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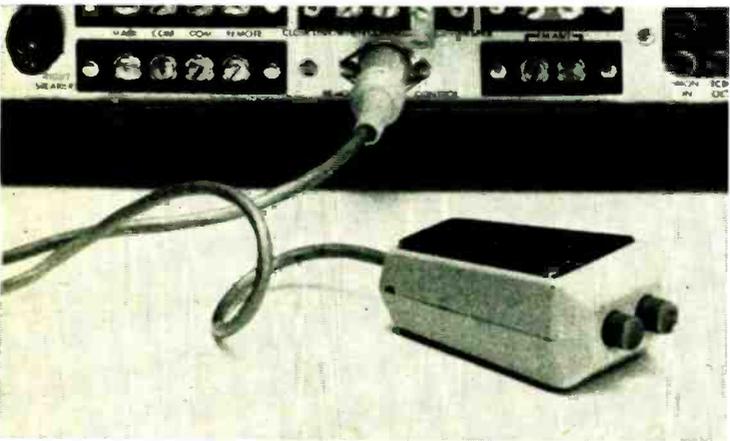
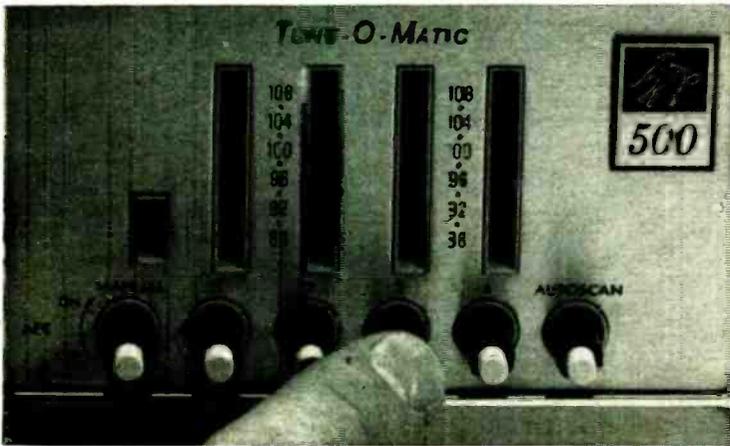
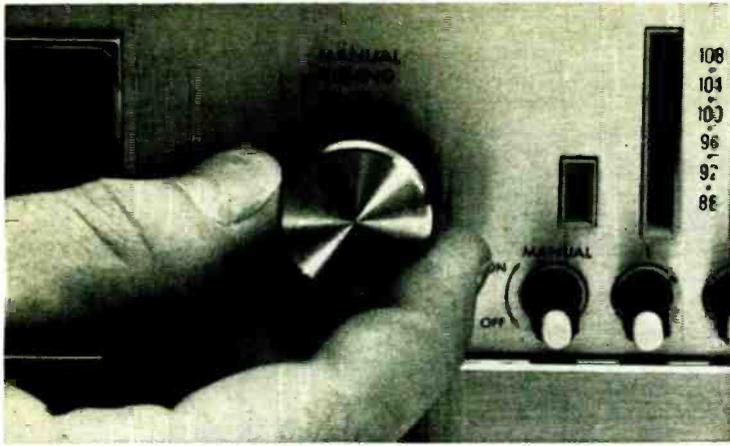
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CIRCLE 52 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

# HIGH FIDELITY

VOL. 19 NO. 11 NOVEMBER 1969

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- John Culshaw WHERE DO WE GO FROM HEAR?
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# FM, SCA, and "Switched-on Bach"

DEAR READER:

I have just heard a quadriphonic version of "Switched-on Bach"—input: four discrete channels of tape; output: four speakers, two in front, two in back. The experience convinces me that if SCA becomes the medium for broadcasting four-channel FM [see "What Future for SCA?," page 46], it will be an aesthetic booby-trap.

Although many reviewers have disparaged "Switched-on Bach," I agree with Glenn Gould that it is the record of the decade: not since the Solti *Rheingold* have I been so struck by the new methods through which stereo can enhance the perception of music. Contrapuntal lines are more lucid than they generally would be in a concert hall; also, through the brilliant use of directionality via stereo, Bach's architecture becomes clearer than it ever could be in a conventional concert. In, say, the Third *Brandenburg* finale, sequences and imitation (fundamentally the same) are differentiated by their stereo patterns; similar phrases and passages are both unified and varied by the directions from which they come at you: entire sections are handled specifically to expose the movement's basic three-part structure. Whatever you may think of "Switched-on Bach," it is certainly the most *analytical* rendition of the master's music any of us have ever heard. Heretofore, the analysis was most dramatically clear when heard through headphones. Through quadriphony, with the phrases bouncing among the four sound points, it becomes even clearer.

Other music cries out for four sources of sound. The Berlioz Requiem and Mozart's *Notturmo* for four orchestras come immediately to mind. And now that composers are being commercially encouraged to write quadriphonically [see "AR and the Now Composers," page 46] there will undoubtedly be greater use of the "surround" medium. As for pops. . . .

Consider, also, that just as the two speakers of a stereo setup can form sound images anywhere in between, four speakers (and channels) can present images at an infinite number of points around you. The final step, I suppose, will be six channels, adding one above and one below. (Perhaps we may one day be able to experience in our homes Varèse's *Poème électronique*, originally written for some 400 loudspeakers.) Or perhaps we will have to grow more ears.

As for SCA, if it becomes FM's means for providing four channels of sound, two of the channels will either lack separation or will cut off at 8,000 hertz. If those two channels are simply adding ambience—and this is the main thrust of the new medium's initial promotion—the loss in either event should hardly be noticeable. Only if you A/B the various speakers, (or, in this case, A/B/C/D them) should you hear the discrepancy. But that's just the point: directional music will inherently A/B the various speakers and if there is a loss in quality in half of them, musical presentation will suffer. If, on the other hand, they are combined into a mono signal, a good part of the multidirectional music technique will be lost. Boston's solution—two independent stereo FM stations—still seems best.

Let's leave SCA at the A & P.

I write this just before I am to leave for Montreux, Switzerland where I will preside over a meeting of some of the world's most distinguished record critics. The purpose of this conclave: to select **THE BEST RECORDS OF THE YEAR**. I will report the results next month. The December issue will also present **PROFESSIONAL HINTS FOR AMATEUR TAPE RECORDISTS**; both actual and potential do-it-yourselfers should learn something pertinent from **WHAT'S NEW IN STEREO KITS?**

*Leonard Marcus*

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**New York:** 165 W. 46th St., New York, N. Y. 10036. Telephone: 212-757-2800. Seymour Resnick, Eastern Adv. Mgr.; Charlotte Gilbert; Leonard Levine.  
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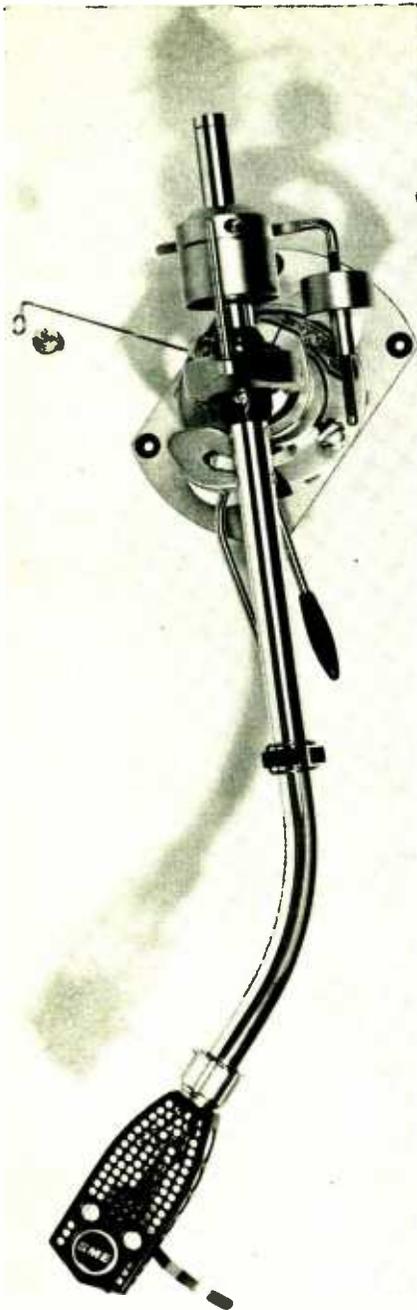
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## letters

### Classical Bag

I found the articles by Gene Lees ("Antidisestablishmentarianism") and John McClure ("The Classical Bag") in the same issue [August 1969] highly amusing. The latter so blatantly manifests the position against which the former is arguing. Each man is so smug that he cannot see the limitations of his own position.

The Lees article is by far the more intelligent, since he has many perceptive and original comments to make. His comment that "The Establishment makes money on the revolution against it" is true, but his bias becomes apparent in his failure to define precisely who makes up this Establishment. This group, which sells both crowbars to the young and night sticks to the cops, is plainly broader than the Madison Avenue clique which has made a fortune on the new sentimentality of revolution. It is absurd for Lees to set up parents, the "experienced," as the positive element in American society. Such a system lets Mr. Lees and everyone else over the age of twenty-five who does not work on Madison Avenue off the hook, but it does not come to grips with the basic problem—the need for massive social change, a possibility which the "experienced" have not offered the young. Lees's view of the situation, neglecting as it does the larger social perspective, becomes a comfortable, self-contained philosophy of evil, and as such is ultimately irrelevant.

McClure's article is on a far lower level indeed—an obvious case of rationalization. As his statistics reveal, McClure knows from whom the money comes and has now set about to justify whatever he may do to pander to this market. Terms like "generation gap," "McLuhan," "era of youth and communication," etc., have no concrete meaning. McClure's flat statement that these forces have "already set off the most rapid and convulsive revolution in life-style that man has ever experienced" and other such phrases add up to a statement completely devoid of any real meaning. Delivered in a tone which would humble Arnold Toynbee, the statement contains not one concrete example to help us define this revolution.

But what is most shocking in McClure's article is the absence of any aesthetic considerations, an obvious sell-out of McClure's responsibilities as Director of Columbia Masterworks. His use of the "Classical Best Sellers" chart to justify his position is specious. He claims that those who bought the "Elvira Madigan" Concerto came to "love Mozart," an inane statement which he is unable to back up statistically. Has there been a jump in other Mozart sales? Where is his proof for the statement that sales of "straight" recordings of R. and J. Strauss

have increased? Are Yehudi Menuhin's recordings selling any better now? Has Bach on the synthesizer stimulated other sales of Bach? Apparently, to revive interest in classical music, we are going to have to use a lot of it on soundtracks and to find many more intriguing instruments. It would take a letter at least twice this size to analyze all of the flaws in McClure's patronizing approach to the problem.

It is rather crass for McClure to refer to the "Contemporary Pop Music Business" as "the first wholly owned subsidiary of Youth, Inc. (with a little help from their friends)." This is precisely the process Lees is talking about. "Their friends" include McClure, and it amuses me to note that he gives himself away by finding no clear subject for "owned." Not even McClure would dare to claim that "Youth, Inc." owns the Pop Music Business. I get the distinct impression it is "owned" by these "friends." How he can conclude his article with the statement that "we are embarked on the richest era in the history of music" when he has not even considered the question of the quality of the new musical experience—an issue which he obviously regards as irrelevant—is beyond me. Perhaps the word "richest" is the key to the remark as a whole. Somebody is going to get very rich indeed.

*Richard Steiger*  
Oakland, Calif.

The strange advertisement in your August issue ["The Classical Bag"] by Columbia's head merchandiser John McClure (how clever of him to make it look so like a real article) ends with the statement, "I can't rid myself of this odd feeling that we are embarked on the richest era in the history of music." He could have made this statement a lot more accurate and (in his case) honest by dropping the final "t" from "richest"; and the odd feeling I got from reading this piece of agitprop was wonderfully removed when, a few pages later, I got to Gene Lees's "Antidisestablishmentarianism." So thoughtful of you to provide the antidote in the same issue with the poison.

*Harry Wells McGraw*  
Hattiesburg, Miss.

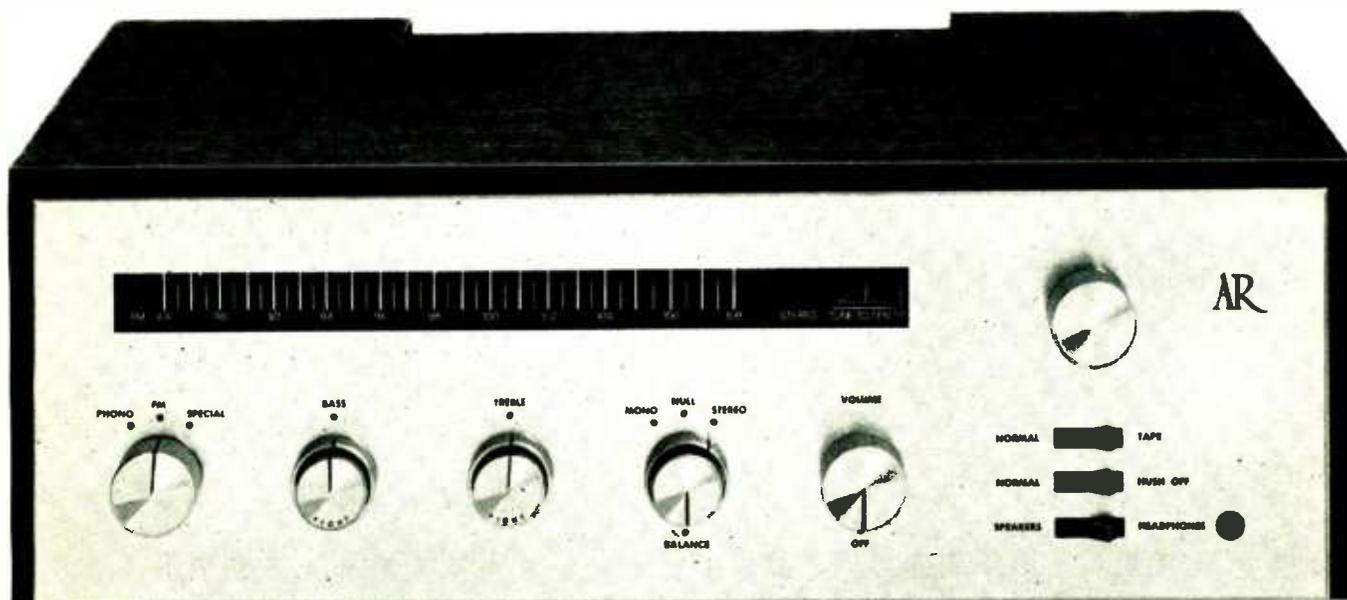
I found John McClure's article "The Classical Bag" extremely irritating. Sure, I would like to see more people, young people in particular, discover "classical" music. But you can't convince me that Bach played on a Moog synthesizer is a sincere effort to sell today's youth on concert music. It is nothing more than a gimmick to sell records. The hodgepodge of selections on "Switched-On Bach" does not include Bach's best

*Continued on page 8*

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



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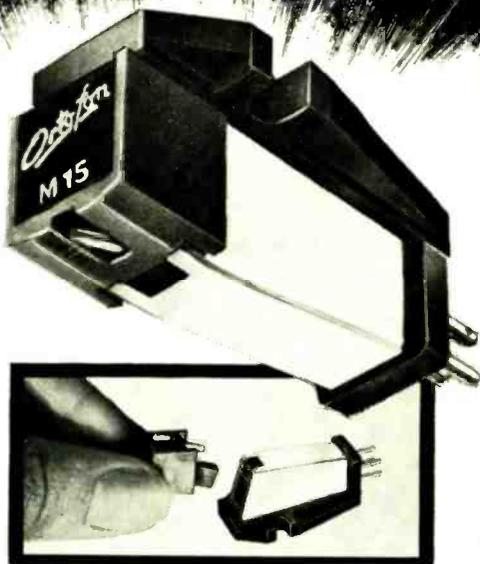
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LETTERS *Continued from page 6*

pieces but his most popular and therefore most accessible.

Again, in Stanley Kubrick's *2001*, Strauss's music was selected to give impact to certain visual scenes and thereby enhance the total effect of the film. How many people who bought a recording of Strauss's *Zarathustra* on the strength of its opening measures have listened more than twice to the remainder of the piece?

As a music teacher in the New York City public school system, I would like to see more of today's youth become aware of the concert world. But I do not want to see this come about through a lowering of standards or the use of gimmicks. Much of the new serious music, in fact, has attained a vogue among the youth because of stereo gimmickry and unusual sound effects, not because of any intrinsic value. Most of it is dull, tedious, and uninteresting and several years will pass before the good can be sifted from the bad.

In the meantime, Bach will not grow "stale"—he does not need synthesizers to make his music palatable for a public not mature enough to appreciate his truly spiritual content. Bach's music is great because it has stood the test of time, and it is still being played because a relatively small number of people have perpetuated his works in performance. "Classical" music will always be there for those who want the experience it affords.

*Bill Curtis*  
Bronx, N.Y.

Throughout John McClure's essay, I could not help but find myself continually nodding in agreement with his every word: thoughts of "hear, hear" and "sock it to them, John" continued to echo through my head as I perused his article.

As a member of the generation of which he speaks (I'm twenty-four), I know too well how accurately he has summed up the situation. "Classical" music was indeed excellent, but it is still dead! Why the Beatles instead of Mozart, why the Neon Cyrkle instead of Wagner? Because they are fresh, alive, and of this generation. As for the classics, they are dull and static. How could it be otherwise when the same music is played over and over? Mozart and other classical composers wrote only so much and they can only be heard so many times. Why are there no new composers, no new symphonies, no new instruments? Without fresh creativity, how can classical music survive? The answer is simple: it cannot and will not.

The pop/rock groups will form the music of the future, not necessarily because of superiority, but through default. As John McClure points out, it is time for classical music to come off its lofty pedestal and join the rest of the peasants. In fact, this seems to be precisely what is happening. When the Beatles record an album in London, who supplies

*Continued on page 10*

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

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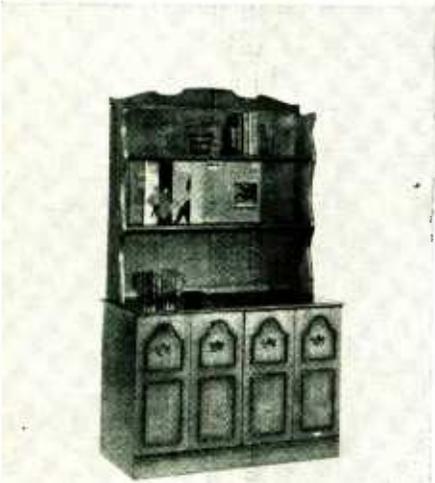
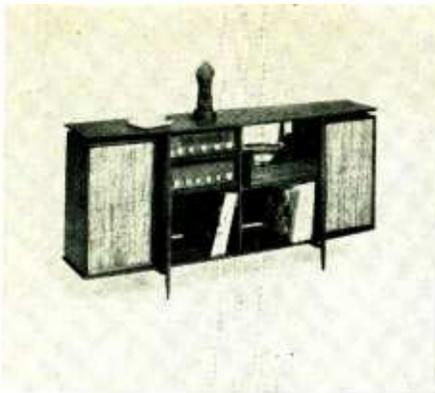
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## LETTERS *Continued from page 8*

the orchestral background? Generally, a few members of the London Philharmonic, and it does not take an expert to realize that both sides are the richer for it. With a little more co-operation and crossfertilization, the classics might yet hope for survival; but the classical establishment had better hurry before it's too late.

John T. Anderson  
Hamilton, Ontario

## Haydn's Horn

May I take the opportunity through the "Letters" section of your excellent magazine to clarify a point brought up by Mr. H. C. Robbins Landon in his review of Philips' recording of the Haydn *Seasons* [July 1969]. Mr. Robbins Landon seems to have been in doubt whether or not the three horn players did cheat by playing the very end of *The Seasons* in C basso and not C alto as Haydn intended.

I am the principal horn player of the BBC Symphony Orchestra and I performed the first horn part during the Philips sessions. I can positively assure Mr. Robbins Landon that all three horns did sound at pitch in this final section and that at no time during the recording did we play—or cheat (a strange word to use)—by transposing down one octave into C basso. Since the horn pitch cannot, unfortunately, be heard on the disc, one begins to wonder why it was necessary for three players to exert themselves needlessly by playing in this upper register. In fact, the engineers, producer, and even the conductor did not notice our trimerous effort.

Incidentally I must thank Mr. Robbins Landon for his praise of the horn obbligato in Simon's aria from *Summer* and also mention that the instrument I used for the recording was a natural French horn crooked in F, made in 1803 just two years after *The Seasons* had its premiere. I hardly think that the recording staff or Mr. Davis objected to my "cheating" by hand-stopping the eleventh harmonic—do you think it is possible that they simply didn't notice?

Alan Civil  
Downe, Kent  
England

## Toscanini Treasures

In his review of the new DGG recording of the Brahms Fourth Symphony [August 1969], Harris Goldsmith made reference to Maestro Toscanini's reading of this work with the BBC Symphony Orchestra. The Maestro's approach to the Brahms Fourth with the BBC Orchestra is indeed more expansive and relaxed than his recording with the NBC Symphony made sixteen years later.

As it happens, The Arturo Toscanini Society plans to present the BBC recording to its members in the near future. Already received by ATS members are Haydn's Symphonies Nos. 88 and 104, Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben* and *Dance of the Seven Veils*, Brahms's *A German*

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LETTERS Continued from page 10

Requiem and Edmund Rubbra's orchestration of the Variations on a Theme of Handel.

Clyde J. Key, President  
The Arturo Toscanini Society  
Duman, Tex.

Mr. Goldsmith's reviews of these recordings will appear in next month's issue.

A Schock and a Jolt

I find it surprising that Conrad L. Osborne, in reviewing London's new *Pagliacci* [Aug. 1969], made no mention of what to some of us may be the only interesting thing about this set. It is the second set—of some fifteen complete recordings—to give us the Nedda-Silvio duet complete. The first was a German language set on Electrola, with Rudolf Schock, which had a limited circulation in this country a couple of years ago. Incidentally, the German set also

allotted the famous line "*La commedia è finita*" to Tonio (Josef Metternich).

I sat up straight when I first heard the Electrola set and found that the traditional cut wasn't made, and received another pleasant jolt when I heard the new London release.

I find Lorengar, Merrill, and Krause all better than did Mr. Osborne, but, unlike him, I thought McCracken's Canio a disaster. Where is the legato, the phrasing that we have a right to expect from a singer represented to us as a major artist? This performance does not presage well for his forthcoming *Otello* on Angel.

There have been many good recordings of *Pagliacci* but for me the finest is London's first recording, with Del Monaco a magnificent Canio, Petrella a marvelously slutty Nedda, and Poli a brilliant Tonio—performances both moving and terrifying. The sound too is superb for its time.

Wilfred Healey  
Los Angeles, Calif.

For a review of McCracken's *Otello*, see the Classical Reviews in this issue.

Gilmore: Yes; Lang: No

My hearty congratulations to Clifford F. Gilmore for his discerning review of Bach's Mass in B minor as performed by Nikolaus Harnoncourt ["Does the Conventus Musicus' Authenticity Make Musical Sense?," July 1969]. It is quite clear that Mr. Gilmore understands the meaning of the words "musical" and "sense."

On the other hand, Paul Henry Lang's companion review of the same recording, a crude and irrational attempt to justify his negative answer to the question put forth in the article, has convinced me that he is, without doubt, one of the most opinionated critics this side of Philistia. I am really rather surprised that Mr. Lang has placed his stamp of approval on the harpsichord and reconstructed

Continued on page 16

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## LETTERS *Continued from page 12*

baroque organ used in the Harnoncourt performance. He condones the usage of those authentic baroque instruments but cannot accept the usage of the others! It is absurd, musicologically speaking, to be authentic only halfway.

Before anyone can discuss musical sense it is imperative to realize that music does not always require what Mr. Lang calls "guts." Contrary to contemporary thought, music can be meaningful without volume. If Mr. Lang would relax and at least temporarily abandon his prejudices, he too might find beauty and "musical sense" in the work of Nikolaus Harnoncourt.

*Benjamin Hey*  
Newark, N.J.

I read with a great deal of interest Paul Henry Lang's unfavorable review of the Bach B minor Mass side by side with the more approving review of Clifford F. Gilmore. I own the old Angel version conducted by Karajan (a smooth-as-silk performance, but hardly correct—stylistically or otherwise), and I was looking for a replacement. I am truly surprised that an academically inclined person such as Dr. Lang could ever disapprove of an effort in the direction of authenticity. As I listen to the new Telefunken performance, I find little reason to feel uncomfortable. I suppose that if I had drenched myself in Karajan I might have had to cleanse my ears more thoroughly (I have only listened to his recording half a dozen times since purchasing it in 1954).

Frankly, I found Harnoncourt's version like a breath of fresh air. I did notice some difficulty in the manipulation of the horn part in one movement, and some ensemble imprecision in spots (doubtless because of the lack of a conductor). It is obvious, however, that Dr. Lang is basing his standards on the neo-Romantic versions of which I and many others are so very weary. Why have the transverse flute part played by a baroque flute and not by a modern metal one? Because it was not intended for these metal instruments. If we are going to allow the chorus to be nearly drowned out by the modern string instruments, bassoons, flutes, and trumpets, why not go all the way and substitute the modern pianoforte for the harpsichord? The carrying power will be on a par with the modern oboe and trumpet, as well as the beautiful (but quite out of place) platinum flute as it was "improved" by Boehm. Let's be consistent, sir.

May I register one "yes" vote for the Harnoncourt version of the great B minor Mass of J. S. Bach.

*Gene M. Lacy*  
Fort Worth, Tex.

HIGH FIDELITY is to be commended for printing two reviews of the *Concentus Musicus* recording of the B minor Mass. Fortunately, the subjective, overstated denunciation by Paul Henry Lang was more than balanced by the reasoned approach of Clifford F. Gilmore. Mr. Lang's obsession with the alleged inadequacy of

*Continued on page 20*

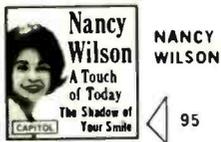
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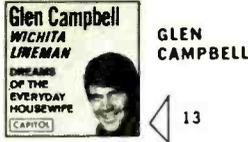
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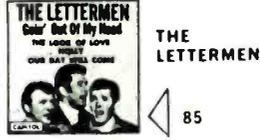
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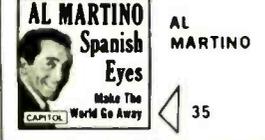
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unchanged voices to convey "music of any passion" is familiar enough to your readers. Now we are also informed that instrumentalists should not bother to play authentic eighteenth-century instruments (except harpsichord and organ) because they "sound flat and have no guts"; and furthermore, we should not restrain the size of the ensembles to that approximating original conditions because Bach would certainly have preferred a larger group if only he'd had the money. Mr. Lang seems willing to permit the confluence of musicology and performance only when the results do not upset his own comfortable, not to say rigid, conceptions.

Anyone fortunate enough to have heard

the Concentus Musicus during their 1968-69 U.S. tour can attest that this group plays with all the zeal, involvement, and technical expertise that one could ask of any ensemble, no matter what the vintage of its instruments. This ensemble's outstanding musicianship is amply demonstrated on the Telefunken recording of the B minor Mass.

*Kenneth L. Taylor*  
Gambier, Ohio

*For Dr. Lang's reply, see "A Critic Answers his Critics," page 22.*

**Golden Age Hacks, Cont'd.**

The hysterical responses and invective inspired by my modest letter are truly amusing [May and August 1969]. Have

you ever noticed that when people argue from a sense of right (not righteousness), with logic, sense, and facts on their side, they are cool, calm, and composed. But when they argue from prejudice and from "traditional" positions fed them by others, rather than evolved by their own mental effort, they get hysterical, abusive, and boring. I certainly trod on a lot of soft corns, didn't I?

*Stella Sherman*  
San Francisco, Calif.

While Stella Sherman certainly was misguided in completely condemning the tenors of the past, those who rose to their defense were equally extreme. Ramon Vinay's voice was right for *Otello* in 1948. It then possessed the proper weight and brilliance. As for Kraus, Windgassen, and Pavarotti—no one has ever thought of them as appropriate for the role of *Otello*. Vickers and McCracken are, however.

Mario del Monaco, at his peak in 1955, was a superb *Otello* vocally and dramatically. I heard all his performances with De los Angeles and Milanov and they truly showed him at his best. To hold up his 1968 recordings as indicative of his true stature as an artist is sheer folly. Del Monaco never had the impact on records that he had in person, and I suspect the same was true of Martinelli and Melchior. Even in their prime the singing of these tenors, as recorded, sounds inferior to their contemporaries. Caruso, Gigli, McCormack all recorded better. Surely Martinelli was finer in person than he appears on the *Forza* trio with Ponselle and Pinza. And I know that Melchior sang more freely in live performances than he did through much of the historic *Walter Walküre*.

Vocal art is constantly changing and every era has its greats. Surely we are just as "wealthy" now as we were in the past. Vickers, Gedda, Thomas, Kraus, Pavarotti, Aragall, Corelli, Domingo, Bergonzi, Molese, Tucker—all will be remembered fondly in years to come.

*Carl K. Edwards*  
New York, N.Y.

I am vastly annoyed with Shaun Greenleaf's condescending letter directed to Stella Sherman, in which he attempts to set himself up as some kind of vocal guru. I have not heard the *Otello* high-lights recording which Miss Sherman disliked, but I have heard many Martinelli recordings made in his prime years—the Twenties and early Thirties—and think that they are rather poor.

However, what really exasperated me was Mr. Greenleaf's discussion of *Otello* tenors. Apparently he has never heard of Jon Vickers, a great artist with a voice of heroic dimensions. And what about James McCracken, one of the most famous *Otellos* of modern times. What is the point of telling us that Kraus and Pavarotti have voices too light for *Otello*? Any fool knows that such heroic roles are beyond them. Are their talents to be degraded simply because they are lyric tenors? Would Mr.

*Continued on page 24*



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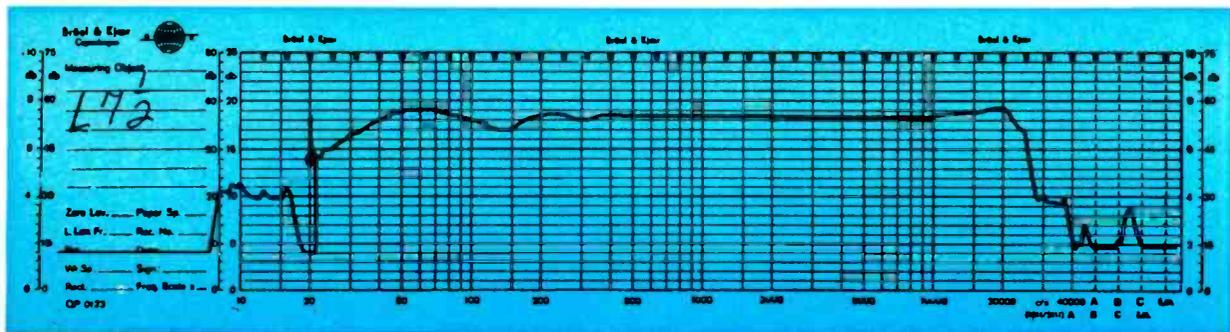
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# A Critic Answers His Critics by Paul Henry Lang

I find the controversy over the Telefunken recording of Bach's B minor Mass very heartening. Only a generation ago, in this country "musicology" was a word that evoked snickers—it wasn't even listed in Webster—and musicians, critics, and the public denounced those benighted plodders who tried to "understand music by reading books." Well things have changed, and for the better; those books have reached the devoted fans who won't tolerate grossly distorted performances of their beloved baroque masters (the latter, incidentally, also of recent discovery as far as they are concerned). Musical literacy has never been at such a high point and it is rising every day, with HIGH FIDELITY not only contributing to its spread but providing a welcome forum for varying opinions. But, "Most Worshipful, Distinguished, Steadfast, Honored, Learned, and Most Highly Esteemed Sirs," to use Bach's own form of salutation, what you are preaching and practicing is not musicology, only an abridged paperback edition of it.

Mr. Harnoncourt, supported by not a few readers, maintains that his B minor Mass is performed faithfully according to what he took to be the composer's original concept. The only hitch is that the precepts and conditions prevailing in Leipzig are not at all valid either for Bach's works or for the period's general practice of music. Musicology begins in the archives, not in old monographs. During the past generation, Bach research has made immense strides, the results of which are just beginning to appear, rather cautiously, in the English-language literature on music. But we know that Protestant church music was declining rapidly by the beginning of the eighteenth century, and that the Thomasschule was in such decay that Bach, embittered, simply served out his last fifteen years, turning his attention to the great musical essays, *Kunstbücher* they are called, in which he methodically summed up his wisdom to set examples for all time to come. The vast majority of the many Leipzig cantatas have proved to be wrongly dated; they were much earlier works patched up for his Sunday services. He no longer composed original works regularly for the church; his tremendous creative power, still intact if turned inward, went into the great studies: *Clavierübung*, *The Art of Fugue*, *A Musical Offering*—and the B minor Mass. This last, a collection of all styles and all devices known to Bach, was never performed by him, and may not even have been intended for performance—certainly not for integral performance, so different are its sections.

In his last attempt to improve the wretched state of his performing forces, Bach addressed a memorandum to his superiors stating that the incoming class of students would not enable him to maintain a proper musical establishment. It

was from these recruits that he had to replenish the thinning ranks of choristers caused by graduation and changed voices. He found four sopranos of "good voice and good proficiency," one "passable and fair," one "mediocre," one "weak and indifferent," and one "weak and slight." There was one good alto, but the rest were "rather poor," and many were rejected. Only three of the four churches under Bach's care could be staffed by this pitiful crop of singers (he considered three or four singers to a part the choral minimum); the fourth, "receives the remainder, namely those who do not understand music and can only just barely sing the chorales."

Now surely we should not base our performances on such a meager body of singers and players, denounced as inadequate by Bach himself. We know that in many other cities they had choirs of forty or more singers and well-appointed orchestras. The famous Kreuzschule, the Dresden counterpart to the Leipzig Thomasschule, had a large choir as early as when Schütz was its master—a hundred years before the B minor Mass. Years before Bach's angry petition, the great court conductor in Vienna, J. J. Fux, addressed a report to the emperor in which he stated that the minimum requirement for a choir is eight singers to the part, twice Bach's own modest demand made *in extremis*.

Now about the choirboys-vs.-women dispute that seems to exercise a number of my readers. Johann Adolf Scheibe, critic and theoretical oracle in Bach's time, says (1737) that a good choir is formed by a core of at least eight experienced mature singers (tenors and basses) to which are added "amateurs such as school teachers," choirboys—and women, "because the latter's voices are more natural, purer, and more sustained than the boys' voices." How far the employment of female trebles and altos goes back is difficult to ascertain, but by the end of the seventeenth century they can be located pretty nearly everywhere. In 1713, in Karlsruhe, there were dozens of them in the choir.

Where Harnoncourt made his mistake is that he took a provincial and declining church-supported institution, rent by rivalries and prejudices, and low on funds, for a typical representative of the period's musical practice, ignoring the fact that by that time the opera house had first call on all good musicians and singers, the churches got what was left. Yet the opera house also called on the churches for assistance. The general practice was that the local church choir or choirs joined forces with the opera, thus not only forming a much larger ensemble than when functioning alone but learning much more up-to-date music-making. So the Dresden "School of the Cross" choristers sang in one of Lotti's operas (1719) and the accounts say that there were "twenty-four women and

twenty-four men" in the chorus. Examples of this procedure can be duplicated in many other places, from Vienna and Prague to Berlin and Hamburg; Leipzig was decidedly not where the action was. So eager were the patrons and musicians for sumptuous sound—characteristic of the baroque—that even those ladies and gentlemen of the court who could read music joined the choir. In many places where the cultural show was run by the court (there were Protestant princes in Germany who liked artistic luxury as much as their more famous and more wealthy Catholic counterparts), the musically trained students of the local Latin or parochial schools were ordered to join the opera chorus. One of the accounts speaks of monies distributed to "44 scholars who sang in the choir, and five teachers who looked after them." The kids must have had a good time playing hooky with official sanction in the opera house. Furthermore, according to the universal custom of the time, the soloists, whether in church or opera, always sang with the choir, thus adding several strong voices to the ensemble. The same goes for the orchestras. Stuttgart, to mention an example, had a standing orchestra of about thirty-five, to which were added amateurs, and wind players from the band of the local grenadier regiment. All this is hardly consistent with Harnoncourt's extremely small complement of performers.

Above all, however, this music-making was expressive, far more expressive than the timid and prayerful way of the Telefunken recording. It could not have been otherwise, because all music took its cue from opera. I did not criticize Harnoncourt's recording on musicological grounds only; I objected to the lack of artistic communication, the tentative and expressionless playing and singing. Before I became a musicologist, I—like any other historian worth a double-dotted sixteenth note—was a practicing musician who made his living in the opera pit, than which there is no more enlightening place to study music. It was there that I acquired my abiding faith in the glory of the singing voice, the beauty of a well-delivered melody, and the fervor of a group of musicians rising to the challenge. The score is a mute document until those middlemen we call performers "re-create" it. Contemporary musicians play quite differently from their ancestors, but they have the same musical instincts and feelings. They can be brought culturally nearer to the spirit of Bach's time, but they cannot wholly identify with it; it will always be only an approximation. If we try to suppress their natural, native musical instincts and feelings, we get demonstrations, not artistic communications. A compromise is inevitable, and it must be a judicious blend of musicological awareness with healthy and genuinely felt musicianship.



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Greenleaf also deprecate Schipa and McCormack because they were not equal to heroic roles?

*Robert Tinker*  
San Francisco, Calif.

**Additions and Deletions**

I enjoyed William Zakariasen's article about the records that didn't make it ["Speaking of Records," August 1969]. Nussio's *Folklore d'Engadine* is also one of my treasures.

I agree with Mr. Zakariasen that Franz Schmidt's orchestral works deserve a hearing. But I have some hopeful news. I noticed in a program of the Los Angeles Philharmonic that Zubin

Mehta played Schmidt's Fourth Symphony there last November. I wrote Ray Minshull, London/Decca's a & r chief in England, suggesting that he think about recording it, and he sent me an encouraging reply. Perhaps if more people write to him we may get some action.

*John Holt*  
Boston, Mass.

**HAM, Project Two**

Your review [August 1969] of the newly released Southern Illinois University endeavor to record the *Harvard Anthology of Music* should, in all fairness, be followed by an announcement to your readers of a similar enterprise being offered by the Musical Heritage Society (1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y.)

This series, under the artistic direction of Denis Stevens, appears on that company's Orpheus label, and, at the reasonable price of \$2.89 (plus postage) per disc, serious music students will want to investigate these recordings. As a long-standing recipient of the Society's offerings, I can say that their engineering and musical quality are unsurpassed by any label at any price.

*Robert F. Weirauch*  
Danbury, Conn.

**One Vote for Borsch**

Balanchivadze, Machvariani, Taktakishvili, Tsintsadze, Babajanyan, Balasanyan, Gajibekov, Kuzhanyarov, Ashrafi. Oriental diseases? No. These are Soviet trans-Caucasian composers writing symphonic music in the exotic idiom of their native lands of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. If you want to hear music with far more ear appeal than the cacophonous celebrations that pass for modern music, I strongly recommend the recordings of these and other Soviet composers. Although some of these recordings are obtainable from the Four Continent Book Corporation in New York City, Znanie Books in San Francisco, and Victor Kankian in Washington, D.C., a much wider selection is available from August Rajas, 936 South Detroit Street, Los Angeles, Calif. 90035.

Augie, as his friends call him, has a personal collection of over 800 such recordings which he plays on University of Southern California radio station KUSC/FM every Friday evening from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. He can also make available tapes of his recordings. Although I had a glimpse of this new world of music before I knew Augie, he extended my knowledge of it considerably. This music is like drawing a breath of fresh air after being polluted for years by—shall I say it?—Berg and Bartók. I may be accused of being a musical peasant, but give me borsch anytime.

*Saul Kruger*  
Silver Spring, Md.

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**High Fidelity**, November 1969, Vol. 19, No. 11. Published monthly by Billboard Publications, Inc., publisher of *Billboard*, *Vend*, *Amusement Business*, *Merchandising Week*, *American Artist*, and *Modern Photography*.

**High Fidelity/Musical America** Edition published monthly. 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, 2160 Patterson St., Cincinnati, O. 45214. Subscription rates: High Fidelity Musical America: In the U.S.A. and its Possessions, 1 year \$12; elsewhere, 1 year \$13. National and other editions published monthly: In the U.S.A. and its Possessions, 1 year \$7; elsewhere, 1 year \$8.

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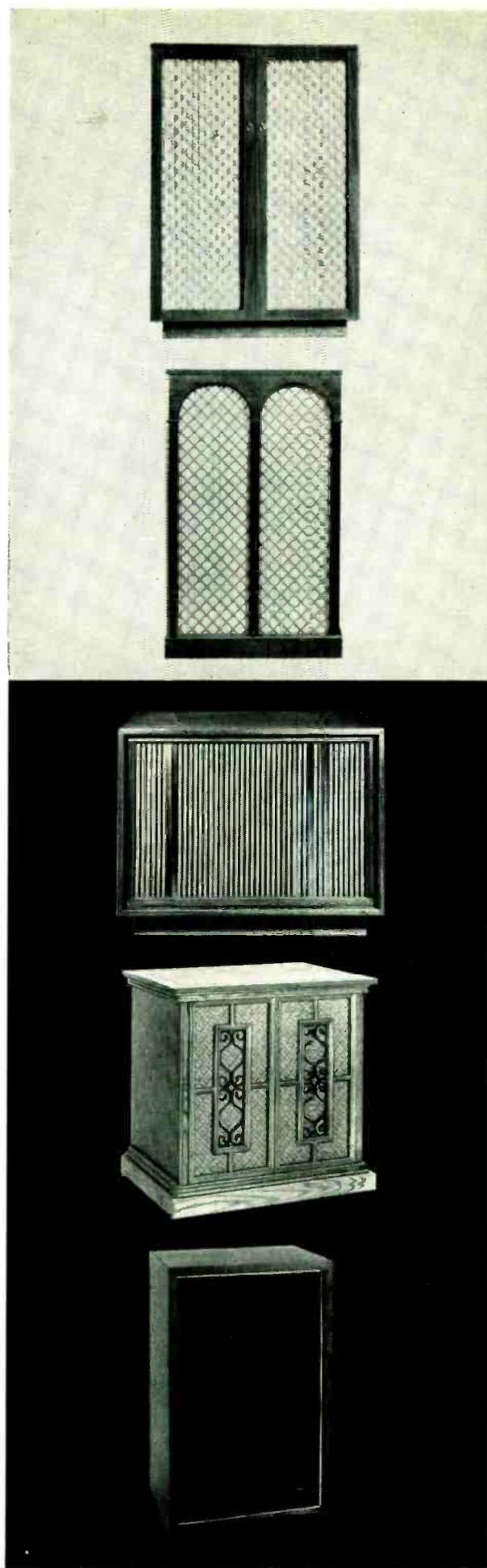
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# behind the scenes

Reports from the International Recording Centers



*Daniel Barenboim: his frenzied enthusiasm produced a monumental volume of first-take finished material.*

## LONDON

### Barenboim and Beethoven

When Daniel Barenboim returned to London late last summer, his major recording project was that most formidable of the Beethoven sonatas, the *Hammerklavier*, Op. 106. To everyone's astonishment, he recorded not only that Mt. Everest of a sonata but ten other sonatas as well, completing his Beethoven cycle for EMI way ahead of schedule.

Even Suvi Raj Grubb, the recording manager behind so many of Barenboim's disc successes, was startled by the speedy pace of the sessions. During this intensive recording period, Barenboim's habit was to practice all morning. He would then arrive at EMI's studio in St. John's Wood, and there—on the Steinway he specially selected in America—he would start to record. Some idea of his frenzied enthusiasm may be gathered from the sheer volume of finished material produced at these sessions: sixty minutes of music perfected in one monumentally active session, fifty-five minutes at another, and forty at a third.

Listeners will have to judge for themselves whether or not the results are mechanical mass productions; my own feeling is the exact opposite. For example: once, when Barenboim had completed taping the sonata that he had prepared in his morning practice period, he thought he might run through Op. 109 for the microphones just to see how it sounded. He had not played this sonata for months, and, as any pianist knows, the first movement is full of unexpected twists and tricky figurations. Both Barenboim and Grubb were so enthusiastic over the first take that they went ahead to complete the work then and there. Some sonatas were even recorded non-stop in a single take with only minor polishing required.

Eleven sonatas in all were taped during these sessions: three late works (the *Hammerklaviers*, Opp. 109 and 101), three

middle sonatas (Opp. 78, 79, and 90), the "little" Op. 54, and four early sonatas (Op. 2, No. 2; Op. 7; Op. 14, No. 2; and Op. 31, Nos. 1 and 3). For over a year Barenboim had done next to nothing on his Beethoven series, started in 1967, but this bonus put to rest any of EMI's worries over completion of the project.

**Madrigals by Monteverdi.** Philips has recently launched an even more monumental series—nothing less than the complete recording of Monteverdi's madrigals on a projected sixteen discs. The director for this undertaking is an artist who has made a number of records for Philips and has now signed an exclusive contract with the company—conductor/musicologist Raymond Leppard. The other personality in the project is recording manager Erik Smith (son of conductor Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt), who left Decca/London for Philips at the end of last year. One of Smith's most striking achievements at Decca/London was his sponsorship of the complete recording in Vienna of Mozart's dances and marches. His musical scholarship contributed greatly to the success of those discs and many of the same qualities will be needed for the Monteverdi madrigal series.

I attended one of the last of this summer's sessions held in Wembley Town Hall. Leppard, fresh from another Glyndebourne success, was directing a full five-part chorus, a group of young, fresh-voiced singers that he had helped to train at Glyndebourne. One of the lovely, languishing madrigals of Book Four was just being completed, *Voi pur du me partito*. The big danger on so hot and tiring a day was that the choral pitch might well tend to sag in unaccompanied music. The take was perfect in ensemble and phrasing, and then we waited breathlessly for the "plink" of the harpsichord; its verdict clearly showed that the pitch had remained true and everyone sighed with relief.

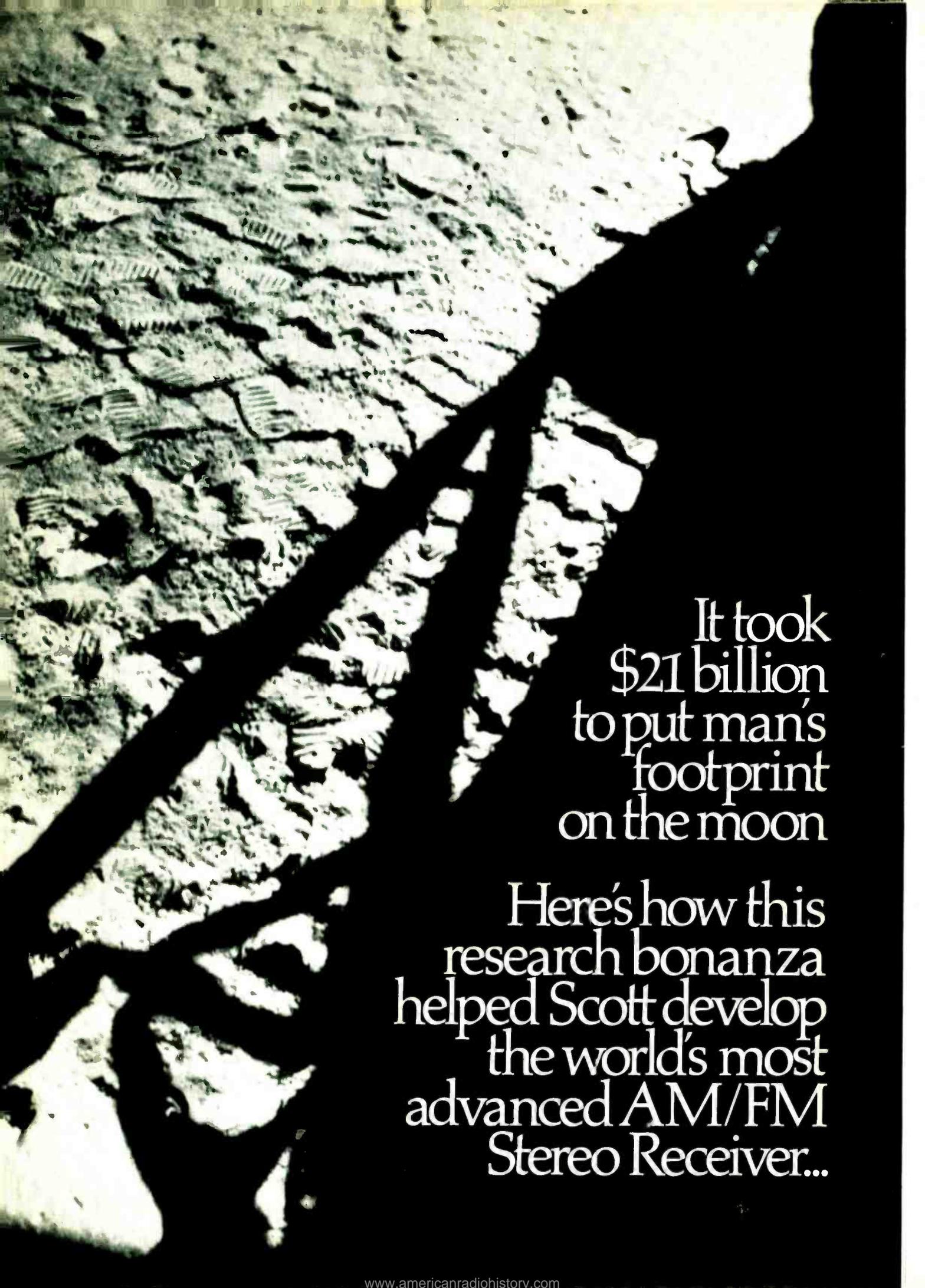
The next madrigal was a fast, light, brilliant one, *Io mi son giovinetta*, and here Leppard's emphasis from the start

was on projecting the meaning of the words. Originally, Smith and Leppard thought that the project ought to have used Italian singers in order to insure idiomatic treatment of the words. London was ultimately preferred, however, owing to the striking ability of the British singers to sing so expressively. "You're describing a very pretty young girl," Leppard said with feeling, and in his own inimitable conductor's voice he did the phrase, *Io mi son giovinetta*, with a sly nudging glissando, exaggerating his interpretation a bit to get the point across.

Meanwhile, back in the control room, Erik Smith was playing through takes of a previous madrigal, deciding exactly which material was best. I asked how the singers were arranged on stage, and, slightly hurt, he pointed out: "You can hear." And the stereo spread did indeed come over very clearly—first and second sopranos at extreme left and right, tenors and basses somewhat closer in left and right, and altos center. These first sessions completed Book Four of the madrigals, and a number of isolated items from Books Nine and Ten. Next year Smith hopes to do the two longest books, Seven and Eight, each of which will spread over three whole records. Book Four will take a single well-filled disc, which should be issued in mid-1970. With luck, the whole project will be completed in four years.

While Leppard has signed a contract with Philips, he still insists on being allowed dispensation every now and then to record with Janet Baker for EMI. Just before the Philips Monteverdi sessions, he had conducted her in a disc of arias by Monteverdi and Alessandro Scarlatti, including Ariadne's Lament. Baker has also just recorded a recital with Gerald Moore (French songs by Debussy, Fauré, and Duparc), and Mahler's Rückert Lieder with Barbirolli and the New Philharmonia—a fill-up for Mahler's Fifth Symphony taped by Barbirolli in the same series of sessions.

