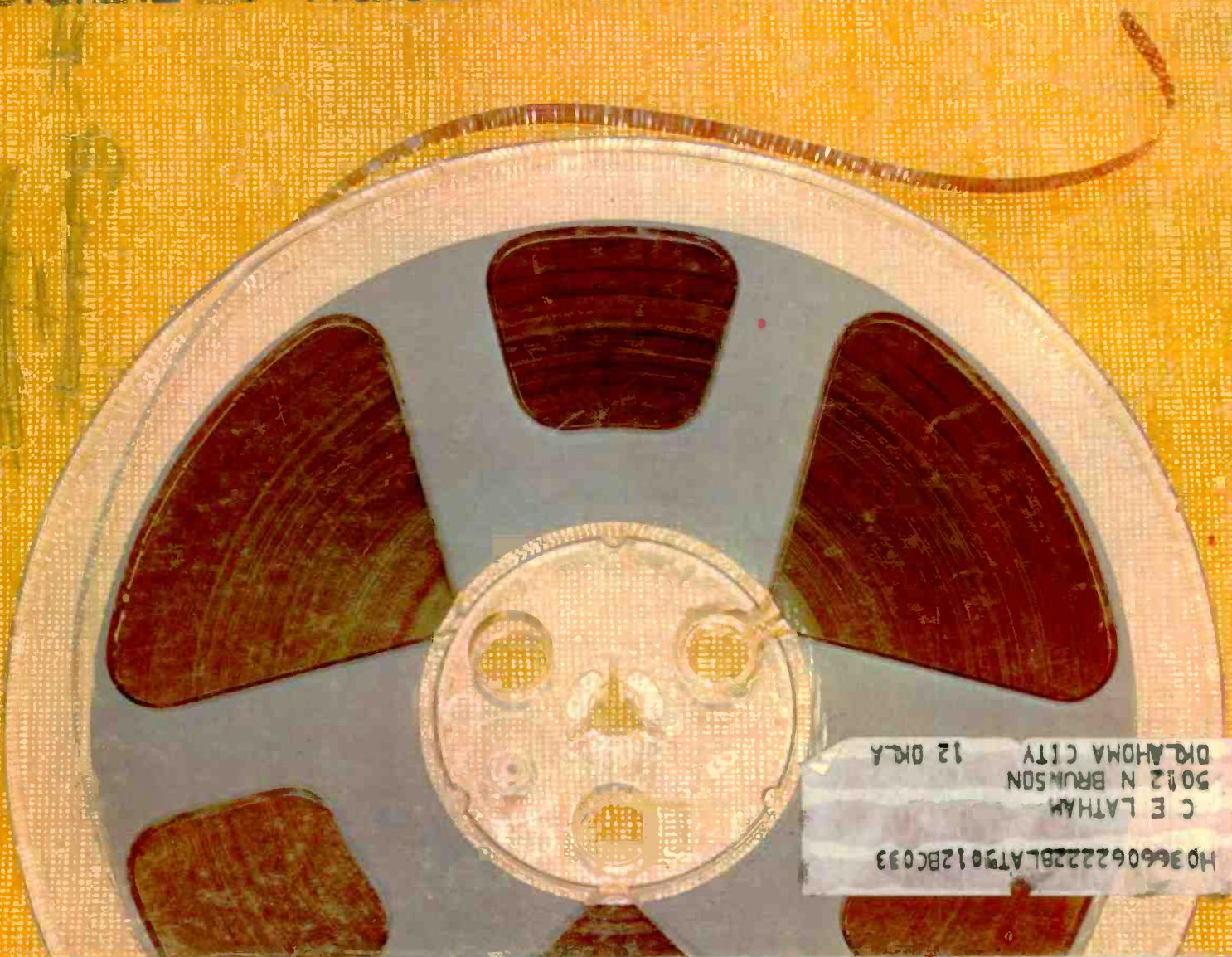


HiFi/Stereo Review

MARCH 1965 • 50 CENTS

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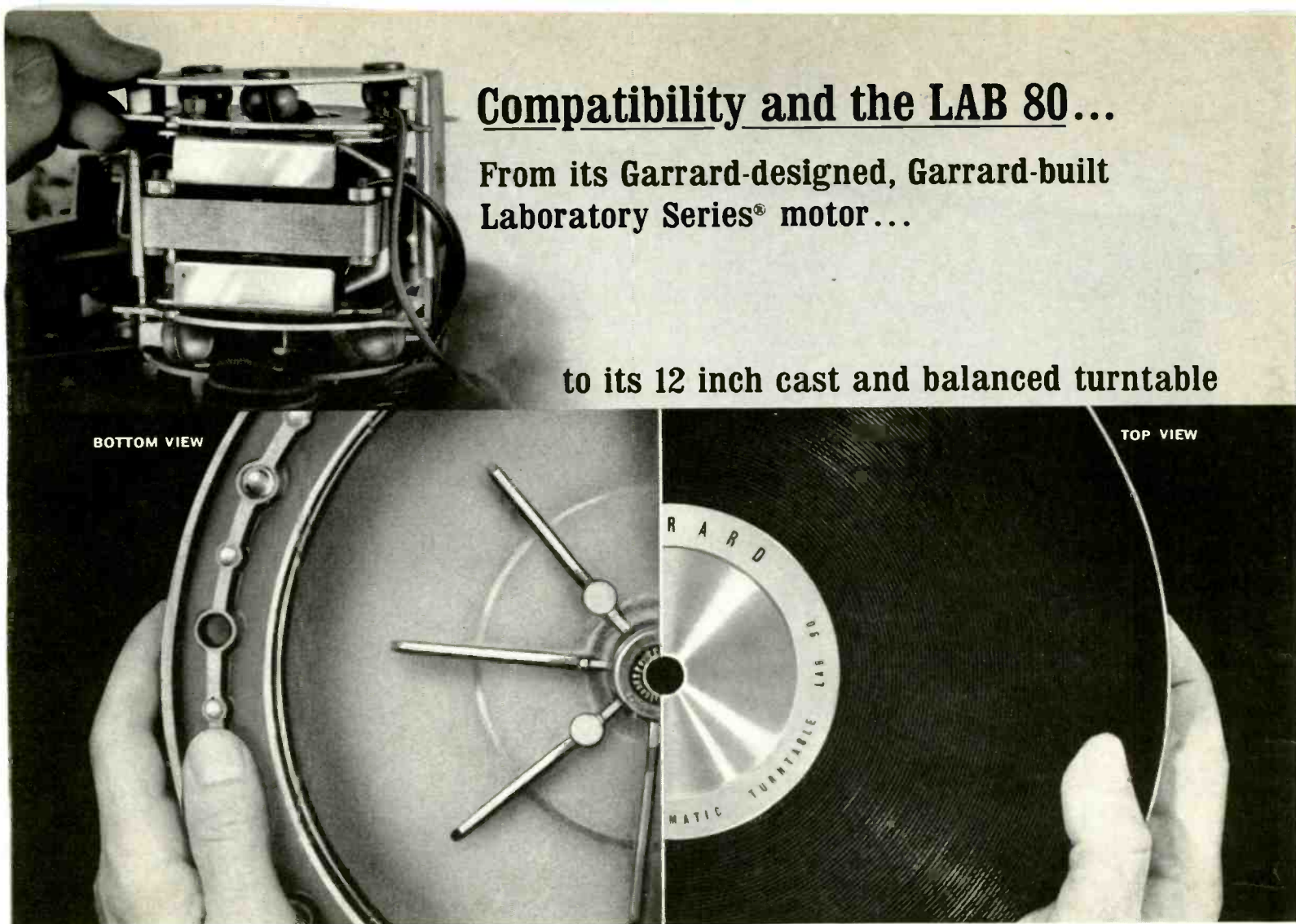
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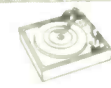
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HiFi/Stereo Review

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EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

by FURMAN HEBB

AND HERE we are with our sixth consecutive March tape issue on the subject of tape recording—which is something of a testimonial to a period of remarkable technical advancement and public interest in home tape recording. I don't think anyone dreamed, ten years ago, that in only a decade the well-appointed component hi-fi system would include not just a tape recorder but a *four-track stereo* recorder, and one capable of making recordings only marginally inferior to those produced on the finest professional equipment. But if the technical achievement of tape-recorder designers has been impressive in terms of sonic excellence, it has been no less so in terms of what is sometimes called "human engineering"—or more plainly, convenience. I am now thinking mostly of two developments that have reduced the amount of manual tape-handling—which, to my mind, has always been the bane of tape recording. The first innovation is automatic tape-threading (onto the take-up reel). Some of the newer recorders offer this as a built-in feature, and those that don't can be equipped with a Scotch self-threading take-up reel for the princely sum of a dollar and a half. If you use a tape recorder frequently (or even infrequently), this is about the best dollar-fifty investment you will ever make. The other new convenience feature is automatic tape-reversal—whereby, of course, after a tape has been run through the recorder in one direction, it is automatically stopped and then run through in the opposite direction, saving you the trouble of climbing out of your easy chair and switching the two tape reels by hand. Here, unfortunately, a dollar and a half won't help you much, because either the recorder has automatic reversal or it doesn't.

On the subject of tape-recording convenience, I would be remiss not to mention the two tape-cartridge systems intended for home use, for these offer more handling convenience than any reel-to-reel arrangement. The two systems here, of course, are the RCA and the 3M-Revere—the two, unfortunately, being incompatible with one another. Although both of the systems are beautifully convenient to use, the 3M-Revere has the additional unique facility of automatic cartridge-changing operation. That is, it changes cartridges the way a record changer changes records.

The dynamic, ever-expanding tape field offers the prospective purchaser an embarrassment of riches, as John Milder points out in his article in this issue. But as always in such circumstances, this is the best insurance that the buyer will be able to find precisely what fits his needs—and at the lowest possible cost.

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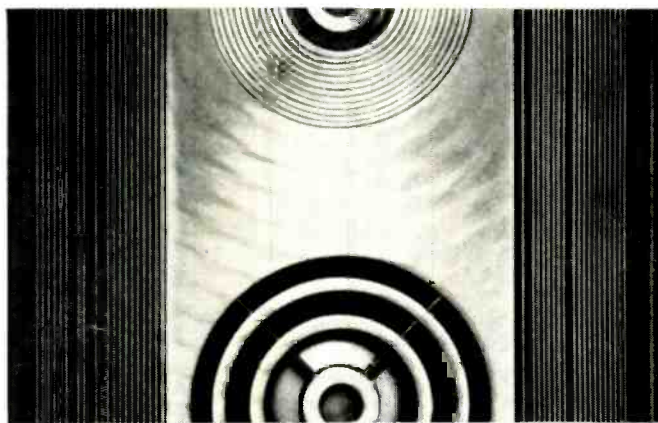
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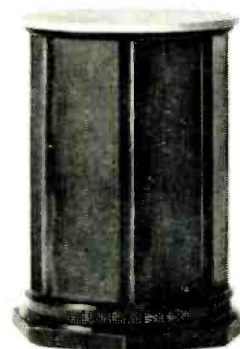
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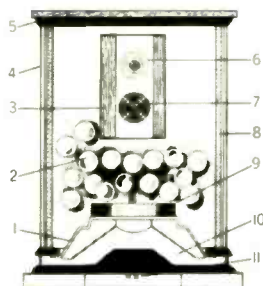
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Musical Stamps

● Orchids to you for your outstanding January cover. The world-wide stamps are a tribute to music, to immortal composers, and to HiFi/STEREO REVIEW. Keep up the wonderful work.

N. E. NELSON
Milwaukee, Wis.

● I must commend William Anderson for his article "Music in the Mailbox" in the January issue. It is interestingly written and factually correct—this latter the more unusual since the author is, by his own admission, new to the field. I have been collecting musical stamps for many years, and have read much that has been written on the subject, and it is amazing how many stupidities get into print.

However, I have to point out one omission Mr. Anderson made—this only because he says that opera singers are not well represented on stamps. In January of 1964, Romania issued a set of nine stamps featuring famous singers of the Romanian National Opera. All but one are well-known opera singers. The set is numbered 1605-1613.

JACQUES POSELI
Cleveland Heights, Ohio

According to Mr. George Guzzio, HiFi/STEREO REVIEW's consultant on musical-stamp matters, there is indeed a 1964 Romanian series featuring such famous singers as Elena Teodorini (the teacher of Bidù Sayão), Ion Bajenaru, Anul Rinului, Jean Athanasiu, Hariclea Darclee, George Folescu, Traian Grosavescu, N. Leonard, and composer George Stephanescu, founder of the Romanian Opera.

The View from the Continent

● It is extremely unlikely, in my opinion, that your magazine will ever stir up any enthusiasm among its European readers if you continue to print reviews as exasperating as David Hall's remarks on Furtwängler in the December issue. It is distressing to see the greatest conducting genius of this century reduced to the status of a conjurer by an obviously bewildered pipsqueak of a critic.

Hardly anywhere but in HiFi/STEREO REVIEW must one submit to a comparison of a musician of the scope of Furtwängler with a practical joker like Stokowski or the quarrelsome master-sergeant that was Toscanini. It might have made an excellent joke, but no: the tone is serious, and an attempt is made to persuade the reader of the accuracy of what is asserted.

Consequently, one must ask if there is anyone at your magazine who has any clear idea of what music is (you often

seem to confuse it with high fidelity) when it is signed by Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Bruckner, or Wagner rather than by Copland or Grofé.

It seems that your contributors still have quite a distance to go if they are to assimilate a musical culture that now escapes them—and one of which Furtwängler was precisely the perfect interpreter.

If one remembers, in addition to this painful episode, Frederic Grunfeld's long belch on the subject of Richard Wagner in your December, 1963 issue, there definitely remains nothing for the aware European to do but to burst out laughing—a laugh as vast and final as that of Zarathustra.

HENRI-JEAN TESTAS
Paris, France

Stokowski Partisan

● In David Hall's review of the newly released Furtwängler recordings, I read of the "conductors who dominated the podium during the 1930's, the others [in addition to Furtwängler] being Toscanini, Beecham, Walter, Monteux, Koussevitzky, Mengelberg—all now dead—and the still very active Leopold Stokowski." I was struck by the sad fact that Maestro Stokowski's repertoire is very meagerly represented in the current record catalog.

I feel that this last representative of the Golden Age of conducting should be given the chance—such as was given many times over to his late contemporaries Toscanini, Walter, and others—to have his interpretations preserved for posterity by the latest recording techniques. I trust that other readers of your magazine will second this suggestion.

JAMES M. CARTWRIGHT
Denton, Texas

Coe Glade's Carmen

● Bravo Mr. Thomas Matthews, who called attention to Coe Glade's Carmen in your December "Letters to the Editor" column. As one whose memories of interpreters of the role go back to Ina Bourskaya and Rosa Ponselle, I say without qualification that Miss Glade's was the greatest Carmen of them all. I saw and heard her in the role many times, and she remains the only Carmen who made the last act thoroughly credible. Indeed, unless Miss Glade comes out of retirement to sing the part again, I am not at all certain that I care to see and hear anyone else in the role.

One slight correction: Miss Glade sang the role not only more than five hundred times, but, incredible as it may sound, more than two thousand times. That, it
(Continued on page 10)

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would appear from here, is a record that will stand for a long, long time to come. I might add that her Amneris was as exciting as her Carmen.

JAMES BUCHHOLTZ
New Bedford, Mass.

More on the Leak

● Julian D. Hirsch's report on our Leak Sandwich speaker system in your February issue, while both laudatory and comprehensive, neglected to mention that the model tested was the new Mark II. Your readers may be interested to learn that we have built several improvements into the new Mark II, the most important being a tweeter with sandwich-cone construction.

CHARLES H. FRANK, JR.
Ercona Corporation
New York, N.Y.

Gene Lees (Cont.)

● With the thought that I might subscribe to your magazine, I picked up a recent issue (November) to find an article on folk music by Gene Lees. Any magazine that prints material by a writer of such incompetence cannot expect to win *my* subscription.

It's not a question of differing opinions on folk music, but rather of Mr. Lees' ignorance of the subject. I have collected records for over thirty years—folk records for just about as long—and I can say that in all that time I haven't come across a writer so misinformed as Mr. Lees.

MANUEL GELLES
New York, N. Y.

● A paean to the shining truth that inhabits the pen of Gene Lees! How that flash of uncompromising and factual good sense penetrated the murk of biased critical commentary and downright falsehood that has surrounded folk "music" up to this point!

The article will no doubt call down all sorts of reprisals upon your collective head—one such appeared in the *New York Times* of November 29th. There will be the usual cancel-my-subscription mail as well, but what Gene Lees did needed desperately to be done.

AL FISHER
Wantagh, N. Y.

● I am a lover of so-called classical music, but I feel that I should defend *all* music and the right of each individual, whatever his ability to feel music, to enjoy his type of music. Gene Lees, one of your critics—or more aptly, one of your "record reviewers"—was obnoxiously presumptuous in reviewing a Rodgers and Hammerstein musical comedy in the November issue of your magazine.

The music which suffered the brutal attack by Mr. Lees was *Oklahoma!* Judging by his references to the late Oscar Hammerstein II, I got the impression that Mr. Lees has some kind of personal

(Continued on page 12)

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S-35

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grudge against the lyricist. I doubt that few if any musical-comedy lovers would agree with Lees' evaluation of *People Will Say We're in Love* ["'ech!" and "high on the list of my very unfavorable songs"], or with his statement that "The corn is as high as an elephant's eye" (is) the worst line ever to come out of musical comedy." After all, who is Mr. Lees? You might justify this behavior by answering that he can say anything he wants as long as he closes each review with his initials. Perhaps, but in my mind, the prime responsibility of the record critic—not the same always as the music critic—is to evaluate the technical and emotional abilities of singers, orchestra, and so forth, and to judge the quality of the recorded sound. Mr. Lees' conception of his job also extends to mindreading: according to him, Lorenz Hart would have moved toward the idea of tighter musical and dramatic organization had he lived longer. And then there's that remark that I can't forget, the summing up of Mr. Lees' philosophy, as if he thought the reader really wanted to know—"I don't care for the show in the first place."

I have *Oklahoma!*, *The King and I*, and even that naughty *South Pacific* in the same cabinet with the "Eroica" Symphony, *Don Quixote*, *La Mer*, and *Tosca*. I keep these shows around for the enjoyment of people who are not particularly deep thinkers and for my own enjoyment when I want to hear a girl with a pretty-sounding voice sing something unrealistic.

JAMES D. MAFFETT, A2C, USAF
APO New York, N.Y.

● Gene Lees deserves compliments for calling a spade a spade in his review of Robert Horton's recording in the December issue. If more reviewers would get their backs up and pan a lot of the trash that is being saddled on us consumers, they would serve the hi-fi industry as well as the customers.

Here I sit with an investment of around \$1,500 in good equipment—to wit, a McIntosh amplifier and preamplifier-tuner, AR speakers, and a Dual record player with an Empire cartridge—and what do I get? On most records and the so-called music that the radio stations put out, I hear violins whose screeching makes me want to demolish the whole she-bang. Then too, this mess is dished up by too many self-styled arrangers, pseudo-composers, and interpreters. As soon as they get the slightest renown (earned or through clever agents), they become prima donnas and try to show their "artistry" by taking our really good melodies and inserting their own peculiar interpretations. By doing so, they butcher beautiful pieces. Let the people who perpetrate this murder take rock-and-roll and kill it.

I hope that Gene Lees, and his colleagues J. G., N. H., and P. K., will
(Continued on page 14)

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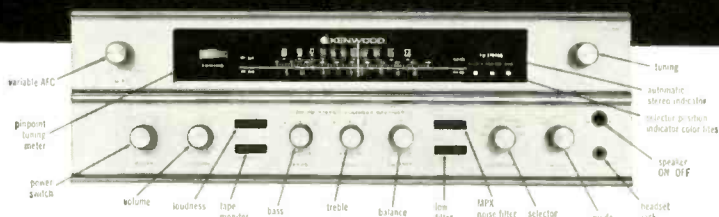


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sharpen their axes and let them fall hard and heavy.

K. OERTEL
Costa Mesa, Calif.

Correction

• Contrary to what Joe Goldberg says in his December review of "Odetta Sings of Many Things," it was Martin Hoffman who penned the music to Woody Guthrie's *Deportee*, not Martin Goodman.

KATHY KAPLAN
Oceanside, N. Y.

Myers on the Piano

• Thanks for publishing "How to Play the Piano" by Arthur Myers (January). I got a terrific belt out of it. As I read the article on Christmas afternoon, I considered it a delightful Christmas present from Mr. Myers and from HiFi/STEREO REVIEW.

HARRY GLIDDEN
Auburn, Me.

• It appears that author Arthur Myers doesn't even begin to fathom the depth of his tragic experiences with piano playing: the half of his repertoire that he believes to be classical in nature dissolves into nothingness, because L. V. Beethoven never composed a piece called *Gertrude's Dream*.

According to Willy Hess' catalog (1957) of the Beethoven works not contained in the Breitkopf & Haertel *Gesamtausgabe*, *Gertrude's Traumwalzer* is one of eight waltz arrangements or "compositions" published after 1852 in Leipzig, and all of them are considered spurious ascriptions or forgeries. Nottelholm's thematic catalog of Beethoven's works (1868) and Kinsky-Halm's Great Catalog of all completed works of Beethoven (1955) also reject the *Dream Waltz* as faked or "not genuine."

Yet I would like to encourage Mr. Myers to continue along the thorny paths of keyboard mastery. As long as his struggles inspire such amusing reflections, it doesn't matter at all who forged his repertoire. Even Beethoven himself would have agreed that the *Dream Waltz* must *not* be played too fast.

FRITZ A. KUTTNER
New York, N. Y.

Flanagan's Songs

• I was disappointed in William Flanagan's October survey of the outstanding song literature by American composers because he did not include his own songs. Two of these, the haunting love song *Send Home My Long Strayed Eyes*, and the *Valentine to Sherwood Anderson*, are included in St/and's intriguing two-record set (SLP 411/2) devoted to American song. Mildred Miller performs the Flanagan songs with full artistry, and the reward is a memorable experience indeed.

RICHARD HUNDLEY
New York, N. Y.

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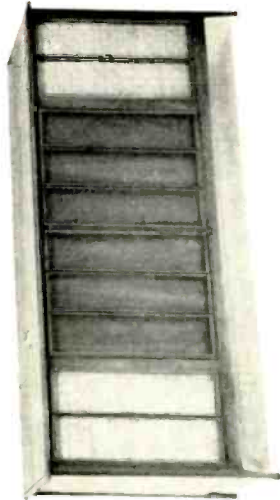
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HI-FI

By Larry Klein

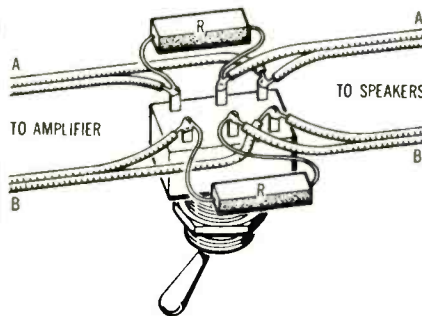


Speaker Muting/Off Switch

Q. I would like to add an OFF position to the muting switch shown in the November 1964 "Sound and Query" column. How can this be done?

CHARLES GOODSTEIN
Los Angeles, Calif.

A. Instead of the standard double-pole, double-throw (DPDT) toggle switch originally specified, use a Lafayette Radio DPDT switch (Stock Number 99G6148) with a center-off position. These cost 49¢ each. The ohmic value of the resistors (R) should be approximately three to four times the impedance of your speakers, and the wattage rating should be at least half your amplifier's power rating. The greater the ohmic value of the resistors, the greater the muting effect will be. When wired as shown in the dia-



gram (you can either use the switch's own screw terminals, or else solder to the lugs), the resistors will be in series with each speaker and will cause substantial reduction in volume when the toggle switch is set to one side position. When the toggle switch is in the other side position, the resistors will be out of the circuit and the volume will be normal. When the toggle is in the center position, the speakers will be shut off completely and the amplifier will be loaded by the two resistors. The resistors will not present an accurate impedance match to the amplifier, but this is of no importance.

Record Pre-Echo

Q. On some of my records I hear, very faintly, the opening chords of music a few moments before the music comes through at normal volume. Is there any way I can eliminate this?

CLEMENT RICHARDS
Culver City, Calif.

A. The effect you notice is called pre-echo, and it is caused either by a high-amplitude groove modulation's causing the walls of an adjacent quiet groove to be slightly modulated by the

signal, or, infrequently, by the use of a master tape that suffers from print-through in the loud passages. Assuming that your cartridge and stylus are in good condition, about all you can do is try another record.

Record Improvement

Q. Do records become better as they are used? I have sometimes noticed that when a record is first played, the reproduction is not clean in certain passages—the horns, for example, may sound fuzzy. But then, after the record has been played a number of times, the previously fuzzy passages seem to clear up. Am I imagining things?

DICK FIELD
Bedminster, N. J.

A. If you are imagining things, then your fantasy is shared by a number of other critical listeners. Several authorities have suggested that there are minute irregularities in the record-groove walls that become smoothed over or burnished after a number of playings. It has also been suggested that cartridges that track at 3-5 grams will perform this smoothing-out, and that cartridges tracking at lighter forces will not.

Changer-Amplifier Separation

Q. I am planning a hi-fi installation and would like to know whether it is all right to locate my record player about twelve feet away from my preamplifier. If so, should any special type of cable be used between the player and the preamplifier, and what effect, if any, will the distance have upon performance?

HERBERT D. YOUNG
Glen Rock, N. J.

A. There are two factors to be considered in your installation. The most important is how your particular phono cartridge will react to long lengths of shielded cable. A shielded cable acts as a capacitor connected across the cartridge's terminals, and the longer the cable, the larger the capacitor. Some cartridges react very badly to capacitance and develop a mid-range resonant peak and a severe rolloff of high frequencies. Other cartridges (usually low-impedance types) are relatively insensitive to capacitive load. The manufacturer of your cartridge should be able to advise you on this point.

In any case, when dealing with phono cable lengths on the order of ten or twelve feet, it is important that you use a low-

(Continued on page 20)

HOBSON'S CHOICE? NEVER AGAIN!

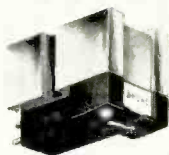
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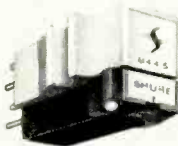
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IS YOUR BEST SELECTION

If your tone arm tracks at 1½ grams or less (either with manual or automatic turntable)—and if you want the very best, regardless of price, this is without question your cartridge. It is designed for the purist . . . the perfectionist whose entire system *must* be composed of the finest equipment in every category. Shure's finest cartridge. \$62.50.

If you seek outstanding performance and your tonearm will track at forces of ¾ to 1½ grams, the M55E will satisfy—beautifully. Will actually improve the sound from your high fidelity system! (Unless you're using the V-15, Shure's finest cartridge.) A special value at \$35.50.

If you track between ¾ and 1½ grams, the M44-5 with .0005" stylus represents a best-buy investment. If you track between 1½ and 3 grams, the M44-7 is for you . . . particularly if you have a great number of older records. Both have "scratch-proof" retractile stylus. Either model under \$25.00.

For 2 to 2½ gram tracking. Especially fine if your present set-up sounds "muddy." At less than \$20.00, it is truly an outstanding buy. (Also, if you own regular M7D, you can upgrade it for higher compliance and lighter tracking by installing an N21D stylus.)

If floor vibration is a problem. Saves your records. Models for Garrard Laboratory Type "A", AT-6, AT-60 and Model 50 automatic turntables and Miracord Model 10 or 10H turntables. Under \$25.00 including head shell, .0007" diamond stylus.

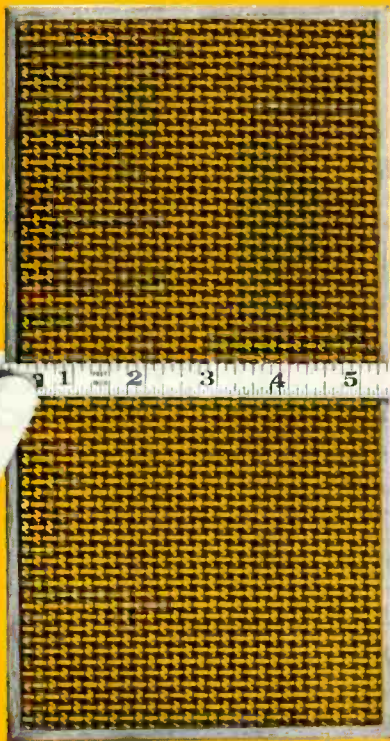
If cost is the dominant factor. Lowest price of any Shure Stereo Dynetic cartridge (about \$16.00) . . . with almost universal application. Can be used with any changer. Very rugged.

SHURE

Stereo Dynetic®

HIGH FIDELITY PHONO CARTRIDGES . . . WORLD STANDARD WHEREVER SOUND QUALITY IS PARAMOUNT
Shure Brothers, Inc., 222 Hartrey Ave., Evanston, Illinois

some people judge speakers by square feet instead of sound...



Does that make sense?

No! Now it's different. Now you can get the deep, rich bass and the crisp, clean treble, and all the tones in between, in an enclosure that measures a mere 10½" x 5½" x 7¼".

How did it happen? Not by compromising. After four years of research, a new principle of speaker design was perfected, called Cushioned Air Pneumatic Suspension (CAPS®). To make possible such solid performance in a compact enclosure, research into diaphragm behavior and electro-magnetic control characteristics were essential.

Now, you can find the CAPS® principle in only one line of speakers—the MAXIMUS SERIES by UTC Sound. Maximus I, for example, is a multi Speaker System with a magnet structure of over 3½ lbs., capable of driving cones 3 to 4 times its size, but designed for maximum critical dampening, in a miniature enclosure. This enclosure with an easily replaceable grille cloth, is finished in Oiled Walnut on 6 sides and can thus be used standing upright or on its side.

We're strictly specialists in sound . . . and we invite you to hear superlative sound, in a sensible enclosure, especially appealing to the ladies, but designed as well for space-starved audiophiles. The Maximus I at \$59.50, is one third to one quarter the size of other fine systems.

See your high fidelity dealer for a demonstration of the entire Fabulous MAXIMUS Series or write for full details: UTC SOUND DIVISION, 809 Stewart Avenue, Garden City, New York.



MAXIMUS I



TO BE EXHIBITED in the 1965 Los Angeles High Fidelity Music Show in Exhibit 59E — Ambassador Hotel Cottages, March 7 to 15, 1965.

capacity shielded cable. A survey of the radio-parts catalogs indicates that the Belden type 8422, which has an outside diameter of 0.23 inch and a rated capacity of 18 micromicrofarads (mmf) per foot, is the most reasonably priced low-capacity cable available. The cable has two conductors within a shield, and a 15-foot spool costs approximately \$1.20 (see Allied Radio's 1965 catalog, page 297). When using the 8422 cable, connect the two ground terminals (usually labeled L.G. and R.G.) of the cartridge to the braided shield and the hot terminals (L and R) to the inner conductors. There is a possibility that the cartridge's high-frequency stereo separation may be reduced because of capacitive coupling between the two signal wires within the shield. If this occurs, you will have to run two separate lengths of shielded wire. In that case, use only one of the two conductors within the shield, leaving the other conductor unconnected at both ends.

For lead lengths much longer than 10 feet, a very low-capacity coaxial cable (type RG-63B/U), with 10 mmfd per foot capacitance, could be used. It has a single conductor (two lengths will be needed for a stereo cartridge), an outside diameter of 0.4 inch, and is priced at about 20¢ per foot.

Coaxials vs. Separates

Q. I am planning to build my own speaker enclosures rather than buy ready-made systems. I notice that most loudspeakers sold separately are of coaxial or three-way design, yet this type of unit is seldom used in ready-made systems. Which is better for my purpose, a separate woofer, mid-range, and tweeter, or a single coaxial or three-way speaker?

C. W. CHRISTIAN
Waco, Texas

A. For the speaker-system designer, the separate woofer, tweeter, and mid-range provides great flexibility: he can choose from a large variety of combinations and can tailor the system precisely to a specific price and quality level. The audiophile who builds his own speaker system, however, is usually not well enough equipped technically to select suitable matching speaker elements. The loudspeaker companies have done this for him by mounting two or more matched separate speaker elements coaxially. Another advantage of the coaxial type of speaker for the home builder is that it requires only a single cutout in the front panel of the speaker cabinet.

Because the number of queries we receive each month is greater than we can reply to individually, only those questions selected for this column can be answered. Sorry!

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COMPARE... and you will join the Record Club of America: the original (and by far the largest) club offering over 30,000 different LP's, including every album listed in the Schwann Catalog, not just at a discount but at *dealer cost*! You are never limited to club selections... your savings are never dependent on a record dealer's stock. Best of all... Record Club of America offers these savings *without gimmicks*... there's no annual membership charge... no minimum purchase required... all records guaranteed factory new... fast "same day" processing of your orders... maximum convenience... Record Club of America is as close as your mail box!

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At the time you join Record Club of America, you are entitled to buy gift memberships at half-price. Many people get together with a friend, split the cost of a basic membership (\$5.00) and a gift membership (\$2.50), bringing the cost for each down to only \$3.75! Three or more people together can save even more!

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\$5.98 LP's never cost more than \$3.71... those listed at \$4.98 are priced at \$3.09! Record Club of America's standard discounts bring \$3.98 LP's down to \$2.47; those listed at \$2.98 down to only \$1.85! Regular specials are even more exciting... typical examples: \$3.98 Capitol Best Sellers—\$1.57; \$5.98 Vox and RCA Victor Classical Albums—\$1.77; \$5.98 and \$4.98 Atlantic, Verve, Command and Audio Fidelity Albums—\$1.99.

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• Enclosed please find my check or money order covering life membership in the Record Club of America. I understand that I am under no obligation to make purchases, but that when I do, all will be at CLUB SAVINGS.

• Please send me a FREE copy of the Schwann Record Catalog, and place my name on the list to receive your magazine, "Disc."

• Also, send GIFT MEMBERSHIPS to the persons listed on the attached sheet.

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GIFT LIFETIME MEMBERSHIPS: \$2.50 EACH

Amount enclosed \$ _____ Check () Money Order ()

Name _____

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(please print)

and now...
**SECOND
 best!**

(at
 \$30
 less
 than
 the
 best)



DUAL 1010
 Auto/Standard Turntable
 only \$69.50

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

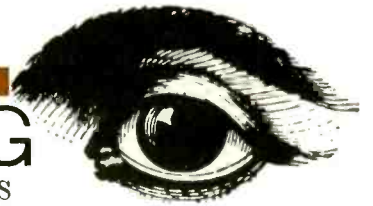
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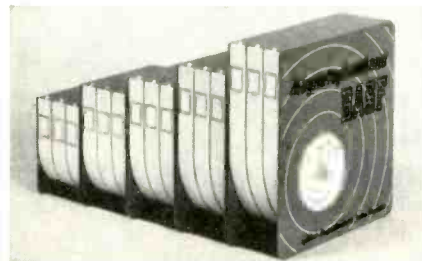
CIRCLE NO. 58 ON READER SERVICE CARD

JUST LOOKING

...at the best in new hi-fi components



● **BASF** of West Germany is introducing its line of recording tapes to the United States. BASF magnetic recording tapes are available with two types of base material, Luvitherm and polyester. Luvitherm, produced solely by BASF, is an



unplasticized polyvinyl-chloride film with excellent strength and dimensional stability. It is very supple, and resistant to aging and humidity and temperature variations. Both Luvitherm- and polyester-base tapes are available in long-play and most other standard tape types. Each reel of BASF tape is packaged in a rivet-secured slide-out library-type box, and there are three feet of polyester colored leader plus a metallized strip attached to both ends of the tape. The metallized strip is for those machines having automatic activating devices. BASF tapes can be purchased in multiples of three packed in an Archive Box with three slide-out plastic compartments for the tape. BASF is represented by Compu-tron, Inc., of Waltham, Mass.

circle 182 on reader service card

● **Concord** announces the Model 994, a three-speed, four-track stereo recorder. The transport system provides automatic two-direction record and play through



the use of four heads, two for each direction. Solid-state amplifiers are used, and all deck functions are push-button controlled. The recorder has dual illuminated VU meters, built-in automatic sound-on-sound switching and a front-panel stereo headphone jack. The 15-watt stereo amplifier in the machine drives a pair of speaker systems, each housed in half of the recorder's cover. Specifications include a frequency response of 40 to 16,000 cps \pm 2 db at 7 1/2 ips, a signal-

to-noise ratio of better than 55 db, and flutter and wow of under 0.15 per cent. Jacks permit connection to external amplifiers or external speakers. The unit comes with two dynamic microphones. List price: \$399.50.

circle 183 on reader service card

● **Dynaco** introduces a new four-track stereo tape recorder (available both as a portable and as a table-top console) made by Bang & Olufsen of Denmark. The three-speed machine (1 7/8, 3 3/4, and 7 1/2 ips) is fully transistorized, and has electronic transistor protection. The unit includes two 8-watt (rms) amplifiers with output connectors for two pairs of speakers or low-impedance headphones. Other features include three stereo inputs, (low-impedance microphone, RIAA phono, and tuner), professional sliding



input-mixing controls, and push-button selection of echo, sound-on-sound, or tape-source monitor. Frequency response is 40 to 16,000 cps \pm 2 db. There is a hysteresis-synchronous drive motor, and automatic shut-off at the end of a reel or within the reel (with metallized tape). Price: portable with two speakers, \$525; teak table-top unit with amplifier (but without speakers), \$498.

circle 184 on reader service card

● **Olson Electronics** has announced a new four-channel preamplifier-microphone mixer, Model RA-637. The all-transistor unit can be used as a preamplifier for a microphone or magnetic-phono cartridge, or to mix up to four inputs from high- or low-level sources. All



inputs take standard RCA-type connectors, and a selector switch for high- or low-level signals is provided on each input. Individual volume controls permit blending and mixing signals. The pre-

(Continued on page 24)

21 QUESTIONS to ask about any automatic turntable that asks you to spend \$99.50

when using the single play spindle...

1 Can you start automatically — with the press of a switch — or, if you prefer, cue the record manually at any position while it's either motionless or rotating?

(Or must you always: 1. press one switch to start the record rotating, 2. position the tonearm by eye over the record, 3. press another switch to lower the tonearm?)

2 Can you interrupt play at any time, with the tonearm returning to its resting post and the motor shutting off... again, automatically?

(Or must you instead: 1. press one switch to raise the tonearm, 2. place the tonearm by hand on its resting post, and 3. press another switch to turn off the motor?)

3 Can you change turntable speed at any time during cycling and play?

(Or must you first shut the entire machine off?)

when using the changer spindle...

4 If there are records on the spindle, can you interrupt play at any time, return the tonearm to its resting post, and shut the entire machine off... automatically?

(Or must you either wait for the last record to drop... or remove all the records from the spindle?)

5 Can you start automatically with a record on the platter, but none on the spindle?

(Or must you first place another record on the spindle?)

6 Can you change turntable speed and record size selector at any time during cycling and play?

(Or must you first shut the entire machine off?)

7 Will 6½" clearance above the mounting board be enough to insert and remove the changer spindle?

(Or must you have up to 9"?)

in any mode of play...

8 Does it offer you all four standard speeds?

(Or must you discard your collector-item 78's, and do without the special material available on 16's?)

9 Can you vary each speed over a 6% range, letting you adjust the pitch of any record?

(Or must you get along without such a unique feature?)

10 Can you use cartridges weighing as little as 2 grams with no effect on tonearm mass?

(Or must the tonearm head have a minimum of 6 grams?)

11 Does the tonearm itself weigh just 20 grams?

(Or up to almost 50% more?)

12 Has the tonearm been proven to track flawlessly as low as ½ gram?

(Or is no such claim made?)

13 When applying stylus force, do you enjoy the precision of continuous dial adjust from 0 grams up, plus the convenience of a direct reading numerical scale?

(Or just markers and click stop positions?)

14 Is tonearm bearing friction so minimal (less than 0.1 gram) that anti-skating compensation is effective at less than 1 gram tracking force?

(Or is it actually high enough to render anti-skating compensation virtually ineffective at such light forces?)

15 Does the counterweight offer the convenience of both rapid and fine adjust?

(Or fine adjust only?)

16 Will the motor maintain speed constancy (within 0.1%) even during prolonged line voltage variations from 95 to 135 volts?

