THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS

fice

The Prima Donna at Work

CALLAS as Carmen

New

Trends in

965KITS

FEBRUARY

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A Brünnhilde

#### SUTHERLAND as Norma

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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE







#### high fidelity



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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



#### Great sound, if you have the room.



If your heart's set on a super stereo phonograph installation capable of tracking down every last cycle, and you have the room for such a system, by all means, go 'whole-hog'.

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#### On the Score of Spadework. . . .

SIR .

Conrad L. Osborne's suggestion, in his review of the recent RCA Victor Rigoletto [December 1964], that the line "You see before you a man with a spade" is "... the greatest single line in all translated opera," is open to some challenge. Mr. Osborne simply hasn't been doing the proper spadework.

If he had, he would have come across the following, from the Prague National Theatre recording of Smetana's Dalibor, issued by Colosseum. It occurs at the very end of the opera, as translated by Jindrich Elbl.

Enemy troops are beaten and Budivoi: dispersed.

- Let freely go this group of women fair! We carried victory!
- We carried victory!
- Guards: Budivoi:

(seeing Dalibor) By golly! Surrender. Dalibor!

Before such an effort, all others pale into insignificance.

Alan Rich New York, N. Y.

#### More on FM-and Its Sponsors

SIP .

In the article entitled "FM on the Threshold" in your November 1964 issue you stated that "live stereo broadcasts are unknown in nearly all communities."

There are, of course, a few FM stations offering such programs-of which WPRB is one. and. as far as we know, the only college radio station in this category. We are now broadcasting the Princeton University Concert Series I from McCarter Theater on the campus. The first concert in the series, by the New York Festival Orchestra conducted by Thomas Dunn, was broadcast on October 12. Future broadcasts will include a concert by George Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra on February 16 and a recital by Nathan Milstein on March 22.

These programs (and other WPRB stereo offerings) can be heard in the New York and Philadelphia areas as well as throughout the State of New Jersev.

Jeffrey A. Schafer Director of Classical Music, WPRB Princeton, N. J.

Continued on page 17

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

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This is the music that makes hearts sing . . . the music of Paris . . . music of swirling gaiety . . . music of subtle charm . . . music with the bittersweet flavor of a great vintage wine.

As the greatest of American guitarists explores the loveliest music of Paris, he pays tribute to its most renowned guitarist, the legendary Django Reinhardt, creating performances that reflect the same feeling for beauty and joy and rhythm that brought Reinhardt acclaim.

And Tony Mottola has an ad-ded advantage that Reinhardt never had . . . Command's amazing techniques which bring such an astounding sense of immediacy and presence to even the gentlest nuances that he conjures from his guitar.

Even a person who had never been to France knows something about the country, knows something of the French mode of life and French mode of living.

We all absorb this from the music of France. If we have actually been to France, certain tunes will have certain specific associations. But you don't have to go to France to understand and react to the music that is so typically French - the music that makes us feel Parisian.

This is particularly true of a musician such as Tony Mottola. More than most people, he is sensitively attuned to the waves of feeling that emanate from a song because of his highly developed skill both as an independent interpreter of songs --- as a solo performer -and as an intuitive collaborator when he plays accompaniment to Perry Como, as he has for two decades. As a guitarist, he has a very special reaction to the music of France because the man he calls "the greatest guitarist who ever lived" — Django Reinhardt — spent his career in the musical milieu of Paris.

There is, however, very little that is preconceived in Tony Mottola's approach to French songs. He meets each of them as a fresh and exhilarating experience. This album, as it exists now, grew and took shape because of the exploratory thinking that went on in the course of its development.

Tony Mottola spent days going over the possibilities for an album CIRCLE 21 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

of French songs (it would have been simpler to make six albums, he said later, because then he wouldn't have had to decide what not to in-clude in just one.) Finally, Guitar ... Paris, was born.

In some of these pieces you will hear phrases that derive from Reinhardt, and in all of them you will hear the spirit that is Paris. All intermixed in special magic, com-pounded out of the perfectly brilliant recording technique of Command, and the sensitive artistry of Tony Mottola.

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#### LETTERS

#### Continued from page 10

SIR:

Leonard Marcus, in his November article on FM broadcasting, points an accusing finger at "listeners' apathy" as one of the reasons why Good Music programs are on the decline. I think his premise is wrong.... Teen-agers will call their rock 'n' roll stations and ask for the latest Beatles record; a sophisticated audience doesn't function this way.

On the sad occasion of the dropping of another Good Music program, listeners are generally rebuked for their failure to sit down periodically and write letters of appreciation. Or they are told more specifically: "Our sponsor offered a free booklet on Investing, and we received only seventeen requests!" and "We were advertising a free brochure on Life Insurance, but so far only seven listeners have written in. . . ." Don't the sponsors and the broadcasters realize that the majority of the FM audience consists of mature, well-to-do, settled citizens who don't go for advertising gimmicks? They have Life Insurance, they are in the Stock Market, and they are reluctant to expose themselves to the hard sell which usually follows the free booklet. What business concerns sponsoring Good Music programs should realize is that they thus create a desirable corporate image in the community of which they are a part. I doubt that the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts sponsored by Texaco are paid for by extra gasoline sales, nor does a metallurgical firm in my own area sell more rotor blades for jet engines because it sponsors weekly broadcasts of the Philadelphia Orchestra.

It is not the FM public that should be denounced. It is the sponsors who should be made to understand that we do not walk into their establishment and tell a clerk that we enjoyed last night's Sibelius symphony. We don't even write to thank the management. A more subtle, longer lasting, and almost subliminal feeling of good will is what the sponsors of Good Music programs should expect—and this can be shown to exist wherever good taste and good sense combine in a community.

> John J. Stern, M.D. Utica, N. Y.

#### A & R Fantasies, A & R Facts

Sir:

"Let's Play A & R Man," by Leo Haber [December 1964], was smashing! I must suggest, though, that Boris Christoff would make an excellent Pooh-Bah, leaving the role of Ko-Ko, Lord High Ex., open for Franco Corelli.

Speculation prompts me on to the haven of all speculators, *Les Huguenots*. If a seven-star cast is desired, why not the following? Marguerite, Ljuba Welitch; Valentine, Peter Pears; Urbain, Anna Russell; Raoul, Bing Crosby; Nevers, Carlos Alexander; St. Bris, Maria Callas; Marcel, Burl Ives. The

Continued on page 20

FEBRUARY 1965

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The KLH Model Sixteen is probably the smallest integrated stereo amplifier in its power class.

We designed it that way. Small enough to fit into any room. Handsome enough to be welcome there.

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This is a full powered, full performance amplifier, with 70 watts of wide-band steady state power — 200 watts of peak power.

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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

# 'All that sound from that little tuner !!!?'

To lots of people, there's trauma in a small stereo tuner. Traditionally, the multiplex tuner has been a big heavy monster. It's hard to accept that a unit that sits easily in the palm of your hand can outperform most of its bulky and cumbersome predecessors.

KLH's brand new Model Eighteen multiplex tuner is just about nine inches long. And no matter how you look at it, that's small for a high performance stereo tuner.

But the Eighteen isn't small just so that you can amaze your friends. It's small so that it will be the perfect mate for the KLH Model Eleven, Model Fifteen, Model Sixteen or any other good amplifier. It's small so that it won't waste precious space in today's homes and apartments. It's small so that it's less likely to be damaged or thrown out of alignment in normal handling and transportation.

And it's small because it works best that way.

Judged on an absolute basis, the performance of the Model Eighteen is comparable to that of tuners costing much more. When its price is taken into consideration, its performance can be described as truly incredible.

Like the most expensive tuners, you'll find the

Eighteen a pleasure to tune. With Zero Center Tuning, there's no 'maybe area'. The meter tells you when you're tuned in and when you're not. The planetary tuning system we've used is mechanically the most accurate and trouble free. The tuning vernier has the silky yet positive feel that marks high quality engineering. The Stereo Indicator Light automatically identifies multiplexing stations as you tune.

But there is no vacuum tube tuner, at *any* price, with the ultimate reliability of the Model Eighteen. Beyond the fact that the Eighteen runs cool; beyond the fact that transistors don't age, the Model Eighteen has 4 IF stages employing transformers of extremely low mass. The slugs are less subject to jarring and misalignment when the Eighteen is shipped from the factory, or handled, than with heavier instruments. As a result, Model Eighteens in normal use will require substantially less maintenance and service than old fashioned tuners.

There's one more way the Eighteen differs from expensive tuners. It's not expensive. About \$130. Hear it at your KLH dealer's and judge for yourself.

Just don't call it cute. It's very sensitive.



KLH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION 30 CROSS STREET. CAMURIDGE 39, MASSACHUSETTS

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#### LETTERS

Continued from page 17

chorus of the Soviet Army, with the Waterloo (lowa) Symphony Orchestra, would be conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch, with Carl Orff producing.

What about Joan Sutherland as Santuzza? Eileen Farrell as Lakmé? There remains the one that almost came true, courtesy London Records, back in the early days of stereo: Mario del Monaco, Heldentenor, as Siegmund.

Truth could be stranger than fiction. Lawrence King Park Ridge, Ill.

SIR:

On the chance that you do not receive much comment on your magazine's format, I'd like first to say that the covers on your last November and December issues seem to me truly beautiful. Like good recorded sound for a great performance, the handsome appearance of your magazine adds much to my enjoyment of its contents.

I especially appreciated the wistful wit of Leo Haber's article (what a curse are the necessary restrictions of recording contracts!), but I think it is seriously incomplete in failing to mention some bizarre a & r fantasies that have become fact. If we can't hear Backhaus and Klemperer in Gershwin, we can hear Toscanini in both Gershwin and Grofé. We can also experience what Knappertsbusch does to the Nuteracker Suite, how Kempff and Backhaus fare in Chopin, and the wages of matching Klemperer (who, be it remembered, was the Robert Craft of the Twenties) with Kurt Weill (which also reminds me that no one has heard Mack the Knife or Swanee River until he's heard them played by Heifetz!). While Stokowski's Bach is celebrated, how many know his Vivaldi Op. 3, No. 11? Finally, I suppose that everyone has heard Johnny Mathis sing the Hallelujah Chorus by now, but I've saved my own favorite for last: you may never hear Lawrence Welk conduct the Mahler Resurrection, but you most certainly can hear him, a-one a-two, in Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture! Mr. Haber need only have patience, .

Harry Wells McCraw New Orleans, La.

#### **Callas in Beethoven**

SIR:

In H. C. Robbins Landon's review of Maria Callas' disc of Beethoven/Weber/ Mozart [November 1964] he says that Mme. Callas' version of "Ah perfido" is not in the running with that of Kirsten Flagstad. I believe this to be the other way around. Mme. Flagstad was a great artist and sang this concert aria with beautiful tone; but she also sang it without any sense of involvement. Callas is able to bring the whole thing alive right from the opening statement. Her still perfect breath control enables her to draw and phrase the long lines superbly. Richard Cabral Bell, Calif.

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

State.....Zip



#### If you have never really believed that a 2 cubic foot loudspeaker can sound as good as the largest systems, listen to the new Fisher XP-9.

We do not want to start another debate on the 'good big speaker' versus the 'good little speaker.' But, when you listen to the new Fisher XP-9, we do want you to evaluate it against loudspeaker systems of *all* sizes, not just the standard 2-cubic-foot bookshelf units.

We think the XP-9 can hold its own in an A-B showdown with any speaker--including the 'monsters.' It is simply the most successful bookshelf design to date.

The 12" woofer of the XP-9 not only goes down to 28 cps without distortion but also requires considerably less amplifier power for room-filling bass than previous experience would make you expect. The three 5" midrange drivers are assigned more than three octaves of the audible spectrum, with a considerably lower bass-to-midrange crossover than is conventional. This wide-band approach flattens the upper bass and lower midrange response to an unprecedented degree, completely eliminating even the slightest suggestion of boxed-in 'bookshelf' sound. And the exceptional dispersion characteristics and uniquely smooth, resonance-free response of the exclusive  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " soft-dome tweeter result in the most natural-sounding treble range ever achieved.

The Fisher XP-9 has an impedance of 8 ohms, comes in Scandinavian walnut, measures  $24\frac{1}{2}$  "by 14" by 12" deep, and costs \$199.50. Other superb Fisher loudspeaker systems include the XP-5 at \$54.50, the XP-6 at \$99.50, the XP-7 at \$139.50, and the XP-10 Consolette at \$249.50.



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#### Not even Fisher knows how to make a better tuner under \$300 than the new Fisher FM-200-C.

Fisher engineers have been working for several years now on the industry's most extensive research and development project in FM tuner design.

The one FM stereo tuner that incorporates all the advancements of the art that have emerged from this program is the new Fisher FM-200-C. Here is the sum total of Fisher creativity in the tuner field. It seems almost superfluous to add that no other high fidelity manufacturer has produced anything comparable.

Among the exclusive Fisher innovations and other typical Fisher circuit features designed into the FM-200-C are the Nuvistor-Golden Synchrode\* front end, 5 IF stages, 4 limiters, wide-band ratio detector, solid-state multiplex section,

ADIO CORPORATION, 21-40 44TH DRIVE, LONG ISLAND CITY, N.Y. 11101. OVERVEAS REPORTING " Onal. Inc., Long. Stand Oliy, N.Y. 11101. - Manadian Ree dents write to taniteb asso Stereo Beacon\* with automatic stereo-mono switching, AutoScan\* automatic stereo scanner, the MicroTune® system of tuning with AFC, and a d'Arsonval tuning meter.

IHF sensitivity is 1.8 microvolts; stereo separation is in excess of 40 db! In every respect, performance approaches the theoretical limits of the medium. You cannot buy finer FM reception or purer audio quality.

The dimensions of the FM-200-C are Fisher standard: 15% "wide x  $4^{11}$ /6" high x 11%" deep. Weight is 13 lbs. And the price is an eminently reasonable \$299.50. (Other great Fisher FM tuners include the FM-90-B at \$179.50, the FM-100-C at \$249.50 and the transistorized TFM-300 at \$299.50. Walnut cabinet for each model available at \$24.95.) \*PATENT PENDING

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CIRCLE 87 ON READER-S

R-217

## Anyone (including your wife) can make just as fine a tuner as Fisher



#### ...with the Fisher KM-60 StrataKit.

The Fisher KM-60 StrataKit makes it so easy to build an elaborate, high-performance FM-multiplex tuner that the technical experience or inexperience of the kit builder becomes totally irrelevant. Audio engineers and housewives can build the KM-60 with equal facility and completely equal results. And the results are spectacular.

The StrataKit method of kit construction is an exclusive Fisher development. Assembly takes place by simple, errorproof stages (Strata). Each stage corresponds to a separate fold-out page in the uniquely detailed instruction manual. Each stage is built from a separate packet of parts (StrataPack). The major components come already mounted on the extra-heavy-gauge steel chassis. Wires are *pre-cut* for every stage – which means every page. All work can be checked stage-by-stage and page-by-page, before

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proceeding to the next stage.

In the KM-60 StrataKit, the front-end and multiplex stages come fully assembled and prealigned. The other stages are also aligned and require only a simple 'touch-up' adjustment by means of the tuner's laboratory-type d'Arsonval signalstrength meter.

When it comes to performance, the advanced wide-band Fisher circuitry of the KM-60 puts it in a spectacular class by itself. Its IHF sensitivity of 1.8 microvolts makes it the world's most sensitive FM tuner kit. Capture ratio is 2.5 db; signal-to-noise ratio 70 db. Enough said.

Another outstanding feature of the multiplex section is the exclusive STEREO BEAM, the Fisher invention that shows instantly whether or not an FM station is broadcasting in stereo. It is in operation at all times and is completely independent of the tuning meter.

Everything considered, the Fisher KM-60 StrataKit is very close to the finest FM tuner you can buy and by far the finest you can build. Price, \$169.50. Walnut or mahogany cabinet, \$24.95. Metal cabinet, \$15.95. \*PATENT PENDING

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PARIS

For its series of recordings of ancient music, Archive has given the seventh "research period" a musicologically fascinating title: "Westeuropa

zwischen Barock und Rokoko." Offhand, what would you say is "between baroque and rococo"? In the past the Archive editors have selected, among other things, Purcell and carillon pieces; and have evaded the stylistic issue in English by simply labeling the category "from 1650 to 1800." But lately their emphasis has become clearer. Your really central Zwischenmusik (my coinage is thoroughly respectful) is apparently that created for Versailles and for the French public influenced by the royal taste.

The smost recent disc in the series was recorded in Paris under the direction of Paul Kuentz. One side offers *Simphonies, Quatrième Suitte*, by Michel-Richard Delalande (this spelling, after some discussion, was preferred to the equally defensible "de La Lande"); the overside presents *Fanfares, Premiere Suitte*, and *Simphonies, Seconde Suitte*, by Jean-Joseph Mouret. who died poor and mad after an unwise attempt to oppose Raneau. In those days you were terribly out if you weren't in.

New Light from Old Treatises. Kuentz, who by the time this is in print will be touring North America and Mexico with his chamber orchestra, is a brilliant member of the post-War-II Paris Conservatoire generation which felt the full impact of the return to Bach and Vivaldi. "I started out," he told me in a recent conversation, "very Romantic, and then I heard some of the older music played as it should be played." And how, I wondered, could one decide how this older music-Delalande's and Mouret's, for instance-should be played? "You must not," he said, "rely on the written notes, even when, as we did for this recording, you have photo copies of the oldest scores. But there are dozens of detailed eighteenth-century treatises on interpretations: and, knowing how the Archive people insist on authenticity, I studied them.'

The reader may be reminded of Wanda Landowska's remark, "let us revive the dead letter of old treatises" ["From the Landowska Notebooks," HIGH FIDELITY, December 1964]. The Kuentz disc, just awarded a 1965 grand prix, reveals a complexity in rhythm, dynamics, and timbre which should help to dispel the rather common notion that Versailles, musically speaking, was majestically simple-minded,

Existentialist Timidity. "Hell," according to a famous line in Jean-Paul Sartre's Huis Clos (No Exit), "is other people," It is also, for Sartre, a microphone. When Deutsche Grammophon asked him to tape his preface for its recent recording of the play, he quite lost the aplomb with which he rejects Nobel prizes. Finally, he smoked and worried through the assignment on the solemn condition that he be allowed to check immediately on how he sounded (actually, he sounded fine). The disc, which has also won a 1965 grand prix, is part of a new Literary Archive undertaken by the increasingly active local studio of DGG. Other items in the collection, all in French, are Rostand's L'Aiglon, a Rilke anthology, and a selection of medieval and Renaissance French love poetry. The performers are well-known Paris actors and actresses, plus M. Sartre,

**Double Role.** Pathé-Marconi has scheduled a midwinter recording in Paris of excerpts from Parts 1 and II of Berlioz's *Les Troyens*, with Régine Crespin and Guy Chauvet as soloists. Mlle. Crespin will repeat the exploit she demonstrated on a recent South American tour, singing the music of both Cassandra and Dido. Georges Prêtre will conduct the Conserv-

Continued on page 30



Paul Kuentz: once a Romantic.

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



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27



CIPHER I: a remarkable high-fidelity tape recorder with automatic push-button control; tape speeds 71/2, 33/4 and 17/4 ips; up to 7" reels; dynamic microphone; monitoring earphone; digital tape index; pure idler drive (no belts); \$139.95. CIPHER VI: a 4-track stereo recorder with detachable speakers and 2 dynamic microphones; tape speeds  $7^{1}/_{2}$  and  $3^{1}/_{4}$  ips; 2 VU meters; automatic shutoff; digital tape index; pause control; plays horizontally or vertically; \$239.50. CIPHER VII: a 4-track stereo recorder with detachable speakers and 2 dynamic microphones; tape speeds  $7^{1/2}$ ,  $3^{1/4}$  and  $1^{2/6}$  ips; 2 VU meters; automatic shutoff; plays horizontally or vertically; \$274.95. (Also available as the VII-D deck.) CIPHER 800: a professional 4-track stereo recorder with 3 hysteresissynchronous motors and 3 heads; plug-in head assembly (2-track also available); no pressure pads; tape speeds  $7^{1}a$  and  $3^{1}a$  ips; solenoid controlled; 2 VU meters; \$499.95.

#### So sorry.

#### It is not enough that a tape recorder is Japanese.

#### It must be Cipher, too!

After many years of research and development, the Japanese tape recorder industry has achieved a number of significant advances. Today, as in cameras, Japan sets a standard of excellence the West may well envy. Yet, while there are many Japanese tape recorders of good quality on the market, none measure up to the remarkable Cipher. The four Cipher models shown here are without question the most thoroughly engineered Japanese recorders seen so far. At the same time, they are priced significantly lower than tape recorders of comparable performance made anywhere else. That's why Cipher has been rated by experts as today's leading value. But don't take anyone's word for it. Ask your Cipher dealer for a demonstration. For further information, write to Inter-Mark Corporation, 29 West 36th Street, New York, N.Y. 10018. In Canada: Inter-Mark Electronics Ltd., 298 Bridgeland Avenue, Toronto 12, Ontario. **CIPHER** CIRCLE 48 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

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#### This is a Dynakit-AR system. One year ago it would not have been possible to assemble a stereo system of this high quality at this low cost.

Each of these components has already earned a unique reputation for absolute quality independent of price.

The AR turntable, one of the most honored products in hi-fi history, has been selected by five magazines as number one in the field. (*Gentlemen's Quarterly* chose it editorially for a price-no-object system costing \$3,824.) It has also been cited for outstanding visual design.

The Dyna Stereodyne III cartridge is an improved model at a new low price. It is one of the truly musical pickups.

The Dynakit SCA-35 integrated amplifier was described simply and accurately in the 1964 *Hi-Fi Tape Systems* as "the finest low-powered amplifier on the market." We have nothing to add except to note that the all-in-one<sup>•</sup> SCA-35 has more than adequate power to drive AR-4 speakers.

•Also available at a slightly higher price with preamp and power amplifier separate.

Modern Hi-Fi wrote of the new AR-4 speaker: "The results were startling...the AR-4 produces extended

low-distortion bass. The power response and dispersion of the AR-4's tweeter are as good as those of units that cost many times as much. All in all, it is difficult to see how AR has achieved this performance at the price."

These components comprise a complete record-playing system that will play both monaural and stereo records at 33% or 45 rpm. A Dynakit FM-3 stereo tuner may be added simply by plugging in to the SCA-35.

You can hear this stereo system at the AR Music Room, New York City's permanent hi-fi show on the west balcony of Grand Central Terminal.

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	I would like more information on the stereo system shown here, and on Dynakit and AR products.
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CIRCLE 2 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



You'll have more fun with your tape recorder if you use it more frequently. Always keep an extra supply of tape on hand, so that you're always ready to record!

Take this good advice: When you buy tape, buy at least three reels. And buy brand-name tape, so you can be confident of its quality, certain it won't harm your recorder.

Of course, we hope you'll choose Tarzian Tape. We thoroughly test other brands along with our own—and the impartial equipment in our labs assures us that you can't do better.

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#### NOTES FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Continued from page 26

atoire Orchestra. The two-disc album will be released on the Angel label.

On Their Own. A group of singers and musicians from the Paris Opéra and Opéra-Comique-including such established names as Mady Mesplé, Albert Lance, Gabriel Bacquier, Alain Vanzo, Robert Massard, Gérard Serkoyan, and conductor Jésus Etcheverry-have just formed their own record company, which will produce operatic works under the label Mondiophonie. Jean-Louis Caussou, who was formerly with Véga and is editor of the French magazine Opéra, has joined the group as artistic director. The new firm's first release is a complete Werther, with Rita Gorr (although not one of the stockholders, she was happy to be engaged by her friends to sing Massenet), Mlle. Mesplé, Lance, Bacquier, Julien Giovannetti, Robert Andreozzi, and Jacques Mars in the principal roles, and Etcheverry directing.

Mondiophonie discs will be distributed by CBS, for the time being in France only. Eventually, the young company hopes, of course, for wider distribution. Roy MCMULLEN



The "bargain revolution" in record prices which took place in this country a few years ago now looks as though it may be followed by a "super-

bargain" revolution. It is the achievement of the British record industry (and notably of some individual entrepreneurs) to have broken wide open the old rigid price structure and yet to have maintained some measure of protection for retailers. Consequently, dealers can afford to stock even esoteric issues at full-price, while at the same time the collector can get many recordings for about the equivalent of two dollars—provided he is prepared to put up with a limited and fluctuating list and sometimes less than first-class sound.

The first organizations to make inroads into the old price system were the record clubs, and between them the two most important clubs now in business-Concert Hall and World Records-still account for some seventeen per cent of the classical market. Record club prices, however, are currently being considerably undercut by the bargain labels, such as Saga and Delta, both of which have produced some really first-rate releases, mainly using up-andcoming British artists and selling at about 12s 6d (\$1.75-a third and less than the list price of major-company LPs). Somewhat more expensive but still cheap by conventional British standards are the rapidly increasing number of offerings from Eastern Europe.

Foreign Invasion. Conspicuous among

Continued on page 34

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

After two months of what **Popular Science** described as "the most extensive listening tests ever made by any magazine," a panel of experts chose components for stereo systems in several price categories. The components in the highest rated system were to be the best available no matter what the price.\* "Where there was a more expensive component that produced a detectable improvement in sound," stated **Popular Science** authors Gilmore and Luckett, "it was chosen."

AR-3 speakers and the AR turntable were the choices for Popular Science's top system.

The Popular Science panel was not alone in its findings. Two other magazines — Bravo! and Hi-Fi Tape Systems — selected components for the best possible stereo system; AR-3 speakers and



Two of Popular Science's five-member panel check speakers.

the AR turntable were the choices in each case. **Gentlemen's Quarterly** chose the AR turntable for its top (\$3,824) system, but relegated AR-3's to its "medium-cost" (\$1,273) system. (The complete lists of selected components, as they appeared in these four magazines, are available on request.)

The AR turntable by itself has been reviewed by leading authorities as the best in the entire field regardless of price.

Yet you can spend many times the price of these AR components. AR-3 speakers are \$203 to \$225 each, depending on finish (other models from \$51), and the two-speed AR turntable is \$78 including arm, base, and dust cover.

\*Speakers limited to "compacts" for reasons of practicality in the home.

ACOUSTIC RESEARCH, INC., 24 Thorndike Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02141 CIRCLE 2 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

#### Here Are \$1,119.50 Worth of HEATHKIT<sup>®</sup> Stereo Components . . . Comparable Factory-Built Brands Cost \$2,579.90!

It Doesn't Make Any Difference Whether You're Price Or Performance Conscious. Regardless of which Heathkit stereo unit you buy, you automatically get both—low price and fine performance.

You enjoy a low price for 3 reasons: 1. because you buy direct from the Heath factory . . . no dealers, no distributors, no middleman expense. Reason #2: no elaborate, expensive packaging. Your kit is shipped direct to your door in sturdy, protective containers that keep the parts as safe and sound as they were when they left the factory. Reason #3: by quickly and easily building it yourself, labor costs are eliminated. No special skills or knowledge are needed . . . you'll enjoy building your kit . . . it's like getting two hobbies for the price of one! These savings are passed on to you . . . in the form of better parts and lower prices. And with Heath, you're assured of the best performance. Name brand parts combined with experienced design bring you electronic kits you can rely on for the finest, up-to-date performance and life-long dependability. The world's most experienced kit engineers, using the latest techniques in the art of electronics, develop, produce, and test each Heathkit component to insure published specification performance. Every Heathkit product is "specification guaranteed".

To buy factory-built units with the same performance capabilities as these Heathkit components, you'd have to pay more than twice the Heath price. So why pay more when you can enjoy the best for less? Select your favorites from this wide array of Heathkit stereo. Then use the handy order form, and order now!

#### **All-Transistor Stereo Receiver**



All-Transistor, AM/FM/FM Stereo Receiver AR-13A...\$195.00-46 transistor, 17 diode circuitry for cool, fast, economical operation and the quick, natural beauty of "transistor sound." Compact, yet houses two 20-watt power amplifiers, 2 preamplifiers, and a wide band AM/FM/FM Stereo tuner. Attractive walnut cabinet in new low-silhouette styling. Just add 2 speakers for a complete stereo system. 34 lbs.

#### **Deluxe All-Transistor Stereo "Separates"**



Deluxe All-Transistor, AM/FM/FM Stereo Tuner AJ-43C...\$129.95—Up to the minute AM, beautifully quiet FM, thrilling natural FM Stereo...all reproduced in the exciting new dimension of "transistor sound." Features 25transistor, 9-diode circuitry, automatic switching to stereo, AFC, stereo phase control, filtered stereo outputs for beat-free recording and handsome walnut cabinet. 19 lbs.

Matching Deluxe All-Transistor 70-Watt Stereo Amplifier AA-21C... \$149.95— Enjoy the quick, unmodified response of every musical instrument, each with its characteristic sound realistically reproduced, with no fading, no faltering! Enjoy 100 watts of music power at  $\pm 1$  db from 13 to 25,000 cps. Enjoy cooler, faster, "hum-free" operation from its 26-transistor, 10-diode circuitry. Easy to build. 29 lbs.

#### Low-Cost All-Transistor Stereo "Separates"





Low Cost All-Transistor AM/FM/FM Stereo Tuner AJ-33A . . . \$99.95— Features 23-transistor, 8-diode circuitry for cool, "hum-free" operation and longer life, built-in stereo demodulator, AFC for drift-free reception, stereo broadcast indicator light, filtered stereo outputs for beat-free recording, concealed secondary controls to prevent accidental system settings, and "lowsilhouette" walnut cabinet. 17 lbs.

Matching All-Transistor 40-Watt Stereo Amplifier AA-22... \$99.95—Produces a full 66 watts IHF music power at  $\pm 1$  db from 15 to 30,000 cps. Quick, clean, unmodified "transistor sound." 20-transistor, 10-diode circuitry for cool, fast, trouble-free operation and long life. 5 stereo inputs for versatile performance. Concealed secondary controls, and "low-silhouette" walnut cabinet. 23 lbs.

CIRCLE 46 ON READER-SERVICE CARD
#### Deluxe Tube-Type Stereo "Separates"



Deluxe "Tube-Type" AM/FM/FM Stereo Tuner AJ-41 ... \$119.95—Deluxe features include built-in stereo circuitry, automatic stereo indicator light, adjustable AFC for drift-free reception, adjustable FM squelch, stereo phase control, individual tuning meters, filtered stereo tape recorder outputs, flywheel tuning, and handsome luggage-tan, vinyl-clad steel cabinet. Easy to build. 27 lbs.

Matching "Tube-Type" 50-Watt Stereo Amplifier AA-100 ... \$84.95—Value leader in the industry! Features 5 stereo inputs, separate monophonic input, versatile controls, mixed channel center speaker output, and a power response of  $\pm 1$  db from 30 cps to 15 kc. Advanced circuit board construction for quick, easy assembly. Attractively styled in luggage-tan, vinyl-clad steel cabinet ... matches any decor! 35 lbs.

#### Value-Line Tube-Type Stereo "Separates"



Low-Cost "Tube-Type" AM/FM/FM Stereo Tuner AJ-32 . . . \$89.95— Boasts features and capabilities of tuners selling for 3 times its price! Built-in stereo circuit, stereo indicator light, variable squelch, stereo phase control, adjustable AFC, individual "bar" tuning meters, filtered stereo tape recorder outputs, and factory built & aligned "front-end". Tan vinyl-clad steel cabinet. 23 lbs.

Budget-Saver "Tube-Type" 28-Watt Stereo Amplifier AA-151 ... \$59.95— The AA-151 is ready to accept any stereo or mono program source, offers complete controls, and delivers plenty of hi-fi rated power. Features two hi-fi rated 14-watt channels, preamps and power amplifiers, 4 stereo music sources, stereo or mono operation, and famous patented Heath Ultra-Linear<sup>®</sup> circuit. Matches the AJ-32 in styling. 29 lbs.

#### Budget-Saver Tube-Type Stereo "Separates"



New FM/FM Stereo "Tube-Type" Tuner AJ-13... Only \$49.95—Easy to own! Only 3 simple controls to operate. Features built-in FM stereo circuitry, stereo indicator light, automatic frequency control for drift-free reception, flywheel tuning, lighted slide-rule dial, external antenna terminals, preassembled, prealigned "front-end", and new mocha brown, beige & black color styling. Matches the AA-32 Amplifier. 14 lbs.

New 16-Watt "Tube-Type" Stereo Amplifier AA-32 . . . \$39.95—An inexpensive way to start a modern stereo system in your home. Operates with magnetic as well as ceramic phono cartridges; delivers full power (20 watts IHF) within  $\pm 1$  db from 30 to 30,000 cps; has full-range controls, 4 stereo inputs, 2 four-stage preamplifiers, 2 push-pull power output stages; plus new mocha brown, beige & black color styling. Matches the AJ-13 Tuner. 16 lbs.



FEBRUARY 1965

CIRCLE 46 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## 

#### only \$69.50

#### Says Julian D. Hirsch in Dec. HiFi/Stereo Review:

In my review of the Dual 1009... its performance was comparable to the better manual arm and turntable combinations. The Model 1010... is designed to deliver essentially the performance of the 1009, but at a considerably lower price.

"... can be used with practically any cartridge on the market,

"With the 1010 on the bench next to the speaker, I was unable to induce any acoustic feedback, even at high volume and with maximum bass boost.

"(speeds) unaffected by line voltage variations from 95 to 135 volts.

". . . low rumble figure is approximately the same as 1 measured on the 1009.