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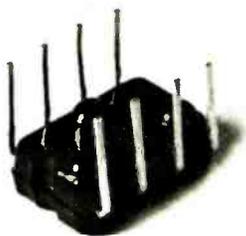
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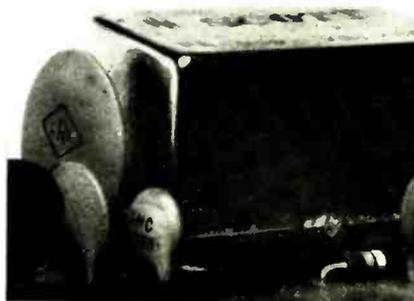
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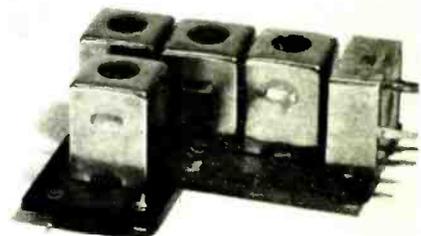
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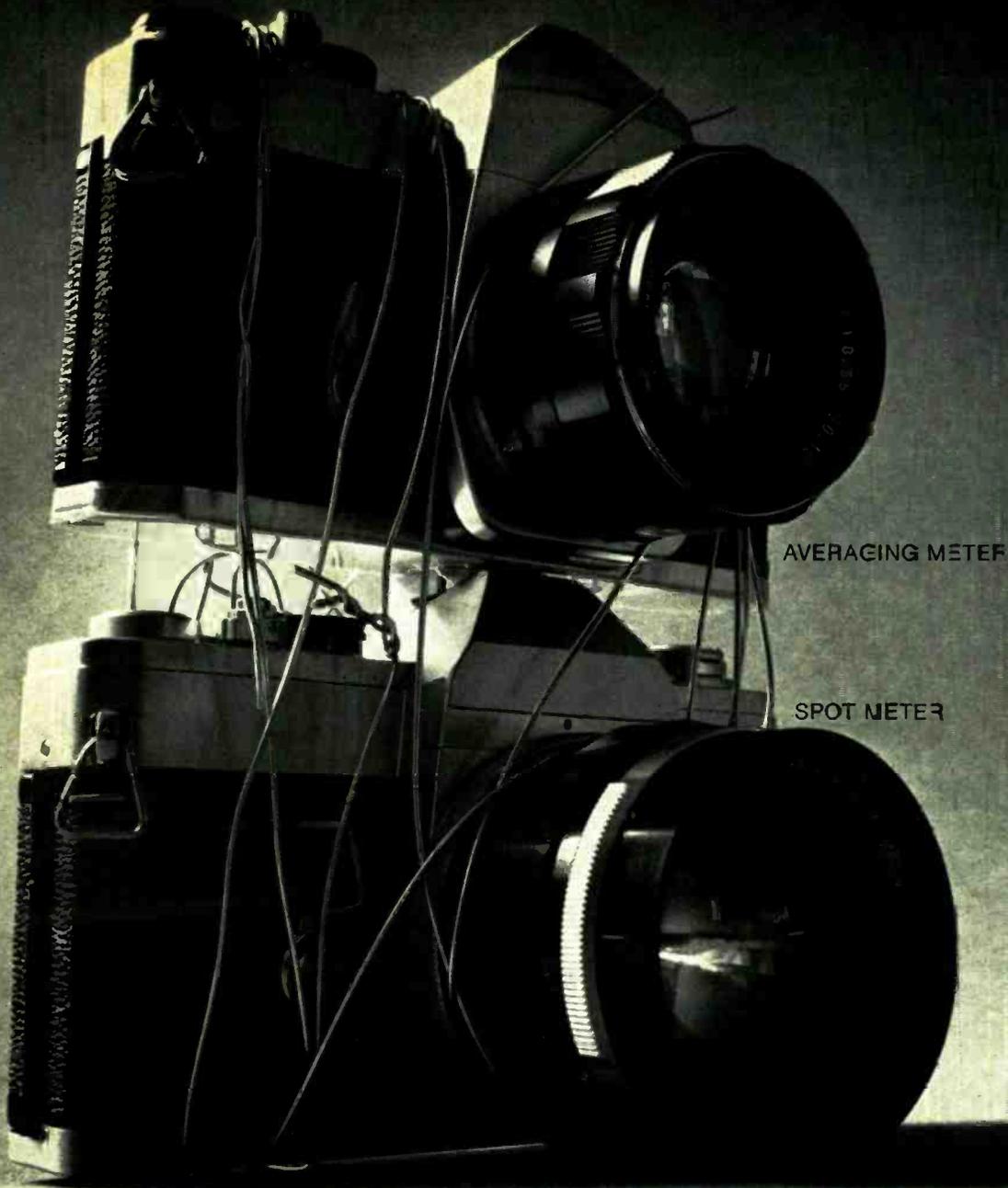


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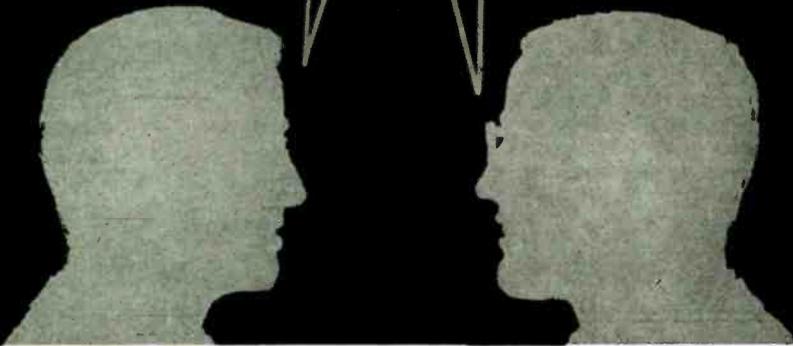
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**Other features:** 12 inch, 7 1/2 lb. precision balanced, non-magnetic platter eliminates wow and flutter . . . Unified suspension system suppresses rumble . . . Double synchronous motor for constant, precise speed.

Complete with tonearm and walnut base . . . Only \$125.00 (Suggestion: the new Ortofon M15 magneto-dynamic cartridge is the perfect complement.)



And here's what the critics say about . . . **THORENS TD-125 3-speed Transcription Turntable**

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- TD-125 chassis — \$185.00; mounted in walnut base — \$200.00

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CIRCLE 87 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**speaking of records**

*Continued from page 32*

by an audience some distance away. Wide vibrato creates faulty intonation rather than tonal warmth. The high fidelity stereophonic record generates music of such intimacy that even the sounds of breathing constitute part of the performance, in an approximation of the artist's presence. Tension can be applied in spurts while sections are being recorded, but the over-all structural considerations have to be of such strength that regardless of the number of stops and replays, the unity of the composition will not suffer. No one can say whether any artist is fully able to submit himself to the demands of the composer—whether in live concert or in recording. Nor can anyone say in good conscience how much of the performance is the composer's and how much the re-creative artist's—or, on a recording, how much of the final product is the producer's. The secret seems to lie in the perceptions and convictions of the artist.

Based on these principles, you might think that my recording likes would tend to be rather limited. However, I bring the concert hall experience into the record listening room. To be sure, the acoustics are far from ideal and perhaps the oboe has a thin sound and the harp is not tuned. Still I accept the total experience.

In short, one tries not to criticize details, but rather to appreciate the superb piano sound of Rubinstein's recordings, the fascinating clarity and brilliance of Horowitz', the extreme control—and extreme lack of it—of Richter's,

. . . the tear-provoking beauty of yesterday's Gigli, Chaliapin, Elisabeth Schumann, and Lotte Lehmann,

. . . Fritz Reiner, my idol for many years, whose absolute dedication to the written score cannot be surpassed—Strauss's *Zarathustra* (RCA Red Seal LSC 2609) and *Final Scene from Salome* (Odyssey 32 16 0078); Bizet's *Carmen* (RCA Red Seal LM 6102, three discs); Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* (RCA Victrola VICS 1110), *Hungarian Sketches* and *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta* (RCA Red Seal LSC 2374),

. . . Bach's *Unaccompanied Sonatas and Partitas* by Henryk Szeryng (Deutsche Grammophon 139270/2, three discs),

. . . the Szigeti/Walter Beethoven Violin Concerto (Columbia ML 4012, now unavailable),

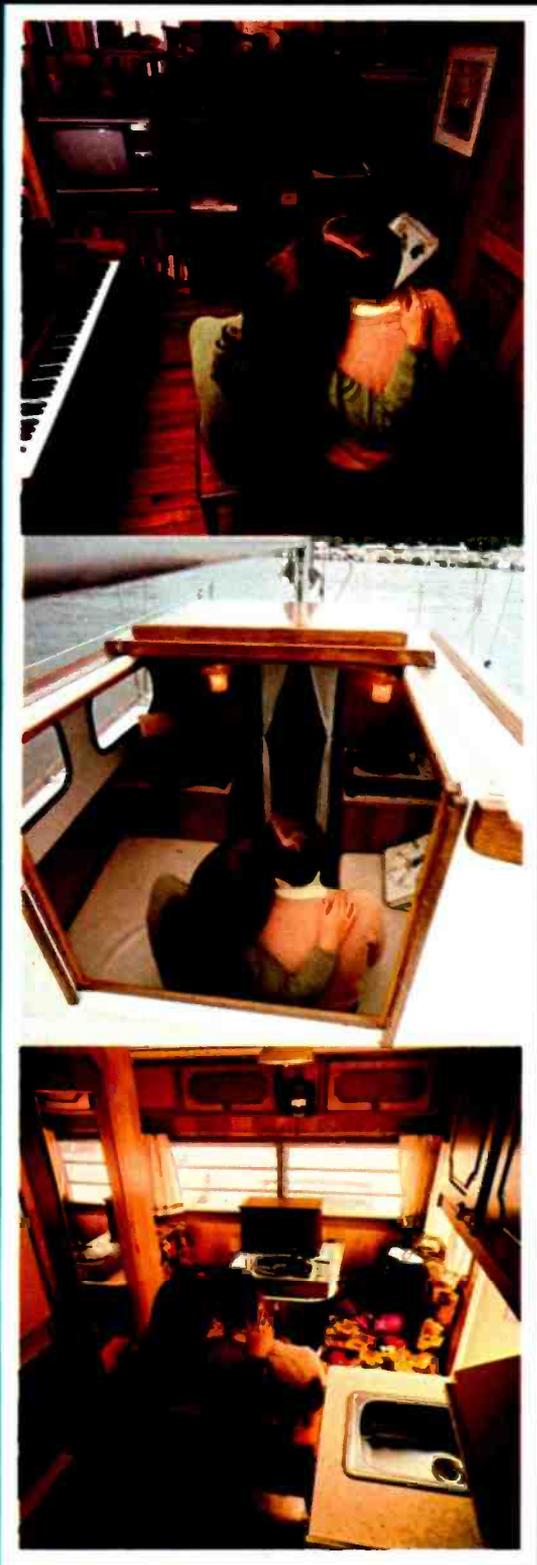
. . . practically anything Heifetz ever recorded—nearly all give goose bumps: the Miklós Rózsa Concerto (RCA Red Seal LM 2027, just recently deleted—hurry if you want a copy) which stuns on every hearing, and Dohnányi's Serenade in C with Primrose and Feuermann (RCA Red Seal LVT 1017),

. . . the Juilliard Quartet playing Bartók's Quartets (Columbia D3S 717, three discs),

. . . Dvořák's Cello Concerto with Casals and Zell (Angel COLH 30, also recently deleted), a historic achievement in setting standards.

And so on ad infinitum—a journey of joy limited only by time to listen and revel in memories.

CIRCLE 37 ON READER-SERVICE CARD →



## the company that started it all...

From Jensen now comes the greatest advancement in modern sound! Jensen STEREO 1®—a *single cabinet true stereo loudspeaker system!* This new development marks a significant departure—a “first” in two-channel stereo loudspeaker systems and follows an impressive list of Jensen breakthroughs without which stereo today would not be possible.

### NOTABLY:

- the first permanent magnetic loudspeaker
- the first direct radiator tweeter
- the first bass reflex enclosure
- the first polystyrene foam diaphragm speaker system
- the first commercial compression driver horn tweeter
- the first articulated horn and diaphragm two-way unitary system

That's a lot of tradition for any new product to live up to. But with that kind of engineering ingenuity behind it, can Jensen STEREO 1® be anything less than revolutionary?

# NOW SETS SOUND FREE!

Mini-room, boat, mobile home . . .  
no space is too small for the  
big true stereo sound of STEREO 1®

**NEW!**

**jensen** **STEREO**



**THE FIRST FREE SPACE SINGLE  
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Photography: By Bart Harris

Orchestra: Producer, arranger, composer Dick Shory and His Orchestra (on Ovation Records)

NOW! TRUE, FULL-FIDELITY STEREO

**AS BIG AS ALL OUTDOORS  
FROM ONE SPEAKER CABINET**

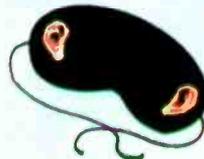


In STEREO 1<sup>®</sup>, Jensen introduces the first speaker system to break "the indoor sound barrier"! A *single cabinet* providing a total wall of stereo—to bring you balanced, all-encompassing stereo fidelity and presence regardless of room size or shape.

Place it anywhere. In an efficiency apartment. On a boat. In a mobile home. A small dormitory room. Anywhere! From any location (your's or the cabinet's) Jensen STEREO 1<sup>®</sup> embraces you with a wall-of-sound. Not reflective, bounce-back sound but direct, original sound that seemingly comes to you from a multiplicity of virtual sources far beyond the confines of the *one* 20-inch cabinet.

The secret is Acousti-Matrix\* . . . Jensen's exclusive, highly sophisticated stereo speaker system which separates and directs the different channel signals throughout the entire listening area. Without sonic voids. Without extra cabinets. You get wide-range, perfectly separated balanced sound . . . true stereo from a *single cabinet* speaker system. Jensen STEREO 1<sup>®</sup>.

**MAKE THE  
BLINDFOLD TEST**



Don't look before you buy. Instead, pick up a special blindfold at your participating Jensen dealer and test Jensen STEREO 1<sup>®</sup> with covered eyes. Wherever you stand, you'll feel yourself surrounded by a wall of sound; the exact location of the STEREO 1<sup>®</sup> cabinet is impossible to pinpoint, because this *one cabinet* does what no other *two* speaker cabinets have ever done before. It sets sound free! Free from the reflective "bounce back" of walls, corners, room characteristics—and therefore free of the extra cabinet and space requirements of the two cabinet stereo system.

Remarkable? It's revolutionary! But not totally unexpected from the company that has pioneered virtually every major breakthrough in the loudspeaker industry. See, hear, "blindfold test" Jensen STEREO 1<sup>®</sup> at your Jensen dealer today.

\*Patents pending

**jensen**

MANUFACTURING DIVISION

The Muter Company

5655 West 73rd Street, Chicago, Illinois 60638

## Now-True Stereo From One Speaker Cabinet

### JENSEN STEREO 1® TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

#### COMPONENTS:

An array of Jensen full-range, high compliance, heavy duty FLEXAIR® loudspeakers, in a specially designed air-suspension enclosure, featuring the Acousti-Matrix System.\*

#### FREQUENCY RANGE:

30-20,000 Hz (each channel).

#### POWER RATING:

35 watts per channel, integrated program material.

#### IMPEDANCE:

8 ohms (each channel).

#### INPUT CONNECTIONS:

Terminals at rear of cabinet for RIGHT and LEFT channel inputs.

#### FINISH:

Dura-Syn Walnut Veneer.

#### DIMENSIONS:

13" H, 21¾" W, 11-9/16" D.

#### SHIPPING WEIGHT:

32 lbs.

\*Patents pending



### WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY:

"Unbelievable. But it is true stereo from one speaker cabinet . . ."

". . . sound is smooth, evenly-dispersed throughout the entire listening area."

"A worthy alternate to the two cabinet stereo speaker system especially where space is limited."

"Unit has remarkably full bass. Highs are silky clean . . . mid-tones are strong, full-bodied."

"Space-saving concept opens new decorating possibilities."

"Jensen's done it again . . . a true breakthrough in stereo."

### HERE'S HOW IT WORKS...

The two input stereo signals (LEFT and RIGHT) are combined in a special network so as to provide SUM (LEFT *plus* RIGHT) and DIFFERENCE (LEFT *minus* RIGHT) signals.

These SUM and DIFFERENCE signals are reproduced by arrays of wide range loudspeaker units, carefully chosen and adjusted for *special* directional characteristics.

These arrays are installed in a carefully co-ordinated air-suspension type enclosure configuration, precisely aiming SUM and DIFFERENCE signal components.

The resulting combined radiation patterns provide the real stereo LEFT and RIGHT components, with virtual sources extending well beyond the actual enclosure.

#### JENSEN MANUFACTURING DIVISION

The Muter Company  
5655 West 73rd Street, Chicago, Illinois 60638

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75 watts\*  
LR-500TA  
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LR-1500T

LR-1000T

LR-500TA

"High performance and an abundance of features . . . an excellent buy on today's market."

"HIGH FIDELITY"

"... it offers most of the refinements (and performance) typical of receivers selling for twice its price . . . clearly one of the best buys in audio."

"HI-FI STEREO REVIEW"

"... a unit with excellent tuner characteristics . . . I suspect that Lafayette will have a great many satisfied customers."

"MODERN HI-FI & STEREO GUIDE"

If you can believe the advertising, unequaled values in stereo receivers abound everywhere. Almost every receiver ad claims to offer more of everything for the money—more power, more features, more sophisticated circuitry, better performance...and so on. Not that we don't do the same ourselves. But with all these claims, it's becoming harder than

ever to decide on a receiver. Who *can* you believe then? Well, we took our receivers to the experts to find out what *they* had to say. Their unbiased findings are summed up in the comments above.

*Now who do you think offers the finest value in stereo receivers?*

\*1HF = 1db (in accordance with the high fidelity industry's latest test procedures for rating power outputs.)

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## too hot to handle

When I bought my AR amplifier, which is rated at 50 watts rms per channel into 8 ohms, my dealer said it tested out at 100 watts rms per channel at that loading. I am using a pair of Altec Madera speaker systems, which claim to have a power-handling capacity of up to 50 watts continuous. Am I endangering my speakers?—David Walton, Shawne Mission, Kans.

Your dealer is wrong. The AR amplifier checks out at slightly over the 50 watts per channel at which it is rated. To drive it beyond the 50-watt rating of your speakers, you would have to feed it at full gain with a continuous high-level signal, which you are unlikely to encounter with any program source except a test record or audio oscillator. So we see no cause for worry. The levels involved should hurt your ears before they damage the speakers.

Crown, Magnecord, and Ampex all manufacture bona fide professional tape decks. But, while Magnecord and Crown machines can be purchased readily by anyone who can afford them, the Ampex people seem to discourage purchase of their studio equipment by nonprofessionals. Why is this? Ampex equipment is found in virtually every radio and TV station and recording studio. Is this because the Ampex equipment has some advantage over the other brands?—Steve Keller, Cedar Rapids, Ia.

The pre-eminence of Ampex in U.S. studio installations is partly because the company—or its Professional Products Division—has concentrated so single-mindedly on that area. It was, of course, the first in the field and produced equipment that met just about every requirement of professional use. More recently, Ampex has continued in this area with equipment for recording on half-inch and one-inch tape to fill modern studio needs—including those of video. Differences in design—and price—between Ampex and the two other companies have reflected the kinds of users each has been thinking of in conceiving and marketing its products. Magnecord, for example, has produced some models that are admirably suited to language-lab use, though editing on them may not be quite as simple as it would be on equipment designed expressly for studio use. Similarly, Crown International says that thirty-five per cent of its output goes into

home use—a statistic that is bound to influence the company's attitude toward its consumer-type customers.

A phrase that I see frequently, "high-velocity records," is very confusing. Usually the phrase is found in some sort of testing. What does it mean? What are these records? I thought all records had to turn at precisely 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  rpm.—W. R. Augur, Claremont, Calif. Since "high-velocity records" is a rather imprecise way of specifying records cut with high-velocity (high-frequency, high-amplitude) groove modulation, we hope you haven't been seeing the phrase in *High Fidelity*. A high-velocity groove is one that forces the stylus to move at higher than average velocities, and therefore is particularly demanding on the playback mechanism. For this reason, groove velocity is germane to the testing of styli and cartridges. Assuming that any record is played back at the speed—that is, the number of revolutions per minute—at which it was cut, groove velocity is dependent only on the frequency and amplitude of the modulating signal. Therefore record speed in the usual sense has nothing to do with the case.

Is magnetic recording tape of the kind used for data processing suitable for home recording, and do you recommend it for high fidelity use? Are there any tape splitters on the market that will cut the half-inch computer tape down to the quarter-inch size for home recorders?—Murray Cooper, Foster City, Calif.

Data processing tapes and audio tapes are not identical. Frequency response characteristics are different enough to alter tonal balances, for one thing. We know of no splitter available on the consumer market. And, since the splitting operation is critical to proper alignment between the tape and your recorder's heads, a makeshift splitter probably will give inferior—if not disastrous—results. Even the "white-box" tapes produced by splitting standard data processing tape to quarter-inch widths may be deficient in this respect.

I am using a Shure Super-Track cartridge in the AR turntable, with tracking force set at a mite under 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  grams—and it sounds excellent. Does anyone make a hinged brush for at-

tachment to tone arms, one similar in principle to the brush built into the Pickering and Stanton cartridges? If so, it would not only keep the record clean, but also provide some anti-skating and enable me to reduce the tracking force.—Philip A Stough, Timonium, Md.

First of all, let's straighten out the matter of tracking force. If "a mite under 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  grams" is ideal for the force exerted by the stylus tip on the record with your combination of arm and cartridge, then it will be optimum when you add the brush. The brush may alter the settings necessary to achieve that optimum stylus force, but it should not change the stylus force itself. If it does, you will no longer have optimum tracking. As to anti-skating, you're touching on a matter that still is a subject of argument among engineers, some of whom even would have us believe that the Dustomatic brush increases, rather than decreases, skating bias. All would seem to agree, however, that the precise effect of the brush on antiskating is difficult to evaluate—either theoretically or experimentally. In any case, though, differences in performance are liable to be inaudibly small. Indeed, AR spokesmen have held that anti-skating is unnecessary to quality reproduction. Since you seem pleased with the sound you're now getting, we see no reason to make a change. And, anyway, we know of no hinged add-on brush that would do exactly what you want.

I have been debating with my friends whether it is necessary to wait at least sixteen hours before playing a record for the second time. They all say I am foolish and that playing it twice in succession will cause no more damage than it would if the second playing were delayed. Who is correct?—Joel Bieder, Forest Hills, N.Y.

Some experiments seem to indicate that vinyl does suffer a sort of fatigue that impairs its resilience, and therefore its resistance to damage, for hours after it is subjected to extreme instantaneous loads—and remember that a stylus force of only a few grams works out to the equivalent of tons per square inch when you allow for the minute surface over which those few grams are distributed. As far as we know, however, these experiments either were conducted with older record-playing equipment, using much higher tracking forces than are common today, or were conducted under exaggerated test conditions that did not simulate modern record-playing parameters. Indeed, the most recent tests we have heard of seem to indicate that record wear poses remarkably little threat to audible sound quality with good, modern equipment, properly maintained. Since these tests were conducted by playing the same record grooves on a continuous-cycle basis, we see no reason to worry about vinyl's recovery characteristics—unless your equipment isn't up to snuff.



P R E S S U R E  
G A U G E

1

3/4

## 1,000-play tests prove this is the longest-playing cartridge.

Nobody ever dared to challenge a stereo cartridge the way we did—but nobody ever created a cartridge like our 999VE before.

We designed it to give audio purists superb playback of all frequencies, at any groove velocity, at tracking forces so low that records would still sound brand-new after 1,000 plays—about a 991-play improvement over ordinary cartridges.

Whether we used standard commercial recordings or special stereo test records, our results were identical. For low and middle frequencies, no audible or measurable wear, distortion or frequency loss after 1,000 plays.

With high frequencies, from 2k to 20kHz, 1,000 plays produced no audible

changes in the test records. The only measurable change: after a full 1,000 plays were a 3db loss at 20kHz, and a maximum induced distortion of 0.1% at a groove velocity of 14 cm/sec.

When we published these sensational figures, the professionals couldn't believe it. Until they tried the 999VE themselves.

The results they've been publishing ever since are just as dramatic as ours.

STEREO REVIEW tested all cartridges capable of tracking at 1 gram or less and rated the 999VE #1 in performance.

HI-FI SOUND called the 999VE "A real hi-fi masterpiece... a remarkable cartridge unlikely to wear out: discs any more rapidly than a feather held against the spin-

ning groove."

HIGH FIDELITY found "that high-frequency peak invariably found in former magnetic pickups has been designed out of the audible range [for a frequency response] that remains within +2.5, -2db from 20Hz to 20,000 Hz."

AUDIO MAGAZINE said "Outstanding square waves. Tops in separation."

POPULAR SCIENCE picked the 999VE hands-down as the cartridge for "The Stereo System I Wish I Owned" designed by Electronics Editor Ronald M. Benrey.

If you want the best stereo cartridge money can buy, you want the 999VE, \$74.95.

The 999VE **EMPIRE**

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# IT'S ONLY

# \$200.00

excellent. Solid-state i.f. filters are used. With their help alternate channel selectivity reaches a full 70 dB. What's more, they never require realignment.

While we streamlined the 6040, we did provide a number of im-

Sony has placed its name on an under \$200 FM stereo/FM-AM receiver — the Sony STR-6040. We broke the \$200 price barrier without putting the slightest dent in quality. We did it by eliminating the unessentials, designing an amplifier with less than a super power rating and by drawing upon advanced radar and microwave technology in the tuner design.

The amplifier delivers 30 watts RMS continuous power into 8 ohms, both channels operating — more than enough to drive even relatively inefficient "bookshelf"-size speaker systems to room-

filling volume, without distortion.

The tuner employs a completely passive front end. There is no amplification of the incoming signal frequency. This eliminates two common problems: internally generated background hiss and overloading of weak stations by strong ones (spurious-response rejection is 100 dB down).

The Sony 6040 comes through with flying colors in all areas essential to superior receiver performance. Sensitivity, stereo separation, capture ratio and noise suppression characteristics are

important operating conveniences: switches for easy selection between the most common program sources, radio or records and for instant comparison between original and recorded program material; automatic stereo/mono circuitry; a headphone jack and an auxiliary input on the front panel; and precise tuning meter.

The Sony name, Sony quality and an un-Sony-like under-\$200 price tag. That's the Sony 6040, and that's beautiful music.

Sony Corporation of America, 47-47 Van Dam St., Long Island City, N.Y. 11101. **SONY®**



## AR AND THE NOW COMPOSERS

The title is rather forbidding: Acoustic Research Contemporary Music Project. But it stands for an undertaking that could bear exciting results. ARCMP will record contemporary American music in sufficient quantity to produce twenty-six broadcasts a year for distribution to FM stations throughout the U.S. and abroad. In addition, the music will be issued on stereo discs that will be available to the public at about \$2.00 each.

In AR's own words, the project will aim "to present a wide spectrum of composers and works. Where justifiable, the scope will extend backward in the Twentieth Century. . . . The main criterion for the choice of works will be whether they are essentially representative of music in America today."

Funding for the project will come, of course, from Acoustic Research, Inc., the Cambridge, Mass. audio manufacturer. It was originally conceived by AR's Bob Berkovitz as a means by which the company could serve both American composers and their audience in opening a line of communication between the two groups free of the commercial pressures that prevent such an approach on the part of the major recording companies. Direct communication will be aided by the ease with which the listener can have access to the music—the broadcasts and low-cost LPs—and by the control over technical means that will be offered to the composers.

Indeed, composers will themselves be in charge of the project. An advisory panel includes some of the most respected names in contemporary American composition: Milton Babbitt, Elliott Carter, Aaron Copland, Gunther Schuller, and Roger Sessions. In addition, a panel of music educators will act as the program com-

mittee. This committee is headed by project director David Epstein of MIT, and includes Earl Kim of Harvard, Seymour Shifrin of Brandeis, and Donald Martino of the New England Conservatory.

The LPs will be mastered and pressed in Germany by Deutsche Grammophon from tapes produced under the direction of Thomas Mowrey of the Eastman School of Music, who for some years was in charge of classical repertoire at Vox. Distribution of broadcast materials will be handled by William French, who also represents the Boston Symphony Transcription Trust, the Philadelphia Orchestra Transcription Trust, and the Marlboro Festival broadcasts.

It is more than coincidence that Messrs. Mowrey, French, and Berkovitz all have been involved in recent four-channel recording projects, AR having worked with both the Eastman School and the Boston Symphony Orchestra in the four-channel medium. The contemporary music project too will avail itself of four-channel recordings wherever possible, and the composers who are invited to participate are being made aware of the fact so that they may take advantage of the new medium's potential.

The first recording to be taped under the project's aegis, in fact, does just that. It is Milton Babbitt's *Philomel*, for soprano and four electronically synthesized channels. The RCA synthesizer at Princeton, where Mr. Babbitt teaches, was first programmed to produce the four electronic channels. Then soprano Bethany Beardslee sang live with the "instruments" to produce the four-channel master tape. It will, of course, be mixed down to two channels for both broadcast release and LP mastering. But should four-channel recordings emerge as a commercial reality, the AR Project tapes will certainly be regarded as an important source of recorded materials.

CIRCLE 146 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## WHAT FUTURE FOR SCA?

**NEW** Background SCA Music Programs in Your Home with NO COMMERCIALS!

**MS-1 MUSIC SYSTEM**

**\$119.95**

**What is SCA?**  
Use 400 FM stations throughout the country to enjoy SCA commercial-free background music programs in restaurants and other public places. With a special decoder adapter you can listen to these SCA programs with this receiver.

**Solid-State AM/FM Stereo Receiver plus SCA**

- Built-in Background Music Decoder • Tuning Meter for AM and FM
- Input Jacks for Record Changer or Tape
- Stereo Indicator Light • Walnut Finish Plastic Case

A stereo receiver with a built-in background music decoder is the perfect choice for the listener who wants to enjoy the best of both worlds. The MS-1 Music System is a solid-state receiver that can receive both SCA background music programs and regular FM broadcasts. It features a built-in background music decoder, a tuning meter for AM and FM, input jacks for record changer or tape, a stereo indicator light, and a walnut finish plastic case. The MS-1 Music System is priced at \$119.95.

SCA broadcasters objected to this ad, offering receiver that picks up background music as well as regular FM.

If you read this column in our June issue, you may remember an item dealing with SCA (Subsidiary Communication Authorization), that behind-the-scenes sub-carrier system by which background music is beamed via FM to restaurants, shops, and other commercial establishments without disturbing the FM station's regular broadcasts. Reception of the background music channel requires use of a special SCA adapter or receiver; and it is normally through the licensing of this reception equipment that the broadcaster earns back the cost of operating the music service.

The SCA receiver was the key idea in that previous column since Lafayette was, at that time, selling one made by S.C.A. Services Co., Inc.—the only such full receiver we had seen on the market. Usually only a kit version of an adapter is sold; it must be built and wired into an FM tuner or receiver by the user. The SCA-music industry has tolerated manufacturers of these adapters the way a horse tolerates flies: they're too little to bother with, and anyway there's not much that can be done. SCA broadcasters seem to feel that few commercial establishments are going to want to muck about with a hot soldering iron just to save a few bucks. And the FCC, while establishing that the pirating of SCA

Continued on page 50

# Stop listening to squashed music.

Virtually all conventional speaker systems project music in a direct, forward pattern with rather limited dispersion in all planes. The music comes at you in a narrow path and sounds as if all of the air has been squeezed out of it. If you are not sitting in just the right spot or if the speakers are placed badly, the total stereo effect of the music is all but lost.

Unlike conventional speaker systems, our new HK 25 omnidirectional speakers deliver 360 degrees of sound. The three major benefits of omnidirectional sound are: (1) it dramatically increases stereo depth, (2) it spreads the stereo effect throughout the listening room and (3) it improves the character of the sound itself; bass becomes richer and deeper, the highs smoother and sweeter.

The HK25 is a two-way system with crossover network. It covers the entire audio spectrum through the use of a rugged, long-throw six inch bass driver and 2¼ inch tweeter. Response is exceptionally linear. Nominal impedance is 8 ohms and the system will handle 35 watts of music power with ease.

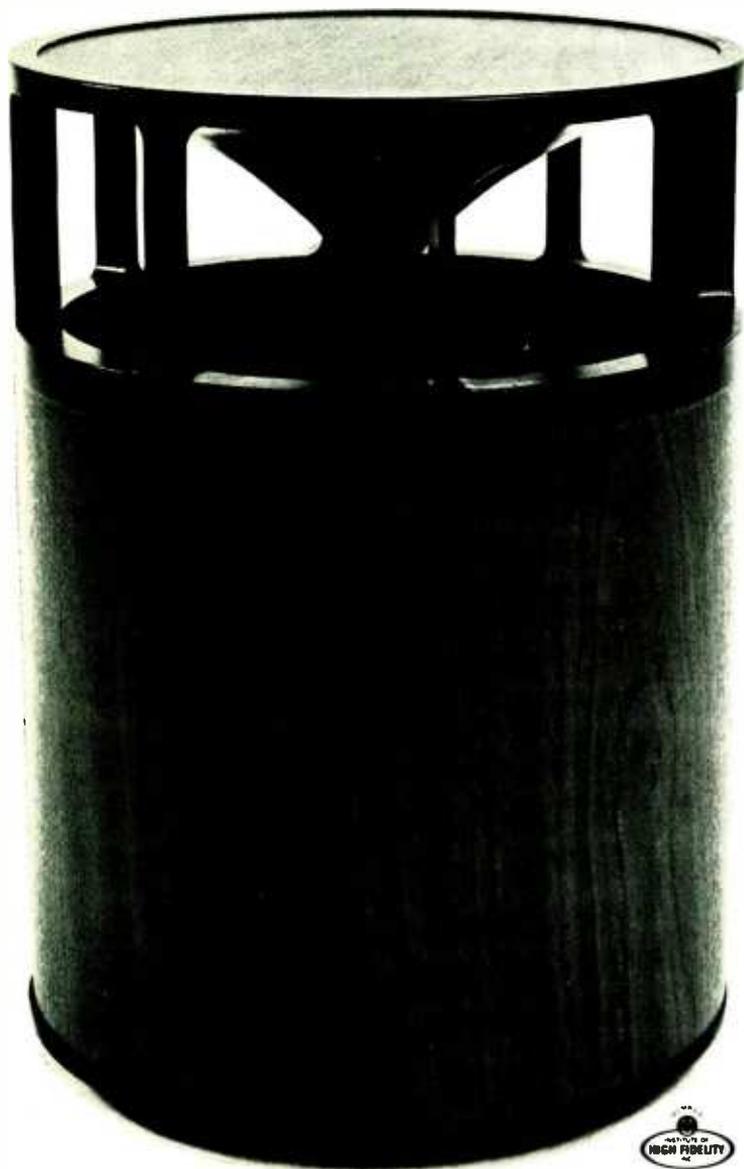
At \$69.95\*, the HK25 is an extraordinary value in sound. It is available now at your Harman-Kardon dealer. Listen to it soon. We think you will agree it represents an entirely new and totally refreshing approach to music listening.

For more information, write to Harman-Kardon, Inc., 55 Ames Court, Plainview, N.Y. 11803, Dept HF 11

\*Minimum resale price.

**harman kardon**

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CIRCLE 32 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

# Only Marantz Has Gyro

## What's a Marantz?

Any audio engineer or stereo hobbyist will tell you. Marantz builds the world's finest high-fidelity components. And has for fifteen years.

This message, therefore, is not to engineers but to professional musicians, serious music-lovers, and beginning stereo hobbyists. We'd like to introduce you to Marantz.

### Never Heard Of Marantz?

Until this year, the least-expensive Marantz stereo component you could buy cost \$300.00. And our FM tuner alone cost \$750.00! To own a Marantz, you either had to be moderately wealthy or willing to put beans on the table for awhile. But it was worth it. And a lot of experts thought so, too, because the word soon got around, and the products sold themselves.

### What The Competition Said

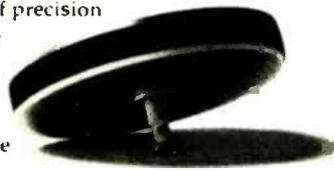
The chief design engineer of a major competitor once said that no one even tries to compete with Marantz' redundant-design philosophy. Redundant designs are used in spacecraft and all advanced technology where it's vital to have foolproof reliability and performance.

### Gyro-Touch Tuning

Even tuning a Marantz FM unit is a unique experience. Other manufacturers connect the tuning knob to the electronic device which actually tunes in the station by mechanical means of gears or pulleys. That's not good enough for Marantz – nor should it be for you. We couple the tuning

wheel directly – for the smoothest, most precise tuning possible. The tuning wheel never sticks, binds, or drags. We call this patented pleasure "Gyro-Touch tuning."

In order to give you full benefit from this kind of precision tuning, the more-expensive Marantz units utilize a unique built-in oscilloscope.



### Features, Not Gimmicks

The unique features of a Marantz component are there for only one purpose: to make possible the highest level of listening enjoyment.

That's why we put an oscilloscope in our best components.

An oscilloscope is kind of a TV tube. But instead of the Wednesday Night Movie, it shows you a green wavy line. An electronic picture of the incoming FM radio signal, telling you exactly how to rotate your antenna for minimum multipath distortion (ghost signals) and maximum signal strength (clarity) even from the weakest stations.

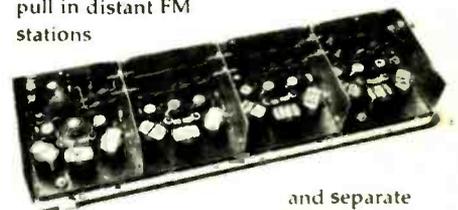
The "scope" also shows correct stereo phasing; that is, if the broadcasting transmitter or your other equipment is out of phase. And it lets you set up



optimum stereo performance and reception to create a solid "wall" of sound.

### Butterworth Filters

You've probably never heard of Butterworth filters because no one else uses them besides Marantz. And the U.S. Military. Other manufacturers feel they can get by without them. And they can. Because their standards don't have to measure up to Marantz'. Butterworth filters let you hear music more clearly, with less distortion, and, unlike their conventional I.F. coil or filter counterparts, they never need realignment. They help pull in distant FM stations



and separate those right next to each other on the dial. Although Butterworths cost more, Marantz designed not one but four of them into their Model 18 receiver.

### Built To Last

Marantz stereo components aren't built in the ordinary way. For example, instead of just soldering connections together with a soldering iron, Marantz uses a unique, highly sophisticated wave-guide soldering machine – the type demanded by the military. The result: perfect,

CIRCLE 45 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

# -Touch Tuning!

failproof connections every time. Even our printed circuit boards are a



special type—glass epoxy—built to rigid military specifications, ensuring ruggedness and dependability.

#### Marantz Power Ratings Are True

When someone tells you he has a "100-watt amplifier," ask him how the power was rated. Chances are his 100 watts will shrink to about 75 or 50 or perhaps even as few as 25. The reason is that—except for Marantz—most manufacturers of stereo amplifiers measure power by an inflated "peak," or "IHF music dynamic" power.

Only Marantz states its power as "RMS continuous power." Because this is the only method of measurement that is a true, absolute, scientific indication of how much undistorted power your amplifier can put out continuously over the entire audible frequency range.

For example, if Marantz were to use the unscientific conventional method, our Model Sixteen 80-RMS-80 power amplifier could be rated as high as 320 watts per channel!

Moreover, you can depend on Marantz to perform. For example, the Marantz

80-RMS-80 amplifier can be run all day at its full power rating without distortion (except for neighbors pounding on your wall). That's power. And that's Marantz.

#### Marantz Speaks Louder Than Words

In a way, it's a shame we have to get even semitechnical to explain in words what is best described in the medium of sound. For, after all, Marantz is for the listener. No matter what your choice in music, you want to hear it as closely as possible to the way it was performed.

In spite of what the ads say, you can't really "bring the concert hall into your home." For one thing, your listening room is too small. Its acoustics are different. And a true concert-hall sound level (in decibels) at home would deafen you.

What Marantz does, however, is create components that most closely recreate the sounds exactly as they were played by the musical performers. Components that consistently represent "where it's at" in stereo design. No one gives you as much—in any price range—as Marantz.

#### Every Marantz Is Built The Same Way

Every Marantz component, regardless of price, is built with the same painstaking

craftsmanship and quality materials. That's why Marantz guarantees every instrument for three full years, parts and labor.

#### Now In All Price Ranges

Today, there is a demand for Marantz quality in other than very-high price ranges. A demand made by music-lovers who want the very best but must consider their budgets. Though you can easily invest more than \$2000.00 in Marantz components, we now have units starting as low as \$199. True, these lower-priced models don't have all of the same features, but the quality of *every* Marantz is exactly the same. Marantz quality.

And quality is what Marantz is all about.

#### Hear For Yourself

So now that you *know* what makes a Marantz a Marantz, *hear* for yourself. Then let your ears make up your mind.



**marantz.**  
A subsidiary of Superscope Inc.

© Marantz Co., Inc. 1969 P.O. Box 99A Sun Valley, Calif. 91352 Illustrated above, Model 26 Price \$199. Send for free catalog

CIRCLE 45 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

broadcasts for commercial use is illegal, has left essentially unresolved the case of the many private citizens who want the commercial-less SCA music in their homes.

The availability of a wired receiver, though, seems to have been more than the SCA people can stand. Apparently as a result of pressure from companies like Muzak that make a profit from SCA, the FCC has asked Lafayette to discontinue sales of the receiver. At this writing, there's still no conclusive ruling that sale of the receivers infringes the rights of the broadcasters in any way unless the receivers are put to commercial use, mind you. But, we understand, the receiver will not appear in the next Lafayette catalogue.

If the FCC's action suggests government by indecision, the Commission may yet be forced to take a positive stand in the near future. And the crisis may come over the broadcasting of four-channel materials similar to the Boston Symphony Orchestra series this fall and the Vanguard Surround Stereo tapes.

From several quarters, we hear murmurings about the possibility of using an SCA carrier for the additional channels. According to Len Feldman, long a contributor to this and other magazines dealing with high fidelity, and an industry insider with considerable interest in the future of SCA, two approaches are possible. One is to broadcast two SCA channels: the station would carry the two front channels of the four-channel original via the usual multiplexing and the two rear channels separately on SCA. The resultant SCA bandwidth would limit the frequency response—of the rear channels only—to something like 8 kHz at the top end, but

presumably would provide sufficient information in the critical midrange to make the effect convincing. The alternative would be to trade separation in the rear image for additional bandwidth by adding the rear channels together and transmitting them on a single, less restricted SCA carrier. Since separation in the rear channels is minimal for much of the four-channel material, these three-channel broadcasts could be almost as effective as a full complement of channels.

It appears that a number of broadcasters are playing with the SCA-four-channel idea at present. If and when one of them gets on the air, it will raise an interesting question: the broadcasts will be intended for public—not commercial—consumption. So how can the FCC effectively restrict sales of the SCA equipment necessary to receive them? If it does, won't it be suppressing a vital development in FM? And if it doesn't, won't we be right back where we started with the public sale of SCA adapters?

### MATCHMAKERS

Despite the plug-it-in-and-enjoy philosophy made feasible by modern stereo systems, some audiophiles are forever rooting among the bins in radio parts stores like hogs in search of truffles, seeking the right connectors and gadgets to get a little more flexibility out of their equipment. If you're one of them, may we suggest Switchcraft's Audio Accessories catalogue A-404. It is packed with gizmos that will mate or mix just about anything with everything in the way of high fidelity.

CIRCLE 156 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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## equipment in the news

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### Rabco adapts to AR

Owners of AR turntables may now mount the Rabco SL-8 servo-controlled straight-line tracking arm on their units. In addition to the SL-8 itself, which sells for \$149.50, they will need the new MK 101 Adapter Kit, which lists for \$12. All SL-8s beginning with serial number 600 come with bracket predrilled to accept the adapter.

CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

### Multiple features in Sansui receiver

The Sansui 4000 is an AM/stereo FM receiver that includes circuit modules among its many features. It will handle three sets of speakers, individually or in pairs, through a front-panel switch. The tuner section has a stereo-only switch to bypass mono stations; it also is equipped with muting and multiplex noise filter. Back-panel connections include both 75-ohm coax and 300-ohm twinlead connections; antenna and speaker connections are a clip type that is said to prevent accidental shorting. A DIN back-panel connection matches European tape recorder leads. Power is rated at 65 watts continuous per channel into 4-ohm loads; the price is \$378.95.

CIRCLE 154 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



*Continued on page 52*



## *Versatility that's surpassed only by performance*

A new criterion of excellence in sound has arrived. The Pioneer SX-1500TD AM/FM multiplex stereo receiver was meticulously designed for the audio perfectionist. Its advanced design circuitry, incorporating an FET front end and IC's IF strip, offers an array of features for the ultimate in stereo performance. Music power is at a zenith of 180 watts, rated in compliance with the standards of the Institute of High Fidelity. Extremely versatile, it provides six sets of inputs. The pre and main amplifiers may be used independently. An exclusive highlight is

the unique facility for Dynamic Microphone Mixing which provides simultaneous recording with broadcast music... voice over music announcements... 5-position speaker selection for announcements over speakers in several locations. You can connect up to three different speaker systems. Complementing its magnificent sound reproduction is the subdued elegance of the hand rubbed, oiled walnut cabinet faced with brushed silver and jet. Hear the true sound of quality at your Pioneer dealer. Only \$399.95, including microphone.

**PIONEER**

PIONEER ELECTRONICS U.S.A. CORPORATION, 140 Smith Street, Farmingdale, N. Y. 11735 • (516) 694-7720  
West Coast: 1335 W. 134th Street, Gardena, Calif. 90249 - (213) 323-2374 & 321-1076 • In Canada: S. H. Parker Co., Prov. of Ontario

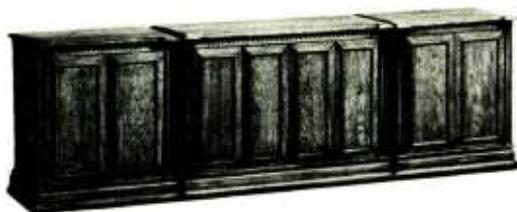
CIRCLE 83 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## EQUIPMENT IN THE NEWS

Continued from page 50

### Speakers and cabinetry: a matched set



Altec Lansing has introduced the Model 871A Milano speaker system, which houses the company's A-7 "Voice of the Theatre" drivers in an Italian provincial cabinet of pecan-finish hickory. A matching equipment cabinet completes the ensemble, designated as Model 885-871. Doors fold out of the way when the speakers are in use; right-opening and left-opening versions are available. The speakers sell for \$395 each.

**CIRCLE 152 ON READER-SERVICE CARD**

### New tuner from Scott

An unusual feature is pointed out by Scott in introducing its 330T AM/stereo FM tuner: monitor speakers can be driven from the front panel headphone jacks, making it possible to use the 330T without a power amplifier where that should be desirable. It is, however, designed as a high-performance tuner and incorporates many of the features of the recent 382C receiver—including Perfect-tune automatic tuning circuitry. Price of the 330T will be about \$199.

**CIRCLE 151 ON READER-SERVICE CARD**



### Teac turntable magnetically suspended

The TS-85 Magnefloat automatic turntable, the first turntable to be marketed in the U.S. by Teac, uses a magnetic suspension system that is said to carry fifty per cent of the turntable's weight to reduce bearing friction and aid in isolating the platter from external shock and feedback. A two-speed unit, the TS-85 is equipped with arm lifter, antiskating, and automatic shutoff. It also features a switched output transformer with positions for either moving-magnet or moving-coil cartridges. The price of \$299.50 includes base, dust cover, and a moving coil cartridge with elliptical stylus.

**CIRCLE 153 ON READER-SERVICE CARD**

### Pioneer's black and blue look

The new Model SX-700 AM/FM receiver from Pioneer features a stark black front panel on which the tuning dial lights up in blue when the set is in use. Output power is rated at 70 watts (IHF) total into 4 ohms. Tuner circuitry, which contains an FET front end and ICs in the IF section, is rated at 1.8  $\mu$ V sensitivity with a signal-to-noise ratio of 70 dB. The SX-770 is priced at \$249.95.

**CIRCLE 149 ON READER-SERVICE CARD**



### Portable VTR uses quarter-inch tape

Roberts has announced the Model 1050 portable VTR which can record up to twenty minutes on a five-inch reel of quarter-inch tape with a resolution of 250 lines, according to the company. The VTR has a built-in playback monitor screen and operates on batteries, or on AC with an adapter. The entire system—including recorder, camera, and adapter—costs \$1,800.

**CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVICE CARD**

**INTRODUCING**  
a most significant breakthrough  
in home stereo reproduction . . .

## The WHARFEDALE Model W80 VARIFLEX® Speaker System

This new concept completely eliminates the usual limitations involving speaker placement!

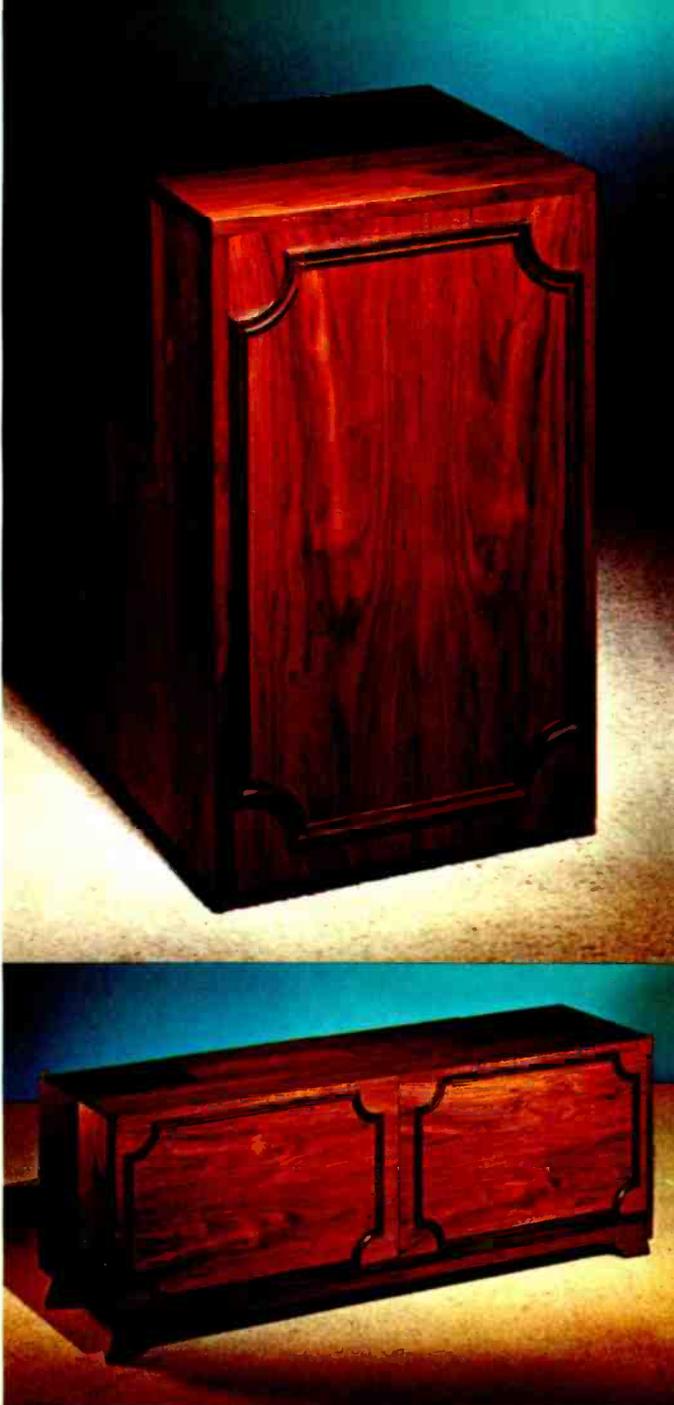
- The VARIFLEX requires no special spacing apart, or from a wall or above a floor.
- It can be used in pairs, anywhere in the room.
- Or, two W80 speakers can be used to form a single 56" console.
- VARIFLEX brings balanced stereo sound to the listener.
- Stereo perception is *preserved*, rather than splattered promiscuously by uncontrolled room acoustics or speaker elements.
- No need to disturb existing high fidelity systems. Does not require electronic equalizer.
- Exclusive sand-filled construction, to eliminate undesirable enclosure resonances and coloration.
- Modest in size (only 17" x 17¼" x 29"), the W80 is truly fine furniture, attractively styled to enhance rooms of virtually any decor.

Wharfedale . . . a pioneer in reflected and indirect sound techniques, as evidenced by a number of such speaker designs introduced over the years . . . refrained from introducing the W80 until the VARIFLEX technique could be refined into a carefully executed, easily utilized speaker system that not only would satisfy the acoustic objectives, but would retain the uncompromised *quality* of the reproduced sound. The W80 achieves both objectives successfully.

### What is VARIFLEX?

Ordinary reflective and "omni" speaker systems have one thing in common: Sound dispersal is promiscuous and therefore subject to acoustical phase distortions caused by the shape and furnishings of the room. Splattered sound, whether solely against a wall or through use of a conical reflector in the speaker enclosure, is *uncontrolled* sound. Hence, in the case of some types of systems, "optimum" spacing is recommended from a wall or above the floor. In other instances, sound is projected over a wide area, equally, from both speakers of a stereo pair. But, in this case it should be obvious that the *levels* at which sounds of different frequencies arrive from both channels to a given point in the room are unequal and therefore *unbalanced*. In both instances, room conditions play further havoc because the distribution pattern of sound is fixed and therefore unable to accommodate the multitude of differences which exist between rooms and the general listening areas.

The Wharfedale VARIFLEX employs a *variable* device which bends sound waves in a definite and controllable manner so as to form the particular sound distribution pattern *required* by room conditions and/or the listening and decor needs of the user. It is capable of directing sound waves both in the vertical or horizontal planes, or any combination of these angles.



Pair of W80's on B68 Base

### VARIFLEX | The Need for *Controlled* Sound

There are differing schools of thought among acoustics engineers on how live sound reaches the listener in a concert hall. The loudspeaker engineer must also keep in mind the differences in operating conditions of a room in the typical home, as compared with the environment of the concert hall. There are, nonetheless, several significant considerations which must be taken into account, if any design of loudspeaker system may be said to have reproduced the original sound with reasonable fidelity.

Briefly, it must be recognized that the acoustics of a large concert hall, with its great expanse, high ceilings and generally hard surfaces are in sharp contrast to the shape, dimensions and furnishings of a typical room in a home. To emulate in the home the sound propagation characteristics of the concert hall too closely can, in fact, compound those characteristics into a disfiguration of the original sound. The program source, be it a disc, tape or broadcast, has already interpreted the conglomeration of actual sounds and reflections, as seen by the microphones which are the originating pick-up device. Similarly, even in studio recordings, the careful separation and balancing of sounds achieved by the recording director and engineers must remain

unviolated by the playback reproducing system.

