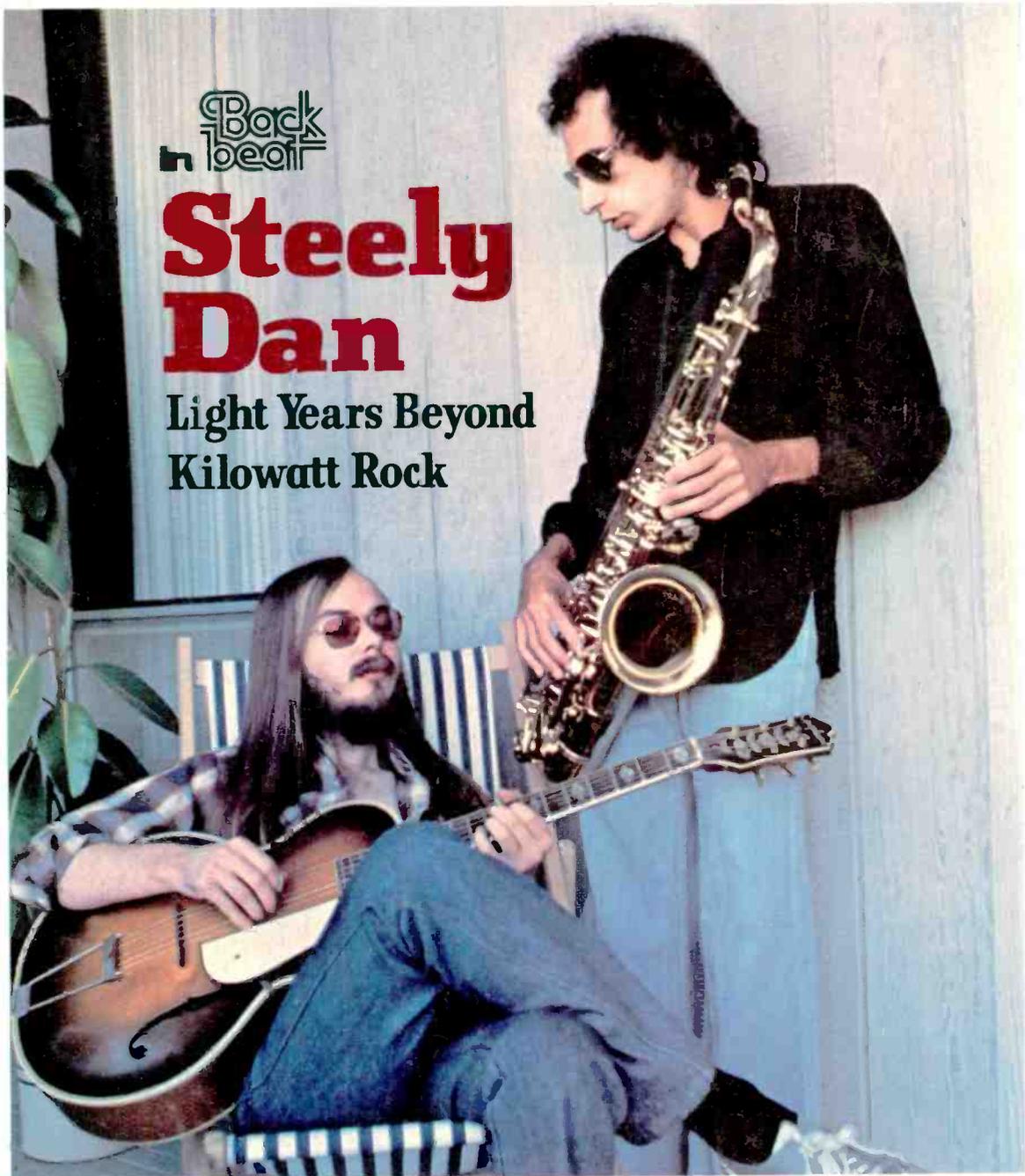


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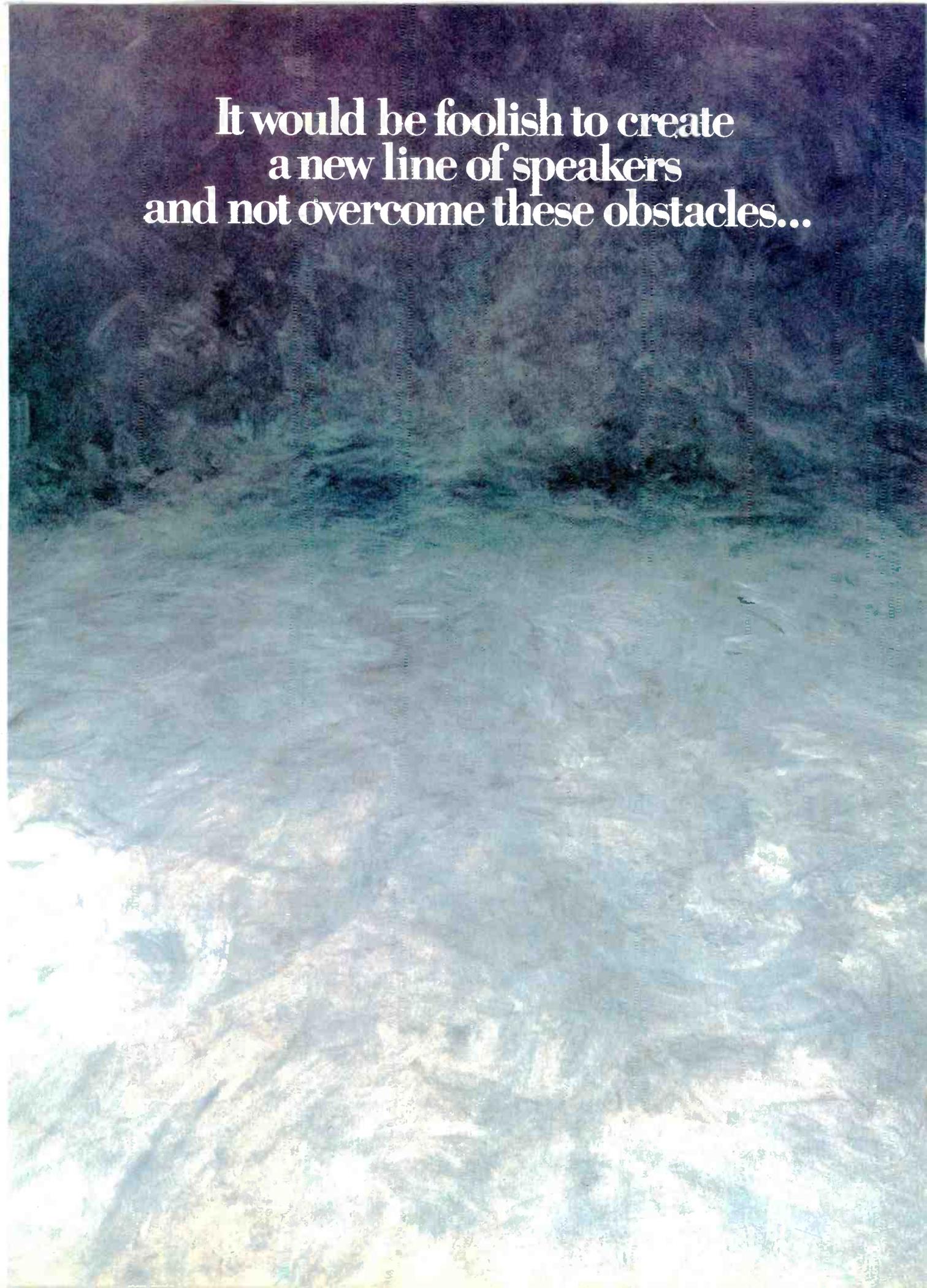
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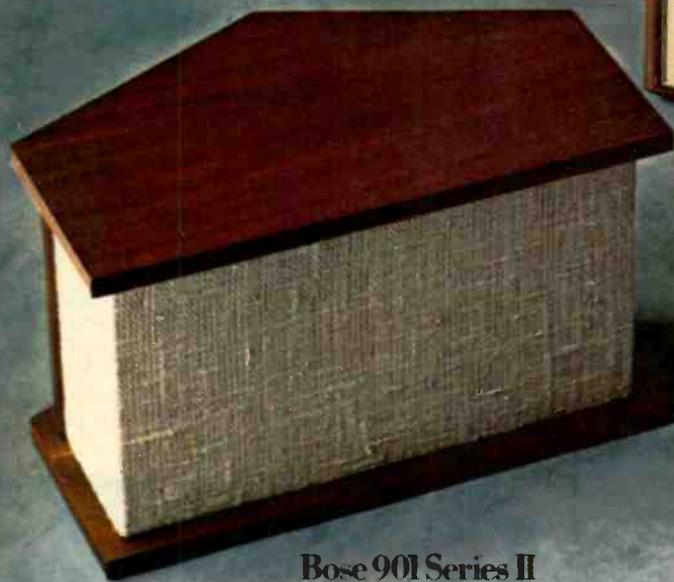


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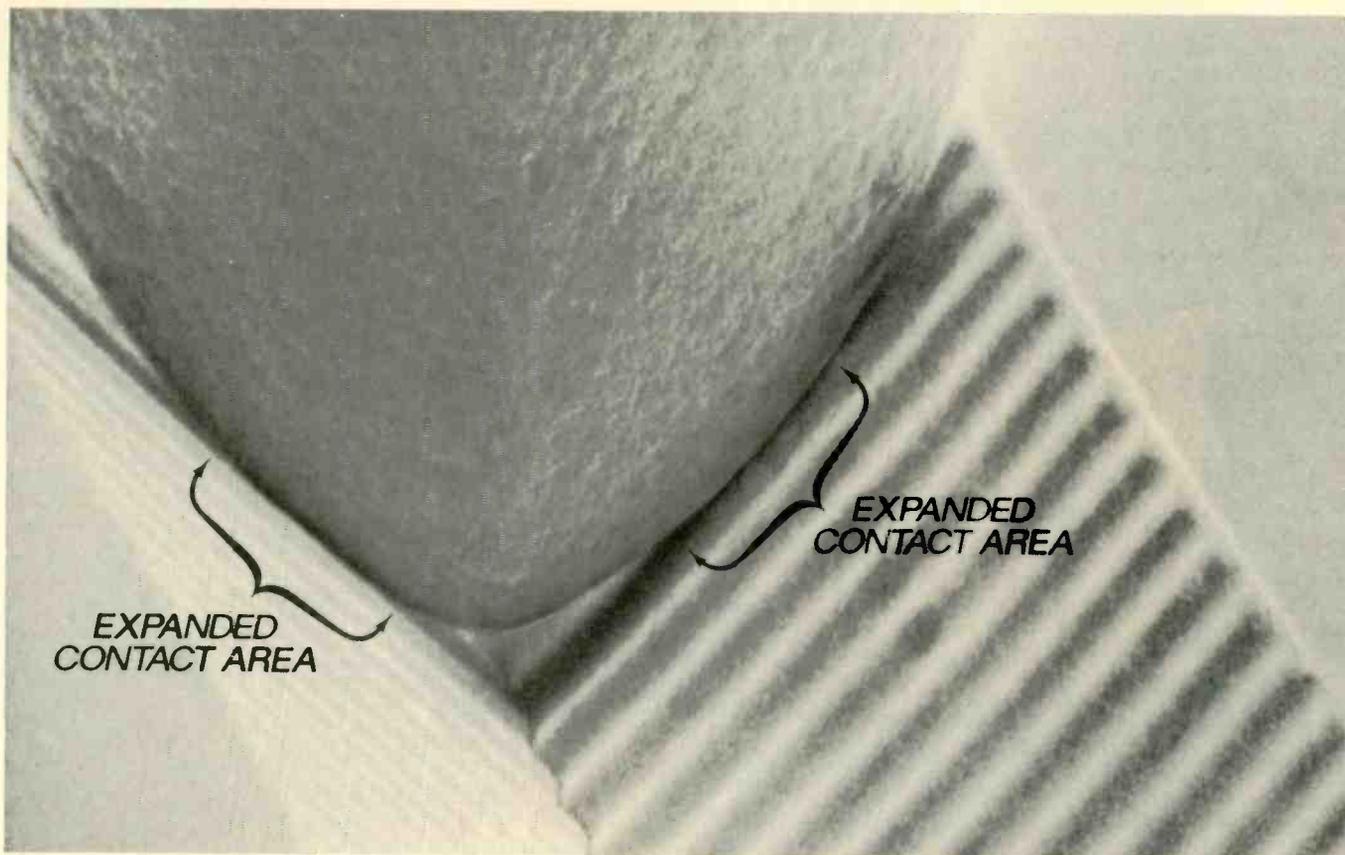


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Scanning Electron Beam Microscope photo of Stereohedron Stylus; 2000 times magnification. Brackets point out wider contact area.

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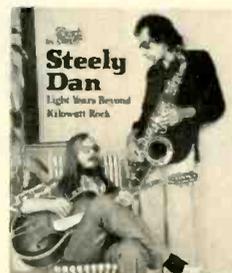
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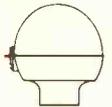
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HF's seasonal gift to you, dear reader, will be **THE BEST OF 1977**—that is, a special issue devoted to the phenomenon of excellence as manifested on the recording scene over the past year. We disclose the winners of the **Tenth Annual HF/International Record Critics Awards**; Editor Leonard Marcus, presiding at this year's sessions held for the first time under the auspices of the Berlin Festival, relates how the voting went. Harold A. Rodgers examines the proliferation of **Audiophile Discs**—direct-cut and other limited-edition, high-ticket records—and assesses both the promise they hold and the risks they may entail for the average consumer. In addition, Edward J. Foster offers aid in **Sorting Out Amplifier Specifications**; **BACKBEAT** delves into **Dolly Parton's Music**, **How Yes Plugged In at Madison Square Garden**, and **What Makes Arp Run**; Gene Lees and John Culshaw continue their celebrations and celebrations; plus laboratory test reports, and much more.

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Letters

Queler vs. Harris

It is somewhat poor taste, in my judgment, for a conductor and a music critic to engage in such a vicious verbal battle as that in your "Letters" section [August] between Eve Queler and Dale Harris about the former's recording of Massenet's *Le Cid*. Although there are probably merits on each side, I believe that it is a disservice to exhibit such feelings in print. Goodness knows that there is enough strife in this world without artists and critics slugging it out so in your enjoyable publication.

Richard Sight
Shawnee Mission, Kan.

The exchange of views between Queler and Harris illustrates the problem in recording operas: How does a company produce a recording of an opera that is complete and "alive" as well?

Record companies should note prominently on the cover of an opera recording what cuts, if any, have been made and what version has been used. This is only fair and just. But achieving an "alive" performance is more difficult, as Kenneth Furie points out in his review of James Levine's *La Forza del destino* and *Andrea Chenier* recordings in the same issue. Most integral recordings seem pervaded with dullness. At least Queler's performance of *Le Cid* is not dull, even if it is not complete.

I hope there is a solution, though I doubt it. Must the public always be forced to supplement a dull, complete studio recording with an "alive," incomplete pirated recording?

Jerome A. Margala
New Springfield, Ohio

Dale Harris' reply to Eve Queler's letter about his review of *Le Cid* was simply galling. To claim that the fact that the tenor sings along with the chorus and soprano means that the conductor has rewritten the score is simply mad—and it is maddening as well. Doesn't everyone know about tenors and their ways? Doesn't Harris know that Domingo is one of the world's leading tenors and that Queler is not quite as important in the opera world? I imagine Massenet, with all of his experience in the theater, would hardly have been surprised or offended by such a minor display of egotism from a splendid tenor. Indeed, I imagine he would not have minded the cut of 637 bars (to think that Harris sat there with his piano-vocal score counting them!) since, as Queler notes, it adds up to ten minutes or less of questionable music.

Queler seems to have a genuine understanding of and feeling for Massenet's music, and I look forward to hearing more of his music under her direction. I hope, as

well, to never hear of Dale Harris again.

Roger Horn
Clarion, Pa.

Let me register a vote of confidence for Eve Queler and her efforts to make available, both in the concert hall and on records, some of the neglected masterpieces of opera!

I am disturbed by reviews like Dale Harris' of the recent recording by Columbia (thank you, Columbia!) of *Le Cid*, because in his zealous efforts to identify what he considers to be imperfections he overlooks the far more important fact that we are at least able to hear this interesting and very enjoyable music.

Robert W. Upshaw
Simsbury, Conn.

Furie vs. Solti

Kenneth Furie is to be congratulated for his very perceptive reviews of recent operatic releases. Of particular note were his views concerning the recent *Flying Dutchman* conducted by Georg Solti [August], which reinforced his "suspicion that the success of [Solti's] other recorded Wagner interpretations owes more to the orchestra . . . than to him." Along with a growing number of other listeners with musical training, I have long felt that Solti is an inferior conductor vaulted to stardom not only by his superior orchestra, but also by the expert sound technicians and publicity organization of London Records. It is most gratifying to see that views consistent with my own position are beginning to appear in print.

Lawrence S. King
New York, N.Y.

The hatchet job on Solti's *Flying Dutchman* recording is your most unaccountable review since H. C. Robbins Landon did one on Eugen Jochum's *Missa Solemnis* back in 1973. (And that recording metamorphosed into one of HF's "Record Riches of a Quarter-Century" [April 1976]!)

The unaccountable part is Furie's unbelievably nasty tone. He seems to have developed an intensely personal animosity for the Chicago Symphony and everyone associated with it. Just why is not clear—though there may be a hint in his sweet remarks about the Boston Symphony. Whatever his reasons, bile is not criticism.

Sandor Garraty
Louisville, Ky.

I am both amazed and outraged by Kenneth Furie's vicious attack on Solti's magnificent new *Dutchman*. Although he can find "nothing to recommend it," I certainly can: The huge presence of the orchestra is thrilling; Norman Bailey's soliloquy is one of the most moving I have ever heard on disc; in Senta's Ballad Janis Martin is touchingly beautiful; and the Sailors' Chorus is pure delight! Indeed, Solti's is the most sonorous and exciting recording of this opera I have ever heard.

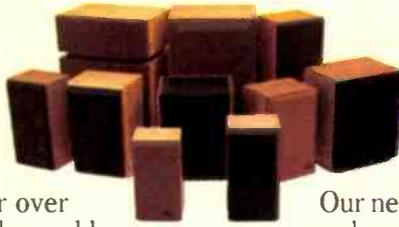
Jose Olivarez
Wichita, Kan.

Mr. Furie replies: I've had my say on the *Dutchman* recording, so let me just set the

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record straight on one count. Mr. Garraty's assumption of some animosity toward "the Chicago Symphony and everyone associated with it" is based on nothing I have ever written or said. (Indeed in the Dutchman review I referred to "the splendid Chicago Symphony Chorus.") My comments were confined to this performance, which I found unsatisfactory for the specific reasons stated.

More Audio Courses

I found Stephen Traiman's article "Careers in Audio: Choosing a Course" [July] to be quite informative. You may be interested in knowing that the Ohio State University has a similar comprehensive audio curriculum leading to a baccalaureate degree. This program is interdisciplinary between the School of Music and the Department of Electrical Engineering and emphasizes the theoretical as well as practical aspects of recording.

Robert Y. Hare
Director, School of Music
Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio 43210

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Mux R. Knittel
Western Washington State College
Bellingham, Wash. 98225

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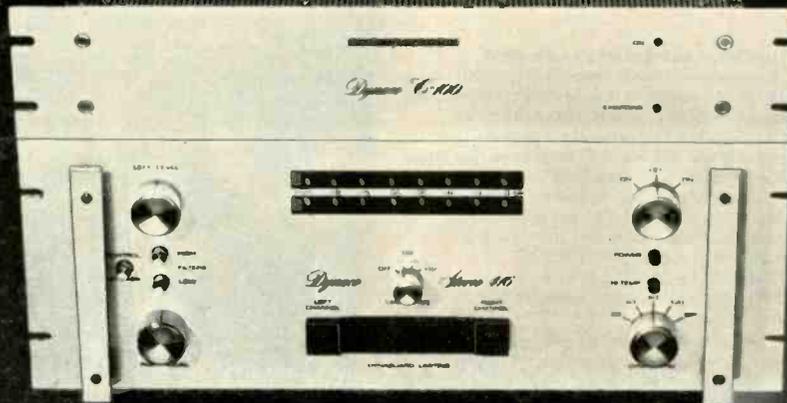
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Copyright and Home Recording

After we went to press with our September issue, in which we published a letter from Don E. Ballard asserting that the authors of the new copyright law intended "no restriction of the traditional freedom of the hobbyist," we received the following letter from Leonard Feist, who wrote the article that elicited Mr. Ballard's comment.

Mr. Ballard is mistaken in his belief that the authors of the new copyright law intended that it not be applicable to the general pub-

"The Big Bands": Sorting It Out

Gremlins went to work on Gene Lees's column about "The Big Bands" in our September issue, and the result was some inchoate scrambling of his quite coherent argument. We apologize to him and to any reader who encountered the virtual roadblock imposed by the jumble.

To straighten things out, we take up what Lees wrote at the opening of the third paragraph, which should have read: "But by the Twenties, bands were sitting down. Benny Carter, one of the most gifted soloists, composers, and arrangers of the period, recalled recently that when he played in the Charlie Johnston band it comprised three trumpets, two trombones, three saxophones (two altos and a tenor), and four rhythm instruments, including the tuba functioning as bass. Not until the bands forgot their ambulatory origins did the string bass, a more flexible and pulsating instrument, become the rhythmic and harmonic footing on which all bands since have built their walls of sound."

And in the following paragraph, the fourth sentence should have read: "The qualification of 'explicit rhythm' (Henry Pleasants' term) will not suffice, since it is present in many other forms of music, including the Brazilian samba, which is not jazz even though it shares its ancestry and interacts with jazz readily."

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lic. The thrust of copyright remains as it has always been: applicable to all who use protected works whether commercially for profit or privately for pleasure. The public is subject to all its provisions unless specifically exempted. I had hoped that my article had made that clear.

Apparently some have seized upon one section in the report of the House Judiciary Committee on the antipiracy law of 1971 as a basis for their belief that "hobbyists" can make copies of recordings for their own use without violating the law. That section says, in part, "it is not the intention of the Committee to restrain the home recording, from broadcasts or from tapes or records, of recorded performances, where the home recording is for private use and with no

purpose of reproducing or otherwise capitalizing commercially on it." There have been no "judicial interpretations" of the antipiracy law, itself an amendment of the Copyright Act of 1909, as it relates to home recording or of what effect is to be accorded the House report in view of the other provisions regarding the exclusive rights of copyright owners.

In any case, in October 1976 a completely revised copyright law that supersedes the 1909 law was signed by President Ford. The antipiracy amendment has been picked up in the new law but—and this is the crux of the situation—there is nothing in the text of the law or in any of the accompanying reports that makes mention of an exemption for home recording. There is no section

relative to home recording in any report on the 1976 General Revision, and thus that commentary is obsolete. In the absence of a specific provision, there can be no support whatsoever for a contention that home recording is legal.

The law lists the exclusive rights, including the right of reproduction, and then exemptions are detailed. In the entire list of exceptions there are only two relating to recordings. The first, Section 115, is the compulsory license for making and distributing phonorecords. The only one that is relevant to this discussion is Section 114(b), which concerns the right of reproduction in connection with recordings included in educational television and radio programs distributed by or through public broadcasting entities.

Nor can those who might share Mr. Ballard's opinion take comfort from the "fair use" provisions of the 1976 law. The four criteria for determining if reproduction of phonorecords is an infringement include the "effect of the use upon the potential market or value of the copyrighted work" as well as "the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole." Thus, "fair use" provisions give not even a vague sanction to home recording and, in fact, would seem to prohibit it, both as to the copyrighted music on the recording and to recordings themselves if made after February 15, 1972.

Leonard Feist
President
National Music Publishers Assn.
New York, N.Y.

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Ax to Grind?

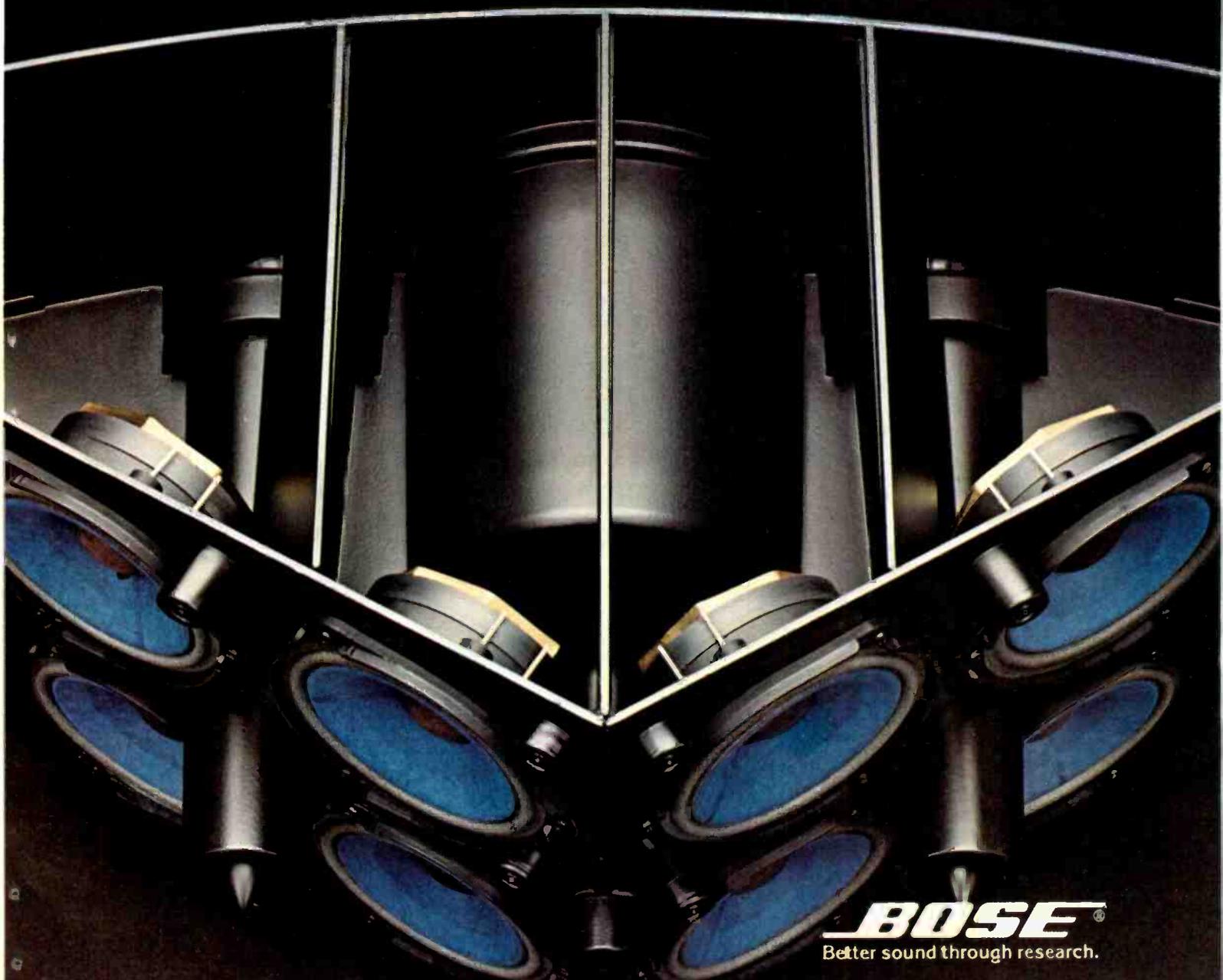
In his critique of a recording of the Beethoven *Waldstein* Piano Sonata [June], Harris Goldsmith accuses Emanuel Ax of "a careless misreading in the left hand at bar 104 of the first movement." The Ricordi edition of the Beethoven sonatas discusses this chord at great length and notes that Czerny suggested that possibly Beethoven himself considered changing it after sonata's publication in 1805. It is hard to believe that a pianist of Ax's stature would "carelessly misread" this chord; surely he would play it this way only after careful consideration. I think Mr. Goldsmith owes him an apology.

Mrs. Marvin Taxman
Omaha, Neb.

Mr. Goldsmith replies: The variant in question is unmentioned in the Henle urtext, the original Schenker (reprinted by Dover), the revised Schenker-Ratz (*Wiener Urtext*, Universal), and the Schnabel (Simon and Schuster)—beyond all doubt the most reliable and respected texts available of the Beethoven piano sonatas. My curiosity was aroused, however, and I decided to check the point. The editor of the Ricordi text, Alfredo Casella, does indeed give the cited (mis)reading—without explanation—as a marginal note, along with myriad suggestions on how to simplify or fake other details. Krebs says in his footnote to the Kalmus urtext that, while there was no sanction to print the A flat in the text, some players might want to opt for it on Czerny's say-so. However, Von Bülow, editor of the

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Good as it is, a traditional servo system has two flaws. When playing a record for a long time, it heats up and you're continually forced to correct for speed drift.



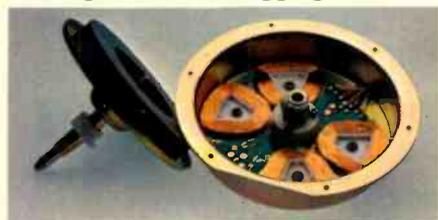
More critically, increased friction between the stylus and record during loud passages can slow down the speed. It will then fall into a range wherein a conventional servo isn't sensitive enough to read. But your ear can.

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All this, so while you're vibrating to the record, your turntable isn't.

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CIRCLE 57 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

old Schirmer edition, calls the variant "wholly unauthorized" and adds that "this chord of the sixth would sound very weak and flat."

That Beethoven sometimes made changes in his compositions is well known. The change in dynamics at bars 321 et seq. in the Waldstein's third movement is a case in point. So is the change from F flat (in the manuscript) to F natural (in the first printed edition) in the first movement's bar 100—the very next measure, incidentally, to the one under discussion. In such cases performers may accept whichever version they prefer.*

Not so in this instance. Czerny's alleged conjecture that Beethoven may have wanted to make the change doesn't hold

water. He could have made the change and didn't. Nor should the fact that Czerny was Beethoven's contemporary be allowed to lend authority to his transgressions. Another contemporary saw fit to publish the first edition of the G major Sonata, Op. 31, No. 1, with two spurious, meretricious measures that the composer later repudiated. There has never been a shortage of small minds who arrogantly seek to "improve" the work of a genius.

No apology is in order. A careless misreading of a single note is an unwitting oversight, far more forgivable than an apparently intentional attempt to revive and perpetuate a long-discredited editorial gaffe.

Ciani on Records

After reading the letter on pianist Dino Ciani from Henry Schultz [July], I am moved to write to request more of his recordings in this country. Several Deutsche Grammophon discs, including some fine Debussy, are readily available in Europe.

I was overwhelmed by Ciani's artistry. In 1973, I heard his recital at the Maggio Musicale in Florence and his technique and depth of feeling were unforgettable.

William Knorp
Sausalito, Calif.

Sibelius' Legends

In his perceptive review of Sibelius' *Four Legends*, Op. 22 [July], Abram Chipman remarks that Okko Kamu "seems to be the first conductor to record the *Legends* in the order of publication." At least one previous recording does so: Melodiya D 04726/7. Dating from the early 1950s, this account is conducted by Tauno Hannikainen, whose *Karelia Suite* is given enthusiastic mention in Mr. Chipman's review.

For my money, the Hannikainen recording of the *Legends* is the best (despite the tubby sound) and worth scouring the import shops for.

Dean H. Streit
New York, N.Y.

Matrix H

Not everyone shares American apathy regarding quad sound: It seems our British friends are fighting to keep the medium alive. This is evident in the recent tests run by the BBC of its new Matrix H quad-encoding system. I'm fortunate to have heard some of them.

Essentially, Matrix H is similar to QS in concept. The difference is a 60-degree phase shift in the right channels. A simple converter device is available in the U.K. to provide this shift and thus decode Matrix H correctly when using QS equipment. The difference, however, is minimal.

The tests featured programs of classical, jazz, and pop music, as well as spoken drama. The sound was consistently clean, with excellent separation. The BBC's engineers did a fine job of mixing and encoding.

Records in Matrix H are in the offing as well. The BBC's own record division plans some quad releases in this system, and other British record companies are likely to follow suit. Perhaps some American companies will also. Time will tell.

Jay L. Rudko
Elmendorf AFB, Alaska

Vittorio Weinberg

I enjoyed Andrew Porter's review of *Madama Butterfly* with Margaret Sheridan [May]. I may be able to contribute some information on Vittorio Weinberg, who sings Sharpless, that Mr. Porter is not aware of.

Weinberg must have had a varied career prior to the time that I knew the gentleman, but his career in the U.S. was limited, so far as I know, to the San Francisco Bay area. I met him in the late '40s and early '50s per-

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forming with the Pacific Grand Opera Company under the aegis of Arturo Casiglia, an impresario who toured the northern counties of California. Occasionally Casiglia gave a season at the San Francisco Opera House, where I recall Weinberg singing Marcello in *La Bohème*. He no doubt did some other roles with whatever company was operating at the time—the Pacific Grand, Dollar Opera, or Cosmopolitan Opera, all companies formed, managed, or conducted by Casiglia. Weinberg also was the cantor and director of music for one of the large synagogues in San Francisco for a number of years and taught voice at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music for a while. He had a very beautiful baritone voice and was a good, if rather provincial, operatic actor.

Edward R. Schembs
New York, N.Y.

Portamento

I was delighted to read Andrew Porter's intrepid defense of string portamento in his review of the reissued Sabajno *Madama Butterfly* [May]. String players and conductors have learned to avoid this technique, just as most critics (those arbiters of public aesthetic opinion) have learned to scorn it as both anachronistic and symptomatic of tasteless sentimentality.

As Mr. Porter intimates, however, use of portamento, which did not die out until after World War II, can be heard in recorded performances in increasing amounts as one goes back in time and the date of the recording approaches the turn of the century. It is used in abundance not only in prewar recordings made by those players whose technique was rooted in and reflective of late nineteenth-century performing traditions (e.g., Kreisler, Thibaud, Marie Hall, Casals) and those conductors whose early careers were closely associated with composers of that period (e.g., Nikisch, Walter, Toscanini, Mengelberg, Kajanus, Beecham), but also in recordings made by those composers whose periods of creativity began in the nineteenth century but who lived long enough to commit performances of their own music to disc well into the electrical era (e.g., Richard Strauss, Mascagni, Elgar, Rachmaninoff). From all of this, it would seem apparent that the late Romantic composers conceived of their music as being performed and interpreted with portamento interpolated into the string parts. To rob such music of this device in present-day performances is to deprive the score of an important stylistic element.

George A. Locke
San Francisco, Calif.

Welcome Changes

I just wanted to let you know that BACK-BEAT is a welcome addition to HIGH FIDELITY. I enjoy the "business" articles and the equipment reviews especially.

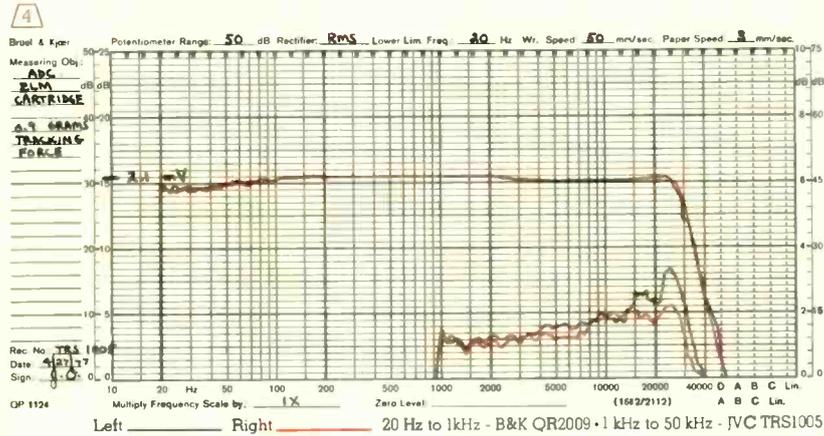
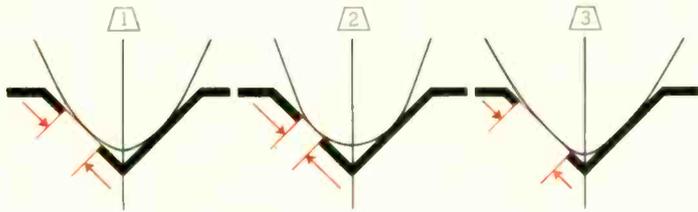
I also appreciate your return to the present binding method. This puts the MUSICAL AMERICA section into one compact place: the old divided format was a bit of a nuisance.

Glenn W. Harris
Falls Church, Va.

CIRCLE 2 ON READER-SERVICE CARD →

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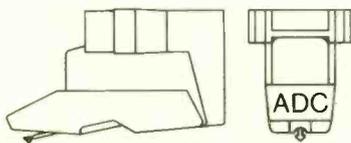
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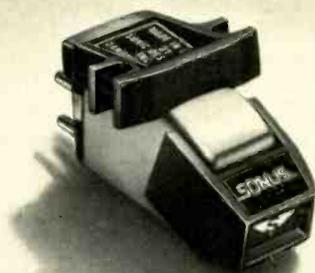


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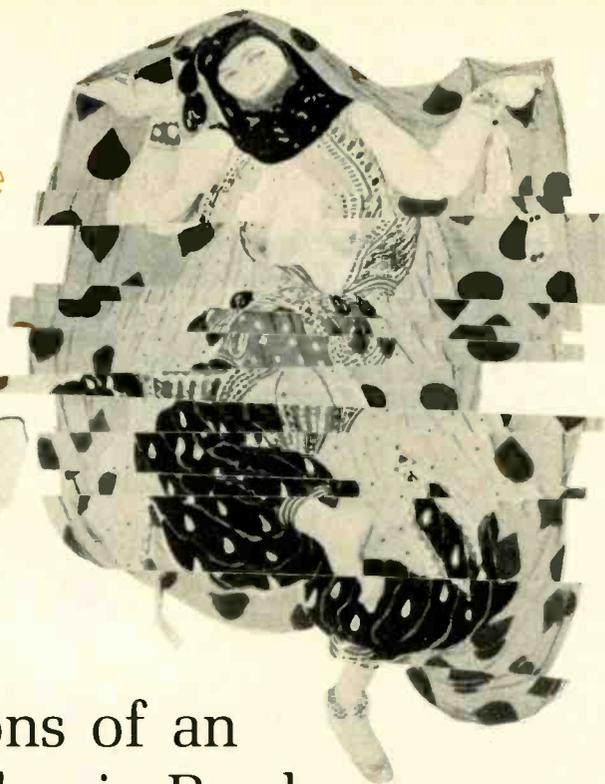
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Confessions of an Allergic Producer

by John Culshaw

LONDON—I have been reading some dreadful reports about what can happen to those whose profession requires them to listen to high-decibel pop music for long periods. It seems that many of them go deaf before they are twenty-five, which is at least two years before the anticipated retirement age in that particular world. To the best of my knowledge no such affliction comes upon classical-music producers, if only because most of them are aware of Culshaw's First Principle of Recorded Sound, which states that *anything*, no matter how bad, will sound good if played back at a very high level for a short time. Thus classical producers tend to play back at an optimum level, high enough to drive the speakers efficiently but not so high as to sever the faculty of aural judgment.

Yet classical producers are not immune to other, horribly insidious maladies. In my very early days I produced a 78-rpm version of Bach's cello suites played by Enrico Mainardi that, at the outset, seemed like a very enjoyable project because the suites are marvelous and Mainardi was an enchanting man. But by the end of the second of six days I was going quietly insane during out-of-session hours by the sound of another cello playing incessantly in my head. Moreover, it was not playing Bach, but some mad, endless invention of its own that noth-

ing would dispel until Mainardi picked up his cello and started the next suite. That, at least, was a temporary affliction; but there are much worse things, like allergies, which the classical producer can easily develop.

Shortly after the Mainardi incident British Decca began to cut its first LPs. Since it had not yet acquired a tape machine, the method used was to dub directly from 78s, which meant lining up a row of turntables so that the end of one 78 side could be made, with luck, to dovetail with the start of the next. It was a perilous process, for if I gave a wrong cue or the operator whose job it was to "drop" the next pickup was a fraction early or late, or if the pickup skipped a groove or one turntable was even marginally different in speed from its predecessor (or about one thousand other things, now that I am thinking about those dreadful days again), there was nothing to do but go back to the start. And at the end of it all you had only produced one 33-rpm lacquer, whereas the factory always required at least two, so even after a successful run you had to do the thing all over again. I reckon that I heard Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scherzade* and Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* more times in six weeks than anyone else has heard them in a lifetime, and I have been allergic to

Continued on page 69

CIRCLE 63 ON READER-SERVICE CARD →

Last year, Technics gave you everything you wanted in direct drive. This year we're giving you less.

Introducing three new Technics turntables: The SL-1600 automatic, the SL-1700 semi-automatic and the SL-1800 manual. All with the Technics direct-drive system. The system FM stations use and discos abuse. And all with performance specs even better than last year's.

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This year we did more to give you less acoustic feedback. With Technics double-isolated suspension system. A floating system that not only damps out external vibrations at the base but also from the platter and tonearm. Combined with our new sensitive gimbal-suspension tonearm, it dramatically reduces feedback. Even at high music levels.

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For Less Money.

Even with features like oil-damped cueing. A computer-analyzed S-shaped universal tonearm with anti-skate control. Pitch controls variable by 10%. And detachable dust cover. Technics turntables cost less this year than last.

Technics. We're giving you less. And that means you're getting more.

Technics

by Panasonic



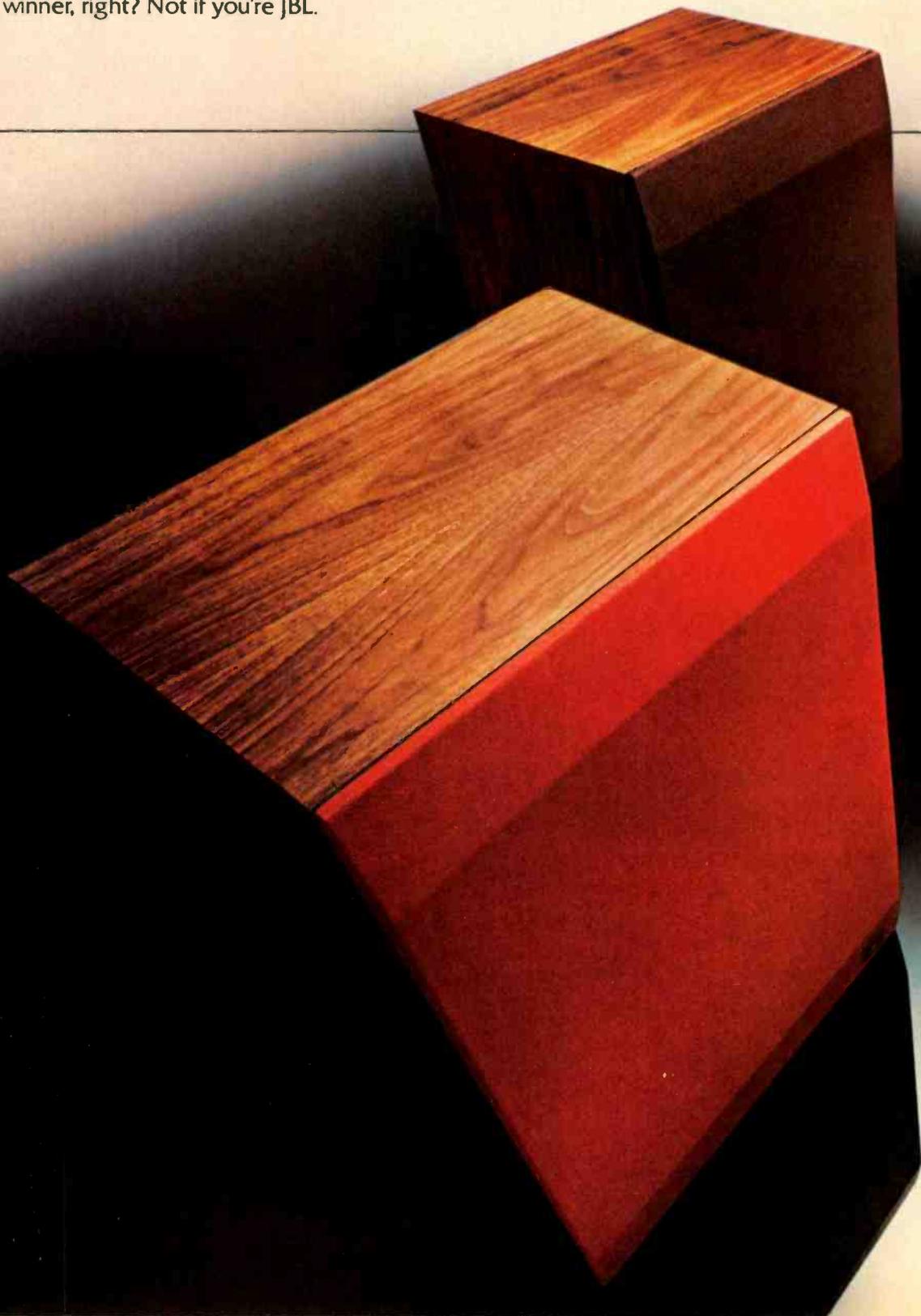
THE LOUDSPEAKER WITH A TOUGH ACT TO FOLLOW: JBL'S NEW L40.

For the past 2½ years, we've been making a two-way bookshelf loudspeaker called the L26. The critics loved it. The dealers loved it. The customers loved it. 250,000 times to be exact.

The smart thing to do would've been to just keep cranking out those L26's for the next hundred years. Never change a winner, right? Not if you're JBL.

Meet JBL's brand new L40. It's the best \$200 two-way loudspeaker you can buy. Here's why:

The L40 has tremendous power handling capability. Don't let its size fool you. It'll play right up there with loudspeakers twice its size.



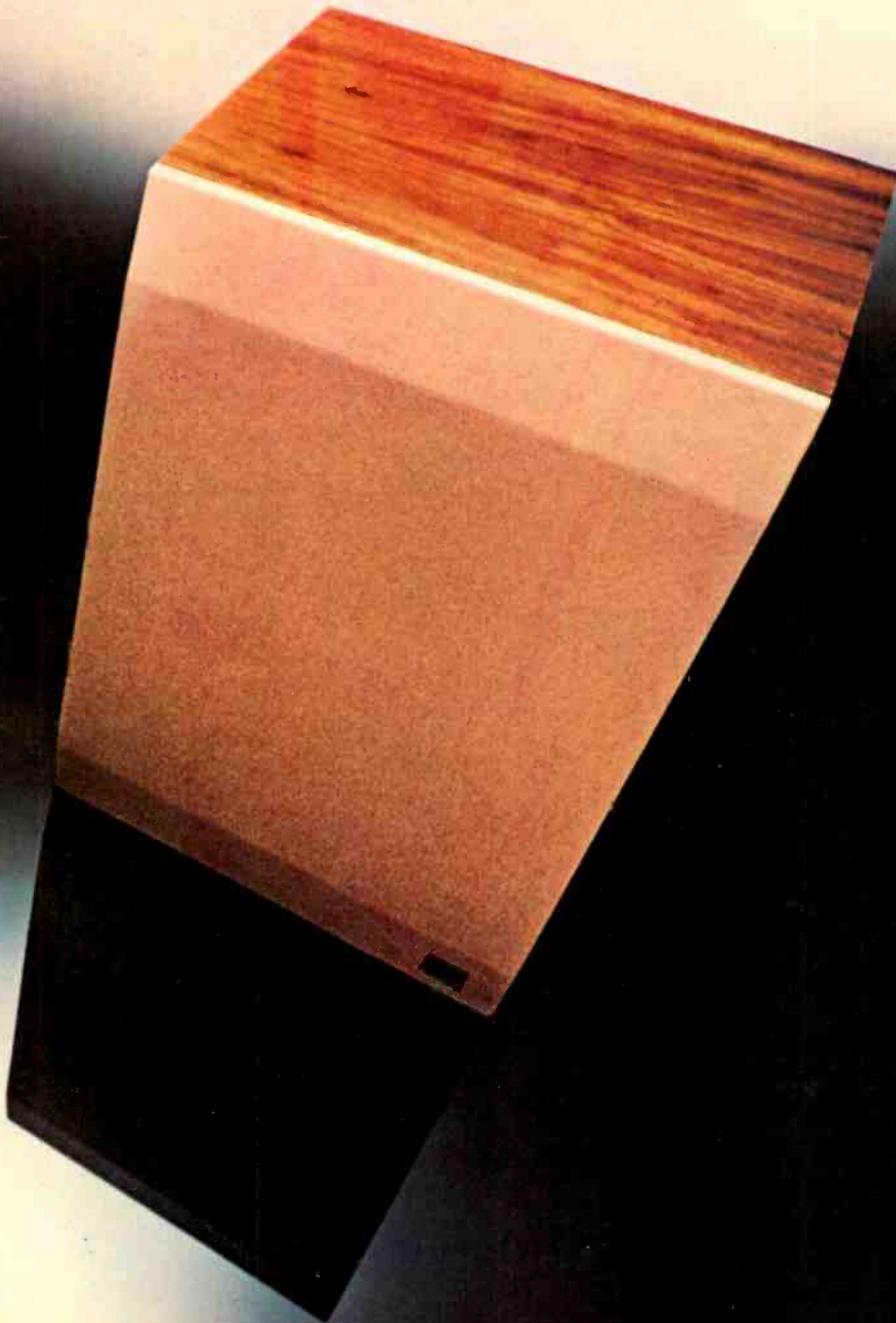
Every sound is clean and clear. Listen to the snap of a rimshot, the crash of a cymbal. Pure. Accurate. Perfectly defined. (If you'd like the technical information on the L40, write us and we'll send you an engineering staff report. Nothing fancy except the specs.)

Go listen to the L40. And ask for it by its first name: JBL. You'll be getting the same craftsmanship, the same components, the same sound heard in the very top recording studios in the world.

If you've been thinking about getting into high performance high fidelity, we know a great place to start: JBL's new L40. It's a whole lot of JBL for not a whole lot of money.



Ranked by the number of Top Fifty albums they produced last year, seven of the ten leading recording studios in the world used JBL to record or mix their music. They used our sound to make theirs. Source: Recording Institute of America.



GET IT ALL.

Unique counterbalance contains two mechanical anti-resonance filters which are specially tuned to absorb parasitic resonances originating in the tonearm/cartridge system and chassis.

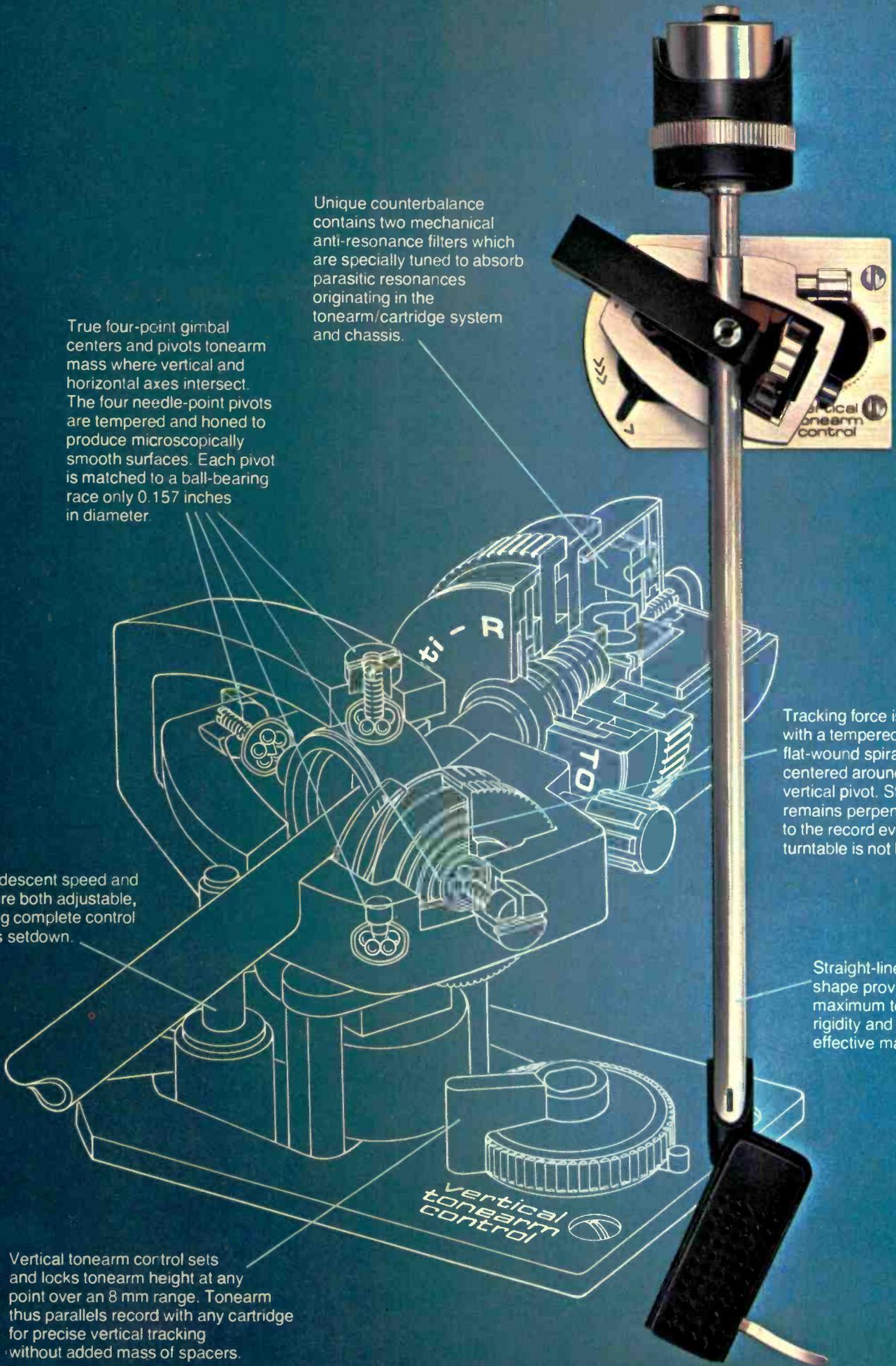
True four-point gimbals centers and pivots tonearm mass where vertical and horizontal axes intersect. The four needle-point pivots are tempered and honed to produce microscopically smooth surfaces. Each pivot is matched to a ball-bearing race only 0.157 inches in diameter.

Cueing descent speed and height are both adjustable, providing complete control of stylus setdown.

Tracking force is applied with a tempered, flat-wound spiral spring, centered around the vertical pivot. Stylus force remains perpendicular to the record even if the turntable is not level.

Straight-line tubular shape provides maximum torsional rigidity and lowest effective mass.

Vertical tonearm control sets and locks tonearm height at any point over an 8 mm range. Tonearm thus parallels record with any cartridge for precise vertical tracking without added mass of spacers.



How to identify the world's finest tonearm.

When one tonearm—among all those available—is described as "the world's finest," some controversy may be anticipated. Fine, we welcome that possibility. There is far too little discussion about tonearms—considering the critical difference they make in how records sound and how long they last.

Simply stated, the tonearm's function is to provide the correct cartridge-to-groove geometry and to allow the stylus to trace the groove contours freely, precisely, and with the lowest practical tracking force.

Dual's engineering approach to tonearm performance makes us feel confident of the outcome of any comparisons.

The basic geometry.

The shape of the Dual tonearm is a straight line from pivot area to tonearm head, the shortest distance between those two important points. Curved tonearms may look sexier, but contribute extra mass, less rigidity and a tendency to lateral imbalance. That's hardly consistent with good engineering.

Every Dual tonearm is mounted in a true, four-point gimbal. The tonearm mass is centered, balanced and pivots precisely where the vertical and horizontal axes intersect.

Identical pairs of low-friction needle-point pivots and miniature ball bearings are used in both axes. The precision and quality control standards applied to their manufacture and assembly are usually found only in aerospace and allied technologies.

Settings for your cartridge.

The vernier-adjustable counterbalance lets you set zero-balance with micrometer-like precision so that tracking force can then be set accurately. A tempered, flat-wound spring applies tracking force directly at the vertical pivot, and this force remains perpendicular to the record even if the turntable

chassis is not level. Anti-skating is applied around the horizontal pivot, directly counter to the skating force, and it adjusts automatically to the varying skating force encountered by the tonearm as it moves across the record.

Another Dual refinement, not available on any other integrated tonearm, is the Vertical Tonearm Control. A vernier height adjustment over an 8mm range allows paralleling the tonearm to the record without cartridge spacers. Tonearm mass remains as low as possible, and mounting and changing cartridges are simplified.

Another Dual exclusive: tuned anti-resonance filters.

The counterbalance contains two specially tuned mechanical filters that absorb parasitic resonances originating in the tonearm/cartridge system and chassis. The result: flawless tracking stability maintained even in the presence of external shock and vibration whether caused by acoustic feedback, record warps or dancing feet.

About all Dual tonearms.

The tonearm shown and described here is part of our higher-priced turntables. But many of its features are found in our lowest-priced model: the four-point gimbal, the straight-line design, and the precise mechanisms for balance, tracking force and anti-skating adjustment.

In fact, we'd be willing to match the performance of our lowest-priced tonearm against anyone else's highest-priced tonearm. But one argument at a time is enough.

Now that you've been "armed" with the facts, we invite you to visit your audio dealer to examine the tonearms you find there—separate and built in—and decide for yourself which one is indeed the finest.

No one can argue with that suggestion.

Dual[®]



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New . . . 100D 3-Way
Curvilinear Enclosure System

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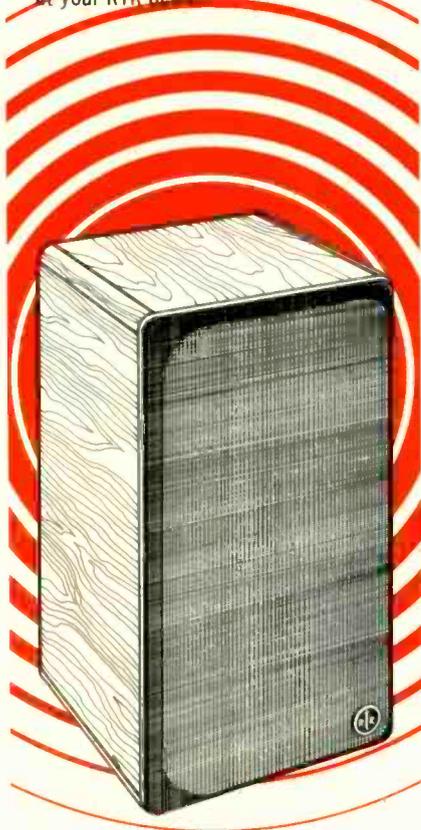
RTR interpolates a significant midrange

Within this striking, acoustically transparent enclosure, lies an exceptional 3-way speaker system. Entirely new. Totally RTR.

The 100D was conceived and executed to display the new, technologically advanced RTR midrange system. Vast midrange capabilities are yielded by a low mass 1.5" soft dome driver, single layer voice coil and 3.4 lb. magnetic assembly. This is the first dome system to successfully integrate smooth response and broad dispersion with outstanding dynamic range and transient response. The key to reproducing music convincingly!

This multi-faceted midrange crosses over at 1.25 KHz to an RTR 12" woofer which is so technically excellent that it will neither destruct nor delaminate. The deep, authoritative bass response is uncolored and precisely defined. Crossing in at 10 KHz, the solid state supertweeter imparts extended crystalline high end reproduction.

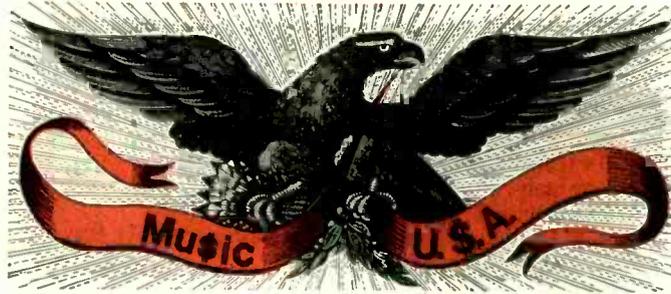
All packaged handsomely in a 15 x 26½ x 14D walnut enclosure and bookshelf priced. Addition the 100D now at your RTR dealer.



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CIRCLE 50 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

The
Lees
Side



10. The Ban and the Big Bands

by Gene Lees

IN 1942 the American Federation of Musicians made a tactical blunder: It called a strike against the recording industry. That strike was one of a series of blows that would bring about the demise of the big-band era.

The union's cause was just enough. It argued that since "live" musicians were being put out of work by phonograph records played on radio and jukeboxes, they should be compensated for this loss by the record industry. After a twenty-seven-month ban on recording by AFM members, the industry agreed to the establishment of a trust fund, financed by a surcharge on recording sessions, through which the union would sponsor live presentations of music throughout the country. Later, consolidating its gains, the AFM also established a system whereby musicians receive a royalty check for their work at the end of the fiscal year. A busy studio musician may get \$25,000 or more on top of the money he already has earned for the sessions. But in 1942 all that lay far in the future.

