

Don’t feel sheepish, either, if you’ve never heard of Lambert. As a young man he enjoyed the patronage of Cardinal Richelieu, and during the course of his astonishingly long life he published some 20 collections containing hundreds of airs of the type recorded here (more than 300 have survived). In 1661 he became Maître de musique at the court of Louis XIV, where his more famous son-in-law, Jean Baptiste Lully, held the title of surintendant.

The selections on this disc range from purely instrumental interludes, beautifully played, to vocal numbers for as many as five voices, beautifully sung. A 16-page trilingual booklet provides all the texts, with translations, but it prints the original dialogue in “Admirons notre jeune et charmante déesse” in a manner that will confuse you the first time round; the use of a few colons—which appear in the translations—would have cleared the matter up.

One wonders, in passing, why Mellon sings the solo part in “Trouver sur l’herbette,” obviously a man’s song—particularly in a country where the punch line of one of the most famous national jokes cries, “Vive la différence!”

PAUL MOOR


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an orchestra currently as polished as the Philharmonia in London (credit Riccardo Muti) cannot sound insouciant or effortless when conditions are recherche-tape, re- 
hearse-tape whether or not there’s to be a concert post facto. The players don’t seem to know Nelville Marriner’s conducting well enough to skip the part about his beat and where to find it. Everything on this disc sounds (which it shouldn’t) like preparation, rather than a confident performance.

For every last note of the incidental music Mendelssohn wrote 17 years after the Overture—to accompany a command performance of Shakespeare’s play at Potsdam in 1843—you’d want Andre Previn, on an Angel disc of some vintage that stars the London Symphony. Although that performance is neither more imaginative nor more vivacious interpretatively than Marriner’s, it does sound better and is consistent in the manner of repeats. Philips wins points for giving us Arleen Auger and Anna Murray as solo singers in “Ye spotted snakes,” and “Through this house” at the very end, where it seems, however, that the Ambrosians are singing in German. Despite a reverberant studio (or church, or town hall, or whatever), digitalism discloses virtually every detail, even on a conventional stereo disc. But the high strings have the metallic timbre of a thunder sheet when they play forceful and loud, wearere a cassette counterpart is prettier to hear.

Musically, though, the loveliest evocation of this elfin Dream remains Peter Maag’s on London Stereo Treasury, despite its quarter-century of service, with Bernard Haitink’s firmly in second place on Philips Festivo. Neither one has every note of the music (nor even Dolby processing, much less colorado coding, in the case of Maag), but what they do include endorses.

ROGER DEITTMER


Brandis Quartet. [F. Axel Mehrle, Dieter Sinn, and Diether G. Wanneck, prod.] ORIOLE S 041831 (digital recording). Cassette: M 041831. (Distributed by Harmonia Mundi, 2351 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90064.)

The Berlin-based Brandis Quartet gives these Mozart pieces the basic Romantic reading, with impassioned crescendos, tight vibrato, volume contrasts on an orchestral scale, lots of precious favoring with the phrasing, a dash of Angst in almost all the accents, etc. And there’s a peculiar nervous quality about the group’s collective sonority, a slight edgeiness that gives the music a hurried feeling even though the tempos are in fact perfectly sensible.

Those idiosyncrasies are worth detailing, because everything else about the performance is first-rate. For all their stylistic anachronisms, these interpretations are undeniably cohesive, and the playing—like the recorded sound—is simply impeccable.
RAMEAU: Orchestral Suite from ‘Les Indes galantes.’

Orchestre de la Chapelle Royale; Philippe Herreweghe, cond. [Alain de Chambrier, prod.]
HARMONIA MUNDI HM 1130 (digital recording).
Cassette: HM 40.1130.

In his article on Rameau in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Cuthbert Girdlestone advises that there is much more to this composer’s theatrical works than the orchestral dances and interludes, but he admits that these instrumental pieces “are what touch us first because of their uniquely immediate, quasi-tactile magic.” Persons interested in exploring the deeper recesses of Rameau’s dramatic sensibilities are invited to listen to Jean-Claude Malgoire’s fine recording of the complete Les Indes galantes on CBS M3-32973. (Of course, insights far more profound than those offered by this or any other of the essentially lightweight opéras-ballets are to be had when time is spent with tragédies lyriques such as Hippolyte et Aricie or Abarus, or Les Boréades, available on Argo D 272 D3 and Erato STU 71534, respectively, and reviewed by David Patrick Stearns in High Fidelity’s June 1985 issue.)

For those content with just a quick sample of the magic, though, this sumptuous orchestral suite will do nicely. Like the four concerts from Les Indes galantes that Rameau interested for publication shortly after the work’s 1735 premiere, the collection of airs and dances put together by Philippe Herreweghe draws from the various entrées a potpourri of selections whose ordering is determined only by the smoothness of the tonal relationships and the vividness of the contrasts in meter, tempo, and sonority. This is deliberately spectacular music, spectacularly performed by a 43-piece ‘original instrument’ orchestra that features some of the best woodwind players in the early music business. The recording was made in one of Radio France’s drier studios; the sound is sharply focused in all registers, and the bass patterns on which the music depends so much for its forward motion are never made subordinate to the brilliantly colored upper lines.

JAMES WIERZBICKI

SATIE: Aperçus désagréables; La belle Excentrique; En Habit de cheval; Parade; Trois Morceaux en forme de poire; Trois petites Pièces montées.


This recording presents us with the complete piano four-hand music of Erik Satie, brought together on one disc for the first time. Including his own arrangements of works not originally conceived for piano, it offers a relatively complete picture of Satie’s compositional development after 1900. And what impressive music this is! For those who belittle Satie, perceiving him as a second-rate prankster more important for his influence than for his music, a reader’s attention...
Perceptive playing from pianist Frankli

this work—lacking the visual distraction of the stage—quickly disintegrate into a jumble of dance-hall fragments, popular tunes, and cinematic action music. Yet, owing to the uniform timbre of the instrument, the piano duo version immediately assumes a more organic character, its cubicus collages suddenly seeming coherent if not controlled.