"... wow (0.06% at 33 rpm) and flutter (0.02%) were very good. **99** 

This astonishing performance in a \$69.50 turntable is possible only because it shares the precision engineering and many advanced features of the incomparable DUAL 1009 itself . . . including the renowned Continuous-PoleTM motor. For example: automatic and manual single play, Elevator-ActionTM changer spindle, feather touch slide switches, acoustically damped soft spring footings. For more, see your United Audio dealer.

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#### NOTES FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

these last are the Czech Supraphon discs, selling, both stereo and mono, at 17s 6d (about \$2.45). This success has been the work of an enterprising book publisher, Paul Hamlyn, whose links with Czechoslovakia were built up through printing contracts for his books. Though in Great Britain bookshops generally confine themselves to selling books while records remain in record shops, Hamlyn was able to persuade his outlets to handle Hamlyn records too. The result has been that the whole trade has accepted the Supraphon label even at its very low price-not quite "super-bargain" level but much less than half of what these same discs used to cost under the old marketing arrangements. (As might be expected, you hear among manufacturers the accusation that the discs are being "dumped," with the Czechs accepting less than a fair wholesale price on their contracts.)

It will be interesting to see whether the Russian MK records will follow a similar course. For a time the Russians had a contract with a cut-price mailorder firm through which MK records were sold at such incredibly low prices as 7s 6d (a few cents more than a dollar) but they were of course available only from this single source. Now a contract has been signed with Transatlantic Records of Hampstead, so far known best for off-beat "pop" issues. The price fixed is the same as for Supraphon, 17s 6d, but Transatlantic will have to build up a distribution system before it can hope to rival Hamlyn.

Rather a special case is Deutsche Grammophon, which despite its great success on the British market (or perhaps because of it) reverted some years ago to importing German pressings. DGG, it seems, is thus more likely than other foreign labels to be hit by the new fifteen per cent import surcharge. This past fall the company announced the curtailment of its "Heliodor" series, which had always been a direct competitor of other bargain series, and the launching of a new "luxury bargain" series to be called "E" Collection. So far these releases have been very much what one would have expected on "Heliodor," but the packaging is more elaborate and the cost is five shillings more. This price (27s 6d-\$3.85-or thereabouts) is still 10 shillings less than the standard price, however, and is not expected to deter purchasers.

**Big Company Headaches.** The question of the moment is whether the major British record companies are going to enter the "super-bargain" sphere. While EMI and London/Decca have their relatively low-price labels ("Concert Classics" and "Ace of Clubs," respectively). they no doubt realize the existence of a fair-sized economy-minded market in which at present they have no share. At the same time they are acutely conscious that selling a million discs at a cut rate is economically pointless if the sales don't return a profit. Certainly the big firms are not hesitating to point out that the independent companies have very low overheads, especially if, like Saga (directed by a go-getting American, Marcel Rodd), they have their own manufacturing plant. While matters may be more difficult for some other small companies (Delta, for instance, which has to rely on custom pressing), it is still possible for them to keep production costs low. The big firms tend to talk gloomily of high overheads and the necessity for very careful cost-accounting.

Continued from page 30

In fact, both EMI and Decca have recently been making close reassessments of their classical lists, and EMI has taken a clear decision that the classical side should in no way be cushioned by profits from the Beatles or any other pop enterprises. (Indeed it has been rumored that in the future FMI will forgo its sumptuous Londonmade opera sets with the Philharmonia, relying instead on less expensive recording sessions on the Continent.) In this atmosphere of budget reëxaminations, it appears unlikely that the major companies will plunge headlong into the "super-bargain" revolution. What steps they do take in this direction may well be in bringing out reissues of standard classics. One important signpost is the introduction by Pye of a new label at 12s 6d (competitive with the "super-bargain" issues) called, rather brashly, "Marble Arch." (The first classical "Marble Arch" issues are re-pressings of the most popular in the company's still extant "Golden Guinea" series which sells for 19s 11d mono, 25s 6d stereo.) It would seem that whether he chooses to buy domestic reissues, economy British labels, or inexpensive foreign releases, the record collector here is happily experiencing the familiar fruits of EDWARD GREENFIELD competition.

High Fidelity, February 1965. Vol. 15. No. 2. Published monthly by The Billboard Publishing Co., publisher of Billboard, Vend, Amusement Business, American Artist, Modern Photography, and the Carnegie Hall Program. High Fidelity/Musical America Edition published monthly except December, when it is published semimonthly. Member Audit Bureau of Circulations.

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

Subscriptions should be addressed to High Fidelity, Great Barrington, Mass. 01230, Subscription rates: High Fidelity/Musical America: Anywhere on Earth, 1 year \$9, National and other editions published monthly: Anywhere on Earth, t year \$7,

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CIRCLE 75 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

## HIGH FIDELITY BY NORMAN EISENBERG NEWSFRONTS

Wires for Taping and Tapping. One solution to the problem of obtrusive wiring in installing stereo speakers at some distance from the amplifier or in setting up extension speakers is now offered by the 3M Company's new Scotchflex cable system. Designed originally for use in computer hookups, Scotchflex is available in three classes: No. 550, which comes with up to 24 separate conductors for special industrial needs; No. 700, designed for telephone connections; and No. 800, the type of direct interest to the audiophile. This cable is 5/8-inch wide and contains two sets (four lengths) of No. 22 stranded wire. One side is adhesive and will stick to almost any surface. The cable also can be laid flat under carpets and is flexible enough to be bent easily and neatly around corners. For extra-long speaker runs requiring wires thicker than No. 22, a pair of adjacent leads can be combined to serve as a single line by means of shorting plugs; the nominal stereo cable then serves as a single-channel cable, and another length must be used for the second speaker.

Offered with the cable is an assortment of neat connectors, terminals, and receptacles. These can be employed in a variety of ways—to join lengths of cable, to run lines from one room to another, to permit tapping in with signals from an amplifier or tapping out signals to feed to a speaker. A final fillip: although Scotchflex is not suitable for power line voltage runs, it can be used for low voltage applications, such as bell-wiring systems and remote control lines.

Stokowski—Pronouncements. To the often austerely technical discussions at the conventions of the Audio Engineering Society a new note was brought last fall when Leopold Stokowski addressed the New York conclave at its meeting on October 14. Introduced by Chairman Benjamin B. Bauer of CBS Laboratories



Scotchflex cable, receptacle, and plug.

as a "pioneer in combining audio engineering and acoustics with music," Dr. Stokowski began by asserting that the theory of "concert hall sound" as the aim of reproduced music was fallacious. In the first place, the maestro pointed out, the concert hall demands great volumes of sound, and its decibel range of up to about 120 db could be painful, even harmful, to the ear in a normalsized listening room. Furthermore, not only do concert halls vary greatly in their acoustic qualities (thus obviating any single standard of what constitutes "concert hall sound") but the nature of hearing is such that no two human beings have the identical response to the same aural stimuli. Consequently, as Stokowski sees it, judgments of the effectiveness of reproduced sound vis-à-vis live

sound are highly unreliable. The conductor went on to say that a logical aim of high fidelity should be to re-create an impression (rather than a duplication) of live sound, appropriate to the acoustics of the living room. Achievement of this goal, he indicated, was largely the responsibility of the recording people, especially in connection with the use and placement of microphones. "Every kind of orchestration requires a unique microphone setup," he explained. "The recording techniques must vary to suit the music. Beethoven's Eighth and Ninth Symphonies, for instance, are totally different kinds of works; any 'fixed' microphone or recording system for both is out.'

Returning to the subject of concert halls, Dr. Stokowski delivered himself of a couple of parting shots. The experience of performing artists, he asserted, should be taken advantage of: "They have great empirical knowledge of acoustics, but they are never consulted. Architects ought to talk to these people.' Further, he urged that the concert hall be thought of like a violin, as a resonator, and like the violin employ a resonating material. "Use steel and concrete for strength; use wood for all interior surfaces exposed to sound," he advised. A final suggestion: "Let concert hall architects devote at least fifteen minutes sometime to the study of the violin-and learn."

Literature, All Free. Owners of the Viking 88 Stereo Compact tape recorder may write to the manufacturer—Viking of Minneapolis, Inc., 9600 Aldrich Ave. South, Minneapolis, Minn. 55420—for a free copy of a service manual for the

www ameri

machine. The booklet contains, among other things. a run-down of service adjustments that the average owner can perform. . . . A comprehensive line of Beyer microphones, headsets, and auxiliary equipment is described in Catalogue No. 1064, offered by Rye Sound, 145 Elm St., Mamaroneck, N.Y. 10543. . . . Advanced hobbyists and professional technicians may be interested in a 52page catalogue devoted to oscilloscope accessories (including special cameras to take wave-form photos) available from Tektronix, Inc., P.O. Box 500, Beaverton, Ore. 97005. . . . Nortronics Com-pany, Inc., 8101 Tenth Ave. N., Minneapolis, Minn. 55427 has released two new customer engineering bulletins: CEB #2 discusses factors relating to 3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-ips tape operation; CEB #9 describes a new solid-state recording amplifier. . . . The full line of new Jensen speakers, systems, and headphones is described in a handsome illustrated booklet (No. 165-K) available from Jensen Mfg. Co., 6601 S. Laramie Ave., Chicago, III. 60638. . . . New antennas and accessories for FM stereo are the subject of a brochure offered by JFD Electronics Corp., Fifteenth Ave. at 62nd St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11219. . . . Literature dealing with the conversion to solid-state circuitry of Artisan kit and custom organs can be obtained from Electronic Organ Arts, 2476 N. Lake Ave., Altadena, Calif. 91800.

Long, Long Play. Originally offered by Roberts Electronics as a demonstration and promotional item to purchasers of its crossfield-head Model 770 tape recorder, prerecorded stereo tapes at 1%ips speed are now being planned by the company for general distribution. Arrangements have been made with American Tape Duplicators (a Los Angeles firm) to produce the new releases. Al Barsimanto of Roberts tells us that a variety of musical and spoken-word fare will be offered.

The first of the series, scheduled for release this month, is called "Tapotique" and will offer an assortment of pops and show tunes. Playing time is estimated to equal that of eight LP discs, and the new tapes will be deliberately programmed for automatic reverse playback. Of course even on machines that lack this feature, such programming is a convenience in that it eliminates the need to hunt for the exact start of Side 2 of the reel. Reels, also available at 3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> ips, will list at \$14.95.





## CULPRIT

## VILLAIN

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Now, transistor economy. The new Stratophonic all-transistor FM stereo receivers (shown below), priced down with the most popular tubed units, give you Sound Unbound without the old price penalty of transistor equipment. Now, with the Stratophonics, there is literally an all-transistor receiver for every home and every budget. When you hear these magnificent instruments, you will never again settle for the distortion of tubed equipment.

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MODEL SR900, 75 watts IHFM music power. Hailed by <u>Audio</u> (October 1964, before the SR600 and SR300 came out) as "the only component-quality all-transistor receiver we know of." Price \$469.\*

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CIRCLE 45 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



#### The New Prima Donna—At Work

**P**<sub>RIMA DONNA</sub> (first lady) is one of the few terms indigenous to the lyric stage that has acquired general currency. It has taken on connotations far beyond its literal meaning, however, and in standard American usage it often implies something a little distasteful to our firm-beating egalitarian hearts: "What are you, some kinda prima donna?"

And there is no use denying that the operatic diva is a special species. Like any artist she is endowed with a unique talent and an intensified set of perceptions, but she also assumes on the stage an extraordinary, larger-than-life functionthat of embodying characters and expressing, through music, emotions that have almost quintessential meanings. It is not any girl-next-door who can fill such an assignment. Further, the great international singing-actress is to some extent the creation of other people: managers and publicists play their often significant parts, and so too do audiences. One sometimes feels that she is the offspring of others' wishes and needs, nonmusical in nature, as Brigid Brophy has suggested in her recent book Mozart the Dramatist. Thus we have the prima donna of popular imagination-a semimythical figure, exempt from the rules of ordinary human behavior, bending a perhaps willing world to the demands of her own intractable self-centered genius.

Such personalities have existed, and still exist. But as we meet the three celebrated prima donnas portrayed in the following pages we are struck by a quality wholly antithetical to the picture above: a willingness to subordinate the private ego to the common good.

The Mmes Callas, Sutherland, and Nilsson are as different as three individuals can be, and they differ in their approaches to their work. But they share an unquestionable dedication to the operatic art—not only to their own success but to that of a performance as a whole. We see each of them here undertaking an especially important recording assignment: Maria Callas as Carmen, the role which nearly everyone has begged her to record for several years past; Birgit Nilsson as the Götterdämmerung Brünnhilde, possibly her greatest role; Joan Sutherland as Norma, the most imposing challenge she has yet faced. Recording a role is, if anything, a more exhausting job than singing it onstage. These women devote to it sheer hard work-and that without side, without calling on the prerogatives of the prima donna of tradition. Mme. Callas does not dictate to M. Prêtre; Mme. Nilsson does not refuse to redo a difficult phrase for proper balance; Mme. Sutherland, her own most severe critic, does not hesitate to reject a near perfect take whose intonation is not quite right. In fact, the three of them insist on nothing short of perfection.

When "temperament" rears its ugly head these days, it is as often as not to register simple impatience with the obstacles (sometimes human) to an artistic goal. In the opera house today's prima donna is shrewd enough to know that a shabby mise en scène or silly posturing by the chorus detracts from her own performance. In the studio, she knows that a not-quite-jelled duet reflects on her as well as on her partner. Perhaps all this is not pure gain; possibly the new seriousness, the new reasonableness has lost us something of the excitement imposed by a magnetic individual careening arrogantly along a self-determined path. But a real star is a star under any conditions. What differentiates today's first ladies from the prima donnas of legend is the measure of thought they give to the task at hand, the concentration, and the persistent labor. Our authors, we think, have done well to show us this basic ingredient of the artistic personality.

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DUT OF COURSE you will have a private interview with Madame Callas—that goes without saying."

The solemn, round-faced, bespectacled man making this confident assertion was Peter de Jongh, artistic director of Pathé Marconi, who was on hand at the Salle Wagram, Paris, for Maria Callas' first recording session of a complete *Carmen*. To tell the truth, he did not look terribly confident. The prima donna was already an hour and a half late.

Down below, on the stage which had been set up for the recording, Nicolai Gedda—the Don José was hard at work. It was a bit sad, a bit disconcerting, to hear his beautiful tenor voice declaiming "Carmen, je t'aime," with no Carmen in sight.

"Yes, but anyway she'll be along," Peter de Jongh insisted.

We were standing on the balcony, looking down at the orchestra and its energetic conductor, Georges Prêtre, at Gedda standing on the stage before an open score, at a plump blonde lady photographer whose camera lens was expectantly pointed in the direction of the door by which Callas would enter, at a publicity-girl greeter for Pathé Marconi, and at an assortment of technicians going about their business of adjusting microphones.

Just then a tall and vigorous young woman marched into the Salle Wagram. She wore a summerweight well-tailored tweed suit and a blouse, highheeled black opera pumps, and her heavy dark hair was fastened back tightly away from her face in an arrangement that was a cross between a ponytail and a chignon. En route to the balcony, she whisked off her jacket and handed it to a tiny companion who appeared to be her personal maid. Then, with an unmistakably American stride, she dashed up the stairs to be greeted with kisses by Michel Glotz, the recording director of Carmen. Glotz had emerged from the playback room, having seen her entrance on the television screen that showed what was going on down below in the hall. After a very brief interval of kissing and handshaking (Nicolai

The Prima Donna at Work

## An Interview with

# Maria Callas

Notes on a new recording of Carmen and its sometimes amiable prima donna.

#### by Esther Gelatt

Photographs by Sabine Weiss

Gedda and Georges Prêtre had followed her up to the balcony, where Peter de Jongh and others of the recording company were assembled to greet her), Maria Callas entered the playback room to hear what had thus far been accomplished.

"I had to make a tour of the world to get here," she said jokingly, referring to the wide sweep of hall between the artists' entrance and the balcony with its rickety and rather steep staircase. De Jongh whispered to me that this was true in another sense as well: she had that very day flown in from Greece, which was the reason for her late arrival at the session. In fact, Michel Glotz and Georges Prêtre had only preceded her back to Paris by a few days the three of them having spent a week aboard the Onassis yacht *Christina*, cruising around the island of Corfu, alternating hours of work on *Carmen* with hours of sunbathing and swimming.

When Gedda's aria ("La fleur que tu m'avais jetée") had been played back for the tenor and the conductor and Maria Callas, it was time for the orchestra men to return from their short intermission. They had a performance that night (it was the orchestra of the Paris Opéra), which meant that the afternoon session could not run more than fifteen minutes past the scheduled 7 p.m. deadline. Maria Callas, score on lap, had listened quietly alongside Gedda to the tenor's aria, and when it was over she hummed a few notes of the duet which follows ("Non! tu ne m'aimes pas!").

"No, Maria," said Michel Glotz, "now we will do the Habanera."

"Salaud" (which can be politely translated as "Wretch"), she said and marched downstairs matterof-factly, picking her way through the scatterings of wooden chairs pushed to the side (the Salle Wagram ordinarily is set up as a dance hall circled with tables and chairs at which the dancers take their refreshments). During her journey the members of the orchestra applauded, and she waved happily towards them.

On stage she placed her purse on a chair, her



Callas in merry mood, Gedda next to ber, Glotz and Prêtre in forefront.

score on the music rack before her, examined the tall stool at her side which supported a telephone communicating with Michel Glotz in the playback room, smoothed out her skirt, paced back and forth a few times while waiting for the signal to begin, and—when the music had commenced—sang straight through the *Habanera* with no interruptions or hesitations.

"Come up and listen, Maria," Glotz requested over the loudspeaker.

The playback room this time held one less person. Realizing, probably, that there would not be time to do the duet scheduled for that afternoon, Nicolai Gedda had silently folded his tent and stolen away. No one seemed to notice except Glotz, who began a question, "Nicolai, will it be possible . . ." and then tapered off with the vague, irritated awareness that he was addressing a departed presence.

Maria Callas and Georges Prêtre had made it to their seats at about the same time, she looking still calm and fresh, he ignoring the droplets of sweat that rolled off his nose and chin, or dabbing at them with a red-and-white striped towel that went round the back of his neck and dangled down his shirt front, prize-fighter fashion. Over the backs of several chairs hung sweat-drenched shirts discarded earlier in the day. In a corner stood the suitcase from which he culled replacements as needed. Each time the conductor entered the room it had become routine to close the window, shutting out the cool breeze so that he would not be chilled in his humid state. Now that Maria Callas was on the scene another ritual seemed quietly to be adopted -all cigarettes were stubbed out when she came in. Smoking and the admission of fresh air were thus routinely intermittent in the playback room, to be indulged in during recording periods and forsworn during playbacks.

Leaning toward Prêtre and Glotz from her chair on a little wooden platform behind the recording console, Maria Callas listened to her *Habanera*, to her first "take" in a recording that she had been advised, nay begged, to do by half the music critics and opera fans in the Western world. "It's not going badly, eh?" she commented serenely.

A few measures later she asked Prêtre whether she was too loud at a certain point.

"Not at all," he answered, pointing to the score, "but you must take a breath here and do not hesitate when you come to this spot."

"I understand," she agreed, adding in a bantering tone, "and for you Georges, I will do *anything* at all."

"Enough, Maria," interrupted Michel Glotz. "Get down there and sing. Time is money."

One take succeeded another, with no interruptions for listening. Always the takes were terminated by a word from Glotz over the loudspeaker or by Prêtre from the podium. Some takes failed because of orchestral deficiencies, some for technical reasons, some because the soprano was not singing her best. At times Callas picked up the phone at her side and received instructions from Glotz, at other times Prêtre climbed to the stage and conferred privately with her-thumbing through her score and obviously delivering himself of minutely detailed pointers on the interpretation of the aria. Invariably she listened attentively and calmly. One began to wonder where the stormy personality lay hidden, when one would see a display of the much publicized temperament. And one wondered also whether the powerful creative artistry might not eventually assert itself, rebelling against all this instruction.

After fourteen takes, her two mentors considered themselves satisfied by the *Habanera* and after another eleven takes it was decided that the recitative preceding the aria had also been sufficiently dealt with. It was 7:15 p.m. when the prima donna and the maestro sat down to listen. The orchestra and chorus had been dismissed; the lights downstairs were lowered. Maria Callas had completed an hour and a half of intensive work and had recorded about four minutes of music.

She seemed quite generally pleased. "It's good. The atmosphere is good. I am happy." Then, frowning, she murmured, "Oh, I don't like the end." Glotz assured her that he would combine two takes, using the beginning of one and the end of another. Like everything that Glotz said, this appeared to reassure her. Evidently her faith in him and in Georges Prêtre was entirely compatible with her faith in herself.

The company seemed reluctant to go home, to conclude the first day of a project that had begun auspiciously. Glotz, a fairly young man of middle height who looks a bit like Peter Lorre in his slimmer days, pulled down his blue silk knitted sport shirt, smoothed his hair, settled expansively in his chair, asked one of his assistants to pass around the Eau Perrier and orange juice, and suggested playing some of the takes from the morning session.

"But why can't I go on?" said Maria Callas. "I have enough voice tonight for 'Là-bas, là-bas dans la montagne'."

Everyone laughed at her enthusiasm, but Glotz reminded her that the orchestra had gone home. And so the technician put on the tapes of the Chorus of Cigarette Girls.

"It's ravishing," Glotz said, and all agreed that they had surely created the "mise en scène" from the very start.

Finally, Callas gathered up her entourage, which by this time had grown to include several friends, in addition to her maid, and started out onto the balcony. On the way one friend was heard to ask, "What is your feeling about Carmen? Is she a bad woman?"

"No, she's not a bad woman," the soprano replied, without stopping to reflect, as if she had long ago considered this problem and had found the definitive answer. "She's not a bad woman. What she likes, she does. It's an almost masculine attitude. No, she's not bad."

As the Callas procession descended the stairs with much jollity, I found myself next to Peter de Jongh, looking as if a great weight had finally been lifted off his shoulders.

"It went well, didn't it?" I observed, voicing what I suspected were his thoughts. "Is she always so professional, so coöperative in working with people and taking direction?"

"Oh, yes," he affirmed, "I have never seen her act otherwise at a recording session."

"Well, then," I said, "I look forward to my interview with her. It should go easily, and people will be interested to know what she is really like." And I left the dingy Salle Wagram by the artists' entrance in time to spy Madame Callas driving off in a Rolls Royce that appeared indescribably mammoth as it squeezed its way down a narrow street choked with illegally parked cars.

HE RECORDING had commenced on Monday, July 6, and by Wednesday afternoon anyone could see that all was going well. Morning sessions were devoted to orchestral and choral sections of the opera, while afternoon or evening sessions were saved for the soloists. All of the artists, including Maria Callas, arrived on time, took direction patiently, listened to criticism up in the playback room, and returned to stage determined to better their previous efforts. An atmosphere of friendliness and courtesy prevailed, and one man bossed the proceedings with a sure and not always benevolent hand.

Michel Glotz was, indeed, the very model of an exigent recording director. "Ravishing," he would announce over the loudspeaker to a soloist standing on stage, "very beautiful, lots of character. But I would like to do it once more. Unhappily, you were not together with the orchestra." And after the next few takes he might admit, "It comes." Three or four takes later the final verdict would be rendered with a sigh of mingled pleasure and weariness: "I believe we have done something good. I believe. It is hard, *la culture.*"

Prêtre, on the other hand, hardly ever admitted to being satisfied with anything. "It will be necessary to do it all over again, Michel," was his typical response to a playback.

"We will do just this section, Georges," was Glotz's way of handling the conductor's perfectionism. "And why?" he might add. "To amuse you."

His firmness was not dissipated in the slightest when dealing with the prima donna. If her accent was not perfect (her French is fluent but rather tinged with an Italianate pronunciation that sometimes comes through in her singing), he made her repeat an otherwise well-performed sequence until the difficulty had been overcome. When she queried his choice of a "good take," he knew how to soothe with, "You are not to have a care. Trust me. I know."

It was to Prêtre that she turned for advice on phrasing, on whether to emphasize one word with a darker tone, on where to pause, on where to quicken the tempo. To Glotz she turned for the reassurance that she had accomplished her intention. The Callas-Prêtre-Glotz triangle functioned in the most complete harmony.

An advertisement put forth by Angel Records later in July—when *Carmen* had been completed synthesized the position of the other singers: "Maria Callas *is* Carmen . . . Nicolai Gedda as Don José, Robert Massard as Escamillo, Andrea Guiot as Micaëla." While democracy and camaraderie characterized the sessions, the triumvirate of Glotz, Prêtre, and Callas was not invaded by any other artist. No act of unruly behavior or even mild ungraciousness marked Maria Callas as the star, but the enterprise centered upon her so obviously that all the others automatically hovered at the sidelines.

I hovered too, ever present in the hall or playback room, fortified and warmed by the anticipation of my audience with the prima donna. Her disarming geniality and simplicity encouraged my hopes for a satisfying interview. In the meantime, when she was in the mood for relaxed conversation, I tried to draw her out. On one occasion, after listening to the playback of her Seguidilla and accepting the extrava-



Towel-draped maestro, attentive diva.

gant compliments of those in the room, she observed: "It is all a question of voice. We have grown accustomed to a mezzo conception of Carmen, but it need not be heavy and forced. I am so happy that we have been able to do *Carmen* in this way."

"What would you say is the difference between a mezzo Carmen and yours?" I ventured to ask.

"What can I say? This," she said, pointing to the tape machine, "is how I talk. Words ruin music; it should be understood in its own way.... However, I do believe that Carmen should be light, *légère*, and lively, swift. A mezzo cannot achieve this effect. It's like ... what can I say? ... like the difference between a greyhound and a bulldog. One is swift ... Carmen should be ironic, light.

"But once upon a time there was not that much distinction between a mezzo and a soprano. . . ." she had begun to elaborate, when Michel Glotz announced, "Now we'll do the *Chanson bohème*, Maria."

"Chanson bohème, what's that?" she demanded. "Are you pulling my leg?"

"Don't discuss, just sing," replied Glotz.

This particular command seemed almost to summarize her own attitude. On one occasion Glotz intrigued me by referring to Maria Callas' preference for a "catlike Carmen," a very feminine characterization. I sought to learn more from the singer herself. In a less expansive mood this time, she merely smiled and said, "You just do what you feel is right, together with the maestro. What is there to say?"

I did not press the point; she could be persuaded to say more when we spoke privately.

On this same Wednesday evening Maria Callas announced quite casually that in two days she would be going "là-bas" for the holiday weekend. She promised to return in time for the Wednesday session just following Bastille Day, which fell on Tuesday. "Là-bas" referred, of course, to Greece—and the proclamation seemed both to surprise and to shake Michel Glotz out of his usual composure. "Our conceptions of a schedule seem to differ, Maria. You are expected to record the *Récit et sortie d'Escamillo*, Act II, on Saturday afternoon, with Robert Massard and Jacques Mars-unless your schedule reads differently from mine."

But no real argument ever developed on the subject. Glotz seemed to know from the start perhaps on the basis of previous experience—that he was faced with a change of plans. A short while later he announced quite cheerfully that he had rescheduled the aforementioned sequence, and he confined his admonitions to a grudging, "See that you are here for the session on Wednesday, good flying weather or bad."

"I'll sing very well for you now, Michel," was Callas' placating reply as she returned to stage for the next take.

It began faintly to cross my mind that I had been witness to a quiet stubbornness, an implacability in the prima donna that might run at cross purposes to my own plans. Peter de Jongh had promised me an interview with Madame Callas, Michel Glotz had further assured me it would come to pass, Angel Records in Anierica had expressly invited me to interview her in connection with the *Carmen* recording. Surely, they had cleared it with her. Strange, then, her often repeated phrase: "What is there to say?"

"Let us set a time and place," I said firmly to Michel Glotz a few moments later, and the interview was arranged for Wednesday evening, July 15, at the Salle Wagram, when recording had ended for the day. I chastised myself for having doubted.

Others were also doubting whether their work could be satisfactorily completed. Among them was a well-known photographer, whose assignment from a large American pictorial magazine was to photograph Maria Callas during the recording sessions. On Friday, July 10, he invaded the playback room in hopes of taking some lively candid shots of the prima donna. The small room-approximately fifteen feet square-was literally bulging with recording equipment, tripods, lights, cameras, half a dozen singers, Georges Prêtre and a few of his wet shirts, two sound engineers, Peter de Jongh, Michel Glotz, Michel Glotz's mother (who had come to visit, as she often did), his assistant, Pathé Marconi's publicity girl squatting on the floor for lack of a chair, and myself seated on a radiator. The photographer, a husky middle-aged man accompanied by three aides, was deferential and agreeable in the extreme while at the same time piling more and more photographic equipment into the room. Maria Callas, the subject of his exertions, did not, however, assume her usual seat directly in back of the recording console. There she could have been picked up too easily by the lens. Upon entering the room she glanced at the cameras and headed straightaway for a chair in the far corner, next to some files, where she presented a most unphotogenic aspect. After a few clicks of the shutter, the photographic activity seemed to taper off, and presently the photographer retired from the room.

Increasingly I glimpsed the dual nature of this singing star: professional and coöperative in the

extreme, even submissive, in matters relating to the art of singing, balky as a mule on many ancillary points. My admiration for her artistry and professional competence grew apace, but I could now appreciate the "difficult" aspects of her personality.

**M**ICHEL Glotz and I sat down one afternoon during the long Bastille Day week end to discuss Maria Callas and *Carmen*. Had I not been a spectator to the recording session, I might have boggled at some of his remarks. As it was, agreement came fairly easily.

"The conception of this Carmen," he assured me, "is entirely Prêtre's-with, of course, the individual artistry that Maria brings to it. He works with her as he does with every other singer, even more so, explaining everything. It is entirely the wrong impression that she likes yes-men. People think she works well with Prêtre because she can tell him what to do. This is entirely wrong—she depends on his direction. He is to her now what Serafin was to her in Italian opera in her youth. He has taught her everything about this role. She is a singer who would have worked magnificently with Toscanini. And, in fact, Prêtre is very much like Toscanini, both in manner of working and in his artistic temperament. He is fastidious to the extreme and very difficult in that if something is not exactly as he likes, he will insist on redoing it twenty times."

"Did she bring any preconceptions to the role?" I inquired.

"Well, I suppose so in a general sense, but she has been influenced in every detail by Prêtre. He has worked on every note with her."

One question Michel Glotz advised me to save for my interview with Callas, implying that he could not do justice to the answer: "Has she read Mérimée's *Carmen*," I wanted to know, "and does she find it of value in interpreting Bizet's *Carmen*?"

"Ah," he answered, "she has very strong ideas about Mérimée's character of Carmen. She has read everything. You must ask her to talk about that on Wednesday."

Maria Callas did indeed return to the Salle Wagram on the Wednesday after Bastille Day. In fact, she was there by ten o'clock in the morning, having been scheduled that day to sing in both the morning and afternoon sessions. Paris was bathed in a kind of heat wave that New Yorkers take very much for granted-humid, sticky, and oppressive. To be sure, there was still a residue of cool air in the heavy stone buildings that grace the Etoile district, but not in the Salle Wagram with its normally stuffy atmosphere. And certainly not in the playback room, where desperation had led the assistants in charge of closing the window to ignore their duty even when Georges Prêtre dashed dripping into the room. Prêtre's high-spirited attention to detail was not in the least abated by the heat. Nor was there any slack in Callas' responsiveness to his suggestions.

Callas and Gedda had made a take of the recitative

preceding the Card Trio, in Act III, in which Don José refers to a woman "*là-bas*"—a woman who believes him to be an honest man and who is, unhappily, mistaken.

Prêtre asked Callas to make her question—"Qui donc est cette femme?"—more ironic, less pleasant.

"But of course," answered Callas, immediately understanding why. "I'd already thought about that. Otherwise, why would Don José answer 'Carmen ... ne raille pas ... c'est ma mère'?"

Every correction aimed at emphasizing the dramatic truth, the underlying meaning, was seized upon and comprehended by her. I could well imagine Callas on stage in *Carmen*, even though she stood quietly behind her music stand, singing from the score, restricting herself to brief hand and arm movements and an occasional toss of the head. "Color is everything," she commented, "and violent colors are an integral part of *Carmen*. But it must not be vulgar."

A FTER A WEEK of observing Maria Callas, of enjoying her work, of anticipating the insights and perceptions that she would reveal in discussing *Carmen*, I found that the time for the interview had finally arrived. The Wednesday evening session ended at seven o'clock and we all sat down to hear the playbacks. In addition to the work recorded that day, Callas asked Glotz to play the *Chanson bohème* and several other bits for the benefit of a friend who had come to listen. She was in a mood to be delighted, and what she heard pleased her. At one point she laughed and said, "Oh, that is really *très jeune fille*," looking rapidly from Glotz to Prêtre as if to determine whether the effect was overdone.

Prêtre too was joyous. At his request some orchestral segments were played, and then Callas' Seguidilla. "I have always tried to get a singer to do it that way," he exulted.

It was eight o'clock before the jubilation had simmered into a going-home frame of mind. Maria Callas rose in purposeful fashion and I got up to join her. "Goodnight," she said to all and sundry, including myself.

"But it is time for my interview," I choked out, dumbfounded, glancing from her to Glotz and De Jongh, who suddenly looked unhappy.

"Oh, I am tired," she protested, "and besides one cannot talk about music. One just sings, one does not plan things or explain them. It ruins music to talk about it. You hear the basso do so and so, and you know then what you have to do. That's how it happens. And through your music you are either understood or not—that's all that matters."