Consider, too, that the propagative qualities of different musical instruments are quite dissimilar, so that where an entire orchestra is concerned, the direct vs. indirect distribution of sound is not only a function of the concert hall's acoustics but also, and very prominently, a function of the individual instruments and their respective positions on stage. In studio recording, where close pick-up techniques and soundproofed rooms are frequently employed, the distribution pattern of the various musical instruments again takes on a tonal quality that can be quite different from that of an open concert hall.

Clearly then, whether the source of the live program is the concert hall stage or the recording studio, the sole purpose of the loudspeaker system is to bring to the listener the sound as *originally experienced*.

Therefore, a speaker system which uses a predetermined ratio of direct to indirect sound distribution, and applies reflected sound that cannot be adjusted, is obviously *adding* an aural effect that is not in the original program . . . and that effect will vary uncontrollably with room acoustics and furnishings. Similarly, a speaker system which attempts to simulate the effect of wide-angle

propagation of sound (usually through use of an inverted reflecting cone or by an array of speakers in a circle or several quadrants of a cabinet) merely creates a splashing or scattering effect that is also fixed, and equally affected by room acoustics. The basic thought that needs to be borne in mind is that the listener to any live performance is almost never *surrounded* by the program source, unless perhaps he is one of the musicians! The totality of the sound comes from a particular direction, and depending upon the nature of the sound (voice vs. small combo vs. full symphony orchestra, etc.) it is either a confined point in space or over a broad dimension. True "stereo", therefore, is the listener's ability to distinguish the direction of the total sound and the individual components of the sound. If this requirement of "stereo" is compromised, then all that really results is a room full of sounds unbalanced and unrelated to the acoustical and musical composition of the original. If one wishes merely for that, it can easily be accomplished using mono programs on speaker systems of the fixed reflector and "omni" inverted cone types. This is, in fact, exactly what was often done in the earlier days before stereo, to enhance the spatial effect of mono programs.

## VARIFLEX | What It Does

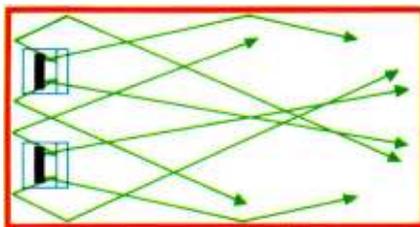
Low frequency sound waves (bass and low mids) spread energy throughout a room with a minimum of attenuation and do not exhibit noticeable restriction of dispersion. It is often stated, therefore, that retention of the stereo characteristics for such frequencies is not really important. It would be better to qualify that viewpoint by saying that the perception of directionality of the bass and low mid frequencies are not "as critical" as for the rest of the spectrum. However, the retention of a sense of direction *does* preserve the fidelity and the "balance" which existed in the original program. Speaker systems which house the bass speaker in a manner which produces a 360° dispersion, for example facing downward to radiate against the floor, appreciably dilute whatever directionality might have been retained. In the model W80 VARIFLEX, the bass speaker faces *upward and into a mixing chamber* . . . a carefully oriented arrangement of complementary mid and treble speakers, to *blend* the sounds of the entire ensemble . . . just as these same sounds blend within the orchestra.

We agree with the usual contention that the normal mid and treble ranges provide the greatest recognition of "stereo" spatial separation. It is, in fact, for this very strong reason that the dispersion characteristics of those frequencies *must* be controlled, rather than left to the mercy of individual room acoustics and other varying operating conditions. (The importance of this was previously explained.) For these reasons, the VARIFLEX incorporates a device which permits the user to literally direct the mid and treble frequencies in any direction needed to accommodate room acoustics, furnishings, placement and spacing of the speaker systems. So completely independent of these factors is the VARIFLEX, it makes no difference how far apart the speakers are from each other, or how far away from a wall. If desired, the speakers may even be mounted off the floor on a wall, and still provide the same degree of performance and operating flexibility.



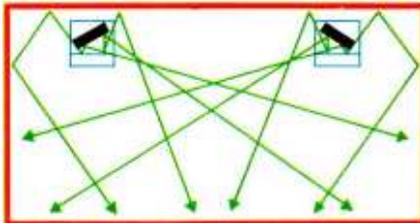
This exceptional versatility is achieved by means of a 10" hard-surfaced disc, with universal mounting, which enables it to be placed in any combination of vertical-to-horizontal angular positions. It is, in effect, a variplanular reflector. The disc is situated with respect to the speakers, so that *both* reflection and deflection can be achieved, sending the sound waves into the room in any desired direction. It is round in shape to prevent unwanted sharp diffractory effects (as would occur from a rectangular device) as well as to provide only the amount of reflection the design intends. With the cabinet placed against a wall, the surface of the wall is, additionally, brought into play for even broader spread of the sound. The dispersion characteristics of the individual mid and treble speakers are carefully tailored to employ only that portion of the variplanular disc required, so that an amount of sound is permitted to "escape" from the "mixing" chamber to complete the sound distribution pattern in directions other than that being directed by the disc.

What, in total occurs, is that sound is projected by the disc into that part of a room where it is needed but would otherwise be lacking in level and/or frequency response, while the remaining normal distribution of sound from the speakers covers the rest of the room.



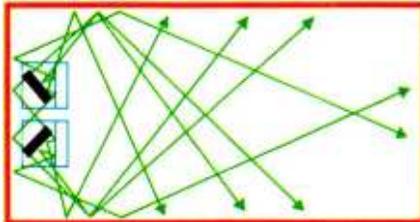
### Speakers Spaced Normally Apart

With two W80 speaker systems spaced 6 to 8 feet apart, the variplanular discs can be set as shown. The disc is tilted back towards the wall, by an amount determined by the distance from the wall that is most convenient to the user. Instructions provided with the system describe how to set the disc. In this application, the exceptionally wide angle dispersion of the system is used in a normal fashion, while at the same time deflecting some of the sound to the wall, for still greater reflection and dramatic "openness" of sound.



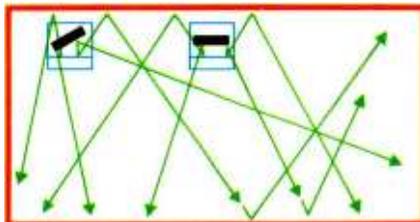
### Speakers Spaced Far Apart

With two W80 speaker systems spaced far apart — even as much as 15 feet or more — the variplanular discs are set as shown. The discs in this case have been tilted back for deflection to the wall, and at an appropriate angle *toward the center* for reflection of the sound to what otherwise would remain a void between the two speakers. This fills the "hole" in the middle and results in a very smooth sound pattern along the entire distance. Heretofore, it has been necessary to introduce a "third channel", with a third speaker located between the usual two, to overcome this problem.



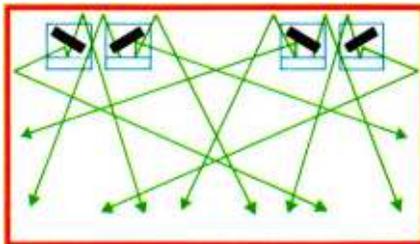
### Speakers Spaced Very Closely

With two W80 speaker systems spaced very closely together — under six feet apart — the variplanular discs are set as shown. In this case, the discs are tilted back for deflection to the wall, and at angles *away from the center* for reflection of sound to areas that otherwise would not be reached by sound in proper balance.



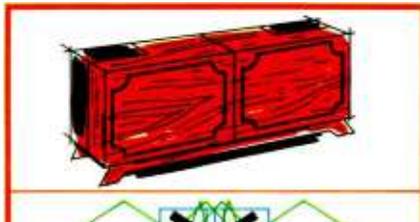
### Listening Areas Off-Center From Speakers

Since sound from a VARIFLEX speaker can be projected in any direction, it becomes obvious that a pair of W80 can be set up to cope with a situation where the general listening area is sufficiently off axis from the location of the speakers to cause a serious compromise of the stereo illusion. In such instances, the variplanular discs are set *unequally*, with each W80 being set to cover respective areas as needed.



### Expanding the W80

The W80 can be used in multiples, for still greater power handling capacity and superior acoustical coverage of particularly large areas, as in a small auditorium, music appreciation assembly hall, catering establishments, etc. Two W80s are placed side by side, connected to one stereo channel. Another pair is connected to the other stereo channel. The variplanular discs of a *pair* of W80 would be tilted back for wall deflection, and *away from the center* to provide an extremely wide angle of projection, or adjusted for an *unequal* sound pattern, where room conditions dictate the need.



### Single Console Stereo

The *ultimate* in applying Wharfedale's W80 VARIFLEX speakers. Two W80s can be employed as a "single" console to provide uncompromised, perfectly balanced broad angle stereo . . . using only 56" of wall space. The two speakers are placed on their sides on an optional set of legs (model B68), with the "bottoms" of the cabinet facing each other at the center. The resulting paths of sound are outward toward the ends, and over the top and around the underside. The variplanular discs are tilted back for wall deflection, and each disc is also turned at angles *away from the center* to reflect sound out from the ends of the "console" . . . resulting in an acoustic lengthening of the console by several feet! Overall distribution of sound is remarkably smooth, and there is the added advantage of close coupling of the extreme low frequencies, yielding a bass response of exceptional depth and clarity.

## The W80 Components A Four-Way System

Only the finest, professional grade components are used. The woofer is a heavy duty 12½" unit with massive 9½ lbs. magnet assembly. The long-throw cone uses a very low resonance, high compliance rubber suspension for rich, deep bass. The bass chamber incorporates Wharfedale's exclusive sand-filled construction for elimination of cabinet coloration. The mid-range employs a 5" curvilinear cone in a separate chamber acoustically isolated from the

bass housing. Two different treble speakers are utilized, one for the sub-treble range; the other for extreme highs. Both have low mass aluminum voice coils and pressure dome diaphragms. Phase compensating diffusers provide for smoothest, linear response over the entire operating range . . . right out to inaudibility.

All the speakers are arranged in a carefully calculated configuration, to eliminate a common fault with multiple speaker systems: Acoustic division of sound. With the W80 you don't listen to part of a musical instrument but to all of it, and from its intended place in space.

Prices: W80 \$289.95 ea.  
B68 25.75



# Wharfedale

British Industries Co., Westbury, N. Y. 11590. Div. Avnet, Inc.

# "Scotch" Brand Cassettes prevent tape hangups

## Here's the inside story.

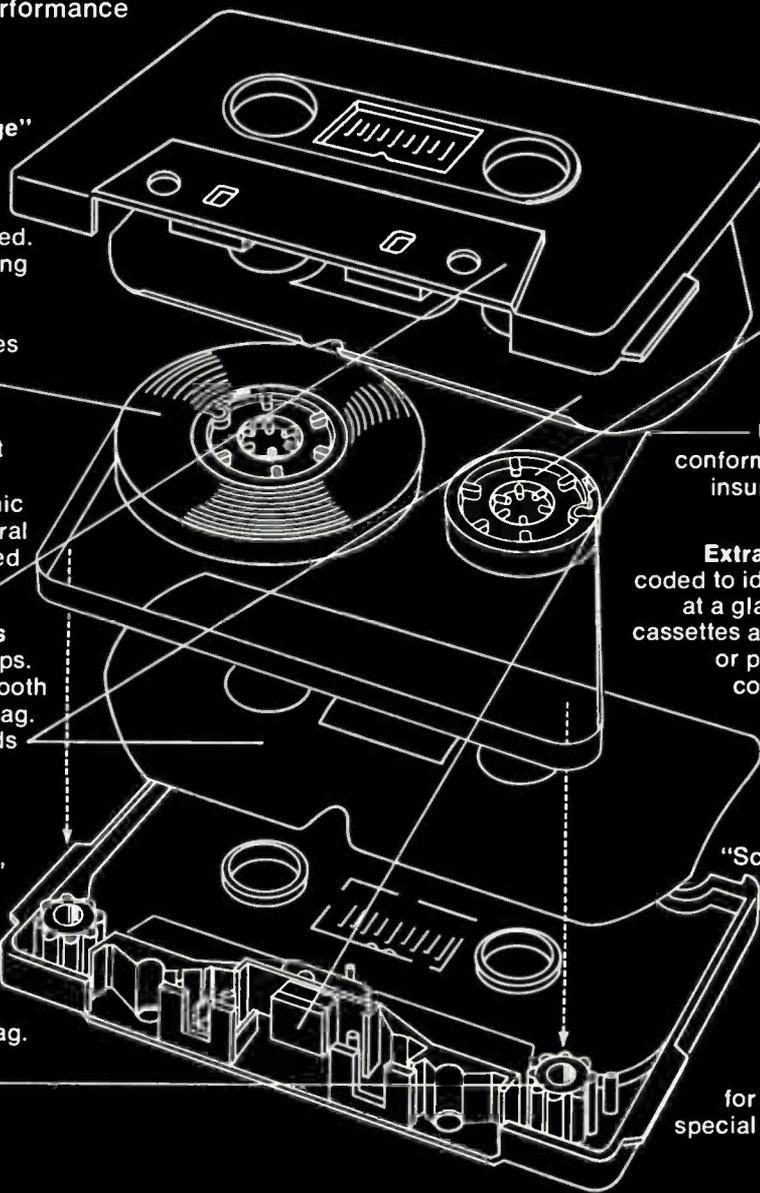
"Scotch" Brand builds in trouble-free performance with exclusive features:

**Famous "Dynarange" Magnetic Tape** provides highest possible fidelity at slow recording speed. A slick, tough coating affords smooth tape travel, resists oxide ruboff, assures long tape life.

**Precision-molded case** is high-impact plastic, features permanent ultrasonic sealing, large integral window. Color coded for recording time.

**Anti-friction shields** combat tape hangups. Exclusive, ultra-smooth material reduces drag. Bowed shape guards against uneven tape wind.

**Fixed tape guides** help prevent "wow" and "flutter" often caused by imperfect roller guides. Splined design cuts friction and drag.



**One-piece hub** locks leader tape securely, eliminates "bump" that can distort tape in winding.

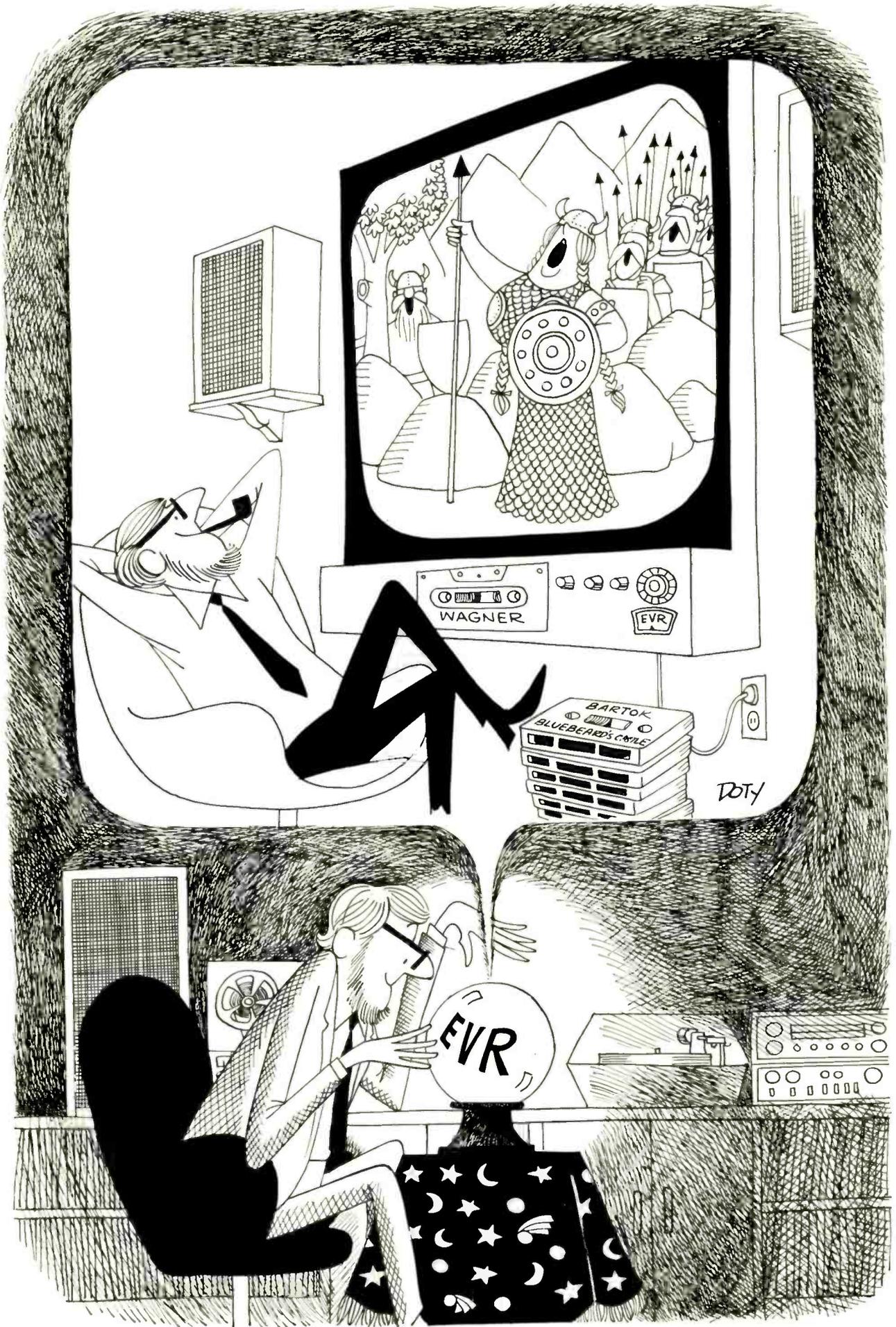
**Unitized pressure pad** conforms to recorder head to insure better tape contact.

**Extras:** Cassettes are color coded to identify recording times at a glance. 30, 60, 90-minute cassettes available in album-style or postal-approved plastic containers. Plus C-120 in album only.

Helpful booklet, "Recording Basics" is yours free with any "Scotch" Brand purchase from your nearest participating dealer. Or send 25¢ coin to cover handling to:  
 3M Company,  
 P.O. Box 3146  
 St. Paul, Minn. 55101.  
 Also ask your dealer for catalog of special premiums.

**3M**  
 COMPANY

"SCOTCH" AND "DYNARANGE" ARE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF 3M COMPANY.



by John Culshaw

# The Coming Revolution in Home Recordings or **WHERE DO WE GO FROM HEAR?**

The future lies with the audio-video cassette, says an expert who has been a pioneer in both the recording and television industries

DO WE WANT TO SEE what we are hearing? If so, do we want to see what our own eyes select as in a concert hall or an opera house, or what a director chooses for us, as in television or films? The fearful word is out, and we had better consider its implications carefully. In Europe, the present rumblings within the record industry about the coming of video seem very like the premonitions of that earlier earthquake, the long playing record, some twenty years ago. Various dignitaries solemnly said at the time not only that it couldn't happen, but that it mustn't happen. In *The Gramophone*, Sir Compton MacKenzie was utterly gloomy, and the *London Times* said it was quite premature. In the U.S., CBS went it alone and was followed a year or two later by Decca/London in Europe. I don't suppose it was easy for either management to make the decision, but, once made, it literally changed the face of the record. Artistically, technically, and physically it was a different product, one that would have to be packaged, promoted, and marketed in a different way. Whoever heard of a complete opera on four sides? In 1947 nobody had. Whoever heard of a complete opera on color video for home use? In 1969—

Nobody really knows how close we are to what may be the next revolution, nor quite what it will be like when it comes. My brief in this article is to elucidate some methods of production, and then to speculate. All we have thus far are, so to speak, some scribbings on the screen. There is EVR—Electronic Video Recording—which is a cassette system using electronically scanned film stock. It is essentially a prerecorded system, which means that you cannot use it to record your own material. It has recently been demonstrated in London, and professional opinions indicate that it has a fine quality picture but a pretty dismal sort of sound. Fairly jumbled reports from Japan suggest the existence of a shortly-to-be-revealed domestic VTR machine with color which, if marketed at a competitive price, would be useful not only for recording one's own material but for replaying prerecorded VTR tapes. This, of course, is entirely incompatible with the EVR system. And in Europe, there are mind-bending stories about video on disc. (Not that there is anything very strange about that. Recently, at the BBC in London, I watched beautiful color pictures reproduced from a disc recording; the only snag is that with the turntable revolving at a speed of 3,000 rpm, your playing time is down to 36

seconds or less, which is not of much use for *Parsifal*.) What is already obvious is the growing concern of the record industry to throw out tentacles in the direction of film and/or television companies which, if and when the time comes, will be able to provide the studio hardware to record in vision whatever material the record people think they can sell.

But it isn't as simple as that. First, let's ask the question: what do we gain by seeing? The very quick answer is that we gain a lot. Those critics of the audio disc who insist on the totality of operatic experience by eye as well as by ear are on the side of the angels. Few composers of any substance ever wrote an opera with the specific condition that it should be heard and not seen. Yet there are those of us who have found for some time now that, on occasion, we can get more pleasure and reward from recorded operas played at home than from the complicated social activity involved in getting to an opera house after a hard day's work, sitting for hours in an auditorium with all the rituals of public performance—and then getting home again, late, weary, and somehow disenchanted. Would home video amount to the perfect compromise? You could stay at home, the performance could start at any time you chose, and you would see as well as hear. Perfect? Well no, not entirely.

It's a question of proportion *within* the medium. I think there is a valid comparison between the experience of good stereo well reproduced at home and the experience of "live" music in the concert hall and opera house; but once we consider video, I have to admit that there's no comparison at all between the very best video image and the live image, or between video sound and the live or high fidelity sound. Video loses on every count. Think first of the size of the picture you will watch, which will be exactly the size of whatever television screen you own—and remember that the size of the screen will inevitably govern the *content of the picture*. To take a simple example: Stanley Kubrick's *2001* would not make much visual sense on a TV screen, whereas it almost knocks you over in Cinerama; of course if he had produced it for television, it would have been a totally different movie. Long shots (i.e., those taken from a distance) tend to make little effect on the small screen, whereas the close-up, which is what Cinerama can't handle, is

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television's greatest communicator. But an *opera* in close-up? There's the rub.

Similarly, it is the small size of the screen which hinders the effective presentation of symphonic music through video. If you stay in long-shot and don't fidget with the camera, the musicians in the orchestra come out peanut-sized and smudgy; but if you go in close you may throw up all sorts of undesirable distractions, like the clarinet player with a stain on his shirt or the cellist with a wart on his nose. I can't believe there is any future at all for symphonic music in any home video system while the screen remains anywhere near its present size. But if the screen expands, those of us at the other end could compose long shots containing images of recognizable human beings instead of peanuts; if that development occurs, there may be a video market after all, especially as one would expect improvement in sound quality to accompany any major increase in screen dimension. I have heard that RCA is in the process of developing such a screen, but home video may well be upon us before that arrives on the market.

At first, the companies are sure to turn to opera, or excerpts from opera, because of the visual potential. In terms of our present screens, the "Triumphal Scene" from *Aida* would either not work at all, or be minimized out of recognition; but *Così fan tutte* would work, and so would *Salome*, and so might *Tristan und Isolde*, *Bluebeard's Castle*, and *Orfeo*. But we still have to ask *how* they are going to be made, because at present there are several widely different techniques, each with its own advocates. Whatever the differences from company to company, no such basic disparity exists in the world of audio recording because it's a much simpler, and much older, medium.

The most common method of putting an opera on film is to record all the music first on a separate soundtrack, after which—when your track has been audio-edited—you put the artists in costume on the set and direct them to mime to a playback of the music. This has been a standard movie technique for years, and with time on your side and the right technical skills you can make it work for a musical.

However, I put forward the opinion that not only has it never worked for opera, but that it never will. Harsh words, but true. The old saying that opera is an irrational entertainment is still a basic, indelible fact, and when an opera singer is miming and not singing, he is totally out of his element. He is not projecting the one thing he knows how to project, which is his voice, plus whatever musical or dramatic sense that voice can impart to the opera. Ask him to mime, and he will instantly unleash all the pent-up ham which even the moderate disciplines of the opera stage have hitherto denied him. He will either look like an apoplectic goldfish in its final spasms or—worse—he will adopt the fancy of "naturalism," which means that, whatever the soundtrack is doing, he will open his mouth no more than would be necessary to order a coffee and a hamburger. The Germans have spent, and are still spending, a fortune on making the most God-awful opera films by this method; and when challenged, their reply has almost invariably been to the effect that while people who know about opera are certainly aware of the defects, the general public is not. I don't believe this for a minute, not least because there is no such thing as a "general public" for opera, not even in Germany.

It doesn't help the method to have actors stand in for the singers. No matter how much you train an actor, you can't really make him breathe in the way a singer breathes; and, to state the obvious, breathing is part of the music of opera because it makes the line. In any case, I don't want to see Anneliese Finkelstein uttering the voice of Birgit Nilsson: I want to see and hear Nilsson herself.

A variation of this method is called "sing-back," where you prerecord only the orchestra (and perhaps the chorus) and then get the singers to superimpose their voices while in costume and on the set. It is better than all-out miming, but only by a small margin because it is technically so difficult. There is the problem of "empty" bars—the bars where the orchestra is not actually playing—and the difficulty of judging the timing and phrasing of the vocal line so that voice and orchestra will come together precisely when the prerecorded orchestra re-enters. I am familiar with this from the audio world, where a comparable process is known as "tracking." This operation is difficult enough without having to worry about a visual result as well. It means that your singers have to focus all their concentration on a piece of technical ingenuity, leaving little room for either good acting or good singing. Opera won't work in a technical strait jacket.

A much better system is to use two studios simultaneously. One contains the conductor and orchestra, while the other holds the singers, the chorus, the set, and the cameras. At the very least, this sort of performance is actual. The singers hear the orchestra relayed over loudspeakers dotted around their studio, while the conductor wears headphones to listen to the singers. The object of the game is to keep them all together in a musical sense, and it takes some doing. I have seen some of these operas recorded

in adjacent studios, and others that were about eight miles apart—although with some technical ingenuity it presumably wouldn't matter if the singers were in Los Angeles and the orchestra in Palermo so long as the two-way communication functioned. Unfortunately, it frequently does not. It is strange that in these days of advanced technology, the weakest link in any recording system (video or audio) is the communication hook-up whenever more than one studio is involved. Recording producers go prematurely gray, and eventually begin to gibber, at the mere mention of interstudio communications.

Even without bugs in the link lines, I fear that the system is biased against a passionate or committed performance. For one thing, the balance between voice and orchestra is *entirely* out of the conductor's hands, which means that he never hears the ensemble until it is too late to make an alteration. It presupposes the presence of a near-genius at the sound controls. And in the singers' studio, there is often a feedback problem due to the presence of loudspeakers and open microphones. This means that the orchestral playback has to be at low level, which makes it hard for the singers to follow and discourages any thought of dynamics. On top of all this, the studio is likely to be acoustically "dead," forcing the singers to shout. All the same, some highly creditable work has been done this way—notably the BBC version of Britten's *Billy Budd*. Yet it can never produce what I have to call "operatic intensity." I can't imagine Callas as Norma or Nilsson as Elektra or Price as Aïda under these conditions. Unless you have singular luck, the best you can hope for is lesser artists in lesser performances—a future that none of us want for video opera.

Last February, I produced a color videotape version of Britten's *Peter Grimes* for the BBC, and we had the cast, the conductor, the orchestra, the cameras, and the sets all in one place at one time. Britten himself conducted, and Peter Pears sang the role he had created almost twenty-five years ago. It is not for me to say whether or not the experiment was successful—whether, in fact, the desirable ensemble of the musical forces seriously hindered the mobility of the cameras. What I can say, and with certainty, is that a sort of immediacy and impact was made in a way that is at least uncommon in video opera. In other words, the presence of the conductor and orchestra, although never in camera vision, brought forth from the singers the kind of intensity that happens on a good night in the opera house, or on a good day in the audio studio. They were doing what they do naturally—matching their voices and scaling their performances against the actual sound of the orchestra. To do all this, we had to move out of the conventional acoustically dead type of studio and take the whole vast operation over to Britten's remarkable concert hall near Aldeburgh, Suffolk. For a month it became a new sort of video studio, imposing on the one hand all sorts of limitations which some might consider intolerable, while extending on the other an acoustic of such remarkable warmth and clarity that it made

the singers feel at ease and encouraged them never to force. It is an expensive and difficult way of making video opera, but it is a step towards ensemble, without which you fail in both music and drama.

There is yet another way by which the record industry might approach video opera—recording directly from stage performances. Of course, this sort of thing was done extensively when LP was launched, and the virtues and limitations will be exactly the same for video as they were for audio. What you will get is a souvenir, and, if that's all you want, it can be very agreeable. But souvenirs don't add anything either to art or technology; I can't believe that the future of video opera will consist of stage performances pickled on Ampex videotape, though they have one big advantage—they are much cheaper and much less trouble to make.

Which brings us to the nastiest problem of all: if there is a market for domestic video opera, how much will it cost to buy the video album of your choice? I am not an economist, but on the figures that are being mentioned right now I doubt if a major opera with top stars could be available for domestic distribution at much less than \$250. This cost is based on an average playing time of about 140 minutes, which covers a lot of the popular repertoire. There is a most uncomfortable disparity between this and its highest audio-only equivalent of less than \$20. But even assuming that the video price could be brought down considerably by some as yet unknown processing development, the basic questions still remain. Do we *want* to see as well as hear? And if we do, *what* do we want to see?

The past can give us a clue to the answers in that it shows what happens when a medium undergoes radical change. Before LP, the operatic repertoire on records consisted mostly of excerpts; the restricted playing time of the 78-rpm record and the limited frequency and dynamic range made it almost impossible for the medium to do justice to anything as extended as a complete opera. LP and stereo altered all that; and in less than twenty years just about the entire repertoire of performed opera (even those operas that are not performed today) has been recorded, some of it several times over. It came into being simply because there was an audience for it, and an audience large enough to make profits for record companies. The idea that record companies make operatic discs as an act of piety is laughable: they make them because in the long run they are profitable, and that's certainly a healthy motive. What is currently unknown is whether the people who buy those records will want to pay substantially more to see as well as hear; what is even less known is whether people who don't buy operatic records now would have their interest roused by video. The LP market did not "grow" out of the 78-rpm heritage: it was an explosion. Will video cause another?

The manufacturers are doubtful, and so am I. The monetary aspect is grim, whichever way you look at it: the costs of equipment, of processing; the demands likely to be made by artists and the

conditions laid down by unions; the publishers who can ask, and sometimes get, the earth for visual rights in a copyright opera. Yet there are deeper issues than these. Although medical science tells us that in range and sensitivity the eye is a less efficient organ than the ear, the fact is that its influence on most of us is greater. By some strange natural law we seem to be born with eyes already trained, whereas we have to work to get anything special from our lazy ears. Even people who profess to like music sometimes astonish me by their aural tolerance. They will not demur about out-of-tune singing or bad violin intonation, although they instantly object to a badly focused film or a slightly crooked picture on the wall. The professional musician, if he ever thinks about it, probably regards aural sensitivity as his greatest asset, for his ears amount to a built-in critic and guide for the limbs or vocal cords he uses for performance. Yet not so very far behind these leaders of aural perception stand the armies of modern record collectors. With the sort of equipment that has been around for the past fifteen years or so, these people have developed ears very different from those of their 78-rpm predecessors: and they have done so precisely *because* their records do not give them vision. I doubt very much whether such people will tolerate opera on EVR if the sound is as inferior as reports suggest. I am even more doubtful that they will succumb to any visual enticement if the price to be paid is a severe audio compromise.

This is the manufacturer's dilemma. He has built up and fed a hungry audio market, which he cannot afford to alienate; yet he knows perfectly well that whatever form his video product takes, it cannot provide more than a restricted monaural sound. His only hope, therefore, would seem to be a frontal attack on the unknown market—the untutored ears, so to speak—where he may stand a chance of getting his product away by its visual appeal alone. I don't doubt that a color video cassette of Maria Callas in popular repertoire items would sell very well indeed, even if the sound reproduction were vastly inferior to a stereo disc recording of the same repertoire made at the same time. But once the emphasis is truly on the visual, the floodgates may open. We may be offered a miniskirted Carmen, a naked Salome, a *Tannhäuser* bacchanal of which we shall be assured that the participants actually did what they seem to be doing . . . well, the mind boggles, as doubtless would the insatiable eye.

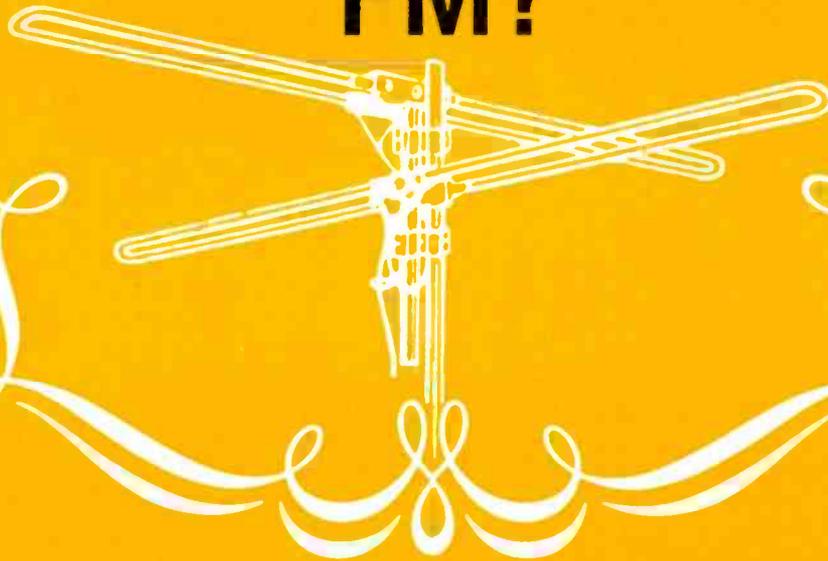
I don't think that will happen. Indeed, I don't think video will ever be launched in the way that LP was launched. The only indisputable application of EVR (or any other video system) is in education, where the quality of sound is not of major importance as long as the communication is intelligible. It will be from this expanding and immensely remunerative field rather than from home entertainment that the manufacturers will make their profits. They will be selling equipment and video cassettes to universities and schools all over the world, and they will not need to spend huge amounts to acquire program material. As time goes on and the medium

gathers force, I imagine they will get a bit more ambitious. Instead of "straight" lectures they may, when dealing with a subject like architecture, get involved with quite elaborate location snooting on an international basis. They will find that even in the field of education the cardinal sin is to be boring, and thus I believe it will emerge that their more adventurous and imaginative material will bring them more demand and therefore higher profits. It will be when they have reached this stage that they may begin, tentatively, to think about music in general and opera in particular. By then, some progress may have been made in sound research and there may even be the possibility of a bigger screen. At any rate, my prediction is that the very first operatic venture may seem modest, but might turn out to be a revelation. It might be something like Schoenberg's *Erwartung* or Holst's *Savitri* or Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* or Britten's *Curlew River*. But whatever it is, it will probably be on this sort of scale, which is considerably less than grand opera at its grandest, and very much shorter. It will have to be strong on visual imagination, for these are not repertoire pieces and each in its own way could gain from a sensitive video treatment that has managed to break away from stage conventions. So, I am suggesting that the approach to the production and marketing of video opera will be wholly different from anything we have experienced in commercial recording.

I believe it will happen gradually, over quite a long period. It will not, at first, be based on a "star" system, nor will it plunge at once into the standard repertoire. And the economics are such that the manufacturers may find it undesirable at the outset to offer the product on open sale; instead, they may devise a system through which, for a relatively modest outlay, you will be able to hire your video cassettes for as long or as short a period as you require. The great illusion is to suppose that the switch into video will be as smooth or as rapid as the transition from 78s to LP, or from LP to stereo. There is no valid parallel, and I see no reason why the record, as we know it, should not continue to prosper long after video has finally established itself. In at least two ways, the record has enlarged our experience. By means of a constantly developing technology, it has taught us to train our ears to a degree that has no parallel except in the life of a professional musician; and, despite mistakes, errors, and omissions, it has, over a period of twenty years, communicated a whole literature of music which would otherwise have remained within the province of specialists. For at least some time to come, video cannot hope to be a serious challenge precisely and entirely because it is technically imperfect for the medium of music. When we can have a larger screen and compose our pictures for it, and when we can produce a sound compatible not only with that picture but with the best that can be obtained from a record—then, and only then, in my opinion, shall we be able to say that video is equipped to enlarge our experience. It will be a long struggle, but it is the future. Have no doubt at all, it *is* the future.

by Ian Alberts

# Has Success Spoiled FM?



THE BIGGEST NEWS in FM broadcasting these days, certainly where lovers of concert music are concerned, has been the advent of four-channel stereo FM transmissions. In the Boston area this fall two stereo FM stations, WCRB and WGBH, are regaling listeners with live and taped quadriphonic broadcasts of Boston Symphony Orchestra concerts. The concerts can be received in mono or stereo by listening to either station. But if you receive both stations, and play them through stereo systems on opposite sides of your listening room, you will be hearing four separate and distinct channels of musical information: four-channel stereo, in fact, which adds a new and dramatic sense of realism and "hall ambience" to the program heard at home. The system was worked out jointly by engineers from the two stations, Acoustic Research, Inc. (which will sponsor the broadcasts), and the Boston Symphony Transcription Trust.

Whether or not this system becomes widely used in other communities, it does represent, and in a big way, FM on the move. And move it must, since technical improvements are badly needed. Of the three basic program sources—FM, disc, and tape—FM gets the lowest grade for sonic quality by a substantial margin. What progress has been made in the last few years has applied mostly to the receiving, rather than to the broadcasting, end.

It has been significant progress, though. In fact, many experts now allow that the best of today's stereo tuners and receivers are capable of receiving better sound than is customarily being transmitted. [See "How We Judge Stereo Tuners" in this issue.]

There also has been progress in antenna designs. The more highly directional an antenna, the less likely it is to pick up reflected signals coming from other directions. Antenna design is very esoteric—understandable mainly to a few engineers and war-

locks—but it seems reasonable to assume that there will be improvements here too.

The same basic idea—improving the signal going into the tuner—lies behind the growth of cable FM. A properly designed cable system is immune to multipath problems, and just about any form of interference. In addition, the signals of stations too far away for reception on home antennas can be picked up and piped in—which accounts for the cable's popularity in suburban and rural areas. In urban centers the main demand for a cable has to do not with the desire for more stations but with cleaner reception of the stations already available.

But cable FM is still in its early stages. Indeed, it is usually considered merely as an added attraction that cable-TV operators can add at little extra expense. As such, it may receive far less attention than the TV signals that pay its way on the cable. FM pickup, for example, often is managed with a single, relatively modest antenna—as opposed to the array of highly directional jobs that pick TV signals, channel by channel, from the ether. So, while cable FM reception may be better than home antenna reception, it often could stand improvement.

What is most distressing is that even with a “perfect” tuner and a “perfect” antenna or cable system, the sound quality of FM would be inferior to tapes and records. This has nothing to do with inherent limitations on the potential quality of a broadcast signal. It's just that most FM stations seem to have discouragingly low standards. Any really good home stereo system is sure to have better record-playing equipment than you'll find in many radio studios. One of the reasons is that the finest phono cartridges are much too delicate to put up with demands made by professional use. And the sturdy equipment doesn't always have the highest fidelity.

As home audio equipment improves, some pressure for improvement may begin to be felt by the broadcast industry. At present, there isn't much pressure. Signal quality is “adequate,” and there doesn't seem to be much prospect of significant improvement in the near future. Broadcasting traditionally has shown little inclination to be ahead of its audience. But home equipment is getting better and will continue to get better, so the radio stations are bound to get better too. When the general public has learned the gospel of high fidelity, it will start demanding good sound. Till then—well, the sound *is* adequate.

Signal quality also can be limited by program sources of course; and those sources reflect station programming policy which, in turn, reflects the economics of broadcasting. And in FM, the economic realities have changed radically in the last few years. In some cities, FM set penetration has reached nearly eighty per cent. Between 1960 and 1967, the number of FM receivers in the country increased by 670 per cent. And during the same period, FM time sales increased by a healthy 326 per cent. Again, while the single most important reason for this growth is FM's potential for quality sound, the sound is

nowhere near as good as it could be. But it is miles ahead of AM, the clincher being the introduction of stereo FM.

The figures make clear just how fast the growth of stereo broadcasting has been. In June 1961, there were only two stations broadcasting in stereo. By the beginning of this year, there were 738. Most experts believe that the number will soon reach 1,000. AM shows no signs of dying out, but if FM keeps on growing at its present rate it may become the predominant broadcasting medium. It is this tremendous audience growth, plus the effects of some recent government decisions, that are going to have the major impact on FM's development during the next few years.

### Uncle Sam Steps In

The precise role of the government—or more exactly, of the Federal Communications Commission—is hard to pinpoint. In the past, the FCC has seemed unsure of just what it wanted to do. Perhaps this uncertainty doesn't really matter much, though, since most of the government decisions had results quite different from those expected. Sometimes the FCC has acted as if it were “out to get” FM. Take, for example, what happened in 1945: the FCC decided that the band of frequencies being used by FM should be given over to television, and every FM receiver in the country instantly became obsolete. The effects of more recent decisions haven't always been very much better, but at least the FCC's intentions have been good.

Since there was little money to be made in FM in its early years, there was a need for the cheapest possible programming. This encouraged the practice of “simulcasting”—transmitting the same material over both the AM and FM outlets of the same broadcasting company. As far as advertisers were concerned, the FM audience was simply thrown in as a bonus. The FCC finally concluded that this was a waste of valuable air space. There are just so many broadcast channels to go around—using two of them for the same programs seemed rather profligate.

Furthermore, the FM picture was beginning to look rosy around the edges. Some stations had found that the quality-sound medium could be used effectively to sell quality goods and services. To put it bluntly, FM had snob appeal. Its audience tended to have a higher median income—and more disposable dollars—than AM listeners, and comprised a higher proportion of college graduates and professional people. Airlines, gourmet restaurants, mutual funds, cultural institutions, and distributors of specialty products were finding that they could reach a fertile upper-middle-class urban and suburban market through FM. It seemed apparent that FM, freed of simulcasting, could develop this audience profitably while AM went its mass-appeal way.

So, in 1964, the FCC handed down the word: in cities numbering more than 100,000 souls, jointly

owned AM and FM stations would be required to have independent programming for at least half of their air time. There was just one problem: profit and quality programming did not always go hand in hand, particularly when the operating economies of simulcasting were no longer available. So the rush was on to find the *next*-cheapest possible programming. The result has been an increase in automated—"canned"—material, often making use of vast libraries of background music recorded on slow-speed tape supplemented with specialty items recorded on endless-loop tape cartridges. In other words, simplicity even at the expense of fidelity. But the savings in eliminating disc jockeys and program directors alone would make any accountant happy. The figures have a horrifying charm all their own. In 1966, roughly twenty per cent of the stations used canned programming. By 1967, the figure was up to twenty-five per cent. And last year, a full thirty-eight per cent were automated.

For those stations that found automation unacceptable, there was the alternative of using one or another of the services that offer prepackaged, sometimes virtually mass-produced programming. Some of the prepackaged programs are similar—or even identical—to those used by automated stations. Others can be extremely high in quality. The transcription services of some major symphony orchestras are an example of packaged programming at its best. In 1968, twenty-four per cent of the FM stations were using such a program service.

These statistics point out how unpredictable are the effects of FCC dicta. And even if it were easy to forecast the influence of the commission's actions, it's all but impossible to tell what those actions may be. One move that has been under consideration for some time would prohibit common ownership of more than one broadcast outlet—AM, FM, or TV—in the same market. When you consider the power and influence a company can have when it controls a newspaper, a local television station, and an AM/FM operation, all aimed at the same community, the prohibition appears to be a potentially valuable move. But again, practice may prove otherwise.

The FCC's first step toward banning joint ownership was an announcement that it planned to prevent sale to a single owner of AM and FM operations in the same market. Within a few days, KFAC-AM/FM in Los Angeles, the city's long-time good-music outlet, requested FCC permission for the sale of the operation. The FCC refused, pending a decision on its proposed rule, which would of course prohibit the sale. The station countered by running an ad in the *Los Angeles Times* explaining why, in its view, single ownership of both its AM and FM outlets is necessary if KFAC is to continue offering the kind of programming on which its reputation—and its audience—has been built. Some 12,000 letters from listeners—almost all of them in support of the station—poured into KFAC as a result of the ad and were forwarded to the FCC with a petition to allow the sale of the station, whatever the rules might ulti-

mately turn out to be (remember that the commission had announced only its *intention* to make a rule). That was months ago, and the FCC, at this writing, has yet to take action on the matter.

Another move soon expected from the government is a law requiring all radios sold in the country to have both AM and FM sections—a law comparable to that causing all television sets sold to have UHF in addition to the conventional VHF band. Obviously such a law would result in even greater penetration for FM. But what the results of *that* would be are impossible to predict.

Government's search for ways to put AM and FM on equal footing emphasizes a fact that has become increasingly obvious: FM is turning into a true mass medium. Other mass media have shown a natural tendency to become even more so: that is, to appeal to an ever larger part of the audience. In television, this tendency has led to programs of stupefying banality. FM has been a minor cultural haven for years. But recently it hasn't done too well in resisting the economic blandishments of its mass appeal.

A recent study by the National Association of FM Broadcasters showed that only six per cent of FM stations had classical music as a major programming category. (I suppose things could be worse—only five per cent of the records sold in a year contain classical music.) The biggest single category was "middle-of-the-road," which added up to a resounding forty-seven per cent. This was followed by "beautiful music"—simply a euphemistic name for background music. It collected twenty-five per cent. Third, with eleven per cent, was "modified contemporary," generally known as "easy listening." These three categories add up to eighty-three per cent of the "major programming" offered by FM stations.

There are some minor bright spots, principally the "underground rock" stations. For what it's worth, there are as many of them as there are "top 40" rock stations. Not quite so minor is the persistence of non-commercial radio. The three Pacifica stations (KPFA-Berkeley, KPFK-Los Angeles, and WBAI-NY) are perhaps the best known. Despite low budgets and the resulting slipshod quality of much of the programming, these three stations have produced an amazing number of excellent and provocative shows. And noncommercial radio extends well beyond Pacifica. In New York City, for example, some half-dozen stations are run by colleges, one is run by the city, and another by a church. It may be unfortunate that noncommercial stations are needed. But at least they are there.

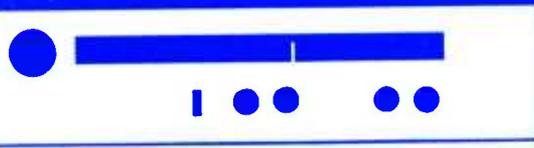
In its rather short career, FM has withstood all sorts of indignities—including patent fights, unfortunate government decisions, and so on. Prediction may be uncertain, but one question must be answered—can FM stand success? At the moment, the answer seems to be no. And that is a damn shame.

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*The author's work, both as writer and as editor, has appeared in publications devoted to high fidelity and FM programming.*

by Edward J. Foster

# How We Judge



# FM Tuners

THE TERM "TUNER" APPLIES, of course, to the tuner section of a receiver as well as to the tuner as an individual component. Both must do the same job, and both may be evaluated by the same criteria. But what are those criteria?

The existing "Standard Method of Measurement for Tuners," issued by the Institute of High Fidelity (IHFM-T-100) in December 1958, does not cover a tuner's FM multiplex (stereo) functions. Predating the 1958 IHF standard was an Institute of Radio Engineers (now the IEEE) standard covering the same subject. Differences on several points between these two standards have caused considerable confusion in the past. To avoid the same problem in the future, and to update tuner measurements to reflect stereo FM, the IHF standards committee now is working with the IEEE standards committee toward a joint standard. Producing any new standard is a lengthy process since the various committee members will have different views. When the standards committees of two organizations are involved, the process can take even longer. Present expectations are that the new document will appear very late in 1969 or early 1970. Until then, we are making the best of the present IHF version, using portions of it and expanding it as we deem suitable to cover a tuner's stereo functions.

The IHF standard lists eleven specifications in the following order of importance: IHF sensitivity, signal-to-noise ratio, harmonic distortion, drift, frequency response, capture ratio, selectivity, spurious responses, IM distortion, audio hum, and AM suppression. Manufacturers are supposed to use the first five items as their minimum published specifications, and all eleven as a complete technical descrip-

tion. For the reports in *HIGH FIDELITY* we measure the first six of the above (except drift) and IM distortion. In addition we measure stereo response and separation as well as pilot and subcarrier suppression—measurements which pertain to the tuner's multiplex circuitry. We do not measure drift because in today's cool-running solid-state equipment it is no longer a problem. In fact, most of the recent tuners do not use automatic frequency control (AFC)—once considered important in controlling drift—at all since modern design has eliminated its need. Certainly, any tuner which purports to be a high fidelity unit must be stable after but a few minutes' warm-up.

## IHF Sensitivity—How Strong is the Tuner?

A tuner's sensitivity indicates how much RF (radio frequency) signal it needs to suppress noise and distortion by a given amount. We measure it in microvolts (millionths of a volt), using a modulated signal from a carefully calibrated frequency modulation signal generator that simulates an FM broadcast transmitter. Both the generator and the tuner are set at 98 MHz. The antenna is simulated by a network providing the characteristic 300-ohm impedance. Using a low distortion 400-Hz signal to modulate the generator, we drive the tuner with an input signal level of 1 microvolt, and measure the tuner's total output signal. This signal will contain the 400-Hz modulation plus the noise and distortion of the tuner. We then remove the true 400-Hz signal with a distortion analyzer and measure just the noise and distortion. The ratio of noise and distortion to total signal is then expressed in dB, and begins the plot of the "IHF sensitivity curve." We then raise the signal level a bit and repeat the whole measurement. We do so, in fact, all the way from 1 microvolt to 50,000 microvolts. At some RF signal level from the generator, the tuner will produce a

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*The performance criteria and test methods described here are those used by the author and his associates at CBS Laboratories in preparing data for HIGH FIDELITY's test reports.*

signal which is 30 dB greater in level than the total hum, noise, and distortion. This input signal level (in microvolts) is called the "IHF usable sensitivity." To check how well the tuner performs at different parts of the FM band, we measure this usable sensitivity at 90 MHz and 106 MHz as well as at 98 MHz.

What should the IHF sensitivity of a good FM tuner be? I would say that 2.2 microvolts is a very respectable figure. More sensitivity, such as 1.8 microvolts, is of course better if all other factors are equal. The buyer should be aware, however, that there are means of increasing the sensitivity of a tuner by sacrificing its performance in other respects. For example, it is possible to restrict the passband of certain sections of the tuner thus raising their gain and decreasing the noise. Such a tuner will exhibit an excellent IHF sensitivity but will also exhibit high levels of distortion in the upper frequencies, and may have a rather poor stereo separation as well. In any event, sensitivities of 1.8 microvolts are approaching the theoretical limit and probably will not be improved upon substantially.

The amount of sensitivity you need depends upon your location. If you are out in the Arizona desert, miles and miles from the nearest station, you will need all the sensitivity you can get—plus the best antenna system you can find. If you are in a metropolitan area in which large numbers of powerful stations surround you, sensitivity is not of very great importance. In such a case, sensitivities of 3.5 to 5 microvolts are fine, if the rest of the tuner's specs are good. As a rule, though, a really poor sensitivity (worse than, say, 5 microvolts) generally indicates an inferior tuner in other areas as well.

When checking the sensitivity of a tuner, carefully inspect the sensitivity curve. It should fall off sharply and then flatten out for higher input signal levels. Furthermore, it should fall to as low a level as possible. Thus, a tuner that reaches an ultimate signal to total hum, noise, and distortion figure of -50 dB is superior to one that only reaches -40 dB. If the tuner has some hum or a lot of distortion in its detector or audio stages, it will never reach a very low value for a total hum, noise, and distortion, since this figure is the sum of all annoyance factors. Thus, if the tuner has a constant 1% total harmonic distortion (THD), it will not get below -40 dB on the sensitivity curve since 1% distortion is equivalent to -40 dB. It may not even get as low as -40 dB since it may be subject to hum and noise problems.

The sensitivity curve, then, that falls to a very low amount of total hum, noise, and distortion—and does so as rapidly as possible—indicates a really good tuner. Although it is convenient to specify a single figure for sensitivity such as 2.2 microvolts, this figure corresponds to only one value of total hum, noise, and distortion. By convention the sensitivity is specified at that point where the total hum, noise, and distortion is -30 dB. This point is convenient since all tuners which purport to be high fidelity units should ultimately have a lower total hum, noise, and distortion figure than -30 dB and so

will cross this level at some value of input RF signal. Generally speaking, however, you will not be content to listen to a station that is so weak as to produce only a 30-dB figure. Thus, the "effective" sensitivity of a tuner is not as good as the published figures. If two tuners have IHF sensitivity curves of the same shape then you can go by the 30-dB figures to compare them. However, if one tuner has an IHF sensitivity of 2.2 microvolts and reaches, say, the -50-dB level at 3.1 microvolts, it is, in my opinion, distinctly superior to a tuner with an IHF sensitivity of 1.8 microvolts that reaches the -50-dB level only at 10 microvolts.