Trots petites Pièces montées (c.1920) and La belle Excentrique (1920) date from Satie’s last years and are imbued with the popular spirit of the music hall: March, polka, waltz, cancan, cakewalk are all snatched from the cabaret and remade. Sometimes vulgar, sometimes affecting, these miniatures—while far from profound—have an undeniable charm.

One doubts that Wyneke Jordans and Leo van Doeselaar’s performances will soon be surpassed. The two approach this music lovingly, carelessly; most important, they take it seriously. They have rehearsed their interpretations with infinite care, bringing to them a wide dynamic range, innumerable tonal shadings, and delightfully appropriate rubatos—without ever undoing the appearance of absolute spontaneity. Jordans and Doeselaar capture the charm of this music, from the rambunctious joy of the cabaret numbers to the delicate melancholy of the lyric ones. Even better, they penetrate to the music’s structure, clarifying inner lines through crisp articulation and careful pedaling.

Ectetera’s sonics are excellent, as is its pressing, but unfortunately all is cloaked in an intrusive background hiss that is surprising in a digital recording. No matter: Pianists, Francophiles, contemporary music types will all cherish this recording.

K. ROBERT SCHWARZ

SCHUMANN: Concertstück in F, Op. 86 (arr. for Piano and Orchestra); MEN-


How well does this version of the Concerto for four horns work, even as arranged by the composer himself? Marvelously well indeed! In my opinion, the piece places in quality just below Schumann’s Piano Concerto, and above his other two piano-and-orchestral compositions. Why this arrangement has taken so long to reach us is a mystery; perhaps someone will come along to tell the whole story (though it will be hard to tell it better than Richard Freed does in his excellent notes for the disc). Until then, all Schumann lovers can rejoice at the appearance of this new version, which should find many more advocates than the original.

The performance is extremely perceptive—how else could it be? with a soloist who has already recorded as much Schumann as Peter Frankl has? One might imagine better, but not by much. The same evaluation also applies to the account of Mendelssohn’s unjustly neglected Piano Concerto No. 2. In fact, Frankl has a far finer sense of the Mendelssohn style than almost anyone else who has chosen (with bad advice, no doubt) to record both concertos in recent years.

One last question: These performances were recorded in March 1980. Why has the Moss Music Group waited so long to release them?

THOMAS L. DIXON


American Youth Symphony of Los Angeles, Mehli Mehta, cond. [Jane Courtland Walton

Mehta: an auspicious recording debut

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and Laila Padov Nilles, prods.) Protone PR 159. Cassette: CPR 159.

Yup, it's Zubin's father, now in his mid-seventies, making his long-delayed recording debut. The elder Mehta, longtime music director of the Bombay Symphony Orchestra, founded the Youth Symphony of Los Angeles in 1964 and has apparently been content to remain there ever since, despite the fact that his New York debut with the National Orchestral Association in Carnegie Hall two seasons ago was greeted with unequivocal critical acclaim.

Even though both sides of this disc are devoted to ersatz arrangements of the real thing, one can easily hear why the critics (and Zubin himself) have been so enthusiastic. Stoki's marzipan mishmash of Tristan's love music has never been to everyone's taste, and most likely there are those who were grateful that the maestro's death supposedly precluded any further performances of it. Mehli was courageous indeed to take up the gauntlet. At any rate, what is heard here is remarkable for its sinewy strength, sinuous exposure of detail, and - above all - its uncanny near-duplication of the lush Stoki/Philly sound. All the more striking, since Mehta's orchestra is somewhat undersized (only five basses) and mainly made up of students.

The Rosenkavalier Suite was anonymously arranged (appropriate, because it's really awful), but the sounds are likewise impressive on their own merits. Protone's recording is quite clear, though subject to stridency in the upper registers. It would now seem right and to allow Mehli Mehta to record the really meaty repertory he surely deserves. Bill Zakariasen

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**Theater and Film**

HORNER: Star Trek III: The Search for Spock.

James Horner is a composer who, after what seemed the briefest of apprenticeships scoring the current equivalent of B-flicks (Humanoids from the Deep, Battle Beyond the Stars), graduated to the big time in a big way. Suddenly, films like 48 Hours, The Dresser, and Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan were sporting his music. None of his previous work indicated any solid creative capacity, nor have any of the scores he has written since his name went up in soundtrack lights. If ever there was a composer who rode the Tinsel Town escalator to the top by carefully following already blazed trails, it's Horner.

Mind you, I haven't heard Brainstorm or Gorky Park, which (I'm told) stand out with some individuality, but on the basis of his major film scores Horner is a creator of coldly calculated, imitative music. His Wrath of Khan was a pale reflection of the fine material Jerry Goldsmith wrote for Star Trek: The Motion Picture. And now Star Trek III sounds like outtake cues from Khan. (Indeed, the wavery main theme from Trek II returns to dominate the new score.) The music does not lend itself to much treatment, nor does Horner apply much, and the result is aural stagnation. One can hear a bit of Goldsmith here, a bit of John Williams there. There's even what sound like a direct lift from Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet—compare the opening of "Stealing the Enterprise" to the middle section of "The Death of Tybalt." (Horner has done this before: His score to Battle Beyond the Stars lifts a theme from Alexander Nevsky.)

This is a BORING album, graced by some of the worst studio playing I've ever heard out of Hollywood. To top it off, a one-sided LP containing a disco version of the Search for Spock theme is included as a "bonus." Whoever thought that one up ought to be beamed into the storage compartment of a Port-O-San as punishment to fit the crime.

Noah Andre Trudeau
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Alone, Alone, Oh!