The ban did not close down recording studios altogether. Singers are not required to be members of the AFM—perhaps reflecting the view of instrumentalists from time immemorial that singers are not really musicians—and therefore were able to continue recording. So long as AFM members were not used in instrumental accompaniment, there was nothing to stop them. Backed by a cappella voices, the vocalists turned out hits such as Frank Sinatra's "Sunday, Monday, or Always" and Nat Cole's "Nature Boy." (As a pianist, Cole was a member of the AFM, but when performing as a singer he was not in violation of union regulations.)

Musically, these choral-accompanied performances left much to be desired, but radio stations obviously were dependent on them if they

wanted new material. Thus, while such singers as Sinatra, Cole, Dick Haymes, Peggy Lee, and Doris Day received increased exposure on radio and records, Tommy Dorsey, Woody Herman, Benny Goodman, and the other bandleaders got none. By the end of the recording ban, vocalists were firmly entrenched in popular favor and the bands had lost ground.

Before the ban, singers had been an adjunct to instrumental dance music, their lesser rank manifested in the fact that the first chorus on a recording was usually instrumental and that the singer was heard only in the second chorus. But when at the end of the ban singers found themselves in the ascendancy, they inevitably reversed this order. The first chorus was vocal, generally followed by a sixteen-bar instrumental interlude, the singer returning at the release for the last half of the song.

And popular music was changing. Since few singers, with the notable exception of Cole, could swing, the fare consisted mainly of ballads, with nonsense novelty tunes turning up occasionally to break the pattern—hardly the sort of thing that required creative instrumental support. Coming into focus too was a division in pop music between the high standards of art and the expediencies of commerce.

In the struggle between art and entertainment, many of the bandleaders were clearly on the side of the angels. Reaching beyond the popular song for repertoire, Woody Herman experimented with expanded form when he recorded *Summer Sequence*, a suite for jazz orchestra by pianist/arranger Ralph Burns, and then the *Ebony Concerto*, which Igor Stravinsky composed for the band. Boyd Raeburn's band was doing remarkable and daring things, becoming "far out" or "out there," in today's parlance. Claude

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What you want is better sound. But, the expense of replacing your whole system just isn't reasonable. MXR has a way to upgrade your sound significantly, without starting from scratch. MXR's Stereo Graphic Equalizer and Compander can give you the right sound at a cost that is much easier to take.

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The Compander compresses the dynamic range of the signal going onto the tape and expands it upon playback at a two to one ratio. The resulting increase in dynamic range allows your present system to produce the depth of sound that you want to have when you record.

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The Compander, at \$129.95, and the Stereo Graphic Equalizer at \$199.95, with the equipment you already have, can add up to the sound that you want, at a reasonable price.

For more information see your nearest MXR dealer or direct inquiries to MXR Innovations, Inc. 277 N. Goodman St., Rochester, New York 14607 (716) 442-5320.

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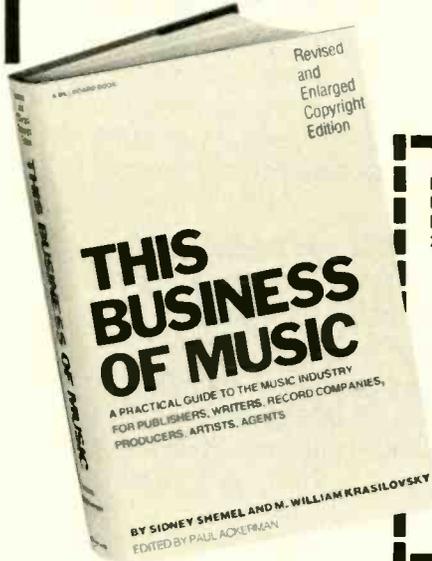


CIRCLE 38 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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Thornhill added French horns to his band, and the arrangements and compositions of the brilliant Gil Evans gave it the floating, misty, almost motionless quality Thornhill was looking for. Eddie Sauter and Bill Finegan, two enormously gifted arrangers, formed an orchestra using flutes and a battery of symphonic percussion and wrote material that took the band close to classical music. Stan Kenton, always one of the most experimental of bandleaders, recorded Robert Graetinger's then-radical *City of Glass*. Later, with his Innovations in Modern Music orchestra, Kenton added a large string section and eschewed the dance pavilions for the concert hall.

At one time a story had circulated that a frustrated dancer asked one of Kenton's trombonists, "Why don't you play something we can dance to?" To which the musician replied, "Why don't you dance something we can play to?"

The tale may be apocryphal, but the fact that it was repeated with gusto by other musicians revealed their condescension toward dancers and indeed the public as a whole. Musicians were growing uninterested in being entertainers; they were thinking of themselves as artists.

The ambivalent attitude toward the music of the bands had been evident for some time, and it was not limited to the musicians. The public shared it. The main support for the bands had been an audience of young dancers. But others among their fans—more interested in the music itself, fully aware of the virtuosity of these orchestras, admiring individual sidemen as stars in their own right—were wont to gather near the front of the ballroom so they could hear better. It was this intent group of listeners, as opposed to dancers, that the bands began to focus on and play for. The question was: Were there enough of them to support this serious and experimental music? The wisdom of hindsight suggests that there were not.

All the while, the bands were faced with increasing problems of a material nature. After World War II musicians wanted and needed higher salaries. The costs of transporting bands from town to town by bus were rising. Ballrooms and dance pavilions one by one went out of business.

Weakened by round after round of pummeling, the bands were about to be hit by a powerful punch that would kill off all but a hardy handful. That blow was the decline and, for all practical purposes—in the postwar era, at least—the death of network radio. This is the topic I will discuss in the next issue. ●

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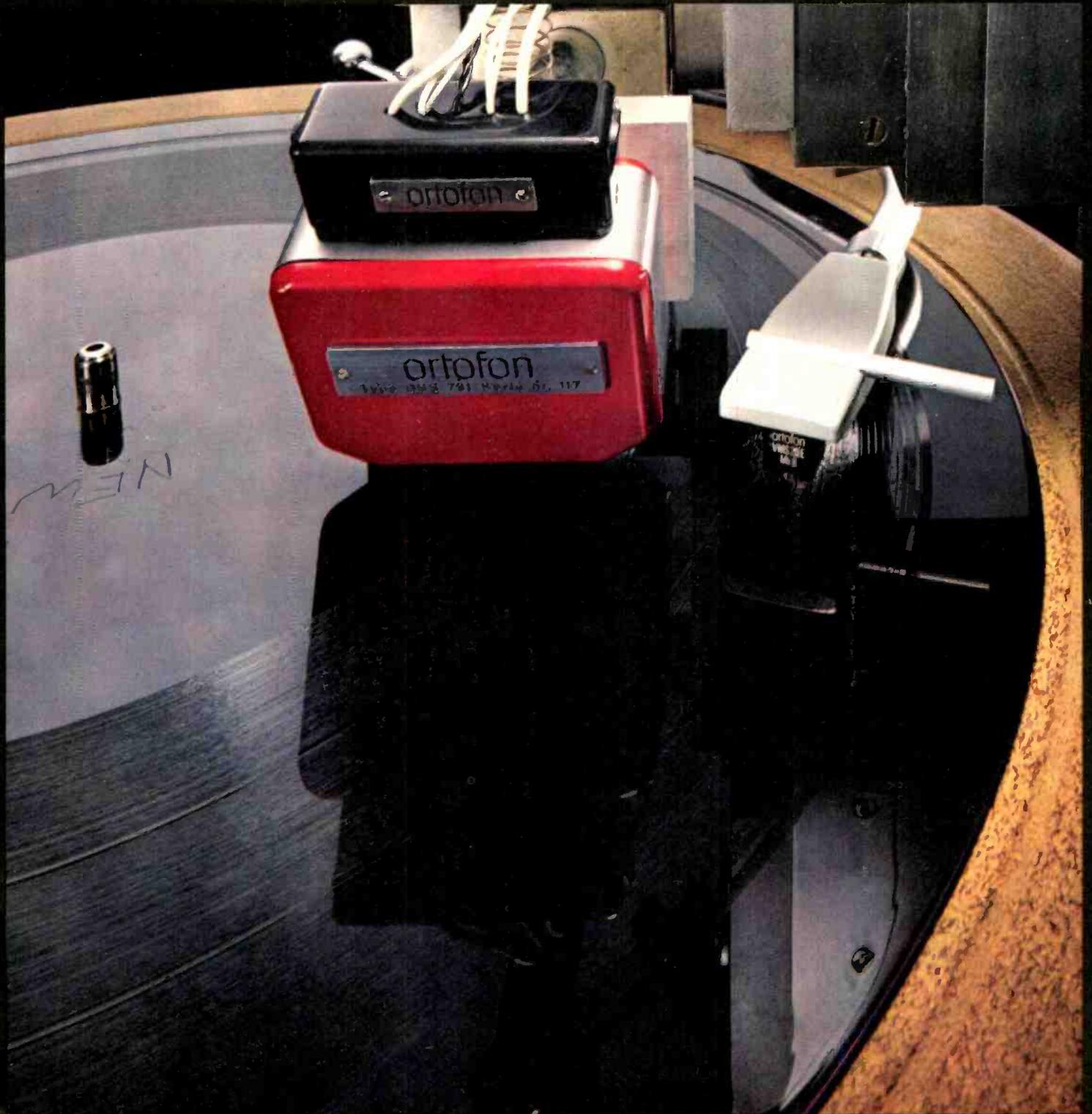
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Two Years of the Power Rule

A wise man once observed that stresses in social systems are most often resolved through minimal adjustments; the route through cataclysm is rarely taken. Thus, while the doomsayers of the 1950s seemed to have been convinced that major portions of the earth were destined to become radioactive junkyards long before now, the conflicts between East and West have been confined to far more manageable proportions. Similarly, while large cities in the U.S. surely are having their problems, they have not become the uninhabitable pestholes that those with a penchant for sensational pessimism had foreseen.

The situation is, we suspect, much the same with respect to the FTC amplifier power rule, which has been in effect roughly two years. Proponents of the rule saw it as a significant step in bringing about the millennium for consumers, who would henceforth be protected against unscrupulous high fidelity manufacturers bent on convincing the unwary that one watt was two, or four, or more. Opponents felt that the rule would harm the consumer by raising the cost of equipment without providing any benefit.

From what we can see, few of the predicted effects have materialized. Amplifiers are not significantly higher in cost than they were before, and the increases in performance are just about what we would have expected over a two-year period without the intervention of the federal government. Whether it was the detested one-hour preconditioning (which the FTC watered to innocuousness when it decided to permit thermal cycling) or concern for conserva-

tion that prompted companies like Hitachi, Soundcraftsmen, and Threshold to design relatively power-efficient circuits is hard to say, but these developments have been welcome nonetheless.

One thing the FTC did accomplish was near-total banishment of "music power," a concept that it apparently considered useless other than as a vehicle for inflated power claims. Yet, since most amps are not used to handle sine-wave power in servo systems, the question of how they behave with a music waveform is quite legitimate. This is especially true for amps that (like Hitachi's Class G) are specifically designed for the kind of peak capability required by music.

Perhaps "music power" should be redefined as the peak power the amp can produce on an instantaneous transient, minus 10 dB (to allow for the usual 10-dB peak-to-average ratio of music). Since an amp rated at 20 dBW (100 watts) continuous would probably have a "music" rating only slightly greater than 13 dBW (20 watts), no one then could be accused of inflating specs.

Aside from that, we have been lucky—very lucky, considering the obvious lapses of understanding out of which the FTC rules were made. Disaster has not befallen the industry, and research and development do not appear to have been seriously inhibited. Next time the gods of chance might not be so kind. When the Feds deem it necessary to intervene on behalf of the audio consumer, is it too much to ask that they do their homework—first?

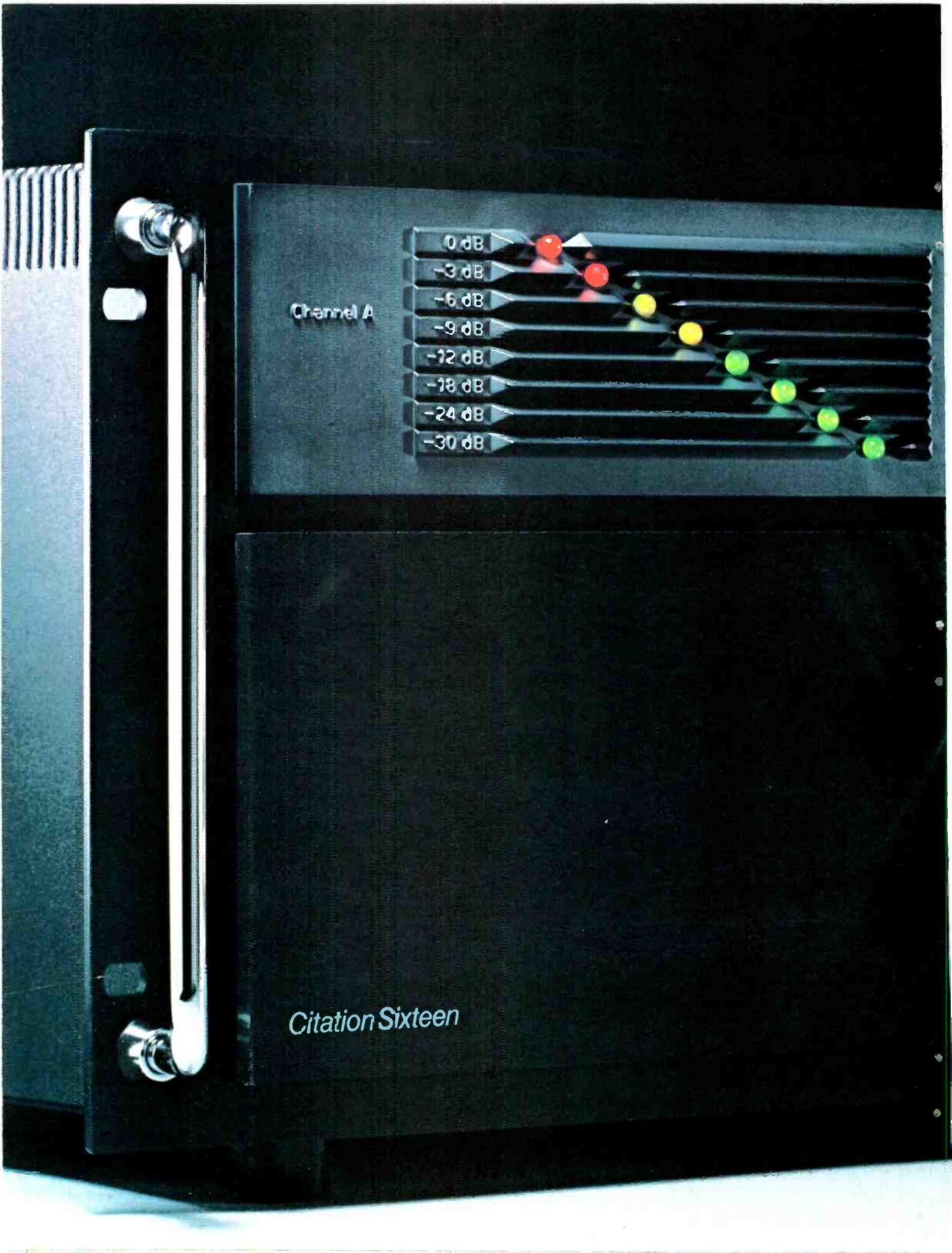
Home Video Cassettes: A Report from the Front

Though the moment of single-format truth still seems distant (and, with it, the long-heralded revolution in home entertainment, which we believe must be based on buyer confidence that today's recorder can find parts and tape supplies tomorrow), we sense a new vigor in the way the various bandwagons are being urged toward the fray. Perhaps those who hold the reins genuinely think their designs finally are "final"; perhaps they seek to head off the video disc (meaning, primarily, the Philips/MCA format) at some Thermopylae. But motion—and commotion—there is.

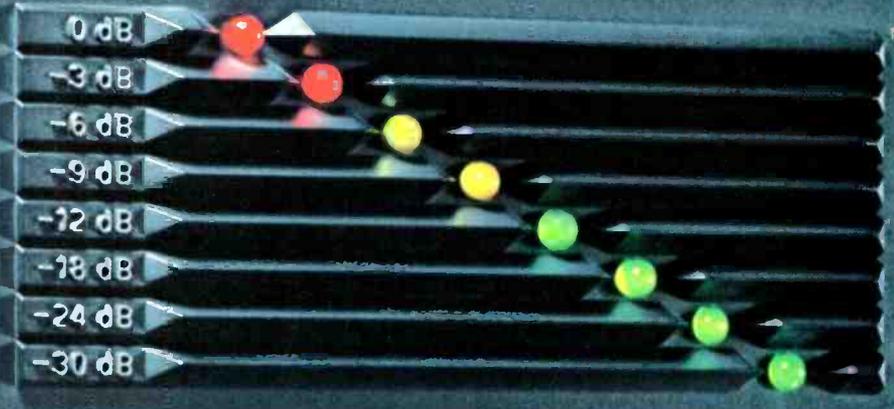
Sony seems the leader with Betamax. (The earlier U-Matic format, as Sony predicted, has found a solid market in industrial and educational applications and has never been a serious contender for the home market.) Betamax has longevity: some two years on the U.S. market. Its price, about \$1,300 in deck form, has therefore set

the pace for its competitors, who try, not always successfully, to come in a little lower. Its original recording time of an hour per cassette also has been something to shoot at; Sony itself has outdone that figure in the newest models, which add a half-speed option for twice the recording time with somewhat diminished picture quality. Other companies offering Betamax-format equipment (all with the option), or reported to be considering doing so, include Pioneer, Sears, Zenith, Sanyo, Toshiba, and Aiwa.

JVC's format, VHS, offers the two-hour capability that presumably forced Sony's hand in introducing its option. VHS has also been espoused by MGA and Sharp. Meanwhile, JVC's parent corporation, Matsushita (of Panasonic/Technics fame), has fitted a half-speed option to VHS, making it capable of recording for four hours. Magnavox, RCA, Sylvania, Hitachi, and Curtis Mathes are among those favoring this version. But Matsushita is still



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ultimate.**



Citation 16s Power Amplifier. Professional version, without instant-reading LED displays.



Citation 17 Preamplifier. Frequency response from below 3Hz to beyond 270,000Hz, -3dB. Less than 0.001% THD, phono preamp less than 0.002% THD



Citation 19 Power Amplifier. 100W min. RMS per channel into 8 ohms from 20Hz to 20kHz, with less than 0.08% THD. Frequency response from below 5Hz to beyond 140kHz, -3dB.



Citation 17s Preamplifier. Same performance specifications as Citation 17, without active equalizer.



Citation 18 FM Tuner. 50dB Quieting Sensitivity, better than 17 dBf. Audio frequency response, 10Hz-50kHz. Patented Quieting Meter.

You've spent a long time developing your listening sense.

To the point where what's super for most people, for you is just compromise.

You're ready for the ultimate.

Which we call Citation.



The Citations you see here are all brand-new.

Designed to new understandings.

New understandings about transient intermodulation distortion (TIM). About cross-over distortion. About FM signal processing and phono preamp design.

The new Citations answer these concerns with features like fast slew rate, low-level negative feedback, discrete components in place of integrated circuits, extended Class A operation, an FM external processor loop, and phono equalization to within ± 0.25 dB of the RIAA curve.

In addition, they all feature the ultra-wideband design pioneered by our first state-of-the-art Citations in 1959. Ultra-wideband design extends flat frequency response well beyond the conventional

20-20,000Hz range. To insure phase linearity and outstanding transient response.

The benefit is an incredibly open, accurate sound. The spacious stereo imaging and the far greater musical detail you've been longing to hear.

Citation components are in use throughout the world. By professionals in their reference systems, by rock bands on stage, and by symphony orchestras in their listening facilities.

And their reliability is legend.

The new Harman/Kardon Citations.

As close to the ideal in sound reproduction as any components have ever come.

Some even say closer.

Harman/Kardon, 55 Ames Court, Plainview, NY 11803.

harman/kardon
wide,
open sound

You deserve a Citation.



Citation 16a Power Amplifier. 150W min.
RMS per channel into 8 ohms from
20Hz to 20kHz, with less than 0.05% THD
Twin Powered. Frequency response from
below 4Hz to beyond 120kHz +0, -3dB.

producing (via Quasar) its two-hour VX-2000 format, which is not compatible with either version of VHS but, at about \$1,000, is among the least expensive decks so far announced.

Sanyo, in addition to offering Betamax, still has its own V-Cord II format, which it appears to be alone in pursuing. In Europe there is yet another format espoused by Philips, Grundig, and ITT. Both of these dark horses for the American home market appear more likely to compete with U-Matic in institutional use.

The camera industry also is interested in video tape; Eastman Kodak and Bell & Howell (the latter working with BASF) appear to be developing formats specifically for use in the field—as opposed to the basically nonportable, AC-operated decks of the other formats. B&H already has announced that it expects to have something on the market at less than \$1,000 by Christmas of 1979. But that's a long way off. Like weather forecasts, such announcements seem to lose reliability exponentially with the length of their reach into the future.

A field format easily might coexist with a home format, since they serve very different needs. But, long term, we believe it unlikely that multiple home formats can be pre-

vented from consuming each other. May the best one win—and quickly!

Also . . .

Audio-Technica has announced the winners of its Audio Excellence Awards, a critics' poll meant to identify discs that are outstanding in production, engineering, manufacture, and other important qualities. Stevie Wonder's "Songs in the Key of Life" (Tamla 13 340C2) won in the rock/pop division, while classical honors were taken by "Caruso—A Legendary Performer" (RCA CRM 1-1749), performances taken from discs recorded between 1906 and 1920 and sonically restored by computer techniques (see "Caruso *cum* Computer," November 1976).

Superscope, jumping into the field of reproducer pianos in a big way since the introduction of its Pianocorder, has acquired the Aeolian Corporation, the largest company in the world engaged exclusively in manufacturing and distributing pianos. Aeolian distributes Mason & Hamlin, Knabe, Chickering, and other makes of piano.

Equipment in the News



JBL introduces the L-212

JBL's newest in loudspeakers is the L-212, a floor-standing system that consists of two three-way panels and a self-powered subwoofer called the Ultrabass. Using a single channel to reproduce frequencies below 70 Hz, the Ultrabass contains a bass amplifier and a 12-inch driver. It can be positioned anywhere in the listening room without affecting the stereo image. Total bandwidth (to -3 dB) of the L-212 is said to extend from 25 Hz to 20 kHz. All three enclosures are finished in walnut. The price of the complete system is \$1,740.

CIRCLE 136 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

New turntable from Marantz

Added to Marantz' line of components is a direct-drive, two-speed (33 and 45 rpm) turntable, the Model 6150. Powered by a DC servo-control motor, this turntable includes such features as $\pm 3\%$ pitch control, stroboscope, statically balanced tone arm, and viscous-damped cueing. Wow and flutter are rated at less than 0.045%. Base and dust cover are provided with the 6150, which costs less than \$200.

CIRCLE 137 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



AR DOES IT AGAIN. INTRODUCING THE LIQUID COOLED SPEAKER.



©1977 Tele-Dyne Acoustic Research

Designing a great loudspeaker system is truly an engineering challenge. Solutions don't come easily.

But every so often...

And that's been AR's secret: a quarter-century of innovation and engineering concepts which have influenced speaker design world-wide. Acoustic suspension. The dome high-range speaker. And now, the liquid-cooled, high-range speaker.

The problem: High-range speakers are relatively small and

AR generate a lot of heat. The entire system's power-handling capacity depends in part on whether or not this heat can be dissipated.

Too much heat. Pop goes your system.

The AR solution: Suspend the voice coil in an exotic magnetic liquid, (it costs nearly \$3000 per gallon) to position the voice coil precisely and act as a heat transfer agent.

The result: Greater power-handling capacity for every one of the seven-speaker systems in the new AR range.

You'll find them all in fine high fidelity stores, from about \$65 to about \$450.

Listen to them before you buy anything, and define "truth in listening" once and for all.

For information and "specs" pick up our new catalog from your high fidelity dealer or write to us at the address below.

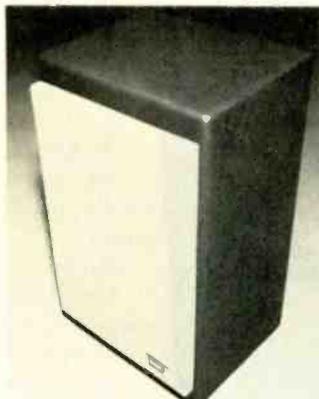
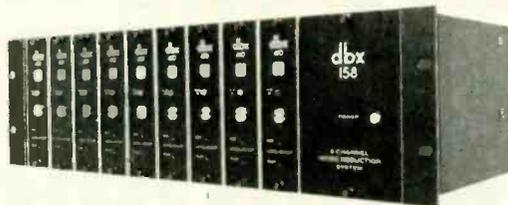
CIRCLE 1 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

TELEDYNE ACOUSTIC RESEARCH
10 AMERICAN DRIVE, NORWOOD, MASSACHUSETTS 02062
IN CANADA: A. C. SIMMONDS & SONS LTD.

DBX semipro noise-reduction system

The modular, rack-mounted DBX Model 158 offers eight channels of noise reduction for semiprofessional or small studio applications. Each module contains separate recording and playback electronics, which allow monitoring of the processed program from the tape. The system comes with a spare plug-in module and is compatible with the entire DBX professional line, as well as with those Teac tape recorders that incorporate DBX units. The 158 can be used with preamps, mixer, or multitrack tape recorders having pin-style (unbalanced) output connections and is sold—by DBX professional audio dealers—for \$2,400.

CIRCLE 138 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Budget speakers from Cerwin-Vega

Cerwin-Vega is offering the HED series of loudspeakers designed for performance rather than appearance. The H-12, one of the two-way models, has a 12-inch woofer and 1-inch dhorm tweeter. Rated frequency response is 38 Hz to 20 kHz, ± 4 dB, and crossover occurs at 2 kHz. The H-12, which is finished in Durotex, costs \$119.95. Other speakers in the HED series—the H-10 and H-15, also finished in Durotex, and the W-10 and W-12, finished in walnut—range in price from \$99.95 to \$199.95.

CIRCLE 139 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

The Spectra Sonics line/mike audio mixer

The Model 1100, for PA/disco and studio use, combines six microphone or line-level inputs to a single mono output. The front-panel controls include one each for input level, two for mono output equalization (maximum eq. is said to be ± 20 dB at 20 Hz and 20 kHz), and separate program and monitor gain potentiometers. Frequency response is rated at 20 Hz to 20 kHz, $\pm 3/4$ dB (program output), ± 1 dB (monitor output). The 1100 can be mounted in a 19-inch rack and costs \$800.

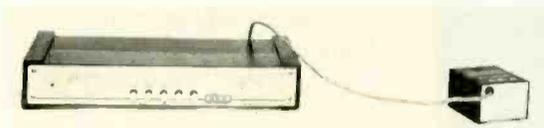
CIRCLE 140 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Ace's preamp has separate power supply

The Model 3100 preamp from Ace Audio comes with a separate power supply module to minimize the residual hum that can occur should the power transformer couple to other circuitry in the preamp. The module also has a slow turn-on characteristic to control thumps. Ferrite beads are used to stave off interference from CBs and other radio frequency sources. Intermodulation and harmonic distortion are rated at less than 0.01%. The cost of the 3100 preamp is \$325.

CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Audio-Technica electret condenser microphone

The Model AT-813 is one of a series of microphones recently introduced by Audio-Technica. Its pickup pattern is cardioid, and it features a low-mass polymer diaphragm. A small AA cell powers the FET impedance-matching network built into the microphone's casing. The AT-813 is said to provide a distortion-free signal in sound fields as loud as 122 dB, well above the threshold of pain. An integral windscreen for close-distance applications should reduce the possibility of "popping." Output impedance is rated at 600 ohms, and the microphone is designed to work into inputs rated between 150 and 1,000 ohms. The price is \$80.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



CIRCLE 62 ON READER-SERVICE CARD →

THAT NEW BLACK MAGIC.



So it's got an expensive new look that separates it from every deck in its class. Nice. But is that reason enough to call it magic?

No.

But this is: generally speaking, over a quarter century of TEAC engineering is wrapped up in the A-103. Specifically speaking, the A-103 boasts an innovative design that replaces a maze of wires and circuit boards with a single circuit board. That's one reason.

When you press the Eject button, your cassette doesn't pop out at you like a deranged toaster. It's cushioned, and works slowly and smoothly for longer deck life. That's two reasons.

Built-in Dolby* circuitry, High Density Permaflux head, frequency-generated servo-controlled DC motor, separate level controls, wide dynamic range, and switchable

bias/equalization. Reasons three through eight.

But how do we offer all these things (and more) in a deck that costs as little as the A-103?

That's the *real* magic!

*Dolby is a registered trademark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.

SPECIFICATIONS (conservatively cited)

Signal-to-Noise Ratio:
50dB (without Dolby)
55dB (with Dolby at 1kHz)

Frequency Response:
30-14,000Hz (Cr₂/FeCr)
30-11,000Hz (Normal)

Wow & Flutter: 0.10%
(NAB Weighted)

TEAC®

First. Because they last.



INTRODUCING HIGHER FIDELITY.

The first components precise enough
to be called Philips.

Now, a full line of high-fidelity equipment that is so precise, Philips calls it "higher" fidelity. Philips precision. It means being able to call upon dozens of research engineers and a computer to help design a mini-computer to regulate



N 4506. All the features of the N 4504—including optional on/off remote control—plus a built-in preamp. Less than \$650.

N 4504.

the speed of a turntable. And then using unsurpassed worldwide technical resources to produce that turntable precisely as it was designed.

Today, that same level of precision is yours to enjoy in a line of turntables, as well as in several other new components which offer innovative features, outstanding performance and reliability for less than you'd expect to pay.

Principal among the tables is the GA 222. To the mini-computer of the GA 312 Electronic, it adds an ultra-low-resonance tonearm and the convenience of fully automatic operation.

All single-play turntables suspend platter and tonearm over a free-floating subchassis to shield the stylus from vibration.

The decks with logic circuitry.

And it's controlled logically—with time delay relays and solenoid switches—to smooth changes in function (from "rewind" to "fast-forward," for instance) without spilling tape. Quite remarkable, even in expensive professional equipment. Astonishing in the N 4504 at less than \$450:

Other pro features at semi-pro prices: 3 speeds, 3 motors (the drive motor is regulated by a tacho-generator for extra precision), 3 heads, automatic end-of-tape stop, a dynamic noise limiter (better than 10 dB down) that cuts the hiss but not the highs, and an exclusive system that lets you play tape with or without the pressure pad in place.



GA 437. Manual turntable with automatic shutoff. Less than \$120.

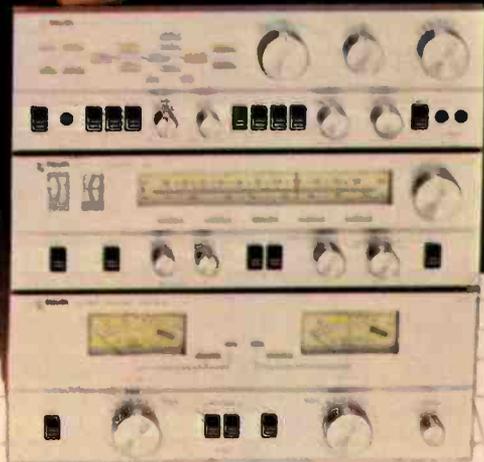
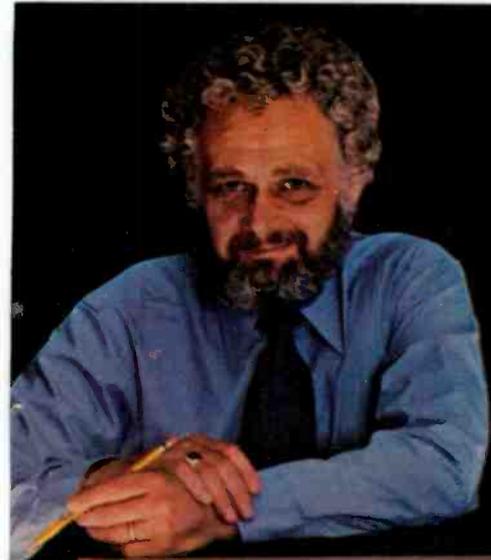
GA 406. The automatic turntable that can be used as a changer. Separate tonearm motor. Less than \$200.



GA 312. Electronic, even to its switches. Less than \$180.

GA 222. The Electronic Turntable turns automatic. Less than \$250.





AH 572. Six inputs, four outputs, five tape modes, five listening positions, all for less than \$600.

AH 673. Phase-locked loop multiplex decoder, dual-gate MOSFETs in FM, full-fidelity AM. Less than \$600.

AH 578. High-accuracy detent controls and high performance at a not-so-high price: less than \$700.

See what you're hearing.

Finally. A preamp that illuminates function to eliminate confusion. You always see precisely what it's doing (inputs and outputs light up on a flow diagram), and you hear how well, too (less than 0.01% total harmonic distortion).

The tuner features exclusive automatic stereo noise-cancelling circuitry. The amp delivers 210 watts per channel minimum RMS into 8 ohms, from 20-20k Hz, with no more than 0.08% total harmonic distortion. And touch switches on all three units literally put precise control at your fingertips.

Big sound. Small speaker.

A paradox? No, a Philips MFB electronic speaker system. The secret: unique built-in amplifiers and an automatic system that extends bass response, yet reduces distortion.

Philips dynamic speakers use the same mid- and high-frequency drivers as the MFBs, which means they "listen" with the same precision.

Turntables, tape decks, separates, speakers. Now you can choose higher fidelity from the full line that only Philips precision could produce.

*Optional with dealer.



Philips speakers are priced from less than \$120* each to over \$1,000*.

PHILIPS

High Fidelity Laboratories, Ltd.
For the name and address of your nearest franchised Philips dealer,
call 800-243-6100, day or night, toll-free.
(In Conn.: 1-800-882-6500.)

CIRCLE 47 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Introducing the Koss Theory of loudspeaker design and the three new Koss CM speaker systems that prove it.



© 1977 Koss Corp

Here for the first time is the culmination of a world-wide search for the ultimate in loudspeaker design within the limitations of today's technology and within affordable price restrictions. Indeed it represents a breakthrough in loudspeaker technology of such significance that it heralds the second major revolution in loudspeaker design.

By utilizing a complex series of audio engineering formulas and the precise knowledge of computer science, Koss engineers are now able to derive and produce the optimum system parameters for any loudspeaker. The incredible result of this engineering achievement is the new Koss CM

1010, 1020, and 1030 loudspeaker systems. Each represents the ultimate speaker system available in its price range. And each represents a listening experience you'll have to hear to believe.

Ask your Audio Dealer to let you hear this new, incredibly beautiful, Sound of Koss and to show you how the Koss Theory of loudspeaker design has created a whole new generation of loudspeakers. And if you'd like to have our full-color brochure telling all about the Koss Theory, write for it, c/o Fred Forbes. Once you've heard these revolutionary new loudspeakers, we think you'll agree: hearing is believing.

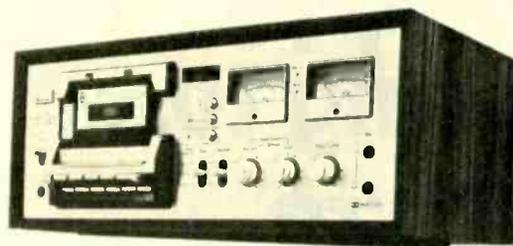
KOSS® CM LOUDSPEAKER SYSTEMS **hearing is believing**™

KOSS CORPORATION, 4129 N. Port Washington Ave., Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212
Koss International/London, Dublin, Paris, Frankfurt • Amsterdam • Koss Limited/Ontario • Koss K.K./Tokyo

Direct-o-matic Sansui cassette deck

Sansui's SC-3100 cassette deck incorporates two proprietary features: a direct front-loading system that is said to provide exceptional convenience in tape-handling and head maintenance, and a system that cues itself up just past the tape leader at the beginning of a cassette. This Dolby deck also offers mike and line mixing, averaging meters, a peak-indicating LED, memory rewind, and a timer for automatic recording and playback. The separate bias and equalization switches each have three settings: CHROME, NORMAL, and FERRICHROME. The SC-3100 is finished in simulated walnut grain and costs \$430.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Ultralinear's Synchronic Time Array speakers

The Synchronic Time Array ST 525 from Ultralinear is a three-way loud-speaker system whose design features driver alignment and network/driver matching to correct time-delay distortion. Output of the three drivers can be controlled individually. Crossovers occur at 700 Hz and 4.3 kHz. Suggested amplifier range is from 13 dBW (20 watts) to 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ dBW (75 watts) into 8 ohms, and frequency response is rated at 30 Hz to 22 kHz. Standard finish for the ST-525 is walnut grain covered with Melamine, costing \$289.95. Models in oak and walnut finishes are available for \$329.95.

CIRCLE 144 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Berkshire Audio's new disco mixer

Two stereo disc pickups, an auxiliary stereo tape recorder, and a mono microphone input may be fed through the Disko Mix-Master IV by Berkshire Audio, with the level of each controlled by front-panel slide faders. In addition to the stereo program output, a separate cue output allows the user to monitor independently the aux or either phonograph input. A rotary volume potentiometer adjusts headphone level. Phono frequency response is said to be within $\pm \frac{1}{2}$ dB of the RIAA curve, while mike and aux inputs are rated at 20 Hz to 20 kHz, ± 1 dB. The suggested retail price is \$189.

CIRCLE 145 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Around-the-ear headset from Burwen

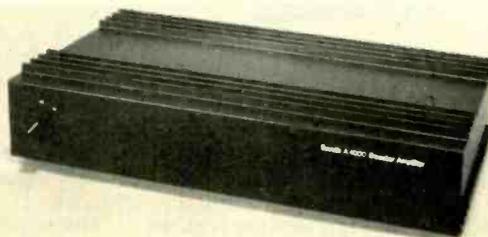
Burwen Research's PMB-8 headphone is a semi-open design that uses internal damping material to attenuate external noise. The orthodynamic driver is said to produce up to 112 dB SPL at 1 kHz. Its voice "coils" are printed onto the diaphragms, which are within the field created by perforated disc magnets; the drive-unit segments are held at the center and edge for phase coherence. According to Burwen, the PMB-8 has a frequency response of 15 Hz to 26 kHz with less than 0.3% total harmonic distortion and 150-ohm impedance. Ten-foot cables are provided with the PMB-8, which costs \$99.95.

CIRCLE 146 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

A booster amp from Sonab

Sonab has introduced an add-on amplifier module that can double the output of any amplifier or receiver up to 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ dBW (60 watts). The dual-channel auxiliary amp, the A-4000, has no controls other than an on/off switch. An LED indicator is provided to warn of faults in the system. Rated bandwidth at full power into 8 ohms is 20 Hz to 25 kHz with no more than 0.3% total harmonic distortion. The A-4000 is not recommended for use with a 4-ohm load. Signal-to-noise ratio is claimed to be better than 90 dB. The A-4000 comes in a black matte finish and sells for \$400.

CIRCLE 147 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Where they're going to. We're coming from.

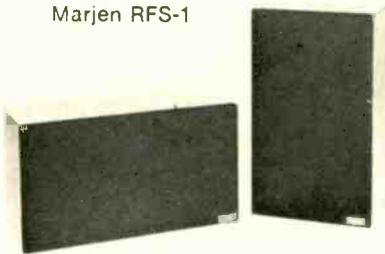
"The extraordinary ability of the human ear to perceive and analyze sound cannot yet be simulated by existing electronic measuring devices. Therefore, we must rely upon the ear's evaluation of our design efforts."

That's where we're coming from.

The enjoyment of music begins and ends with the ear. Naturally, we depend on our laboratory measurements for numerous points of information. But, in the final analysis, the judgement of the ear takes priority.

Combining this important principle with data collected from "environmental" measurements, we have put accuracy back in the listening room resulting in a marked advance in music appreciation.

Marjen RFS-1



Psycho-Acoustic Research

Marjen Company, Inc.

P.O. Box 251, South Kent, Ct. 06785

Designer's note: The speakers shown above have a suggested list price of under \$100.00 each. Though modestly priced, they well represent the acoustic and economic advantages of the psychoacoustic research done at Marjen.

CIRCLE 34 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Too Hot to Handle

I am thinking of buying a McIntosh amp with 100 watts per channel, and either a JBL Model 200 or 300, Altec Model 19, or Klipschorn speakers. I know all these speakers are supposed to handle this kind of power, but will they? A friend of mine blew an Ohm F with a 75-watt receiver. I would appreciate your opinion.—Garth S. Nelson, Sussex, Canada.

The speakers you are considering are safe (as are most speakers) with 20 dBW (100 watts) as long as the amp is not driven into clipping. We cannot imagine that an Ohm F was destroyed by a clean signal from a 75-watt receiver, as that speaker has been known to remain unimpressed while driven from amps rated at 23 dBW (200 watts) or more. Either the receiver was driven into heavy clipping, or it failed under excessive drive and put DC through the voice coil.

Record stores check styli microscopically free of charge, but I have found this service to be very careless and poor. I had a stylus checked in a store that declared it to be worn out and unusable, and several minutes later another store nearby said the same stylus was in perfect condition.

Because of that, I want to buy a microscope for my own use and would like your suggestions. How strong should the magnification be (25X, 100X, 1,000X)? What features are significant and necessary in a good stylus microscope, and which are insignificant except in raising the price? Which brands can you recommend that are good and not very expensive (for example, one can buy very good binoculars for \$50, while slightly better ones cost around \$400)?—Omelan Kulyckyj, New York, N.Y.

The personnel who check styli in record and audio stores often lack expertise and may be plagued with poor equipment. On the basis of the sophisticated hardware we have seen manufacturers use to check stylus wear (and the dismal results we have gotten using cheapies) we would suspect that a usable microscope for this purpose is an expensive item. But the microscope won't do you any good unless you know what to look for, and—more to the point—when a stylus shows faults that are obvious to the untrained eye it may already be damaging records. It seems to us that you can save yourself grief, trouble, and money by simply replacing a stylus routinely after 500 to 600 hours of use and forgetting the microscope.

Akai and Hitachi now have tape recording and playback heads within a single housing that eliminates height and azimuth adjustment problems. Is this type of construction an ad-

vantage over that of such decks as the Tandberg TCD-330 and the Nakamichi 1000 II, which feature adjustable azimuth?—Richard Reid, Grand Rapids, Mich.

The two-head-in-one arrangement, by placing the playback gap very close to that for recording, minimizes the amount of tape twisting (and hence misalignment) that can take place between the two. But the physical space limitations put constraints on the design and construction of the head. Nakamichi and Tandberg are saying, in effect, that they would rather go for the best possible heads and solve the alignment problems inherent in separate heads via an adjustment system; Hitachi and Akai prefer to minimize the alignment problem and avoid potentially annoying (and costly) adjustment systems by accepting some compromises in the heads. Incidentally it is conceivable that Hitachi's new Hall effect heads may make possible the best of both worlds, though any judgment on that will have to wait until products are available.

I'm a bit obsessive when it comes to conserving electricity and would appreciate information on power consumption in stereo amplifiers. Do the figures listed by some manufacturers represent consumption only at full volume—which I'm not likely to require? Does consumption increase as I turn up the volume? If so, would an amp use relatively little power at low volume? If the amp is switched on but no input provided, what percentage of its peak consumption does it draw? Does a more powerful amp use a lot more electricity or will things balance out somewhat because it can be used at a lower volume setting than a less powerful amp? I don't mind a higher initial investment but would dislike a higher monthly electric bill.—Michael D. Scherer, Teaticket, Mass.

We covered this subject in some detail in our July 1974 issue ("High Fidelity and the Energy Crisis" by Edward J. Foster), though amplifier design has altered the figures somewhat since then. First, we doubt that your audio equipment is using any significant fraction of your total electricity demand (certainly, if we assume solid-state equipment; tubes draw a lot of current just to heat their filaments). The wattage drawn by a power amp (regardless of its output ratings) depends on how much output power it actually is called upon to deliver. Idling power increases with output rating but usually not proportionally. A typical amp rated at 20 dBW (100 watts) per channel and designed for Class-B operation might draw about 80 watts at idle and perhaps 250 watts at around 13 dBW (20 watts) average—the

UPGRADE YOUR HI-FI SYSTEM FOR ONLY \$4.25.

Most people think they have to buy expensive equipment to improve their hi-fi systems.

But no matter how good the components in any system are, it's impossible for the sound you have recorded to be any better than the tape you record it on.

So before you invest hundreds of dollars in new

equipment, invest \$4.25 in a Maxell cassette.

Maxell is recognized as the premier quality recording tape the world over. It's used by more audio critics who evaluate hi-fi equipment than any other brand. Among people with expensive sound systems, we're also the most popular tape. But this doesn't mean we can't make a medium

quality system a better sounding system.

Buy just one Maxell cassette and see how much better it sounds than the tape you're using now.

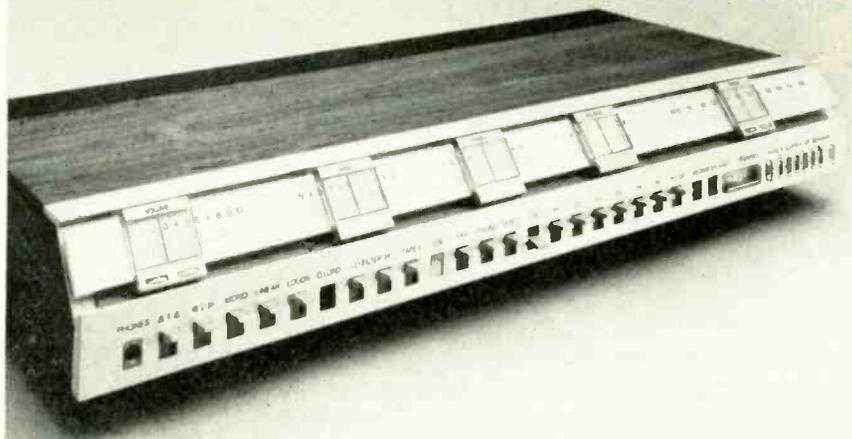
At \$4.25, you can think of us as expensive tape. Or the cheapest way in the world to get a better sounding hi-fi system.



maxell

Maxell Corporation of America, Moonachie, N.J.

POWER WELL BRED



BANG & OLUFSEN

WRITE FOR LITERATURE. BANG & OLUFSEN OF AMERICA, DEPARTMENT 11, 515 BUSSE ROAD, ELK GROVE VILLAGE, ILL. 60007

CIRCLE 9 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NEW from High Fidelity's Music Listener's Book Service

The Fischer-Dieskau Book of Lieder

800 The Fischer-Dieskau Book of Lieder

From the master interpreter of the Lied: a personal selection of more than seven hundred and fifty of the greatest song texts in the international repertoire, all in new translations by George Bird and Richard

Stokes that enable the reader to follow them line by line, the English directly opposite the German. Presents the works of Schubert, including the three song cycles, and a generous sampling of the works of Brahms, Wolf, Schumann, Liszt, Mendelssohn, Mahler, and Strauss plus little-known pieces by Reichardt, Zelter, Marx, Franz, Meyerbeer, Cornelius, Busoni, Hindemith, Fortner, and many others. \$15.00

DIETRICH FISCHER-DIESKAU SCHUBERT'S SONGS

801 Schubert's Songs: A Biographical Study

By Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau — From the greatest interpreter of Schubert's songs — and one of the most penetrating singers of our time — comes this masterly study of the

genesis and development of Schubert's vocal music. \$12.50

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Dept. HW 2160 Patterson Street
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City _____

State _____ Zip _____

point at which instantaneous musical peaks may be expected to go into clipping. At full output the power drain should be about 300 watts and at one-third power (where efficiency is close to its lowest) 320 watts. For comparison, a typical Class-A amp with the same rating might draw 800 watts at idle, 400 at full power.

So figuring how much electricity your amp actually will eat up is not easy. It is further complicated by the fact that (as you suggest) a single power-consumption figure, where the manufacturer shows it at all, represents consumption at rated output; your actual demands will be lower. Some manufacturers do show idling consumption as well, and for background-music levels this figure will be close to what you actually use. With a medium-power amp of conventional design, this level may require less (say, 25 watts or so) than is drawn by a hefty-motored open-reel deck (which might easily be in the 100-watt range). So don't overlook your other components when making your calculations, and remember that most will draw their full rated power consumption (which may be shown on the serial-number plate or in the owner's manual) all the time they are turned on.

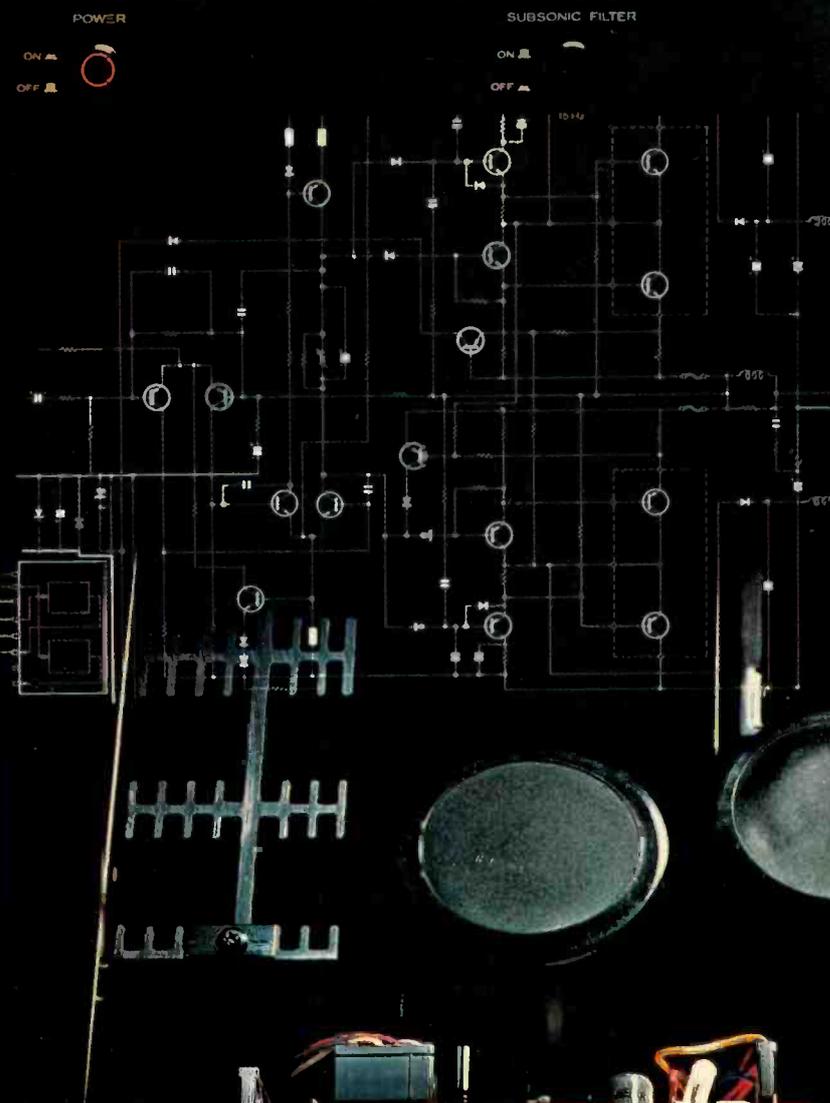
Recently I had the chance to purchase a Dual CS-704 turntable for an exceptionally good price. Your test report [March 1977] said the following: "The excellent damping provided by the antiresonance filter results in less recorded rumble and low-frequency chaff being transferred through the stylus and pickup to the preamp. This translates into a small but perceptible increase in the over-all clarity of sound."

If that is actually the case, shouldn't the arm come in for censure rather than approbation? That is, if the filter really is able to remove some recorded rumble and other low-frequency noise, then conceivably it also filters out musical material in the same frequency range, or some nonmusical material that is still part of the musical performance (say, the pedal action in some of Anthony Newman's harpsichord recordings). Perhaps I am guilty of what HIGH FIDELITY has elsewhere called "perfectionism run rampant"; after all, who isn't in favor of the greatest possible clarity of sound, and who wants to listen to recorded rumble and other noise?—Paul Seydor, Los Angeles, Calif.

The tone arm of the Dual CS-704 does not, in fact, remove anything; it simply doesn't accentuate as much noise in the low-frequency resonance range (below musical frequencies) as many other tone arms do, because it keeps the resonance very well damped.

A friend gave me a pair of Delta Scientific transmission meters. I would like to use these meters to show the output in watts of my Pioneer 737 receiver. Since my friend is not sure how to do this and I cannot find the company's address, I am hoping you can tell me what procedure to use and if it is safe to do.—Adam Kaplan, Plainview, N.Y.

We are not familiar with Delta Scientific, and without certain knowledge and data about the meters we cannot tell you how to use them. Why don't you ask your friend where he got them and get the company's address from the store? You might also look into the Realistic APM-100 audio power meter as an alternative.



Dynaharmony

RMS output power per channel
(both channels driven into 8 ohms
20Hz-20,000Hz 0.1% THD) 200 watts

Transient Music Power
(within rated distortion) 400 watts

Frequency Response 5-80,000Hz (+0, -1dB)

S/N Ratio
(IHF, A Network) 110 dB

Extra Power with Improved Efficiency

Hitachi's Class G

Hitachi's Class G is one of the most incredible cost/performance amplifiers ever created.

It is about three times as efficient as the conventional Class B amplifier. And it looks as sophisticated as it sounds.

Simply expressed, Class G is two amps in one. During the musical "downs" and "averages" the primary amp works on the low-voltage amplifier. But let one of those musical peaks come along and the standby

high-voltage amplifier cuts in for clear, powerful sound without clipping distortion.

Technically the standby amp consists of additional power transistors which are activated only when the signal peak demands it. But practically it means we can offer more usable power at a lower price.

Or in other words you're not only getting a little extra, you're getting about twice the amplification for the price of one amplifier.



HITACHI
When a company cares,
it shows.

*Introducing 3 new ways
to get the truth out of your
cassette deck.*



OVER

REW

FF

STOP

PLAY

REC

ON



**The Master Series.TM
A Scotch[®] cassette for every
switch position.**

Three totally different tapes. Each developed to deliver the truest, clearest sound possible at each tape selector switch position.

Our Master I cassette is for normal bias recording. It features an excellent dynamic range, low distortion, uniform high frequency sensitivity and output that's 10 dB more than standard tapes.

Our new Master II replaces chrome cassettes and is designed for use on hi-fi stereo systems with chrome bias (70 microsecond equalization). It features some spectacular performance characteristics, including a special coating that gives it a 3 dB better signal-to-noise ratio at low and high frequencies than chrome cassettes, yet it's less abrasive.

Our new Master III is for the ferri-chrome setting. It's formulated with the most advanced technology available, giving a 3 dB output improvement at low frequencies and 2 dB at high frequency. And the unique dual layer construction increases both low and high frequency sensitivity over chromium dioxide and ferric oxides.

All this, plus unique inner workings you can actually see. Our new Master line has a special bonus feature. A precision molded clear shell that allows you to monitor the inner workings of the cassettes. You can actually see the recorder head penetration and the unique roller guides in action. Look closely at the transparent shell and you'll see the water wheels which were specially designed to move the tape evenly across the head, reducing friction and noise. And two radially creased shims insure smoother wind, improved mechanical reliability and reduced wow and flutter.

Enough said. Now it's time for you to take the true test. Match up the right Master cassette with the bias you prefer. Then just listen.

You'll find that whichever switch position you use, a Scotch[®] Master is the way to get the most out of it.

**Scotch[®] Recording Tape.
The truth comes out.**

3M
COMPANY



Here's another Empire 698 Turntable dashing off the assembly line.

It takes 15½ hours to make an Empire turntable.
Each one stands over 80 separate inspections before
it reaches the end of the line.

And after the assembly is done, we test it some more.

Wow and flutter, rumble, and speed accuracy are
electronically confirmed to meet specifications before
final approval.

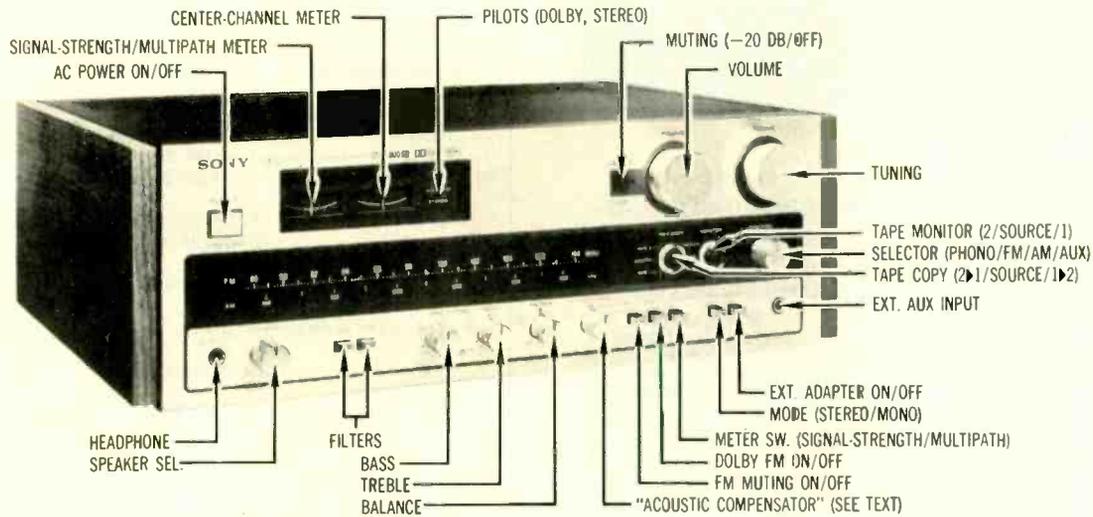
It's not a fast way to finish a turntable, but it's a great
way to start one.

EMPIRE

Empire Scientific Corp., Garden City, New York 11530

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

New A CONSUMER'S GUIDE Equipment Reports



A Solid Midpriced Receiver from Sony

The Equipment: Sony STR-5800SD, a stereo FM/AM receiver in metal case with wooden side panels. Dimensions: 19¼ by 6½ inches (front panel), 14¾ inches deep plus clearance for controls and connections. Price: \$500. Warranty: "limited," two years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Sony Corp., Japan; U.S. distributor: Sony Corp. of America, 9 W. 57th St., New York, N.Y. 10019.

Comment: Considering the number of receivers on the market, finding one with full Dolby FM circuitry is like finding an oak in a birch forest. They're there, but rare. The STR-5800SD and the rest of the Sony receivers with the SD suffix are among these rarities.

Third down from the top of the Sony receiver line, the STR-5800SD offers an impressive number of features. For example, at the push of a button, the signal strength meter indicates the degree of multipath interference, allowing you to orient your antenna for minimum deflection. The combination of a four-position rotary switch and a pair of three-position levers handles the input selection. With the Sony arrangement, dubbing between tape decks can proceed in either direction: 1 to 2 or 2 to 1. A front-panel stereo phone jack overrides the rear panel auxiliary inputs for a convenient temporary lashup of an extra piece of equipment. An external processor such as an SQ decoder or graphic equalizer can be permanently wired into the setup and activated at the push of a button—without re-

course to the TAPE MONITOR. Three sets of loudspeakers can be hooked up and selected separately or in two combinations (A + B or A + C).

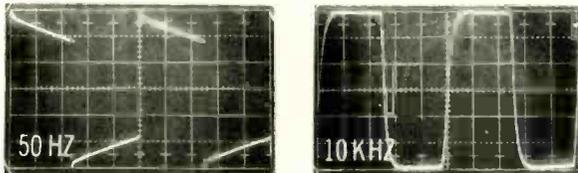
While its 17½-dBW (55-watt) rating doesn't vault the STR-5800SD into the super-power class, it certainly is no weakening. Exemplary of Sony's power-rating philosophy, our sample was able to deliver somewhat more oomph (1 dB) than Sony actually claims. Though this doesn't guarantee that all units from a production run will perform identically, it is a good indication that any one you're likely to buy will at least meet spec.