"But," I managed to counter weakly, "you are a singer who plans her roles carefully—you are known for your marvelous characterizations."

"Ah," she replied, "that is a misconception. I do not plan. I work vocally and I listen to the others and I sing. I do not talk about music. What is there to say?"



Götterdämmerung team: Nilsson, Solti, Culshaw.

the arrival of a prima donna; instead I saw an ordinary human being.

"Ordinary," of course, is the wrong word. As I watched her work for the next month in two different operas, as I talked to her between takes, at lunch, or at supper after a session, I became increasingly aware that Birgit Nilsson is quite out of the ordinary. If this forthright, hard-working, obstinate, and unusually objective person is the opposite of the traditional terrible-tempered diva, she is still every inch an artist.

Our first luncheon was a few days later at the Hotel Sacher, redolent of the Vienna of Lehár and Strauss; it was delicious from a culinary point of view, but conversationally a bit stiff. Inasmuch as both interviewer and interviewee were shy, only the skeletal facts of the singer's career emerged: opera debut as Agathe in Freischütz in Stockholm, 1946; great success the following year as Lady Macbeth under Busch: Glyndebourne (Elektra in Idomeneo) in 1951; thence other international appearances and the quick rise to world fame. First recordings-except for a few Swedish records-were in 1957 (a recital disc for Angel), then Turandot for RCA Victor in 1960, the Decca-London Tristan in 1961, a number of other albums in the next few years, and now the real "Nilsson explosion": complete recordings of Götterdämmerung, Macbeth, Fidelio, and the Verdi Requiem.

Later these bald facts were supplemented by the more personal background. I learned how Nilsson's well-to-do farmer father was opposed to her career and how she stubbornly earned her tuition for the Stockholm Conservatory (where her teacher told her she would never have an operatic career) by singing in churches (funerals a specialty), by working in the beet fields during summer vacations, and, one lucky summer, by singing every evening in an outdoor restaurant. This hard work has given her a healthy respect for money, and she is her own shrewd manager, with some help from her businessman husband. She is a careful spender, going overboard only rarely and then for antiques at her favorite haunt, the auction rooms of Vienna's Dorotheum. A lot of stories told about Nilsson concern money; a typical one is how one evening, as she came off the stage after a very successful *Tristan*, the head of the opera house asked her if she were tired. "I'd go right back on stage and sing it all over again," she said; and added, with a laugh: "if you'd double my fee!"

I learned too of the hardships and disappointments of her first years as a professional singer. Her *Freischiütz* debut was, quite simply, a flop; she told me how, when she walked home after every performance—young, lonely, depressed—and had to cross a bridge, she was tempted to jump off. She thought of abandoning the whole idea of a career. And for months, though she was on the Stockholm Opera's roster, she was assigned no roles. Only the illness of another singer scheduled for *Macbeth* and an audition with Busch arranged by a friend turned the tide. "I hated for the performance of *Macbeth* to end; I couldn't wait for the next one...."

I asked Miss Nilsson (I was calling her "Birgit" by this time) about her repertory. "Twenty or twenty-five roles, no more." She added: "I've never sung small parts."

Actually she did sing as small a part as Woglinde in *Das Rheingold*, in a Stockholm production of the *Ring* in 1950. But in that same *Ring* she also sang Sieglinde in *Walkiire*, Brünnhilde in *Siegfried*, and then Woglinde again in *Götterdämmerung*. "Knappertsbusch never knew where he was going to see me next," she recalls.

Since then Nilsson has sung most of the roles Wagner wrote for the female voice (the exceptions: Eva, Ortrud, and Kundry), many of them often. She sang her hundredth Isolde—in Bayreuth, appropriately—in the summer of 1963. And her *Walküre* Brünnhildes are approaching the hundred mark. The *Götterdämmerung* Brünnhilde—the role I was watching her record in Vienna—is a favorite, but she has sung it only about forty times. I asked her when she sang it first.

"On the thirteenth of December, 1954," she answered, causing me to comment on the remarkable precision of her memory. My compliment brought a quick rejoinder. "It wasn't an occasion I'm likely to forget," she said, and went on to tell me her favorite operatic mishap story. The tale—it has been printed several times—involves the horse playing Grane, who took to biting her at the end of her big scene, despite the sugar lumps she had given him to win his affection. And "at the end of the opera he even came out for a bow, and somebody sent him a bouquet of oats. He didn't deserve them, after such a terrible performance. . . ."

The day after this conversation when I was again walking up the steps to the recording room of the Sofiensaal I heard Nilsson's voice—amplified at least twice its magnificent life-size—billowing out in the duet with Siegfried: "Heil! Heil! Heil!." holding a splendid high C. The Decca team was listening to the playback again. This day's session was scheduled a little early, because the Waltraute (Christa Ludwig) was due later at a rehearsal of Die Fran ohne Schatten with Karajan for a forthcoming Vienna Festival production. Miss Ludwig arrived, crisp and cool in a pink linen suit; Miss Nilsson, equally cool in lemon-colored linen, also arrived, and the ladies went to work.

The session proceeded beautifully (as for that matter all the sessions had, except for the time when a troublesome bird got into the hall somehow and an Austrian Airline jet which had changed its route flew over the building). Watching the two singers afforded less the thrill of seeing a drama unfold than the deep pleasure of observing first-rate craftsmen going about their job, as a cabinetmaker might create an exquisite cabriole with a few deft strokes or, to use a homelier simile, as a skilled cook might break eggs with one hand.

 $\mathbf{T}_{\mathsf{HE}}$  same sense of calm assurance pervaded the sessions for Verdi's Macheth a few weeks later, but otherwise the atmosphere was totally different. From the drab anonymity of the Sofiensaal, the scene shifts to the chaste, white loveliness of the Sala Accademica of Rome's Santa Cecilia Conservatory. This historic institution is located in a former monastery, whose refectory has now become a chamber-music concert hall and, on occasion, a recording studio. At the very chic bar, instead of Kleine braune, it's caffè freddo and spremuta di limone (though Maestro Thomas Schippers and his two charming secretaries stick patriotically to Cokes). The weather is hot, but during breaks one can look at the fountain playing in the green courtyard and feel cool.

Nilsson arrives for her first session, seeming to bring with her the freshness of the fountain outside. She begins: "La luce langue..." She sings the aria three times without a hesitation. This aplomb of Nilsson's is legendary. Once another soprano asked her, after a *Tristan* at the Met, if the role weren't terribly taxing. "Not if you have a comfortable pair of shoes," she answered slyly. And she might have said: not if you have a voice like mine.

Again the sessions move smoothly—until the evening when Nilsson is scheduled to record the sleep-walking scene. At 8:30 she and Macbeth (Giuseppe Taddei) begin to record their duet. It is nearing eleven when she starts "Una macchia . . . ," moving across the stage, from microphone to microphone, her voice pitched in a chill half-whisper, re-creating the tension of the Verdi scene. At the end, she has to back away from the microphone and sing a little ascending phrase which ends on a high D flat, pianissimo ("un fil di voce." the score says, a thread of voice). It is hard to scale the big Nilsson voice down to a thread, but she spins it out mirac-

ulously. The first time, however, both she and Schippers are dissatisfied. She sings it again. No, too close to the microphone. Again. Again. By the time the session ends at 11:30 she has sung over a dozen D flats, any one of which would have won her tremendous applause in a live performance.

But Nilsson was still not satisfied. Two days later, at the close of the very last session, she asks to do it again. A thrilling, finespun D flat emerges. Ray Minshull, the engineer in charge, comes out of the recording room and murmurs something to Schippers. The maestro smiles, slams his score shut, and says to the orchestra: "Arrivederci till next year...." Macbeth is recorded.

Nilsson and I and some friends retire to a nearby pizzeria for a belated supper. Over a *pizza capricciosa* and some beer, the erstwhile Lady Macbeth talks about her Italian repertory. Of Puccini she sings Tosca and Turandot. She has learned Santuzza but never sung it. Of Verdi. in addition to Lady Macbeth, she sings Aida, and Amelia in *Ballo in maschera*.

What about Forza?

"I've almost sung it," she says with a big smile. "I sing 'Pace, pace' all the time in concerts, and the duet. But once I almost sang it in the theatre, by mistake...."

And she is telling one of her stories. "I was singing at La Scala around Christmas time in '58 and they telephoned me from Zurich. Could I fill in unexpectedly for an ill soprano in three days' time? I ask the name of the opera. *Macht des Schicksals*, they tell me. And—maybe because I hadn't been speaking German for a while, or maybe it was a bad connection—I thought they meant *Maskenball*. So I arrive in Zurich the day before the performances and go to try on my costumes. They bring me these *boots*!" She breaks off, laughing. "It was like a bad dream *Continued on page 111* 



Brünnhilde sings alone on the stage of Vienna's Sofiensaal.

by Robert Kotlowitz

# Boadicea in Walthamstow

## A glimpse of Joan Sutherland as she grapples with her most important opera recording to date—Bellini's Norma.

STANDING ONSTAGE at Walthamstow Town Hall, London. between recording takes. Joan Sutherland keeps busy by making faces. It is unclear at first whether she does this to amuse the London Symphony Orchestra, seated on the floor just below her, and its conductor of the moment, her husband Richard Bonynge, or simply to loosen her facial muscles, relax nerves, and release energy. Then she begins to sing the music of Bellini's Norma, and as the long arched phrases drift away, it becomes perfectly clear that each "face" is a well-turned comment on the diva's performance.

A half-moon mouth, turned down, means unhappiness: something has gone wrong. A half-moon mouth, turned up, is pleasure: she hopes you were listening. A full-moon mouth is complete delight, and when the Sutherland hands are also brought into use—fists clenched and a sweeping gesture underlining the expression on the face—ecstasy is upon Joan Sutherland: the soul-harrowing demands of the opera have been met. But it is also worth noting that when the Sutherland mouth is transformed into an exclamation point, a state of utter horror has been reached. At such a moment, things are so bad that she may point her index finger at her temple, and, wincing, pull an imaginary trigger.

The point is that Joan Sutherland cares about her work, sometimes with an intensity that seems almost desperate, and she is willing to allow the whole world to see how much she cares, without disguise or self-consciousness. This is not a cool woman, however calm and at ease the surface may seem; she is committed and totally involved. A great awakening lies in the path of anyone who, for ulterior reasons, would like her to take it a bit casier, or make do with an interpretation that is not quite fully

A Senior Editor of Show since that magazine's inception, Mr. Kotlowitz has recently joined Harper's Magazine as an Editor.



The Prima Donna at Work





thought out, or even go on stage without *everything* in as perfect shape as mortals can make them.

Since few things are ever in perfect or near-perfect shape, Sutherland's life as a diva can be a study in stoic frustration, in pain and incomprehension as well, at the vagaries of managerial types who like to promise one thing on Monday and without explanation deliver something totally different on Tuesday. Nevertheless, she has carefully figured out the possibilities for error in almost any given musical situation, added a strong-minded understanding of plain human inadequacy in the face of operatic obstacles, and come up with a fairly exact notion of what can and cannot be accomplished. While the understanding may help to ease pain, it doesn't lessen the Sutherland frustration.

"I feel very strongly about details," she says. "I like the fabrics of a costume to look as though they were chosen by someone who knows something about both fabrics and opera. It may seem obvious, but I want the lines of a costume to be planned. And I want them planned around the body of a real person, meaning me, not just an idealized person who exists only in a designer's mind. I want that costume to have something to do with the historical setting of the opera, and also to relate to the composer and the period when the work was written. For example, in *Lucia* one wants a romantic early-nineteenth-century conception of seventeenth-century Scotland."

She has, perhaps, had more than her share of costume troubles. Strikingly tall and saucer-faced, with red hair that she uses to emphasize rather than shrink her height, Sutherland has not always had designers who are in sympathy with the historically accurate and aesthetically satisfying presence she wants to project. "After all," she says, "a designer must carefully size up the situation with me, size being the operative word. Insofar as it is possible, I must be made to look young and fragile for *Sonnambula*. grand and regal for *Semiramide*.

"But I know how rare real consideration for a production is. As a matter of fact, the only place I ever found it was with the Boston Opera Company when I worked with Sarah Caldwell on a production of *Puritani*. I have never duplicated the feeling that experience gave me. There was very little money so all of us had to think—and I mean really think—about everything we did. We worried together about the lighting. We worried together about how we were going to move onstage. We even worried about what one character in the opera might think about another. Sarah forced us to work, and the experience was unique.

"At some opera houses there is always the feeling that money can take care of all the problems that are really purely human concerns. That money will buy what human brains and talent are too lazy or disinterested to buy. This can make a production wrong from beginning to end because the proper spirit is not there. Well, producers love to spend money, don't they? It's one of their functions and, hopefully, one of their talents. They adore giving you enough rehearsal time, but they care very little about what you do with the time."

If the thoughtful tone as well as the substance of this speech is remote from the traditional concept of the prima donna, it is an essential part of Joan Sutherland as prima donna and of the prima donna as performer. For this prima donna, all the ancient paraphernalia of temperament are not only boring but expensive in energy, too. "Temperament has nothing to do with throwing vases," she says. Tempers, in Sutherland's ideal world, are to be lost when there are reasons to lose them and never, never for display or intimidation of a colleague. Haughtiness she considers a pose and a dull one at that. If one of the world's major opera houses offers you five different Alfredos in seven performances of Traviata, then you make the time for extra rehearsals so that the standard of production can be maintained. Your first obligation is to the audience, and simultaneously to your colleagues. The only thing that counts is the performance. First things always first.

**F**<sub>IRST THINGS</sub> for a performer are also built upon the daily routines of study, rehearsal, rest. fittings. special meals, all those externals that a prima donna must control for herself and must never dare forget: the penalty for forgetfulness is the disintegration of professionalism. Attention, too, tightly focused upon the matter at hand, is also one of the requisites. Here the prima donna who makes records will find her selfdedication perfectly reflected in the painstaking care characteristic of the control room, more punctilious perhaps than the care that goes into any other artistic team enterprise.

Did yesterday's take of the "Casta diva" go all

right? Was it as good as the singer remembered it? Perhaps the pianissimos could have been softer, more whispering. Perhaps diction could have been clearer. These are among the thoughts that surface a day later, when the ear is again fresh and faults unnoticed the day before can be caught and corrected. Such a *recherche à la musique chantée* can produce a conversation like the following, which took place at Walthamstow as Joan Sutherland, Marilyn Horne, who sang Adalgisa, and a & r producer Christopher Raeburn listened to playbacks of the new RCA Victor Norma.

Raeburn: "I say, Joan, that was very good."

Sutherland: "Don't look so surprised."

Raeburn: "But it was late in the day."

Horne: "She sounds good after singing twentyfour hours straight."

Sutherland: "Oh, come off it. Both of you."

In the middle of all the good-humored give-andtake, Sutherland had noticed the slightest imperfection in the way she was producing her voice. Her breath control was an edge off and so was her intonation. It worried her, enough to make her spend ten minutes in deciding whether or not to try another take. In the end, she redid the passage perfectly, wondering how there could ever have been any question about another attempt. *Norma*, after all, was to be the single most important operatic recording of her career to date.

It was also to be the single most ambitious and difficult. Joan Sutherland has now recorded the leading soprano roles in *Rigoletto, La Traviata, Lucia di Lammermoor, Alcina, Acis and Galatea, I Puritani, La Sonnambula,* as well as Micaëla in *Carmen.* For the most part, the characters she portrays in these operas are simple, direct, and adolescent, although some of them have an unsettling susceptibility to madness; only Violetta among them offers the complexity of a really sophisticated woman. Norma, however. is far more complex dramatically than Violetta; she is overwrought, mature, jealous, demanding, and caught in fatal conflict between the needs of her religion and of her own nature.

To dramatize this complexity, Bellini composed music so difficult that it has intimidated sopranos ever since it was first sung. At one moment declamatory and fiercely passionate, at another pure and sustained, the vocal writing requires an extraordinary range together with the ability to produce a long, soaring line in which technique must never show. To all intents and purposes, the soprano who sings Norma must not appear to be breathing. It is hard, heavy work although the results can scarcely be called thankless. The world is delighted with superb Normas, for superb Normas are extremely rare. Joan Sutherland knows this as well as she knows the Bellini music itself, and it is no wonder that she cannot relax in a serious way until the recording is finished and pronounced, at the least, satisfactory.

"I believe all my roles," she says. "Violetta, Amina, Lucia. It may sound terrifying but I really do." Some, though, like Norma, frighten her. "One comes across certain emotional roles, and they are like obstacle courses. If you let anything go for one moment—breath, placement, memory—you're lost. No one should sing Norma until she is very sure of herself—certainly not before thirty-five. It may be static in a dramatic sense, but emotionally it's a tremendous drain. There is hardly a joyous moment in the opera; it's all terrifically long, tense scenes, and you'd better be right on top of them. It's the most difficult role in my entire repertoire."

EVERY DAY of the week, Sutherland studies one subject or another, but it is no longer as easy as it was when she was a student at London's Royal College of Music more than ten years ago. "When I was an all-day student, my life was geared to study and memory problems. It was automatic then. Now it's a struggle. My life is too broken up. I can almost never find any consecutive time for real concentration.

"But I've always had certain problems about study. For example, I have very little real feeling for the structure of a foreign language. I learn by ear, not by syntax. My son speaks impeccable French and I am embarrassed when we try to talk to each other in that language. I also speak poor Italian very well. I used to have terrible anxieties when I was younger that the words that I had to sing would vanish from my mind the minute I stepped out on a stage. I never worried about the music. That's because I always trust my ear, and my ear, like everybody else's, will not always come through when memory is the problem.

"I spend a great deal of time studying the purely physical problem of singing. It's crucial. Yet there's terrible advice all too available to any singer. I've read books on voice production that tied me in knots. Good singing comes from the perfect control of breath plus perfect placement of the voice. Every voice student should study physiology, the structure of the body. How it works and how it is controlled. That is where all technique comes from, and without technique we cannot take a single artistic step forward."

The study, the preparation, the concentration are all applied daily in London, where the Bonynges have their home. It is here that the prima donna as a private person-as wife, mother, and homemaker who handles affectionately all the practical chores of normal life that help keep people cheerful-merges with the prima donna as performer. Here Joan Sutherland becomes custodian of a wonderful barococo house that by any standards must be called a mansion. Six stories from basement to rooftop, its rooms are decorated by wallpapers that are virtually gardens in themselves and by chandeliers that need not be turned on to light up, so dazzling bright are their crystals. In the drawing room stereo equipment stands cunningly camouflaged in walls and window jambs, while every room is hung with a splendidly personal collection of prints, paintings, lithographs, and nineteenth-century busts of such per-

## New Trends in Stereo Kits



plus photographs of how the completed wiring should look. Eico overlays parts numbers in red: Harman-Kardon prints a gray overlay on all components and connections not touched on the page of instructions facing them. But the principle remains the same: the breakdown of a full-scale work project into step-by-step procedures.

And increasingly, some procedures have been completed before the kit even reaches the customer. That the chassis will be predrilled and punched goes without saying: but more and more chassis carry one or more large, square cutouts, the hallmark of the printed circuit. A  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " x 5" p.c. board on an amplifier I'm now building carries seventeen premounted components, forty-two presoldered connections saving at least an hour's work, more likely two, and reducing the chance of wiring errors considerably.

Knight has carried the process further, with printed-circuit switches; Heath further yet, with wiring harnesses and epoxy-covered modules of up to thirty or forty components, ready to be plugged in and soldered to the p.c. board in minutes. Scott premounts tube sockets and terminal strips; Eico preinstalls transformers. In general, says Fisher's Fred Mergner, "You preassemble switches, FM front ends, multiplex adapters . . . things you feel are difficult to explain and difficult for the customer to manage."

Circuit-board design in general is an area where transistors are making themselves most felt by the kit builder. Transistors lend themselves to printedcircuit mounting, especially as it diminishes the danger of heat damage from amateur soldering. At the same time, the transistor's small size and low or no heat generation during use permit higher component densities and more efficient utilization of printed circuit techniques as well as more compact over-all dimensions. Cool-running transistors also require less heat resistance (hence, lower cost) from circuit boards.

Beyond such recent developments, we can anticipate in the kit of tomorrow a wider use of prefabricated circuit sections—for instance, entire portions of an amplifier—in module form. Such circuit modules could be chosen and custom-assembled to suit the buyer's individual tastes or needs. That is to say, one could choose one's own equalization facilities, decide whether one's amplifier would include tone or filter controls, determine the type and number of inputs and outputs, exercise an option on power output. In a sense, the prefabricated circuit module would enable one to custom-build an amplifier in somewhat the same way that audio components themselves enable one to custom-assemble a complete sound system. Just such an approach to kit building has already been launched by a British firm, Martin Audiokits, and other manufacturers probably will follow suit before long. Indeed, the hint of just such a flexible approach to "custom kit building" was suggested two years ago when the Citation A appeared, with its circuit modules which contained fixed-gain, flat preamp stages linked to passive equalization and control circuits. Actually, much of the total circuitry of the "A" could be eliminated (assuming the owner didn't want all that control flexibility) without adversely affecting the basic amplification functioning of the equipment.

**F**LEXIBILITY ASIDE, nearly all kits offered today duplicate existing factory-wired units. Why, then, bother with a kit? One reason—valid, though by no means the only one—is economy. Dynakits, for example, cost, on the average, three-fourths of the price of their assembled counterparts, and most other lines run about the same in price ratio. Most kits, in fact, cost less than the parts alone would retail for, and this does not take into consideration the value of the instruction book, prepunched chassis, and dress panels. Dividing the saving in cash by the hours required for assembly, however, the kit builder may be "selling" his time at a rate anywhere from 25c to \$3.00 per hour. The economics may or may not make sense.

An equally important reason for kit building is the intensely personal satisfaction it affords: the pride of ownership one feels upon emerging successfully from the turmoil of component selection is decidedly enhanced by the pride of creation which only a successfully assembled kit can give. Moreover, kit construction can be a pleasant and relaxing escape from one's customary preoccupations. Many kit builders, bereaved by the completion of one kit, launch at once into another.

You can build any kit, given care and time enough; so can your twelve-year-old little sister. But the wise man treads cautiously in selecting his first kit. Don't buy just any unit, simply because it comes in kit form: examine its specifications as critically as you would a wired unit—you'll have to live with its performance after it's assembled. Don't pick the most complex unit for a starter, either; while each step may be a simple one, 451 of them at a stretch will prove fatiguing.

Start with an easy kit-speakers are the simplest,

usually slipping together in an evening or less. (Speaker kits are so simple, in fact, that they provide hardly any experience for putting together other components.) Power amplifiers are the simplest electronic units, and most builders cut their eyeteeth on them. Next in order, generally, come preamps, control amps, tuners, and receivers—but the order of difficulty may vary according to the unit. A general clue to complexity is the difference in price between kit and wired unit: the more you save, the less work has been done for you.

Once over the selection hurdle, relax. Find a working surface that won't be dusted, cleared off, or otherwise disturbed for the next several evenings, and carefully unpack your new acquisition. Check the parts against the bill of materials, both to make certain that they are all there and to acquaint yourself with them.

If space permits, save all the packing material until the unit is complete and working; if you must dispose of it, check carefully for stray parts—or parts that look like packaging—before discarding. Speaker enclosure padding, frequently mistaken for excelsior or such, may be thrown away in error; and one manufacturer once confused a few customers with "spaghetti" (insulated sleeving) packaged so cleverly inside a tube shield that some builders couldn't find it. Once three or four inquiries had reached him, he of course changed the packaging most manufacturers keep a close liaison between Customer Service and Quality Control.

Setting up the working area, unpacking, and mounting of transformers, circuit boards, and tube sockets usually leaves you eager to go on. Stop there, anyway, for you've done a good first evening's work. Stopping early is always a good idea: two hours a night is a recommended maximum for the novice. Remember that you're building the unit as a pleasure, not as a penance; leave it at the first sign of fatigue. Better one extra session spent in assembly than three in searching for the mistake you made the night you overtired yourself.

"The main thing I would recommend to anybody who's going to build a kit is that he follow the instructions explicitly, even if it looks crazy to him," states David Hafler. "I think women have less trouble building kits, because they follow the instruction book more carefully, and they usually don't have any experience that would lead them to go off on a tangent of their own. We find that the people who try to change sequence or take short cuts—usually those who think they know a little bit about it—are the ones who generally run into problems; and those who rigorously follow the thing right down the line are the ones who'll wind up without any trouble."

Follow the instructions, and even tuner alignment becomes easy. Modern techniques make a benchful of instruments unnecessary. Today's kit tuners are prealigned, requiring only minor touch-up adjustments; with most tuner kits now on the market, a weak station—or the tuner's own internal noise—serves as a signal source, and the tuning eye or meter as an indicator. Readings are not critical: tune for minimum or maximum indications as instructed, and your tuner will be aligned within a hairsbreadth of the factorywired unit. Printed circuits play a role here too. Prewired front ends and IF strips can be accurately prealigned because components' positions are predetermined and the capacitance between "wires" of the circuit board is fixed. One helpful tip for tuner builders is offered by Scott's Daniel von Recklinghausen: "Sit very still while aligning. The signal strength will often be highly dependent on how the operator moves."

HE BULK OF kit construction is a matter of snipping and soldering. Always leave a small extra margin when cutting wires or component leads: once a lead is threaded and wrapped through its connection point, you can always cut the excess off, but lengthening a wire is a bit more difficult. If you have cut too much off, don't despair. Working gently, you may be able to bend the contact over far enough to catch your lead or wire. If not, bend the wire's end into a tiny hook, bend a spare piece of hook-up wire into another hook, connect, and solder; the resulting splice will carry you on to the desired connection.

Soldering is a bit more complicated, but only a bit. The choice of solder is preordained: it must be rosin-core. Somewhere at the very beginning of your manual will be a warning—all in capital letters—that "USE OF ACID-CORE SOLDER AUTOMATI-CALLY VOIDS THE WARRANTY." It also automatically voids the unit. The solder that came packed with your kit, if solder was provided, is sure to be rosin-core; if you have any doubts about the solder in your tool box or if your solder looks old, gray, and tired, toss it out. Solder is the cheapest part of any kit (but acid-core solder can be most expensive!).

Solder is a conductor, not a glue. The best joints are mechanically self-supporting; wrap your connections securely before soldering. Your iron will work better if it's "tinned"—lightly coated with solder at the tip for better heat conduction. Apply tip and iron squarely and simultaneously to the joint, and let the heated joint—not the iron itself—melt the solder. When the solder flows into every crevice of the connection, take away the iron, being careful not to shake the joint.

A properly heated joint, not shaken as it cools, will fade to a deep, pearly luster after about five to fifteen seconds. Dark rosin streaks or a pale frosted appearance indicate a "cold" joint, which may eventually become resistive. Carefully remelt the solder until it settles into the joint, and take double care not to shake it.

Kit builders have long debated the relative merits of gun and pencil soldering irons, but both deserve a place on the workbench. Long stretches of continual soldering call for the pencil iron, light to wield and always heated. When less soldering needs to be done, the quick-heating gun is just the ticket for an occasional joint or two. *Continued on page 110* 



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# high fidelity

## EQUIPMENT REPORTS



THE EQUIPMENT: Magnecord 1024, a two-speed (7½ and  $3\frac{3}{4}$  ips), quarter-track stereo/monophonic tape recorder supplied in two sections—transport and record/ playback preamplifier—each in its own carrying case. Dimensions of transport out of carrying case: 19 inches wide (standard rack mount size), 10½ inches high, 7 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches deep (allow about 1 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches more for clearance of reel caps, controls, etc.). Preamp dimensions out of case: width, same as transport; height, 5 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches; depth, 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches (allow about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches more in front for knobs; about 1 inch at rear for connections). Either unit in its case, add 1 inch to width and height; depth, 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches (plus clearances as above). Cost (including cases), \$655. Manufacturer: Midwestern Instruments, P. O. Box 7509, Tulsa, Okla. 74105.

**COMMENT:** It probably will not win any beauty awards, but the Magnecord 1024 is easily one of the best tape recorders you can buy. Both its appearance businesslike, professionally dimensioned, marked by a full complement of large-size controls plainly marked and its performance, which either meets or exceeds specifications, mark the 1024 as an audio product just on the border line between superior "home type" equipment and truly "professional" equipment. It combines high quality, splendid performance, and great versatility in Magnecord Model 1024 Tape Recorder

a functional combination that should recommend it for either the finest of home music systems or for many commercial applications.

The 1024 is supplied with three heads for quartertrack (four-track) stereo or monophonic erase, record, and playback. It will, with this complement, also play half-track tapes, although for best results with these older tapes, an optional fourth half-track head is available (a switch above the head assembly selects between this head and the normal quarter-track head). It also records sound-on-sound and has built-in mixing facilities. Monitoring, via headphones or external amplifier and speakers, is possible for both the program source and the tape as it is recorded.

The head assembly, of course, is part of the larger, transport section of the 1024—over-all a fine piece of equipment with a sturdy, die-cast top plate on which are mounted the various parts of the transport. The drive motor is a two-speed hysteresis-synchronous type which drives the capstan by means of a flat woven belt. Both motor and capstan contain flywheels. A third flywheel, known as an inertial filter, is located at the input side of the head assembly; a fairly massive wheel, it is rotated by the tape and is designed to reduce flutter.

In addition to the drive motor, there are two additional motors-one for the supply reel and another for

Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and listening tests. Data for the reports, on equipment other than loudspeakers, is obtained by the United States Testing Company, Inc., of Hoboken, New Jersey, a completely independent organization not affiliated with the United States Government which, since 1880, has been a leader in product evaluation. Speaker reports are based on controlled listening tests. Occasionally, a supplementary agency may be invited to contribute to the testing program. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with the editors of HIGH FIDELITY. No report, or portion thereof, may be reproduced for any purpose or in any form without written permission of the publisher. No reference to the United States Testing Company. Inc., to its seals or insignia, or to the results of its tests, including material published in HIGH FIDELITY based on such tests, may be made without written permission of United States Testing Company. Inc.

REPORT POLICY

the take-up reel. These are permanent split-capacitor torque motors. The machine has differential-band mechanical brakes operated by a DC solenoid. The tape, when threaded, runs around a tape-break arm which stops the machine if the tape breaks or runs out, then past the head assembly, and finally around a take-up compliance arm that takes up the initial slack in the tape. In addition to these functions, these two arm assemblies help to further minimize tape flutter.

Reels of up to eight inches in diameter may be used. In addition to the regular spindle, each hub also has a second projecting member that engages one of the three holes found on standard reels to further secure it in place. The transport may be used in any position from full vertical (as shown in our photograph) to full horizontal. Reel caps are supplied for the vertical position. Transport operating controls consist of three knobs

Magnecord 1024	Recorder
Lab Test Data	
Performance characteristic	Measurement
Speed accuracy, 7½ ips 3¾ ips	0.28% slow same
Wow and flutter, 7½ ips 3¾ ips	0.05% and 0.03% respectively 0.1% and 0.06% respectively
Rewind time, 7-in., 1,200-ft. reel, either speed setting Fast-forward time, same reel	1 min, 20 sec same
NAB playback response, 7½ ips (ref Ampex test tape No. 31321-01)	
l ch r ch	+ 2, -0.5 db, 50 cps to 15 kc + 2.5, -0 db, 50 cps to 15 kc
Record/playback response (with –10 VU recorded signal) 7½ ips I ch r ch	+ 2.5 db, -1.5 db, 39 cps to 20 kc + 1.5 db, -2.5 db, 39 cps to 19 kc
3	+ 1, -2 db, 28 cps to 10.5 kc + 1, -2 db, 27 cps to 10 kc
S/N ratio (ref 0 VU, test tape) playback record/playback	l ch, 55 db; r ch, 56 db l ch, 46 db; r ch, 48 db
Sensitivity (for 0 VU record- ing level) aux input mic input	l ch, 68 mv; r ch, 76 mv l ch, 1.6 mv; r ch, 1.8 mv
Max output level (with 0 VU signal) (with —10 VU signal)	l ch, 3.2 v; r ch, 3.2 v same
THD, record/playback (-10 VU recorded signal) 7½ ips	either ch: less than 2%, 50 cps to 15 kc
3 <sup>3</sup> /4 ips	either ch: less than 2.5%, 30 cps to 8 kc
IM distortion, record/play- back	
–10 VU recorded level –5 VU recorded level 0 VU recorded level	l ch, 3.5%; r ch, 4% l ch, 4%; r ch, 4.5% l ch, 5.5%; r ch, 6%
Recording level for max 3% THD	l ch, +5.8 VU; r ch, +6.8 VU
Accuracy, built-in meters	l ch meter reads 0.5 VU high r ch meter reads 0.5 VU low

to the left of, and a row of push buttons directly under, the head assembly. The knobs are for: power off/on; remote or local operation; slow  $(3\frac{3}{4} \text{ ips})$  or fast  $(7\frac{1}{2} \text{ ips})$  speed. The buttons are for: rewind, record (in conjunction with a separate safety button that must be pressed first to record), stop, cue, play, and fastforward. The 1024 can go from play to record, or from record to play, without first stopping the tape. It also can be operated from a remote location in either the record or playback modes. The cue button, when pressed, permits the tape to be manually "rocked" back and forth to locate a specific portion on the tape, as when editing.

The electronics of the Magnecord 1024, housed in the smaller section, are completely solid-state. They consist of two independent channels that may be used separately or together, as desired. Separate record and playback amplifiers on each channel permit simultaneous recording and playback. The amplifiers, incidentally, feature modular construction: each subsection (amplifier stages, bias and erase oscillators, power supply) plugs into a separate compartment at the rear of the chassis. Both the record and playback amplifiers contain adjustments for equalization and bias: using these adjustments together with certain test instruments, as described in the owner's manual, can assure optimum performance over years of use, and with different types of tape.