The virtues of live concert recordings vis-à-vis those made without an audience in attendance have long been fervently advocated—and questioned. The pioneering example, Columbia's Associated Glee Clubs and a Metropolitan Opera House audience in Adeste fidelis (March 31, 1925), was one of the most potent factors in selling the brand-new "electrical" technology to the record-buying public. Later examples have met with varying degrees of success, although some are highly esteemed as historical documents. Few recent ones have been as vigorously touted as Alfred Brendel's third traversal of the five Beethoven Piano Concertos, this time with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under James Levine, recorded June 14-16, 1983 (Philips prestige-box digital/chrome 411 189-4). Brendel pleads the "live" case in the 48-page notes-booklet and in a May 1984 HIGH FIDELITY article, but both the pros and cons are most provocatively argued by the recordings themselves.

There is indeed a fine sense of spontaneity and dramatically effective spacing. And while the audience is admirably quiet, one sees aware of his empathetic presence even apart from the warm applause at the start of each concerto and enthusiastic cheering after each has been played. But right there is a prime disadvantage: Fine on first hearing, these audience reactions become less and less tolerable on every repetition. In any case, home listeners will be most directly influenced by the music, the readings, and the sonic qualities—all variably admirable and debatable.

Brendel and Levine fans will be enraptured. I have a few reservations, mainly about the concerto over-romanticization of some orchestral passages and the tendency of the piano's tone to harden in loud, emphatic moments—in contrast to the sparkling or floating sonorities found elsewhere in Philips's ultralucid digitalism. And the convenience and economy of this three-cassette edition must be balanced against improper sequencing and side breaks between movements in the First, Fifth, and Third Concertos. So while this is a set to be heard—and, in large part, esteemed—it scarcely challenges the memorable Ashkenazy/Solti/London, Fleischer/Szell/CBS, or Schnabel/Sargent/HMV (now Arabesque) versions.

Church music, even in concert rather than actual worship, profits more richly by the presence of a devout audience. Witness Haydn's so-called Saint Cecilia Cantata-Mass. Its inexhaustible musical, as well as devotional, appeals (and the grand ambition of the Basilica Ottobeuren) were spell-bindingly captured on July 4, 1982, in Rafael Kubelik's account with Bavarian choral and orchestral forces and a group of celebrity soloists topped by soprano Lucia Popp and bass Kurt Moll (Orfeo/Pantheon digital/chrome double-play M 03282; brief notes; no texts).

Live recording risks can be avoided, yet some advantages retained, by scheduling sessions during the rehearsals for a concert or just after a performance—long a common practice, as are we reminded by the first of Barton Wilmore's two latest miraculous resurrections of 78-rpm milestones: the Columbia Karl Muck and Siegfried Wagner Parsifal excerpts, from the 1927 Bayreuth Festival (In Sync/Conduktart C 4137), and the Willem Mengelberg/Concertgebouw Orchestra versions of Tchaikovsky's Fourth (1929) and Fifth (1928) Symphonies (C 4138, double-play). [See feature review, September MUSICAL AMERICA edition.] Both meet the dictionary definition of "live" as "full of life and active power; not obsolete." Indeed, I'm still able to reiterate my 1929 praise for the sheer strength of Mengelberg's performances, which even in quiet passages suggest "an athlete's muscles rippling under the skin as he makes even the slightest gesture." But it's the Wagnerian program—above all, the incomparable eloquence of Alexander Kipnis and Fritz Wolff in the Good Friday Spell—that endows the past with eternal life.

Lively Interpretations. The great Ukrainian bass's artistry also survives in the playing of his harpsichordist son, the American-born Igor Kipnis, whose latest program is further outstanding for the tonal beauty of its Boston Museum instruments: a 1680 Couchet in François Couperin's 26th Ordre and uncle Louis Couperin's G minor Suite, and a 1756 Henri Hemsch in Louis Mar- chand's First Suite. All three pieces, but especially François's masterpiece in silvery Couchet sound, are sheer enchantment (Nonesuch 78021-4, detailed instrument and music notes). Moving on from France to Austria, an "Early Viennese School" collection by the Camerata Bern under Thomas Füri, with oboe soloist Heinz Holliger, hardly makes a case for the "school's" existence. However, it imaginatively revises unjustly forgotten yet still delectable early Classical works not only by Albrechtsberger and Dittersdorf, but also by the far-from-obsolete Matthias Monn, Joseph Starzer, Johann Baptist Vanhal, and Anton Zimmermann. Only period instruments are lacking in this invaluable anthology (Archiv prestige-box digital/chrome 410 599-4; two extended-play cassettes). [See review in this issue.]

A more startling return from apparent oblivion is that of Albeniz's only piano concerto, which vanished after he first performed it in 1887 and was rediscovered (in a two-piano reduction) only in the late 1960s. Now, in a restored orchestral version, it is played with zestful bravura by Aldo Ciccolini with the Royal Philharmonic under Enrique Bátiz (Angel digital/ferric 4XS 38038). But the crisp articulation and vivid presence of recording that are so effective for this Lisztian display are less apt for the impressionistic coupling, Falla's Nights in the Gardens of Spain. For its haunting magic, turn to the third and finest version by Alicia de Larrocha, now with the London Philharmonic under Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos (London digital/chrome 410 289-4). Their matchless mastery of Franco/Iberian atmosphere and idiom is also evident in another, if less important, Albeniz revival—his more expected "Spanish" Rapsodia española, a string of piano-solo dances deftly transcribed for piano and orchestra by Cristóbal Halffter. Turina's familiar, more gaudily colorful Rapsodia sinfonica is the filler. [See review of these Angel and London recordings in this month's MUSICAL AMERICA edition.]

There was an alter ego of the March-King John Philip Sousa few of us know: a composer of popular operetta and dance music, as we are ingeniously reminded by Erich Kunzel and the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra (Vox Cum Laude D-VCS 9063). His exemplary waltzes, gavotte, polonaise, tango, even a fox-trot, plus Desirée and El Capitan excerpts, are disarming lavender-and-old-lace curios.

Lifeforms' infinite variety. Valuable as many live recordings may be—including this month's Beethoven and Haydn examples—the catch-em-on-the-wing mode works far better for grand, potentially historic ceremonials than for standard reperto- rie fare. The death-and-time-defying vitality of either the works themselves or unique interpreters, along with invigorating acoustical ambience, is quintessentially what makes music, recorded or otherwise, "then chiefly live."