The FM specs of this receiver are no more extraordinary than those of the amplifier, but, again, the lab data show a comfortable margin in almost every respect. Exceptions can probably be attributed to measurement techniques: Capture ratio and selectivity are very difficult to establish with a high degree of accuracy, and our way of measuring

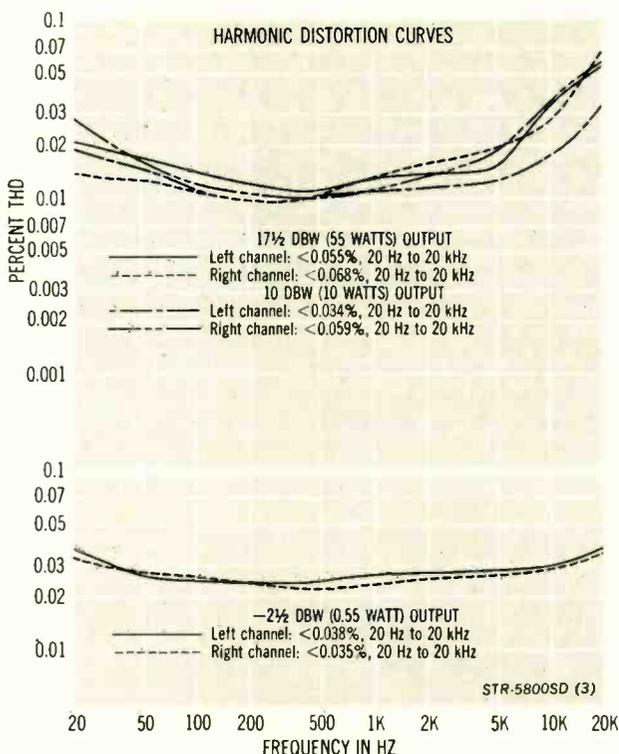
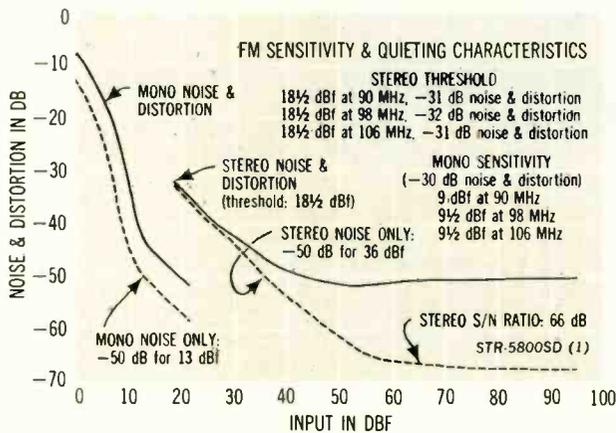
REPORT POLICY Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and controlled listening tests. Unless otherwise noted, test data and measurements are obtained by CBS Technology Center, Stamford, Connecticut, a division of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc., one of the nation's leading research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

IM differs somewhat from the standard. So while the STR-5800SD hits no new highs in specsmanship, it is well above average in most important areas.

And the performance is there in actual use. FM behavior is very good—especially in quieting and stereo separation. The dial is generous in length and its calibration linear and reasonably accurate. Tuning is smooth, with negligible backlash. While the channel-center meter is not particularly sensitive, the combination signal-strength/multipath meter is very handy. The multipath function offers a good indication of optimum antenna orientation and, in the normal signal strength mode, indicates relative signal level

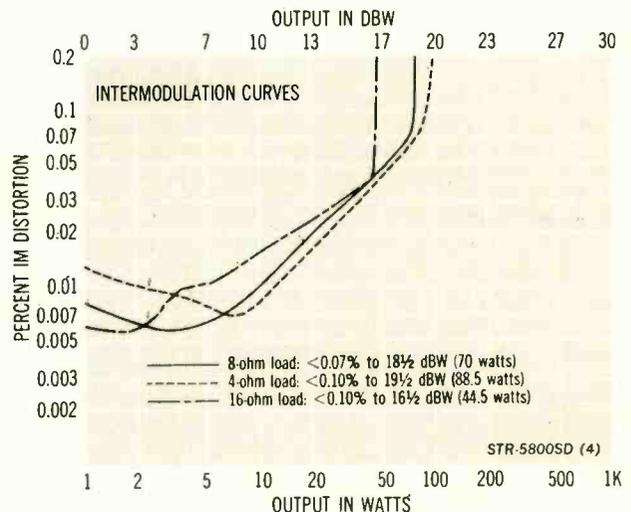


Square-wave response



Sony STR-5800SD Receiver Additional Data

Tuner Section			
Capture ratio	1½ dB		
Alternate-channel selectivity	70 dB		
S/N ratio (mono)	74 dB		
THD	Mono	L ch	R ch
80 Hz	0.21%	0.70%	0.67%
1 kHz	0.185%	0.30%	0.33%
10 kHz	0.18%	1.10%	0.98%
IM distortion	0.27%		
19-kHz pilot	-65 dB		
38-kHz subcarrier	-68 dB		
Frequency response	mono + 1, -½ dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz		
	L ch + 1, -2 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz		
	R ch + ½, -2 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz		
Channel separation	>37 dB, 80 Hz to 10 kHz		
	>27 dB, 36 Hz to 15 kHz		
Amplifier Section			
Power output at clipping (channels driven simultaneously)	L ch 18½ dBW (70 watts)		
	R ch 18¼ dBW (68 watts)		
Frequency response	+ ¼, -½ dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz		
	+ ¼, -2 dB, below 10 Hz to 40 kHz		
RIAA equalization	± ¼ dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz		
Input characteristics (for rated output at full gain)	Sensitivity	Noise	S/N ratio
phono	2.4 mV	-53½ dBW	71 dB
aux	250 mV	-74½ dBW	92 dB
tape 1, 2	250 mV	-74½ dBW	92 dB
ext. adapt.	250 mV	-74½ dBW	92 dB
Phono overload (clipping point)	80 mV at 1 kHz		
Damping factor at 1 kHz	42		
High filter	-3 dB at 7.4 kHz; approx. 6 dB/oct.		
Low filter	-3 dB at 43 Hz; approx. 6 dB/oct.		



with comparatively high precision. On reasonably strong signals, the tuning can be quite far from the center frequency (as indicated by the meter) before the sound goes to pot.

The muting is effective, although spinning rapidly through the dial will elicit some thumps. The mute point is set quite high, which suppresses some listenable stations with the muting on but assures good mono performance on any signal strong enough to "unmute." On the other hand, the rather low stereo threshold is low enough to put the receiver into the stereo mode on stations that are really quite marginal. The dial pointer is rather novel. It is illuminated in two segments. The lower one is always lit, while the upper appears to come on whenever an FM station strong enough to overcome the muting is received.

The tuner of the STR-5800SD is about what we've come to expect in equipment of this quality. The amplifier, on the other hand, is a bit surprising. The phono preamp is quiet and the RIAA equalization accurate. But we've seen good lab data and heard disappointing sound before. Not so with this Sony—evidently it knows how to extract the best from a cartridge. The phono sound is exceedingly clean and crisp, with very solid midrange and bass. The excellent transient ability shows up dramatically on the new direct-to-disc records, such as the Nexus ragtime concert on the Umbrella label. On that disc, the percussive attack of the xylophone is reproduced with uncanny realism, and the drum beat, although not particularly low in pitch, can be felt as well as heard. We'd rate the phono preamp of the STR-5800SD with the best we've experienced.

We detected no signs of phono input overload even

CIRCLE 131 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Correction

We are informed by Sansui that the price of its BA-2000 amplifier, reported on in our September issue, is \$440, rather than \$850 as quoted in the report. We regret the error.

though the measured clipping point is a bit on the low side. So only with very sensitive cartridges—and discs cut at high levels—might there be cause to look askance at the overload figure. The tone controls are typical, but the ACOUSTIC COMPENSATOR selector is unusual. This four-position switch offers conventional loudness contour, bass boost alone (which can be used as a bass-only loudness compensator, though the degree of boost does not depend on the volume setting), and PRESENCE, which produces a gentle hump in the midrange response. The latter is very effective in producing a more "up-front" sound from rather distantly recorded discs, with little apparent effect on the tonal balance. The low and high filters are less effective, and the settings of the function switch and tape selector levers are nigh impossible to see in a dimly illuminated room.

Sony's STR-5800SD strikes us as a very good value. Not only does it include full Dolby FM circuitry (whose usefulness depends, of course, on the number of Dolby stations in your area), but it provides a generally high level of FM performance. The power amplifier should be adequate for most normal listening, and the phono preamp is exceptional. We'd suggest you give this one a careful look.

PL-570, a Luxury Turntable from Pioneer



The Equipment: Pioneer PL-570, a two-speed (33 and 45 rpm) automated single-play turntable assembly, with tone arm, base, and dust cover. Dimensions: 19¼ by 15½ inches (top); 7½ inches high with cover closed, 18½ inches clearance required with cover fully open. Price: \$400. Warranty: "limited," two years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Pioneer Electronic Corp., Japan; U.S. distributor: U.S. Pioneer Electronic Corp., 75 Oxford Dr., Moonachie, N.J. 07074.

Comment: If there is any component in which efficient, no-fuss operation can inspire the user with a sense of security, it is a turntable. With the exception of a volume control set inadvertently to speaker-destroying levels, mismanagement of electronics is harmless and easily rectifiable.

Phonographic fumble-fingeredness, however, may be punished summarily by damage to a cherished record—or by a horrendous transient that can also put loudspeakers in danger. The Pioneer PL-570 seems to understand this. It almost seems to dare you to try to make a mistake with it. Apart from initial setup, installation of the pickup, and balance and adjustment of the tone arm (which can be a trifle fussy), the user who favors automatic operation has just one responsibility: to make sure that the controls are set correctly for the disc on the platter before touching START. And a touch is all that any of the activating controls needs.

If you like to make manual starts, the unit will indulge you by setting the platter spinning as soon as you remove the arm from its rest. You then cue up the arm and release the cueing lever, which lowers the arm quickly but gently to

Millinewtons? For some time, we have had to suppress a small wince every time we expressed a vertical tracking force in grams, regardless of the fact that the gram is a unit of mass. This solecism has long since become convention in the industry; to correct it would surely have caused confusion. But the situation is different now. Some manufacturers are beginning to use the newton (named for Sir Isaac), which is a unit of force, and so will we from now on.

For a force of the magnitude applied to a phono pickup, the millinewton (0.001 newton) is appropriate. The relationship between grams and millinewtons is simple: A mass of 1 gram placed at sea level in the earth's gravitational field develops a downward thrust (weight) of 9.8 millinewtons. Thus, "10 millinewtons" (abbreviated mN) can be taken as equivalent—not equal—to "1 gram," with a negligible 2% error. We will continue to supply data in grams (in parentheses).

the disc surface. Should you forget to raise the cue mechanism in the first place (in which case the arm is free), the balance and feel of the arm is such that a reasonably coordinated person will not find it difficult to lower by hand. Using the cueing lever to interrupt or "edit" a record is also rewarding. The negligible side drift makes it easy to return to the groove you left.

For no-hands record playing, the START automatically places the arm in the lead-in groove. If REPEAT is pushed before START, the arm recycles at the end of a side and begins to play it anew. A light push on the STOP button cancels REPEAT; a second touch returns the arm and brings the action to a halt. The arm returns automatically at the end of a side in any mode of play; yet, gratifyingly unlike some automated turntables we've worked with, the PL-570 does not return the arm when you try to cue to a record's inner bands. Nor is there any speed/diameter interlock to inhibit playing 7-inch LPs or 12-inch 45s. In fact, we can think of only one operation that is possible on typical manual players but not on the PL-570: back-cueing.

It is noteworthy that throughout the machinations of the arm its position is monitored optically rather than mechanically, thus insuring minimal drag. (CBS Technology Cen-

ter found none to speak of.) Tripping of the automatic return requires a minimum stylus force of 3 millinewtons (0.3 gram). Total cycle time is 11 seconds.

Despite its rather substantial appearance, the tone arm has a low effective mass. Used with the Shure V-15 III cartridge, it resonates at 8.5 Hz—lower than "ideal" but no cause for alarm; we found it would track moderately warped discs well. The relatively good damping holds the amplitude rise at resonance to a mere 2½ dB. For all practical purposes, the stylus-force gauge measures exactly up to the setting equivalent to 20 millinewtons (2 grams), going only negligibly over the indicated value at settings above that. Antiskating force is linear over the most-used part of the range. And, while we're talking about arm features, the headshell is interchangeable with other standardized models. The arm will therefore accept the pre-mounted pickups that are appearing from several companies.

Of course, a sophisticated tone arm is of little use unless the platter does its job well too. The Quartz Lock servo system of the PL-570 keeps the speed of the platter exact at line voltages of 105 and 127 as well as at a normal 120, both at 33 and 45 rpm. It thus renders the easily read strobe redundant except for reassurance. With the Quartz Lock defeated, the speed can be varied by an amount equivalent to a bit more than a semitone up or down. Average weighted peak flutter (ANSI/IEEE) reads 0.04% at 33 rpm with a maximum instantaneous value of 0.07%, representing fine performance. Rumble is well suppressed, reading -64 dB with the CBS ARLL weighting. The isolation system prevents the turntable from being noticeably sensitive to footsteps or minor accidental jogs.

Considered in toto, the PL-570 offers a lot in the way of features and performance to justify its price. The tone arm, incidentally, is adjustable for height, and while we are unable to verify Pioneer's claim that this is unique in such an automatic, we can't recall seeing it elsewhere. Much of what the unit offers is in the realm of convenience and therefore not absolutely necessary, but all the basics are taken care of almost impeccably. To top things off cosmetically and operationally, the turntable projects a gratifying sense of refined elegance and attention to detail. The PL-570 is truly a fine job.

CIRCLE 134 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

A Distinctly Unconventional Preamp from Philips

The Equipment: Philips AH-572, a stereo preamplifier in metal case. Dimensions: 18 by 6 inches (front panel), 13¾ inches deep plus clearance for controls and connections. Price: \$599.95. Warranty: "limited," two years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Philips High Fidelity Laboratories, P.O. Box 2208, Fort Wayne, Ind. 46801.

Comment: Philips, in the AH-572, has addressed itself to a question that is, we suppose, as old as high fidelity itself—how is one to build a full-feature preamp (or any other unit of similar complexity) so that its workings can be understood at a glance even by the uninitiated? The Philips answer is an illuminating front-panel block schematic whose various elements turn on and off along with the feature each represents. This is one of the innovations that claim the attention immediately; the other is the capacitance switching. Instead of pushbuttons or levers, Philips has elected to use ridged touchplates, with integral LEDs to

show whether the switching action is on or off.

In combination these two elements—cosmetic though they admittedly are—set the AH-572 apart from the competition. The luxury/convenience personality that they establish is a major factor in both the enjoyment and the utility inherent in the product. But they are not entirely successful in the utility department. In keeping the "schematic" simple, Philips has omitted some functions (the filters and tone defeat, for example) whose operation therefore can be checked only at the LEDs; the output selectors (the user has the choice of two switchable outputs) conversely are indicated both on the schematic and on the LEDs. Also, we would suggest that the front panel should be placed so that it won't be touched accidentally; you can trigger the capacitance switching without being aware of it when your hands are busy in the immediate vicinity. In addition, the LOUDNESS stopped working on our samples—a problem Philips says it found and corrected in all but the

Pure Pleasure.

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Scott speakers are designed and engineered for listeners who demand the ultimate in true sound reproduction.

All Scott speakers are designed and individually tested for low distortion, flat frequency response and the highest possible efficiency. Their crossover networks are built with low loss capacitors, and coils with exceptionally close tolerances to give you the truest sound possible.

Unlike many other speakers, Scott speakers neither add nor subtract from the original sound. And unlike so many of today's "fad" speakers, they don't distort the original sound for special effect. Nor do they color the sound for an exaggerated response.

Scott speakers provide pure listening pleasure by accurately reproducing music with qualities equivalent to live performances, and with a degree of authenticity limited only by the quality of the record, tape or broadcast signal.

It is this uncommon ability to reproduce sound in a truly natural fashion that has earned Scott

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Listen for yourself. The true sound of Scott is pure pleasure. And true sound is built into every Scott speaker in every price range, from the Bookshelf Series to the distinguished PRO 100 shown here.

For specifications on our complete line of audio components, contact your nearest Scott dealer, or write H.H. Scott, Inc. Corporate Headquarters, 20 Commerce Way, Woburn, MA 01801. In Canada: Paco Electronics, Ltd., Quebec, Canada.



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The PRO 100 provides a unique sound dispersion control that allows you to adjust the direction and amount of sound between the upward-firing and front-firing drivers. Two additional switches allow you to tailor the high end and midrange frequency response of the speaker to best match your room acoustics.



Three individual position switches allow you to tailor response to best match your own listening environment.

SCOTT Warranty Identification Card

Warranty Number: 24026
 Model: PRO 100 Speakers (2)
 Serial Number: 1001374/1001375
 Expiration Date: January 1, 1983

Scott's unique, gold warranty card.

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Pairs of midrange and tweeter drivers in two planes, one horizontal and one vertical, offer the advantage of steering high-frequency distribution to most favorably complement speaker placement and individual listening taste. Unlike many other speaker systems, the Scott PRO 100 is not dependent on the reflecting surface of the listener's walls for its response, and provides a truly omnidirectional effect in any listening environment.



Upward-firing midrange and high-frequency drivers, as well as front-firing drivers, provide an omnidirectional effect that surrounds you with sound.

SCOTT
The Name to listen to.

Receivers / Tuners / Amplifiers / Turntables / Speakers / Cassette Decks

CIRCLE 54 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

We build the others

Only JVC offers touch control
and LED readout to let you control
pitch perfectly.



in what leave out.



There are seven extraordinary new JVC turntables to choose from. And priced from less than \$100 to more than \$1000.* Every turntable in our line offers more features for your dollar than you would expect.

Our most amazing features appear on our unlimited-class QL-10: A totally unique LED readout system that lets you change the exact, quartz-locked pitch of music up or down with a touch of the appropriate button. Certainly a remarkable innovation for serious audiophiles, musicians, broadcasters and recordists.

But every JVC turntable boasts similarly surprising features, in quartz-locked direct drive, direct drive and belt-driven models. There are core-less DC servomotors, Tracing-Hold tonearms, error-free integrated frequency generators, detachable dust-covers (our JL-F50 even lets you operate most of its controls without disturbing the cover) and all of the other amenities we're famous for.

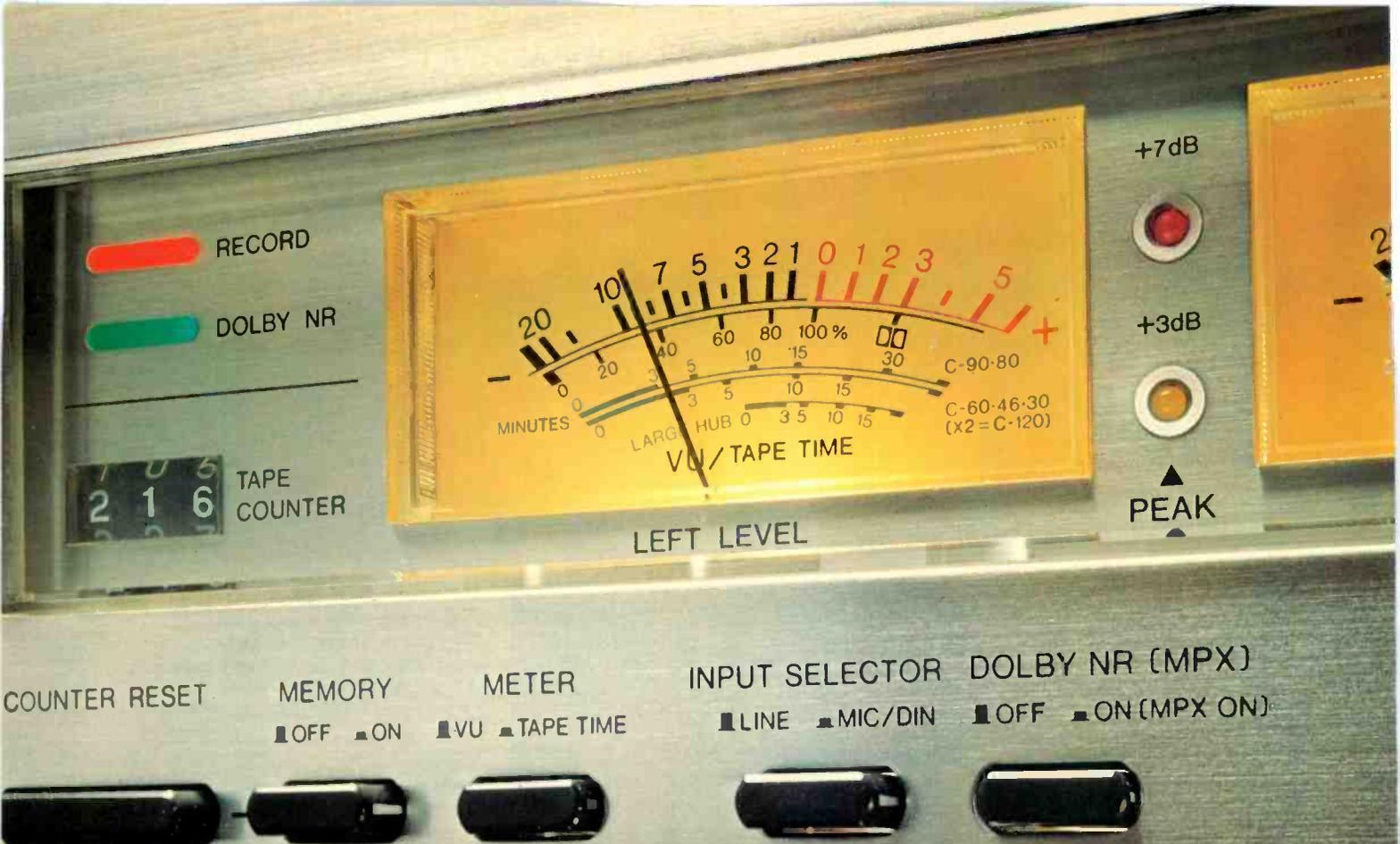
Of course, you'll find our wow and flutter and S/N ratio specs equal to or better than other turntables costing much more.

Once you've seen the things we build in, you'll wonder why the others leave them out.

JVC America Company,
Division of US JVC Corp., 58-75
Queens Midtown Expressway,
Maspeth, New York 11378
(212) 476-8300. Canada: JVC
Electronics of Canada, Ltd.,
Scarborough, Ont.

For your nearest JVC dealer,
call toll-free (outside N.Y.)
800-221-7502

*Approximate retail value.



3 Minute Warning from AIWA

With the AD-6550's unique new Remaining Tape Time Meter you never have to worry about running out of tape in the middle of recording your favorite music. In the past you monitored your tape visually and hoped that the musical passage and tape would finish together. Now, this extremely easy to use indicator gives you plenty of warning. It shows you exactly how many minutes remain on the tape. So that when you record the "Minute Waltz" it won't end in 45 seconds.

Wow and Flutter: Below 0.05% (WRMS)

The AD-6550 cassette deck achieves an inaudible wow and flutter of below 0.05% (WRMS) thanks to a newly designed 38-pulse FG servo motor and AIWA's special Solic Stabilized Transport (SST) system. And because we use Dolby* we also improve the S/N ratio to 65dB (Fe-Cr). So you can listen to the music instead of tape hiss. The AIWA AD-6550. Be forewarned.

AIWA®

LH BIAS FINE (%)

Bias Fine Adjustment

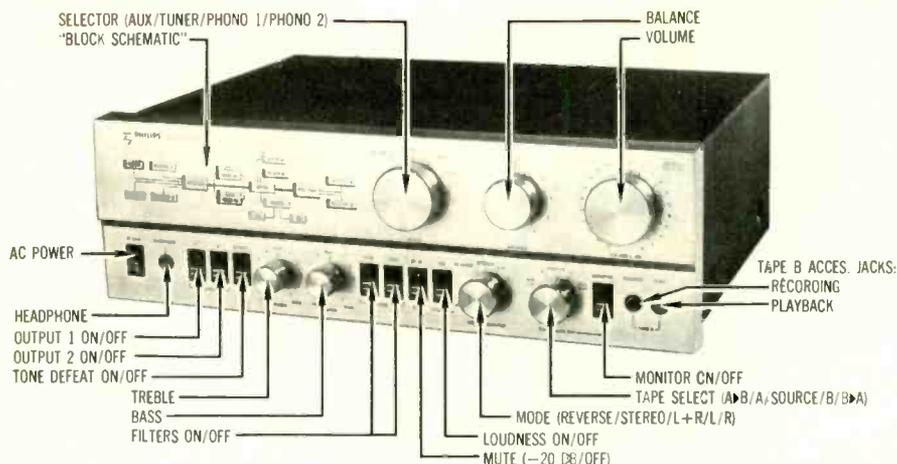
But there's a lot more to the AD-6550. AIWA has included a Bias Fine Adjustment knob that permits the fine tuning of frequency response to give optimum performance of any brand of LH tape on the market.



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 Distributed in Canada by: **SHRIRO (CANADA) LTD.**

CIRCLE 4 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



earliest. Buyers whose loudness switching misbehaves can get the fix at a warranty station.

In spite of these cavils, the concept is attractive and, for the first time around at least, well executed. It is complemented by a couple of nice touches on the back panel. There are two unswitched convenience outlets (rated at 200 watts apiece) and two that are switched (100 watts apiece)—a generous array. There is a master power switch. (With it on and the front-panel power touchplate off, there presumably is a slight drain to activate the touchplate; but the various operations triggered by the touchplates, draw current only while the plates are being touched—meaning, for one thing, that when you kill the power by any of the available means, including pulling the plug, the switches will remain on or off as they were beforehand once the power is restored.) Finally, there are four screwdriver phono-sensitivity adjustments, one for each channel and for each of the phono inputs.

The as-delivered performance of these inputs is shown as measured by CBS in the "Additional Data" table; the sensitivity of each is exactly on Philips' specs and can be varied from 1.5 millivolts to 17 millivolts. The former extreme-sensitivity setting yields a signal-to-noise ratio of 67 dB (a little better than spec); at 17 millivolts the S/N ratio measures 82 dB—almost as good as the high-level inputs. The settings at which you end up using these phono-preamp sections will, of course, depend on the output of your cartridge(s) and its relationship to that of your tuner and other ancillary components.

The remainder of the unit's performance too is good (all distortion measurements are, for example, considerably better than spec), though at first glance the lab's square-wave-response photos may not suggest it. The ultrasonic ringing implied by the 10-kHz square wave actually appears to be the result of very sharp filtering just above 40 kHz, which is designed into some preamps to prevent the output from demanding greater slew rate than the associated power amp can deliver—therefore causing transient distortion. Though we obviously could hear no behavior that would have been less good had Philips not limited ultrasonic bandwidth, neither could we detect any ill attributable to the visually "poor" square-wave-response.

The switchable high filter, incidentally, strikes us as well calculated to suppress intrusive hiss; the low filter seems a little overenergetic in attacking rumble since it eliminates an appreciable portion of orchestral underpinning as well. When the turntable is audibly rumble-free, as one would expect in any price class comparable to that of the 572 itself, something closer to a subsonic filter might be a preferable alternative.

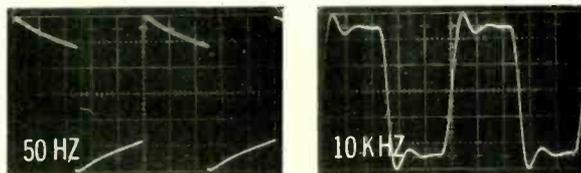
Over-all, the internal design of the preamp strikes us as very good without being as innovative as the external design. And it is therefore the externals—the cosmetics, if you will—on which the product will stand or fall in the estimation of the user. This is an exceedingly personal matter, bound to trigger widely diverging reactions, and it therefore must be carefully assessed by each potential user for himself.

CIRCLE 135 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Philips Model AH-572 Preamp Additional Data

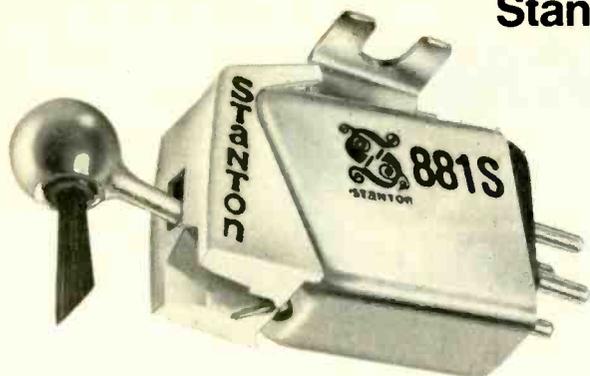
Output at clipping (channels driven simultaneously)		
L ch	16 volts	
R ch	16 volts	
Frequency response	+0, -½ dB, 13 Hz to 20 kHz	
RIAA equalization	+0, -½ dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz	
Input characteristics (for 2 volts output)		
	Sensitivity	S/N ratio
phono 1	2 mV*	68 dB*
phono 2	10 mV*	79 dB*
tuner	190 mV	88 dB
aux	190 mV	88 dB
tape A, B	190 mV	88 dB
Phono overload (clipping point at 1 kHz)		
phono 1	160 mV*	
phono 2	800 mV*	
High filter	-3 dB at 5 kHz; 12 dB/oct.	
Low filter	-3 dB at 110 Hz; 12 dB/oct.	
Muting	-20 dB	
IM distortion (at 2 volts)	0.0024%	
THD (2 volts output, 20 Hz to 20 kHz)		
L ch:	<0.0081%	
R ch:	<0.0086%	

*User variable; see text.



Square-wave response

Stanton Calibrates a New Leader

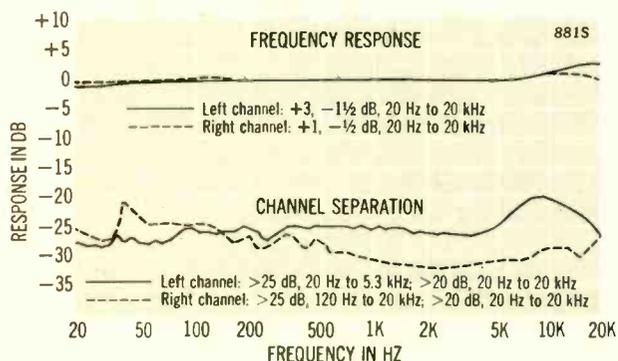


The Equipment: Stanton Model 881S Professional Calibration Standard stereo phono pickup, with Stereohedron stylus and brush. Price: \$150. Warranty: "full," one year parts and labor. Manufacturer: Stanton Magnetics, Inc., Terminal Drive, Plainview, N.Y. 11803.

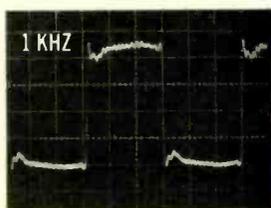
Comment: Ideally, the stylus used to play a record should be identical in shape to the one used in cutting the master from which the disc was made. The problem with this approach is, of course, that such a stylus would cut the groove anew every time the record is played and cause very rapid wear indeed. So here—as elsewhere in audio—compromise is necessary.

General practice has been to make the contact area between stylus and vinyl as small as possible in the direction of groove travel (so as to trace the groove accurately without gouging it) and as long as possible from top to bottom (to provide the largest possible bearing surface and minimize wear). This was the direction taken first by the elliptical stylus, then the Shibata, and then by the Stereohedron, introduced by Stanton's sister company Pickering specifically for playing stereo discs. Stanton has, partly through skillful use of electron microscopy, developed an improved Stereohedron for the 881S.

While this pickup is capable of tracking the "torture test," administered by the CBS Technology Center, at a vertical tracking force of 6.5 millinewtons (0.65 gram), the



Square-wave response



manufacturer's preferred setting is 10 millinewtons (1 gram). With this VTF, the 881S performs very well in the maximum tracking level tests, although not quite as well as the 681EEE that preceded it at the top of Stanton's Calibration line. Second harmonic distortion is (like that of the 681EEE) better than average. The newer pickup has less spurious second harmonic at high frequencies, and this, despite slightly higher IM, seems to make it somewhat smoother-sounding than its predecessor.

With its recommended load of 47,000 ohms in parallel with 275 picofarads, the new Stanton has a frequency response that remains within ½ dB of perfect flatness between 100 Hz and 6 kHz. Across that range the channel separation is 25 dB or better, with the match between channels within ½ dB. Below 100 Hz the response falls off a trifle, reaching -1 dB at 20 Hz while maintaining the same standard of channel matching. Above 6 kHz each channel begins to show a mild peak, that in the left reaching +2½ dB at 20 kHz and that in the right +1 dB at about 12.5 kHz before returning to 0 dB at 20 kHz. Generally the 881S has slightly better separation than the 681EEE and a somewhat more extended—and well controlled—high end.

At 1.33 millivolts per centimeter per second, the output is on the high side for a top-of-the-line pickup. Compliance, as shown by a resonant frequency of 8.4 Hz in an SME 3009 arm, is moderately high; since this frequency is a bit on the low side, the pickup should be happier with a somewhat less massive arm. Vertical tracking angle measures 25 degrees, distinctly higher than the nominal standard of 15 degrees.

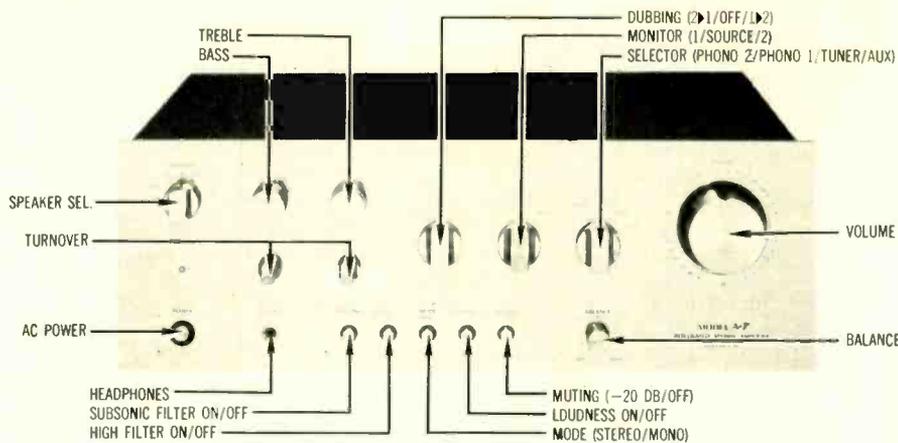
Microscopic examination confirms that the stylus has a large contact area and that its finish and alignment are very good. Square-wave response shows virtually no overshoot, mild undershoot, and heavily damped ultrasonic ringing.

In the past, we sometimes had experienced difficulties with the type of dust brush that comes integrally mounted on the 881S. This time, after we set it up according to directions, the brush-equipped cartridge did very well in tracking our favorite warped, thin-stock disc. Stanton claims that the brush actually adds damping to the cartridge/arm system and hence helps in tracking warped records; on the basis of our experience with the 881S we can see no ground for arguing the point.

Records heard via the Stanton sound bright, clear, and detailed, with an especially smooth high end. Sharp, quick transients such as those found on direct-cut discs from Telarc, Sheffield, and Umbrella are taken in stride and reproduced with a stunning sense of presence. The stereo image is vivid, plausible, and stable. In the short time that we have known the pickup it has become one of our favorites.

If our elation concerning the 881S collides with any aspect of its reality, it is the price, which begins to approach the realm of imported moving-coil exotica. The Stanton is certainly competitive in this league, however, and we would expect its sound to tempt many a music lover into parting with the required cash. For those in whom parsimony vies with aesthetic sensibility, the large contact area of the Stereohedron stylus offers, in addition, low record wear and the ability to salvage worthy sonics from some well-worn discs. And professional (and semipro) users will doubtless find the individual calibration that accompanies each unit useful. Over-all, it sounds like a good deal to us.

CIRCLE 133 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Onkyo's A-7 Integrated Amp: Virtue in Reticence

The Equipment: Onkyo Model A-7, a stereo integrated amplifier, in metal case. Dimensions: 17½ by 6¼ inches (front panel), 13½ inches deep plus clearance for controls and connections. Price: \$349.95. Warranty: "limited," three years parts, two years labor. Manufacturer: Onkyo Corp., Japan; U.S. distributor: Onkyo U.S.A. Corp., 42-07 20th Ave., Long Island City, N.Y. 11105.

Comment: If, as is generally thought, lack of personality is a commendable feature in an amplifier, the Onkyo A-7 can be said to have achieved a considerable measure of virtue. It plays music with minimal coloration, can be put through its paces without special effort or understanding on the part of its human master, and is reasonably tolerant of vagaries in the other components with which it must be used. Furthermore, its sections are well balanced—no one is far above or below the general quality of the whole.

The Onkyo A-7 is exceptional in that it has a 4-ohm rating (70 watts—18½ dBW—per channel) as well as one for 8 ohms (65 watts/18 dBW per channel). Data taken at CBS

Technology Center verify that the ratings are accurate with a comfortable margin of safety. At rated power, the total harmonic distortion averages only a third of its specified value (0.1%) and barely exceeds 0.06% at 20 kHz. Distortion components remain small down to low power levels and are close to the noise floor of the amp (which is itself quite low at 90 dB below the rated 18-dBW output for the high-level inputs) as far down as 20 dB below full power. IM distortion is somewhat lower than specified with an 8-ohm load and somewhat higher with 4 ohms. The bandpass is a little wider than average, especially at the bass end, where a square wave is reproduced with surprisingly little tilt. The -3 dB point at the high end is beyond 70 kHz. The damping factor is adequate.

The phono equalization is exceptionally accurate and the overload point more than adequate for almost any conceivable circumstance. Signal-to-noise ratio of this section is very good at 75 dB re full output (equivalent to 87 dB re a 10-millivolt input). The choice of circuit geometry for this stage seems felicitous, for we are unable to find any evi-

About the dBW . . .

We express output power and noise in terms of dBW—meaning power in dB with a reference (0 dBW) of 1 watt. We repeat herewith the conversion table so that you can use the advantages of dBW in comparing current products with those we have reported on in the past. You can, of course, use the figures in watts that accompany the new dBW figures for these comparisons, but then you lose the ability to compare noise levels for outputs other than rated power and the ability to figure easily the levels to which specific amplifiers will drive specific speakers—as explained in the June 1976 issue.

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

dence of undesirable interaction with phono cartridges.

The control panel of the A-7 is distinguished by its large, open design and rather unusual layout. The controls that are used most frequently are on the upper two-thirds of the panel. The oversized volume control knob has thirty-two detented positions. The four-position input selector handles two phonos, tuner, and auxiliary. It functions in conjunction with the adjacent three-position monitor switch that expands the switching capability to include two tape decks. Dubbing between the decks—in either direction—is determined by the next three-position switch and is independent of the selector position. Thus, dubbing between decks can take place while listening to another source. The bass and treble controls have eleven switched positions. Below each tone control is a three-position turn-over switch (125-HZ/DEFEAT/400-HZ for the bass, and 2-KHZ/DEFEAT/8-KHZ for the treble) with actual 3-dB turn-over points reasonably close to the frequencies indicated. Two sets of loudspeakers can be handled in the conventional A/B/A + B manner.

The less frequently used controls are clustered on the lower third of the panel. Of these, the subsonic and high cut filters are relatively ineffective, and the BALANCE has no detent to identify the equal-gain position.

Besides the normal complement of inputs on the rear panel (including a removable link between the preamp and power amp) there are three convenience outlets (one of which is switched) and a set of speaker fuses. Connection to the speakers is via color-coded binding posts that are most suitable for bare-wire connections. There are molded off-center slots on the connecting strip that guide the wire into position so that the strands wrap around the post as it is tightened.

The Onkyo A-7 is a competent all-around performer with sufficient power capability for most applications. The LOUDNESS, whose quite mild contour introduces enough bass and treble boost at low volume levels to help restore the tonal balance without overwhelming the music, is more felicitous to our ears than many. The selectable-turnover

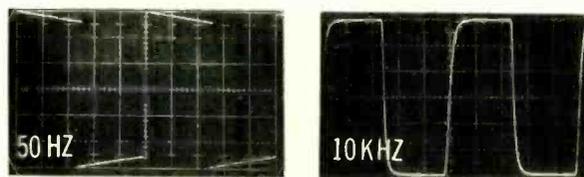
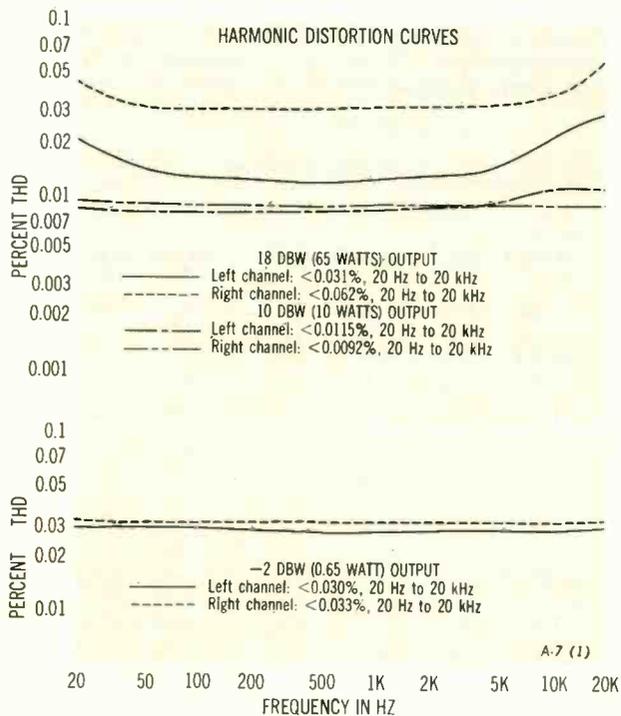
tone controls are a boon. When they are set for 125 Hz and 8 kHz it is easy to taper the extreme ends of the spectrum without altering the midband balance—and that, to many serious music lovers, is what a tone control is for.

The exceptionally clean and sharp phono preamp, one of the strongpoints of the A-7, is virtually overload-proof. For its price, the A-7 comes notably close to doing what an amplifier is supposed to do—amplify and nothing else. When alteration of the signal is called for the control section generally is willing and competent. The Onkyo A-7 reproduces music—subtly and without introducing its own personality.

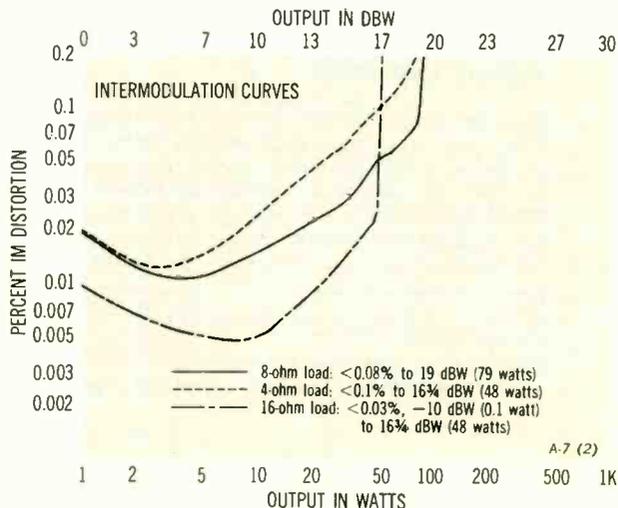
CIRCLE 132 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Onkyo A-7 Amplifier Additional Data

Power output at clipping (channels driven simultaneously)			
L ch	18 3/4 dBW (74 watts)		
R ch	18 1/2 dBW (71 watts)		
Frequency response			
	+ 0, -1/2 dB, below 10 Hz to 23 kHz		
	+ 0, -3 dB, below 10 Hz to 72 kHz		
RIAA equalization			
	+ 0, -1/2 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz		
Input characteristics (for rated output at full gain)			
	Sensitivity	Noise	S/N ratio
phono 1, 2	2.5 mV	-57 dBW	75 dB
tuner	160 mV	-72 dBW	90 dB
aux	160 mV	-72 dBW	90 dB
tape 1, 2	160 mV	-72 dBW	90 dB
Phono overload (clipping point)		240 mV at 1 kHz	
Damping factor at 1 kHz		49	
High filter		-3 dB at 6 kHz; 6 dB/oct.	
Subsonic filter		-3 dB at 14 Hz; 6 dB/oct.	



Square-wave response



Infinity brings
high technology
to a new low.

Under \$150.



Now there's a speaker at \$139 (\$145 east of the Mississippi) that has actually been compared to our phenomenal \$1200 Quantum Line Source™.

Our new Q_a™.

It was conceived with much of the same advanced technology and all of the commitment to excellence that gave birth to the Quantum Line Source.

Both have our EMIT electromagnetic induction tweeter™, driven by magnets of the most powerful magnetic material in the world: Samarium Cobalt.

With its extremely low mass, EMIT instantly and accurately follows input signals, combining exquisite detail of mid and high frequencies (to 32,000 Hz), sledgehammer power capability and dispersion to a degree never achieved by electrostatics or conventional drivers.

A special cone treatment and other advances in our low-mass, high-excursion Q-woofer™ delivers startlingly accurate bass as well as extraordinary midrange — the kind associated with 3 and 4-way systems.

Efficiency? You can drive Q_a with as little as 15 watts/channel or as much as 150 — comfortably.

Now we're not saying that the modest price of the Q_a buys you \$1200 worth of speaker. But we *are* suggesting that you'll be bowled over by the price/value comparison with QLS.

And when you compare Q_a with *other* legendary speakers, a remarkable thing happens. Speakers that used to sound great now sound wrong.

Get over to an Infinity™ dealer. A toll-free call to 800-423-5244 will tell you

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We get you back to what it's all about. Music.

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POWER OUTPUT

125 watts per channel, min. RMS, both channels driven into 8 ohms from 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz, with no more than 0.1% total harmonic distortion.

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FM SENSITIVITY

9.8 dBf (1.7 μ V).

SELECTIVITY

better than 85 dB.

SIGNAL TO NOISE RATIO

better than 70 dB.

SPURIOUS

RESPONSE REJECTION

better than 85 dB.

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CIRCLE 53 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

receiver with Dolby.*

there is also a midrange control. High and low filters. A tone defeat for bass and treble. A loudness switch and 20 dB audio muting switch. For added creative freedom, two tape monitors and a mic mixing circuit with separate level control. Two tuning meters,

as well as twin power meters that also serve for Dolby tone calibration.

Listen to the 9090DB. Handle its superbly smooth controls. See how they respond to your slightest command. We know you will fall in love with Sansui.



IF YOU CAN AFFORD THE BEST...



No matter what anyone tells you, you don't get better for less. You get what you pay for. That's why, when you're looking for quality stereo, you may have to spend a little more for Marantz... the finest audio equipment you can buy.

The Marantz 2500 is unquestionably the world's most powerful receiver. It delivers an awesome **250 watts per channel (minimum RMS at 8 Ohms, 20-20,000 Hz)** with no more than **0.05% THD!** And yet it conveniently fits shelves or cabinets.

The Marantz 2500 handles its tremendous power effortlessly. An especially designed Marantz **toroidal dual power supply** lets each channel perform unaffected by the power demands of the other. There are more innovations, like the **tunnel "pin fin" heat sink**, the most efficient cooling system on the market.

Look 'em straight in the eye and say,

"I want Marantz!"

Full complementary symmetry direct-coupled output circuitry, for highest reliability.

Two **LED peak-power indicators** show when the amplifier is at full output. A **built-in oscilloscope** gives unequalled tuning precision, while the **5-gang FM tuning capacitor** and **dual-gate MOS FET FM front end** comprise the most advanced tuner you can buy. The ultra-sophisticated noise-filtering system incorporates convenient **plug-in optional Dolby* FM noise reduction** circuitry plus the **18 dB per octave 9 kHz Bessel-derived high filter** and **15 Hz sub-sonic Butterworth low filter**.

If you're a music lover who will accept nothing less than the very finest... tell 'em you want Marantz.

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We sound better.



*TM Dolby Labs, Inc.

Prices, models and specifications subject to change without notice.

them ever since. If trapped in a concert hall when either piece is being played it takes a great effort of will to stop myself from leaping up and yelling "Drop!" at each four-minute cross-over point.

That is an example of an induced allergy. But what about the real ones, the ones that you are born with and that, if you are a recording producer, you may have to disguise if you want to stay employed? After all, it takes a brave man to declare that he can't bear Puccini just when he has been assigned to produce the latest *Butterfly*. The trouble is that we are all to varying extents victims of fashion: if you abominate Beethoven and happen to be a dentist, the worst that can happen is that you will be regarded as an eccentric and risk the loss of a few Beethoven-loving patients, but if you are a music student of similar persuasion, you may become an outcast. Even when you are established you risk ostracism if you so much as nudge a sacred cow, which almost happened to me some years ago when fate decreed that I should produce four recordings of Beethoven's Seventh virtually one after the other. This led me to express the opinion that the *Asai meno presto* in the third movement was the most boring, pretentious clodhopping music ever committed to paper and that it made me sick to see conductors drooling over its spurious profundities instead of treating it as the rather poor Austrian folksong (or imitation thereof) which it actually is. This mild observation caused sensitive ladies to faint and worthy gentlemen to turn their backs.

The fact is that we are alternately inhibited and two-faced about our allergies. I can think of one well-known conductor who dares not mention the fact that he loathes Mozart's operas. Fifty years ago you would have been thought eccentric if you admired Mahler, whereas today you are eccentric if you do not. Size also has something to do with the case in an inverse sort of way: It is permissible to attack Wagner's *Ring* or Beethoven's Ninth, but it is a heresy to suggest that even some of Haydn's symphonies are workaday trifles or that the only thing that makes Stravinsky's *Mass* bearable at all is its extreme brevity.

I am conscious that these views may cost me whatever reputation I have left. Yet, in the unlikely event that any record company should take pity and become concerned about my chances of earning a living henceforward, I must state that whatever happens I shall never be in the market to produce the complete unaccompanied viola sonatas of Max Reger. ●



Model AT15Sa/H Dual Magnet Stereo Cartridge pre-mounted in Universal tone arm head shell.

To find out how much better our cartridge sounds, play their demonstration record!

There are some very good test and demonstration records available. Some are designed to show off the capabilities of better-than-average cartridges...and reveal the weaknesses of inferior models. We love them all.

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Find out for yourself that when it comes to a duel between our cartridge and theirs...we're ready. Even when *they* choose the weapons!

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

DIRECTIONS

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

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

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

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

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

The answer to HiFi-Crostic No. 30 will appear in next month's issue of HIGH FIDELITY.

INPUT

- A. Original manufacturer of De Forest's audion (init. and last name)
- B. 300-3,000 MHz (2 wds.)
- C. Company sued by De Forest over high-vacuum patent (2 wds.)
- D. First president of American Radio Relay League (full name)
- E. Science of sound
- F. Agency that controls transportation (abbrev.)
- G. Component of pickup cartridge consisting of shear plates (2 wds.)
- H. Piccolo (Ger. abbr.; 2 wds.)
- I. Italian tenor in first Met broadcast, 1910 (full name)
- J. Teased; rode (slang)
- K. Electrical engineer at World C., taught Alexander radiotechnology

OUTPUT

1	116	17	127	105	74	188	174
				59	93	158	146
18	29	61	118	192	89	35	100
	195	106	144	77	160	131	201
				177	56	46	
32	205	7	142	96	45	78	159
	109	196	134	20	71	55	185
170	53	141	21	130	202	6	75
					186	98	
9	178	82	181	193	95	125	37
							47
137	94	189					
103	76	199	26	149	2	41	70
		58	162	81	187	139	14
72	111	49	85				
102	148	198	107	68	203	164	173
				54	25	36	117
163	84	40	124	19	179	151	
63	152	90	133	121	51	165	194

INPUT

- L. Rapid alternation of low chest voice and falsetto
- M. Davenant song: "The lark now leaves his wat'ry"
- N. Early Ed Sullivan variety show (4 wds.)
- O. English physicist (1851-1940), invented tuning (full name)
- P. Stravinsky ballet, *Les*
- Q. Plaintive song of Bolivian Andes
- R. Loving (It.)
- S. Parts of speech
- T. Smoothed by an added resistive load
- U. Stitched
- V. Schumann song cycle (2 wds., Eng. title)
- W. Device to magnify electric impulses
- X. Long waves of visible spectrum
- Y. Lifelong assistant of Marconi

OUTPUT

28	138	83	150	10			
157	183	140	169				
136	38	57	80	4	156	168	88
		153	108	64	97	191	22
12	92	171	204	114	182	79	126
					34	67	23
101	128	155	42	184			
60	99	122	176	39	16		
112	129	48	3	30	172	86	
66	120	181	132	166			
110	123	73	143	190	43		
15	91	44	145	31			
197	24	50	113	13	27	167	175
							62
135	200	180	69	65	87	104	33
							206
115	147	8					
119	154	11	52				



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How to prove Dolby FM to yourself.

Remember the first cassette recorders with the Dolby system, back in the early 70's? The advantages were easy to prove to yourself. You flipped the Dolby NR switch. Now you heard it, now you didn't. You were impressed.

A few years later and along comes Dolby FM, which you'd like to be just as convinced about. The same 10 dB's are still there. But, unfortunately for demonstration purposes, they are used in a more subtle way. Let's face it, the effect is hard to

hear most of the time (that's compatibility for you). To make a convincing test is tough; you can't get your hands at the controls of the local FM station the way you'd like to (Dolby FM is an encode-decode process).

Well, here's how to overcome these problems and make a quick test that will enable you to hear one of the main effects of Dolby FM. The demo is artificial, but technically valid.

1. Using a receiver with full Dolby FM capability, defeat the inter-station muting switch.
2. Tune to a vacant place on the dial to get pure high-level hiss as a test signal (the extreme ends of the dial are usually good for this).
3. Switch back and forth between Dolby FM and conventional FM.
4. Listen to the increased high-frequency content in the Dolby FM mode. The difference should be very obvious.

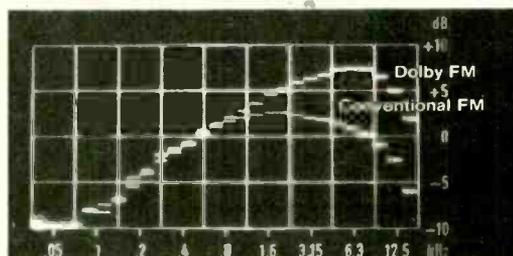
In the Dolby FM position the test signal will have a wide-range, open quality. The conventional FM hiss will be muffled. This is the high-frequency, high-level capability difference between Dolby FM and conventional FM. All the highs on the record at the station can actually get through. This allows the rest of the receiver to do its job properly; the other specs on the unit become more meaningful.

Low-level noise reduction, the other half of Dolby FM, is harder to demonstrate at will. Needless to say, most stations transmit silence as rarely as possible. In any event, you have heard low-level noise reduction before; Dolby FM gives 5 dB worth.

This should help you get a better handle on Dolby FM. Not only a theoretical improvement, but one you can prove to yourself.

Technical Note

The use of wideband noise is becoming increasingly popular in testing audio equipment and acoustical characteristics. Interstation noise is equivalent to an FM carrier which is modulated with high-level white noise. This is a suitable signal for checking the high-level, high-frequency capability difference between Dolby FM and conventional FM. Relating the test result to actual listening, the difference shows how conventional FM muffles loud musical signals containing significant amounts of steady-state or transient high-frequency energy (for example, the steep waveforms of percussion and brasses).



Real-time analysis of Dolby FM receiver output when tuned to interstation noise, using Altec Hewlett-Packard 8050A analyzer. In a "perfect" FM system the trace would be a continuously rising straight line. Thus the results show that highly modulated high-frequencies can be reproduced with significantly improved accuracy using Dolby FM.

August 1977 Dolby FM statistics: In U.S.A., FM stations in 10 metropolitan areas plus 101 other cities with Dolby FM encoders; 14 in Canada; 17 in other countries. 24 manufacturers with 62

different tuner and receiver models incorporating Dolby FM decoder circuits.

Write us for technical details, lists of products and Dolby FM stations.

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**HIGH
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*Why "the higher,
the better" is not
good enough*

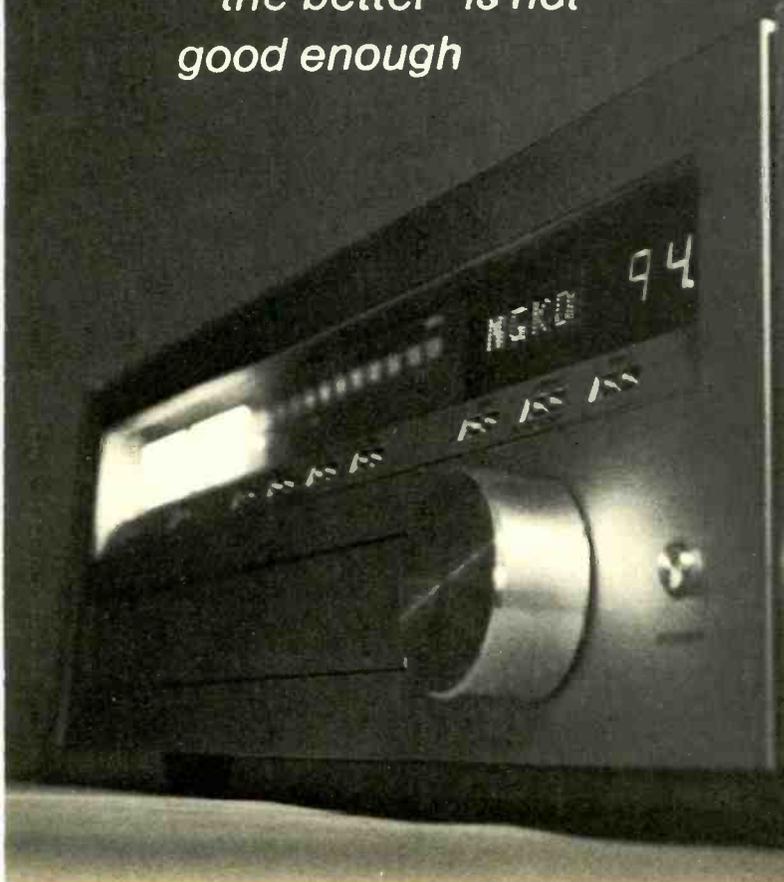
Interpreting

TO MAKE SENSE of the specifications of a power amplifier is not generally a momentous task. You can look for the power you want, the lowest distortion you can find, frequency limits of 20 Hz and 20 kHz or better, and low noise, then audition the unit you've chosen with at least a reasonable expectation of hearing something good. But the job an amplifier does is not all that complicated.

A signal entering the antenna terminals of a stereo FM tuner, on the other hand, goes through a multitude of changes before appearing as audio output, and this complexity alone is enough to generate a bewildering array of specs. Worse yet, since the various specs interact in such a way that improving one often will degrade another, you cannot cover yourself by looking for the best you can find in each parameter. To evaluate a tuner sensibly, you need a firm grasp on what aspect of performance is described by each number and its relative importance for your particular situation. In short, you need to know what you must have and what you can trade away to get it. And you will have to trade.

Consider selectivity, sensitivity, capture ratio, frequency response, and distortion. A tuner can be made more selective—that is, better able to reject stations near the frequency of a desired station—by narrowing its IF bandwidth (that is, the "dial space" with which the intermediate-frequency section deals in tuning a particular station). More than likely, sensitivity—the tuner's ability to provide noise-free reception from weak signals—also will be enhanced. But the capture ratio will get worse, high-frequency audio response may be adversely affected, and the distortion content of the audio probably also will be increased. In a rural area far from transmitters, sensitivity may be paramount; in a metropolitan area with lots of local stations, it may be barely significant. But with many stations sharing the FM band in an urban area, it is more likely that stations will fall close together in frequency. For good reception, the tuner will need sufficient selectivity to reject unwanted stations while tuned to the desired one.

Unfortunately, improved selectivity is at odds with good capture ratio—also a desirable attribute



FM Tuner Specs

by Edward J. Foster

in a "metropolitan tuner." Because of the many reflective objects around—buildings, aircraft, etc.—FM reception in and near a city frequently is plagued by multipath problems. The reflected signals confuse the tuner and cause an increase in distortion—especially in the stereo mode. The first line of defense against multipath reception is a highly directive antenna, but a good capture ratio enables the tuner to suppress the late-arriving signals—which, from the tuner's point of view, resemble different transmissions on the same frequency. Capture ratio measures the tuner's ability to suppress all but the strongest of these.

So here's a case where two specs (selectivity and capture ratio), each important for good reception in the same locale, conflict. You will have to look at the frequencies of your favorite stations and decide whether you are more afflicted with multipath or with alternate-channel interference.

Some tuners, we hasten to point out, manage through superior design to achieve a better compromise between conflicting specs than others do, but a compromise it remains. Faced with this basic tradeoff, some designers have introduced switchable-bandwidth tuners—those that provide a choice between high selectivity (narrow band) and high performance vis-à-vis distortion, capture ratio, stereo separation, etc. (wide band). Such tuners, in effect, allow you to make the tradeoff, at least in part, yourself—and to alter the chosen compromise at will depending on the specific reception problems of the moment.

The spec that seems to catch everyone's eye first, no doubt because it long has been shown so prominently in tuner advertising, is the so-called minimum usable sensitivity. This terminology is unfortunate, since an audio signal recovered by a tuner operating at this point is hardly usable. "Usable sensitivity" of a tuner is defined as the minimum input power (in dBf) required for the noise and distortion components in the output to be suppressed by 30 dB. (Note that this is a mono sensitivity figure.)

Minimum usable sensitivity is measured at three different frequencies across the FM band (90, 98, and 106 MHz) for our test reports. The figures give

an idea of the *uniformity* in sensitivity across the dial. Most measurements are made only at the midband frequency of 98 MHz. Good uniformity in sensitivity would suggest that the other lab data also are valid across the band. You can expect reasonable similarity—a spread of 1 dBf or less—in the three measurements; gone (fortunately) are the days of tuners whose performance deteriorates badly toward the ends of the dial.