One final item on the sensitivity curve. Once the tuner has reached its lowest level of total hum, noise, and distortion, it should stay at that low level for higher RF input signal strengths. If the total hum, noise, and distortion level increases again as the signal level is increased, the tuner is probably overloading at these increased levels. A slight increase, say, from -53 dB to -51 dB is probably all right. Excessive increases are to be avoided, however.

To recapitulate: a high fidelity tuner should have an IHF-rated sensitivity figure of 2.2 microvolts or better. Furthermore, the tuner should have about the same sensitivity at all three test frequencies (90 MHz, 98 MHz, 106 MHz). The sensitivity curve should fall off very rapidly to a level of -50 dB or better for total hum, noise, and distortion. The total hum, noise, and distortion should stay below this level all the way out to 50,000 microvolts. These are, I would say, the earmarks of a really sensitive FM tuner. On a somewhat lower level, I would say that an IHF sensitivity of 3.5 microvolts and total hum, noise, and distortion reaching -40 dB would characterize a fairly good unit.

### S/N Ratio and Distortion— How Clean is the Tuner?

If the sensitivity measurement just described measures noise and distortion, why do we bother measuring them again? Precisely, to separate them. Whereas the previous measurement gave a sort of over-all quality measurement of the tuner, we now wish to find out what part of the audible hum, noise and distortion is really due to hum and noise, and which part is due to distortion.

In making our measurements of S/N ratio, we set our FM generator at 98 MHz, but this time we do not modulate it. That is, the generator acts like a station which is still on the air but is not sending out any music. The signal level of the generator is set at 1,000 microvolts—a pretty healthy signal. The output of the tuner under these conditions must be pure noise since no signal is being sent. We measure that noise and record the amount. We next fully modulate the generator (to 75-kHz deviation) with a 400-Hz tone. The tuner's level now equals the maximum signal level which the transmitter is allowed to send by law. The ratio of the 400-Hz signal

to the noise measured previously is expressed in dB as the S/N ratio. A good tuner should have a signal-to-noise ratio of at least 60 dB when measured in this way. Lower quality units will probably come in at 50 to 60 dB, which is probably adequate for all but the most critical conditions.

To check mono THD the generator and tuner are set at 98 MHz, and the generator RF level is set for 1,000 microvolts. These are, by the way, the standard measurement conditions. We also use a distortion analyzer. The audio frequencies used to modulate the FM generator are 40 Hz, 400 Hz, and 1 kHz. In all cases 100% modulation is used. You may well ask why we do not measure distortion using higher audio frequencies—say, up to 15 kHz, as we did for amplifiers. FM transmissions use a pre-emphasis that boosts the higher frequencies at the station in order to minimize the noise in transmission. Based on the distribution of energy in music, the transmitter pre-emphasizes frequencies above 2 kHz, where there is naturally less audio energy. In the receiver, the corresponding de-emphasis is used, producing an over-all flat response and simultaneously reducing the high frequency noise. For frequencies above about 1 kHz, the receiver de-emphasis also reduces the harmonic distortion, giving optimistically false readings. Thus, 1 kHz is the highest frequency for which we can make sensible THD measurements. Fear not, a different—intermodulation distortion—measurement will tell you what is happening at the higher frequencies.

A topnotch tuner will measure 0.25% or less THD following the above-described procedure. Perhaps it will be a trifle higher at 40 Hz than at 400 Hz or 1 kHz—reflecting the characteristics of the audio section of the tuner. As with amplifiers, a figure of about 0.75% THD is acceptable.

The final type of distortion we measure is intermodulation (IM). The method of measuring tuner IM differs from that used for amplifiers. The generator and tuner are set up under the standard conditions described above. Two signals, 15 kHz and 14.6 kHz, are used to modulate the FM generator simultaneously. The audio signal levels are adjusted to be equal in magnitude, while their sum deviates the generator 100% on the peaks. If there were no distortion in the tuner, only the two original signals would emerge from its output. When distortion is present, a "cross-term" will appear at the difference frequency, in this case, 400 Hz. A special filter is used to measure the amount of 400-Hz signal in the output. This level is compared with the output of the tuner for 100% modulation, and the ratio is expressed as a percentage.

This IM measurement tells you how things are going in the upper frequency region (where THD measurements are meaningless, as described above). If the tuner under test has inadequate bandwidth or phase distortion in the tuned circuits, or a poor limiter or detector, the IM figure will betray the fact. A tuner deficient in this way will probably also show poor stereo separation. So, when you think you have found a tuner with superb sensitivity, take a look at its IM figure to see if the sensitivity was achieved at the expense of this distortion. A high-quality

tuner will exhibit an intermodulation distortion figure of 0.25% or better. Probably 1% or so would indicate adequate performance.

### Frequency Response— How Linear is the Tuner?

As mentioned, the FM transmitter uses a specific pre-emphasis to achieve an optimum S/N ratio at its end. In making our measurement of frequency response, we duplicate exactly this pre-emphasis. Using the standard setup described, we modulate the FM generator (which simulates the transmitter) with a signal from an automatic oscillator sweeping from 20 Hz to 20 kHz. The output of the tuner, shown on automatic charting equipment, reveals every wiggle in the response. If all is well, the response will indeed be smooth and flat from 20 Hz to 15 kHz. Above 15 kHz, the response generally falls off rapidly, showing the special filter characteristics employed in stereo tuners. This is of no significance since FM stations generally limit their transmission to 15 kHz.

A really superb tuner will exhibit flat response within  $\pm 1$  dB from 20 Hz to 15 kHz. Response within  $\pm 3$  dB is probably adequate. When you inspect the frequency response curve, though, look for peaking in the 15-kHz to 20-kHz region, which indicates poorly aligned filters. A gentle rising or falling of response above 2 kHz indicates that the de-emphasis curve of the tuner is not conforming to the standard 75-microsecond response. Inadequate response at the low end may be due to insufficient bandwidth in the audio circuits. Sometimes a manufacturer will purposely design this way to minimize the chance of damaging speakers by rapid tuning through the FM band. (For your own protection, incidentally, tune your receiver slowly, or reduce your volume when tuning—or both.) Another possible cause of poor low-frequency response is an inferior automatic frequency control (AFC). AFC circuits are used to lock onto a station and eliminate drifting in the tuner. Since they cause certain deleterious effects, and since with modern cool-running transistor equipment drift need no longer be a problem, most modern high-quality tuner manufacturers have avoided using AFC altogether.

One of the key virtues of an FM tuner is its ability to lock onto a desired signal and ignore interference. Capture ratio measures a tuner's ability to do just that. If two signals of the same frequency are received by the tuner and one is larger than the other, the tuner will tend to "capture" the larger of the two and ignore the smaller one. This is a very important attribute. With the high congestion of the air waves, the FCC often has found it necessary to assign the same frequency to many different stations. There is a certain geographical separation between any two transmitters using the same frequency, determined by the power which the station is authorized to use. Still, your tuner may be literally picking up several stations at once on any single channel. For satisfactory reception, it must lock onto one and ignore the rest—especially important if you live in an area

midway between transmitters assigned to the same frequency. Even if you are not so located, there is a lot of RF noise, both man-made and natural, that is constantly flooding the tuner. Some of it will be in the channel to which you are listening. A set with good capture ratio can adequately suppress this noise.

In measuring capture ratio, we use two generators. One of these is the standard FM generator operated under the standard conditions described. In addition, we also inject another RF signal (representing the interference) tuned to the same frequency (98 MHz) into the receiver. A series of measurements are made to determine how much larger in level one of the signals must be to suppress the effect of the other by 30 dB. The difference in signal levels between the two "transmitters" necessary to achieve the 30-dB suppression is the capture ratio, expressed in dB.

The lower the capture ratio the better, because it means you will be able to lock onto a station even if it is only slightly more powerful than its competitor. As with the other tuner specifications, it is possible to design a set with an excellent capture ratio (say, 1 dB) at the expense of other features such as high frequency distortion and poor stereo separation. I would say that a capture ratio figure of 3 dB is very respectable. Less is better, of course—but not at the expense of other performance characteristics.

### Stereo Measurements

No measurement of a stereo FM tuner would be complete without some indication of its stereo performance. Without industry-wide standards, we must impose our own concept of what constitutes adequate performance. The tests we make cover frequency response of both channels, separation between channels, THD, and pilot and subcarrier suppression.

These measurements are made by using a special multiplex generator capable of modulating the FM signal generator in a stereo mode. Under the standard measurement conditions, we automatically plot the frequency response of each of the two channels independently. The same criteria of acceptance apply as with monophonic response, namely,  $\pm 1$  dB being excellent, and  $\pm 3$  dB as acceptable.

The separation is measured by modulating one channel at a time and measuring the amount of signal that comes out of the wrong channel. Thus, we generate a "left only" signal and measure the output of each channel. Then we measure outputs for "right only" input modulation, giving us a comparison between the levels produced by direct modulation and those caused by "leakage" between channels. The difference between a channel's output when it is modulated and its output when the other channel only is modulated, expressed in dB, is the separation.

Normally, the separation is best in midband, say from 400 Hz to 1 kHz. At lower frequencies the separation diminishes; as we approach 15 kHz the separation usually diminishes quite rapidly. Midband separation of 40 dB or better, along with at least 30 dB from 40 Hz to 8 kHz and 25 dB at the extremes of 20 Hz and 15 kHz is the mark of a

superior receiver. Perhaps 10 dB shaved off each of the above numbers would still provide adequate performance. Separation figures appreciably less than this indicate either an inferior multiplex design, misalignment, or inadequate passband—the last deficiency also giving rise to high frequency distortion.

Having measured frequency response and separation in the stereo mode, we make two more measurements: the 19-kHz pilot suppression and the 38-kHz subcarrier suppression. These phenomena are unique to stereo FM transmission. In the system of multiplex transmission that has been adopted by the FCC, the two channels (left and right) are added together and used to modulate the transmitter in the same manner as with monophonic FM transmission. Thus, a monophonic receiver accepts the total signal (left plus right, or "sum" channel). For stereo, the "difference" or left-minus-right signal is sent on a separate subcarrier centered at 38 kHz. A separate modulation scheme (called double sideband suppressed carrier) is used to carry this difference signal. This type of modulation requires a "code" to help in demodulation. This code is provided by the inclusion of the 19-kHz "pilot signal." The whole conglomeration, sum signal (monophonic), difference signal (which carries the stereo information), and pilot are all added together and used to modulate the transmitter. Your tuner receives the whole mix, and the stereo multiplex section re-creates the stereo channels. The 19-kHz and 38-kHz tones, once they have served their purpose, are not wanted in the output and are filtered out in the tuner. We make a measurement to determine the amount of these unwanted signals in the output referred to a full 100% modulation level.

The reason why these inaudible signals are unwanted is that they can mix with other signals in your amplifier and cause intermodulation distortion. Furthermore, if excessive, they can drain away the power capability of your amplifier and even damage your tweeters if the signal level is high enough. Finally, they can intermodulate with the bias frequency of your tape recorder causing distortion and squeals. This last danger has been largely eliminated by additional filtering in modern tape recorders. Respectable figures for 19-kHz and 38-kHz suppression are at least 40 dB in a topnotch tuner, although a figure of 30 dB represents adequate performance.

We have discussed the various tests we make on a tuner to establish its qualifications as a high fidelity piece of equipment. In most cases we have followed the 1958 IHF standards. When it comes to the stereo sections, we have had to impose our own standards. However, these are in pretty good agreement with industry practices. Within a year, we expect a new set of standards covering stereo tuners. When that time comes, we will review our practices and modify them if necessary.

By examining the reports published in HIGH FIDELITY, following the guidelines given here, you can assess the relative merits of various tuners and receivers. When you have narrowed the field down to a few units, try to listen to them in your locality with a good FM antenna. You should soon be able to tell which model meets your requirements.

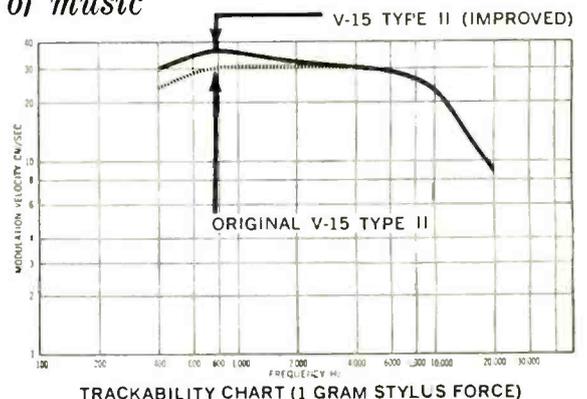


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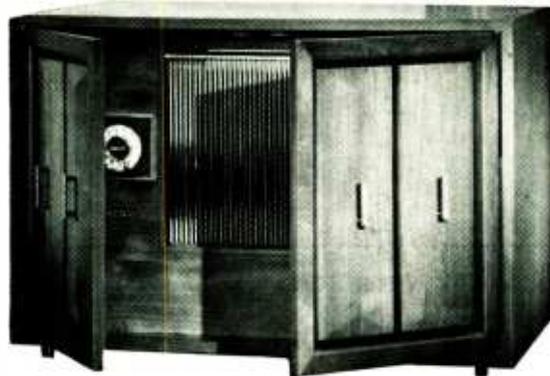
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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

# new equipment reports

THE CONSUMER'S GUIDE  
TO HIGH FIDELITY EQUIPMENT



## HOW AUTOMATIC CAN YOU GET?

**THE EQUIPMENT:** Seeburg AP-1, an automated record-playing system with built-in storage, memory selection facilities, and equalized preamps. Cabinet dimensions: 33 by 22½ by 22½ inches. Price: \$795. Manufacturer: Seeburg Corp., Consumer Products Div., 1500 N. Dayton St., Chicago, Ill. 60622.

**COMMENT:** The most automatic record player ever made, the Seeburg AP-1 combines the following: a vertical record-playing mechanism of elaborate design which includes turntable and tone arm fitted with a twin-stylus Pickering cartridge; an RIAA-equalized stereo preamplifier for driving an external basic amplifier (or the "spare" or other high-level inputs on a system control amplifier or receiver); storage for fifty microgroove discs; and a control system with "memory bank." Optional accessories permit remote control operation from any location in the home.

The most prominent (and, for home music systems, the most novel) control on the AP-1 is its telephone-type dial on which you select the records to be played by dialing a two-digit code number. You make up your own code according to how you store the records in the unit. Since the dial ties into the computerlike memory bank (itself made up of one hundred magnetic cores and their associated write-in, read-out, and sensing circuits), you can select any quantity of record sides for playback in numerical order. Multi-disc sets will play in the correct order as long as the records were pressed in so-called manual sequence—that is, successive sides arranged back to back. When you finish dialing, the machine takes over:

the record, gently nudged upward at its outer edge, is placed into position on the turntable where it is held in place by a plastic member against the label, the arm moves up to it, and the pickup—after being cleaned by a built-in stylus brush—engages the groove. You can reject a record during play, clear all selections previously programmed in the memory bank, or set the machine for "all-play" which, with one hundred LP sides involved, could mean continuous music for upwards of thirty-six hours. The preamplified-equalized stereo signal is taken from a pair of jacks at the rear via shielded cable.

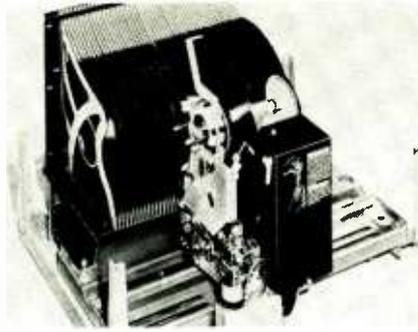
This utterly untouched-by-human-hands device is powered by a vertical play mechanism: records, turntable, and tone arm all remain vertical instead of horizontal as in conventional record-playing apparatus. The record is held firmly only at its center label area; the larger portion of the disc remains unsupported. While this design concept does make for smooth and flawless automation, it does impose certain limits on performance, at least from an ultimate hi-fi perfectionist standpoint—and those limits concern the pick-



*Telephone dial  
selects records  
to be played.*

## REPORT POLICY

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



*Record storage and sliding carriage combine with memory bank to lend Seeburg player unique automation.*

up's tracing of the record groove. That is, since the music grooves have no horizontal support and the pickup must engage the record groove horizontally, something in the way of vertical compliance and response is lost. This in turn means somewhat less channel separation and somewhat less bass output from stereo records as compared to a pickup's engaging a record groove supported by a platter. For playing mono records, this criticism does not apply since mono discs have no vertical modulation and thus require no turntable support.

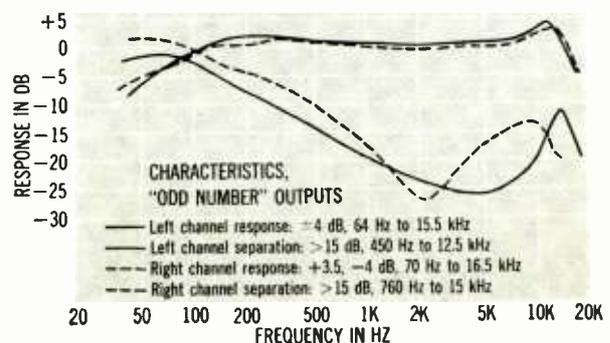
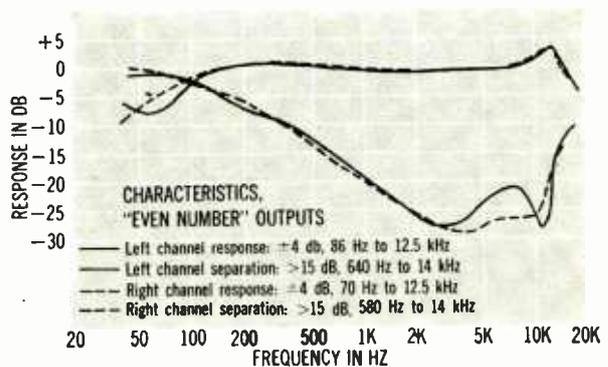
The cartridge used in the Seeburg is a specially made Pickering magnetic fitted with two diamond-tip styli which project from opposite sides of the cartridge body, one stylus engaging that side of the record selected for play. Stylus force, preset at the factory, was measured to be 2.25 grams for each stylus. Compliance was gauged at  $3.0 (X 10^{-6} \text{ cm/dyne})$  laterally, and 1.5 vertically—both figures being lower than average for modern hi-fi pickups. Vertical angle was measured at 24 degrees. The turntable's single speed of  $33\frac{1}{3}$  rpm was accurate and was not affected by line-voltage changes, remaining a mere 0.1% slow at all test voltages. The average flutter and wow figure was an insignificant 0.07%.

For rumble and other electrical measurements, CBS Labs ran two sets of tests, one for each side of the pickup (designated as odd and even numbers to correspond to the record sides that would be played). Measurements were made at the stereo signal output jacks of the set's built-in preamp. The arm resonance occurred at 17 Hz on each side. Rumble, by the CBS-ARLL method, was clocked at -65 dB and -59 dB for even and odd sides respectively; these figures are among the best ever measured for any turntable. For even numbers, the preamp's signal output was 0.25-volt on left and right channels; for odd numbers, the output was 0.29-volt and 0.24-volt for left and right channels respectively. Over-all harmonic distortion (of the pickup) ran a little higher than average; IM did the same.

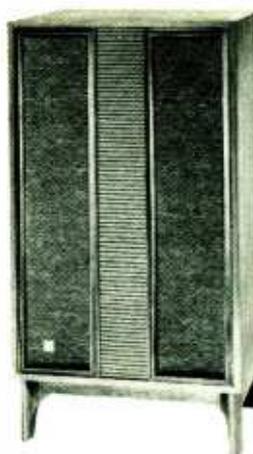
The response data (see accompanying graphs) cover the frequency and channel separation characteristics for each channel in both odd- and even-numbered playback modes. Generally speaking, the frequency response curves resemble that of a typical magnetic pickup—except for the sagging bass end below 100 Hz. Channel separation is adequate-to-ample through the midrange and highs, but lessens appreciably below 500 Hz or so. Both the bass roll-off and the decreased channel separation in the bass region are due, in the view of the testers, to the limited vertical compliance of the pickup as explained earlier. Again, however, it should be pointed out that for records in which the bass frequencies are themselves cut laterally (i.e., monophonically), no appreciable frequency roll-off would occur.

Listening tests of the AP-1 hooked up to a normal stereo component system confirmed this point and also demonstrated that even with the relatively lessened channel separation (from full-cut stereo discs), the over-all stereo effect was not appreciably degraded. The relative left-and-right locations of orchestral instruments still could be identified, and the sound did present a satisfactory sense of spread across the speakers. The Seeburg system, in sum, may not be every listener's audio cup of tea, but it conceivably could be put to good use (thanks to its hands-off-the-records type of operation and its complete automation) in schools, libraries, and other applications where safe and foolproof functioning, rather than the ultimate in sonic splendor, is desired. In addition to the AP-1, there's an AP-2 (same unit in an unfinished cabinet without front doors) priced at \$695. Seeburg also has announced other models, including a console line with its own speakers, and various accessories.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## JENSEN'S TOP-OF-LINE COMPACT SPEAKER SYSTEM



**THE EQUIPMENT:** Jensen 700-XLW, a compact, full-range speaker system in enclosure. Dimensions: 16 $\frac{1}{4}$  by 25 $\frac{1}{2}$  by 12 inches. Price: \$275. Manufacturer: Jensen Manufacturing Div., The Muter Co., 5655 W. 73 St., Chicago, Ill. 60638.

**COMMENT:** The 700-XLW represents Jensen's major design effort to date in the compact speaker system class. A shade larger than most "two cubic footers," the 700-XLW may be placed on a shelf that is deep and strong enough to hold it, or on a bench, or on a floor pedestal available as an accessory from Jensen (the Model FS-1 stand, \$19.95). It may be positioned horizontally or vertically.

A four-way system, the 700-XLW houses—within an attractive walnut enclosure—a 12-inch woofer, a horn-loaded midrange unit, a compression-driver horn-loaded super-tweeter, and a "sono-dome" ultratweeter. Crossover frequencies are at 600, 4,000, and 10,000 Hz. Efficiency is fairly high, and while the system is rated for power-handling capacity of 40 watts, it can be driven to room-filling volume by amplifiers of lower power output than that. Impedance is 8 ohms; connections are made to screws on the rear marked for polarity. The rear also contains two continuously variable controls for balancing the midrange and highs.

After experimenting with these controls, we finally settled on about one-quarter rotation (from minimum)

for the midrange control, and about one-third rotation for the highs control. Higher settings than these produced, at least in our room, a somewhat bright quality in the sound, a fairly hard quality in white-noise response, and a vague kind of "sheen" on singing voices. At the settings indicated, though, everything fell into what we considered excellent musical balance. On test tones, the 700-XLW responded uniformly and smoothly from about 40 Hz to beyond audibility. Below 40 Hz, response became a bit weaker and was mixed with some doubling—an effect which remained pretty constant down to 20 Hz. Directivity effects were remarkably absent through the midrange; in fact, tones up to 11 kHz could be heard clearly when listening well off axis of the speaker. At 12 kHz, the response became a bit "thinner" and more directive; at 13 kHz, this effect increased somewhat, and so on to beyond 14 kHz where a slope to inaudibility began.

As with all really good speakers, it is difficult to describe the "sound" of the 700-XLW. One ends up pretty much describing the sound of the program material being played. It is, in short, an accurate, transparent, wide-range reproducer that combines clarity with efficiency. We'd also guess that the usable range of those two controls, while not needed in our fairly live room, would help adjust the speaker's response to other rooms with different acoustic characteristics.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## PORTABLE CASSETTE UNIT DOUBLES AS DECK



**THE EQUIPMENT:** Sony 124-CS stereo cassette recorder. Dimensions (transport/electronics unit only): 6 $\frac{5}{8}$  by 9 $\frac{1}{2}$  by 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches. Price: \$199.50 with extension speakers, F-99S mike, carrying case, other accessories. Manufacturer: Sony Corp. (Japan). U.S. distributor: Sony/Superscope, Inc., 8150 Vineland Ave., Sun Valley, Calif. 91352.

**COMMENT:** The 124-CS is a self-contained stereo cassette system designed primarily for independent use, though it may be used in conjunction with stereo components as well. It can be operated from batteries (four C cells), an accessory rechargeable power pack, 12-volt auto or boat batteries (via an accessory cigarette-lighter adapter), or AC. The AC adapter is provided with the recorder and was used for most of the tests covered in this report. Also included with the

recorder is a pair of extension monitor speakers (in addition to a single speaker built into the recorder's case and allowing mono playback without using the separate speakers), a stereo microphone, a button-style mono earphone, a pair of patch cords, a C-60 blank cassette, a shoulder strap for the recorder, and a vinyl case that will hold the whole ensemble.

The 124-CS will accept additional accessories. There is a jack for stereo headphones on the control panel of the recorder, and the remote control jack can be used for a foot switch in dictation or transcription work. This jack is between the two audio jacks for the mike input. The mike's plug has prongs for all three jacks—two for audio and one to power the on/off switch on the mike.

The F-99S stereo mike, incidentally, proved to be an efficient way of recording two channels of information with minimum fuss. It appears to contain two directional dynamic elements, pointing toward the sides of the mike. Sounds originating at the front, top, or even back of the mike are reproduced properly centered between the two speakers on playback. Sounds originating at the sides are clearly sorted out into the respective channels. The microphone is intended primarily for work with speech. We did not test it with live music.

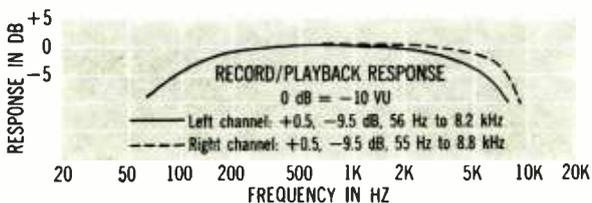
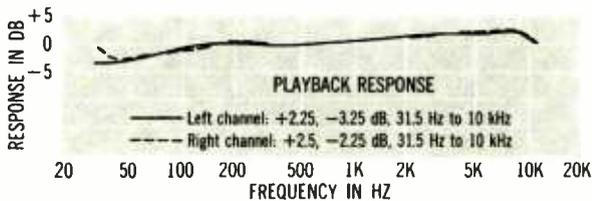
The recorder's front panel contains fast-wind, play, stop, and record controls on the usual "piano-key" lever switches. In addition, there are balance, tone, and volume controls for the playback circuit, and a stereo/mono switch. (In the stereo position, the built-in speaker monitors the right channel.) At one side are miniature phone jacks for auxiliary inputs, which are automatically cut off when the mike plug is inserted into its jacks nearby. At the other side are the extension-speaker jacks—also miniature phone types—and an ingenious speaker control switch. In the "1" position, this switch allows full-level monitoring in either record or playback modes—useful if you are recording via the auxiliary inputs. In the "2" position, speaker output is automatically attenuated when the recorder is put into the record mode. This position inhibits feedback during recording with the mike, yet allows normal playback. A third position turns off the speakers altogether.

The patch cords have a miniature phone plug at one end and a standard phono male at the other. They can be used either to connect the tape-recorder output of your stereo system to the auxiliary input of the Sony or to run from the extension-speaker outputs of the Sony to a tape or auxiliary input on your stereo system. With a spare set of cords—available from

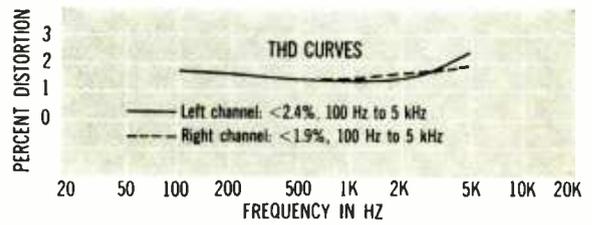
either Sony or Switchcraft—you can do both and use the Sony as a tape deck.

Notice, however, that there is no input level control on the 124-CS, which is equipped with Sonymatic automatic level control. While this is a handy-dandy way of controlling levels on speech, it can be argued that the distortion and compression of dynamic range inherent in automatic level controls limit the appropriateness of the recorder for music. In use, however, we found very little audible evidence of degraded signal, even when the input consistently peaked well into the record/battery meter's red area and the resultant recording was played back through a high-quality stereo system. Indeed, we found that with our setup it was not possible to decrease the input level to the recorder without tapping the power-amp output of our preamp so that we could control gain with the preamp's volume control. So while we found that the 124-CS performed successfully as a deck, its operation is not ideally suited to that use.

In some respects, however, the Sony makes a better deck than some true deck models. Playing some of our best prerecorded cassettes through a component system, for example, we found the sound to be as wide-range as any cassette system we've heard. In



Sony 124-CS	Additional Data
Speed accuracy, 1 7/8 ips	105 VAC: 1.3% fast 120 VAC: 1.2% fast 127 VAC: 1.1% fast
Wow and flutter, 1 7/8 ips	playback: 0.24% record/playback: 0.32%
Rewind time, C-60 cassette	1 min. 39 sec.
Fast-forward time, same cassette	1 min. 45 sec.
S/N ratio (ref 0 VU, test tape)	playback: l ch: 52 dB r ch: 53 dB record/playback: l ch: 48 dB r ch: 48 dB
Erasure (400 Hz at normal level)	61.5 dB
Crosstalk (400 Hz)	record left, playback right: 31.5 dB record right, playback left: 31.0 dB
Sensitivity (for 0 VU recording level)	aux input: l ch: 32 mV r ch: 32 mV mic input: l ch: 0.22 mV r ch: 0.24 mV
Accuracy, built-in meter	left: 2 dB low right: 8 dB low
IM distortion (record/play)	1 7/8 ips, -10 VU: l ch: 9.5% r ch: 8.5%
Maximum output, speaker (8-ohm) jack	l ch: 2.7 V r ch: 2.8 V
Note: all tests performed at speaker output with 8-ohm load.	



filtering the tape hiss reproduced along with the music we reconfirmed the lab's findings that playback bandwidth reaches 10 kHz. With the filter set at that frequency, a reduction in the extreme top of the music was clearly audible; with the filter set at 12 kHz, hiss was reduced but the music was not audibly altered.

Another impressive element in the lab report on the 124-CS is its harmonic distortion curve—one of the best we've seen yet in cassette equipment. Other

report data, including record/playback response curves are good indeed for cassettes. Over-all, therefore, we would conclude that the model merits serious consideration, particularly for uses that will depend to a large extent on its portability and flexibility. The same recorder, equipped with all accessories except the extension speakers and carrying case, is available as the 124 at \$169.50.

CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## ELAC DESIGNS FOR LOW IM —AND GETS IT

**EQUIPMENT:** Elac STS 444-E, a stereo phono pickup with elliptical stylus. Price: \$69.50. Manufactured by Elac of West Germany; U.S. distributor: Benjamin Electronic Sound Corp., Farmingdale, N.Y. 11735.

**COMMENT:** What's your choice for the single most important measurable characteristic in evaluating a stereo cartridge? Is it high compliance? Low stylus force? Low tip mass? Low distortion? Smooth square-wave response?

According to Elac, no single characteristic is the "most important"; all of them are interdependent. But—"if there is any figure capable of providing a clue to the over-all listening quality . . . the intermodulation distortion rating would probably be the most meaningful." Thus a major design aim in producing the new Elac was low IM. In this sense it is obvious that the product succeeds hands down: the 444-E has the lowest IM distortion we've yet measured for a stereo pickup.

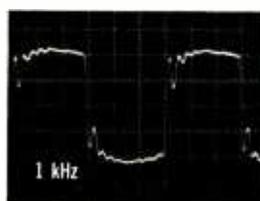
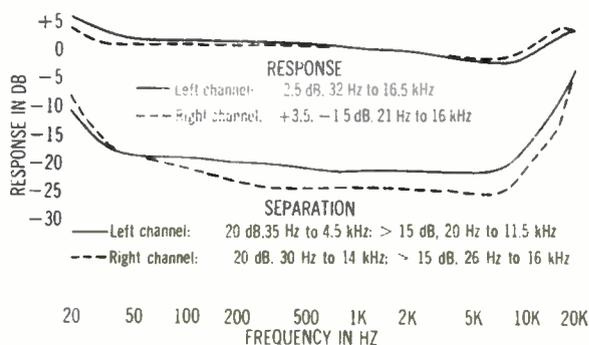
And indeed this very low IM does not seem to relate to measured compliance or to any other characteristics that can be tested in the lab. For while the 444-E did have fairly high compliance (15 laterally, 10 vertically), it was not the highest ever measured. And its measured frequency response curves certainly do not appear to be substantially different from the curves reported for many other pickups. As for harmonic distortion, it ran somewhat higher in the Elac than in other high-priced pickups. Vertical angle, at 19 degrees, did show up comfortably close to the theoretical ideal of 15 degrees. Stylus (or "tracking") force was found to be 1.5 grams in the SME arm used for the lab measurements, although the same pickup used in the Rabco SL-8 arm required only 0.75 grams to track the most demanding records we played. (Elac's own recommended range of stylus forces, incidentally, runs from 0.75 to 1.5 grams.)

Intrigued by both the very low IM figure, and its apparent nonrelationship to other measured characteristics, we listened to the Elac 444-E playing several recent stereo discs. Throughout, the sound was eminently clean, wide range, well balanced, and amply separated for good stereo effect. Tracking ability was unimpeachable, and the subtle differences among various ensembles and recordings were readily discernible. In short we'd rank the STS 444-E with the top performing pickups currently available. Some



additional notes on the unit: its output voltage is 3.2 and 3.3 millivolts for left and right channels respectively. These values—well suited for most magnetic phono inputs on today's equipment—are about as closely matched, channelwise, as you could find. The stylus tip is a true elliptical with good geometric conformation. A removable wedge at the top of the cartridge body permits adjusting the cartridge for optimum vertical angle engagement with a record when it is used in a manual tone arm or in an automatic player arm.

CIRCLE 144 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



*Elac square-wave response.*



**EQUIPMENT:** Parastat MK 4, a record and stylus care kit. Price: \$15. Manufactured by Cecil E. Watts, Ltd., England; distributed in the U.S. by Elpa Marketing Industries, Inc., Thorens Building, New Hyde Park, N. Y. 11040.

**COMMENT:** If any single person can be credited with making record owners aware of dirt and the need (and gadgets) for getting rid of it, the late Cecil Watts of Britain would be the man. Over the years he pioneered photomicrographic inspection of record grooves and of stylus tips, perfected optical techniques for three-dimensional viewing of these areas, published numerous papers and pamphlets, served as consultant to record and pickup manufacturers, and successfully launched many consumer products—such as the famed Dust Bug—that lent new meaning to the concept of “clean sound.” As far back as December 1964 (reported in HF, April 1965), the inventor told us of the need for an improved technique to care for records that would be played with new lightweight pickups tracking at 2 grams or less. A more refined applicator and mild chemical solution with antistatic properties seemed to be called for. Watts died in September 1967, but the company he formed continued to operate, and has introduced—via Elpa in the U.S.—the new Parastat MK 4 based on Watts’s original research.

The most striking feature of the new device is the record brush, whose nylon bristles have been ground down to an extremely narrow tip that enables them to thoroughly engage all the contours of the complex stereo groove and dislodge minute particles of foreign matter. When used as instructed—that is, with the bristles moistened with both distilled water and an auxiliary antistatic fluid—the brush also imparts a calculated amount of humidity to the record; this helps to neutralize static charges and thus to eliminate a main source of dust attraction.

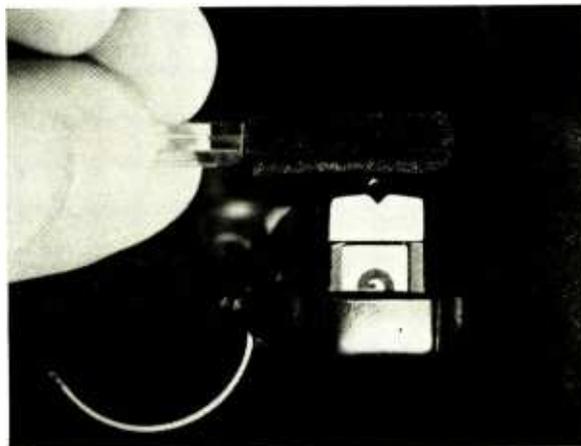
The brush is housed in a snap-lid case. The lid itself holds a multilayer pad which is to be moistened with the distilled water and the antistatic fluid, each

#### REPORTS IN PROGRESS

Ferrograph 724A Tape Recorder

Electro-Voice “Aries” Speaker System

## NEW KIT HELPS CLEAN RECORDS AND STYLUS



*Stylus is cleaned in upside-down position.*

of these individually contained in plastic vials fitted with dispensers. Also found in the case that holds the record brush is a smaller stylus-cleaning brush. Three replacement pads and a detailed instruction booklet complete the kit. The stylus brush, incidentally, does not use bristles; instead it employs a wrap-around layer of close-pile nylon velvet. And, interestingly enough, the instructions for correctly cleaning a stylus call for removing the pickup shell so that you can face the stylus upward as you stroke it from rear to front.

Use-tests of the Parastat MK 4 impressed us with the kit’s apparent effectiveness in helping to minimize surface noise. The literature with the kit states that it is designed for use on new records; “new,” however, is defined as not necessarily mint-fresh, but rather as not previously treated with other fluids. We have several such records in our collection, a few actually ten years old. Application of the new Parastat could not, of course, “restore” these discs but it did reduce some of the surface noise (due obviously to dust particles that had been lodged in the grooves) that we had previously resigned ourselves to living with.

CIRCLE 145 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



*Holding the Parastat brush with just enough pressure to flex bristles helps clean record groove.*

# Fisher is ahead in the race for bass.

For a long time, the bookshelf speaker system with the "best" bass was the one with the most boom.

The fact is, most good bookshelf speakers today incorporate the acoustic suspension principle. Invariably, they can all deliver big bass in a corner, or on the floor. And, just as invariably, there'll be a lot of bass coloration, resonance, and overemphasis of certain bass frequencies.

## Introducing the XP-9C.

At Fisher, we suspected that the first bookshelf system capable of solid, resounding bass outside of a corner or floor location would sound far cleaner than any other bookshelf speaker on the market.

We gave our engineers the assignment.

And they gave us the new Fisher XP-9C. The smallest speaker system ever to use a fifteen-inch acoustic suspension woofer.

This woofer, with its massive 12-pound Alnico magnet and extremely high compliance, has a free-air resonance of 10 Hz! And in its compact cabinet will produce natural-sounding bass to below 30 Hz. No doubling. No audible distortion.

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The total effect is cleaner, more exact bass than any other bookshelf system can achieve, anywhere you choose to place the XP-9C's.



## On to treble.

Naturally, there's more to the XP-9C than flawless bass.

A special hemispherical dome tweeter takes over from the lower mid-range drivers at 1,200 Hz. Then, starting at 5,000 Hz, a super tweeter reproduces all frequencies to the limits of audibility with outstanding clarity and presence.

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Also (and some of our engineers believe, most important of all), the XP-9C has virtually eliminated boxy "speaker sound" by careful acoustic loading of the woofer; and putting it all in a cabinet constructed of non-resonant flake board, which eliminates the resonances found in plywood. Finally, the whole system is tightly sealed and filled with Acoustiglas® to provide a high degree of damping.

## We challenge all comers.

We invite comparisons between the Fisher XP-9C and any other speaker system. Bookshelf, or floor standing.

Compare them for overall sound, of course. But pay special attention to the bass.

If you're a concert goer, and you know what real bass sounds like, you'll never be able to settle for one of the speakers that lost the race for bass.

(For more information, plus a free copy of the Fisher Handbook 1970 edition, an authoritative 72-page reference guide to hi-fi and stereo, use coupon on magazine's front cover flap.)

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CIRCLE 30 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NOVEMBER 1969

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# SANSUI

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NOVEMBER 1969

77

SIGNAL

"... a truly great performance of the glorious opera, superbly performed. London had done it again, had scaled even greater heights of achievement than ever before, but to say this is no way to disparage the "Golden Ring" in favor of the "Silver Rose"

... I do not know what views Strauss, who died in 1949, held about the recording techniques of his time, but I feel sure that if he had been able to hear the magnificent playing of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under Solti, the marvellous clarity of detail, reproduced now as never before, he would have expressed his delight..

"Crespin's interpretation stands out from all others I have ever heard... The possessors of this recording will get special joy in discovering all the lovely details, the light and shade, in this superb rendering of the part.

"The recording shows throughout a well-nigh perfect balance between voices and orchestra which puts it ahead of any other to date.

"Solti's direction seems to me faultless. He is always most considerate to the singers, one may say he breathes and sings with them, his amazing rhythmic vitality flows into every bar, his tempos are exactly right, he catches the spirit of the wide range of emotions, the comedy, the near-tragedy—in regard to the Marschallin—and in all this his great orchestra give him of their glorious best. One could write pages about the lovely, lively, profoundly expressive details of their playing.

"I am not a Fope; but can at least send a symbolic Golden Rose to the cast, conductor, orchestra, producer, sound engineers and all others associated with this project, performed with profound gratitude for a marvellous realization of an opera I most dearly love."

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# Der Rosenkavalier

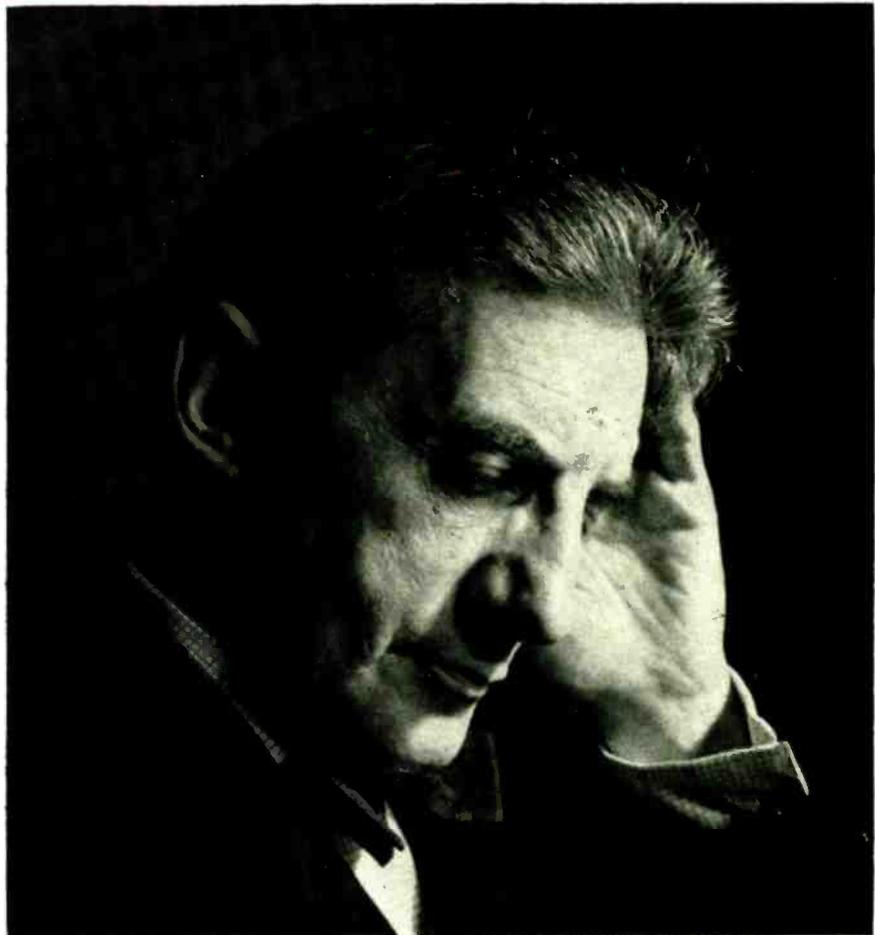
Régine Crespin, Yvonne Minton, Helen Donath,  
Manfred Jungwirth, Luciano Pavarotti,  
Otto Wiener, Emmy Loose,  
Alfred Jerger, Anton Dermota and many  
other superb artists.

Georg Solti and The Vienna  
Philharmonic Orchestra

OSA-1435

**LONDON**  
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of Opera



Jeremy Grayson

by David Hamilton

## Verdi's *Otello* — A Discographic Survey

Sir John Barbirolli's distinguished, forceful reading competes with Toscanini, Karajan, and Serafin

AS FAR AS I know, Barbirolli's only previous association with *Otello* on records goes back nearly four decades, to an imposing single disc of *Otello*'s monologues sung in German by Lauritz Melchior (one of the few "wrong-language" records that stands up to virtually all competitors; recently reissued on the Austrian Lebendige Vergangenheit label, LV-11, this should be in every serious vocal collection). Nothing on that record, competently directed though it was, necessarily pointed to the very impressive work that Barbirolli does in this new Angel set.

If I were to relate it to any previous recordings of the opera, I would juxtapose Barbirolli's performance with Karajan's (in terms of orchestral sound and ensemble) and also Serafin's (in terms of tempo and pacing). The New Philharmonia has not such a Germanic tonal quality as the Vienna Philharmonic, but

the sound is fat and organlike, with a richer bass than any of the Italian orchestras (as well as much better ensemble)—although in both these recordings I sometimes miss the bright silvery sound of Serafin's cornets and trumpets, which is so well recorded in the Victor set.

Like Serafin's, Barbirolli's tempos are slower than the norm (although in fact rarely different from Verdi's metronome marks), and they are maintained with impressive firmness; a few exceptions aside, the slackness of Serafin's reading is not a problem here. By the standards of most *Otello* performances this may be on the stately side, but tension is very well maintained.

The lapses of continuity are in fact rather puzzling. After a brilliant first side—aided immeasurably by the work of the Ambrosian Chorus with its fine precision of ensemble and diction—the cello solo leading to the

duet is unconscionably retarded, and the opening pages of the new material become very mushy. (Things are further complicated here by McCracken's obvious desire for a faster tempo, and the ensemble between voice and orchestra in his first speech is simply disastrous—I cannot understand how something so sloppy should have been passed for release.) Eventually, firmness is restored, but the performance has sagged badly. Another awkward spot is the middle of the "*Dio ti giocondi*" duet, where the original rate of movement should return; it does in the orchestra, but Gwyneth Jones is allowed to set a contradictory and slower tempo in her (unaccompanied) material, and for a page we don't quite know where we're at.

But this kind of thing is relatively rare, and it's clear that Barbirolli has a real conception of the piece, both in the large and in detail. Good examples of the latter include the chords leading into the Act III ensemble (after Otello's "*A terra! e piangi!*"), where Verdi's decrescendos are meticulously observed (alas, as in most performances, when this figure returns in the act's final measures, the reference is obscured by a ritard that distorts its rhythm), and the breathtaking diminuendo in the violin scale leading down to Otello's final monologue. It all goes to show that fast tempos aren't everything when it comes to generating excitement; steadiness and clarity of articulation are at least as important, and I find that harmonic details come through with greater weight at Barbirolli's tempos than in some other performances.

There are some reservations, of course. The balance of instruments in the Act II chorus is not happy—it's nice to hear the mandolin and guitar, but this is a chorus, not a concerto, thank you (the score specifies that these instruments should be behind the scenes anyway). Another balance problem is the third-act ensemble—all the two-channel recordings have not been able to clarify this passage as well as Toscanini's old NBC broadcast (that's where those months of rehearsal really paid off!). And in the last act, the rapid measured recitative between Otello and Emilia (right after Desdemona's death) is not strict enough; compare Toscanini or Karajan for a demonstration of how this can build up to the next orchestral entry. I occasionally have the feeling that this whole project was not quite as carefully carried through as the Karajan—or perhaps it was too tightly scheduled to permit that last degree of rehearsal and retaking. However, despite the loose ends around the edges, it is a distinguished and forceful reading, strong enough to survive deficiencies of singing.

And deficiencies I'm afraid there are in this international ensemble—American Otello, Welsh Desdemona, German Iago, and Italian supporting cast. The latter includes some old friends: Piero de Palma (in somewhat rougher voice) repeats his musical Cassio from the Erede set and Florindo Andreolli, Serafin's Cassio, is here demoted to Roderigo. Anna di Stasio is a strong Emilia (perhaps in more senses than one: her knocking on the door in Act IV suggests some high-level karate experience), but the Lodovico is a bit shaky.

These are side issues, of course. Among the principals, I would give highest marks to Gwyneth Jones, whose lovely sound is better controlled here than on previous occasions. She has a sympathetic feeling for phrase-shaping, and some real temperament; over against this, a few notes aren't tuned well, and a tendency to jump the beat is sometimes evident. Although her big scene in Act IV is well conceived, various small imperfections of rhythm, ensemble, and control keep it from the top rank—a level which I take to be defined by the Tebaldi/Karajan collaboration, aided by the winds of the Vienna Philharmonic. Her death scene is marred by an extravagantly ugly scream, but this is perhaps the producer's fault. Basically, she gives us strong, generous, intelligent singing that will hopefully become, every bit as refined as Tebaldi's.

James McCracken has been, of course, the Metropolitan's Otello of preference since the departure of Mario del Monaco—an eminence achieved against some severe handicaps. The physical problems do not matter in a recording, and the obvious conviction and earnestness of delivery do come through despite McCracken's rather strenuous method of tone production and his unsuitability of timbre: most of the range is rather mushy in sound (although pointed enough to permit accurate pitching), and he achieves a certain ringing, heroic quality only at the top. There is not much subtlety in the treatment of text, and little individuality of characterization beyond that resulting from the voice's special sound, the effort and awkwardness of its production (this Otello sounds as if he's suffering—but even before he has any reason to do so).

There is one big musical problem—a pronounced and persistent tendency to get ahead of the orchestra (the spot mentioned earlier is the worst example, but the propensity is always evident, and very disconcerting). Since his rhythms are usually accurate in themselves, I suspect that the trouble stems from being unused to this range of tempos. Another blot is the opening of the monologue, delivered (apparently through an echo chamber) in a ghastly stage whisper. I'm sorry to say that McCracken is an adherent of the Del Monaco theory about "*Dio mi potevi scagliar*"—to wit, that Verdi used only two different pitches for the voice in this passage because he couldn't think of anything more interesting. McCracken doesn't "remedy this lack of inspiration" quite as enthusiastically as his Italian predecessor—but how much more effective is the correct delivery of Martinelli, who makes the syllables of the text resonate with significance.

Apparently even Fischer-Dieskau is not completely immune to discomfort with the tempos—at "*Roderigo, beviam!*" in the First Act he threatens to move things faster (a suggestion that Barbirolli rightly ignores), and there are some surprising rough spots in his performance—textual errors, careless intonation, choppy delivery. I find, indeed, two types of vocal condition—good in the Second Act and at the start of the Third, rather rougher in the First and in the Trio with Otello and Cassio; could this be the result of two groups of recording sessions at different times?

I will not be imparting new information if I observe that Dieskau's is hardly an Italianate sound like Taddei's; this Iago must be accepted on another level, and the singer does a good deal to compensate for his lack of sheer rolling power. After all, it isn't a cantabile-oriented part to quite the same degree as, say, Renato or the Conte di Luna, and even such an exception as Cassio's Dream actually plays to one of this singer's strengths, mezza-voce singing. The *Credo* is declaimed with considerable effectiveness, and the little passage immediately following is razor-sharp and insinuatingly phrased; later, the dialogues with Otello are delivered with intelligence and no little *intenzione* (note the reckless bravado of "*Io non narrai che un sogno,*" right after the Dream—this Iago knows that his man is trapped, and he can afford to make minor concessions to truth at this point). And the final pages of Act III gain greatly from his unwillingness to distend every triumphant phrase; by pushing on, in tempo, through "*L'eco della vittoria. . .*" he gives the real climax even more force. An uneven performance, perhaps, but a resourceful one that dominates by dint of intelligence and subtlety—much more successful than I had anticipated on the basis of his contribution to a German "highlights" record with Windgassen (DGG 136434, not issued in this country).

The competition for this new Angel set remains formidable—of the five other versions, only Erede's Richmond reissue is completely negligible (all of his principals make more effective contributions in the disciplined framework provided by Karajan). Serafin (Victor) has

Gobbi's fine Iago, but his stately, measured reading often sags—if you want this kind of performance, Barbirolli carries it off better.

That leaves three, including one phonographic classic—the Toscanini, which is still something very special in terms of execution, momentum, and conviction, despite unrelentingly boxy sound (so dead as to virtually destroy the fourth act Prelude) and an entirely neutral Desdemona. The other stereo set is Karajan's, with the inestimable advantage of Renata Tebaldi—but even the most famous living conductor could not control Del Monaco's fondness for unmusical embellishment of Verdi's writing, nor could he instill a dramatic aliveness into Aldo Protti's unresponsive Iago. (I would certainly agree that Del Monaco was the most naturally endowed Otello of recent decades, but he never achieved anything like full potential: even after hundreds of performances, he still had not mastered that crucial phrase in Act III, "*Datemi la vostra eburnea mano.*") Another drawback in the Karajan set (as in the Serafin) is the baffling inclusion of the ballet music, a disastrous dissipation of the tension so brilliantly built up in the preceding sequence.

A particular favorite of mine is the Capuana reading, now released in unflattering pseudo-stereo by Everest. Nowhere obtrusively brilliant, this is a very well-rounded and convincing performance, boasting a superb Iago (Taddei) and two other principals both musically and dramatically aware—all these people "play" to each other in a most responsive way, making both Verdi's and Boito's points with accuracy and

understanding. It's too bad that the third-act ensemble is completely sabotaged by the recording job—but elsewhere this is a performance of distinction.