OCTOBER 1984
BORN IN FORT WORTH, Texas, in 1930, Ornette Coleman has been widely recognized since the release of his debut album in 1955 as the father of free jazz. With such landmarks as the double-quartet “Free Jazz” in 1961 and the electric guitar-based “Dancing in Your Head” in 1977, he has created a body of work that eschews conventional bar limitations and ignores keys and chord changes. He also invented “harmonolodies,” a complicated system of writing that is better felt when listened to than when read about. John Coltrane and James Blood Ulmer, to name just two of the great ones in the past 30 years, have both said that Coleman changed the way they improvised and made them more open as musicians.

Yet no matter how far “outside” he has gone, Coleman’s work has distinct roots in the black music of his native Southwest. The Texas-style honking of rhythm-and-blues saxophonists such as King Curtis is a part of his playing today. And his recent performances with Prime Time (his electric guitar band) at New York clubs like the Ritz link the dance music of the ’40s with the dance music of the ’80s.

Coleman’s impact has been felt in the classical field as well as in jazz and rock. His symphony, Skies of America, has been performed at home and abroad, and he is currently writing The Oldest Language, a symphony for Prime Time and 125 additional musicians, Eastern and Western.

A recent tax-evasion case is but one example of the kind of financial difficulties Coleman has faced his entire career. On the afternoon of the Fourth of July, we met at his current home, a spacious but largely unfurnished room on the top floor of an old schoolhouse on Manhattan’s Lower East Side.

Backbeat: What are your earliest memories of music? How did you begin?
Coleman: My father died when I was about seven; I only faintly remember him, but my mother told me that he was a really good singer. We lived on the East Side of Fort Worth, a class-zero ghetto. As little kids, my friends and I used to play on kazooos and imitate bands. There were three churches right on my block, and I remember all that time going from one church to the other listening to gospel music.

I was around nine when a band came to school, a miniature Basie-type band. This guy got up and took a solo on saxophone and I was just in awe. His name was Red Connors and he became my hero. When I became a teenager I made me a shine box and got a job shining shoes, and also as a busboy, to save money. Finally one night my mom told me to look under the bed, and there was this alto. I assembled it and

Roots & Branches

Ornette Coleman connects the dance music of the Forties and the Eighties.

by John Morthland
played it as good as I’m playing it today, first time. Because I just thought that was the way you do it.

I started learning things from the radio; I wasn’t old enough to go to clubs. Sentimental Journey was big then, Jimmy Dorsey and Louis Jordan were big. When I was fourteen I got a band together, and we were the house band for these illegal gambling joints in town. I played in lots of Mexican places, too.

Backbeat: Then what was your introduction to jazz?
Coleman: I met Red Connors. I went to a jam session one night with Lester Young. Red, musicians passing through town from the East, and lots of local guys. I found out I was very limited, because I only knew the song I was playing. They were calling songs they thought was hard, to play the changes; I couldn’t do that because I hadn’t learned their repertoire. So Red played me records by Bud Powell and Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, who are still my favorite bebop musicians today, as is Thelonious Monk. The more I learned everybody’s solos, the less I wanted to play other kinds of music. I was fifteen. Two years later I broke my cornet playing football; the doctor said I’d have to switch from alto to tenor. So I was playing more rhythm and blues, because that’s what people wanted to hear on tenor.

Backbeat: Would you say there was anything in your style then that hinted at what was to come?
Coleman: Yes—I always made up something when I didn’t have anything to go by. I didn’t know it was improvising. I just thought that was the way you played music, the way you would, say, just read a newspaper. I didn’t think of a structure and what you could and couldn’t do.

But the only jobs I could get were in bands that read charts, and I’d always get fired because of my solos. I remember one night I started playing what I thought Stardust sounded like without playing the melody. Everybody stopped dancing and started looking up and just listening. And that night I got fired; the guy said, “Give ‘em vanilla! Give ‘em vanilla!”

Backbeat: If you were already playing outside, did you really expect people to react otherwise in those days?
Coleman: Yeah, I expected them to like it. See, I was still playing with a dance feeling, a dance beat; I just wasn’t playing with dance ideas. People could dance to it if they’d wanted. But I figured maybe they just wanted to listen, so I obliged.

Backbeat: Were you making a decent living when you left Fort Worth at seventeen? What was your ticket out?
Coleman: I was making a decent living until I started playing bebop. Then nobody in Fort Worth would hire me. I thought if I could just get to either coast, I could play the real music. I went down to the black movie house in Fort Worth, and a minstrel, carnival type of band there was looking for a saxophone player. I told my mother they wasn’t going any further than Dallas, when actually we went deep into the South—Natchez, Mississippi. I was trying to teach this other tenor player some bebop, and so I was fired; I thought the minstrel show was outdated. But when I went back to Fort Worth, I told Tom-is, so I didn’t regret it. But I did regret being fired in Natchez.

I was a vegetarian then, and had my hair long like the Beatles—this was way back in the early Forties—and a beard. People thought I was a homosexual. But I had done all that because I thought it put me in a category where I wouldn’t have to play a certain kind of music. And it did. All I ever thought about was how the horn sounded, not the style.

Backbeat: Next you went to New Orleans, a city with a long jazz tradition. Did you fit in there at all?
Coleman: I joined Clarence Samuel’s band, and I switched back to alto because some guys who beat me up in Baton Rouge had destroyed my tenor. New Orleans was still playing Dixieland. But I was staying with Melvin Lassiter the trumpeter, and his family had a sanctified church. I used to go with them on Sunday and take my horn. I found myself playing in these incredible keys, Z and P and Q. It really helped me find out how to play without referring to what I call the maze, which is the changes. The music was freer than any I’d ever played, because there wasn’t a key. People sang or danced out of the blue, and everybody played what shook them at the moment. That made me very comfortable. I’m at the point today of believing that the truest expression is from the folk musics of the world.