Each channel has its own recording and playback controls as well as a VU meter. There are microphone



inputs for each channel on the front panel; auxiliary high-level inputs and the recorder outputs are on the rear. Separate level controls on each channel are provided for both microphone and auxiliary inputs; in addition there is a master recording level control for both channels simultaneously. The number and arrangement of controls facilitate very precise channel balance, as well as smooth "fading" for special recording effects. For playback, there again are separate level controls for each channel plus a master control.

A recording selector switch permits recording on either channel monophonically, or on both for stereo. Each VU meter has a switch that determines whether the meter reads bias current, input program source level, or the level on the tape itself. This switch also determines whether the source or the tape will be monitored at the output of the machine. The front panel also contains a high-impedance stereo headphone jack and a switch above it that determines whether the phones will get a stereo signal from both channels or the individual signal from either channel 1 or 2. There also is an electronics power off/on switch, and another switch that selects the correct equalization for fast and slow speeds.

An additional touch of versatility is found at the auxiliary, or "high level" input jacks on the rear. There actually are two such inputs for each channel. One is controlled by the auxiliary gain control: the other, only by the master gain control. Normally, one would use only the first input. However, both may be used to feed two high-level sources simultaneously on a single channel and regulate their relative levels for mixing and other special effects. Inasmuch as the microphone input with its level control also can be used at the same time, the 1024 permits three-source mixing on each channel. In addition to the headphone output, there are two external amplifier outputs on each channel so that up to four monophonic, or two independent stereo, playback systems may be driven at once.

In tests conducted at United States Testing Company, Inc., and in subsequent listening and use tests, the 1024

acquitted itself with flying colors. Both mechanically and electronically the equipment worked flawlesslyeither meeting or exceeding its performance specifications. Speed accuracy was excellent; wow and flutter, insignificant. The transport responded to changes in its operating modes perfectly, and with no trace of tape spillage. The fast-forward and rewind modes could be engaged directly from the play mode with no trouble. Indeed, the 1024 even responded with alacrity to "fast buttoning" during high-speed operation (rapidly changing from rewind to fast-forward without first stopping the machine)-a procedure not recommended for normal use, and a rigorous test of how gently the recorder handles tape. No mangling or breakage of tape was encountered in this test. Braking action at all speeds. when the proper button was pressed, proved positive and, again, very easy on the tape.

The electrical performance of the 1024 proved to be as splendid as its mechanical performance. Signal-to-noise ratio was quite high; distortion, very low. Response at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ips was uniform within a few db's out to 20 kc; at  $3\frac{3}{4}$  ips, to just above 10 kc. In fact, the characteristics of this recorder at the slow speed are reminiscent of cheaper or older recorders at the fast speed. As far as we could determine, the 1024 can be counted on to make unimpeachable copies of program sources fed to it at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ips, and near-perfect copies at  $3\frac{3}{4}$  ips. Its playing of commercially recorded ("prerecorded") tapes is unsurpassed by any "home-type" machine yet auditioned

surpassed by any "home-type" machine yet auditioned. Happily enough, the superior performance and the apparent complexity of controls on the Magnecord 1024 do not require very much orientation for correctly operating this machine. Even its relatively "plain-Jane" styling and bulk is quickly overlooked when one has had a chance to enjoy the flawless functioning and full clean sound of the equipment. The 1024, in a word, is a unit to gladden the heart of the tape enthusiast who is prepared to spend upwards of \$600 for a recorder and who has the additional high-quality audio equipment that logically ought to be used with it.



**THE EQUIPMENT:** Fisher 600-T, a combination FM stereo tuner and stereo preamplifier—power amplifier on one chassis. Dimensions: front panel, 16¾ by 5¼ inches (add ¾ inch to height if rubber feet are used). Depth, including knob clearance: 14 inches. Supplied in metal cage. Cost, \$499.50. Optional walnut case, \$24.95. Manufacturer: Fisher Radio Corp., 21-21 44th Drive, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.

**COMMENT:** The 600-T is the most elaborate of the new line of stereo components by Fisher, and the first transistorized stereo receiver from this company. Except for the tuner's front end, which uses two RCA Nuvistors and a 6HA5 tube, the Model 600-T is all solid-state. The unit is handsomely styled in two tones of brushed gold aluminum, with a black, green, and white station

#### Fisher Model 600-T

#### **Tuner/Amplifier**

dial, red indicator lights, and maroon-colored push buttons. One of the most elegant-looking of Fisher products, it also boasts high over-all performance both as tuner and as amplifier.

The front panel has an ample-sized tuning dial with FM markings and a logging scale. At its left is a signal strength meter; above this is a stereo beacon that indicates when a station is broadcasting in stereo. The moving indicator for FM channels has a small red lamp at its bottom to help pinpoint station settings. The tuning knob is at the right. And at its right is a speaker selector switch that may be used to turn the speakers off (for instance, when listening over headphones), as well as to select either or both stereo speakers.

Across the bottom half of the escutcheon. from left to right, are the following controls: a volume control combined with the AC power off/on switch: a set of three push buttons for loudness contour, interstation muting, and high-frequency filter: a balance control knob: three more push buttons for low-frequency filter. tape monitor, and monophonic mode: dual-concentric bass tone controls (separate for each channel, but friction-coupled so that they may be operated simultaneously if desired); a similar-type treble tone control; a lowimpedance headphone jack; and the program selector, with positions for tape head, phono, FM automatic (both mono and stereo programs are tuned in), FM stereo (only FM stereo signals will be received), FM



mono (only FM mono signals will be received), tape play, and auxiliary.

If this array of controls isn't enough, there are two more hidden behind the Fisher emblem. You push on the bird, and a little door opens to reveal a muting threshold control (to adjust the level at which the set will not respond to noisy stations), and another adjustment that—believe it or not—is a "dimmer" control that regulates the brightness of the set's tuning meter and stereo indicator lamps.

The rear of the set contains stereo inputs for phono cartridges (high and low output types), signals direct



from a tape head, signals from a tape playback preamp, and signals from two (high and low level) auxiliary sources. There also is a stereo pair for feeding signals into a recorder. Additional jacks are provided for connecting a reverberation device-such as the Fisher SpaceXpander-into the circuit; in normal use, these jacks are connected by jumpers provided. There are two sets of antenna terminals (300-ohm type) on a barrier strip; one set is for distant, the other for local, reception. Speaker terminals, also on barrier strips, are provided for connecting two sets of speakers to each channel. The extra speakers may be used as extension speakers in another room, or as additional sound sources to enhance the stereo effect in the same room. An output impedance switch selects between 4, or 8 and 16 ohms. The rear also contains two AC convenience outlets, and five fuse-holders: in addition to the main-line fuse, there are two fuses in each amplifier output channel to protect the transistors from damage due to overload.

The tuner section of the 600-T was found by United States Testing Company, Inc., to have better than 1.9  $\mu$ v sensitivity across the FM band, with 1.8  $\mu$ v as the IHF sensitivity figure at 98 mc. It thus is one of the most sensitive tuners available; combined with its other fine performance characteristics it should provide superior reception in the most difficult of locales. On the weakest of incoming signals (including some not normally received on less sensitive sets) the 600-T may prove susceptible to external interference, such as electrical noise. On stronger signals, of course, this noise is overcome by the set's own quieting action.

The 600-T is also an easy set to use for receiving

both monophonic and stereo FM broadcasts. Its tuning meter is accurate and an aid in locating stations. Dial calibration is excellent; distortion, low; signal-to-noise ratio, very favorable. Channel separation on stereo was outstanding, reaching an impressive 40 db at midfrequencies, remaining better than 30 db across a good part of the band, and better than 20 db across the largest part of the FM audio band.

The amplifier portion of the 600-T shapes up as a very fine combination unit in, say, the "upper-medium" power class, with low harmonic distortion and a respectable power bandwidth. As is typical of many solid-state combination amplifiers, the IM characteristic was generally somewhat higher at low power output levels, but decreased at the higher power levels. In general, the higher the impedance load being driven, the lower the IM across the power output range. But again, as is true of solid-state amplifiers, these relatively small changes in IM could not be discerned in listening tests; indeed, the "listening quality" of the 600-T was found to be extremely agreeable: full, clean, and natural-sounding. Square-wave response characteristics were typical of a good integrated amplifier: response to the 10-kc signal showed no ringing and excellent stability; response to the 50-cps signal had some rolloff and phase-shift in the subsonic bass. The amplifier's damping factor was 8.8, which is moderate; its stability with capacitive loading, very good-the Fisher 600-T thus can be used with any type of speaker. The instruction manual provided is an unusually clearly written and well-illustrated booklet that should greatly assist the owner in setting up, and enjoying, an installation built around the 600-T.



Fisher 600-T Tuner/Amplifier			
Lab Test Data			
Performance characteristic	Measurement		
Tuner Section			
IHF sensitivity	1.8 μν at 98 mc; 1.9 μν at 90 mc; 1.75 μν at 106 mc		
Frequency response, mono	+0, -3 db, 20 cps to 15 kc		
THD, mono	0.46% at 400 cps; 0.78% at 40 cps; 0.38% at 1 kc		
IM distortion	0.51%		
Capture ratio	4.5 db		
S/N ratio	68 db		
Frequency response, stereo I ch r ch	+ 1, −4 db, 23 cps to 15 kc identical		
THD, stereo, I ch	1.35% at 400 cps; 2.7% at 40 cps; 1.1% at 1 kc		
r ch	1.65% at 400 cps; 3.1% at 40 cps; 1.4% at 1 kc		
Channel separation, either channel	better than 40 db at mid-frequen- cies; better than 30 db, 150 cps to 2.8 kc; better than 20 db, 45 cps to 15 kc		
19-kc pilot suppression 38-kc subcarrier suppression	–46 db –57 db		



#### UTC/Goodmans Maximus Speaker Systems

THE EQUIPMENT: Maximus 1, 2, and 3, full-range compact speaker systems in integral walnut enclosures. Maximus 1:  $10\frac{1}{2}$  by  $5\frac{1}{2}$  by  $7\frac{1}{4}$  inches; price, \$59.50. Maximus 2:  $14\frac{3}{4}$  by  $10\frac{7}{6}$  by 9 inches; price, \$109. Maximus 3: 18 by  $12\frac{3}{4}$  by 10 inches; price, \$169. Manufactured by Goodmans of England; marketed in the U.S.A. by UTC Sound Division, 809 Stewart Ave., Garden City, N.Y. 11533.

COMMENT: The Maximus models comprise a new "family" of speaker systems in which the apparent design aim is to produce an acceptable reproducer in the most compact dimensions possible. The largest Maximus is less than 11/2 cubic feet in volume; the smallest is less than 1/4 cubic foot in volume. Common to all three systems is a newly developed woofer, about 4 inches in diameter and having a high compliance suspension and a magnet that is, for the size of the cone, quite heavy and massive. Indeed, it appears to be the sort of magnet that could drive a cone three to four times the size of that used here. The tweeter is a 25%-inch diameter cone with a foam plastic domeshaped center, and a sealed back to "pressure load" it for its intended response range. The basic classification of the Maximus design is air suspension: each system is a direct radiator; the drivers (and crossover network) are housed in a completely sealed enclosure that is fully stuffed with acoustical damping material.

The differences between the three Maximus systems are in the number of drivers used. The Maximus 1 employs one woofer and one tweeter; crossover is at 1,900 cps; rated impedance is from 8 to 16 ohms; recommended amplifier power is 15 watts. The Maximus 2 employs two woofers and one tweeter. Crossover and impedance are the same; but power-handling ability is rated at 30 watts. The Maximus 3 uses four woofers and two tweeters; crossover and impedance are still the same, but power-handling ability is increased to 60 watts. Besides increasing each system's power-handling ability, the additional woofers, in each instance, extend its over-all bass response.

In our tests, the Maximus 3 had ample bass response to just above 30 cps. Doubling could be induced, by driving the system "hard" from about 50 cps down, but at normal listening levels, the bass line held up cleanly to somewhere between 30 and 35 cps. Upward from the bass, response seemed very smooth with no sudden peaks or dips. There was an apparent slight increase in over-all level from about 2 kc upward. Response continued evenly to beyond audibility, with a gradual and smooth rolloff judged to begin at about 12.5 kc. Directionality was moderate at 1 kc, but no more pronounced at 5 kc, and—surprisingly enough apparently less at 8 and 10 kc. A 12-kc test tone was, again, more directive but still perceptible fairly off-axis of the system. Response to white noise was generally smooth, with some hints of midrange preëmphasis.

On program material, the Maximus 3 gave an account of itself that was, for its size, noteworthy. Vocal and orchestral music had a lively sense of "presence" acclaimed by some listeners as "good front row" sound; by others, as a feeling that it was "recorded very close to the microphone." Aside from this difference of opinion, there was general agreement that the system had a well-defined, possibly "tight," quality; very low distortion; and fine response to transients.

The next smaller system in this series, the Maximus 2, had a response characteristic similar to that of the Maximus 3 except that, as expected, its bass response did not extend as far down. The Maximus 2's bass was judged to sound firm and clean to about 40 cps. Midrange and highs were about the same as in the Maximus 3: there were no pronounced peaks or dips along the response range, but the rise in output level above 2 kc was noticeable. Directivity was similar to that of the Maximus 3; response to white noise, a bit smoother. Handling program material, the Maximus 2 did not have as much heft at the very low end, but again we often had to do a double-take to reassure ourselves that the bass it did produce was indeed coming from such a small box.

The baby of this family, the Maximus 1, had, of course, less bass than either of the other two systems. Doubling was apparent at 60 cps when the unit was driven hard. At normal listening levels, the bass was clean to 50 cps. The output upward from here was very smooth and uniform, with an apparent rolloff starting at about 11 kc. Directivity was about the same as in the other two; white noise response—interestingly enough—was the smoothest of the group. This effect doubtless is related to the fact that the rise in level above 2 kc—noticed on both larger systems—was less pronounced. On program material, the Maximus 1 sounded very smooth, but was obviously lacking in full bass. Transient response was clean and crisp.

Any of these systems is, for its size, something of a prodigy as regards wide response and low distortion although this achievement does. apparently, involve higher cost vis-à-vis other speakers of larger dimensions and comparable performance. But for those seeking the ultimate in compactness the new Maximus line surely merits serious consideration.

REPORTS IN PROGRESS

**Dynaco FM-3 Tuner Kit** 

#### Pure Sonics Model 402-C Amplifier





### Like those in the Maestro by Sylvania.

#### 200-WATT EIA AMPLIFIER

Solid-state circuitry Continuous R.M.S. power–65 watts with one channel just below clipping, 55 watts with both channels just below clipping. Frequency response: 20 to 20,000 cps  $\pm$  1db Power bandwidth: 22 to 60,000 cps  $\pm$  3db (half power point) Harmonic distortion: less than .3% for 50 watts orach channel at 1 KC

50 watts each channel at 1 KC Intermodulation distortion: less than .4% for 50 watts each channel at 1 KC

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which suspends the cone. The system is precisely matched; the overall response profile is carefully balanced.

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#### STEREO FM, FM/AM TUNER

Solid-state circuitry FM quieting sensitivity: 1.5#v FM sensitivity (IHF): 2.5#v Capture ratio: 6db Signal to Noise ratio: 60db Full limiting: 4#v Tuned R.F. AM and FM stages FM Stereo Separation: 35db at 1 KC FM-IF Stages: 4 Separate FM and AM tuning with heavy individual flywheels

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8 Velvet-Touch controls: Flywheel tuning (separate FM and AM) Dual element Loudness control (dual tap compensation)

Dual element Boost-Cut Bass control Dual element Boost-Cut Treble control Dual element Balance control Custom Sound-Level control (concentric

with Loudness control) Push-Pull manual AC Power control

(at Treble control)

FM/AM Tuning Meter Stereo FM Indicator Light Pilot Light

SOLID-STATE ELEMENTS

Transistors: 39, Diodes: 15

Maestro Series model shown–SC818. For new booklet, "An Introduction To Sylvania Stereo," send 25¢ in coin to: Sylvania, Dept. HF, P.O. Box 7, Station C, Buffalo, N. Y

CIRCLE 76 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Joan Sutherland

Connoisseurs of opera have had cause to rejoice ever since Joan Sutherland's debut. Her command of *bel canto* and the ornamented style of early 19th-century opera lend special magnificence to the works of Bellini and Donizetti. In fact, her latest triumph is this new album of Bellini's Norma. Recorded with a distinguished cast, including Marilyn Horne, John Alexander and Richard Cross, with the London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus under Richard Bonynge, Joan Sutherland's Norma is an experience to treasure. To be released in February on RCA Victor Red Seal.

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CIRCLE 68 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

reviewed by PAUL AFFELDER NATHAN BRODER O. B. BRUMMELL R. D. DARRELL SHIRLEY FLEMING ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN



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Carlos Chávez: leader in a unique culture.

## by O. B. Brummell

#### The Artistic Ferment

#### **Of Mexico Today**

WHEN THE FIRST Europeans poured into the New World almost five hundred years ago, they found aboriginal cultures ranging from tribes of neolithic hunters to the sophisticated Incas of Peru, whose pottery and textiles surpass any that twentieth-century technology has yet contrived. The invaders themselves were wildly varied—greedy adventurers from Castile, pious English Nonconformists but they uniformly suppressed both the natives and their traditions wherever they found them. In Mexico, Archbishop Zumárraga burned countless thousands of Aztec books, forever obscuring pre-Columbian history, theology, astronomy, mathematics; in Peru, Pizarro summarily strangled the last Inca emperor, Atahualpa, and after him a civilization that had been two thousand years in the making; whole tribes of North American Indians disappeared.

With a single notable exception, the descendants of these diverse peoples survive in government-decreed reservations (e.g., in the United States and Chile) or as a sullen have-not class (Peru, Bolivia). The exception is Mexico; here the glories of the Aztecs and the Maya have reflowered. The Revolution of 1911-1920 which purged Mexico of dictatorship also elevated the Indians to a status of respectability and revitalized the traditions they had nurtured through dark centuries of Spanish oppression. Today, virtually every major artist south of the Rio Grande finds inspiration in pre-Columbian sources: Rivera with his squat, squarish figures, his slashes of ocher and maroon; Carlos Chávez-the musical force behind this recording-with the ancient themes of his Sinfonia India and the pure Aztec cosmology of his ballet Los Cuatro Soles. If Montezuma has not in the end conquered Cortés, he has at least won a dazzling parity.

This exciting album—the fifth in Columbia's opulent "Legacy Collection" —captures in word, picture, and sound the artistic ferment of present-day Mexico. The single disc nestles within a magnificent 66-page hardbound bilingual (Spanish and English) book that offers perhaps the finest appreciation of Mexico in print. A long, perceptive essay by Carleton Beale traces Mexican history and, in relating the modern republic to its Indian past, brilliantly illuminates the mathematical niceties of the Aztec calendar-so much sounder astronomically than our own. Stanton L. Catlin gives a fascinating account of the wellsprings and goals of the great muralists: Orozco, Rivera, Siqueiros, Tamayo. The four composers represented on the recording---Chávez, Luis Sandi, Blas Galindo, Gerónimo Baqueiro Fóstercomment upon their music. The whole shines with lavish illustrations, ranging from Aztec paintings to a photograph of Pancho Villa to striking reproductions of the greatest works of Mexican art. There is also a map that unaccountably robs Mexico of a large chunk of territory, Baja California. Another Yankee annexation?

Throughout the album—in art as in music—one detects nostalgia for the idyllic life of the pre-Columbian Indians. In his great *History and Perspective of Mexico*, for example, Rivera depicts noble, clean-limbed Aztecs suffering at the hands of a hideous, deformed, diseased Cortés. Well, maybe. But doughty, honest old Bernal Díaz, a soldier of Cortés, caught the Indians at a different moment: "After the prisoners had danced, the Mexicans bent them backward over some stones, somewhat narrow, that they used for sacrificing, and with stone knives they sawed through their chests, took out the beating hearts, and offered them to their idols. Then they kicked the bodies down the steps. There were butchers waiting below to cut off the arms and legs. They flayed the faces, and later cured them with mud so that they were like glove leather, with their beards still on. These they kept for their fiestas, when they got drunk and ate the meat."

Nonetheless, the best of the old seems to have commingled with the best of the new to form a unique and effervescent culture-modern Mexico. It is all here in the music. Carlos Chávez leads a superb orchestra through a superb program, duplicating the celebrated concert given at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 1940 and brilliantly re-recorded in Mexico in 1962. He opens with excerpts from two of his own compositions. Danza a Centeotl from the ballet Los Cuatro Soles and Xochipilli, a stirring, exotic re-creation of Aztec music that is all flutes and percussion, all loneliness and loss. Then comes Luis Sandi's poignant orchestration of a Yaqui Indian dance, El Venado, part of an ancient propitiatory rite still played out by this primitive people prior to a hunt. Blas Galindo's mosaic of mariachi songswhich largely echo the Aztec musical scale-sparkles with gay melody, and G. B. Fóster's presentation of a huapanga (nee fandango) from Veracruz, La Bamba, harks back to the Spain of three centuries past. Of all the delights here, however, I think the most appealing may be Chávez's haunting arrangement of two nineteenth-century canciones ---pure Spanish, this, but refracted through a Mexican prism-titled La Paloma Azul.

My only cavil about this splendid album concerns the lopsided proportion of text to music. While the recording presents a neat anthology, it is not enough: whole areas of Mexican music are neglected—revolutionary songs like *La Norteña*, religious alabados, the distinctively Mexican corrido. In view of the book's catholicity, the somewhat limited scope of the recording disappoints—but only mildly. This stands as the finest evocation of Mexico available, a gorgeous wedding of printed word and recorded sound. I would not be without it.

#### CARLOS CHAVEZ: "Mexico"

Chávez: Xochipilli; Los Cuatro Soles: Danza a Centeotl. Chávez (arr.): La Paloma Azul. Sandi (arr.): El Venado. Galindo (arr.): Sones Mariachi. Fóster (arr.): La Bamba.

Mexican Chorus and Orchestra. Carlos Chávez, cond.

• COLUMBIA LEGACY COLLECTION LL 1015. LP. \$15.00.

• COLUMBIA LEGACY COLLECTION LS 1016, SD, \$16.00.



In Act II appears a vision of a Heavenly Mansion.

### Four Saints— "Humanity Is the Key Word"

#### by Alan Rich

THE REISSUE of this cherishable recording is a cause for general rejoicing, except among those collectors who have of late been paying up to \$50 for the LP released more than a decade ago. They have naught for their comfort; the new disc is greatly improved technically and also includes a brochure with the text.

It is thirty-one years this month since this operatic collaboration between Gertrude Stein and Virgil Thomson startled its first audiences. in a production by a group entitled The Friends and Enemies of Modern Music in Hartford, Connecticut. The details of that event are well known: the cellophane sets, the occasion of an all-Negro cast employed in an opera not about Negroes, the fact that the opera had sixty performances in its first year. The man on the street remembers Gertrude Stein today, if at all, as the author of "Pigeons on the grass, alas," and this is the work in which it appears.

Parody? Satire? Latter-day Dada? None of these terms really applies to *Four Saints*. The work is not at all a comic opera, but an extremely warm and human pastoral. Humanity is the key word, I think, and it is what gives the illusion of humor. When a personage, saintly or otherwise. pronounces at an operatic distance a line like "How do you do," we smile, because language so commonplace destroys the distance. This was clearly the intent of librettist and composer—and insofar as they have succeeded, they have produced an inevitable sense of comedy.

Four Saints is an opera that uses the elements of the common verbal and musical language in a most uncommon way. It takes these elements, plays with them, examines them in almost ruthless penetration, and extracts from them their power to glitter. Words, to Gertrude Stein, become little crystal prisms: the light that shines through them comes from Virgil Thomson's music. There are few examples in music—any variety of music—in which text and composition are so totally one. There is nothing nonsensical about this, as nonsense is usually understood. We are not meant to concentrate upon the meaning of the individual words but upon their sound. "Alas" does not connote "alas"; it is, rather, an orchestration of "grass." "Let Lucy Lily Lily Lucy Lucy . . ." sings the chorus upon St. Ignatius' revelation of his vision; we aren't supposed to worry about the girls themselves, but to hear these tinkling names as the distant fluttering of angels' wings.

And what Stein has done with her words, Thomson has done with his notes. His harmonies are, for the most part, the elements of the simplest kind of musical language: the relationship to hymn tunes is far from accidental. But a chord here is not always an element in a harmonic progression; it is a color that flows freely over a flat glassy surface. Just as Stein showers her text with words, ten where one will do, so does Thomson wiggle his chords back and forth a little like a child exploring a toy concertina. These things are, however, handled on a level of utmost sophistication. There is more to Thomson's music than meets the casual ear. There are big musical moments, such as an orchestral passage at the end of the third act and an intermezzo that follows this act, in which polytonality plays an important part. Here too there is a touch of what might be called parody: a distorted reflection of the scale passage that begins the finale of Beethoven's First Symphony. (Thomson likes this sort of thing, obviously: there is a quote from a Beethoven plano sonata thrown just for fun into the finale of his Cello Concerto.)

To what end, all this? Four Saints does purport to follow a dramatic line. Maurice Grosser, working with the creators, extracted from the text a complete scenario (which probably ought to have been included with the recording). Act I is largely concerned with a pageant, during which scenes from the life of St. Theresa of Avila are pantomimed on the steps of her cathedral; Act II is a garden party in the course of which a vision of a Heavenly Mansion appears; Act III is about St. Ignatius' vision of the Holy Ghost (the "Pigeons" aria) and a discussion of it; Act IV is an argument as to whether there should be a fourth act. Other readings are possible and probably even desirable, but Grosser's interpretation allows for an intelligible staging and is the one that has been followed when the work has been produced.

The use of Negroes for the original was Thomson's own inspiration. "During the Thirties," he told me recently, "we liked to end our evenings up at one of the night clubs in Harlem; it was the thing to do in those days. More and more it struck me as inevitable that the way Negro singers produced their words, and the complete naturalness of their style, was what we wanted for Four Saints. We had the idea that professional white singers might make fun of the verses, and we were probably right. The Negroes we got together for the first performance not only accepted everything; by the end of a week's rehearsals they were actually talking like Stein when they were off the stage."

The performance on this recording is a condensation made by Thomson of a concert performance given in New York's Town Hall in 1946, again with a Negro cast. While many listeners might wish for a complete version, no real damage to the flavor of the work has been done in the cutting, and more than half the opera is included on the disc. The omission I regret most is the argument with St. Ignatius in Act III, a scene that goes on in martial rhythm.

The singing couldn't be more wonderful. There is a freedom in the flinging forth of the lines which is totally infectious, even when it departs somewhat from the published score (and it often does). And although a few of the voices are clearly untrained, this is of no consequence. Beatrice Robinson-Wayne, who also sang St. Theresa I at the Hartford premiere, is tremendously moving in her many solo passages; Altonell Hines and Abner Dorsey (again from the original cast) are magisterial as the two masters of ceremonies. The recording, especially as now electronically enhanced, misses no detail of the prismatic scoring; it was made at Town Hall with very few microphones (at Thomson's own urging) and creates a real performance atmosphere.

#### THOMSON: Four Saints in Three Acts (abridged)

Beatrice Robinson-Wayne (s), St. Theresa I; Inez Matthews (s), St. Settlement; Altonell Hines (ms), Commère; Ruby Greene (c), St. Theresa II; Charles Holland (t), St. Chavez; David Bethea (t), St. Stephen; Edward Matthews (b), St. Ignatius; Randolph Robinson (b), St. Plan; Abner Dorsey (bs), Compère; Chorus and Orchestra, Virgil Thomson, cond. [from RCA Victor LM 1244, 1947 and LCT 1139, 1953].

• RCA VICTOR LM 2756. LP. \$4.98.



- BACH: Arias: St. John Passion: Es ist vollbracht; St. Matthew Passion: Buss' und Reu'; Erbarme dich; Christmas Oratorio: Bereite dich, Zion
- Handel: Arias: Samson: Return, O God of Hosts; Jephtha; Scenes of Horror; Messiah: He was despised; O thou that tellest good tidings

Maureen Forrester, contralto; Solisti di Zagreb, Antonio Janigro, cond.

• VANGUARD BG 669. LP. \$4.98.

• • VANGUARD BGS 70669. SD. \$5.98.

Yet another superb record of baroque music by Maureen Forrester. Listen to the way this great contralto phrases the final dying fall in "Es ist vollbracht," and you will encounter artistry on an awesome level. She not merely comprehends the import of this style; she is totally imbued with it. This is, furthermore, a more varied recital than her recent disc for Westminster, and she has more opportunity to dig into strongly and overtly dramatic material. She flings forth the powerful Jephtha aria brilliantly, and I hope every American singer can be strapped to a chair and made to listen to her English enunciation. The charming aria from the Christmas Oratorio elicits a delightful, light tone, and this is another aspect of Miss Forrester's art that previous recital records have not fully explored.

I still feel a certain reserve, however, in the basic coloration of this singer's voice. It is not a warm instrument, as Ferrier's was, and as a result the total effect of the present recording is just a shade this side of overwhelming. But there are few if any singers of Forrester's range today who sing music of this kind with her degree of taste and sensitivity—which is enough to make her a genuinely exciting artist.

The support by Janigro's superb orchestra cannot be overpraised as an important adjunct in the success of this record. Janigro himself plays the cello solo in "Es ist vollbracht," and wonderfully. A.R.

#### BACH: Cantata No. 80, Ein feste Burg; Motet, Jesu, meine Freude

Antonia Fahberg, soprano; Margarethe Bence, contralto; Theophil Maier, tenor; Ulrich Schaible, bass; Figuralchor of the Stuttgart Memorial Church; Württemberg Chamber Orchestra, Helmuth Rilling, cond. (in the Cantata). Stuttgart Hymnuschorknaben; Stuttgart Bach Orchestra, Wilhelm Gerhard, cond. (in the Motet).

Vox PL 14150. LP. \$4.98.
Vox STPL 514150. SD. \$4.98.

Here is the best recording yet of the great Reformation Cantata. It is especially strong in its soloists. Miss Bence has little to do, but Miss Fahberg sings her fine aria with ringing confidence, in a steady voice and with lovely tone. Schaible, in his duet with her and his recitative-arioso, reveals an agile and accurate voice of attractive quality. And Maier is strong-sounding, tossing off with fine bravura the roulade on "freudig" in his recitative. The general level of the solo singing is thus somewhat higher, it seems to me, than in the Epic recording, and the sound brighter, though the stereo does not have the directionality that the Epic does.

Concerning this reading of Jesu, meine Freude I am less enthusiastic. There are some good points. For example, the conductor has used instruments to double the voices throughout and is consequently able to draw all the lines in the texture distinctly, despite what sounds like a fairly large chorus. On the other hand. he has not used the instruments with much imagination; when they follow the voices with dogged determination even in such intimate passages as "Denn das, Gesetz des Geistes," it is too much of a good thing. The general style of this male choir is a hearty one here, and this fits some of the music well, but there are times when one would welcome relief from the almost constant forte or mezzo-forte. The sound here gives the impression of a hall or church with very lively acoustics. N.B.

#### BACH: Suites for Unaccompanied Cello, S. 1007-1012

Milton Thomas, viola.

• CONCERTDISC M 1503. Three LP. \$14.94.

• CONCERTDISC CS 503. Three SD. \$17.94.

Milton Thomas, whom I have not heard as a soloist before, reveals himself in this set as a violist of marked skill and musicianship. As recorded here, his is not the most ingratiating viola tone, and it grows hard in forte, but his playing is well controlled. Rapid figures are tossed off with a rather winning insouciance. An occasional movement-the Gigue of No. 4, the Courante of No. 5is played so fast as to sound swallowed up, but on the whole the tempos seem plausible, and many of the faster dances have a nice, crisp rhythm. The phrasing is flexible, and, in slow movements, quite free-so much so at times as to twist a phrase out of shape. Nevertheless Mr. Thomas is capable of eloquence, as in the Praeludium of No. 2, and considerable exuberance, which sometimes, as in the Courante of No. 1, triumphs over finesse. The recording is a little too close, magnifying an occasional bit of less than immaculate bowing. By and large, however, this is impressive playing. Impres-

sive, though, is not the word for its presentation. There are no bands between movements, and the labels do not give the titles of the movements. N.B.

#### BACH, C.P.E.: Concertos: for Cello and Orchestra, in A; for Flute and Orchestra, in D minor

Robert Bex, cello; Jean-Pierre Rampal, flute: Huguette Dreyfus, continuo; chamber orchestra, Pierre Boulez, cond.

Vox PL 14170. LP. \$4.98.
Vox STPL 514170. SD. \$4.98.

In addition to achieving considerable celebrity as a composer of avant-garde music, Pierre Boulez has recently been gaining recognition as an outstanding conductor. These poised, superbly balanced, and enlivening performances support that reputation triumphantly. In both concertos, the small string ensemble plays with keen rhythmic buoyancy, gleaming sonority, and marvelous precision. Both soloists are among the foremost instrumentalists currently active, and their contributions are pretty much in keeping with what should be expected of them: in other words, they play with incandescent virtuosity and impeccable taste. It is doubtful whether better versions of these late-baroque-earlyclassic charmers will appear for a long time. The recorded sound is admirably

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full-bodied yet deliciously transparent.

H.G.