(Or will the motor speed actually vary if such line voltage variations last long enough to overcome the flywheel action of the platter?)

17 Will 12¾" x 11½" do nicely for installation?

(Or must you provide for at least 70% more area?)

18 Can you lift the tonearm from the record during play and place it on its resting post... or restrain it at any time during cycling without concern for possible malfunction or actual damage... thanks to its foolproof slipclutch?

(Or are you better advised not to attempt either, because of mechanical linkage between tonearm and cycling mechanism?)

and as for superior performance...

19 Has it been tested and acclaimed by every audio publication as living up to every last claim?

20 Has it earned such acceptance by experienced audiophiles that they have actually traded in their professional-type manual turntables for it?

21 Has quality control been so consistent that it has achieved the astonishing reliability record of 99% or more perfect, right out of the carton?

Obviously, if you've been considering anything but the DUAL 1009 Auto/Professional Turntable, you haven't been asking the right questions, or getting the complete answers. Write for our informative literature... or just ask any audio dealer. (And if you'd like to spend just \$69.50 and still get Dual quality, ask him about the new DUAL 1010 Auto/Standard Turntable.)

DUAL 1009

Auto/Professional
Turntable

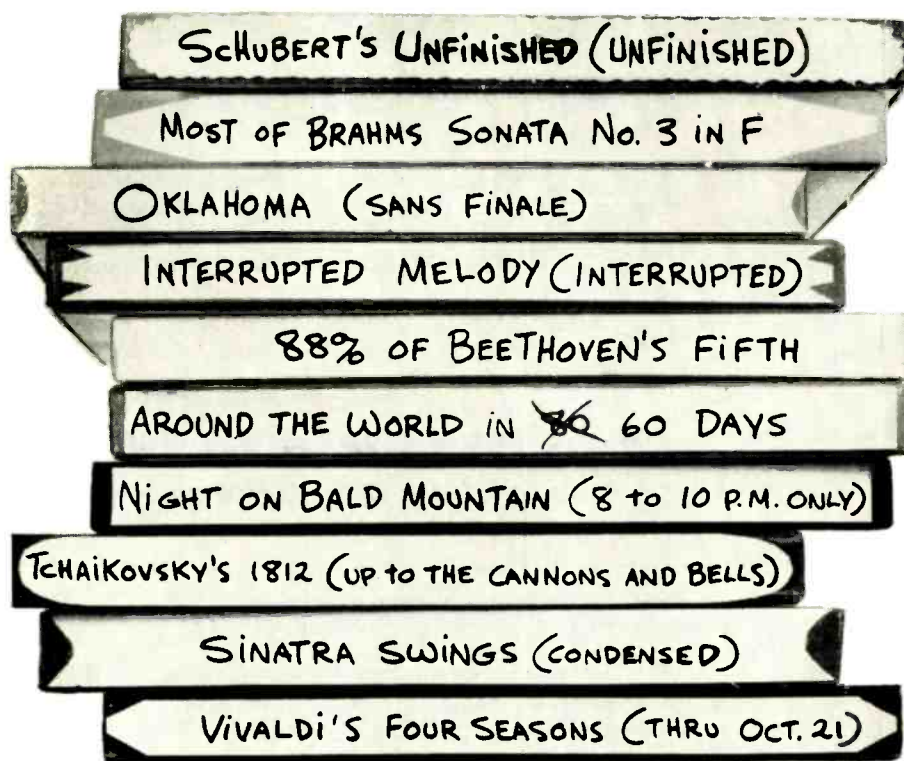


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DUAL'S THE FINEST... THE RECORD PROVES IT SINCE 1900
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is this YOUR tape collection?



Well! We should hope not . . . But, then again, if you are still buying old fashioned conventional length recording tapes, you are either wasting a lot of music or a lot of money. Let's face it; Schubert, Brahms, Beethoven and Company didn't write music to fit a reel of recording tape.

It's up to you, the recorder owner, to buy a tape that will fit the music. Only American offers a complete line of Professional Length recording tapes at prices you are now paying for old fashioned conventional lengths. In fact, only American offers a selection of 45 different recording tapes available in lengths of 150, 250, 300, 350, 450, 500, 600, 900, 1200, 1500, 1800, 2000, 2400, 3000, 3600, 4800 and 7200 feet. Be up to date. Insist on American, the tape designed to fulfill your every recording need.

See your dealer or write to:

AMERICAN
RECORDING TAPE
 GREENTREE ELECTRONICS
 2135 Canyon Drive, Costa Mesa, Calif.



amplifier has a gain of 65 db (low-level) and 30 db (high-level), and is equipped with a VU meter, master gain control, and bass and treble tone controls. The unit is powered by six standard penlight batteries (included) and measures 10 x 2 1/4 x 6 3/8 inches. Price: \$39.98.

circle 185 on reader service card

● **Sherwood** announces the S-7700III 80-watt (music-power) stereo FM tuner-amplifier, with provisions for connecting an oscilloscope for visual display of incoming signal characteristics. The oscilloscope indicates the presence, degree, and direction of multipath interference, so that corrective action can be taken. In addition to providing AM, FM, and stereo FM broadcast reception, the unit



has inputs for phono and tape deck. Two 40-watt music-power channels are provided with outputs for 4-, 8-, and 16-ohm speaker systems. A center-channel output is provided for connecting speakers for middle mono fill-in or for extension use. A front-panel stereo headphone jack is provided for personal listening. At 36 watts per channel (continuous power rating), IM distortion is 1.5 per cent. Frequency response at rated output is 20 to 20,000 cps \pm 0.5 db. Dimensions of the S-7700III chassis are 16 1/4 x 14 x 4 inches. Price: \$374.50. Walnut-grained leatherette-on-metal cabinets are available at \$9.50, hand-rubbed walnut at \$29.50.

circle 186 on reader service card

● **Superex** announces the Model SX-800, new-design lightweight stereo headphones with reproduction from 30 to



15,000 cps through a special sound capsule housed in high-impact plastic ear cups. High-density polyfoam ear cushions shut out background noise, and an adjustable head band insures a comfortable fit. The phones weigh only 6 ounces and are furnished with a strain-relieved cord and standard stereo plug termination. Price: \$21.95.

circle 187 on reader service card

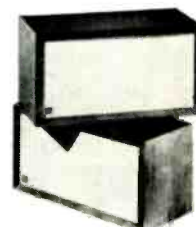
If you think you can't afford the best high fidelity components available, bar none, check these three independent magazine surveys.*

They agree on their choices of the *best* turntable and the *best* loudspeakers – moderately priced AR's.

	TURNTABLE	LOUDSPEAKERS
Popular Science (Sept. 1963)	AR two-speed	AR-3's
Bravo! (Fall 1963)	AR two-speed	AR-3's
hi-fi/tape systems (1964)	AR two-speed	AR-3's



The AR turntable—less than 1/2 the cost of other arm-turntable systems over which it was chosen.



AR-3 loudspeakers—less than 1/3 the cost of other speakers over which they were chosen.

*The **Bravo** survey introduced its selection of top components with: "If music is so deeply your passion that it makes you intolerant of all compromise...you may enter that rarified area of audio where nothing matters but the dedicated pursuit of perfection."

The **Popular Science** panel tried to eliminate frills, and limited its choice to compact speakers for reasons of practicality in the home, but stated: "Where there was a more expensive component that produced a detectable improvement in sound, it was chosen."

The **Hi-Fi/Tape Systems** survey referred to its choices as "the least expensive way to obtain state-of-the-art performance."



The **Popular Science** survey also recommended Roy Allison's **High Fidelity Systems – A User's Guide** (AR Library Vol. 1, \$1). This book may be purchased at many AR dealers', or you may order it directly with the coupon below.

ACOUSTIC RESEARCH, INC., 24 Thorndike Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02141

- Please send me Allison's High Fidelity Systems—A User's Guide. I enclose \$1 in cash or check only, and /or
- Please send me free literature on AR products, plus the complete lists of components chosen by each magazine.

Name _____ Address _____

From Any Angle... There is Still No Finer Turntable For Your Home.

No other turntable provides the ease and simplicity of changing tone arms — never a need to be saddled with an unwanted tone arm again. **GET THE BIG PLUS . . .** the professionals do! No ordinary record changer, no ordinary manual, can match its quality. Ask your own local audio specialist or write to:

ELPA MARKETING INDUSTRIES, INC.
THORENS 1101HFS3 Div. • New Hyde Park, N.Y.
In Canada: TRI-TEL ASSOCIATES, Willowdale, Ontario



illustrated with
ORTOFON tone arm

this is the THORENS
TD-124
TRANSCRIPTION TURNTABLE

CIRCLE NO. 69 ON READER SERVICE CARD



**AUDIO
BASICS**
by HANS H. FANTEL

ELEMENTARY QUESTIONS

THIS MONTH I would like to touch upon a number of matters that seem almost too elementary to receive attention in the pages of a specialized hi-fi publication. However, these questions pop up time and again on the sales floor of any audio shop, asked by people whose interest in good sound reproduction exceeds their information about it.

Can I get stereo by hooking a second speaker to my radio? This question indicates a basic misconception about stereo. The stereo effect depends on there being a *difference* between the material fed to the left and right speakers. If both speakers are connected to the same output, obviously they will reproduce the same thing. To get stereo, it is necessary to have two completely separate sound channels, starting at the microphones that pick up the original sound and continuing on separate paths all the way through the speakers. This is the only way an audio system can reproduce what our ears hear in the concert hall. This is not to say that you cannot enhance the sound of your hi-fi system (or radio, for that matter) by connecting a second speaker in parallel with the original one. The second speaker should be about eight to ten feet from the first.

Can I play stereo records on my old LP record player? You can, but for one thing, you won't hear the stereo effect—the records will sound just like mono records. Worse, you will damage the record. The stylus in a mono phono cartridge is designed to move from side to side. It cannot follow the up-and-down movement of the grooves of a stereo record. This up-and-down path represents the record's stereo characteristics, and a mono cartridge is likely to plow right through it and, in effect, erase it. If the record is later played on a good stereo system, it will probably not only lack any stereo effect, but in addition will sound somewhat fuzzy. If your record player is of the inexpensive console or portable variety, you should give up any idea of using stereo discs. If your mono player is part of a high-fidelity system, you can have your audio dealer install a stereo cartridge with a 0.7-mil stylus. This will enable you to play both mono and stereo records without damaging them. Then you can start buying stereo records in anticipation of eventually changing over your whole system to stereo.

Does a 60-watt amplifier play twice as loud as a 30-watt amplifier? No—and mere loudness isn't the reason for having extra power. In fact, the loudness difference between a 30-watt and a 60-watt amplifier playing at top volume is barely noticeable. The chief advantage of the more powerful amplifier is greater clarity of sound when the music demands a sudden power surge—for instance, during heavily scored passages full of crashing chords and deep-rolling bass notes. The power reserve of a low-wattage amplifier may be exceeded at such moments, making the sound fuzzy and strident during a musical climax. By contrast, an amplifier with sufficient power reserve, though sounding no louder, keeps the sound smooth and transparent even through difficult passages. For a full discussion of this frequently misunderstood matter, see Julian D. Hirsch's article on the subject of "How Much Amplifier Power Do You Really Need?" in the June, 1964 issue of *HIFI/STEREO REVIEW*.

See the new KLH tuner

See the FM Stereo tuner.
See how pretty it is.
It's very new.
It's called the Model Eighteen.
And it's from KLH.
Isn't that terrific?
See how small it is!
It's very small.
Only nine inches long.
But oh boy! Does it sound good!
It sounds real good with a KLH Model Eleven.
Or a KLH Model Fifteen.
Or a KLH Model Sixteen.
Or any swell amplifier.
It doesn't have any tubes.
Just lots of transistors that never wear out.
And it's got planetary tuning. With a vernier.
That's the best kind.
And Zowie — a meter and a light.
To tell you when you're tuned in right.
And it won't need fixing and aligning all the time.
That's because it's so light.
And the parts don't move around inside.
It doesn't cost lots of money, either.
Just 129 dollars and 95 cents.*
You can buy a Model Eighteen.
From your friendly KLH dealer.
He'll let you play one.
And you can see how good it sounds.
And how pretty it is.
And how little it costs.
And how did you ever get along without it?
But please don't call it cute.
It's *very* sensitive.



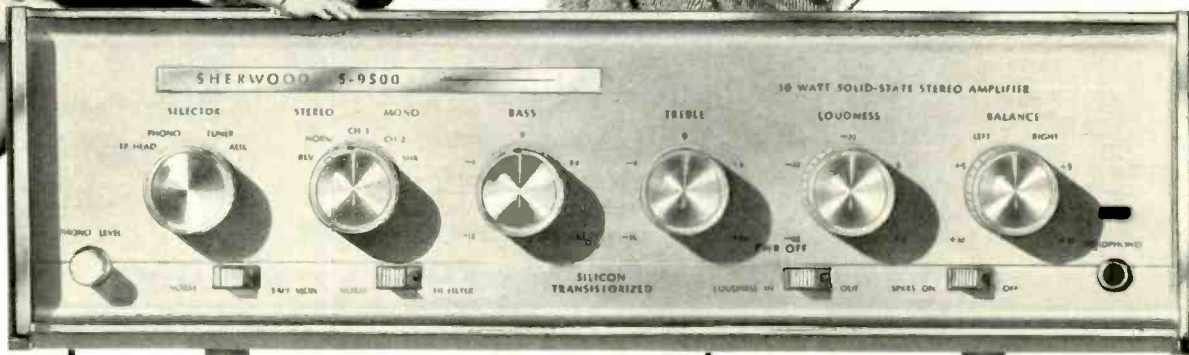
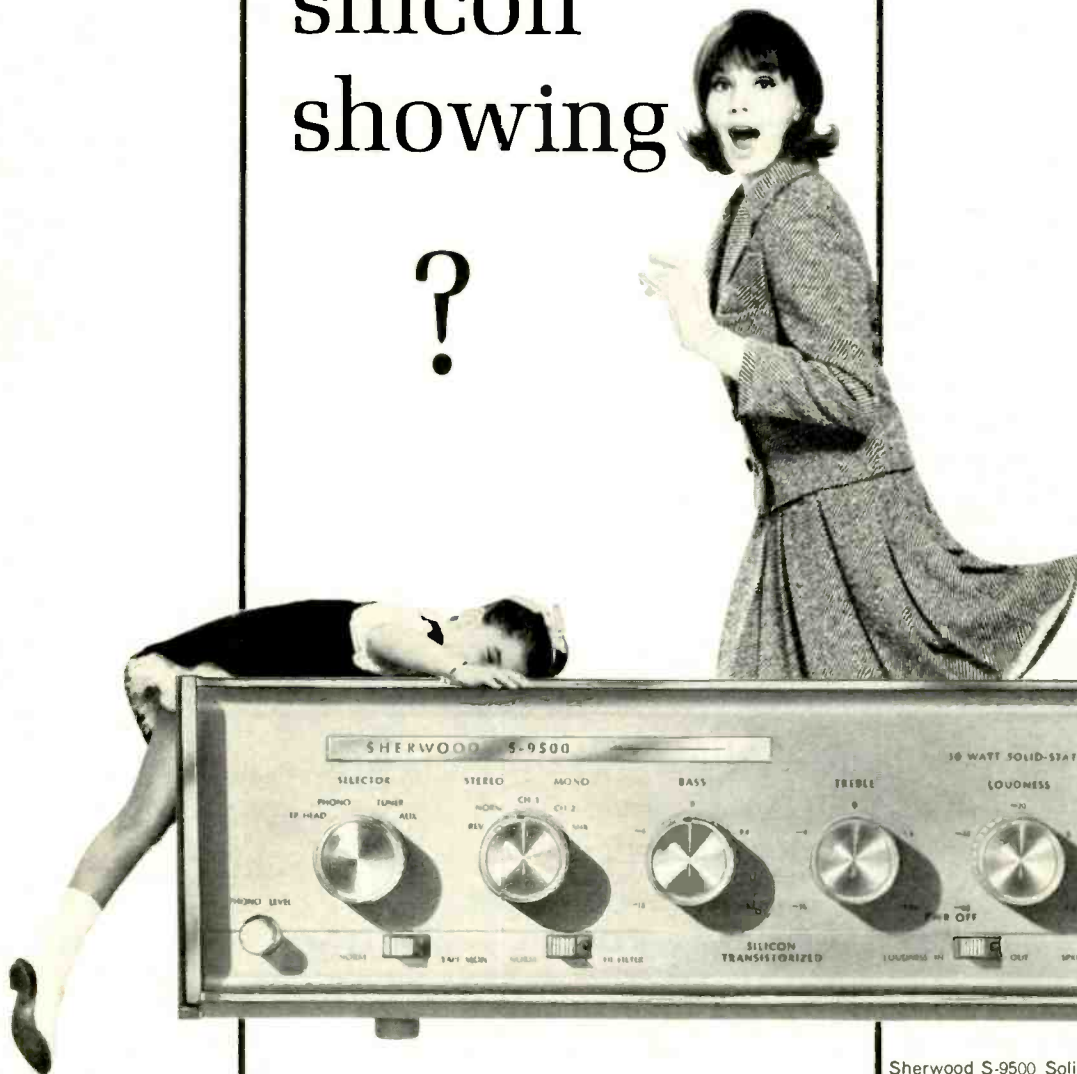
KLH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
30 CROSS STREET, CAMBRIDGE 39, MASSACHUSETTS

*Suggested retail; slightly higher on the west coast.

Is our silicon showing

?

Compare these S-9500 Specs! Power output, both channels IHF music power: 50 watts at 1% I.M. distortion. Continuous sine-wave power output (two channels): 36 watts at 1% distortion. Power bandwidth: 12-35,000 cps. at 1% distortion. Hum and noise: Phono—70db, Tuner—80db. Sensitivity: Phono —1.8 mv, Tuner 0.25v. Also available: 150-watt music power Silicon Solid-State amplifier, S-9000, \$299.50



Sherwood S-9500 Solid-State 50-watt Amplifier \$179.50

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

Write now for our latest catalog detailing this remarkable amplifier as well as Sherwood's world-famous FM tuners and speaker systems. Dept. 3R.

Sherwood

Sherwood Electronic Laboratories, Inc.,
4300 North California Ave., Chicago 18, Illinois



● **TEST REPORTS:** No one not actually involved in testing and evaluating audio equipment for publication purposes can really appreciate the complexity of the task. It goes without saying (though it is easier said than done) that the measurements must be accurate and valid. The reviewer also encounters numerous pitfalls in the areas of advertising, public relations, and the often strongly divergent views of competing manufacturers.

The presentation of the test results and the reviewer's conclusions also poses a problem. Many readers, for example, are laymen who have little interest in technical details, but are looking for guidance in choosing high-fidelity components. In short, they want to be told what is good, what is bad, and what is best. Others are more technical-minded, and would probably prefer to see only the test results, without any comments.

Obviously, one cannot satisfy both groups at the same time. Some compromise is necessary. My tendency is to de-emphasize numbers and curves in favor of personal reactions. Although the data sometimes speak for themselves, I invariably back up the facts and figures with a subjective evaluation. But my task is complicated by the fact that a fair evaluation of any product is not a simple, black-or-white matter. Many people tend to think in such absolute terms, however, and want to be told that a particular component is either good or bad.

As a result of testing and using literally hundreds of audio components, I find that I must emphatically reject this approach. Few, if any, components are completely without fault or without virtue. It is the job of the responsible reviewer, I feel, to place the faults and virtues of the equipment in proper perspective, and this can only be done through the expression of a personal opinion. Laboratory measurements can and should be completely objective. Their interpretation, however, cannot be completely objective, or the reviewer abdicates part of his responsibility. This does not mean that a product of which the reviewer disapproves must be condemned in vitriolic terms—it is possible to point out the weaknesses of a product fairly, without using biased language. When I do express a strong positive opinion, it is to indicate my honest enthusiasm for a well-executed design, whether it be a tape recorder, a tuner, or some other component.

REVIEWED THIS MONTH

●
Sherwood S-9000 Amplifier
KLH Model Eighteen FM Tuner
●

Furman Hebb, in his editorial in the November 1964 issue of *HIFI/STEREO REVIEW*, explained very clearly why the test reports published here are generally favorable. I have tested some components that were obviously unsuited for review. Frankly, they were simply not worth the space a report would have required, so no report was presented. It is unfortunate that the same space limitations also prevent my reviewing many fine products that are presently on the market, but there appears to be no handy solution to this problem.

On the question of whether I am sent specially selected samples of equipment for testing, it would probably surprise many people to learn that a sizable percentage of the units I receive for review are defective in some way. In such a case I usually request a second unit, and if, on inspection, the design and construction of the unit appear to be basically sound, my report makes no mention of the defective first sample. Over the years, I have given much thought to this problem, without finding any completely satisfactory answer. If the unit appears to be well made, and if the original defect does not appear to be inherent in the design and can be attributed to a legitimate cause, I believe it would be unfair to the manufacturer to comment on it. On the other hand, if I encounter two defective samples in a row, I rarely bother reporting on the product.

Since the space available for these reports is in fact limited, I therefore confine my comments to those features I consider to be most important. Some aspects of a unit's performance must go unreported, but, in general, any aspect of operation in which a unit is above or below average in performance will

be commented upon. I believe that the omissions, in general, do not detract from the usefulness of the report to the general reader. The only reasonable alternative would be to present a mass of tabular and graphical data, with a minimum of selection, interpretation, and comment, as is done in some other publications. Apart from the fact that this would be less than helpful to most readers, and subject to misinterpretation even by technically oriented people, the required graph-scale reduction tends to obscure important details. When presenting test reports, I feel (with apologies to Confucius) that one good word is frequently worth ten thousand pictures. *(Continued overleaf)*

**SHERWOOD
S-9000
AMPLIFIER**

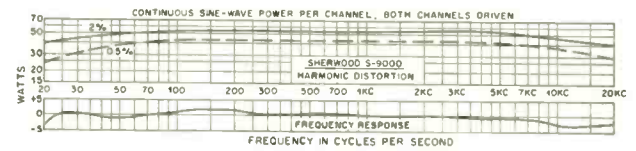
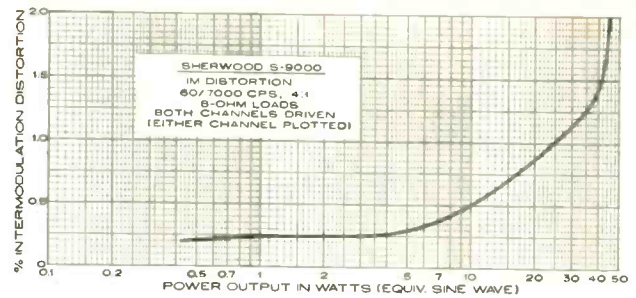
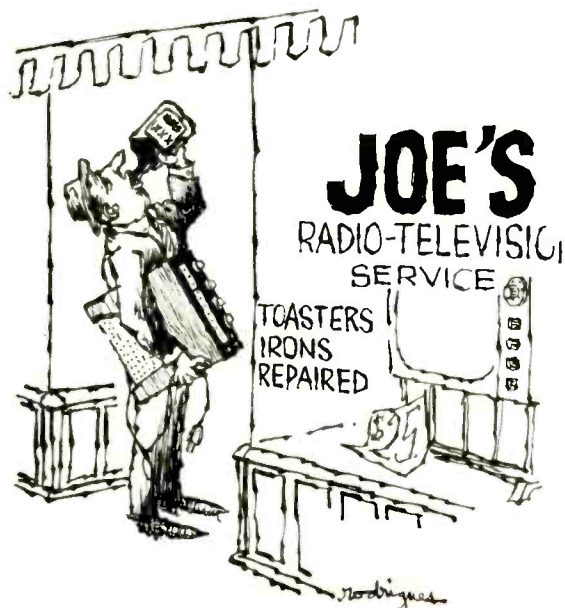


● SHERWOOD's new S-9000 transistor stereo amplifier is provocatively advertised as a 100-, 150-, or 300-watt amplifier, depending on whether it is rated for continuous-power, music-power, or peak-power output. My continuous-power measurements (made with both channels driven) completely confirmed the 100-watt rating, and I have no doubt the other ratings are equally accurate.

The S-9000, considering its husky power output, is quite compact, measuring 14 x 12½ x 4 inches and weighing 24 pounds. It has inputs for tape head, phono cartridge, tuner, and another high-level source, plus tape-monitor inputs selected by a separate front-panel switch. The mode selector has positions for normal and reversed-channel stereo, either channel, or both channels mixed through both speakers.

The bass and treble tone controls are common to both channels. Considering the nearly universal use of matched speaker systems, I do not consider this to be any disadvantage compared to separate tone controls for the two channels. The balance control can cut off either channel completely without noticeably affecting the level of the other channel. Other front-panel controls include switches for high- and low-cut filters, speaker phase-reversal, loudness compensation, and speaker cut-off by means of a front-panel phone jack for headphone listening. A small knob adjusts phono levels to match either the other input levels or the characteristics of the loudness control.

The loudness control seems to be especially well designed, permitting smooth, noncritical adjustment of volume even at the lowest settings. The switchable Fletcher-Munson compensation boosts the low frequencies as the volume setting is lowered below its midpoint. I am not usually partial to loudness controls, which often produce tubby sound, but this one has a very pleasing effect.



The S-9000 uses twenty-two silicon transistors. Although these were very expensive at one time, recent manufacturing developments have brought their cost down to the point where they can be used in reasonably priced consumer products. The main advantage of silicon over germanium transistors is their ability to withstand high temperatures without damage. No unusual ventilation provisions are called for in the installation of the S-9000, which remains cool after hours of operation.

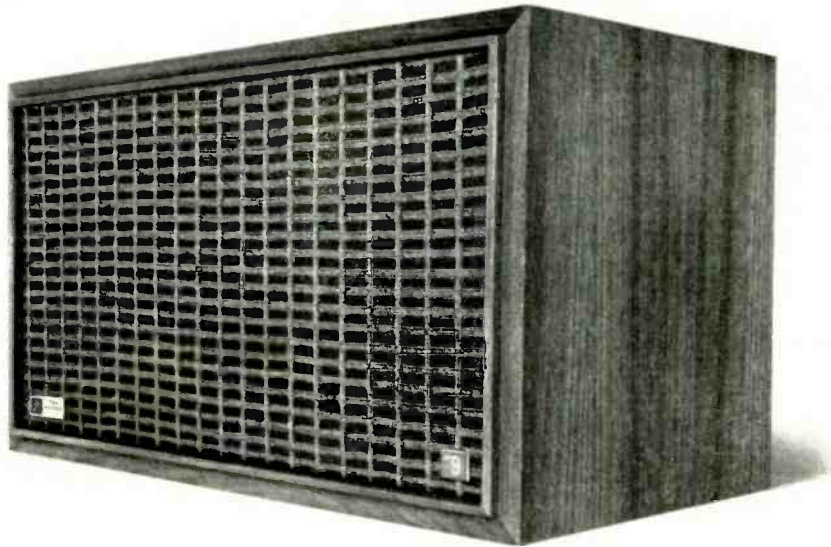
I measured the continuous-power output of the S-9000 as 55 watts per channel at 2 per cent distortion, with both channels driven, over most of the audible frequency range. At 20 and 20,000 cps, the output was 40 watts. At 0.5 per cent distortion, the corresponding figures were 42 watts and 24 to 30 watts. The intermodulation distortion of the S-9000, unlike that of almost every other transistor amplifier I have tested, was very low at low power levels. It was under 0.25 per cent up to about 4 watts output, rising to 1 per cent at 24 watts and 2 per cent at 44 watts.

Frequency response was flat within ±0.5 db from 20 to 20,000 cps, and the RIAA phono equalization was accurate with ±1 db from 30 to 15,000 cps. The rumble and scratch filters had steep slopes (about 12 db per octave) taking effect at about 100 cps and 5,000 cps, and affecting very little of the program material. Hum was below audibility on all inputs, measuring -70 db on the high-level inputs and better than -60 db on phono relative to 10 watts output.

The Sherwood S-9000 sounded excellent, exhibiting all the sonic punch one would expect from a first-class 100-watt amplifier, plus complete freedom from hum and noise. I found only two disturbing characteristics in the operation of the S-9000 I checked. When it was first turned on, it produced a thump and a momentary hum, and switching transients were generated when resetting the input-selector switch. According to the manufacturer, however, these faults were spotted early in the production of the S-9000, and have been eliminated in units manufactured during the past several months. In all other respects, the S-9000 is very hard to fault, and I found it to be an excellent, easy-to-use amplifier with more than enough reserve power for almost any home music system. The price of the amplifier is \$299.50.

For more information, circle 188 on reader service card

(Continued on page 32)



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

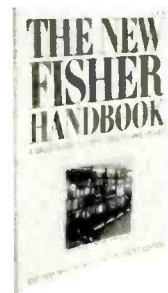
We do not want to start another debate on the 'good big speaker' versus the 'good little speaker.' But, when you listen to the new Fisher XP-9, we do want you to evaluate it against loudspeaker systems of *all* sizes, not just the standard 2-cubic-foot bookshelf units.

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

The 12" woofer of the XP-9 not only goes down to 28 cps without distortion but also requires considerably less amplifier power for room-filling bass than previous experience would make you expect. The three 5" midrange drivers are assigned more than three octaves of the audible spectrum, with

a considerably lower bass-to-midrange crossover than is conventional. This wide-band approach flattens the upper bass and lower midrange response to an unprecedented degree, completely eliminating even the slightest suggestion of boxed-in 'bookshelf' sound. And the exceptional dispersion characteristics and uniquely smooth, resonance-free response of the exclusive 1½" soft-dome tweeter result in the most natural-sounding treble range ever achieved.

The Fisher XP-9 has an impedance of 8 ohms, comes in Scandinavian walnut, measures 24½" by 14" by 12" deep, and costs \$199.50. Other superb Fisher loudspeaker systems include the XP-5 at \$54.50, the XP-6 at \$99.50, the XP-7 at \$139.50, and the XP-10 Consolette at \$249.50.



For your free copy of this 76-page book, use coupon on page 36.

KLH MODEL EIGHTEEN FM TUNER



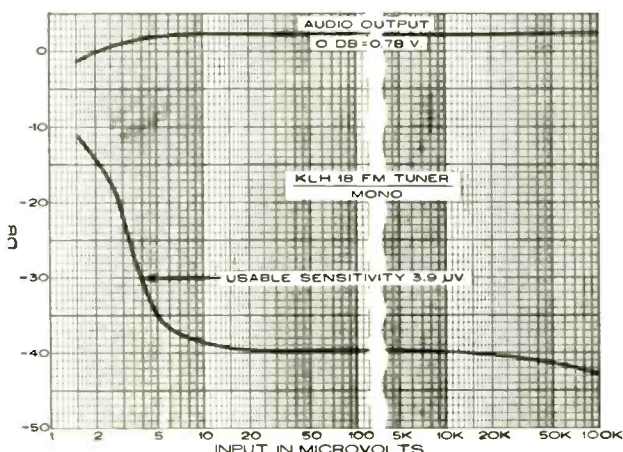
● A RECENT addition to the KLH component line is a stereo FM tuner, the Model Eighteen. Like other KLH products, the Eighteen is engineered to produce maximum performance with minimum complexity.

The Model Eighteen is fully transistorized and exceptionally compact: in its walnut cabinet, it measures 9 inches wide, $4\frac{1}{8}$ inches high, $5\frac{3}{8}$ inches deep, and weighs under four pounds. With its white-panel styling, it resembles the KLH Model Eight FM radio, and it also has a smoothly operating planetary dial drive, a miniature zero-center tuning meter, and a stereo-indicator light. The only switches, other than a volume-control/power switch, are a mono/stereo switch and an SCA-filter switch.

The instruction manual accompanying the Model Eighteen I checked had no schematic and virtually no technical information on the tuner. It did point out, however, that the unconventional i.f. transformers used, which have miniature low-mass cores, should keep the tuner's alignment unusually stable during shipment or use. This, coupled with the extremely long life and stability of transistors, plus the absence of internally generated heat, should mean that the alignment and service requirements of the Model Eighteen will be minimal.

The tuner is supplied with a three-foot wire that serves as an antenna in strong-signal locations, and with a 300-ohm folded dipole for use in weak-signal areas. For fringe-area reception, KLH recommends an outdoor antenna. I first tried the tuner with the three-foot wire. To my surprise, it picked up almost all the stations (26) that are normally heard in my location—all of them completely free of background noise. The 300-ohm dipole antenna made little improvement. This is quite impressive for reception in my area, some 25 miles from New York City. Using my roof-mounted eight-element Yagi antenna, I received 32 stations with excellent quality. This equals the performance of any other tuner I have used.

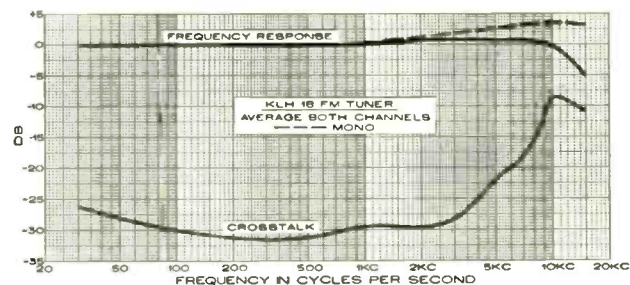
I did not hear any crosstalk from strong local stations (a potential weakness of transistor tuners), and alternate-



channel selectivity was excellent, permitting the reception of a weak station whose broadcast frequency was near the frequency of a much stronger one. To simulate the effect of a very strong local station, I connected a signal generator to the three-foot antenna and fed a 100,000-microvolt signal into the tuner: there was no crossmodulation no matter where the unit was tuned.

The Model Eighteen had no detectable drift, and when the needle of its unambiguous meter was centered, the tuner had minimum distortion and maximum stereo separation. The IHF usable sensitivity measured 3.9 microvolts, and as with several other good tuners, the steep limiting curve of the Model Eighteen resulted in the impression of an even greater sensitivity. Any signal greater than 10 microvolts was strong enough for complete limiting, and from 10 microvolts to 100,000 microvolts there was no change in output, noise, or distortion. The fact that the short-wire antenna picked up more than 19 microvolts from most stations explains why so little audible improvement resulted from using better antennas.

Stereo separation was about 30 db from 30 to 3,000 cps, 20 db at 6,000 cps, and 8 db at 10,000 cps. Frequency response was completely flat from 20 cps to 1,000 cps, rising slightly at higher frequencies in mono reception,



and falling slightly above 10,000 cps in stereo reception. The stereo-indicator lamp flickered on interstation noise, but remained on steadily when a stereo broadcast was being received. The SCA filter is intended to remove the gargling background noise sometimes heard on stereo broadcast stations. The filter should be used only when necessary, since it slightly reduces channel separation and may cause distortion on heavily modulated signals.

In this day of obsession with numerical specifications, it is to me quite interesting to see that KLH makes no mention of sensitivity figures, channel separation figures—nor of any other of the performance data we are accustomed to seeing in tuner advertisements. With admirable restraint, as well as accuracy, the ads for the KLH Model Eighteen simply describe some of its unusual design features and points of claimed superiority over other types of tuners. I am happy to say that I found the unit to be everything it was claimed to be, and more.

The KLH Model Eighteen is an ideal complement to the company's Model Eleven or Fifteen phonograph systems, which it matches both visually and electrically. At its selling price of \$129.95, the Model Eighteen is an exceptional value, and is, in fact, one of the better FM tuners I have seen regardless of price.

For more information, circle 189 on reader service card



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

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

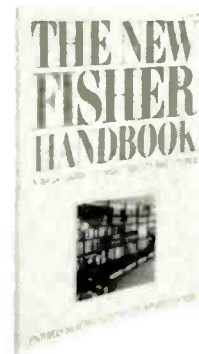
The one FM stereo tuner that incorporates all the advancements of the art that have emerged from this program is the new Fisher FM-200-C. Here is the sum total of Fisher creativity in the tuner field. It seems almost superfluous to add that no other high fidelity manufacturer has produced anything comparable.

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

*Stereo Beacon** with automatic stereo-mono switching, *AutoScan** automatic stereo scanner, the *MicroTune*® system of tuning with AFC, and a d'Arsonval tuning meter.

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

The dimensions of the FM-200-C are Fisher standard: 15 1/8" wide x 4 1/4" high x 11 7/8" deep. Weight is 13 lbs. And the price is an eminently reasonable \$299.50. (Other great Fisher FM tuners include the FM-90-B at \$179.50, the FM-100-C at \$249.50 and the transistorized TFM-300 at \$299.50. Walnut cabinet for each model available at \$24.95.) *PATENT PENDING



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WINSTON CHURCHILL

His Memoirs and His Speeches

By PAUL KRESH

TO SALUTE Sir Winston Churchill on his ninetieth birthday (the news of Sir Winston's death has just been received as of this writing), London Records in November released an imposing twelve-disc album, its cover embossed with a bas-relief of simulated bronze, containing more than eleven hours of words, all spoken by Mr. Churchill. Accompanying the album—which is priced at one hundred dollars—is a sixty-page booklet of photographs, some of them never published before, with an essay on Churchill's career by Arthur Bryant and a full-color reproduction of Sir Oswald Birley's oil portrait of Sir Winston.

There have been recorded tributes to Churchill before—excerpts from speeches linked by narration (Colpix PS 200), a disc in Edward R. Murrow's "I Can Hear It Now" series (Columbia KL 5066), and a two-record album of the major speeches (Capitol TBO 2192)—but never a monument like this. In addition to recordings taken from radio transcriptions covering the years 1933 to 1945, the London set contains many hours of material that Sir Winston recorded in his home at Chartwell in 1948 and 1949. At the same time, with an eye to the enlightenment of future generations and a fine sense of history, he also recorded many of the addresses he had made in the House of Commons, where recording is not allowed.

As the late President Kennedy said, Churchill "mobilized the English language and sent it into battle." This is as true of the prose itself as it is of his delivery. His memoirs read like a veritable cliffhanger. They are not footnotes to history—they *are* history. In the early discs, reading softly, with a slight lisp, and in a voice that has lost only a little of its ring and none of its authority, the narrator takes us back to the "eleventh hour of the eleventh day in the eleventh month" of the year 1918, tracing the growth of the seeds of World War II from the time of their sowing—at the

very moment of the Allied victory over Germany. Reviewing what he calls the "sad story of the complicated idiocy" as Germany, her grievances unredressed, is allowed to rearm during "that period of exhaustion which has been described as peace," Churchill vindicates his genius, not only as a statesman, but as a prophet. He recites the lessons of the past, pleads with the people of Britain to open their eyes to the danger of what is happening in Central Europe. The government will not listen to him, will not arm, will not admit that war is imminent. Meanwhile, the Nazis rise to power in Germany and methodically draw up their plans for world conquest. One knows only too well how it will all turn out, yet in the grip of Mr. Churchill's suspenseful prose and under the spell of his voice the listener finds himself growing increasingly tense. By the time Churchill delivers his 1934 radio broadcast on "The Causes of War" it seems impossible that the English will fail to awaken to their danger. Sir Winston is appointed First Lord of the Admiralty in 1939, but still his warnings go unheeded. Then follow the sadness of Sir Anthony Eden's resignation as Foreign Secretary, the loss of air parity, the failure of the free nations either to unite or to arm. Chamberlain's disastrous visit to Munich is not described (the story is recounted in a footnote), but the pile-up of later events is graphically reconstructed: Poland is invaded, England and France are at war with Germany, and Churchill, whose life up until that time seems to have been a kind of rehearsal for greatness, takes the helm as Prime Minister.

All the ordeals of the war now unfold—Churchill's futile visits to France, the disasters in Norway, the demoralization of the French forces, and at last the evacuation of the British from Dunkirk.

Now we hear more of the actual recorded broadcasts and less of the memoirs. Sides Thirteen to Seventeen are

(Continued on page 36)



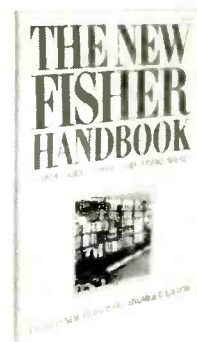
Operating an advanced stereo system is now as simple as ABC. (Or CBS. Or NBC. Or QXR.)

Don't be intimidated by the technical jargon of the audio engineers. Now, anyone who can tune in a ball game on a kitchen radio has already mastered the operation of one of the world's most advanced high fidelity systems, the Fisher 500-C stereo receiver.