Backbeat: Were you writing by then?
Coleman: Yes. I had learned enough to know that there were consistent patterns that went with bebop writing. So I could take a pop song and use the changes to make it bebop. But when I came back to Fort Worth in 1950, I really got into analyzing those changes. When I finally discovered they were based on the voicing of the piano, I realized that the alto sax didn’t have to follow those voicings; the C on the piano and the A on the alto were the same soundwise, even if they were supposedly different musically. I found that I could play much freer by using alto in place of piano. When that happened, I thought I’d outgrown bebop, and started writing songs that didn’t have nothing to do with changes.

Backbeat: Later that year you finally reached Los Angeles, as saxophonist with Pee Wee Crayton’s R&B band. Then what happened?
Coleman: When his band broke up, I sat in where I could—and I never went back to bebop, so I was having a terrible time. I’ll tell you an embarrassing story. One night I got to sit in with Max Roach and Sonny Rollins and Clifford Brown. When it came time to solo, I started playing the way I always played and they all got up and walked off the bandstand—left me standing there by myself. I was so hurt I started crying; they made it seem as if I was backwards, and that wasn’t true. They just didn’t know how to play outside.

Eventually I met some guy at a jam session who knew Les Koenig of Contempo (Continued on page 114)

**Selected Discography**

- **Ornette Coleman**
  - *Something Else!* Contemporary S 7551; 1958.
  - *Tomorrow Is the Question!* Contemporary S 7569; 1959.
  - *The Shape of Jazz to Come.* Atlantic SD 1317; 1960 (recorded 1959).
  - *This Is Our Music.* Atlantic SD 1353; 1960.
  - *Free Jazz.* Atlantic SD 1364; 1961.
  - *Trio.* Atlantic SD 1588; 1961.
  - *Ornette on Tenor.* Atlantic SD 1394; 1962 (recorded 1961).
  - *At the Golden Circle, Vols. 1, 2.* Blue Note BST 84224/25; 1965.
  - *The Empty Foxhole.* Blue Note BST 84246; 1966.
  - *Love Call.* Blue Note BST 84356; 1968.
  - *Paris Concert.* Trio PA 7169-80 (Japan); 1971.
  - *With YOKO ONO Yoko Ono/Plastic Ono Band.* Apple SW 3373; 1970 (includes a segment recorded at Royal Albert Hall, 1968).
  - *With JAMES BLOOD ULMER Tales of Captain Black.* Artists’ House AH 9407; 1978.
He's a Rebel

Prince and the Revolution: Purple Rain
Prince and the Revolution, producers Warner Bros. 25110-1

Prince is getting too old to make like his Bambi running for a warm cove in the woods, he wants his fans to know he has matured at least a little since he first wiggled in his bikini briefs for the masses in 1978. Now twenty-four years old, he has lived long enough to talk about his growing pains and his remorse, and he's smart enough to see the advantage in making his fans feel they understand.

Thus the goofy, slippery film and soundtrack album "Purple Rain." There's nothing here as visionary as Little Red Corvette, or that speaks to the body as aggressively as the rest of last year's "1999" did. "Purple Rain" is made for arenas, and played to the bleachers in the back.

The move's a smashing success: Both the album and the first single are stuck like barnacles on the Top 10, and as I write, the film hasn't even opened. Prince has earned his success, and yet it comes off like a big joke. At his best he's an amazingly asocial artist, one of the few who might still enthral your mama, as intense in his desire to slough off this mild life as any punk who never made it as far. "Purple Rain" doesn't advance any new ideas, but it's enjoyably splashy and unavoidable—Prince, a big flag flapping in the faces of middle America. He's winning them over.

"Dearly beloved..." the album begins throughout. Prince plays at being a preacher, albeit one with his own ideas about what constitutes a sacrament. By the end of that cut (Let's Go Crazy) you don't really know which second coming Prince is actually cheering for, but my guess is that the religious stuff is more strategic than felt. Casting his psyche and the sidewalks for something that might be called "spirit," he finds it in sex. The goof on preaching is self-dramatizing, something he could have taught Norman Mailer a thing or two about: the musically great I Would Die for You even has Prince offering to do God's job. But beneath the posturing, there's a pretty dangerous, pretty exciting impulse: that with God out of work these days, sex—not love—can rend this vale of tears.

There has always been a sense of others in Prince's music. On "Dirty Mind" he was the self-appointed leader of a gang set to rob all the banks and end all wars. In lingerie. The post-coital hordes he martials avoid the old social rubs. They won't fight, don't want to work, and like their horizontal refreshment anywhere they please. Yet for all the talk about "blacks, whites, Puerto Ricans, everybody just a freakin'," there was also a way in which sex seemed like an escape from everybody else, and himself, too. It cleared the air for Prince's love-mad fifth column, but before it built a coalition it registered as one big No—to boredom, to rigor mortis. It was as full of life and urgency as punk's revolt, and as total.

New fans may be corralled by the
Laura Branigan: Self-Control

Jack White, producer
Atlantic S 299706

Laura Branigan may be the Lucky One after all: three hits, a Grammy nomination for Best Pop Vocal Performance, and a certified gold single in the two short years since her debut. Power she's got—once a backup for Leonard Cohen, the voice is now a megaton bomb. Trouble is, "Self-Control," her latest effort, proves she still hasn't learned how to control power for more important things—namely, a sense of humor.

Right now, it's a mean, angry voice without a substantial cause to support it—that is, without a genuine, multicolored personality that speaks through and ultimately beyond the instrument itself. Despite her publicized four-octave range, Branigan's limited vocal expression vacillates only between a hoarse whisper and a wail that treads dangerously close to a loud wail. Hitch this to a punchy way with words, and all her tunes blend into some prefabricated sameness that's exhausting to listen to en masse unless you are concentrating hard on something else, like dancing. On The Lucky One, Satisfaction, and Breaking Out, Branigan seems to sing from the outside in—a curious mannerism for someone who idolizes Edith Piaf, but understandable from a career personally (and painlessly?) manipulated by Atlantic Svengali Ahmet Ertegun. Even when she offers her brand of tenderness on Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?...
the crackle in her voice, although slick, remains curiously empty.