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Present-day researchers are still debating the issue of poison. by Else Radant

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Music critics and musicologists should hoe their own rows. by Patrick J. Smith

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BARTOK: Dance Suite; Two Portraits, Op. 5; Seven Rumanian Dances

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.

- LONDON CM 9407. LP. \$4.98. • • LONDON CS 6407. SD. \$5.98.

Music such as this engages the best in Ansermet's vivid coloristic sense, and he leads a trio of superb performances. His control of the perky rhythms in the dance-oriented music is beyond reproach, and he drives his orchestra hard to obtain clean, bright, edgy realizations of Bartók's fascinating patterns. The Portraits are also projected with marvelous fantasy, although the violin solo in the first part, played by Lorand Fenyves, does not leap out as it should. While there is even more thrust in the recent DGG performance of the Dance Suite under Gyorgy Lehel, this is on the whole a disc well worth owning. A.R.

#### BEETHOVEN: Piano Works

Albumblatt in A minor ("Für Elise"); Andante in F ("Andante favori"); Bagatelles, Op. 126 (complete); Ecossaises, in E flat; Rondos, Op. 51: No. 1, in C; No. 2, in G; Rondo in G, Op. 129 ("Rondo a capriccio"); Variations on "Nel cor più."

Wilhelm Kempff, piano.

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18934, LP. \$5.98.

• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138934. SD. \$5.98.

Kempff's meticulous, slightly detached playing is a joy to hear in this repertoire. Each work has a jewel-like proportion and prismatic translucency of tone. Sforzandos are given biting vehemence without sounding percussive, semi-staccato bass lines (as in the final Op. 126 Bagatelle) emerge with positive buoyancy, and there is a sense of controlled fire, too, wherever necessary. This is a disc to treasure (and one to encourage hopes for a Kempff version of the Diabelli Variations). Fine, live-H.G. sounding reproduction.

BEETHOVEN: Quartet for Strings, No. 15, in A minor, Op. 132

Juilliard String Quartet. • RCA VICTOR LM 2765. LP. \$4.98. • • RCA VICTOR LSC 2765. SD. \$5.98.

Opus 132 is the longest of the late quartets and in texture possesses a mellifluence verging on sensuousness. Indeed, the final section with its throbbing cello countermelody is more Brahmsian than Brahms, while the third movement -a thanksgiving hymn wherein Beethoven thanked the Deity for restored health-is of an almost unbearable poignancy. This new Juilliard edition of the work is quite extraordinary, but so are the recent recordings by the Budapest (Columbia) and Amadeus (DGG)

Quartets. The three versions are not all extraordinary in the same way, however: each represents a different philosophy of music making and quartet playing.

The Amadeus is probably the furthest removed from the current standards encountered in American concert halls. This London-based ensemble does not shy away from a big, thick sonority. Its members dig into Beethoven with unashamed vehemence. They want passion and heartfelt romanticism even if some tonal roughness is the price for conveying the spiritual force of the music, as they see it, undiluted. My colleague Robert C. Marsh found the Amadeus performances "coarse-grained, and even crude" when he reviewed the set in these pages last spring, but to me the Opus 132 is capable of withstanding, and even profiting from, some roughness.

In over-all technical approach, the Juilliard and Budapest foursomes would seem to be in general agreement. Compared to the Amadeus, they are far more aristocratic in ensemble decorum. They play like orchestral musicians temporarily mesmerized by a great. compelling, and tyrannical conductor. The personal "expressivity" of each player, in other words, is subordinated to the collective will of the group. The emphasis is less on intuition and more on planning. These are both basically "classical" statements, with animated tempos, maintenance of consistent rhythmic pulse, and other elements implied by such an approach.

In other respects the two groups diverge. The Juilliard musicians do not waste time meditating. They seize upon the marchlike elements of both the first movement and the introduction to the last with furious abandon. A few theatrical adjustments of fast tempos do not impede the essential terseness of their presentation. In articulation and balance they are above reproach, in nuance and tone quality considerably less so. The edge of the first violin, particularly in the highermost reaches of the staff (so much employed in this score), is rather acid and disagreeable. Stereo serves only to make the acerbity more acute. and thus magnifies the major flaw in an otherwise impeccable accomplishment.

As for the mellow Budapest performance, it represents, along with the guartet's recent Opp. 127 and 130, some of that group's most controlled playing in recent years, measurably surpassing the 1952 Budapest effort in both sonics and interpretation. An even earlier recording by the group (once available on Columbia 78s, and as ML 4006 in the early days of LP) must, however, remain the exemplar: its flawless integration. tonal sheen, and unfaltering phraseological intelligence border on the supernatural. Surely, a way must be found to keep such artistic treasures as this available to the public, if only on a limited basis. Nevertheless, lacking that triumph. I would choose the latest Budapest edition, despite the very considerable challenge from RCA Victor and DGG. H.G.

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#### **BIZET:** Carmen

Maria Callas (s). Carmen; Andréa Guiot (s), Micaëla; Nadine Sautereau (s), Frasquita; Jane Berbié (ms), Mercédès; Nicolai Gedda (t), Don José; Jacques Pruvost (t). El Remendado: Maurice Maievski (t), El Remendado (in Side 4 only); Robert Massard (b). Escamillo; Jean-Paul Vauquelin (b). El Dancaïro: Jacques Mars (bs). Zuniga; Choeurs d' Enfants Jean Pesneaud; Choeurs d' Enfants Jean Pesneaud; Choeurs René Duclos; Orchestre du Théâtre National de l'Opéra (Paris), Georges Prêtre, cond. • ANGEL 3650. Three LP. \$14.94.

• • ANGEL S 3650. Three SD. \$17.94.

It has taken a while, but we now have the Callas Carmen. That. I am sure, is how this recording will be thought of, for though it has other merits, it is Callas who makes it noteworthy and newsworthy. This is the first complete recorded role we have had from her since the remake of *Norma*, released about two and a half years ago, and the first since she began to focus somewhat on the French repertory and on the mezzo range.

Callas remains a compelling and magnetic artist, and is already an intermittently great Carmen-she simply must sing the role in the theatre. Vocally, she is somewhat different from the Callas of a few years ago. Her voice is darker in color than it was formerly. If we compare this Habanera and Seguidilla with those she recorded a couple a years back under the same conductor, we find that the older versions are lighter and brighter, the newer ones duskier in sound. The high tones are quite substantial and steady, though I could not call them entirely free-sounding or full -but of course they are not at all high relative to the B-to-E-flat extension she has made use of in the past. The actual quality of the voice is not changed. except in the lower-middle area. Here there is a new sound, which seems to be based on the French "eu." "Tra-la-la-la-a." she sings in the Danse bohémienne, and then, as she descends, "Tra-la-la-leu-eu." The "hooded" quality of these tones is still present, with this new overtone added. The effect is not unpleasant, but it is peculiar. As for the break, she seems to relish it: listen to the "tra-la-las" directed at Zuniga after the fight in Act I, and you will hear an absolute vocal somersault (tremendously effective here, less so in other places). But perhaps that is the secret-treat it as an asset, not a problem.

From the musical and interpretative standpoints, there are moments when this Carmen leaves all others in the dust. The Danse bohémienne (opening of Act II) is one such passage—there is such a wonderful animation and fire, coupled with such rhythmic strength and execution of the notes (the old Callas combination) that the urge to leap onto the nearest tabletop is nearly irresistible. The Act I arias are—vocal color aside—much as before: quite slow and insinuating, subtle and underplayed. In the opera house, this night be almost too subtle it is the sort of interpretation that draws you towards it rather than coming out at you-but it is assuredly absorbing and convincing on records. I very much like the manner in which Callas keeps a certain control and dignity in her Act II scene with José, and that is why I am all the more disappointed at her reading of the final scene. This is, I should add, perfectly convincing in a traditional way, but I had hoped that this unique artist would bring to it a unique sense of fatalistic acceptance, so that a line like "Frappez-moi donc, ou laissez-moi passer!" ("Kill me then, or else let me go") would become an almost matter-offact utterance, tinged with impatience: "If you're going to do it, you're going to do it, but let's get it over with." All the usual teeth baring and snarling. it seems to me, is not up to the highest level on which the character can be played, and I had hoped that Callas would do for this scene what she has done for so many others-reveal it in a fresh, more truly dramatic light. In addition, she sings a great deal of the scene in a raw chest voice which is too strained to sound forceful; at times, it sounds like a duet between two tenors.

But this is, for me, the only real disappointment of the Callas Carmen, and it is something that a stage performance might very well put in a more convincing perspective. One other thing deserves special comment: this singer's articulation of the French language, and more important, her feelings for the emotive possibilities of its sounds. are altogether incredible for a "furriner." If she ever stops singing, I will not be surprised to find her a Sociétaire of the Comédie-Française.

Angel has surrounded Mme. Callas with a lively and idiomatic cast, but not one remarkable for its individual contributions. Nicolai Gedda is obviously on his mettle. and sings with a good deal more passion and thrust than on the Beecham set as well as with his usual intelligent stylistic grasp. He is still not a dramatic tenor, though, and while his efforts in the last two acts certainly win our respect. they do not make his lean, pointed lyric tenor a really suitable voice for the music. Andréa Guiot has a nice, ample lyric voice of some body. which she handles knowingly. Her Micaëla is not



Karl Richter: for organ lovers, a boon.

particularly individual or exciting, but it is assured and capable. Robert Massard is a rather nondescript Escamillo. with a baritone of little color or ring. His chief contribution is a touch of native elegance in the toreador's *couplets*.

Taken in sum, the work of these secondary principals and of the comprimari does have the advantage of home-grown Gallic flavor; they are French, and have no stylistic or linguistic barriers to stumble over. The leadership of Prêtre is not quite as good as I had hoped for. on the strength of his fine Samson (for Angel and at the Met). He secures good execution and lots of life from everyone, but there is sometimes a stop-and-go feeling about the reading; well-performed sections do not fit alongside quite perfectly, and an over-all shape, with each tempo and scene related to all the others, is not always visible. Still, by no means a poor job-less compelling than Beecham's I would say, and not so individual as Von Karajan's, but better than par for this rather hacked-up course.

The sound is splendid. But will anyone, I wonder, choose or reject the Callas Carmen on the basis of sound? C.L.O.

BRAHMS: Eleven Chorale-Preludes, Op. 122

+Mozart: Fantasia for Mechanical Organ. in F minor, K. 608
+Liszt: Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H

Karl Richter, organ.

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18906. LP. \$5.98.

• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138906. SD. \$5.98.

This disc might well bear the title "Homage to Bach." offering. as it does, the tribute paid the Leipzig master by three great composers who lived during the century and a half after his death. Mozart's Fantasia in F minor, written in the last year of his life, was directly inspired by Bach, with its grand opening, its quietly lyrical middle section, and its final fugue. What is so difficult to believe is that it was originally designed for a mechanical clockwork organ in a "Museum of Curiosities." One wonders how it must have sounded on such an instrument. In Karl Richter's hands, it emerges as a powerful and moving work. There is heroic grandeur and sweep in his playing of the end sections, tenderness, sensitivity, and delicate filigree in the contrasting middle part. Liszt's homage takes the form of a grandiose Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H (B flat-A-C-B natural in German notation). Many composers-even Johann Sebastian himself-have employed this four-note motto, but few have used it as insistently as Liszt did throughout this 1855 composition. Here is music that combines flaming virtuosity with intricate counterpoint. Richter's interpretation is notable not only for its pyrotechnical display but also for its incisiveness, intense drama, and excep-tional technical clarity. Like Bach,
Brahms chose to end his life as a composer with a chorale-prelude—or rather, a set of eleven works in this noble form. And, like so much of the late Bach and the late Brahms, this swan song, dating from the year before his death, is solenn, quiet, introspective. It is in this mood that Richter allows the music to unfold.

One could ask for no more sympathetic, no more deeply probing, no more technically perfect performances than the German organist offers here. Nor could one ask for a finer, cleanerspeaking instrument or better acoustics, with just the right amount of reverberation to lend spaciousness without adding a muddying overhand. It is a pity that the organ is not identified. All this has been captured with absolute naturalness by the Deutsche Grammophon engineers.

Altogether, a truly magnificent organ record. P.A.

## BRAHMS: Symphonies (complete)

No. 1, in C minor, Op. 68: No. 2, in D, Op. 73: No. 3, in F, Op. 90; No. 4, in E minor, Op. 98.

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Herbert von Karajan. cond.

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON KL 33/36. Four LP. \$23.92.

• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SKL 133/36. Four SD. \$23.92.

Here is further proof, if any be needed, that Herbert von Karajan is a virtuoso conductor. At times his ability to bend an ensemble to his image—that is, to neutralize its own strong characteristics —is truly uncanny. When one hears the traditionally staid Berliners give 'forth lush, showy, brilliant, and light-colored sonorities that out-Stokowski Stokowski . . . well, one has heard everything! Not even Toscanini could make the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia. or BBC Symphony sound unlike themselves: his ideas of pacing and phrasing were superimposed upon their own recognizable collective sonorities.

But then, Toscanini, for all his dictatorial tendencies, was an intensely human musician. Karajan is far more impersonal. He possesses a fine ear for balance and sonority, a taste for phrasing, a commanding intelligence, but one senses a lack of personal commitment in his work. As pure tonal abstractions, these Brahms Symphony recordings are ravishingly beautiful: but as living, feeling, emotional statements of Brahms's music, they often have the lifeless quality of Mme. Tussaud's waxwork. True, Brahms had his limitations as a composer. Karajan has smoothed out the rough edges and attempted to brighten the murkiness of texture, but as a result he has concealed the strengths as well as the weaknesses of the writing.

Symphony No. 1 is played grandiosely, in a vein of throbbing religiosity. The "sound" is everything here: gushing violins, bulbous bass lines (like an organ with all its stops out), crooning wood-



Cellist Rostropovich, with composer-conductor Britten.

winds. etc. The tempos are also weighty and slow-moving. If you enjoy the C minor Symphony played like this, Karajan's is an exemplary reading of its kind. I don't. Walter/New York Philharmonic (Columbia mono) for craggy impetuosity; Toscanini (RCA) for radiant volatility; Van Beinum (Richmond or Epic) for light-footed traditionalism: these are my recommendations among the presently available editions. (The best of all by far—Cantelli's for HMV— is no longer listed domestically. Could not Angel be persuaded to reinstate it?)

Karajan is on happier ground in the lyrical Second Symphony. He gives it a lithe, creamy, Latinized presentation, somewhat akin to those by Toscanini (RCA Victor) and Steinberg (Command) if without their intensity. He admirably refrains from whipping up the tempo in the finale, and molds the phrases with loving care. At times, I think, too loving: the third movement oboe solo has so much vibrato that it sounds almost like a Hindu snake charmer. Nevertheless, Karajan's unwrinkled account ranks with Toscanini. Steinberg, Monteux (Philips/LSO; Victrola/VPO-both with the unusual exposition repeat in the first movement), Klemperer (Angel), and Van Beinum (Epic). Munch's deleted RCA Victor disc was also impeccable. So is the aged Weingartner (Harmony) performance in faded sonics.

In the difficult first movement of the Third Symphony, Karajan attempts to negotiate the transition from impassioned opening theme to lilting second with minimum shock. He starts rather listlessly, thereby avoiding both monolithic grandeur and headlong fervor. If one were to describe his interpretation in culinary terms, one would liken his opening to a dumpling rather than to roast beef. The entire first movement rolls along in a buttery fashion, and although it gathers momentum as it progresses, it fails to get far beneath the surface of the score. Karajan eschews the exposition repeat—a far more serious omission here than in the Second Symphony. The Berlin Orchestra plays very beautifully for its conductor (certainly better than the Vienna Philharmonic on Karajan's other recorded version of the Third), but he never clarifies the scoring as Toscanini, for example, did. All told,

Karajan's reading here is calm, unevent ful, and just slightly featureless. At present, I like the Klemperer (Angel) best, but I am still waiting for RCA to issue a representative Toscanini version (that currently available on LM 1836 has moments of surpassing beauty, along with others that are merely plodding and dispirited). Other good leisurely ac-counts were those by Monteux and Cantelli (blemished also by lack of first-movement repeat), but, alas, the former's recording has never been released at all, while the latter's (an HMV product made shortly before his untimely death in 1956) did not appear domestically. If you prefer a more headlong approach (as many do), Walter is your man (the newly reissued Odeon/Vienna Philharmonic disc, reviewed on page 97, is the best of his three).

One word could aptly summarize my impression of Karajan's E minor Symphony: languid. The two opening movements, at any rate, meander aimlessly, with the rhetorical spreading-out in climactic pages causing the music literally to disintegrate. I have heard these played much more slowly than Karajan does, and hasten to point out that it is his lack of pulse rather than his deliberation which produces the tedious effect. The scherzo springs to life convincingly, but in the finale (beautifully executed though it is) we are back to the unfortunate-and once commonplace-situation of a different tempo for each successive variation. The Toscanini (RCA Victor), Weingartner (Harmony), and Van Beinum (Epic) discs are easily the strongest and most valid interpretations of the Fourth on record, though Klemperer's eccentric one (for Angel) is not without interest.

Deutsche Grammophon's sound is excellent, albeit a mite "toppy," but (save for the Second Symphony) this set is strictly for Karajan admirers only. H.G.

BRITTEN: Symphony for Cello and Orchestra, Op. 68 †Haydn: Concerto for Cello and Or-

chestra, in C

Mstislav Rostropovich. cello: English Chamber Orchestra. Benjamin Britten, cond.

• LONDON CM 9419. LP. \$4.98.

• LONDON CS 6419. SD. \$5.98.

Britten's symphony, written last year for Rostropovich. is the most "modern" and most mature work of that composer I have had the pleasure of hearing, and it is one of the few from which the pose of the clever young man is totally absent. Indeed, it is an immensely serious work, quite genuinely a symphony, with something of the broad, ruminative, uncompromising character distinguishing the music of Vaughan Williams but rather more up to date. Britten knows what the serialists and the electronic composers are up to, and he is not too proud to take a leaf or two from their books.

His first movement is all smoky and dark, full of tuba and contrabassoon and dramatic, polytonal activity between solo These are the recordings found at the heart of all great collections. They're basic. They're brilliant. And they can now be yours at tremendous savings—if you buy them in sets now offered by Columbia Records 👰

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CIRCLE 86 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

The ripeness, grandeur, and rich elaboration of this music would. of course, utterly fail of effect without performers equal to it. That Rostropovich is one of the leading cellists of the present day needs no argument, and that Benjamin Britten is an equally authoritative interpreter of his own music is equally obvious. Add to this a perfect recording. and a formidable combination begins to take shape.

The Haydn Cello Concerto in C was discovered in the National Museum of Prague in 1961. It is a much stronger work than the light and graceful Cello Concerto in D. ascribed to Haydn, which everybody knows. The Concerto in D is constantly being taken away from Haydn by one musicologist or another and constantly being given back, and this led Sir Donald Francis Tovey to remark that one stroke of genius in the music would have settled the question for good and all. By this criterion there is no problem with regard to the Concerto in C. Its slow movement is pure genius, pure Haydn, and tremendous music. and it brings out the best in the genius of Rostropovich too. The work has been adorned with cadenzas by Britten. The one for the first movement is very "modern" and madly out of style. The recorded sound here is quite as fine as in the Britten work. A.F.

# CHOPIN: Mazurkas (18)

In E, Op. 6, No. 3; in A minor, Op. 7, No. 2: in E minor, Op. 17, No. 2: in A minor, Op. 17. No. 4; in G minor, Op. 24, No. 1; in C, Op. 24, No. 2; in B flat minor, Op. 24, No. 4; in C minor, Op. 30, No. 1; in B minor, Op. 30, No. 2; in B minor, Op. 33, No. 4; in E minor, Op. 41, No. 2; in C sharp minor, Op. 50, No. 3; in C minor, Op. 56, No. 3: in A minor, Op. 59, No. 1; in A minor, Op. 67, No. 4; in A minor, Op. 68, No. 2; in F minor, Op. 68, No. 4; in A minor, Op. posth.

Fou Ts'ong, piano.

• WESTMINSTER XWN 19085. LP. \$4.98. • WESTMINSTER WST 17085. SD. \$5.98.

One could quibble with Mr. Fou's choice of repertory here. Of the eighteen mazurkas in this anthology, only two are in major mode, and a third of them are in the key of A minor! Furthermore, the consecutive arrangement by opus number produces whole stretches of works similar in mood and scope. The intense, brooding inwardness is. to be sure, an important element in Chopin's Mazurka writing, but it is not the whole story. Gaiety, optimism, and exuberant vitality are present in the totality, but they are slighted in the present selection.

The performances themselves, though, are exceptionally fine. Mr. Fou's tone ranges from bright translucency to velvety suggestiveness. He utilizes a hundred types of rubato and "snap" rhythms, but manages to preserve flow. There is admirable flexibility in the way this artist unfolds a melodic line. While the emotional temperature of his work remains rather low-keyed and cool, he confirms the impression, given by his earlier Chopin discs, that he was born to play this music.

Excellent sound, with the monophonic version at least the equal of the stereo. H.G.

### COUPERIN: Les Fastes de la Grande et Ancienne Ménestrandise; Les Folies Françaises; Pieces for Harpsichord

Aimée van der Wiele, harpsichord. • LES DISCOPHILES FRANCAIS DF 730077. LP. \$5.98.

• • LES DISCOPHILES FRANCAIS DF 740077. SD. \$6.98.

Aimée van der Wiele performs the music of François Couperin with a rare degree of emotional intensity and artistic devotion, and it is much to her credit and that of the engineers that the stereo version transmits so much of this impression of physical presence. The harpsichord is by no means the easiest of instruments to record, since its mechanism tends to contribute more than is needful to the total sound-picture; and some harpsichord recitals impose the mechanical upon the musical element in a way that can be very disturbing. Here, the sound has clarity and honesty, so that the main characteristics of the tone come vividly across and the personalities of both instrument and performer can be sensed throughout the program.

Couperin's delightfully Gallic mélange of subtle understatement and overwhelming passion can be heard at its best in this collection in *Les Fastes*, where satire and brilliance go hand in hand to produce a truly memorable masterpiece. In *Les Folies*. Madame van der Wiele is no less successful, though here and there a preoccupation with register changes slightly disturbs the rhythm. D.S.

DELALANDE: Quatrième Suite de Simphonies pour les Soupers du Roy

+Mouret: Première Suite de Fanfares; Seconde Suite de Simphonies

Chamber Orchestra, Paul Kuentz. cond. • ARCHIVE ARC 3233. LP. \$5.98.

• • ARCHIVE ARC 73233. SD. \$5.98.

Delalande's delightful dinner music, written for Louis XIV and Louis XV and copied in various versions between

# A stunning new recording by the Boston Symphony under Leinsdorf Here is an important new recording of two major ballet suites: Rimsky-

Here is an important new recording of two major ballet suites: Rimsky-Korsakoff's Le Coq d'Or and Stravinsky's Firebird. In this new album the Boston Symphony under Leinsdorf devotes itself for the first time to the Russian repertoire with brilliant results. Their performances have been recorded in <u>Dynagroove</u> sound that yields glittering, shimmering, luscious music. Hear this RCA Victor Red Seal album soon.







1703 and 1736, appeared in a definitive publication of 1745, which is used as the musical basis for this performance. Paul Kuentz and his ensemble (mostly Frenchmen, but with the notable addition of Adolf Scherbaum, trumpet) give a lively account of this musique de table, everything about it being authentic with the exception of the acoustic ambience. The recording was made in a Paris studio, and the sound is noticeably tighter than it would have been if recorded in the Palace of Versailles. So close was Delalande's connection with Versailles that it surely would have been worth while to explore the possibilities of recording in an authenticsounding environment.

There may be some who will find this music a little stiff and lacking in melodiousness, or who will feel that the echo passages are somewhat mechanically epigrammatic; but repeated hearings will bring home its essentially noble and dignified nature, even when dance meters usurp the scene. One short item, the Sarabande de Cardenio, is really a song. Quitte ici tes ailes. and the singer Edith Selig does justice to its gracefully flowing ornaments. Mouret, known as "le musicien des graces." was a contemporary of Delalande, but found himself unable to maintain his place in the Parisian musical firmament once Rameau arrived there. As a result, his mind gave way and he spent his last years in miserable penury. His music reflects much of the pomp and circumstance of his position (he served the royalty and nobility of France nearly all his life) but makes less of an artistic impression than that of Delalande. The trumpet and horn playing here is brilliant and memorable. D.S.

- DOHNANYI: Suite in F sharp minor, Op. 19
- *†*Hindemith: Symphonic Metamorphoses of Themes by Weber

Seattle Symphony Orchestra, Milton Katims, cond.

• SEATTLE SYMPHONY RECORDING SO-CIETY SM 5000. LP. \$5,98.

• SEATTLE SYMPHONY RECORDING SO-CIETY SS 5000. SD. \$5.98.

This disc (available from the Seattle Symphony, 508 Orpheum Building, Seattle, Washington) is the first commercial recording made by the Seattle Symphony, and it also marks the return to the lists, after many years' absence, of Dohnányi's lovely, warmhearted Brahmsian Suite. Both events are welcome.

Milton Katims has built an excellent orchestra in this progressive and fastgrowing cultural community. As a heritage from the 1962 World Fair the city has a concert hall whch seems acoustically splendid: while it shows up a little thinness in the string tone and a few tentative attacks from the brass, the sound on the whole is rich and robust. Katims leads alert and vivid performances of both works. The Hindemith has



Milton Katims: Seattle can be proud.

some stiff competition in the lists from more virtuosic orchestras, but the Dohnányi work itself, and the way it is performed, are enough to merit attention for this record. Seattle, it seems, has much to be proud of in its conductor, its orchestra, and its concert hall. A.R.

DVORAK: Slavonic Rhapsody, Op. 45, No. 2; In Nature's Realm, Op. 91; Carnival, Op. 92; Othello, Op. 93

Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Laszlo Somogyi, cond.

WLSTMINSTER XWN 19072. LP. \$4.98.
WESTMINSTER WST 17072. SD. \$4.98.

Much of Dvořák's work suffers from falling between two categories of repertory. It's too serious for the pop concerts and not serious enough for the average symphonic subscription series. Record makers should not have to be concerned with these difficulties, yet this disc represents the stereo debut of both Op. 91 and 93 if 1 read my Schwann aright.

In Nature's Realm is the sort of lovely miniature that Delius might have written if he had ever taken up composing with a Central European accent. It's a slight work with some beautiful pages worth discovering. Othello tends to be brooding and repetitious, but it too reveals an interesting and unfamiliar facet of the composer. Both the Slavonic Rhapsody and Carnival are, of course, widely played scores, with a folk flavor and big tunes no doubt accounting for their popularity.

Laszlo Somogyi is a good choice as conductor for this music. He knows how to play up its strong points and pace the unfolding of the long themes so that they emerge gracefully. He gets a warm range of colors from the orchestra and some sensitive playing when it's wanted.

In the stereo version the orchestra seems a little distant, as though one were occupying a midrange seat in a good hall, but there are good multichannel effects. The mono has solid focus that makes it quite appealing on its own terms. R.C.M. HANDEL: Arias: Samson: Return, O God of Hosts. Jephtha: Scenes of Horror. Messiah: He was despised: O thou that tellest good tidings— See Bach: Arias.

# HANDEL: Belshazzar

Sylvia Stahlman (s). Nitocris: Heidrun Ankersen (c). Daniel: Helen Raab (c), Cyrus; Wilfrid Jochims (t). Belshazzar; Helge Birkeland (bs). Gobrias and Messenger; Stuttgart Choir and Orchestra, Helmuth Rilling. cond.

- Vox VBX 209. Three LP. \$9.95.
- • Vox SVBX 5209. Three SD. \$9.95.

"I think it a very fine and sublime oratorio," wrote Handel to Jennens about Belshazzar in progress, "only it is really too long; if I should extend the music, it would last four hours and more." An earlier recording from Period took Handel's hint rather too well, and presented only half of this gigantic score. Vox makes a double claim for its new version: complete and in English. But "complete" here is little more than relative: Vox's three-disc set gives us a more complete presentation than Period did, but it still amounts only to about three quarters of the whole. Entire arias have been cut, choruses have been omitted. and recitatives have been either truncated or left on one side. As for the claim that the language used is English, one can only say that credit is due for trying hard, and that in general the chorus succeeds where the soloists often disappoint.

All the same, there is a great deal of magnificent music here, and its innate power, melodiousness, and tension combine to forge a musical weapon that cuts heartily through all the imperfections of realization and performance. One of the artistic landmarks of the 1745 spring season in London. Belshazzar followed the previous and successful pattern of Handel's oratorios yet improved on it in certain respects. The characters in this Biblical drama are drawn with a pen surer and more persuasive than ever, their human qualities transcending scriptural truths on the one hand and party politics on the other. Handel, at that time opposed to the Tory party, may have felt some of his librettist's lines applicable to current events, as in the first great aria of Nitocris, "Vain, fluctuating state of human empire"; but as the story of Belshazzar's feast. the prophecy of Daniel, and the victory of Cyrus develops and gathers momentum, so Handel enters into the dramatic spirit of the piece and writes movement after movement full of brilliant strokes of invention, strongly evocative descriptions, and melodies of compelling grandeur or pathos.

In spite of the sustained quality of Handel's music for Nitocris, Sylvia Stahlman occasionally allows faulty vocal technique to mar an otherwise promising performance. Sad to say, there are too many sopranos who think that all high

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CIRCLE 26 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HAYDN: Salve Regina, in G minor Mozart: Litaniae Lauretanae, K. 109; Church Sonatas: in C, K. 278; in C, K. 329 Ursula Buckel, soprano; Maureen Lehane, contralto; Richard van Vrooman, tenor; Eduard Wollitz, bass; Tölzer Boys Choir; Collegium Aureum, Rolf Reinhardt, cond. \$5.98.

• HARMONIA MUNDI HM 30669. LP.

notes must be loud, and all vibrato must

be the same speed. Miss Stahlman avoids these pitfalls throughout the greater part

of her contribution, but one gets the impression that she could have done

even better. Helen Raab's incisive and

mercifully un-oratoriolike contralto voice

suggests the character of Cyrus in a

skillful and musicianly manner, and her

handling of recitative is outstanding. Almost equally memorable for his fine

declamation and vocal timbre is the Norwegian bass Helge Birkeland, who

lends gravity and nobility to the part of Gobrias, the lieutenant of Cyrus. Too

bad they cut his marvelous aria "Behold the monstrous human beast," which

tells in no uncertain terms of the excesses of Belshazzar and his courtiers.

The tenor, Wilfrid Jochims, and the

other contralto, Heidrun Ankersen, pro-

Perhaps with more imaginative leadership the soloists would have emerged

in a more favorable light. The orchestra,

like the chorus, offers much that is

more than competent, but they are in

the hands of a director who seems

to be largely unacquainted with Han-

delian style. One expects, in this day

and age, at least a knowledge of such

traditions as double-dotting, correct in-

terpretation of appoggiaturas, and real-

HAYDN: Concerto for Cello and Or-

chestra, in C-See Britten: Sym-

phony for Cello and Orchestra, Op.

D.S.

ization of the continuo.

68.

vide solid but unsubtle support.

The Haydn work here-apparently never published in this, its original formis a beauty. Written in 1771, it is in a serious vein throughout, with a smaller admixture of operatic elements than some of the Masses. Nothing seems to be known of the circumstances surrounding the composition of the work, but it is clear that whatever the occasion, Haydn took pains to produce music of top quality. The writing for solo quartet is very fine, in some places anticipating Beethovenian procedures. Throughout the composition there is a high level of expressivity. The soloists are quite satisfactory, but the chorus and orchestra sound rather thin. One suspects that there is more drama in the music than Reinhardt can get out of it with the forces at his disposal. The sound here is quite clear.

The pieces on the other side are minor Mozart. The two church sonatas are played decently enough, though the orchestra again sounds skimpy and in K. 329 the little organ sallies are hard to make out. A pleasant aspect of the early Litany is the singing of Miss Buckel, again ably companioned by the other soloists. N.B.

## HAYDN: Symphonies: No. 39, in G minor ("The Fist"); No. 73, in D ("La Chasse")

Esterházy Orchestra, David Blum, cond. • VANGUARD VRS 1123. LP. \$4.98. • • VANGUARD VSD 71123. SD. \$5.98.

Young David Blum is rapidly emerging as the most likely successor to the late Max Goberman, certainly the man most likely to fill the gaps in the Goberman volumes of early and unfamiliar Haydn scores. Both of these Symphonies are major works of their respective periods, and neither exists in the Goberman series or in any other stereo edition.

No. 39 is a tightly constructed, powerful work with an extraordinary finale. It is really the only Haydn symphony that makes full use of the distinctive G minor tonality, and its effect on the composer's contemporaries was such that, according to many historians, it inspired Mozart to write his *Little* G minor, K. 183. Blum's performance is extremely fine, with the finale a particularly forceful achievement.

La Chasse is another matter, a symphony that stresses lyricism and humor and builds (through a bucolic minuet) to a hounds and horns finale, first written as the prelude to the third act of Haydn's opera La fedeltà premiata. Again the performance is a fine one, but Haydn added trumpets and drums to the finale and their color obviously should be employed for special accents. Apparently, Blum used one of the many older scores of this work in which parts for these instruments do not appear. I might add in Blum's defense that correct scores are much less easily come by than faulty ones. R.C.M.

HINDEMITH: Symphonic Metamorphoses of Themes by Weber-See Dohnányi: Suite in F sharp minor, Op. 19.