The verdict? If you must have real stereo, it's between Karajan and Barbirolli: one more obviously spectacular in vocal terms and as recorded sound (which I, for one, find obtrusive at times) but weakened by the ballet music; the other more measured but equally compelling at its best, recorded with a more natural perspective, and partially compromised by McCracken's jumpiness. The Toscanini set is *hors concours* and (especially if it becomes available at Victrola prices) should be regarded as indispensable, while *Otello* connoisseurs are also directed to the Capuana set. Finally, if you want to hear what can really be done with the title role, the Martinelli excerpts on Victrola VIC 1365 will give you a better idea than anything in the complete sets: he wasn't flatteringly recorded, nor was the voice in top condition—but the sheer mastery of vocal technique and the intensity of delivery have not been touched in the three decades since.

**VERDI: Otello.** Gwyneth Jones (s), Desdemona; Anna di Stasio (ms), Emilia; James McCracken (t), Otello; Piero di Palma (t), Cassio; Florindo Andreolli (t), Roderigo; Glynne Thomas (t), Herald; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b), Iago; Alfredo Giacomotti (bs), Lodovico; Leonardo Monreale (bs), Montano; Ambrosian Opera Chorus; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli, cond. Angel SCL 3742, \$17.94 (three discs).

by George Movshon

## Hary Janos — An Entertainment With Music

A merry romp with Hungary's Walter Mitty folk hero

IT IS OF COURSE well known that Hungarians love their native land and perpetually sing its beauties; but also that they emigrate from it in droves, generally in order to conduct the great orchestras and opera companies of lesser musical breeds. Centuries ago the provision of musical talent for the world market was an Italian monopoly; but in recent decades Hungary's export figures have been by far the more impressive, and today a large number of the most prestigious musical jobs in the world are securely in Hungarian hands.

Hungarian musicians arriving since 1926 have consistently proclaimed the virtues of a work first unveiled in that year, *Hary János* by Zoltán Kodály. They are less explicit in describing exactly what sort of work *Hary János* is: "... an opera. Well, not exactly an opera: something like a sort of play, but with singing and also orchestral music. But not *really* a play—more like a folk musical. Except you can't really call it a musical: more like an opera." Having now a reasonably close acquaintance with *Hary János*, I can certify that the foregoing is an accurate description.

*Hary János* is in fact a story *with* music (rather than a story told *in* music or *through* it) and Kodály's score is descriptive and pictorial rather than dramatic. It consists of thirty-one numbers, sixteen of which are sung, either by solo artists or chorus. All of the latter and a few of the orchestral passages are based on Hungarian folk songs. Eight of the orchestral movements have been



*Ustinov's accent is as autochthonous as goulash.*

# Hary Janos *Continued*

combined into a concert suite, which is frequently played in concert and has been much recorded (the current Schwann lists four versions by conductors of Hungarian origin—Dorati, Fricsay, Kertesz, and Ormandy—as well as others by Leinsdorf and Rodzinski).

The Suite has traveled the world but the so-called opera has not succeeded outside Hungary, where it is given regularly. There was a production in Cologne in 1931, another in Zurich in 1950, and a few later attempts in German opera houses; but the consensus of critics seems to be that *Hary Janos* is more satisfying as a musical experience than as a theatrical one. More surprisingly, the record catalogue has also slighted *Hary Janos* in its full-length form: apart from an import on the Qualiton label (Hungary's national record publishing house) there has been no trace of the vocal music in any domestic catalogue, barring Kertesz' version of the Suite which does contain a short vocal selection.

But now London has ridden nobly to the rescue and has closed the gap. Here is a complete version of the work, sung in Hungarian by a company from the Budapest Opera, but performed and recorded in Britain with the utmost technical skill; the whole presented in a delightful manner for English-speaking listeners who would find the dialogue in Hungarian (and there is a great deal of it) quite unendurable. This is a thoroughly satisfying release, musically, technically, and dramatically, and will give great pleasure. The problem of dramatic presentation has been solved most effectively: by getting Peter Ustinov to deliver a cleverly crafted linking narration and to act every one of the speaking roles, both male and female.

*Hary Janos* is simply an outrageously mendacious tale, a Walter Mitty dream, as related by an amiable braggart of a returned soldier to the townspeople of Abony Magna, the village of his birth. It is a tale told by Janos in his cups, a fantasy of high life in the imperial capital. The ex-soldier claims that he once helped Archduchess Marie Louise (wife of Napoleon I and daughter of the Austrian Emperor) to cross a frontier; how she, in gratitude and admiration, took him along to Vienna—and was not pleased when Janos insisted that his beloved, Orzse, should accompany them. How a wicked chancellor intrigued with Napoleon to invade Austria, and how Janos, almost singlehandedly, defeated the French and took Napoleon prisoner; how the Austrian Emperor then offered Janos a dukedom and the hand of his daughter; but our hero declined the honors, asking only to be released from the army so he could return with Orzse to his beloved Abony Magna.

Kodály's score is fresh, engaging, rhythmically vital, and tuneful. There is nothing in it to deter the man in search of easy listening—no Bartókian dissonances or harmonic innovations. Yet it never sounds staid or musically unadventurous; and nearly every page is informed with the melodies, meters, and harmonies of Hungary, even its characteristic instruments—for the cimbalon (or

zimbalon or cembalon) provide a unique and stirring color.

Of the performers, Melis is outstanding: a forthright, manly, and musical voice, guided by a sure-fire sense of drama; he owns this role in Budapest, and is indeed Hungary's foremost baritone. Zsolt Bende is excellent as the intriguing chancellor and László Pálocz does well with the coachman's song. The women all sound wobbly to my ears, but one has to remember that different criteria of beauty in singing endure in other places: certainly the *emotions* of Orzse and Marie Louise are very effectively conveyed. Kertesz conducts with humor, zest, and (when needed) considerable thrust; and it is hard to imagine the orchestral performance surpassed.

Peter Ustinov has a field day, shuffling and dealing his accents like a conjuror. He never forgets that it is, after all, Janos who is telling the story; but within that frame, he delineates—sometimes in no more than a word or two—a dozen separate personalities. His skill with national pronunciation and inflection is legendary; and here he creates a Russian sentry, a Viennese Empress, a Corsican Napoleon, a French courtier—all these come to fully rounded life in seconds. And his Hungarian accent is as autochthonous as goulash.

The man who found this solution to the problem of presenting *Hary Janos* to a non-Hungarian audience is producer Erik Smith, who wrote the additional (and very funny) copy and used the entire range of available stereo perspectives with high imagination to support and extend Ustinov's gallery of characters.

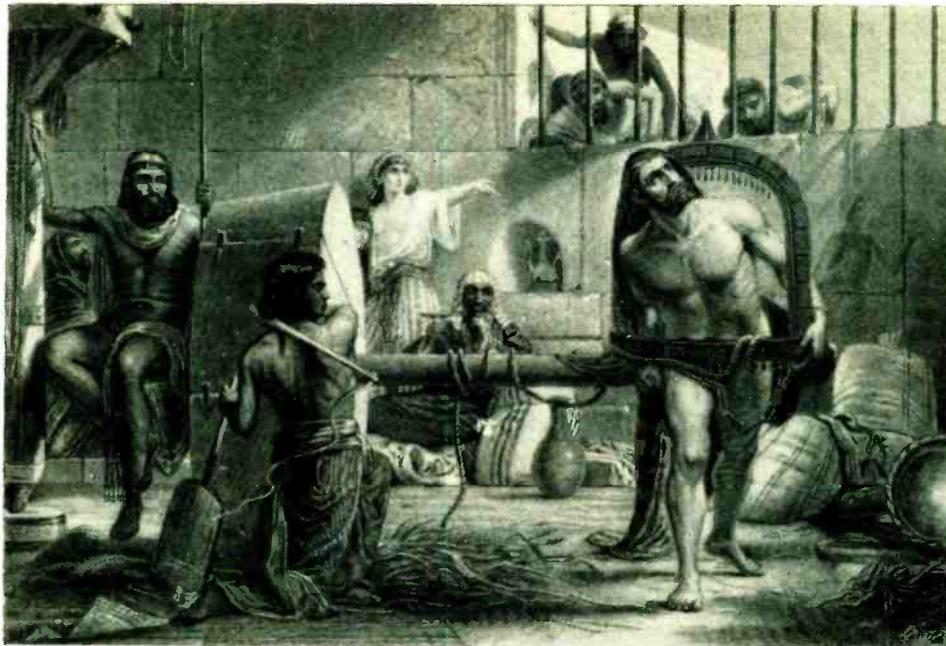
Zoltán Kodály died in 1967, in his eighty-fifth year, having done most of his significant work in composition during the Twenties and Thirties (though his postwar *Missa Brevis* and his 1961 Symphony are both considered worthy). Perhaps even more far-reaching in its influence than anything Kodály wrote was his postwar effort to reform the teaching of music in Hungary's schools. In the late 1940s, Kodály's countrymen made him President of the National Arts Council and a member of the national legislature. From this power base he was able to secure the adoption of a program to teach every Hungarian school child the musical alphabet—first in *solfeggio* form, later on in conventional notation. The result is that Hungary stands today as the most musically literate nation—by far—in all the world. The children's choirs of Hungary are famous all over Europe for their ability to master and to perform music of the greatest complexity and difficulty. We may expect many, many more conductors—and other master musicians—from Hungary in the future.

None of the Walter Mitty-like dreams of *Hary Janos* approaches in improbability the ideal of extending musical education to an entire people; yet Zoltán Kodály's dream of glory has actually come true.

**KODALY:** Hary Janos. Erszébet Komlóssy (s), Orzse; Margit László (s), Empress; Olga Szönyi (ms), Marie Louise; Zsolt Bende (t), Bombazine (Ebelasztin); György Melis (b), Hary and Napoleon; László Pálocz (b), Marczi; Peter Ustinov, narrator; John Leach cimbalon; Edinburgh Festival Chorus, Wandsworth School Boys Choir; London Symphony Orchestra, Istvan Kertesz cond. London OSA 1278, \$11.96 (two discs).

## Correction

In the listing of the "Great Recordings of the Century," on page 82 of our October 1969 issue, the second line under the Beethoven Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 9, in A, is in error and should have read: Op. 47 ("Kreutzer"). Fritz Kreisler, violin, Franz Rupp, piano.



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## From Germany: An English Music Drama

Karl Richter conducts Handel's "Samson" in English for DGG

by Paul Henry Lang

WHEN A COMPANY of Deutsche Grammophon's reputation turns to one of the great baroque music dramas and does it in the original English language and with a cast native to that language, it is artistic news of the first importance. The Germans have always considered Handel their own, despite his near half-century of residence in England, and have always recorded his works in execrable German translations; but now they tackle one of Handel's Miltonian works—little appreciated and understood even in the English-speaking world—in its original form.

*Samson* is neither a "sacred oratorio" nor is it drawn from biblical texts, as is generally supposed; the libretto was based on Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, a "Greek tragedy" on a colossal scale, and is a genuine stage work. The many stage directions in the original manuscript were largely omitted by the nineteenth-century editors so as not to give the impression that the biblical story was intended for the blasphemous theater. Newburgh Hamilton, the librettist, did a commendable job in arranging the long poem into acts and scenes; he remained as close to the original as possible, and where he had to depart from it for musico-dramatic reasons, he used bits and pieces from Milton's other poems. But this was not a congenial text for Handel and one wonders why he agreed to compose it. Milton's Puritanism was alien to him and he found the disillusioned old poet's misogyny distasteful. So Handel was saddled right from the start with a tremendous handicap. That he overcame it is pretty close to a miracle and is solely due to the fact that the force of his music was able to change the meaning of Milton's words. Unfortunately, this is not always to the advantage of the drama. He was brilliantly successful in changing Delilah from the hateful and treacherous

harlot painted by tradition to a vibrant feminine creature, completely contradicting Milton as well as the Bible. This transformation of Delilah caused much anguish to the Victorians, who were shocked by the charming and beguiling music used to characterize her.

When Handel was unhappy with the libretto, he resorted to a unique trick to enforce his own ideas. By singling out certain words and making them conspicuous by repetition, he could altogether change the meaning and emphasis of the original text. Milton has Samson greet Delilah with the grossly insulting "thou hyena," but what catches our attention because of its musical emphasis, is her reiterated "hear the voice of love." There are many such instances, when music triumphs over the libretto, but there are also others when Handel could avoid neither Milton's *longueurs* nor his oppressive moral philosophy. A typical example is the choral number which confronted him with the trying words "To man God's universal law gave pow'r to keep the wife in awe." Now what could this gallant bachelor who created Semele, Solomon's Queen, Cleopatra, and all the other luminous women, generous and uninhibited lovers, do with Milton's "wicked female usurpation"? He took the unsympathetic text and wrote a rollicking fugue, the chorus prancing in delightful garlands of effortless counterpoint that is altogether meaningless so far as the text and the drama are concerned. Though a very fine piece, it is a complete *non sequitur*, which was later cut by Handel himself, but which is faithfully included in this recording.

As DGG presents *Samson*, the work appears to be shapeless, monotonous, and benumbingly long. To be fair, it must be conceded that *Samson* does not really hit its stride until it is almost half over; the entire first act is static, filled with the soliloquies of extraneous

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**BACH: Cantata No. 213, Hercules auf dem Scheidewege.** Sheila Armstrong, soprano; Hertha Töpfer, alto; Theo Altmeyer, tenor; Jakob Stämpfli, bass; Chorus of the Gedächtniskirche; Bach-Collegium (Stuttgart), Helmuth Rilling, cond. Nonesuch H 71226, \$2.98.

Even though the *Hercules Cantata* (written in 1733 for the birthday of the electoral crown prince Friedrich of Saxony) has not previously been available, the music is not unfamiliar: Bach incorporated almost all of it the following year into the *Christmas Oratorio* with only minor changes. For instance, the echo song in Part IV of the *Christmas Oratorio* appears in this score sung by an alto; and the gentle, lovely lullaby in Part II of the Oratorio originated here as a soprano aria with a very similar text. The Cantata's radiant opening chorus found its way into Part IV of the Oratorio with no changes at all except for the substitution of new words.

The most outstanding aspect of the performance is the work of the four soloists. Sheila Armstrong's light, expressive, and well-controlled voice and precise intonation make the slumber song a thing of ravishing beauty. Equally effective is Theo Altmeyer's vigorous aria, "Upon my wings you shall soar." Here Bach has combined solo violin, oboe, tenor, and continuo in a fully developed fugue, with episodes, stretto entries, and, near the end, a complete inversion of the subject.

My reservations concern Rilling's handling of the orchestra and the chorus in the outer movements. Though the number of singers appears to be modest, and while they do sing accurately and with good intonation, their heavy choral tone and overly legato manner robs the music of rhythmic tension and forward thrust—quite the opposite from the energetic and extremely articulate choral sound of Richter's Munich Bach Chorus, an approach that I definitely prefer. Part of the problem here is undoubtedly the distant and diffuse recording acoustic which tends to blend everything into a smooth, warm block of sound. C.F.G.

**BACH: Concertos for Keyboard and Orchestra: No. 2, in E, S. 1053; No. 4, in A, S. 1055.** Glenn Gould, piano; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Vladimir Golschmann, cond. Columbia MS 7294, \$5.98.

The sleeve lists the contents of this recording as "concertos for piano and orchestra," which is a statement of fact so far as this particular performance with Glenn Gould as soloist is concerned; but it is also a bit confusing. Bach did not compose for the piano, he did not even compose an original concerto for the harpsichord; all his clavier concertos are transcriptions—and not very good ones at that. One would surely expect the greatest German clavier player of his time to adapt the new and exciting form and style coming from Italy for his own instrument, yet the only great original "concerto" for keyboard he ever composed was the "Concerto after the

Italian taste" (1735). But this work is for solo harpsichord without orchestra, a fact which, together with Bach's splendid original violin concertos, gives us the clue to this curious situation. It seems that Bach associated the concerto with the glorious violin tone (the Italians did not compose keyboard concertos) and his violin concertos are unusually Italianate for him. In the absence of the prototypes (mainly Vivadi) that enabled him to compose his great violin concertos, Bach had to be satisfied with mere transcriptions for harpsichord of his own and some other composers' violin concertos. These he used for convivial music-making at the Collegium Musicum, which he directed in his spare time. Curiously enough, given Bach's tidy ways, these transcriptions are not carefully made, and even his worshipful biographer Schweitzer was constrained to say that the master was "incredibly hasty and superficial" in arranging them. That the transcriptions are more popular than the excellent originals is undoubtedly due to Bach's fame, though some of the manuscripts are lost and the original version can only be conjectured. This is not a difficult task (Szigeti restored the violin version of the D minor Concerto) because Bach did not bother to change the violin texture of the solo part. Nevertheless, these works are viable if not so effective as when played on the violin. Even the second movement of the *Italian Concerto* cries out for a soaring violin.

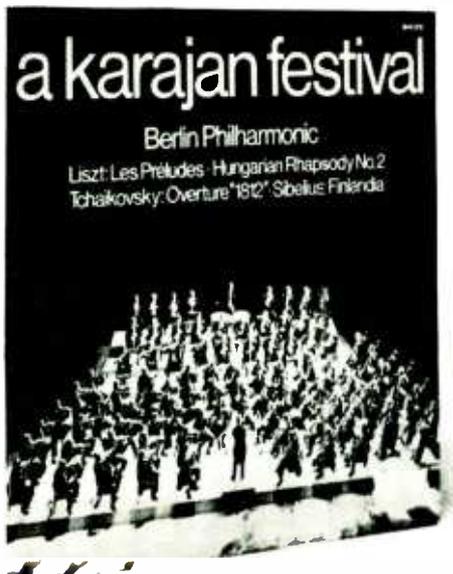
Since these are transcriptions, there is no point in harping on the old harpsichord-versus-piano controversy; after all, one can hear portions of these concertos sung in Bach's cantatas. The only criterion is whether the performance is good and idiomatic for the piano. Gould's playing is without any chi-chi or preciousness, musicianly from beginning to end. What makes his performance attractive is that he does not attempt to imitate the harpsichord as some misguided pianists do (only in the slow movement of the Second Concerto are there a few finicky spots); he plays this music as it should be played—with quiet intimacy. But the performance is marred by the unsubtle orchestra. Golschmann hews to the old idea that all baroque music is "massive," and the piano is often covered. At the same time, the delicate accompaniment figures have little body of sound and thus are not well co-ordinated with the solo. The sicilianas in both concertos suffer from improper emphasis given to musical values. The orchestra must supply the sustained melody while the piano plays evanescent figurations; if we hear only the latter, as in

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this case, we get a lopsided picture. The orchestral sound is better in No. 4, although in neither concerto is it well dispersed, and one gets the impression that the players are bunched in one corner. Gould should try it again with a better accompanist, for he can make the piano version really valid and artistic. P.H.L.

**BACH: Masses:** in F, S. 233; in A, S. 234; in G minor, S. 235; in G, S. 236. Elisabeth Speiser, soprano; Ingeborg Russ, alto; Hildegard Rütgers, alto; Kurt Equiuuz, tenor; John van Kesteren, tenor; Gerhard Faulstich, baritone; Jakob Stämpfli, bass; Erich Wenk, bass; Gächinger Kantorei; Chorus of the Gedächtniskirche; Bach-Collegium (Stuttgart), Helmuth Rilling, cond. Nonesuch HC 73020, \$8.94 (three discs).

The current Schwann lists no fewer than twenty-one complete recordings of the *Brandenburgs*, eleven *Matthew Passions*, and ten B minor Masses—yet we have had to wait until now for the first stereo recording of the four so-called Lutheran Masses. Why such neglect for four works, which certainly deserve a wider hearing? Albert Schweitzer felt it necessary to pooh-pooh these Masses simply because they are made up entirely of music adapted from earlier cantata movements: Schweitzer claimed that the adaptations are not artistically satisfying because the texts don't match the meaning implicit in the music. Apparently this attitude is still with us, although I doubt that a contemporary audience would ever suspect any textual surgery—only the performer might detect an occasional awkwardness in the declamation. Still, it would be a mistake to approach these works expecting the B minor Mass: that monumental structure will always remain in a class by itself.

These four Masses were assembled by Bach in the mid-1730s. Each is in six movements with the Kyrie, the *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, and the *Cum sancto Spiritu* assigned to the chorus, with three arias spaced between. All twenty-four movements are adapted from ten cantatas, only two of which, Nos. 67 and 79, are very well known. A marvelously effective chorus with solo interludes from Cantata No. 67, *Halt im Gedächtnis*, has been ingeniously reworked for the Gloria of the A major Mass; the great *Reformation Day* Cantata No. 79, *Gott der Herr ist Sonn und Schild*, yields three movements, including the Cantata's opening chorus which becomes the Gloria of the G major Mass. The Kyrie of this Mass is a very slightly altered version of one of Bach's most remarkable fugal movements, in which each entry of the subject is answered in turn by its inversion.

When Bach transcribed a number of Vivaldi's string concertos for solo organ, he was careful to choose only the Italian composer's finest works; even if the new works hardly improved on the originals, at least Bach was working with first-rate music. A similar principle is involved here: in assembling these

Masses, Bach has chosen from among his most impressive earlier works. What we have here, then, is nothing but highlights from a fine collection of cantatas. Some have been drastically altered and some have been appropriated intact, but all are eminently suited to their new surroundings. While the concept of plagiarism is certainly suspect today, we must remember that such a practice was common in Bach's time and in no way reflects upon the integrity of the composer or the composition.

Unfortunately the current performances are not all that one had hoped for. The work of the vocal and instrumental soloists is generally on a high level, but the choral movements, which account for roughly half of the music, are too often sluggish and poorly focused. The chorus sings with far too much vibrato and this, coupled with the rather covered choral tone, prohibits maximum clarity and articulation. I suspect that much of the trouble is due to the recording itself, which is very often boomy and muddy in the lower registers. In fact, an occasional over-resonant low E from the cellos and basses will blot out the entire aural picture.

Despite my reservations about this set, everyone interested in Bach should sample this marvelous music: the rewards are certainly equal to the disappointments. C.F.G.

**BEETHOVEN: Symphonies: No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67; No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral").** **SCHOENBERG: A Survivor from Warsaw, Op. 46.** Jane Marsh, soprano; Josephine Veasey, mezzo; Plácido Domingo, tenor; Sherrill Milnes, baritone and narrator (in the Schoenberg); Chorus Pro Musica (in the Symphony No. 9); New England Conservatory Chorus; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 7055, \$11.96 (two discs).

**BEETHOVEN: Symphonies: No. 1, in C, Op. 21; No. 8, in F, Op. 93.** Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3098, \$5.98.

Leinsdorf's Beethoven Symphony cycle ends on a real sardonic note: it is more than a bit sobering to have the Ninth, with its frenzied *Ode to Joy* (on the brotherhood of man) preceded by Arnold Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw*. Schoenberg wrote the brief work in 1947. It concerns a group of Polish Jews in a Warsaw ghetto facing imminent slaughter at the hands of the Nazis. As they go to their death, the group impulsively starts chanting the ancient prayer *Shema Yisroel*. The admixture of languages and the stark brutality of the setting does not—and was not intended to—paint a pretty picture. Nor does Leinsdorf soften the blow: the orchestral playing and choral singing are obviously inspired, and Sherrill Milnes exhibits impeccable diction and a wonderful sense of timing in his narration.

Leinsdorf sounds inspired too for most of the *Choral* Symphony. His first movement is swift, headlong, and galvanic—



Sherrill Milnes—equal to both Schoenberg's *Survivor* and Beethoven's Ninth.

very much in the Toscanini tradition. The Scherzo (with the double exposition repeat) is also energetic, though the rhythm almost runs ahead of itself in one or two places. The Adagio is analytical, brightly detailed, and perhaps a bit too dry-eyed and *con moto* for its own good. The soloists in the fourth movement all acquit themselves with distinction—the two male voices are especially well matched in terms of lean, ringing, incisive vocalism. In one or two spots I felt that Leinsdorf's immense energy was operating in spasmodic fits and starts rather than being driven by a steady impulse as was the case with Toscanini. But perhaps this is merely an impression deriving from the conductor's essentially intellectualized, objective approach to music. Certainly, the present edition of the Ninth is one of Leinsdorf's finest performances on disc.

The Fifth Symphony, on the other hand, gets into real difficulties from such cerebral treatment. The Boston maestro sacrifices everything in order to achieve precisely measured fermatas in that work's first movement. This is the *only* performance of the first movement I have ever heard that is totally devoid of emotional drive. Only the unadorned generates any kind of vitality, for the Andante goes nowhere while the third movement is a positive dirge. But even the finale is beset with sluggish orchestral playing and indecisive rhythm all the way. This reading is as bad as the Ninth Symphony is good.

The First and Eighth are somewhere in between the two polarities. The tempos of the First are well chosen, but there is a certain stiffness in transitional passages and a neutrality of tone that I find unagreeable. Leinsdorf observes all repeats here, even the unusual one in the Andante. The Eighth gets off to a robust, energetic start but before long, little details of careless ensemble and tiny lapses of rhythmic incisiveness crop up and de-



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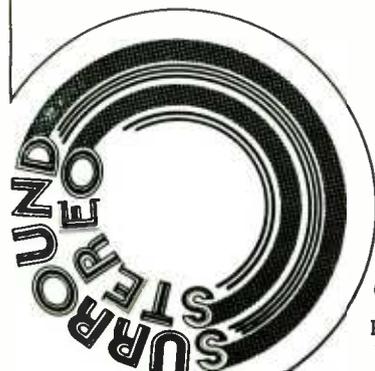
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biliterate the performance. Not really bad, but not very interesting either.

The reproduction is a bit bloodless and over-reverberant. It is at its best and most compact in the Ninth and in the Schoenberg, and at its worst in the Fifth. I wish that the tape editors had allowed a little more breathing space between the movements—for this editorial impatience tends to militate against the cumulative impact of these interpretations. H.G.

**BERIO: Visage—See Webern: Five Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 10.**

**BERLIOZ: Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14.** Boston Symphony Orchestra, Georges Pretre, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3096, \$5.98.

One of Prêtre's most successful en-

deavors to date, this *Fantastique* recording offers a far more cogent view of Berlioz than the same conductor's recent *Harold en Italie*. To be sure, temperate refinement is the rule here, rather than swashbuckling bravura, but at least the architectural lines are clean-limbed, dry-eyed, and not permitted to wilt like raspberry ice cream left in 90-degree sunlight. The conductor draws lovely varicolored playing from the Boston orchestra. Everything is very precise, but this is a genteel sort of cleanliness, not that familiar insistent, febrile, hair-trigger excitement. Categorizing performances into generalized groups is always a dangerous (and sometimes misleading) thing to do. Be that as it may, I think it fairly accurate to say that Prêtre's interpretation combines Karajan's smooth-skinned tonal refinement (DGG), a bit of Markevitch's introspection (also

DGG), Monteux's poetical classicism (RCA Victrola), with just a touch of Munch's sense of the fantastic (RCA and Angel).

Tempos are rather fast throughout, enabling the slow movement to be contained on one side. There are no cornets in *Un Bal*, and, as usual, the repeats in the first and fourth sections are not observed (Colin Davis' Philips edition remains the only one to offer all of these refinements). The chimes in the *Witches' Sabbath* are a bit weak but RCA's engineering is spacious, velvet-toned, and resonant. H.G.

**BIZET: Symphony in C. ROUSSEL: Suite in F, Op. 33. D'INDY: Istar, Op. 42.** Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Max Rudolf, cond. Decca DL 710162, \$5.98.

These works are all otherwise available, mostly in couplings of more inherent logic than the present one, but Rudolf's performances are good enough to recommend this disc to anyone who fancies this particular grouping. The strict, more symphonic, less balletic reading of Bizet's youthful work tends to emphasize the Germanic facets of its multiple ancestry, but there's no harm in that, and the work's perfection always was independent of its sources. Incidentally, Decca's annotator doesn't seem to know about the most important of these sources, and the probable reason for Bizet's suppression of the work: as Howard Shanet demonstrated most convincingly over a decade ago, the seventeen-year-old Bizet modeled his work on the recent and very successful First Symphony of his teacher Gounod—so closely, in fact, that he felt unable to make the work public. When it did turn up at last, in 1935, Gounod's work had been so sufficiently forgotten that two decades elapsed before the resemblance was noted; evidently, it will take a few more decades before the information reaches the authors of liner notes.

Roussel's astringent and sophisticated neoclassic exercise is also well done, as are D'Indy's "strip-tease" variations-in-reverse, an artful work whose harmonic character often suggests that the goddess Istar's underworld destination is very close to the garden of King Mark of Cornwall.

The recorded quality is bright and clear—in fact, it sounds like a real orchestra in a real hall, and that isn't so common these days. D.H.

**BRAHMS: Quintets for Strings: No. 1, in F, Op. 88; No. 2, in G, Op. 111.** Amadeus String Quartet, Cecil Aronowitz, viola. Deutsche Grammophon 139430, \$5.98.

The Brahms string quintets are in an unfortunate position midway between the "standard chamber music" status of the string quartets and the "lightweight attraction" standing of, say, the Dvořák Op. 97. The upshot of this situation is that these superb works are habitually

## Britten's Unchanged Aesthetic

by David Hamilton

THESE TWO CYCLES, composed twenty years apart, make an interesting pairing, demonstrating both Britten's basically unchanged aesthetic of song writing (he has hardly been beguiled by the newer approaches that concentrate on the sonic aspects of the text to the exclusion of direct intelligibility) and his increased attention to problems of cyclic organization.

The Donne group of 1945 is clearly more than just a collection of separate pieces—the sequence of keys, the motivic connections and, of course, the particular choice and ordering of the poems all attest to its integrity. Particularly admirable is the way in which the sonnet's characteristic articulation after the first eight lines is reflected in the musical setting, and the balance between formal structure and flexibility of textual declamation is equally impressive. Two of these songs, "Since she whom I lov'd" and the final "Death, be not proud," are among Britten's finest, and the others are not far behind.

However, the Blake settings of 1965 are even more ambitiously unified. To begin with, each of the seven poems is preceded by a proverb, chosen to provide conceptual links between the poems (the selection of texts was made by Peter Pears). Further, all the proverbs are set in free recitative over a consistently treated note-row, thus forming a kind of musical refrain, and elements of the note-row are prominent elsewhere in the cycle. Despite these touches of serial devices, the songs are tonally oriented.

The piano writing is less obviously virtuosic than in the Donne cycle, and rhythmically more complex; it also lies differently on the keyboard, in consideration of the lower vocal register. This is a complex work, and a difficult one to grasp, but certainly Britten's most interesting set of songs since the *Nocturne*.

The performances, by the respective dedicatees of the two cycles, are accurate and expressive. That Pears can improve on his 78 rpm recording of two decades ago is hard to imagine—yet he does; the tremendous crescendo on the last phrase of "Death, be not proud" is just one of many masterful details. Fischer-Dieskau's voice has more tonal allure, but it lacks the force of declamation and the integration of consonant sound with legato tone that makes the tenor's singing so uniquely compelling; his English diction is, however, remarkably good. (Texts are provided on an insert; for once, they hardly seem necessary.) Britten's piano playing does not need further praise at this late date, of course, but the piano might have been balanced a bit more prominently and its tone a shade more clearly focused; in this respect, the Pears/Britten records of fifteen years ago were superior.

**BRITTEN: The Holy Sonnets of John Donne, Op. 35; Songs and Proverbs of William Blake, Op. 74.** Peter Pears, tenor (in Op. 35); Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone (in Op. 74); Benjamin Britten, piano. London OS 26099, \$5.98.

cast into a sort of semilimbo. This DGG coupling is the first we have had since the Budapest/Trampler Columbia edition of a decade ago.

I prefer the Budapest, fine though these new performances are. For one thing, I find the American-based group's gutsy, slightly astringent sonority more to my liking than the occasionally over-sweet, cloying sound of the Amadeus team. Norbert Brainin's wide vibrato, particularly in the higher reaches of the treble, prevents the kind of incisive attack the Budapest achieves. More specifically, however, the Budapesters conceive the music along bolder, more grandiose lines. Their opening of Op. 111 has a vigorous, swaying quality only hinted at by the Amadeus, and they achieve an unbuttoned abandon in the finale's coda that the Amadeus strive for but fail to suggest with their characteristic British reserve and civility. On the other hand, I can see many listeners preferring the Amadeus' lighter treatment of Op. 88 (which, you may recall, has been nicknamed the *Spring* Quintet), but I remain in the Budapest's camp by virtue of their greater rhythmic attack and projection.

Sonically, the smoothly processed, somewhat recessed DGG engineering is preferable to the Columbia/Budapest, which is a shade close and strident, but even here, if you can equalize some of the wire out of their tone, the Budapest's close microphoning repays with its greater immediacy. H.G.

**BRAHMS:** Trio for Violin, Horn, and Piano, in E flat, Op. 40. **FRANCK:** Sonata for Violin and Piano in A. Itzhak Perlman, violin; Vladimir Ashkenazy, piano; Barry Tuckwell, horn (in the Brahms). London CS 6628, \$5.98.

This has been a year for Brahms Horn Trios. First came the sober, studious reading by the Menuhins and Alan Civil for Angel. On its heels came the silken, cultivated, and exceptionally fine-grained performance for RCA by Joseph Silverstein, James Stagliano, and Claude Frank (available only in a three-disc Boston Chamber Players anthology). Deutsche Grammophon got into the act by offering an ascetic, precise, and rather angular account by Eduard Drole, Gerd Seifert, and Christoph Eschenbach (coupled with a truly superb account of the Brahms Clarinet Trio). There was a triple-threat curio by Frederic Vogelgesang who played all three parts quite competently. And finally, a simultaneous reissue of both Rudolf Serkin recordings: the classic 1932 performance with Aubrey Brain and Adolf Busch (now on Seraphim) and the less successful Marlboro Festival version on Columbia.

Despite these interesting releases, to my mind this new Perlman/Tuckwell/Ashkenazy reading is the most successful of all. For one thing, it has the most color. Ashkenazy cultivates a softer-hued, more pastel-shaded kind of piano tone than the other keyboard players—he is all rippling suggestiveness where Serkin

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and Eschenbach, for example, both define their sonorities with a touch of hardness and glare. Similarly, Perlman is a lush, gentler, less astringent violinist than either Drole or Busch. He shapes so many phrases with a wonderfully yearning, tender quality that his playing really moves me. Tuckwell is an audacious, spry virtuoso, but he, too, knows how and when to subdue the penetrating edge of his sound. While other editions boast equal technical and musical finesse (though certainly none are superior on either count), this version stands apart because of its particular brand of personality. All three players are not only masters of their instruments, but they are clearly soloists as well, and one finds many tiny details that bespeak real initiative and temperamental flare. And because all three musicians are such strong and well-matched personalities, there is no danger of one outplaying the other. In sum, then, this is a truly astonishing projection of a great piece and quite the best Brahms Horn Trio I have ever heard.

The overside Franck Sonata benefits from a similar type of performance. Here Perlman is all brimstone and fire, using a vibrato with more urgency than I usually associate with his basically lyrical style. Askenazy partners him with tremendous force and projection and with ample technical equipment to make light of even the thunderously bombastic second movement. Some may prefer a more contained, less overtly dramatic approach, and listeners so inclined are directed to the Gertler/Farnadi (Westminster), Mornni/Firkusny (Decca) and Komlós/Ankios (Qualiton) editions. Lovers of the grand manner, however, ought to be swept off their feet by the present partnership.

The disc is further blessed by full-blooded, really potent sound, and a recorded balance that really lets the piano speak. H.G.

**DEBUSSY:** *Children's Corner; La Fille aux cheveux de lin; L'Isle joyeuse; Etude No. 11 ("Pour les arpèges"); Suite Bergamasque; La Plus que lente.* Alexis Weissenberg, piano. RCA Red Seal LSC 3090, \$5.98.

**DEBUSSY:** *Jardins sous la pluie; Pour le piano; La puerta del vino; Ondine; Feuilles mortes.* **RAVEL:** *Sonatine.* Ivan Moravec, piano. Connoisseur Society CS 2010, \$5.79.

Weissenberg's playing in this collection seems almost entirely lacking in commitment to a positive view of the music—even in *L'Isle joyeuse*, where the ostensibly virtuosic aspects might be expected to arouse a firm response from even the most anticoloristic keyboard lion. In fact, this particular piece is rhythmically slack, and the complexities of its metrical structure are never realized; what we get here is just top-voice playing, adorned with occasional swoons. In the *Etude*, Weissenberg quite misses the structural thread, turning it into a series of unrelated sprays. The earlier

suites are more straightforward, but the often casual treatment of Debussy's dynamics tends to negate whatever value there may be in his digital accuracy.

Moravec, on the other hand, performs with a sense of color and purpose: all in all, I find this record preferable to his earlier Debussy collection—the playing less willful and more subtle. Perhaps the respective instruments have something to do with the difference: instead of the new Baldwin, the present disc was made on a Bösendorfer, whose tonal coloring is less conducive to splashy effects. Whatever the reason, this is accomplished and musical playing, and quite well recorded (although the review copy had some distracting surface noise). D.H.

**DEL TREDICI:** *Szyzygy*—See Xenakis: *Akrata*.

**DVORAK:** *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in B minor, Op. 104.* **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33.* Mstislav Rostropovich, cello; Berlin Philharmonic, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 139044, \$5.98.

This may be the fanciest performance of the Dvořák ever put on disc. The playing is fabulous, rather *too* fabulous for its own good. The orchestra begins in a heavily introspective manner that becomes positively droopy after one has listened to a few bars. The horn solo slows down so much that there is nothing left for Rostropovich to add when he takes up the tune later (somehow he adds it anyhow!). The line is constantly being broken for some fine point or other—a subito *pppppp* here or a coloristic nuance there, and I wouldn't be surprised if there were more changes of tempo than there are measures in the entire Concerto! Furthermore, Karajan's

woodwinds, while distinctly audible, sound as if they were being squeezed out of a tube. Rostropovich, of course, plays with splendid tone and wonderfully poetic impulses, while the collaboration with Karajan obviously bespeaks inch-by-inch rehearsal. I find it a tasteless performance though and an unfortunate artistic letdown after the wonderful 1953 Rostropovich/Talich/Czech Philharmonic account (still listed on Parliament PLP 139).

The Tchaikovsky is a bit more straightforward—or is it that one expects more flamboyance in this work? Karajan's orchestral backdrop is richly voluptuous and his horns sound decidedly more like horns than the saxophoney counterparts in Rostropovich's earlier DGG record with the Leningrad under Rohzdestvensky. Otherwise the interpretation remains the same light-handed paragon of virtuosity it was before. And the sound is just as superb as of yore. H.G.

**DVORAK:** *Symphony No. 7, in D minor, Op. 70.* **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Symphony No. 5, in E minor, Op. 64.* Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Zubin Mehta, cond. London CSA 2224, \$11.98 (two discs).

This two-disc "Tribute to the Israel Philharmonic and Zubin Mehta" was taped in London during the orchestra's tour there in the summer of 1968. It is the first example of that ensemble's playing we have had on records since the Katchen/Kertesz Grieg and Schumann concertos of 1962. Though still a bit short of being a truly first-rate orchestra, the Tel Aviv aggregation has come quite a distance since I last heard them. The strings still have a scraggly sound, especially in rapid accompanimental figurations but they are notably more incisive than before. Similarly, there is still some raucous tone from the brasses and out-of-tune woodwind playing, but at least the important horn solos are musicianly in their phrasing, despite a bit of bluntness here and there. The timpanist has a tendency to go beserk at times (the finale of the Dvořák sounds like a kettledrum concerto). It is rather ironic that these performances should remind me so much of the wartime Furtwängler/Berlin Philharmonic readings. The resemblances are striking: the same kind of savage, breath-taking forward thrust, the same kind of febrile, neurotic intensity, and much the same kind of heartfelt devotion. These interpretations may be disturbing to some, but they are nothing if not utterly committed.

I happen to find Mehta thoroughly congenial in these symphonies. His Dvořák is direct, expansive, and free-wheeling. He doesn't quite have the steely efficiency of Dorati's recent intellectualized approach, the detail of Košler's rustic one, or the memorable poetic sophistication of Monteux; but the sense of a real performance (as opposed to a snip-and-edit tape-splice job) gives it an appeal all its own. The Tchaikovsky is more like Ozawa's recent RCA edition than Markevitch's Philips reading in that



Zubin Mehta—a congenial interpreter of symphonies by Dvořák and Tchaikovsky.

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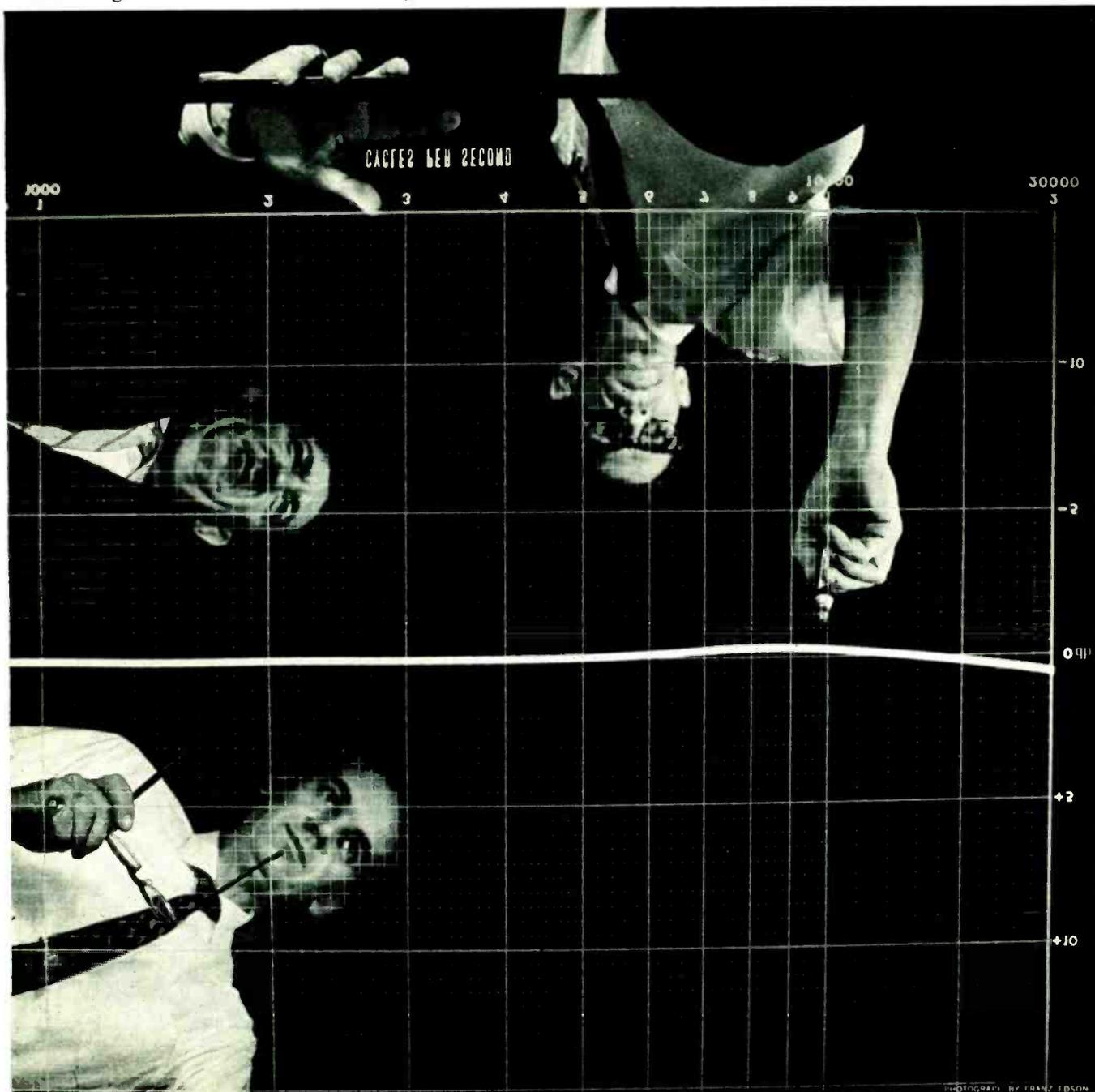
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it represents a tasteful handling of the "traditional" interpretive view rather than a complete rethinking of the music, eschewing all tempo idiosyncracies. In feeling, though, Mehta is thoroughly dissimilar to Ozawa. He is virile, unperfuméd, and almost Brahmsian, whereas Ozawa strove for a colder, more silken, and flexible refinement. I still feel that Markevitch offers the ideal statement of this much-abused symphony, but both Mehta and Ozawa join Klemperer (on Angel) as extremely close runners-up.

One wishes, though, that the companies would stop packaging their products in such a way that artists are more loudly touted than the music. In Britain these discs were offered singly; what is to become of the domestic collector who might want one performance but not the other? H.G.

**FRANCK: Sonata for Violin and Piano, in A—See Brahms: Trio for Violin, Horn, and Piano, in E flat, Op. 40.**

**HANDEL: Concertos for Organ and Orchestra: No. 4, in F; No. 5, in F; No. 6, in B flat; No. 13, in F. Simon Preston, organ (organ at the Merchant Taylors' Hall in Nos. 5 and 13; Flentrop organ at Queen Elizabeth Hall in Nos. 4 and 6); Menuhin Festival Orchestra, Yehudi Menuhin, cond. Angel S 36599, \$5.98.**

**HANDEL: Concertos for Organ and Orchestra: No. 1, in G minor; No. 4, in F; No. 5, in F; No. 9, in B flat. Gábor Lehotka, organ; Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra, Sandor Frigyes, cond. Qualiton LPX 11380, \$5.98.**

Simon Preston, a brilliant young organist, does not really give us a satisfying account of these four concertos. All the ingredients are here—a brilliant and flawless technique, a marvelously warm and well-controlled orchestra, two very fine organs—but there is a precious lack of musical imagination. Handel wrote these concertos to divert the audience between the acts of his operas and oratorios. The maestro himself played these first performances, and as a result the organ part exists only in a rough outline. Handel's intention was to "wow" the audience as much as possible with his dazzling improvisatory skills; Preston gives us a fine reading of the outline with almost none of the impromptu display that Handel must have considered the *raison d'être* for these works. Biggs, in his complete set for Columbia, Müller, in his fine version for Archive, and especially Weinrich, in his recordings of the Opus 4 and Opus 7 concertos for RCA, have all more successfully realized the essentially spontaneous nature of these works. Preston relies exclusively on precipitous tempos and crisp articulation to achieve a bravura effect.

The orchestra under Menuhin provides splendidly subtle and expressive accompaniments, but occasionally Preston's delicate and attractive registrations are overpowered. The nineteen-stop organ at the Merchant Taylors' Hall was in-

stalled in 1966 utilizing primarily pipe work from a 1722 instrument by Renatus Harris, and the restoration and reinstallation have been beautifully accomplished by Noel Mander. Queen Elizabeth Hall is the proud home of a new fifteen-stop Flentrop, whose flutes are probably the most beautiful I've ever heard.

On the Qualiton disc Gábor Lehotka, apparently a member of the under-thirty generation (the jacket notes are not very specific on the point), displays brilliant technique and flair. He too, however, needs to loosen up and expand upon the printed score. If anything, he sticks even closer to Handel's draft than Preston, although he does include two long and elaborately improvised cadenzas in Concertos 1 and 4. Both are marvelously effective and stylistically correct.

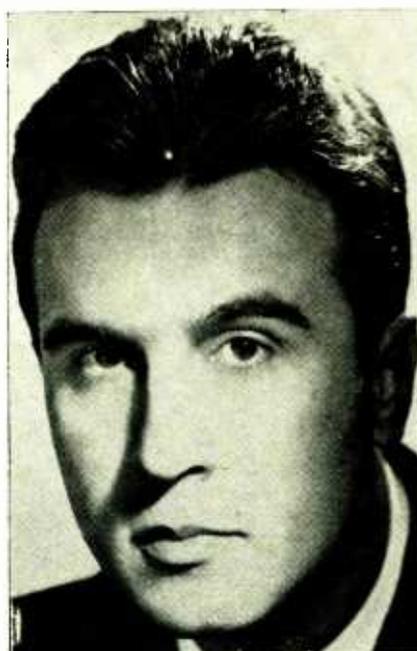
The orchestra under the direction of Sándor Frigyes is a first-rate ensemble. On a number of occasions the accompaniment is reduced to a group of solo strings, that enables us to hear clearly even the most delicate organ passages. Another fine touch is the inclusion of the continuo harpsichord and cello in many solo organ passages.

Both records are richly and warmly recorded, but the Qualiton pressing is markedly superior to the Angel, which has patches of distortion. C.F.G.

**HANDEL: Samson. Various soloists; Munich Bach Choir and Orchestra, Karl Richter, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 83.**

**HAYDN: Sinfonia Concertante in B flat, Op. 84—See Mozart: Sinfonia Concertante in E flat, K. 297b.**

**HINDEMITH: Symphonic Metamorphoses. JANACEK: Sinfonietta. London**



*Claudio Abbado makes lyricism pay off handsomely in the Janáček Sinfonietta.*

**Symphony Orchestra, Claudio Abbado, cond. London CS 6620, \$5.98.**

Both these scores are well calculated to test the capabilities of a virtuoso orchestra and the capacity of your sound system to reproduce huge masses of instrumental sonority. On each count, this new London disc wins handily: the ISO dances through Hindemith's tricky figurations and Janáček's rhythmic knots with ease, and the sonics (aided by a slight treble boost) faithfully mirror the wide-range glitter of this sumptuous orchestral palette.

Abbado's performances compete directly with an identical coupling on Columbia by George Szell and his Clevelanders, and here we reach an impasse. Hindemith's *Metamorphoses* is a jolly but thoroughly mechanical affair and only makes its full effect when played with dead-pan precision—the kind of soulless merriment that emanates from an intricately constructed, well-oiled automaton as it goes through its carefully programmed paces. Szell captures this quality with amazing accuracy: important solo lines stand out with just the right amount of emphasis and each independent instrumental block turns as smoothly as a cog wheel. Abbado makes the mistake of playing for expression and loses the crisp efficiency that is the essential humor of the piece. He makes many laudable musical points but his romantic approach only succeeds in blurring the sharp contours and smudging Hindemith's crystal-clear sonorities.

Abbado's lyricism pays off beautifully in Janáček's *Sinfonietta*, however. Usually this piece is the conductor's cue for slashing rhythms, biting attacks, and sudden dynamic contrasts—and I confess that this understated, almost introspective performance did unsettle me a bit at first. But for all its spectacular instrumentation, ceremonial fanfare, and heady vitality, there is not a bar of music—even the most simple accompanimental figure—that doesn't come from the heart, and Abbado's lusciously phrased reading is hard to resist. And there's plenty of tension too, sustained in an even development right up to the final climax which opens out gloriously. Szell, on the other hand, has little feeling for the piece on any level; his chilling objectivity kills the score outright. If you're set on this particular musical pairing, there seems to be little choice—get both discs. P.G.D.

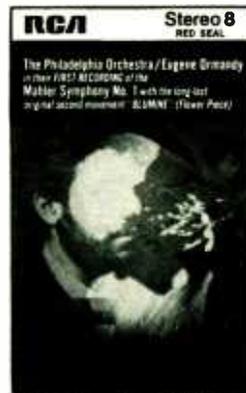
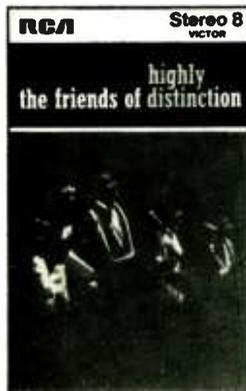
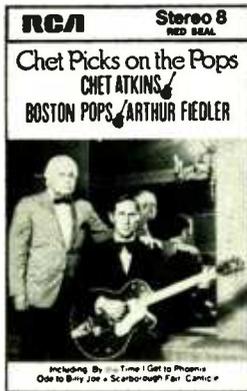
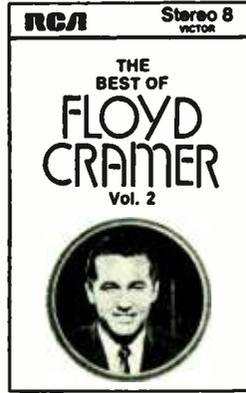
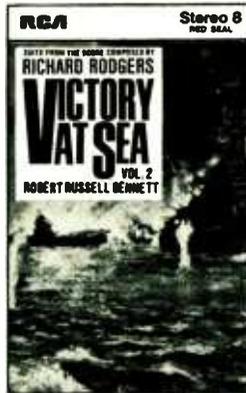
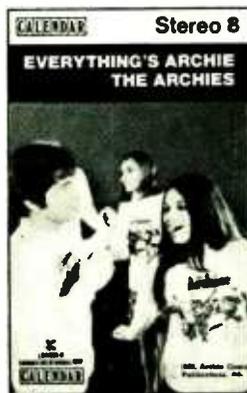
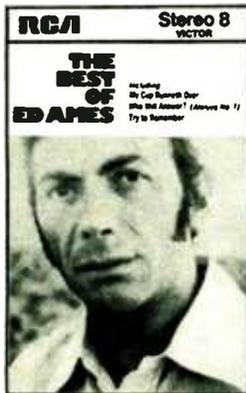
**D'INDY: Istar, Op. 42—See Bizet: Symphony in C.**

**JANACEK: Sinfonietta—See Hindemith: Symphonic Metamorphoses.**

**KODALY: Háry János. Various performers; London Symphony Orchestra, Istvan Kertész, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 81.**

**LEONCAVALLO: I Pagliacci—See Mascagni: Cavalleria rusticana.**

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**LISZT: Choral Music. Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil; Tantum ergo; O salutaris hostia I; Legende (Sankt Christoph); Weihnachtslied (O heilige Nacht); Mariengarten (Quasi cedrus); Pater noster I.** Margit László, soprano (in Psalm 137); József Réti, tenor (in Weihnachtslied); György Melis, baritone (in Legende); Gábor Lehotka, organ; Female Choir of Győr; Choir of the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble; Miklós Szabó, cond. Hungaroton LPX 11381, \$5.98.