Still, Briganan is not without effect. In the last refrain of With Every Beat of My Heart ("There’s thunder inside of me, deep inside of me, something’s goin’ aaaaah . . . "), she dives headfirst into a rockpile of emotion with an abandon that is thrilling and even infectious. A little more


Elvis Costello and the Attractions: Goodbye Cruel World
Clive Langer & Alan Winstanley, producers. Columbia FC 39429

Ever since “Trust” (1981), when Elvis Costello revealed his ambition to write like Cole Porter and sing like Frank Sinatra, he has been turning out exercises in dazzling songcraft, moving further away from the compressed rock of his early albums. “Im-

perial Bedroom” (1982) was Costello’s masterpiece of this phase. He wove Beat-

leque bounce, Broadway elegance, and folk simplicity into a sophisticated brand of pop, and puzzled over love’s fractured bonds with juicy wordplay. But on “Good-

bye Cruel World,” he succumbs to the dan-

gers of eclecticism. These songs carom between styles with no unifying theme, and
The 12-inch Single: Ain’t No Stoppin’ It Now

Reviewed by Vince Aletti

The 12-inch single, introduced a decade ago, has survived the disco boom that spawned it and the industry’s running-scared, post-disco slump to be rewarded this year with a new kind of pop respectability and recognition. Once the format of the dance club underground, the 12-inch is now solidly Hot 100 as well. At the time of this writing, fifteen of the top 20 singles on the Billboard chart are available as 12-inch discs. Originally developed to accommodate extended dance mixes on a high-quality pressing, the 12-inch is still the vinyl of choice for nearly all hard-core dance records of all sorts, including the broad range of rap and break tracks that are often available in no other format. But the success of dance-oriented British pop groups like Culture Club, Duran Duran, the Thompson Twins, and Human League—all of whom put out five 12-inch singles to every full LP—and the return of upbeat, multi-racial Top 40 radio have brought the 12-inch mix to a much wider audience.

Ideally, the format offers versions of a song no other pressing provides: primarily longer (averaging between six and nine minutes), usually remixed (in most cases by a club DJ) for maximum danceability, and accompanied by an instrumental or dub version. Designed to capture the heat of the moment on the dance floor, many 12-inch singles have the life span of a firefly on a summer night, but the best retain their powers long after that moment has passed. Starting below, a regular round-up of those records most likely to survive the passing passion.

Begin with two of the year’s biggest pop singles. Prince’s When Doves Cry (Warner Bros. 20228) and Bruce Springsteen’s Dancing in the Dark (Columbia 44-05028)—rich, dramatic records in very different moods. Prince’s chunky, dense track and the dreamlike intensity of his lyrics combine for his most compelling performance on vinyl. Even before the sighs and screams come in—and the guitar howls—you know there’s something deeply primal and thrilling going on here. What makes the 12-inch essential, though, since the A-side is an extended version, is a B-side unavailable elsewhere called 17 Days. A minor pleasure next to the major workouts on “Purple Rain,” it sounds like an outtake.

Vince Aletti lives and works in New York City and writes for The Village Voice.
Costello's musical cleverness can't hide his surprisingly sloppy writing or the pertunoriness with which he addresses his familiar obsessions, faithless love and lovers' guilt.

On last year's Punch the Clock, Costello united his conflicting desires (mass popularity vs. artistic integrity) by writing a glossy, brass-laden album about battling lassitude in work, love, and thought. Here, indecision sinks the record. For example, in his attempt at an even bigger single, 'The Only Flame in Town,' Costello virtually rips off his 1983 Top 10 hit, 'Everyday I Write the Book' (and needlessly drags in singer Daryl Hall as a security for more airplay).

Yet on Worthless Thing, the finest song on the album, he derides a celebrity-fixated culture. 'The Great Unknown'—a humble acceptance that the song, not the singer, is immortal—is top-rate, and so is Peace in Our Time, which conjures up World War II, Grenada, and America's beauty-pageant Presidential campaigns to caution that peace isn't possible as long as we're vulnerable to propaganda. In these three songs, Costello retains his facility for raising pop's literacy level. But forget the rest. The real problem with 'Goodbye Cruel World' is that its pithy creator simply needs a vacation.

ROYCE MILLMAN

George Jones: Heartaches & Hangovers
Rounder Special Series SS 17

From 1965 to 1971, when he was on Musicor, George Jones released nearly 300 sides, or roughly four to five albums per year. So it's hardly surprising that his output was patchy and that much of it is forgotten today. But it was an important transitional period for Jones in several respects, and besides, his talents are simply too vast to mess up all that material. With last year's 'Burn the Honky-Tonk Down' and now this new LP, Rounder has begun separating the wheat from the chaff.

The 'Nashville Sound' sweetening took hold during this era, but Jones's records stayed closer to hard-core honky-tonk than most of his peers'. The vocal chorus, for example, may sound excessive on 'I Threw Away the Rose or Blue Side of Lonesome,' but the crying steel guitar remains prominent on the former, and his own phrasing on the latter matches the pedal steel note for note. Jones was also blessed with the true grit of songwriters Dallas Frazier, who took his honky-tonking straight or tongue-in-check, and Leon Payne, who was unremittingly morbid.

But most importantly, by moving away from the uptempo (and often carefree) material of his youth and toward ballads, Jones allowed himself to stretch out, giving full play to his pinched voice and to his newer, more adult feelings of yearning, anger, and remorse. Only three of these songs are uptempo, and only one of them (the gospel 'Leaning on the Everlasting Arms') could be considered upbeat. The rest (for honky-tonk hell—from the irony of My Favorite Lies, on which his vocal twists reshape the melody with virtually every line, to 'The Man That You Once Knew,' which he sings with his teeth clenched and his stomach in knots, to 'Things Have Gone to Pieces,' the kind of overlaid country melodrama only Jones can salvage).