Far more meaningful as a *sensitivity* figure is the power input (in dBf) required to achieve 50 dB of noise suppression. The lower this figure, the more sensitive the tuner. Average these days seems to be about 13½ dBf in mono and 36 dBf in stereo. Note that the average tuner requires almost 23 dB more—roughly 200 times as much—input to achieve fairly quiet stereo operation than it does for equally quiet mono. That's why many stations on your dial will sound cleaner in mono than in stereo.

The minimum input power at which the multiplex circuitry in the tuner recognizes that the broadcast is in stereo and switches accordingly is called the stereo threshold. There is no particular reason to favor a low stereo threshold. If sufficient quieting (at least 40 dB) hasn't been achieved by the threshold point, you are unlikely to want to listen in stereo anyway. (Remember, below the threshold, the tuner will still receive the broadcast—but in mono rather than in stereo, and with less noise.) The stereo threshold, therefore, represents a point of information rather than a criterion of merit.

Other important aspects of tuner performance are how rapidly quieting improves with increasing signal strength, what the ultimate level of quieting is, and what happens when even stronger signals are received. In actual use, a tuner will seem more sensitive if it reaches its ultimate level of quieting at a relatively low level of input signal. Most tuners achieve ultimate quieting with 65 dBf or less of input signal, so by convention the quieting at that input level is defined as the signal-to-noise ratio of the tuner, both in mono and in stereo. The average stereo S/N ratio these days is about 65 dB; that for mono is about 70 dB or more and repre-

What to Look for (and What You'll Find) in the Tuner Ads

Advertising copywriters have a way of throwing out phrases ("epitaxial snark" or whatever) as though they represent unquestioned virtue—features to be conjured with however obscure in import. That's their business, just as it's ours to make plain as many rough places as we can. With that in mind, we offer the following notes.

Phase-Locked Loop: This circuit for demodulating stereo information performs better than earlier demodulators and eliminates a number of costly parts. Both objectives are worthy—so worthy that you'll be hard put to find a current high fidelity tuner without PLL.

Tuning Meters: A variety of virtues and a few sins are covered by the term. Cheapie tuners and receivers have simple signal-strength meters, which—if they're any good—help you tune the station but not as quickly or as unequivocally as channel-center meters, which are standard from moderate price points up. Several types of metering address themselves to multipath distortion; their utility will depend on the behavior of the specific meter, on the severity of multipath problems in your area—and on whether you have an antenna rotator.

Scope: The next step up from meters (in price, anyway) is a small oscilloscope that gives you a visual display from which a number of signal parameters (including tuning, modulation, and multipath) can be judged simultaneously. It won't necessarily let you tune better than a good set of meters, but it may do so a bit faster. And it looks mighty sexy.

Interstation Muting: Virtually every FM device has for years had this feature, sometimes with a defeat switch or muting threshold control so you can "get at" extremely weak stations. A second-rate design produces loud "thumps" every time you pass a station in rapid tuning; the better ones mute even this annoyance.

High Blend: For any particular signal strength, mono reception is almost always more noise-free than stereo reception, and the noise difference in-

creases as the received signal gets weaker. One way of suppressing stereo noise is to switch to mono; a useful in-between option preserves separation through the midrange (which largely determines stereo imaging) and cancels it in the highs (where the noise is most annoying) by blending the two channels. In a weak signal area this feature is virtually a must for stereo reception.

Automatic Frequency Control: Way back when, tubed tuners were subject to "drift" that would take them well off channel as they warmed up. AFC prevented drift, but at a price in distortion. So AFC virtually disappeared on component-grade solid-state equipment. Now it's back in forms that bypass the distortion, but it's a nicety rather than a necessity.

Bandwidth: Intermediate-frequency (IF) bandwidth is what's referred to in those high-end units having a control so labeled. See the accompanying article for an explanation.

IF Filter: You won't see as much in today's ads as you once did about filter construction (crystal, Butterworth, for example), skirt characteristics, symmetry, and whatnot. Fine. The real story is in the specs, which of course reflect filter quality.

FETs and MOS FETs: The virtues of field-effect transistors, used in tuners partly for their wide dynamic range and hence relative freedom from overload with strong incoming signals, are described better by the specs they achieve than by any *in vacuo* consideration of their nature.

Dolby: Here the obvious consideration is whether you have Dolby-encoded broadcasts in your area—or are likely to get any in the near future. If not, the feature has no value for you. If so, give the edge to a Dolby feature with the decoding circuitry built in. The alternative—Dolby switching to accommodate an outboard Dolby decoder—may be harder to set up and use (depending on the decoder, especially if it is built into a tape deck, even with a DOLBY-FM switch of its own), and the outboard decoders are getting more difficult to come by.

sents, for practical purposes, noise-free reception.

While the 50-dB quieting point is a convenient reference, it does not represent really enjoyable listening; noise suppression that low is not usually tolerated in other high fidelity components. It would be nice to know how much signal is needed at the antenna for 55 or 60 dB of quieting. This information is not usually contained in manufacturers' spec sheets, but it can easily be read from the graph of sensitivity and quieting characteristics included in our test reports.

At the other extreme is the ability of the tuner to cope with very strong signals—an important consideration if you live near a transmitter. A tuner whose quieting curves remain low above 65 dBf is coping well; if these curves rise at the high-input end, indicating overload and deteriorating performance, the model in question is less appropriate for urban use.

Frequency response of a tuner generally is restricted to the range between 20 Hz and 15 kHz. Though FM-transmitter performance need not be maintained to beyond 15 kHz, in some new tuner designs that remove the 19-kHz stereo pilot by cancellation rather than by means of a filter the upper limit extends to around 18 kHz. The extra bandwidth will have little, if any, audible significance. Mono response is apt to be a trifle flatter than stereo response, but the difference is small: The average spread is under $\pm 1\frac{1}{4}$ dB in mono, $\pm 1\frac{1}{2}$ dB in stereo. It is not unusual to find the response trailing off below 30 Hz. Many designers do this to minimize low-frequency thumps while tuning and to make the low-frequency cue tones often used by broadcasters less audible.

Finding averages for channel separation is a bit more problematic. Tuners vary widely in just how much separation they achieve and in the frequency range over which they achieve it. Most manufacturers specify separation only at 1 kHz. In our test-report curves we show separation to 15 kHz and tabulate the best separation (40 dB, if the tuner can manage it—which most can these days) that it maintains throughout at least a reasonable portion of the critical midrange, together with the limits of the frequency band over which it is maintained. In addition, we show the frequency limits over which a figure 10 dB poorer (therefore, generally 30 dB of separation) is maintained. For practical purposes, 30 dB of separation seems adequate, even in the midband: FM stations' source material usually is records, and channel separation in the pickups used to play them generally is no better than this. So separation is more than adequate in the large majority of today's tuners.

Low total harmonic distortion is of course a paramount consideration. We tabulate the lab data for both the stereo and mono modes at three different modulating frequencies—80 Hz, 1 kHz, and 10 kHz. Again, mono performance is typically

better than stereo, especially at 10 kHz. At 80 Hz and 1 kHz, the average tuner in the mono mode might exhibit under 0.15% THD, a bit more at 10 kHz. In stereo, you're more likely to find about 0.25% at 80 Hz, 0.20% at 1 kHz, and 1% (sometimes considerably more) at 10 kHz. The IHF/IEEE standard calls for measurement of high-frequency THD at 6 kHz, and this is the route taken by most manufacturers in their spec sheets. We believe that the 10-kHz measurement can be a more revealing test of the tuner and have therefore retained it, even though it is stretching a point to call the spurious frequency components revealed thereby "harmonic distortion." THD is, after all, really a "total garbage" measurement—distortion and noise.

You can glean further useful information about harmonic distortion (at 1 kHz) from the sensitivity/quieting graph in our test reports. The difference between the noise-only curves and the corresponding noise-plus-distortion curves represents distortion. Where the noise curve is low and the noise-plus-distortion curve relatively high, so is distortion; where the two curves are close together, distortion is swamped by noise, which therefore will be the factor limiting your enjoyment. So by examining the curves you can get some feeling for the way noise and distortion vary relative to one another with different input signal strengths.

For technical reasons, intermodulation in tuners is measured differently from the way it is done for other equipment; our interpretation, therefore, is not quite the same. We view it as an index of high-frequency distortion in the mono mode. Typically it runs about 0.1%.

The tuner must suppress the 19-kHz pilot and 38-kHz subcarrier signals and all other by-products of stereo multiplexing that may contaminate the audio output, especially if the broadcast is to be taped. If these extraneous signals find their way into the tape recorder, they can "confuse" a Dolby circuit and result in a poor over-all frequency response or, if they're severe, result in intermodulation whistles on the tape. Fortunately, the average tuner knocks each of these pollutants down by about 65 dB, and that should be adequate.

Capture ratio, again, is a criterion that tends to conflict with selectivity, both of which have an effect on distortion and separation. For the record, the "typical" tuner has a capture ratio a bit under $1\frac{1}{2}$ dB (the lower, the better) and an alternate-channel selectivity of 70 dB (the higher, the better).

As with other equipment, lab data and specs alone do not tell the full story. How does the tuner act in practice? Is the tuning precise? Is the mute effective? How useful are the tuning meters? The answers to these questions and others of like importance appear in the text of our reviews—not in the tables and graphs. ●

THE BARRIERS to better TV sound have seemed so immovable, so *final*, for so many years that Americans can be forgiven some resignation on the subject. But new forces are at work that promise to upgrade TV sound at last.

The problem, now boringly familiar, is a four-stage chicken-egg bind. The low quality of sound pickup at TV origination points, mostly major network stations, has been matched by that of the distribution system (in the past mainly the Bell System), the local TV stations, and, above all, TV receivers in viewers' homes. Obviously, improving just one link in this chain has little immediate effect, and higher quality has been firmly resisted at each stage, pending improvements in all the others.

But the barriers of origination and distribution are now under heavy attack. As the flow of high fidelity begins to jam up at the local TV station, will the pressure to improve that station rise and will the shock waves reach the receiver in the home so that listenable audio can reach the ear? It seems likely that they will. The forces behind the changes are the commercial industry itself and the Public Broadcasting System in Washington, the national organization of public television stations. PBS is organizing a distribution system with superlative audio quality, even though it can't be fully used at the receiving end for some time.

In the past, the microphone technique used at the sound pickup point in commercial TV has been based on a single imperative: "Keep the mike out of any possible camera view!" When the norm was a single mike, this rule obviously gave an audio man tough, often insoluble, problems in trying to get even reasonably accurate representation of a musical group. That is being changed by a shift to the multimike techniques that have been common in recording for a long time. Now the audio man can mix his mikes (via a multi-input console) into the final sound in any proportions he wants. In this way, despite less than optimum positions of the microphones, he can get a balanced sound.

The recording of the audio material is also due for radical change. TV sound traditionally is recorded on a track on the edge of the video tape, via an extra audio head on the video tape recorder. But the audio gets a tiny track because the picture needs every millimeter of tape it can get. Even the tape is wrong for audio; it is formulated for best response with video signals themselves, the audio being left essentially to fend for itself. Also, the rotating video heads vibrate the tape continuously, producing serious flutter in the audio.

New Hope for TV Sound



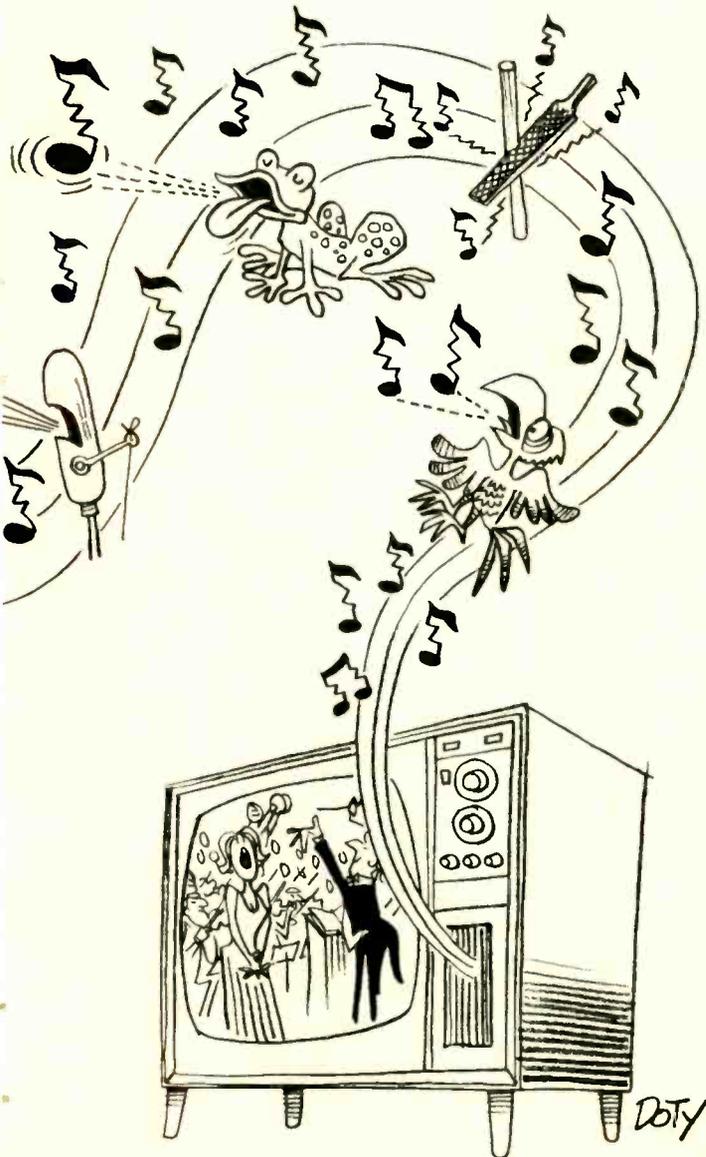
An observer of the broadcast industry sees encouraging significance in some recent behind-the-scenes developments

What's the solution? Record the audio on a separate, high-grade audio machine. This "double system" recording has become practical and attractive with the development of effective, comparatively inexpensive systems for keeping the video and audio machines synchronized. The commercial TV networks are using double-system recording only occasionally, on major musical programs and—at ABC, at least—on elaborately produced shows where multitrack capability is advantageous. But the equipment and the skills are there, fully developed and ready for the TV sound revolution. NBC is currently upgrading the audio facilities at its headquarters and can even now deliver high quality sound—in mono or stereo.

Public television stations have often relied on the double system. WGBH-TV in Boston, which originates many top musical programs for the public network, uses thirteen or fourteen mike inputs, mixed down to four channels on tape. These top-grade tapes have in the past been mixed down again to mono before the programs go out for Bell System distribution, but the tapes are ready for any better days that might be coming.

Those better days are also getting a boost from the PBS plan to use satellites for distributing programs to the public television stations. Last January the Federal Communications Commission approved a detailed plan for a major satellite transmitter near Washington, with regional transmitters across the country and earth stations at or near all PBS affiliates, for a much cheaper, more flexible, higher-quality program delivery than PBS has had up to now. The \$40 million needed to implement it is committed, with various sources contributing. The plan includes a system called DATE (digital audio for television), which will put four top-grade audio channels in digital form alongside the picture. PBS has gone ahead with DATE, even though no local stations can use it yet. Until TV transmitters and home receivers are equipped for stereo sound, PBS will send along with the DATE signal a mono audio signal on an FM subcarrier. Thanks to the wide bandwidth of satellite links and the high level of equipment and care used at the points of origination, this signal is significantly better than what has been available.

The Bell System itself has not remained dormant during all these developments and has used some experimental equipment in recent simulcasts—transmissions in which the TV audio is sent simultaneously via an FM station. (New York's Lincoln Center has been a pioneer in this area.) Bell has even toyed with the idea of using DATE.



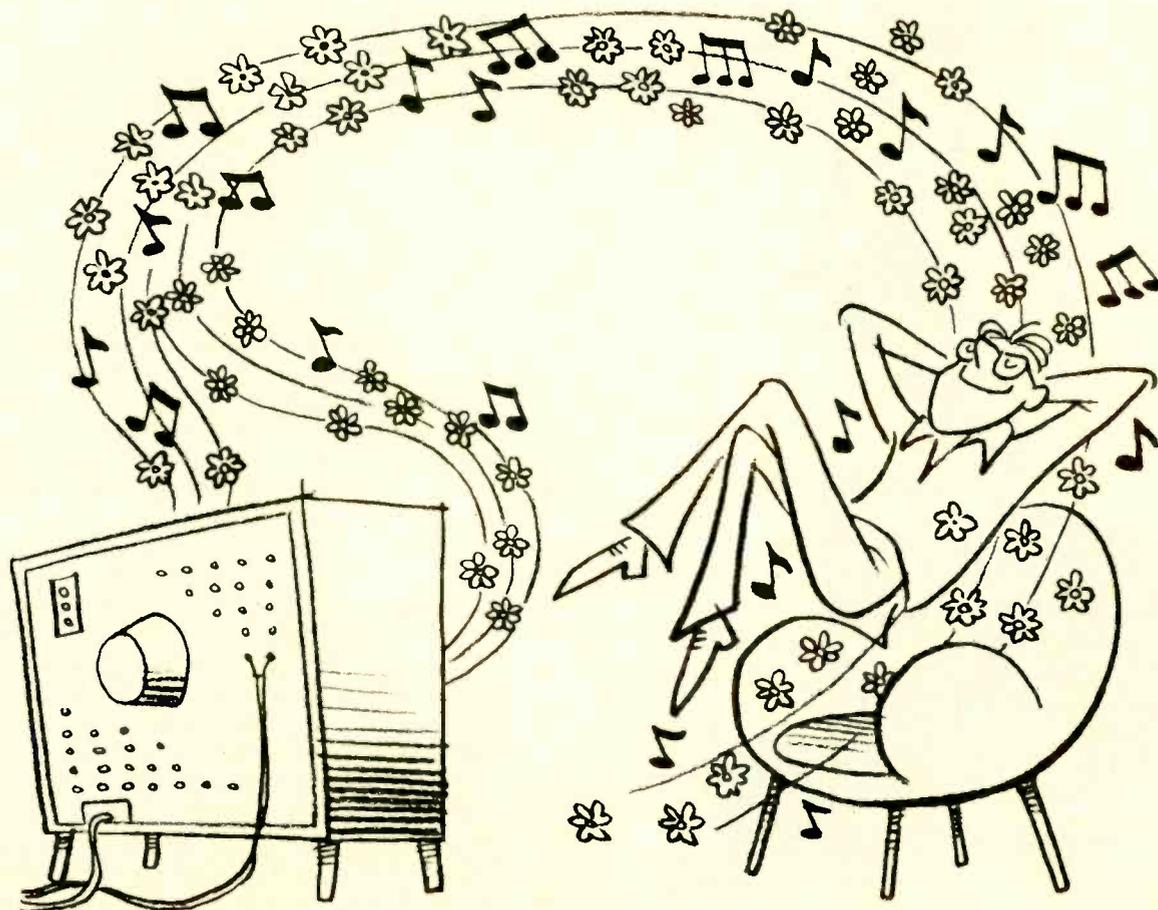
Although it apparently turned down multichannel audio as too expensive to be justified in the commercial telephone system at this time, it has introduced its own *diplexing* system for mono TV audio, currently being installed by all three commercial networks and planned for operation early next year. In a diplexing system (DATE is one as well), the audio is put on a separate carrier on the same channel as the video. Video distribution networks have bandwidth that can easily accommodate a high-grade audio signal *alongside* the video, whereas the standard telephone lines used for TV audio for so many years are limited to 5 kHz, are comparatively noisy, and have little dynamic range.

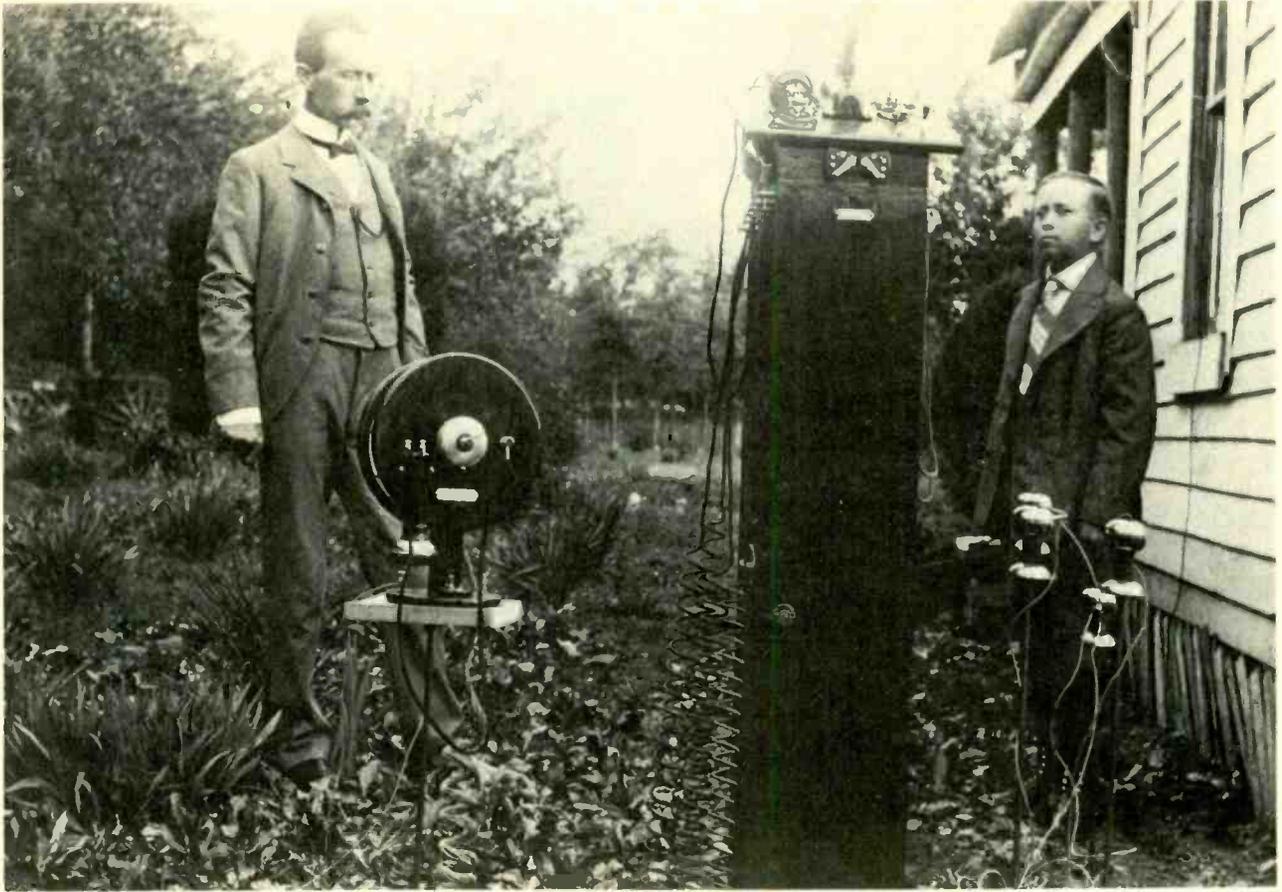
What is the outlook for getting the better quality through the last two segments of the system—the local TV station and the home receiver? The basic (FM) audio quality of the standard TV transmitter is quite good; and any important change—especially adapting TV transmitters for stereo broadcast—will require comprehensive industry study followed by some sort of FCC standardization. The Joint Coordinating Industry Committee, made up of representatives of the commercial networks,

Bell, the public TV stations, and the manufacturing groups, has been examining television technology for several years to identify those aspects that need improving. The subcommittee on TV sound, chaired by Dan Wells of PBS, has made a number of important recommendations in this area, but it is unlikely that they will be implemented in anything less than five years.

We can only hope that when that does happen, competitive pressures will encourage at least some TV receiver manufacturers to take advantage of the improved audio signal available to home viewers. It would be optimistic to expect real high fidelity from in-cabinet speakers (although considerable improvement is possible), so the sets seeking very high audio quality will probably go to outboard speaker modules. Detector outputs (with the necessary power-line isolation) can also be added at relatively modest cost to provide the owner of a component music system with audio signals comparable to those from an FM tuner.

Meanwhile, you can get sporadic and tantalizing foretastes from simulcasts. Considering the pace at which TV audio is developing, it looks like you won't be waiting too long for the real thing. ●





In this photo from the Stubblefield family collection, the inventor and his son Bernard stand outside the Murray (Ky.) farmhouse with his "radio" apparatus. Flanking the "crazy box"—the transmitter—are the receiving device and the ball-tipped rods used with it.

Nathan Stubblefield

The Radio Prophet of the Kentucky Fields

Marconi, Fessenden, and DeForest have their places in radio's history, but Stubblefield was the first to broadcast speech and music.

by Harvey Geller

MOST OF THE RESIDENTS of Calloway County, Kentucky, in the last decade of the nineteenth century must have chuckled when an inordinately eccentric young vegetable farmer suggested that he had invented a portable wireless telephone that could broadcast voice and music over high buildings and through stone walls. And they probably howled with laughter when he revealed his "crazy box," together with an odd assortment of batteries, rods, and coils.

Today, eighty-odd years later, descendants of Harvey Geller is an account executive for *Billboard Publications, Inc.*, and the *West Coast* editor for *Cashbox*.

those detractors are christening radio stations, dedicating libraries, and constructing monuments in his honor. But this veneration is hardly more than local. Residents of Murray, Kentucky, may agree that Nathan Bernard Stubblefield was the first man on earth to transmit and receive the human voice without wires, but most of the world is unacquainted with his improbable name, and even his proponents are unaware of the precise date of his discovery. Evidence points to the period from 1890-92, at least seven years before Guglielmo Marconi sent the first wireless telegraph message across the English Channel and eight be-



After his successful demonstrations in Washington, D.C., from the deck of the steamship *Bartholdi*, and in Fairmont Park in Philadelphia, Stubblefield posed with his wife, six of their children, and his then-celebrated broadcasting gear. In the foreground are mementos of his brief time in the limelight: photographs of the *Bartholdi* on the Potomac (left) and of the crowd in Fairmont Park.

fore Reginald Fessenden demonstrated radio voice transmission in the U.S.

Stubblefield's name and invention are set off against Marconi's by Trumbull White in a book titled *The World's Progress*, published in 1902:

Of very recent success are the experiments of Marconi with wireless telegraphy, an astounding and important advance over the ordinary system of telegraphy through wires. Now comes the announcement that an American inventor, unheralded and modest, has carried out successful experiments in telephoning and is able to transmit speech for great distances without wires. . . . The inventor is Nathan B. Stubblefield.

He was born in Murray, Kentucky, in 1859, the son of William Jefferson and Victoria Bowman Stubblefield. In his teens he was an omnivorous student and researched everything available on the new science of electricity. He memorized long passages from *Scientific American*, studied the theories of James Clerk Maxwell and Heinrich Hertz, and became obsessed with the more bizarre experiments of Nikola Tesla, a Croatian-American inventor who was trying to send electrical impulses through Pikes Peak.

Stubblefield was a few months shy of twenty-

three when he demonstrated to local residents that electricity could affect a compass needle, even though the generator and compass were yards apart. The experiment was a success, but it failed to impress his audience. By the time Alexander Bell told Tom Watson by phone, "Come here, Watson, I want you," Stubblefield was experimenting with vibrating communication devices.

In 1888 he invented a vibrating telephone, and the *Murray News Weekly* carried the following item: "Charlie Hamlin has his telephone in fine working order from his store to his home. It is the Nathan Stubblefield patent and is the best I have ever talked through." In 1898 he manufactured and patented an electrical storage ("earth") battery, which he later described as "the bedrock of all my scientific research in raidio [his spelling]."

The world's first radio message was "Hello, Rainey, hello, Rainey," according to Dr. Rainey T. Wells, founder of Murray State College. Testifying before the Federal Communications Commission in 1947, he explained that he had personally heard Stubblefield demonstrate his wireless telephone as early as 1892:

"He had a shack about four feet square near his house from which he took an ordinary telephone

receiver but entirely without wires. Handing me this, he asked me to walk some distance away and listen. I had hardly reached my post, which happened to be an apple orchard, when I heard, 'Hello, Rainey, hello, Rainey,' come booming out of the receiver. I jumped a foot and said to myself, 'This fellow is fooling me. He has wires somewhere.' So I moved to the side some twenty feet, but all the while he kept talking to me. I talked back, and he answered me as plainly as you please. I urged him to patent the thing, but he refused, saying he wanted to continue his research and perfect it."

Dr. William Mason, Stubblefield's family physician, detailed for the local newspaper a day during the same year when Stubblefield "handed me a device in what appeared to be a keg with a handle on it. I started walking down the lane. . . . From it I could distinctly hear his voice and a harmonica which he was broadcasting to me. . . . several years before Marconi made his announcement about wireless telegraphy."

With the new industrial and scientific epoch at hand and the first Roosevelt in the White House, Stubblefield continued to refine his broadcasting station, a tiny workshop on the front porch of his modest farmhouse. It was barely wide enough to hold the transmitter and one chair. The transmitting mechanism was concealed in a box.

On January 1, 1902, Stubblefield staged what appears to have been the world's first public broadcast at an exhibition before a thousand spectators in the courthouse square in Murray. He established five listening stations in various sections of the town, the farthest six blocks away from the transmitter. When his fourteen-year-old son Bernard talked, whispered, whistled, and played the harmonica, he was heard, according to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, "with remarkable distinctness." The *Dispatch* correspondent drove to Stubblefield's farm a few days later and was received "with the usual hospitality of Kentucky. Previously Mr. Stubblefield had never permitted a correspondent to approach his house nearer than the road that runs before it, so jealously had he guarded the workshop in which his experiments were made." Stubblefield's son was left on the porch while Nathan and the newsman walked about five hundred yards to a dry-goods box fastened to the foot of a tree stump. The writer picked up the receiver and heard spasmodic buzzings and then: "Hello, can you hear me? Now I will count to ten. One, two, three, four. . . ." Later Bernard whistled and played his mouth organ.

"Now," said Stubblefield, who carried several ball-tipped steel rods under his arm, "I wish you would lead the way. Go where you will, sink the rods into the ground, and listen for a telephone message."

"Away we went down a wagon track," wrote the

correspondent, "through a wide cornfield. A gate was opened into a lane that bordered the field and a dense oak wood. We pursued the lane for about five hundred yards and struck into the woods. I led the way. Into the heart of the woods we walked for nearly a mile. In a ravine I stopped. I took the four rods from Stubblefield. Each pair was joined by an ordinary insulated wire about thirty feet long, in the center of which was a small round telephone receiver. Two by two the rods were sunk in the ground, about half their lengths, the wires between them hanging loosely, and with plenty of play. I placed the receiver at each ear and waited. In a few moments came the signaling buzz." Stubblefield's son went through the same program the newsman had heard earlier.

Later Stubblefield told the *Dispatch* reporter, "I have been working on this for ten or twelve years. . . . This solution is not the result of an inspiration or the work of a minute. It is the climax of years. The system can be developed until messages by voice can be sent and heard all over the country, even to Europe. The world is its limit.

"For years I have been trying to make the bare earth do the work of wires. The earth, the air, the water, all the universe as we know it, is permeated with the remarkable fluid called electricity, the most wonderful of God's gifts to the world. . . . The electrical fluid that permeates the earth carries the human voice, transmitted to it by any apparatus, with much more clarity and lucidity than it does over wires.

"Beneath the surface of the earth, as above it,

The Mysterious Box

What was Stubblefield's secret? By speaking into a device similar to a telephone transmitter, Stubblefield discovered that a current carrying his voice varied in accordance with the vibrations of the transmitter's diaphragm. He also found that, in order to transmit his voice without wires, he had to provide a radio frequency. Its source seems to have been his "earth" battery. And his "crazy box"? To vary the amplitude of the current, he required a "modulator," apparently in that box. His receiving apparatus, in principle, consisted of two basic parts of a modern unit: a device sensitive to the transmission and a detector whose function was to translate radio-frequency waves into the low-frequency vibrations of speech. By tapping the receiving coils at different intervals, he provided a means for adjusting the inductance. He didn't perfect fine tuning, and his detector cannot be found. But he seems to have grasped the fundamental principles of radio.



there is electricity. No one knows how deep it extends or how high it goes. I claim for my apparatus that it will work equally as well through air and water as it does through the earth. It can be used on moving trains, it will convey messages through the land and the sea. There is no position or station where it may not be used.

"How I have obtained the result is, of course, my secret. My apparatus has not yet been patented. It is not perfect by any means. I have not yet devised a method whereby it can be used with privacy. Wherever there is a receiving station, the signal and the message may be heard simultaneously. Eventually I, or someone, will discover a method of tuning the transmitting and receiving instruments so that each will answer only to its mate.

"In a short time, when my improved and more powerful apparatus is finished, I will make another test and expect to be able to telephone several miles. Then I will go to Washington and patent my invention."

On January 12, 1902, the *Post-Dispatch* headlined a full-page story, "Kentucky Farmer Invents Wireless Telephone . . . Messages Are Heard at a Mile." The article concluded, "Everyone at the receivers heard him with remarkable distinctness. At that moment Mr. Stubblefield became a prophet with honor in his own country."

Word spread quickly after the *Post-Dispatch* article. Stubblefield was soon besieged by capitalists, financiers, stock-jugglers, hucksters, and

hawkers. Dr. Mason recalled seeing a \$40,000 check for a part interest in the invention, and titans of industry, "wearing diamonds as large as your thumb," scuttling up dusty roads to Stubblefield's farm. "You and I will yet add luster to the Stubblefield name," wrote Nathan to his cousin Vernon.

Yet initially he refused all propositions, including one for half a million dollars. "It is worth twice that," he insisted, entrusting only his son Bernard with the secret of his mysterious keg. On occasion he repulsed overinquisitive visitors with a shotgun.

Invited by leading scientists, Stubblefield traveled to Washington, D.C., with a trunk containing all of his papers associated with the invention, to demonstrate the practicability of his contrivance from the steamship *Bartholdi* on the Potomac to crowds along the riverbank. On Decoration Day, 1902, he broadcast words and music from the Belmont Mansion and Fairmont Park in Philadelphia to hundreds of statesmen, investors, scientists, and newsmen. Articles appeared in major newspapers throughout the world acclaiming him as the distinguished inventor of the wireless telephone and a celebrated scientific genius. At least one extravagant reporter credited Stubblefield with "the world's greatest invention." But the inventor was destined not to enjoy the fruits of his ingenuity.

The crucial blow was unquestionably the loss of his trunk, apparently en route from Philadelphia

Among those who were present in Philadelphia's Fairmont Park on May 30, 1902, to hear Stubblefield's wireless telephone demonstration were Frederick Collins (identified by an anonymous hand, perhaps the inventor's, with the number 2) and Henry Clay Fish (3). One close student of Stubblefield's fortunes suggests that Collins stole the trunk containing details of the invention; Fish was treasurer of the Wireless Telephone Company of America, which tried to swindle the inventor. Stubblefield is at the far right (6).

to Murray. "Will I ever see my trunk again?" Stubblefield scribbled on the back of a map after he returned from Philadelphia. Vernon Stubblefield claimed the trunk was stolen. James L. Johnson, executive secretary of Murray's Chamber of Commerce, asserts, "There's no way to tell where that trunk went, but many of its papers later showed up as part of the Collins Wireless Corporation of Canada patents. Frederick Collins, who formed that corporation, was one of the scientists who attended the Fairmont Park demonstration."

Johnson also points out that Stubblefield was inveigled into a partnership in a fraudulent firm, the Wireless Telephone Company of America, based in New York: "Needing money to pursue and perfect the invention, he traded *all* his interests, *all* his secrets, *all* his equipment for 500,000 shares of stock in the company. . . . On May 14, 1903, Stubblefield discovered that his 500,000 shares had been juggled so that the books read his shares were 50,000. He protested in a strong letter to the firm, and rather than let the information be revealed to the public the company called it a typographical error and issued him a certificate for the original amount. But the stock was worthless, in any case."

Depressed and disillusioned, Stubblefield grew more and more eccentric. He was virulent about those who had fleeced him and advised friends to withdraw any investment they had in his project. Soon after this incident, he renounced his wife, nine children, and all other family and built a her-

mit's hut in Almo, six miles from his family farmhouse. (Bernard later joined the Westinghouse Electrical Corporation, one of the pioneer commercial radio firms. Did he utilize his father's secrets in the production of early crystal sets?)

In 1908, Stubblefield finally obtained patents on his inventions in the U.S., Canada, and England, but the world took no notice. In 1906, Fessenden had demonstrated transmission of voice and music (including his own violin solo) by the continuous-wave method from Brant Rock, Massachusetts, and it had been picked up as far away as the coast of Virginia. The field was dominated by other men, and Stubblefield seems to have taken no further initiatives. He lived alone for the next twenty years. His farmhouse, which had been lost to creditors, mysteriously burned to the ground. Wireless lights were reported in trees and along fences guarding Stubblefield's crudely constructed shanty, and his neighbors said that voices, apparently coming from the air, were heard by trespassers. "Get your mule out of my cornfield," Stubblefield's voice could be heard shouting in the night. He curtly refused the aid of former friends. "He was never insane," they insisted, "only peculiar."

A friend found Stubblefield's body in his hut on March 30, 1928, several days after his death, his brain partly eaten by rats. Death was caused by starvation, Dr. Mason concluded. He was buried in an unmarked grave in Bowman's Cemetery, a mile and a half from Murray.

In 1930 a memorial to "the first man to transmit and receive the human voice without wires" was dedicated at Murray State Teachers College campus, less than five hundred feet from the remains of the world's first "broadcasting station." That same year Stubblefield's family brought suit in New York's Supreme Court for recognition and patent rights. The court ruled that they had proved every detail of their claims but that the statute of limitations had made those rights "void as to royalties."

On May 18, 1961, the Kentucky Broadcasters Association granted Nathan Stubblefield official recognition as the inventor of radio. In 1962 his tragic life was dramatized in a folk opera, *The Stubblefield Story*, composed by Murray State professor Paul Shahan and Mrs. Lillian Lowry and performed in the campus auditorium. It was staged again as part of the 1976 Bicentennial.

Murray's only radio station, a 1,000-watt outlet, programs "middle of the road and some rock as well," according to program director Fransuelle Cole. Between Jesse Winchester's "Seems like Only Yesterday" and a live spot for Kroger's Grocery, one hears, "You are tuned to WNBS, 1340 on your radio dial in Murray, Kentucky, the birthplace of broadcasting." The station's call letters, not incidentally, include Stubblefield's initials. ●

Nathan Milstein

Brahmin with Violin

After some fifty years at the top of his profession, the violinist feels out of tune with the times — and doesn't care.

by Estelle Kerner

NATHAN MILSTEIN, who will be seventy-three next New Year's Eve, is the last surviving public performer among that handful of Jewish virtuosos, born in pre-Soviet Russia, who have dominated the violin in this century. Mischa Elman died in 1967 and David Oistrakh in 1974; Efrem Zimbalist, eighty-eight, lives quietly in Reno; Jascha Heifetz, at seventy-six, no longer performs. Of course there are the descendants of Russian Jews, from Yehudi Menuhin and Isaac Stern (who was actually born there) to Pinchas Zukerman and Itzhak Perlman, but none of the old guard survives except Milstein.

"Could this phenomenon be genetic—or ethnic?" I asked him at his New York apartment across from the Metropolitan Museum of Art earlier this year. He did not think so: "If it were a special Jewish gift, Jewish violinists would always have been better in quality. Historically they were not."

As for himself, he had not, as a child of five, begged for the violin. It would keep him out of mischief, advised Marya Roisman, a neighbor in Odessa whose son Josef would grow up to become first violinist in the Budapest String Quartet. "My mischief wasn't so terrible," Milstein said, grinning. "I simply was very robust, very physical. The painful part of studying violin was when my mother, my sister wouldn't let me go out and play. I was forced to practice; otherwise I would be punished. I liked the violin because it was so easy for me. But you can't love music when you're so young. When I started violin I never thought—my mother thought and told me what to do."

The boy realized later that his mother had more in mind than prevention of mischief. "Violin playing was a social condition in Russia. Under the tsar, Jews in intellectual towns like Odessa, Kiev—towns with a substantial Jewish population—couldn't achieve anything in the professions. A Jewish family could buy a violin for two dollars; but even a bad piano at that time cost \$300 or \$400."

Milstein's parents could have afforded a piano—his father was a wealthy importer of woollens and tweeds—but the craze for the violin had swept the Pale. Jewish virtuosos did not share the fate of their coreligionists during the era of the 5% aca-

demical quota, the Mendel Beilis case, the Black Hundreds, and the pogroms. There was Elman's exemption from military service, by Nicholas II himself, Zimbalist's command performance at Buckingham Palace, Gabrilowitsch's parents' buying two houses in St. Petersburg.

Though Milstein's father professed no interest in formal religion—his sons were not Bar Mitzvah—his mother was Orthodox. "She was practicing the rituals. I loved them. On Friday, it was so beautiful. It was the most cozy thing. The only thing we complained about was that we each always got a little piece of chocolate and only part of an orange—not because we couldn't afford it—but because we always had to divide."

For more than two years the boy studied with Peter Stoliarsky, an established teacher in Odessa and second violinist in the Odessa Opera Orchestra: "Stoliarsky never taught anything. When you played he said, 'Bad' or 'Good.'"

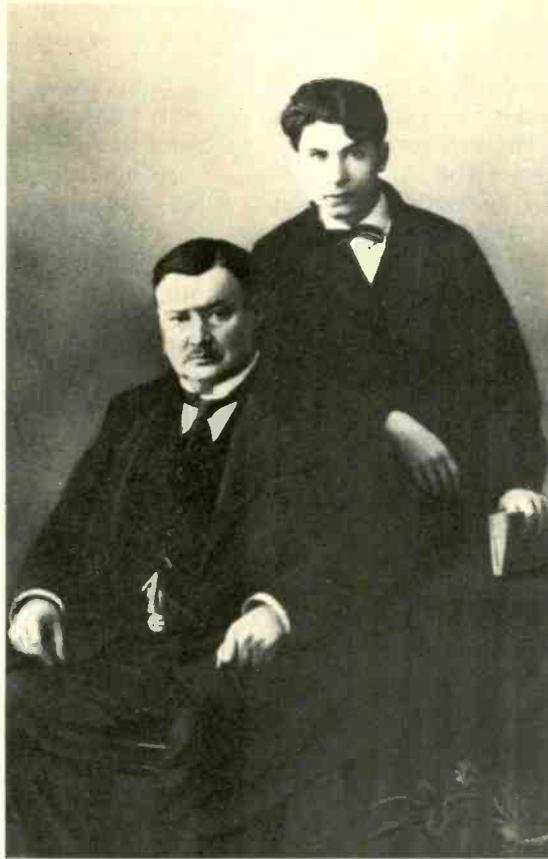
But at eleven, Milstein was invited by the great Leopold Auer to study violin with him at the Imperial Conservatory in St. Petersburg, and when he arrived the following year Auer sent him out on a performance.

"He said, 'You will not get anything, but it will be very good for you to play.' I got twenty-five rubles, a box of chocolates—and applause. I thought, this is the best profession. You show off, you are applauded, you get paid, and you get chocolate. Now, no chocolate, only applause. You do not get fat from applause."

"But three weeks after I played at the first class, we were afraid to return. We had no permits." Jews needed permits to be in the major Russian cities. Milstein's father, as a first-degree merchant, had a dispensation to remain in St. Petersburg or Moscow—a privilege extended to no one else in the family. Heifetz and Zimbalist had both had trouble with the authorities. Since Heifetz was only thirteen when he came to the Conservatory, his father, who had no permit, did not want to leave him alone in the city. But students admitted to the Conservatory received residency permits (for themselves alone): Auer's solution was simply to admit Reuven Heifetz—aged forty and a good violinist—to his class of child prodigies. When the



1914: At age ten, three years before the Revolution, as a pupil of Stoliarsky's.



Pictorial Parade

1923: In St. Petersburg with composer Alexander Glazunov, who, as director of the Imperial Conservatory when Milstein was a student there, had come to the rescue of the young violinist and his mother.

Some Milstein Milestones



Wide World

1933 With Gregor Piatigorsky and Vladimir Horowitz, returning to New York on the *Mauretania* after a European concert tour by the trio. 1976: Forty-three years later, having just arrived in New York to give the opening concert at the reconstructed Avery Fisher Hall, Milstein greets his old friend Volodya Horowitz at the latter's seventy-second birthday party.

(more overleaf)



RCA

thirteen-year-old Zimbalist's mother was discovered without a permit, she and her son were driven from their lodging to walk the streets in below-zero temperatures. They arrived at Auer's door shivering, embarrassed, begging for help. It took all of Auer's influence to get Mrs. Zimbalist a one-week permit.

"When I told Auer why I had not come to play," Milstein continued, "he immediately called Alexander Glazunov, director of the Conservatory. He said, 'Look, I have the young Milstein with his mother. They have a problem. Could you help them?' Glazunov was a wonderful person. He said, 'Of course.' We went to Glazunov. He was a gentleman. He stood up and gave my mother a seat. Then he said, 'The problem will be immediately taken care of.' He called the Minister of Interior and said, 'Sasha, please do something for this young boy and his mother. Arrange that nobody disturbs them.' We went to another office. The superintendent, Vornick, stood up and saluted us—Jews!

"People exaggerate. Of course things were bad. Officially, sometimes the government encouraged awful things, like pogroms, but they made pogroms where the population accepted them. The Ukrainians and Polish—they were always ready. But the Great Russians? Never!"

Milstein reminisced about his master: "Every young boy who had the dream of playing better than the other boy wanted to go to Auer. He was a very gifted man and a good teacher. I used to go to the Conservatory every Wednesday and Friday at three o'clock for classes. I played every lesson with forty or fifty people sitting and listening. Two pianos were in the classroom, and a pianist accompanied us. When Auer was sick he would ask me to come to his home."

It was 1917.

In December, Auer fled to Norway, carrying the legal limit of five hundred rubles, bitterly lamenting the loss of his fortune, his pension, his library, and his priceless gifts. A few months later he was in New York, which with its four or five concerts a day he found the "acme of present-day civilization"; and though he died in Dresden in 1930, he was buried, at his request, in Scarsdale.

Auer's departure from Russia ended Milstein's formal violin studies. "After I was thirteen I never had a teacher. I went to Ysaÿe in 1926, but he didn't pay any attention to me. I think it may have been better this way. I had to think for myself.

"I was very romantic when the Revolution came. We all shouted! Everybody was in favor of it, even the tsar's brother. I knew things had been bad. When a boy sees women standing in line for bread at six in the morning—as if it were for a Horowitz concert—and waiting until six at night and then they are told, 'Sorry, we don't have any more,' he knows something is wrong. But I had bread."

Milstein met Vladimir Horowitz in 1921, in Kiev.

"I went there to play a concert. Horowitz came with his sister, Regina, to hear me. He was handsome and elegant like a greyhound. He came backstage and said, 'My mother and father invite you to tea.' There were music professors at the tea—like Heinrich Neuhaus, years later teacher of Sviatoslav Richter. Volodya (nobody called him Vladimir) played for me later, in Regina's room—his own piano arrangements of operas, Puccini and Wagner. He knew symphonies and operas from memory. After dinner we played sonatas, concertos. I was asked to spend the night—four in the same room: Papa, Volodya, his brother, and me. The next day I was asked to stay on. I was invited to tea, and I stayed three years."

Milstein left Russia on Christmas Eve 1925. "At that time I was sure I would return. When I left, terror was not noticeable yet—it was not organized, not a police state. Horowitz left first. It happened like this: After Horowitz and I played in Moscow, the Commissar of Education, Lunacharsky, very musical, wrote a review about us. He called us 'children of the Soviet Revolution.' Children of the Soviet Revolution? We were children of Imperial conservatories! But Trotsky read the review and said it will be very good to show that Russia is not just materialistic. Trotsky's assistant gave us a letter: 'The Soviet government has nothing against Comrade Horowitz and Comrade Milstein going out of this country for the purposes of study and cultural progress.' Permission was granted for two years."

Milstein was soon famous throughout Europe as both a brilliant soloist and member of a piano trio with Horowitz and Russian cellist Gregor Piatigorsky. He made his American debut in 1929.

Now, after fifty years of eminence, Milstein feels out of tune with the century—and does not care. Dapper, urbane, impeccable, he is a confessed aristocrat. The red button of the French Legion of Honor is set in the lapel of his elegant English tweed jacket. His violin, which he bought at the close of World War II, was originally called the Goldmann Strad, after the collector who once owned it. "The name sounded like I would be selling onions, so I called it Maria-Thérèse, after my wife and daughter."

As with any true aristocrat, Milstein's manner is all modesty. Yet the volatility of his playing is matched by that of his speech—and of his ideas. A painter himself and a collector of fine art, Milstein says: "You will never again have great masterpieces. There is nobody who will spend money for it. Very often, a tyrant, in today's sense, was a cultured personality. That's why you have masterpieces. A democratic form of government has to ask a Congress. Good tyrants produce quality. Peter the Great was good. He had St. Petersburg designed for him. He took experts to Holland and bought a collection of Rembrandt paintings. If he wouldn't do it, nobody would do it. You can't find



1944: Playing for World War II troops at Hollywood's Stage Door Canteen.



Foto Grassi

1955: After a recital at Siena's Accadem a Chigiana, as Count Chigi applauds and Milstein's wife, Thérèse—whose name forms half the appellation of his Stradivarius—beams. 1957: With the other half of the appellation, his daughter, Maria, smoking Papa's cigarette, on Lake Geneva, Switzerland. The boy is conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler's son Andreas.



Lauterwasser/DG

1975: Recording Bach's unaccompanied violin sonatas.



great jewelry now, for example. Expensive, but not great. Nobody can afford to pay union fees for masterpieces. You would have to have somebody who would tax the masses. We have in our home in London two beautiful French carpets made in the workshop of Louis XV. They were not made to sell someplace. In the time of the Medicis there was a dinner for five hundred titled people. Everybody ate on a golden plate bearing his own coat of arms. Then the guests took the plates home. I don't have friends like that," he adds with a laugh. "Nobody gives me a golden plate.

"I think the more people that are involved in artistic things, the less good they are. Even in food the quality will diminish as more people ask for things. In France the best cuisine is in the small towns. There are more violinists now. Grants create many violinists, but grants disperse your attention and you don't have time to notice something extraordinarily good. There is a terrific number of geniuses. But now young people often start to concertize before they have all the equipment. There is no time for concentration, no time to think.

"I see the difference between now and the past: Music has become more educational than artistic. Young people must be able to sacrifice for the violin. I don't think it's important to sacrifice for education. You can live happily without education. But people who are very dedicated to the violin will never be happy unless they play."

Milstein doesn't think much of the conducting profession: "People say so-and-so is a great conductor. He cannot be great at twenty-five. Conductor as an artist, a great personality who can teach the orchestra—that is a conductor. But today nobody can. Since you only need yourself to be a great violinist, pianist, cellist, singer, you can experiment. You are completely in the music, you make music. Conductors do not make music. They make somebody else play. I made recordings, and when it came through it was because I said something, not the conductor. Very often I stop the conductor and tell the orchestra how to do it."

Milstein's recordings currently in the catalog, with the exception of the Bach sonatas and partitas for unaccompanied violin (and an imported Brahms Third Sonata with Horowitz), are devoted exclusively to works for violin and orchestra. (See below.) Only the Glazunov and Prokofiev concertos were composed in the twentieth century. Why doesn't he play more contemporary music? "People don't know how to write for the violin anymore. There was never in musical history such a universal lack of quality. The connection between Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Wagner is continuous like a chain reaction. There was not even a pause; from Rimsky-Korsakov, the Russian school and French school, and their intermarriage and influence, you had Stravinsky, who started to write in the nineteenth century. Prokofiev wrote his best works when he was nineteen, before World War I. Stravinsky, Bartók, Berg. Finish! That was all written forty-five years ago. Now you have cement music, concrete music, electronic music. Atonal music is a destruction. Everybody is looking for something silly. If composers would continue writing traditionally, a gifted person would come with a good idea. They don't look for the gifted; they look for the intellectual."

What does Milstein himself look for in music? "Quality. And virtuosity, which is also quality. The piano has virtuoso music—Chopin, for example. But the only composers in the nineteenth century who wrote brilliant violin music were superficial musicians: Sarasate, Wieniawski, Vieuxtemps, who tried to make a nice form out of it. The solo playing is not virtuoso—it lacks that *quality*—because it is superficial. Even chamber music should be virtuoso. You play Beethoven's Violin Concerto, you have to play *virtuoso*. Stravinsky wrote for violin, but he wrote nothing extraordinary. Prokofiev wrote two wonderful concertos and small pieces.

"People go to hear sonatas. But how many so-

natas are there? And not all sonatas are possible in a large hall. Beethoven's last sonata, the tenth, if you play it right, in Carnegie Hall or Lincoln Center, nobody will hear it. You can't be intimate there."

Milstein is considered one of the most passionate interpreters of Beethoven and Bach. His Deutsche Grammophon recording of the complete Bach Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin was one of HIGH FIDELITY's three best records of the year in 1976. "Bach was the greatest, without improvement. Paganini may have invented more exterior things: harmonics, pizzicato, showoff music. But Bach's was all authentic violin sound. If you ask me who made the greatest contributions to music I would say: Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, Schubert, Schumann—like everybody would say. Everyone's gods are the same."

At seventy-two, except for a back that begs pampering, he retains a youthful ebullience and vitality. He was to make his first overseas flight—from New York to Switzerland—shortly after I saw him. "I hope I like it. I will take two scotches before I board the plane." He laughed.

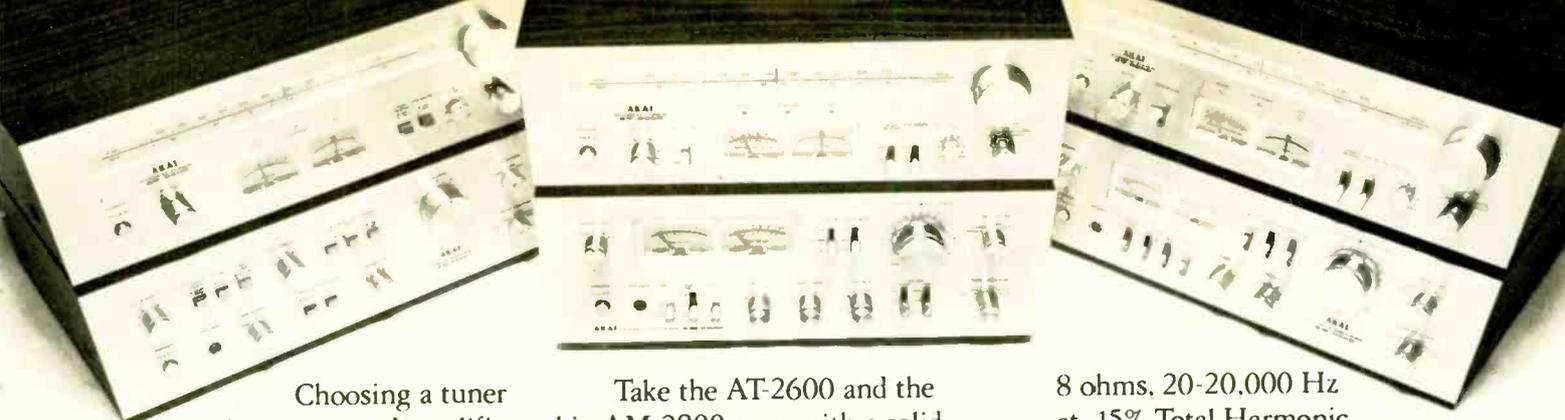
But he does not regret aging. Returning to the subject of the young, he said, "A gifted person cannot develop badly. Talent will always put him on the right track. He might not succeed commercially, but he will always be good—in a way, morally good too. The majority of young people now are more brilliant. They know more than we knew fifty years ago. But people exaggerate the importance of young people. People lose perspective. Whatever they do as young people, if they are gifted, they will do better when they get older.