# HUMPERDINCK: Hänsel und Gretel

Anneliese Rothenberger (s), Gretel; Irmgard Seefried (s), Hänsel; Liselotte Maikl (s), Sandman and Dew Fairy; Elisabeth Höngen (c), The Witch; Grace Hoffman (c), The Mother: Walter Berry (b), The Father; Boys' Chorus; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, André Cluytens, cond.

• ANGEL 3648. Two LP. \$9.96.

• • ANGEL S 3648. Two SD. \$11.96.

This is on the whole a satisfactory album, one with relatively few moments of real magic but pleasant nonetheless. For those who love Hänsel and want it in good stereo, or who are not satisfied with either of the older versions in the catalogue, it will fill the bill.



# **CROSS FIELD ADVANCES TAPE TECHNOLOGY**

By Cliff Whenmouth, President Magnetic Tape Duplicators

# An audio engineer reports on the capabilities of the Cross Field Concept

Is the Cross Field concept of tape recording a "gimmick"? Or is it, in-deed, the long-sought-after solution to the problem of high frequency losses at slow speeds? Along with most audio men, I have watched the performance of the Cross Field concept closely since its introduction a year ago. After exhaustive testingin the studio, in home sound systems and out in the field-there is no doubt but that the Cross Field is a brilliant success.

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To achieve its high frequency response at slow speed, the Roberts Cross Field 770 employs an unique recording and playback technique involving three heads:



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3. The unique separate Bias Head which provides the bias field during recording, and which automatically swings out of the field during playback. The tape never touches the bias head, which is therefore not subject to wear.

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The opera itself is a matter of very personal taste, and I may be churlish to register my own dislike for it. For one thing, I hated it as a child (Tosca and Faust are fine for children, but Hänsel can be downright repellent), and that sort of prejudice is difficult to lay aside. But even beyond this, it has always seemed to me a lumpish affair, puffed and swollen beyond the dimension of the tale, extremely difficult to realize on the stage, and demanding enough vocally to kill the possibilities of simplicity and directness which might have made it work. Good fairy tales remove the stuffing for the sake of clarity, and here goes Humperdinck spooning it all back in. Musically, there are undeniably moments of charm and blandishment, all the familiar songs are justifiably popular, the Witch is wonderfully characterized, and the moments when night and silence steal into the forest in Act II have a just-right hushed, breathless quality. But things are so doggedly worked out-why must the Father be given a windy, blustery narrative to explain his sale of the brooms?-and at this distance, it seems really ridiculous to find every opera Wagner ever wrote poking its very identifiable head from behind Gretel's skirts. Admittedly, there is in this a certain period charm-all we need to complete the picture is one of those wonderful turn-of-the-century book-length analyses of the score "Now (bars 884-887), the noble Theme of the Cake-Salvation (Tortenerlösungsmotiv, No. 17) is intoned by the Heckelphone and Wagner tuba (how cunning a coloristic device, this!), whilst the trombones give forth threateningly with the Theme of Gretel as Pastry (Gretel als Brioche Motiv, No. 31) in its second variation (No. 31b), in which the 6/4 inversion is employed, the second and third notes of the melody being augmented the while." Not much, but a beginning-others may carry the work forward.

The performance benefits most from a topnotch job of stereo engineering-full and spacious, but unfussy-and from leadership of great warmth and affection from Cluytens. I had feared that his reading might lean on the soggy side, but there is no trace of such a quality; the orchestral playing, as might be expected from this ensemble, is superb. Irmgard Seefried is fine; though one may be used to a lusher quality of tone, Miss Seefried has a boyish, light-mezzo quality here which seems to me very appropriate. Both she and Anneliese Rothenberger articulate everything with a charming clarity, light but not cute, and Rothenberger sings very prettily to boot, though a few of the high tones extend her and fly out of focus. It is a shame, though, that their rates of vibrato are not more closely matched in the prayer.

Grace Hoffman is a solid singer, but she can do little to mitigate the whoopy, graceless writing of her role. Walter Berry, apparently opting for a dark. closed sound that seems too heavy for his voice, is still a sturdy, idiomatic Father. While Elisabeth Höngen is an experienced and intelligent artist, her voice is nonetheless in too ravaged a condition even for the Witch—one just cannot listen to so much wobbly, spread sound. Liselotte Maikl is very pleasant in her two brief appearances.

If one is thinking of this as a children's opera, it makes sense to investigate the old Columbia Metropolitan Opera version, quite a respectable performance which has the merit (for children) of being sung in English. C.L.O.

# LISZT: Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H—See Brahms: Eleven Chorale-Preludes, Op. 122.

## MONTEVERDI: L'Incoronazione di Poppea

Magda Laszlo (s), Poppea; Lydia Marimpietri (s), Drusilla; Soo-Bee Lee (s), Damigella: Elizabeth Bainbridge (s), Pallade; Annon Lee Silver (s), Amor: Frances Bible (ms), Ottavia; Oralia Dominguez (c), Arnalta; Richard Lewis (t), Nerone; Hugues Cuenod (t), Lucano; Dennis Brandt (t), First Soldier; Gerald English (t), Second Soldier; Duncan Robertson (t), Valetto; John Shirley-Quirk (b), Liberto; Carlo Cava (bs), Seneca; Walter Alberti (bs), Ottone; Dennis Wicks (bs), A Lictor; Glyndebourne Festival Chorus, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, John Pritchard, cond.

• ANGEL 3644. Two LP. \$9.96.

The entry of this recording into the catalogue gives us two versions of L'Incoronazione, taken from substantially different editions. The new edition is based on the Glyndebourne Festival production, and the version used is the work of Raymond Leppard. There is of course no such thing as an Urtext for this work. Two "original" versions exist (the Venice and Naples manuscripts); they apparently differ in several important respects, and neither contains a realization of the continuo, which means that this becomes a vital task for any modern adapter.

Leppard and the adapter of Vox's version. Rudolf Ewerhart, are clearly men of markedly different tastes. Beyond that, they have approached the score with somewhat different goals in mind. Ewerhart has consciously tried to reconstruct Monteverdi's score, to take the best possible educated guess at what the "original" must have sounded like. Leppard, while mindful of the need for capturing the flavor and over-all sound of Monteverdi's instrumentation, has also tried to produce something that will play well in a modern theatre. One can be offended in principle-mustn't we respect the composer's dictates? . . . and why should the most "authentic" version also not be the most playable?-but the truth is that Leppard's edition is a good deal more persuasive. (It depends, of course, on what you want: if one's interest is historico/scholarly, Ewerhart's edition demands study: if one wants an enjoyable performance, to be heard more or less as more familiar operas are heard, then Leppard, I think, will be the choice.)

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Leppard's version is more extensively cut than Ewerhart's-by a good twentyfive per cent, I should say. His excisions include entire scenes and arias heard on the Vox set (some of them musically interesting: e.g., part of the first dialogue between Arnalta and Poppea; a lovely aria for Poppea, "Signor, le tue purole son si dolci"; a languishing one for Nerone. "Son rubini amorosi") as well as extensive internal cuts in scenes and arias that are left in some form or other. But the Leppard edition also includes sections that are left out of Ewerhart's work. These turn out to be almost exclusively light intermezzos. There is a miniature love scene for the valet and the serving-lady, for example, and there is another important one in which Nerone and his sidekick Lucano celebrate the death of Seneca in a drinking bout.

The great objection to the Leppard verison is that it tends to become a series of bleeding fragments, with many of the characters left in a partially developed state. The objection to Ewerhart's is that when all this music is restored. minus its lighter moments and scored strictly for the austere collection of instruments chosen by Monteverdi in preference to the more lavish Venetian court orchestra, the effect is, to put it bluntly, boring. A great deal is made of the power shown by Monteverdi in this opera for creating character through music, particularly with certain harmonic and instrumental devices. But this is true, I submit, only in a very relative sense. Often (not invariably, but often), characters could switch arias (musically, ] mean) without the slightest loss or gain in significance, and the recitative, for all its subtle and sometimes striking touches, has, shall we say, an insistent sound.

This does not mean that the opera is interesting only in a historical sense. It contains scenes of exceptional beauty -Seneca's noble death arioso is just one of several scenes that might be selected as representative of the score's eloquence. and so is the remarkable plea of his pupils (which, however, is vastly more moving as a chorus than as a trio, in which form it is heard in the Vox performance). The fact that Seneca is accompanied continuously by the organo regal, incidentally, is one of the strokes of "characterization" frequently singled out for praise. And it is a good idea. But it is not characterization in any specific sense at all; it merely indicates this figure's general position and the feelings we are supposed to have about himnothing personal.

L'Incoronazione is also one of the few pieces in which the bad guys win, and the audience must swallow it. Hurray.

The performance is excellent, one of the finest in the Glyndebourne series of recordings. Magda Laszlo sings with pure tone and considerable musical insight, and Richard Lewis with understanding, if not very ingratiating sound. Oralia Dominguez voices the beautiful "Oblivion soave" magnificently, and Carlo Cava sings with dignity and a fine deep resonance as Seneca. Frances Bible is not as focused or controlled as one might wish, but still very adequate. and the same can be said of the Ottone of Walter Alberti. a pleasant light bass. (Offhand, the role might seem better cast with a countertenor, but Vox's choice is such a poor singer that the advantage is lost.) There are good minor contributions from Hugues Cuenod and Elizabeth Bainbridge, and indeed everyone is equal to his or her task. The orchestral playing could not be better, the sound is nearly perfect. the balances exemplary.

But the great all-round virtue of the set is that its characters come to life in the music: no one is simply executing the notes. or sacrificing theatrical life to "purity," and as a result Monteverdi's music takes hold.

Vox has some fine artists, toonotably Ursula Buckel, a firm-voiced Poppea, and Eduard Wollitz, the Seneca, who sounds like a potentially great Sarastro. But where an advantage exists, it lies with Angel. C.L.O.

- MOURET: Première Suite de Fanfares; Seconde Suite de Simphonies --See Delalande: Quatrième Suite de Simphonies pour les Soupers du Roy.
- MOZART: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 22, in E flat, K. 482: Sonata for Piano, No. 16, in B flat, K. 570

Daniel Barenboim. piano: Vienna Radio Orchestra. Laszlo Somogyi. cond. (in the Concerto).

• WESTMINSTER XWN 19079. LP. \$4.98. • WESTMINSTER WST 17079. SD. \$4.98.

These performances represent a striking advance over Barenboim's playing of Mozart sonatas issued last year by the Music Guild. There are still traces of willfulness, but this ebullient temperament is now almost completely under control. If Barenboim, who is in his early twenties, still has not entirely solved the problem of keeping a slow movement moving, he no longer yields to old-fashioned, romantic ideas of phrasing and of tempo inflection. In the great Concerto he plays the first movement with such verve that the con-ductor sometimes has difficulty dovetailing the orchestral part with the piano part neatly. The wonderful Andante is beautifully sung, with sensitive phrasing and a true pianissimo on its last page. Some day, if Barenboim continues to grow, he will plumb this remarkable movement to its depths. Very few pianists have, so far, on records. In the finale the pianist gives full value to the contrast between the hunting gallop of the main body of the rondo and the slow episode, an instrumental aria that could have come out of Così fan tutte. At the beginning of the Concerto the strings tend to grow coarse in forte. and the woodwinds are sometimes buried when they should come forward, but both of these matters improve after the first movement. N.B.

What troubles me is the obscurity of the oboes and horns: granted that they may be doubling other parts most of the time, they might as well have stayed home for all they contribute to the color here, which is unanimously string-toned. But the weakness may lie with Telemann, not with the members of the Hamburg society named after him, who play richly and very double-dottedly, or with the DGG engineers, who have recorded them clearly and with resonance.

The prize selection on this disc is the Sonata for Flute and Viols, which casts the latter two instruments sometimes in supporting roles and sometimes as protagonists in a pleasantly democratic giveand-take with the flute. The slow movement is a joy indeed, with the three easy-moving melodic lines entwining here and there in pungent harmonies. Stereo contributes to this movement in particular. Performances are topnotch, displaying not only spirit and flexibility but an instinctive and highly skilled molding of dynamics. The Oboe Concerto is a fine Telemann filler, though it can hardly be counted as one of the major items on his résumé. S.F.

#### VERDI: Requiem Mass

Lucine Amara, soprano: Maureen Forrester. contralto; Richard Tucker. tenor; George London. bass; Westminster Choir; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

• COLUMBIA M2L 307. Two LP. \$9.98. • COLUMBIA M2S 707. Two SD. \$11.98.

This set has its merits, but it is up against formidable competition—the Toscanini, Reiner, and recent Giulini versions are hard to face down, and the historic Serafin set with its quartet of Caniglia, Stignani, Gigli, and Pinza still bids strongly for the attention of vocal enthusiasts.

Ormandy conducts a solid, fairly traditional Requiem, impressive in massed sonorities but not very lucid or cleanly defined. With his oddly assorted quartet, there is no question of securing the sort of ensemble coöperation that so distinguishes the Giulini release; still, one might have hoped for more sharpness than we get here. The Westminster Choir is a good body, but it tends to produce a sort of viscous over-all sound without much in the way of line; this is one of the reasons why the Sanctus (to take the most obvious example) comes out gunny, without lightness or snap. The orchestra makes its accustomed gorgeous sound, with the brass playing to especially good effect. but again it is a little puffy and lacking in outline. I do not believe that sharpness and brilliance are necessarily the only desirable traits in this score, but the present version swims a bit too much. The tempos are quite normal, except for a strangely slow Tuba mirum. which does not seem in line with the rest of the reading.

There is one outstanding soloist here: Maureen Forrester. What a pleasure it is

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to hear a round, firm contralto and a really adult musical approach in this music. The *Liber scriptus* is splendid, with a really gripping articulation of the repeated "nil," and the same vocal and musical level is maintained through the *Recordare*, the *Lacrimosa*, the Agnus Dei. This is the best voicing of the mezzo music on records, and it is only a pity that it cannot fill out the quartet on another set, rather than constituting the only true distinction of this one.

Richard Tucker is not in his best form, sounding rather heavy and constricted, but of course his work is reliable tenorizing. The only serious objection is that there is no vocal or musical blend with the other soloists. George London just doesn't possess the rolling legato or sheer basso cantante beauty of tone called for. His work is competent enough, but not when set against that of Ghiaurov, Pinza, Siepi, or Tozzi. Lucine Amara would be acceptable only if she used her rather small, colorless voice with unusual sensitivity and control. Here there is too much uncertain intonation and insecure attack, too little in the way of phrase shaping, with the result that one becomes very much aware that her voice is not intended for this sort of music.

In view of the alternatives, I'm afraid that this set cannot be recommended. Let us hope that Miss Forrester will have an opportunity to rerecord the work. C.L.O.

Recitals & Miscellany

#### AMSTERDAM CHAMBER ORCHES-TRA: "Italian Masters of the Preclassic Era"

Sammartini: Concerto for Recorder and String Orchestra. Pergolesi (?): Concertino for String Orchestra, in F minor. Bonporti: Concerto a quattro, for Violin and String Orchestra, in D, Op. 11, No. 8. Nardini: Concerto for Violin and String Orchestra, in A.

Soloists: Amsterdam Chamber Orchestra, André Rieu, cond.

• TELEFUNKEN AWT 9415C. LP. \$5.98. • • TELEFUNKEN SAWT 9415B. SD. \$5.98.

The two composers here who offer something to remember are Nardini and Pergolesi (the latter of whom, as everybody now knows, probably wrote only a portion of what has been credited to him; Carlo Ricciotti is suggested as the possible author of the present concerto). Nardini's Violin Concerto, somewhat less peremptorily square-cut that Bonporti's, is centered on a rather plaintive Adagio —the kind which he himself was said to play so beautifully that his own tears "ran down upon the violin" (according to Schubart). The work is topped off by a smart minuettish movement which might almost come out of *Don Giovanni*. The Pergolesi/Ricciotti, which delves more deeply into imitation than the other works here, begins with a warm and tender love duet between two solo violins, and closes with a big, happy, more or less fugal finale. The performances are satisfactory; the recorded sound, unfortunately, is less so, with a tendency to blast in loud or high passages. S.F.

## RUDOLF BAUMGARTNER: Eighteenth-Century Music for Strings

Mozart: Divertimento for Strings, in B flat, K. 137. Haydn: Divertimento for Strings, in E flat ("The Echo"). Vivaldi: Concerto for Two Violins and Strings, in A, P. 222. Roman: Sinfonia XX, in E minor.

Lucerne Festival Strings, Rudolf Baumgartner, cond.

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18947. LP. \$5.98.

• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138947. SD. \$5.98.

Each of these works has its interesting aspects. The Mozart has an unusually serious first movement for a divertimento -and one by a sixteen-year-old composer -as well as a graceful finale. Haydn lavished some fine lyric material on his divertimento, but the echo idea is perhaps overworked. The Vivaldi is another echo piece (one solo violin echoes the other; here too one would willingly forgive the composer if he had been less consistent about it, for with respect to thematic substance and level of expressivity this is one of the better works by Vivaldi. Not the least engrossing composition on the disc is the one by the least-known composer. Johan Helmich Roman (1694-1758), one of Sweden's most important creative musicians, is not yet listed in Schwann. This four-movement symphony is in a late-baroque style; its themes are well profiled, and its harmonies have emotional power. It leaves one wanting to hear more by this man. The playing is songful or lively throughout, and the sound is resonant, with effective separation. N.B.

# CARLOS CHAVEZ: "Mexico"

Mexican Chorus and Orchestra, Carlos Chávez, cond.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 69.

## CLEVELAND COMPOSERS' GUILD: "New Music from Cleveland, Vols. 1 and 2"

Roy: Canticle of the Sun. Murray: Safe in Their Alabaster Chambers. Whittaker: Cantata, Behold He Cometh with Clouds. Smith: In Memoriam— Beryl Rubinstein.



CIRCLE 42 ON READER-SERVICE CARD FEBRUARY 1965 Wilding-White: Paraphernalia—A Regalia of Madrigalia from Ezra Pound.

Kulas Choir and Chamber Orchestra; Members of the Cleveland Orchestra, Raymond Wilding-White, cond. (in *Paraphernalia*), Robert Shaw, cond. • COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CR1 182. LP. \$5.95.

Erb: Sonata for Harpsichord and String Quartet. Bubalo: Three Pieces for Brass Ensemble. Dick: Suite for Piano. Nunlist: Two Piano Pieces. Young: Dramatic Soliloquy for Piano.

John White, harpsichord (in the Erb); Arthur Loesser, piano (in the Dick, Nunlist, and Young); Koch String Quartet (in the Erb); Cleveland Brass Ensemble (in the Bubalo).

• COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 183. LP. \$5.95.

Future historians will probably not isolate a "Cleveland school" of composers, as they do now with Mannheim, but they will note that there was in that Ohio city the Kulas Foundation, which did yeoman service on behalf of local talent, sponsoring performances of their music and now these recordings of works written mostly in the last decade. It is an example other cities would do well to note.

The examples of Cleveland talent presented here include several solidly conservative works, somewhat modal in harmonic style, influenced strongly by the modern *faux-bourdon* manner of Vaughan Williams. Most of the choral pieces fall into this category, as do the warm-textured brass pieces by Rudolph Bubalo. Of them, the most attractive is Klaus Roy's setting of the poem of St. Francis, which twines a solo viola (played by Abraham Skernick) interestingly through the choral texture.

The Wilding-White Paraphernalia and Donald Erb Sonata are in a more current, hippety-hoppety "modern" style, and both are (not necessarily for that reason) somewhat more vivid works than their disc mates. The Erb, with its dry-point textures in the string writing and some unusual percussive effects from the harpsichord, is an especially attractive piece. The piano suite by the veteran Marcel Dick is also lively and ingratiating, in a 1910-Schoenberg manner, and the two other piano works, both by women composers, are exercises in bone-dry chromaticism.

If Cleveland manifests no single compositional style, it maintains here a uniformly high level of performance. Robert Shaw has trained an excellent chorus (drawn from his choir at the First Unitarian Church in Shaker Heights), one which sings with tone and splendid attention to diction. It is also a pleasure to hear the superb pianist Arthur Loesser at work again, and one wonders why his efforts receive so little circulation these days. The instrumentalists, drawn from the Cleveland Orchestra, are as good individually as their orchestra is as a whole, which is very good indeed. Clean, close-up recorded sound. A.R.

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# IGOR KIPNIS: "French Baroque Music for Harpsichord"

Boismortier: Suite No. 3. in E. Louis Couperin: Tombeau de M. Blancrocher; Chaconne. François Couperin: Les Barricades mistérieuses: Le Moucheron; Passacaille. Rameau: Suite in E.

Igor Kipnis, harpsichord. • Epic LC 3889, L.P. \$4.98, • Epic DB 1289, SD, \$5.98,

My collection of music about the piquant activities of the common or garden flea includes songs by Senfl and Mussorgsky, and madrigals by Monteverdi, Lassus, and Gesualdo. Now Mr. Kipnis introduces me to a charming harpsichord piece on the same subject, by Boismortier: it's the second item of the Suite in E, and it reveals something of the composer's ready wit as well as the interpreter's musical imagination. His Rutkowski & Robinette, brilliant and incisive in timbre, aids him not a little in conveving the essence and the spirit of those intellectual but sensuous Parisian salons of the early eighteenth century. The items by Louis and François Couperin take us back to another age, but once again this resourceful performer persuades the listener that restraint and elegance constitute the genuine hallmarks of French keyboard music, no matter what the architects and the interior decorators might perpetrate in the way of overelaboration. His registration, like his rubato, hints at artistry rather than mere cleverness, and his fine command of ornamentation suggests that his sympathy for the French school is no simple accident. The sound is impressive, except for the occasional presence of wow, presumably inherited from the master tape. D.S.

## ARTUR RUBINSTEIN: "A French Program"

Chabrier: Valse-Scherzo. Fauré: Nocturne in A flat, Op. 33, No. 3. Poulenc: Intermezzos: No. 1, in A flat: No. 2, in D flat: Mouvements perpétuels. Ravel: La Vallée des cloches; Valses nobles et sentimentales.

Artur Rubinstein, piano. • RCA VICTOR LM 2751. LP. \$4.98. • RCA VICTOR LSC 2751. SD. \$5.98.

Rubinstein's discography once included 78-rpm versions of the Fauré A flat Nocturne and Poulenc's witty *Mouvements perpétuels*, but the other pieces on the present beautifully reproduced disc are new to the great pianist's recorded repertoire. (Indeed, there is a rumor that the artist learned the Chabrier overnight for this collection!)

Everything here is typical of the lovely playing which Rubinstein has been giving us lately. All of the music is presented with superb lilt and proportion, beautiful tonal coloring, and faultless articutation. The Ravel is, indeed, noble and full of sentiment. Rubinstein plays the set with fleshy exuberance, eschewing the icy brilliance favored by Casadesus in his very different, though equally effective, interpretation. In both the *Valses* and the *Miroirs* excerpts, Rubinstein is an uncommonly *warm* exponent, but he never makes the elementary mistake of romanticizing Ravel's basic objectivity.

The simplicity and directness of the two Poulenc Intermezzos and the Fauré Nocturne should be the envy of every pianist, while the Movements perpétuels contrasts instructively with Poulenc's own recorded version on Columbia. Rubinstein rightly strives for clarity, while the composer, in my opinion, took his gris markings far too seriously and thereby muddled these humorous tidbits by using too much pedal. Inasmuch as Poulenc gave overwhelming approval to Rubinstein's performances of his music, one can only assume that he was less doctrinaire than most composers in determining how others were to play his work.

To put matters shortly, I can't conceive of any collector of piano music wanting to be without this record. H.G.

## EVERT VAN TRICHT: Baroque Music for Oboe

Handel: Concertos for Oboe: No. 3, in G minor; No. 8, in B flat. Dittersdorf: Concerto for Oboe, in G. Telemann: Concerto for Oboe, in F minor. Bach?: Suite No. 5, in C minor.

Evert van Tricht, oboe: Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Bernhard Paumgartner, cond. (in the Concertos): Pro Arte Orchestra of Munich, Kurt Redel, cond. (in the Suite).

• MERCURY MG 50403. LP. \$4.98. • MERCURY SR 90403. SD. \$5.98.

A bargain for those who want a big package of baroque oboe music at a modest price per minute. Van Tricht is obviously a first-class player, with the proper, crisp tone for this music, a good feeling for the style, and a sparkling trill. Paumgartner gives him fine support, and the recording is particularly open and clean in its textures.

The Dittersdorf is the longest of the four concertos and, I think, the weakest. But conscientious eighteenth-century craftsmanship is not to be dismissed when the results are as obviously tuneful and entertaining as this. Both the Handel works are early and both are notable for lovely slow movements, particularly the Saraband of No. 3. The consensus of scholars seems to be that the attribution of the so-called Fifth Suite to Bach is unsupported. Certainly there is nothing about it to suggest that a commanding genius such as Bach was its composer, but, again, it's a good. craftsmanlike piece with a couple of interesting movements. Redel gives it a sympathetic performance that is well recorded.

It should perhaps be noted that Mercury has not always identified this music in full, and (a real irritation) has failed to provide bands by which to locate the beginning of three of the works. R.C.M. Herz: Variations on "Non più mesta" from Rossini's "La Cenerentola." Godowsky: Symphonic Metamorphosis on Themes from Strauss's "Künstlerleben." Rubinstein: Etude in C, Op. 23, No. 2. Thalberg: "Don Pasquale" Fantasy, Op. 67. Hummel: Rondo in E flat, Op. 11. Paderewski: Theme with Variations in A, Op. 16, No. 3.

Earl Wild, piano.

- VANGUARD VRS 1119. LP. \$4.98.
- • VANGUARD VSD 71119. SD. \$5.95.

During the past year there has been a resurgence of interest in pianists and pianism of the past. The compositions of great composers who were also great pianists of course have not been neglected, but those of great pianists who were also highly skilled composers have been largely relegated to oblivion. This enterprising disc sets out to remedy that situation injuste.

The six virtuoso works here presented are great fun and are programmed with discriminating variety. At one time or another many pianists still play the E flat Rondo of Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837) and one could ask why a neglected work of Hummel's large and otherwise completely neglected output should not have been chosen. On the other hand, who today has had the chance to hear the Variations on "Non più mesta" from Rossini's La Cenerentola of Henri Herz (1803-88) or the Don Pasquale Fantasy of Sigismond Thalberg (1812-71)? Both works have operatic flavor-you'll find yourself humming the Donizetti A major Serenata con coro theme-and for technical fireworks each in its genre is a real show stopper. Paderewski's Theme with Variations, with its spirituality and elegance, attests to his credo of singing melody, jeu-perlé passagework, and fullkeyboard sonorities. And for paraphrases, it is doubtful that anyone will ever out-Godowsky that pianist's Künstlerleben with its overripe harmonies, half-step modulations, whole-tone scales, Tausiglike octave tremolos, and black- and white-key glissandos all over the place.

Why wait further to say it? This is a superb collection superbly performed. Earl Wild not only plays with a technical mastery that exhilarates and dazzles: he interprets with subtlety, elegance, humor, and depth. The Herz and Godowsky make one think of Horowitz and Rachmaninoff; the Anton Rubinstein Etude conjures up memories of Lhevinne. For me, the Hummel is a bit heavy-handed, the ending of the Rubinstein would have been more effective without sudden accelerando, and the last variation of the Paderewski should begin pianissimo. But these are peccadilloes, in view of the over-all excellence of this outstanding disc.

The spacious, lifelike sound on the monophonic review copy was first-rate except for the hall echo after big chords. DEAN M. ELDER



## BRAHMS: Symphony No. 3, in F, Op. 90

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Bruno Walter, cond. [from RCA Victor M 341, 1936].

• ODEON QIM 6341. LP. \$5.98.

Bruno Walter and the Vienna Philharmonic managed to generate a certain magic which neither could always be counted on to produce alone. The elements were obvious enough—a warm. radiant tone from the ensemble and a guiding intelligence that shaped these sounds into singing phrases which held a long line and yet gave ample room for sentiment to have its say. That is what happens here in a recording I have prized for at least a quarter of a century.

The trouble, in recent years, was al-ways the sound. Walter's Vienna career ended with Hitler's Anschluss in 1938, vears before the benefits bestowed by modern sound technology. The present reissue, therefore, must be regarded as a small miracle of reprocessing. I have never heard this recording sound so fine, with the fullness and refinement that was the best of European recorded sound in the prewar period. It thus becomes thoroughly competitive as a document with Walter's New York and Los An-geles recordings of later decades, and l feel that it is probably the best realization of his mature feelings about the work. (The New York version may well have been influenced by Toscanini, who was a good friend but a bad example for one of Walter's predilections.)

The LP has rather wide grooves and must be played with a genuine 1-mil stylus rather than one of the small stereo diamonds. I can't object to this, but I do object to some of the careless splicing between the old 78 surfaces, especially the break (admittedly it was always a bad one) at the end of the first side of the finale. As done here, there is an awkward pause within a phrase and the needless duplication of a note. R.C.M.

# MAHLER: Symphony No. 4, in G

Margaret Ritchie, soprano; Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eduard van Beinum, cond. [from London LLP 618, 1952].

• RICHMOND B 19104. LP. \$1.98.

Mahler has been slow in gaining a place on the lower-priced labels, and it is good to see that this popular work is finding entry to that market. Beinum's



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edition is dated by the exaggeratedly close miking of percussion and like features of the early FFRR technique, but the sound remains pleasing, though there's not much bass and the dynamic range is fairly restricted. The conductor's approach calls for rather fast-paced, lightly inflected playing with open textures and a general avoidance of emotional intensity. Margaret Ritchie's pronunciation and enunciation lack the qualities you would expect from a German singer, but, like Beinum's, hers is an acceptable performance if something less than the best on records. R.C.M.

SCARLATTI: Sonatas for Harpsichord (20)

Wanda Landowska, harpsichord [from various recordings, 1939-40]. • ANGEL COLH 304. LP. \$5.98.

About four years ago Angel brought out the first "volume" of re-pressings of Scarlatti sonatas played by Landowska. Those had been first recorded in 1934. The present group of pieces was recorded during the first years of World War II. Like those in the earlier set, they are well chosen to display different facets of the genius of their extraordinary and enigmatic composer. Several of them seem to be illustrating some sort of program; others are dances, slow and dreamy, or moderate in tempo and graceful, or fast and light-footed. The remarkable character piece numbered 422 by Longo contains a brief dialogue between treble and bass that anticipates a characteristic procedure of Beethoven. There are poetic reveries, and pieces full of almost romantic feeling.

Landowska plays all of them with relish and conveys the special character of each. Whether in a lament like L. 138 or a brilliant toccata like L. 461, the attention is seized in the first measure and held by the vitality of the playing. It does not matter a bit that the harpsichord sound is not as "real" as it would be on a modern recording, or that the timbre of the instrument varies in different parts of the disc, or that one can hear anti-aircraft guns booming in L. 206. This is indeed, like its predecessor, one of the "Great Recordings of the Century." N.B.

SIBELIUS: Symphony No. 2, in D, Op. 43

London Symphony Orchestra, Anthony Collins, cond. [from London LL 822, 19541.

• RICHMOND B 19103. LP. \$1.98.

When I wrote a Sibelius discography for this magazine in 1955. I gave Anthony Collins' version a high rating, and it still merits one. Playing and reproduction are exceptionally clear. London has apparently souped up the sound a bit to match the sonics of the Sixties, and in so doing has brought along some audible tape hiss. This has little importance, however, alongside a vibrant interpretation, the occasional impetuousness of which disturbs me less now than it did nine years ago. P.A.

# THOMSON: Four Saints in Three Acts (abridged)

Soloists, chorus, and orchestra, Virgil Thomson, cond.

For a feature review of this reissue, see page 70.

#### WAGNER: Parsifal: Dies alles . . . Ich sah' das Kind (A); Götterdämmerung: Prologue (B) †Schumann: Duets (5) (C)

Kirsten Flagstad, soprano (in the Wagner); Lotte Lehmann, soprano (in the Schumann); Lauritz Melchior, tenor; Gordon Dilworth, baritone (in the Wagner); RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra and San Francisco Opera Orchestra, Edwin McArthur, cond. (in the Wagner); orchestra. Bruno Reibold, cond. (in the Schumann) [(A) from RCA Victor 17774/77 and LCT 1105, 1940; (B) from RCA Victor M 749, 1939; (C) from RCA Victor 1906/07, 1939]. • RCA VICTOR LM 2763. LP. \$4.98.

The two operatic selections on this disc have long been admired as eloquent mementos of the Flagstad-Melchior era of Wagnerian singing, and their reëntrance into the catalogue. freshly remastered, is most welcome. Actually, this is the second LP renascence of the Act II, Scene 2 duet from Parsifal: the performance was previously reissued in 1953 on Victor's "Treasury" Series. The Götterdämmerung Prologue ("Zu neuen Thaten") appears on LP for the first time.

The virtues of these performances have been extolled many times, and I need only add that the great floods of sumptuous tone from Flagstad and the fervent intensity of Melchior are as thrilling as ever. It is true that Flagstad never cared particularly for the role of Kundry, and her distaste is shown in her rather coolly detached vocalism. Nevertheless, there are few today who traverse this tortured and involuted chromatic writing with such ease and security. Edwin McArthur's lumpy and stumbling accompaniments have always been the chief flaw in these perforances. Fortunately he does not seem to inhibit the two soloists.