Perhaps the best of all is the unusually frank (for its time) 'Say It's Not You.' 'Darlin', there's talk around town/ About a girl who spreads love around,' it begins. At the end of the first chorus, a paired Jones begs, 'Darlin', say it's not you.' But as the details are filled in, his voice ebbs and flows over a mournful Texas fiddle, and the truth becomes increasingly apparent. Finally, there is nothing left but resignation as he delivers the title line one more time. Say It's Not You is a guided tour through (to paraphrase one of his songs) the seasons of George Jones's heart, proving conclusively that it's a mistake to ignore his Musicor years.

JOHN MORTLAND

Oh-OK: Furthermore What

The simplest question regarding Tina Turner's career could put an end to any Trivial Pursuit contest: Who can name one hit of hers? Unless you're one of those slaverers keeping of her long-legged legend, you might, after some thought, mumble Proud Mary and stop dead. After almost 30 years in the majors, her batting average has

TINA TURNER: PRIVATE DANCER

Rupert Hine, Terry Britten, Martyn Ware, Greg Walsh, & Carter, producers. Capitol ST 12330

Tina Turner: Private Dancer

The simplest question regarding Tina Turner's career could put an end to any Trivial Pursuit contest: Who can name one hit of hers? Unless you're one of those slaverers keeping of her long-legged legend, you might, after some thought, mumble Proud Mary and stop dead. After almost 30 years in the majors, her batting average has
been mighty lucky.

Until now, that is. Before ‘Private Dancer’ even came out, Turner scored with an audacious 12-inch rendition of Al Green’s Let’s Stay Together that matched technotrons (courtesy of the producers, Heaven 17’s Martyn Ware and Greg Walsh) with old-styled Memphis grit. Best of all, though, was Turner herself: The plea for lasting love revealed a part of her soul she’d never shown before.

Such moments abound on this album, a considerable achievement in that four sets of British producers and musicians had a hand in its three-year metamorphosis. Each song has been carefully picked or molded to fit Turner’s persona: the gritty soul survivor who may have seen some better days, but who’s doing just fine, thank you. That real character inspires the producers to avoid the sterile confines of most current British studio creations. Rupert Hine (known for late for producing the Fixx and Howard Jones) lets her work up a sweat on two concise declarations. I Might Have Been Queen and Better Be Good to Me, and studio vet Terry Britten applies the most modern settings to a quirky take on Ann Peebles’s I Can’t Stand the Rain and Turner’s summer smash; What’s Love Got to Do With It?

The rock-and-soul sound of the last two songs on the record is one that Turner has mined with little success since splitting with husband Ike in the mid-Seventies. But producer Carter and a Mark Knopfler-less Dire Straits assisted by Jeff Beck give us overdrive rock on Claw that stays this side of strident, and convey understated melodrama on Private Dancer. By assuming the title role, Turner chooses an extreme but perhaps fitting finale for her most glorious recorded moment. ‘Tell me, do you want to see me slimmy again?’ she sighs, and the answer is—of course—yes. The show must go on; in Tina Turner’s case, we’re lucky it did.

WAYNE KING

**Jazz**

Barbara Lashley:
How Long Has This Been Going On?
Judy Kupnica & Bozy White, producers
Shoestring SS 70 (P.O. Box 10208, Oakland, Calif. 95610)

Barbara Lashley’s studies at the University of California at Berkeley in the history of American female singers led her to become a professional herself. So it is not surprising to find a number of ’30s and ’40s performers suggested in her work. The relationships come out in phrasing, in shading, in approach, but not in outright imitation.

The conjunction of Lashley’s research and voice with similarly oriented instrumentalists gives a sense of immediate vitality to songs that are usually thought of as old standards. She is especially in sync with trumpeter Leon Oakley, whether in brash and brassy outbursts or muted to a soft and distant murmur, while pianist Ray Skjelbred keeps the rhythm pumping. The ensemble effect is particularly successful on Lawd, You Made the Night Too Long, a clumsily constructed song that flows because of her phrasing. Oakley spurs her on with wild growls, and Dick Hadlock’s soprano saxophone adds soft, ascendant mutterings.

And Lashley is not limited to female singers as sources. She and bassist Steven Strauss do a vocal duet on My Blue Heaven that follows the stylized phrasing of the vocal trio in Jimmie Lunceford’s version of the tune. Another ’30s band, the Casa Loma Orchestra, and a male singer, Kenny Sargent, inspire For You, although her thin-voiced rendition withs in comparison to his.

JOHN S. WILSON

The Louisiana Repertory Jazz Ensemble of New Orleans: Uptown Jazz
S. Frederick Starr, producer
Stomp Off SOS 1055 (549 Fairview Terr., York, Pa. 17403)

The Louisiana Repertory Jazz Ensemble of New Orleans has embarked on what might be a treacherous project, “creating uncompromisingly authentic performances of classic New Orleans jazz of the decades before 1930.” It is extremely difficult to
recreate something as ephemeral as a jazz performance; it’s nearly impossible to reach back 50 years and capture not just the musicians’ style, but also their instincts and chemistry.

So the Ensemble’s first LP, “Alive and Well” (Stomp Off SOS 1029), was encouraging. But “Uptown Jazz” is even better. The best cuts succeed not because they are faithfully reproduced, but because they’re played with the kind of vitality and involvement that one associates with original creation. Frederick Longo, a marvelously brash, but perceptively channeled trombonist, is especially good; John Chaffe’s delicately sensitive mandolin and producer S. Frederick Starr’s clarinet virtuosity are also first-rate. Starr, who has a day gig as president of Oberlin College, projects the idiosyncratically exuberant, grainy-toned phrasing of Edmond Hall and brings fresh life to the styles of Johnny Dodds and George Lewis.

As quoted above, the Ensemble speaks of “creating,” not “recreating,” which is the customary approach. On this disc, they are zeroing right in on their target.