"The young are important only because eventually they will become old." ●

Sampling the Art

Milstein's Currently Available Discs

- BACH, VIVALDI:** Concertos. ANGEL S 36010.
BACH, VIVALDI: Double Concertos. With Morini. ANGEL S 36006.
BACH: Sonatas and Partitas. DG 2709 047 (3).
BEETHOVEN: Concerto. Philharmonia, Leinsdorf. ANGEL S 35783.
BRAHMS: Concerto. Philharmonia, Fistoulari. SERAPHIM S 60265. Vienna Philharmonic, Jochum. DG 2530 592. Tape: ●● 3300 592.
BRAHMS: Sonata No. 3. With Horowitz. RCA (Germany) 26.41339 (mono; imported by German News Co.).
BRUCH: Concerto No. 1. **MENDELSSOHN:** Concerto in E minor. Philharmonia, Barzin. ANGEL S 35730.
DVOŘÁK, GLAZUNOV: Concertos. New Philharmonia, Frühbeck de Burgos. ANGEL S 36011.
GOLDMARK: Concerto. **BEETHOVEN:** Romances. Philharmonia, Blech and Milstein. SERAPHIM S 60238.
MENDELSSOHN: Concerto in E minor. **TCHAIKOVSKY:** Concerto. Vienna Philharmonic, Abbado. DG 2530 359. N.Y. Philharmonic, Walter; Chicago, Stock. ODYSSEY Y 34604 (mono).
MOZART: Concertos Nos. 4, 5. Philharmonia. ANGEL S 36007.
PROKOFIEV: Concertos Nos. 1, 2. Philharmonia, Giulini; New Philharmonia, Frühbeck de Burgos. ANGEL S 36009.
SAINT-SAËNS: Concerto No. 3. **CHAUSSON:** Poème. Philharmonia, Fistoulari. ANGEL S 36005.
VIVALDI: Concertos. ANGEL S 36001.
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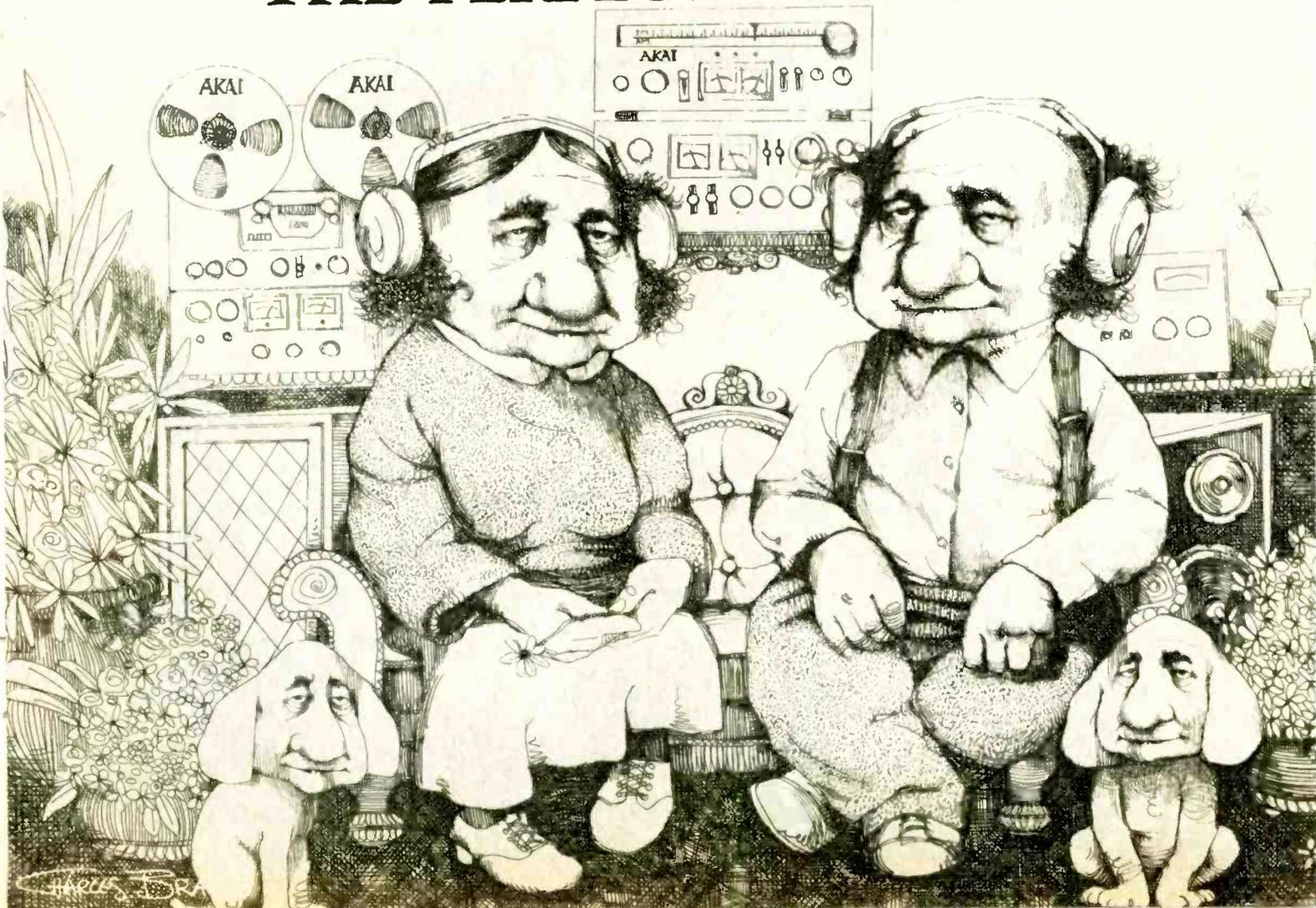
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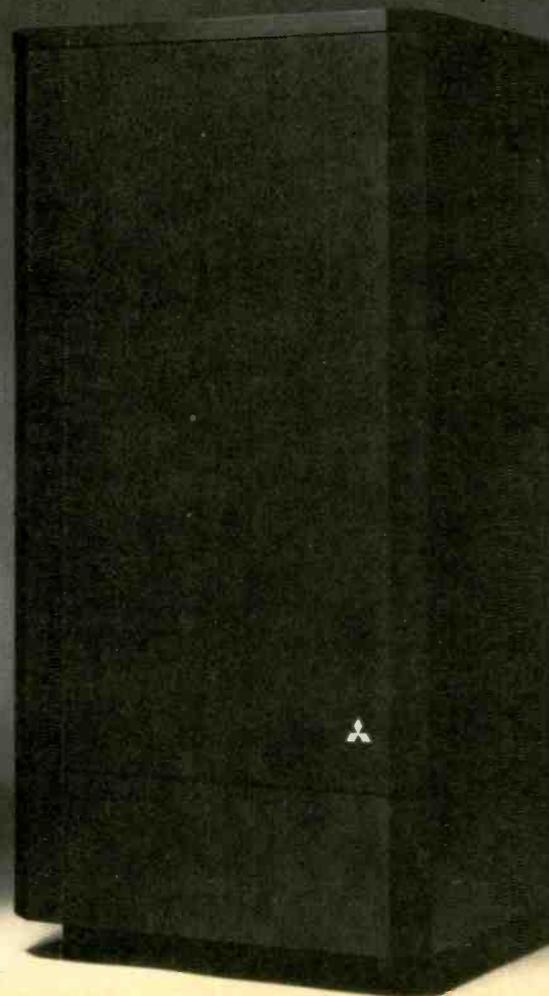
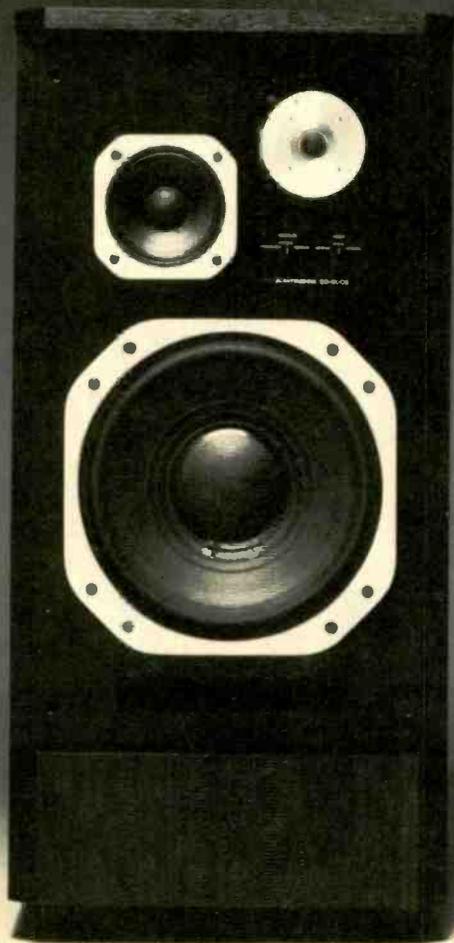
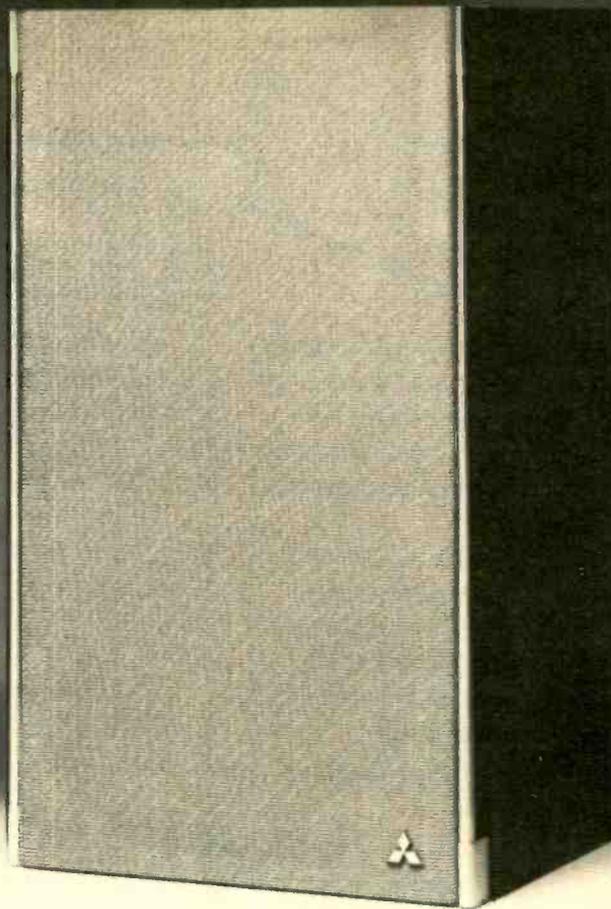
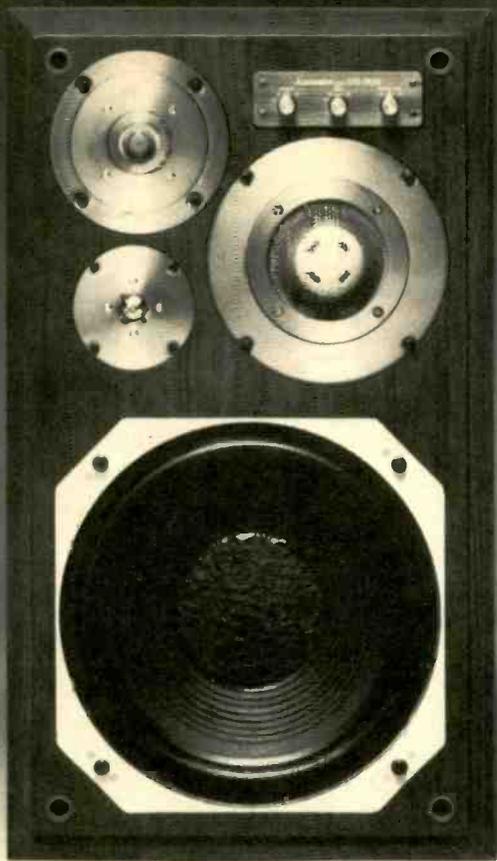
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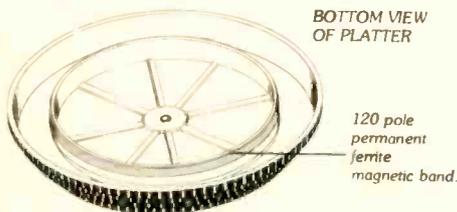
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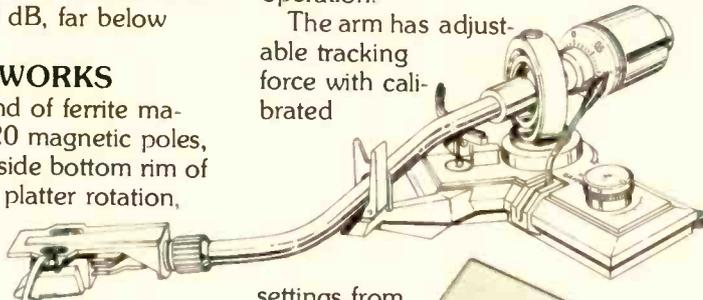
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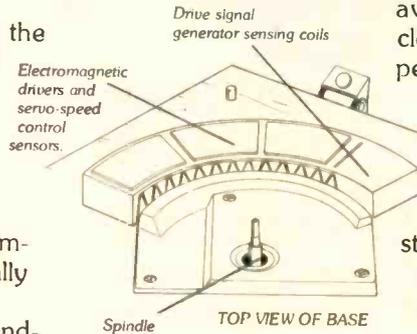
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Anti-Skate Control	Adjustable
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Karl Böhm (above) and Kurt Masur

The New Releases



Barbara Koppe

A Bruckner Tradition Moves On

Karl Böhm and Kurt Masur demonstrate their unforced mastery in a pair of three-disc Bruckner sets from DG and Eurodisc.

by Abram Chipman

NOW IN HIS EIGHTIES, Karl Böhm has long been the elder statesman of a German conducting tradition established by Muck and Weingartner, the antithesis of the Romantic approach of Bülow, Mahler, Nikisch, and (ultimately) Furtwängler. The simultaneous release by Deutsche Grammophon and Eurodisc of a pair of Bruckner packages, overlapping in their contents, could almost symbolize a passing of that mantle to the fifty-year-old music director of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Kurt Masur, who with Carlos Kleiber and Klaus Tennstedt has been one of the most noteworthy conductors to emerge from Germany in recent years. (All three, interestingly, were long-experienced conductors by the time they "burst" onto the international scene.)

Neither Böhm (conducting the Vienna Philharmonic in the Seventh and Eighth Symphonies) nor Masur (conducting the Gewandhaus Orchestra in the Fourth and Seventh) is a flashy virtuoso, although the orchestral execution here is always solid, comfortable, and stylistically "right." This isn't explosive, grandiloquent Bruckner, surging in every bar with metaphysical significance. Not that either conductor is impatient or unduly metronomic with the music: Böhm's performances are broadly spanned, but with a gentle, clear-eyed directness; Masur's are flexible, but in a jaunty and dancelike rather than rhetorical way. Both seem to believe that

music needs above all to unfold naturally—Bruckner's mammoth structures are in profoundly secure hands.

Masur's *Romantic* begins less than charismatically. Stark contrast, thrust, and glitter are scarcely to be found in the first movement, with its consistently legato articulation, steadiness, and backwardly balanced trumpets and trombones. In the following *Andante quasi allegretto*, Masur opts for an ideally quick tempo, much like the second versions of Klemperer (Angel S 36245) and Karajan (DG 2530 674) but with possibly even more seamless joints. In the big viola tune, the hairpin dynamics in the pizzicato accompaniment have rarely, in my recall, been so subtly terraced, an effect that adds to the poignancy of the episode.

The scherzo, taken somewhere between the ominous jog of Klemperer and the white heat of Haitink (Philips 835 385), is much the most successful among my favorite versions in obeying Bruckner's successive markings of *langsamer*, *ruhiger*, and *stringendo*. Masur's finale is equally revelatory, Bruckner's many gear shifts being followed with unflinching accuracy, even to the differentiation of *noch langsamer* from *im frühiger Zeitmass* for the two widely spaced occurrences of the viola theme. One small textual point: Eurodisc attributes this performance to the 1936 Haas edition, but Masur, like

Klemperer, follows the 1944 reprint of Haas in giving the flute-and-clarinet tune of the trio to oboe and clarinet.

DG is more seriously incorrect in labeling its Eighth as an "original version." Böhm appears to use the Nowak text, which is based entirely on Bruckner's 1890 revision, a drastic change indeed from the 1887 original.

One might voice a few criticisms of what is heard too. Böhm's rhythmic coordination of the tricky passage at bars 250-60 in the first movement is flawed. The brass release at bar 389 is not quick enough (compare the terrifying void of silence that follows when it's done accurately, as in the recent Karajan version, DG 2707 085). Things here get a bit heavy from cues Mm to Oo in the finale, and the recording level (or the playing?) is far too loud for much of the scherzo's trio and at bars 60-80 in the Adagio (beautifully flowing though these pages otherwise are in Böhm's hands).

Yet these are ultimately minor points in the context of the deep affinity that conductor and orchestra together display for the work. They do not exaggerate its fatalistic mood (note the utter simplicity of phrasing for the mysterious opening bars) and convey, perhaps more naturally than anyone else on records, the sheerly magical eloquence of the horn, oboe, and trombones over string tremolos at bars 140-65 of the first movement. The scherzo is taken at a moderate pace, its demonic nature understated in favor of its healthy, outdoor ruggedness. It is just those qualities that Böhm stresses in the trio, with its openness of tone and plain-spoken phrasing.

As I have already said, the Adagio is given a very strong, forward reading, but without slighting in any way the music's tenderness or tragic nobility. The sonority is rich and warm, even to a smidgen of portamento between bars 25 and 30. The finale brings excellent structural integration, the rhythmic control at the *etwas breiter* passage (cue W) more than compensating for any lack thereof noted earlier.

Predictably, the Böhm and Masur Sevenths turn out to be a close contest. There have been many recordings of high musical quality, but my favorites among current listings—Haitink (Philips 802 759/60), Rosbaud (Turnabout TV-S 34083), and Horenstein (Unicorn UNI 111)—date back from a dozen to almost fifty years and in all cases sound their ages. The thoroughly contemporary Eurodisc and DG engineering preserves performances of heartfelt lyric warmth and humanity. In the first movement, Masur stresses sectional contrasts, particularly between his leisurely main tempo and the jocular, almost agitated one for the triplet theme first presented at bar 123. Böhm maintains a calm and unwavering dignity throughout the movement—with one exception, about which more below.

In the Adagio, it is Masur who misses the optimal differentiation between the slow basic tempo, which he rushes a little, and the more consolatory Moderato. Böhm sets the two alternating pulses off in clear relief, though I miss the incredibly spacious Adagio tempo of his 1944 Vienna concert performance, issued briefly by Vox in the Fifties and available again in a five-disc Vox Bruckner compendium, VSPS 14. Despite thick sonics and a missing measure at the be-

ginning of the scherzo (at least in the earlier issue; I haven't heard the current one), it's well worth hearing. That Adagio was a shattering experience, which even Furtwängler (to judge from the recorded evidence) did not duplicate.

Böhm's new scherzo is wonderful, especially for the ambling treatment of the trio, a reposeful pause in the surrounding virility. Masur is a shade blunted rhythmically, the impression undoubtedly in part a function of the limitations of the Leipzig brass vis-à-vis those in Vienna and Amsterdam. Both finales have their strong points. Masur sails into the coda with a particularly menacing momentum. Böhm, in keeping with his slightly more bucolic view, conjures lovely wind playing in the softer passages (cf. the almost Dvořákian flute writing around bar 140). Both make a *Luftpause* before the second theme (violins and violas over pizzicato basses at bar 35), but whereas Böhm tightens the pace afterward, Masur holds it back—either one a viable option.

Textual questions in the Seventh are both more simple and more complicated than is usual for Bruckner: simple because there are no extensive revisions from the original manuscript to plague scholars, complicated because the few instrumental changes superimposed by Schalk and Loewe and the tempo changes added by Nikisch may or may not be detectable in a given performance as a function of orchestral balances and conductor's whims, rather than printed editions. I'm not inclined to quarrel with Eurodisc's credit of Haas (which is based on the original manuscript), supported by the absence of cymbal and triangle at bar 177 in the Adagio. Böhm could be using Nowak, Haas, or a combination of both with his own judgment. I hear the Nowak triangle and cymbal, but no wind or brass doublings, and the strings switch from arco to pizzicato in the third, rather than fourth, bar before the end of the Adagio. The matter of tempo changes is tricky. Nikisch is responsible for the silly *molto animato* at bar 233 of the first movement, and Böhm observes it now as he did in 1944; Masur, happily, doesn't. As for all those spurious ritards in the finale, Böhm takes some and not others, and even Masur takes some. And so on.

Through his long and prolific recording career, Böhm has left us too few examples of his Bruckner interpretations. Let us hope these are not the last. In the case of Masur, his discography thus far has been quickly and generously filled with integral symphonic cycles. It should be more than an outside hope that the set at hand, produced by East Germany's Deutsche Schallplatten (which is also collaborating with EMI on the new Jochum Bruckner cycle with the Dresden State Orchestra), heralds a forthcoming Bruckner series.

BRUCKNER: Symphonies: No. 4, in E flat (*Romantic*); No. 7, in E (both ed. Haas). Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Kurt Masur, cond. [Reimar Bluth, prod.] EURODISC 27 913 XGK, \$26.94 (three SQ-encoded discs, manual sequence; distributed by German News Co.).

BRUCKNER: Symphonies: No. 7, in E; No. 8, in C minor (ed. Nowak). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm, cond. [Werner Mayer, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 068, \$23.94 (three discs, manual sequence). Tape: ●● 3371 027, \$23.94.



Re-creating Cimarosa's masterly romp: left, Ryland Davies and Alberto Rinaldi; below, Julia Varady and Julia Hamari; below left, conductor Daniel Barenboim

Photos: Barda/DG



Cimarosa's Comic Masterpiece

*DG's recording of
Il Matrimonio segreto under
Daniel Barenboim is "a largely
enjoyable performance that
no lover of opera should miss."*

by Paul Henry Lang

DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON'S RELEASE of *Il Matrimonio segreto* gives us nothing less than the peak achievement of Italian settecento comic opera. It is amazing that such an unquestionable and enjoyable masterpiece should be so little known. (The poor old Ceira and the much better Angel recordings have not been available for some years.) By the end of the first of this album's six sides anyone with a taste for style, elegance, and charm will be wholly captivated.

Domenico Cimarosa (1749-1801) was a product of the Loreto, the oldest of the famous Neapolitan conservatories; he was well trained, and besides playing the violin, harpsichord, and organ, he was praised as a good singer. His star rose rapidly, and in no time his popularity outshone that of his most celebrated older colleagues. Even Paisiello had to cede his hitherto unchallenged eminence to the young man whose operas were performed not only all over Italy, but in Dresden, Prague, Vienna, London, and St. Petersburg. When Cimarosa was thrown in jail for republican activities, the most influential royalists and cardinals went to his rescue; in Italy a successful opera composer can do no wrong.

Cimarosa composed *Il Matrimonio segreto* in

Vienna, where he was engaged as Salieri's successor at the court (the position Mozart always sought unsuccessfully), and soon after Mozart's death the work was performed to instantaneous acclaim. The emperor, no mean musician, was so carried away that he ordered supper for all participants, and after a rest the entire piece was repeated the same night—surely a unique event in the annals of opera. Everyone (except the splenetic Berlioz, who hated everything Italian) admired *Matrimonio*: Goethe, beguiled, produced it in Weimar; opera composers up to Verdi loved and feasted on it; even the usually reticent and severe Hanslick found it "full of sunshine."

The only sour note in this felicity was provided by Mahler, who at the centennial festivities organized in Vienna in 1901 refused to conduct the opera, even though the committee of sponsors consisted of the cream of Vienna's musical and literary intelligentsia. I suppose a man so tense and full of inner conflicts and pressures could not understand this quintessence of Latin grace, freshness, color, and exuberance of spirit.

The libretto, suggested by one of Hogarth's famous series of pictures, came from a play by the elder Colman and Garrick entitled *The Clandestine Marriage*, produced in London in 1766. After going through several hands, it landed in those of Giovanni Bertati, the author of the *Don Giovanni* set by Gazzaniga that immediately preceded Mozart's opera by the same title and that both Da Ponte and his composer studied closely. It deals with the always popular story of the old guardian or father whose sweet young charge refuses to marry her wealthy but elderly suitor. To this was added the necessary subplot permitting the permutation of amorous intrigues: in the end the couples are of course sorted out to general satisfaction.

Bertati, an experienced librettist well above the average prevailing in his day, made a spirited piece out of the old story, and Cimarosa set it with classically balanced economy. The composer establishes immediate rapport with his audience, because whatever he does is always graceful, witty, and creative, the charming melodies flow in abundance, and there is a delightful tinge of sly irony. Cimarosa knew the theater as few have known it, he was a superbly gifted lyricist, and his orchestra is full of verve. Only Mozart and Rossini composed such crackling and animated ensembles and finales.

Now we must touch upon the unavoidable comparison with Mozart; it is often made, and of course to the detriment of the Italian. But such comparisons are based on the wrong premise, for these two composers were no rivals—they created in different veins. Mozart, though saturated with Italian elements, was not an Italian composer like Hasse; the Italians knew the difference, and while he was admired he never became really popular in Italy. The Italian buffa composer did not take very seriously the reality of his characters or seek their inner truth as Mozart did—no Italian could create a dramatic figure like the Countess in *Figaro*—because they wanted to romp, entertain, and propagate cloudless merriment.

Thus the two composers' aims were quite different, and each achieved them according to his lights

and temperament. Both used the prevailing classical idiom to perfection, and we cannot fault Cimarosa if he could not turn clichés from the public domain into revelations, for only Mozart could do that. But he used them with captivating elegance, volatile and cohesive at the same time. As Hanslick so well said: "*Il Matrimonio segreto* shows a fabulously light but masterfully schooled hand led by discriminating taste."

The new performance, though not without some flaws, is excellent. Daniel Barenboim, not infrequently guilty of romantic effusiveness, this time shows a most intelligent, understanding, and sophisticated approach as well as a firm command of his forces, both stylistically and technically. He presents us with an opera *da camera*, intimate, delicate, and yet solid. There is an impressively just balance between stage and pit, the English Chamber Orchestra is superb, the tempos are brisk, the ensembles roll along with precision, the accompanied recitatives are flexible, and there are none of those phony allargandos at the end of sections or arias. Even the harpsichordist, who sticks to his duties without unnecessary flourishes, ends his cadences crisply, but he is somewhat muffled by the sound engineers. Though the latter commendably assist Barenboim in his endeavor to maintain an intimate atmosphere, the closely placed microphones, appropriate most of the time, cause sudden high notes to erupt shrilly; the marvelous finales are also a little noisy when the sonic barometer rises.

All three of the women—sopranos Julia Varady and Arleen Auger and mezzo Julia Hamari—sing well, with warmth and vivaciousness, though with less than ideal enunciation, and in the fast patter of the parlados their attempt to be too pointed results in breathless flutter. The outstanding members of the cast are tenor Ryland Davies, a sensitive bel canto artist, and especially Alberto Rinaldi, who uses his attractive bass voice impeccably, with a fine sense for articulation and pace, and engagingly communicates his own relish for the part. Both he and Davies enunciate with remarkable clarity.

Regrettably, the one unsatisfactory member of the cast is the most famous of them, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. His voice is not suited for his part, nor does it show to advantage even in the more sustained passages. Fischer-Dieskau does not really understand Italian buffo singing (few, if any, German Lieder singers do), overdoes the part by attempting to be very funny as he jumps from barely audible mumbled asides to sudden outbursts, and cannot master the parlado; huffing and puffing, he spits out the notes as though they tasted bad.

Nevertheless, we still have an absolutely delectable work in a largely enjoyable performance that no lover of opera should miss.

CIMAROSA: Il Matrimonio segreto.

Eisetta	Julia Varady (s)	Paolino	Ryland Davies (t)
Carolina	Arleen Auger (s)	Geronimo	Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b)
Fidalma	Julia Hamari (ms)	Count Robinson	Alberto Rinaldi (bs)

Richard Amner, harpsichord; English Chamber Orchestra, Daniel Barenboim, cond. [Hans Weber and Günther Breest, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 069, \$23.94 (three discs, manual sequence).

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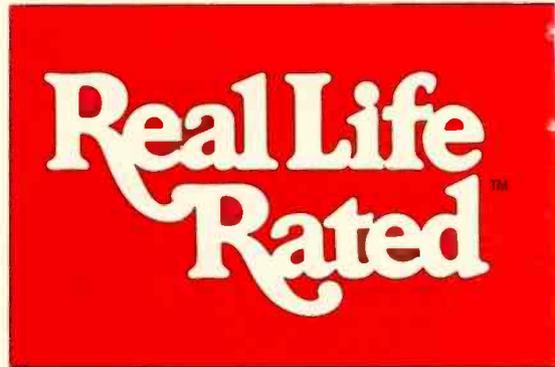
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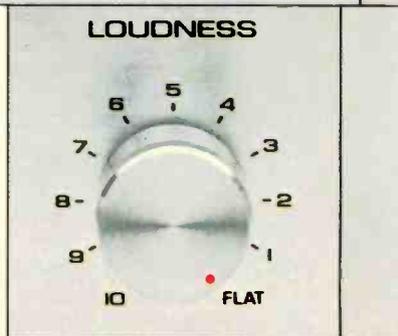
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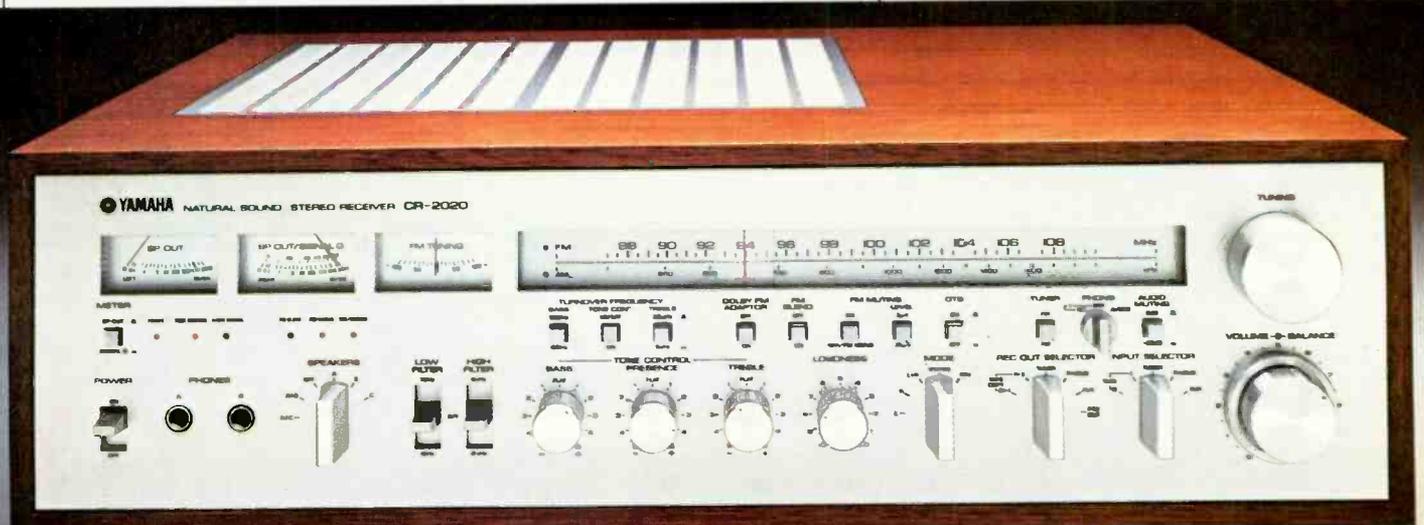
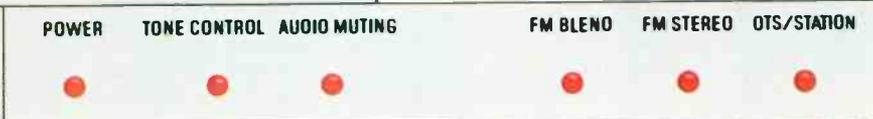
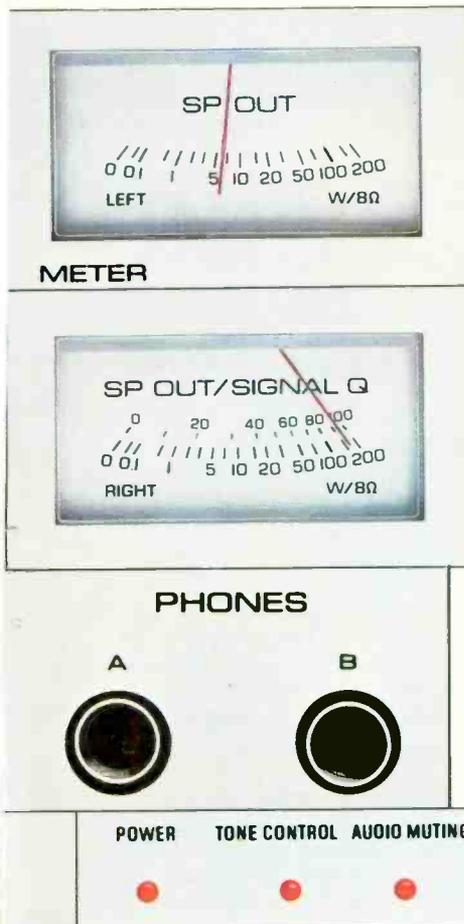
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Muti's Nabucco and Ivan. Readers of this department may have noticed the frequency with which we hedge our bets. This is not accidental; when it comes to recording plans, nothing is certain until it's on tape (and sometimes not even then!). Thus when we told you in July about RCA's planned Solti/Chicago Verdi Requiem, we described Leontyne Price, Janet Baker, Vladimir Atlantov, and Nicolai Ghiaurov as "the announced solo quartet." And a good thing we did, for by the time the recording was made, Veriano Luchetti (a tenor who attracted some favorable comment during last year's La Scala visit and comes to the Met this season as Puccini's Rodolfo and Pinkerton) and José van Dam had replaced Atlantov (who canceled his planned U.S. trip, which was to have included his Met debut as Cavaradossi) and Ghiaurov.

Similarly, by the time EMI got around to recording its much talked-about *Nabucco* in July, the title role was taken by Piero Cappuccilli and not, as previously announced, Sherrill Milnes. But the story doesn't end there. Although work began on schedule, it came to a halt when Cappuccilli became indisposed. And word is that when recording resumes—in February, it is hoped—there will "probably" be a new *Nabucco*. The likely replacement is a first-rate and much under-recorded Verdi baritone, but perhaps this time we should hold off until we have more certain word.

If all goes well now, patient Verdians should be amply rewarded: EMI has Ghiaurov as Zaccaria, a role that the Bulgarian bass was first scheduled to record more than a decade ago, in Decca/London's stereo premiere of the opera. As reported, EMI's Abigail is Renata Scotto; Luchetti turns up again as Ismaele. Riccardo Muti conducts the New Philharmonia and the Ambrosian Singers.

The same orchestra and chorus participated in Muti's other major summer project, which featured yet another tyrant: Ivan the Terrible. Also on hand for the cantata drawn from Prokofiev's music for the Eisenstein films were mezzo Irina Arkhipova and baritone Anatoly Mokrenko (the latter having already participated in the Soviet recording available here for the last decade on Melodiya/Angel). Prokofiev's Sinfonietta had been taped earlier for the set's fourth side.

Sheriff Milnes. Milnes fans will get to hear their man in roles unexpected and expected. The unexpected is Sheriff Jack Rance in Puccini's *Fanciulla del West*. We told you in June that Deutsche Grammophon would be making a record based on the Covent

Behind The Scenes

Garden production, but in the interim the scheduled Rance, Ingvar Wixell, withdrew. DG and Covent Garden went their separate ways in replacing him, with Silvano Carroli reportedly scoring a great success in the live performances. The other principals—Carol Neblett in the title role, Plácido Domingo as the outlaw Ramerrez—re-created their stage roles: Zubin Mehta, in his DG debut, conducted.

As noted in February, Milnes was also scheduled to record Don Giovanni, in Karl Böhm's new version to be made at the past summer's Salzburg Festival. The rest of the cast was shaping up as follows: Walter Berry (Leporello), Teresa Zylis-Gara (Elvira), Anna Tomova-Sintov (Anna), Peter Schreier (Ottavio), John Macurdy (Commendatore), Edith Mathis (Zerlina), and Dale Duesing (Masetto).

Obraztsova in the studio. No doubt about it: Since Elena Obraztsova burst onto the American operatic scene during the Bolshoi Opera's 1975 U.S. visit, the dramatic mezzo (a rarity indeed these days) has won the hearts of American operaphiles.

The record companies, it seems, are beginning to get the message, and she is scheduled to record three (non-Russian) roles. After taping an operatic recital disc for EMI (begun in the time originally allotted for completion of *Nabucco*—see above), and *Adriana Lecouvreur* for CBS in London, she was due in Berlin in late September to sing Azucena in Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, a recording that grows out of Herbert von Karajan's triumphant Salzburg and Vienna productions last spring. Scheduled to re-create their Vienna roles were Leontyne Price (her *third* Leonora) and Piero Cappuccilli (Di Luna). Obraztsova replaces Christa Ludwig, the Vienna Azucena, while Franco Bonisolli replaces Luciano Pavarotti, who of course is the Manrico of the new Decca/London *Trovatore*. The Ferrando is Ruggero Raimondi, the orchestra the Berlin Philharmonic.

Next year for Deutsche Grammophon she is to be Saint-Saëns's Dalila (in which role she caused quite a stir last spring at the Met), with Plácido

Domingo as Samson and Daniel Barenboim conducting.

Back on home ground, this winter Obraztsova will be singing Santuzza in Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana* (in Italian) in Moscow, both in concert and at the Bolshoi. Undoubtedly it has occurred to someone that that would be a suitable recording vehicle for her!

Ashkenazy at the keyboard. Last month we reported on new developments in Vladimir Ashkenazy's conducting activities, but it should not be thought that he is about to abandon the piano. In addition to continuing his long-running Decca/London series of Beethoven sonatas and Chopin piano works, Ashkenazy has recorded a second disc of Scriabin sonatas (Nos. 2, 7, and 10) en route to yet another *intégrale*. He has also taped the Schumann concerto with Uri Segal and the London Symphony, as well as two more discs with soprano Elisabeth Söderström: Vol. 3 in their series of Rachmaninoff songs and a Musorgsky collection. Decca/London, we are told, is now looking for suitable repertory to continue the collaboration.

Lorengar and De Larrocha. Decca/London has paired two artists on its roster to form another happy duo. Those illustrious Spaniards Pilar Lorengar and Alicia de Larrocha have recorded a disc of songs by their countryman Enrique Granados. De Larrocha, meanwhile, has recorded yet another sequel to her highly successful "Mostly Mozart" collections, featuring solo works by Mozart and Bach.

Lombard branches out. Alain Lombard's ambitious recording program in Strasbourg is going international in more ways than one. His *Faust* for Erato (released domestically by RCA, to be reviewed next month) broke ground in the matter of casting, bringing in such distinguished non-French singers as Montserrat Caballé, Giacomo Aragall, and Paul Plishka. Now Lombard will be moving outside the French operatic repertory, and at least one of his projects is for a non-French company.

EMI plans to record Puccini's *Turandot* in Strasbourg with Caballé (Decca/London's Liù last time around) in the title role, Mirella Freni as Liù, José Carreras as Calaf, and Plishka as Timur. On the Erato schedule is Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, with Kiri Te Kanawa (Fiordiligi), Frederica von Stade (Dorabella), Teresa Stratas (Despina), David Rendall (Ferrando), José van Dam (Guglielmo), and Jules Bastin (Don Alfonso). ●

tal works. But too many of them, like the flute sonatas, tend to reinforce the impression that this London (or English—or more properly, Italian) Bach was basically a rather lightweight, however pleasant, composer.

So it's salutary to be reminded that the composer young Mozart admired so wholeheartedly did indeed create more substantial works, such as the best of his some sixty sinfonias (or, on occasion and interchangeably, overtures). Three of the six in Op. 18, the odd-numbered ones, are particularly interesting today in that they anticipate the coming of stereo in calling for double orchestras. Zinman's is, to my knowledge, the first integral Op. 18 in SCHWANN; Münchinger has recorded the set in two separate installments (1974 and 1976), and only the second disc, with the three even-numbered sinfonias for a single orchestra, has appeared so far in this country. The Zinman album has the further advantage of including one of the relatively better-known sinfonias from Op. 9, plus an engaging if less substantial two-movement sinfonia concertante for oboe and cello. Münchinger fills out the second side of his disc with a rather staid version of Telemann's *Don Quichotte* ballet suite, which offers little competition to the superb Mariner/Argo recording (ZRG 836, October 1976).

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B **BARTÓK:** *The Wooden Prince*, Op. 13; *Suite*; *The Miraculous Mandarin*, Op. 19; *Suite*. Minnesota Orchestra, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, cond. [Dennis D. Rooney, prod.] CANDIDE QCE 31097, \$4.98 (QS-encoded disc).

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BEETHOVEN: *Symphonies Nos. 2, 4*. Ferencsik. HUNGAROTON SLPX 11891, 11894, Oct.
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BRAHMS: *Orchestral Works*. Abravanel. VANGUARD CARDINAL VCS 10117/20 (4), Oct.
CHOPIN: *Piano Works*. Zimmerman. DG 2530 826, Oct.
DAQUIN: *Noëls*. **MARCHAND:** *Organ Works*. Wills. SAGA 5433/4 (2), Oct.
DUSSEK: *Piano Sonatas*, Vols. 1-2. Marvin. GENESIS GS 1068, 1069, Sept.
GERSHWIN: *Porgy and Bess*. Dale, Albert, Smith, DeMain. RCA ARL 3-2109 (3), Sept.
GRANADOS: *Goyescas*. De Larrocha. LONDON CS 7009. *Piano Works*, Vol. 1. Dosse. VOX SVBX 5484 (3), Oct.
HAYDN: *Piano Works*, Vol. 4. Ránki. HUNGAROTON SLPX 11625/7 (3), Oct.
HAYDN: *Symphonies Nos. 44, 49*. Barenboim. DG 2530 708. *Symphonies Nos. 82-87*. Barenboim. EMI/CAPITOL SLS 5065 (3), Oct.
HINDEMITH: *Organ Sonatas* (3). Baker. DELOS FY 026, Sept.
IVES: *Concord Sonata*. Kalish. NONESUCH H 71337, Sept.
KHACHATURIAN: *Gayane Suites*. Tjeknavorian. RCA RED SEAL CRL 2-2263 (2), Oct.
SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 8*. **HAYDN:** *Symphony No. 104*. Karajan. ANGEL S 37058, Oct.
STRAUSS, R.: *Burleske; Violin Concerto*. Frager, Hoelscher, Kempe. ANGEL S 37267, Oct.
TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 4*. Abbado. DG 2530 651, Oct.
BAROQUE CONCERTO IN ENGLAND. Black, Bennett, Dobson. CRD 1031, Sept.
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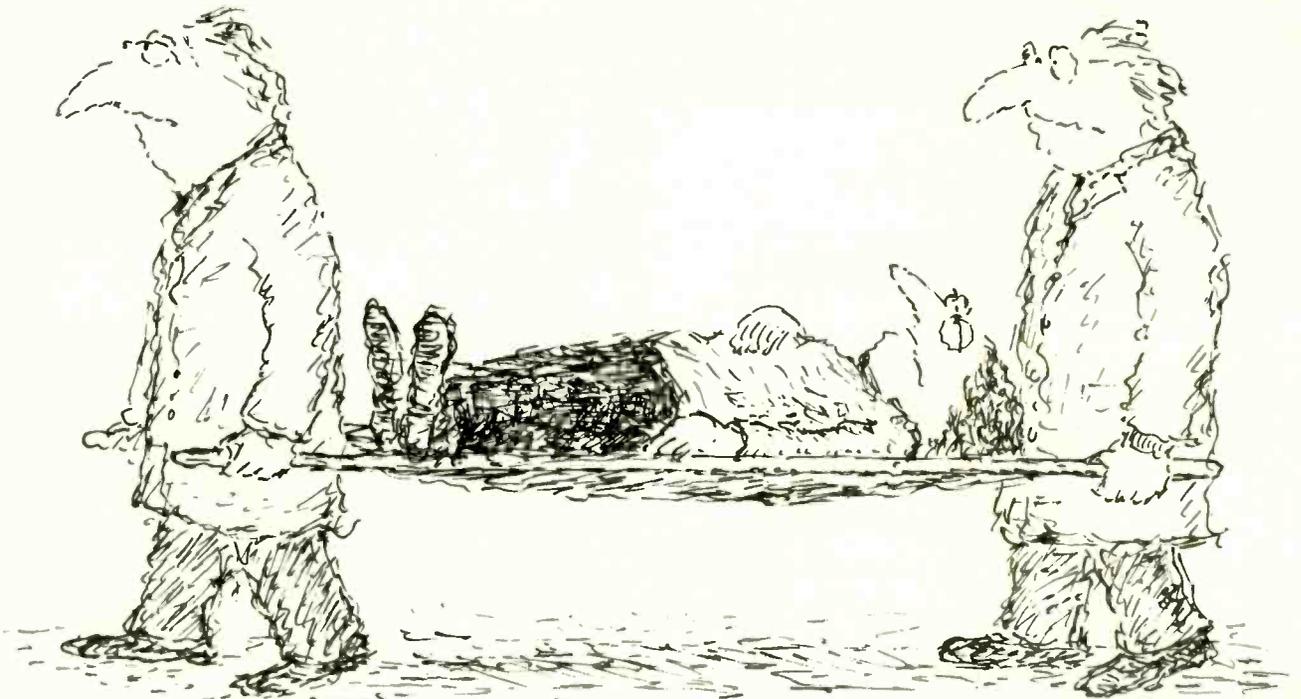
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CIRCLE 10 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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Klaus Fischer/Phonogram

David Zinman—J. C. Bach with individuality and eloquence

BACH, J.C.: Sinfonias. Netherlands Chamber Orchestra. David Zinman, cond. PHILIPS 6780 025, \$15.96 (two discs).

Sinfonia in E flat, Op. 9, No. 2. Sinfonias, Op. 18: No. 1, in E flat; No. 2, in B flat; No. 3, in D; No. 4, in D; No. 5, in E; No. 6, in D. Sinfonia concertante in F (with Thomas Indermuhle, oboe; Herre-Jan Stegenga, cello).

BACH, J.C.: Sinfonias, Op. 18: No. 2, in B flat; No. 4, in D; No. 6, in D. **TELEMANN:** Don Quichotte Suite. Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Karl Münchinger, cond. [James Mallinson, prod.] LONDON GS 6988, \$7.98.

I don't know whether Johann Christian Bach, Johann Sebastian's thirteenth son (and eighteenth of twenty children), was a triskaideca-phobe or phile, but he certainly was startlingly different from not only his parents, but his ancestors and siblings: the first of a strictly Lutheran family

to become a Roman Catholic, the first of an ancient German line to become—at least temperamentally and artistically—an Ital-

Explanation of symbols

Classical:

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

Recorded tape:

- Open Reel
- ◻ 8-Track Cartridge
- Cassette

ian. A spoiled favorite of his father, he wasn't quite fifteen when the latter died and the responsibility for his musical training passed to Carl Philipp Emanuel in Berlin. But within a few years, before he was twenty, he was magnetically drawn south to Italy, where he found himself far more "at home" not only in Catholicism, but with distinctively Italian rococo musical styles and ideals. And it was these affinities he steadfastly retained when he finally settled in England some eight years later to become music master to Queen Charlotte, composer/accompanist for George III's flute-playing, and one of the first to recognize the genius of the child Mozart.

Nowadays, even though his hit operas have been long forgotten, J. C. Bach is not badly represented on records by instrumen-

tal works. But too many of them, like the flute sonatas, tend to reinforce the impression that this London (or English—or, more properly, Italian) Bach was basically a rather lightweight, however pleasant, composer.

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HAYDN: *Symphonies Nos. 44, 49*. Barenboim. DG 2530 708. *Symphonies Nos. 82-87*. Barenboim. EMI/CAPITOL SLS 5065 (3), Oct.
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IVES: *Concord Sonata*. Kalish. NONESUCH H 71337, Sept.
KHACHATURIAN: *Gayane Suites*. Tjeknavorian. RCA RED SEAL CRL 2-2263 (2), Oct.
SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 8*. **HAYDN:** *Symphony No. 104*. Karajan. ANGEL S 37058, Oct.
STRAUSS, R.: *Burleske; Violin Concerto*. Frager, Hoelscher, Kempe. ANGEL S 37267, Oct.
TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 4*. Abbado. DG 2530 651, Oct.
BAROQUE CONCERTO IN ENGLAND. Black, Bennett, Dobson. CRD 1031, Sept.
HEINZ HOLLIGER, AURÈLE NICOLET: *Works with Oboe, Flute*. PHILIPS 9500 070, Oct.
PETER HURFORD: *Chorale Variations for Organ*. ARGO ZRG 835, Oct.
WILHELM KEMPF: *Bach, Handel, and Gluck Arrangements*. DG 2530 647, Sept.
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strings and its rich panoply of winds (including two saxophones) and percussion. Comparing this with the sound *Candide* has provided for the Minnesota group is instructive, though, and by no means entirely in Columbia's favor: Though there are minor discrepancies of balance between the two versions, the *Candide* recording, made in Minneapolis' highly praised Orchestra Hall, gives a slightly rounder sound, particularly to the strings, with no loss of detail.

As for the interpretations, there too it is a matter of swings and roundabouts. Boulez is the more nuanced, with a more conscientious attempt to follow Bartók's very precisely indicated rubato: Yet sometimes the relatively unsubtle Skrowaczewski can sound more natural in his choice of tempo, and certainly he gets more unanimous playing from his orchestra in the strongly rhythmic allegro sections than Boulez does from his—and this applies to his account of the *Mandarin* suite as well as to that from *The Wooden Prince*. In general Boulez does greater justice to the music's sensitivity, Skrowaczewski to its animal vigor. So the choice depends almost entirely on whether you feel you can afford two full-priced records for the complete scores (plus the *Dance Suite* on Boulez' *Mandarin* disc, M 31368), or whether about two-thirds of each combined on a single budget-priced disc will meet your needs. J.N.

Mike Evans/Phonogram



Alfred Brendel
Lively and
characterful
Beethoven

B **BEETHOVEN:** Quartets for Strings: No. 1, in F, Op. 18, No. 1; No. 2, in G, Op. 18, No. 2. Gabrieli Quartet. [Michael Woolcock, prod.] LONDON TREASURY STS 15398, \$3.98.

The London-based Gabrieli Quartet—violinists Kenneth Sillito and Brendan O'Reilly, violist Ian Jewel, and cellist Keith Harvey—plays urbanely but with no lack of drama; indeed, the group's special attention to such characteristically Beethovenesque dynamic distinctions as that between forte and fortissimo adds immeasurably to the vivid vitality of both performances on this resonantly realistic disc. I also admire the precise ensemble, the crisp articulation of passagework, and the unusual prominence of the viola and cello as microphoned. Interpretively, both performances are bright-eyed and unaffected, urging the music onward but rarely slighting the rapt poignancy of such introspective movements as the celebrated *Adagio affettuoso* of the F major Quartet (taken somewhat quickly but without any feeling of either rushing or casualness).

On repeated hearings I did begin to feel that some of the playing, for all its cleanliness and good musicianship, is a bit hurried and shapeless, particularly when measured alongside such structurally perceptive interpretations as the Végh Quartet's in the outstanding (and much more expensive) Telefunken set (36.35042). The running finale of Op. 18, No. 1, and the first, third, and fourth movements of Op. 18, No. 2, are cases in point. But I don't want to exaggerate. It is high praise to say that the Gabrieli is fully competitive with the excellent budget Op. 18 sets by the Budapest (*Odyssey* 32 36 0023) and Hungarian (*Seraphim* SIC 6005). Indeed, it provides worthy cre-

dentials regardless of price, and the prospect of a Gabrieli Beethoven cycle is a pleasant one. H.G.

BEETHOVEN: Sonatas for Piano: No. 8, in C minor, Op. 13 (*Pathétique*); No. 18, in E flat, Op. 31, No. 3; No. 19, in G minor, Op. 49, No. 1. Alfred Brendel, piano. PHILIPS 9500 077, \$7.98. Tape: ●● 7300 478, \$7.95.

Brendel's new Op. 31, No. 3, is fine, but in my opinion less so than his earlier version for Vox (in SVBX 5418). I once characterized that reading as his best Beethoven sonata recording, and it still seems so, now along with the fine Philips remakes of the *Waldstein*, Op. 110, and *Andante favori* (all on 6500 762, August 1976). The new performance, while still lively and characterful, is a bit more disjointed rhythmically, and the distant microphone placement, though it results in more vibrant and colorful sound than the close-to Vox's, robs the performance of forceful bass. Only in the last movement, now an appropriately fiery presto, is this account preferable.

The new *Pathétique* is less stolid than the old one (in SVBX 5420) but also less steady rhythmically. The Grave introduction seems particularly lumbering and ambiguous, but in this instance the added color and vibrancy of the Philips sound is a vast improvement over the tinny, boxy Vox.

Brendel's way with Op. 49, No. 1, remains essentially as it was before: No other pianist has managed as Schnabel did to go beyond the decorative surface of this juvenile and yet potentially affecting little essay. The Philips sound does add refinement to Brendel's rippling outlook. The pianist's own notes are characteristically informative and thoughtful. H.G.

BEETHOVEN: Sonatas for Piano: No. 28, in A, Op. 101; No. 30, in E, Op. 109. Vladimir Ashkenazy, piano. [Richard Beswick and Christopher Raeburn, prod.] LONDON CS 7029, \$7.98. Tape: ●● CS5 7029, \$7.95.

Many of the Romantic composers created in the shadow cast by "late" Beethoven, and there are few performances that make the connection as apparent as it is here. The *Alla marcia* of Op. 101 is, of course, the precursor of such Schumann inspirations as the F major *Novelette* and the second of the viola/piano *Märchenbilder* in the same key. Ashkenazy's performance stresses the kinship. His tempo is on the leisurely side, and his rhythm is full of an exaggerated spring and snap with stressful (some may think overstressed) inflections at the endings of large phrases. A similar kind of bright incision pervades the fugal portions of the finale.

The first movement of Op. 101 and most of Op. 109, on the other hand, foreshadow Chopin, and Ashkenazy's playing, while thoroughly scrupulous about following Beethoven's detailed requests, does have a definite Chopin cast to it. The rhythm is slightly languorous and rounded off, the sound clear and contrapuntal enough but still a bit blandly pianistic (a hard thing to describe, but compare Kempff's more plangetic—and, I think, more idiomatic—sonority in the same works). On the whole, these are large-scaled, effective, and valid readings that add interesting commentary to the subject of interpreting both pieces.

The Kingsway Hall acoustics are a trifle overblown but not injurious to the polyphony of either composition. H.G.

BEETHOVEN: Songs, Vol. 1. Peter Schreier,

tenor; Walter Olbertz and Gisela Franke, piano. TELEFUNKEN 6.41997, \$7.98.

Op. 48: Gellert Songs (6). Op. 52: No. 1, Urians Reise um die Welt; No. 4, Mälied; No. 6, Die Liebe; No. 7, Marmotte; No. 8, Das Blümchen Wunderhold. Op. 75: No. 2, Neue Liebe, neues Leben; No. 3, Flohlied aus Faust. Op. 83: No. 1, Wonne der Wehmut; No. 2, Sehnsucht; No. 3, Mit einem gemalten Bande. Egmont, Op. 84: Freudvoll und leidvoll. Ich denke dein, WoO. 74. Opferlied, WoO. 126. Die laute Klage, WoO. 135. Des Kriegers Abschied, WoO. 143.

For VEB Deutsche Schallplatten in East Germany, Peter Schreier has recorded three discs of Beethoven songs, and this is the first American release from that series, which is comparable in extent (though not precisely equivalent in content) to Fischer-Dieskau's set, first issued as DG 139 216/8 and also as part of the Beethoven bicentenary series. Of the latter, however, only the first disc remains available (DG 139 197), while from the baritone's still earlier two-disc mono Beethoven project for Electrola only a single disc (the original E 90005 plus a few songs from E 90006) is now listed as an import (IC 053 01138).

Beethoven's songs are a less than consistently sublime aspect of his output, mixing a few unquestioned masterpieces with a modicum of conventional settings and some early trivia. (The opus numbers are often misleading: e.g., both Opp. 52 and 75 contain songs dating back to 1783.) Thus an extensive recorded survey is probably more than most listeners will want—while those with a comprehensive bent would probably like to have everything (there's at least another record's worth not included in either the Schreier or Dieskau series). What we presently lack is a good single-disc selection of the best Beethoven songs: say, *An die ferne Geliebte*, the eloquent, archaizing Gellert settings, the best of the Goethe songs, and a few others. Naturally, these plums have been well distributed over Schreier's three discs, and the two available Dieskau singles (which duplicate only four songs between them) still omit some fine things.

Be that as it may, Schreier does well with this material. Now and then the voice verges on a Karl Erb-ish dryness that one has not previously noted in his singing, but it is manipulated with more elegance and dynamic consistency than Dieskau managed—a particular benefaction to the many lightweight songs, which labor under the baritone's excessive heartiness (cf. the potentially tedious "Urians Reise um die Welt," where Schreier also spares us five out of the fourteen verses, traversing the remainder with a more delicate humor).

This is not to suggest that Schreier is weak on the serious songs. I find his restrained treatment of "Wonne der Wehmut" more appropriate to the poet's resignation than Dieskau's portentous, tragic approach, and he handles the melismatic return to the opening material more smoothly and expressively. The musicianly playing of Walter Olbertz, though less plangently registered than DG's Jörg Demus, is always to the point, especially his well-timed agogic accenting in "Neue Liebe, neues Leben."

On the debit side, one must mention a tendency for the microphone to exaggerate Schreier's sibilants, and Telefunken's inadequate presentation: only German texts (run on, rather than line by line), no



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Peter Schreier
Spotty Beethoven consistently well done

translations, and no dates for the songs (important for the reason given above). A record issued for general sale in the American market at full price should do better than this. D.H.

B **BEETHOVEN (arr.):** Songs of Various Nationality, WoO. 157. Accademia Monteverdiana, Denis Stevens, dir. NONESUCH H 71340, \$3.96.

B **BEETHOVEN (arr.):** Folksong Settings. Accademia Monteverdiana, Denis Stevens, dir. VANGUARD EVERYMAN SRV 356, \$3.98.

Scottish Songs, Op. 108: No. 5, The sweetest lad was Jamie; No. 23, The shepherd's song. Irish Songs, WoO. 152: No. 1, The return to Ulster; No. 2, Sweet power of song; No. 20, Farewell bliss and farewell Nancy. Welsh Songs, WoO. 155: No. 1, Ston the son of Evan; No. 4, Love without hope; No. 7, O let the night my blushes hide. Scottish Songs, WoO. 156: No. 10, Glencoe; No. 11, Auld lang syne.

The folksong settings that the Scottish dilettant George Thomson commissioned from Beethoven may not be ethnomusicologically sound, but the instrumental preludes, accompaniments, and postludes are covered with the master's fingerprints: inventive textures (for piano, violin, and cello), striking harmonic turns, ingenious melodic developments.

Some of the tunes are familiar indeed—"God save the King," "Auld lang syne," "The Minstrel Boy" (to new words as "The Soldier")—but the interest is primarily in their surroundings, especially as these professional, brightly and sensitively articulated performances give equal weight to voices and instruments. The singing is not as assertive, as self-conscious as in some earlier, now unavailable recordings (notably those involving Fischer-Dieskau), and this is all to the good. Since Beethoven apparently composed many of these settings without knowing what the words would be (in many cases they were still being written, by poets also under Thomson's commission), he didn't go in for much finely detailed word-painting.

Though this isn't the Accademia Monteverdiana's expected line of country, the group performs with fine style. The voices are firm and pleasant, the singers phrase with grace and strength (and, of course, with idiomatic diction), the instrumentalists match them. Both discs are well recorded and include the texts as sung (a number of stanzas are left by the wayside—no great loss) and annotations. Those who own DG's Beethoven editions will find three duplications on the Vanguard disc, five on the Nonesuch; several songs on each disc are first recordings. D.H.

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 2, in D, Op. 36^o; Leonore Overture No. 3, Op. 72b^o. BBC Symphony Orchestra^o and London Symphony Orchestra^o, Colin Davis, cond. PHILIPS 9500 160, \$7.98. Tape: ●● 7300 525, \$7.95.

These are, objectively considered, fine performances—cleanly played, judiciously paced, idiomatic as to sonority and phrasing, and devoid of eccentricity. But the one ingredient conspicuously missing is, at least for this reviewer, an important one: Davis' account of the symphony never conveys the lightness of touch (which can fully coexist with solid weight) and the soaring lyricism that provide needed foil for the fiery drama. Indeed, for all the strength and integrity, the playing hardly gives the impression of being on the verge of bursting into flame. The deficiency of humor and intensity is missed less in *Leonore* No. 3, but other accounts (Solti's, to cite one of the most recent) have conveyed a stronger sense of the theater, more hushed calm in the introduction, more blazing excitement in the finale.

Philips gives us a compact, classically apt, beautifully balanced sound with plenty of rugged bass, and Davis observes the repeat in the symphony's first movement. H.G.

BLOCH: Schelomo. **SCHUMANN:** Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 129. Mstislav Rostropovich, cello; Orchestre National de France, Leonard Bernstein, cond. [John Mordler, prod.] ANGEL S 37356, \$7.98 (SQ-encoded disc). Tape: ●● 4XS 37356, \$7.98.

Although *Schelomo* is generally taken as an invitation to interpretive license, my impression from several conversations with the composer is that he held a different view. My feeling that he imagined a rhapsodic (but controlled) solo cello juxtaposed against a somewhat less intense orchestra is borne out, I think, by the score itself: Expressive markings for the soloist are much more numerous and precise than those for the orchestra.

Both Rostropovich and Bernstein are known for placing a highly individual stamp on everything they perform. And in the cellist's case, at least, I was interested to note how scrupulously Bloch's directions are followed, not so much literally as with expressive intensification that falls just short of exaggeration. Moreover, he holds these details together in an extremely impressive total conception of the piece. Bern-

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Mstislav Rostropovich and Leonard Bernstein—A competition in which Bloch loses

stein's orchestral conception, however, in a sense turns it inside out, for he tries to outdo Rostropovich's already intense reading. The result, to my ears at least, is a garish orchestral performance that completely throws the piece out of focus. There is even a time, in the *pitt vivo* section between Nos. 31 and 33, when Bernstein whips the orchestra into something like a 1930s Hollywood version of "Oriental" music.

Much as one may be swayed by Rostropovich, then, I would look to other versions for an over-all realization. Janos Starker's reading with the Israel Philharmonic under Mehta (London CS 6661) is impeccably musical, though a shade cool for my taste. Leonard Rose and Ormandy's Philadelphia (Columbia MS 6253) are beautifully matched, but I have heard the soloist play this piece with more expressive power in concert. Finally, Zara Nelsova's recording with Abravanel and the Utah Symphony (Vanguard Cardinal VCS 10007) may well represent the closest approach to Bloch's intentions. Her solo performance is controlled but still expressive, and Abravanel has long been one of the most sympathetic Bloch interpreters.

In the Schumann concerto, both cellist and conductor indulge themselves to an extent that only the most ardent fans could tolerate. P.H.

BRAHMS: Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Handel, Op. 24; Variations on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 35. Garrick Ohlsson, piano. [Suvi Raj Grubb (Op. 24) and David Mottley (Op. 35), prod.] ANGEL S 37249, \$7.98 (SQ-encoded disc).

Ohlsson's more recent recordings have given evidence of rapid and considerable growth, both pianistic and interpretive. While these demanding compositions like-

wise document his development—especially in the realms of greater tonal subtlety and rhythmic suppleness—I am afraid that, when measured against the best previous recordings (Fleisher, Solomon, and Petri in Op. 24, Arrau and Backhaus in Op. 35), these sturdy, craftsmanlike interpretations leave much to be desired.

There is less to fault in Ohlsson's treatment of Op. 35. These variations on Paganini's famous Twenty-Fourth Caprice were originally conceived as technical exercises (they go considerably beyond that, of course), and Ohlsson's technique permits him to use very little sustaining pedal, with resultant gains in clarity and articulation. He is particularly impressive in clarifying the typical Brahmsian threes-against-fours, and his octave glissandos have impact and focus. Yet hear how much more scope and interest Arrau (Philips 9500 066) brings to the same patterns without losing one iota of virtuosity. In these finger-twisting miniatures, Arrau's rhetorical theatricality works like a charm, and his sonority also has more weight and diversification. Backhaus' 78-rpm account was more like Ohlsson's in its straightforward approach to the notes, but again there was a degree of tonal poise and sheer effortlessness apparently beyond Ohlsson's present reach.

The *Handel Variations* may pose less of a purely digital problem (though they are difficult enough in their own less showy way), but infinitely more is demanded of the performer in terms of long-range planning. The architecture, like that of Beethoven's even longer Diabelli set, relies on minute subtleties of pacing and tempo relationship: the player must know when to move forward—and precisely how much—and when to provide repose. While there are many details to be savored, it is simply not enough to present each variation for itself.

In fairness, Ohlsson frequently recog-

nizes that some probing is in order, but he seems unable as yet to translate this into specifics. Again, the spare pedaling bares a lot of rhythmic interplay and the steady, accurate fingers produce many examples of attractive bell-like sonority, but the composer's logical dramatic argument never unfolds as it did in Fleisher's superbly gauged, masterfully timed reading. (When is *Odyssey* going to reissue it?) Many of Ohlsson's tempos are just a little square, and sometimes the sound he produces in forte or fortissimo is slightly hard and flat. The final three variations never achieve the desired piling up of dramatic intensity, and the sturdily played fugue has moments of lagging impetus.