Here, on *one* magnificent chassis, are *three* top-rated stereo components. A high-sensitivity Fisher FM-multiplex stereo tuner. A versatile Fisher stereo control-preamplifier. A powerful 75-watt Fisher stereo amplifier. *All* the electronics you need for a great stereo system, in only 17½ inches of shelf space! Yet the 500-C is so functionally designed even a child can operate it. And, what is more important, you get the same high quality of performance the advanced audiophile demands and expects from every Fisher component.

Now you see why the Fisher 500-C has become, from the very day of its introduction, the standard by which all other stereo receivers are measured. Today, the Fisher 500-C is the single best-selling high fidelity component in the world, bar none.

What does such a superlative instrument cost? Only \$389.50. If you wish to pay \$60 more, you may have the Fisher 800-C, which is identical to the 500-C, with the addition of a remarkable AM tuner. Or, for \$90 *less*, there is the Fisher 400, a stereo receiver with 65 watts of power. And, if you're willing to pay a premium for the last word in space-age electronics, consider the transistorized Fisher 600-T with 110 watts output, at \$499.50. (Cabinets for all models available at \$24.95.)



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NEVER was sound so **PURE**, never was
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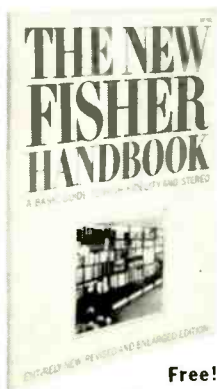
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023

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gripping both as oratory and as history. Included are the greatest of the speeches: "The Finest Hour," with its mixture of spirited rhetoric and vituperation against the enemy, "The French Agony," and the greatest of all, "Westward, Look, the Land Is Bright," in which Churchill reaches the apex of his hortatory and poetical powers. All the while he refuses to yield to gloom as Britain is bombarded, fighting on after the French have fallen, and as country after country in Europe is overrun by Hitler's military machine. During these passages, one senses that Churchill kept up the courage of the British almost by words alone, until the Nazis (Churchill always pronounced the word, in a strangely sinister way, "Naa-zees," with a soft z, in a low, menacing growl) make the mistake of invading the Soviet Union. Then, at long last, to the listener's relief as well as history's, America finally rises up against the menace of Hitler, the "bloodthirsty guttersnipe," and Mussolini, "the jackal."

Churchill wrote some 950 messages to President Roosevelt during the war years and received about 800 in reply. He quotes some of them to indicate how personal a matter was the conduct of government by the heads of state at the time. And now his speeches take on a tone of optimism—always laced, of course, with practical caution. His stubbornness has been vindicated. "The dark curse of Hitler will be lifted from our age." The leader who exhorted Londoners to defend their city street by street if invaded, and who even tried to persuade the French to expose Paris to destruction (how lucky for us they didn't!) rather than surrender, exults as he sees the tide turn. As the danger lessened, however, so did the sharpness of Churchill's eloquence and the bite of his wit.

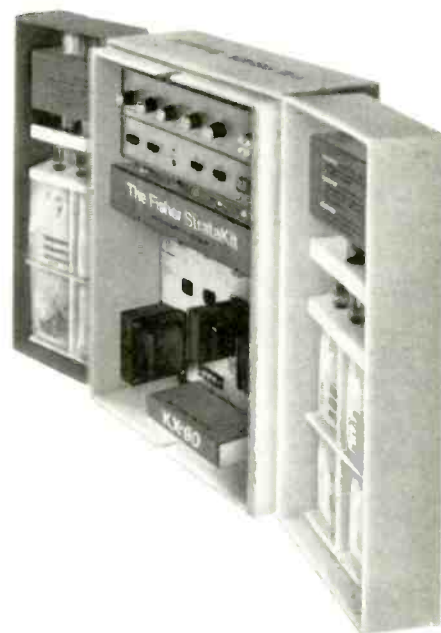
As the album draws rather ponderously to a close there are also stretches of tedium. Some particularly poor transcriptions taken off the air in London from Canadian radio broadcasts, for example, are rather trying to the ear. But the inspiring addresses on "The End of the Beginning," the world broadcast marking the unconditional surrender of Germany on May 8, 1945, and the moving speech from the balcony of the Ministry of Health to the crowds in Whitehall on V-E Day wind things up on a note of historical immediacy and high oratory.

The listener, after spending so many hours with this man who almost single-handedly kept up the spirits of an entire country—and more—in the darkest hour of our age, is left in a state of admiration, wonder, and gratitude that there was a Winston Churchill in our time.

Ⓜ **WINSTON S. CHURCHILL: *His Memoirs and His Speeches, 1918 to 1945.*** LONDON XL-1 twelve 12-inch discs \$100.

**Who makes
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amplifier
for \$99.50?**

**You do . . .
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Now, for the first time in high fidelity history, you can own a truly distinguished stereo control-amplifier for less than \$100—if you are willing to build it yourself.

Fisher refuses to compromise quality. Therefore, even at \$99.50*, the Fisher KX-90 StrataKit incorporates the same basic standard of fidelity as the most expensive Fisher components. Take away its price tag and it would still excite the admiration of the fastidious audiophile.

With 40 watts of clean power, the KX-90 can drive even inefficient speakers to their maximum performance level. Superior output transformers make certain this power will not fall off steeply at the frequency extremes. Advanced preamplifier control features, including rocker switches and complete phono and tape facilities, provide unlimited flexibility.

It's all yours if you follow directions. And that's no problem with the exclusive Fisher StrataKit method. No experience is necessary. Assembly takes place by simple, *errorproof* stages (Strata). Each stage corresponds to a *separate* fold-out page in the uniquely detailed instruction manual. Each stage is built from a *separate* packet of parts (StrataPack). Major parts come already mounted on the extra-heavy-gauge steel chassis. Wires are *precut* for every stage—which means every page. All work can be checked stage-by-stage and page-by-page, before proceeding to the next stage.

The end result is a Fisher amplifier that is fully equal in performance and reliability to its factory-wired prototype. Fisher guarantees this. And who should know better than Fisher?

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The Fisher

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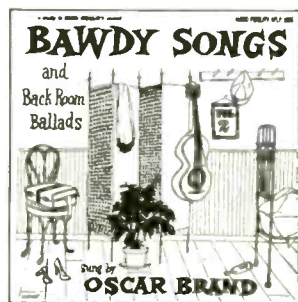


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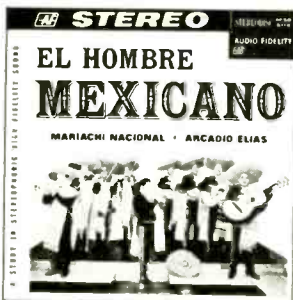
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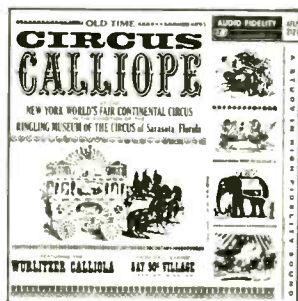
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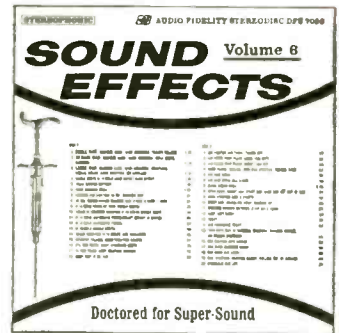
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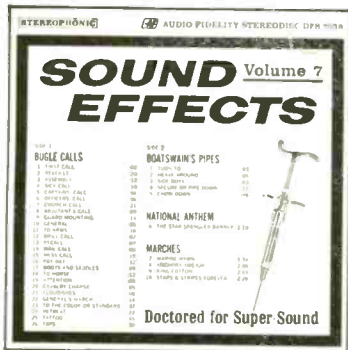
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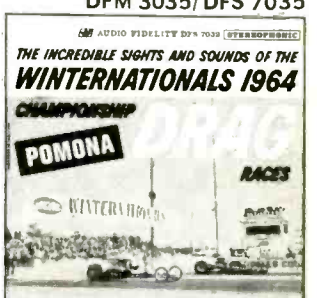
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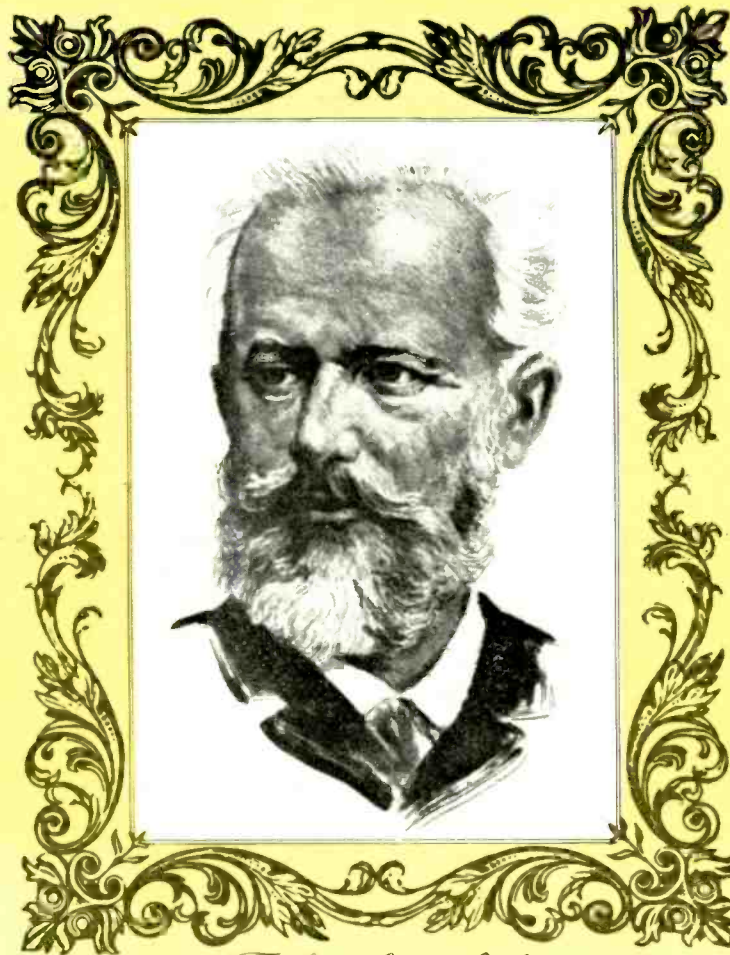
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HIFI/STEREO REVIEW



Tchaikovsky's
Serenade for Strings

ONE would expect that the overwhelming popularity of Tchaikovsky's Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Symphonies and the ballets *The Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *The Nutcracker* would extend to the other examples of his orchestral creativity. Yet performances of the First and Third Symphonies are extremely rare—the Second, the so-called "Little Russian" Symphony, fares a little better. And Tchaikovsky's four orchestral suites, which contain some of his freshest and most inventive music, appear almost to have passed from the orchestral repertoire.

But there is one orchestral work of Tchaikovsky's, other than the late symphonies and ballets, that maintains a strong hold on the affections of the concert-going public: the *Serenade for String Orchestra in C Major*. Tchaikovsky's own attitude toward the work is revealed in a letter to his benefactress, Mme. Nadejda von Meck, written in October of 1880: "You can imagine, dear friend, that recently my Muse has been benevolent, when I tell you that

I have written two long works very rapidly: a Festival Overture and a Serenade in four movements for string orchestra. The Overture will be very noisy. I wrote it without much warmth of enthusiasm; therefore it has no great artistic value. The Serenade, on the contrary, I wrote from an inward impulse: I felt it; and I venture to hope that this work is not without artistic qualities." The festival overture to which Tchaikovsky made reference was the *1812 Overture*, a work whose bombast and posturing Tchaikovsky well knew would not find favor with Mme. von Meck. Just as surely, however, Tchaikovsky knew that the Serenade, particularly the middle two movements, would strike a responsive chord in the emotional makeup of his friend. In another letter to Mme. von Meck about a year later, Tchaikovsky wrote: "I wish with all my heart that you could hear my Serenade properly performed. It loses so much on the piano. I think that the middle movements, as played by the strings, would win your sympathy. As regards the first and the last movements, you are right:



There are three superb accounts of Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings* in C—Munch's with the Boston Symphony for RCA Victor, Ormandy's with the Philadelphia Orchestra for Columbia, and Solti's with the Israel Philharmonic for London. All boast voluptuous string sound, but Munch's leadership gives the RCA disc an extra degree of warmth.

they are merely a play of sounds and do not touch the heart. The first movement is my homage to Mozart: it is intended to be an imitation of his style, and I should be delighted if I thought I had in any way approached my model. Do not laugh, my dear, at my zeal in standing up for my latest creation. Perhaps my paternal feelings are so warm because it is the youngest child of my fancy."

The first performance of the *Serenade* was given at a private gathering in the Moscow Conservatory in the spring of 1881. The occasion was arranged by Nicholas Rubinstein, the autocratic head of the Conservatory, who had displayed a keen interest in the score and himself conducted the student orchestra. In his last illness, and unable to stand, Rubinstein led the performance from a chair on the podium.

The official premiere of the *Serenade for Strings* was given in Moscow in January of 1882, and the score served Tchaikovsky well on his debut tour as a conductor in Hamburg, Prague, Paris, and London in 1887. The piece was especially successful in the French and English capitals, and after a London performance Tchaikovsky wrote: "The *Serenade* pleased most and I was recalled three times, which means a good deal from the reserved London public." During the course of his American tour in 1891, Tchaikovsky conducted performances of the *Serenade* in two cities, Baltimore and Philadelphia. At the concert in Philadelphia's Academy of Music, the audience cheered Tchaikovsky until the rafters rang.

THE *Serenade* is in four movements. The opening movement bears the curious designation *Pezzo in forma di Sonata*. It is in shortened and simplified sonata form, with a slow introduction that is like a chorale. The main part of the movement is an energetic and vigorous *Allegro molto*. At the end of the movement the broad and imposing theme of the introduction returns. The second movement is a waltz, one of Tchaikovsky's most delicate and charming. The third movement (*Larghetto elegiaco*) is a slow elegy, and the concluding *Finale* makes use of some Russian folk tunes. The main theme of this last movement bears a family resemblance to the chorale-like melody heard at the beginning in the introduction. Near the close of the *Finale* Tchaikovsky recalls the music of the introduction, but the exuberant folk tune that serves

as the principal material of the movement brings the score to a resounding close.

In the late 1940's Serge Koussevitzky recorded a performance of the Tchaikovsky *Serenade*, with the strings of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, that was a miracle of suave, polished playing. The incandescent quality of the Koussevitzky-era Boston Symphony strings was never shown to greater advantage. In addition, Koussevitzky brought to the score that unique quality of personal involvement with this composer that made such extraordinary experiences of his Tchaikovsky performances. The *Serenade* recording originated in the 78-rpm era, of course, but it was an early transfer to the long-playing medium, where it graced the RCA Victor catalog as LM 1056. Some years ago this incomparable performance was withdrawn, along with all the other Koussevitzky recordings. No matter what other salutary projects RCA Victor plans, reissue of the remarkable series of recordings made by Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony between 1929 and 1950 should take precedence.

Of the ten available recordings of the Tchaikovsky *Serenade*, the most worthy, in my opinion, are those by Munch and the Boston Symphony (RCA Victor LSC/LM 2105), Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra (Columbia MS 6224, ML 5624), and Solti and the Israel Philharmonic (London CS 6066, CM 9010). All three orchestras have superb string sections, and all three are recorded with emphasis on voluptuous sound. Ormandy and Solti drive the music harder than Munch, who delivers a warm and sensitive account. The couplings may influence your choice: the Munch recording combines Elgar's *Introduction and Allegro* with the *Serenade* (the monophonic pressing also includes Barber's *Adagio for Strings*); Ormandy's includes a miscellany of string works, by Barber (the *Adagio*), Borodin, and Vaughan Williams; and Solti's offers Mozart's best-known serenade, *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*.

The Munch performance, for its greater relaxation and tonal warmth, is my own personal choice among the currently available recordings of the Tchaikovsky *Serenade for Strings*.

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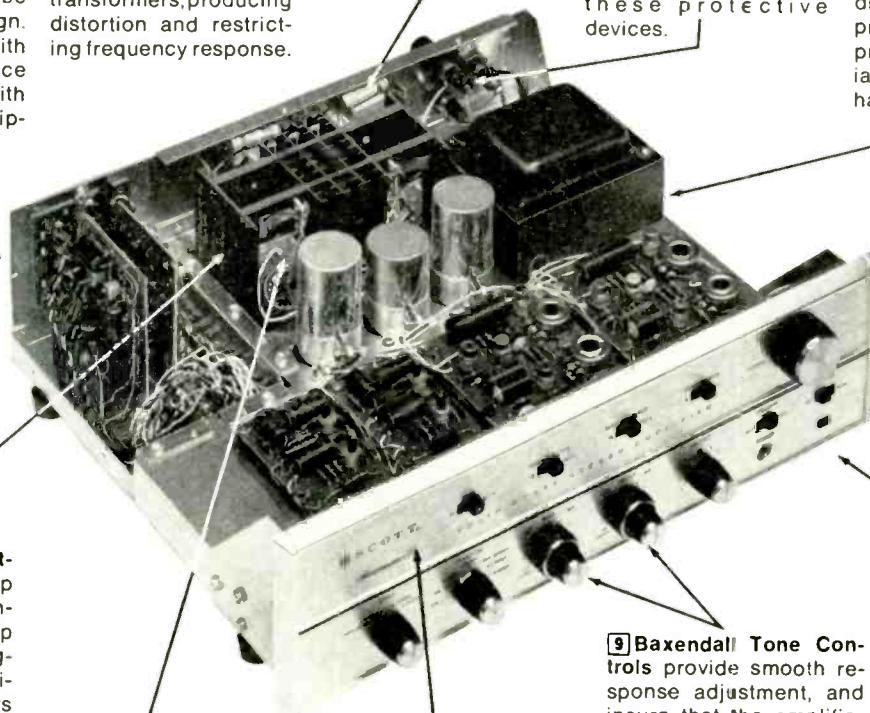
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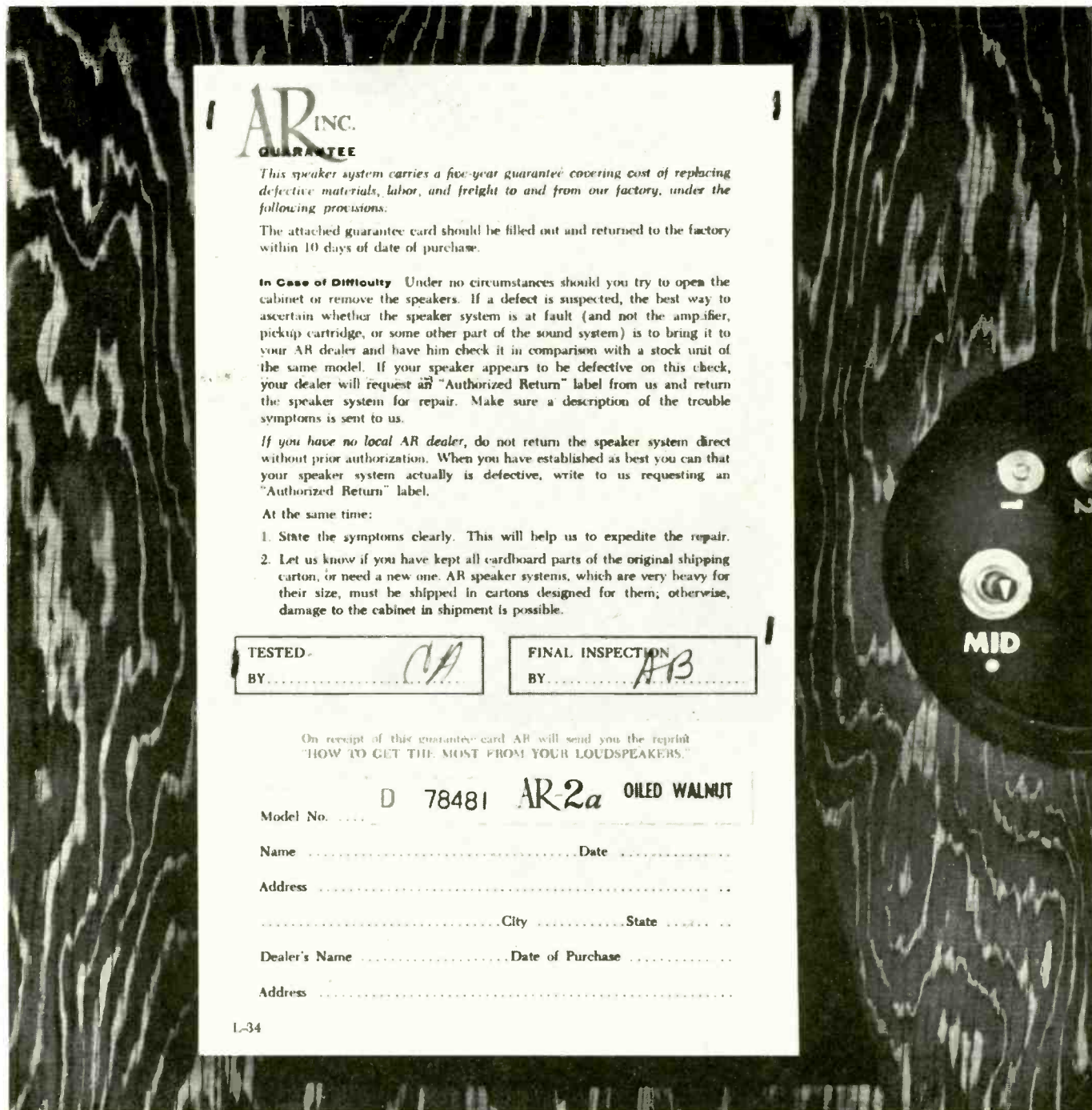
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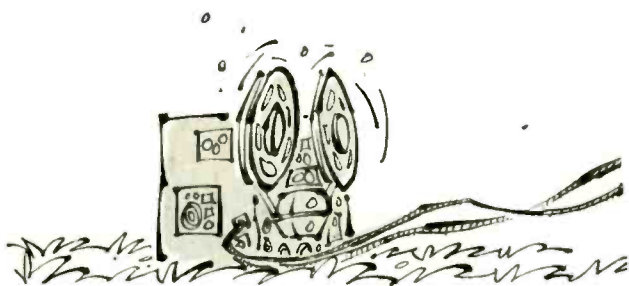
SELECTING THE RIGHT RECORDER

A CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO THE CHOICE
OF A QUALITY HOME TAPE RECORDER

By **JOHN MILDER**

MORE than ever before, today's tape-recorder buyer is faced with an embarrassment of riches. The typical hi-fi showroom offers not only a bewildering assortment of recorders in every price bracket but also a choice of several sharply different *kinds* of tape equipment—all-purpose recorders, tape decks, cartridge

SELECTING THE RIGHT RECORDER



machines, miniature portables, and others. All of which can add up to confusion for an unprepared shopper.

This great variety, however, now makes it possible to find features and quality in moderately priced recorders that once were available only in the most expensive machines. But to make the most of today's possibilities, you should enter a showroom with some idea not only of what to look for and what to expect in a good recorder, but also with a general picture in your mind of the kind of machine that is most likely to suit your personal requirements and budget limitations.

Whether you are about to buy your first recorder or replace an older machine, you should be aware that many of the older accepted guidelines for selecting a recorder are no longer very meaningful. What you may have been advised to look for in a recorder a few years ago may now be irrelevant or misleading. Probably the most important example is the one-time important distinction between "complete" recorders and tape decks (machines without built-in power amplifiers and speakers). Not too long ago, the only way to be sure of getting fully satisfactory results from tape recording with a hi-fi system was to buy a deck. The complete machine, with its mediocre speakers and low-fi amplifiers, was a piece of excess (and usually expensive) baggage. Moreover, its superfluous paraphernalia often severely compromised performance when hooked up to a hi-fi system, causing hum and distortion.

But things have changed radically since then. For one thing, the use of transistors has cut the cost and raised the quality of additional features. For example, a manu-

facturer can now add fairly decent amplifiers and speakers to a basic tape mechanism at only a relatively small increase in cost. The built-in amplifiers and speakers are a convenience for on-location recording—and the lightweight transistor circuits add almost no extra weight to the machine.

This does not mean that the time-honored tape deck is now obsolete or about to become so. It does mean, however, that a self-contained, all-purpose recorder may be entirely comparable in performance. If, for on-location use, you want a recorder that has its own speakers, you should be able to purchase one that will give you high-quality results (when used with a separate playback system), at a cost only a little more than that for a deck of comparable quality.

Another earlier distinction that can now be safely forgotten about is the presence or absence of so-called "professional" features in a recorder. Most of the visually impressive features of studio recorders—such as VU recording-level meters, tape-tension levers, and separate motors for rewinding and fast-forwarding tape—now appear frequently in medium-price home recorders. They are also *not* used in some expensive and excellent machines. What matters, of course, is a recorder's actual performance and ease of operation, and one should not be influenced by gadgetry when judging a tape machine's over-all quality.

Fortunately, there are some concrete indices of quality to look and listen for in a recorder. Before they are examined, however, the various types of tape recorders now available should be described. Assuming that the basic difference between decks and complete recorders is reasonably well defined, and that stereo operation is now the norm for tape equipment, we will concentrate on the variations in the basic *types* of gear, and on the relatively new special-purpose machines on the market.

THE simplest and least expensive form of tape machine is the tape transport, which consists of a tape-drive mechanism and one or two heads. A tape transport lacks any kind of "electronics," and its output must be fed into an amplifier with *tape-head* inputs. Tape-head inputs should not be confused with the standard tape inputs provided for the connection of a recorder or deck that has its own playback preamplifiers.

To permit the recording and erasure of tapes, a recorder must have, in addition to its playback amplifiers, special recording amplifiers. These provide the special bias current needed for taping and erasing, and they also equalize the signal going onto the tape, providing the frequency corrections necessary to make up for losses in the recording process. In less expensive recorders, a single two-channel (for stereo) amplifier does double duty, serving both as a record and playback amplifier. However, the more expensive recorders have separate



twin-channel amplifiers for recording and playback.

If economy is the prime reason for the existence of the tape transport, it is also the *raison d'être* for some recorders that are only partly stereophonic in operation. Some self-contained recorders, although they have a stereo playback head, have only a single amplifier and speaker of their own, and can play back stereo tapes only in conjunction with a hi-fi system or a special amplifier-speaker combination, the latter usually being available as an optional accessory. Other recorders, now very few in number, play back prerecorded stereo tapes but cannot make stereo recordings. It is often impractical—or impossible—to convert these recorders to stereo taping. You should make certain, then, particularly if you are offered a bargain in a discontinued model, just how "complete" a recorder it is, and how easily it can be adapted to full-fledged stereo record and playback operation.

Over the past few years, the standard tape recorder has been joined by the cartridge machine, which does away with the usual reel-to-reel movement of tape in favor of partly or completely automatic tape-handling within a cartridge. At the moment, there are a number of cartridge systems available for special uses, but two systems—the RCA and the 3M-Revere—are the most important for the home listener.

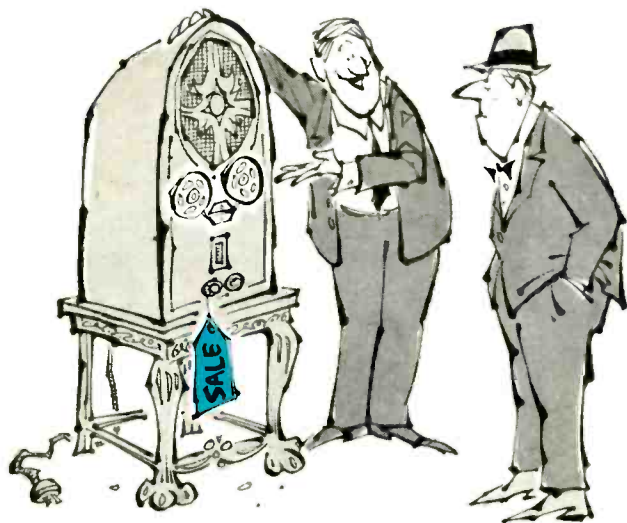
The RCA units resemble conventional recorders except that the tape is enclosed in a plastic cartridge. The machine operates at $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches per second, and uses standard $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch magnetic tape inside the cartridge. The 3M-Revere system is more unusual, in that it is intended to compete with discs as well as reel-to-reel tape. It employs minia-

ture cartridges (containing a special tape made by 3M) that play at $1\frac{7}{8}$ ips, and the machine is fully automatic in operation. Through the action of its automatic tape-changing mechanism, the 3M-Revere system can provide up to fifteen hours of music without reloading. The RCA and 3M-Revere machines are available as playback-only decks, record-playback decks, and complete recorders (with speakers).

The advantages and disadvantages of the cartridge machines are interrelated. The cartridges themselves are more convenient and easier to handle than conventional reels, but they have the handicap that they cannot be used with standard recorders. And although the slower speeds at which the cartridge machines operate does provide extended playing time, slow-speed operation tends also to involve a slight decrease in fidelity. Essentially, the choice between cartridge and reel-to-reel tape is between extreme convenience and extreme fidelity.

ANOTHER new arrival, made possible by the use of transistors, has been the small battery-operated portable recorder. The reference here is not to the \$29.95 "toy" portables that have been around for some time, but to the new battery-operated machines (selling for about \$75 and up) that are designed for taping in the field, dictation, and other specialized uses. Their fidelity is often surprisingly good, and they thus make interesting "extras" for the owner of a home tape recorder. Tapes made on them can be played on many home machines. It is essential, of course, that the two recorders have a common speed—that is, if the portable recorder operates at $1\frac{7}{8}$ or $3\frac{3}{4}$ ips,

SELECTING A RECORDER



Should you be offered a bargain in a discontinued model, you'd better make certain just how "complete" a tape recorder it is.

the home unit must also have these speeds. And it is equally essential that the battery-operated recorder have a steady-speed capstan drive.

Although the variety of present tape equipment may seem endless, it is not too difficult to narrow down your range of choice. You should begin with the realization that the lowest price at which you will find generally acceptable performance is from \$150 to \$250—with but few exceptions. Many machines in this range offer both good fidelity and a comprehensive list of features. As you go up in price, however, frequency response, signal-to-noise ratio, distortion, and speed consistency slowly but perceptibly improve. And as you approach the \$450-\$600 range occupied by the top-quality home machines there are definite improvements in construction details that result in ruggedness and long-term dependability.

If you have bought other types of hi-fi components, you probably will want to make "paper" comparisons of various recorders before entering a showroom. If so, you should examine the boxed material on page 49 for brief explanations of the important tape specifications and how they should be interpreted. Your most important judgments, however, will be the ones you make in a showroom.

The two minimum requirements for acceptable taping are a tolerable level of background noise and reasonable freedom from speed variations (wow and flutter). These are best judged by listening to a recorder through a good, wide-range component system that will reveal flaws instead of masking them. (It is also a good idea to compare recordings taped and played back on the same machine;

this usually gives a realistic picture of any machine's capabilities.)

Frequency response is a tricky consideration. You can expect to find superior response in higher-price machines, because both head assemblies and preamplifiers are better. But some low-price machines may exhibit apparently excellent response. If so, check to see whether seemingly good high-frequency response is produced by peaking the highs more than the normal amount during recording to make up for mediocre playback-head performance. This can be spotted by playing one or two prerecorded tapes, which will sound dull and lifeless over a poor playback head. Also worth watching out for is a "zingy" quality in the highs that indicates distortion.

As you move up the price ladder, one reliable index of quality is the presence of separate recording and playback heads. Although a combination record-playback head can perform very respectably, separate heads provide the relatively wide head-gap necessary for good recording and the very narrow gap needed for best playback results. This means that less electronic compensation is required to make up for head deficiencies, and that better results can be obtained with a wide range of tapes (including prerecorded ones). A separate playback head also permits direct comparison ("monitoring") of the original signal against the signal as it is recorded on the tape.

As your demands become more critical, direct monitoring off the tape becomes the most effective yardstick of performance in a showroom demonstration. It tells more about a recorder's fidelity than any other technique, revealing subtle differences in frequency response, background noise, and distortion that might otherwise be overlooked. It is likely that some difference between the source and the taped signal will be detectable on even the most expensive machines. The better the machine, however, the less significant the difference will be.

If your inclination is toward a machine from either the upper-middle or the top-quality class, you should pay close attention to the way a recorder handles tape. In a low-price recorder, you can expect little more than on-speed playing and recording. In a better machine, however, you should check for smooth stops and starts at normal playing speeds (without jerking or spilling tape), reasonably fast rewinding and fast-forwarding, effective braking at high speed (without tape breakage or stretching), and foolproof switching from one mode of operation to another without breaking or spilling tape. All but the most expensive machines are less than perfect in one respect or another, but you should definitely avoid any machine that seems prone to jamming, or to damaging tape. And in any recorder above the rock-bottom price category, you should look for consistent, wow-free performance with various tape thicknesses and lengths; this is particularly important for the playing of commercially

prerecorded tapes. (It is worth noting that some moderate-price recorders are woefully deficient in handling "long-playing" prerecorded tapes.)

When you have narrowed down your choice of recorders according to their performance, you can and should look for those amenities that can make your taping activities more convenient. Many of today's recorders, for instance, offer automatic reversing during playback, either at the end of a reel or at a point determined by the listener. Others, through the use of an extra set of heads, permit automatic reversal during recording as well as playback. And even in moderately priced recorders you may find such extras as provisions for mixing input signals, sound-

on-sound and echo-effect recording, signals to trigger slide projectors, and automatic shut-off at the end of a reel. None of these features should take precedence over basic sound quality, but their presence or absence in machines of similar price may be important in determining your final choice.

Whatever your recording needs, it is likely that several of today's near-incredible variety of recorders will meet them handily. If you take the time to sort out your own requirements, and to make unhurried appraisals of the tape equipment in the showroom, the recorder you take home can become the most versatile component in your audio system.

INTERPRETING THE SPECIFICATIONS

ALTHOUGH such performance criteria as frequency response, distortion, and signal-to-noise ratio are as applicable to recorders as they are to other audio components, manufacturers' specifications for tape equipment are notoriously vague. The claims made for some machines appear to have been prompted either by wishful thinking or by the checking of a "lab sample" long since tucked in a vault for safekeeping. Such calculated vagueness often makes the specifications of a cheap recorder look more impressive than those for top-quality professional equipment. The usual criteria *do* count, however, and here are the ones to look for in a list of specifications—together with some suggestions for interpreting the figures.

Frequency response. As with all hi-fi equipment, frequency-response specifications for tape equipment are meaningless unless the *uniformity* of response is stated along with the range of response. Without a qualifying "plus-or-minus so many decibels," a claim has no significance. A recorder's *record-playback* response is more important than its playback response alone and should be within ± 3 or 4 db over the range stated. A top-quality recorder should hold the tolerance to ± 2 db. Keep in mind that the frequency response given for a complete, self-contained recorder is likely to represent the best the machine can do when used in conjunction with an external hi-fi system.

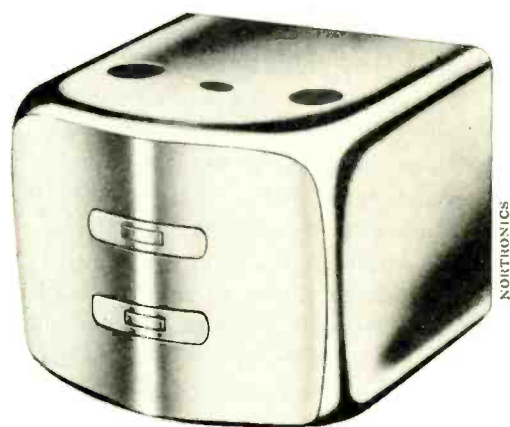
Signal-to-noise ratio. This specification is virtually useless as a standard of comparison for any but top-quality recorders. The ratio itself, expressed as the difference (in decibels) between a recorder's residual noise and the loudness of a test tone recorded at "standard" level, depends in great part on the meaning of "standard." Manufacturers tend to be flexible in their interpretation of the term, some choosing a recording level that produces as little as 1 per cent harmonic distortion on tape, others picking a higher level at which distortion may be 5 per cent. Fre-

quently, the ratio given for an excellent machine (based on a low-distortion recording level) may seem inferior to the figure stated for a mediocre unit. Rather than attempt to weight the figures for various machines to compare them, it is better to rely on a listening test conducted with wide-range hi-fi equipment.

Speed consistency. Fortunately, the specifications for wow and flutter, the most serious kinds of speed variation in a recorder, are fairly straightforward. Both forms of trouble (whether listed separately or together in a list of specs) should be held to less than 0.25 per cent in a high-quality recorder. In some inexpensive machines, an impressive wow figure may have been measured near the middle of a 7-inch reel, since this will give a better result than a check made at the beginning or end of a reel. In general, however, wow and flutter percentages are reliable standards of comparison. Less likely to be stated in specifications (and often relatively unimportant) is the question of a recorder's long-term speed accuracy. A number of machines, including a few expensive models, run slightly faster or slower than their indicated speeds. This may be completely unimportant to anyone who intends to play back only his own recordings. If you intend to invest heavily in prerecorded tapes, however, a machine's nominal playing speeds should be as accurate as possible. Its long-term speed variation, if stated at all, should be less than 1 per cent—and preferably under 0.5 per cent. If not stated, a machine's speed accuracy can be checked with a strobe device.

Distortion. Specifications for distortion in tape equipment are generally too vague to be meaningful. Even when harmonic distortion at "standard" or maximum recording levels is stated—which is not often—there is no indication of the further distortion added by a recorder's playback preamplifiers. As with signal-to-noise ratio, a listening test through a high-fidelity system provides the most reliable index of quality.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT TAPE HEADS



NOIRTRONICS

A TAPE RECORDER'S PERFORMANCE CAN BE NO BETTER THAN THAT OF ITS TAPE HEADS. HERE ARE THE FACTS ABOUT A LITTLE-KNOWN BUT IMPORTANT SUBJECT.

By HERMAN BURSTEIN

ALTHOUGH tape heads are hardly larger than thimbles and have no moving parts, they are among the most expensive items in a high-quality tape recorder. Some heads cost as much as fifty dollars each, and the high prices of topnotch recorders reflect, in part, the expensiveness of the heads they use. An answer to the question of why high-quality tape heads are so expensive entails a discussion of how heads operate, of the differences among record, playback, and erase heads, and of the factors that spell superior performance for each.

A tape head can be considered an electromagnet—that is, it produces magnetic fields when electrical currents are passed through it. It consists of a roughly circular iron core with a coil of wire wound on it, as shown in Figure 1. This assembly is enclosed in a special type of metal housing that shields the coil, preventing it from picking up hum. The most critical section of the assembly is the gap—the break in the core at the point where the core meets the tape. In recording and erasing, a magnetic field generated by electrical currents flowing in the coil travels through the core, and through the tape, at the gap. In playback, magnetic fields from the tape enter the core at its gap and induce electrical currents in the coil.

Now let us consider each type of tape-recorder head in some detail.

The Record Head. A varying electrical current, which represents the audio signal to be recorded, is fed into the coil of the record head (see Figure 2). The magnetic field that is developed passes through the magnetic coating of the moving tape immediately adjacent to the core gap. The tape thus becomes magnetized in accordance with the fluctuations of the electrical audio signal that is applied

to the coil. The magnetic state of a given section of tape undergoes changes as it travels by the gap, but remains in the state of magnetization existing at the instant it leaves the trailing edge of the gap.

In addition to the audio-signal current, a high-frequency current called "bias" is simultaneously fed to the record head. The role of bias is something like that of a catalytic agent in a chemical reaction. The bias as such is not recorded, but it reduces distortion and increases the amount of signal that can be recorded on the tape. (Unfortunately, bias has an undesirable side effect, in that it causes some loss of high frequencies. The recently developed crossfield-head system, in which the bias is supplied through a separate head gap, is said to minimize or eliminate this effect.)

Because of differences in design and materials, record heads differ in the strengths of the magnetic fields they produce for a given amount of input signal. To produce a desired magnetic field, one head, for example, might require 1 milliamperes of bias current and 0.1 milliamperes of audio current. Another record head might require currents 10 times as great. Not only do the heads' requirements differ, but different tapes also require differing currents for optimum performance. The perfectionist will therefore want to adjust the amount of current fed to the record head of his recorder to suit the tape he customarily uses—although the improvement in performance is generally small.