Apparently the first of a series, this disc invades what is, phonographically speaking, virtually terra incognita. Beecham once recorded one of the Weimar psalm settings and we have had some of the Masses, but hardly any of Liszt's shorter choral works.

Actually, two of these pieces—and the most interesting at that—are really solo vocal works, with a women's chorus entering only at the end. The 1859 setting of Psalm 137 is a soprano solo (accompanied by violin, harp, and organ), chromatic and expansive; the St. Christopher piece is a balladlike song for baritone and piano, in the starker style of Liszt's later years, that apparently remained unperformed until 1967.

The remaining items are pretty small beer, useful mainly to the Liszt specialist. (The *Hymne de l'enfant* is related to No. 6 of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* for piano, and the *Weihnachtslied* is arranged from the second piece of the *Weihnachtsbaum* cycle.) Performances are OK, but you'll have to put up with some of the distortion apparently endemic to women's-chorus recordings, and also some surface noise. Texts, but no translations. D.H.

**MAHLER: Symphony No. 4: Third Movement—See Webern: Five Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 10.**

**MASCAGNI: Cavalleria rusticana.** Caterina Mancini (s), Santuzza; Adriana Lazzarini (ms), Lola; Aurora Cattelan (c), Lucia; Gianni Poggi (t), Turiddu; Aldo Protti (b), Alfio. **LEONCAVALLO: I Pagliacci.** Aureliana Beltrami (s), Nedda; Gianni Poggi (t), Canio; Alfredo Nobile (t), Beppe; Aldo Protti (b), Tonio; Walter Monachesi (b), Silvio; Chorus and Orchestra of the San Carlo Opera, Naples. Ugo Rapalo, cond. World Series PHC 3-018, \$8.94 (three discs).

If the world really has been waiting for another *Cav* and *Pag*, then this one isn't it. Even at a budget price, defects outweigh its simple, provincial virtues—this is an honest, if rough account of two indestructible favorites, performed by an experienced and idiomatic company of singers. The sound is reasonable, though I suspect (without having any clear-cut evidence) that the recording was made a decade or more ago.

Signori Poggi and Protti are both veterans of the Italian operatic stage, capable actors and musicians who handle

the ardent words with a skill few non-Italian singers could emulate. Unfortunately both voices sound ragged and worn, Poggi's tenor having throughout both operas a pinched and lackluster sound with very little volume in the low register; Protti's tired baritone barely skims the music of Alfio or Tonio.

The best voice in the album is that of Caterina Mancini, a Santuzza who sounds both youthful and involved; but musically she cannot compare with Cossotto, De los Angeles, or Suliotis, to choose only the first three recorded alternatives that come to mind.

The singing of the chorus is adequate, the orchestral playing quite acceptable, and Maestro Rapalo is able and sensitive, save for a few slack passages. The recording is a little dated in concept, though not by any means archaic—except in giving undue prominence to the voices which, believe me, cannot stand such exposure.

Just to put things in perspective, I should say that an evening spent in Naples at the San Carlo opera, hearing this double bill with just this cast, would be reckoned an evening well spent and worth the money; but repeated hearings at home—and every operatic record must pass that test—are likely to prove irritating.

If you are in the market for a *Cav* and *Pag*, try the Karajan DGG set (with Cossotto, Bergonzi, and Guelfi), though the slow tempos bother some listeners; the Callas/Di Stefano/Serafin double bill is another fine issue (Angel, mono only). If it must be a budget-priced set, there is Del Monaco and company on Richmond or the Gigli (c. 1940) pairing expertly dubbed from 78s and available on Seraphim 6008 and 6009. G.M.

**MENDELSSOHN: Die erste Walpurgisnacht, Op. 60; Heimkehr aus der Fremde, Overture, Op. 89.** Lili Chookasian, mezzo-soprano; Ernst Häfliger, tenor; Hermann Prey, baritone; Raymond Michalski, bass-baritone; Musica Aeterna Chorus (in Op. 60); Musica Aeterna Orchestra, Frederic Waldman, cond. Decca DL 710164, \$5.98.

No sooner do I complain about "just another *Elijah*" (July 1969) than we get the first stereo recording of this extremely well-made but little-played Mendelssohn cantata (of course, we're also getting two more *Elijahs* before the season is out—let us hope that they, too, have such welcome sequels as the *Walpurgisnacht!*). The text is a "dramatic ballade" by Goethe, based on the ingenious (if perhaps ingenuous) theory that there never were real witches and devils celebrating up there on the Brocken—that the whole infernal Sabbath ritual got started because adherents of the old Druidic religions hit upon the idea of camouflaging their rites against spying Christians by setting up a guard force, disguised as visitors from the nether world, to frighten them away.

Whatever its merits as history, the poem makes good material for a musical setting, as Goethe intended it to. Mendels-

sohn's piece dates from 1832, but was revised a decade later. No less a connoisseur of witches' Sabbaths than Hector Berlioz pronounced it a "marvelous composition," and I would not be inclined to gainsay his judgment; the writing is skillful and varied, the transitions between movements carried out with enormous skill, and the orchestration full of fine detail. Don't expect a full-scale Berliozian frenzy (the point is, after all, that the spooks are only make-believe)—rather, a wide range of delightful music, with the climactic chorus more closely related to Weber's *Wolfsschlucht* scene in *Der Freischütz* than to any headier Romantic visions.

The filler overture, a *Singspiel* designed for family consumption, is better known (relatively speaking) by the title of an English version, "Son and Stranger." It is indubitably minor, but also indubitably perfect, and should be heard more often (there is no other current recording).

I have not heard the Everest version of the cantata (evidently a radio tape of dubious origin, reprocessed in fake stereo), but cannot imagine that it would seriously compete with the new Decca, a thoroughly respectable performance. I could wish that the choral sound were more sharply focused and that it did not cover some occasional orchestral detail; also, a few spots would have benefited from retaking (the soggy upbeat to the last chorus is a case in point), but the basic impetus is good and the soloists more than capable. Text and translations are included, and some excellent historical notes by Joseph Braunstein. D.H.

**MENDELSSOHN: Symphony No. 5, in D minor, Op. 107 ("Reformation"). SCHUBERT: Symphony No. 5, in B flat, D. 485.** New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. Columbia MS 7295, \$5.98.

Bernstein's view of the *Reformation* Symphony is quite similar to Munch's older RCA disc with the Boston Symphony: broadly rhetorical and romantically inclined while favoring a rich, weighty, darkly colored tone from his ensemble. Solidity of pulse is preferred to letter-perfect rhythmic precision—some critics might apply the less complimentary adjective "ragged" in a few instances and not without justification. Bernstein, after a rather slow, fancy introduction, presents the main section of the first movement with lusty, expansive vigor. He makes a huge but tasteful accelerando just before the recapitulation, and a big, melodramatic rallentando at the movement's close. The Scherzo, to quote W. S. Gilbert, "is rustic but hearty." It is often taken a bit faster, but I rather like Bernstein's effusive bear hug. The chorale is phrased very expansively (so much so, indeed, that it has to be speeded up considerably when it reappears over the vamping strings). Unfortunately Bernstein, in company with Munch and

*Continued on page 102*

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1212

1209

by Paul Henry Lang



## Leinsdorf's Mozart, a Feast for the Ear

EVERY ONCE IN a while the maestro of one of our great orchestras, used to the splendors of the hundred-piece band, is permitted the luxury of making music for himself. This opportunity is usually provided by the recording industry and constitutes its most attractive feature. This recording of two Mozart symphonies is such an occasion: Erich Leinsdorf has simply assembled a small group from the Boston Symphony to play, seemingly, for their own delectation, and a delight it is from first to last note. What Leinsdorf does is to let the music speak for itself. Now surely this sounds like a pious truism—but is it? Leinsdorf is a master conductor whose technical prowess is undisputed, and his control of the orchestra is complete in this recording; but he does not wield a whip, does not “interpret.” He puts everything in good order, establishes the stylistic guidelines for his superbly trained players, then lets the music unfold naturally. This is a great and near-forgotten art, especially welcome in the presentation of this crystalline music, where balances, accents, and dynamics are measured in milligrams.

In the case of an eighteenth-century symphony, the success of such an undertaking depends on the conductor's ability to make the winds equal partners with the strings, something that a “reduced” (i.e., original) orchestra alone will not insure. Though bona fide orchestral music, much in these sym-

phonies is only once removed from chamber music, requiring close attention to the individual parts. There are in K. 425 only four woodwinds: two oboes and two bassoons; in K. 543 there are only five: one flute and pairs of clarinets and bassoons. Both symphonies also call on the usual pairs of horns, trumpets, and timpani. Every note counts, and in this recording every note is heard. Well, I must qualify this to a certain extent. There is absolutely no flaw in the C major Symphony, but in the E flat, which has more solos than the earlier work, the flute is not always clearly in evidence. When it is, it does not blend well with the other winds; the performance is otherwise equally impeccable. This only goes to show that if a single wind instrument is not on a par with the others, musical intelligibility is instantly in jeopardy. The trouble is that the flutist, though an accomplished artist, steps right out of *The Afternoon of a Faun*—this is French playing, too soft and too liquid for the classical Viennese style.

What a difference it makes when the chord-defining tone is clearly heard! To obtain this in the normal modern concert hall the player must either blow louder than he should, or he must be doubled, or the strings must be kept down; whatever the remedy, it can seldom be carried out with the natural smoothness heard in this performance. The horns, the pedals of the

orchestra, are handled with extraordinary finesse, while the trumpets and drums join the ensemble with vigor, as they should, for in this style they are responsible for the delineation of form and the nailing down of the cadences. While everything said above is valid for both symphonies, there is considerable difference between the two works. The *Linz* Symphony is Haydnesque in almost every detail, except in the slow movement, which is pure Christian Bach. While it is a sunny and beguiling work, it only suggests the consummate symphonist that is before us in the E flat Symphony, which is Mozart's *Eroica*. For the first time Mozart uses clarinets in the symphony. He was well acquainted with the instrument and wrote for it felicitously in his operas; but the symphony, always a little behind the more advanced opera orchestra, was just beginning to admit the clarinet to its ranks. Even Mozart was unwilling to abandon the standard five-woodwind arrangement, so he left out the oboes to make room for the clarinets. This change, however, created an altogether new aural situation. In the early eighteenth-century symphony when full four-part harmony was desired from the winds, the usual combination was oboes and horns. Now Mozart shifts to clarinets and bassoons, a warmer and darker sound later much favored by Beethoven; this quartet plays a prominent role in the E flat Symphony. Leinsdorf does not miss the significance of this changed sonority. In the finale, where clarinets and bassoons usher in the recapitulation, all of Mozart's infinite grace and aural imagination are conveyed by the remarkable quartet of woodwinds. Listen to this spot—one of many—and you will realize why this recording is such a feast for the ear. In a large concert hall, so delicate an equilibrium can seldom be achieved. Unfortunately, we never hear Mozart as he should be heard—in a music room like that of the “old Count Thun” for whom the C major Symphony was composed or in a 300-seat concert hall. But this recording gives us a remarkably close approximation: and a memorable achievement it is, to be cherished by all lovers of unadulterated music-making.

**MOZART: Symphonies: No. 36, in C, K. 425 (“Linz”); No. 39, in E flat, K. 543.** Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. RCA Red Seal 3097, \$5.98.

We suspect that the new Dual 1219 will get a warm reception from the independent testing labs. For the same reasons that they welcomed earlier Duals.

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torque with the absolute constancy of synchronous speed.

Although we can anticipate all the above features and refinements being welcomed by the testing labs, we don't presume to predict how they might be evaluated in terms of performance. Which, after all, is what really counts.

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# The Dual 1219 should give the testing labs something new to talk about.



virtually every other conductor save Toscanini, succumbs to the temptation of becoming precipitate and hectic in the last movement. He does so less than most though, and, on the whole, this is a very acceptable, impassioned performance.

Whereas the Mendelssohn hovers at the borderline between classicism and romanticism, the Schubert Fifth is most definitely a classical work. Here Bernstein's forces dawdle lumpishly throughout, and while the general intentions are amiable enough, I find the results rather gross. For one thing, the orchestral playing has the same *laissez-faire* quality it had in the Mendelssohn, and here it

sounds clumsy and out of place. Then too, all the tempos are just a mite too slow—the Andante con moto, in fact, wallows self-indulgently and nearly succeeds in killing off whatever spiritual purity that wonderful movement possesses. It is a fatal flaw to lose sight of the crystalline simplicity of early Schubert, as Bernstein does. The conductor, though, is generous with repeats in this work.

Warm, resonant reproduction, particularly (and appropriately) so in the Mendelssohn. The balance between strings and woodwinds is fine in both works.

H.G.



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# THE ROGER WAGNER CHORALE: CATHEDRALS IN SOUND



**MOZART: Sinfonia Concertante in E flat, K. 297b. HAYDN: Sinfonia Concertante in B flat, Op. 84.** Peter Graeme, oboe, Thea King, clarinet, Ifor James, horn, Martin Gatt, bassoon (in the Mozart); Emanuel Hurwitz, violin, Keith Harvey, cello, Peter Graeme, oboe, Martin Gatt, bassoon (in the Haydn); English Chamber Orchestra, Daniel Barenboim, cond. Angel S 36583, \$5.98.

Haydn wrote his great Sinfonia Concertante for London; Mozart wrote his not-quite-so great Sinfonia Concertante for Paris. Both works are often coupled on recordings and they do make most congenial disc mates. Barenboim leads his efficient soloists and the English Chamber Orchestra through performances that are comparatively massive in scope, decently played, and perhaps too serious in attitude. This last-mentioned quality is not particularly damaging nor even inappropriate to the Haydn; it is a work rich in expression, and the sheer excellence of its architecture allows a latitude in performance that Barenboim does not exceed. Despite the absence of spontaneous humor, I find myself attracted to the young conductor's approach: his seriousness has invested the music with added grandeur and complementary emotional richness.

Mozart's lighter work is another matter. The first movement works fairly well; though not exactly "light," Barenboim's statement is one of intelligence and reflection. The remaining Adagio and Andantino both lack vitality, due largely to uncomfortably slow tempos and too much heart-on-sleeve posturing.

Angel has accorded Barenboim fine sound—warm yet pinpointed—and agreeably quiet surfaces. S.L.

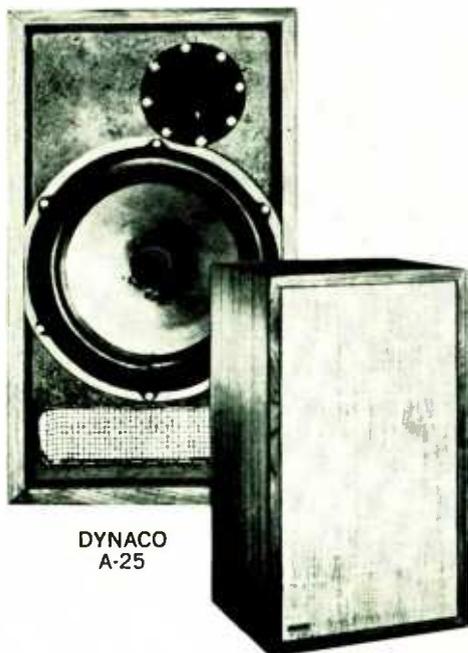
**NONO—Canciones a Guiomar—See Xenakis: Arkata.**

**POULENC: Piano Music. Nocturnes: in C; in A; in C minor; Novelettes: No. 1, in C; No. 2, in B flat minor; No. 3, in E minor; Pastourelle; Presto in B flat; Suite française; Toccata; Trois Mouvements perpétuels; Valse. Gabriel Tacchino, piano. Angel S 36602, \$5.98.**

Poulenc didn't take himself too seriously as a piano composer, and his witty, pungent, thoroughly delectable music is all the better for that. How typically French of him to invent a sensuous, utterly voluptuous peaches-and-cream melody like that of the second *Mouvements perpétuels* and direct the player to interpret in *tres modéré*. And certainly there is an element of tongue in cheek to all his *gris-les deux pedals* and *in-differamente* markings.

Gabriel Tacchino, a young French pianist (despite the Italian-sounding surname) enters into the very specialized world of this composer with striking affinity. Indeed, he almost goes too far in his ultrabrisk treatment of that second *Mouvement perpétuel* (compare Rubinstein's more lyrical, even-tempered exposition on an RCA disc). Similarly,

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*Stereo Review*, June, 1969.

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Tacchino sounds a bit four-square and straight in the *Pastourelle* and rather heavy in parts of the *Toccata* (both of which boast more delicacy and imaginative color in those superb old Horowitz versions on Angel COLH). On the other hand, there is something extremely gratifying—as well as stylistically “right”—about Tacchino’s complete directness and lack of pretense. Also, he puts a lot of incisive vigor into his technically brilliant, well-reproduced performances. Moreover, as parts of the charming *Suite française* make plain (the Pavane, for example). Tacchino is perfectly capable of achieving ravishing color effects when he wants them. Very highly recommended.

H.G.

**PROKOFIEV: The Gambler, Op. 24.** T. Antipova (s), Grandmother; A. Matyushina (s), Blanche; N. Polyakova (ms), Pauline; V. Makhov (t), Alexey; A. Sokolov (t), The Marquis; V. Tsarsky (t), Prince Nilsky; B. Dobrin (b), Mr. Astley; I. Budrin (b), Potapuch; G. Troitsky (bs), The General; A. Petukhov (bs), The Baron; Chorus and Orchestra of the All-Union Radio, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, cond. Ultraphon ULP 163/165, \$17.94 (three discs).

*The Gambler* was Prokofiev’s first completed opera, and like so many of the composer’s stage works it has consistently been dogged by ill luck. He finished the score in 1916 and counted

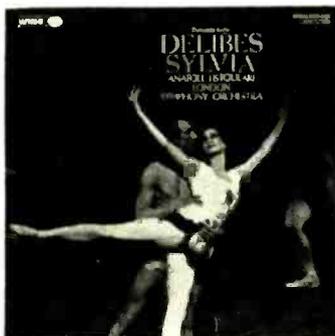
on a great success from the promised premiere at St. Petersburg’s Maryinsky Theater the following year. The revolution sabotaged all this, however, and the subsequent production of a revised version at Leningrad in 1927 was also canceled. The opera was finally staged at the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels on April 29, 1929, and since then has enjoyed very few performances.

Prokofiev adapted his own libretto from Dostoevski’s semiautobiographical tale. Perhaps this was his first mistake, for the text is a puzzling jumble of satire, melodrama, intricate plot twists, and psychological analysis. The principal character is young Alexey, a tutor in the employ of a retired Russian General and desperately in love with the General’s moody stepdaughter, Pauline. When the General’s traveling entourage reaches the mythical German spa of Roulettenburg, Alexey becomes obsessed by the chancy ball and wheel in his attempts to win enough money to buy Pauline out of a financially favorable union with a French Marquis. He does indeed break the bank, but Pauline hysterically hurls Alexey’s winnings in his face and the young man goes mad. Fleshing out this slender theme are numerous other characters, the most important being the General himself. He dotes on a silly thing named Mlle. Blanche, and borrows great sums from the Marquis to further his suit while waiting for news of his mother’s death and a rich inheritance. The redoubtable old lady turns up in Roulettenburg very much alive and proceeds to gamble away the family fortune, leaving the General totally ruined.

A clever librettist could conceivably have made an effective operatic text from these materials, but Prokofiev’s text is so full of inconsistencies, ill-motivated action, partially explained events, and awkwardly constructed scenes that the opera finally falls apart from a lack of dramatic focus. Clearly, Prokofiev wanted a fast-moving theater piece. Had the libretto been better, he might have achieved it too, for the music contains some of the composer’s most brilliantly mordant inspirations—much of the musical satire is really extremely funny. The declamatory writing is superbly paced and often probes the characters with great subtlety, while the orchestra underlines and comments with unflinching accuracy. Perhaps it was the gambling scene that first attracted Prokofiev to the story, for here he has pulled off a dazzling tour de force: each chorus member has an individual part in this dizzy farrago of musical activity, and the turning of the roulette wheel itself (the whirring and spinning is graphically reproduced in the instrumental accompaniment) provides an obsessive rondolike ostinato to Alexey’s successive rounds of gambling. Despite the inconclusive libretto, a group of talented singing actors and an imaginative production might almost convince one that *The Gambler* really has a consistent point of view, thanks to the dramatic vitality of Prokofiev’s virtuoso setting.

This Russian recording evidently dates from the early Sixties and many of the

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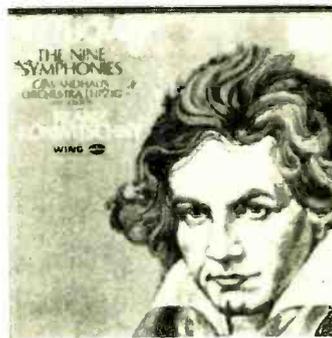
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3. If you are using a changer and have done everything right, as explained in footnotes 1 and 2, the arm should lift itself off its rest and set down at the beginning of the record, if the adjustment for this is correctly set. Depending on the changer you have, this may take about twenty seconds, during which you can read the notes on the record jacket, etc. If the part of the record you wanted to hear is not at the beginning, wait until the arm has set down and then pick it up. On some record changers, instead of just picking up the arm, they have a special lever you can push or pull to raise or lower the arm, which really makes it easy. After you move the lever, you can then go ahead and pick up the arm and move it over to the part of the record you wanted to hear. Instead of just setting it down there, you can use the lever feature again, which is very convenient; sighting along the surface of the record, move the arm from side to side until it looks as if it is right over the place where you want it to come down, then work the little lever. You really get used to the extra motion soon, and don't mind it. Now, if the band you wanted to play is near the end of the side, be careful not to trip the changer mechanism when you get the arm in toward the center. If you do, the machine will lift the arm right out of your hand. If this keeps happening, maybe the best thing would be to listen to the whole record anyway.

4. If the part of the record you wanted to hear was not at the end of the record, and you have a changer, you have two options: either let the record finish and the arm will lift off by itself, which shouldn't take more than fifteen minutes, or, go over and push the "reject" lever very gently, so as not to jar the pickup arm.

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singers are familiar from Angel/Melodiya's recent release of *The Love for Three Oranges*. If there was ever an opera where dramatic projection takes precedence over the voice beautiful, it's *The Gambler*; and on that score the cast here is ideal—it's a marvelously integrated performance, rich in colorful vocal acting and plucky team spirit. Only Pauline and Alexey break out of conversational patterns and into a lyrical arioso: Polyakova's dark, brooding mezzo is put to fine use here, and Makhov displays a healthy, ringing tenor. Rozhdestvensky's Prokofiev conducting is well known for its sharp bite and tonal luster; the orchestra may not always be as polished as it might but the score is more than adequately served. Ultra-

phon's pressings were rather noisy, but the (true) stereo sound is clear and has presence even though it's a trifle coarse. The discs come with an English-only libretto: the overly literal translation adds further obscurities to the confused plot, but it's certainly preferable to nothing at all. P.G.D.

**PROKOFIEV: Three Marches, Op. 69; March in B flat, Op. 99—See Rimsky-Korsakov: Concerto for Trombone and Band.**

**RACHMANINOFF: Symphonic Dances, Op. 45; Three Russian Folk Songs, Op. 41. Bolshoi Theater Chorus and Or-**

**chestra, Yevgeny Svetlanov, cond. (in Op. 41); Moscow Philharmonic, Kiril Kondrashin, cond. (in Op. 45). Melodiya/Angel SR 40093, \$5.98.**

Rachmaninoff's last major work, the set of three Symphonic Dances composed in 1940, has been cursed from birth by the music's inability to satisfy either admirers of the composer's unabashedly romantic earlier works or connoisseurs of more sophisticated "modern" fare. Yet there is a wealth of imagination in this score: the Dances surely warrant a more appreciative and wider audience than that commanded by the "standard" Ormandy/Columbia version of 1961 or by the invigoratingly fresh approach of Donald Johanos and the Dallas Symphony for Turnabout a couple of years ago. The new version may possibly prove more popular—not so much by virtue of superior executant or technical characteristics (although the Moscow Philharmonic does play superbly here and is given impressively big, live, and expansive stereo recording), but by the infectious enthusiasm and warmth of Kondrashin's reading. His is the first all-Russian version of Op. 45 available in this country and it exploits the music's hitherto unsuspected rich vein of emotionalism that so clearly spells out "Rachmaninoff."

Since Kondrashin's performance runs a bit over thirty-four minutes, there is a side break between the haunting "valse-triste" second movement and the finale, and the second side is filled out with one of the most skillful achievements of the composer's American years: the set of *Three Russian Folk Songs*, Op. 41, dating from 1926. It was just a few months ago that American discophiles first encountered these delectable settings for chorus (altos and basses only) and orchestra in Igor Buketoff's fine versions for RCA Red Seal. But their coupling there (Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* with choral interpolations) was less appropriate. The present performances are more idiomatic and robust, and the recording is on a par with RCA's. The jacket notes helpfully include both Russian and English texts of the folk songs. R.D.D.

**RAVEL: Sonatine—See Debussy: Children's Corner.**

**RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: Concerto for Trombone and Band; Variations on a Theme by Glinka for Oboe and Band; Concertstück for Clarinet and Band. PROKOFIEV: Three Marches for Band, Op. 69; March for Military Orchestra, in B flat, Op. 99. TCHAIKOVSKY: Military March, in B flat (1893). U.S.S.R. Defense Ministry Band, Nikolai Nazarov, Yuri Pitirimov, Leonid Dunayev, and Nikolai Sergeyev, cond. Melodiya/Angel SR 40108, \$5.98.**

Rimsky-Korsakov was not born a master of instrumentation: he won that skill by many years of hard study and practice—especially during the period 1871–84 when he served as Inspector of the Rus-

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sian Naval Bands. To provide "less hackneyed than usual" solo display vehicles and to "master the virtuoso style [then] so unfamiliar to me," Rimsky composed the present three works in 1876-77, according to his autobiography *My Musical Life* (in 1878 according to *Grove's Dictionary*). Only the swaggering Trombone Concerto has been recorded before, to the best of my knowledge, in a long out-of-print 1952 Circle LP. Here it is played by Viktor Batashov with Nazarov conducting, with coarser tonal qualities and less virtuoso bravura than by Davis Schumann and Tibor Serly for Circle, but it's still a rollicking joy to hear. A big-toned oboist, Yevgeny Lyakhovestsky (with Pitirimov conducting)

does very well with the piquant variations of a slinky melody, "What a Young Beauty"; and a suave, if less individual, clarinetist, Lev Mikhailov (Dunayev conducting) is starred in the more broadly songful, somewhat sentimental *Concertstück*. No masterpieces, of course, but these apprentice works have considerable fresh charm as well as historical interest.

Overside, only the machine-gun-rattling Op. 99 double-time March by Prokofiev is familiar. I don't think that the conventional, but proudly high-stepping Tchaikovsky March has appeared on records before in this country; and the three other Prokofiev Marches are surely firsts. Written in 1935-37 they start out

well with the alternately roguish and bland No. 1 ("Sports Games") that couldn't possibly be mistaken for the work of any other composer. But No. 2 ("Lyric") is somewhat schmaltzy, and the untitled Third is only routinely ceremonial. Sergeiev conducts the Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev Op. 69, No. 2, and Op. 99; Nazarov conducts the others. Throughout the whole program the Russian bandmen play with immense enthusiasm, if no great tonal refinement or precision. They are robustly, if perhaps just a bit coarsely, recorded in a markedly reverberant ambience. And despite all minor shortcomings this disc is a "must" for all connoisseurs of military—and Russian—music. R.D.D.

**ROREM:** Songs—See Ward-Steinman: Fragments from Sappho.

**ROUSSEL:** Suite in F, Op. 33—See Bizet: Symphony in C.

**ROSSINI:** Introduction and Variations for Clarinet and Orchestra—See Weber: Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra, No. 1, in F minor, Op. 73.

**SCHOENBERG:** A Survivor from Warsaw, Op. 46—See Beethoven: Symphonies: No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67; No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral").

**SCHOENBERG:** Verklärte Nacht, Op. 4; Quartet for Strings, No. 2, in F sharp minor, Op. 10. Evelyn Lear, soprano (in Op. 10); Siegfried Führinger, viola, Fritz Hiller, cello (in Op. 4); New Vienna String Quartet. Deutsche Grammophon 139361, \$5.98.

This continuation of DGG's Schoenberg quartet series brings a competent *Verklärte Nacht* (although not so good as to induce me to give up the superb Marlboro version on Columbia MS 6244) and a Second Quartet that doesn't really make the grade. The New Vienna ensemble appears to be much less comfortable in this work than in the sextet or the earlier release of the First Quartet. The delicate passages (the Scherzo or the wonderfully coloristic opening of the last movement) sound clumsy and insecure by comparison with the fifteen-year-old Juilliard recording (Columbia CML 4736), the intonation isn't all it might be, and Miss Lear seems rather ill at ease—her tone isn't light enough, her phrasing is short-breathed, and the climactic high C in the third movement is shoehorned in by an ugly splice. Until we get the inevitable Juilliard remake, it's still worth putting up with the rather boxy mono sound of their classic performance. D.H.

**SCHUBERT:** Symphony No. 5 in B flat, D. 485—See Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 5, in D minor, Op. 107 ("Reformation").



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**SCHUMANN: Liederkreis, Op. 39—See Wolf: Lieder der Mignon; Harfenspieler Lieder.**

**SCHUMANN: Symphony No. 2, in C, Op. 61; Genoveva: Overture.** New Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond. Angel S 36606, \$5.98.

I have no doubt that Klemperer would have been a natural for this repertory fifteen years ago, but here is one of those instances where the inverted maxim "better never than late," should have prevailed. Klemperer's slow, lifeless tempos assure that every cobweb in the back of Schumann's mental process gets illumi-

nated with microscopic scrutiny. But the tremendous amount of detail revealed in this performance is hardly flattering to either the conductor or the music. The interpretive thought is constantly being fragmented and the result is a kind of nerve-wracking hyperintrospection. Beethoven, in his late quartets, could take this kind of cryptic preoccupation and still sound universal, but Klemperer's Schumann merely emerges as disjunct, crotchety, and lumbering. Moreover, one is made aware of innumerable bits of scoring in a negative sense: one notices woodwind and brass comments, for example, because they are invariably a shade behind the rest of the orchestra; similarly, attention becomes focused on

the double-bass at the beginning of the slow movement because it too enters a split second late. In those delicate ritenu- tos of the Scherzo, the instrumentalists follow Klemperer with the grace of sub- way cars rounding a forty-five-degree curve.

It is not malice which prompts me to go into such detail over Klemperer's forgivably waning powers; rather, it is my concern for Schumann's music. This composer has often, and unfairly, been cited for incoherence. It is precisely such performances as these that have con- tributed to the legend. Despite a few intermittent flashes of real grandeur, these interpretations make Schumann sound like a bad composer. Can any- thing be more dangerous to the un- initiated listener? I think not.

Angel's sound is realistic, and Klem- perer's preference for divided violins once again puts a lot of the string writing into neat perspective. On the whole, though, Kubelik's DGG coupling of these same two works is far preferable, and An- sermet's London account of the Sym- phony is also a very fine one. H.G.

**SOLER: Four Villancicos: En Piélagos Inmensos; Contradanza de Colegio; De un Maestro de Capilla; Congregante y Festero.** Sue Harmon and Esther Mar- tinez, sopranos; Richard Levitt, counter- tenor; William Lyon Lee, tenor; Fred- erick Marvin, continuo; The Gregg Smith Singers; The Texas Boys Choir; Colle- gium Musicum Winterthur; Gregg Smith, cond. Columbia MS 7287, \$5.98.

Padre Antonio Soler (1729-1783), who spent thirty-one years as a monk in the Order of St. Jerome at the royal monas- tery at El Escorial, seems not to have been unduly sobered by the monastic life. Among his hefty output there are (according to harpsichordist Frederick Marvin, who unearthed the manuscripts and wrote the liner notes for this record- ing) at least 128 examples of that pecu- liarly Spanish genre, the *villancico*—a cantata-like work for chorus, soloists, and small orchestra. The *villancico*, while usually concerned with churchly or reli- gious matters in one form or another and often related to the Nativity, fre- quently managed, by virtue of its dance rhythms and sometimes comic/dramatic texts, to emerge as lighthearted and earthy. Before the eighteenth century, according to the reference works, the *villancico* paralleled the motet of more northerly countries and was often poly- phonic; in Soler's hands—at least here— it is mostly homophonic in the choral sections, with solo arias or duets of stateliness and nobility.

There are, apparently, complicated ground rules for the arrangement of stanzas and the alteration of chorus and soloists, most of which Soler seems to have broken. Suffice it to say that the works sound slightly oratoriolike, with- out the grandeur or depth of Handel. There is some expressive picture paint-

*Continued on page 114*

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## The Sound World of Salome—And a Surprise from Caballé

THE FIRST PAGE of Richard Strauss's *Salome* is unquestionably one of the most striking beginnings in all of operatic literature, and despite a slight melodic suggestion of *Tristan* (the cello phrase that enters under—and develops from—Narraboth's first line), the harmonic color and the exotic scoring, with its transparent accents of celesta and harp harmonics, are completely distinctive. Certainly *Salome* meets one standard by which great musical dramas may be set apart from their lesser fellows: it occupies a sound world all its own. When that opening clarinet run sounds from the orchestra pit, we know at once that we are "somewhere" unique and well defined, in the same way that we can know we're in Venice from the quality of the light that shines into our otherwise geographically anonymous hotel room.

*Salome* has many other pages quite as impressive as that first one, as well as a number that don't measure up, although they are obviously intended to (e.g., the more sanctimonious of Jokanaan's cadences). What makes the opera problematic, in my view, is the contrast between these carefully made passages and the intervening stretches of rather casual "noodling," spinning out motives and indiscriminately piling them up in sequences until their original dramatic significance is virtually worn away. At times, it almost seems as if any motive will do if it can be woven into the texture, and well before the opera's end we are prepared to admit that Strauss can find a way to combine just about any of his motives in some sort of juxtaposition. The most notorious example is, of course, the *Dance of the Seven Veils*, for it is little more than a potpourri of all the ideas in the opera that can be squeezed into a dance meter (the sudden outcropping of Narraboth's tune in waltz time is particularly disconcerting), but the Salome-Jokanaan duet and the first part of the final scene suffer from a similar lack of discrimination.

Up until the exit of the prophet, these disjunctions are not disastrous, partly because the general strophic nature of Salome's attempted seduction and Jokanaan's replies, plus a general consistency of texture and tempo, keeps things flowing clearly forward. The succeeding scene was presumably to be organized similarly, around Herod's successive invitations to Salome, preceding the last one ("*Tanz für mich*") with an interruption by Jokanaan that sets up the argument of the Jews and the Nazarene's speech about the Messiah. But this interpolated episode is so prolix, and Jokanaan's last speeches (beginning at "*Eine Menge Menschen*") wander so far musically, that the thread of continuity is already drawn very thin—whereupon Strauss abandons any effort whatsoever to compose his way back; inserting a *Luftpause* after one of Herodias' impreca-

tions, he simply picks up where he left off twenty-eight pages earlier. In general, the second half of the opera relies more and more on the frequent introduction of new ideas to keep interest sustained (with the obvious exceptions of the Dance and the Finale), and it is a much tougher proposition to bring off in performance than the opening scenes.

One of the interesting aspects of this new recording of *Salome* (the second one in stereo, and the first one ever to be made outside the Strauss "centers" of Dresden and Vienna) is the way in which it points up this difference in the opera's two halves. Up to the entrance of Herod, Erich Leinsdorf's very firmly controlled reading is extraordinarily successful, imparting a sweep and smoothness to the opening scenes that make them almost one long sweeping phrase. Thereafter, except for the Dance, things don't work as well, and the fragmentary character of the music is more obvious than in the alternative recordings. Throughout the opera, Leinsdorf follows the score quite carefully, never driving hard to keep up the momentum from one "hot spot" to the next, and, conversely, avoiding the great big "expressive" ritards that other conductors use to give extra weight at cadences. And I'm afraid it proves that the second part of the score really needs the kind of artificial respiration that Krauss and Solti administer.

Without any doubt, an important factor in the successful parts of Leinsdorf's performance is the Salome of that surprising lady Montserrat Caballé. She has frequently been quoted as saying that this was her favorite part, and now we know why—she has a marvelous feeling for the Straussian vocal line, and the vocal equipment to do stunning things with it. She can't quite summon the icy power of Birgit Nilsson, but my considerable respect for the latter's performance is often tempered by the realization that she tends to pick at individual notes rather than singing a true legato line. Caballé always sings the phrases through to the end, with a natural flowing rhythm (the waltz bits shortly after her entrance really swing) and an infallible sense of where to place accents. The German diction is a little odd, but very clear, and she has a cool yet feminine approach to the part that projects most convincingly. This is the best Salome I have heard since Welitsch (and, to be perfectly frank, Welitsch never sang the part this accurately, nor could she float a high A flat, pianissimo, like this—but, on the other hand, she was Ljuba Welitsch).

Also quite impressive, and very relevant to those excellent opening scenes, is the Jokanaan of Sherrill Milnes. Some of his low notes get lost in the bottom of the cistern, but everything else is fine; there's not much to be done with this part except to sing it well and sturdily, and Milnes does just that.

Herod and Herodias, on the other hand, have to do a good deal more than just sing—to the extent that vocal quality is sometimes neglected in casting these parts in favor of dramatic abilities. Of the present couple, Resnik projects the more vivid personality, while Lewis gets around the notes more smoothly; I'm afraid, though, that his rather plain performance does contribute to the recording's loss of interest in the second part, especially by comparison with Julius Patzak's sharply defined and masterfully sung Herod in the Krauss recording on Richmond (I am not fond of the whiny grotesqueries of Gerhard Stolze in the Solti set).

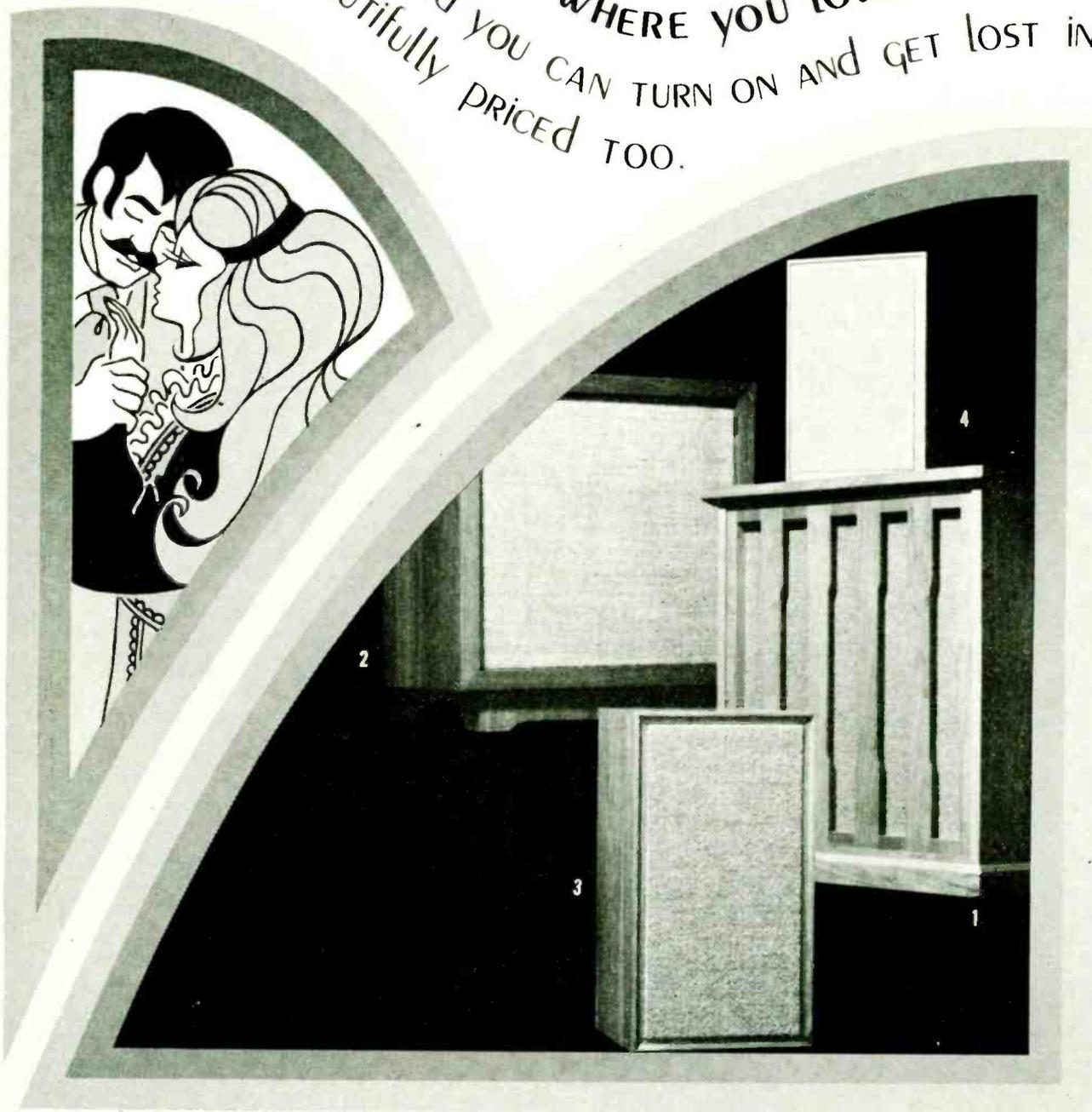
A piece of lavish casting is the presence of James King as Narraboth, and all to the good. The supporting ensemble of soldiers, Jews, and Nazarenes manages fairly well, although you will hear a few exotic varieties of German diction (one of the advantages of recording this opera in Vienna is the ready availability of experienced singers for these parts; the old Richmond set even sports such dignitaries as Ludwig Weber). This is not a performance picked up from the regular repertory of a theater, but rather one worked up from scratch; consequently, there are occasional imperfections of orchestral ensemble and intonation—but really very few (far fewer than in any stage performance I've ever heard), and at crucial points the playing is very good indeed.

Finally, there is the recorded sound. At first, I was very conscious of resonance (King's opening line swims around as if in a large tiled shower bath), but it turns out to be surprisingly clear, not as close up as the London, but with the balance and blend of instruments rather more natural. It does have that Dynagroovy dullness at the top, and decidedly too much boom to the timpani—the sort of characteristics that would make it, I suspect, sound better on a poor phonograph than the London set. "Serviceable" is probably the right word.

I hope I haven't given the impression that any part of this set is a dead loss; it does tend to run downhill after a while, but even that is, in a way, a direct result of what makes the rest of it so good. The best music in *Salome* is memorably presented here, and that is a considerable accomplishment; I certainly wouldn't be without it.

**STRAUSS, R.: Salome, Op. 54.** Montserrat Caballé (s), Salome; Regina Resnik (ms), Herodias; Julia Hamari (ms), Page; Richard Lewis (t), Herod; James King (t), Narraboth; Sherrill Milnes (b), Jokanaan; Michahel Rippon (bs), First Nazarene; London Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 7053, \$11.96 (two discs).

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CIRCLE 78 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Continued from page 110

ing, as in *En Piélagos Inmensos* (In Seas of Fathomless Depths), when mankind (double chorus) cries out for salvation amid "rushing furious winds"; the aria for two sopranos that follows, addressed to the Savior, is highly ornamented, noncontrapuntal, and set off by flute obbligato. The *Contradanza de Colegio* (Contredanse of the School) is, as its title implies, quite different in mood: the "story" is about the preparation of a contredanse by the school for the entertainment of the Christ Child, and offers Soler the opportunity to make the most of some lively, skipping dance rhythms.

The two remaining works on the disc

offer comic relief. *De un Maestro de Capilla* (From the Master of the Chapel) deals with an irritated chorus master rebuking his choir for their usual negligence in preparing the Christmas *villancicos* (frequent alternation of chorus and countertenor, here), topped off by a tonadilla for soprano which has nothing whatever to do with what has gone before. *Congregante y Festero* (A Churchgoer and a Music Director) recounts the efforts of the Churchgoer (soprano) to bargain with the Music Director over the price of three Masses: the chorus comments, and interpolates sections of a Gloria. An amusing idea, but one which suffers from the *villancico's* traditional dependence on strophic settings: a series of couplets, when re-

peated to the same strains too often, eventually becomes tiresome.

In general, these works seem to me worth a hearing if one is interested in becoming familiar with a long-lived (three centuries) and indigenous part of Spanish musical history. But one can't help noting that both Bach and Handel handled the same forces in a rather similar vein and to much greater advantage. Neither in quality of melody nor in complexity of texture and not even in originality of idea do these works match those produced north of the Pyrenees. Perhaps the comparison is unfair, but it is hard to avoid. The performances, with the exception of the unsettling vocalism of the countertenor, are polished and effective: the two sopranos in particular are full-voiced, skilled in ornamentation, and completely at home in their parts. Texts and translations are enclosed. S.F.

**TAKEMITSU:** The Dorian Horizon—See Xenakis: Akrata.

**TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Francesca da Rimini*, Op. 32; *Hamlet*, Op. 67. New Philharmonia Orchestra, Igor Markevitch, cond. Philips PHS 900234, \$5.98.

Markevitch's Tchaikovsky project for Philips bids fair promise of encompassing the composer's entire orchestral output, and since the conductor already has a fine coupling of *Romeo and Juliet* and the *Nutcracker Suite* to his credit on an Angel disc (with the Old Philharmonia), perhaps he will now turn his attention to more out-of-the-way items such as *Voyevoda* and *The Tempest*.

Both of the present performances are smoothly played by the New Philharmonia. The brass has a suaver, slightly less raw sound than that of the London Symphony—Markevitch's orchestra for the symphonies and *Manfred*. The added refinement though, is a two-edged sword, for it also detracts from some of the primitivism and demonic frenzy that Tchaikovsky suggests in *Francesca*: this Hades burns with cool flames, and you are never quite roasted on the coals as Tchaikovsky undoubtedly intended! Markevitch approaches the music with severe classicism. He draws lush string playing, to be sure, but the combination of a rigorously maintained basic tempo, an angularly square-cut beat, and a penchant for bringing out all sorts of cross comments from the winds and brass effectively keeps the music from swooning and throbbing in the sensual Stokowskian manner. *Hamlet* is better suited to such cool-headed treatment than *Francesca da Rimini*, which really needs the more full-blown treatment it gets from both Munch (RCA Victrola) and Giulini (Angel).

Sonically, Philips' engineering is outstanding: close up and vivid with especially pungent clarinet sound. Finally, even though I disagree with Markevitch's views regarding *Francesca*, he nonetheless displays a brilliant musical mind. H.G.

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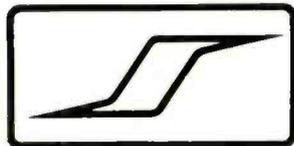


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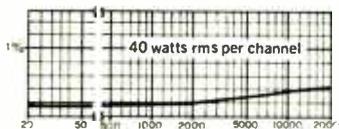
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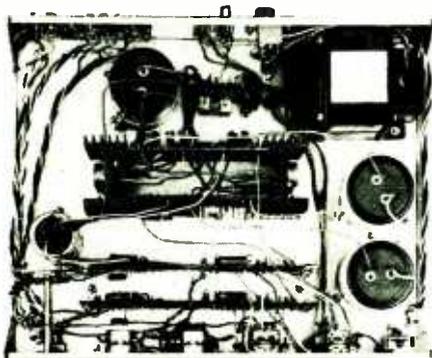


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**TCHAIKOVSKY: Military March, in B flat (1893)**—See Rimsky-Korsakov: Concerto for Trombone and Band.

**TCHAIKOVSKY: Symphony No. 5, in E minor, Op. 64**—See Dvorák: Symphony No. 7, in D Minor, Op. 70.

**TCHAIKOVSKY: Variations on a Rocco Theme, Op. 33**—See Dvorák: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in B minor, Op. 104.

**VERDI: Otello.** Gwyneth Jones, James McCracken, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau; Ambrosian Opera Chorus; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 79.

**WARD-STEINMAN: Fragments from Sappho.** **ROREM: Some Trees; Little Elegy; Night Crow; The Tulip Tree; Look Down, Fair Moon; What Sparks**

and **Wiry Cries; For Poulenc.** Phyllis Curtin, soprano; Samuel Baron, flute; David Glazer, clarinet; David Ward-Steinman, piano (in the Ward-Steinman). Phyllis Curtin, soprano; Beverly Wolff, mezzo; Donald Gramm, bass; Ned Rorem, piano (in the Rorem). Composer's Recordings CRI 238, \$5.95.

David Ward-Steinman's *Fragments from Sappho* is one of the great finds of the year. To begin with, he has a marvelous translation by Mary Barnard which is full of kittenish intensity and is a bit of a masterpiece in its own right. The setting—for voice, with very important obbligato parts for flute and clarinet—ricochets off this text in brilliant fashion, and the performance by Curtin, Baron, and Glazer is equally brilliant. This is the best setting of old Greek texts since Debussy's *Chansons de Bilitis* (those texts are fake old Greek; but you see what I mean).

Rorem's *Some Trees* is a cycle of four songs to poems by John Ashbery, set for vocal trio. They are a complete, unmitigated disaster, at least in this recording,

wherein all one really hears is the vibratos of the two women's voices fighting like Kilkenny cats.

There are also six solo songs in Rorem's usual smooth and successful style. I especially like *Look Down, Fair Moon*, partly because Gramm is one of the best basses going, and *To Poulenc* (a sentimental text by Frank O'Hara) which subtly quotes from Poulenc himself—a tribute from a true believer in his genius. A.F.

**WEBER: Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra, No. 1, in F minor, Op. 73; Concertino for Clarinet and Orchestra, Op. 26.** **ROSSINI: Introduction and Variations for Clarinet and Orchestra.** Gervase de Peyer, clarinet; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, cond. Angel S 36589, \$5.98.

The opening tutti of Weber's First Clarinet Concerto has always struck me as ideal for the background of an old silent movie in which the villain is chasing the damsel up a cliff; but credit Weber with the fact that after the soloist's entrance the listener can no longer take the work so lightly. Indeed, it achieves a good deal of genuine *Sturm und Drang* tension, and the role of the clarinet is consistently beguiling. The slow movement in particular is lovely, and the passages wherein the clarinet sings over the accompaniment of three horns deserves some sort of special mark in the annals of orchestration. The Concertino is rather more rhetorical in spirit, but no less gratifying as an instrumental display piece.

Rossini's Variations are much less interesting musically (he wrote them at the age of eighteen), but the languid Introduction and the acrobatics that follow are idiomatic, and a performing artist of the caliber of Gervase de Peyer can make you welcome every note.

The view of De Peyer's art, as much as that of Weber or Rossini, is what accounts for the value of this recording: every roulade, every ornament, every staccato run is a joy to the ear, and the seamless purity of tone from bottom to top of the instrument's range is an achievement few current clarinetists can match. In addition to which, of course, De Peyer's musical sensitivity is profound. The New Philharmonia backs him beautifully. S.F.

**WEBERN: Five Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 10.** **MAHLER: Symphony No. 4: Third Movement.** **BERIO: Visage.** London Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Boulez, cond. (in the Webern); New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. (in the Mahler). Columbia OS 3320, \$5.98.

The justification for this peculiar coupling lies in the fact that all three pieces are used on the soundtrack of the Clouzot film *La Prisonnière*. Only the Webern is a first issue, however, and it will certainly turn up in a more appropriate coupling when Columbia starts issuing Boulez' complete Webern. On the whole, it's a welcome augury of things to come:

## A Wagnerian "Filet"

by George Movshon

A MUSIC LISTENER who knows *The Ring* entire, complete with voices and such, will always approach this kind of orchestral highlights disc with suspicion. To him it will have the appearance of the meat shelf at the supermarket: eight bleeding hunks of steak hacked from the body artistic. Such a listener will need to be reminded of three things. 1) Wagner himself sanctioned the concert use of most of these excerpts (indeed he often made the arrangements himself and frequently led their performance). 2) Many listeners (and this reviewer was one of them) made their first tentative approach to the tetralogy by sampling excerpts like this, got hooked, and then moved on to the complete operas. 3) You may search the world's opera houses and record catalogues and never hear these parts of the cycle as sumptuously performed as they are here by Szell and his Cleveland musicians.

The timing of this release suggests that CBS might have had the New York Audio Fair (lately cancelled) in mind as one possible target: it will come as no surprise if these extracts pound through the walls and follow one down the streets. It is a robust and full-bodied sound, with an enormous dynamic range; a good idea would be to send the lady off shopping and to close all the windows before letting fly. A quibble, maybe, but I

would have preferred a slightly crisper, less woolly bass line and some more stereo "sculpturing" in the solo instrumental passages. But don't get me wrong: the sound quality is striking enough.