Clear piano reproduction in both performances. Ohlsson, incidentally, omits the restatement of the Paganini theme before Book II of Op. 35. H.G.

BRUCH: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 44; *Scottish Fantasy*, Op. 46. Itzhak Perlman, violin; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Jesus Lopez-Cobos, cond. [Suvi Raj Grubb, prod.] ANGEL S 37210, \$7.98 (SQ-encoded disc).

Bruch's still infrequently played Second Violin Concerto has amassed all of three recordings (though the Third has yet to receive its first!). He may have been an uneven master, but it doesn't necessarily follow that the most obscure works are the least worthy. After Heifetz revived the virtually unperformed *Scottish Fantasy* in the late 1940s, it rightly came to rival the First Concerto in popularity. The recently unearthed two-piano concerto (Angel S 36997, September 1974) similarly turned out to be a work of substantial value and eloquence.

My enthusiasm for the D minor Violin Concerto, however, can be expressed as "modified rapture." The work begins promisingly enough with a dark, brooding introduction that carries the mood of the G minor Concerto to even greater emotional range. Alas, the promise is not kept, and before long the first movement runs afoul on an idea that seems a virtual cribbing of the main theme of the G minor's last movement. And whereas the G minor's finale provides a sustained dramatic capstone, that to the D minor is lamed by repetitiousness and its end comes more as a mercy than as a fulfillment.

Of the three recordings, this new one strikes me as a stylistic compromise between the terse, glittery (and harshly reproduced) Heifetz mono effort (RCA LM 1931) and the broader, more musically sympathetic but violinistically somewhat rough-hewn Menuhin edition (Angel S 36920). Menuhin and Boult, even granting the soloist's occasional pinched tone and awkwardness, play with the most conviction and thus make the strongest case for the work. Perlman's smooth, creamy fiddling, however, is adroitly seconded by his conductor and richly recorded.

The same may be said for the overside *Scottish Fantasy*, a suave and agreeable performance in which Perlman's lush approach provides an especially persuasive languor to the introductory phrases. My favorites for this piece remain the dark, bur-

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nished Oistrakh/Horenstein (London CS 6337), the earlier Heifetz version with Steinberg (in RCA ARM 4-0946—a bit more expansive and reposeful than the stereo remake), and the fervent, intensely poetic Chung/Kempe (London CS 7695). Grumiaux and Wallberg (Philips 6500 780) are in some ways the most classical and refined of all, and they get the clearest engineering among these excellent versions. The Angel disc (SQ-encoded) is a trifle soft in focus in comparison with the others. H.G.

BRUCKNER: Symphonies Nos. 4, 7, 8. For an essay review, see page 93.

CHABRIER: Orchestral Works. Paris Opera Orchestra, Jean-Baptiste Mari, cond. [Greco Casadesus, prod.] ANGEL S 37424, \$7.98 (SQ-encoded disc). Tape: ●● 4XS 37424, \$7.98.

España. Habanera. Joyeuse marche. Le Roi malgré lui. Fête polonaise. Danse slave. Suite pastorale.

Comparison:
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Confirming the promise of his Pierné-program Angel debut (S 37281, September), Mari passes an even more searching test of quintessentially Gallic stylistic authenticity in this characteristic Chabrier program, which wisely excludes those works like the *Gwendoline* Overture, where he had momentarily succumbed to the lure of Wagnerism.

España is of course done to death by every virtuoso conductor, but what foreigners, even Spaniards, can match the elasticity, vibrancy, and proud grace of an idiomatically French reading like this one of Mari's? And it is primarily from native interpreters that foreigners can learn the true flavor of Chabrier's other orchestral pieces—not only the brilliantly festive showpieces, but also such enchanting mood and scene evocations as the *Habanera* and the "Idylle" and "Sous bois" from the *Suite pastorale* (orchestral versions of four of the ten *Pièces pittoresques* originally written for piano solo). The only other recent all-Chabrier program by a French conductor (Louis de Froment's, Turnabout TV-S 34671) lacks both the vivacity and refinement to offer any real competition to the justly famous Paray/Detroit Mercury recordings of 1961, now available again in the Golden Imports series, showing remarkably few signs of sonic aging.

Even Mari can't supersede Paray, but he does provide a distinctively individual yet no less idiomatic approach, at its best no less fiercely vital, yet lighter, more graceful and piquant. And of course the Pathé-Maroni engineering demonstrates what progress has been made since 1961, most notably in transparency and vividness—to say nothing of the enhanced authenticity of auditorium ambience when these robust-enough stereo sonics are expanded in quadraphonic playback. Then, too, while the Paris Opera Orchestra is by no means as polished as Paray's Detroit Symphony, its tonal qualities are far more characteristic "French."

Now I'm hoping that Mari will proceed to a long overdue resurrection of some of Vincent d'Indy's oeuvre beyond the familiar,



Itzhak Perlman and Jesus Lopez-Cobos—Smooth, creamy fiddling adroitly accompanied

however delightful. *Symphony on a French Mountain Air*. R.D.D.

CIMAROSA: II Matrimonio segreto. For an essay review, see page 95.

DVOŘÁK: Quartets for Strings: in E, Op. 27/80; in E flat, Op. 51. Prague Quartet. [Franz-Christian Wulff, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 719, \$7.98.

The confusing double opus numbering of the E major Quartet is a function of the publisher Simrock's attempt, in 1888, to "pass off" the 1876 composition as one of Dvořák's more recent efforts. The composer's protest against this chicanery had more than an element of embarrassment that folks might think he still wrote like that. In looking for justification of his apparent harsh criticism of the score, I find the opening allegro of routine melodic inspiration by Dvořák's standards. (By any others it would probably be considered brimful of good ideas.) The darkly passionate *Andante con moto* is more clearly the work of the mature master, its mood reflecting its origin at a time of bereavement (of a baby daughter). If the scherzo is neither the first nor last in music history to have a trio more vigorous and agitated than its main section, the basic materials of the two lend themselves awkwardly to the juxtaposition. The finale is somewhat rambling in form, though it has one interesting idea—an almost Brahmsian leitmotif.

The E flat Quartet, Op. 51, is delectable by any standard. The opening theme of the second movement is so heartbreakingly beautiful that I can't complain how little it lends itself to development. I'm happy to

hear it repeated a few times, alternating with a central faster dance section (the whole *Elegia* is in fact a *dumka*). Something as mournfully lovely is found in the second subject of the first movement, while the finale is a vivacious expression of pure joy.

It is hard to believe that this DG coupling actually fills a notable gap in SCHWANN, but there it is. The E major has a long history of phonographic neglect, and the fine mono performances of the E flat by the Léner, Busch, Boskovsky, Netherlands, and Budapest Quartets are all gone. In stereo there was a pretty fair E major by the Dvořák Quartet on Crossroads and a truly lovely E flat by the Vlach on Artia, but these can now be had only as Supraphon imports (SUAST 50528 and 50463, respectively). The only competitive listing is the Kohon's—brashly efficient but terribly wiry-sounding versions of both works (included in Vox SVBX 549).

The Prague's interpretations are handsomely sturdy yet resilient, well played in slightly aggressively reverberant sonics. Since both middle movements of the E flat are marked *Andante con moto*, I can understand the temptation to make the third movement something of an *Adagio*; this means, however, that that wonderful *dumka* tune in the second movement is pushed a little for my taste—but then, only the lingeringly gentle Boskovsky performance on London really savored it to the full. A.C.

DVOŘÁK: Symphony No. 7, in D minor, Op. 70. London Philharmonic Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini, cond. [Christopher Bishop, prod.] ANGEL S 37270, \$7.98 (SQ-encoded disc).

Comparison:
C. Davis/Concertgebouw

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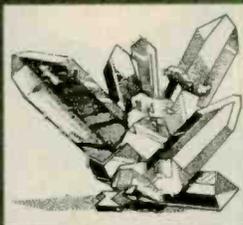
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This warm, refined reading of Dvořák's most Brahmsian symphony is a fascinating foil for the equally fine but utterly dissimilar Philips recording by Colin Davis and the Concertgebouw (April 1977). Each has a distinct interpretive flavor and points of superiority that balance and counterbalance. In this case an "ideal" performance—i.e., one that synthesizes the merits of the two—does exist, in the form of a recent broadcast performance by Giulini and the Concertgebouw, superior to either of these commercial recordings.

Giulini, who seems of late to have entered a new phase of his career, presents a sunny, plastic, subtly wrought interpretation that nevertheless moves along with a kind of firm geniality and keeps a firm sight on the total architecture. He secures responsive, suave playing from the London Philharmonic, and the reproduction, sleek and resonant, lets the lines sing while putting detail in a slightly soft-focus subordinate position. Switching to the Philips recording, one is immediately struck by the sharper, more direct sound and by the tougher, holder (and, save for the Poco adagio second movement, faster) outlook of Davis. Time and time again, Davis resolutely urges his players past a detail or episode that Giulini lovingly caresses, and the darker, grittier sonority of the Concertgebouw adds to the muscle of Davis' reading. One is forced to assess the strength and fierceness of Davis' way as opposed to the gentler, but hardly laggardly, hand of Giulini.

Giulini's Concertgebouw performance, however, was a little freer rhythmically than the LPO recording, and he utilized the gorgeous dark sonorities of the Dutch orchestra with an imaginative resourcefulness that Davis' more matter-of-fact treatment eschews by its very nature. Moreover, the broadcast performance unearthed a wealth of instrumental detail (and, I admit, a few horn bobbles!) unheard in either of the records under consideration. Were that account available to the general record collector, it would be my clear favorite; since it is not, I must reaffirm the excellence of the Davis record and confess a preference for Giulini's more humane, rhapsodic approach. I would also urge a sampling of the Giulini disc in an imported version: Experience tells me that European EMI records are often mastered with more bite, brilliance, and dynamic range than their American counterparts; while nothing about the Angel pressing is unpleasant to the ear, I suspect that there may well be more color and detail in the master tape than I have yet heard.

H.G.

ELGAR: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, Op. 85*; Enigma Variations, Op. 36*. Jacqueline du Pré, cello*; Philadelphia Orchestra* and London Philharmonic Orchestra*, Daniel Barenboim, cond. [* recorded in concert, November 1970; *Paul Myers, prod.] COLUMBIA M 34530, \$7.98.

With all due respect to the outstanding pre-LP accounts of the Elgar cello concerto, modern recordings of distinction have not been lacking either. Of these the Du Pré/Barenboim, the first issue of a 1970 concert



Carlo Maria Giulini
A warm, refined
reading of Dvořák's
most Brahmsian
symphony

performance, must go to the top of the list. For some listeners the coughs and the dry acoustic (Philadelphia's Academy of Music, I gather) will be obstacles, but I find that the circumstances of the recording help assure musical tautness and unity and both bite and massiveness in the orchestral texture. Du Pré's tone may not be captured at its loveliest in the upper reaches (as it was in the studio recording made some five years earlier with Barbirolli, Angel S 36338), but her intonation is thoroughly respectable and her control over the running figurations in the scherzo is breathlessly exciting.

The sometimes gushy vibrato of the earlier recording is considerably subdued, and the later performance shows an even more striking development in musical vigor, intensity and drive of line, and inwardness of soft playing. Du Pré and Barenboim have worked out a conception of the concerto that, though varied between striking extremes of fast and slow, relates each section into a more coherent overview than is evident in the version with Barbirolli (though Sir John has to his credit an even better-conducted performance, with Andre Navarra for Pye). The Philadelphia Orchestra plays majestically, and thanks are due to all concerned in prying this treasure loose for commercial issue.

The overside Enigma Variations, a succulent-sounding new studio recording, documents one of Barenboim's best recent efforts. He is a tone poet in his element when dealing with the nobly affectionate sections (Nos. 1, 5, 12), though "Nimrod" (No. 9) could have begun a bit softer to allow full head to its climax. He is all graciousness in the light No. 3, and his "Dorabella" (No. 10) is so delectably played, its syncopations so subtly pointed, as to evoke memories of Beecham. A bit more "devil" might have helped in the uproarious Nos. 7

and 11, where timpani and brass are somewhat lacking in presence.

Barenboim's Enigma, complete on one side and coupled with another substantial Elgar masterpiece, is something of a best buy among current SCHWANN entries. However, now available at Musical Heritage Society's budget price is the 1975 Lyrita recording by Andrew Davis and the New Philharmonia (MHS 3628), excelling in all those sections where Barenboim falters (though brisk and offhand where Barenboim is warm and enveloping) and having as coupling the most scintillating Falstaff I've heard on records.

A.C.

FALLA: The Three-Cornered Hat (complete ballet). Teresa Berganza, mezzo-soprano; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Seiji Ozawa, cond. [Rainer Brock, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 823, \$7.98. Tape: ●● 3300 823, \$7.98.

Comparisons:
DeGaetani, Boulez/N.Y. Phil. Col. M33970
Berganza, Ansermet/Suisse Romande Lon. CS 6224

This triply promising Tricorne turns out to be a three-cornered disappointment. Teresa Berganza, who sang the two brief solos so well in the famous 1961 London version conducted by Ansermet (who had led the original Ballets Russes production in 1919), now shouts more than she sings, with little trace of the ideal sultriness, and there is no suggestion at all that her second ("Cuckoo") air comes from an off-stage source.

Still worse, Ozawa's reading is more brutally than balletically energetic, often rhythmically stilted or even stiff, and it gives scant indication of genuine personal involvement in or relish of the music. Perhaps most disconcerting of all, both the tonal-color range and the sonic warmth of

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Andrew Davis—Grieg conducting bordering on melodrama

the Bostonians' playing are unconsciously handicapped by ultrarobust but not particularly vivid recording (in the well-processed cassette as well as the disc) in the constricted acoustical ambience of what seems more like a studio than an auditorium. Presuming that the recording was made in Symphony Hall, this is a technical feat—and error—of no mean order.

The Berganza/Ansermet/London version is still available and still magical. But for the score's full timbral scintillation and rhythmic intoxication, for a hauntingly evocative mezzo-soprano soloist, and for arrestingly vivid recording—even when the completely spellbinding enhancements of quadrphony aren't available—the DeGautani/Boulez/Columbia version (August 1976) is unmatched. R.D.D.

FAURÉ: Elégie—See Lalo: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra.

GRIEG: Peer Gynt Suites: No. 1, Op. 46; No. 2, Op. 55. Songs: Elisabeth Soderström, soprano; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Andrew Davis, cond. [Paul Myers, prod.] COLUMBIA M 34531, \$7.98. Tape: MT 34531, \$7.98.

Songs: From Monte Pincio, Op. 39, No. 1; A Swan, Op. 25, No. 2; The Way of the World, Op. 48, No. 3 (orch. A. Davis); The Princess (orch. A. Davis); I Love Thee, Op. 5, No. 3.

This enticing Grieg program includes not only the sung version of Solveig's Song, but also her rarely heard Lullaby in the second Peer Gynt Suite. And for extra good measure Elisabeth Söderström adds—also in Norwegian—three familiar and two unfamiliar Grieg songs, a repertory sadly ne-

glected nowadays. Given artists of such distinction as Söderström and conductor Andrew Davis, and the essential inclusion of both Norwegian texts and English translations, this is unquestionably a valuable release, enhanced by extremely vivid recording.

Nevertheless, I must note that I enjoy Peer Gynt, and indeed most of Grieg's music, only when it's done wholly straightforwardly in simple, folkish, open-air manner—as by such native Norwegians as Fjeldstad and Gruner-Hegge or, more recently, as in the salty-fresh Vox versions by Abravanel. And I stubbornly cling to the possibly illusory memories of Norena singing the great "From Monte Pincio," Frijsh singing "I Love Thee," and Flagstad singing a variety of Grieg songs. By such criteria Davis' readings seem often excessively mannered, overvehement, even verging on the melodramatic; the bewitching Söderström's brilliant voice too often lacks taut vibrato and intensity control. R.D.D.

HANDEL: Sonatas for Oboe(s) and Continuo. Ronald Roseman, oboe; Edward Brewer, harpsichord. [Marc J. Aubort and Joanna Nickrenz, prod.] NONESUCH H 71339, \$3.96.

Sonatas, Op. 1: No. 6, in G minor; No. 8, in C minor (with Timothy Eddy, cello). Trio Sonatas (Halle): No. 2, in D minor; No. 3, in E flat (with Virginia Brewer, oboe; Donald MacCourt, bassoon).

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slightly more familiar solo oboe sonatas from Op. 1, for which the harpsichordist's continuo partner is wisely shifted from bassoonist to cellist. The readings are in good present-day baroque-revival style, the performances deft and persuasive, the recordings admirably clean and ungimmicked.

There are just two minor catches. One is that Roseman's tonal qualities and executive authority are so distinctive that he tends to overshadow his colleagues, the overreticent harpsichordist in particular. The other is that Handelians already have admirable versions of Op. 1, No. 8, in the great ABC/Seon period-instrument set of the "complete" solo woodwind sonatas (ABCL 67005/3, March 1977) and of the D minor Trio Sonata in the Ars Rediviva's de-

lectable Supraphon set (1 11 1251/3, June 1975) of no less than thirteen trio sonatas. But if you don't already know these large-scale collections, Roseman's disc will may whet your appetite for them. And even if you do have them, Roseman proffers a couple of Handelian gems they don't include.

R.D.D.

KHACHATURIAN: Piano Works. David Dubal, piano. [Robert F. Commagere, prod.] GENESIS GS 1062, \$6.98.

Sonata; Poem; Gughetta; Sonatina; Dance In G minor; Valse Caprice; Toccata.

Although not as well known in this country as larger scale works such as the *Gayane*

ballet suite or the violin and piano concertos. Aram Khachaturian's solo piano music has a definite attractiveness, and it is well represented on this Genesis release. Like much contemporary piano music, it tends to stress rhythm, open harmonies, and sonority, with sometimes harsh hand-against-hand configurations winning out over the harmonically oriented melodism characteristic of much Romantic piano music. There is also a rather Les Six-ish side to Khachaturian that can be heard in the banter à la Poulenc of the openings to the 1961 sonata and the 1959 sonatina, as well as in the 1926 Dance in G minor. Yet a warm, simple lyricism, with its roots in the folk music of the composer's native Armenia, also turns up, most apparently in the slow movements of the sonata and sonatina.

Unfortunately, David Dubal's pianism is nowhere nearly as attractive as the repertoire. His articulation in the numerous sections calling for fast passagework lacks evenness. Even worse, he jumbles everything into an unvaried mishmash so that the separate musical elements never get a chance to assert themselves. In the 1932 Toccata, the recording's best-known work, Dubal sloughs off the exciting, heavily accentuated syncopations at the opening; he also makes little attempt to give tonal definition to Khachaturian's rich chords. Throughout most of the other works as well, Dubal captures little of the pulse so characteristic of the composer's best efforts.

The disc is nonetheless nice to have because of the works it offers; and the high-register piano sonorities, in which Khachaturian composes almost to excess, have been well reproduced. Excessive surface noise, however, detracted from my enjoyment of the music.

R.S.B.

LALO: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in D minor. **SAINT-SAËNS:** Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, No. 1, in A minor, Op. 33. **FAURÉ:** *Elégie*, Op. 24. Heinrich Schiff, cello; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Charles Mackerras, cond. [Rudolf Werner, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 793, \$7.98.

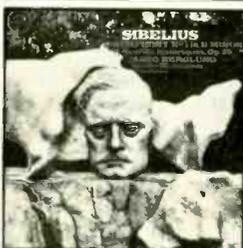
This is the record debut of a young (only twenty-four) but surprisingly mature Austrian cellist, Heinrich Schiff, who has only recently jumped into the spotlight of the European concert world. And, rather surprisingly for an interpreter who first won fame (substituting for Rostropovich) in a contemporary work, Lutoslawski's cello concerto, he turns out to be one of the increasing number of virtuosos distinguished by powerful Romantic empathies and affinities. Probably that's the reason he doesn't hesitate to risk comparisons with the reigning masters in such staples of the late-nineteenth-century cello repertoire as the Lalo and Saint-Saëns First Concertos and the ever-popular Fauré *Elégie*—the same programming as that of the well-nigh definitive Rose/Ormandy of 1971, on Columbia M 30113, to say nothing of the Casadò/Perlea Vox disc (STPL 510 920) of 1960 and, minus the Fauré, the Navarra/Munch version for Erato, originally (1967) on Epic and currently available from Musical Heritage Society (MHS 3023).



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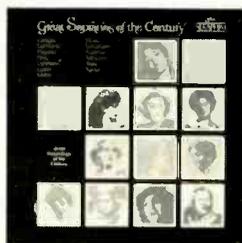
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I'd hesitate as yet to rank Schiff with the best of his rivals. Rose in particular, but he makes a generally favorable impression and displays exceptional assurance for a youngster. He is open to criticism mainly for the somewhat excessive contrasts between the virility of his bravura passages and the heartfelt fervency of his lyrically expressive ones. In any case, Schiff is not the only attraction here. I don't think I've ever heard the orchestral accompaniments of these works played and recorded with more dramatic force and conviction than conductor Mackerras and engineer Naegler provide. R.D.D.

MAHLER: Symphony No. 2, in C minor (*Resurrection*). Carol Neblett, soprano; Marilyn Horne, mezzo; Chicago Symphony Chorus and Orchestra, Claudio Abbado, cond. [Rainer Brock, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2707 094, \$15.96 (two discs, manual sequence). Tape: ●● 3370 015, \$15.96.

The latest contender in the increasingly fierce *Resurrection* rivalry sets a few world records, as it were. One is for softest string playing: Abbado proves that it's really possible to get from *fff* to *pppp* in some six bars (before No. 16) only to reach a discernibly distinct *ppppp* with mules on after No. 24 later in the first movement. Another surpassing feature is the off-stage brass in the finale, farther away than ever before on discs and almost unnoticeable if you're paying less than complete attention. Finally, the Chicagoans take the prize for complete, natural glissandos (e.g., the concertmaster just before the mezzo's "Ach nein! Ich liess mich nicht abweisen" in the fourth movement). Too often, American (and some European) orchestras play slides, even those specified by the composer, with clumsy embarrassment.

Not unique in the work's discography, but surely praiseworthy, is the sensitive treatment of such a poetic moment as the first movement's bucolic episode from Nos. 8 to 9 (marked *noch etwas langsamer*), the subtle way the first bassoon creeps through the texture at the scherzo's No. 31, the dignity of the moderately paced march in the finale (though again and again I hark back to Klemperer's terrifying deliberation on Angel SB 3634), the observance of *poco ritardando* three bars before No. 27 in that movement where many others make an extreme ritard, and the clearly balanced organ at the very end.

The extent of the musical limitations in Abbado's performance is about the same as in the average Mahler Second but greater than in the really enduring ones (i.e., Klemperer's, Bernstein's on Columbia M2 32681, Haitink's on Philips 802 884/5, Walter's on Odyssey Y2 30848). Abbado's obsession with an almost classical lightness causes many problems. The *Ländler* is a little brisk and doesn't die off enough at the end; the staccato phrasing is less piquant than with Haitink. The scherzo is cool, lacking both malice and moonshine, and the end movements lack dramatic thrust in sufficient degree. The finale particularly is vitiated by underplaying the *sehr zurückhaltend* at No. 2, various forward pushes between Nos. 8 and 9, and the fierce impact of the brass

writing prior to the flute-and-trumpet "birdsong" episode. Likewise, the two vocal soloists, while competent and pleasant to listen to, do not scale the heights of many of their competitors.

The set has a prominent sonic problem as well: the extremely low level of its mastering. Some of those awesomely quiet passages have to compete with surface swish. Moreover, the cutting (with exceedingly—and visibly—variable groove spacings) may pose problems for some pickups, especially in the quiet passages. Otherwise, the release is impressively engineered in terms of delicately filigreed play of light and shade. This is a less immediate and enveloping acoustic than we heard in DG's last Chicago Mahler recording, Giulini's Ninth (2707 097, July). A.C.

MOZART: Quartet for Oboe and Strings, in F, K. 370; Quintet for Clarinet and Strings, in A, K. 581. Lothar Koch, oboe; Gervase de Peyer, clarinet; Amadeus Quartet. [Günther Breest, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 720, \$7.98.

There have been some outstanding performances of this music on records, but the present coupling compares favorably with the best of them. Both soloists, in fact, have essayed their respective works on disc before, though the venerable Amadeus—long associated with Mozart—seems to be represented for the first time.

Gervase de Peyer's new reading of the clarinet quintet improves upon his Angel reading with the Melos Ensemble (S 36241).

There is a darker ensemble color from the strings and a greater sense of personal involvement than can be heard in that excellent account, and though the renowned British clarinetist favors a flatter, more restricted type of sonority than Guy Deplus (with the Danish Quartet, in Telefunken 56.35017) or Harold Wright (with a somewhat loose-limbed Marlboro string ensemble on Columbia MS 7447), there is insinuating lift, profile, and character to his phrasing. Another point of interest is De Peyer's interpolation of a small roudade just before the finale to the last movement, a detail that I have grown accustomed to through several of his live performances of the work. (Its authenticity, according to De Peyer, is established by an early edition—and without checking it out, it sounds fine to me.)

The oboe quartet is perhaps the finest of those works Mozart composed during that decade when he withdrew from the string quartet proper, and oboist Lothar Koch makes an excellent "first violinist." He negotiates all the roudades and somersaults in his bravura part with consummate pizzazz and virtuosity and (in contrast to the superb but idiosyncratic Pierre Pierlot, with Grumiaux et al., Philips 6500 924) produces a lush sound without any annoying vibrato. I haven't heard his earlier version with members of the Berlin Philharmonic for some years, but my impression is that the collaboration with the Amadeus is a bit tighter structurally and more economical.

DG has discreetly miked the Amadeus at a moderate distance. As a result, it sounds suaver, and clearer, than it has for some time on records. A superb release. H.G.

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OFFENBACH: *Gaîté parisienne* (arr. Rosenthal). *La Fille du Tambour-Major*; Overture. Monte Carlo Opera Orchestra, Manuel Rosenthal, cond. [John Mordler, prod.] ANGEL S 37209, \$7.98 (SQ-encoded disc). Tape: ●● 4XS 37209, \$7.98; ●● 8XS 37209, \$7.98.

SOUSA: *Stars and Stripes* (ballet; arr. Kay). *Marches* (arr. Rogers): *King Cotton*; *El Capitán*; *Semper Fidelis*. National Philharmonic Orchestra, Henry Lewis, cond. [Raymond Few, prod.] LONDON PHASE-4 SPC 21161, \$7.98.

Having complained a year ago about the recent neglect of "ballet metamorphoses" (November 1976), I'm pleased to welcome

new versions of both the most popular work in this genre and another recorded only once in the past.

Angel's new *Gaîté parisienne* immediately wins high ranking in the sizable current discography—partly as one of the relatively few versions that include the complete score, partly as the first new recording in some five years and the first in quadriphony, but mainly for bringing back to records the reading of the score's co-creator, Manuel Rosenthal (who was once heard in a highly unsatisfactory 1955 mono version for Remington). And, seemingly appropriately, the orchestra Rosenthal uses is that of the Monte Carlo Opera, as close as possible to that of the Ballets Russes of

Monte Carlo, which commissioned the work and first performed it under his direction in 1938.

Not surprisingly, Rosenthal's performance—prefaced by a sparkling, quintessentially Offenbachian overture, that to *La Fille du Tambour-Major*—is distinctive for its balletic authority as well as personal verve, while the recorded sonics are vividly and robustly up to date. (Quadriphony adds some expansiveness, but there is no significant loss in stereo.) The main handicaps are the tonal and executant deficiencies of the Monte Carlo players, who, even under Rosenthal, can't match the color and precision of truly first-class orchestras. Hence, my all-round preference remains the still well-nigh ideal, quite unfaded Munch version for London (SPC 21011). And of course both the best-selling 1954 Victrola and 1959 RCA Fiedler accounts (the latter available in two different couplings) remain unique for their vivacity.

But this still leaves an important place—especially among balletomanes' libraries—for the arranger's own version. Its producers deserve our gratitude for jacket notes that not only summarize the ballet's "story," but specify the twenty individual musical sections. The notes include Rosenthal's account of how he came to write the score (as a substitute for the originally designated orchestrator, Roger Desormière) and how it was first turned down by Massine until Stravinsky's praise for it changed the choreographer's mind.

Hershy Kay's ballet built on Sousa marches and operetta excerpts has had a different history. Still alive and well on the stage, it has been recorded only once before, as far as I know—by Fiedler and the Boston Pops Orchestra for RCA Victor in 1958, the year of its first stage production: that more idiomatic performance is currently available in a Gold Seal reissue (AGL 1-1271). Lewis is an able operatic and symphonic conductor, but neither he nor his British orchestra seems to have any sense of how some of Sousa's best music should sound and swing. It certainly never should sound as brutally blatant and heavy-handed as it does here (except momentarily, as in the superbly schmaltzy *pas de deux* cornet-euphonium duet). And even all the sensational thunders and lightnings of Phase-4 technology can't deafen one to a pervasive tonal and interpretive coarseness. Well, the disc's unexcelled as a lease-breaker.

There's still an aching need for a more satisfactory version of the Sousa-Kay ballet and for new recordings of the Gottschalk-Kay *Cakewalk*, Scarlatti-Tommasini *Good-Humored Ladies*, the Boccherini-Françaix *Scuola di Ballo* (if the missing score can be found or reconstructed), and other delectable "ballet metamorphoses."

R.D.D.

PROKOFIEV: *Concertos for Violin and Orchestra*: No. 1, in D, Op. 19; No. 2, in G minor, Op. 63. Kyung-Wha Chung, violin; London Symphony Orchestra, André Previn, cond. [James Mallinson and Christopher Raeburn, prod.] LONDON CS 6997, \$7.98. Tape: ●● CS5 6997, \$7.95.

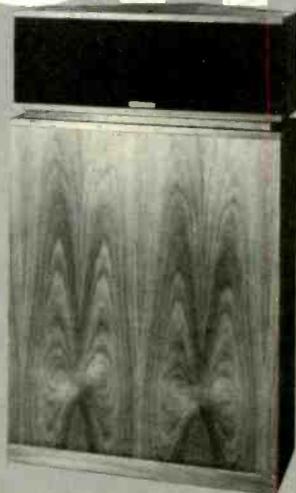
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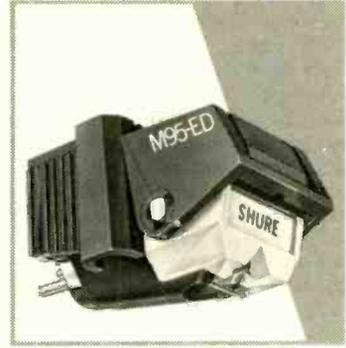
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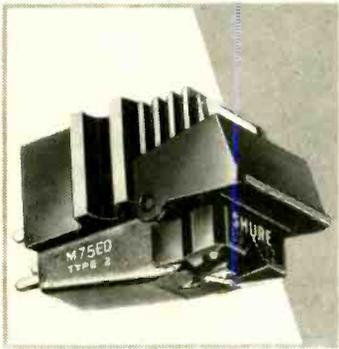
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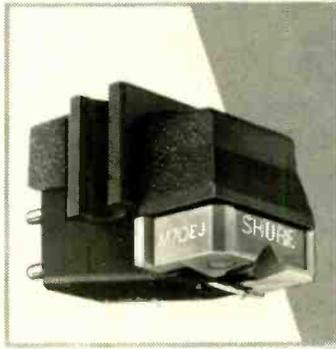
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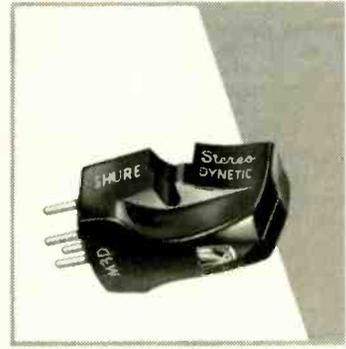
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fiev concertos. Kyung-Wha Chung seems more at home in the more exotically lyrical D major than in the starker, more propulsive G minor, with its heavier domination of chordal writing, its more jagged melodic line, and its often louder goings-on in the orchestral part. In purely technical terms the G minor seems to require no less than Heifetz (or so the latter's recording, RCA LSC 4010, would suggest—he comes closest, for example, to the startling twenty-minute duration suggested in the score). In addition, Chung's romantic temperament—her shading of tone and use of portamento and rubato—is better suited to the D major.

In general, Chung's work here confirms earlier impressions. In the intimate mo-

ments of the D major there is much playing that is affecting and characterful, but in the blazingly sonorous conclusion of the G minor her tone spreads uncomfortably, and in the latter work she and Previn, even more than Stern and Ormandy (Columbia MS 6635), fragment structure by exaggerating Prokofiev's indicated tempo changes for contrasting themes. The LSO provides excellent support, at times outshining the soloist. At No. 34 in the G minor's slow movement, for example, the flutist's lightly filigreed triplets far surpass Chung's just-preceding playing of the same material. Previn—helped by remarkably open, transparent, and somewhat bass-heavy recording—leaves no accompanying detail un-

realized; a number of rhythmic points could be better, though.

In sum, the new issue has much that is interesting, if also much that is problematic. Milstein's coupling (Angel S 36009) offers a more coolly cultivated alternative—neat, urbane, but somewhat chilly emotionally. The remarkable Milanova performances (Monitor HS 90101, budget-priced) remain my preference among all couplings of the two concertos at any price. A.C.

RACHMANINOFF: Piano Works, Vol. 4. Ruth Laredo, piano. [Andrew Kazdin, prod.] COLUMBIA M 34532, \$7.98.

RACHMANINOFF: Etudes Tableaux (9), Op. 39. **KREISLER:** Liebesleid; Liebestrud (arr. Rachmaninoff).

RACHMANINOFF: Piano Works and Arrangements. Garrick Ohlsson, piano. [David Motley, prod.] ANGEL S 37219, \$7.98.

RACHMANINOFF: Mélodie, Op. 3, No. 3 (revised version); Humoresque, Op. 10, No. 5 (revised version); Prelude, Op. posth.; Fragments (1917); Lilacs; Daisies. **BACH:** Partita for Solo Violin, No. 3, in E. S. 1006; Prelude; Gavotte; Gigue. **BIZET:** L'Arlésienne; Minuetto No. 1. **MENDELSSOHN:** A Midsummer Night's Dream; Scherzo. **MUSORGSKY:** Hopak. **KREISLER:** Liebesleid; Liebestrud. **RIMSKY-KORSAKOV:** The Tale of Tsar Saltan; Flight of the Bumblebee. **SCHUBERT:** Die schöne Müllerin; Wohin? **TCHAIKOVSKY:** Lullaby.

Ruth Laredo's approach to the Op. 39 Etudes Tableaux is more intimate than one usually hears. She emphasizes the lyricism and often underplays the massive, sardonic facets of the writing. Ashkenazy (London CS 6822), with what frequently appears to be a more laconic approach, often seems to be taking faster tempos, but this is largely the result of spacing and accentuation rather than mere speed. Both artists present sympathetic views of this problematical (and extremely difficult) music. Ashkenazy's version gets off to a better start with a more whirlwind account of No. 1, and he also holds the interpretive edge in No. 7, where his phrasing better brings out the asymmetrical, jagged references to the Dies Irae chant. Laredo, by contrast, is uncomfortably close to Fauré here.

On the other hand, she excels in more tenderly introspective pieces like No. 2, and her gear shifts in No. 3, allied with sharper dynamic contrasts and drier sound, also give her the edge. The biting acoustic similarity helps her in No. 6, where the repeated notes register with more crispness than in Ashkenazy's equally fleet but more resonantly generalized performance. And if Ashkenazy's stark power gives him momentary advantage over Laredo in the "Baba Yaga"-like No. 9, her lithe, elegant account of No. 5 is quite refreshingly free of the usual rhetorical tub-thumping (of which Van Cliburn's performance is an extreme example, though Ashkenazy and Horowitz to lesser degree succumb to this approach).

In the two Kreisler arrangements, however, I prefer Ohlsson's performances, which have a greater control of the over-all line and a kind of casual command that easily separates the swirling inner notes from the (more important) melody. He doesn't quite achieve the bold rhythmic outlines and magnificent virility that Rachmaninoff himself brought to these tailor-made bonbons (who does?), but sometimes—as in the Mendelssohn *Midsummer Night's Dream*

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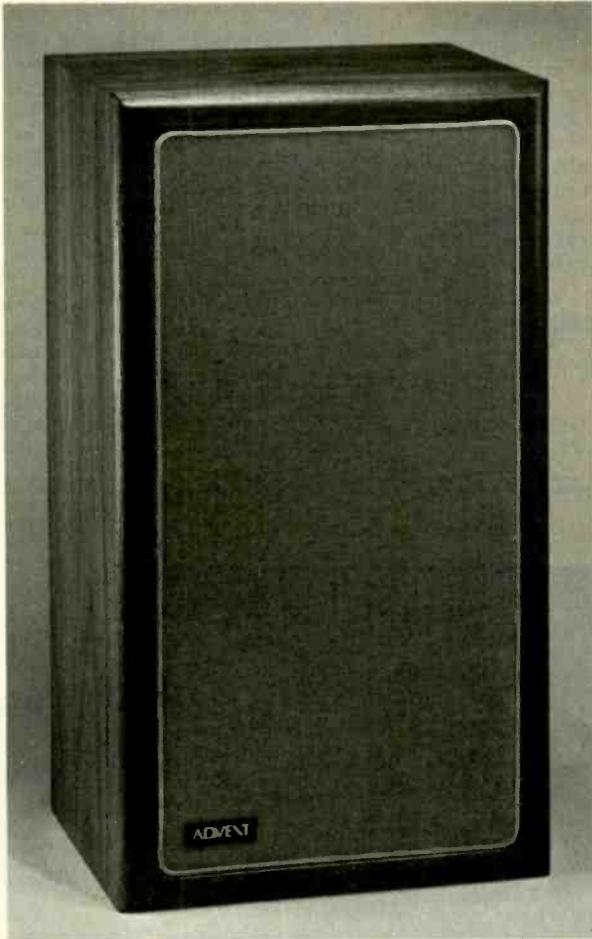
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Both recordings are well made. H.G.

SAINT-SAËNS: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, No. 1—See Lalo: Concerto.

B SCARLATTI, D.: Sonatas for Harpsichord. Elaine Comparone, harpsichord. [Michael Naida, prod.] MUSICAL HERITAGE MHS 3330, \$4.95 (\$3.50 to members). Tape: ●● MHC 5330, \$6.95 (\$4.95 to members). (Add 95¢ postage; Musical Heritage Society, 14 Park Rd., Tinton Falls, N.J. 07724.)

Sonatas: in G minor, K. 12 (L. 489); in F sharp minor, K. 25 (L. 481); in D, K. 45 (L. 255); in D, K. 118 (L. 122); in F minor, K. 187 (L. 285); in B minor, K. 197 (L. 147); in C, K. 201 (L. 129); in D minor, K. 213 (L. 108); in B minor, K. 409 (L. 150); in F minor, K. 481 (L. 187); in D minor, K. 517 (L. 266); in B flat, K. 545 (L. 500).

Elaine Comparone is a Massachusetts-born Fulbright fellow who has studied with Ahlgrimm in Vienna and since 1970 has established herself as an active solo and ensemble harpsichordist. She commands impressively strong-fingered, crisp articulation, which perhaps tempts her into overvehemence in the more vigorous and bravura passages here.

But if she still has a lot to learn in assured relaxation and grace as well as in personality projection, she is already an imaginative programmer. Possibly she has had the opportunity of studying the late-1976 list,

prepared by West Coast Scarlattiian Gilbert Van Vranken, of over 100 unrecorded Scarlatti sonatas, for no less than five of the twelve pieces played here are drawn from this list and are hence firsts. (The closest competitor in this respect is Colin Tilney with three other firsts in his Argo ZK 5 of a year ago, so far available only in England.) Comparone's new five are all good ones, too: the cheerful K. 12, the inventionlike K. 25, the ceremonial K. 118, the striding balladlike K. 187, and the jollily swaggering K. 409.

The instrument used here, built in 1968 by William Dowd on the model of a 1730 N. et François Blanchet harpsichord, is not a particularly brilliant one, but it is of the proper size (not too big) for Scarlatti, while still being capable of considerable registration and dynamic variety. It has a distinctive technical feature in its use of "Delrin" jacks and plectra, which provide markedly strong string-plucking action—a characteristic that makes for exceptionally clean-cut and full-bodied tonal qualities. And first-rate, ungimmicked recording, not too closely miked and hence freer than usual from extraneous mechanical noises, makes the most of these distinctive sonics. R.D.D.

SCHUMANN: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra—See Bloch: Schelomo.

SCHUMANN: Piano Works. Claudio Arrau, piano. PHILIPS 6500 395, \$7.98.

Papillons, Op. 2; Kinderszenen, Op. 15; Blumenstück, Op. 19; Romances (3), Op. 28.

Arrau's way with the *Papillons* miniatures is broad, spaciouly relaxed, genial, and affectionate. He eschews some of the sparkle and contrast heard in Richter's rather overdrawn interpretation (Angel S 36104) and subdues some of the sarcastic humor of Cortot's (EMI Odeon 1C 147 01544/5). Nor does Arrau favor the crystalline lightness of touch that Perahia brought to this youthful music in concert (his recording for Columbia is due for release soon) or the spontaneity heard from Novaes and Kempff. In its open-hearted, gracious style, though, Arrau offers a masterly account.

The three Op. 28 *Romances* are even more impressive. Nos. 1 and 3 are swirling and brooding (note the cryptic, phantomlike emphasis he brings to the shadowy second trio of No. 3), and even in the popular No. 2, so often treated as another Schubert impromptu, Arrau finds all sorts of psychological implications in his more abrupt, detached, but very intense reading. The usual flow gives way to an arresting, quirky angularity, and there are many instances of impressive voicing and color contrasts.

Kinderszenen is not successful, to my way of hearing. Save for a steady "Hasche-Mann," a suitably pompous "Wichtige Begebenheit," and "Ritter von Steckenpferd," which is given an attractive thrusting rhythm, Arrau bears down too heavily on these cameos, divesting them of charm and spontaneity. The rhythm is spasmodically

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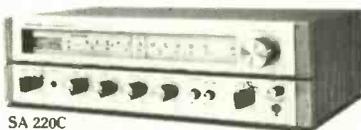
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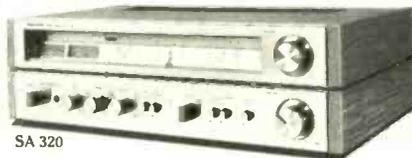
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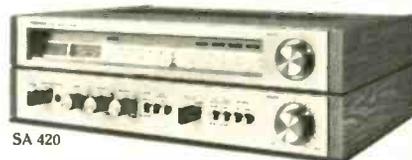
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disrupted by constant emphases and adjustments, and the sonority is much too ample—even, at times, prosaically heavy.

The long, lyrical lines of *Blumenstück* are sympathetically savored, though Arrau almost kills the music with kindness. His richly intoned reading lacks the flowing, fragile beauty heard in Horowitz's more delicate account (Columbia M2S 757), becoming (to borrow a phrase from *Kinderszenen*) "almost too serious."

The piano sound is superb throughout—richly plangent, pearly and round on top, with plenty of hazz and silent surfaces.

H.G.

SHOSTAKOVICH: *The New Babylon* (film score). Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra members, Gennady Rozhdesvensky, cond. [Igor Veprintsev, prod.] COLUMBIA/MELODIYA M 34502, \$7.98.

The very existence of this score was unknown to me until the disc landed on my doormat, so in writing about it I will draw shamelessly on the copious background information contained in Royal Bruwn's ad-

mirable liner notes. *The New Babylon*, apparently, was the first of Shostakovich's long series of film scores, even antedating the arrival of the talkies. As a teenager in Leningrad he had had the formative experience of playing piano accompaniments to silent films, but it was not until 1928, just after his brilliantly satirical opera on Gogol's *The Nose* had attracted attention, that the chance to compose a score of his own came his way. It was commissioned by the avant-garde directorial team of Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg, whose group (known as FEX, an acronym for Factory of the Eccentric Actor) was part of the lively wing of Russian creative life that had not yet succumbed to Stalinist realism. A specially composed orchestral score was something of a prestige item in the days of silent movies, and Shostakovich evidently took the task seriously, providing versions for both large and small orchestras. (It is the smaller that is recorded here, but there is no sense of undernourishment; in fact the music's perky and satirical style is probably better matched in this version.)

The film's title refers both to the department store where the heroine works and to

its broader setting—Paris at the time of the Franco-Prussian War and the Commune (no prizes for guessing which line the film takes in that particular conflict). It gave Shostakovich plenty of scope for his favorite type of parodistic quotation: Among more oblique references to the styles of the Second Empire, there are direct quotations from Offenbach and a rather odd version of the "Marseillaise." There is "Frenchness" of a more recent vintage too—that of Poulenc, Ibert, and Milhaud, who had been drawn by different reasons to the quasi-popular idiom that FEX affected, and Shostakovich with them. But already the opposite pole of Shostakovich's deeply divided nature, the bleak melancholy that is the reverse of his almost manic high spirits, makes its appearance, notably at the end of the third sequence, "The Siege of Paris." And there are one or two patches of that tender lyricism, usually in waltz-time, that nostalgia for times past would regularly induce. (The waltz, surely, in Soviet music is as much a symbol of the bourgeoisie as the minuet had been of the eighteenth-century aristocracy.)

It is, I think, for this predictable but utterly individual mixture of ingredients that anyone interested in Shostakovich's personality and music will want the record. The actual bar-to-bar course of the music seems all too often to be dictated by a succession of images that we can only guess at through the notes' brief but helpful description of the movie. The score apparently lay unrecognized—or, at any rate, ignored—in the Lenin State Library in Moscow until shortly after the composer's death in 1975. Would he have sanctioned its publication and performance in this unabridged form? I rather doubt it. I must say, since his "absolute" music, even at its most diffuse, observes stricter canons of coherence than one can find here, and contrasts between and within the seven sequences are less well planned than they would have been in an autonomous work.

But I am glad, for all that, to be able to explore the origins of so much that is individual in his later music—particularly in this stunningly well performed and recorded version. The natural balance of the small ensemble, with its highly individualized timbres (including a *locus classicus* for flexaton) and unconventional contrasts, is very vividly reproduced, and Rozhdestvensky gets playing of marvelous elegance and energy from his Moscow Philharmonic players. J.N.

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B **SIBELIUS:** *Symphony No. 1, in E minor, Op. 39; Scènes historiques, Op. 25.* Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Paavo Berglund, cond. [John Willan (Op. 39) and David Mottley (Op. 25), prod.] SERAPHIM S 60289, \$3.98 (SO-encoded disc).

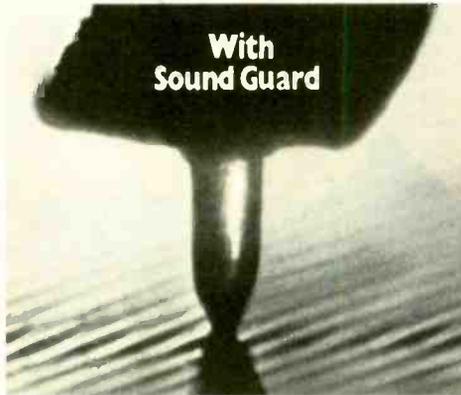
Comparison—symphony:
Davis/Boston Sym. Phil. 9500 140

After Colin Davis' sumptuous First (June 1977), this new issue has a few disadvantages. The Bournemouth Symphony, though possessed of a fine first clarinet and darkly imposing low brasses, lacks the Polish and virtuosity of the Boston Symphony. Then, EMI's sonics—at least as heard on my Seraphim pressing, which in heavily scored

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passages sounds like mud splattering from a bog—lack the sparkling translucency of Philips'. And Berglund is less concerned than Davis with nuances of tempo and dynamics.

Nonetheless, the present reading has a sense of impassive authority, a kind of brooding inevitability. Berglund, though some two years younger than Davis, leads a performance of the kind often associated with an older man—not so riveting in detail, nor ardent in affection, but strong in its sense of deep identification, of organic rootedness. The fast sections of the scherzo and finale may go along almost stolidly, but the grand sweep of the symphony as a whole carries its own involving excitement.

At the Seraphim price, this is a competi-

tive version. The first (Op. 25) set of *Scènes historiques* is an attractive and substantial coupling, though Jalas (London CS 6956) offers the Op. 66 set as well, for the complete Sibelian—albeit Op. 25 is less appealingly played and recorded than Berglund's. A.C.

SOUSA: Stars and Stripes (ballet; arr. Kay); Marches (arr. Rogers)—See Offenbach: *Gaité parisienne*.

STRAUSS, J. I and II: Orchestral Works. Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond. [Thomas W. Mowrey, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2584 008, \$7.98.



Ron Lubin/DG

Arthur Fiedler

Another Strauss treat for Fiedler fans

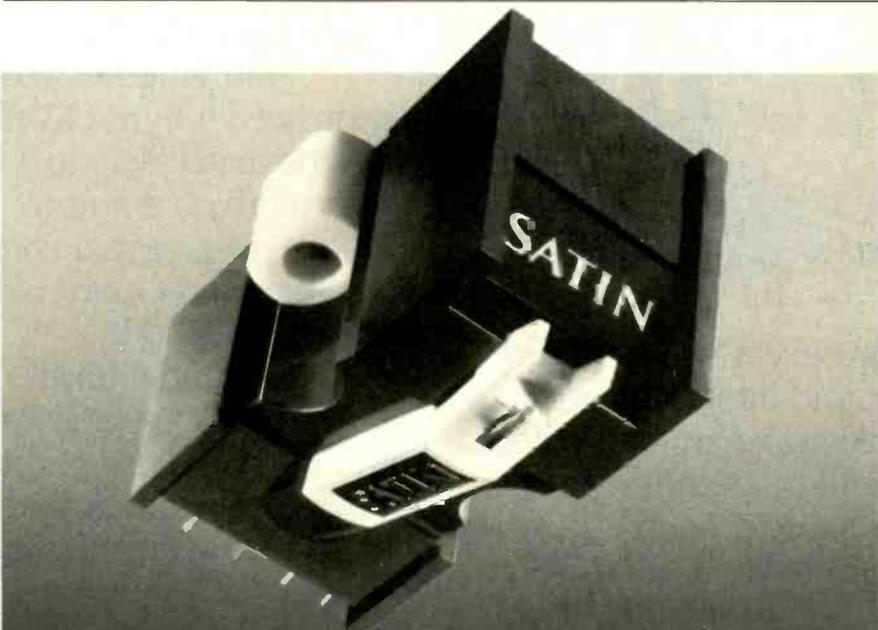
J. STRAUSS I: Chinese Galop, Op. 20. **J. STRAUSS II:** Perpetuum mobile, Op. 257. Polkas: Im Krappfenwald'l, Op. 336; Tritsch-Tratsch, Op. 214. Waltzes: Emperor, Op. 437; Tales from the Orient, Op. 444; New Vienna, Op. 342. Der Zigeunerbaron: March, Act III.

Here's what I—and I'm sure many other Fiedler fans—have been waiting for: not only another of the too rare Bostonian Strauss releases, but one that, unlike last year's otherwise outstanding London Phase-4 waltz program (SPC 21144, August 1976), dips back into the unfamiliar repertory the conductor pioneered in bringing to American listeners' attention. Except of course for the high-voltage *Tritsch-Tratsch* Polka and the great *Emperor Waltz* (which Fiedler takes more briskly than anyone except Boskovsky and which he endows with more resplendent sonics than anyone, period), the present selections are heard all too seldom nowadays, at least outside the Viennese Light Music Society's specialized catalog. Yet, believe it or not, apparently only Father Johann's chipper *Chinese Galop* and the son's opulently colored *Tales from the Orient* Waltz were not recorded by Fiedler for RCA Victor back in the '30, '40s, and early '50s. It's good to have them—the unjustly neglected *New Vienna Waltz* and the sonic-spectacular *Im Krappfenwald'l* Polka-Française in particular—in typically exuberant Fiedlerian performances now given expansively big, vividly incandescent, yet almost palpably solid recorded sound in an unmistakably authentic Symphony Hall reverberant ambience.

Now, how about new life for one of the earliest Strauss/Fiedler novelties: the Op. 364 *Wo die Zitronen blühen* Waltz and the still unfamiliar works in the celebrated "Mr. Strauss comes to Boston" program of 1954? R.D.D.

B STRAUSS, R.: Don Juan, Op. 20; Macbeth, Op. 23. Dresden State Orchestra, Rudolf Kempe, cond. [David Mottley, prod.] SERAPHIM S 60288, \$3.98 (SQ-encoded disc).

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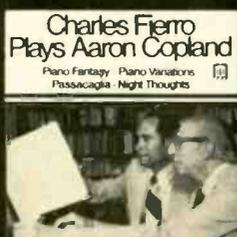
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trickle into the domestic catalog. Some of this material is finding its way onto the budget-priced Seraphim label—first his *Zarathustra* (S 60283) and now this coupling, with *Aus Italien* to follow shortly. This enables Straussians to get at low cost his magnificent, now virile, now poetically eloquent *Don Juan* (which documents a quantum jump in Straussian authority over his 1964 recording—recently issued on Quintessence PMC 7005—good as the latter is) and obtain as a bonus his even more dramatically exciting and satisfying *Macbeth*.

Macbeth, the second of the Strauss tone poems and the neglected stepsister of the whole series, gets long-deferred recorded justice, incidentally proving that its neglect never has had a legitimate excuse. It is no masterpiece, to be sure: More episodic than the later tone poems, it represents a composer (then in his early twenties) far less sure of himself and of his new orchestral-resources explorations than he was to become. Indeed, *Macbeth* was one of the few Strauss works to undergo radical revamping—this, on Von Bülow's advice, between its first 1887 and final 1890 versions. But in its final form, and especially as realized with such vital conviction as it is by Kempe, the score is fearfully dramatic and evocative with some moments of eloquent, even exalted, lyricism. No Straussian worthy of the name can afford to ignore it.
R.D.D.

TELEMANN: Don Quichotte Suite—See J. C. Bach: Sinfonias.

Recitals and Miscellany

ILANA VERED: Piano Recital. Ilana Vered, piano. [Tim McDonald and Tony D'Amato, prod.] LONDON PHASE-4 SPC 21156, \$7.98. Tape: ●● SPC5 21156, \$7.95.

BACH: Jesu, joy of man's desiring (arr. Hess). **BEN-HAIM:** Five Pieces, Op. 34: Toccata. **CHOPIN:** Etude in C minor, Op. 10, No. 12 (*Revolutionary*). **DEBUSSY:** Suite bergamasque: Clair de lune. **LISZT:** Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2. Liebestraum No. 3, in A flat. **RACHMANINOFF:** Prelude in C sharp minor, Op. 3, No. 2. **SATIE:** Gymnopédie No. 1. **SCHUBERT:** Moment musical in F minor, D. 780, No. 3. **SCHUMANN:** Kinderszenen, Op. 15: Träumerei.

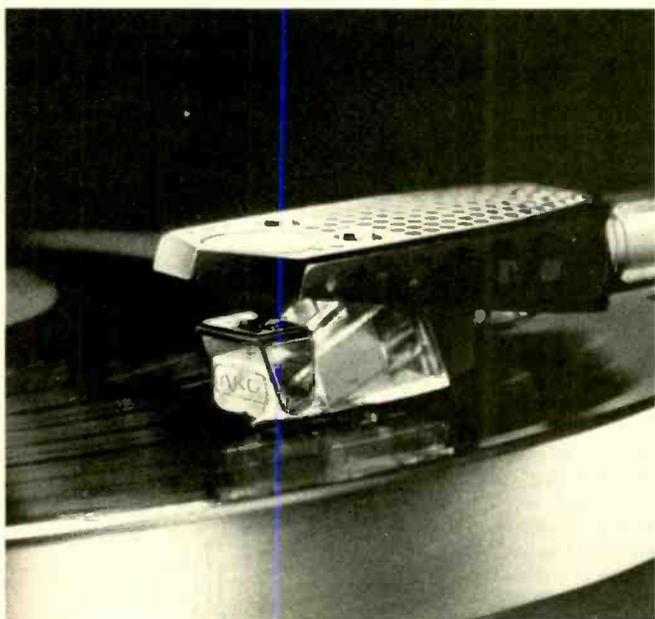
At her best, as she is frequently on this disc, Ilana Vered has a natural expressiveness, the ability to "sing" a melody rapturously, to "float" a phrase with easy tonal beauty. Her way with the Satie *Gymnopédie* No. 1, though removed from the deadpan, "idiomatic" French style, is quiet, serene, and altogether lovely in its outgoing directness. I also found her staccatissimo account of the Schubert F minor *Moment musical* full of engaging personality, and the concluding Ben-Haim *Toccata* pianistically impressive (after that horrid xylophone-accentuation induced by the recorded sound in the opening repeated notes). The Bach-Hess *Jesu, joy of man's desiring*, whose benign repose would seem



Ilana Vered—Talented enough to succeed without hokum

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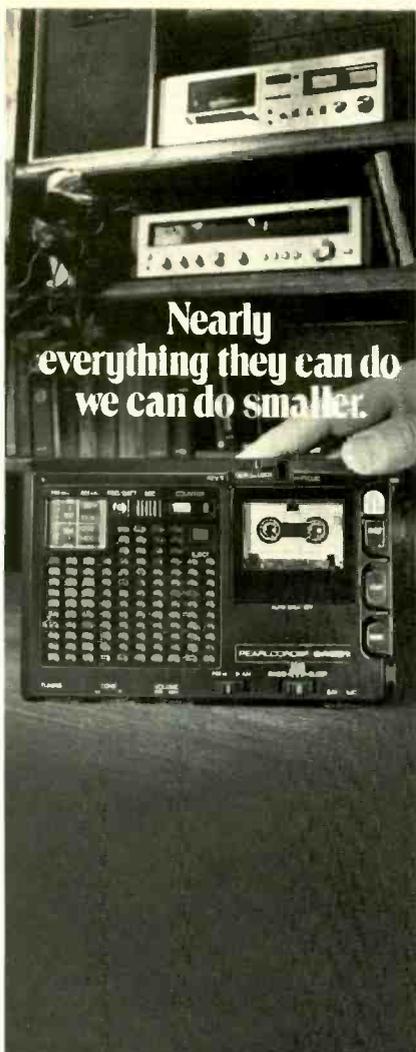


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temperamentally at the opposite pole from Vered's sensationalistic approach, is a bit too broken up and extroverted but not unappealing.

Vered has the talent and temperament to succeed without London's crude promotional hokum, which carries over into the engineering (the Rachmaninoff C sharp minor Prelude, for example, emerges with beefed-up, sensual bass and glassy, shark's-teeth treble) and into the playing (the Liszt Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 is fitfully egocentric, the Schumann "Traumerlein" so faint that many of the left-hand chords fail to register properly). For all that, much of this recital is affecting as well as affected—incomparably better than the dull, petulant, small-scaled Tchaikovsky First Concerto and Stravinsky *Petrushka* scenes (SPC 21148, November 1976). H.G.

JONATHAN WOODS: *Battle Imperial* (Spanish Harpsichord Works). Jonathan Woods, harpsichord. [Philip Greenspan, prod.] LONDON CS 7046, \$7.98. Tape: ●● CS5 7046, \$7.95.

In this record debut, Texas-born Jonathan Woods goes all out to demonstrate dramatically that he is not just another rookie in the fast-growing ranks of skilled harpsichordist/musicologist youngsters. Backed to the hilt by Peter Borchard's ultrarobust, vividly close, and realistic recording, Woods not only flogs unmercifully his big 1964 Rufkowski & Robinette instrument, but exhausts its elaborate timbre, pitch (including a 16-foot stop), and sound-effects potentials—along, inevitably, with volleys of mechanical-action noises. The over-all result, especially in the only too realistically depictive title piece and even at drastically reduced playback levels, is what is probably the most sonically spectacular harpsichord recording to date, one sure to be a demo staple in high fidelity shows and audio dealers' salons.

The emphases on sheer sensationalism—to say nothing of Woods's own blazing digital virtuosity and seemingly inexhaustible, almost frenetic energy—unfortunately tend to distract from more substantial but quieter musical attractions, most of which (with the exception of Cabanilles' *Batalla Imperial* and perhaps Soler's apotheosis of the Fandango) call for a much smaller and less powerful harpsichord than the one used here. Woods is indeed capable of more delicate, even graciously lilting playing, as he proves in a few, all too rare moments.

It's only too easy, however, to overlook the likelihood that several composers may be represented for the first time on discs: the obscure fifteenth-century Francisco de la Torre and such no less obscure seventeenth-century worthies as Dr. José Bassa and Bartolomeo Olague. It's also easy to forget that the present harpsichord versions of the Cabezon *Variations* on "El Canto del caballero" illumine new facets of the work, usually heard only in organ performances. And one is even likely to underestimate the incalculable Soler masterpieces that occupy the disc's full second side: the lengthy improvisatory Fandango, fiercely bravura B minor Sonata (Marvin

16. Rubio 10), and nobly eloquent D minor Sonata (Marvin 8).

For that matter, the eponymous battle piece is not without historical interest as at least one of the less naive and vulgar examples of its centuries-popular depictive genre. It's been recorded before, but only (I believe) in organ versions, like that by Ortiz in the all-Cabanilles program, Musical Heritage MHS 3069. If you're militant-minded enough to take more of the same, there are no fewer than nine battle pieces played on the organ by Haselböck on Musical Heritage MHS 1790: by Cabanilles (*Batalla II*), Banchieri, Bull, Conceicao, Frescobaldi, Jimenez, Kerll, Krieger, and Löffelholz.