The Schumann duets (Er und sie, Ich denke dein, Familien-Gemälde. So wahr die Sonne scheinet, Unter'm Fenster)

**Correction:** In discussing for High Fidelity last month the Gary Graffman/Leonard Bernstein coupling of Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto and "Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini" (Columbia ML 6034 or MS 6634), reviewer Harris Goldsmith wrote: "It will be noted that Columbia's engineers have managed to encompass the entire 33 minutes and 45 seconds of the Concerto on a slight decibel cut—a miracle of advanced disc cutting." We very much regret the inadvertence through which the important word "decibel" was dropped from Mr. Goldsmith's review as printed." Correction: In discussing for High Fidelity

were an ill-conceived venture from the start. Melchior is completely miscast in these intimate salon pieces, further distorted by extremely poor barrel organ orchestrations. Even Lotte Lehmann sounds ill at ease. It would have made more sense to round out the disc with further Wagnerian selections from Melchior. PETER DAVIS

# WILLI DOMGRAF-FASSBAENDER: Recital

Willi Domgraf-Fassbaender, baritone: various other singers; G. Haberland, piano; Orchestras; Fritz Busch et al., conds. [from various recordings, 1931-36].
ELECTROLA E 83390. LP. \$5.98.

Willi Domgraf-Fassbaender, now in his late sixties. is best known to American collectors as the Figaro and Guglielmo in the marvelous Glyndebourne performances of 1934 and '35. These performances are generously sampled on this disc, along with a number of operatic performances (recorded in German between 1931 and 1936) and one Lied.

In a short speech included on the present recording Domgraf-Fassbaender names Battistini and Schlusnus as his two idols. Like both these singers he worked hard to develop a vocal richness, largely through a wide but controlled vibrato, which borders on juiciness. One does indeed think of Schlusnus in the Schumann song and in Wolfram's song from Tannhäuser. But Domgraf-Fassbaender also had a certain harshness that he never completely mastered. He used it to good effect in his comic roles at Glyndebourne, and it can also be heard here as an enhancement of his Malatesta in the Don Pasquale excerpts. It is not quite as attractive, however, in the duet from Trovatore with Margarete Teschemacher, or in the Rigoletto selection with Erna Berger. Both these excerpts are hampered further by absurdly fast tempos and mechanized conducting by a deservedly unnamed dirigent.

Domgraf-Fassbaender did, however, have a lively dramatic sense and his phrasing, especially in the *Tannhäuser*, the "*Di Provenza*." and the Mozart excerpts, is a joy to hear. Sopranos Teschemacher, Berger, and Lotte Schöne (heard in the Donizetti selection) are splendid, and one hopes that Electrola will give them all discs of their own in this "Golden Stimme" series. A.R.

# ARTURO TOSCANINI: "Concert Favorites"

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HEERING-VERLAG · 8 MUNICH 25, ORTLERSTR. 8 - WEST. GERMANY CIRCLE 79 ON READER-SERVICE CARD Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet Fantasy-Overture. Wagner: A Faust Overture; Die Walküre: Ride of the Valkyries.

NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond. [from various RCA Victor recordings].

•RCA Victor LM 7032. Two LP. \$9.96.

Of this long list of items, only the Star-Spangled Banner and the Sousa El Capitan March are completely new, and no one will claim them to be the most important treasures in the Riverdale archives. Everything else has appeared before, although only the Tchaikovsky Romeo and Juliet was readily available immediately prior to the issuance of this collection. While it is good to have the Maestro's magnificent performances of the Faust Overture, Barber Adagio, and Don Juan back in print, it should in all fairness be pointed out that conscientious Toscanini collectors probably already own some or all of these recordings.

Which brings us to the question of the tranfers: do these current incarnations sound better or worse than their predecessors? In the case of the Don Juan and Daphnis, I would say that they are about the same. The ersatz resonance added to later pressings of the former on LM 1157 has been removed. but now we have occasional distortion because of the higher volume level here. Daphnis et Chloë has just about the same dead, clean, slightly grainy sound as before. The Tchaikovsky, on the other hand, is quite appallingly bad: horrible distortion and indiscriminate use of the echo chamber and such misguided devices almost obliterate the merits of the powerful reading. A show piece like this one really does need high fidelity sound to put it across. Rather than stimulate aural brilliance from this dated 1946 recording, RCA Victor could have given us the real thing by offering the Maestro's superb 1953 concert performance. (But that would have meant paying the NBC Symphony members more money!)

Two surprises in the anthology are the Gluck and Mendelssohn. Both were made in tiny, cramped NBC studio 3-A (even smaller than the more famous 8-H) and have gained undeserved notoriety because of their origin. Heard again over wide-range equipment, in these clear, well-equalized, and completely honest transfers, they emerge with an over-all agreeableness. The Bach Air (from 1946 and 8-H) and Barber Adagio (from 1942) are also quite faithfully resurrected from their 78-rpm originals. The 1952 Ride of the Valkyries is no surprise at all: it always did sound superb and still does. This could pass for contemporary reproduction. As for the rest, they require a sharp treble cut to offset the unpleasant edginess acquired by the engineers' peaking of the highs. I wish that they hadn't done this, but at least one can undo its negative effects.

While this set smacks of commercial prudence rather than selfless dedication to the Toscanini cause, it is by no means to be overlooked. H.G.



"Harold Rome's Gallery." Betty Garrett, Jack Haskell, Rose Marie Jun, Harold Rome. Columbia KL 6091, \$4.98 (LP); KS 6691, \$5.98 (SD).

A LTHOUGH composers and artists have often explored the relationship between music and painting, the manner of exploration undertaken by Harold Rome on *Harold Rome's Gallery* is unique—and it has produced unique results.

Rome is, first of all, an experienced composer for the theatre who has been writing both music and lyrics for Broadway shows since his first success in 1937, Pins and Needles. In 1948 he added painting to his creative arsenal (a development that may be traced to his uncertain career at Yale, where he spent two years in the Law School, and four more at the School of Architecture, ultimately acquiring a degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts). Nowadays his usual routine is to compose in the morning and paint in the afternoon. At one point it occurred to him that it might be stimulating to use all his talents simultaneouslyto express a specific mood or emotion with music, words, and paint-and this led to the present disc, which contains twelve Rome songs along with twelve Rome paintings based on the same themes.

One of the differences between Rome's two-way view of a subject and the joint work of other musicians and artists is that in this instance both painter and composer are the same person. This results in revelatory interpretations lurking in the mind of the composer that might never have occurred to another



Harold Rome: animal kingdom in music and paint.

person undertaking to translate the song into terms of painting. Still another difference lies in the kind of music that Rome writes. He is first and last a theatre composer, whereas most art-music relationships in the past have involved works by composers of what is usually identified as "serious" music.

The songs in *Rome's Gallery* include several investigations of the animal kingdom—an explanation of how to avoid the wolf who swallowed Red Riding Hood; memories of a Teddy bear; a chummy life history of a cow, recounting her many services to mankind and her inevitable tragic reward. There are waltzes both tender and maddening; a tango for Betty Garrett that serves as a delayed follow-up to Rome's *South America, Take It Away* (the song which first brought her to notice in *Call Me Mister*); and a number listing names of artists—an extended version of the tooth-rattling line of Russian composers that Ira Gershwin put into *Tchaikovsky* from *Lady in the Dark*.

The pictures that Rome has painted in association with these songs are done in a mosaic style that at times resembles objectivized Jackson Pollack. Rome plays it cagey about whether the picture or the song was done first, putting him one up on those songwriters who make a mystery regarding the order of creation of words and music. Listening to the songs first and consulting the paintings afterwards can produce a variety of reactions. The yellow wolf who swallowed Red Riding Hood is a gayer, more cuddlesome type than I had anticipated, but the comic Tango Diablo is visualized in the somewhat irrational terms that the song suggests. The worthy Mrs. Cow, whose dedicated services are praised in a song that deserves Beatrice Lillie's attention (although Miss Garrett does it splendidly), wears an unexpectedly dubious and aggressive look in Rome's painting, suggesting that she has listened to the song and heard the fate that Rome says is in store for her.

The real unveiling of the inner Rome, however, occurs on  $My \ Long \ Ago$ , a lovely tune with lyrics that look back to a fondly remembered love. What Rome depicts in his painting of  $My \ Long \ Ago$  is a fat, blank-faced, green nonentity sitting primly on a hassock. Can this really be what composers think about when they create their tenderest melodies?

This is a disc that gives the mind and the eye, as

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well as the ear, something to consider. It opens up possibilities for parlor games, too—how would you visualize a song? And it offers a generally rewarding set of songs ranging from the satirical to the sentimental.

The singers, in addition to Miss Garrett, are Jack Haskell, a pleasant-voiced "leading man" type, and

Rose Marie Jun, who is particularly effective in a portrait of a self-proclaimed shy girl. Rome sings two of the songs himself with dauntless enthusiasm but with results that he would probably not tolerate from anyone else. Eddie Sauter's arrangements for strings and a rhythm section add considerable charm to the set. J.S.W.

#### Reprise Repertory Theatre: "Finian's Rainbow," "Guys and Dolls," "Kiss Me, Kate." "South Pacific." Reprise 4F-2019, \$19.98 (Four LP); 4FS-2019, \$23.98 (Four SD).

Four good Broadway musicals are given the Hollywood treatment in this peculiar set. The emphasis is put on "name" performers to such an extent that the songs of one character in a show are often distributed among two or three different singers. The result is a complete inconsistency of characterization within each show, or, for that matter, within any given song. The records contain performances by Frank Sinatra (who conceived and produced the set), Bing Crosby, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis, Allan Sherman, Lou Monte, Jo Stafford, Dinah Shore, Rosemary Clooney, the McGuire Sisters, Keely Smith, and Debbie Rey-nolds. The gamut runs from Miss Stafford, who simply sings the songs in her usual skillful fashion, to Miss Reynolds' lamentable attempt to undertake a comic accent for Guys and Dolls. The efforts of Sinatra, Crosby, and Davis along with Miss Stafford, are generally commendable, although they convey no sense that these musicals are cohesive entities. The Clan approach to the scores, in fact, is apt to be detrimental. When Sinatra, Martin. and Davis inject their own manners and modes into We Open in Venice from Kiss Me, Kate, they completely annihilate an already discouraging performance. Because their particular brand of hipness is within the context of Guys and Dolls, this musical is the only one of the four performed with any approximation of style.

## Johnny Mathis: "Olé." Mercury 20988, \$3.98 (LP); 60988, \$4.98 (SD).

This is a surprising record in more ways than one. Johnny Mathis has established himself as a popular singer with a high, wraithlike voice bordering on a type of falsetto commonly raised in adolescent plaints. With this disc, he puts all that behind him, emerging as a discerning adult performer. Although the material here is, by and large, subdued, he reveals considerably more voice than in the past, especially in Granada and Tres Palabras. The program is completely South American, with an emphasis on bossa nova, which Mathis sings with the same cool precision projected by the best of the Brazilians (João Gilberto, for instance). But there is also some very unexpected material. Leroy Anderson's Serenata proves to be an ideal subject for Mathis, as does Villa Lobos' Bachianas Brasileiras, in which Mathis not only sings and hums but, in effect, turns himself into a cello playing along with the strings. The conception of the record is extremely imaginative. the arrangements are beautifully developed and executed. Yet the individual responsible for all this is given no credit at all—no producer, arranger, or conductor is named. Originality on such a level is rarely found on popular records and it deserves to be recognized. This recognition should be extended to the feat of saving Mathis from what apparently had become a dead-end routine and casting him in a completely new and rewarding light.

Tessie O'Shea: "Cheers." Command 33-872, \$4.98 (LP); S 33-872, \$5.98 (SD). The vivid and ebullient Miss O'Shea burst on the American scene late in 1963 with a twelve-minute stint of singing and fancy stepping during the first act of Noel Coward's The Girl Who Came to Supper. It stopped the show cold. She had been a headliner for thirty years in England's music halls (and in other areas of the world where the English music hall tradition has a strong following), but this was her first American venture. There's more, considerably more, of Two-Ton Tessie, as she is billed, on this disc than was offered in the Coward show (minus the visual qualities, of course). But Miss O'Shea is of the old show-business school that does not need visual aids to project a personality. She sings a collection of tried-and-true songs that she has been doing in her music hall turns for years. Some are familiar - I've Got a Lovely Bunch of Coconuts, I've Got Sixpence, Lily of Laguna. Some are idiomatically British-Don't Have Any More. Missus Moore or Hold Your Hand Out, Naughty Boy. There is warm sentimentality in Maybe It's Because I'm a Londoner. And she can tell a gentle tale in The Honeysuckle and the Bee. But the full, joyous flavor of Miss O'Shea's performance is exposed most completely when she is gleaming with pleasure about her size (It All Belongs to Me, Two-Ton Tessie), or rollicking through It's Men Like You. and particularly when she whangs away on her banjolele, a banjo tuned like a ukulele. An innocent spirit from the past pervades these songs, but Miss O'Shea's vitality makes them seem completely and immediately contemporary.



"The Beatles' Story." Capitol TBO 2222, \$9.98 (Two I.P); STBO 2222. \$11.98 (Two SD).

If anything could cap the varied incredibilities of the Beatles, it might be this straight-faced documentary of the rise and reign of the four Liverpudlians. Like everything else about the Beatles, this disc can have a strange fascination. It is often marred by such pompous talk as "a decision that would affect the musical history of the world," and at other times it is totally disarming, as in snippets of impromptu conversation by the individual Beatles. For amateur sociologists, a high point is an interview with a pair of avid Beatle worshipers, two girls who have just experienced the Beatles in person and who try to explain their appeal, sobbing and gasping with joy as words of wondrous adoration pour out. Against a throbbing background of Beatle music, the origins and development of Beatlemania are detailed through sketches of the four singers and their manager, Brian Epstein, and through comments by each of them, interspersed with snatches of the Beatles at work. The general tone is that of a fan magazine, but the personality of the four Beatles cuts through to enliven the project. For Beatle fans it is, of course, essential. For others, enlightening.

Tony Bennett: "Who Can I Turn To." Columbia CL 2285, \$3.98 (LP); CS 9085, \$4.98 (SD).

The pattern of a Tony Bennett record has been well established by now. It involves a highly showmanly use of his rather limited voice, phrasing that emphasizes the beat, extremely perceptive accompaniment, and an unusually keen ear for songs both old and new. One of the major wonders of Bennett's records is the consistency with which he uses all these assets, turning out one disc after another that stays very close to his established high norm. This one is no exception. Bennett opens big with Anthony Newley's Who Can I Turn To? a song that demands the same bravura treatment as Newley's What Kind of Fool Am 1? There are some old standards that are so good one wonders why they are not done more often-Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams, There's a Lull in My Life. Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea-and several attractive new songs in the bittersweet vein that Bennett does particularly well: The Brightest Smile in Town, I Walk a Little Faster, and Listen, Little Girl. Although there is an orchestra of monstrous proportions behind Bennett, George Siravo's arrangements keep it either tacit or subdued most of the time while Bennett's



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regular pianist. Ralph Sharon, his trio and/or quartet, provide apt and sensitive settings that frame Bennett's voice extremely well.

"Golden Boy." Sammy Davis, Billy Daniels and Original Cast. Capitol VAS 2124, \$5.98 (LP); SVAS 2124, \$6.98 (SD).

Clifford Odets' play Golden Boy, on which this musical is based, has largely been lost sight of in the transformation. The story of an East Side Jewish boy who becomes a professional boxer to finance his career as a concert violinist has given way to a tale of a young Negro who begins his boxing career in an effort to escape the color barrier by becoming a celebrity. If the motivation of the musical is sometimes confusing (a confusion increased by occasional appearances of leftover bits from Odets' plot), this is of little concern on the disc. The show, through a series of rewrites, has become largely a showcase for Sammy Davis, and he is the point around which the disc revolves. He is involved in almost all of the Lee Adams/Charles Strouse songs, working effectively and working hard, so hard that by the time he reaches Can't You See It?, a paean of joy near the end of the disc, the joy is curdled by the weariness of his voice. But he is properly lyrical on the atmospheric Night Song, strongly rhythmic on This Is the Life, and almost manages to



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# ONE YEAR GUARANTEE

• **Tanaberg** of AMERICA, INC., P.O. Box 171, 8 Third Avenue, Pelham, N.Y. CIRCLE 77 ON READER-SERVICE CARD make the banal I Want To Be with You seem convincing. Despite Davis' yeoman efforts. it is Billy Daniels who emerges most strikingly on the disc. with his cynical and slinky treatment of While the City Sleeps and as a suave, authoritative foil to Davis on This Is the Life. Paula Wayne also has only two good opportunities but. like Daniels. she makes them count. Both her songs. Lorna's Here and Golden Boy. are dark and moody pieces to which she brings the controlled, emotional projection of a skilled torch singer.

"Ben Franklin in Paris." Robert Preston. Ulla Sallert. Original Cast. Capitol VAS 2191, \$5.98 (LP); SVAS 2191, \$6.98 (SD).

Ben Franklin cut quite a dashing figure in Paris when he went there to plead the cause of the American colonies, according to Sidney Michaels' book for Ben Franklin in Paris. Robert Preston is just the man to convey this sparkle (as well as looking remarkably like a somewhat younger version of the familiar highforeheaded Franklin portraits), and Ulla Sallert. a gorgeous import from Sweden, provides him with something that he can understandably be dashing about. Preston's vitality and Miss Sallert's stimulating presence, however, are the main assets of this musical. The music by Mark Sandrich, Jr., and the lyrics by Michaels fall into that anonymous middle ground where things are neither quite good enough to arouse one's interest nor bad enough to be searingly memorable. One has to follow the advice of the most effective song in the score. Look for Small Pleasures. These include, in addition to this amiable tune, a song that is seasoned with suggestions of Cole Porter, Too Charming: the lively zest that Preston brings to I Invented Myself: a celebration of the grape called God Bless the Human Elbow: and an inspirational bit taking him back briefly to his Music Man characterization. Half the Battle. Miss Sallert depends more on charm than on voice in her songs. The one voice of any consequence in the company belongs to Susan Watson, who -as a traditional ingénue-is given traditional ingénue songs.

Carmen McRae: "Second to None." Mainstream 56028, \$4.98 (LP); 6028, \$5.98 (SD).

Miss McRae's steady progress as a moving and meaningful singer continues on this disc, with the very helpful support of Peter Matz's arrangements. The dark, colorful timbre of her voice gives her singing an effortlessly sensual quality on pieces as diverse as the bossa nova Manha de Carnival and one of Barbra Streisand's songs in Funny Girl-The Music That Makes Me Dance (with a glowing trumpet accompaniment by Johnny Bel-10). Her mannerisms, which once tended to jar the sense of her songs, have been distilled down to the use of unexpected shadings and lifts, adding to the controlled interpretation she gives these pieces. She has chosen her program with a sense of adventure (typified by her use of a song from Funny Girl other than People). Oscar Levant's haunting Blame It

on My Youth is here, along with Jerome Kern's In Love in Vain, and a fine new bit of atmospheric writing by Joe Mc-Carthy and Marvin Fisher, Cloudy Morning. Matz has provided an unusual rhythmic accompaniment for My Reverie, which refreshes this well-worn chestnut, and McRae shows what a charming song the Beatles can write in a simple and convincing version of And I Love Him.

Guy Lombardo and His Royal Canadians: "The Lombardo Years." Capitol TDL 2181, \$15.98 (Four LP); STDL 2181, \$19.98 (Four SD).

For home dancers (nontwisting adult division) it is difficult to conceive of a more delightful set of discs than this collection of Lombardo medleys. Seven of the eight sides are devoted to nonstop, medium fox-trot medleys lasting an average of twenty minutes each. Half of the eighth side is a waltz medley; the rest of the side returns to the fox trot. There are three hours and forty minutes of superb dance music here arranged from 160 of the best pop songs ever written, all played with the suave finesse and the inimitably individual style of the Lombardo brothers.

Allan Sherman: "For Swingin' Livers Only!" Warner Brothers 1569, \$3.98 (LP); S 1569, \$4.98 (SD).

Allan Sherman, who has been wandering far afield in his recent records, here returns to his initial role as My Son, the Folk Singer—singing parodies about folks again. This is a tricky area, because an idea that is funny once is rarely funny twice. Under the circumstances, Sherman has been remarkably successful in mining still more laughs from a vein that he has already worked so assiduously. His topics this time include gluttonous women in Grow, Mrs. Goldfarb (to the tune of Glow Worm), an astronaut named Harvey Bloom (to the tune of Shine On, Harvest Moon), a resident mother-in-law (to Love Is Here To Stay), the teamsters (to Beautiful Dreamer), and the Beatles (to Pop Goes the Weasel). His material wears thin at times, especially when one compares his parody on The Twelve Days of Christmas with Stan Freberg's memorable version, but he can still find an amazing number of laughs in what seems to be well-worn satirical ideas.

Eddie Cantor: "Songs He Made Famous." Decca 4431, \$3.98 (LP).

Eddie Cantor was well past his prime when these recordings were made. His voice tends to be somewhat thick and heavy on this disc and sometimes he seems to be straining to achieve what once came so easily. Yet for all this, the pixy gleam still shines through, and in the mind's eye one can visualize the prancing legs, the agitated hands, the round, startled face with its round mouth. round nose, and three-dimensionally round eyes. The songs he sings are some of the classics of the Cantor repertory: --If You Knew Susie (with an unaccountable change of lyrics-instead of walking "back from Yonkers," Eddie here walks "back from the country" did Yonkers stop being funny?), Makin'

Whoopee, his Depression cheer-up song Now's the Time To Fall in Love, Ida, Mal, Margie, and on down the line. Although these are not the definitive performances, they are very close indeed, and they are the definitive Cantor songs.

Nina Simone: "Broadway—Blues—Ballads." Philips 200-148, \$3.98 (LP); 600-148, \$4.98 (SD).

Although an incredible mishmash of odds and ends, the good points of this recording are first-rate samples of the Simone technique. She subdues her burning temperament to a gentle glow on Night Song, a softly melodic piece from Golden Boy. Her ability for characterization is brought into play for an up-

dated version of Bert Williams' memorable Nobody, but when she gets to Cole Porter's The Laziest Gal in Town her characterization becomes a bit too broad. She ventures into a rather different style with Something Wonderful from The King and I, a song which challenges her range. All of these songs, as well as the odd but effective choice of The Last Rose of Summer, have been arranged persua-sively by Hal Mooney. Taken together, they give the set a thoughtful, amusing, and slightly sophisticated tone. But then we come to six very ordinary songs by one team of writers, Benjamin and Marcus, all arranged in teen-age beat style by Horace Ott. This is pure monotony. JOHN S. WILSON



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"Beethoven/Tchaikovsky Program." Beethoven's Wellington's Victory and Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture. London Symphony and Minneapolis Symphony Orchestras respectively, Antal Dorati, cond. Mercury SRD 19, \$2.98 (SD). Où sont les neiges-et les sons-d'antan? These once sensationally successful stereo spectaculars, with real cannon, muskets, and chimes, first appeared in late 1958 in the case of the 1812 (then coupled with *Capriccio italien*) and early 1961 in the case of the *Battle* Symphony (then coupled with the Prometheus and Third Leonore Overtures). Time has taken its toll: today's generation of perhaps more sophisticated audiophiles will, sad to say, find the Tchaikovsky warhorse sounding definitely aged and the Beethoven (though its sonics stand up considerably better) lacking in sustained musical interest. There also is a mono edition (MGD 19, \$1.98) of this reissue, but that is of course quite pointless for stereo display works like these. A 4-track tape edition (STE 19, \$4.95) is well processed but at a considerably lower level than the disc; it also lacks some of the latter's high-end brilliance, a weakness scarcely compensated by somewhat warmer mid- and low-frequency qualities.

- "Battle Stereo: The Sounds of War." Band, chorus; sound effects; Bob Sharples, dir. London SP 44037, \$5.98 (SD).
- "Capriccio!" (Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio espagnol. Tchaikovsky: Capriccio italien). London Festival Orchestra, Stanley Black, cond. London SPC 21004, \$5.98 (SD).

Following his famous, or at least notorious, "Pass in Review" and "Victory in Review" Phase-4 spectaculars, Bob Sharples now reaches what must be the ultimate dead-end of two-channel sensationalism in a whole program of his-torical adaptations of the Beethoven/ Maelzel Battle Symphony formula. This basic scheme is simple enough: the channel opposition of antiphonal snare drums, gunfire, and characteristic pieces of music-Yankee Doodle vs. The British Grenadiers for the American Revolutionary War, Dixie vs. the Battle Hymn of the Republic (American Civil War), Land of Hope and Glory vs. the Horst Wessel song (Battle of Britain), etc., through the Napoleonic/Russian War of 1812 and the Crimean War. There's also a shift in pattern to include a medley of various national songs for World War I. But the execution, involving some 225 band musicians and choral singers, to say nothing of galloping and gunfiring servicemen and engineers galore, is fabulously elaborate. The over-all effect is at once colossal—and rather absurd in its ultraserious insistence on leaving absolutely nothing to the imagination.

Undue seriousness, this time on the part of the conductor, is a handicap in the "Capriccio!" program too, though here it's a slight one. In all other respects, this is by far the best release to date in the Phase-4 "Pop Concert" series. Despite Stanley Black's lingering self-consciousness (and tendency still to lean too heavily on accents-dare I say that he is prone to fall down on his arsis?), he shows up to better advantage here than he ever has before. Furthermore, either he has enrolled new and far superior players in his London Festival Orchestra or the old ones have improved miraculously. Most impressive of all, however, is the refined and enriched Phase-4 sound itself-still not wholly "natural," but no longer gimmicky, and at its frequent best magnificently solid in tonal weight and impact.

- "Kick Off, U.S.A." University of Michigan Band, William D. Revelli, cond. Vanguard VSD 79155, \$5.95 (SD)— For a review of this recording, see "The Tape Deck," page 117.
- "More Jungle Drums." Morton Gould and His Orchestra. RCA Victor LPM 2768, \$4.98 (LP): LSC 2768, \$5.98 (SD).

The combination of Gould and Lecuona, so successful in a "Jungle Drums' program (LM/LSC 1994) of 1960, is featured again in the second side of this new disc. In the present sequel we are given colorfully evocative performances of Guadalquivir and Siboney, an oddly piquant In 3/4 Time, andmost fascinating of all-four more pieces from the highly distinctive Danzas Afro-Cubanas, two of which were included in Vol. 1. The other side of the record offers some good, if musical-ly less outstanding Spanish and Latin-American pieces (despite the implications of the album title, there is no "jungly" exoticism at all), topped by an atmospheric arrangement of The Peanut Vendor and the conductor-composer's own graceful Calypso Souvenir. The remarkably vivid and lucid (yet not excessively "Dynagrooved") recording is

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both a delight to one's ears and a wellnigh ideal medium for the reproduction of Gould's scoring felicities—perhaps especially the delicacy of his exploitation of varied percussive timbres.

- "Pomp and Ceremony." Bands, Drums, and Pipes of the Royal Inniskilling Fusileers, Royal Ulster Rifles, Royal Irish Fusileers; various conds. London International SW 99352, \$4.98 (SD).
- "The Black Watch (RHR) of Canada." Regimental Band, Lt. H. C. Eagles, cond., with Pipes and Drums of the Regiment's 2nd Battalion. London International SW 99353, \$4.98 (SD).

The North Ireland brigade forces' release well may be a welcome souvenir for anyone who saw them on militarytattoo display in their recent American tour. But for me the eager anticipation aroused by the reports of their success in New York's Madison Square Garden was rudely shattered by the present only too candid recording. Even technically it is unkind to one's ears: the highs are extremely "cutting," and the strident passages for bagpipes or fanfaring trumpets are almost more than human tympana can stand. But the biggest disappointment is in the performances' lack of both precision and refinement, to say nothing of the schmaltziness of some of the interpretations of familiar Irish tunes. Visually, these musicians, aided by a sextet of girl dancers, apparently put on a great show; aurally, they just aren't out of the top drawer.

Happily, the recording of the Canadian Black Watch regimental band and second battalion pipes-and-drums is a thoroughly pleasant surprise. Here the technology is just as scintillant, while far better balanced and much less strident than in the "Pomp and Ceremony" offering; the tonal qualities are an aural delight; and the performances throughout are both rousingly spirited and admirably controlled. The only drawback is that there are rather more piping-and-drumming selections than most (non-Scottish, at least) listeners are likely to tolerate willingly. These are first-rate of their kind, but others beside myself will yearn for more straight-band performances like the present Canada on the March, Rhoads's Scottish Rhapsody, the Blue Bells of Scotland, and Lataan's Frei Weg. The justification for including this otherwise incongruous last-named work is that the whole program was recorded in Germany while the regiment was on a tour of NATO duty. R. D. DARRELL I want to stop throwing money away. Send me all the literature on McIntosh products.

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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



Louis Armstrong: "In the '30s. In the '40s." RCA Victor LPM 2971, \$3.98 (LP); LSP 2971 (e), \$4.98 (SD).

The success of Armstrong's Hello, Dolly! has prompted RCA Victor to dig out some Armstrong recordings from the Thirties and Forties. The first side of the disc focuses on the rough, sloppy, and occasionally lusty band that Armstrong fronted in 1933, a band which included Teddy Wilson on piano and Budd Johnson on saxophone. Armstrong is practically the whole show as he effervescently introduces selections, sings, and plays Sweet Sue, St. Louis Blues, I've Got the World on a String, Honey Do!, Swing You Cats, and Mighty River. The 1940 decade presentation on Side 2 is more varied. Jack-Armstrong Blues and Before Long are two memorable 1947 smallgroup performances with Jack Teagarden, and a different small group from 1946 plays the hauntingly lovely Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans? From Armstrong's big band there are two items taken from its last efforts, neither of which is apt to make one regret the band's demise. Although not classic Armstrong, this record is worthwhile for the glimpse it gives us of him during the years before the ennui and repetitiousness of his performances in the 1950s began to wear him down. The periods represented by this disc show him to be full of vitality and élan. He could carry a mediocre group singlehandedly and lift good colleagues to special heights.

# "Era of the Swing Trumpet." Mainstream

56017, \$4.98 (LP); S 6017, \$5.98 (SD). The trumpeters involved in these recordings from the Commodore catalogue are Roy Eldridge, Jonah Jones, Cootie Williams, Bobby Hackett, and Sidney de Paris. These excellent musicians are, however, constantly challenged and not infrequently topped by the saxophonists who play with them. Eldridge is in his most pungent form with a mute on I Can't Believe That You're in Love with Me and 46 West 52nd Street, but saxophonist Coleman Hawkins all but outdoes him on the first while Chu Berry drives him equally hard on the second. Bud Freeman challenges Hackett's lyricism on Embraceable You, and Ike Quebec takes the play away from Jonah Jones on two selections. Ed Hall's clarinet is vividly present, both with the De Paris brothers and in an Ellington-influenced group led by Cootie Williams. All of this is, of course, to the good, for these trumpeters are no slouches and the performances are, in most cases. bristling examples of first-class smallgroup swing.

#### Stan Getz Quartet: "Getz Au Go Go." Verve 8600, \$4.98 (LP); 6-8600, \$5.98 (SD).

Getz, who was once a prime exponent of the light-toned, translucent style of tenor saxophone, has been steadily acquiring a firmer form of address. Within the past two years, he has developed an attack that can erupt with a commanding authority that relatively few jazz musicians have ever cultivated. He is in fine fettle on this disc, at the very peak (to date) of his newly acquired maturity as a performer. However, this disc is not quite as engrossing as it might have been because Getz is mining a streak of popular acceptance through his performances with Astrud Gilberto of The Girl from Ipanema. One can enjoy the effect Mrs. Gilberto achieves with her blank, monotoned manner of singing for possibly one selection, especially one that has the haunting effect of Ipanema, but six -which is what she does on this disc-are definitely too much. Fortunately, Getz is on hand to leap into the vacuums that she creates.

#### Friedrich Gulda: "From Vienna with Jazz!" Columbia CL 2251, \$3.98 (LP); CS 9051, \$4.98 (SD).

Gulda became a jazz celebrity for a brief period nine years ago when, after having established himself as a concert artist, he came to the United States as a jazz pianist at Birdland and at the Newport Jazz Festival. Although he was generally deemed to be a vast improvement over the usual classical musician who decides to dabble in jazz, he has not been heard in America as a jazz musician since that time. During the ensuing years, reports crossed the ocean that he was still playing jazz occasionally in Europe and that he had taken up the baritone saxophone. Two or three years ago he turned up at a jazz festival in Germany as pianist and composer. But for Americans, this disc represents the first word from the jazz side of Gulda since his visit in 1956. And the word is good.

He appears as pianist, composer, and arranger-conductor of a fourteen-piece orchestra of internationally known European and American jazzmen playing a thirty-minute piano concerto which Gulda calls Music for Piano and Band because "the word 'concerto' has taken on . . a certain pretentiousness that I wanted to avoid." There is also a shorter selec-There is also a shorter selection featuring flute, clarinet, trumpet, and tenor saxophone, The Veiled Old Land. The longer piece uses, without a trace of self-consciousness, the concerto form to create music with a definite jazz flavor. There are spots, however, particularly in Gulda's slow unaccompanied solo in the second movement, which are in a nonjazz vein. During the course of the work's three movements, the band performs like a jazz group and Gulda's piano is either completely in the jazz idiom (on the walloping third movement he sounds like something out of the halcyon days of Chicago jazz) or at least colored by it. He has become sufficiently immersed in jazz so that, with his earlier classical training, he can move readily between both without finding it necessary to prove himself in either field. As a result, the concerto avoids the strained classicisms of the majority of such hybrid works, while Gulda brings to his piano playing the touch and temperament of a true virtuoso. If there must be crossbreeding between classical music and jazz, this is certainly the way to do it. The Veiled Old Land is less interesting. although it offers distinctive solos by Tubby Hayes on tenor saxophone and Idrees Sulieman on trumpet.