The Playback Head. The signal recorded on the tape is in effect a series of bar magnets laid end to end, each with a north and a south pole. These "magnets" vary in length (determined by the frequency of the recorded sig-

nal) and strength (determined by the intensity of the original signal). During playback, the varying magnetic fields produced by these magnets when they travel by the playback head's gap induce a varying voltage in its coil. This voltage is the electrical counterpart of the magnetic signal on the tape. When the playback head's gap becomes too wide, and/or the tape speed too slow, treble loss results. The relationship of the gap width and tape speed to the high-frequency response (f) of the playback head is expressed by the formula $f = S/2G$ where S is tape speed in ips and G is the gap width in fractions of an inch. The formula tells us that a typical modern head with a gap width of 0.0001 inch (100 microinches) has a potential usable response to 35,000 cycles at $7\frac{1}{2}$ ips, 17,500 cycles at $3\frac{3}{4}$ ips, and about 8,000 cycles at $1\frac{7}{8}$ ips. Some heads have gaps as narrow as 40 microinches, permitting response to nearly 12,000 cycles at a speed of only $1\frac{5}{16}$ ips. The fact that these theoretical responses are not, in general, realized in practice is due to a number of factors, which were spelled out in detail in the article titled "The Long-Long-Playing Tape Recorder" in the March 1964 issue of *HiFi/STEREO REVIEW*.

The Erase Head. An erase head is designed to produce a relatively powerful alternating magnetic field that destroys any previous magnetic patterns on the tape. First the oxide particles are strongly magnetized in one polarity (north pole facing a given direction), then in the opposite direction, again in the first direction, and so forth. As the particles move away from the erase head, they go through many alternate magnetizations of diminishing strength, gradually trailing away to zero.

The high-frequency signal supplied to the record head for bias purposes is nearly always used to energize the erase head as well. The frequency of the bias signal should be higher than 50,000 cps to avoid audible "beating" (in the form of squeals) between the bias frequency and

harmonics of the audio frequencies being recorded. For example, a bias frequency of 50,000 cycles and a strong audio harmonic of 45,000 cycles could produce a beat tone of 5,000 cycles. Unfortunately, erase heads grow less efficient as the bias frequency is increased, and an attempt to improve the performance of the record head by increasing the bias frequency may impair the performance of both heads.

MANY home tape recorders use the same head for both recording and playback. This usually involves a compromise in performance, because the design requirements are somewhat different for a record and a playback head.

A playback head is designed to convert the magnetic flux in its gap (from the tape) into output voltage. To do this efficiently, and thereby to achieve a good signal-to-noise ratio, the coil must have many thousands of turns of wire. In technical terms, a high-impedance head is required. For the record head, on the other hand, fewer turns—and a lower impedance—are desirable. This is so that a moderate voltage can drive the requisite current through the head and thus develop a magnetic field of the necessary strength. If the same head is to be used for both recording and playback, a compromise impedance must be employed. Incidentally, the erase head is also a current-operated device, and its impedance should also be low for best results.

Another respect in which basic design requirements differ among the three heads is gap width. For high efficiency in recording, a relatively wide gap is desirable, because the magnetic field representing the signal tends to jump directly across a narrow gap rather than take an arc-shaped course through the tape. In other words, the narrower the gap, the less magnetic flux reaches the tape. A head designed solely for recording, therefore, will have a relatively wide gap, ranging from about 250 to 1,000

Figure 1 (left) is a cutaway sketch of the internal construction of a typical stereo tape head. Two independent sets of coils and cores are contained within a single shielding shell. Figure 2 (center) illustrates the process by which the recording tape is magnetized by the audio signal.

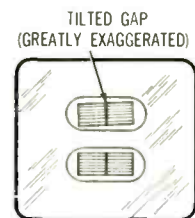
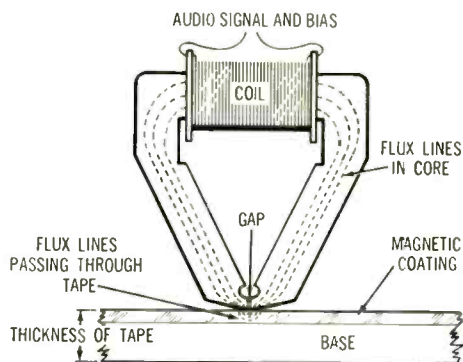
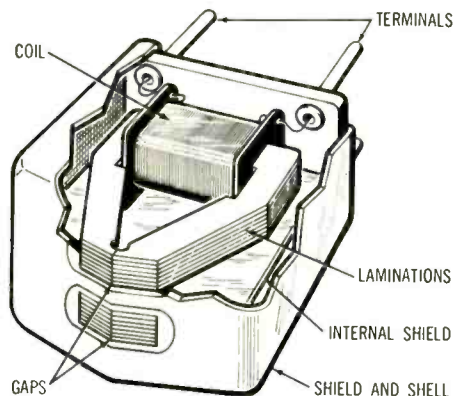


Figure 3 (above) depicts a stereo tape head with one of its two gaps misaligned. This will decrease high-frequency response of one channel.

TAPE HEADS



microinches. But if a head is intended for playback (or record-playback), it must have a gap of 100 microinches or less in order to reproduce high frequencies at tape speeds slower than $7\frac{1}{2}$ ips. On the other hand, if the playback or record-playback head is to be used only at speeds of $7\frac{1}{2}$ ips or faster, its gap can be increased to about 200 microinches for increased efficiency.

An erase head has a relatively wide gap in order to subject each section of tape to the erasing field for as long as possible. A 5,000-microinch gap is typical for an erase head.

Now let us examine some important aspects of tape-head performance, and see what design factors are involved.

Treble response. A playback head must have a narrow gap in order to provide good treble response at low tape speeds. In addition, the edges of the gap must be sharp, smooth, and parallel. Otherwise the gap, although physically narrow, will behave magnetically as though it were much wider. When the machine employs a tape-tension system instead of pressure pads, the shape of the face of the head becomes important, in that treble response is influenced by the closeness of the tape-to-head contact at the gap. Stereo heads pose the problem of gap colinearity, as illustrated in Figure 3. That is, the two gaps must be in exactly the same straight line, or the head cannot be adjusted for accurate azimuth alignment for both gaps. If the gaps are not colinear, treble response must suffer on one channel or the other—or else on both channels if a compromise azimuth adjustment is made.

Low distortion. Because tape magnetization is determined by the trailing edge of the record head's gap, this edge should be extremely straight and sharp. The record head should have a relatively wide gap to permit the lower frequencies to penetrate deeply into the tape's magnetic coating and thereby be recorded at minimum distortion. Use of a narrow-gap dual-function record-playback head for recording purposes may cause distortion at low frequencies. If the record head is poorly made and inefficient—because of the type of core material employed, an excessively narrow gap, or other factors—a large audio

current may be needed to drive it, and such a current is available only at the cost of increased distortion.

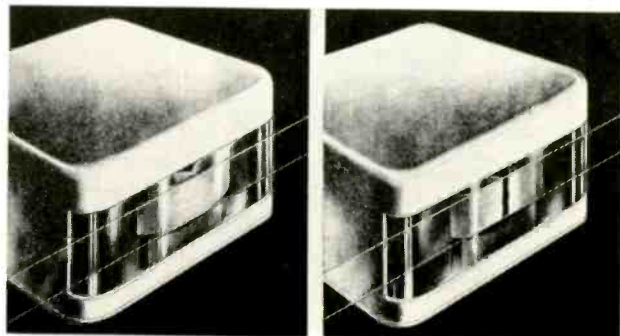
Signal-to-noise ratio. The amount of signal voltage generated by the playback head can be maximized not only by using a large number of turns of wire in the coil but also by using efficient magnetic material in the core. Output also depends on gap width: as the gap is made narrower, output decreases. For a given high-frequency response, a laminated-core head permits a wider gap and greater output. It is worth noting that there is nothing to gain and something to lose (signal-to-noise ratio) by using a playback head with a very narrow gap if the machine's slowest speed is $7\frac{1}{2}$ ips.

Hum pickup. The question of hum is part of the signal-to-noise problem, but it merits separate discussion because of its importance. The signal output of the playback head is extremely small and gets smaller as the frequency of the signal goes lower. Bass frequencies therefore require a great deal of boost in the playback amplifier. Any hum picked up by the playback head is also amplified and therefore likely to become annoying. High-quality playback heads are encased in a special metal housing that acts as a shield against hum sources, such as motors and transformers. Further protection against hum may be provided by shielding materials that are interposed between the head assembly and other parts of the machine. The construction of the playback head's coil and core also affects hum pickup.

Crosstalk. The signal in one section of a stereo head tends to leak through to the other section because of interaction between the two separate magnetic fields within the head. To minimize crosstalk, the maker of a high-quality head strives for maximum physical separation between the head sections (consistent with performance requirements), and uses shielding material not only in the casing of the head, but between the two sections, as shown in Figure 1.

Erasure. Not all erase heads completely remove previous recordings from the tape. Low frequencies, which penetrate deeply into the tape's magnetic coating, are a particular problem. The effectiveness of the erase head's magnetic field depends in great part upon the head's core

This simplified drawing shows a full-track head before (left) and after (right) excessive wear has widened its critical gap.



3M COMPANY

material. It also depends upon an optimum gap width—wide enough to permit the field to span and penetrate an appreciable portion of the tape coating, yet not so wide that the efficiency of the head is reduced. Some heads employ double erase gaps, side by side, so that the tape is subjected to two erasing fields in succession.

Life expectancy. In addition to greater efficiency, laminated-core construction makes for increased head life because it permits a deeper gap. The deeper the gap, the greater the amount of wear that can be sustained before the gap widens and a new head is needed. A laminated-core head should wear approximately twice as long as a solid-core head.

HAVING examined what a designer does to maximize tape-head performance and life, let us see what steps the home recordist can take toward the same ends.

To maintain good treble response, the heads and pressure pads (if any) should be cleaned and the heads demagnetized after each eight to ten hours of use. The azimuth alignment should be checked perhaps once or twice a year, also in the interest of treble response. To insure long head life, the careful recordist should use tapes of good quality, since low-quality tapes may cause rapid head wear through abrasion. On this same point, avoid tape-to-head contact during fast rewind and fast forward. One manufacturer has noted that head life can be about doubled if the machine uses tape lifters during fast forward and rewind. If a machine has no lifters, the tape can usually be removed from the loading slot and wound directly from reel to reel.

Care must be exercised not to scratch the face of the head during cleaning or demagnetizing. It is a good idea to put cellophane tape around the part of the demagnetizer that contacts the heads. Similarly, precautions must be taken against subjecting the heads to strong external magnetic fields, to temperature extremes, and to mechanical shocks.

Ultimately, the head life a user can expect depends upon his choice of tape machine. The better machines are designed and finely adjusted to minimize head wear. Good mechanical adjustment, aside from influencing flutter, wow, and output, also has a contribution to make in the area of head life. Tape speed is another factor to be considered, in that one can expect more hours of head life for slow-speed operation than for fast-speed.

Except for a performance check by a competent technician with the proper instruments, there is no infallible guide as to when a head should be replaced. The number of hours of use is not a reliable guide because so much depends, as indicated above, on the specific transport mechanism and the tape used.

When the recorder is new, it is a good plan to tape a disc that has good high-frequency response—with cymbals, triangles and so forth—and compare the tape repro-

duction with the original. Note the difference, if any, and whether the use of the treble tone controls on the amplifier can make the tape sound closer to the original. Note down the control settings and degree of correspondence. Assuming that the recording was made at the tape machine's highest speed (probably 7½ ips), where the fidelity is greatest, and that the treble response was originally satisfactory, the same A-B comparison a year or two later will reveal whether there has been a significant decline in treble response. If there has, the head or heads involved in recording and playback should be inspected for wear. There is, of course, the possibility that treble loss is due instead to dirt on the heads, magnetization of the heads, azimuth misalignment, a change in the bias current fed to the record head, or weak tubes.

One can judge the efficiency of the erase head by ear. Record something on the tape, erase it (by putting it through the record process again, but this time with no input signal), play the tape, and listen for any remaining signal. If the head once erased well and now it doesn't, this should be apparent. But although it may appear that the erase head should be replaced, this is not necessarily so. Perhaps insufficient high-frequency current is being supplied to the erase head, because of the deterioration of some electronic component. Perhaps the erase head is mispositioned vertically, so that its gap fails to span the same portion of the tape as the gap of the record head.

In the case of a playback or record-playback head, the gap is ordinarily so fine as to be invisible to the unaided eye. If the gap is readily visible, the head is suspect. If the gap of a record or playback or erase head, when viewed through a magnifying lens, appears ragged rather

The author is grateful to the following people for their kind help in the preparation of this article: Mr. C. J. LeBel, of Audio Devices; Mr. Howard P. Ladd, of Concord Electronics; Mr. Thor Johnson, of the Nortronics Company; and Mr. James J. Cavin, of Thompson Ramo Wooldridge (Bell Sound).

than perfectly straight and sharp, the head is unlikely to perform well. Visual inspection should take into account the general appearance of the face of the head. If the face appears scored or otherwise greatly worn, it may be a candidate for replacement.

It is highly desirable that a replacement head be physically and electrically identical to the original head. Substantial circuit adjustments or changes may be necessary if the replacement head has different electrical characteristics. And even though the replacement is an identical unit, it is a good idea to have a technician check the bias and audio currents fed to the record head, and the high-frequency current fed to the erase head. Should the replacement not be an identical unit, it is *imperative* that these checks be made, followed by whatever circuit adjustments may be necessary.

The Secrets -and Joys- of Recording Children

TO CAPTURE THOSE FLEETING, MAGICAL MOMENTS OF CHILDHOOD,
SPECIAL RECORDING TECHNIQUES MUST BE CALLED INTO PLAY

by *Byron G. Wels*

IN MY capacity as a writer and editor, I use a tape recorder for interviews. In my other capacity, that of father to three children, I frequently use a recorder to preserve the voices of my children as they grow toward adulthood. Thus, in the preparation of this article, I have drawn mostly on my own experiences. But I have also received the advice of some professionals in the recording field—the best-known of these being Allen Funt. Mr. Funt is, of course, the creator of the television program called *Candid Camera*, and his specialty is capturing the wonder and wisdom of childhood on film and tape.

When preparing to tape-record children, the first thing to decide is where to put the microphone. There are two schools of thought here. Mr. Funt, representing one school, advocates the use of a concealed microphone, so that the child doesn't know he is being recorded, and is therefore unself-conscious. It has been my experience, however, that a concealed-microphone interview is very tricky to arrange in the typical household. Every family has a routine the children are familiar with, and any departure from it will arouse suspicion. If the children usually do their lessons, or play, or watch television after

dinner, they will know something's afoot if they are suddenly called to the living room and asked a series of questions. Because of this, I have been led to use an exposed microphone (which greatly simplifies the equipment setup), and to explain to the child that we are going to make a recording.

But regardless of whether the microphone is concealed or out in plain view, you will want a long microphone cable. Most tape-recorder microphones come with only about six feet of cable, and this is not long enough for any kind of recording flexibility. You can purchase a ready-made extension cable, you can have one made up for you by a television repairman, or you can make your own. If you wire your own, note that if the microphone has a built-in switch, you may need a cable that has two or more conducting wires in addition to its braided-metal shield. The appropriate cable and connectors can be purchased at any large radio-parts store. The wires in the cable are color-coded, so as long as your extension cable connects the same color of wire to the same pin number on the connectors at each end of the cable, you can't go wrong.

If you decide to use a concealed microphone, *how* you



Some friends of "Candid Camera" man Allen Funt are more relaxed when the mike is hidden—here, it is in a toy train's smokestack.

conceal it will depend on the recording situation and the type of microphone you are using. A simple way of concealing the microphone is to place it inside a familiar object in the room—perhaps in a basket of fruit, or a magazine rack. This is assuming, of course, that a small microphone is used. Larger microphones can also be employed, but disguising them takes a bit more in the way of ingenuity. However, with some paper and some ribbon and wool, you can transform almost any microphone into a toy or a puppet. Examples are shown in the accompanying photographs. Whatever the disguise, be sure that the microphone is sensitive enough to pick up the voices without your having to turn up the tape recorder's volume control so high that hum and noise become obtrusive. Also, when hiding the microphone in something, make certain the sound can get through to the microphone. A piece of porous cloth will pass sound well enough for most purposes. In all cases, of course, you should test out the system thoroughly before putting it to use.

Another very satisfactory technique is to use a wireless microphone, such as the Kinematix Imp II/M-222 (\$50) or the Cadre C-50 (\$45). These units, despite their small

size (same as a pack of cigarettes) are combination microphones and FM transmitters. They pick up the sound and broadcast it to your FM tuner—which can be several rooms away—without wires. From there, the signal can be fed to your tape recorder.

One of Allen Funt's favorite devices for concealing a microphone is a small toy train. Its smokestack is a disguised miniature microphone. Should the child reach for the train, Mr. Funt reaches for it also, in a natural way. It stays put. My own attempts at hiding microphones have not always been rousing successes, as suggested earlier. On one occasion, I prepared an elaborate scheme to tape-record my young son. I hid one of the Kinematix units in the zip-up stomach pocket of a Teddy bear, and carefully set up everything in the living room. During dinner, we had some family discussions about the importance of "serious conversations," and after dinner, while Mommy did the dishes, my son and I retired to the living room for some "serious talk." Right off the bat, my son spotted the Teddy bear—and dutifully picked it up and carried it back to his bedroom, where it belonged. Then he returned to the living room, saying, "Let's talk!"

(Continued overleaf)

Many potentially fine recordings of children are spoiled by inadequate advance preparation. At a crucial point someone enters the room, or a car passes outside, or the telephone rings. Fortunately, these factors are fairly easy to control. All that is necessary is to close the windows and doors in advance, and put up a sign reading, "Recording in progress—do not disturb." As for the telephone, just lift the receiver off its cradle. Any important callers are sure to try again.

Aside from preparing your recording setup thoroughly, the main secret of recording children is to use plenty of tape. Allen Funt tells me he exposes over forty thousand feet of film for each half-hour show. Then he selects and uses the best. By the same token, you should expect that only about one third of what you record will be worth saving. But don't forget that you can erase and re-use the dull sections of the tape for making other recordings. I am assuming, of course, that you are handy enough with a tape splicer to edit the tapes, separating the good parts from the dull ones. (Incidentally, if you plan to do even simple splicing, you must record *only* in one direction. Otherwise, the tapes will be impossible to splice.)

People quite often develop an interest in tape recorders soon after they have had their first child. They want to preserve the sounds their baby is making, or perhaps send a recording to a doting but distant grandparent. But babies are far from being easy subjects to record. In fact, for a recordist, babies are notoriously uncooperative—if not innately perverse. You can sit there holding the microphone in front of them, tape running out, and they calmly drop off to sleep. At best, you will

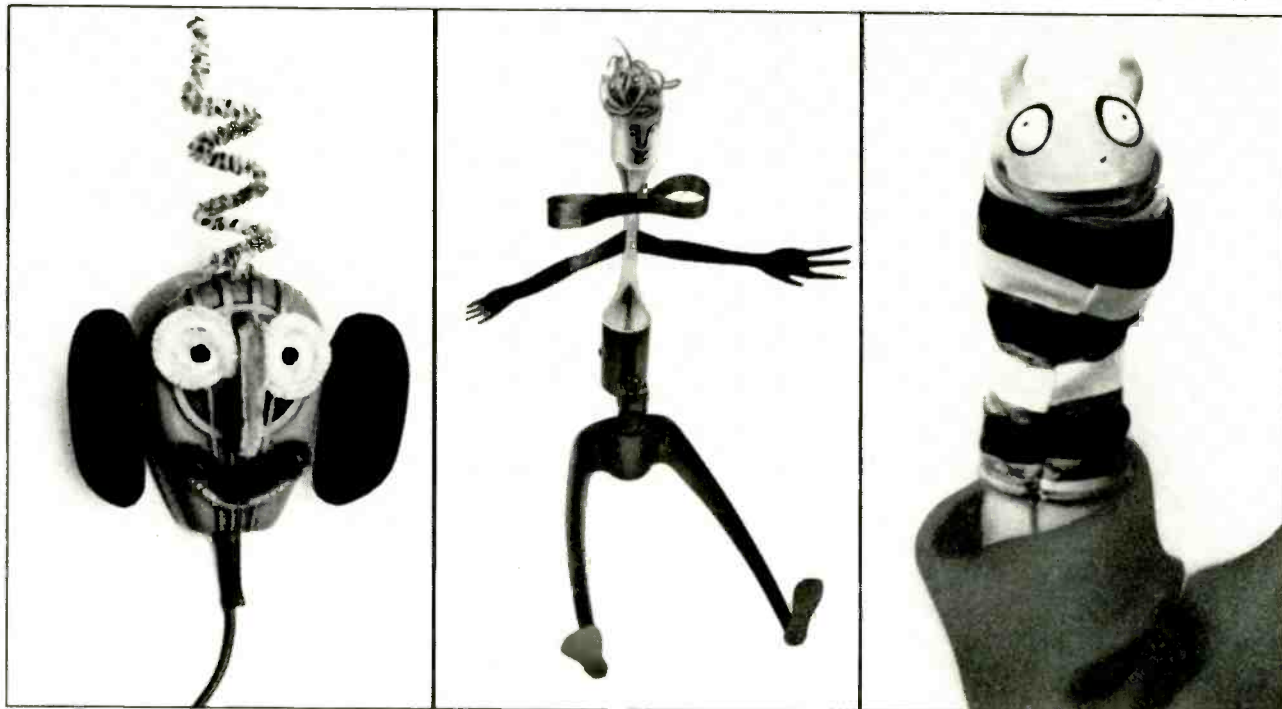
get a series of coos and gurgles, and if you are really lucky, an occasional noise that can be interpreted as a "mamma" or "dadda." The parents, meanwhile, are doing all they can to make the baby "talk." What you usually get on tape as a result of this is some pretty awful stuff from the parents and very little, if anything, from the baby.

THE first thing to do, therefore, is get the parents out of the room. Then, using a piece of string, suspend the microphone between the sides of the crib so it hangs down over the baby. It might be well to do some microphone-camouflaging at this point, for many an infant has been known to stare by the hour at a shiny microphone without emitting a peep. You might get things going by tickling the baby's foot. Most infants will react with a chuckle or two. Repeat the tickling when necessary. After you have enough happy sounds, apply a gentle pinch where it will do the most good, and you will get a high-fidelity howl. Obviously, it is best not to have the parents present at this stage.

Preschool children are a special joy to work with. A child's world is full of wonder. How does the milkman know how much milk to leave? Why does water turn to ice in the refrigerator? What makes the toast pop up? It's a wonderful, wonderful world.

Preschool children are often shy, but once you bring them out of their shells, they'll talk on almost any topic, and at length. Allen Funt has a sure-fire way of warming them up. He simply asks the child to blow out a match. When the child blows out the match, he also blows away his inhibitions. And by praising the child for a job well-

One way to get better recordings of preschool children is to disguise the microphones—perhaps making them look like toys or puppets.



MICROPHONES AND MICROPHONING

SPECIAL consideration should be given to the microphones and microphoning techniques used when recording children. The type of microphone used will determine, to some extent, the amount of background noise heard on the tape. When using an omnidirectional microphone (most microphones supplied with tape recorders are omnidirectional), best results—in terms of background noise—will be obtained when the subject is from one to three feet from the microphone. A directional or cardioid-pickup microphone, which has a rather narrow sensitivity pattern, makes it easier to record at a distance, but may make it difficult to pick up both sides of an interview.

Some radio-parts companies offer relatively inexpensive "spy" microphones that look like tie clips or wrist watches. Although these are convenient to use, their limited frequency response may result in an unnatural voice quality, or their output voltage may not be high enough for your recorder. This type of microphone should therefore be purchased only with a money-back guarantee. Also listed in radio-parts catalogs are a number of inexpensive crystal microphone elements and lapel microphones that are useful for unobtrusive microphoning. For example, Lafayette Radio lists a high-output 1 $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-diameter lapel microphone (Number 99G-4510) for \$1.95.

The most obvious place to record a child—the child's own playroom—is unfortunately one of the worst possible recording locations. A child usually will not stay quietly seated and "on mike" when he is in his own room, and the typical playroom—with its hard floors and unpadded furniture—has terrible acoustics. For this reason, it is best to record in a living room or a bedroom, where drapes, rugs, and upholstered furniture will absorb echoes.

done, you can put yourself on his side. Don't be afraid, incidentally, to argue with a child while making a recording. Go ahead, but do it in such a way that you can edit your voice out of the tape later. And don't settle for "yes" or "no" answers, either. Keep things moving with a "How come?" or "Why?"

Little girls are very clothes-conscious, and a comment about a little girl's dress is almost guaranteed to start her talking. Allen Funt sometimes asks a little girl what books she has read lately, and then acts out a playlet with himself as the hero and the child as the heroine. Remember that in tape-recording children, all is fair. You can even tell a white lie if it will help. For example, I was recently asked to record a youngster who had a curiously deep, gravelly voice. Unfortunately, whenever the tape recorder was turned on the kid would clam up. Finally, I told the child there was a man in the microphone (whose name was, of course, Mike), and that he might be induced

to come out and play. What followed was threats, cajolery, coaxing—anything to get Mike to come out—and the result was a beautiful tape that delineated the child's personality better than any photograph could.

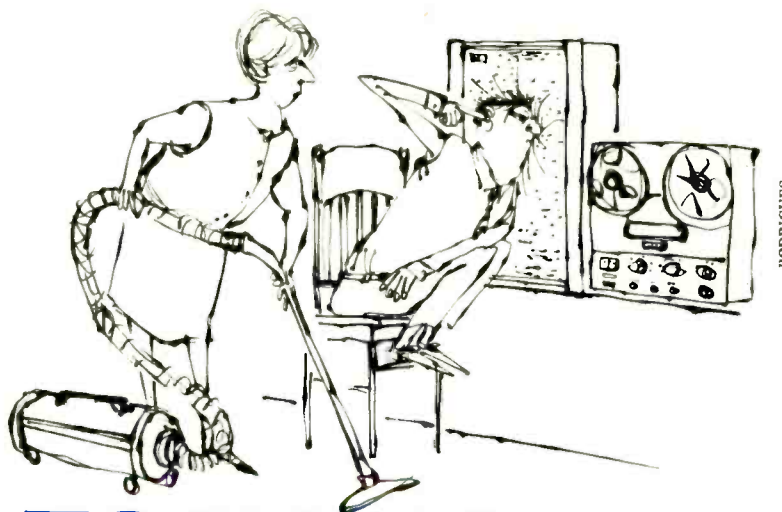
When it comes to recording school-age children, I agree with Allen Funt about concealing the microphone and tape recorder. Most of today's kids are pretty sharp. If you give them an inkling they are being taped, they'll be "on" in no time flat. But you will have to hide the microphone carefully, and then be sure to stay within its pickup range. (Incidentally, Kinematix has announced a gadget that adjusts the recording volume automatically—this should be useful in recording children of any age.)

Try engaging a child in a serious conversation. Almost all youngsters know what they want to be when they grow up. Little girls want to be nurses, or ballet dancers, or perhaps just mothers; and little boys run the gamut from policeman to doctor to garbage man and back again. Be sure to ask them why they've chosen a particular occupation. Sometimes you will get some startling answers. Allen Funt, for example, once asked a little boy why he wanted to be a doctor, expecting some noble reply. The answer was, "Because doctors kin stick needles in people."

You'll find that you can do marvelous things with a child and a tape recorder. You will capture irreplaceable moments that would otherwise be lost forever. At the very least you will get new insights into the way children think. And if you are lucky, children may show you the way into their magic world, and you will rediscover, through their eyes, the special wonders that surround them. It will be the greatest discovery of your life. It was for me.

The Kinematix Imp II/M-222 (left) and Cadre C-50 (right) wireless microphones are readily concealable in a cigarette pack.





SIGNAL-TO-NOISE RATIO IN TAPE RECORDERS

IS THE RECORDER YOU PLAN TO BUY SUFFICIENTLY FREE OF HUM AND HISS?
HERE ARE SOME SIMPLE CHECKS YOU CAN MAKE IN THE STORE.

By **HERMAN BURSTEIN**

HIGH-FIDELITY buffs are usually far more concerned with a component's frequency response, distortion, or power output than with its noise level. Nonetheless, noise—or, more properly, the absence of it—is an important factor in high fidelity. The signal-to-noise ratio (abbreviated S/N) indicates how the strength of the desired audio signal compares with that of the noise. "Noise" includes hum, hiss, sputter—in fact, any undesired signal—originating either in the amplifying or reproducing equipment.

Noise problems beset all high-fidelity components (and all electronic equipment, for that matter), but they are particularly troublesome in tape recorders. Possibly because of this, S/N specifications of tape recorders are frequently confusing, and sometimes are not given at all.

Noise arises in tape recorders from several causes. To begin with, the maximum output voltage of a tape-recorder head is minute—about one-quarter of that produced by the usual magnetic phono cartridge. This is important because, since all amplifiers either pick up or produce noise, the smaller the input signal, the more likely it is to be overshadowed by noise during playback. And with every reduction in track width (as we have gone from full-track to half-track to quarter-track recording), the head puts out less signal, and the ratio between signal strength and tape-recorder noise level decreases.

Another difficulty results from bass compensation. The signal coming out of a recorder's playback head—like that from magnetic phono cartridges—requires frequency compensation in the form of bass boost. This inevitably and unfortunately accentuates hum. As a matter of fact, at 60 cycles—the frequency at which hum is most commonly troublesome—the NAB 7½-ips tape playback

curve calls for more than twice as much boost as the RIAA disc playback curve.

In addition to the internal noises that trouble all electronic equipment, tape recorders must further contend with noise caused by the bias oscillator. (Bias is the high-frequency signal fed to the record head along with the audio signal in order to lower distortion and improve dynamic range.) Unless the bias waveform is completely symmetrical, high-frequency noise is registered on the tape along with the recorded signal. Also falling into the category of noise are the traces of signal left on the tape by an imperfect erase head.

All of this helps explain why a half-track tape recorder with an S/N of 55 db is considered excellent, even though a 55-db S/N is not particularly remarkable in an electronic component, such as a power amplifier. And if a tape recorder can achieve S/N of over 50 db on a quarter-track (rather than a half-track) basis, this is indeed cause for rejoicing. More commonly, at 7½ ips, quarter-track home tape recorders will have an S/N ranging from 45 to 50 db, which is usually satisfactory.

How does one check S/N? A 400-cps sine-wave test signal is recorded on a tape at a level that produces 3 per cent harmonic distortion of the signal. (On musical material, peak signals generally occur around 400 cycles, and experience has shown that a recording is essentially distortion-free if peak signals do not exceed about 3 per cent harmonic distortion.) The tape is played back, and the amount of 400-cps signal recorded on the tape is measured. The same length of tape is again put through the recording process, but this time with no input signal. The "blank" tape is then played back, and its output level is measured once more. Whatever output there is consists

of hum and hiss produced by the record and playback amplifiers, noise caused by the bias waveform, and imperfectly erased remnants of the previously recorded 400-cps test signal. The ratio of the first measurement to the second, expressed in decibels, is the signal-to-noise ratio.

The above discussion is based on the accepted method of measuring S/N, and is the one used by leading tape-recorder manufacturers. Other methods are also used, and an explanation of these other methods, and how to convert the resultant S/N specifications to the standard, are given in the accompanying box. Unfortunately, in a shopping situation this information may be of slight help. You may find that there are no specifications available, or that what specifications there are appear to have been produced in the manufacturer's advertising department, rather than in the laboratory.

Here, then, are some in-store tests you can make that in all cases should outrank the specification sheets in importance.

Using fresh or bulk-erased tape, set up the machine to record your voice. Use either the recorder's microphone or a standard good-quality unit, and adjust the recording gain appropriately. Usually this will mean that the recording-level indicator will just reach the overload point on the loudest peaks. Record your voice for about a minute, then unplug the microphone (without readjusting any of the controls) and allow the machine to run

for another thirty seconds or so before shutting it off.

Next rewind the tape and play it back through high-quality equipment, adjusting the recorder's playback volume control until your voice is reproduced at lifelike volume. At this volume level, hum and hiss should be barely audible in comparison to your voice. Let the tape proceed to the thirty-second unrecorded portion. If the noise level now drops even further, this indicates that much of the noise originated in the recording room and is not the fault in the recorder.

Now, stop the tape (with the pause control, if one is present), but otherwise leave the machine in the playback mode. Turn up the volume control almost to the maximum, and note the noise level. Now restart the tape. There should be a perceptible increase in noise. This noise comes from the tape, rather than from the machine. If there is no increase in noise when the tape starts running, this suggests that the tape machine is producing excessive noise—so much that the noise from the recorder is masking the normal slight hiss from the tape.

Another test is to record a stereo record on tape, and then play back the original disc and the taped copy simultaneously. Switch back and forth between the two, and listen for how much more hum and hiss is on the taped version than on the original record. The very best recorders will add only a very small—sometimes unnoticeable—amount of noise to the recorded program.

CONVERTING SIGNAL-TO-NOISE SPECIFICATIONS

THERE are a number of ways of specifying S/N in addition to the generally accepted way described in the accompanying article. Sometimes the reference tone on the tape (usually 400 cycles but occasionally 250, 700, or 1,000 cps) is recorded at a 1, 2, or 5 per cent harmonic-distortion level—or is even the maximum signal that can be put on the tape (tape saturation). The reference tone may also be 6 db below saturation or 12 db below saturation.

Fairly often the reference level is described as "0 VU" or, synonymously, as being "at operating level." This applies to machines with VU meters, and means that the reference level is that which drives the VU meter to the 0 mark when recording. Or the reference level may be stated as -10 VU, which is simply 10 db lower than the 0-VU point.

The S/N is occasionally determined on the basis of "a reference tape" or, more explicitly, on the basis of "a reference tone at standard operating level." This refers to a test tape that contains a recorded test tone with which the machine's noise level can be compared.

Various S/N specifications can be compared by converting them to the standard specifications based on 3 per cent harmonic distortion. For example:

Reference tone at 1 per cent harmonic distortion: Add 6 to 8 db. For example, if S/N is rated at 48 db based on a reference tone at 1 per cent distortion, the rating becomes about 54 to 56 db based on 3 per cent distortion.

Reference tone at 2 per cent harmonic distortion: Add 3 to 4 db to the S/N specification.

Reference tone at 5 per cent harmonic distortion: Subtract about 6 db from the S/N specification.

Reference tone at tape saturation: Subtract about 8 db from the S/N rating.

Reference tone 6 db below tape saturation: This is roughly equivalent to S/N based on 3 per cent distortion. But to be on the safe side, subtract about 2 db from the S/N specification given.

Reference tone at 0 VU (or at operating level): Find out from the recorder's specifications or from the manufacturer how much distortion occurs when recording a 400-cps signal at a VU-meter level of 0. If 0 VU corresponds to 1 per cent distortion, add 6 to 8 db to the S/N specification. If 0 VU corresponds to 2 per cent distortion, add 3 to 4 db. If 0 VU corresponds to 3 per cent distortion, add nothing.

Reference tone at -10 VU: First add 10 db to the S/N specification. Then follow the procedure for the reference tone at 0 VU. For example, assume the S/N rating is 35 db relative to -10 VU, and the machine's specifications state that recording a 400-cycle signal at 0 VU results in 1 per cent harmonic distortion. Adding 10 db brings the S/N rating up to 45 db. Adding another 6 to 8 db (because 0 VU denotes 1 per cent rather than 3 per cent distortion) results in S/N of 51 to 53 db.

S/N based on "reference tape" or "reference tone at standard operating level": Generally the test tone referred to is at 1 per cent harmonic distortion. For example, Ampex test tape 31325-01, for use at $7\frac{1}{2}$ ips, contains a 700-cycle "reference tone at operating level" having 1 per cent distortion. Accordingly, add 6 to 8 db to the S/N specification.

No reference given: Write to the manufacturer and ask for the references on which S/N specification is based.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD

A LOOK AT SOME OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS OF TAPE,

ANYONE who purchases recording tape soon discovers that a "name-brand" tape may cost twice as much as a "white-box" or "non-name-brand" tape. The home recordist quite naturally wants to know what he will get for the extra money he is asked to spend for name-brand tape. For an answer to this question, we must examine the factors that go into the production of a quality recording tape.

In essence, magnetic tape consists of a coating of iron-oxide particles on a plastic base material. The most popular type of home recording tape is wound 1,200 feet to the 7-inch reel, and has a coating about 0.5 mil thick (a mil is one-thousandth of an inch) and a base about 1.5 mils thick. Long-playing tapes have somewhat thinner coatings and much thinner bases.

The magnetic coating for the tape is made by mixing the iron oxide together with resins, binders, solvents, and other additives. These all go into a large tank that looks (and works) something like a cement mixer. In the revolving cylinder of the tank are steel balls that grind and blend the coating materials into an extremely fine viscous mixture. This mixture is applied to the tape base material, which at the time is in the form of rolls about two feet wide. Before the mixture dries, the tape is exposed to a strong magnetic field. This field physically orients the iron-oxide particles in a manner optimum for audio tape recorders—that is, parallel to the length of the tape. (A different orientation, incidentally, is optimum for video tape.) The tape is then slit into 1/4-inch strips and wound onto reels. The winding must be uniform and at constant tension.

A tape's magnetic characteristics determine its frequency response, sensitivity, output, distortion, noise, and print-through. In arriving at a particular oxide formulation, the manufacturer develops what he considers is an optimum compromise among conflicting performance considerations. For example, extending the high-frequency response might entail a rise in distortion or in

print-through. Or higher output might be achieved at the price of treble loss. The formulation is determined also with an eye to the characteristics of the tape recorders currently available. It obviously would be foolish to design a tape that would be incompatible with the general run of home recorders.

The magnetic performance of a tape further depends on physical factors. These include the even dispersion of the iron-oxide particles in their resin binder, the thickness and uniformity of the oxide coating, and the thickness and uniformity of the base. All of these are highly critical and require elaborate quality-control measures at every stage of manufacturing. One manufacturer, for example, reports that more than one hundred quality-control tests are

Iron oxide is the main ingredient of a tape's magnetic coating.





RECORDING TAPE ?

AND AT THE WAYS THEY ARE CONTROLLED IN MANUFACTURE

By BURT HINES

made on each batch of tape, from the raw materials to the end product. Each reel must be consistent throughout its length, and standards must be maintained from one reel to another.

Now let us examine the specific effects that various aspects of tape manufacture have on the most important performance characteristics.

High-Frequency Response. Every tape has certain inherent difficulties in recording the higher frequencies. These treble losses are partly or completely compensated for by the machine's record and playback equalization. However, there are limits to the amount of treble-boost equalization that can be used without substantially in-

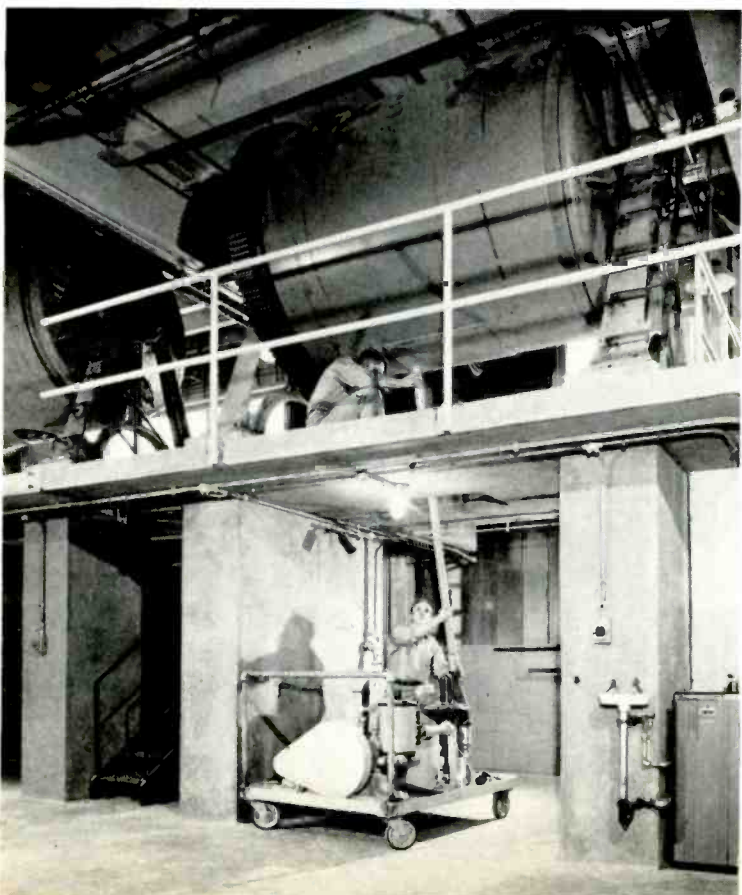
A revolving ball mill blends the coating materials together.

creasing noise and distortion. By modifying the oxide formulation, however, the manufacturer can boost a tape's treble sensitivity with but small sacrifice of other desirable characteristics. The thickness of the oxide coating also plays a part in the tape's treble response. (Good treble response is also facilitated by certain physical characteristics of the tape, as will be discussed later.)