Finally, this endlessly provocative release raises technical questions of another kind when one turns to the cassette edition. Normally, nowadays, disc and cassette editions of the same recording are close if not exact sonic spittin' images. Here, however, they scarcely could be more different if they represented different takes with different microphone placements, which I'm assured is not the case, since only one master tape went to English Decca from the originating Pavane Productions in New Jersey. But the British tape editor can't have listened to his disc colleague's work: The cassette's frequency-spectrum balance is markedly different from the disc's, with less brilliant highs and markedly more percussive quality. The tape is technically effective in its own way, but it's surely less authentic sonically. R.D.D.

Theater and Film

A BRIDGE TOO FAR. Original film soundtrack recording. Composed and conducted by John Addison. [John Addison, prod.] UNITED ARTISTS LA 762H, \$7.98.

You can take the bounce out of the film (when is the last time you saw a war movie end à la *Seventh Seal*?), but you apparently can't take the bounce out of John Addison. *A Bridge Too Far* deals in a fragmented, rather anti-British, and fairly uncompromising manner with one of the Allies' costliest failures during World War II. Yet Addison, who actually took part in the operation on which *Bridge* is based, could find nothing better as a main theme than a catchy little stiff-upper-lip march that sounds like filler music for a soldiers' revue.

Most of the best moments come in the nonthematic mood-sustaining sequences. But the main theme keeps intruding with a vengeance, and throughout there is something alarmingly Boston Pops-ish about the score. Fans of jaunty tunes, of course, may find much of this thumpily recorded album just their dish. But as music for *A Bridge Too Far*, it just does not work. R.S.B.

Continued on page 134

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PROVIDENCE. Original film soundtrack recording. Composed and conducted by Miklós Rózsa. [Philippe Dussart, prod.] EMI ODEON 2C 066 14406, \$8.98 (distributed by Peters International).

Unlike many film directors, Alain Resnais, considered part of the French New Wave, has often had precise ideas about the music to accompany his films. Consequently, he has covered a widely varied musical range with his seven feature films. *Last Year at Marienbad* has a spooky organ score quite different from the music called for by scriptwriter Alain Robbe-Grillet; *Je t'aime je t'aime* uses avant-garde sounds devised by Krzysztof Penderecki; and for *Stavisky* (RCA ARL 1-0952) Resnais's musical conception of the movie led him to Broadway composer Stephen Sondheim.

For *Providence*, the director's first English-language film, he turned to Miklós Rózsa, a name inevitably associated with the typical Hollywood productions of the Forties and Fifties. It is only when you see the film that you realize what Resnais had in mind by enlisting Rózsa's services. Within its space-and-time-out-of-mind perspective—an aging author (John Gielgud) invents a morbid narrative in which members of his family act out roles—the music adds a temporal dimension that is deliberately out of sync with the story's other time layers.

The score is also out of sync with the action. Except for the romantic piano-dominated "Twilight Waltz," the music evokes either the spectacle films for which Rózsa wrote some of his most popular scores (*Quo Vadis*, *Ben Hur*) or, more pervasively, the stark films noirs, with their black-and-white tensions, for which he composed some of his best film music in my opinion (*The Killers*, *Brute Force*). All of this reinforces the effect of the main character's delusion.

It should be added that, precisely because the composer was given free rein to write in his characteristic idiom, the *Providence* abounds in the theme patterns, rhythms, harmonies, and textures that have made Rózsa's style so recognizable. This score represents, in fact, his best effort in some years. Even though there is nothing new in it from the musical point of view, Resnais's ingenious, nonsatirical use of it creates an effect that is novel to the cinema.

This brightly recorded French import features an exceptionally well-played, dynamic interpretation by Rózsa and the small studio orchestra. R.S.B.

ROLLERCOASTER. Original film soundtrack recording. Composed and conducted by Lalo Schifrin. [Sonny Burke, prod.] MCA 2284, \$6.98. Tape: MCT 2284, \$7.98.

VOYAGE OF THE DAMNED. Original film soundtrack recording. Composed and conducted by Lalo Schifrin. [John Steven Lasher, prod.] ENTR'ACTE ERS 6508 ST, \$7.95.

Lalo Schifrin's distinctive musical style has not been heard often enough in recent films. And the last Schifrin score released on disc was the rather unrepresentative *Enter the Dragon* (Warner Bros. BS 2727). These recordings of *Rollercoaster* on MCA and *Voyage of the Damned* on Entr'acte, each

successfully documenting a different side of the composer's art, are therefore doubly welcome.

The *Rollercoaster* album offers a mixed bag. For starters, the main theme, heard for the last time on the disc in a rousing, beautifully recorded calliope arrangement, has a captivatingly off-center quality that is largely due to a rather Herrmannesque modulation. The score also includes rock, small-group blues (used for the theme of Harry, the principal good guy), big-band jazz, a Charleston, and some classy suspense music.

The latter is based on a nervous, two-note motive ingeniously taken from a string-quartet movement played as part of a scene in which the nameless bad guy appears for the first time. Although there is something disturbing about the film's association of homicidal psychosis with one of the most "highbrow" forms of music, the quartet movement, with its classical harmonies and its Ravelian grace, adds an important dimension to the disc.

Unlike *Rollercoaster*, Schifrin's *Voyage of the Damned* score, which was nominated for an Academy Award but lost out to Goldsmith's *The Omen* (Tattoo B/L 1-1888, October 1976), is basically symphonic in scope. It is, furthermore, unified by a single theme, a mildly acerbic melody with icily chromatic contours that often clash with the sustained chordal harmonies. Although the theme is heard in almost every sequence, Schifrin presents it in such varied instrumental and harmonic contexts that there seems to be no repetition at all. In fact, in the final cut its character is transformed into a Nino Rota/Fellini-esque foxtrot, putting the film's only partially happy ending in a rather ironic light.

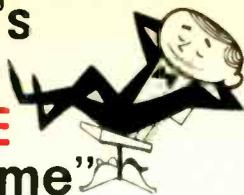
Considering the Jewish tragedy involved in *Voyage of the Damned*, the score contains surprisingly few Semitic modes or theme patterns. Precisely because it does not make constant allusion to the film's narrative, the music, with its subtle, close dissonances and its transparent instrumentalizations, stands up beautifully on its own. And it benefits greatly from Entr'acte's fine recorded sound, which has depth and balance, as opposed to MCA's more pop-oriented, if spectacular, sonics. Both discs should belong in any self-respecting film-music buff's collection; and I suspect that strictly "classical" listeners will find much to like in *Voyage of the Damned*. R.S.B.

RÓZSA CONDUCTS RÓZSA. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Miklós Rózsa, cond. [Brian Culverhouse, prod.] POLYDOR (Great Britain) 2383 440, \$8.98 (distributed by Peters International).

Julius Caesar: Overture. Lady Hamilton: Love Theme. The Killers: Prelude. Lydia: Love Theme and Waltz. Four Piano Improvisations. The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes Fantasy. Five Graves to Cairo. The Red Danube: Prelude, Nocturne, Deportation Scene.

The seven scores excerpted on this third disc in Polydor's distinguished Rózsa series span thirty years of the composer's fruitful career and document how successfully he has solved the paradox of his profession: to perpetuate a distinct stylistic identity and personal artistic development while always keeping in primary regard the musical re-

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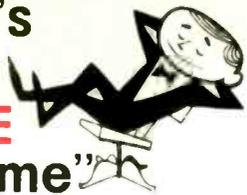
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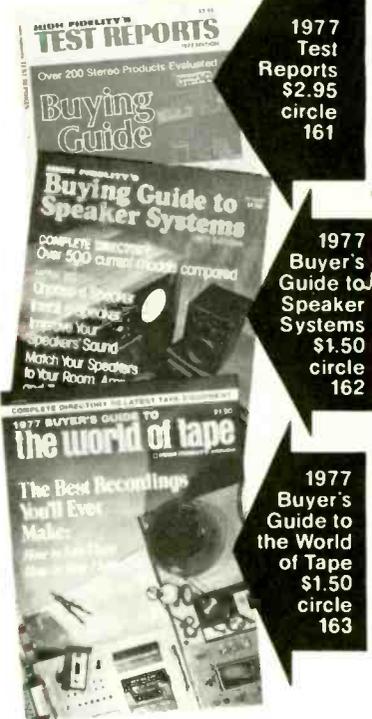


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Miklos Rozsa
Distinctive style, regard for the film

quirements of the film. He has adapted his amazingly flexible Hungarian modal idiom with uncanny appropriateness to the ancient Rome of *Julius Caesar*, the Victorian England of *Sherlock Holmes*, and the American gangster milieu of *The Killers*.

Two selections stand out. The *Julius Caesar Overture*, originally intended to precede showings of the 1953 film, presents the score's principal themes in a tightly knit formal set piece, complete with an introduction and coda of archaic fanfares and a fugato variation section. This arrangement of the brooding, dirgelike Brutus theme and the heraldic, ambitious theme shared by Caesar and Marc Antony expertly captures the essence of Shakespeare's tragedy in musical microcosm. The other highlight is the set of piano improvisations from *Lydia*, displaying a wistful, introspective facet rarely glimpsed in Rozsa's film scores. The charm and elegance of these miniatures make me wish that he had explored this fertile territory more often. (His recent score for Alain Resnais's *Providence* abounds in this intimate ambience.)

The inclusion of *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes Fantasy* is a puzzlement, especially considering that Rozsa's exquisite score for *Madame Bovary* has yet to receive a new recording. Director Billy Wilder became so enamored of Rozsa's Violin Concerto, Op. 24, that he requested that the composer write a score for his 1970 *Holmes* film based on themes from the earlier work. The resulting music embellishes this underrated movie, lending a warmly romantic, bittersweet quality to Wilder's caustic treatment; but from a musical standpoint, it doesn't make sense to hear these themes minus the context of their original setting. (The complete concerto is given its definitive performance by Heifetz and the Dallas Symphony on RCA Red Seal LSC 2767, now out of print.)

It is unfortunate that Polydor has chosen an anthology format for its Rozsa series. This bits-and-pieces approach seldom allows a score's full breadth and scope to come across to the listener. But until more complete recordings become available, these brief excerpts will remain morsels to treasure. R.F.

STAR WARS. Original film soundtrack recording. Composed and conducted by John Williams: London Symphony Orchestra. [George Lucas, prod.] 20TH CENTURY 2T 541, \$8.98 (two discs, automatic sequence).

John Williams' score for director George Lucas' space extravaganza *Star Wars* is not at all the type of music I had expected. Instead of the trappings commonly associated with such films—electronic wails and screeches, bizarre avant-garde effects, quasi-atonality—he has concocted a thrilling Korngold-style adventure-film score. (The *Sea Hawk* and *The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex* are the obvious inspirations.) Since *Star Wars* is technically not science fiction, but a blend of romantic fantasy and swashbuckling adventure, a conventional science-fiction score would have been inappropriate: a lavish Romantic adventure score—with gusto and vibrant sparkle—is a revelation.

Williams, a leading proponent of the current trend toward eclecticism in movie music, has composed a fine assortment of lush themes and motifs for the film's principal characters. A rousing and triumphant tonic-dominant statement by the brass heralds *Star Wars*' hero, Luke Skywalker: an equally noble and spiritually soaring theme identifies Luke's mentor, Obi-Wan Kenobi, and the metaphysical, all-powerful entity of the universe he represents, known as the Force; and for Princess Leia, Williams has composed an ethereal little nocturne that suggests Luke's enchantment with her. There are suitably ominous fanfares and rumblings for the villains and an amusing bit of conjecture as to how an all-alien cabaret band might interpret 1930s swing.

This is all music on a grand scale and easily the versatile Williams' most elaborate effort to date. A generous seventy-four minutes of the full ninety-minute score, performed by the London Symphony (particularly worthy of praise is the brass section, which gets quite an exhausting workout), is presented on two superbly recorded discs, making this one of the few double-LP soundtracks ever issued. In compiling this album, Williams has tried to present the score in a more listenable concertlike format, though by rearranging cues far out of their original sequence and combining cues from different parts of the film he has foreclosed a listener's attempt to maintain continuity.

My one reservation about this music is its lack of a genuine Romantic sensibility to substantiate the borrowed Wagnerian form. This causes some of the music to wear a little thin after a few hearings but does not negate its absolute effectiveness in the film and its immediately engaging qualities. In fact, *Star Wars* may well be one of the great rarities in recent years: an instant film-music classic. R.F.

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The first Barclay-Crocker orchestral reels inaugurate a new-era Vanguard series with two programs appearing for the first time in the open-reel format and another given arrestingly improved processing over its 1963 Ampex version. All three have been produced with the high-quality characteristics that distinguished the initial B-C/Musical Heritage Society releases noted last August: Dolby noise reduction, low-speed duplication, handsome labeling and annotation. The full progress represented is perhaps evident only when one directly compares Vanguard/B-C D 0275, \$7.95, with the long out-of-print VTC 1673 version. Color, frequency, and power ranges have been markedly expanded; transparency, glitter, and transient response are notably refined. Best of all, the musical selections are ideally suited to display the original recordings' belatedly realized potentials. Morton Gould's *Latin American Symphonette* comprises symphonic-pops rumba, tango, guaracha, and conga apotheoses. Gottschalk's superbly evocative *Night in the Tropics* combines a sensually romantic Andante with an intoxicatingly rhythmed Allegro moderato. And if Hershey Kay's orchestration of the Gottschalk *Grand Tarantelle* is largely nineteenth-century fustian, it does provide a bravura showpiece for piano soloist Nibley, Abravanel's Utah Symphony, and Vanguard's recording engineer.

The other two reels, also \$7.95 each, are less sonically spectacular but generally more substantial musically: the Davrath/Abravanel Mahler Fourth Symphony (D 10042) and Haydn Symphonies Nos. 90 and 91 by the Esterhazy Orchestra under David Blum (D 10044), both from 1969. The former, the first recording of the Fourth to use the critical edition of 1963, was taped earlier in a Cardinal/GRT cartridge version ("Tape Deck," May 1976), but the new one not only avoids any mid-movement break, but does fuller justice to the warmth and piquancy of the master tape. The Haydn program is especially valuable for its delectable Symphony No. 90, a work otherwise unavailable in any tape format.

... and more Heritage chamber programs. Barclay-Crocker's series of reel editions (\$6.95 each) of Musical Heritage Society recordings is extended by three releases of largely specialized interest. But two of these are of very special value. A Glinka program (C 1973) couples the familiar mellifluous *Trio pathétique* with the first (I think) recordings of six piano pieces reflecting the influence of John Field, played to perfection by Thomas

by R. D. Darrell

The Tape Deck

Hrynkiw, who is also the pianist with clarinetist Lamneck and bassoonist McCraw in the trio. The other (C 3047) is seemingly for Kodaliens only, but if you've never heard the poetically eloquent Duo, Op. 7, or fabulously bravura unaccompanied Cello Sonata, Op. 8, these works—appearing for the first time on tape in admirably recorded performances by violinist Leonard Posner and cellist Paul Olefsky—proffer novel yet incalculably rewarding experiences.

Members of the Soni Ventorum wind quintet give their zestful best to a Poulenc/Villa-Lobos program (C 3187), and they are given vivid, close-up recording in a rather dry studio ambience. But the Frenchman's clarinet/bassoon sonata and clarinet/bassoon/piano trio are already outdated Parisian vogue-music. And while the Brazilian's oboe/bassoon duo and clarinet/bassoon/piano *Fantaisie concertante* have solid substance, they too are of strictly limited appeal. (Mail orders only: to Barclay-Crocker, 11 Broadway, New York City 10004.)

But somebody must love them! If the choice of open-reel releases is still lamentably limited, that of musicassettes is now bewilderingly wide. So as I rule I tend to select for discussion those cassette programs that promise the best returns on one's monetary and listening-time investments. But there also are seemingly attractive releases that turn out to warrant warnings rather than recommendations. Two major opera enterprises are conspicuous examples: London's *Flying Dutchman* (OSA5 13119, boxed, \$23.95), even though it stars Norman Bailey with Solti and his Chicagoans; and Philips' *Rosenkavalier* (7699 045, boxed, \$23.85), even though it stars Evelyn Lear and Frederica von Stade with De Waart's Rotterdam Philharmonic.

It's less surprising that the Hamline University/Twin Cities forces under William L. Jones should sound amateurish in Britten's charming *St. Nicolas* cantata (Musical Heritage MHC 5484, \$6.95 list, \$4.95 to members), especially to anyone who remembers the 1955 composer's version. But it is startling to find such relatively little dramatic conviction in a generally well sung and recorded Berlioz Requiem with Bernstein conduct-

ing a French chorus and orchestra in Les Invalides (Columbia MT 34202, \$7.98). And they have neither notes nor texts.

Elsewhere, others may be less concerned than I am by what I consider to be weaknesses in the readings of two great Byrd Masses (Argo KZRC 858, \$7.98; notes but no texts) and the Siegel/Slatkin performances of Gershwin piano and orchestral works (Vox CT 2122, \$4.98). Both programs are very well sung or played and recorded, which well may be enough for many listeners. (Slatkin's *Cuban Overture* is true magic!) But I'm most aware of the lack of airborne flow in Preston's often arbitrary Byrd treatments and of the lack of ribald swagger in the Gershwin concerto, rhapsody, and variations.

Expectedly/unexpectedly relishable.

What a relief it is to turn to the realization of promised rewards and to serendipitous joys for which one is wholly unprepared. My standards for the heavenly Schubert Ninth Symphony and Dvořák's still too seldom heard or appreciated Seventh scarcely could be higher. Yet my most exorbitant demands are not merely met but prodigally exceeded by their latest—and, for me, best—recorded versions from Philips, both by the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, conducted by Haitink (7300 510) and Colin Davis (7300 535), respectively.

Then, no one familiar with the old Rostropovich Russian recordings of Bloch's *Schelomo* and the Schumann cello concerto could fail to expect something extraordinary from up-to-date versions with Bernstein, no less, conducting the French National Radio Orchestra. And if their magnificently big and rich approach is just a bit too much for the Schumann, it makes the most of the kaleidoscopic scoring and Old Testament grandeur of the Hebrew rhapsody (Angel 4XS 37256, \$7.98; no notes).

On the other hand, I had no high hopes for the now somewhat run-down D'Oyly Carte company's recording of *The Grand Duke*, the least successful commercially of all the G&S operettas (London OSA5 12106, boxed, \$15.95; notes but no texts). And practically all I knew about Montemezzi's *L'Amore dei tre re* was that it was just another Italian *verismo* opera (RCA Red Seal ARK/ARS 1-2191, \$7.98 each; no notes or texts). How wrong can one be? The former is only competently sung, but it contains some of Sullivan's best music outside *Princess Ida*. And even in excerpts only, the latter—starring Moffo, Domingo, Siepi—is a thrilling revelation of theatrical eloquence. ●

Back beat

Steely Dan Sans Sarcasm

by Sam Sutherland

Steely Dan has been insinuating their mordant, pop-noir sensibility into the American musical mainstream for over five years now, and from the outset they've smartly chosen to conceal their weapons rather than brandish them foolishly. They conceive their darkly comic vignettes and edgy, oblique confessions as pop songs with snappy choruses, crisp instrumental hooks, and ensemble settings that integrate bebop, Chuck Berry, and Ellingtonia seamlessly,

without disrupting the flow of the music or its sleek aural finish. Eclecticism, both verbal and musical, never impedes the sheer momentum of their songs.

Walter Becker and Donald Fagen, whose songwriting collaboration led to the invention of the Dan as a putative rock band, don't break pop conventions when they can warp them, and this they do with disarming ease. As popular music's thematic range in the '70s continues to contract to a time-honored preoccu-



pation with romantic mythology. Becker and Fagen refine their exquisite subversion of it: They use the shell and discard the soft center, supplying their songs with a lyricism and harmonic richness that mitigate, and often ironically belie, a usually pitch-black core.

The results are seductive. Steely Dan fans don't necessarily have the faintest notion of what's going on between the intro and the fade, but they like the music's stylish verve enough to have pushed all but one of the first five albums past the gold record mark. In a platinum age, the Dan's two chief architects are in-

“A lot of people really
don't give a tinker's damn what . . .
you're singing about,
and we're aware of that.”

clined to call their success modest in scale; they appear neither very frustrated by nor grateful for their solid gold constituency and the apparent freeze on its growth. Nor do they seem unduly concerned about any lack in their fans' comprehension, apart from their suggestion that the last album, “The Royal Scam,” and its recently completed successor, “Aja,” employ simpler lyrics.

“Well, that's the idea, really,” Becker explains. “A lot of people really don't give a tinker's damn what in particular you're singing about, and we're aware of that. So it should work that if, theoretically, some portion of our audience didn't understand the English language to any significant extent—which may be true, for all I know—these things would actually sound good.”

Yet Becker and Fagen continue to invest their work with ideas that clearly don't stem from contemplation of the Top 40. The songs invert rock's cult personality, contradicting the Dan's own celebrity. The band's presence is shadowy, its identity subject to chameleon change. Instead of providing a familiar voice that mirrors a hip status quo, it exploits the multiple viewpoints of fictional narrators encountered on the brink of hysteria, despair, or bloodlust. Their fables are encoded in vivid language that transforms street patois, pop clichés, and dialogue into symbolist props, and Becker and Fagen themselves remain ciphers.

Their history reinforces that anonymity. When producer Gary Katz first heard their material at the turn of the decade, Becker and Fagen were still trying, with little success, to write pop songs for mainstream performers. The collaboration had begun at Bard College during the mid-'60s, where the pair was involved with a series of bands that somewhat prefigured Steely Dan in the leaders' insistence on driving players beyond the musical devices and instrumental techniques of rock and blues. After Bard, they headed down to New York to push their songs, working at one point with Jay & the Americans as supporting musicians.

“Before we had Steely Dan, we wrote what we felt were very respectable pop tunes that your average B flat female vocalist might be honored to do,” Becker recalls. “But we could never find any average B flat fe-

male vocalist who felt that way about them. And it was obvious because there was always some element of this fatalistic mentality that crept into the lyrics and the tune.

“Back when we were working with Jay & the Americans, we tried to disguise this to whatever extent was possible. 'Course, we were never successful—it's amazing how efficient your average pop culture artifact vocalist is in detecting the slightest degree of weirdness or perversity in what is supposed to be essentially a love song.”

Katz was equally efficient in detecting the duo's underlying point of view, but his reaction was far more enthusiastic. His belief in the partnership extended beyond the songs to a conviction that Becker and Fagen could come up with good records on their own. Although while under contract to ABC Music they still had little success in placing “hits,” Katz persuaded ABC Records to sign them to a recording contract. “When I first convinced Jay [Lasker, then president of the label] to let me sign Donald and Walter as artists, I said to him, ‘Forget about it for a year or two or three. It's gonna take a long time for people to listen to this.’”

Thus was born Steely Dan, not out of B-movie dreams for fame and glory but out of two songwriters' need for a vehicle for their material. The band assembled for the first album sessions was composed primarily of other East Coast musicians who, like Becker and Fagen, had come to Los Angeles, enticed by its growing importance as a production center. The preliminary quintet could have easily been mistaken for a rock band: drummer Jim Hodder, guitarists Denny Dias and Jeff Baxter, Becker on bass, and Fagen playing keyboards and singing most of the lead vocals as much by default as by design. A sixth member, vocalist David Palmer, was added near the completion of sessions for the first album. “Fagen and I found out our manager was booking gigs on the road for us, and there was some feeling that maybe it would be helpful to have a singer out front,” says Becker. Although Palmer did complete the first tour, Fagen's vocals had already begun to leave their stamp, and Palmer was dismissed prior to sessions for the next LP.

Steely Dan used electric guitars and a powerful rhythm section, but in nearly every other regard “Can't Buy a Thrill” took a very unusual approach. After the '60s, the idea of a rock band was predicated to some extent on improvisation, with the extended solo the coin of the realm. By contrast, the Dan built their arrangements into the songs, so that, while their records featured solo work, the material was more tightly structured, with melodic ideas dictated by the arrangement rather than simply built over the basic chord progressions.

The debut album was released in the summer of 1972, and it proved that Gary Katz's only miscalculation was his timetable for recognition. FM programmers started playing the moody, Latin-tinged opening track, *Do It Again*, with enough regularity to force the release of an edited single version. The song was a hit, as was a second single, the even more impressive *Reelin' in the Years*.

The next album, "Countdown to Ecstasy," brought their interest in jazz styles, as well as their bleak perspective, more than the customary step forward. The songs were longer, the imagery blacker, and the attitude toward rock mythology more explicitly caustic. Perhaps those developments accounted for its far cooler reception and, to a lesser extent, prompted the briefer, more conventionally pop-styled songs on the next album, "Pretzel Logic." That brought the group their next—and thus far last—hit single, *Rikki*,

"Their continued dislike for California and . . . rejection of the hip elite only enhanced their mystique as . . . mean-spirited misanthropes."

Don't Lose That Number, a love song of sorts that was as melancholy as it was mysterious.

"Pretzel Logic" was the final album recorded by Steely Dan in the guise of a formal band. With the sessions for "Katy Lied," the followup, Becker (now playing guitar as well as bass), Fagen, and producer Katz handpicked musicians for specific tracks (as they had already done when using additional "specialists" for the first three albums), enlisting six guitarists, two keyboard players, two bassists, and a roomful of singers and percussionists. Their choices were illustrative of their goals: On the one hand, they added crack pop and rock performers like Rick Derringer, Elliott Randall and Jeff Porcaro; on the other, veterans like Victor Feldman (senior member of the Dan auxiliary, having played on all the albums) and Chuck Rainey made their interest in jazz more apparent than ever, which they capped by Phil Woods's stunning alto sax solo on *Doctor Wu*.

Steely Dan had emerged as what Katz calls a "floating workshop," not a band. And its two project leaders were thus irresistibly cast as *auteurs*, a role they filled more naturally than most pop creators who are viewed in that light. Their continued dislike for California and a corresponding rejection of the hip elite only enhanced their mystique as reclusive, sometimes mean-spirited misanthropes, attracting a core audience who concentrated more on the Dan's coruscating lyric sense than the music framing it. Critical profiles also gravitated toward the songs' arch wit and underlying fatalism, diverting attention from the allusive, intelligent arrangements. The tension between musical confidence and psychic anxiety, which is the heart of their style, thus became a line of demarcation dividing their fans.

"Tradition and experimentation reign side by side," observed Tristan Fabriani (a Dan nom de plume) at one point in the liner notes to "Can't Buy a Thrill." Although intended as a parody, the slogan rings true of Becker and Fagen's musical views. If the early albums made it possible to mistake them for a rock band, each subsequent one has manifested their historical grasp of popular music, one that the group's



The floating workshop: Walter Becker and Donald Fagen

more verbally oriented fans sometimes miss.

While Fagen simply calls it "a wide range of listening experience," his partner is more explicit. "We've always written in the context of rock & roll writers," Becker claims, "and clung to the pop song form, to bridges and choruses and things like that. But expanding the harmonic context a little bit was also something that we always did, and it grows from a number of things . . . from jazz, and from traditional popular song form."

Accordingly, Steely Dan songs are concise extensions of familiar harmonic patterns. Becker recalls his earliest songs, written in high school years before he met Donald Fagen, as "altered blues." They began with conventional modal harmonies and then moved into other directions, "not unlike some of the things we've done lately." Such transformations are seldom abrupt. Even their fastest, hardest numbers don't really rock as much as swing. The drummer breaks up the beat with fluid fills, or skips across it to drop lightly into a new time signature; guitars climb slowly from familiar rock motifs, unraveling a blues line until it winks into ringing, angular chromaticism light years away from kilowatt rock. Piano chords chop against the rhythm in laconic syncopation, blocking out wry harmonic comments on the melody, while a sax obbligato surfaces to whirl through hard-blown but lyrical turns before diving back under the oncoming vocal chorus. The chorus may change key every few bars or

skirt an expected change. Yet none of these elements is dramatically backlit by the arrangements or even the songs themselves. However unexpected the melodic movement might seem on close examination, its contours sound both natural and logical coming through the car radio.

Therein lies Steely Dan's paradoxical "slickness," a conscious goal that turns out not to be as cynical as some might assume. Indeed, while Becker and Fagen are both less than fond of requests for *The Final Word* on lyrics—which, after all, they write to be open-ended in the first place—their penchant for sarcasm vanishes when discussing music. "They are composers." Gary Katz agrees, and, instead of manuscript, the medium is the record.

"The songs are arranged as they're written," Becker says. "It's a pretty integral part of the process. We do all at once; we don't write the lyrics and then write the music, ever. We'll usually have a fragment to begin with, and we'll have quite a bit of lyric writing to do as we assemble the song musically." A typical work in progress may already have a specific drummer's style written into the arrangement, while instrumental solos will be dictated by the chord voicings Fagen and Becker specify on the chart. By the time the piece is brought into the studio, they have already mapped out much of the instrumental detail that would usually emerge from musicians' head arrangements in a more conventional session.

Like Duke Ellington ("Ah, well, we all have our idols," Fagen admits), they use frequent modulations, employing them as casually as most rock bands would a simple chord change. Changes in key are designed to showcase the strongest tonal range for a solo instrument, much as Ellington's charts do. "He may have arrived at the effect as a solution to a problem," Becker remarks, "but I think it's probably the first thing that grabs you about his music. In a comparatively short piece, whereas Count Basie's band might be chugging

"The Dan studio legend includes stories of entire band tracks scrapped because of a single unsatisfactory phrase."

along with the blues. Ellington will move from key to key, and it gives you a very interesting structural thing. The modulations are frequent and unpredictable."

But their use of these techniques is not intended as a display of virtuosity. "The way we perceive it," says Becker, "if a modulation or a technique is so obvious that it draws attention to itself in an ungraceful way, or it really disrupts the flow of melody where it's not supposed to, then it's not good. Part of what we try to do is make the modulations not seem arbitrary and not strike the ear as abrupt. In other words, there should be sense to it. Even if we're going to a distant key, [we'll try] to move into it with a lot of authority so that by the time we finally arrive, it seems like the home key."

Firsthand testimony reveals a near-obsessive demand for precision in the studio. Their own small-ensemble jazz arranging techniques, along with their use of crack outside arrangers to polish some horn charts, compels the pair to guide more rock-oriented players beyond their usual frame of reference. "Talk to any guitar player we've worked with," suggests Becker. "Donald and I have been busting guitar players' humps for, oh, five and a half years now. That's easy to verify."

Accordingly, Elliott Randall will reminisce about six-hour sessions devoted to polishing twelve bars of rhythm guitar, while Jeff Baxter, now with the Doobie Brothers, calls them the most intelligent pop writers and arrangers he's worked with. The Dan studio legend includes stories of entire band tracks scrapped because of a single unsatisfactory phrase in an otherwise flawless performance—even though they could easily overdub the entire part, or punch in over the earlier take.

Because they rarely tour (a tentative fall tour, if it materializes, will be their first live exposure in over three years), their economic situation is far less bullish than their gold credentials might suggest. "Our record budgets are large, and our record sales are moderate," says Fagen. "These days we probably spend maybe half what the profit is." Their next album will be their last for ABC and, like the last few, will pay a higher royalty than their original agreement. Still, the sessions for their new LP, "Aja," were among the costliest to date, and even though the contract with Warner Bros. is said to be much more advantageous both creatively and financially, they remain stubborn in their refusal to tailor their schedule to record company stratagems if it would mean threatening the music in any way.

So Walter Becker and Donald Fagen are, in Katz's words, "resigned" to the recurrent technical gremlins that have plagued the final stages of nearly every album. They can't even listen to "Katy Lied," which they say was "damaged" by a faulty noise-reduction system during the final mix. In the same way they're resigned to their "modest" popularity, which after all enables them to keep making these arch, iconoclastic pop records. They're resigned to their California exile, living amid what they see as the revival of "gay Fifties culture" in the West Coast of the '70s. They're even resigned to the perfectionism that prevents them from being able to enjoy their earlier records or to use what Katz says are "some terrific songs" left over from earlier sessions, because they sound dated to the Dan's ears. And they're resigned to accept the overserious cult worship of listeners who hear the fatalism of their music but not its humor.

"We do think these songs are pretty funny, by and large," Becker remarks in his laconic fashion. "In fact, we have a hell of a time writing these lyrics, whooping it up over how hysterically comical we think it is. It may not be as funny once it's all assembled."

"It's just popular music," Fagen offers. "It can be listened to at any level."

You'd almost think they were just making rock records. ●

Mix to Master to Mother to Disc: Manufacturing a Record

by Howard Cummings

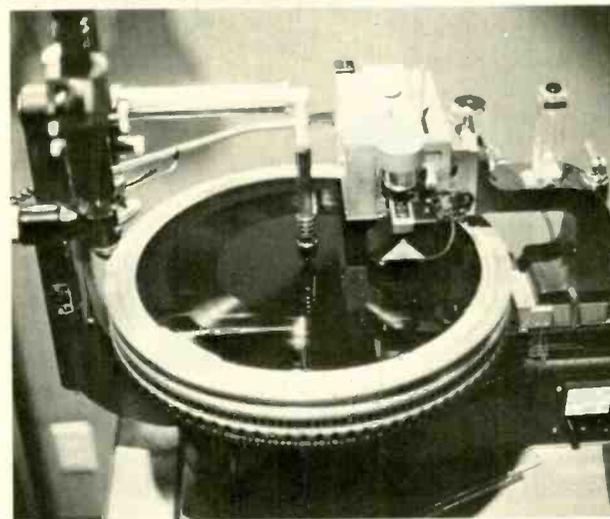
The pictures on these pages were taken at the Capitol Records cutting studio and pressing plant in Hollywood and Atwater, Ca., respectively. The author's descriptions of the processes involved in cutting a record are based on his observations of these two facilities.

After mixing down from 24 or 16 tracks to 2, adding equalization and echo-reverberation, compressing the dynamic range, placing the instruments in the stereo image, balancing the levels, etc., the final stereo mix is ready for the disc-cutting studio. This may be associated with a record company, as is the one I recently visited, or it may be one of the many independent operations that serve clients from aspiring songwriters to independent record companies. At the cutting studio, the pair of signals from the two-track ¼-inch master is processed through a tape-to-disc transfer console [1] for final level adjustments. From there it goes to the cutting lathe [2] (which looks something like a 2001 turntable) where a high-precision stylus cuts a continuous groove into a lacquer disc. Lacquer is basically composed of cellulose nitrate, solvents, a castor-oil plasticizer, and dyes, all of which are deposited onto a thin aluminum substrate plate and then carefully dried so that surface irregularities do not develop.

Once a blank has been chosen and carefully inspected for any deformities that might damage his precision cutting stylus, the engineer cuts a reference lacquer for review by the producer. Simple changes, such as overall reverb, eq., or limiting-compression, can be accommodated in-house with the engineer re-cutting to the producer's specifications. Problems beyond these—such as instrument balance or too much reverb—generally result in a step backward to the recording studio mix room.

When the ref is finally approved, "master" lacquer blanks are chosen, this time with ruthless scrutiny since a flaw at this stage will affect all successive stages, right through pressing and packaging. Blanks

The author is a recording engineer based in Los Angeles who specializes in audio/visual work.



used for 12-inch LPs are 14 inches in diameter while 45s are cut on 10- to 12-inch discs; the extra size not only provides a banding sample to check signal-to-noise and groove geometry, but also facilitates easier handling in plating (the next step).

Due to the wear and tear of the plating process, several masters are usually cut simultaneously. The

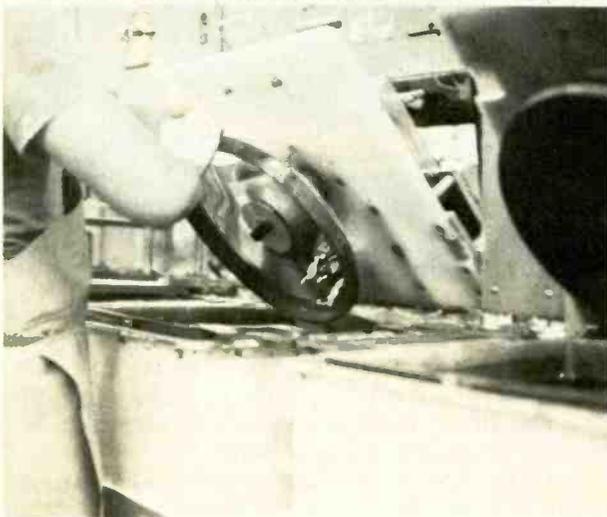
exact number is finally determined by sales forecasts: Linda Ronstadt may need a dozen, while a newcomer would need only one or two. Masters are then shipped to one of the hundreds of pressing plants in this country, where they are coated with a thin layer of metallic silver, making them electrically conductive. Silver has been found to be the best conductor that will adhere to lacquer, accept a nickel coating, and separate easily from nickel.

The silvered lacquer is then electroplated to a carefully measured thickness in a pure nickel solution bath. This forms a negative image "metal master," which is removed from the solution, separated, and inspected for imperfections. If none are found, it is washed in distilled water and a scrubbing solution, cleaned, and polished [3].

The positive-image "mother" is made from this negative master [4], again by means of immersion in a nickel solution (above 100 degrees) for about an hour. After cleaning, it goes to the "mother tester," who plays it through complete [5]. If he finds any defects, a high-powered microscope is called in to determine when the flaw occurred—in plating or in cutting [6]. If in plating, and if it is superficial enough, jeweler-type precision "pricking" tools can be used to remove it. If that doesn't work, it may be necessary to go as far back as the cutting studio.



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Once the mother tester has given his okay, the mother goes to production control to be made into a stamper. It is played through completely after every sixth stamper is made (the stamper's life-span is also limited) to make sure that no damage has occurred along the way. The stamper is processed in much the same way as the mother but takes less time in the plating cycle and has a thinner nickel coating. Once stampers have been made for both sides of the record, they are positioned facing each other on the record press to achieve a waffle-iron effect on the "batter," polyvinyl chloride, PVC, which originates in a clear granular or powdered form, is shipped in bulk loads to the plant, where it is pumped through a silo, a blender, and then to a "closed-tube" system to avoid any chance of contamination. It is then combined with other materials, including chemical stabilizers—for stiffening and heat tolerance—and carbon black, which gives records their characteristic appearance. Black is used for a number of reasons: It makes track location easier, covers cosmetic defects, and—significantly—costs about half of what other colors do.

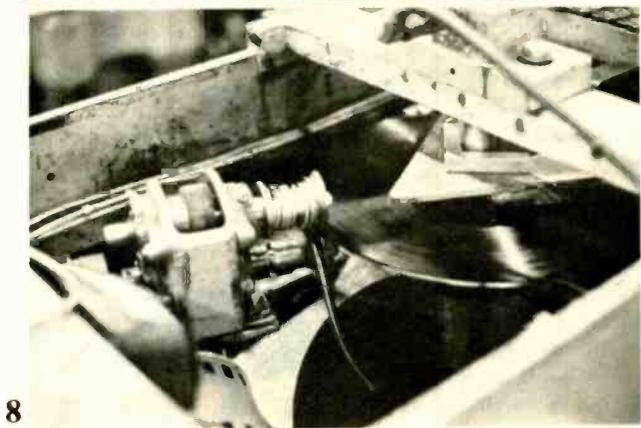
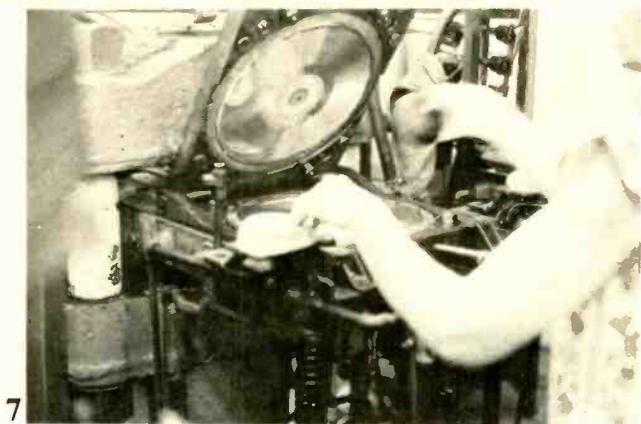
What about adding antistatic agents and extenders? (An extender is a clay-type filler that is compatible with, but less expensive than, vinyl and is often the source of surface noise.) Capitol's response: "Our records are 99 per cent pure vinylite [stabilizers mak-



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ing up less than 1 per cent of the vinyl]. We don't add extenders because they hurt the quality of the product. As for antistatic agents, some have been tried, but they've never proven 100 per cent effective. We feel the added cost doesn't warrant it."

To get back to our "batter," the PVC and any additional ingredients are loaded into an extruder—which looks something like a meat grinder—where they are heated for softening and, in a matter of seconds, they reach the press in biscuit form, ready for stamping.

The pressing itself is accomplished by a hydraulic air and water system controlled through air-operated valves and a heating-and-cooling process. The stamper dies are steam-heated to 350 degrees to allow the PVC to flow into every groove. Then the PVC biscuits, approximately 2 by 3 by 1 inches in size, are pre-heated to 300 degrees and inserted into the press [7], either manually or automatically. Through compres-

sion molding and steam injection, a flat record is formed in approximately 30 seconds under a pressure of 60 tons per square inch. Just before the press opens, cold water is pumped in to chill the die to 95–100 degrees, making the finished disc rigid and easier to remove. Labels are applied and the holes punched during pressing. Flash, or excess vinyl, is trimmed off after the record has come off the press and been inspected visually. A seven-inch circular punch trims 45s in one go, while a high-speed edge trimmer eliminates the excess on LPs [8]. The record then drops to a spindle and is transferred to the testing areas. Here it is inspected for bad labels, scratches, pits, dirt, rough edges—anything that might detract from its physical appearance. Next it goes to quality control, where approximately 10% of the day's total production is inspected for master numbers, sequence and number of songs, and again for surface blemishes. One disc per box of twenty-five is then weighed, checked for defects that may have occurred in pressing, and played for surface noise check [9].

If either aural or visual examination reveals a problem, a "stop order" is written and the stampers replaced before any further production takes place. If not, the record is inserted into a white bleached inner sleeve. When I asked about using plastic-lined sleeves as they do in Europe, I was told that the cost of five cents more per sleeve was the reason we don't see them often in this country.

The album cover, inserts (posters, etc.), record, and inner sleeves are collated, and the package proceeds via conveyor belt first to a plastic shrink-wrap area and then to a 300-degree tunnel where the excess wrap (about ½-inch all the way around) is shrunk to the final dimensions.

The albums are then packed, twenty-five to a carton, and delivered to the shipping department for their journey to various distribution centers around the country. The total time elapsed in the pressing plant varies greatly: assuming normal scheduling, six to eight weeks for a forecasted million-seller; for a projected 300,000, three to four weeks. However, if an album has been held up in the recording stage and is long overdue, as little as twenty-four hours has been known to elapse from lacquer to shipping dock!

What with all the product that is released these days and the tight playlists, there are a great many LPs that never get beyond the racks in the record stores. So what about recycling all that unsold vinyl? According to one plant manager at Capitol, "Almost every company uses a certain percentage of remilled materials—we use maybe 20 or 30 percent." The process? "The labels are removed with a wetting agent to penetrate the paper so it comes off easier. Afterward, the material is ground up, delivered to the press, and then heated."

No one will say how widespread this practice is. But there are frequent cries that quality is "going down the drain" and that records are "too high-priced for what you get." Nonetheless, sales are healthier than ever and will continue to increase; only the audiences will change. For if you like the artist, it's the only game in town. ●

Input Output

Instruments and Accessories

Fender Super Twin Reverb Amplifier. The Fender Twin Reverb has long been a favorite of guitarists in the industry due to its durability and clean, accurate sound reproduction. In an effort to gild the lily, Fender has announced the release of its new Super Twin Reverb, which adds distortion controls, a five-band equalizer, a presence control, and many pounds to its predecessor. (The new baby weighs close to 100 pounds. Fortunately, it comes with a set of casters.) Front panel controls include VOLUME, which when pulled out activates a BRIGHT SWITCH, TREBLE, MIDDLE, BASS, DISTORTION, OUTPUT—for master vol-



Fender Super Twin Reverb

ume control—and a five-band equalizer. The usual two inputs and pilot light appear to the extreme left of the front panel next to the AC (power) and standby switches, both of which have been conveniently moved from the back of the amp. Located on the back panel is the LINE/RECORDING jack (which will feed a PA system, tape recorder, or direct box in a recording studio), HUM BALANCE, an accessory AC outlet (250 watts maximum), and a three-position ground switch.

The Equalization and Harmonic Balance section is composed of separate controls for 2,300 Hz, 1,250 Hz, 485 Hz, 235 Hz, and 100 Hz. It works extremely well and cleanly and can be switched in or out with a supplied footswitch. PRESENCE comes in handy when you thought you had your sound just right but suddenly can't hear it over the rest of the band. The equalizer footswitch also

houses an on/off distortion switch and a switch labeled DST for volume boost when DISTORTION is engaged. A second footswitch is supplied to control reverb. Footswitch and AC cables are heavy-duty and should last a long time, as should their respective connectors to the amp. Even the RCA plugs feeding the reverb spring to the electronics are housed in heavy plastic.

We field-tested the Super Twin with guitarist John Stowell, who subsequently decided to use it on his forthcoming LP for Inner City. The sound was clean and he was able to get what he wanted. The variety of sounds available—what with the five-band equalizer, the distortion controls, etc.—is an obvious plus, as is having 180 watts coming out of an amplifier of that size. As we were hauling it into the studio, Stowell remarked that the case left something to be desired. Apparently the "pre-CBS" Fender amps used heavy plywood for the case panels that run lengthwise across the back of the amp. The Super Twin uses thin composition board instead. This may have kept it from weighing over 100 pounds, but it seems scant protection for the speakers and all those expensive vacuum tubes.

Overall, this is a very good instrument. Personally, I'm not convinced that it has the warmth of earlier Fender amps, but it's a versatile, powerful, and well-built tool. Retail price is \$745.

CIRCLE 121 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Shure Model 50 AC Telephone Acoustic Coupler. Occasionally, a record producer will call the studio to check out how the rough mixes sound. Or the artist may call to see how the edit went. One way to appease their curiosity is to hold the phone up to the speaker and shush everyone who comes into the room. What the producer hears is an uneven stereo balance, room ambience, and people tiptoeing around shushing each other. Add to that the band tuning up in the studio, the delivery boy's arrival with lunch, and the bass player's sudden coughing attack.

In a spectacular stroke of beneficence, Shure has provided a way to wipe out all those little annoyances with the 50 AC Acoustic Coupler: a small speaker, cased in molded rubber, with a chord that at-

taches to the output of your cassette recorder (or whatever you adapt it for). The speaker fits perfectly over the telephone mouthpiece and can be strapped onto the handset so that you needn't hold it there. Frequency response is designed to match that of the microphone in your telephone. The casing is sturdy, and the coupler weighs all of 4 ounces.

Now the producer won't panic when he hears a noisy playback. And, when you've been up all night dictating the



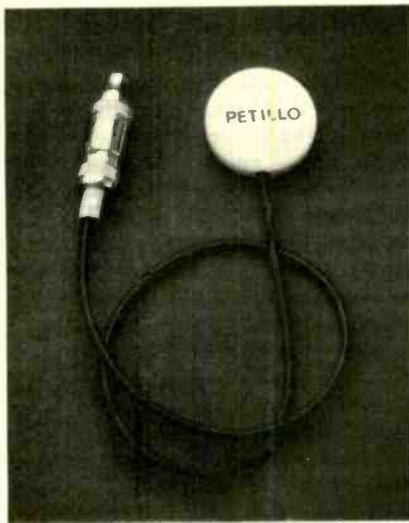
Shure Telephone Acoustic Coupler

Great American Novel into your cassette machine, you can play it back to your brother in Minneapolis while you go back to sleep. Whatever use you find for the 50 AC, it'll do the job well and costs only \$28.50.

CIRCLE 122 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Petillo Model 20 Guitar Pickup. Petillo is a small family-run company that until recently was known only for its hand-made guitars. Work with James Taylor on guitar pickups and with jazz giant Tal Farlow on a new guitar has led to several new acoustic pickups, one of which is the Model 20. It's about the size of a quarter, and is enclosed in a mother-of-pearl shell. The lead wire terminates in a female mini-connector, which can be adapted to a standard guitar cable. It uses no battery or preamplifier and is mounted just behind the bridge with pressure-sensitive tape (supplied). The sound is clean and even, and the reproduction good. As with other pickups of this type, it is sensitive to other noises coming from the guitar, such as string sliding and thumps.

The Model 20 is simple to use, and although I've never been a fan of double-sided tape to hold a pickup on a guitar,

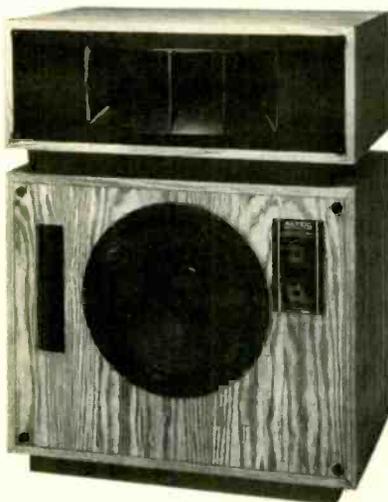


Petillo Model 20 Guitar Pickup

its \$45 price tag puts it in a different category from the more elaborate Polytone or D'Armond pickups, both of which attach with a little more security. Its size precludes any danger of its getting in the player's way.

CIRCLE 123 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Altec Model 19 Speaker System. At the studio where I spend all my days and some of my nights, we monitor commercial recordings on Altec 604s. So when the 19s came out, I had to hear them. We brought a pair to the studio to compare them A/B style with the 604s. After somehow managing to get them up the stairs (they measure 21 inches deep by 30 inches wide by 39 inches high) we gave them a pink noise test, which involves playing back random noise through the speaker and measuring the frequency response with a calibrated microphone. The curve showed a fairly flat response, which is to say there were no peaks or dips that might significantly color the



Altec Model 19

sound. Overall, the sound was very pleasing although somewhat on the bright side.

Originally designed for high-end home audiophile use, the 19s will be marketed for professional recording as well. I found them a bit overwhelming as control-room monitors, but then I'm used to my Acousti-Voiced 604s. Rock, jazz, and classical sounded equally good, indicating that the 19s make an accurate all-round system.

The new element here is the 802 8G driver, which when combined with the standard 15-inch woofer (416 8B) and 811 B horn yields a very high quality speaker. The Dual Bank Eq. Crossover permits some tuning of the system to suit your particular listening conditions. Connections from the amplifier are located under the cabinet. There has never been an ideal or standard studio monitor—there probably never will be. The Model 19 isn't one either, but it is quite a

overload, a low-cut (100 Hz) filter, REVERB (return), MONITOR (send), and MASTER VOLUME output. Standard ¼-inch phone jacks accommodate inputs on the front of the mixer; the back-panel jacks include MAIN and MONITOR output (each fed to separate amplifiers), and SEND HI, SEND LOW, RECEIVE for patching in external equalizers, tape delays, or whatever. IN and OUT coupling jacks permit attaching to other 1336 mixers for more input capability, and a jack marked FS is provided for a footswitch (not supplied) to control reverb externally.

The bass and treble controls work fine and, in addition to being wide-range tone controls, can be very handy in controlling feedback. The inclusion of a low-cut filter and LEDs for overload is a sensible move. All pots operate smoothly and are virtually free of noise, and provisions have been made for most standard external connections. Perhaps the most bothersome feature is the fact that the



Barcus Berry 1336 Mixer

nice sounding speaker, and I'd love to have a pair at home. Retail price is about \$660 per unit.

CIRCLE 124 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Barcus Berry Model 1336 Mixer. Barcus Berry, long known for its musical instrument pickups and more recently for its stage amplifiers, enters the PA mixer arena with Models 1334 and 1336. Designed to fill the needs of a low-cost PA setup, the 1336 is versatile and well put together. Each of the six inputs—three for magnetic or acoustic-instrument pickups, three for high-impedance microphones—has the following set of controls: BASS and TREBLE (offering 10 and 20 dB of boost or cut, respectively), REVERB/EFFECTS, and VOLUME. Separate LEDs for each indicate overload.

The output section has two more LEDs for battery supply status and level

master monitor control has no separate volume pots to feed it. It's nice to be able to feed your monitor system with a different overall level than is fed to the room, but that's *all* you can do—you're locked into the PA mix. You may want the audience to hear the lead guitar louder than anything else, but your primary concern in monitoring should be the rhythm section. The 1336 is a good, flexible mixer and unquestionably worth the money, but I'd have been willing to pay the extra for a little more freedom of choice. Frequency response of the 1336 is said to be within 3 dB from 100 Hz to 25 kHz, signal-to-noise ratio is 83 dB, and the mixer uses four 9-volt cells. It weighs only 5 pounds—a definite advantage—and measures about 4 by 12 by 9 inches. Suggested list price is under \$160.

CIRCLE 125 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

FRED MILLER

What's Out In Semipro Consoles

by John Woram

It's hard to believe that not too many years ago recording consoles with any sort of flexibility were pretty much in the pro-only category. Hardware available to the home recordist was limited in scope, and even the most modest signal processing functions could be a problem.

Today's home recordist has quite a different sort of problem: choosing from a bewildering array of semipro consoles, ranging in price from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars. To help add to the confusion, we present here a small sampling of what's available. The list is by no means complete—in fact it barely scratches the surface of what's to come in future issues.

Tapco Model 6000R

This is a six-in/one-out mixer with built-in reverberation. Each input has a rotary gain control and a two-section equalizer, offering ± 15 dB bass and treble control. Above the equalizer section EFFECTS controls the signal fed to the reverberation unit's input. Patch points in the rear panel allow the effects section to be used in conjunction with other external signal processing devices, with or without the reverb.

All inputs and outputs are $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch phone jacks. Three-pin professional-type microphone jacks may be specified as an option. Price of the 6000R is \$365.

CIRCLE 126 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Teac Model 2 Audio Mixer

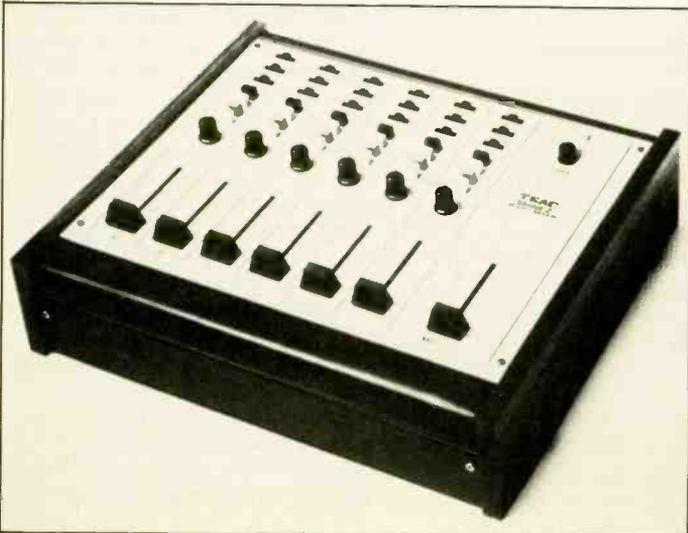
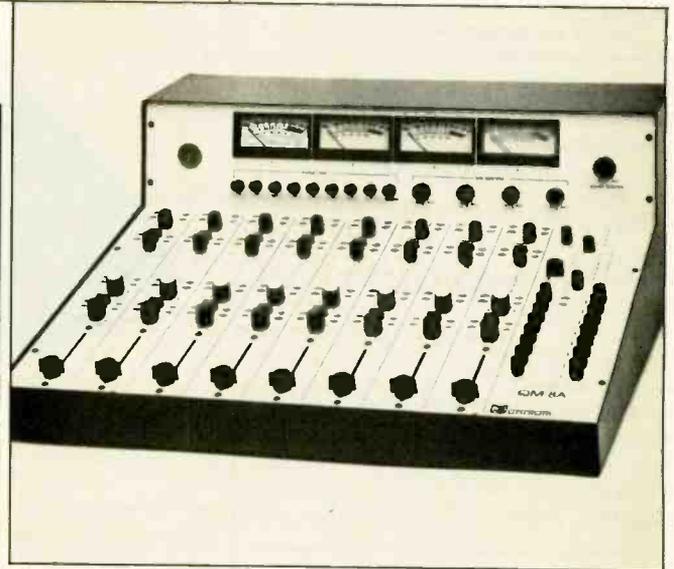
A surprising amount of flexibility has been packed into this six-in/four-out board, with each input controlling either a microphone or line-level signal, depending on the position of an input-selector switch. Above each input slide fader is a series of four pushbuttons, a rotary potentiometer, and high- and low-frequency cutoff switches. The pushbuttons route the input signal to any combination of outputs, while the potentiometer allows panning between odd- and even-numbered outputs. The master fader controls all four output levels. The Model 2 sells for approximately \$325.

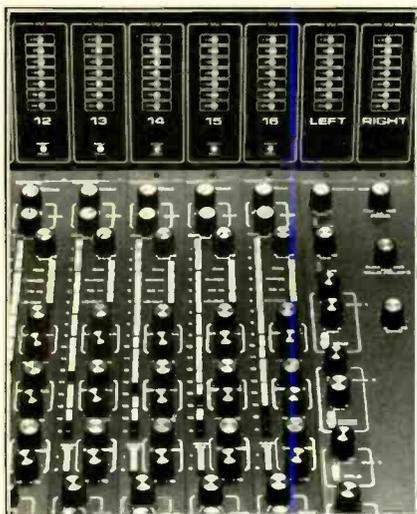
CIRCLE 127 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Quantum QM-8A

Here is another four-out console, this one with eight inputs. In addition to the basic input/output control functions, the Quantum Audio 8A features an 8-track monitor system, talkback and headphone mixing facilities and echo send/return controls. Professional three-pin

Top: Tapco 6000R, Quantum QM-8A
Bottom: Teac 2, Sound Workshop 1280B





Tangent 3216

connectors are located on the back.

A two-section equalizer offers high- or low-frequency cut or boost of up to 12 dB. Equalization is switchable between 3 and 10 kHz in the highs and 50 and 200 Hz in the lows. The unit sells for \$2,695, with an optional 104-point patch bay costing \$749.

CIRCLE 128 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Sound Workshop 1280B

This versatile twelve-in/eight-out board has a three-band equalizer that offers up to 15 dB of shelving equalization at 100 Hz and 12 kHz, and ± 15 dB of peaking equalization at 3.7 kHz. Output levels are indicated by a two-color/three-LED readout on each of the eight channels, and a mute switch is included on each input channel. Back-panel connections are three-pin jacks for the balanced microphone inputs and $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch phone jacks or RCA pin jacks elsewhere.

Options available include "Super EQ," featuring three-band equalization with five selectable center frequencies on each band (all are rated at ± 15 dB), and an 8-track meter bridge that fits across the top of the console and has eight internally lit VU meters (cost is \$850).

The basic 1280B retails for \$3,200; with "Super EQ" on eight of the twelve inputs, the price is \$4,000. A twelve-input expander costs \$2,500.

CIRCLE 129 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Tangent 3216

The Tangent model is 16-in/16-out with ± 15 dB three-band parametric equalization on each channel. There are two cue lines for headphone monitoring, and each of the two echo-send lines provides a two-position switch offering pre- or post-fader echo send. A phase reversal switch is also included in each channel, and the board is equipped with phantom powering. A rotary potentiometer permits panning between odd and even

channels, and recording levels are indicated by means of a vertical row of seven LEDs. The 3216 sells for \$7,950. Options include 24- and 32-channel mainframes, and a 156-point patch bay.

CIRCLE 130 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Allen and Heath Syncon Series

Allen and Heath Ltd., well known for their line of small mixers, now offers a top-of-the-line semipro "super board" with up to 28 input/output modules and 16 mixing bus outputs. Each module has

a two-section parametric equalizer plus switchable high- and low-frequency shelving equalization. Also there are four auxiliary send controls on each, and the board will handle six auxiliary returns as well as four quad echo returns. Other features include quad, stereo, and mono monitoring controls, phantom powering for condenser microphones, talkback facilities, a built-in oscillator, and VU meters on each module. The Syncon sells for just under \$20,000.

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Linda Ronstadt Breaks Training

by Stephen Holden

Linda Ronstadt: Simple Dreams. Peter Asher, producer. *Asylum 6E 104, \$7.98.*
Tap: ♣♣ TC5 104, ♣ ET8 104, \$7.98.