#### Woody Herman: "The Swinging Herman Herd Recorded Live." Philips 200-131, \$3.98 (LP); 600-131, \$4.98 (SD).

131, \$3.98 (LP); 600-131, \$4.98 (SD). Release by release, Woody Herman's hot new Herd is simmering down. Not that it is deteriorating. But the emphasis on overpowering attack, a dominating factor of the first disc, has gradually been reduced until it is scarcely present at all on this, their fourth release. The band shows here that it can be equally interesting in a consistently moderate mood. The rich voicings remain and the quality of the soloists is still excellent: Phil

Wilson, who has created some dazzling trombone entrances in the past, outdoes himself with a swooping, sailing arrival in Just Squeeze Me; trumpeter Billy Hunt gives interesting evidence that the delightful Clark Terry is having a beneficial influence on him; and in Andy McGhee a strong new tenor saxophone voice has arrived from Lionel Hampton's band, The inventiveness of Herman's arrangements, exemplified by his recent Alter You've Gone, is continued in Bob Hammer's treatment of a Beatles' tune, The Things We Said Today. This selection employs a brilliantly imposing background of moaning trombones as a setting for Herman's alto saxophone, an effect straight out of early Ellington. Vocalist Joe Carroll, now a regular part

of the Herman entourage, appears on two selections but to practically no purpose.

Ahmad Jamal: "Naked City Theme." Argo 733, \$4.98 (LP).

Ahmad Jamal rose to celebrity status on the wings of a trio in which some of his most effective pianistic moments were achieved by executing (or not playing) dramatic silences, and by throwing in little twinkles of frosting on the sturdy foundation provided by his bassist, Israel Crosby, and his drummer, Vernell Fournier. The core of this trio was Crosby (who has since died), frequently cast in the unlikely role, for a bassist, of playing the lead. Because of this, it was an unusual trio. It was also a very polished trio and, after a while, a slick trio and,



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eventually, a rather dull trio. It broke up several years ago, and since then Jamal's fortunes have plummeted.

Now they are apparently on the rise once more, for this, his first recording in two years, is played with a new trio (Jamil Sulieman, bass and Chuck Lampkin, drums) following more orthodox principles than the earlier one. True, Sulieman occasionally pushes forward to undertake some of the chores that once were handled by Crosby, and Jamal's old romanticism is still present. But Jamal himself is now the moving force of the group. He is the one who gives it body and strength and, in the process, he reveals facets of piano playing that are rarely hinted at in his earlier work. The six tunes include three pops, one original by Richard Evans, and two by Jamal (of which One for Miles is a striking showcase for his new style).

#### Charles Lloyd Quartet: "Discovery!" Columbia CL 2267, \$3.98 (LP); CS 9067, \$4.98 (SD).

Lloyd is a tenor saxophonist and flutist who was the mainstay of Chico Hamilton's group for several years and is currently with Cannonball Adderley. He is opening wedges. The quartet he plays being groomed as a leader in his own right, and this disc serves as one of the with here is made up of Don Friedman, piano; Eddie Khan or Richard Davis, bass: and Roy Haynes or J. C. Mosses, drums. There is a good deal of similarity between Lloyd and the late Eric Dolphy. Like Dolphy, Lloyd is a well-disciplined saxophonist and flutist who possesses a warm, clean, full-bodied tone, although he often chooses to do a good deal of his work in terms of raucous squawks, agonized wails, and bagpipe drones. At times he appears to be a close follower of Sonny Rollins, producing a hollow sound and throwing out cascades of jagged phrases. To an ear that has found Dolphy's noises irritating and Rollins' tiresome, Lloyd's ventures in these directions are not at all attractive. His other style, represented by four of the eight selections, is tender yet assertive, al-though he tends to lose his rhythmic impulse at slow tempos. Friedman contributes several piano solos that have a watery, anonymous quality.

# Joe Pass: "For Django." Pacific Jazz 85, \$4.98 (LP); \$ 85, \$5.98 (SD).

The most surprising thing about this disc is that no jazz guitarist, to my knowledge, has previously done an album based on Diango Reinhardt's repertory. The great gypsy guitarist wrote many tunes that are ideal for guitar settings, and he set his stamp on an even greater number of standard tunes. Joe Pass has drawn from both bags for this collection, including such Reinhardt compositions as Manoir de mes rêves, Fleur d' ennui, and Cavalerie, and other Reinhardt vehicles, as Night and Day. Limehouse Blues, and Nuages. He has also chosen John Lewis' now familiar tribute, Django, and has written another of his own, For Django. Pass comes from a period when Charlie Christian was the dominant guitar influence and his style has grown from Christian rather than

Reinhardt. He has wisely chosen to be himself in these performances, and rather than emulating Reinhardt he tries to evoke some of the feeling that Reinhardt produced. With John Pisano playing rhythm guitar and backed by unobtrusive but helpful bass and drums, he has caught this atmosphere quite successfully. Pass works most of the time in singlenote lines rather than the mixture of single notes and chords that gave Reinhardt's playing so much of its dramatic impact. This is delightfully relaxed yet rhythmic guitar playing, and, although in a quite different style, it has much the same appeal as some of the recent bossa nova guitar pieces.

Pee Wee Russell: "A Legend." Mainstream 56026, \$4.98 (LP); S 6026, \$5.98 (SD).

Clarinetist Pee Wee Russell recorded for Commodore Records with a variety of groups, many of which are represented in this collection-two bands led by Muggsy Spanier; one by Max Kaminsky; a quartet with Jess Stacy, Sid Weiss, and George Wettling; and a trio with Joe Sullivan and Zutty Singleton. Russell is his customary wry and whimsical self (the similarity between his off-balance approach to a pop tune and that of Thelonious Monk is made very apparent on Keepin' Out of Mischief Now). But the man who dominates the entire disc is Stacy. He plays superb piano solos on the four quartet selections and opens one Spanier entry, A Good Man Is Hard To Find, in a delightfully slinky fashion. There is more good piano from Sullivan on the two trio selections, as well as a strong chorus from trombonist Miff Mole on Spanier's Snag It. The quartet and trio pieces give Russell more leeway than the larger groups (which suffer from tubby recording), and he responds with some particularly inventive performances.

Lalo Schifrin: "New Fantasy." Verve 8601, \$4.98 (LP); 6-8601, \$5.98 (SD). New Fantasy suggests that Lalo Schifrin is at a crossroads in his career. The pianist and arranger who made such a strong impression as a member of Dizzy Gillespie's quintet is now out on his own, and is heard on this disc as conductor as well as arranger and pianist. As an ar ranger, Schifrin leans towards a big, bursting ensemble style played over a strong rhythmic bass through which his piano passages, often expressed in single notes, trickle as light and contrast. His program has been chosen with an eve for colorful possibilities involving an unusually strong set of names for a jazz album-Gershwin (Prelude No. 2), Villa Lobos (Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5), Rodgers (Slaughter on Tenth Avenue), Ellington (The Blues), Khachaturian (Sabre Dance), Copland (El Salón México), plus The Peanut Vendor and Schifrin's own New Fantasy (based on radio station WNEW's musical signature). Out of all this, and with a brass-heavy band that glistens with highly reputable musicians, Schifrin has made remarkably little. At its best, his writing is much like Gil Evans', but he is more apt to settle for loud emptiness in the manner of Stan Kenton in the Fifties. There are effective moments all through the set, but Schifrin seems unable to sustain a good idea or to avoid banality. It is all very glossy, however, and because of this the disc may reach a wide audience.

#### "Tenor Hierarchy." Mainstream 56019, \$4.98 (LP); \$ 6019, \$5.98 (SD).

There are at least two masterpieces in this collection of performances made for Commodore Records in the 1940s. And there are a couple more that would be standouts in any normal set of jazz recordings. One of the gems is Chu Berry's masterful treatment of On the Sunny Side of the Street. Taking it at a moderate tempo, Berry plays with tremendous authority and a rich, glowing timbre that borders on stateliness without stumbling into pretentiousness. The other is I Surrender. Dear. The tone of this selection is set by Coleman Hawkins' smooth and easy opening statement, followed by Roy Eldridge's equally easy but typically biting trumpet solo, and the suave elegance of Benny Carter's alto saxophone. This Hawkins-dominated treatment is followed by Body and Soul, the old Hawkins trademark, played here by Berry in a smooth and singing manner quite different from the dark mulling of Hawkins' development of the tune. Ben Webster romps through Sleep, supported by superb drumming from Sid Catlett, and Don Byas is represented by a soft and furry treatment of Candy. Flip Phillips and Frank Wess are also among the featured saxo-JOHN S. WILSON phonists.



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BARTOK: The Miraculous Mandarin: Suite, Op. 19: Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta

London Symphony Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond.

• • LONDON LCL 80149. 46 min. \$7.95.

Among the avant-garde shockers of the World War I era. The Miraculous Mandarin ballet music has never impressed me as sharing the viability of Stravinsky's Sacre or even that of Prokofiev's Scythian Suite. But in the present insistently persuasive performance by Solti, I find myself for the first time more fascinated than repelled by the work. Solti conducts the far more engaging Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta just as passionately and incisively; and in both works the recording is exceptionally luminous-highly satisfying in every respect save possibly that of somewhat exaggerated channel separation in the inherently stereogenic Music for Strings. The latter work is available on tape in a more dramatic reading by Reiner for RCA Victor (my own first choice) and a more poetic one by Ansermet for London, but the present Miraculous Mandarin Suite is a tape "first" and essential to every Bartókian collection.

#### BEETHOVEN: Sonatas for Violin and Piano

No. 1, in D, Op. 12, No. 1; No. 3, in E flat. Op. 12, No. 3; No. 6, in A, Op. 30, No. 1,

David Oistrakh, violin; Lev Oborin, piano.

• • PHILIPS PTC 900032. 58 min. \$7.95.

Preceded just a year ago by a coupling of Nos. 9 (*Kreutzer*) and 10, this second recl in a French prize-winning series of the Beethoven violin sonatas presents three more first tape editions, in recorded performances that again are more likely to impress admirers of skillful fiddling than to please devout Beethovenians. Neither Oistrakh nor Oborin, for all the assured competence each shows in reproducing the letter of the scores, seems particularly concerned with reading anything between the lines. Their interpretative superficiality is most marked in the first two movements of Op. 30, No. 1; elsewhere, and particularly in the Andante con moto and Rondo finale of Op. 12, No. I, they demonstrate some expressiveness and verve.

The recording itself is admirably clean. natural. and well balanced, with the violin seeming only slightly left of the definitely centered piano. It would appear, then, that inferior disc processing was responsible for the exaggerated channel separation of which Harris Goldsmith complained in his disc review. The taping is less admirable, however, in a program sequence (Sonatas Nos. 6, 1, 3) that roughly equalizes the reel-side lengths at the cost of a break between the first and second movements of No. 1.

#### BERG: Wozzeck (excerpts); Lulu: Suite

Helga Pilarczyk, soprano: London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond.
MERCURY STC 90278, 56 min, \$7.95.

It's too bad that the first taped Berg couldn't have been the moving Violin Concerto or the *Lyric* Suite. But perhaps the present five-movement *Lulu* Suite is the next most persuasive introduction both to the composer's singular power of emotional spell-binding and to his employment of twelve-tone technique. Dorati plays the music magnificently, with special honors going to an unidentified saxophonist as well as to Helga Pilarczyk (heard in "Lolu's Song" and the final Adagio): and the 1962 recording, stemming from a 35-mm nugnetic film master, remains a model of sonic lucidity and authenticity. The more familiar *Wozzeck* fragments are just as well performed and recorded (so well, indeed, that they defy the more recently recorded competition by Erich Leinsdorf and Phyllis Curtin for RCA Victor), but concert excerpts fail to do justice to the work from which they are drawn.

## BRITTEN: Serenade for Tenor, Horn. and Strings. Op. 31: Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34

Peter Pears, tenor (in the Serenade); Barry Tuckwell, French horn (in the Serenade): London Symphony Orchestra, Benjamin Britten, cond.

• • LONDON LCL 80148, 41 min. \$7.95.

It's good to get a taping of the latest Pears/Britten version of the evocative Serenade. There once was a two-track version by Lloyd and Burgin under the Boston label, but it didn't approach this one, which is in some ways (in my opinion not excluding Tuckwell's playing of the French horn part made famous by Dennis Brain) even better than the legendary original performance of pre-LP days--quite apart from the atmospheric enhancements of stereo. The popular Young Person's Guide is also welcome despite the fact that we already have two generally superior tapings (by Bernstein for Columbia and Fiedler for RCA Victor). The special advantages here are the omission of narration and the individual touches of a composer's reading-one surprisingly idiosyncratic, with more marked tempo contrasts than one hears normally. The beautifully transparent, warm, and floating stereo recording is matched by flawless tape processing, but the failure to provide

Continued on next page





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#### THE TAPE DECK

#### Continued from preceding page

the texts of the six Serenade poems (by Blake, Ben Jonson, Keats, et al.) is inexcusable.

# DONIZETTI: L'Elisir d'amore

Hilde Gueden (s), Adina; Giuseppe di Stefano (t), Nemorino; Fernando Corena (bs), Doctor Dulcamara; et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Francesco Molinari-Pradelli, cond.

• LONDON LOG 90082. Two reels: approx. 64 and 46 min. \$19.95.

This reminder that Lucia di Lammermoor is by no means Donizetti's only opera is mighty slow in reaching the tape repertory (it appeared on stereo discs in 1960, and was originally recorded in 1956), but its age doesn't indicate any technical senility. Although the stereoism is scarcely notable for marked channel differentiations, it is genuinely expansive; and while the recording is obviously not of the latest vintage, it is thoroughly satisfactory. The performance, if not a particularly refined one, is genially engaging, and the music itself has far more vivacity and charm than those unfamiliar with it might expect. Although primarily a work for coloratura specialists, L'Elisir d'amore well may prove a delightful discovery for many other listeners.

HOLST: Suites for Band: No. 1, in E flat; No. 2, in F

†Vaughan Williams: Folksong Suite; Toccata marziale

+Grainger: Hill-Song No. 2

Eastman Wind Ensemble, Frederick Fennell, cond.

• • MERCURY STC 90388. 40 min. \$7.95.

Although this is an example of "processed stereo" (except in the case of the Grainger piece), with only fair spread and minimal channel differentiation, it still ranks as one of the great band recordings of all time as well as one outstanding for its musical contents and performances. Even the familiar Vaughan Williams Folksong Suite (hitherto available on tape in orchestral versions by Boult for Westminster and more recently by Gould for RCA Victor) is a first tape edition in its original scoring for wind band, to which the music lends itself far more rewardingly. Yet delightful as this Vaughan Williams work is, the liveliest satisfactions here are derived from the far too little-known Suites by Holst: delectable examples of folk song inspiration and of imaginative band scorings. Listeners familiar with Holst's St. Paul's Suite (unfortunately not yet available on tape) will find it particularly fascinating to compare its all-strings setting of the Dargason and interwoven

Greensleeves with that for winds-only in the present Suite No. 2.

# MAHLER: Symphony No. 2, in C minor ("Resurrection")

Lee Venora, soprano; Jennie Tourel, mezzo; Collegiate Chorale; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. • • COLUMBIA M2Q 604 (double-play). 85 min. \$11.95.

Granting the justness of disc reviewer Robert C. Marsh's praise of the sonics here ("slightly artificial, to be sure, but this is the closest we have yet come to the [presently unrecordable] effect of the work in concert") and accepting too his criticism of the overly remote microphone placement in the earlier Klemperer set (for Angel), I still must find the latter version more magically evocative over-all. In the louder, most dramatic passages, Columbia's stereoism certainly makes the more vivid impact; but elsewhere, and particularly in the superbly atmospheric quiet moments, there is a sorcery in the Angel sound that is never suggested in Columbia's.

In any case, though, quibbling over comparative technical merits is beside the real point-which is that the constrained Bernstein performance, for all its earnestness, just cannot compare in either authority or eloquence with Klemperer's. The present soloists are no match for Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Hilde Rössl-Majdan, nor is the apparently none too large Collegiate Chorale for the truly magnificent Philharmonia Chorus. But while my preference is all for the Klemperer/Angel reel, I must in all fairness note that-although it runs only some five minutes longer-it costs \$4.00 more than the Bernstein/Columbia.

# PURCELL: Dido and Aeneas

Mary Thomas (s), Dido; Honor Sheppard (s), Belinda; Helen Watts (c), Sorceress; Maurice Bevan (b), Aeneas; et al.; Oriana Concert Choir and Orchestra, Alfred Deller, cond.

• • VANGUARD VTC 1692. 55 min. \$7.95.

There is nothing serious to fault herein fact this is an immaculately processed taping of a highly admirable performance -but it must face the competition of the Anthony Lewis version of Purcell's little masterpiece taped just a year ago for London/Oiseau-Lyre. The latter is no less sonically radiant than the Vanguard tape, and it boasts even more magnetic performances, especially by that para-gon of all Didos, Janet Baker, and by Thurston Dart in the realization of the harpsichord continuo part. I find too that Lewis' reading is slightly superior in dramatic integration to Deller's. Indeed only in Helen Watts's nonmelodramatic singing of the Sorceress' role, done in much more mannered fashion by Monica Sinclair in the Lewis set, does the present taping have the advantage.

Continued on page 116

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# THE TAPE DECK

Continued from page 114

STRAUSS, JOHANN II: Die Fledermatus

Anneliese Rothenberger (s). Adele; Risë Stevens (ms), Orlofsky; Sándor Kónya (t), Alfred; George London (b), Dr. Falke; et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera, Oscar Danon, cond.

• • RCA VICTOR FTC 7004 (doubleplay). 96 min. \$14.95.

If only everything had gone as well here as the work of Anneliese Rothenberger as Adele and of conductor Oscar Danon. the present more-operetta-than-opera treatment of Strauss's masterpiece might have triumphed over such self-imposed handicaps as the elimination of a large part of the dialogue and of the nonsinging part of Frosch, to say nothing of the extensive aria-transpositions noted by Conrad L. Osborne in his December review of the disc edition. As things are, however, Adele Leigh's Rosalinda is only pleasantly adequate, and not even that much can be said for Kónya's Alfred, Stevens' Orlofsky, London's Dr. Falke, and Wächter's Eisenstein. In other respects, and for some compensation, the recording is attractively clean if never outstandingly dramatic; the tape processing is excellent; and the handsome booklet containing notes and libretto (available to tape purchasers on request) also includes the finest picture 1 have ever seen of Johann Strauss 11. And largely because there are briefer interpolations in the ballroom scene than in the London "Gala-Performance" Fledermaus with its "guest" performances, the present taping runs some fifty minutes shorter and costs \$7.00 less.

I MUSICI: "A Decade of Eloquence"

• • PHILIPS PTC 900052. 54 min. \$7.95.

It may be a kind of musical lèse-majesté to question the merits of a program by so talented an ensemble as this dozen of young Italian musicians, but here, at least, the performances strike me as much more admirable for their sensuously beautiful tonal qualities than for their illuminations of baroque music making. The minimally stereoistic re-cordings are unevenly varied and in some cases a bit tubby and muffled. Yet such technical weakness is perhaps less objectionable in itself than in its lack of a proper explanation: while the present program first appeared as a whole on European discs in 1962 (ten years after the public debut of I Musici), it consisted even then entirely of reissues, dating back to 1958-60. Perhaps other baroque connoisseurs will be less annoyed by all this than I am-and be more grateful for what seem to be the first tape editions of the Vivaldi Violin Concerto II Favorito (the same composer's II Gardellino Flute Concerto has been taped before by the Virtuosi di Roma for Angel); Albinoni's D minor Oboe Concerto, Op. 9, No. 2; Manfredini's Concerto in A minor, Op. 3, No. 2; and Corelli's Concerto grosso in D, Op. 6, No. 4.

"Hello, Benny!" Benny Goodman and His Orchestra. Capitol ZT 2157, 31 min., \$7.98.

Neither the current Goodman 14-man band nor Benny's own clarinet playing is all it once was, but the routine moments here are more than redeemed by some old and some new attractions. The former are three highly characteristic Fletcher Henderson arrangements heretofore unrecorded (Great Day, The Lamp Is Low, Them There Eyes). The latter are several highly imaginative present-day scorings (especially La Boehm and People) which mark Tommy Newsome's graduation into the ranks of outstanding arrangers. The stereo recording throughout is a model of tonal transparency and naturalness, but the tape processing hasn't entirely eliminated all preëchoes.

- "Hello, Dolly!" Ella Fitzgerald; Orchestra, Frank de Vol, Johnnie Spence, conds. Verve VSTC 318, 39 min., \$7.95.
- "The Jerome Kern Songbook." Ella Fitzgerald: Orchestra, Nelson Riddle,

cond. Verve VSTC 316, 42 min., \$7.95. Both of the great Ella's latest releases are rather more uneven than one has come to expect from her: VSTC 318 is handicapped by the inclusion of some highly commercialized and rough British accompaniments and recordings of the title song, the Beatles' Can't Buy Me Love, and two others; "Songbook" is a rather pretentious title for a collection of no more than a dozen Kern favorites, for some of which the characteristic Fitzgerald style is not really suitable. But (and what a big but it is!), the former reel boasts two authentic masterpieces in the performances of How High the Moon and Lullaby of the Leaves, plus fine ones of Miss Otis Regrets. Memories of You, and Pete Kelly's Blues; the Kern reel brings us welcome revivals of Remind Me and Let's Begin as well as the uniquely Fitzgeraldian Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man and Why Was I Born?

"It's My Way." Buffy Sainte-Marie. Vanguard VTC 1690, 41 min., \$7.95. The heady excitements afforded by the disc debut of this highly unusual folk singer are just as potent in the tape edition. Since Miss Sainte-Marie's effect on the listener depends far less on sheerly aural charms (although she can claim those too when she sings softly) than on the magnetism of a fiercely intense emotionalism—all wrong for folk song authenticity by the old standards she is perhaps best described as a minstrel or *trouvère*, as my colleague O. B. Brunmell suggested. Indeed she is as much poet—dramatically pleading special

I Musici.

causes-as singer. At times she is extraordinarily moving; at others almost embarrassingly overwrought and mannered. Personally, I'd like to hear her far more often in the less tense, casually jaunty mood of the present Cripple Creek, but even at her most agitated extremes she provides unforgettably moving experiences.

"Kick Off, U.S.A.!" University of Michi-

gan Band, William D. Revelli, cond. Vanguard VTC 1691, 40 min., \$7.95. By far the finest scorings, performances, and recordings of college football songs I ever encountered were in the Vanguard "Touchdown, U.S.A." program of 1962. The present sequel (representing twentyone more team favorites plus an exceptionally rousing National Anthem) may lack the excitements of an entirely new and fresh discovery, but it too is outstanding for the effectiveness of the Bilik arrangements, the zestfulness as well as precision of the Revelli direction, and the astonishingly authoritative playing of the collegiate musicians. And this time it is the tape and not the stereo disc edition (VSD 79155) that enjoys the edge of superiority: there is now less disparity between the reel and disc modulation levels, and there is definitely fuller sonic body (and no less brilliant highs) in the immaculately processed taping.

- "The King and I." Barbara Cook, Theodore Bikel, et al.; Chorus and Orchestra, Lehman Engel, cond. Columbia OQ 655, 47 min., \$9.95. "My Fair Lady." Recording from the
- sound track of the film. André Previn, cond. Columbia OQ 664, 54 min., \$9.95.

While the stars of this King and I are not likely to please all tastes (although Miss Cook sings very competently indeed and the immensely versatile Mr. Bikel can survive even his present miscasting), every listener will surely relish Anita Darian's dramatically effective Something Wonderful, and most people will like the tasteful freshness of Philip J. Lang's refurbishings of the score. The recording is extremely vivid with the soloists quite far in front of Engel's big orchestra, and the sonics undoubtedly make those of Capitol's early stereo taping of the film sound track seem faded in comparison. But the present cast, with the exception of Miss Darian, certainly can't efface one's memories of the older one.

And where the Lerner-Loewe masterpiece is concerned, see the film by all means, but continue to hang on to the stereo reel by the London cast, andif you still have it-the LP of the original Broadway production. Inexplicably, the sound track tonal qualities are thin as well as too close-up-blame for which the engineers perhaps might be able to shove off onto Previn's overvehement conducting of an orchestra that sounds neither large nor competent enough for its task. Where the stars themselves are concerned, Rex Harrison is more virtuoso than ever, but now almost too intensely so; Stanley Holloway seems to have lost just a bit of his incomparable gusto; and Audrey Hepburn's Liza, even with Marni Nixon's vocal dubbings, is to the ear seldom more than mildly pleasant. The film itself is a sensational success, by all accounts, but the sound track alone does a good deal less than justice to the now immortal music.

# "'Pops' Goes the Trumpet." Al Hirt, trumpet; Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond. RCA Victor FTC 2171, 43 min., \$8.95.

Any lingering fears I might have had that I was too harsh on Mr. Hirt in my recent "Sonic Showcase" review of this program's disc edition were immediately banished by rehearing it on tape. Since the transfer boasts some sonic superiority, eliminating what may have been coarseness in the disc processing, the soloist's own coarse tonal qualities are revealed even more blatantly than before. The final romp on Java remains delightfully rowdy symphonic Dixieland, but the rest goes from bad enough (in the monstrously bathetic versions of Eili, Eili and The Lost Chord) to the unspeakably dreadful. And of the Haydn Trumpet Concerto starring so brashly insensitive a soloist, one can only paraphrase Dr. Johnson's response to the spectacle of a dog's walking on its hind legs-one is less amazed that it is done badly than by the fact that it should be done at all.

## "The Serendipity Singers." Philips PTC 600115, 32 min., \$7.95.

I hate to turn thumbs down on any group so charmingly named as this one, or which is obviously made up of such nice college kids as these two girls and seven boys. But, sad to say, their voices are not only commonplace individually but they never combine to achieve any genuine sonority. Worse still, the mostly dubiously folkish program materials are presented in the most vapid of commercial arrangements-with the possible exception of a quasi-Calypso treatment of Crooked Little Man Don't Let the Rain Come Down.

# "Sounds of the Great Bands in Latin." Glen Gray Casa Loma Orchestra. Capitol ZT 2131, 32 min., \$7.98.

Since the death of Glen Gray, his Casa Loma studio recording series of performances in the styles of various great bands is being carried on by others— in the present Vol. 9 for the most part by arranger-conductor Larry Wagner. Aided immeasurably by robustly vivid yet not too closely miked stereo recording and consistently fine solo and ensemble playing, this program ranks among the best in the series for its evocation of such memorable big-band hits as Gray's own Casa Loma Stomp, Harry James's The Mole, Benny Goodman's King Por-"*A*" ter Stomp, Ellington's Take the Train, and the Gray-styled Larry Wagner original No Name Jive. All these are done with unexaggerated yet highly piquant Latin-American rhythmic and coloristic enhancements; and if all this may seem only too square to Beatled youngsters, for many of us oldsters it is the heart-warming real swinging McCoy.

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# STEREO KITS

Continued from page 59

The gun's high heat is an advantage for heavy soldering, while the lower-powered pencil is less risky to components especially those mounted on a p.c. board—easily damaged by heat.

Soldering accessories merit consideration too. Small picks-of an alloy to which solder won't adhere-are handy for reaming larger holes in lugs, guiding, holding, and prying wires. Stainless wire brushes or special sponges keep your iron tip clean, while clip-on heat sinks protect transistors and other delicate components while you solder. Perhaps the prize accessory, though, is a ventilated holder for your pencil iron: its slotted wire guard protects both you and your workbench from damage, while allowing your iron to be kept hot and at the ready. Your instruction manual will usually indicate what other tools -pliers, strippers, screwdrivers, etc .are necessary. Make sure you have them all on hand before you start construction.

Two final tips from experienced builders: first, mount all components with their values showing: this makes troubleshooting—or checking in general—a good deal easier. Second, label all tube sockets, terminal strips, and the like with their code numbers, marking the chassis nearby; any soft lead pencil or marking crayon will suffice for this, and it will save you much consultation of the pictorial and many cries of "where is Socket V6?" as you wire.

When you finish your kit, the manual will instruct you to go back and recheck your connections. For your own sake, rest before you do so. Clearheaded rechecking-by someone else, if possiblewill usually turn up one or two minor errors (everybody's human) which can be quickly set to rights. If such errors were not discovered, they would probably degrade performance only slightly, but one ought to take all possible precautions to ensure against the consequences of a real howler: the telltale puff of smoke, or the swift and silent puddling of a melting transistor. The author-in building seven kits-has smelled smoke only once, and luckily burned out only one resistor. But doublechecking would have saved me that resistor-and more importantly, the feeling of abject despair as I reached to pull the plug.

Completed, checked, and corrected where necessary, kits are a great ego booster. And the soothing music of the tuner, amplifier, preamp, and speaker system that you've put together yourself will make mighty pleasant background music as you look for new kit worlds to conquer. Perhaps a color TV set next? A video recorder? A computer? . . .



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CIRCLE 57 ON READER-SERVICE CARD HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

# **MORE** and **BETTER**



CIRCLE 15 ON READER-SERVICE CARD FEBRUARY 1965

# DIE NILSSON AND LA NILSSON

Continued from page 51

I sometimes have, of being made to go on stage and sing a role I don't know. Carmen. I told the Intendant that I didn't know *Forza*. But the theatre was sold out—and they had raised the prices because of me. Finally, they announced I'd sing *Tosca* instead. 'Because of illness,' they put on the posters. But nobody was sick!"

Lady Macbeth remains a favorite role, thanks to the sentimental attachment to that first Stockholm success; but when the Metropolitan cast her in the part last season, she had completely forgotten it. ("I learn fast, but I forget much faster.") She restudied it completely. Then, independently of the Met revival, Decca/London decided to record the opera. She and Schippers-with whom she had never worked beforewere on the Metropolitan tour together last spring, both overworked and both a bit tired. But they spent an afternoon at the piano in an Atlanta hotel room, going over the opera; and in Rome every recording session was preceded by piano rehearsals. Nilsson's Italian also magically improved (the reading of the letter in Act I was recorded almost as many times as the D flat of the sleepwalking scene). Götterdämmerung is a longer and more taxing opera, but Nilsson worked a lot harder on Macbeth.

Finally, pizzas eaten, beer drunk, and a last *espresso* on the table, I asked Birgit Nilsson the question that had been on the tip of my tongue ever since I met her. Why? Why does the greatest Wagnerian soprano of our time insist on singing Italian opera?

"I've got a right to sing the blues!" she answered, with another hearty laugh. Then, serious again: "Italian opera is a change. It has different problems, you use a different voice, different acting. . .." And she modified her first joking words: "I know I'm more suited to Wagner, but I've got a right to sing Italian opera too." Having watched her give herself completely to Verdi through ten days of concentrated recording, working to assert that right, I, for one, could not deny that it was hers.





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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

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But a woofer properly designed for optimum bass performance cannot do justice to higher frequencies. In the E-V SIX there are three other component speakers — equally sophisticated — to handle the higher ranges.

Mid-bass frequencies from 250 to 800 cps are developed by a specially designed 8-inch speaker whose characteristics exactly complement the 18-inch woofer. From 800 to 3,500 cps a true compressionloaded driver with diffraction horn preserves the vital presence tones that add definition to both voice and music. The diffraction horn ensures uniform dispersion of sound throughout the listening area. The driver employs a "ring" diaphragm (lacking a central dome that is the frequent cause of distortion in this range.)

From 3,500 cps to beyond audibility (20,000 cps) a deluxe compression-loaded driver and diffraction horn completes the EV- SIX speaker complement. And all of these specialized audio instruments are combined and controlled by an electrical crossover network that utilizes the latest techniques in etched circuit board construction. A 5-position control is provided to discreetly balance the output of the E-V SIX to your listening room characteristics.

#### CIRCLE 32 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

And what about E-V SIX appearance? No photograph can do justice to its handrubbed walnut or mahogany finish, or to the elegance of its traditional styling. And the moderate E-V SIX dimensions allow great flexibility of placement. Height is but 30 inches, width is 32 inches and depth only  $17\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The price is equally moderate: just \$330.00 in either finish.

We believe the E-V SIX heralds a new era in speaker system design, based on greater emphasis on performance. The task of providing a distinct improvement in sound quality with but a modest increase in size has proved both stimulating and rewarding. We urge you to consider carefully the advantages of the E-V SIX for your high fidelity system. You can hear it now at your Electro-Voice showroom. Write today for free catalog and name of the E-V dealer nearest you.



E-V SIX components include : 18-inch acoustic suspension woofer 8-inch mid-bass speaker | Etched circuit crossover Ring-diaphragm mid-range driver Compression-loaded diffraction VHF driver

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F-V TWO



E-V FOUR

REGINA E-V SIX





Well, it should be... if only to show you how very lucky you'd be to own the Silicon transistorized circuitry of the S-9500. We wish you could *SEE* the difference which costs us  $50^{\circ}/_{\circ}$  more than the usual Germanium way of transistorizing your circuit; you will *HEAR* the difference. Furthermore, this 50-watt Sherwood integrated amplifier-preamplifier can be squeezed into the tightest custom installation, with no heat problems either. Perhaps, you are wondering if these transistors will really stand up. Just perfectly, because the new Sherwood all-Silicon circuitry virtually eliminates transistor failure caused by shorted speaker terminals or other improper operation. And all this for only \$179.50.

Write now for our latest catalog detailing this remarkable amplifier as well as Sherwood's world-famous FM tuners and speaker systems. Dept. 2H.

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