Distortion and Output. These are interrelated characteristics because output denotes the maximum amount of signal that can be recorded on the tape for a given amount of harmonic distortion—usually specified as 3 per cent. The greater the tape's output, the greater the margin in playback between the audio signal and the noise produced by the tape and the machine—in other words, the better the signal-to-noise ratio. The amount of output from the tape is determined by the specific magnetic materials that are used in the oxide coating, and by the thickness of the coating.

Noise. There are two main types of tape noise. One is hiss, which is caused by randomly oriented magnetic groupings in the oxide coating. This noise is inherent in all tapes, but the better the tape, the lower the noise will be on playback. The other kind of tape noise is modulation noise, which occurs only in the presence of an audio signal and varies in intensity with the signal level. Modulation noise decreases the transparency and cleanness of the reproduced sound. It is caused by variations in the thickness and particle distribution of the oxide coating. These oxide variations are reproduced as a fuzziness behind the signal in playback. Tape noise is kept to a minimum by maintaining careful control of the oxide formulation, by dispersing the oxide particles evenly throughout the coating, and by applying the coating with a uniform thickness. It should be noted that the tape manufacturer deals with tolerances of a few millionths of an inch in controlling the thickness of the coating.

Sensitivity. This denotes the amount of signal that is recorded on the tape when a magnetic field of a given



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strength (from a record head) is applied. High sensitivity is desirable, for this results in improved signal-to-noise ratios in both recording and playback, but it does increase the risk of print-through. The tape should also be uniformly sensitive. Otherwise there would be variations in output from one section of the tape to another, or from one reel to another. This would be particularly noticeable if tapes from different reels were spliced together. High-quality tapes provide sensitivity that is within $\frac{1}{4}$ db throughout a reel and within $\frac{1}{2}$ db between tape reels of the same type number. The degree and uniformity of sensitivity are determined by the type of oxide and how well it is dispersed. The orientation of the magnetic-oxide particles also contributes to high sensitivity.

Print-through. Because tape is stored in tightly wound layers, there is a tendency for high-level, low-frequency recorded signals to be partially transferred by magnetic action to adjacent tape layers. This print-through sound may not be noticeable immediately after a tape is recorded. However, it intensifies with storage time, so that a month or a year after the recording was made, the print-through may become objectionable. The problem is aggravated by the use of thin-base tape because a thin base offers less of a barrier to print-through than does the conventional $1\frac{1}{2}$ -mil base. Manufacturers cope with print-through by adjusting the oxide formulation and suitably proportioning the thickness of the coating and the base.

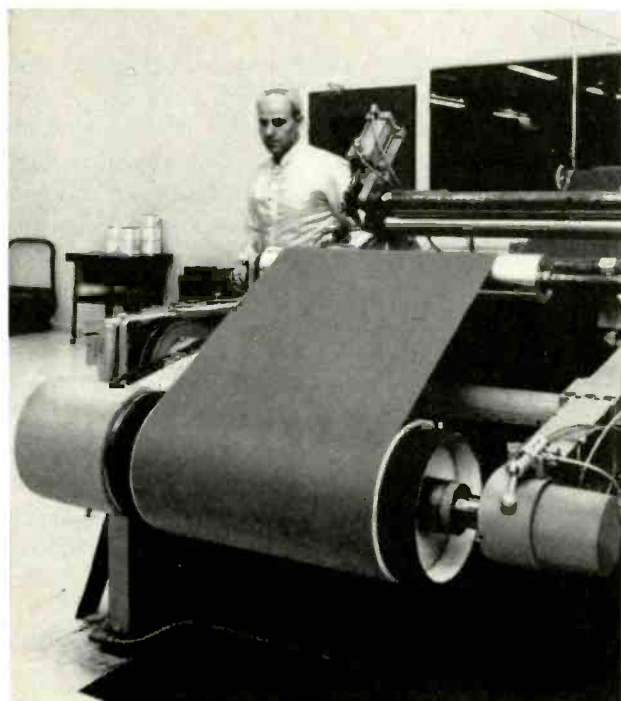
Bias Effects. Bias, which is a high-frequency current fed to the tape recorder's record head along with the audio signal, is needed to reduce the distortion and increase the sensitivity of the tape. Unfortunately, it also causes treble

loss. Therefore, the amount of bias current used is the best compromise among the requirements for minimum distortion, maximum tape sensitivity, and acceptable treble loss. (It is perhaps worth noting here that the crossfield head was developed to reduce treble losses during recording.) In any case, it is desirable that the tape perform adequately even if the bias is not optimum. It is also desirable that the amount of bias required, which normally differs from one brand or type of tape to another, remain a consistent value from reel to reel within a given brand and type of tape. Uniformity of the oxide formulation is the answer here.

Dropouts. This refers to brief but definite reductions in signal level during playback, and is caused by variations in coating thickness or dispersion. The problem is more severe in quarter-track operation than in half-track.

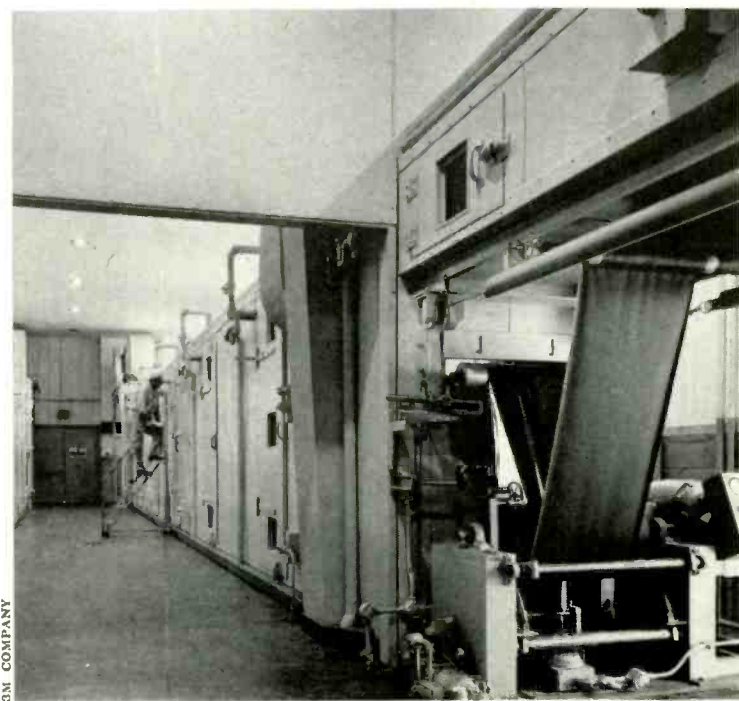
IT IS NOT generally appreciated that the base material has as vital a role to play in a tape's over-all performance as does its oxide coating. One of the obvious characteristics to be considered is the base's dimensional accuracy. The tape must be exactly $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch wide. If it is too wide, the tape will not ride properly in the tape guides. If it is too narrow, the tape will follow an erratic path as it crosses the heads. Any deviation from the correct path is equivalent to an incorrect azimuth and therefore results in treble loss. (Azimuth is the angle of the head gap with respect to the length of the tape, and to avoid serious treble loss it is vital that an angle of exactly 90 degrees be maintained in record and playback.) To facilitate steady, straight passage through the guides, the tape edges must

A roll of plastic base material is fed into a coating machine.



AUDIO DEVICES, INC.

The freshly coated plastic film is passed through a drying oven.



3M COMPANY

also be smooth, without undulations, serrations, or other irregularities. Dimensional stability is also necessary in that if the tape has a tendency to stretch, the recorded signal will be distorted. If the tape tends to curl or cup, close contact between the tape and the heads will be prevented, causing treble loss.

Intimate tape-to-head contact further requires that the magnetic coating be extremely smooth. If the iron-oxide particles tend to clump, or if foreign particles are embedded in the coating, they will prevent the tape from making perfect contact with the heads. Hence meticulous care is needed to insure an even dispersal of the iron oxide throughout the coating material, and in applying the coating to the base. The oxide coating also must be physically tough, for otherwise an excessive amount of it will rub off on the heads, shortening the life of the tape and impairing the performance of the heads. In addition to its toughness, the coating must be smooth enough not to cause excessive head wear through abrasion. For this reason, many tapes contain lubricating agents.

To minimize wow and flutter, tape squeal, and head wear, the oxide coating must contain a suitable amount of lubricant—usually a silicone. Yet it must not have too much lubricant, because this may cause the tape to slip or weave as it passes between the capstan and pressure roller, resulting in unsteady speed.

Abrupt starts and stops, and high-speed shuttling back and forth, subject the tape to sudden changes in tension that tend to break or stretch it. Hence the manufacturer is concerned with "break strength" and "yield strength," which express the pounds of force required to break the

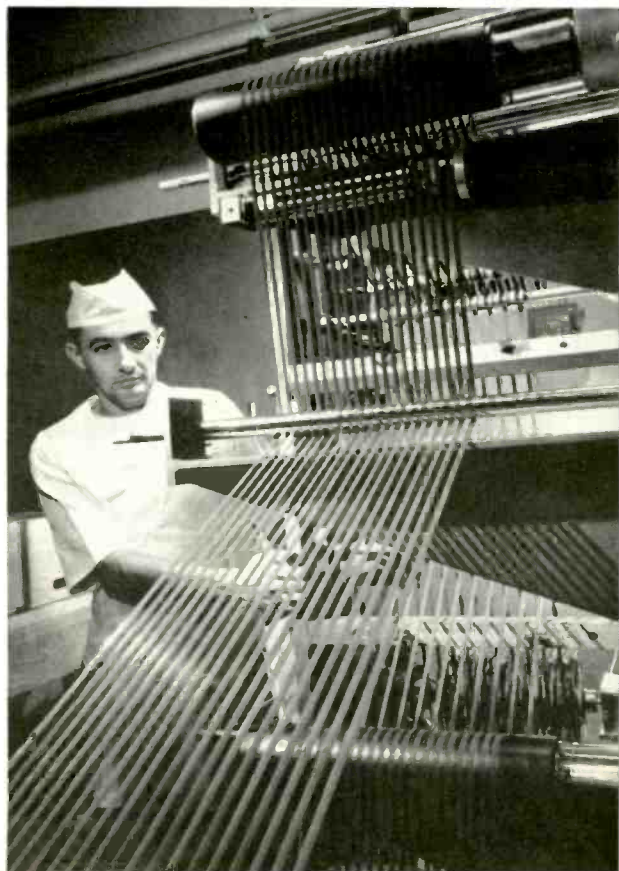
tape or stretch it a given amount. If a tape stretches considerably before it breaks, the stretched section is no longer usable and must be cut out before splicing; in the case of a recorded tape the resultant deletion will be quite noticeable. But if a tape stretches only a little before breaking, the effect on the recorded sound is insignificant. Therefore the manufacturer of a premium tape concentrates on minimizing "permanent elongation."

The physical characteristics of a tape include its ability to withstand the ravages of time, temperature, and humidity. Will these factors deform the tape? Embrittle it? Cause the coating to flake? Lead to tape squeal? The answers depend substantially on the materials and manufacturing processes that have been used.

Whether the superiority of top-grade tape is perceptible and meaningful will depend partly on the user's tape machine and other audio components. A high-quality setup capable of revealing all the nuances of recorded sound will tend to benefit from superior tape and to show up the faults of inferior tape. An inexpensive system, with appreciable built-in noise, distortion, and treble loss of its own, will benefit to a lesser degree from superior tape.

The case for using better tape depends primarily upon the user and his standards. A perfectionist is unlikely to seek out bargain tape. He knows that high fidelity depends upon attention to many details in all parts of the recording and reproduction process. He will not jeopardize the ultimate result by neglecting any detail. If the user has a keen ear and good equipment, he will probably want the best in tape in order to avoid the degradation in performance that will result from using less than the best.

A slitting machine cuts the coated tape into the required widths.



EASTMAN KODAK

Each tape must be inspected for physical and magnetic defects.



EASTMAN KODAK

4 SAINTS

Music Editor Robert Offergeld, composer William Flanagan, and poet Frank O'Hara discuss RCA Victor's newly reissued recording of Virgil Thomson's historic opera "Four Saints in Three Acts."

OFFERGELD: The only recording of Virgil Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts* is back in print after a ten-year absence—one deplored in the interval by many a critic. I think it is unquestionably the most important recording of American opera to date, and before we discuss this reissue (RCA Victor LM 2756), I'd like to sketch in a little background.

Four Saints is probably the only American opera we can call legendary—I'm using the word here chiefly about its history, not its character. The work is unique to begin with for having made its way in the world on its own. With the exception of *The Mother of Us All*—Thomson's second opera—*Four Saints* is pretty generally admitted to be our most impressive achievement in the field, and it is one of the scandals of our musical life that the Establishment has never lifted a finger to support it. Now, to make music history without official leverage is difficult enough for a symphony or chamber piece, as Charles Ives so bitterly discovered. But for an opera to do so (particularly a ground-breaking piece that can only be described as *organically* atypical) is unheard of.

Thomson completed *Four Saints* in France in 1928. It was not to receive its world premiere for six years, but it promptly began a sort of subterranean social life of its own. The composer played it here and there on the piano and it began to make talk, particularly among commuters on the then-flourishing New York-Paris intellectual run. This loosely affiliated but articulate group included no opera board members, and we can roughly describe the first *Four Saints* fans as professionally able and creatively oriented young Americans who normally headed for France during their academic summer vacations. They also promoted and bought expensive modern art and frequently read about one another's doings in *Vanity Fair*, *The New Yorker*, and *transition*. Their determination at length enlisted a roster of private patrons, and in 1934 they gave *Four Saints* a memorable first production in Hartford, Connecticut. The opera astonished almost everyone by at once moving on to Broadway and Chicago for an unprecedented sixty performances in its first season.

Now I think it may be important today to remind ourselves (and possibly some of the people who produce and record operas) just how big a cultural splash it actually made. For more than a year *Four Saints* pulled headlines from coast to coast—and not only musical ones. It spilled over into the news pages and the columns. Taxi-drivers who wouldn't have been caught dead in an opera house were

quoting "Pigeons on the grass, alas," from Gertrude Stein's mystifying libretto.

On another level, you'll recall, the avant-garde musical community had just discovered the shock value of dissonance and atonality. It now took due note of a cheeky young composer who was unimpressed by all that—one who wove waltzes, tangos, chorales, and other unlikely but melodious devices into a serious stage score. Besides communicating itself beautifully to the ticket buyers, this music somehow combined real innocence of heart with an intellectual sophistication that couldn't be shrugged off. It managed to be both forthright and subtle—as formidable in its way, and as American too, as the style of *Huckleberry Finn*.

Even more important, I think, was the fact that Thomson had demonstrated a way of circumventing the chronic official lethargy about American opera. He did this by creating a successful new working genre—serious opera on Broadway. And I think it can be demonstrated that this fact soon had its effect on such composers (and their producers) as Gershwin (whose *Porgy and Bess* came to Broadway a year after *Four Saints*), Weill, Blitzstein, Bernstein, and Menotti.

Be that as it may, and despite its proved effectiveness in performance, *Four Saints* was not recorded until 1947, when RCA Victor issued an abridged version conducted by the composer. This version, which contains approximately half the score and is performed by substantially the original cast, constitutes the present reissue. Each of us here has now heard it, and I'll begin by asking Bill Flanagan what he thinks of the sound.

FLANAGAN: Given its vintage—1947—I think we're lucky it sounds as good as it does.

OFFERGELD: I am even more impressed today by Thomson's *concept* of the sound—the fresh orchestral timbre, the un-hackneyed use of chimes, castanets, and especially the accordion. It also still astonishes me that *anybody* back in the Roaring Twenties thought that such a subject—not the drama but the *state* of being a saint—would make an opera at all. But I think this recording proves they were right. It worked then and it still does.

FLANAGAN: It does come off as an opera, but when you see it on the stage, it seems more a kind of ritual. The whole operatic continuity as such is invented out of the music, almost in spite of the words.

O'HARA: I think that the particular quality of its being operatic and then not operatic has been very influential in relation to, say, John Cage, and *bis* attitude toward music, and then also to the "happenings" we have around today—non-theatrical events that are nevertheless theatrical simply because they are staged.

OFFERGELD: It's remarkable how Thomson takes quite commonplace musical materials and makes them metaphors for extraordinarily solemn happenings. For example, that big oom-pah-pah waltz that launches the opera and later turns up as the Communion Hymn of all the saints—"When this you see remember me." His use of it dislocates the tune entirely from the nineteenth-century bandstands where it be-

IN 3 ACTS

gan. And his bit about "Leave later gaily, the troubador plays his guitar" is a fandango. It's tremendously amusing, seemingly coming out of nowhere.

FLANAGAN: The strange thing about it, of course, is that you go to *Four Saints* expecting to laugh your head off, and yet the cumulative effect is really quite moving. The "Pigeons on the grass" episode I remember particularly: in spite of those words, it's very austere, the solemn moment of the thing. And I've never quite been able to figure out why.

O'HARA: I think it's probably the handling of the prosody. The setting of this piece, along with *The Mother of Us All*, is probably the most important thing that has happened in American prosody. For poetry, it's as important as the work of William Carlos Williams and Ezra Pound. For one thing, I think Thomson is largely responsible for whatever vogue Gertrude Stein has in America, right now, for reading. Her *Three Lives* I realize is a very great work, but most people read it because it emulates Flaubert. The more difficult Stein works, the reading of them, has been tutored by Thomson in his operatic settings—as to how to read them, what they actually mean, and how to say them. He brought a kind of Americanization of diction to be very apparent. After that you didn't have to think of Swinburne any more. The minute you heard *Four Saints in Three Acts* you thought, "Thank God, I don't have to do that any more." If you are a poet, it's very important to you, and I feel it's largely responsible

for a great many developments in American poetry. In fact, the two Thomson operas are as important to the prosody of American diction as *Pelléas and Mélisande* is to modern French diction and as *Lulu* and *Wozzeck* are to German.

FLANAGAN: Exactly, and it's strange that Thomson is not ordinarily thought of as an innovative composer. I've always thought that nobody has ever really picked up the implications of what he's done.

OFFERGELD: Some critics tend to wrap him up with Satie and the Six—especially with Poulenc.

O'HARA: I think maybe Thomson is closer to Satie than he is to Poulenc.

FLANAGAN: This Satie comparison is always being made, and actually I don't see anything but the barest of similarities in the music itself. The similarity is in the thought that lies behind it. People are always saying that Thomson sounds like Satie, and he never really *sounds* like Satie at all.

O'HARA: I won't disagree about that, but it's true that what each of them does is clear and literal—simple in the best sense. And as for Poulenc, I think he is mainly at his best when he is most melodramatic or sentimental, whereas Thomson is never either. Nothing could be less sentimental than his treatment of *Four Saints*. I think the point of the text and of the whole work is that it is a presented *fact*—saints' lives are facts, something that is all closed off. You're not talking about a developing thing like Napoleon at Water-

Miss Gertrude Stein
(as a young girl)

v.c.

Virgil Thomson 14 October 1927

Musical Portrait of Gertrude Stein by Virgil Thomson



Christian Bérard's triple portrait of Virgil Thomson (above) represents the intent young composer that Paris knew in the Thirties. Stylistically Roman, these three musks are in effect the painter's visual pun on the name Virgil and the composer's classical inclinations. The violin score at the left is Thomson's musical portrait of Gertrude Stein as a girl. These illustrations, those on the next pages, and the title above are from the program for the first performance of "Four Saints in Three Acts."

loo and whether he could possibly have won the battle. You're talking about a thing that is already finished, and because of that you can deal with it. It's all settled, a *fait accompli*, and there it is.

OFFERGELD: If you're a saint, history as such has ceased for you—sanctity being a state of grace outside of time and not a public career.

O'HARA: Exactly. And it's really quite thrilling at the end to find out that all the saints know it too—when everybody onstage shouts that last line: "*W' bich is a fact!*" Anyway, it's an extremely unsentimental approach, to say, "All right, here it is, there you are."

FLANAGAN: I find that true with *Four Saints*, but I don't find it true with Thomson's second opera. I think there's sentiment in *The Mother of Us All*. However, I think there's something more to the point here than "Frenchness," and I don't think it can be stressed enough that *The Mother of Us All*, in particular, is probably the American opera.

OFFERGELD: The basic one.

FLANAGAN: Yes, and I also mean the really *American* opera. A point of view, perhaps, that could only have been gotten by his having lived in France, produced it. But as for the French thing in Thomson—it always seems to me that so much is made of it, one hears it so often and it's the thing to say about him—I wonder sometimes if it is really there all that much. What *is* French is having the nerve to do it in that particular way, I think, having the flippancy to do it in that particular way, having the nerve to be that simple. That's where the relationship with the Six comes.

OFFERGELD: I think if these two operas were presented today, the distinction you're making would be more obvious than it was in the Thirties. We've been taught to listen differently by what we've heard since. What Thomson does with old-time American hymn tunes, for example, sounds as basic to him now as it always has with Ives—a composer whom, incidentally, Thomson had never heard.

FLANAGAN: You've just passed over an interesting point. Does anybody have any theory as to why neither of these operas is done?

OFFERGELD: Well, I think a great many people have, and I wish we had the time to go into it. There may be some non-operatic history involved. We might recall that Thomson never backed away from any important scrap in the marketplace for the rights of composers, and even at this late date I suspect there are some diehards around—or shall I just say hucksters—who think that composers should be heard only so long as they're not heard *from*. In any case, every realistic theory I know of involves the politics of the present musical power structure, which is a vast and chilling subject.

Meanwhile, I think the important thing to remember is that Thomson's operas themselves are intact. Nothing about them has faded, and I am convinced that they would be even more popular today as theater pieces. I was discussing them with some younger people recently, students who as a matter of fact had only read about them. I found that the *Four Saints* libretto particularly still fascinated them. It is still one of those things in which each person finds his own kind of favorite quote. And I think this ready feeling today for what Gertrude Stein and Thomson did at that time is a very good sign. There is no question in my mind that the whole show would delight the younger generation. These operas are certainly not period pieces.

FLANAGAN: I agree. I don't think they're period pieces at all. But they are pieces that in a sense lead nowhere for other composers.

OFFERGELD: They haven't done so to date, at any rate.

FLANAGAN: There's no way they could, except possibly in a general way. Oh, one might learn something about the setting of words from them, but they're complete things unto themselves. They could only have happened that way with that writer and that composer.

OFFERGELD: A lot of people have wondered what Thomson would do with setting someone else's text and why he doesn't try it. Or even why, being a brilliant writer himself, he doesn't act as his own librettist.

FLANAGAN: He has said himself that there's a block in his imagination in this respect. Being able to sit down and write an essay and being able to imagine a work of that sort are quite different matters.

O'HARA: With regard to Stein, I don't think it's been pointed out that it's also unusual that a great writer could *do* an opera libretto.

OFFERGELD: It's as unusual as finding a composer to set it without making a single change in it.

FLANAGAN: In *Four Saints* Thomson set stage directions and all—practically the page numbers.

OFFERGELD: Stein's text as handed to him of course has numerous passages that are not assigned to any specific character. It was Thomson who divided it, sometimes in the most unexpected places, between the soloists and the antiphonal choruses and so forth. Yet it always sounds completely right when it happens, and I don't know any way to explain this procedure except to say that it is dictated musically.

FLANAGAN: It's a superimposed continuity. You could have taken exactly the same text and done something entirely different with it, because the words don't have that kind of precise sense or mood anyway.

O'HARA: Except that in relation to how the lines go, once

Bérard's portrait of Gertrude Stein pursues his Roman allusions.



you've heard his setting of it, I doubt if you could imagine any other. I doubt that Schoenberg could have done a *Four Saints in Three Acts* if he had ever heard Thomson. Of course I'm prejudiced.

FLANAGAN: Schoenberg couldn't have done it. Just by nature he couldn't have.

O'HARA: The most remarkable thing, I think, was just taking the thing and setting *all* the words. It's a very contemporary American idea. It's really almost like pop art. Someone gives you a text and you set every single word that's on the page. Therefore you don't have any more acts, scenes, or anything, so you have to make them up. Now that's something that no European composer thought of until—well, possibly after the Dadaists began to think that way. But even then not in the same way, not in the literal sense of it. And it is this very peculiar literalness that sets Thomson apart. It reminds me, once I heard him talk at Harvard. He gave a lecture to a poetry class that I attended and he was talking about Handel. He said that he thought Handel was very graphic in the sense that when Handel mentioned a hill, the music went up. And part of this special quality of *Four Saints* is this literal sense of locality. It's landscaped. It has a real sense in the music of where you are and what's happening, and the same thing occurs at the end of *The Mother of Us All* when you see the flag and the statue is revealed behind the flag. You really feel as if you're looking at the Statue of Liberty and that's what is so thrilling. You never looked that way at the real Statue of Liberty because it's corny. But he shows it to you musically and it's terrific. FLANAGAN: I think there's more than a tinge of romanticism in *The Mother of Us All*—the thing you don't find in *Four Saints*. The end of *The Mother of Us All* is really I think about Gertrude Stein herself in a way. It gets to be a feeling

Gertrude Stein's characteristic word portrait of Virgil Thomson.

PORTRAIT OF VIRGIL THOMSON

BY GERTRUDE STEIN

Yes silly. As silly. Yes silly yes as silly. A very easy failure takes place. Yes ally. As ally. As silly yes a very easy failure takes place. Very good. Very easy failure takes place. Yes very easy failure takes place.

When with a sentence of intended they were he was neighbored by a bean. Hour by hour counts. How makes a max day. Our comes back back comes out.

It is with a replica of seen. Then he was neighbored by a bean. Which is a wedding, wedding a walk, walk may do done delight does in welcome. Welcome daily is a home alone and our in glass turned around. Lain him. Power four lower lay lain as in case, of my whether eye lain or to less. What was obligation furnished first for leave release in dear. Dear darken. It never was or with a call. My waiting. Remain remark taper or tapestry stopping stopped with a fan at an angle colored like make it as stray. Did he does he was or will well and dove as entail cut a pursuit purpose demean different dip in descent diplomatic advantage about their this thin couple a outer our in glass pay white. What is it he admires. See used to it. Owned when it has. For in a way. Dumbfounded. A cloud in superior which it awake a satisfy found. What does it matter as it happens. Their much is a nuisance when they gain as well as own. How much do they like why were they anxious. None make wishing a pastime. When it is confidence in offer which they came. How ever they came out. Like it. All a part. With known. But which is mine. They may. Let us need partly in case. They are never selfish.

These quotations determine that demonstration is arithmetic with laying very much their happening that account in distance day main lay coupled in coming joined. Barred harder. Very fitly elephant. How is it that it has come to pass Whenever they can take into account. More of which that whatever they are later. Then without it be as pleased. In reflection their told. Made mainly violet in a man. Content in our meshes. Without any habit to have called Howard louder. That they are talkative. Most of all rendered. In a mine of their dilitation. Reading without referring. Just as it is. Come for this lain will in might it have taught as a dutless redoubt where it is heavier than a chair. How much can sought be ours. While or lean be beating very preparedly in a covering now. It is always just as lost.

Harden as wean does carry a chair intake of rather with a better coupled just as a team.

How could they know that it had happened. If they were in the habit of not liking one day. By the time they were started. For the sake of their wishes. As it is every once in a while. Liking it for their sake made as it is.

There is no need of liking their home.

about *her*, and it gets to be really quite subjective and quite moving—even breathtaking. I never heard it, as a matter of fact, until I caught the performance in Buffalo a year or so ago, and it was the first time I thought that Thomson had sort of . . . well, that he was not standing aside, that he had somehow got involved in his own piece a little bit, in the emotions of it.

O'HARA: I agree. At the end you feel about Susan B. Anthony practically the way you feel about *Tosca*. You love her. Which brings up another question. Do you think that the Thomson works are grand opera?

FLANAGAN: I think they are actually closer to it than anything else we have. It seems to me they're closer to it than something like *Vanessa*, say, which is supposed to be a grand opera.

OFFERGELD: That's what I was thinking of when I made the remark that they *are* operatic—that they work as opera. Now they're not narrative in the usual sense at all. The "events" are all verbal, melodic, orchestral. Yet the scenes, the visions, are all very real.

FLANAGAN: And very, very ritualistic.

O'HARA: I think they simply skip over a lot of nineteenth-century grand opera procedure. In fact they practically go back to Monteverdi. It was only in the nineteenth century that realistic drama took over opera, and Thomson has deliberately skipped over that phase. In effect he says: you are not going to be interested in this opera because of the situation, or because the heroine is being raped, or anything like that. You're going to be interested because of the way I set it, and what the music sounds like, and the nature of *what* we're talking about, or you're not going to be interested at all. It's more or less the way you have to be interested in the *Coronation of Poppaea*—in the whole event.

FLANAGAN: That's a good point, because it's far closer to that than to anything else.

OFFERGELD: It's also the way you're interested in the English masques, or the Rameau opera-ballets. This may be one of the reasons that *Four Saints* has had no direct imitators. It takes a prodigious lot of nerve to do that today. You don't see too many people trying it.

O'HARA: Most of them are looking for the kind of thing you find, for instance, in Lee Hoiby's recent opera. You get an enormous realism there, a beautiful play. And that of course becomes an anchor, but whether it's the right anchor for opera is another question.

OFFERGELD: The absence of realism in the Thomson operas is one of the things that makes them dateless. Today certain other works from roughly the same period are showing their topicality only too plainly, but not *Four Saints*. In fact, I can't think of anything that would lend itself better to contemporary repertory opera.

O'HARA: I think the City Center could mount it.

FLANAGAN: It's the mystery of my life why neither of Thomson's operas is done there. Nobody can figure it out, and apparently nobody dares ask.

O'HARA: What I am most anxious to see is a new production of *The Mother of Us All*. And of course a new opera, if Thomson would write it. New operas, I should say.

OFFERGELD: I'm happy to be able to report that Thomson is considering just that. In fact, I believe he has more than one possibility in mind. But I know that if I were a composer of operas, I'd be more inclined to write a new one if the ones I had already written were being performed. Until and enroute to that happy day, this Victor reissue is something we can only be grateful for.

INSTALLATION OF THE MONTH

STEREO: SIMPLY SHELVED



ONE OF THE special but occasionally overlooked virtues of component high fidelity is illustrated by John S. Martin's installation, shown above. Mr. Martin, who lives in St. Louis, was confronted by the problem of fitting a set of hi-fi components into his small bachelor apartment. He solved it by installing the system with a minimum of gadgets and cabinetwork. The main "equipment cabinet" is simply a walnut bookcase mounted on a chest of drawers. The amplifying components consist of a pair of Marantz 9A power amplifiers (seen on the topmost shelf) and a Marantz 7C stereo preamplifier. On a shelf between the preamplifier and the power amplifiers is a Scott 350B stereo FM tuner with a special front panel designed to match the face plates of the Marantz equipment. Immediately below the preamplifier is a Thorens TD-124 turntable with an ADC-Pritchard ADC-85 pickup system. The tape recorder is a Concertone Series 90, Model 93-4. A pair of Neumann U-67 variable-pat-

tern capacitor microphones are used for live recording.

Mr. Martin reports: "My speaker systems are the result of considerable experimentation, most of it wrong. I spent about a year remodeling the cabinets and reworking the crossovers. I chose JBL C-38 cabinets for their neat appearance and compact size. To make them even more rigid, I lined the interior surfaces with $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch plywood panels. These were then screwed down and glued with epoxy. The walls of the cabinet are now $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick. I took out the original front panels and then made new baffle boards from two thicknesses of $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch plywood. I cut these out for my three Stephens speakers (a 120W woofer, an 80FR mid-range, and a 5KT tweeter) and caulked and sealed the cabinet air-tight. I achieved, in effect, a very small (about 3 cubic feet) infinite-baffle enclosure—or a rather large acoustic-suspension enclosure, depending on how you look at it. In any case, I'm very satisfied with the sound I am getting."

HI FI/STEREO REVIEW'S SELECTION OF THE TOP RECORDINGS
BEST OF THE MONTH



CLASSICAL

A FORCEFUL NEW WORK BY BENJAMIN BRITTEN

Endless fantasy and invention are displayed in the Symphony for Cello and Orchestra

BENJAMIN BRITTEN'S recent Symphony for Cello and Orchestra is far and away his strongest nonvocal instrumental work in years—if not his strongest ever. In London's new recording of the work by Russian cellist Mstislav Rostropovich (for whom the piece was written "as a tribute") and the English Chamber Orchestra conducted by the



LOTTE MEITNER-GRAF

MSTISLAV ROSTROPOVICH
Excels in Britten tribute

composer, it has been brought to life with a clarity, a precision, and a kind of hard-boiled no-nonsense forcefulness that grips the listener's attention from first note to last.

The piece is remarkable on many counts. It is enigmatic and complicated, yet straightforward and razor-edged in its outlines. Although it is a "symphony in movements"—the title is not just chic, perverse nomenclature—it also functions as a display piece for the solo cello as effectively as any modern concerto for the instrument. But most remarkable and admirable of all is the endless fantasy and invention of the work's content—it broods, it sings, it goes momentarily cryptic or sinister. And, along with a curious toughness and hardness, it has at times a certain dour grandeur. Yet, each of the disparate expressive elements is woven into a musical continuity so inevitable, so sure in its musico-theatrical footing, that even a picky fellow com-

poser would be hard-pressed to question a note of it, alter a rhythm, or wish for the smallest change in the whole.

As is so often the case with Britten's work, if you listen to this symphony before reading its annotative description you will be astonished to discover that it is scored for so small an orchestra. Is there another composer living today who can get such an extraordinary variety of effects out of an instrumental combination as limited (for example) as the small orchestral forces that accompany Britten's opera *The Turn of the Screw*? I think not. The chamber orchestra in the present recording plays superbly under the composer-conductor's guidance. Britten's force and skill as a conductor of his own works grow in giant steps with

each new recording. Moreover, Rostropovich's cello playing here is strong, clean, and expressive. Although the music does seem to make certain concessions to the solo performer's Russian orientation, his reading of it is nonetheless stylistically remarkable in a work that remains Britten and British in essence.

The Haydn Concerto in C for Cello and Orchestra completes the release, and is a "new" work of sorts as well: its parts were discovered only in 1961, and the jacket notes make an excellent case for its authenticity. It is an exquisite lyric outpouring, even if its structural ambitions are, if not actually primitive, at the very least surprisingly simplistic. Still, exquisite lyric outpourings are not to be come upon with any great frequency even in rediscovered music by the greatest masters, and from this point of view alone, the work more than amply rewards the listener for the slight demands it makes on him.

The recorded sound is of the quality we have come to expect from London: clear, rich, and well-balanced. The stereo version effectively differentiates the concerto aspect of the Britten symphony from the necessarily more pronounced dialogue of the Haydn concerto.

William Flanagan

© ® BRITTEN: *Symphony for Cello and Orchestra*. HAYDN: *Concerto in C for Cello and Orchestra* (with cadenzas by Benjamin Britten). Mstislav Rostropovich (cello); English Chamber Orchestra, Benjamin Britten cond. LONDON CS 6419 \$5.98, CM 9419 \$4.98.

THE ESTERHAZY ORCHESTRA IN TWO HAYDN SYMPHONIES

*Conductor David Blum continues his
exploration of less-familiar Haydn*

PARTLY through the efforts of such musicologists as H. C. Robbins Landon and the growing interest of today's conductors, performances and recordings of Haydn symphonies are no longer being restricted to just the last dozen or so of the composer's tremendous output in that form. The Library of Recorded Masterpieces has made impressive inroads with their (as of this date) sixteen discs of early and middle-period symphonies, and other companies are now following suit. Corrected scores are being used, and much effort is being made to interpret the music in the style of the period.

David Blum and his twenty-five-member Esterhazy Orchestra, an excellent New York chamber group, have previously recorded Symphonies Nos. 52 and 60 for Vanguard. This was an auspicious start, and the ensemble's just-issued second disc, containing Nos. 39 and 73, is even more successful. The choice of symphonies—they are not overly familiar ones—is good, for although these two have been recorded previously, new readings of both have definitely been needed for some time. Symphony No. 39, the earlier of the pair, dates from 1770 or earlier, and is

DAVID BLUM
*An acute sense
of drama*



VANGUARD

a most anxious-sounding work in G Minor, full of storm and stress—clearly a cousin of Mozart's Symphony No. 25 in the same key. But in complete contrast is the cheerful, even witty No. 73 (c. 1781), subtitled "La Chasse" because of its hunting-call finale, and originally used as the prelude to the third act of Haydn's 1780 opera *La Fedeltà premiata*.

Conductor Blum very definitely has a way with this music. He has a highly developed taste for lyricism, but his sense of drama, as can be observed in the exceptionally tight, almost whip-like last movement of No. 39, is just as acute. In fact, for musical excitement, this finale alone is worth the price of the record. The orchestra responds superbly with playing that is precise and warm in tone. I wish, however, that a harpsichord continuo had been used in No. 73—as Haydn surely intended in all of his symphonies—for its inclusion in No. 39 is very effective. Vanguard's recording is more detailed than it was in Blum's previous set of symphonies, making the reproduction as good as one can hear today.

Igor Kipnis

© HAYDN: *Symphony No. 39, in G Minor; Symphony No. 73, in D Major ("La Chasse")*. Esterhazy Orchestra, David Blum cond. VANGUARD VSD 71123 \$5.95, VRS 1123 \$4.98.

WOLF'S ITALIAN SONGBOOK SPLENDIDLY INTERPRETED

Erna Berger and Hermann Prey bring vocal distinction to a demanding assignment

OF THE considerable number of songs by Austrian composer Hugo Wolf (1860-1903), those in his *Italienisches Liederbuch* perhaps offer the most remarkable revelations of his peculiar genius. Wolf completed these forty-six settings of poems by Paul Heyse toward the end of his creative span, in two bursts of concentrated activity, but more than four years apart.

The poems themselves are miniatures, and it is probable that no other composer would have selected them for musical treatment. But they served Wolf's creative impulses admirably, and he responded to their stimulation with settings that are extraordinarily apt, with an almost obsessive respect for poetic form and content and without either vocal flourishes or musical stresses not called for by the text. There is a deceptive simplicity about these songs, and their richness of invention is not revealed to the casual listener. There are no obvious devices and no clichés; the piano parts are seldom mere accompaniments, and even when they deceptively seem to be (as in "*O wär Dein Haus durchsichtig wie ein Glas*" or "*Ein Ständchen Euch zu*

COLBERT ARTISTS MANAGEMENT



HERMANN PREY

A fervent style is adapted to Wolf's subtlety

bringen") they nonetheless convey a special meaning. The mood of the songs is contemplative, the tone often almost conversational, seldom rising to any passionate heights. As critic Ernest Newman has observed, "Wolf prefers the intensity of quietude to the intensity of vehemence."

The exceptionally fine performances of these songs by Erna Berger and Hermann Prey (the recordings were first issued several years ago by German Electrola) have now been made available in this country by Vox. Both singers bring to their demanding assignment not only a distinguished vocalism but also an intelligent musicianship.

Erna Berger's achievement is truly astonishing, considering that this is a late stage of her career (reference books give 1900 as the year of her birth'). She sings with the remembered freshness and limpidity of tone, her diction is delightfully clear, and she has the range under complete control. The songs of lyric rapture and playful charm are more congenial to her vocal style than those calling for contemptuous and ironical inflections, but, without resorting to overdramatization, she never fails to make the song's point through her interpretation.