With the platinum sales success of "Heart like a Wheel" three years ago, Linda Ronstadt became the most influential female vocalist in Seventies pop and Peter Asher joined Richard Perry and Arif Mardin in becoming one of the decade's three most sought-after producers. Today, that album still stands as the definitive LA recording. Aurally impeccable, it embodies the old-time Hollywood ideal of a "class" product with big box-office appeal, due to its brilliant mating of star, material, and production. Ronstadt's honeyed soprano with its throbbing edge and sensual pliability was perfectly suited to the material. She handled folk, country, and even r&b with equally stunning facility, displaying for the first time in her career her full range and dynamic control.

The time was also right. Her voice was more lyrical and technically assured than Carole King's, less theatrical than Streisand's. And her approach to album-making conformed to Hollywood's long-time self-image as cultural melting pot and dream factory: She was the natural-born culture heroine—the Arizona-bred Miss America of pop. Her success opened the way for a whole school of distressed women singers like Emmylou Harris, Jennifer Warnes, and, recently, Karla Bonoff (see review on page 151).

The next two albums, "Prisoner in Disguise" and "Hasten Down the Wind," duplicated the formula, while trying to expand it. They were somewhat weakened by the inclusion of songs that were beyond the singer's emotional reach: Ronstadt was only partially successful in coping with the momentous r&b of *Heat Wave*, and her flings with reggae came off as pathetically brazen attempts to be "with it." Yet each LP of-

fered at least two pop masterpieces, and like "Heart" each featured brilliant arrangements and performances by Andrew Gold, her band's lead guitarist and musical director who subsequently embarked on a promising solo career (see "Breakaway," February). Gold brought a remarkably eclectic ear to Ronstadt's versions of "oldies," reprising the salient

virtues of the original arrangements while giving the songs a wholly contemporary depth, precision, and clarity.

With "Simple Dreams," Ronstadt tries to break out of the magic formula and falls flat on her face. Some of the cuts—most notably Warren Zevon's *Poor Poor Pitiful Me* and *Carmelita*—are spectacularly wrong for her. His autobiographical slices of LA lowlife are depicted in the sardonic, jaundiced language of a Ross MacDonald character; yet Ronstadt performs them straight, with the usual air of heartbroken valor. So when she sings about a man who "really worked me over good/Just like Jesse James" without a trace of humor, she suggests a Janis Joplin-like infatuation with degradation wholly inappropriate to the context. These perform-



Ronstadt—the missing link is Andrew Gold

ances lend credibility to the assertion made by unsympathetic critics that Ronstadt doesn't have, and never has had, the remotest idea of what she's singing about. For the first time, she drives so hard to be high-spirited that her singing sounds forced and affectedly tough. This in turn ruins her performances of the Stones's *Tumbling Dice* and Buddy Holly's *It's So Easy*.

The effect of Gold's replacement by Waddy Wachtel is as disastrous as the choice of material. Gold's carefully structured singles-oriented arrangements, highlighted by his own ringingly melodic guitar breaks, provided Ronstadt's albums with a good percentage of their energy. But the arrangements on "Simple Dreams" are routine, and Wachtel's guitar playing merely competent. Instead of a propulsive highly polished sound, the recording has the spare, almost empty quality of Asher's James Taylor albums. But what works for Taylor—whose subtle intonations are guided by a precise intellect and his impulse to understate things—fails with Ronstadt, whose interpretations are emotionally driven. The reduced scale works only on the traditional songs, and the LP's one gem is a duet with Dolly Parton on *I Never Will Marry*, with only acoustic guitars and dobro backing. It's as lovely a moment as the finest cuts of Kate and Anna McGarrigle. *Old Paint*, which Ronstadt sings to her own acoustic guitar accompaniment, is also effective but not as winning.

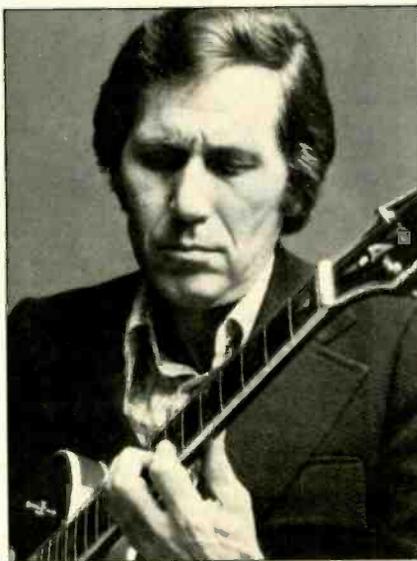
With minimal arrangements, the rest of the material tends to fall flat. J. D. Souther's *Simple Man*, *Simple Dream* and Wachtel's *Maybe I'm Right* are mediocre songs by friends of the family. Eric Kaz's *Sorrow Lives Here* is a bit better but requires more backup than Don Grolnick's lugubrious piano arrangement. The most likely sounding single, Roy Orbison's *Blue Bayou*, is an inspired idea for a remake. But delivered against a backdrop whose austerity I can only take to indicate a dearth of ideas, Ronstadt's singing sounds shrill. "Simple Dreams" is a depressing album that shows a major talent close to exhaustion, making poor choices, and pushing herself to the brink. ●

Chet Atkins: Me and My Guitar. Bob Ferguson, producer. *RCA APL 1-2405*, \$6.98. *Tape:* ●● *APK 1-2405*, ● *APS 1-2405*, \$7.98.

A lot of people badmouth Chet Atkins as being reactionary, but I'll tell you this: There is more subtle talent in his hands and mind than most of country music's new breed will ever be able to appreciate. Atkins was the creative force of Elvis Presley's *Heartbreak Hotel*, one of rock & roll's most glorious moments. I

only shudder to think what such a record would sound like at the mercy of most modern Nashville producers. ("Let's have Charlie overdub some harmonica; then we'll bring the strings up a few dBs.")

This album, like most of Chet's stuff, is not the sort of thing that hits you across the brows: no loud jukebox licks, no growling rhythm. But it's fine music. His



Atkins—talent of the hands and mind

work is rarely forced or arty, and virtuosity is never out of context. The material ranges in source from James Taylor to Jerry Reed to Cole Porter. But the songs have been chosen simply because Atkins wanted to record them, not because they're likely to ravish the charts. How much more interesting, how much better than being pressed to visit Ol' Waylon's Luckenbach. N.T.

Moe Bandy: Cowboys Ain't Supposed to Cry. Ray Baker, producer. *Columbia PC 34874*, \$6.98. *Tape:* ●● *PCT 34874*, ● *PCA 34874*, \$7.98.

Moe Bandy came to prominence early in 1974 with a record called *I Just Started Hatin' Cheatin' Songs Today*, a hard-edged tale of whiskey and wrath. It became a hit at a time when country music was going through one of its most severe sugar-and-poignancy phases. Here, many thought, is the savior, the man who will wrist-whip country back to life. And the savior fought valiantly; more records like the glorious first one followed.

Now I sit here listening to this album, and must admit to myself that it is not the stuff of saviors. Why are the Jordanaires here, drowning every cut in sterile, cloying cuteness? Why are the songs as unimaginative and full of stale metaphors as *I Just Started Hatin' Cheatin' Songs Today* was fresh and raging? The titles read like a list of high-school po-

etry clichés: *Cowboys Ain't Supposed to Cry* (how far is this sort of thing from *Tears of a Clown?*), *She Just Loved the Cheatin' Out of Me*, *All I Can Handle at Home*.

Country music is not in essence an inferior music (there are Lefty Frizzell records that make the Rolling Stones sound like the Osmonds), but stuff like this is almost a parody of itself. Moe Bandy is one of the greatest country artists alive today. He should be making great music, not running lightly in Lynn Anderson's shadow. N.T.

Karla Bonoff. Kenny Edwards, producer. *Columbia PC 34672*, \$6.98. *Tape:* ●● *PCT 34672*, ● *PCA 34672*, \$7.98.

Karla Bonoff's songs are already part of LA's pop mythology. Her neatly drawn meditations on the conflicts between personal freedom and romantic tradition may center around the oldest of themes.



Karla—writer/singer confidence

but a distinctly feminine sensibility has made her work the special province of female singers like Linda Ronstadt and Bonnie Raitt. And because her writing moves between the same melodic poles of male peers like Eric Kaz, Jackson Browne, and John David Souther, she runs the risk of being tagged as just another country-rock singer/songwriter on first listen to her debut album. But such a judgment ignores the record's unified perspective and Bonoff's own considerable presence as a singer.

The artist and her producer may have even increased that risk: Five of the ten songs have already been recorded by Ronstadt, Raitt, and Karen Alexander, and backup talent consists of members of the Ronstadt band and even the competition itself—Souther, Andrew Gold, Wendy Waldman, and Ronstadt. But the risk is ultimately well taken. Some of the arrangements share the basic instrumental ideas employed in their earlier recorded form, but Bonoff gradually reveals her own identity as a singer. After

several listens, one becomes more aware of the difference in stance than any structural resemblances.

Someone to Lay down Beside Me, which opens the album, serves as a graphic demonstration: The piano arrangement is nearly identical to Ronstadt's version, but a rougher, sparer feel to the ensemble work, highlighted by Waddy's alternately tense and lyrical electric guitar, combines with Bonoff's cooler, more resigned delivery of the lyric to carry the song into new territory. What became a dramatic tour de force for Ronstadt is scaled to more human dimensions here; if Ronstadt's interpretation is genuinely thrilling, Bonoff's is more disturbing, for it preserves the bittersweet intelligence and underlying erotic tension of the lyric more effectively. She lacks Ronstadt's sweeping vocal power, thus her stylized phrasing and basic melodic sense offset those interpretations handsomely.

"Karla Bonoff" does offer more conventional romantic moments (*Isn't It Always Love* and *If He's Ever Near*), as well as folk-flavored songs like *Rose in the Garden* and *Falling Star*, that point up Bonoff's links with longtime friend and former performing partner, Wendy Waldman. But the album's best songs describe an emerging feminine consciousness with a clarity and precision that is matched by the writer's confidence as a singer. s.s.

Eric Carmen: Boats Against the Current. Eric Carmen, producer. *Arista AB 4214*, \$7.98. *Tape: ●● 5301 4214, ●● 8301 4214*, \$7.98.

The title of his second solo album notwithstanding, Eric Carmen seems to be drifting. Several songs on "Boats Against the Current" are about coming of age and discovering one's true identity, but the former leader of the Raspberries has miles to go before he can afford to drift. His talents as a singer, musician, and melodist have yet to coalesce in a distinctive style other than pastiche. So here we have big Barry Manilow ballads, a Beach Boys imitation, and a Rod Stewart vocal over a Rolling Stones rhythm track.

If Carmen were still able to pay homage to his influences with Raspberries' humor and ebullience, this album would not be so disappointing. But it's a ponderous effort that never cracks a smile. The vocals often gasp and strain (before recording some of them, he screamed his lungs out to roughen up his voice), and the overbearing orchestration suggests that Carmen, producing himself for the first time here, doesn't know how to display his songs to their best advantage. Many of these arrangements aren't foils, they're fudge. *Run Away*, for instance,



Carmen—too too serious

probably the most beautiful tune on the record, is mucked up by elaborate pianistic interludes during which one forgets what would otherwise be a most memorable melody.

Still, he remains a superb tunesmith. The refrains of *Run Away*, *Nowhere to Hide*, and *Love Is All That Matters* are lovely. If only, having written a good song, he had a better notion of what to do with it. K.E.

Cher: Cherished. Snuff Garrett, producer. *Warner Bros. BS 3046*, \$6.98. *Tape: ●● M5 3046, ●● M8 3046*, \$7.97.

Big-time record reviewers, like yours truly, receive with their booty piles of other stuff like biographies and photos. According to the Warner biography, Cher is "recognized as the personality who has the most influence on the dressing style of the young women in America. . . ." Which, come to think of it, goes a long way toward explaining why so many high school girls are wearing Bob Mackie knockoffs this season.

The biography does not credit Cher with influencing anybody's singing style. That's true too. But it's surprising for a vocalist who has been so visible for so long. There must be a reason.

After a brief flirtation with artsiness by way of a fine if ignored collaboration with Jimmy Webb, Cher is back with the producer responsible for such hits as *Gypsies, Tramps & Thieves*, *Dark Lady*, and *Half-Breed*. While "Cherished" is certainly more commercial than her last couple of albums, much of it isn't the kind of thing that anyone involved should take any pride in. Most of Side 2 sounds as though it were written, arranged, recorded, and manufactured within a six-hour span.

The first side holds some interest, however. There's a powerful story-song, *Pirate*, which is cleverly arranged in the

style of her earlier hits: a strong-ballad. *He Was Beautiful*; and a peek inside the disc biz called *She Loves to Hear the Music* by Peter Allen and Carole Bayer Sager. The first two will probably appear in Cher's next Greatest Hits album. If there is one, you might as well wait for it. R.E.

David Allan Coe: Tattoo. Ron Bledsoe & David Allan Coe, producers. *Columbia PC 34870*, \$6.98. *Tape: ●● PCT 34870, ●● PCA 34870*, \$7.98.

You either love or hate David Allan Coe for his excesses of word and voice. I love all those manic things in his records: the forced melodrama, the egomania, the stark arrangements, the dedication to archetypes, the crescendos out of nowhere.

His own liner notes set the tone: "And to those that see me, let them tell their children they have witnessed a miracle." Megalomania becomes schizophrenia; the songs of the album alternate between hard, old-line country stuff—such as *Play Me a Sad Song* and *Daddy Was a God Fearin' Man*—and hallucinations seen through a wildman's eyes, like the pompous *Maria Is a Mystery*.

Coe is a more interesting singer and writer than most, and his audacity is as much to credit as his talents. That audacity and that talent are what make "Tattoo" infinitely better than the current releases of a hundred other, more popular country artists.

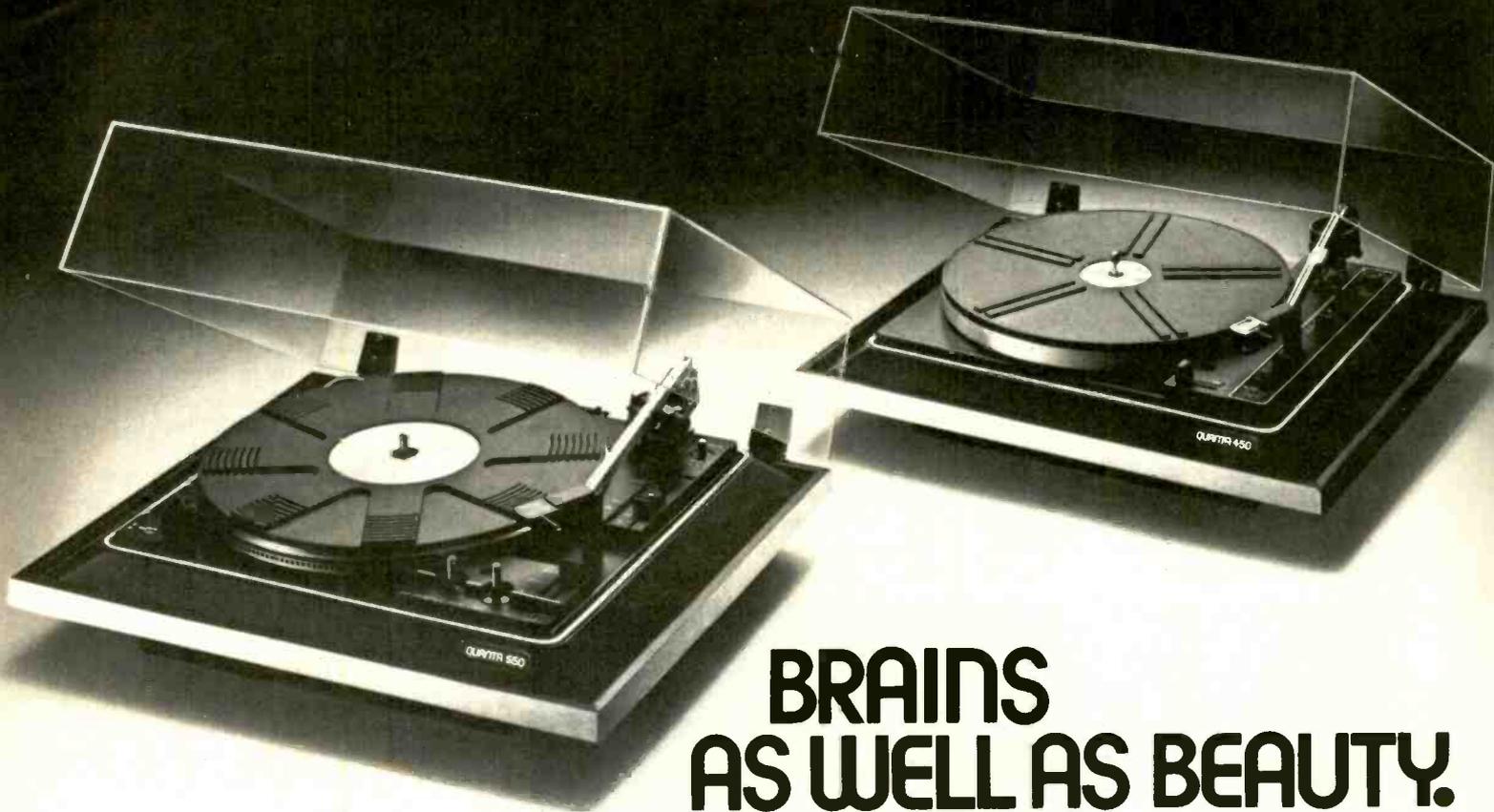
When the medicine show again becomes part of American culture, David Allan Coe will be its prince: baring his tattoos, speaking in tongues, selling Coe's Elixer, and singing them good ole country songs, sideshow-style. N.T.

The Doobie Brothers: Livin' on the Fault Line. Ted Templeman, producer. *Warner Bros. BSK 3045*, \$7.98. *Tape: ●● M5 3045, ●● M8 3045*, \$7.97.

Changing personnel without skipping a beat, the Doobie Brothers have been dependable and potent rockers for so long that they're probably bored stiff by what they do best. "Livin' on the Fault Line" is an understandable and interesting change of pace for the hardy hit-makers, but it's an unexciting album. Not that there's anything wrong with mellow medium tempos, and the Doobies are certainly entitled to add strings and horns if they want to (though surely they could have come up with less hackneyed arrangements). But neither Michael McDonald nor Patrick Simmons is accomplished enough as a songwriter to command attention when you're simply sitting and listening and not on your feet dancing. Their vague though pleasant melodies tend to blur into each other.

Continued on page 156

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The Dwight Twilley Band: British Rockabilly Comes of Age

by Ken Emerson

"We're just a natural progression," Dwight Twilley declares. "From Elvis to the Beatles to Twilley." But in fact the Oklahoma band whose second album, "Twilley Don't Mind," has recently been released evolved ass-backwards—from Beatlemania into rockabilly.

Twilley and fellow Tulsan Phil Seymour met eight years ago at a matinee showing of *A Hard Day's Night*, and their mutual infatuation with the British beat made them fast friends. Soon they were playing together (Twilley on guitar

and piano, Seymour on drums and bass) and even recording in a makeshift studio, disguising their drawls with English accents. It wasn't until they ran into Ray Harris, a producer who had been present at the creation, so to speak, of rock & roll (he had worked at the Sun label with Jerry Lee Lewis, Roy Orbison and the like), that they learned that rock hadn't begun with the Beatles. "Y'all sing like pussies!" Twilley remembers him shouting. "Throw bricks at cars! Tear down telephone poles! Get funky!" They didn't turn into hoodlums, but they did



Twilley and Seymour—"kids cutting loose in the studio"

turn on to Elvis. "Ray just pounded that Elvis/Memphis-rock & roll scene into our heads. There we were, in the middle of the country, freaked out by the English thing and at the same time getting pulled into the very cradle of rock & roll. It put in the rough edges that we needed, and then we really had both sides. Which has made some people label our music 'British rockabilly.'"

"Twilley Don't Mind" and last year's "Sincerely," the band's debut album, burst with the exuberance of kids cutting loose in the studio and discovering the tricks of their idols' trade: the slapback echo of old Sun records, the fat Beatle-ish sound of nine overdubbed guitars. One moment Twilley is hiccupping to beat Buddy Holly, the next he and Seymour are harmonizing like the Fab Four. Twilley is "looking for the magic," as one of his songs goes, and the joyful passion of his search suffuses his music, which never sounds coy or calculated the way Badfinger's and the Raspberries' emulations of the Beatles often did. They still play the majority of instruments themselves, and despite the laborious overdubbing, their sound is spontaneous because they are perfectly at ease in the studio. "It's just such a natural thing to us," Twilley says. "It's like brushing our teeth—there's no effort at all."

If Twilley's music seems anachronistic, it's partly because his devotion to melody is out of step with the generally tuneless rhythms of contemporary disco and hard and/or punk rock. Almost every song he writes has a hook you can hum forever, and unlike those of the run-of-the-mill Top 40, his catchy choruses gladden rather than nag. Moreover, his musical nostalgia dovetails with his lyrics, many of which are couched in the past tense and recall youthful love affairs. The dreamy romanticism and regret of such songs is balanced by lusty rockers, and Twilley's sentimentality is held in check by Seymour's punching drums, which are mixed way up so that they virtually duet with the lead guitar or keyboard.

"Twilley Don't Mind" pounds harder than "Sincerely," exchanging some of its predecessor's boyish charm for a meatier maturity. Due to contractual difficulties (their original label, Shelter, has dwindled from a record company to a production outfit), the band has had more than enough time to hone its craft, and another album is in the can. Twilley is reluctant to release that one, fearing it may sound dated, but his band's music is far too vibrant ever to sound old hat. ■

The Dwight Twilley Band: Twilley Don't Mind. Bob Schaper and Oister, producers. Arista AB 4140, \$7.98. Tape: ●● 5301 4140, ●● 8301 4140, \$7.98.

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Continued from page 152

and the uniform textures make it harder still to tell the tunes apart: McDonald's electric piano (which dominates most of the tracks) and the smoky vocals are as unvarying as the tempos. As a result the record fades into the background—a far cry from the Doobies of the past.

It's admirable, however, when so established a group jettisons a successful formula and experiments with new ideas. And one of these, the title song, pays off. A fleet foray into quasi-jazz, *Livin' on the Fault Line* is enlivened by guest star Vic Feldman's vibes and some galvanizing guitar work. If the Doobies want to strike out in a new direction, they should follow this up and forget about easy listening. K.E.

The Grateful Dead: Terrapin Station.

Keith Olsen, producer. *Arista AL 7001*, \$7.98. *Tape: ●● 5301 7001, ●● 8301 7001*, \$7.98.

If a head count were to be taken a few months after this album's release, I'd wager the Grateful Dead constituency would show some shifts in membership. Not that the ranks would be thinned out any by "Terrapin Station." Producer Keith Olsen has enforced a new economy and radio-consciousness, suggesting that the Bay Area psychedelic patriarchs also could prove appealing to martini drinkers. But his cast of supporting musicians—among them Tom Scott and orchestrator Paul Buckmaster—coupled with the sleek, spacious production finish are inevitably going to strike some of the more devout Dead heads as rock heresy. It's as if Max von Sydow turned up in a Ross Hunter movie.

Less doctrinaire listeners probably won't care, though. If *Passenger* sounds a little too close to Olsen's first major project, Fleetwood Mac, and a new version of Martha and the Vandellas' *Dancing in*



The Grateful Dead—newfound martini-drinker accessibility

the Streets verges on disco, there is still enough loping, cyclical surrealism to remind us where the band started out. On the opening track, *Estimated Prophet*, the producer's hand is lightened to mere cosmetic detail: The arrangement hews to the sort of slow-rolling syncopation and slightly drowsy melodic development central to the band's records since the late '60s.

For long-standing fans, though, the real test will be the title piece, a conceptual suite that takes up the second side of the album. *Terrapin Station Part I* begins encouragingly enough with guitarist Jerry Garcia (once the band's focal point but increasingly withdrawn from the vocal solo work) on *Lady with a Fan*, a typically convoluted Garcia melody with some nice contrapuntal piano and guitar. As the suite unravels, however, Olsen adds the Martyn Ford Orchestra,

with its Paul Buckmaster string and horn charts, and the English Chorale to develop the main theme, which surfaces midway through and reprises at the end. Somehow, the symphonic scale underscores the motif's similarity to Jethro Tull's *Aqualung*, providing yet another note of incongruity.

"Terrapin Station" thus emerges as the most accessible Dead album since "American Beauty." Yet with its disparate pop styles, it seriously challenges the group's earlier sense of their own mythology. Once electric folk eclectics, the Dead now sound more like pop eclectics, a shift that draws them closer to the mid-'70s mainstream than either they or their followers might have expected in the brave days of the Haight. s.s.

Freddie King (1934-1976). Bill Oakes, executive producer. *RSO RS 1-3025*, \$6.98. *Tape: ●● CT 1-3025, ●● 8T 1-3025*, \$7.95.

Freddie King was perhaps the greatest of the last generation of electric blues guitarists, combining the roots feel of Muddy Waters with the flow of B. B. King (no relation). He also was a fine singer, with the power and drive of the Kansas City shouters and the flexibility of the soul artists. King stood at the crossroads of many styles, and he made them all his own.

Despite the title, this album is not a retrospective of King's music, but a selection from four RSO recording sessions (1974-76) and one Texas concert. Most of the participating musicians are British blues addicts, guitarist Eric Clapton and drummer Steve Ferrone among them.



The Doobies: Knudsen, Hartman, Johnston, Baxter, Simmons, McDonald, Porter

T'Ain't Nobody's Bizness If I Do, perhaps the album's high spot and one of the great pop/blues tunes, is a perfect vehicle for the Kansas City style. Both Jimmy Rushing and Jimmy Witherspoon have recorded it. King does a masterly job with it, taking the slower and more effective Witherspoon pace and backing it with organ, piano, and rhythm. *Sweet Home Chicago* is a heavy 1950s Chicago blues-band number with some magnificent guitar solos in the late blues fashion that comes from T-Bone Walker via B. B. King. *TV Mama*, which was recorded by Big Joe Turner during his rock & roll period, gets a beautiful eight to the bar treatment that shows what early rock was like without the camp. The long (almost nine minutes) *Gambling Woman Blues* becomes an excuse for a vocal, with King using the immense dynamic range that the later soul/blues singers borrowed from the church. In the punchy *Pack It Up*, his tight, growling, almost choking delivery is at times reminiscent of a Bubber Miley trumpet solo. *Shake Your Bootie*—an easy, strutting, sexy number over a loose funky walking bass—and *Woman Across the River*, with its constantly shifting rhythms, remind us where funk came from.

The album is a good sampling, though nowhere near being a definitive memorial to an important product of a time when blues, r&b, and soul all met. J.S.R.

Patti LaBelle: David Rubinson, producer. Epic PE 34847, \$7.98. Tape: PEA 34847, \$7.98.

Patti LaBelle has more style than voice, and she's at her best in uptempo numbers. Her getdown talents are, for once,



LaBelle—tough cookie singing

more than adequately matched by her backing. Her tough cookie singing on *Dan Swit Me* is supported by many of the more joyous qualities of r&b's past thirty years: wowie guitar, lovely stomping piano, fine brass riffs out of the Wynonie Harris era, and even some swing clarinet and soprano saxophone. It's an authentic celebration of the life force—or something—to which the judicious critic can respond only by deserting the type-writer to dance along.

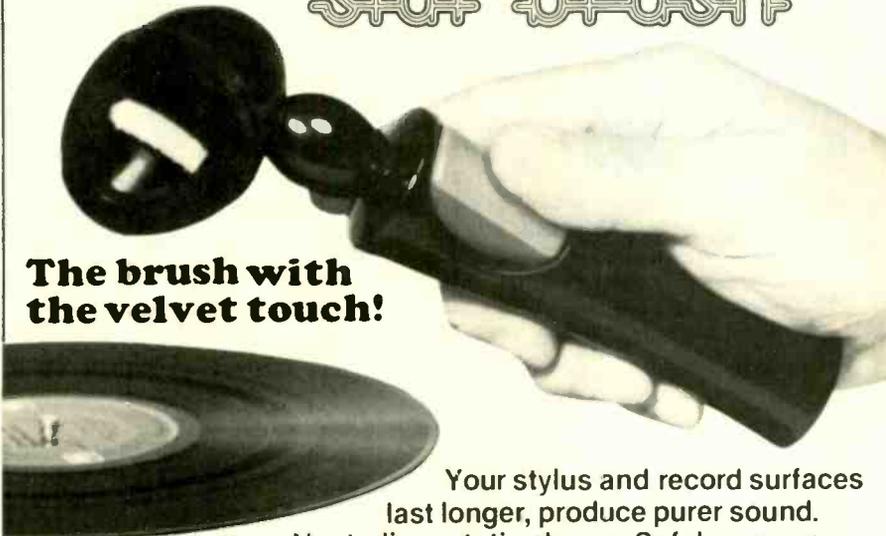
Funky Music has the lift of a trampoline. It's the standard funk number and a

superior getdown, with its sheer craftsmanship and constant small touches also making it a joy to listen to. *You Can't Judge a Book by the Cover* mixes classic Fats Domino-type acoustic piano, more fine brass, shouting backup singers, marvelous blues harmonica, and Patti wailing heavy.

The ballads are another story. In *You Are My Friend*, her voice, which has edge but not much bottom, is not enough to carry her intelligent and dramatic interpretation. But that cut is better than

Continued on page 159

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Pop/Rock

BY TODD EVERETT

Cheap Trick: In Color. Tom Werman, producer. *Epic PE 34884, \$6.98. Tape: ●● PET 34884, ●● PEA 34884, \$7.98.*

The Midwest's answer to Boston—with snappy playing, top-notch lead and harmony singing, and imaginative songs rooted in the late Sixties—is here with their second album already. Even if these guys didn't try so hard to look peculiar, they'd still have a strong shot at becoming stars.



Donovan. Mickie Most, producer. *Arista AB 4143, \$7.98. Tape: ●● 5301 4143, ●● 8301 4143, \$7.98.*

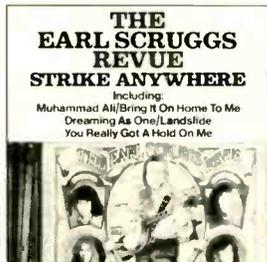
On the one hand, we can hardly expect Donovan to continue singing *Mellow Yellow*, *Hurdy Gurdy Man*, and *Young Girl Blues* for the rest of his life—though it would be nice. On the other hand, it's still all

but impossible to explain to current generations that Donovan used to be really good. Could it be that he was a man of the time and that the time has passed? There is some worthwhile listening here: *Brave New World* and *Maya's Dance*.

Giorgio: From Here to Eternity. Giorgio Moroder, producer. *Casablanca NBLP 7065, \$6.98. Tape: ●● NBLP5 7065, ●● NBLP8 7065, \$7.98.*

The Munich-based engineer/producer/keyboard whiz (sounds like a Teutonic Todd Rundgren, doesn't he?) plays for disco dancing. Moroder plays all instruments on the album, and they're all keyboards. Warning: The title track and *I'm Left, You're Right, She's Gone* aren't the songs you may think they are.

The Earl Scruggs Revue: Strike Anywhere. Ron Bledsoe, producer. *Columbia PC 34878, \$6.98. Tape: ●● PCT 34878, ●● PCA 34878, \$7.98.*



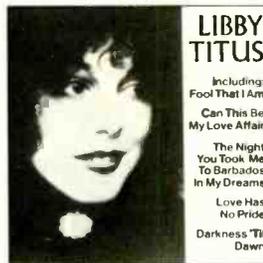
Scruggs, his three sons, and various friends play the kind of music that the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, the Byrds, and dozens of other have been trying to do right for years. Their eleven—so far—albums are consistently fine, and "Strike Anywhere" is typical. Included are a couple of nifty instrumentals, a few more than passable originals, and glittering remakes of some oldies. An uptempo *You've Really Got a Hold on Me* positively sparkles. If you want country rock, this is as close as you're going to get.

Greg and Paul: A Year at the Top. Jay Siegel, Paul Shaffer, & Jeff Barry, producers. *Casablanca NBLP 7068, \$6.98. Tape: ●● NBLP5 7068, ●● NBLP8 7068, \$7.98.*

Greg Evigan and Paul Shaffer are producer/song publisher Don Kirshner's latest stab at creating a new Monkees. They're basically teen idols who do what they're told, don't talk back, and in return are given some hot material to record. Most of that hot material is published by Don Kirshner. Amazing coincidence, eh? There's quite a range of rock to pop/rock here, making the LP at least suitable as a souvenir for fans of the TV show. *He's a Rebel* is mixed down to mono, but anybody who understands the inside reason is probably too old for this album.

B. J. Thomas. Chris Christian, producer. *MCA MCA 2286, \$6.98. Tape: ●● MCAC 2286, ●● MCAT 2286, \$7.98.*

Resurfacing after a bout with pills and such, Thomas has a hit record in *Don't Worry, Baby* despite his use of the wrong (i.e. Tokens-composed) lyrics to the vintage Beach Boys tune. He relies a bit too much on his producer for new songs, but the old voice is still in there throbbing. Overall, though, this album is only for the most devoted of fans: others should look first for "Billy Joe Thomas" in cutout bins.



Libby Titus. Phil Ramone, producer. *Columbia PC 34152, \$6.98. Tape: ●● PCT 34152, ●● PCA 34152, \$7.98.*

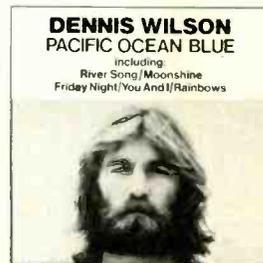
Titus is probably best known for her composition with Eric Kaz called *Love Has No Pride*. There's a version of that here. Other tunes, performed in a voice that sounds like a cross between Maria Muldaur and

Carly Simon, include *Kansas City*, *Miss Otis Regrets*, and the Titus/Hirth Martinez *The Night You Took Me to Barbados in My Dreams*. Have this album on your turntable constantly, and no one will ever question your good taste. Or, for that matter, your trendiness.

Tanya Tucker: You Are So Beautiful. Billy Sherrill, producer. *Columbia PC 34733, \$6.98. Tape: ●● PCT 34733, ●● PCA 34733, \$7.98.*

This album pretty well exhausts Columbia's stockpile of songs recorded by Tucker under the expert supervision of Billy Sherrill. (She's been on MCA for about a year now.) It's the kind of material that brought Tucker her greatest fame, and it doesn't look like she'll be doing anything better for some time. This is not bottom of the barrel by any means: The title cut and David Allan Coe's *I Still Sing the Old Songs* rank with her very best.

Dennis Wilson: Pacific Ocean Blue. Dennis Wilson and Gregg Jakobson, producers. *Caribou PZ 34354, \$6.98. Tape: ●● PZT 34354, ●● PZA 34354, \$7.98.*



The Beach Boys' drummer, in the first full solo album by an original member of the band, has managed to come up with something that should make the fans rejoice. The singing and instrumental work are top-notch; there's plenty of variety; and rock & roll, ecology, and religion each get a shot at the spotlight. Real nice. Dennis. Now it's Carl's turn.

Continued from page 157

Since I Don't Have You and *Do I Stand a Chance*, whose sunrise-over-the-Sierra horns and general portentousness introduce further examples of the worst excesses of the Producer's Revolution. A pity, because buried under the fatty deposits are a couple of lean and sinewy vocals. One whole chorus of *Since I Don't Have You*, when everybody but the rhythm section is out for coffee or something, is a real, though passing pleasure. Of the ballads, the midtempo *I Think About You* works best. Though it's no more than respectable than the rest

versions of two early successes, the gospel-based *Better Git Hit in Your Soul* and his tribute to Lester Young, *Good-bye, Porkpie Hat*. The textures are decidedly different from the earthy originals because of the emphasis on the guitars (Larry Coryell and Philip Catherine)—instruments that did not figure prominently in the earlier Mingus. The result is a lighter, less propulsive *Git Hit*. But *Porkpie*, a very moving piece originally, becomes even stronger with Catherine's deeply felt acoustic solo, full of Django Reinhardt references, and a lovely singing solo by Mingus on bass.



Charles Mingus—a new kind of creative peak

because Patti's chest tones lack richness, it's saved by her ability to wail.

"Patti LaBelle" simply and successfully blends newer and earlier r&b strengths. It does so most obviously in its mix of classic vocals and horns with tight, driving 1970s funk rhythm lines, but also—especially in *Dan Swit Me* and *You Can't Judge a Book by the Cover*—in ways too subtle to disentangle. J.S.R.

Charles Mingus: Three or Four Shades of Blue. Ilhan Mimaroglu, producer. Atlantic SD 1700, \$6.98. Tape: ●● SDC 1700, ●● SDT 1700, \$7.97.

The volatile career of Charles Mingus, in which cycles have revolved within cycles, seems to be coming out of an unwantedly long, complacent period and moving toward the kind of creative peak that Mingus achieved in the Fifties. "Three or Four Shades of Blue" gleams with the lights and colors that were characteristic of Mingus in his heyday. He is not as exuberant and flamboyant as before, but he exhibits a deeper, possibly even stronger feeling.

The comparison between the vital creative force of the Fifties and the contemporary Mingus is easily made via new

framed in guitar fills. The real gems are a pair of new pieces, *Noddin' Ya Head Blues*, in which the soulful ensembles that typify Mingus' work move in and out of a strong blues solo, and *Three or Four Shades of Blue*. Here is a Mingusian summation of jazz—touching on Ellington, Basie, Tadd Dameron, bebop, and Afro-Cuban—highlighted by a ravishing piano solo by a drop-in visitor, Jimmy Rowles. With this disc, Mingus is back and jazz is on a firmer footing because of it. J.S.W.

Iggy Pop: Lust for Life. Bewlay Bros. & David Bowie, producers. RCA AFL 1-2488, \$7.98. Tape: ●● AFK 1-2488, ●● AFS 1-2488, \$7.98.

Dead Boys: Young, Loud and Snotty. Genya Ravan, producer. Sire SR 6038, \$7.98.

At the close of the Sixties when most young Americans were languishing in the relaxed aura of Woodstock, a troubled minority of Midwesterners was shrieking along with Iggy Pop's Stooges. "ain't no fun to hang around." The Detroit-based band existed just long enough to force its nihilist message upon

Continued on page 161



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R&B

BY JOHN STORM ROBERTS

James Brown: Mutha's Nature. James Brown, producer. *Polydor PD 1-6111*, \$6.98. *Tape: CT 1-6111, RT 1-6111*, \$7.98.

After the obligatory obeisances to the Father of Funk and the Guru of Getdown, what's to say? Ecology has replaced ethnic pride: *Summertime* is this year's Everybody's Doing It, and "ugh-yeah-OW" sounds much the same in '77 as it did in '67. The mixture as before.



Keni Burke. Keni Burke, producer. *Dark Horse DH 3022*, \$6.98. *Tape: M5 3022, M8 3022*, \$7.97.

Keni Burke was a member of those former doo-woppers the Stairsteps. His album has the right ingredients for a real nice listen, but the proportions are all wrong. Too much glaze and too little salt yields all gloss and no flavor.

EDDIE HAZEL
Game, Dames
and Guitar Thangs

Includes What About It? Physical Love
California Dreamin' Frank Moment



Eddie Hazel: Game, Dames and Guitar Thangs. George Clinton and Eddie Hazel, producers. *Warner Bros. BS 3058*, \$6.98. *Tape: M5 3058, M8 3058*, \$7.97.

Funkadelic's scari-fying guitarist comes off as one of the most serious rock guitarists around on this solo outing. Unfortunately the stoned chantings of the Funkadelic backup singers, Bootsy Collins' bass and all, water down any attempts to break away from the Parliafunkadelicment.

Millie Jackson: Feelin' Bitchy. Brad Shapiro & Millie Jackson, producers. *Spring SP 1-6715*, \$6.98. *Tape: CT 1-6715, RT 1-6715*, \$7.98.

The label advises radio stations to listen before programming, because there are Naughty Words on the album. Millie Jackson sings superbly, and the lyrics say only half what other peoples' eyebrow-raising lyrics say, though less coyly. The LP is not only sexy, but sentimental, loving, witty, and—within the limits of r&b—wise.

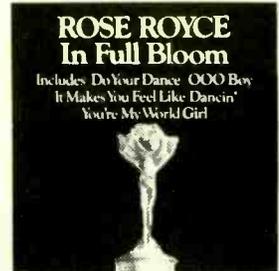


Michael Henderson: Goin' Places. Michael Henderson, producer. *Buddah BDS 5693*, \$6.98. *Tape: BDC 5693, BDT 5693*, \$7.98.

The man can sing, though he leans too heavily on the sexy falsetto. Trouble is, middle-class polyester soul—like the old Blue Eyes-type pop it's descended from—has to be really well written. Which most of this, save the first cut, just isn't. One song has backup vocals from Roberta Flack, but overall it's still just superior wallpaper.

Rose Royce: In Full Bloom. Norman Whitfield, producer. *Whitfield WH 3074*, \$6.98. *Tape: M5 3074, M8 3074*, \$7.97.

Rose Royce has a good lead singer, Gwen Dickey. Otherwise, it's basically a creation of former Motown producer Norman Whitfield, with every detail of watsappnin down pat. The foreseeable problem is that producer creations have a tendency to die on the vine around their third recording, while their Svengali goes on to hipper happenings.



Sister Sledge: Together. Michael Kunze & Sylvester Levay, producers. *Cotillion SD 9199*, \$6.98. *Tape: SDC 9199, SDT 9199*, \$7.97.

Silver Convention producers Kunze and Levay have managed to give Sister Sledge a commercial gloss without turning them into Convention-type plastic giveaway souvenirs. The best tracks are Wonder's *As* and Kathie Sledge's salsa-based *Can't Mess Around with Love*. The rest throbs with craft and simplicity, and the sound is both tight and free-wheeling.

THE STAPLES
Family Tree

Includes Hang Loose
Boogie for the Blues/Family Tree
I Honestly Love You



The Staples: Family Tree. Eugene Record, producer. *Warner Bros. BS 3064*, \$6.98. *Tape: M5 3064, M8 3064*, \$7.97.

The Staple Singers were one of the few established black gospel groups to move into r&b and specialize in message songs. Unfortunately, message songs don't bring the heavy gold, so they've taken up hit-hunting, which doesn't suit them. The material here ranges from the fairly sublime in the message-type *Family Tree* to the faintly ridiculous in *Let's Go to the Disco*.

The Whitney Family: Airways. Jerry Steiner, producer. *United Artists UALA 734 G*, \$6.98.

What with Isleys and Staples and Sledges, this has shaped up as R&B Family Month. With the exception of a couple of blah tracks, the Whitneys are fresh, joyous, and bubbling with the kind of zest that no amount of slick professionalism can replace.

THE WHITNEY FAMILY
The Whitney Family Airways

Includes: Love Is Where You Find It
Get Closer To My Music/Music To My Heart
Let Me Be Your Woman



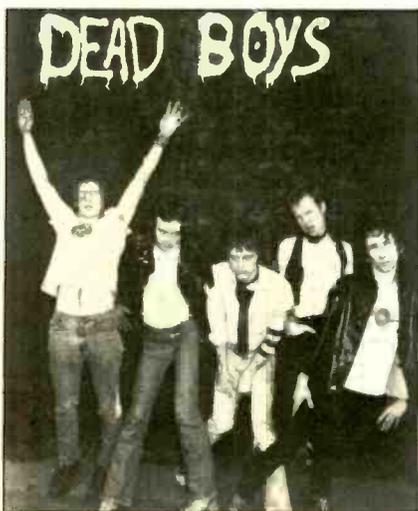
Continued from page 159

a working class, repressed-by-parochial-school minigeneration. Now the quintet that calls itself the Dead Boys continues the crusade, declaring that "the only things we all have in common are Iggy and volume."

In recent years Iggy Pop has made several attempts to resume his uncertain career, with and without the original Stooges. When reticent superstar David Bowie took an interest in him—co-writing, producing, and playing keyboards in his band—Pop became accessible to a larger audience both live and on record. "Lust for Life" is the duo's second collaboration. It retains Iggy's notorious disturbed and hypnotic lyrics, but couples them with a more straightforward rock & roll beat. Iggy has exchanged the guttural cries of his Stooges days for boyish, whispery vocals that



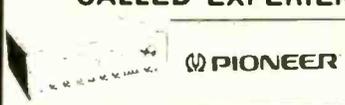
Iggy—F-side outsider



Dead Boys—repressed minority

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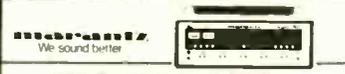
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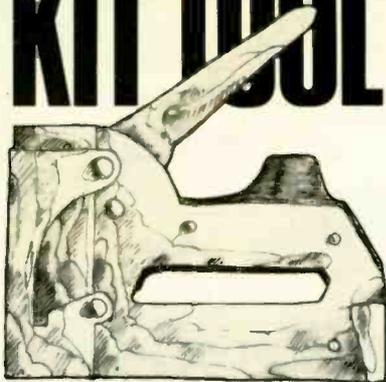
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trickle through and complement his band's steady rhythm tracks rather than shout them.

He still thinks of himself as an outsider, an observer of the decadent scene that he helped to create. In *Success*, he views commerciality as a two-sided mirror: "Here comes success over my hill... in the last ditch I'll think of you, here comes the zoo." As if playing the part of a Greek chorus, the band (which includes Soupy Sales's talented sons Tony on bass and Hunt on drums), repeats every line of the song. Pop wanders in his haunted landscape, asking for "some weird sin to relax with" in a love song to his dead girlfriend. Bowie-composed discofied movements on "Lust for Life" cloak the message; yet even in subtlety, Iggy Pop looms unsettling.

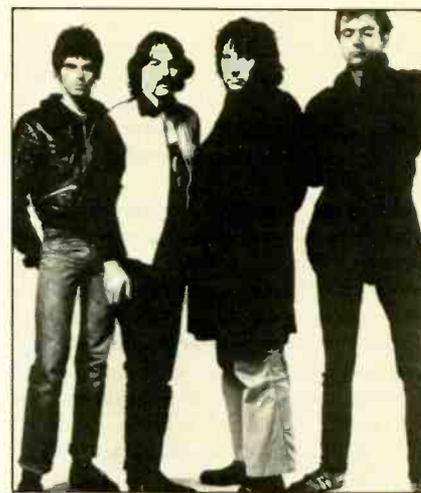
"Young, Loud and Snotty" is as unsubtle, razor-sliced, and sweat-encrusted as the Dead Boys's stage show. Singer Stiv Bators, the chief source of outrage in this Cleveland-bred band, warps his words on record the way he disjoints his body onstage. Lead guitarist Cheetah Chrome unrelentingly pushes his instrument like a buzz saw, forcing Bators to howl and spit.

What may bring the Dead Boys to an unsuspecting public outside the cadre of inner-city punkers is their thorough grounding in the pop tradition. *All This and More* sounds like a fairly normal, three-verse-and-chorus number—until one realizes that "do you know how it feels to have sex with the lights on" is the tune's opening line. The Dead Boys are direct and uncompromising. *I Need Lunch* is not about a trip to the automat, and *Sonic Reducer* has a plot straight out of the vengeful *Carrie*. The group won't induce sweet fantasy, but "Young, Loud and Snotty" provides a shocking insight into what yet another repressed minority considers its reality. T.G.

The Stranglers: IV Rattus Norvegicus. Martin Rush, producer. *A&M SP 4648*. \$7.98. *Tape: CS 4648, 8T 4648*. \$7.98.

Take a dirty, subterranean William Burroughs novel, add a healthy dose of Doors mysticism, and top it off with a Brian Ferry vocal quiver. The result is a hard-to-swallow concoction called the Stranglers, one of the first British punk bands to record for a major label. This LP, their first, actually hit the Top 10 in England last spring, and the group seems to stand a good chance of bridging the American gap between the New Wavers and Sixties nostalgists.

Older than the average British punk lineup, the Stranglers have the ability to elongate their songs, a gift of the Fillmore-era instrumentalists. "IV Rattus



The Stranglers

Norvegicus" (meaning Norwegian rat, the band's thematic symbol) is far from the auto-crash thumping associated with the punk genre. Dave Greenfield's keyboards hover over the songs like an evil angel, propelling them forward with a continuity nonexistent in the younger groups' guitar-centered lineups. Like Roxy Music's Ferry and the late Jim Morrison, singers Hugh Cornwell and Jean Jacques Burnel sound alternately mean and uncertain.

The misogynistic lyrics have enraged many listeners—myself included. The general intention appears to be total intimidation, with woman-hating the obvious first step. How will Americans react to hate-drenched lyrics and skilled instrumental cover? The opening cut, *Sometimes*, states, "Sometimes I want to slap your face... beat you, honey, till you drop." It ought to be easy to reject their message altogether. But beware. You too may find yourself captivated and singing along as if such lines were everyday pleasantries. T.G.

Sun Ra: Solo Piano. Paul Bley, producer. *Improvising Artists IAI 37.38.50*. \$6.98.

Sun Ra's reputation as a musical iconoclast and aesthetic visionary stretches back at least as far as the mid-Fifties. Since that time he has led a series of groups that in essence have represented a continuation of the ensemble he founded long ago in Chicago. Yet through it all—the sometimes confused but usually respectful critical reaction, the gigs in tiny uptown bars and Soho lofts (I once played opposite him at an avant-garde festival on a Staten Island ferry boat)—his music has remained as direct and uncluttered by commercial considerations as it was in the beginning.

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first recording of Sun Ra performing



as a piano soloist. It is a welcome opportunity on a number of counts: First, he simply isn't heard as often as he should be; second, it provides an opportunity to listen beyond the theatrical overlays and extended horn and percussion improvisations that usually dominate his ensemble performances. Alone at the keyboard, he must give us the essence of his music, the heartbeat that throbs in its center. And he does. Though quite familiar with his work, I was still as-



Sun Ra—brilliant and provocative

tonished by the clarity, single-mindedness, and simplicity with which he approaches the musical problems he poses for himself.

Three of the cuts bear familiar Ra-ean space titles: *Cosmo Rhythmic*, *Romance of Two Planets*, and *Irregular Galaxy*. Two are unexpected interpretations of standards: *Sometimes I Feel like a Motherless Child* and Jerome Kern's *Yesterdays*. The final track is an off-the-wall lyrical ballad titled *To a Friend*; it is the most rare piece on the album—so lovely and endearing that it may very well threaten Sun Ra's reputation as a hard-core avant-gardist. (I'm joking, of course.)

I was less impressed by his excursions through *Yesterdays* and *Motherless Child*. Like the flinty composer/pianist Thelonious Monk, Sun Ra seems to feel uncomfortable as an interpreter. The demands his muse makes upon him are so extreme that they tend to violate the basic sense of what other writers' material is all about.

He is much better with his own pieces. The "space" cuts are straight out of his own late-nineteenth-century, poly-harmonic, multirhythmic bag. Given more technical adeptness, he might

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sound like an improvising Scriabin. But his mechanical dexterity—again, like Monk's—almost forces him to paint even his most complex musical pictures in shades that can be readily perceived. In places I miss the contrasting rhythmic excitement that his musicians add. (I suppose, though, that I might have said the same thing of Duke Ellington playing in a trio context.) More often, I marvel at the brilliant, provocative music coming from a remarkable black American artist who is moving, with vitality and grace, into middle age and who has not yet received the recognition he deserves. D.H.

The Tenor Sax Album. (Coleman Hawkins, Ben Webster, Illinois Jacquet, Ike Quebec, John Hardee.) Bob Porter producer. *Savoy SJL 2220, \$7.98 (two discs).*

Since John Coltrane became the pervasive model for tenor saxophonists, the dark, rugged, voluptuous sounding work of the earlier generation of tenor men has virtually disappeared. So this collection, recorded in the mid and late '40s (except for a 1954 set by Coleman Hawkins), is an enlightening reminder of the charm, beauty, and drive of the style that preceded Coltrane.

Not that all of the sides that Bob Porter has pulled together represent a pinnacle of achievement. John Hardee was a capable but relatively minor follower of the Hawkins and Ben Webster line, and his six selections do little to move out of a basic rhythm-and-blues groove. Hawkins' seven pieces come from an obscure session on which the mike setup seems casual, the sound (except for Hawkins) tinny and echoing, and some of the performances have the tentative sound of runthroughs. But Hawkins is indomitable; even under such dire circumstances he creates his own aura, unflappably exploring and inventing.

Webster, on the other hand, has an accommodating setting for his warm furry tone with its unusual blend of power and gentleness. Whether he is swinging gently on *Kat's Fur* or stepping thoughtfully through *I Surrender, Dear*, there is an elegant simplicity to his lines, giving his playing a commanding distinction. Ike Quebec has some of Webster's easy fluency and, although he uses a slightly heavier tone, has a sense of lightness that is complemented by Bill De Arango's light, bright guitar lines.

The fifth saxophonist, Illinois Jacquet, is usually associated with the exhibitionistic, honking style of the Texas branch of the Hawkins-Webster school (headed by Herschel Evans), and that is the manner on display here. He is limited to some degree by that fact that the pieces, like Hardee's, are essentially r&b riffs.

But even so, he shows his ability to generate power and excitement without shifting into the obvious theatrics of his scream-and-honk style. J.S.W.

Ben Webster/Coleman Hawkins: Tenor Giants. Original producer, Norman Granz; reissue prepared by Robert Hurwitz. *Verve VE 2-2520, \$8.98 (two discs).*

The pre-eminence of Coleman Hawkins and Ben Webster among the dark-toned tenor saxophonists of the first generation of jazz masters can now be accepted as a matter of record. Hawkins, the pioneer, not only established the tenor as a jazz instrument, but remained in touch with contemporary jazz developments throughout his career without abandoning any of his hallmarks. Webster, coming in his immediate wake, managed to emerge from Hawkins' all-encompassing shadow by the sheer power of his own musical personality.

Although their musical paths rarely crossed, Norman Granz brought them together in 1957 and 1959. That first meeting might have been a cutting session, particularly in view of Granz's fondness for setting saxophonists at each other's throats. But if there was a challenge involved, both Hawkins and Webster accepted it as an opportunity to show the depth, color, and warmth of their own playing and the subtlety with which each could support and extend another soloist.

The first disc represents the 1957 session and is an absolute masterpiece: two superb players responding to one another brilliantly. Their performances are among the finest either has ever played individually and are unique in their mutual sensitivity. Aside from a catchy Hawkins riff, a Hawkins blues, and *La Rosita*, the tunes are all pop ballads, played with a provocatively imaginative touch and supported in an unostentatious fashion by Oscar Peterson, Herb Ellis, Ray Brown, and Alvin Stoller. The second disc is a good swinging set of jazz improvisations with Hawkins and Webster joined by a third tenor, Budd Johnson, and by Roy Eldridge on trumpet, Les Spann on guitar, Jimmy Jones on piano, Jo Jones on drums, and Brown again on bass. It's the usual solos all around but, although the players are all in good form, this session seems utterly routine in comparison to the heights achieved on the first disc. J.S.W.

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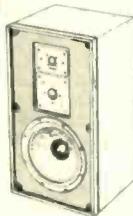
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Continued from page 164
disciple of James P. Johnson with a side-line of ragtime. Within those parameters, he has always been trying to expand his horizons: finding unlikely ragtime material in a tune such as Cole Porter's *So in Love*, or getting into the related but relatively unexplored piano novelties of the 1920s.

On this disc, Wellstood makes his boldest, fullest, and most successful effort to broaden his natural base. The very title indicates his estimation of the album as the kind of performance he has always wanted to get on record. You know he likes it because he is free and relaxed. But it is also "The One" because it shows the diversity of his source material and the way in which he develops it



Dick Wellstood

within his own stylistic approach. He goes from as obvious a choice as James P. Johnson's *The Steeplechase* to as provocative a choice as John Coltrane's *Giant Step*, and he makes those "steps" stride without damaging the essential context of the piece. He chooses Stevie Wonder's *You Are the Sunshine of My Life* to swing with, and then reverses his field on Fats Waller's *Keepin' out of Mischief Now* by making it primarily a reflective piece.

He also tackles a Paganini caprice, which is the kind of thing that pianists of the stride school were always doing (cf Willie the Lion Smith), but does little with it until he finds a place to open up and make it walk. It's a rather pretentious performance, which is not like Wellstood. Otherwise, he ranges far and wide on the musical scene in this collection, turning all sorts of things to his own advantage and playing with great spirit and élan.

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Paul Anka: *The Music Man*. UA. 11 songs. \$4.95.

Carole Bayer Sager. *CMC*. 10 songs. \$6.95.

Carole Bayer Sager's mellow lyrics are enhanced by the contributions of her collaborators (Marvin Hamlisch, Peter Allen, Bruce Roberts, and Melissa Manchester), while Paul Anka goes it alone in his usual forthright style. His choice ballads perhaps do not require the boisterous left hand outlined for us here, but her collection sports some dandy piano arrangements by John Dentato. Also, Ms. Sager's songs have been key-edited, thankfully, so that we don't all have to growl-along with her fragile baritone.

Both folios have been compassionately delineated by two ego-free craftspeople, and home as well as professional musicians will want to partake in the goods.

The Beatles at the Hollywood Bowl. *WBP*. 13 songs. \$5.95.

So, what else is old? The Beatles have long since separated, and now an enterprising publisher wants to separate you from \$5.95. He offers yet another reprint of eight Beatle classics circa 1963-65 (*She Loves You*, *Ticket to Ride*, etc.), plus five songs of similar vintage by other early rockers. If tempted to purchase, check your folio shelves first for possible duplication.

Boston. *CPP*. 9 songs. \$5.95.

Locality-name combos having been declared "in," we now receive a first folio offering from rock group Boston, and it's better than the corresponding recording. I could live without the book's pseudo-psychedelic candid shots, but the piano-vocal arrangements, by Bert Dovo, are clean and will not tax the capabilities of anyone who is driven to purchase this so-so material.

Fleetwood Mac: *Rumours*. *CPP*. 11 songs. \$5.95.

I like the no-nonsense approach of this folio: The photography, layout, arranging, and editing are all coolly professional. I wish I could be as enthusiastic

about the material. But the band's vocal stylings, back-phrased to the outer limits, are effective only when sung against a solid, four-beat rhythm section. Playing these anticipations and/or delays in the right hand makes it difficult to read the resulting oddly accented lyrics simultaneously, and the result is hurky-jerky. Use your judgment.

Historical Anthology of Country Music. *Big 3*. 100 songs. \$7.95.

There are a million stories—well, at least a hundred—in the naked country, and every conceivable variety of grits-opera situation is lined out in this top-notch folio. Jilted lovers, faithless spouses, family reunions, double suicides—they're all here. The material spans the '40s, '50s, and early '60s, and most of the songs have been top sellers on the country charts.

The inclusion of concise bio/discoographies of twenty-one outstanding recording artists such as Patsy Cline, Eddy Arnold, and Charley Pride is a brilliant packaging idea, for which we can thank Ms. Maureen Siekler. For my money, this is the definitive pre-cross-over country collection.

Lynyrd Skynyrd Songbook. *MCA*. 21 songs. \$7.95.

Do not be seduced by the folio's glamor shots, nor by the deceptively simple notation. Even the combined best efforts of editor and purchaser cannot hope to recreate the sound of a heavy Southern blues band reaching for new levels of vocal and instrumental scale-bending. Furthermore, much of the group's home-grown material eviscerated from its

orchestral skin is too banal, too self-consciously masculine, and too redneck for universal appeal.

The Moody Blues *Caught Live + 5*. *TRO*. 18 songs. \$4.95.

If the album didn't turn you on, there is little to entice here. The dreary folio cover does not match the album jacket. The music, as printed, is puerile and uninspired, and an eighth-note ostinato left hand cannot substitute for a cymbal-happy drummer. Definitely not for those with a low tolerance for boredom.

Starland Vocal Band: *Rearview Mirror*. *CLP*. 10 songs. \$5.95.

Again the Starland Vocal Band leaves me wondering if they know something I don't. This easy, two-line piano vocal simply does not come off like the richly textured recording.

It is push-pull all the way. An excellent tune with commercial possibilities, *Mr. Wrong*, is transcribed so precisely that we lose its beauty while digging our way out of the overphrased vocalistic tunnels. Why are so many pages wasted on *St. Croix Silent Night's* already-notated choruses? The same can be asked of *Norfolk*, a simple folkie tune: Thirteen pages of verses and choruses stretched in and out of meter in order to produce an ear-catching sound totally unattainable outside of the recording studio. And why the chintzy black-and-white "horsing around" photos? This a best-selling group, and their public should be treated due respect, not with flakey inconsistencies. Come on, gang, clean up your act. ELISE BRETTON



Boston—better in print than on record

AP—Ajmo Publications
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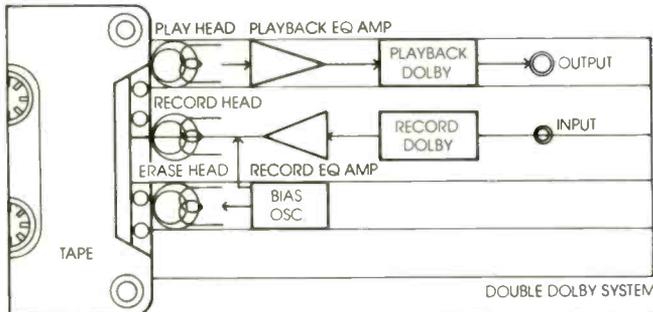
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