Beyond adequate description—or praise—is Szell's sense of proportion with this music, the scale and logic of his climax-building, the subtle dynamic shading, the consistent "rightness" of his tempos. News of a complete *Ring* under Szell's baton would fetch me across an ocean.

I compared one of the Cleveland excerpts—the *Forest Murmurs*—with the equivalent passage in the two complete *Siegfried* recordings: Solti's with the Vienna Philharmonic and Karajan's with the Berlin. (Surely, one of these three orchestras is the world's best?) Each version was beautiful; indeed, sumptuous. But there was something just a little more succulent and lovable in the Szell version, especially in the woodwind figures: a touch of rare magic.

**WAGNER: Das Rheingold: Entry of the Gods into Valhalla; Die Walküre: Ride of the Valkyries; Magic Fire Music; Siegfried: Forest Murmurs; Götterdämmerung: Dawn; Siegfried's Rhine Journey; Siegfried's Funeral Music; Final Scene.** The Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell cond. Columbia MS 7291, \$5.98.

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\*See 'ON THE DESIGN, MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION OF LOUDSPEAKERS', Dr. A. G. Bose, a paper presented at the 1968 convention of the Audio Engineering Society. Copies of the complete paper are available from the Bose Corp. for fifty cents.

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aside from a slight error in the first measure of No. 2 that should have been corrected, this is extremely accurate; quite the best performance we have yet had of the tiny but important pieces. The recording level is a bit high, so set your volume control carefully: the opening notes are marked *ppp* in the score.

Berio's *Visage*, a 1961 tape piece featuring the voice of Cathy Berberian, is also available on the bargain-priced Turnabout TV 34046, coupled with electronic pieces by Cage and Mimaroglu. Although the sound of Miss Berberian's voice is sometimes treated electronically, a "solo part" retains its integrity during most of the piece, which thus emerges as a kind of elaborate quasi-operatic *scena* with electronic accompaniment. The "text" comprises assorted emotive and onomatopoeic sounds, passing through a variety of colorings: terror, pleasure, despair, laughter, excitement, and so forth. Despite many ingenious coloristic details and the always amazing Berberian virtuosity, the interest remains more histrionic than musical.

The Mahler movement is, of course, taken from Bernstein's complete recording—but why not get the whole symphony? Kletzki's superb version is now reissued on Seraphim 60105 at a bargain price. D.H.

**WOLF:** *Lieder der Mignon: Heiss mich nicht reden; Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt; So lasst mich scheinen; Kennst du das Land?; Harfenspieler Lieder: Wer sich der Einsamkeit ergibt; An die Türen will ich schleichen; Wer nie sein Brot. SCHUMANN: Liederkreis, Op. 39.* Christa Ludwig, mezzo; Walter Berry, baritone; Erik Werba, piano. Deutsche Grammophon 139386, \$5.98.

Both Christa Ludwig and Walter Berry take a broad approach to lieder singing—quite a difference from the more sophisticated and occasionally self-conscious manner of the familiar Schwarzkopf/Fischer-Dieskau team. The direct, unaffected quality of their interpretations is a refreshing change of pace and one can easily revel in the freedom and security of their lush voices, although admittedly many of the songs' finer points are sacrificed to pure vocal effect.

The Wolf side shows these two artists at their best, possibly because of the extremely personal and operatic nature of the music. Ludwig is absolutely splendid in Mignon's four songs: her letter-perfect intonation and generous tone could not be more welcome here, and the feverish longing of *Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt*, the radiance of *So lasst mich scheinen*, and intense passion of *Kennst du das Land?* give us a very clear picture of Goethe's pathological heroine so superbly limned in Wolf's settings. Berry's somber vision of the tragic harper is equally moving in its restraint and darkly colored pathos.

Schumann's *Liederkreis* comes off less well. The twelve songs have been divided between the two singers—unobjectionable in theory since the cycle does not evolve

as a musical unit but vaguely unsettling nonetheless. Neither singer seems especially comfortable in capturing the abstract romantic moods set down here and Schumann's rather awkward vocal lines occasionally baffle them. Berry leads off with a curiously insensitive *In der Fremde*, totally ignoring the important pianissimo marking over the second phrase. *Intermezzo* also sounds rather stuffy, although Berry makes a clever attempt to smooth over Schumann's wretched prosody toward the end of the song. He has even less success with *Auf einer Burg*, but then few singers have been able to find a natural phrasing for this difficult song. The baritone opens up warmly on *Frühlingsnacht* and concludes the cycle on an appropriately ecstatic note.

Ludwig's creamy legato and controlled repose work miracles with *Mondnacht*—the hushed beauty of her reading almost atones for an overly skittish *Die Stille* and the superficial rush job given *Wehmut*. Werba's accompaniments are more conscientious than poetic and the piano tone, as recorded, sounds thin and a bit tinny. A variable proposition, then, but the Wolf songs and the luscious sound of two healthy voices make this disc undeniably attractive. P.G.D.

**WUORINEN:** *Time's Encomium.* Synthesized and processed synthesized sound. Nonesuch H 71225, \$2.98.

This is a wonderful work, but not an easy one to describe. Its title comes from the fact that in electronic music time is measured by the clock rather than by metric pulse; this does not mean that Charles Wuorinen's piece is lacking in accent. It was achieved on the Columbia-Princeton synthesizer which, as the composer explains in his notes, "is prejudiced toward 12-tone equal temperament." The work as a whole, in Wuorinen's words, "consists of a core of synthesized music, most of which appears in Part 1, surrounded and interlarded with analog-studio transformations of that music. The synthesized can always be identified by its clarity of pitch and the familiar, almost 'instrumental' sound of its constituent events. The processed almost always contains reverberation. Thus, metaphorically, the listener stands in the midst of this synthesized music, which presents itself to him with maximal clarity; and stretching away from him, becoming more and more blurred in detail, the various transformations—from the slightly altered to the unrecognizable."

One does not ordinarily quote at such length from jacket notes, but then one does not always have such authoritative notes to quote from. This is the composer's description of the piece. My own reaction to it is that it is a genuinely mighty score, full of new worlds and galaxies of sound, magnificent in its size, its spacious implications, and the grandeur of its form.

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**XENAKIS:** *Akrata*. **TAKEMITSU:** *The Dorian Horizon*. **NONO:** *Canciones a Guiomar*. **DEL TREDICI:** *Syzygy*. Susan Bellington, soprano (in the Nono); Phyllis Bryn-Julson, soprano (in the Del Tredici); Festival Chamber Orchestra, Richard Dufallo, cond. Columbia MS 7281, \$5.98.

The four contemporary works in this anthology were all commissioned by the Koussevitzky Music Foundation, and all were performed in a concert at Philharmonic Hall in New York in July 1968.

The most remarkable of the four works is the Del Tredici, which introduces an important young American composer to the record lists. *Syzygy* is a setting of two poems by James Joyce. It involves a solo group consisting of soprano, French horn, and tubular chimes, and a chamber orchestra of strings and wind instruments. The text is totally buried under the elaborations of an incredible vocal line containing enormously wide leaps and trills, but of course this adds to the intended effect. Del Tredici is quoted as saying the second—and much the longer—of the two songs takes off from Joyce's *Nightpiece* to "attempt musically to suggest great distances and the space between: a sort of music of the spheres, an outer space where pale stars wave in gloom, ghost fires illumine, Seraphim awaken, and a tolling starknell soars." The attempt is most successfully achieved, with pungency of color and vocal drama.

There is also vocal drama in the song by Nono, which transforms the disjunct vocal line of the 12-tone tradition into something exceptionally beautiful and expressive. The singer is all but totally independent of the accompanying chamber group—which really does not accompany, but punctuates the vocal line with very delicate sounds, mostly of the high, chiming variety. Once again the Italian sense of vocal lyricism triumphs over angularity and edginess.

*Akrata*, we are told, means *pure*. We are also given the usual line of guff about the theories of games and sets with which Xenakis is said to work. A naïve listener might think he composes by ear, so rousing, dynamic, and exhilarating are the sounds produced in this piece by the eight woodwind and eight brass instruments for which it is scored. "Study in sonority" is a cliché phrase, but offhand I can think of none better to characterize this vivid, immensely colorful, and endlessly surprising piece.

Just what is Dorian about Takemitsu's horizon would be difficult to say; nothing so simple as the Dorian mode seems to be involved. The idea of horizon is clear, though; the work is scored for seventeen strings, which maintain an even, gray, and distant line, like the meeting of sea and sky in some far reach of ocean. Previously recorded works have established Takemitsu as the foremost musical geographer of the present day, and *Dorian Horizon* maintains his lead.

The recording is beautiful, and the performances are presumably authoritative to the last degree. The virtuoso performance of Miss Bryn-Julson in the Del Tredici is really beyond belief. A.F.

## recitals & miscellany

**FEIKE ASMA:** "The Great Cathedral Organs of The Netherlands." **BACH:** Toccata in F, S. 540; Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, S. 565. **FRANCK:** Chorale No. 2, in B minor; *Pièce héroïque*; **REGER:** Fugue, Op. 127. Feike Asma, organ. Philips PHS 900737, \$5.98.

I doubt that any music school would grant a diploma to a student whose graduation recital was as sloppy and eccentric as the performances Mr. Asma offers us here. And if he couldn't get through school, how did he get this recording assignment from a major company like Philips? Another addition to life's many imponderables.

Perhaps Philips needed an organist in a hurry to demonstrate these three Dutch organs—and fine instruments they are. The most impressive is the organ at the Old Church in Amsterdam, built in 1724 by Christian Vater and restored in 1739 by J. C. Müller (a brother of Christian Müller). The organ in the Great Church at Maassluis was built in 1732 by Rudolf Garrels, completely romanticized in 1938, and restored to Garrels' original stop list and voicing in 1962. Like the organ at the Old Church, it has the brilliance and transparency that characterized the finest Dutch organs. The organ at the Great Church in Dordrecht dates from 1859 and is more in accordance with the romantic traditions, but laid out in a strictly classical manner.

Organ buffs will put up with a lot of wrong notes and inferior musicianship for the sake of hearing a fine instrument, but the Philips engineers have sabotaged even that possibility with their unpleasantly harsh, shrill, and distorted recording. This is a completely unsatisfactory representation of these instruments' actual sound. If you're looking for photographs and specifications of three beautiful organs, then I recommend this release. However, finding a use for the disc that comes enclosed in this handsome jacket is something I'll leave to your own ingenuity. C.F.G.

**CAPELLA ANTIQUA:** "Choral Music of the Middle Ages." **ANON.:** *Missa Tournai*; *Ad solitum/Regnat*; *Depositum/Ad solitum/Regnat*; *Ave Regina/Alma redemptoris/Alma*; *Condicio nature/O nacio/Mane prima*. **DE VITRY:** *Colla iugo subdere/Bona condit cetera/Libera me*; *Tribum que non abhorruit/Quoniam secta/Merito*; *Firmissime fidei/Adesto sancta trinitas/Alleluia*; *Tuba sacre fidei/In arboris/Virgo sum*; *Vos qui admiramini/Gratissima/Gaude gloriosa/Countertenor*. Capella Antiqua of Munich, Konrad Ruhland, cond. Telefunken SAWT 9514, \$5.95.

**CAPELLA ANTIQUA:** "Ceremonial music of the Renaissance." **CICONIA:** *Venetia mundi splendor*; *O Padua sidus pre-*

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clarum. FERAGUT: *Excelsa civitas Vincentia*. DUFAY: *Supremem est mortalibus; Nuper rosarum flores*. ANON.: *Advenit nobis desiderabilis*. ENCINA: *Triste Espana*. ISAAC: *Quis dabit capiti meo aquam*; *Imperii proceres*. MOUTON: *Non nobis Domine*. Capella Antiqua of Munich; Konrad Ruhland, cond. Telefunken SAWT 9524, \$5.95.

Telefunken's *Das Alte Werk* series now offers a comprehensive survey of early music history, thoroughly researched and excellently performed, complemented by superb engineering techniques. I have yet to encounter a disc that doesn't maintain a consistently high standard. These two new releases are fine examples of Telefunken's approach. Each is organized around a point of intellectual interest, yet the didactic potential doesn't get in the way of the armchair listener's pleasure.

The Tournai Mass is the first complete setting of the Ordinary to be preserved as a whole, but it is clearly a patchwork of independent movements. The Kyrie, Sanctus, and Agnus are linked by similar rhythms, but they and the Credo are rather dull little conductus-style pieces. Only the Gloria stands out as a really exciting composition with its rousing protoisorhythmic Amen. There is also a curious setting of *Ite Missa est* (the closing words of the Mass which somehow never made it into the standard movements of the Ordinary) as a double motet with two texts; a Latin petition and, of all things, a French love song.

I found the motets on Side 2 to be far more satisfying, musically and intellectually. The first, *Ad solitum*, is performed in such a way as to demonstrate the technique of successive competition. The original version is set as a vocal melody and an instrumental tenor; in the second "verse" another voice similar to the first joins in. Finally, this voice is replaced by a jumpy new tune with an altogether different text while *Ad solitum* and its accompanying tenor, *Regnat*, continue on below. In the motet *Ave Regina* from the *Montpellier Codex*, the tenor melody is repeated several times, a structural innovation which helped pave the way for the architectural wonders of the isorhythmic motet.

These early motets are charming but rather constricted—dabs of paint which make one long for a whole canvas. How marvelous then to move on to the music of Philippe de Vitry. This fourteenth-century poet/politician/composer/mathematician/theorist was certainly one of the great talents of his age. These are big works—at the time they must have sounded monumental—organized on rather complicated mathematical principles. De Vitry uses his isorhythmic procedures with great subtlety, as an armature which enables him to build a large work that artfully disguises the intricate inner structure. As a listener, you may sense the repetitions of extended rhythmic patterns, but what you really hear is a new world of musical motion rushing forward in swinging 6/8 rhythms. De Vitry's melodic gift, somewhat over-

shadowed by that of his successor Machaut, is often overlooked. Ruhland happily makes the most of the composer's sinuous lines: his interpretations of *Firmissime/Adesto* and *Tribum/Quoniam* are especially beautiful.

De Vitry also used his poetic and musical accomplishments for political ends, and he often comments on current events in his motets. The tradition of the political motet, more often celebratory than polemical however, was carried into the next centuries. "Ceremonial Music of the Renaissance" introduces some of the splendid music occasioned by events in the fifteenth century—the consecration of a church, the signing of a peace treaty, the death of a prominent ruler.

Johannes Ciconia, an expatriate from Liège who settled in Italy, combines northern precision of organization with the flowing lines of the Italian *ars nova* to sing the praises of his adopted cities, Padua and Venice. Francesco Malipiero, bishop of Vicenza in 1433, is celebrated in a stunning song-motet by an otherwise obscure Italian composer, Beltram Feragut. Feragut's lyrical style is akin to Dufay, but when that composer set out to write a ceremonial piece, he laid aside simplicity in favor of the learned devices of the isorhythmic motet. *Supremem est mortalibus* and *Nuper rosarum flores* show Dufay at his most formal, a garb also assumed a century later by Jean Mouton, another composer who adapted a naturally melodious style to the exigencies of a state occasion in his elaborate setting of *Non nobis Domine*. While a coronation or a birth might call for Renaissance pomp and circumstance, death demands a more austere observance. Two great rulers, whose names are still familiar to us, inspired a pair of moving laments: Encina's touchingly simple *Triste Espana*, mourning the death of Queen Isabella; and Isaac's famous tribute to his late patron, Lorenzo de Medici, *Quis dabit capiti meo aquam*.

The music on this disc spans a century which produced music unequalled for sheer beauty and the performances here live up to the quality of the material. The Capella Antiqua of Munich sings and plays splendidly under Konrad Ruhland's direction. I have sung the praises of this excellent group elsewhere; suffice it to say that I hope we may continue to hear more from them. The sound on both discs continues the high standard of Telefunken's earlier releases in this field. Texts, sources, and notes are given, although the "Ceremonial Music" dispenses with the customary fact sheet on history, literature, and art.

S.T.S.

**CHAMBER SYMPHONY OF PHILADELPHIA: "Works for Chamber Orchestra."** HAYDN: *Symphony No. 60, in C ("Il Distrato")*. CHERUBINI: *Symphony in D (on LSC 3088)*. STRAUSS, R.: *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme: Suite*. WOLF: *Italian Serenade (on LSC 3087)*. RAVEL: *Le Tombeau de Couperin*. IBERT: *Capriccio; Suite Symphonique*. FRANCAIX: *Serenade (on LSC 3089)*. Chamber

*Symphony of Philadelphia, Anshel Brusilow, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3087/89, \$5.98 each.*

Several years ago the Chamber Symphony of Philadelphia was organized with fanfare and high hope. Anshel Brusilow left his post as concertmaster of the Philadelphia Orchestra to lead this hand-picked assembly of excellent orchestral musicians who were engaged on a full-time basis. Furthermore, the group was assured of more substantial financial backing than such ensembles usually receive. From this auspicious beginning, the Chamber Symphony of Philadelphia proceeded to run downhill: a much heralded New York season of concerts was coolly received by the critics and was poorly attended by the public. For more than a year now, the group has been, so far as I can determine, inactive.

We can hear on these records both the strong and weak points of this laudable enterprise. Certainly we must admire the conscientious attempt to explore the overlooked repertory for small orchestra, though some of the findings were bound to turn up music of minor interest. Each of these three records contains one major work, but in two cases, the filler material is unworthy: another early Haydn symphony would have been a better choice than Cherubini's academically pallid Symphony, while the Francaix and Ibert selections, coupled with Ravel's delightful Suite are distinctly trivial at best. Only the pairing of the Wolf *Italian Serenade* and the Strauss Suite adds up to a satisfying whole. Anshel Brusilow, one of America's best young violinists, studied conducting and played under Pierre Monteux, George Szell, and Eugene Ormandy; he undoubtedly absorbed a great deal from these three quite different but unquestionably masterful conductors. Interpretively, his best performance is that of the Ravel Suite, which is good to hear given for once in such a light-textured performance by a chamber orchestra. Temperamentally, Brusilow seems more sympathetic to French music, perhaps a reflection of the Monteux influence. This record, alone of the three, carries true stylistic conviction in matters of phrasing, texture, and timbre.

Haydn's *Symphony No. 60 (Il Distrato)* was originally composed as incidental music to the play whose title became attached to the symphonic arrangement of the music. In this version it enjoyed great popularity with audiences during the last three decades of Haydn's life. But there is more wit and warmth in this score than are conveyed by Brusilow's rather square performance—though I must admit that David Blum's reading on Vanguard is no better in this respect. This delightful symphony still cries out for a performance that conveys the full measure of Haydn's humanity.

Brusilow's lack of stylistic imagination also works to the detriment of the Richard Strauss piece. Where the music should be bright and brittle, this reading is little more than precise and lively. Nor do the limpid sentiments of Wolf's *Italian Serenade* come across in this performance, clean and accurate though it is.

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These three crisply recorded discs, then, stand as the epitaph of an admirable venture that didn't quite make the grade. There is a real need for an accomplished and fully professional ensemble to perform the neglected chamber orchestra repertory, but I'm afraid Mr. Brusilow's group did not meet the challenge. P.H.

**KRUNO CIGOJ: "Opera Recital." VERDI:** *Il Trovatore: Di quella pira; Rigoletto: Questa o quella; La donna e mobile; La Traviata: De miei bollenti spiriti.* **DONIZETTI:** *L'Elisir d'amore: Una furtiva lagrima.* **LEONCAVALLO:** *I Pagliacci: Vesti la giubba.* **PUCCINI:** *Tosca: E lucevan le stelle.* **LEHAR:** *Das Land des Lächelns: Dein ist mein ganzes Herz.* **DE CURTIS:** *Torna a Sorrento.* **DI CAPUA:** *O Sole Mio.* Kruno Cigoj, tenor; LTM Orchestra, Walter Gehlert, cond. Metronome KMLP 304, \$5.98 (Bremen House, 200 E. 86th St., New York, N.Y. 10028).

In order to shout, convincingly, a sentiment like "Bravo, Cigoj!" it is necessary to have some advice on pronunciation. "Chi-GOY," says one Yugoslav friend who ought to know—for that is where this nineteen-year-old prodigy comes from, though he lives in Hamburg and appears at the Vienna Volksoper. He is billed in this imported German recital disc as "The World's Youngest Opera Tenor" (a claim that may not stand the test of time) and he sounds as fresh and swinging a singer as we have had since the days of Lanza and Wunderlich.

It is impossible to judge the size of a voice from a recording, especially a disc that has been jiggled around with electronically as this one surely has; but there is no doubt about Mr. Cigoj's temperament, which is bounding and ebullient and yet marvelously musical. He is an extrovert, and not ashamed of crying out his tenorial emotions forte in the major key—which is what we expect of a singer who performs *Di quella pira* and *E lucevan le stelle*. He flings high Cs around as though they were pebbles, has a lot of breath and a feeling for the long phrase, and also knows how to sing softly while retaining the character and integrity of the voice. There is a kind of "Nature Boy" feel about his singing, and I should not be surprised to learn that he is entirely untutored and has learned it all from records; if so, he has listened to the right records.

The choice of program is of course utterly popular and the listing would normally make me cringe; but the Cigoj voice is not to be resisted and conquers all. More, please. G.M.

**JEANNE DEMESSIEUX: "Organ Recital." BACH:** *Cantata No. 29: Overture.* **LISZT:** *Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H.* **FRANCK:** *Prelude, Fugue, and Variation, Op. 18; Grande pièce symphonique, Op. 17.* Jeanne Demessieux, organ (Church of the Madeleine, Paris). Société Française du Son 115007, \$5.95.

A touch of tragic nostalgia surrounds this

disc, one of Jeanne Demessieux's last recordings before her untimely death in Paris nearly a year ago at the age of forty-seven. Although she made several U. S. tours (the last in 1958) and recorded a number of discs that did have a brief currency here, Mme. Demessieux never achieved much recognition in this country. I remember her primarily for a long unavailable London recording of several Handel organ concertos—perhaps the most outlandishly overblown and grandly romanticized versions of these works that I've ever heard. Such an approach to the baroque literature, while exhilarating enough when taken on its own terms, sounds very much like high camp today.

Mme. Demessieux has much more affinity with the styles represented on the present release, especially the two Franck pieces (she has, in fact, recorded the complete organ works of Franck for the French Véga label). The Prelude, Fugue, and Variation emerges here with a smooth delicacy and true elegance, quite the best performance on the disc. In spite of the many liberties she takes with the *Grande pièce symphonique*, it is nevertheless a spirited and splendidly forward-moving reading, rivaled only by Virgil Fox's magnificent statement on Command. Her rough treatment of Liszt's garish *B-A-C-H* Prelude and Fugue is perfectly appropriate, and despite my distaste for organ transcriptions, the Bach is not only breathtaking but great fun.

The Cavallé-Coll organ at the Church of the Madeleine has always been something of a curiosity. It is actually a rather small instrument, but the unusually high proportion of large and heavy reeds helps give an impression of massiveness. Unfortunately, this gorgeous instrument is in bad condition (as evidenced here by an ever-present clatter from the action), and there is an ominous rumor that the organ may soon be completely rebuilt. This, therefore, may be one of the last recordings of this historic and uniquely beautiful organ. C.F.G.

**EMIL GILELS: "Carnegie Hall Recital." BACH-BUSONI:** *Organ Prelude and Fugue in D.* **BEETHOVEN:** *Variations (32) in C minor, G. 191; Sonata for Piano, No. 14, in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight").* **MEDTNER:** *Sonata Reminiscenza in A minor, Op. 38.* **PROKOFIEV:** *The Love for Three Oranges: Scherzo and March.* **RAVEL:** *Pavane pour une Infante défunte; Jeux d'eau.* **CHOPIN:** *Etudes: No. 26, in A flat, Op. posth.; No. 14, in F minor, Op. 25, No. 2.* **BACH-SILOTI:** *Choral Prelude in D minor.* Emil Gilels, piano. Melodiya/Angel SRB 4110, \$11.96 (two discs).

These performances, taken from concerts given in Carnegie Hall during January 1969, show us a somewhat different Emil Gilels than we are accustomed to hearing in the pianist's extensive body of studio-derived recordings. Here is a much more creative and interesting performer—a bit more impulsive and chaotic perhaps, but certainly far less antiseptic

than has often been the case when Gilels plays for the microphones alone. This eminent Soviet pianist is something of a hybrid. Part of his musical make-up consists of unadulterated romantic postures — his blood-and-thunder theatrics, his espousal of such heart-on-sleeve treatises as the Medtner Sonata recorded here, or his wholehearted endorsement of the outmoded Victorian baroque of Bach-Busoni, Bach-Siloti, *et al.* Another side of his pianistic personality is quite clearly that of the twentieth-century man of steel.

Both contradictory facets are amply displayed in this collection. How Gilels reverts in tonal amplitude! In the pseudo-organ gargantuanism of the Bach-Busoni Prelude and Fugue, his big, unstylistic sound is full of lush color; on the other hand, when those super-fingers cut loose in the finale of Beethoven's *Moonlight* Sonata or in the Prokofiev tour de force, the results border on maniacal obsessiveness. The stridency of his attack here makes me cringe. A similar type of severe *martellato* is more forgivable in the technically impressive but musically sterile performance of Beethoven's C minor Variations (Gilels' studio version in his recent set of the Beethoven Concertos is more incisively and accurately played). The earlier movements of the Sonata, true enough, are quite delicately nuanced, and some may find the slow tempos and exaggerated phrasing quite intriguing. For my taste, Gilels misses the measure of Beethoven: his performances verge wildly from the cautious and over-reverent to the garish and overblown.

To my mind, the most valuable portion of this collection is the Medtner Sonata which is given a compelling, fully involved, and pianistically superb reading. The Chopin Etudes sound a bit flinty, though their accuracy is unimpeachable. The Ravel *Pavane* tends more towards the *perfunct* than *défunct*. One senses in Gilels' reading just a lingering trace of yielding, suppressed sentimentality that absolutely takes the class distinction out of the music. The pyrotechnical cascades of *Jeux d'eau* are more effective under Gilels' ministrations, though the over-all impression here is more of tidal waves than the sprinkling of a fountain. The two Prokofiev selections are played with murderous intensity, and there it works. Both pieces sound truly marvelous.

Good, slightly overblown sound makes this variable album a desirable grab bag for Gilels' admirers. H.G.

**RAYMOND LEPPARD:** Eighteenth Century Overtures. **PERGOLESI:** L'Olimpiade. **HANDEL:** Il Pastor fido. **GRETRY:** Le Jugement de Midas. **D. SCARLATTI:** Sinfonia in B. **RAMEAU:** Pygmalion. **BONONCINI:** Polifemo. **SACCHINI:** Oedipe à Colone. **MEHUL:** La Chasse du jeune Henri. New Philharmonia Orchestra, Raymond Leppard, cond. Philips PHS 900235, \$5.98.

Raymond Leppard has been at pains in this disc to demonstrate how much variety the eighteenth-century overture en-

compassed, and he has assembled a most happy and entertaining set. The characteristic slow-fast-slow French genre is most notably represented by Handel's overture to *Il Pastor fido*, in which a stately first movement leads into a vigorous fugue, capped off by a dance; and by a rather atypical two-movement piece by Rameau, who does nice things with a pair of oboes and bassoon. The Italian style is in the hands of Scarlatti, full of busyness, and Pergolesi, who created a small masterpiece in his brilliant get-'em-on-the-edge-of-their-chairs overture to *L'Olimpiade*. The most picturesque work is Grétry's, positively blossoming with pastoral color—dawn, the shepherd's pipe, and a good pre-Beethoven rain-

storm. Performances are bright, trim, and full of bounce. S.F.

**ANDRES SEGOVIA:** "The Unique Art of Andrés Segovia." Andrés Segovia, guitar. Decca DL 710167, \$5.98.

It's been some years since I last heard the Father of the Classical Guitar on records or in concert, but nothing has changed: the mixture of old music and new music; of guitar (or vihuela) originals and transcriptions; the vibrantly "singing" tonal qualities; the pellucid clarity and immaculate technique; the

*Continued on page 128*

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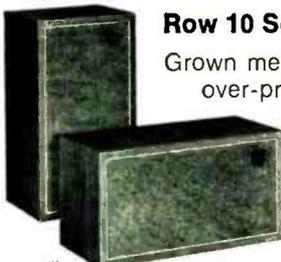
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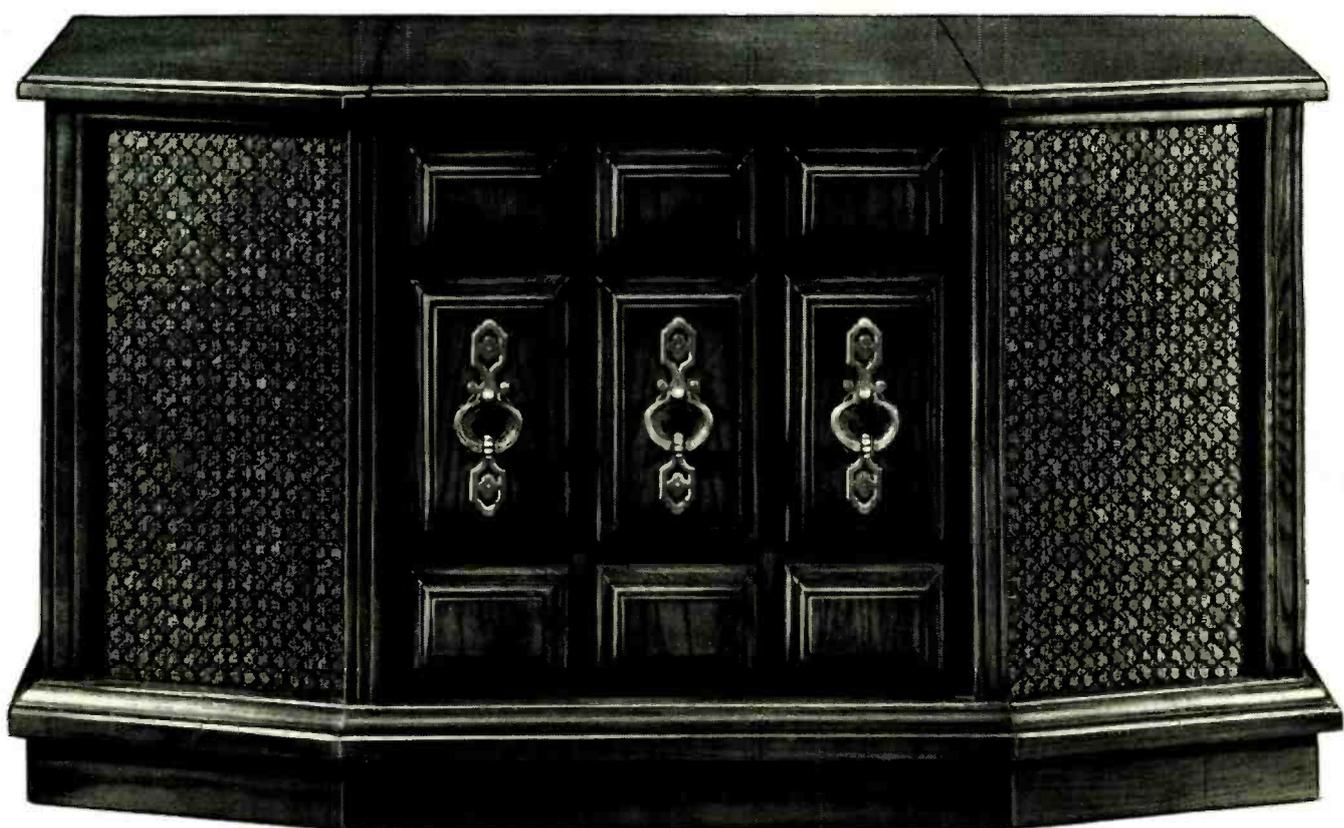
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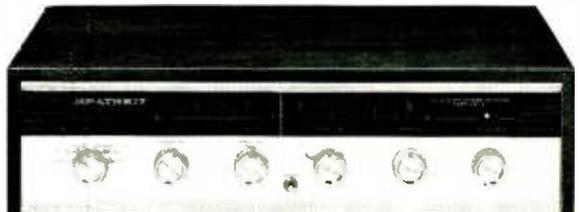
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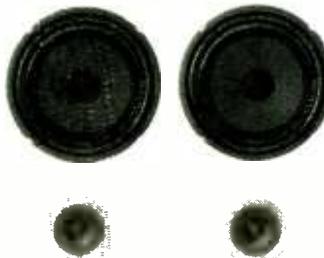
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romantically lyrical warmth and eloquence. Even the present luminously pure stereo recording (made in Spain) is—as so often in the past—so closely miked that there is a constant obbligato of extraneous guitar-performance noises.

The composers represented are old favorites of Segovia (except for the contemporary Albert Harris from the West Coast), but I think that only a few of the selections have been recorded by the maestro before, or at least recently. There are three delectable little dances (two in Segovia transcriptions) by Bach; and six of Luis Milán's extraordinary little *Pavanas*—one or two seemingly based on nursery tunes, one other (No. 2 in B minor) outstanding for its noble pathos. Later Spanish music is represented by a transcription of Albéniz' rhapsodic *Mallorca* (*Barcarolla*); Latin-America by Villa Lobos' songful Prelude No. 1 in E minor; and contemporary eclecticism by the haunting Prelude to Tansman's *Homage to Chopin* and Albert Harris' mellifluous if unadventurous Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel (composed for Segovia in 1950).

If one wants to carp, it could be pointed out that such a feast of expressivity tends to become just a bit too rich for easy digestion, and that the maestro's persuasive personality tends to blur the individualities of the composers. But it is of course Segovia himself—"the same yesterday, today, and forever"—who is the prime magnetic appeal here. And surely his multitudinous admirers would not wish it any other way. R.D.D.



Andrés Segovia—the master's magnetic appeal still conjures its musical magic.

**ALEKSANDER SLOBODYANIK:** "Piano Recital." CHOPIN: Mazurkas: No. 19, in B minor, Op. 30, No. 2; No. 20, in D flat, Op. 30, No. 3; No. 21, in C sharp minor, Op. 30, No. 4; No. 42, in A minor, Op. posth. (1842). HAYDN: Sonata for Piano, No. 48, in C. PROKOFIEV: Sonata for Piano, No. 6, in A, Op. 82. Aleksander Slobodyanik, piano. Melodiya/Angel SR 40109, \$5.98.

Aleksander Slobodyanik is the young (twenty-two-year-old) Soviet virtuoso who impressed some critics as a firebrand at his Carnegie Hall debut last year. Other commitments kept me away from that recital, so I am hearing this new artist for the first time on this, his initial domestic recording. Slobodyanik, as is to be expected these days from budding performers, possesses formidable technical equipment. His runs are even and his finger work is fluent and agile. He also seems to be a musician of agreeable temperament. The Haydn Sonata, as Slobodyanik plays it, is refreshingly pert, sparkingly delineated, and has a friendly, singing quality without in the least upsetting the basic classical formality. The group of Chopin mazurkas are given a gnomelike quality with bouncing, slightly square rhythmic jabs and an application of judicious loud/soft dynamic alternations. Slobodyanik does not project (and perhaps was not interested in projecting) the ferocious, symphonic grandeur of Horowitz, say, in the D flat and C sharp minor pieces. I say "perhaps" because the lack of tempestuous tone here may be nothing more than the instrument itself which has a soggy bass and a rather boxy tone in general.

The Prokofiev Sonata overside sounds as if it came from a different recording session (and piano), for it has a leaner, more brittle and cleaner type of sonority. Slobodyanik takes the prolix score very briskly, giving his reading a lithe, light-footed brio rather than the relentless, heavily accented type of momentum Prokofiev players of the Horowitz persuasion strive for. One might say that he combines the slightly bleak, ultravec style of John Browning with some of Richter's wit and Ashkenazy's mercurialness. However one analyzes Slobodyanik's brew, the obvious conclusion is that he must be doing something right! I look forward to hearing more from him. H.G.

**EDWARD H. TARR:** "The Art of the Baroque Trumpet." Edward H. Tarr, Robert Bodentröder, et al., trumpet; Wenzel Pricha, timpani; Consortium Musicum, Fritz Lehman, cond. Nonesuch H 71217, \$2.98.

This program has been treasured by specialist collectors since it first appeared in an imported German Odeon release of 1966, but it should find a considerably wider American audience in the present, more widely available, bargain-priced version. (Purist connoisseurs may still prefer the import, however, for its more extensive, illustrated annotations, considerably curtailed by Nonesuch.) A gifted, versatile



Aleksander Slobodyanik—a fascinating musical brew from a young firebrand.

young American (born in 1936 in Norwich, Connecticut) is starred here—not only as lead trumpeter, but as the musicologist who assembled and edited the program largely from MS sources, the writer of the notes, and a collaborator in the design of one of the baroque-styled instruments played here, a long "clarin" trumpet completed in 1965. (The others are a modern short-valved trumpet by Couesnon, Paris, and some Steinkopff-Finke "Jäger" natural trumpets in coiled posthorn shape.) He plays them all well, if with almost too much reticence, and he and his proficient colleagues are brightly and cleanly recorded in a warm but not especially reverberant ambience.

The Italian seventeenth century dominates Side 1: Torelli's Sonata and perhaps Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *Marche de triomphe* and *Second Air de trompettes* may be familiar to specialists. New, to me at least, are three anonymous fanfarelike sonatinas and Petronio Franceschini's (c. 1650-80) eloquent, buoyant Sonata à 7, for two trumpets, strings, and continuo. Except for the now well-known Altenburg Concerto for Seven Trumpets and Timpani, the selections drawn principally from the eighteenth-century German repertory on Side 2 are new as well. They include three anonymous processional fanfares: an Altenburg Chorale; a delectable Concerto à 8, for trumpet, strings, and continuo by Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688-1758); and, best of all, a Handel Suite in D, also for trumpet, strings, and continuo. First published in 1733, this piece may not have been assembled by the composer himself, but it does include three *Water Music* excerpts (in different versions) as well as an Aire (Menuetto) and March (Bourrée) only ascribed to Handel, but certainly highly characteristic of his style. R.D.D.

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# in brief

**BRAHMS:** Hungarian Dances, Nos. 1-10. **DVORAK:** Slavonic Dances, Op. 46. Bracha Eden and Alexander Tamir, piano. London CS 6614, \$5.98.

**FAURE:** Requiem, Op. 48; Pavane, Op. 50. Robert Chilcott, treble; John Carol Case, baritone; John Wells, organ; Choir of King's College, Cambridge (in the Requiem); New Philharmonia Orchestra, David Willcocks, cond. Seraphim S 60096, \$2.49.

**MOZART:** Symphonies: No. 39, in E flat, K. 543; No. 41, in C, K. 551 ("Jupiter"). Hungarian State Orchestra, János Ferencsik, cond. Qualiton LPX 11390, \$5.98.

**SCHUBERT:** Symphony No. 9, in C, D. 944 ("The Great"). Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. Columbia MS 7272, \$5.98.

**VIVALDI:** Concertos for Five, Four, and Three Instruments. Concentus Musicus, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, cond. Telefunken SAWT 9528, \$5.95.

**GOTTLÖB FRICK:** "Great Songs of the German Hunt." Gottlob Frick, bass; various accompaniments. Angel S 36610, \$5.98.

The teamwork of this Israeli duo is little short of clairvoyant as they firmly delineate the special rhythmic design of each dance. The approach verges on the symphonic at times, yet the music's inherent intimacy is never seriously disturbed. It is a particularly generous disc too: the complete Dvořák Op. 46 is contained on one side without too much skimping vis-à-vis repeats, and you get similar good measure with Brahms. The piano sound is remarkably deep and plangent, full of dash, brilliance, and delicate coloration. Very highly recommended. H.G.

Gabriel Fauré's gentle Requiem has enjoyed a number of excellent recordings, and I especially treasure André Cluytens' Angel performance. The British musicians here strike me as less imaginative in probing the subtle variety of Fauré's admittedly limited range of expression, although both orchestra and chorus sound extremely good on this record, and the soloists are adequate to their not too exacting tasks. The *Pavane* offers lovely playing by flutist Gareth Morris, but the performance does not efface the memory of a truly magical Beecham record. P.H.

Ferencsik's Mozart is vaguely outlined, lacking rhythmic impetus, heedless of timbral considerations (the winds are buried beneath an avalanche of resin), and wholly unsuited to the sharp profile and miraculous inner workings of the music. Tempos are slow—in itself no bad thing—but lack of attention to detail and pulse strips both symphonies of movement. This release, characterized by tubby and colorless engineering, is not typical of the good work Ferencsik has provided in the past, nor does it reflect this label's best recorded efforts. S.I.

Ormandy's first recorded essay of this colossus proves to be a sturdy, conservatively proportioned statement with broadish tempos and traditional phrasing projected by a hefty instrumental ensemble. Some of the playing is quite beautiful and expressive (the end of the second movement, for instance) and some is a trifle stolid and matter of fact. The finale, in particular, tends to get bogged down: it could stand more momentum and a sharper, more alert kind of forward thrust. This is, then, a perfectly good, well-recorded presentation, but I prefer the work of a Philadelphia Orchestra from another era under the baton of Arturo Toscanini (still available on RCA LD 2663). H.G.

The term "concerto" here may mislead the casual record buyer: these are not concertos in the usual sense but rather a group of solo instruments playing "concertedly," without orchestra—much more a matter of chamber music, in our parlance. Each instrument emerges in turn for its moment of glory, then retires to form part of the background for one of its colleagues. All is lively and unproblematical; none of the slow movements rises to the inspired melodic heights sometimes achieved by Vivaldi, but other things compensate: the elaborate figuration for violins and woodwinds in the C major Concerto, the brisk exchanges between violin and recorder in the D major for three instruments. Performances are excellent. S.F.

This is a quite lavish production. In addition to the familiar black bass voice of Gottlob Frick (a bit worn by now, I'm afraid), we have a horn quartet, a hunting horn ensemble, a zither, boys' chorus, full chorus, a chamber ensemble, full orchestra, and occasional live bird calls tucked in between the songs. Despite the varied forces involved and the brilliance of the recording, I can sympathize with anyone losing patience halfway through this rather ponderous paean to the hunt with its unrelenting folksy music and annoyingly simplistic sentiments. Strictly for the *Vaterland* crowd. P.G.D.

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# repeat A SELECTIVE GUIDE TO THE MONTH'S REISSUES performance

**PUCCHINI: Manon Lescaut.** Licia Albanese (s), Jussi Bjoerling (t), Robert Merrill (b), et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera House, Jonel Perlea, cond. RCA Victrola VIC 6027, \$5.96 (two discs, mono only) [from RCA Victor LM 6116, 1954].

Despite several earnest efforts, *Manon Lescaut* has not had much luck on discs. The Callas recording (deleted) had only Callas herself to recommend it; the Cetra/Everest is a pretty rough affair all round; and the Tebaldi/Del Monaco, despite moments of caressing vocalism from her and occasional outbursts of sheer animal excitement from him, is a plodding and uninteresting performance. The RCA version is perhaps the most satisfying and its budget reappearance (sounding even better than ever on its new two-disc format) is highly welcome.

Albanese's Manon is a full-blooded, absorbing characterization, sung with her typically honest abandon, albeit occasionally wiry tone; and Bjoerling's aristocratic, honeyed tenor has never sounded so beguiling as Des Grieux. Their work together is a constant source of pleasure. I can't resist mentioning a Met broadcast of the opera with these two artists a couple of years after the recording was made. It was one of those rare afternoons when everything clicked: a performance of extraordinary tension and mounting excitement that built to an Act IV of white-hot intensity. The conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos, was largely responsible for kindling that fire, and Jonel Perlea's stuffy conducting here, coupled to a sterile studio atmosphere, prohibits the kind of spontaneous passion that sparked the live performance. Even so, few opera buffs are liable to complain about the fine singing to be heard on these discs.

**SCHUMANN: Frauenliebe und Leben, Op. 42; Dichterliebe, Op. 43.** Lotte Lehmann, soprano; Bruno Walter, piano; Odyssey 32 16 0315, \$2.98 (mono only) [from Columbia ML 4788, recorded in 1941].

Lotte Lehmann was certainly one of the most fascinating lieder interpreters: even when she seemed dead wrong (and much of her Schubert and Wolf occasionally strike me as wildly off the mark), there was always an illuminating phrase here and there that shed new light on a familiar song. Her Schumann and Brahms, however, were priceless and these two cycles are magnificent examples of her art. The *Frauenliebe*, especially, penetrates to the core of the music. That they are intensely feminine goes without saying: more than that, though, Lehmann completely avoids the introverted, rather

droopy *Hausfrau* approach of, say, Kathleen Ferrier—here is a vibrant, complex woman of many moods. So subtle is Lehmann's shading and so potent is her vocal personality that she literally transcends Chamisso's sentimental little verses and suggests intriguing character facets hardly hinted at in the songs themselves.

*Dichterliebe*, of course, is traditionally a man's cycle, but there is no particular reason why a woman shouldn't give it a try. And I dare say no singer, male or female, has achieved Lehmann's passionate identification with this music. The contradictory desperation of *Ich grolle nicht* or the whirling daemonism of *Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen* are unique Lehmann touches. Bruno Walter's accompaniments seem a bit timid compared to his colleague's tense, high-keyed drama, but the romantic poetry of Walter's pianism also carries an arresting conviction of its own. No lieder collection should be without this indispensable disc.

**SCHUMANN: Symphony No. 1, in B flat, Op. 38 ("Spring"). SCHUBERT: Symphony No. 2, in B flat, D. 125.** Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond. RCA Victrola VICS 1436, \$2.98 [the Schumann from RCA Victor LSC 2474, 1961; the Schubert from RCA Victor LSC 2522, 1963].

Munch gives these two happy symphonies a typically big, warm-hearted Alsatian bearhug. Schubert's graceful teenage effort withers a bit from such a cordial embrace—a more easygoing geniality, a lighter touch, and phrasing with more delicate point would have helped convey the lilting Viennese charm of this work. Munch has better luck in capturing the vernal joy of Schumann's *Spring* Symphony—an exuberant performance which some may find too overstated in certain details, such as the deafening triangle in the first movement or the souped-up slow movement. Still the reading has an infectious enthusiasm that is quite attractive. Big, vibrant Boston sonics.

**SIBELIUS: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D minor, Op. 47. TCHAIKOVSKY: Sérénade mélancolique, Op. 26; Souvenir d'un lieu cher, Op. 42, No. 2: Scherzo.** Ruggiero Ricci, violin; London Symphony Orchestra, Oivin Fjelstad, cond. Stereo Treasury STS 15054, \$2.49 [from London CS 6067, 1959].

Admirers of pretty-pretty fiddling had best steer clear of this disc—Ricci will have none of Heifetz's silken suavity in

*Continued on page 134*

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cies. Which means that the low and high frequency components of a signal that enter a speaker at the same instant don't arrive at your ear at the same instant. There's a smearing effect. This accounts, in part, for the gutsy, canned sound of some popular speakers, which many people like although it bears no resemblance to live music.

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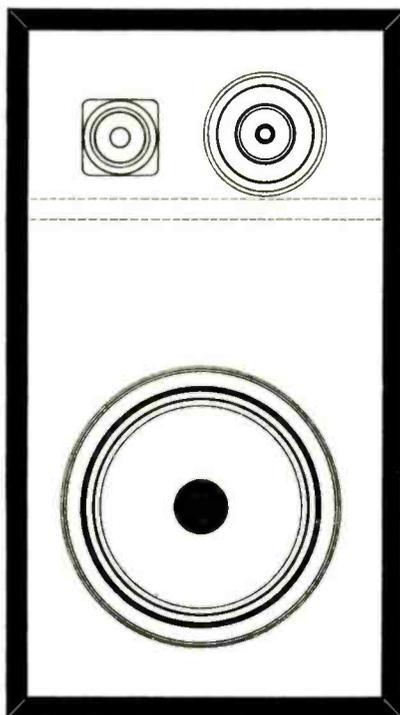
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CIRCLE 19 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## REPEAT PERFORMANCE *Continued from page 132*

this rough-hewn, granitic traversal of Sibelius' knotty concerto. The violin tone is bright, crisp, and biting—yes, and quite beautiful in its transparent iciness, so appropriate to this tense, craggy work. Always an impressive technician, Ricci surmounts every vicious hurdle with impeccable intonation and tremendous virtuosic flair. The two Tchaikovsky encores on the other hand sound a trifle labored, although the violinist's scrupulous avoidance of salon mannerisms does preserve the music's essential dignity. Fjelstad's taut and tart accompaniment in the Concerto is ideally suited to Ricci's approach to the music, and the sound is still right up there with the best.

**VERDI: Aida.** Leontyne Price (s), Rita Gorr (ms), Jon Vickers (t), Robert Merrill (b), Giorgio Tozzi (bs), et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera House, Georg Solti, cond. London OSA 1393, \$17.94 (three discs) [from RCA Victor LSC 6158, 1962].

Collectors glancing through the July Schwann must have been surprised to see the black diamond of deletion beside a dozen or so RCA opera sets—surely a healthy demand still exists for such high-powered recordings as Sutherland's *Nor-*

*ma*, Leinsdorf's *Don Giovanni*, *Figaro*, and *Die Walküre*, Solti's *Aida* and *Falstaff*. Actually these sets were produced for RCA by Decca/London and with the termination of their contractual ties, the recordings became the exclusive property of the English company. Presumably all of them will once again appear on either the London or Richmond labels, although a few operas (the *Walküre*, in particular) present problems by being in direct competition with more recent London productions.

The *Aida* is the first to resurface: originally to tie-in with Leontyne Price's opening week performances at the Met this season. The recording has always seemed to me to be the choice among the current crop of *Aidas*, with Price in magnificent form, ably seconded by Gorr's magisterial Amneris and Vickers' elegant Radames. Even Solti, whose Verdi conducting has often been variable on discs, has the unreliable Rome Opera Orchestra playing with passion and precision. The sound, if not as sumptuous as London's earlier Karajan version, is fully up to the challenge of the score.

**"MUSIC OF THE AMERICAN MORAVIANS."** Ilona Kombrink, soprano; Aurelio Estanislao, baritone; Fine Arts Quartet; Moravian Festival Chorus and Orchestra, Thor Johnson, cond. Odyssey 32 16 0340, \$2.98 [from Columbia MS 6102, 1960, MS 6288, 1962, and MS 6741, 1967].

Columbia has done well by the Moravians, an extremely musical group of Czechs and Germans who came to America in the mid-eighteenth century and settled in Pennsylvania and North Carolina. Soon after this remarkable musical culture had been rediscovered a number of years ago, Columbia set about to record a large portion of it and this reissue is drawn from that valuable series. We know that the Moravians brought the music of Haydn and Mozart to the new world; on these discs we can also hear that they possessed a vital creative tradition of their own.

The music offered here was written by Peter, Herbst, Antes, Dencke, Michael, and Leinbach over a 150-year period right up to the first years of the twentieth century. Most of the choral anthems have a pronounced Handelian character with broadly expressive vocal lines and skillfully written accompaniments, while some of the arias would not be out of place in a Mass by Mozart. The one instrumental work is a string trio by John Antes; the Haydn influence is unmistakable, but Antes' ingenious, apple-cheeked originality smiles through this infectious, cleverly crafted three-movement piece. The excellent performances, which perfectly capture the music's unaffected sincerity, have been given splendidly realistic reproduction. PETER G. DAVIS



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# the lees side



UPI

## New York City—R.I.P.

"BUT WHERE ELSE," said one of the city's few remaining admirers, "can you hear as much symphonic music in one week as you can in New York City?"

"In a living room, even if it's a hundred miles out in the bush," I said. "On a good phonograph."

It's nothing new to observe that New York City is dying. Frank Lloyd Wright reportedly said that grass would grow in the city's streets within sixty years, because the whole town was obsolete. That estimate now appears to have been conservative. The grass is growing already. It springs in tufts from the cracks of sidewalks and the gutters of potholed, washboard streets. It overflows from paper-strewn and neglected greensward. Walking in the park by stately Riverside Drive the other day I saw grass that had reached a height of six feet and become a kind of broad-leaved jungle foliage. It looked as if it had not been tended in three or four years, and it probably hadn't. The city, with its dirt and blowing papers and crumbling concrete, has, despite its dense population, taken on the air of a deserted post-nuclear war metropolis in a science-fiction film. Sidewinder slithers of soot and fly-ash hurry down the streets like black snow in a blizzard. It's eerie, and very disturbing.

The telephone system has deteriorated to the point where making a call across town can be almost as difficult as trying to reach São Paulo from Rio de Janeiro. Congestion is so bad that a former traffic commissioner said he'd concluded that the only way to get to the West Side was to be born there.

In every facet of its existence, the city is beset by problems. It pays far more money in taxes to the state government than it gets back. New Yorkers feel that Washington and Albany have forgotten

them—or worse, are persecuting them. People who have no hope of finding work pour into the city and go on welfare, and money that might be used to restore this once-magnificent tribute to man's imagination is drained away. A harassed Mayor Lindsay apparently makes honest efforts to alleviate the city's ills, but his task is comparable to bailing out the sea with a teaspoon.