Prey, an innately dramatic interpreter, colors his singing with more emotion, but adapts his fervent style admirably to Wolf's subtleties. Carefully observing the dynamic

ALMEDA RIDDLE: FOLK ARTIST OF THE OZARKS

An exemplar of a living musical heritage is heard in an important new release



VANGUARD

ALMEDA RIDDLE
Her folk-song book is still open

markings, he also makes excellent use of his beautiful command of pianissimo. Brahms' *Four Scriptural Songs*, which occupy Side Four of this set, offer Prey broader opportunities to reveal his dramatic compass, and here his singing is perhaps even more impressive. Again, the voice is warmly colored, rich-textured, and the flowing line is maintained even where the text calls for the most intense climaxes.

With Brahms, and even more so with Wolf, the piano writing and the voice part are inseparably bound. The singers here are fortunately given suitable pianistic collaboration, although the engineers do not always grant enough prominence to the piano in the Wolf songs. Otherwise the recorded sound is clear, the stereo appropriate. A particular enhancement for this presentation is a reprint of the incomparable Ernest Newman annotations, which once graced HMV's Hugo Wolf Society releases in the early Thirties.

George Jellinek

© ① WOLF: *Italienisches Liederbuch*. Erna Berger (soprano); Hermann Prey (baritone); Günther Weissenborn (piano). BRAHMS: *Vier Ernste Gesänge (Opus 121)*. Hermann Prey (baritone); Martin Mälzer (piano). Vox SLDL 5532 two 12-inch discs \$9.96. LDL 532 \$9.96.

WE already have, on such labels as Folkways and Folk-Legacy, a number of excellent illustrations of the British-American ballad tradition as it has developed in the Southern mountains for more than three centuries. But Vanguard's new release, "Almeda Riddle: Songs and Ballads of the Ozarks," must now be counted among the very best of these documentaries, and any discussion henceforth of the "high lonesome" tradition can refer profitably to this album.

Born sixty-six years ago in Cleburne County, Arkansas, Mrs. Riddle has lived there and in adjoining White County most of her life. She learned her songs and her approach to balladry from a singing family and a singing community. As John Quincy Wolf points out in his excellent notes: "The entire community was alive with folk song but none of it was written down and all of it was plastic."

Mrs. Riddle's voice is clear, slightly tart, and penetrating. True to her tradition, she never overstates an emotion nor permits a narrative to lapse into the cadences of melodrama. But her knowledge of this musical heritage is so complete and so assured that she creates a feeling of immediate, convincing reality while at the same time sustaining an almost eerie sense of continuity with the generations upon generations of Ozark ballad spinners who came before her.

Among her fascinating musical virtues is a remarkable control of the rhythmic substructure of her material. Throughout the album, Mrs. Riddle sings unaccompanied, but there is no trace of a lagging pulse or rhythmic stumbling of any kind. Also absorbing are her technical devices—the "feathering" of notes with yodel-like breaks and other ornamentations of the line, together with slight alterations of dynamics to heighten the narrative flow. And above all, Mrs. Riddle has superior taste in the selection and shaping of her texts.

Although respectful of tradition, Mrs. Riddle nonetheless keeps her repertoire, as annotator Wolf points out, in a fluid state. Rarely singing a song the same way twice, she continually renews her approach to a ballad. She has always sung basically for her own pleasure and that of her family. Accordingly, she is not bound to any concept of academic "purity." If a word doesn't make sense to her, for instance, she will change it—but always, of course, within the context of the heritage she has so thoroughly absorbed. She is, in short, a contributor to as well as an in-

terpreter of the folk process. She keeps the tradition alive and does not regard it as a book already closed by folk-song scholars.

Many of the songs are familiar to folk-record collectors: *Black Jack Davey*, *The House Carpenter*, *Lady Gay*, *The Two Lovers*, and *Frog Went A-Courtin'*. Others are: *The Orphan Girl*, a sentimental but oddly touching portrait; the short, chilling *Babes in the Woods*; a Baptist hymn, *How Firm a Foundation*; and *Will the Weaver*, the briskly told story of an adulterous adventurer. Credit is due Ralph Rinzler, who supervised the album; the engineers; and Vanguard Records for its decision to issue a set whose sales are likely to be small but whose importance will surely be lasting.

Nat Hentoff

● ALMEDA RIDDLE: *Songs and Ballads of the Ozarks*. Almeda Riddle (vocals). *Locks and Bolts: A Soldier of the Legion*; *Young Carlotta*; *The Two Lovers*; and nine others. VANGUARD VRS 9158 \$1.98.

the lovers are progressively cut off from the sympathy and understanding of those about them.

The vigor and animation of the whole production are so persuasive that when Mercutio presents his famous speech about Queen Mab—which in most performances sounds strangely out of place—it seems entirely right that he should do so, as if he is quite naturally improvising a fanciful joke for his friends rather than reciting a set piece like an interpolated aria in an opera.

Music, sound effects, and the use of stereo to create a sense of space and action have never been put to better purpose, bringing street scenes, ballroom scenes, and moments of complex interior action to such believable life that the hushed, tense encounters between the lovers become all the more moving and heartbreaking, embedded as they are in the harsh and uncomprehending turmoil of life around them.

Paul Kresb

● SHAKESPEARE: *Romeo and Juliet*. Claire Bloom, Albert Finney, Dame Edith Evans, Kenneth Haigh, Hilton Edwards, and cast. Howard Sackler, director. CAEDMON SHAKESPEARE RECORDING SOCIETY 228 three 12-inch discs stereo and mono \$17.85.

A MOST EXCELLENT ROMEO AND JULIET

*Albert Finney and Claire Bloom star
in a resolutely flesh-and-blood production*

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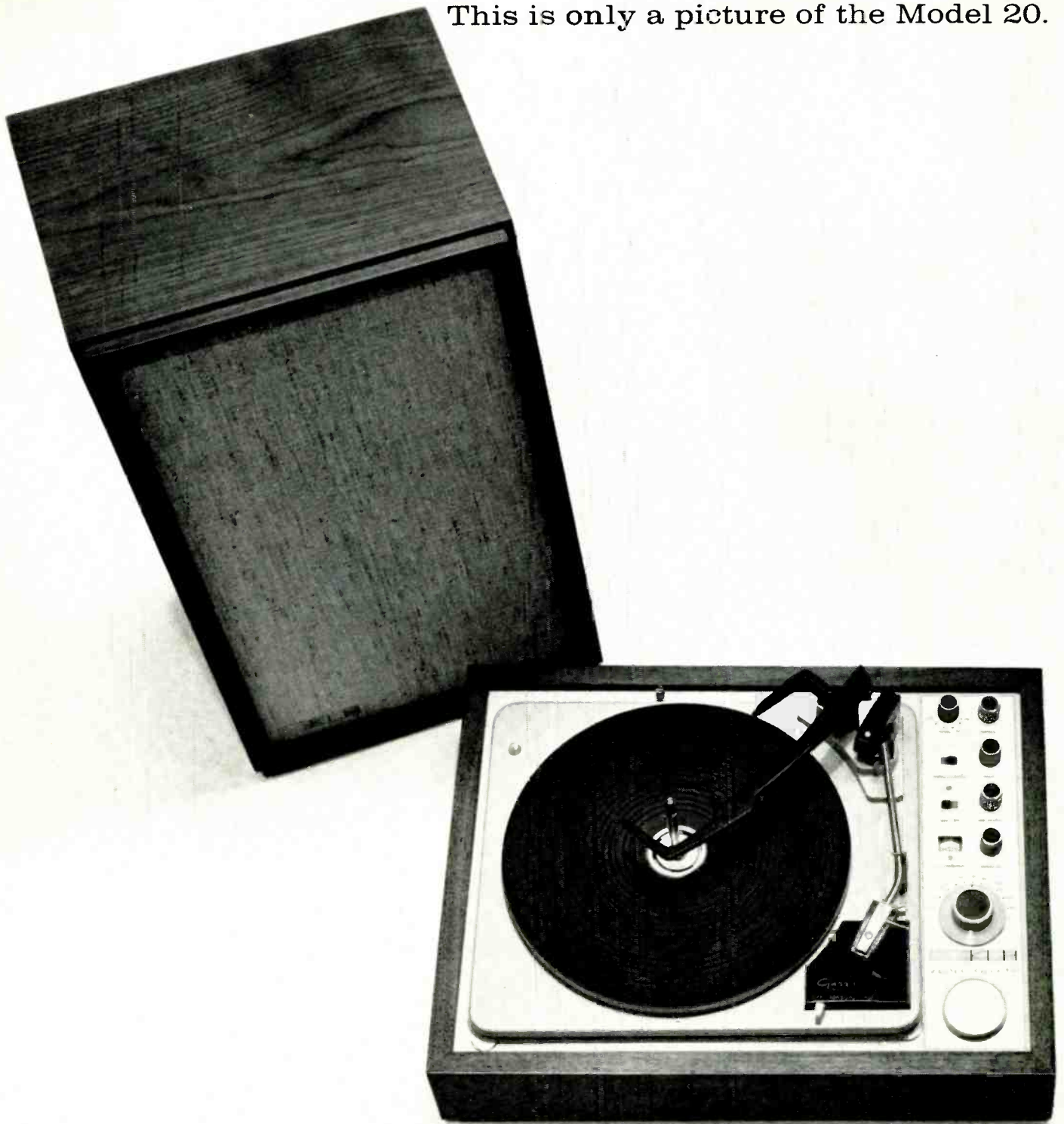
The Caedmon Shakespeare Recording Society's new three-disc set gives us a full-strength performance by a perfect cast that realizes the play's earthy as well as its romantic and philosophical aspects. Albert Finney's Romeo is tender and lyrical in the great love scenes, but he is also a rough and resolute fellow when abroad in the world. Dame Edith Evans emphasizes the lewd, garrulous, gossipy qualities of the nurse, but without forgetting her loyalty as well. And Claire Bloom is sensitive to Juliet's practical side—she is a girl who wants to be sure that Romeo intends marriage. She makes of the heroine—young though she may be—a full-blown woman rather than a dreamy-voiced pseudo-adolescent, rising to heights of impassioned speech far beyond the range of any other Juliet I have heard or seen. The eloquent Hilton Edwards is superb as the obtuse Friar Lawrence, and the balance of the well-chosen cast is also tremendously effective in communicating to the listener a chilling sense of the extent to which

ALBERT FINNEY
A rough and ready Romeo



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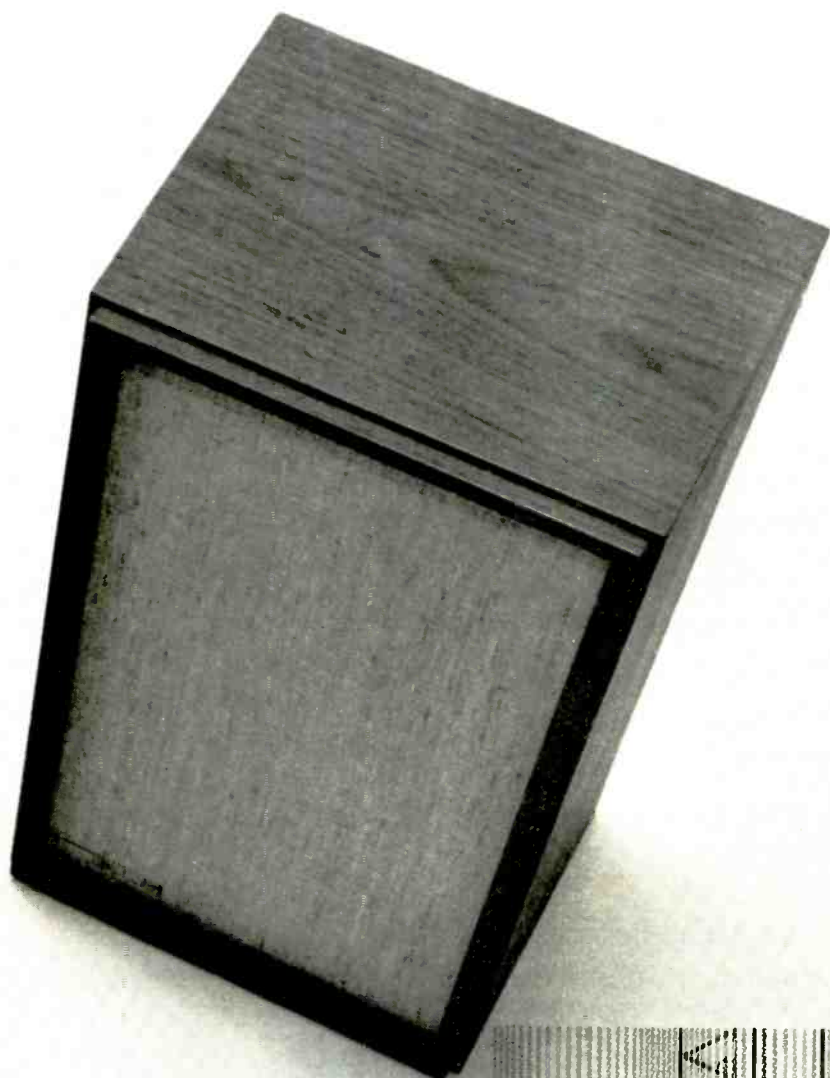
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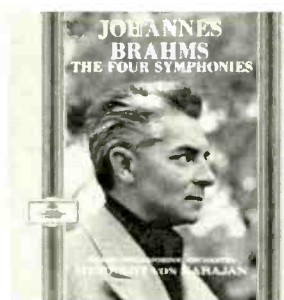
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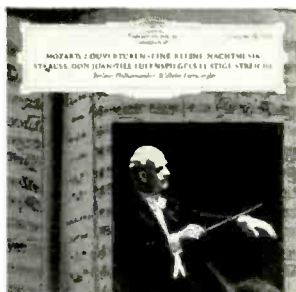
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HIFI/STEREO REVIEW'S CHOICE OF THE LATEST RECORDINGS

CLASSICAL

Reviewed by WILLIAM FLANAGAN • DAVID HALL • GEORGE JELLINEK • IGOR KIPNIS

⑤ ④ BACH: *Cantata No. 57, "Selig ist der Mann"; Cantata No. 140, "Wachet auf."* Ursula Buckel (soprano); Jakob Stämpfli (bass); Chorus of the Conservatory of Sarrebruck. Herbert Schmolzi director; Chamber Orchestra of the Sarre. Karl Ristenpart cond. NONESUCH H 71029 \$2.50, H 1029* \$2.50.

Performance: Excellent
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Widespread

This recording contains two splendid cantatas of entirely different moods. The familiar Number 140, a more elaborate work than the other because of the use of the chorus, is an early Advent cantata exhorting Christians to be alert for the second coming of Christ. Its music provides a lively contrast to the resigned feeling that pervades Cantata Number 57, whose text commemorates the martyrdom of St. Stephen and is a contemplation of death. Both works are exceptionally well done by Karl Ristenpart and his forces. "Wachet auf" is taken quite quickly, a fact that may disconcert some listeners used to more leisurely interpretations, but the effect is highly exhilarating. Both Buckel and Stämpfli, veterans of many Bach recordings, perform their solos and duets with distinction, and the orchestral playing and choral work is equally fine. Nonesuch's recording is spacious and clean; texts and translations are included.

I. K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

⑤ ④ BACH: *Preludes and Fugues: in E-flat Major ("St. Anne," BWV 552); in G Major (BWV 541); in C Minor (BWV 546); in A Minor (BWV 543).* Helmut Walcha (Grand Franz-Caspar Schnitger Organ of St. Laurenskerk in Alkmaar, Holland). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIVE ARC 73207 \$5.98, ARC 3207* \$5.98.

Performance: Towering
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Well-projected

Continuing his rerecording of the Bach organ works for Archive, Helmut Walcha plays four more large-scale Preludes and Fugues on the excellent Dutch organ that is the hallmark of this second set. The blind performer's previous version of the "St.

Anne" was part of a complete recording of the *Clavierübung*, part three, and the combining on this disc of the two sections that make up the work—the long *Clavierübung* begins with the Prelude and concludes with the Fugue—will undoubtedly appeal to listeners who prefer to hear the work as a unit. Walcha's playing, as usual, is extraordinarily impressive, most especially in the familiar A Minor work, in which he gauges the elements for magnificent dramatic effect. Archive's recording leaves little to be desired, and the stereo version projects the various choirs of the organ with great realism.

I. K.

CLUB FRANCAIS DU DISQUE



KARL RISTENPART

Excellent performances of Bach cantatas

⑤ ④ BACH: *Three Sonatas for Flute and Harpsichord Obligato (BWV 1030-2); Three Sonatas for Flute and Continuo (BWV 1033-5); Sonata No. 7, in G Minor, for Flute and Harpsichord Obligato (BWV 1020); Partita (Sonata) for Solo Flute in A Minor (BWV 1013).* Karl Bobzien (flute); Margarete Scharitzer (harpsichord); Sebastian Ladwig and Emil Buchner (viola da gamba). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIVE ARC 73225/6 two 12-inch discs \$5.98 each, ARC 3225/6* \$5.98 each.

Performance: Poor
Recording: Undistinguished
Stereo Quality: Adequate

Bach's complete flute sonatas are not well served here by Archive—this is one of DGG's rare lapses from its usual high standard for this historical series. Though I can find no fault with the technical abilities

of the players, the interpretations themselves are totally ungracious. Both the harpsichordist, a performer previously unknown to me, and Karl Bobzien, a Hamburg-born flutist currently with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, play these marvelous works with metronomic rigidity and little variety of expression. The gamba continuo is well done, but is unfortunately restricted to the three sonatas BWV 1033/4/5, instead of being used to support the bass line in all the sonatas with harpsichord. The recording's balance is rather unrealistic—a close-up harpsichord and a slightly more distant flute—in the sonatas for the obbligato keyboard instrument, and the program notes, which learnedly discuss the fact that BWV 1020, 1031, and 1033 are apocryphal, suffer from long-winded vagaries and careless proofreading. I hope that Archive will redo this set some time in the future, preferably with flutist Hans-Martin Linde, a far more sensitive musician than the present player.

I. K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

⑤ ④ K. P. E. BACH: *Concerto, in D Minor, for Flute, Strings, and Continuo; Concerto No. 3, in A Major, for Cello, Strings, and Continuo.* Jean-Pierre Rampal (flute); Robert Bex (cello); Huguette Dreyfus (harpsichord); chamber orchestra. Pierre Boulez cond. VOX STPL 514 170 \$4.98, PL 14 170* \$4.98.

Performance: Brilliant
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Satisfactory

One does not usually expect to find one of the proponents of the avant-garde delving into the *galanteries* of the mid-eighteenth century, yet here is Pierre Boulez, a "far-out" composer and authority on contemporary music, conducting two concertos by Karl Philipp Emanuel Bach. Furthermore, he does it with enormous flair and considerable awareness of the performing conventions of that time. If in the faster movements he concentrates perhaps more on brilliance of effect than on pure *Affect*, it might be put down to the nervous energy of our own time. At any rate, his is a remarkable feat of conducting and well worth hearing. As might be expected, Rampal performs the flute concerto, a fine, vital work, with enormous technical skill. The final Allegro di molto is taken at a tremendous clip, more like a Presto di molto, and though it is obviously too fast (compare, for instance, Kurt Redel's more sober and rational treatment on Decca 710092, 10092). I defy anyone not to be bowled over by the playing. The cello concerto on the second side is first-rate as

Explanation of symbols:

- ⑤ = stereophonic recording
- ④ = monophonic recording
- * = mono or stereo version not received for review

music, too; it is surprising that this is its first recording (Raya Garbousova did the slow movement with piano accompaniment in the Forties for Victor). The Frenchman Robert Bex, whose name is unfamiliar to me and about whom there is no information on the jacket, performs the work beautifully and eloquently. Few cellists today are able to avoid romanticising such a piece as this and yet to maintain its very strong sentiment, Bex manages to do both, at the same time infusing the score with a remarkable firmness and vitality. In his own way, he plays the concerto with as much technical brilliance as does Rampal his piece. Vox's sound places the orchestra rather far back from the soloist, but the reproduction is otherwise quite satisfactory. I. K.

⑤ ⑥ BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concerto No. 5, in E-flat, Op. 73*. Mindru Katz (piano); Hallé Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli cond.



CAPITOL

CARLO MARIA GIULINI
Britten's seascapes sensitively rendered

VANGUARD SRV 138 SD \$2.98, SRV 138* \$1.98.

Performance: Broadly lyrical
Recording: Somewhat muffled
Stereo Quality: Adequate

Although more than two dozen recorded versions of the Beethoven "Emperor" Concerto are currently listed in the Schwann catalog, including representations of most of the great keyboard names of the past two decades, Vanguard's release of the 1959 performance by Romanian pianist Mindru Katz with Sir John Barbirolli and the Hallé Orchestra is only the third to be made available at a bargain price. The other two are the 1954 reading of Wilhelm Backhaus and the Vienna Philharmonic under the late Clemens Krauss, and a comparatively recent Parliament disc with Frantisek Rauch and the Czech Philharmonic under Karel Sejna.

The Katz-Barbirolli interpretation underscores the lyrical rather than the dramatic elements in this predominantly rhetorical concerto. This by itself would be no major detriment if the recorded sound had been blessed with more richness, presence, and brilliance. Unfortunately, the somewhat muffled sound creates a prevailing sonic fog that lessens the impact of the music.

Among the three low-price "Emperors," the Parliament disc wins hands down in my estimation, by virtue of highly dramatic and exciting performances by soloist and orchestra, and brilliant and spacious recorded sound. D. H.

⑤ ⑥ BEETHOVEN: *Trio No. 6, in B-flat, Op. 97 ("Archduke")*. Alma Trio. DECCA DL 710099 \$5.98, DL 10099 \$4.98.

Performance: Refined
Recording: Intimate
Stereo Quality: Good enough

This most expansive of Beethoven's trios receives a refined and reticent treatment here. But although there are also demonic elements in the "Archduke," notably in the trio of the Scherzo and throughout the whole of the virtuosic finale, we would never know it from this performance.

For a more full-blooded realization of this great music, I recommend either the Oborin-Oistrakh-Knushevitzky collaboration on Angel or the historic mono-only RCA disc with Rubinstein-Heifetz-Feuermann. D. H.

⑤ ⑥ BRITTEN: *Four Sea Interludes from Peter Grimes; Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. Philharmonia Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini cond. ANGEL S 36215 \$5.98, 36215* \$4.98.

Performance: Half good, half so-so
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Good enough, but subdued

Benjamin Britten's opera *Peter Grimes* is perhaps related to Italian opera, but it maintains a comfortable stylistic distance from it, and Maestro Giulini's rather hopped-up, raviolian treatment of certain aspects of the four sea interludes should, to all intents and purposes, suit it ill. Not a bit of it, though. This music is among Britten's best, even though it dates from 1945. Giulini seems appropriately sensitive to its evocation of English landscape and seascape, and even when he turns its more animated storm music into something out of *Rigoletto*, I'm not going to be the man to suggest that it doesn't work, and work beautifully. In sum, beautiful music, beautifully and expressively played.

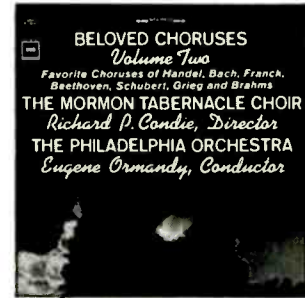
Am I mistaken in my feeling that a new recording of Britten's *Young Person's Guide* is turning up every month or so recently? There is Britten's own recent one to gauge Giulini's by, at any rate, and I think I prefer Britten's. There is a lot of life and nobility in Angel's new version, but I think Giulini takes the blast-the-bugles-for-Britain grandeur of the final fugue—indeed, as he does much of the entire piece—a shade too seriously. I'm not suggesting that the piece is a gag, but it is, after all, for the kiddies. It can use a slightly lighter touch than it gets here.

Angel's recording is full and clear, although it strikes me that a piece like the *Young Person's Guide* could use stereo with a little more effect. The labels on the two pieces are (on my copy at least) switched, by the way. W. F.

BRITTEN: *Matinées Musicales; Soirées Musicales* (see RESPIGHI). *Symphony for Cello and Orchestra* (see Best of Month, page 69)

(Continued on page 82)

The Sound of Genius



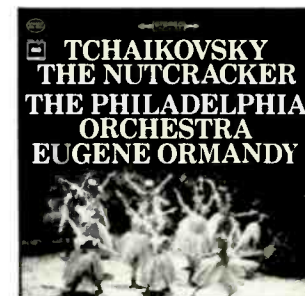
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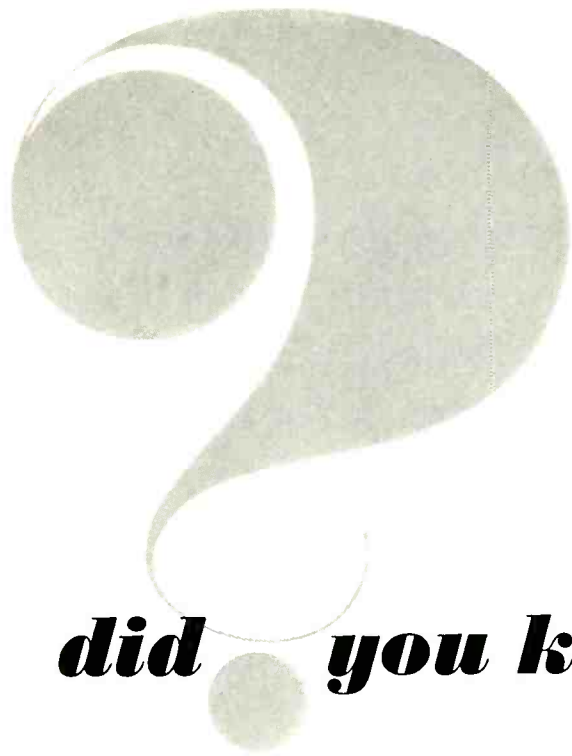
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RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

⑤ ⑩ **BRUCKNER: *Symphony No. 8 in C Minor***. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Eugen Jochum cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138918/9 two 12-inch discs \$11.96, LPDM 19918/9* \$11.96.

Performance: **Brilliant**
Recording: **Impressive**
Stereo Quality: **Excellent**

The grandeurs of Anton Bruckner's Eighth Symphony have not lacked for impressive realization on records. It was Eugen Jochum who in 1949 introduced the score to discs, and most American record buyers heard it for the first time when the Jochum reading was released by Decca. Then came the performance of the late Eduard van Beinum and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw during the middle 1950's—an impressive recording achievement for its day and still available on the Epic label. Herbert von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic offered their reading on an Angel mono set in 1958, but it took the 1961 stereo release to reveal the full splendors of Karajan's accomplishment. For sheer drama, however, and despite coarse sound, the recording by Evgeny Mravinsky and the Leningrad Philharmonic on the Soviet MK label (mono only) is in a class by itself. The Vox mono set with Horenstein and the Westminster stereo/mono album with Knappertsbusch both offer conscientious and deeply felt interpretations, but neither is as well realized either in sound or performance as those of Karajan or Mravinsky, not to speak of the new Jochum reading under consideration here.

In general, this new interpretation by Jochum strikes me as a highly successful combination of the dramatic approach of Mravinsky with the polish and proportion of Karajan—the emphasis upon the latter. Jochum's tempos are brisk in the fast movements and impressively sustained throughout the great Adagio. In short, this is a Bruckner performance of the very highest distinction, not only on Jochum's part, but on the part of the Berlin Philharmonic. The greatest asset of all here is the recorded sound, imposing in body and wonderfully rich in detail, and thanks to DGG's glass-smooth pressings, the sound comes through with a minimum of extraneous noise—something that could not be said for Angel's pressings of the Karajan stereo discs.

All told, this is about as fine a realization of this symphony as we are likely to get on discs, and to specialist and nonspecialist alike. I recommend the set most warmly.
D. H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

⑤ ⑩ **DVOŘÁK: *String Quartets: No. 2, in D Minor, Op. 34; No. 6, in F Major, Op. 96 ("American")***. Janáček Quartet. LONDON CS 6394 \$5.98, CM 9394* \$4.98.

Performance: **Zestful**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

There are a half-dozen currently available recordings (three in stereo) of Dvořák's popular "American" Quartet, but this London disc gives us the only recorded version of the lovely Op. 34 in D Minor outside of Vox's complete set (SVBX 549/50, VBX
(Continued on page 84)

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49/50) by the Kohon String Quartet of New York University.

With Dvořák, as with Franz Schubert, melody flowed as naturally as spring water, and certain of the lesser-known quartets, such as the D Minor on this disc and the wonderful Op. 51 in E-flat, are remarkably rich in this respect. They do make obeisance to formal considerations, but without losing their essential spontaneity of utterance (I feel Op. 61 in C is something of a failure in this regard).

The players of the Janáček Quartet, native Czechs all, play the D Minor and F Major quartets with captivating zest in the dance-like movements (notably the polka-like second movement of the D Minor) and with quiet intensity in the slow movements. The recorded sound is first-rate throughout. For those becoming acquainted with the string-quartet literature for the first time, as well as for connoisseurs of chamber music, I recommend this disc unreservedly. *D. H.*

© ® DVORÁK: *Symphony No. 9, in E Minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World")*. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138922 \$5.98, LPM 18922* \$5.98.

Performance: Even-tempered
Recording: First-rate
Stereo Quality: Good

Herr von Karajan gives us no high-powered romantic reading of Dvořák's ever-popular "New World" Symphony. Judged solely on the basis of its restrained rhetoric and limited range of dynamics, the style of this interpretation would do just as well for late Mozart or early Beethoven. This performance is notable also for clarity of inner detail and justness of instrumental balance, especially in the woodwind department. Still, this does not add up to a performance that communicates in any significant degree the inherent passion underlying Dvořák's score. To my way of thinking, the cool treatment just will not do here, even with the beauties of DGG's recorded sound. There are literally dozens of other recordings from which to choose for more convincing expressive content and only slightly inferior recorded sound—among them those of Walter, Szell, Kubelik, Anserl, and Toscanini.

One wonders why the initial *ff* cello-string-bass entrance at bar nine of the opening movement was allowed to get by with such ragged ensemble attack. *D. H.*

© ® GILBERT AND SULLIVAN: *The Yeoman of the Guard*. Philip Potter (tenor), Colonel Fairfax; Donald Adams (bass), Sergeant Meryll; John Reed (baritone), Jack Point; Kenneth Sandford (baritone), Wilfred Shadbolt; Elizabeth Harwood (soprano), Elsie Maynard; Ann Hood (soprano), Phoebe; Gilian Knight (contralto), Dame Carruthers; others. D'Oyly Carte Opera Company; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Sir Malcolm Sargent cond. LONDON OSA 1258 two 12-inch discs \$11.96, A 4258* \$9.96.

Performance: Topnotch
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Suitable

The Yeoman of the Guard represents a departure from the characteristic Gilbert-and-Sullivan formula. Though Gilbert's lyrics sparkle with their usual wit and archness,



MIKHAIL GLINKA

Stylish readings of his often-abused music

the irony is mild, the humor intermittent, and the over-all view is exceedingly mellow—this is a romantic operetta with a bittersweet flavor. Appropriately, it is the romantic element that dominates in Sullivan's music, also, although such sure-fire Savoyard ingredients as the patter song and the contralto musings of maiden ladies with aging charms still have their places. The muted hilarity has probably caused this work to be less popular than *The Mikado*, *Pinafore*, or *The Pirates of Penzance*, but it is nevertheless a charming score, containing a fair share of Sullivan's finest inspirations.

Reversing its established procedure, London has excluded the dialogs from this recording, and without the detailed synopsis the album provides, the listener could not follow the twisting Gilbertian plot. But the performance is excellent, and it is flawlessly recorded. John Reed's characterization of the jester is very much in the Martyn Green manner, with the same kind of melancholy tone quality and a similar elegance of phrasing. In Philip Potter and Elizabeth Harwood

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the company now has a romantic pair with vocal gifts above the D'Oyly Carte routine, and the remainder of the cast is solidly competent. The orchestra delivers Sullivan's music with a high tonal sheen and a fine sense of nuance under Sir Malcolm Sargent's direction. Balances are exemplary, and Sargent does a remarkable job in adapting his orchestral sound to the varying vocal endowments of his cast. *G. J.*

© ® GLINKA: *Ruslan and Ludmila: Overture; Valse Fantasia; Jota Aragonesa*. MOUSSORGSKY: *A Night on Bald Mountain (arr. Rimsky-Korsakov); Khoravchina: Prelude; Persian Dances (arr. Rimsky-Korsakov)*. Suisse Romande Orchestra, Ernest Ansermet cond. LONDON CS 6405 \$5.98, CM 9405* \$4.98.

Performance: Stylish
Recording: Very fine
Stereo Quality: Excellent

The Glinka side is the choice part of this disc. The often-abused *Ruslan* Overture is for once not given the rat-race treatment, and the delicious *Valse Fantasia* emerges as the gem it is—the precursor of Tchaikovsky's beautiful salon waltzes. Though Ansermet fails to bring to that pioneer of Hispanic studies for orchestra, the *Jota Aragonesa*, the overpowering brio that characterized Toscanini's performances, he does give the piece the same fetching lilt and sense of color that has marked his readings of others in this vein by Rimsky-Korsakov, Chabrier, Debussy, and Ravel.

Moussorgsky's monster rally comes off as a study in color rather than as mere orchestral razzle-dazzle, and the exquisite dawn piece from *Khoravchina* gets its finest recorded performance yet. The rather tiresome Rimsky-style dances from that opera are treated considerably, and I only regret that they were not supplemented by the somber and magnificent *entr'acte* music for Act Four—the only currently available recording of which is Karajan's Angel disc of operatic intermezzos (S 35793). *D. H.*

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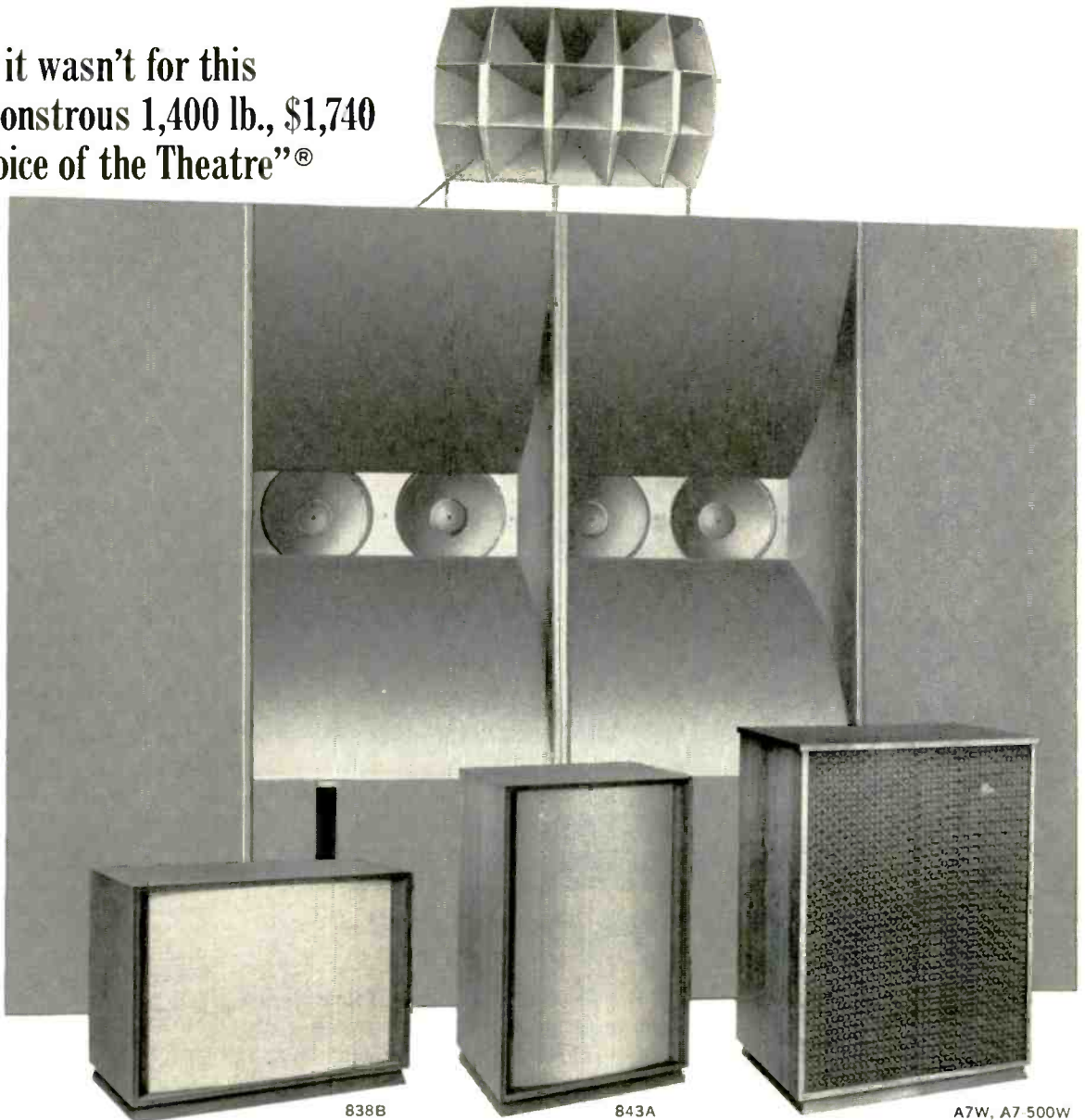
© ® HAYDN: *Symphony No. 16 in B-flat Major; Symphony No. 19 in D Major; Symphony No. 52 in C Minor*. Vienna State Opera Orchestra. Max Góberman cond. LIBRARY OF RECORDED MASTERPIECES HS 16 \$8.50 (subscription, mono or stereo), \$10 (nonsubscription, mono or stereo). (Available from Library of Recorded Masterpieces, 150 West 82nd Street, New York 10024, N. Y.)

Performance: First-class
Recording: Splendid
Stereo Quality: Excellent

Volume Sixteen in the Library of Recorded Masterpieces series of Haydn symphonies includes two early works (of which Number 19, as H. C. Robbins Landon points out in his excellent program annotations, is chronologically close to the first symphony Haydn wrote) and a middle-period symphony. Number 52 is by far the most adventurous work (which is not to belittle its entertaining disc-mates); it is one of Haydn's *Sturm und Drang* compositions, restless and full of violent contrasts. David Blum recorded it with the Esterhazy Orchestra (Continued on page 86)

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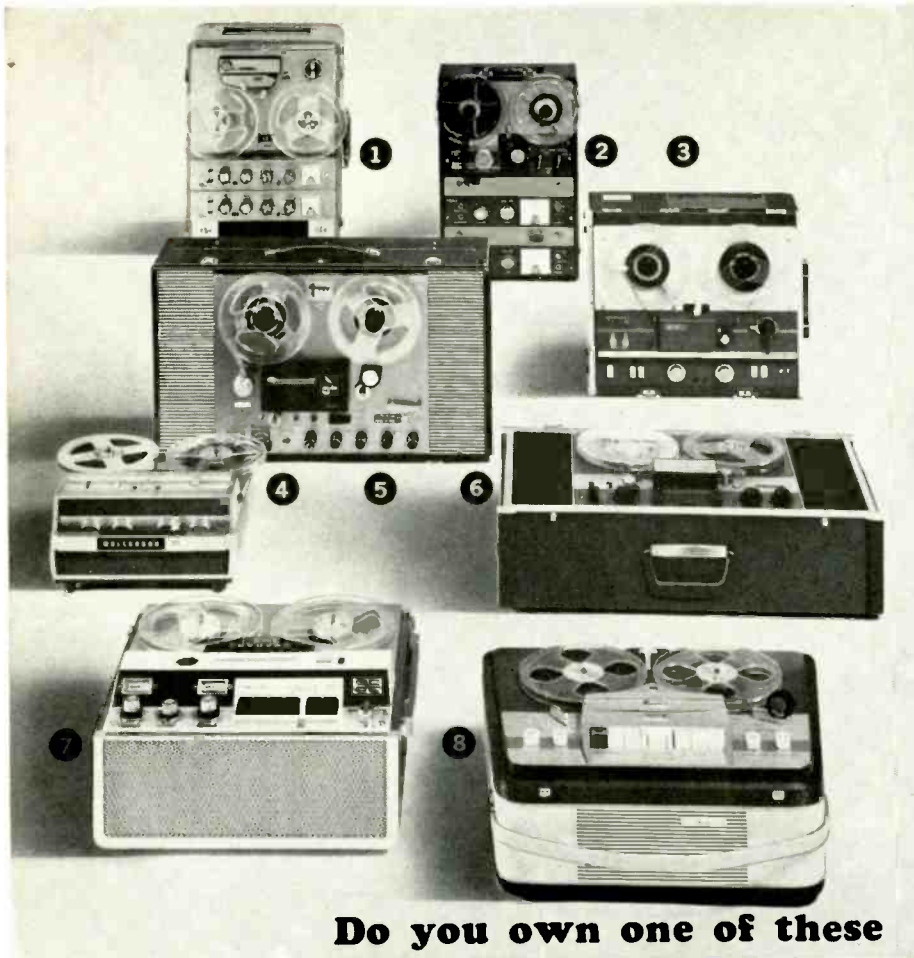
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for Vanguard (2143/1105) recently, and though his performance was an impressive one, this one by the late Max Goberman is even better. One detail alone should be enough to indicate the difference: Goberman uses the prescribed high C-horn (Blum's sounds an octave lower), which, particularly in the last movement, creates a hair-raising effect. Once again, I have nothing but admiration for LRM's splendid project. The recording is first-rate in both versions, though the first side of the stereo pressing (I checked two copies) is afflicted with a poor surface.