JOHN S. WILSON

Art Pepper: Artworks

John Snyder & Laurie Pepper, producers

Galaxy 5148 (Distributed by Fantasy/Prestige/Milestone/Stax)

This is the first of three albums of new material recorded at the sessions that yielded “So In Love” for producer John Snyder’s now defunct Artists’ House label. There could scarcely be a better representation of Art Pepper’s “Artworks.” He plays two unaccompanied alto saxophone solos; three pieces with pianist George Cables, bassist Charlie Haden, and drummer Billy Higgins; and one piece on clarinet with Haden and Higgins. There are two standards, two Charlie Parker numbers, a bossa nova, and a Pepper original. This is a cross section that really cuts across.

Pepper, distictively himself in each situation, is particularly interesting in his clarinet treatment of Parker’s Anthropology. In contrast to the best-known bop clarinetists—Buddy DeFranco and Tony Scott—who attempted to equate the instrument with the clipped, furious tumble of notes that poured out of most bop trumpeters and saxophonists—Pepper has a relaxed, easy approach, starting in low register to milk the tune’s melodic warmth first and then rising to an interpretation more like theirs. Of his two unaccompanied pieces, his Body and Soul is a gem, but he has trouble getting You Go To My Head off the ground: It merely bumps around suddenly. Yet Pepper is as fleet as an arrow with the quartet on Donna Lee and his phrasing is provocatively Monk-ish on his own Blues for Blanche.

JOHN S. WILSON

Mel Powell: The Unavailable Mel Powell

Pete Welding, producer

Pausa PR 9023 (P.O. Box 10069, Glendale, Calif. 91209)

Mel Powell made a very impressive entrance into the big-time jazz world at the age of eighteen when he succeeded Teddy Wilson as Benny Goodman’s pianist in 1941 and began writing arrangements for the band, such as Mission to Moscow and The Earl. But gradually he withdrew to study classical music and to teach. This album of recordings made in 1947 and ’48 is a reminder of his individuality as a jazz musician. These glimpses were originally released as 78 rpm singles or as individual contributions to an LP; two have never been released before.

Whether he plays solo or with a quintet, sextet, or out-of-character Dixieland septet, Powell sets the tone and style of every piece. He is a strong player who goes dancing through ensembles or around soloists as if he were Earl Hines cutting through a major band. (Hines, Wilson, and Tatum are major influences.) His solo pieces—You Go To My Head and When A Woman Loves a Man—are relaxed and evocative, full of spirit and sensitivity. For the sextet, he writes with a sturdy, thick texture, taking advantage of the presence of Chuck Gentry’s baritone saxophone and using his own piano solos as a light contrast to the grainy, urgent quality of the ensembles (most notably on original, Cookin’ One Up). Musk Rat Ramble is a complete stray, recorded with a septet of different musicians almost a year after the other pieces. But like the others, it’s distinguished by Powell himself, who alone refuses to bend an inch to Dixieland formulas.

JOHN S. WILSON
ORNETTE COLEMAN
(Continued from page 105)

ry Records, and Les wanted to buy some of my compositions. I sold him seven at $25 each. About three weeks later, he called back and said his contracted musicians didn’t know how to play the songs. I told him I could play them, and he asked me to, without even an audition. That’s how I made my first album, “Something Else!” And everybody said, “I like his writing, but I can’t stand his playing.”

Backbeat: It seems like the two would be inseparable for you.

Coleman: When I explored my own compositions as a player, instead of finding the maze I had written the song about I would just create another new maze, to go on top. Therefore, nobody could follow how I got from a to b. Once I established the framework, I didn’t use it to establish how I was gonna play; I would just play, because I knew I could always go back to that framework. So it didn’t really dawn on me how different my playing was until I put together my own little band and started trying to show others how to do it.

Backbeat: Did your situation change when you came to New York in 1959?

Coleman: I had the same problems! I filled the Five Spot every night for six months, but people came to see how ridiculous I was, even if they liked the music once they got there. Most of them were artists and painters. I was making only about $90 a week and I was getting written up in all the magazines.

Backbeat: By 1962, you were composing classical music. What drew you to that?

Coleman: Huntley and Brinkley came to the Five Spot and asked me, “Can you read?” And I said, “Only the newspaper,” because even when I told people I could do things like read music, it never helped me. So after that, write-ups always picked up on that quote. I made an album with Gunther Schuller called “Abstraction,” and the liner notes said I didn’t know how to read or notate my own music. And all that time, I had been in the studio sight-reading his music. I realized my image was sort of “corn-pone musician,” this illiterate guy who just plays, so I started writing classical music. I still think of myself as basically a composer who does some performing.

Backbeat: “Dancing in Your Head” has come to be seen as another crucial breakthrough. What was your goal on that?

Coleman: I had some experiences while traveling in the early ’70s with Moroccan and Nigerian musicians that really put me on notice. They played just as free as they wanted to, yet when they all wanted to stop together, they did. They were playing free jazz, only it must have been 400 million years old. What I tried to do after that, which was what I experienced in Nigeria, was to allow every musician to be equal in the total expression of the idea.

When I heard this big sound, the first thing that came into my mind was the guitar. I got me two electric guitars; I wasn’t trying to get an electric band or a rock band, I was just trying to expand my writing, to get that bigger sound. To get the feeling of dancing, without using a specific pattern. The Moroccan musicians did that. I wanted the music to be very electrostatic, to have a cerebral effect but a physical feeling. I was trying to make you think and feel at the same time.

Backbeat: Did you see it as a turning point for yourself? Were you aware of the attention it brought you in the rock world?

Coleman: Because it was a new band, I thought it was opening up avenues for me. I thought it would free me from being classified, and it has worked out like that. I was aware that you could put out a dance record without playing a constant cliché, and that some of the rock guys were gonna be turned on by that.

Backbeat: Do you see any similarities between “Dancing in Your Head” and the kind of r&b you played 40 years ago?

Coleman: You know what I learned to do back then with what’s called swing music? Even when I was playing jazz, I still had that dance image in my mind without having to have drums; lots of that is still in my playing. But that’s the only thing I feel I’ve carried over from the time I started.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>RS #</th>
<th>Page #</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>88</td>
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