There was a time, and it was not all that long ago, when New York was the cultural as well as the economic capital of the United States—of the world, really. It still is the economic capital, although there is talk of moving the activities of Wall Street out of here. But it is no longer the cultural capital.

What city is? None, as yet. People talk of Miami's enormous growth, tell you how hard that city swings. Detroit is changing its character and will, according to one famous city planner, become a new New York. Los Angeles might with some justification claim to be the new cultural capital. People I know in real estate and music in Chicago are enormously enthusiastic about that city's future; and, in spite of Mayor Daley, Chicago is now an infinitely more attractive and dynamic center than New York.

There has been talk for years that Broadway was dying. It is no longer dying. It is dead. "I hate working there," says a noted set designer from Detroit. "The theaters are obsolete, and you're so hedged in by union restrictions on how many men you use that your hands are tied. Their stage techniques are twenty-five years behind the times."

The theater is dispersing. I think the term "Broadway musical" will soon cease to have meaning, as musicals are originated and mounted elsewhere. Why should investors and creators gamble a

half million dollars or more on the dubious opinions of three critics on the remaining New York papers?

New York was once the record capital of the world. Now Chicago, Los Angeles, Nashville, and Memphis are important record production centers, and Detroit has a share of the action too. There is more imagination at work in these other centers than here. As New York has become more restricted and moribund, the minds of the leaders in its record industry have grown timid. New York is an *old* city, older now in its way than Paris or London, and the minds of leaders in its record business have grown timid and rigid. When every day you must fear for your life as you step into the streets, something happens to one's thinking, and these men are pusillanimous when daring is the only attitude that can save them. More musical innovations come from London, Los Angeles, and Nashville than New York. In popular music, New York hasn't been a leader for a long time. It is a decrepit, unimaginative, and ir-resolute follower.

Recordings and television have taken a toll of live entertainment everywhere. Your home is your concert hall and movie theater these days, even if it is hard to find fare that is anything but bland or sick or both. But still, there is *something* going on in other cities of this nation. During recent trips to Washington, Boston, and Detroit, I was surprised at the number of pleasant little cafés and bars employing trios and singers. In New York that sort of thing is almost gone.

When the American Bar Association held its annual meeting here two or three years ago, its members complained that there was no place to go and nothing to

*Continued on page 138*

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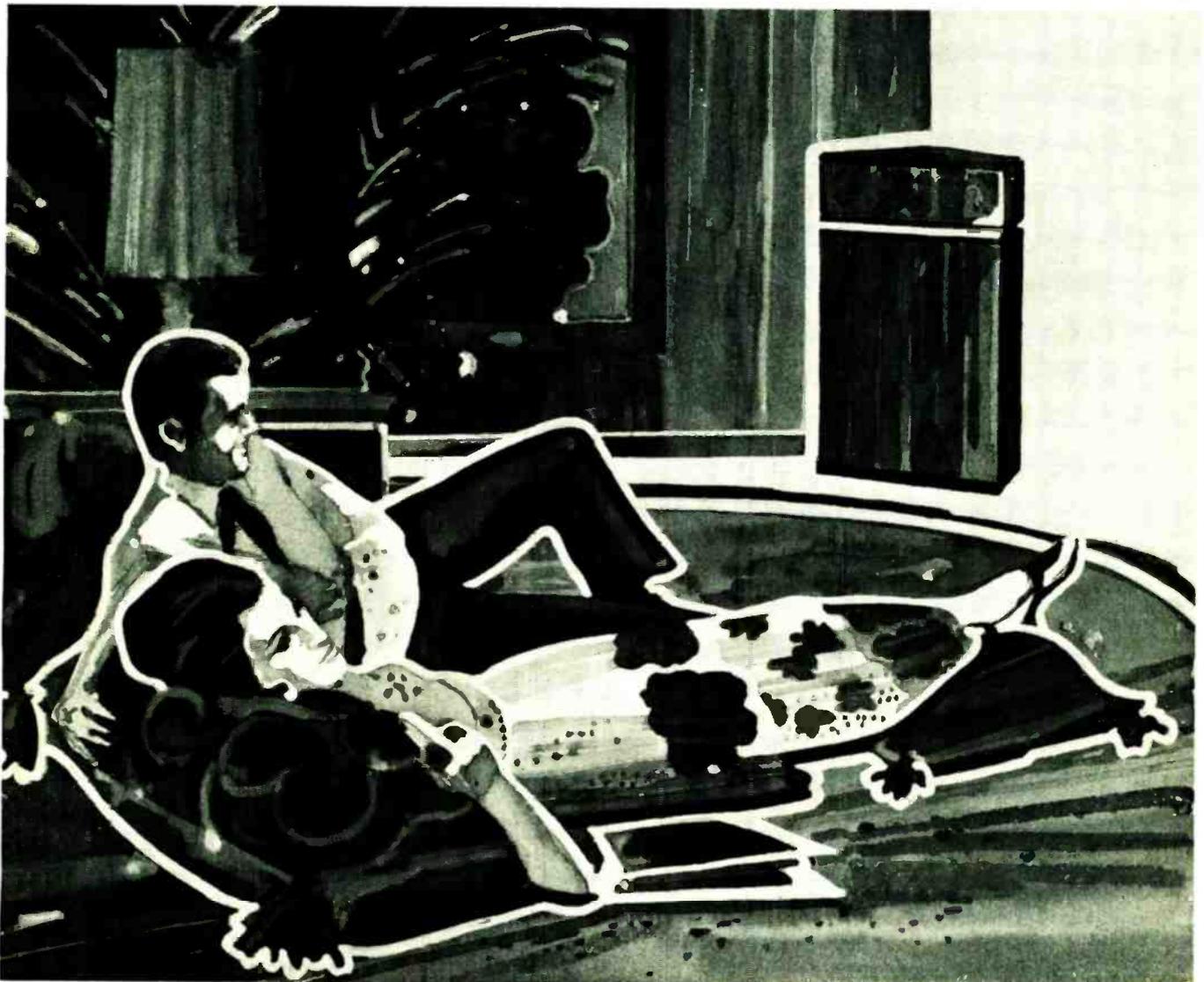
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# What's your favorite listening position?



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## THE LEES SIDE

Continued from page 136

do after their sessions. (After an hour in a discotheque, any intelligent person has usually had it.) They now prefer Las Vegas as a meeting place. They are part of that massive body of the American public whose proclivities and preferences have of late been systematically ignored by the entertainment industries: adults.

There's almost no jazz to be heard in New York. Two or three jazz night clubs limp along wondering where the people are. They're home. They're afraid to go out at night. A cop told me that this, more than anything else, is killing the

night-club business in New York City. Even the restaurants are feeling it: it is all but impossible to find one of any worth open after 11:30 p.m. The city that never sleeps? It hardly ever wakes up any more.

Opera? Try to get a ticket. "I like jazz," a law student at Columbia University told me, "but there's just about no place to hear it now. And I love opera, but you can't get into the Met, you can't get tickets. The New York City company is good, but that's not enough for a city this size. Sometimes I drive down to Philadelphia to go to the opera. Their company is damn good, and it's just about the only way I can get to see singers I want to hear."

Wait a minute. How's that again? People used to pour into New York from surrounding centers because of its cultural attractions, because of its ubiquitous entertainment, the best in the world. Now they're driving to Philadelphia for it? That's what the man said. Soon, perhaps, Philadelphians will be able to reverse the old New Yorkers' joke and say, "I spent a week in New York last Sunday."

It's what's happening. The arts are leaving New York. Escaped New Yorkers like Johnny Mandel, the film composer, who was born and raised here, now have to set foot in the town. "When I have to come in on business, I do what I've got to do and get out again." Henry Mancini, who went to school here, told me recently. "The place makes me nervous." Mancini will fly into New York in the morning for a meeting and catch a plane back to Los Angeles later that afternoon. Composer Antonio Carlos Jobim says he just cannot write in New York. Its tension distracts and drains the artist.

I know a television executive who refused a major promotion in his network because it would have meant moving from Los Angeles back to his native New York. A financier in San Francisco turned down a comparable promotion for the same reason. Industry and the arts are having trouble attracting top-level talent to a city that promises only harassment, poisonous yellow smog, electrical power crises, an apparently endless series of strikes against the public, low-grade groceries, and sky-high rents. In time, business will have to go where the talent is. Indeed the process has begun, and show business is getting out of New York. United Artists Records seems to have moved its center of gravity to Los Angeles. Music Corporation of America is preparing to shift an important part of its business operations to the West Coast, and M-G-M Records and ABC Paramount are preparing to remove their main activities to L.A.

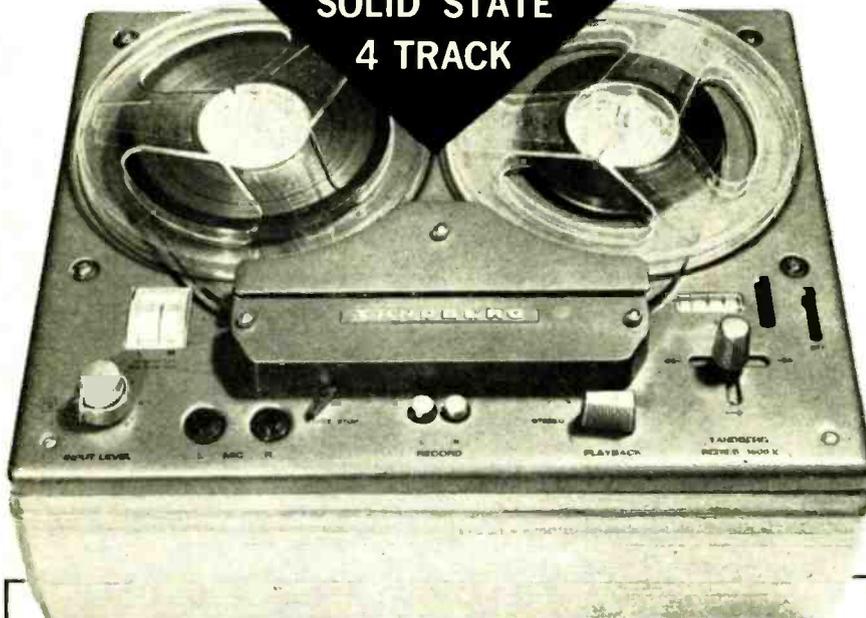
The gutting of downtown New York, now under way, is to me a symbol, a symptom, and a cause of what's happening to this city, and to the arts in this city. Rockefeller Center is expanding. They purchased all the land along Sixth Avenue between 50th and 46th Streets, and they've torn down all the buildings. And what was on those streets? Excellent little restaurants, and excellent larger restaurants like Absinthe House, where editors and writers used to meet; and Jim and Andy's bar, which someone aptly dubbed the Mermaid Tavern of American music: recording studios, music stores, rehearsal halls, instrument repair shops, bookstores. It was the heart of the city's music world. It was in some ways the heart of the city itself.

Some of the establishments have been relocated, but "something's gone," said Jim Koulouvaris, the owner of Jim and Andy's, which had to be relocated on West 55th Street. "It's not the same any more."

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# the lighter side

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**PAUL HORN: Inside.** Paul Horn, flute. Epic 26466, \$4.98.

Paul Horn walks into the Taj Mahal with a couple of his flutes and a recording engineer and begins to play unaccompanied solos. Could any premise for an album seem less promising? Yet that's what this album is about, and it is extraordinary—a beautiful, deeply spiritual experience that any sensitive listener, no matter what his usual musical tastes, will respond to.

Horn became fascinated by the acoustical properties of the Taj Mahal, one of the world's most famous tombs—and certainly one of the most beautiful. He noted once during a visit that every few minutes the guard would let out a vocal call to demonstrate those properties. "Each tone," Horn notes in his detailed and often charming liner notes, "hung suspended in space for twenty-eight seconds and the acoustics are so perfect that you couldn't tell when his voice stopped and the echo took over. Also, the individual tone didn't spread, as in other great halls, but remained pure and round to the very end."

Horn arranged with a guard to return in the evening and play his flute. "I sat down in the middle of the tombs and played one note," he relates. "I was using my alto flute and the low C flew out and filled the entire room and just hung there. I couldn't believe it. It was the most beautiful thing I ever heard in my life . . . I just began playing whatever came into my head, and they came back sounding like a chorus of angels. Then I'd play my text phrase on top of that. There was a whole orchestra invisibly suspended in the obscurity of the dome."

Those who have heard tape echo delay on instruments (trumpeter Don Ellis uses the device a lot) will have some idea of the effect. But one hears in this recording not an electronic effect, but true physical echo, and the feeling is quite different.

The music itself is neither jazz nor pop nor classical music. Nor is it Indian music, although it partakes more of that tradition than any other. (I've listed it among pops because that's the catchall category these days for anything in music that defies simple labeling.)

Occasionally a guard joined in and sang, with Horn echoing his phrases on flute. At one point a mosquito flew close to a microphone. Horn left the sound in the recording. The album is that real; you have that much sense of being there.

I haven't seen Paul Horn in about eight years—not since he was an intense (and tense) young studio jazz musician in Los Angeles. Friends tell me something profound has happened to him. On the evidence of this recording I think it must have.

Paul was the first person I knew to

get involved with the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, and to this day he's the only one of that crowd I think was not a fraud or an attention-seeking poseur or both.

Once I knew him and his playing very well. But what I hear in this album is someone and something quite new to me. This music is slow, utterly relaxed, and serene, and the recording has an incredible ambience, an otherworldly beauty that communicates itself with gentle insistence. "That's healing music," a young woman I know said when I played it for her. "What a lovely moment in these terrible times."

When Horn first took out his flute, a guard said he couldn't play it in the Taj Mahal because it was a tomb. Horn noted, "You sing in here, don't you?"

"I sing to God," the Indian answered. "Well, I play my flute to God," Paul said.

And it sounds as if he does. G.L.

**FRANK SINATRA: A Man Alone, and Other Songs by Rod McKuen.** Frank Sinatra, vocals; Don Costa, arr. and cond. (Night; I've Been to Town; Out Beyond the Window; nine more.) Reprise 1030, \$4.98.

There was much before-the-fact talk about this album, in which Frank Sinatra devotes himself to the songs of Rod McKuen. Maybe the empathy between the two has to do with the publicity bruises they share. Sinatra is an old hand at bad press. McKuen has been attacked in print with that snappy energy reserved for the suddenly successful, but that is already passing. The fact is that McKuen has done some fine, warm work and also a lot of corn. He's a mood setter, and he's good at it. When admiring writers started saying that his was a profound art form, he should have stepped up to say, "No, it isn't." As for Sinatra, he's still the master, case closed.

While the material in this album is mixed, two factors give the set a mystic illusion of consistency: Sinatra's total artistic commitment, and arranger Don Costa's superb orchestral settings. For me, the best parts of the album are the several spoken segments, especially *Empty Is*, *Some Traveling Music*, and *From Promise to Promise*. They're little thoughts, simple ponderings to which Sinatra quietly applies his full dramatic force, brilliantly backed by Costa. The result is intensely moving. Sinatra/Costa ride earlier McKuen/Anita Kerr albums out of town, and I imagine McKuen would be the first to agree. Among the prettier songs are *Empty Is* (both narration and song), *I've Been to Town*, and *Lonesome Cities*. On the other side, *Love's Been Good to Me* is so awkward even Sinatra/Costa can't save it.

One line on the jacket bothers me: "This album composed especially for

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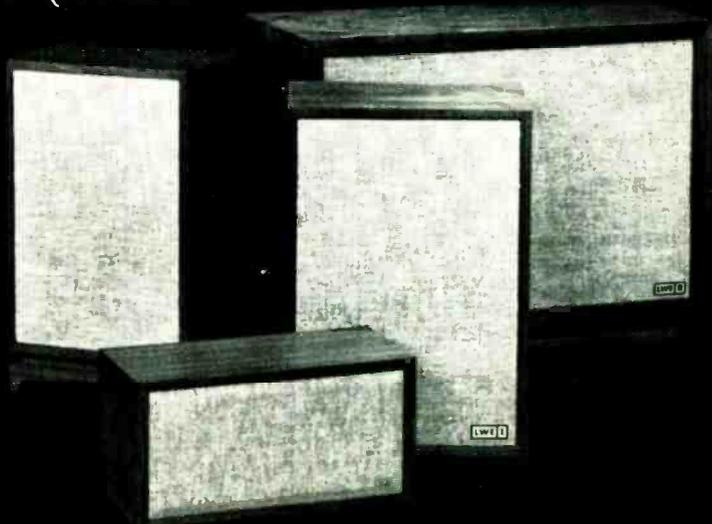
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Frank Sinatra." Much of the material had been recorded earlier by McKuen, some of it quite a while ago. What's more, people with one McKuen album tend to have all of them, and will recognize songs such as *The Single Man*, *A Man Alone*, *The Beautiful Strangers*, and *Love's Been Good to Me*. Or is it like all those never-explained plot moves in quickie movies? It is interesting to note that Rod McKuen has made more mileage on lonesome/lonely/alone than anyone in the history of the record business. I'm not sure what that says about McKuen, but it says a good deal about record buyers.

In all, this is a pleasant, listenable album. I'd buy it for the dramatic readings alone. Each to his own corn, but never trust anyone who doesn't respond to some form of it. M.A.

**JUNIOR WELLS: Hoodoo Man Blues.** Junior Wells, vocals and harmonica; rhythm accompaniment. (Snatch It Back and Hold It; Good Morning School-girl; Hound Dog; Chitlin con Carne; Hey Lawdy Mama; seven more.) Delmark DS 9613, \$4.79.

**JUNIOR WELLS: Sings Live at the Golden Bear.** Junior Wells, vocal and harmonica; rhythm accompaniment. (Fever; My Babe; Don't Start Me to Talking; Please Please Please; Elevate Me Mama; five more.) Blue Rock SRB 64003, \$4.79.

Junior Wells is a young man who plays harmonica and sings in the tradition of the Chicago blues. He has a warm gravelly voice, not unlike James Cotton's, and his mouth-harp playing is hauntingly beautiful. He is a performer of great force and charm. If he were white, he'd be a star.

*Hoodoo Man Blues*, released over two years ago, was his first album and is still his best. *Sings Live at the Golden Bear*, his fourth and most recent LP, marks something of a recovery from the two disastrous recordings he dropped in between.

Buddy Guy shared the first record (under the contractual pseudonym of Friendly Chap) and his guitar work seems to have been designed as the perfect foil for Wells's voice and harmonica. Most of the material is first-rate, including a half dozen originals. Wells's singing here is more personal and more relaxed than on any of his other albums. Except for a few niggles about production, it is a fine release and should probably be heard by anyone who takes pop and r & b seriously.

Since *Hoodoo Man*, Wells has run through a mediocre set for Vanguard (although the label does own some good cuts by him, especially on *Chicago/The Blues/Today, Vol. 1*), and a disastrous first record for Mercury's new Blues Rock subsidiary. Someone at Mercury, producer Jack Daniels I would guess, got it into his head that Wells should imitate James Brown (Vanguard on the other hand seems to have preferred James Cotton imitations) and Daniels provided Wells with a poorly rehearsed

big band and a dozen dispirited arrangements. The result, *You're Tuff Enough*, is awful.

*Sings Live* finds Wells moving back toward his own thing, though much of the fire that brightened *Hoodoo Man* is still missing. Most of the tunes are either old r & b hits (*Fever*) or from the pens of long-time Chicago traditionalists (like Sonny Boy Williamson and Willie Dixon), and Wells does what he can to give them new life. The reed work is nondescript but the rhythm section is good enough to do what's asked of it. The "simulated stereo" contributes nothing notable to the listener's pleasure but it doesn't distract either. The album is quite good when compared to most other new releases and is disappointing only when compared to the promise of *Hoodoo Man* and the incomparable excitement of Wells in live performance. J.G.



**BIFF ROSE: Children of Light.** Biff Rose, vocals and piano; strings; Kirby Johnson, arr. and cond. (Son in Moon; American Waltz; Ain't No Great Day; eight more.) Tetragrammaton T 116, \$4.98. Tape: ●● X 116, 3 3/4 ips, \$5.95; ●● M 8116, \$6.95; ●● X 5116, \$5.95.

Pianist/singer/writer Biff Rose has a sunny, irresistible talent, full of whimsy and sparked with zingers of all sorts. This is his second album for Tetra. It runs along the same lines as the first and strikes me as a bit better, a bit fuller.

Without trying, Rose has acquired the reputation of being today's foremost pop/rock satirist, evident in such marvelous songs as *Ballad of Clichés* and *Color Blind Blues*. Unlike most satirists, Rose's fluid, glib, off-the-wall dialogue reveals unexpected depth in such tender ballads as *To Baby* and *Just Like a Man*.

Rose is a whole talent. His singing is free, delightful, a little shy—as though he doesn't think much of his voice. His playing is musical, energetic, and touchingly quaint. Both provide the perfect vehicle to express Rose's unique and charming songs. All of which proves that you don't have to be tormented to be deep, you don't have to be obscure to be hip.

Carry on, Biff.

M.A.

**JOHN WESLEY RYLES: Kay.** John Wesley Ryles, vocals; Don Tweedy, arr. (Catch the Wind; My Special Angel; Come On Home; eight more.) Columbia CS 9788, \$4.98.

John Wesley Ryles is a young singer who is having some success on c & w charts with a situation-melodrama called *Kay*. Both song and singer are country-oriented.

Ryles sings pleasantly, especially so for a seventeen-year-old. But where does he go from here? He'd be in better shape if he'd written his hit song, for then

he'd be a promising package-talent. As it is, any number of singers could have made a hit of *Kay*.

From the sound of the few songs here on which Ryles collaborated, he's not (not yet anyway) much of a writer. Most of the album is made up of other people's hits. Such an album format is not only dated, but risky in terms of developing new talent. Who needs another too-late version of *Wichita Line-man* or *Little Green Apples*?

What happens when the momentum of *Kay* passes? Drop back, punt, hope for another worth-it song? Where are the satellites of *Harper Valley P.T.A.*? When was it enough to be just a nice singer? M.A.

**JULIE BUDD: Wild and Wonderful.** Julie Budd, vocals; orchestra. (What the World Needs Now Is Love; Johnny One Note; A Very Special Person; eight more.) M-G-M SE 4607, \$4.98.

Julie Budd is a nice little New York girl who sings remarkably like Barbra Streisand. A friend of mine at M-G-M tried to con me that "she just happens to sing that way." Come on, Sol, just because she's Jewish and she's from New York, she sings that way? This is a glaring imitation, and I'd put Miss Budd down for it, except for one thing: she's fourteen. At that age, she has lots of time to acquire taste, and if she does, she'll stop singing like Barbra Streisand.

Miss Budd has *all* Streisand's mannerisms of phrasing and distorted pronunciation. "Her" comes out as "huh" and "winter" as "wintuh." "Me" comes out "meceeee," with the teeth clenched tightly on the vowel. Miss Streisand is full of such fake little tricks, which is why her sound so often becomes incomparably ugly. So does Miss Budd's.

But the kid really does have talent, enormous talent—a big range, good intonation (therefore she has no excuse for that ghastly *...eeeee*), and an intensively communicative hunger.

That's some voice you've got there, Miss Budd. Wear it in good health. G.L.

**DONALD BECK: Banjo Revolution.** Donald Beck, amplified banjo; Marty Paich and Clark Gassman, arr. (Scotland Moors; Nobody's Home; Hey Jude; seven more.) Pete S 1110, \$4.98. Tape: 871-1110, \$6.98.

Pete Records is a small California company which appears to run on brains, good public relations, and high-quality product. That's enough to kill any business. At Pete, it seems to work.

Here is an album whose concept would not have thrilled me had it not been hand-delivered and explained. "Amplified banjo?" I said, gimmick-wary. The representative talked me into a thorough listening—and it wasn't wasted time.

Donald Beck is a twenty-one-year-old musician playing a thing called "The Pete Amplified Banjo," implying that the label also has something to do with development of the instrument. Both Beck and the banjo are a pleasure. So

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are the arrangements by Marty Paich and Clark Gassman, and the choice of material. It ranges from an Earl Scruggs tune (*Ground Speed*) to tasteful pop (*Wichita Lineman*) to movie themes (*Rosemary's Baby*). In all styles, Beck is smooth and skilled, but I like him best on his own interesting tunes, such as *Past Life* and *Gold Hill*.

The sound of this instrument is impressive. As the notes say, it has the "attack" of the regular banjo and the "hold" of the guitar or dobro.

The album is worth buying, and any label with the good judgment of Pete is worth watching. M.A.



**JOHN STEWART: California Bloodlines.** John Stewart, vocals and guitar; rhythm accompaniment. (*Razor-Back Woman*; *Shackles and Chains*; *Some Lonesome Picker*; *Missouri Birds*; *July, You're a Woman*; *Never Going Back*; six more.) Capitol ST 203, \$4.98. Tape: 8 X T 203, \$6.95; 4 X T 203, \$5.95.

No batch of new releases is complete anymore without at least one new country-rock album. John Stewart's *California Bloodlines* is one of the best. And like most of the other good ones, it is a misnomer to call it country-rock. Most of these albums—*John Wesley Harding*, *James Hendricks*, the *Beau Brummels' Bradley's Barn*, and so on—are really folk albums, electrified and countrified to be sure, but folk albums all the same.

Stewart is both an excellent songwriter and a remarkably expressive performer. He has a rich country voice like Johnny Cash's and he writes story songs that are melodic and imaginative. My favorite is *The Pirates of Stone County Road* although it is marred by a voice talkover. *She Believes in Me* and *Omaha Rainbow* are also strong, and a smart promotion campaign could make a number one song out of *Mother Country* (and probably several others as well). Stewart has assembled the usual collection of Nashville studio stars (Buttrey, Burton, McCoy, etc.) with a few L.A. studiomens thrown in for good measure.

I played *California Bloodlines* for about twelve hours straight the day it came in and I've played it a lot since. It has stood up pretty well. J.G.

**JOHN NEEL: John Neel's Amazing Marching Machine.** Orchestra, John Neel, cond. Epic BN 26431, \$4.98.

This is the kind of album that almost slips by unnoticed because of idiotic liner notes. John Neel is described as "a talented genius" by the cover copy. After pondering what an untalented genius might be, I plowed through a lot of bilge about the virtues of Mr. Neel, who apparently writes all sorts of things, including "plays, screenplays, and shooting scripts." He has, we are told, arranged and conducted for "all major record companies"; composed and conducted

music "used in" more than twenty-five movies; and is "an acclaimed gourmet chef." What would you expect? That's right—another dreary rock album.

Surprise. John Neel is not a genius, but he is talented, and this California-made album—his first under his own name for any label, so far as I can tell—is a fresh collection of tunes in all sorts of rhythmic bags, from those of the roaring Twenties to rock. The big-band writing, presumably Neel's, is both skillful and musical.

I had to do some checking to find out even who this cat is. His hair is combed over the forehead in the picture (that's to hide age; usually it's a sure clue) and he turns out to be a thirty-nine-year-old Alabamian.

If the album sells, I'll be surprised: the dumb cover picture and irrelevant liner notes produce a lack of focus that will probably discourage most people, including disc jockeys, from getting to the music inside. And that's a shame. Because it's good stuff, most of it. G.L.

**JOHN RENBOURN: Sir John Alot of Merrie Englandes Musyk Thing & Ye Grene Knyghte.** John Renbourn, guitar; Terry Cox, finger cymbals, African drums, and glockenspiel; Ray Warleigh, flute and recorder. Reprise RS 6344, \$4.98.

I almost let this record slip by because of the paucity of information on the sleeve. We are confronted with the current cutesie-pie trick of omitting liner notes, evidently on grounds that if you've smoked enough grass, you can infer all you need to know by mystical means. Who is John Renbourn? What is his background? How did this record come to be made? The hippy-dip omission of information is going to impede the sale of this record, which is unfortunate: it's quite good.

Guitarist Renbourn performs in a more or less Elizabethan English style on Side 1. Excepting *The Earle of Salisbury*, a traditional theme, he wrote the material. On Side 2 he goes into a blues bag, though retaining a vaguely archaic flavor. It's an interesting combination. His instrument sounds like a steel-string acoustic guitar, played in classical style, but we're told nothing about that either. And Terry Cox, who is listed as playing flute on the jacket, plays recorder (two of them, thanks to overdubbing) in places.

The album was recorded in England. Beyond that you're on your own. G.L.

**SERGIO MENDES & BRASIL '66: Crystal Illusions.** Vocal and instrumental group with orchestra. (*The Dock of the Bay*; *Viola*; *Pretty World*; six more.) A & M 4197, \$4.98.

Like so many people who find success, Sergio Mendes seems to have fallen into a pattern. This album sounds like its predecessors. Yet there is no individualism—not even, paradoxically, the individualism of the previous albums.

What it does have is a seven-minute,

fifty-second track titled *Crystal Illusions*, based on a Brazilian melody by the gifted Edu Lobo. It's tedious beyond words. Attempting to be a "big" work, it becomes merely repetitious. Self-consciously "weird" and self-consciously "poetic," it is illustrative of all that is overbearing and pretentious in current pops.

Sergio Mendes still carefully conceals the identity of the members of his group. The girl who sings lead remains as anonymous as her cohorts. But she cannot, and surely will not, remain anonymous for long. She's too good. In previous albums she seemed cool and lifeless—an instrument articulating words without thought, phrasing, or feeling. That has changed. She is taking on color and life.

And Sergio Mendes has a bit of a tiger by the tail. Because she, whoever she is, is the most distinctive thing about his group. I expect soon to see her go out on her own, unless she's too tightly tied up in contract to do so: she's the most promising young girl singer in sight, and her clear, cool voice is unforgettable. G.L.



**THE FLOCK.** Jazz-rock septet: Fred Glickstein, guitars and vocals; Jerry Goodman, violin, guitars, and vocals; Tom Webb, harmonica, flute, tenor sax, and vocals; Rick Canoff, tenor sax and vocals; Frank Posa, trumpet; Jerry Smith, bass and vocals; Ron Karpman, drums. (Clown; I Am the Tall Tree; Tired of Waiting; three more.) Columbia CS 9911, \$4.98.

Two years ago, while I was still living in Chicago, I first heard and became a fan of a loud, enthusiastic, and exciting hard-rock band called The Flock. They would often share bills with big nationally known acts and steal the show. By today's standards they weren't very much technically, but they were consistently about the most exciting band on the Chicago scene (they were rivaled only by Baby Huey and the Babysitters who still haven't made it beyond the fraternity and dorm circuit).

The Flock's debut album is not a let-down. In fact, they have grown into one of the best hard rock bands in the country: smooth, inventive, eclectic—they draw on everything from jazz and classical to r & b and c & w. The septet's focus is the voice and guitar playing of Fred Glickstein, but Jerry Goodman's classical-sounding violin provides the Flock with its most identifiable signature. Goodman's fiddling is "straighter" than usual for rock, neither bluesy nor country-ish. At one point I even thought I caught a snatch of Delius' Violin Concerto.

Of all the cuts perhaps the best is *Store Bought—Store Thought*, a richly textured piece featuring Glickstein and Goodman. It is a textbook-suitable example of what's possible in intelligent jam-oriented rock. It and *Truth* are the best cuts, but there isn't anything on the record that isn't worth attention.

As usual, the horns are the weakest element of the arrangements, although, as with the recent album by Chicago (the group), they are used more integrally here than is normally so. My guess is that Rick Canoff is the stronger on tenor (based on the observation that Tom Webb's flute is weak). The compositions, written collectively by the band, are serviceable.

Columbia's classical record producer John McClure makes a strong debut bid for the serious rock market with the Flock. Hopefully there is more coming from the producer as well as the group. J.G.

## jazz



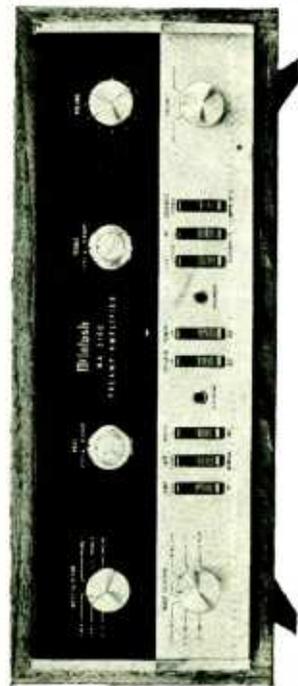
**ON SUNNIE'S SIDE OF THE STREET.** Ruby Braff, cornet; Ralph Sutton, piano; Milt Hinton, bass; Mousey Alexander, drums. (A Hundred Years from Today; Someday Sweetheart; Can't We Be Friends; four more.) Blue Angel 501, \$5.50 (Blue Angel Jazz Club, 25 North Santa Anita Ave., Suite L, Arcadia, Calif. 91006).

For the past twenty years the continuation of traditional jazz—the New Orleans, Chicago, and Dixieland varieties—has fallen increasingly to amateur and semi-pro bands, usually made up of business and professional men getting their off-hour kicks. Now another trend seems to be developing, one that is more "pro" than "semi," which focuses on small-group swing. In this case the musicians are totally professional but the recording and distribution is being done by fans. The first notable step in this direction was the formation of Master Jazz Recordings by two New York City advertising men, Bill Weilbacher and Don Kanter, who recorded some sessions with Jimmy Rushing, Earl Hines, Dickie Wells, Sir Charles Thompson, Julian Dash, and others of that ilk. Now a pair of California doctors, William A. MacPherson and George Tyler, have started a somewhat similar enterprise, calling themselves The Blue Angel Jazz Club. Recently they taped an eleven-hour jazz party at Sunnie's Rendezvous, the club in Aspen, Colorado run by Ralph Sutton and his wife, Sunnie.

The first release from these sessions is by an excellent quartet playing the kind of middle-of-the-road jazz that the doctors and their friends want to support. Ruby Braff, a remarkably consistent performer who has seldom recorded under ideal circumstances, plays beautifully on this set and in an atmosphere that is perfect for his lovely, melodic style. Everything about the set is so relaxed that it swings almost effortlessly. Ralph Sutton floats across his keyboard in delightful fashion and Mousey Alexander's drumming is sensitively balanced with the rest of the group (and, thank God, recorded in balance, not as a separate entity as in

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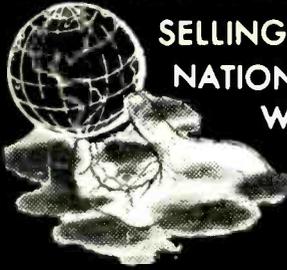
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many studio recordings). But possibly the most startling thing about the set is the masterful fashion in which Milt Hinton follows up on superb solos by Braff and Sutton and unostentatiously proceeds to cut them. This is beautiful, happy music, recorded with love and understanding. It should win a lot of friends and support for the Blue Angel Jazz Club. J.S.W.

### THE WORLD'S GREATEST JAZZ BAND:

Extra! Yank Lawson and Billy Butterfield, trumpets; Lou McGarity and Carl Fontana, trombones; Bud Freeman, tenor saxophone; Bob Wilber, clarinet and soprano saxophone; Ralph Sutton, piano; Bob Haggart, bass; Gus Johnson, drums. (I'm Prayin' Humble; 59th Street Bridge Song; Wolverine Blues; nine more.) Project 3 5039, \$5.98.

On its second I.P. the World's Greatest Jazz Band indicates that it is beginning to find some sense of direction. The earlier mixture of traditional jazz war-horses and current pop material is repeated here but with considerably more perception than before, while the writing in general is far more imaginative than on the band's first LP. An instance — *I'm Prayin' Humble*, which Bob Haggart adapted from Mitchell's Christian Singers while he was with the Bob Crosby band in the Thirties. That, in its day, was a fine record with Sterling Bose playing a particularly pungent trumpet. But Haggart has completely revitalized it in this new version with a marvelously rolling piano (Ralph Sutton) steaming all through the piece, Bud Freeman taking a brilliantly vital solo, and Bob Wilber offering more of his magnificent work on soprano saxophone. And *It Must be Him* is a shimmering blend of the individualistic solo styles of Lawson, muted, Butterfield, open, Wilber on sub-tone clarinet, and Fontana on trombone within a richly harmonized setting—an illuminating instance of how a contemporary song can be related to the special talent of this band.

The inclusion of *Savoy Blues* is a hopeful sign that the World's Greatest will not limit itself to the most hackneyed of the traditional "classics." But, at the same time, there is too generous use of drab, plodding contemporary ballads — *Alfie*, *Wichita Lineman*, *The Wind-*

*mills of Your Mind*. The World's Greatest is improving but its repertory is still not on a par with its personnel. J.S.W.



**BOB WILBER:** The Music of Hoagy Carmichael. Bob Wilber, soprano saxophone, clarinet, and bass clarinet; Yank Lawson and Bernie Privin, trumpets; Lou McGarity and Buddy Morrow, trombones; Bud Freeman, tenor saxophone; Bernie Leighton, piano; George Duvivier, bass; Gus Johnson, drums; Maxine Sullivan, vocals. (Riverboat Shuffle; Skylark; Rockin' Chair; Lazy River; ten more.) Monmouth-Evergreen 6917, \$4.79.

The talents of Bob Wilber as performer and arranger have been quite apparent for several years to those who have had the opportunity to hear them (i.e., at a few of the annual concerts by the Duke Ellington Society in New York or the discs he did for the Classic Jazz label). After about two decades of cooking on a back burner, Wilber is finally being heard by a wider public as a clarinetist and soprano saxophonist with the World's Greatest Jazz Band. And this collection provides further evidence of the full ripening of his talent. He has arranged fourteen Hoagy Carmichael songs with taste and imagination, using a band that, in instrumentation, parallels the World's Greatest and uses four of his colleagues from that group. The prime instrumentalist, however, is Wilber himself, most notably on soprano saxophone. He has completely escaped his early Bechet influence and now, using a small curved instrument, plays with pure, singing fervor in a style that echoes the soaring lyricism of both Johnny Hodges and a lean, less florid Bechet. But, ultimately, the musical expression is his own. There are superb examples of his soprano work on *The Nearness of You*, *One Morning in May*, and *Star Dust* (which also includes a stabbingly brilliant trumpet solo by Bernie Privin).

Maxine Sullivan is also present, singing with an intimate warmth made even more directly communicative by the huskiness that now tinges her once crystal-cool voice. Wilber's settings for her are magnificent—note particularly *Georgia on*

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*My Mind and I Get Along Without You Very Well.*

But Freeman pops up with several typically polished solo spots and contributes some fascinating personal memories of Carmichael in the liner notes. J.S.W.

**BILL EVANS with JEREMY STEIG:** What's New. Bill Evans, piano; Jeremy Steig, flute; Eddie Gomez, bass; Marty Morell, drums. (Straight No Chaser; Lover Man; What's New; Autumn Leaves; Time Out for Chris; Spartacus Love Theme; So What?) Verve 68877, \$5.98.

Jeremy Steig is a flute player whose abilities have been allowed to grow like a weed, fed more by intuition than knowledge. It is unlikely that his talent will fulfill its potential. With his lack of knowledge and lack of discipline, he'll go just so far, I imagine, and then stop.

Bill Evans digs him. He has been allowing Steig to sit in with his trio for some years now. This is not a privilege Evans extends lightly. And the compliment becomes more meaningful when you remember that Evans went to college on a flute scholarship. I've heard Steig and Evans in a number of these encounters, and on a *Camera Three* show they did for CBS-TV. This is the first time they've recorded together.

Steig used to have a semirock group, and he is of the anything-is-art-baby-if-I-say-it-is persuasion so common in rock-dom. And all through the present album, somewhat as Larry Coryell turns his guitar toward the amplifier to produce feedback. Steig keeps making pained squeals on his flute. He'll run up the instrument like a squirrel and, reaching the top, produce a strangled, strained sound. It resembles nothing so much as the anguish of the constipated. If you asked Steig why he makes these stupid, musically irrelevant, and totally distracting noises, he would, I am sure, say, "I feel it that way, man." Those who have been reared on rock will think there is a liberating validity to that philosophy and will probably dig Steig's uptight squeaks.

But, and this is an important but, there are times when he generates tremendous excitement. There is an abandon and an intensity to his playing that would make

some of his solos downright thrilling, were they not marred by those flatulent noises and his lack of taste. Further, in his ballad playing (the *Spartacus Love Theme*, for example) his tone is warm and rich and his inventions have a moody kind of beauty.

But the chief contribution of Steig to the album is his effect on Evans. Bill, who is his opposite in every way (well-schooled; a believer in form as a means to liberation; a musician of exquisite taste), catches some of Steig's fire, and he plays here with greatly increased freedom and buoyancy. Bassist Gomez, curiously, is more settled than usual. Maybe with his cohorts getting wild, he thought he'd better add a calming influence to hold things together. Anyway, the kind of machine-gun linear passages that Evans usually asks of him (I never liked this sort of effect except occasionally and used with discretion) are less in evidence and he plays some potent walking bass. Drummer Marty Morell plays with a great deal more taste and steadier time than Jack de Johnette evidenced in the last Evans album.

An oddly mixed bag, this album is full of rewards, if you can somehow endure the annoyances created by Steig. Superbly recorded, incidentally. G.L.

## in brief

**BOB DARIN: Commitment.** Direction 1937, \$4.98. Tape: A-1937, \$5.98. Bobby Darin has grown sideburns, a mustache, and a new image (what again?). He has also shortened his name. All the songs are his and like their author they are trendy, not very deep, and quite nice. Many happy returns. J.G.

**JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE: Smash Hits.** Reprise MS 2025, \$4.98. Tape: 4RA-2025, \$5.98.

For people who haven't discovered Hendrix yet, this couldn't be a better introduction. The album includes *All Along the Watchtower* which just may be the best single track of the last couple years. J.G.

**COLOURS.** Dot DLP 25935, \$4.98.

You should hear this group, the best new rock entry in some time. Unfortunately, I can't find out anything about

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them except what the cover is legally required to offer: "All selections written by Jack Dalton and Gary Montgomery"—presumably group members. One thing is sure: they know what they're doing. Songs are mournful and quite good. Buy it. M.A.

**JOE COCKER.** A & M SP 4182, \$4.98. Folk/blues/rock singer Joe Cocker caused much rapping with his fine hit, *Feeling Alright*. His album reveals that the single's fire came largely from the first-rate groove set by Artie Butler (piano), Carol Kaye (Hollywood's great lady Fender bass player), Paul Humphries (drums), plus percussion. The musicians who made the hit single don't show up on the album, which suffers for it. Most of the time Cocker sounds more like Richie Havens than not. And we already have a Richie Havens. M.A.

**JOSE FELICIANO: 10 to 23.** RCA LSP 4185, \$4.98. Tape: ●● TP3 1019, 3¾ ips, \$6.95; ●● P8S 1479, \$6.95. If you've heard one Feliciano album (song?) you've heard them all. I think they're all great, but this one may be the best. Cole Porter's *Miss Otis Regrets* is a knockout. J.G.

**SHEL SILVERSTEIN. A Boy Named Sue.** RCA Victor 4192, \$4.98. Shel Silverstein's songs have a certain vogue. I have always found them unsatisfying. The jokes fizzle like so many wet firecrackers. *A Boy Named Sue* has a better story line, but not the bubbling humor of Roger Miller's *My Uncle Used to Love Me but She Died*. Strictly for those who are already convinced. G.L.

**BEE GEES: Best of the Bee Gees.** Atco SD 33-292, \$4.98. The title says it all. J.G.

**BLIND FAITH: Blind Faith.** Atco 33-304, \$4.98. Blind Faith, the wedding of Traffic (Stevie Winwood), Cream (Eric Clapton and Ginger Baker), and Family (Rick Grech), attracted great expectations,

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but manages to win only the Ho-Hum Album of the Month Award. Pray for Jack Bruce. J.G.

**RUN, ANGEL, RUN.** Original sound track album. Epic BN 26474, \$4.98. Probably the first use of country-and-western sounds in a movie since *Bonnie and Clyde*, this score has a curious effectiveness, even on records. Stu Phillips wrote it. Interesting. G.L.

**JOHNNY CASH: Johnny Cash at San Quentin.** Columbia CS 9827, \$4.98. Tape: ●● HC 1162, 3¾ ips, \$6.98; ●● 14 10 0674, \$5.98; ●● 18 10 0674, \$6.98.

A follow-up to Johnny Cash at Folsom Prison, released last year, this album was recorded during the filming of a television show for England's Granada Television. It's a loose, easy—and sometimes a little sloppy—performance with a good deal of happy give-and-take between Cash and the prisoners. G.L.

**SHANGO. A & M SP 4195, \$4.98.** This group hit with *It's Slippin' Away*, celebrating California's impending earthquake. Shango's sound, featuring steel drums, is a mixture of calypso, Afro-Caribbean, and pop—and they're good at it. We've revived every other sound of the Fifties. Why not this? M.A.

**JOHNNY RIVERS: A Touch of Gold.** Imperial LP 12427, \$4.98. One could build a pretty good rock library on "greatest hits" albums alone. Rivers mixes in a couple of less well-known tunes, too, the best of which is probably his own *Ode to John Lee* (Hooker). J.G.

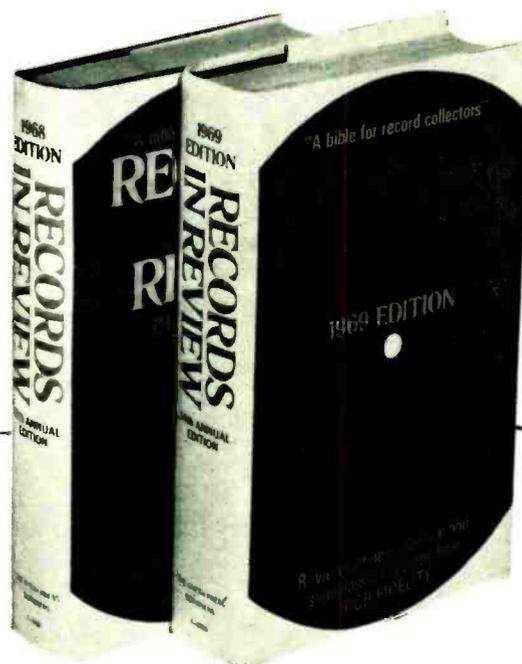
**THE DELLS: Greatest Hits.** Cadet LPS 824, \$4.98. The Dells are a popular r & b vocal quintet from Chicago. Their thing is Fifties-style r & b with a touch of soul, sort of the Temptations Sing the Five Satins Songbook. J.G.

**HARVARD LAMPOON: The Surprising Sheep and Other Mind Excursions.** Epic BN 26462, \$4.98. The boys at the *Harvard Lampoon* have inevitably decided to take advantage of the media revolution, but most of their satire doesn't make it. As prose parodists these chaps may be kings, but on record they're strictly Cerfs. J.G.

**KEEF HARTLEY BAND: Halfbreed.** Deram DES 18024, \$4.98. If you think you can stand another album of British blues, the Keef Hartley Band is pretty solid. Personally I'll have another round of *Yummy Yummy Yummy*. J.G.

**CHER: 3614 Jackson Highway.** Atco SD 33-298, \$4.98. The recent penchant for enshrining studios continues (the title here is the address of the studio in Muscle Shoals where the album was cut) with this strange collection of contemporary hits sung by Sonny's wife, Cher. This is a really uninspired and uninspiring set. J.G.

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# the tape BY R.D. DARRELL deck

**New (Cassette) Bottles for Old (Musical) Wine.** Significant growth of a serious, "classical" music cassette repertory has been handicapped less by the technical immaturities of the ultraslow-speed medium than by the nature of the present cassette market. The majority of equipment purchasers are teen-agers, who strongly favor battery-operated models—machines designed primarily for amateur recording rather than the playback of commercially recorded tapings. Inevitably, then, the production and sales of recorded cassettes have been dominated by less sonically demanding pop, show, and mood music programs, while the more serious repertories have been restricted to mass-public musical favorites already established as best-sellers in their disc editions.

The impending entry of Columbia and RCA into the cassette field is unlikely to change the picture drastically. Review copies of their first releases have not yet reached me as I write, but the advance listings contain no surprises for connoisseur listeners.

Nevertheless, there are two promising new developments: one is the appearance of Philips classical cassettes imported directly from France (giving the earlier DGG importations their first substantial competition); the other is the expansion of Capitol/Angel cassette activities to include not only a wider range of serious musical materials, but also the first examples—in this country, at least—of double-play releases.

**Vive la France!** The gigantic European Philips combine was, of course, the original creator (with a bow to the premature RCA tape cartridge of 1958) and promoter of the cassette format. In the last few years French Philips has been building up a particularly impressive catalogue of both standard and off-beat classical cassettes—in addition, of course, to the usual floods of lighter materials. A comprehensive selection from that catalogue is now being imported and distributed in this country by the Record & Tape Sales Corporation, 821 Broadway, New York City 10003, to which I am indebted for a batch of review samples rich in musical treasures. These imported cassettes boast deluxe packaging (with liner notes in French only) and are priced by the distributor at \$6.98 each—competitive with both the DGG cassettes and those momentarily expected from Columbia and RCA. Technically, they strike me as consistent with the European standards set by the DGG cassettes—a shade less wide in

frequency and dynamic range than the very best American cassette processings, but more than satisfactory to listeners primarily interested in the music offered here.

I've sampled five of the first French Philips importations, all of them not currently available in either disc or other tape editions in this country. "*La Flute à Versailles* (9103) features three tape firsts: flute concertos by François Devienne (1759-1803), Jean-Jacques Naudot (? -1762), and Jacques—not brother Jean-Baptiste—Loeillet (1685-1746). The first work in particular, Devienne's Second Flute Concerto, is a prize discovery; but the others boast light charms and all three are played to perfection by Jean-Pierre Rampal with the Antiqua Musica Orchestra under Jacques Roussel. Another release (9125) will fascinate Handelian specialists for its startling re-creation of what must have been a concert performance typical of the composer's own time—complete with a roaring organ dominating the orchestral tutti. Here the *Royal Fireworks Music*, Hallelujah Chorus from the *Messiah*, and a Suite in F assembled from five *Water Music* and concerto grosso movements feature Pierre Cochereau at the Notre Dame Cathedral organ with a "Wind and Fanfare" Ensemble under Armand Birbaum. Stylistically, the results are questionable at best, but the sonics themselves (with a reverberation period of nearly five seconds) must rank among the most formidable to be encountered in any recorded medium.

A third release (9111) provides the first tape edition of Bach's *Christmas Cantata No. 142*. "*Uns ist ein Kind geboren*," in an infectiously spirited performance by the Pro Arte Chorus and Orchestra under Kurt Redel, coupled with an earnest but somewhat less effective version of the Bach *Magnificat*. Also representing the baroque era is the familiar Vivaldi *Gloria* coupled with the first tape edition of the same composer's less distinctive *Salve Regina* in vigorous if rather jerky performances by Agnes Giebel and Marga Höffgen with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Teatro la Fenice, Venice under Vittorio Negri. And finally, from the Romantic era, there is a set of fourteen Chopin Waltzes (18100) in bravura albeit rather excessively mannered readings by György Cziffra.

Among several notable French Philips cassette editions of recordings that are available on domestic discs (but not otherwise on tape), I especially recommend the Mozart *Sinfonia Concertante*,

in E flat, K. 364. This performance, starring violinist Arthur Grumiaux and violist Arrigo Pelliccia with the London Symphony under Colin Davis (18009), is to my mind not only the best taping of the work but one of the best versions in any medium. Grumiaux and Davis do not achieve quite the same results with the coupled Violin Concerto No. 5, in A, K. 219. However, the reel does bring this so-called *Turkish Concerto* to the tape catalogues for the first time.

**And Now, Double-Play Cassettes.** Angel's mushrooming classical cassette activity continues with the appearances of the label's first double-play releases; the equivalent of two double-sided disc programs with a list price of \$8.98 each. Probably somewhat thinner tape is used here; if so, I wasn't able to detect any audible evidence of pre-echo, or indeed any constriction in the pace-setting frequency and dynamic range characteristics of earlier single-play Angel/Capitol cassettes.

Particularly appealing is a dual "Close-Up" program (4X2S 3749) starring the extraordinary young cellist Jacqueline du Pré (in the "Boccherini" Concerto in B flat and Saint-Saëns' *Cygne*) and her versatile pianist/conductor husband Daniel Barenboim (in the Beethoven *Appassionata* Sonata and the Mozart Piano Concerto No. 21, in C, K. 467).

Two other "Close-Up" programs are devoted to conductor Sir John Barbiroli (4X2S 3750) and the late lamented tenor Fritz Wunderlich (4X2S 3751). The former includes a wide selection of Sir John's specialties: two Elgar *Pomp and Circumstance* Marches; the Prelude to Delius' *Irmlin*; Vaughan Williams' *Greensleeves*; Tchaikovsky's String Serenade in C; Sibelius' *Finlandia* and *Valse triste*; and the J. Strauss, II *Gypsy Baron* Overture, *Blue Danube* Waltz, *Perpetual Motion*, and *Champagne* Polka—variously recorded with the Philharmonia, London Symphony, Sinfonia of London, and Hallé Orchestras. The Wunderlich memorial survey combines a Viennese operetta program (previously noted in this column in its 8-track cartridge and single-play cassette editions) with a hitherto untaped opera program including favorite arias from *Don Giovanni*, *Xerxes*, *Die fliegende Holländer*, *L'Elisir d'amore*, *Manon*, *Mignon*, *Martha*, *Zar und Zimmermann*, and *Die lustige Witwe*. It's a little odd to hear the Italian and French arias sung in German—but Wunderlich's superb vocal appeal surely would have been irresistible had he sung in Choctaw or Chinese!

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