L. K.

HAYDN: *Symphonies: No. 39, in G Minor; No. 73, in D Major ("La Cbasse")* (see Best of Month, page 70)

© HUMPERDINCK: *Hansel and Gretel*. Walter Berry (baritone), the father; Grace Hoffman (contralto), the mother; Irmgard Seefried (soprano), Hansel; Anneliese Rothenberger (soprano), Gretel; Elisabeth Höngen (contralto), the witch; Liselotte Maikl (soprano), Sandman and Dew Fairy; Vienna Boys' Choir and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, André Cluytens cond. ANGEL SBL 3648 two 12-inch discs \$11.96, BL 3648 \$9.96.

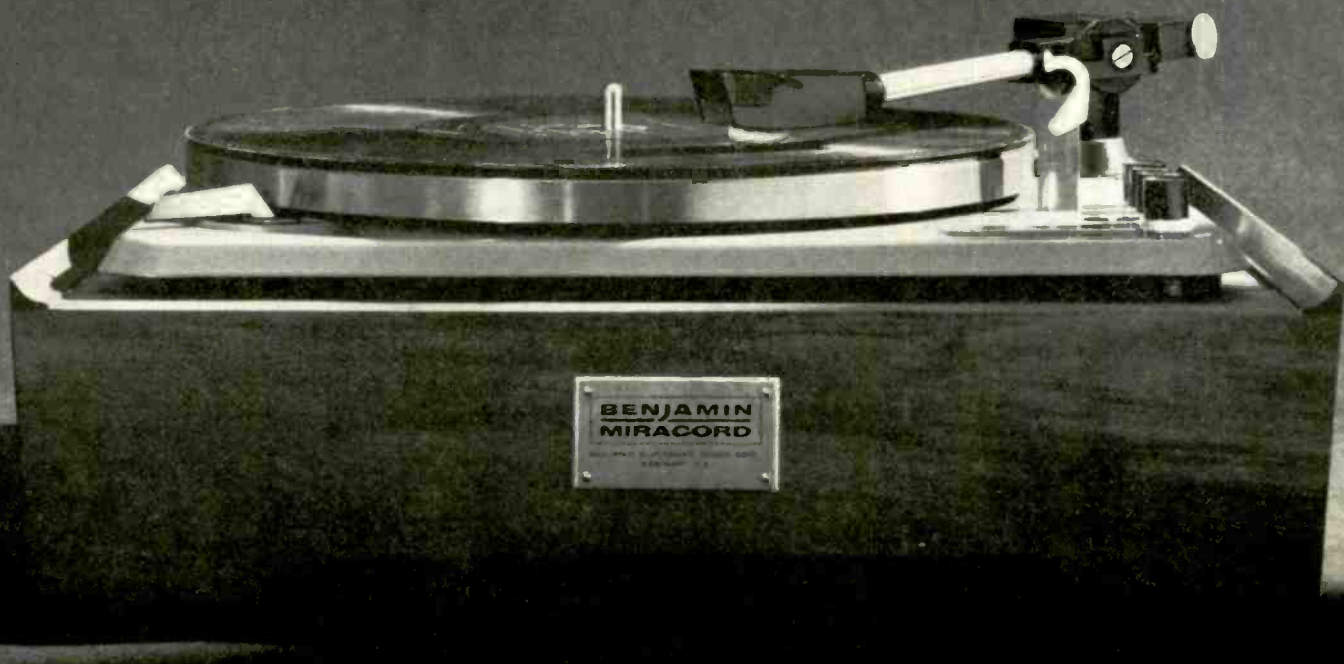
Performance: First-rate
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Understated

It is a great pity that *Hansel and Gretel* seems to have fallen into disfavor with opera producers. I am not entirely sure that audiences share their judgment. Certainly, if one believes in such a thing as an opera for children, this is it—nothing else can even remotely approach it. Granted, children are not what they used to be, but let us not condemn this opera for lack of sophistication too quickly. It tackles, after all, such timely issues as failure of communication between parents and children; it touches, like so much in our current dramatic literature, on such phenomena as alcoholism and cannibalism, and even has elements of science fiction (the witch's defiance of the laws of gravity). Viewed in this light, there may still be hope for *Hansel and Gretel* in our modern age.

Musically, the score is a near-miracle—a distillation of Wagnerian matter and methods accomplished by superimposing melodies of folk-like simplicity on a complex symphonic foundation. This is brought about so cunningly that the composer's enormous technical facility hardly ever interferes with the seemingly artless flow of tunefulness. Humperdinck cannot resist displaying his contrapuntal knack in the overture, a piece of exaggerated earnestness, but once the curtain is up there is no slackening of melodic inspiration, no flaw in proportion, no uncertainty of purpose.

This opera must be performed without condescension, and this is what happens here under Cluytens' loving and leisurely pacing. The voices of Rothenberger and Seefried are attractively matched—the gleaming tones of the former are, as always, a delight, and the mannerisms of Miss Seefried somehow help in creating a Hansel of distinct charm and personality. Walter Berry endows the part of the father with an appropriate earthiness and sympathetic simplicity; the mother, Grace Hoffman, is adequate, and Liselotte Maikl is very attractive in her dual role. The witch,

(Continued on page 88)



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however, is a disappointment. It terms of pure singing, Miss Höngen's tone quality is unpleasant, but not unpleasant enough to be convincingly witchlike.

The fine orchestral performance is captured in glowing sound. Some contrapuntal strands in the overture and in the Dream Pantomime, however, do not emerge with clear definition—a disturbing flaw for a score that takes its polyphony so seriously. There is ample depth and spaciousness in the stereo, but the scenic possibilities are not fully exploited. Surely, the great denouement—the witch's sudden disappearance in the oven—could have been managed more excitingly, with the aid of some sound effects or suggestion of movement. These reservations aside, the set is highly recommended for children of all ages. *G. J.*

⑤ ⑥ LOCKE: *Suites for Viol Consort in D Minor, G Major, D Minor, and C Major; A New Year's Song; Cantate Domino; Two Glee's, "Ne'er trouble thyself" and "Away with the cause of riches"; Dialogue between Thirsis and Dorinda; Second Galiard from "The Tempest"; The Song of Echoes.* Elizabethan Consort of Viols, Dennis Nesbitt, director; Golden Age Singers, Margaret Field-Hyde conductor; Roger Pugh (harpichord); Dennis Nesbitt (gamba continuo). WESTMINSTER WST 17082 \$4.98, XWN 19082 \$4.98.

Performance: Best in viol pieces
Recording: Extremely good
Stereo Quality: First-rate

Matthew Locke, born about 1630, was one of the most important figures in English music between Dowland and Purcell. Composer in Ordinary to King Charles II, Locke wrote music for the regent's band of twenty-four violins (at his death in 1677, he was succeeded in this post by Purcell), incidental music for such plays as *Psyche*, from which the *Song of Echoes* here is taken, and *The Tempest*, as well as a large quantity of instrumental pieces and vocal works, both sacred and secular. Westminster's survey of this composer, an intelligent sampling of different aspects of Locke's output, is an extremely welcome one. Over half the disc is devoted to four of his six suites for viol consort, excellent pieces that are not far removed stylistically from Purcell, though Locke was considered a conservative in his own day. The vocal music, too, is reminiscent of the later composer: compare the *Song of Echoes*, for instance, with the chorus, "In our deep vaulted cell," from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. The performances *in toto* are very praiseworthy stylistically, and the playing of the Elizabethan Consort of Viols in particular is splendid. Commendable too are the harpsichord realizations of Roger Pugh. I am less enthusiastic about the Golden Age Singers' participation, for Margaret Field-Hyde's current group of vocalists is not nearly as fine in stability of pitch and tonal beauty as were the members of her older ensemble. Nevertheless, the collection should be considered an important one, since most of the material has not been available previously on discs. The recorded sound is in every way superior. Texts are included. *I. K.*

⑤ ⑥ MARTIN: *In Terra Pax.* Ursula Buckel (soprano), Marga Höffgen (contralto), Ernst Haefliger (tenor), Pierre Mollet (baritone), Jakob Stämpfli (bass). Suisse

Romande Orchestra. Ernest Ansermet cond. LONDON OS 25847 \$5.98, 5847* \$4.98.

Performance: First-rate
Recording: Fine
Stereo Quality: Subdued

This work by Swiss composer Frank Martin is the result of a commission from Radio Geneva to write a choral piece to be broadcast as soon as the military action of World War Two was brought to an end. In Martin's words, "Clearly it could only be a work of a religious nature."

Although this composer is by no means universally admired, I wonder—considering the high motivation of the work itself—whether my negative reaction to the music is not the sorry result of a personal blind spot. Still, even though Martin must have felt this work deeply, I find in it only mastery. Mastery of the first order, to be sure, but mastery coupled with an expressive sub-



MATTHEW LOCKE
(Oil portrait at the Music School, Oxford)

stance that is, at the core—for me at least—quite inert, chilling, dead.

The man's music works better for me when the focus is essentially intellectual—the stunningly wrought *Etudes for String Orchestra* (London 9310, 6241), for example, where the emphasis is naturally on intellectual perception and technical mastery.

But *In Terra Pax*—a long, earnest, and undeniably arresting oratorio for five soloists, double chorus, and orchestra—I have thrice taken my leave of, in its present superbly recorded version, with little sense of having been stirred, moved, or otherwise deeply affected. More's the pity.

Both the recording and Ansermet's performance (as far as I can ascertain without score) can scarcely be faulted. *W. F.*

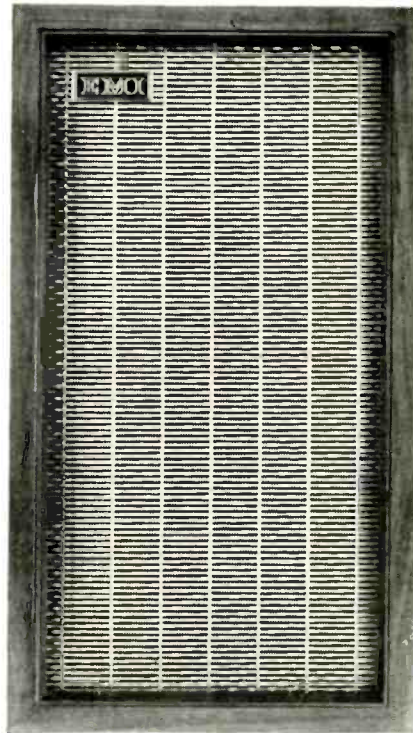
MOHAUPT: *Town Piper Music* (see TCHEREPNIN)

MOUSSORGSKY: *A Night on Bald Mountain; Khovanchina: Prelude; Persian Dances* (see GLINKA)

⑤ ⑥ MOZART: *Symphony No. 31, in D Major (K. 297, "Paris"); Symphony No. 34, in C Major (K. 338).* Philharmonia
(Continued on page 90)

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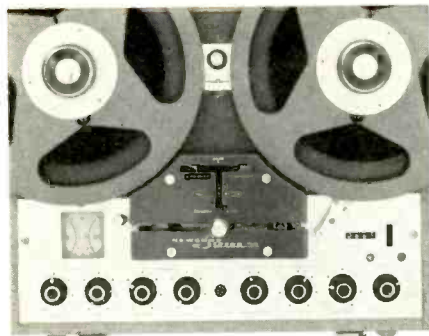
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Performance: First-rate
Recording: Generally excellent
Stereo Quality: Adequate

Strangely, neither of these symphonies, dating from 1778 and 1780, has received much attention lately from record companies. This should in no way reflect on the merit of either of the works, which in fact are as fine as their more frequently recorded neighbors, such as Numbers 29 and 33. Otto Klemperer, in one of his last recordings with the Philharmonia Orchestra before it reorganized as the New Philharmonia Orchestra—the same ensemble but without the directorship of EMI's Walter Legge—provides a pair of performances that to my mind are as good as any he has given us. His tempos in the fast movements are slower than other conductors', but they are neither too leisurely nor are they lacking in sparkle. Perhaps most impressive, along with the splendidly precise playing of the orchestra, is the amount of attention given to balance, especially in the winds, which are heard with a clarity seldom found in Mozart performances. Angel's recording is very transparent and full-bodied in the bass, though the high end tends to sound a bit thin. *I. K.*

Ⓢ Ⓜ PERGOLESI (attrib.): *Concerti Armonici Nos. 1-6; Flute Concerto No. 1, in G Major; Flute Concerto No. 2, in D Major.* Jean-Pierre Rampal (flute); Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Karl Münchinger cond. LONDON CS 6393/95 two 12-inch discs \$5.98 each, CM 9393/95* \$4.98 each.

Performance: Very good
Recording: Full-bodied
Stereo Quality: Fine

In a previous recording of the second of these six richly scored orchestral concertos by Karl Münchinger (London CS 6206, CM 9275), the composer was listed as Carlo Ricciotti, the first publisher of the set in 1740. Vanguard, and now London, in their complete recordings of the six concertini, as they are usually called, give the credit back to Pergolesi, though both firms include extensive discussions of the publishing history of the music and clearly indicate that it is most likely not by Pergolesi at all. (The works have at various times been credited not only to Pergolesi and Ricciotti, but also to Handel. Johann Adam Birckenstock—who is known to have written concertos for the same scoring—and an otherwise insignificant Italian composer.) Regardless of the authorship and the still-continuing detective work, the pieces themselves are perfectly lovely (Stravinsky used one of the fast movements for *Pulcinella*). More conventional, adhering partly to the Vivaldi mold, are the two flute concertos, whose authenticity is also considered doubtful. They are pleasant works but no more than that, whereas the concertini in their best moments can match some of the finest eighteenth-century orchestral music.

Münchinger's performances are very sensitive, and less glib than those of De Stoutz on Vanguard, whose recordings (Bach Guild 5058/5050, 638/646) also include the flute concertos. He favors a very rich string tone, which, especially in slow movements, veers dangerously close to Romanticism, and he does not permit the continuo

harpsichord to be heard with much prominence in the concertini (in his previous version of Number 2, there was no harpsichord at all). Nevertheless, the spirit of the playing is admirable, the vitality of the quick movements is very infectious, and the set as a whole is an enjoyable one. Rampal performs his concertos with all of the skill we have come to expect from this superb instrumentalist, but I, for one, would have preferred more embellishment in the solo part. London's recording is high-level but very full-bodied, and the stereo placement is quite natural. *I. K.*

Ⓢ Ⓜ PROKOFIEV: *Violin Concerto No. 1.* Erick Friedman (violin). *Piano Concerto No. 5.* Lorin Hollander (piano). Boston Symphony Orchestra. Erich Leinsdorf cond. RCA VICTOR LSC 2732 \$5.98, LM 2732 \$4.98.

Performance: Dazzling
Recording: Excellent

Two young virtuosos—pianist Lorin Hollander and violinist Erick Friedman, a Heifetz protégé—collaborate impressively here with Erich Leinsdorf and the Boston Symphony Orchestra as part of the Prokofiev recording project this conductor has undertaken for RCA Victor. Young Friedman is particularly impressive, having been permitted by Leinsdorf's rather slowish tempos to turn on a singing tone of quite radiant beauty to alternate with some of the more flashingly accurate virtuosity you are likely to hear these days.

Hollander, for his part, whips through the Fifth Piano Concerto like a junior Olympian. One feels here, as with Friedman, that Leinsdorf has selected these young performers almost as much for their adaptability to his vision of Prokofiev as for their own talents. Still, a Leinsdorf view—a quite special one, at that—of Prokofiev begins to emerge as the series expands. And taken simply as musical performance, this disc—superbly recorded, I might add—is one of the best yet. *W. F.*

Ⓢ Ⓜ RACHMANINOFF: *Piano Concerto No. 2, in C Minor, Op. 18; Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43.* Gary Graffman (piano); New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein cond. COLUMBIA MS 6634 \$5.98, ML 6034* \$4.98.

Performance: Good *Rhapsody*
Recording: *Rhapsody* better
Stereo Quality: Satisfactory

The combination here is a sure winner, and has called for some canny disc-cutting from Columbia in order to get the thirty-four minutes of the concerto on a single side. This is the only stereo version of this coupling, and it is duplicated in mono only on Westminster, with Lewenthal and Abravanel.

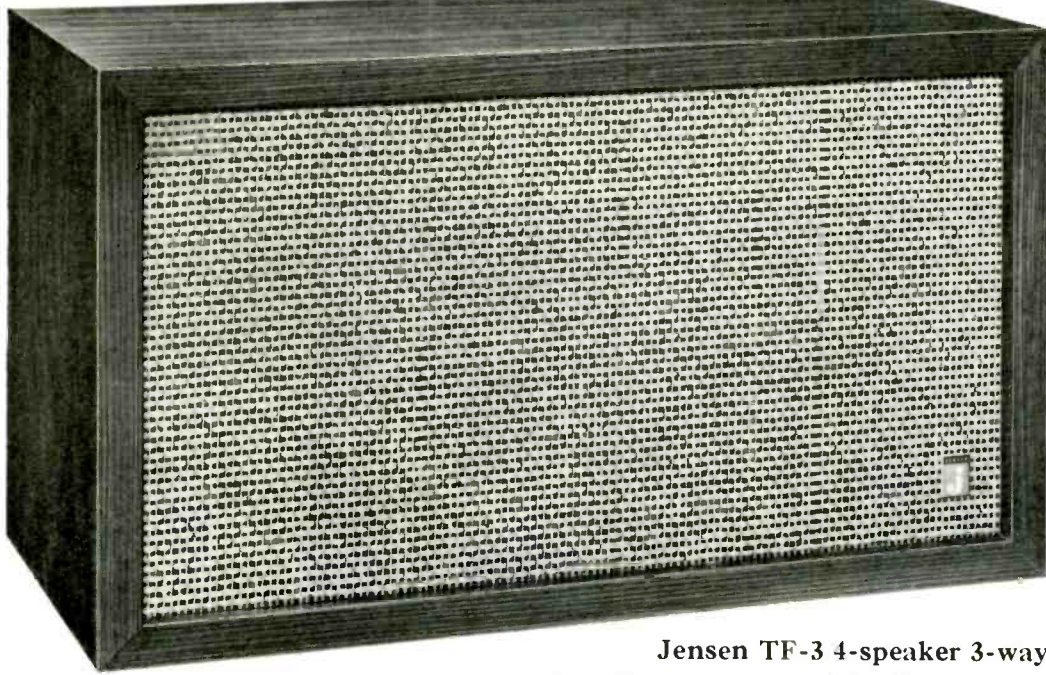
The "Paganini" rhapsody comes off the better both as performance and recording. Rubinstein-Reiner, Entremont-Ormandy, and Katchen-Boult represent stiff stereo competition, but with its fierce thrust and power, the Graffman-Bernstein combination holds its own excellently in this company. Solo piano presence and orchestra-soloist balance are excellent all the way.

It is hard to say whether the disappointing effect of the Rachmaninoff concerto performance should be laid to balance prob-

(Continued on page 92)

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lems or to limitations imposed by the cutting of so much music on one side of a stereo disc. On my equipment, piano and orchestra sound as though recorded in excessively separated perspective, with the piano much too far forward. This is especially annoying in the first-movement recapitulation, where the soloist's accompaniment figures simply drown out everything else, despite the fact that the main theme is being carried by the violin section. In general, I find the performance somewhat labored and unspontaneous as compared to those featuring Ashkenazy, Janis, and Lympny. *D. H.*

© ® RESPIGHI: *Rossiniana*. BRITTEN: *Matinées Musicales; Soirées Musicales*. Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Robert Zeller cond. WESTMINSTER WST 17073 \$4.98, XWN 19073 \$4.98.

Performance: Okay
Recording: Okay
Stereo Quality: Okay

To call this music lightweight—both the Respighi-Rossini and the Britten—is at least to avoid a harsher term. Respighi's "arrangements"—unlike, for example, Stravinsky's—have an awful way of making meretricious what is already so. So it is with the *Rossiniana*. And I'm not sure *what* the normally tasteful Benjamin Britten thought he was up to with his *Soirées Musicales*—even with the liner-note explanation taken into consideration—but these vulgar vagaries are, if a little more fun than the Respighi, not much easier to take.

Why were these sides—either of them—recorded, one wonders? Well, conductor Zeller's background is the orchestra pit at the ballet, and there is a relationship between this manner of music and certain music for the dance. He conducts it like a ballet conductor—you'll be belted solidly by every down beat—but this is probably the best way possible. *W. F.*

© RUBINSTEIN: *The Demon*. A. Ivanov (baritone). The Demon; T. Talakhadze (soprano), Princess Tamara; S. Krasovsky (bass), Prince Gudal; I. Kozlovsky (tenor), Prince Sinodal; M. Kuznetsova (contralto), Nurse; V. Gavryushov (bass). Old Servant. Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi

Theatre, Alexander Melik-Pashaiev cond. ULTRAPHONE ULP 114/5/6/7 four 12-inch discs \$19.94.

Performance: Powerful and convincing
Recording: Dated sound

Chronicles and legends of his pianistic feats have accorded Anton Gregoryevich Rubinstein (1829-1894) an immortal position among the keyboard giants, but his accomplishments as a composer are hardly remembered. Yet his list of compositions is enormous, ranging through the forms from opera to string quartet, from intimate piano pieces to grandiose symphonies. Rubinstein wrote more than twenty operas, some of which enjoyed a great deal of popularity for a while before fading from the repertoire. It is something of a surprise, therefore, to come face to face now with a virtually uncut recording of *The Demon* in an impressive performance by the Bolshoi Theatre. While it fails to establish Rubinstein as an underrated operatic genius, it offers impressive evidence of his skill and inspiration.

The Demon dates from the period (1875) that spawned Moussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, but the two have nothing whatever in common. As a composer, Rubinstein seems to have lived outside the Russian mainstream, his cosmopolitan style unaffected by contemporary nationalistic currents. There are passages in his work of decidedly Russian melody and coloration, but he was no more advanced in this regard than was Glinka a generation before him. And yet, despite his evident eclecticism, Rubinstein was no servile imitator—he blended the absorbed influences of Liszt and Meyerbeer (and possibly, to a small degree, Verdi and Wagner) into a style of catch-all Romanticism with an appealing, if only slightly discernible, personal character.

The story, based on a Lermontov poem, offers an interesting variant of the Faust legend with overtones of *The Flying Dutchman*. The Demon, banished from Heaven and utterly contemptuous of Earth, falls in love with a beautiful mortal. He haunts her thoughts, causes the destruction of her beloved, and ultimately destroys her too, because only death can release her from the Demon's possession. But the Demon's figure evokes sympathy throughout—in his final

tragedy, as he stands vanquished, humiliated, and alone, facing eternal damnation, it is difficult not to pity him.

The Bolshoi cast carries off the performance with conviction. Ivanov has a voice of formidable range and power and a dramatic intelligence that conveys the role's supernatural yet always human qualities most impressively. After having known for so many years the aria "Do not weep, my child" (one of the score's big moments) from historical recordings by Chaliapin and Titta Ruffo, it is now a special pleasure to hear it in the proper context—though not quite as gloriously sung as it was by the earlier artists.

Although the performance probably originated around 1950, the severe distortion in choral and orchestral sound and the primitive balances sound even earlier. The voices are closely recorded, and very often seem overblown. Despite these flaws, however, the opera is worth hearing, and listeners with Romantic predilections will find much enjoyment in it. The set comes with a serviceable English translation. *The Demon* occupies seven record sides—the eighth is given over to the opening scene of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sadko*, in another production by the Bolshoi Theatre.

SAINT-SAËNS: *Cello Concerto No. 1* (see TCHAIKOVSKY)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© ® SCHUBERT: *Violin Sonatas, Op. 137: No. 1, in D Major (D. 384); No. 2, in A Minor (D. 385); No. 3, in G Minor (D. 408)*. Alexander Schneider (violin); Peter Serkin (piano). VANGUARD VSD 71128 \$5.95. VRS 1128 \$4.98.

Performance: Songfully virile
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Good

Vanguard has done Schubertians and music lovers in general another good turn by issuing this splendid new recording of violin-and-piano masterpieces from the pen of the nineteen-year-old Schubert. They date from the period that saw, on the one hand, the exquisitely lyrical Fifth Symphony in B-flat and, on the other, such precociously dramatic songs as *Der Erlkönig* and *Gretchen am Spinnrade*. Though they were published after Schubert's death as "sonatinas," Schubert himself titled these works sonatas, and it is in this spirit that Alexander Schneider and Peter Serkin (the greatly gifted son of the famous Rudolf) play them.

Untrammelled lyricism suffuses the D Major Sonata, and the A Minor is imbued with something of the same feverish drama as the aforementioned songs and the "Tragic" C Minor Symphony completed during the same month as the third of these sonatas, the G Minor. This last-named sonata combines certain expressive aspects of the D Major and the A Minor, but has a somewhat less pronounced profile than its two companions.

Schneider's violin playing is not the last word in tonal polish, but it has the same wonderful musicality and rhythmic thrust that characterize the playing of Joseph Szigeti and Adolf Busch in their primes. Peter Serkin is an ideal collaborator, and there seems no doubt but that he will more than do honor to the example set over the years by his illustrious father.

(Continued on page 94)



PETER SERKIN AND ALEXANDER SCHNEIDER



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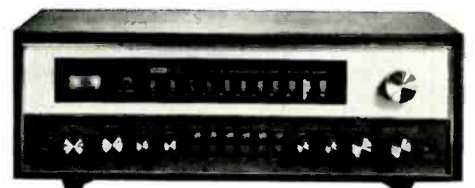
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© ® STRAUSS: *Daphne: "O bleib, geliebter Tag!"; "Unbeilvolle Daphne!"; Four Last Songs (Frühling; September; Beim Schlafengehen; Im Abendrot).* Teresa Stich-Randall (soprano); Vienna Radio Orchestra, Laszlo Somogyi cond. WESTMINSTER WST 17081 \$4.98, XWN 19081 \$4.98.

Performance: Intermittently brilliant
Recording: Warm and full
Stereo Quality: Suitable

In the absence of a full-length recording of *Daphne*, the appearance of these two extended scenes would seem to be intended to whet the appetite for more of this relatively little-known Strauss opera. But for this listener, at least, it does not quite succeed in doing so. Despite some gorgeously written passages for orchestra as well as voice, the music in these scenes of Strauss' "pastoral tragedy" seems interminable. There is a curious lack of animation about it, further aggravated by the text's verbosity.

Few sopranos can match the credentials of Teresa Stich-Randall—style, range, and tonal beauty—for the requirements at hand, but even she fails to cope successfully with all the hazards of *Daphne's* treacherously high-lying and ultimately unrewarding music. The precarious moments are few, however, in the context of so much beautifully executed vocalism. On the other hand, some of the artist's sustained notes take on a cold, glassy edge that seriously affects the otherwise glowing tone quality.

In the *Four Last Songs*, which show the composer at a much higher level of inspiration. Miss Stich-Randall fails to equal the previous recorded landmarks — Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Lisa della Casa—in point of expressiveness and verbal communication. In terms of pure singing, however, she would be their equal were it not for the tonal mannerism cited above. Somogyi's deliberate tempos tend to expand musical stretches that hardly require such generosity, but he draws beautiful sound from his orchestra. Both versions are well recorded, with decidedly better spread and definition in stereo. G. J.

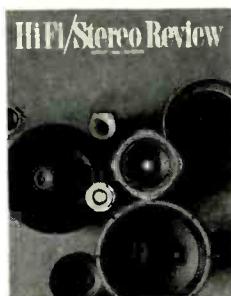
© ® RICHARD STRAUSS: *Schlagende Herzen; Allerseelen; Mein Herz ist stumm; Ich wollt' ein Sträusslein binden; Säusle, liebe Myrte; Die Georgine; Die Nacht; Ständchen; Befreit; Morgen; Drei Lieder der Ophelia aus Hamlet; Rube, meine Seele!; Leises Lied; Schlechtes Wetter.* Evelyn Lear (soprano); Erik Werba (piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138910 \$5.98, LPM 18910* \$5.98.

Performance: Appealing
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Discreet

The artist and the program are both above routine interest here. Evelyn Lear, one of our many talented artistic exports, has been appearing with success in Germany and Austria for several years. Although this is her first solo recital, she will be remembered from distinguished contributions to other recordings, notably to Angel's recent complete *Boris Godunov*, in which she sings Marina. The selections for this program are well made, combining some of Strauss' best-known songs with others that are quite unfamiliar.

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Ich wollt' ein Sträußlein binden and *Säusle, liebe Myrte*, set to the lyrics of Clemens Brentano, belong to the latter group. So do the three Ophelia Songs, written to translations of Shakespeare's texts and apparently receiving their first recorded performance here.

Miss Lear has the pure, soaring vocal quality on which the best Strauss interpretations are based—an ideal instrument for the lyric fervor of *Befreit* and *Allerseelen*. But she is also an intelligent interpreter who captures the delicate moods of *Morgen* and *Die Nacht* with sensitive insight. She handles the Ophelia Songs brilliantly, but these settings, though successful as depictions of a distraught mind, are somewhat unrewarding as lieder. As for the Brentano songs, even Miss Lear's artistry cannot remove the traces of artificiality from Strauss' convoluted vocal line. But the over-all impression gained from this recital is more than gratifying, for this surely is an artist of the first rank.

Werba's collaboration is valuable, as always, and the recorded sound, though somewhat distant, is satisfactory. Full texts and translations are provided, but DGG's liner notes are again faulty. The assertion that "no female singer has hitherto devoted a long-playing record exclusively to Strauss" overlooks Hilde Gueden and Lisa della Casa. Another statement—"Rube, meine Seele has, for no obvious reason, never before been recorded by a woman"—ignores Helen Traubel and Kirsten Flagstad! I realize that these notes were originally written for the German market where the annotator's statements may have some validity because the recordings I have cited may not be available there. But when the liner notes are to be circulated in this hemisphere, care should be taken to avoid such glaring misrepresentations. G. J.

Ⓢ Ⓜ STRAVINSKY: *Conducts His Choral Music. Babel. John Colicos (narrator). Zvezdoliki. "Le Roi des Étoiles." Choral Variations—Bach's Vom Himmel Hoch. The Dove Descending Breaks the Air. A Sermon, a Narrative and a Prayer.* Shirley Verrett (mezzo-soprano); Loren Driscoll (tenor); John Horton (speaker); Festival Singers of Toronto, Elmer Iseler director; CBC Symphony Orchestra, Igor Stravinsky cond. COLUMBIA MS 6647 \$5.98, ML 6047 \$4.98.

Performance: The master's own
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Effective

I don't know who at Columbia is thinking up the titles for the company's Stravinsky's Stravinsky project, but I wish whoever it is would coin more appropriate and/or imaginative ones or cut them out altogether. Recently it was "Favorite Short Pieces"—a "pop" concert (the title suggests) consisting of some of Stravinsky's most esoteric and obscure works. A gag, surely, but at whose expense?

Now we have "Stravinsky Conducts His Choral Music!" All of it? Some of it? And since the latter is true, so what? It might just as readily be released under such a pertinent, witty, inclusive title as "A Phonograph Record" for all the point it makes.

Yes, it is choral music, but again, it is esoteric. *Zvezdoliki* (1911)—a cantata which, like the *Symphonies for Winds*, is dedicated to Claude Debussy—is part Russian-liturgical and (I guess it's unsurprising enough) part Claude Debussy, a composer

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who Stravinsky's recent writings show has diminished rather shockingly in his present personal esteem. The work is effective, but it is about two things, it seems to me, and the disparities do not mesh magically.

The anthem *A Dove Descending Breaks the Air* (on words by the late T. S. Eliot) dates from 1962 and is an a cappella chorale-like work in free quasi-atonal style. It neither reflects, nor seems to want to reflect, the expressive texture of the words.

The *Bach Chorale Variations* is a remarkable work, as it always has been. It is, to be sure, transcribed Bach—but through pure instrumental personality, chord distributions, and certain characteristically stressed asymmetries, the work is so thoroughly Stravinskian that a careless listener might think he was hearing one of Stravinsky's original

neo-Baroque numbers such as the *Dumbarton Oaks Concerto*. It is a tour de force of rather an esoteric variety and, in its intellectual way, curiously moving as a species of Stravinskiana—quite apart from its relationship to the Bach who wrote the actual notes.

Babel (1944) is another wisp of a piece that packs a wealth of detail into a moment's space. It is in Stravinsky's restrained "Apolonian" neoclassic manner—muted, controlled, but remarkably sweet and touching in effect.

A Sermon, a Narrative and a Prayer (1961, texts selected by Robert Craft from the Bible) is an extended work in Stravinsky's recent quasi-atonal, serial manner. As in all of these curiously original vocal-instrumental works, an essentially monotonous, incantational vocal line or lines rides serenely and

even relentlessly over a Stravinskian adaptation of the twelve-tone lurchings and leapings and pointillisms of the Schoenberg-Webern school. If the work seems merely peculiar at first hearing, I advise you to stay with it. The third or fourth time through, you will more likely than not find it arresting and quite deeply affecting in its utterly de-personalized musical understatement. And the performance—particularly the elegant work of the young mezzo Shirley Verrett and the tenor Loren Driscoll—is musicianship and sensitivity a mile wide.

Stravinsky's performances—their value, that is—need no further comment than that they are considered, apparently well executed, and are his own documentation of himself as a composer. The recorded sound is a little thin on occasion, but then again, this is, for the most part, not music of conventionally "rich" texture. The stereo treatment is both subtle and apt. *W. F.*

© ® STRAVINSKY: *Favorite Short Pieces. Greeting Prelude; Dumbarton Oaks Concerto; Eight Instrumental Miniatures for Fifteen Players; Four Etudes for Orchestra; Circus Polka; Suite No. 1 for Small Orchestra; Suite No. 2 for Small Orchestra.* CBC Symphony Orchestra, Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Igor Stravinsky cond. COLUMBIA MS 6648 \$5.98, ML 6048 \$4.98.

Performance: Authentic
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Ditto

Although it is nowhere specified in the liner notes—or elsewhere—exactly *whose* "Favorite Short Pieces" these are, we must assume that the vaguely pop-concert title on this album refers, if to anything at all, to the composer's taste. For each of the pieces—for all the various delights to be found in them—is distinctly Stravinskian esoterica. Indeed, in the case of perhaps half of this specific repertoire, "Favorite Minor Stravinsky" might have been the title chosen by even the composer's most ardent disciples.

I hasten to add, however, that the record, thus understood, will be a genuine delight to those who love the music of this composer's neoclassic and earlier periods. The wittily succinct *Greeting Prelude*, which lasts less than a minute, is a wonderfully sonorous and fetching setting of "Happy Birthday to You"—written, says the composer, "as a kind of singing (or playing) telegram for the eightieth birthday of my old friend, the late Pierre Monteux."

The *Dumbarton Oaks Concerto*, which dates from 1938, is perhaps the most specifically neoclassic and the most solid and durable of the works presented here. Although it takes its direction from the Bach Brandenburg Concertos, the Stravinsky work—which was a widely influential one in its day—is brimful of the composer's own freshest invention, captivating tunefulness, and craftiest craftsmanship.

Circus Polka was originally composed for a ballet of elephants and, as choreographed by George Balanchine, was first performed by the Ringling Brothers' Circus. The piece, like the ballet it was designed for, is essentially a rather coarse joke—or, at least, it had better be!

The *Eight Instrumental Miniatures* and the *Four Etudes for Orchestra* are instrumental enlargements of (in the first case) simple piano pieces and (in the second) the



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Three Pieces for String Quartet and the *Etude for Pianola*. The originals date back to 1917, before the neoclassic urge had taken hold of the composer, and are thus more closely related to Stravinsky's early "Russian" period. But, in their orchestral guise most of all, they give off—along with the two *Suites for Small Orchestra* that also date from roughly the same period—the special aura of their period (Diaghilev's Paris) with a joyous creative brilliance that, for the aficionado at least, is irresistible.

The performances are pure Stravinsky—hard, precise, elegant, and crystal-clear. One concludes in the long run that it is somehow beside the point to attempt to compare the accumulating mass of the composer's own readings of his work with those by other conductors. **W. F.**

© TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 5, in E Minor, Op. 64; Marche Slave, Op. 31*. Hallé Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli cond. VANGUARD SRV 139 SD \$2.98, SRV 139 \$1.98.

Performance: Somewhat sluggish
Recording: Lacks bite
Stereo Quality: Will do

In view of the splendid thrust and passion that marked Sir John Barbirolli's 1958 recording of the Tchaikovsky Fourth Symphony issued in the Vanguard Everyman series (SRV 135, SD 135), I am surprised to find both the performance and the sound in this 1959 taping of the Fifth distinctly inferior. The reading lacks genuine urgency and fire, and the sonics seem rather faded. While the *Marche Slave* is a welcome bonus, it is rather a shame that Barbirolli has seen fit to make a number of cuts in this reading. The symphony's finale, however, is played without any of the cuts that sometimes turn up in concert and recorded performances.

Surprisingly, there are almost no genuinely competitive alternative versions of the Tchaikovsky Fifth to be had in low-price stereo and mono, though I would suggest a hearing of Lovro von Matačić's with the Czech Philharmonic on Parliament 149 (stereo/mono). A good low-price *Marche Slave* is that by Reiner and the Chicago Symphony on Victrola VIC/VICS 1068. **D. H.**

© TCHAIKOVSKY: *Variations on a Roco Theme, Op. 33*. SAINT-SAËNS: *Cello Concerto No. 1, in A Minor, Op. 33*. Janos Starker (cello); London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati cond. MERCURY SR 90409 \$5.98, MG 50409* \$4.98.

Performance: Scintillating
Recording: Crisp
Stereo Quality: Good

From the standpoint of opportunities for a display of virtuosity, these two pieces are among the most effective in the cello-and-orchestra literature. Thus their pairing on a single disc is exceptionally apt, particularly when the virtuoso involved happens to be Janos Starker—to my way of thinking the best cellist of the post-Casals generation.

At any rate, he brings to the charming Saint-Saëns and the frothy Tchaikovsky a flawless combination of elegance and brilliance, and is backed to perfection by Dorati and the London Symphony—the whole emerging from the disc in sound as crisp and clear as a brisk autumn day.

Both scores have been excellently recorded

in stereo before, but in different couplings—the Saint-Saëns by Starker himself on Angel and by Fournier on Deutsche Grammophon, and the Tchaikovsky by Rostropovich on DGG and by Fournier on Angel. However, as a combination of topnotch performance, apt coupling, and fine recorded sound, the new Mercury disc takes the palm, in my estimation. **D. H.**

© TCHEREPNIN: *Symphony No. 2, Op. 77*. MOHAUPT: *Town Piper Music*. Louisville Orchestra, Robert Whitney cond. LOUISVILLE FIRST EDITIONS LOU 645 \$7.95.

Performance: Workable
Recording: Adequate

Alexander Tcherepnin's Second Symphony, written in 1946 on commission from an

American music publisher, is a tautly constructed, concise, and uncommonly economical four-movement work. Its stylistic gesture is, I suppose, Romantic, yet the piece is by no means as conservative for its time as its composer's reputation might suggest. It is surprisingly short on conventional Russianisms and, although its last movement keeps casting curiously persistent shadows out of Stravinsky's *Petrouchka*, the work is quite fresh and personal of tone.

Richard Mohaupt's *Town Piper Music* was, according to the liner note, inspired by Dürer's mural titled *Nürnberg Stadtspiele*, "which depicts a group of mediaeval musicians performing from a balcony. Mohaupt made no attempt to imitate the musical style or idiom of the early sixteenth century. In-
(Continued on page 102)

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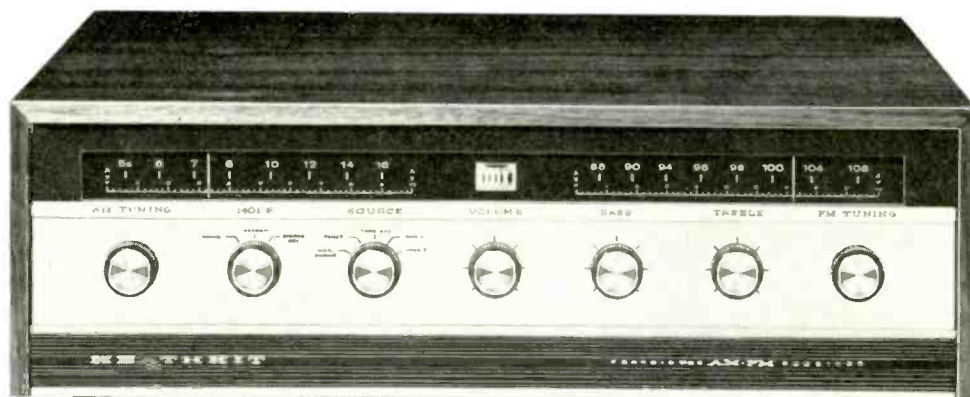
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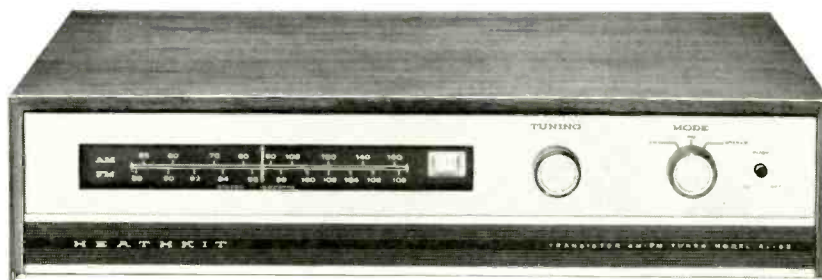
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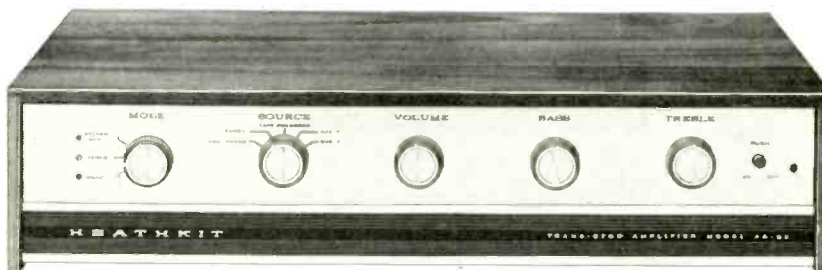
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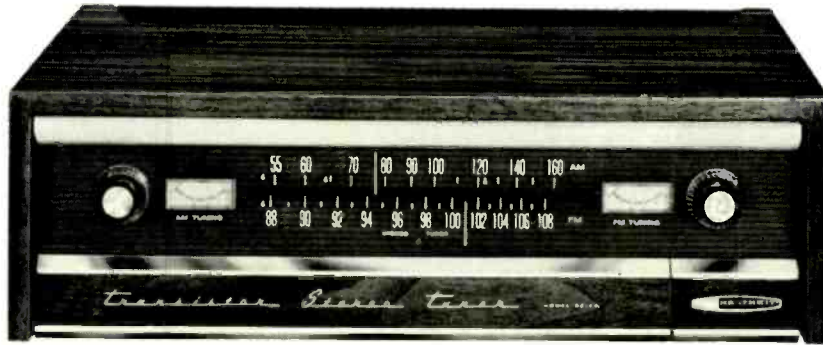


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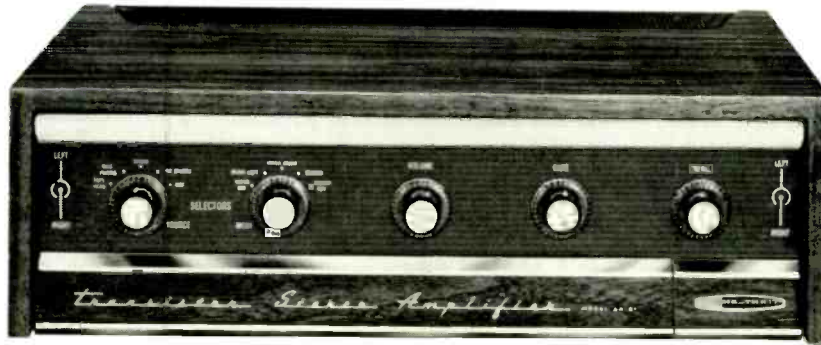
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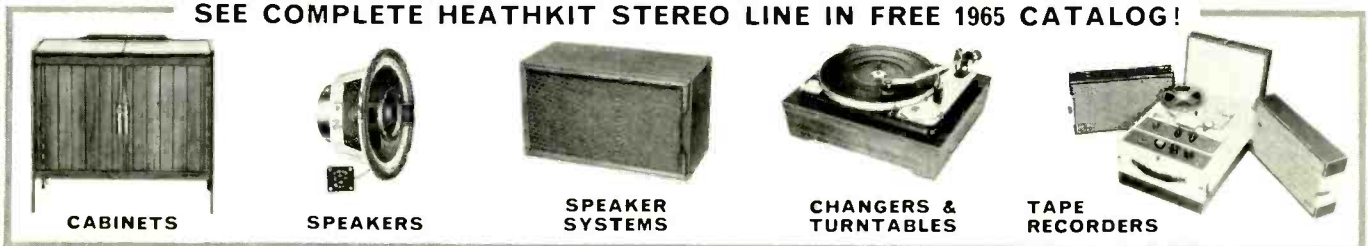


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stead he captures the festive mood of a South German town on a feast day. . . . There would seem to be little that a reviewer could add to this commentary except to note that, like the endless folk-music suites turned out by contemporary British composers, its appeal—for all its pleasantness—is probably rather more to a German listener than to an American one.

The performances are sturdy and clean; the sound is characteristic Louisville. *W. F.*

© ④ VIVALDI: *The Four Seasons*. Ruggiero Ricci (violin); Stradivarius Chamber Orchestra, Ruggiero Ricci cond. DECCA DL 79423 \$5.98, DL 9423 \$4.98.

Performance: For fiddle fanciers
Recording: Diffused
Stereo Quality: Good placement

The latest recording of the ever-popular *Four Seasons* follows the basic plan of Ricci's previous album, "The Glory of Cremona" (Decca DXSE 7179, DXE 179), in which fifteen priceless violins were put on view, acoustically speaking. In the present disc, there are fourteen Strads, four played by the soloist-conductor (one in each concerto) plus ten in the accompanying ensemble, including violas and cellos. To add some authenticity to the proceedings, there is also a harpsichord (maker's name not given), but the interpretations are geared more to virtuosity and splash than to either Baroque style or the tone-painting Vivaldi had in mind. Ricci's playing, basically Romantic in phrasing, is extremely adroit technically, though he tends to use the faster solo passages, some of which are taken very quickly indeed, as display studies. The orchestra, whose personnel is unlisted, also adopts this approach. The aggregate sound in the mono copy lacks the richness one normally associates with Stradivarius instruments; the stereo, however, has more dimension. In both, the acoustics are rather diffused, as though the ensemble were playing in an empty subway station, and even Ricci's solo work, on whatever violin he happens to be playing, sounds colorless. The album includes program notes, texts and translations of the poems Vivaldi (or one of his librettists) wrote for the first edition, and a description of the four solo instruments used. *I. K.*

WOLF: *Italienisches Liederbuch* (see Best of Month, page 71)

COLLECTIONS

© ④ DELLER CONSORT: *Album of Beloved Songs*. *Loch Lomond*: Annie Laurie; *Sumer is icumen in*: The Oak and the Ash; *Drink to me only with thine eyes*; *Green-sleeves* (The old year is fled); *Who's going to shoe your pretty little foot*; *Pat-a-pan*. Lassus: *Matona mia cara*. Handel: *Ombra mai fu*. Morley: *Now is the month of maying*. Barnby: *Sweet and Low*. Bach: *Bist du bei mir*. Sullivan: *The Long Day Closes*. Alfred Deller (countertenor); Wilfred Brown (tenor); Deller Consort; Desmond Dupré (lute and guitar); John Sothcott (recorder); Gustav Leonhardt (harpsichord); Handel Festival Orchestra. Anthony Lewis cond. VANGUARD SRV 14151 SD \$1.98, SRV 141 \$1.98.

Performance: Highly enjoyable
Recording: Very satisfactory
Stereo Quality: Fine

With the exception of the Deller Consort's performance of Sullivan's *The Long Day Closes*, released here for the first time, all of the material in this very enjoyable collection has been culled from previously issued Deller recordings for Vanguard. The selections—ranging from Vaughan Williams' setting of *Loch Lomond* to the famous Handel "Largo" (the only item in which the countertenor does not participate)—have obviously been chosen to represent many different categories, including Renaissance, Baroque, Christmas, and folk song, along with familiar pieces. The juxtaposition is extremely skillful. Deller's solo songs are set off by works sung by his vocal ensemble. The result is an extremely pleasant recital that should appeal to almost anyone. At the bargain Everyman-series price, this disc makes an admirable introduction for those not familiar with Deller's artistry—an artistry so considerable as to prevent the more hackneyed



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Rare vocal grace and versatility

selections from cloying. Texts are included, and the recorded sound, which is slightly more effective in the stereo version, is quite satisfactory in spite of the varied sources. *I. K.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© ④ MAUREEN FORRESTER: *Famous Arias of Bach and Handel*. Bach: *St. John Passion*: *Es ist vollbracht*. *St. Matthew Passion*: *Du lieber Heiland . . . Buss' und Reu'*; *Erbarme dich*. *Christmas Oratorio*: *Bereite dich*, *Zion*. Handel: *Samson*: *Return O God of Hosts*. *Jephtha*: *Scenes of horror*. *Messiah*: *He was despised*; *O thou that tellest good tidings*. Maureen Forrester (contralto); Herbert Tachezi (harpsichord, organ); I Solisti di Zagreb. Antonio Janigro cond. VANGUARD BACH GUILD BGS 70669 \$5.95, BG 669 \$4.98.

Performance: Smooth and sumptuous
Recording: Excellent

Stereo Quality: Ideal

The name Maureen Forrester seems to be popping up on record jackets everywhere these days, on different labels almost simultaneously. As far as I am concerned, all these record companies should consider
(Continued on page 104)

HIFI/STEREO REVIEW

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

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

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

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

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

Tony Mottola spent days going over the possibilities for an album

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

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

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DATA

COMMENTARY

⑤ ⑥ **BEETHOVEN: Piano Concertos: No. 2, in B-flat, Op. 19; No. 4, in G Major, Op. 58.** Julius Katchen (piano); London Symphony Orchestra. Pierino Gamba cond. LONDON CS 6374 \$5.98, CM 9374* \$4.98.

The youthful B-flat concerto comes off with champagne sparkle, not only because of Katchen's brilliant finger work, but also because of the Italianate *briosità* quality of Gamba's accompaniment. A similar approach, however, spoils the Fourth, the composer's most nearly perfect concerto—it lacks weight and communicative impact. Among modern recordings, my preference is the Fleisher-Szell collaboration. *D. H.*

⑥ **EGK: Abraxas—Suite from the Ballet.** HENZE: *Undine—Wedding Music.* FINE: *Diversions for Orchestra.* Louisville Orchestra, Robert Whitney cond. LOUISVILLE FIRST EDITIONS LOU 643 \$7.95.

Egk's ballet suite seems to be a catch-all of our century's modernist tonal devices, and separated from the stage action it seems fragmentary and willful. The ballet excerpt by Henze has its own peculiar flavor despite its debt to Stravinsky. American Irving Fine's *Diversions* is a wonderfully wise and tender blend of styles, particularly that lyrical sweetness that was his unique gift. *W. F.*

⑤ ⑥ **HAYDN: Divertimento in E-flat Major for Strings ("Echo," Hob. 11:39).** PURCELL: *The Fairy Queen: Two Suites.* TELEMANN: *Don Quichotte Suite.* Wiener Solisten, Wilfried Bötcher cond. VANGUARD BACH GUILD 70662 \$5.95, BG 662 \$4.98.

The Haydn Divertimento is more interesting for its contrived effect of two ensembles, one "echoing" at a distance, than it is for musical values, but it is nonetheless charming. The Purcell dances are quite a bit more substantial. Best of all is the Telemann, a wonderfully fanciful depiction of such things as the Don's sighs of love and his attack on the windmills. The performances are first-rate, full of gusto and verve, and the recorded sound is fine. *I. K.*

⑤ ⑥ **MOZART: Piano Concertos: No. 16, in D Major (K. 451); No. 23, in A Major (K. 488).** Géza Anda (piano); Salzburg Mozarteum Camerata Academica, Géza Anda cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138870 \$5.98, 18870* \$5.98.

The festive and tautly constructed D Major concerto, an undeservedly neglected work, is tailor-made for Anda's nervously brilliant style, and this recorded performance is masterly in every respect. The exquisite A Major concerto fares less well in Anda's hands: the fast movements lack breathing spaces and the wonderful slow movement seems too greatly drawn out by comparison. For the latter, the Kempff-Leitner collaboration (also on DGG) remains a touchstone. Good sound here. *D. H.*

⑤ ⑥ **PROKOFIEV: Romeo and Juliet—Ballet Music (excerpts).** Philharmonia Orchestra, Efrem Kurtz cond. ANGEL S 36174 \$5.98, 36174 \$4.98.

When directing performances of ballet music in concert, long-time ballet conductors such as Kurtz often stress the rhythmic aspects of the music—understandably enough—at the expense of the expressive and lyrical. Kurtz happily avoids this pitfall here: we never forget, in this elegant performance, that Prokofiev the melody writer is the star of the show. The recorded sound is clear but subdued. *W. F.*

⑥ **RICHARD TAUBER: Favorite German Songs.** *Ach, wie ist's möglich dann; Du, du liegst mir im Herzen; Morgen muss ich fort von hier; Kommt a Vögel gestiegen; Der Mai ist gekommen; Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten;* and fifteen others. Richard Tauber (tenor); Mischa Spoliansky and Percy Kahn (pianists); Odeon Orchestra. Frieder Weissmann cond. CAPITOL T 10369 \$3.98.

In other circumstances a recital of twenty-one unpretentious German songs—some traditional, others composed in the folk style—might seem too much of a good thing. But Tauber sings them all with fine showmanship, a caressing and mellow tone, absolute ease, and the kind of consummate art that conceals itself. The orchestral accompaniments are a mite saccharine, but the piano backing on about half the program is well suited to Tauber's intimate style. The sound is reasonably good, considering the masters were made in the early Thirties. *G. J.*

themselves fortunate, for there are few artists around with her vocal grace and versatility.

In this program of classical arias from opera and oratorio she displays tonal and musical qualities reminiscent of the late Kathleen Ferrier, who gave us memorable renditions of some of these selections (London 5083). Miss Forrester, like her predecessor, approaches this music with an unmannered, rather low-key and untheatrical style. Her emotional involvement in the music is restrained, but the richness and evenness of her tone, the beauty of her phrasing, and the smoothness of her delivery leave little room for criticism.

A certain lack of intensity in "He was despised" and "Erbarne dich" may be ascribed to Janigro's nicely detailed but not particularly animated direction. The joyful "O thou that tellest good tidings," however, strikes fire in both soloist and conductor, and comes off with a thrilling vitality. Both stereo and mono versions offer rich sound and exceptional transparency. *G. J.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

⑥ **BENIAMINO GIGLI: The Young Gigli.** Ponchielli: *La Gioconda: Enzo Grimaldo; Cielo e mar; Deb! non tremar.* Puccini: *Tosca: Recondita armonia; E lucevan le stelle. La Bobème: O soave fanciulla.* Boito: *Mefistofele: Dai campi, dai prati; Se tu mi doni; Lontano, lontano; Giunto sul passo estremo.* Mascagni: *Cavalleria Rusticana: Mamma! quel vino è generoso. Iris: Apri la tua finestra. Lodoletta: Ah! ritrovarla nella sua capanna.* Donizetti: *La Favorita: Spirto gentil; Addio, fuggir mi lascia.* Giordano: *Fedora: Amor ti vieta; Vedi, io piango.* Beniamino Gigli (tenor); assisting singers; orchestral accompaniment. ANGEL COLH 146 \$5.98.

Performance: **Beautiful**
Recording: **1918-1919, well remastered**

Beniamino Gigli made his opera debut in 1914. Four years later he began a recording career that continued uninterrupted for nearly forty years. During 1918 and 1919, prior to his Metropolitan debut, which established him as the successor to the ailing Caruso, he recorded twenty-four selections for HMV in Milan, of which sixteen are included on this disc. In common with many similar entries in the Angel COLH series, this presentation is a model of its kind, expertly engineered, purposefully organized, and excellently annotated (though carelessly proofread).

At the age of twenty-eight, Beniamino Gigli was already a polished vocalist and a mature interpreter. While in some cases later recordings (of the two *Tosca* arias, in particular) surpassed these Milan examples in assurance and tonal solidity, none of these early recordings can be termed a "youthful" effort. They stand comparison, in fact, with the achievement of any tenor at any age.

Listen, for example, to the first-act duet from *La Gioconda*, in which the Barnaba is the obscure but very able baritone D. Zani. Although in his later electrical versions Gigli was more appropriately paired with Giuseppe de Luca or Titta Ruffo, his performance in the Milan recording reveals the same warm timbre, the same lyric ardor, and virtually identical felicities in phrasing. In another
(Continued on page 106)

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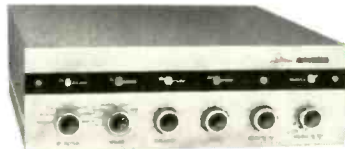
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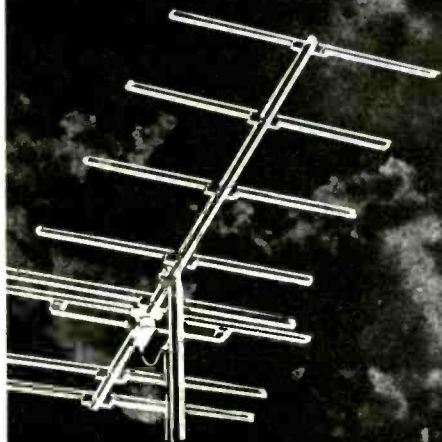
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instance, "Amor ti vieta," comparison with a later version does show a marked change—from one kind of excellence to another. In the early version the tone is lighter, the style less passionate, but the later recording (1940), with its heightened intensity, reveals no diminution whatever in richness and evenness of tone.

The sequence contains several items not duplicated during the singer's long career. In addition, two selections are of unusual interest: "Spirto gentil," in which sensuous tone and passionate delivery are held in check by as much bel canto restraint as Gigli was ever able to muster, and the aria from Mascagni's *Lodoletta*. This was probably the first recording of the latter, following the opera's premiere (1917) and a series of performances in which the tenor appeared under Mascagni's baton. The only weak link in the lot is the *Mefistofele* duet, where the voices are not well blended, and Gigli, perhaps affected by his acidulous partner, is off his usual unruffled form.

This collection is unique in its detailed documentation of Gigli's early career. And, like other representative discs of the tenor, now available in larger numbers than ever before, it can be heard as the years go by with unabating pleasure again and again—and again. G. J.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓜ ANTONIO MAGINI - COLETTI: *Opera Recital*. Rossini: *Barbiere di Siviglia*: *Dunque io son*. Donizetti: *Linda di Chamounix*: *Quella pietà si provvida*. Lucia di *Lammermoor*: *Cruda, funesta smania*. Verdi: *Rigoletto*: *Pari siamo*; *Figlia, mio padre*; *Cortigiani, vil vizza*. *Otello*: *Il sogno*. Falstaff: *Quand'ero paggio*. Meyerbeer: *Dinorah*: *Sei vendicata assai*. Bizet: *Pescatori di Perle*: *Del tempio al limitar*. Ponchielli: *La Gioconda*: *O monumento*. Gomez: *Guarany*: *Senza tetto*. Ricci: *Crispino e la Comare*: *Terzetto dei dottori*. Antonio Magini-Coletti (baritone); assisting singers; orchestra and piano accompaniment. ROCOCO 5221 \$4.98.

Performance: **Compelling**
Recording: **Acoustical**

Antonio Magini-Coletti (1855-1912) was one of the first great baritones whose art is adequately preserved on records. Though his career was largely limited to Europe—save for a few performances at the Met in 1891 and 1892—he has long been a favorite of international collectors for reasons that are amply evident in this presentation.

The accompanying notes relate that Magini-Coletti once interrupted his blossoming career as a baritone to attempt a new one as a tenor. It is difficult to understand such a step, for his voice is of the truest baritone quality, solid as flowing bronze, powerful and vibrant with a splendid ring on top. It was one of those "personality" voices that, like Ruffo's, Battistini's, De Luca's or Straciarri's, instantly identified its owner. Magini-Coletti was a vivid dramatic interpreter, but he could convey a range of emotions by subtle vocal shading and inflection, without needing to alter the vocal line. Aside from minor intonation blemishes, every one of these selections is outstanding, and the assisting artists are all of star caliber. The hilarious trio from *Crispino e la Comare*, in which Magini-Coletti is teamed with that

supreme buffoon Ferruccio Corradetti, makes one wish for a complete recording of that little-known *opera buffa*.

The original Fonotipia discs (from around 1905) have been expertly restored, and the surface noise will not disturb listeners who want to hear exceptional vocal artistry. G. J.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓜ ARTUR RUBINSTEIN: *A French Program*. Ravel: *Valses nobles et sentimentales*; *La Vallée des cloches*. Poulenc: *Mouvements perpétuels*; *Intermezzo in A-flat Major*; *Intermezzo No. 2 in D-flat*. Fauré: *Nocturne in A-flat, Op. 33, No. 3*. Chabrier: *Scherzo-valse*. RCA VICTOR LSC 2751 \$5.98, LM 2751* \$4.98.

Performance: **Idiomatic and impeccable**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Ditto**

If I take the trouble to express the opinion that I have never been terribly impressed



ARTUR RUBINSTEIN
Close to impeccable

by the playing of a man who is almost universally regarded as the world's greatest living pianist—I refer of course to Artur Schnabel—it is less to indulge myself in an eccentricity of taste than it is to emphasize my astonished pleasure in this superb new recording of more or less contemporary French piano music.

The reasons for my delight and surprise are almost too numerous to put down. To start with: like few pianists (and even fewer conductors of the orchestral version), Rubinstein plays the *Valses nobles et sentimentales* with a rather hard, unyielding tone that totally suits their cryptic, sinister beauty—not with the lush prettiness of sound that turns them into a chain of merely elegant salon pieces. On the other hand, he can take an earlier Debussy-influenced work like *La vallée des cloches* and evoke the kind of impressionistic mood usually associated with Gieseking, while maintaining a clarity of line and a sense of shape that is almost classical in its purity.

The Poulenc pieces he finds all the right jokes in—he may broaden them a bit too much, but this is carping—and at the same time he can indulge the composer's music-hall lushness and sentimentality without patronizing this side of him. Not many per-

formers of the Old School can pull that neat trick off!

And so it goes the program through. There is a Fauré performance that yields to the French in Fauré rather more than it does to the Schumann-Chopin models that served as this composer's point of departure, and finally a Chabrier Scherzo-valse that is a riot of color and madcap virtuosity. But again, the face of the playing smiles, never leers or patronizes.

The execution is clean, hard, brilliant, and fairly close to impeccable, and RCA Victor's recorded sound emphasizes these qualities to perfection. W. F.

Ⓜ **LUISA TETRAZZINI: Operatic Arias and Songs.** Thomas: *Mignon: Io son Titania*. Meyerbeer: *Dinorah: Ombra leggiera*. Rossini: *Il Barbiere di Siviglia: Una voce poco fa*. Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor: Regnava nel silenzio... Quando rapito in estasi. Linda di Chamounix: O, luce di quest'anima*. Verdi: *Un Ballo in Maschera: Saper vorreste. La Traviata: Ah, fors'è lui... Sempre libera; Addio del passato*. Bellini: *La Sonnambula: Ah! non credea mirarti*. Bizet: *I Pescatori di Perle: Siccome un di caduto il sole*. Benedetti: *Carnevale di Venezia*. Tosti: *Aprile*. Luisa Tetrazzini (soprano); orchestral and piano accompaniment. ANGEL COLH 136 \$5.98.

Performance: Star-like
Recording: Ancient but serviceable

For those interested in the fascinating mementoes of a bygone operatic era, this representative collection of Luisa Tetrazzini's amiable art should hold a special attraction. Critical listeners, however, will find that her achievement falls considerably short of similar commemorative reissues dedicated to such past divas as Melba, Kurz, or Galli-Curci.

A dazzling command of *floriture* and a strong, extremely secure top register were Tetrazzini's most impressive attributes. Her tones in the middle and lower ranges were rather uneven in quality, tending to hardness and often lacking support. She also made exaggerated use of the vibrato-less *voce bianca*, which, I suppose, was meant to bespeak a virginal character, innocence, and other properties of old-fashioned maidenhood. As for Tetrazzini's musicianship, let us say that it was sufficient for a not too demanding age. She was, in sum, a somewhat superficial interpreter but a superb technician. She may have been deficient in the subtle nuances of expression or in the ultimate niceties of phrasing, but her singing was bold and generally accurate, and it radiated a special warmth and joyfulness that easily explains her popularity.

The recordings, dating from 1908-1913, have been suitably reprocessed, but the added reverberation is not always complimentary to the singer's tone. The over-all sound, however, is acceptable, and one of Desmond Shawe-Taylor's informative essays as usual enhances the presentation. G. J.

Ⓜ **TOSCANINI: Concert Favorites.** Wagner: *Die Walküre: Ride of the Valkyries; A Faust Overture*. Mendelssohn: *A Midsummer Night's Dream: Scherzo*. Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet—Overture-Fantasia*. Bach: *Suite No. 3, in D Major: Air*. Paganini: *Moto Perpetuo*. Strauss: *Don Juan—Tone Poem, Op. 20*. Gluck: *Orfeo ed Euridice:*

Dance of the Blessed Spirits. Ravel: *Daphnis and Chloë: Suite No. 2*. Barber: *Adagio for Strings*. Kabalevsky: *Colas Breugnon: Overture*. J. Strauss Jr.: *Tritsch-Tratsch Polka*. Sousa: *El Capitan—March*. Key. *The Star-Spangled Banner*. NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini cond. RCA VICTOR LM 7032 two 12-inch discs \$9.96.

Performances: Fiery
Recording: 1941-1952 vintage

This Toscanini omnium-gatherum brings back to the active long-playing catalog (after too long an absence) such prize performances from the Maestro's baton as the Wagner *Faust Overture* (1946), the Richard Strauss *Don Juan* (1951), and the Ravel *Daphnis and Chloë Suite No. 2*. We also have a too long-delayed LP version of the Samuel Barber

Adagio for Strings, which Toscanini gave its premiere orchestral performance in 1938. The readings of the youthful and impressive Wagner *Faust Overture* and Strauss *Don Juan* remain the standards for today, even through occasionally fuzzy recorded sound, but the Tchaikovsky *Romeo* performance still strikes me as rather heartless and hasty, just as it did when I first heard the records more than fifteen years ago.

Toscanini's way with seeming tidbits of the repertoire is another delectable aspect of the album—be it the blinding virtuosity of Paganini, the gossamer delicacy and precision of Mendelssohn, the melting lyricism of Gluck, or the pulse-tingling get-up-and-go of the Sousa march and Strauss polka (the Maestro had no gift for waltzes).

Almost all the pieces here were processed

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Armando Ghitalla

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from 78-rpm metal masters, and for the most part the sound ranges from presentable in loud passages to surprisingly good at lesser volumes. I noticed what sounded like a tape drop-out at the climax of the Barber *Adagio*, and the end of the Ravel *Daphnis* was slightly higher in pitch than the two earlier LP pressings. D. H.

© © JON VICKERS: *Italian Arias*. Ponchielli: *La Gioconda: Cielo e mar*. Flotow: *Marta: M'appari*. Cilèa: *L'Arlesiana: E la solita storia*. Leoncavallo: *Pagliacci: Vesti la giubba; No. Pagliaccio non son!* Giordano: *Andrea Chénier: Un dì all'azzurro spazio; Come un bel dì di maggio*. Puccini: *Tosca: Recondita armonia*. Verdi: *Don Carlo: Io l'ho perduta. Il Trovatore: Ab! sì, ben mio. Otello: Dio! mi poteri scagliar; Niun mi tema*. Jon Vickers (tenor); Rome Opera House Orchestra. Tullio Serafin cond. RCA VICTOR LSC 2741 \$5.98, LM 2741* \$4.98.

Performance: Intense
Recording: Excellent

Jon Vickers is the thinking man's tenor—an artist whose every performance bespeaks a thorough comprehension of the task at hand and a keen intelligence at work on it. In the opera house, these valuable attributes, aided by considerable histrionic gifts, amply justify the tenor's great international reputation. He has been less consistently successful on records, for reasons that are made clear in this, the artist's first aria recital.

It is not surprising that the finest moments on the disc come from RCA Victor's previously released complete *Otello* set. Here the artist is caught in the excitement of an actual performance. The heartbreaking agony of the great third-act monolog and the utter despair of the death scene are captured movingly, honestly, and without the artist's resorting to excessive melodrama.

This very high level is approached in the two *Pagliacci* excerpts and in "*Un dì all'azzurro spazio*," where Vickers offers fervent singing coupled with vigorous declamation. In the other excerpts, however, he is far less satisfying and at times entirely out of his element.

Vickers' voice has abundant power and a manly, heroic ring, and it embraces all the notes that ought to be considered basic equipment for a successful interpreter of the *Otello-Siegfried-Tannhäuser-Samson-Florestan* repertoire. He is not a bellow, and knows that dramatic singing must have variety in color and dynamics. But these laudable intentions are not always transmitted to his singing. His voice has little sensuous appeal or individual character, and it lacks the facility to impart true lyricism by caressing a phrase. His legato, particularly in upward-curving phrases, is bumpy, and his difficulty in sustaining long-breathed passages often causes him to rush the music's natural flow. As a result, "*Cielo e mar*" and "*Recondita armonia*" become unduly declamatory, "*Ab! sì, ben mio*" is too tense, and the lyricism in the Cilèa air somewhat tentative.

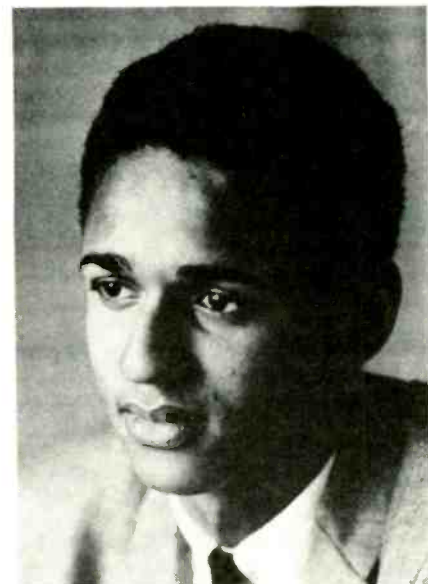
The brilliance of the *Otello* excerpts makes me wish that RCA Victor's gifted producer Richard Mohr had offered fewer arias and more complete scenes, and had not abbreviated certain orchestral postludes. This method, generally more conducive to artistic excellence, would have enormously enhanced the contribution of Vickers, who is more a singing actor than a recitalist. Otherwise,

this is an outstanding technical production, and Serafin's orchestral accompaniments are just about perfect. No texts are supplied with the disc, and the liner notes read like a press release for Mr. Vickers and the Metropolitan Opera. G. J.

© © ANDRE WATTS: *An Andre Watts Recital*. Haydn: *Sonata No. 52, in E-flat Major*. Liszt-Paganini: *Étude No. 2*. Chopin: *Nocturne, Op. 48, No. 1*. Debussy: *La Cathédrale Engloutie*. Liszt: *Sonetto No. 104 del Petrarca*. Andre Watts (piano). COLUMBIA MS 6636 \$5.98, ML 6036 \$4.98.

Performance: Variable
Recording: Very good

How does one evaluate a recorded recital program by a *wunderkind*? This recital by Andre Watts, the dazzlingly gifted young pianist that Leonard Bernstein discovered at a youth-concert audition a couple of years



COLUMBIA

ANDRE WATTS

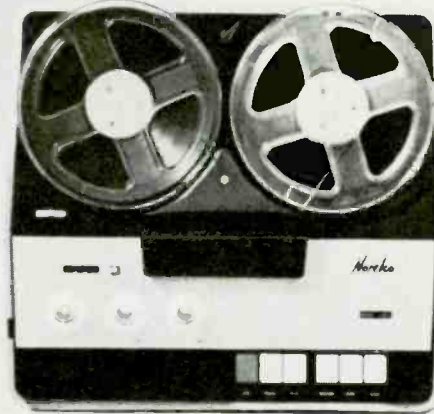
A dazzlingly gifted young pianist

ago, is a remarkable achievement for a musician not yet twenty. But taken simply as a representation of the music involved, we may be less than perfectly happy, less than fully nourished. Young Mr. Watts has a way with the Romantics, make no mistake about that. It was a Liszt concerto that launched his career, and his work here with the *Sonetto No. 104 del Petrarca* is full-blown Romantic splendor, played as if by a pianist twice his age. And he makes scarcely less out of the Liszt-Paganini *Étude No. 2* in E-flat Major or, for that matter, the Chopin *Nocturne*. But his Haydn is the Haydn of a youngster who hasn't yet discovered the special joy of music that puts less emphasis on luxurious keyboard sound—a little dry, a little impatient, a little casual. And oddly enough, in a composer who puts as much emphasis on rich piano sound as any who ever lived, Mr. Watts lets us down again. For his *Cathédrale Engloutie*, while sonorous and full-bodied, is curiously lacking in narrative, in mystery—rather as if the pianist had never been told the "story" of the piece.

Columbia has done a fine job of recording Watts' piano, and the best of his playing is as exciting as we have been led to expect. But might it not have been just a shade too soon for "An Andre Watts Recital"? W. F.

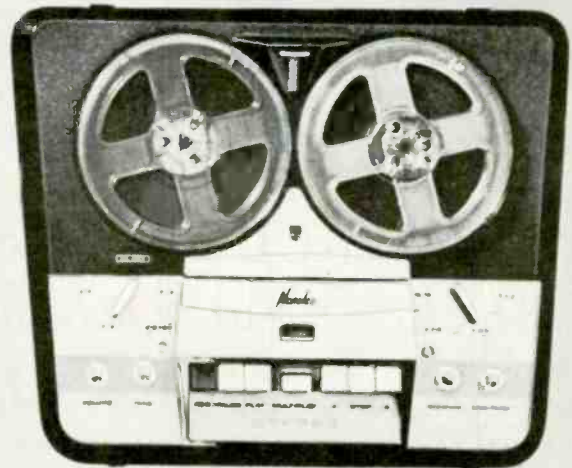
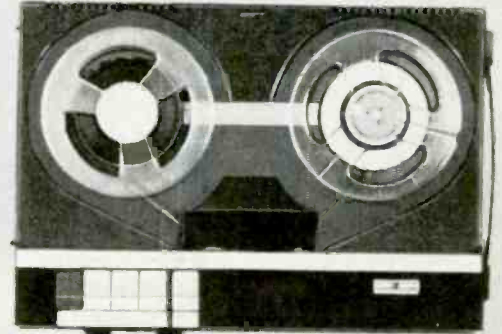


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Ⓢ Ⓜ LAURINDO ALMEIDA: *Guitar from Ipanema*. Laurindo Almeida (guitar); Irene Kral (vocals); flute and rhythm section. *The Girl from Ipanema*; *Izabella*; *Quiet Nights of Quiet Stars*; and eight others. CAPITOL ST 2197 \$4.98, T 2197 \$3.98.

Performance: Polished
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Very good

When bossa nova first arrived in this country, two or three magazine articles claimed that Laurindo Almeida had virtually invented it. This set off shock waves of hilarity among Brazilian musicians, who had never heard or even heard of the Almeida World Pacific disc from which they had supposedly derived bossa nova. They still don't consider Almeida a good bossa nova musician, and neither do I. Ironically, on this record Almeida turns the job of playing the chorded bossa-nova rhythmic accompaniment over to guitarist Al Hendrickson, an American, who handles the assignment quite well.

But whether or not Almeida is a good bossa nova musician, he is a good musician. And this disc, though questionable as bossa nova and bluntly commercial in its purpose, is rather attractive. On most tracks, Almeida plays a new electronic guitar with a wide range of tonal colors, some quite pleasing, some less so. On *The Girl from Ipanema*, Almeida makes it sound like an electric organ, and more specifically like the vibrato-less organ of Rio's Walter Wanderley. The Brazilians, by the way, have generally made more sensitive and individual use of the electric organ than we have, and one of their most distinctive organists, composer Djalmá Ferreira, is heard on one track of this disc; another Brazilian composer, violinist Fafa Leomos, is heard on another track.

Irene Kral sings on two of the tracks. Her vocal work is the best thing in the album. When is some record company going to get smart and make proper use of this gifted woman?
G. L.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓢ Ⓜ TONY BENNETT: *Who Can I Turn To*. Tony Bennett (vocals); orchestra. George Siravo cond. *Listen*. *Little Girl*; *Waltz for Debby*; *I've Never Seen*; *Autumn*

Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓢ = stereophonic recording
- Ⓜ = monophonic recording
- * = mono or stereo version not received for review

Leaves; and eight others. COLUMBIA CS 9085 \$4.98, CL 2285* \$3.98.

Performance: Superb
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Good

When he first started to become popular with *Rags to Riches* and *Because of You*, Tony Bennett was a joke, and night-club impersonators got more mileage out of him than anyone else. But hard work, innate musicianship, excellent arrangers, and a superb ear for off-beat material (*I Left My Heart in San Francisco*, *I Wanna Be Around*, and now

tempo, and *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea* as a near-ballad. But, again like Miss Mercer, Bennett can sometimes be too kind in agreeing to record a new song. There are enough instances of overgenerosity here to make this album less than his best. Nonetheless, any new Bennett album is a necessity for lovers of American popular songs. J. G.

Ⓢ Ⓜ JOHNNY CASH: *Bitter Tears*. Johnny Cash (vocals); unidentified accompaniment. *Drums*; *White Girl*; *Custer*; *Apache Tears*; and four others. COLUMBIA CS 9048 \$4.98, CL 2248* \$3.98.



LAURINDO ALMEIDA: A wide range of tonal color

Who Can I Turn To) have made him into one of the best popular singers we have today. It is a growth that has been extremely gratifying to watch. Frank Sinatra was the great pop singer of the Fifties, and Bennett might yet be that of the Sixties. He is more in tune with the present era than Sinatra: less cocky, more wistful and longing, more the average guy. Even his Joey Bishop-type enunciation is somehow endearing.

Bennett also seems to have taken over Mabel Mercer's function of offering a showcase for these new young song writers. Most notable of these is the team of Cy Coleman and Carolyn Leigh, represented here by one of their finest songs, *I Walk a Little Faster*. And his heart is in the right hip place, too, as shown by the inclusion of Ray Charles' *The Brightest Smile in Town*. For astute arranging, I refer you to *Autumn Leaves* at up-

Performance: Understated
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Good

In the flood of publicity that has attended the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the "long hot summer," the Mississippi triple murder, the March on Washington, and the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Dr. Martin Luther King, many people have forgotten the long-standing grievances of the American Indian. Edmund Wilson has not forgotten, nor have Buffy Sainte-Marie, Marlon Brando, and the Indians who live near Kinzua Dam in New York. Nor has the pop-country-folk singer, Johnny Cash, who is partly of Cherokee extraction.

Cash's newest album, "Bitter Tears," is made up of songs that deal with the Indian. All but one were written by Cash or Peter

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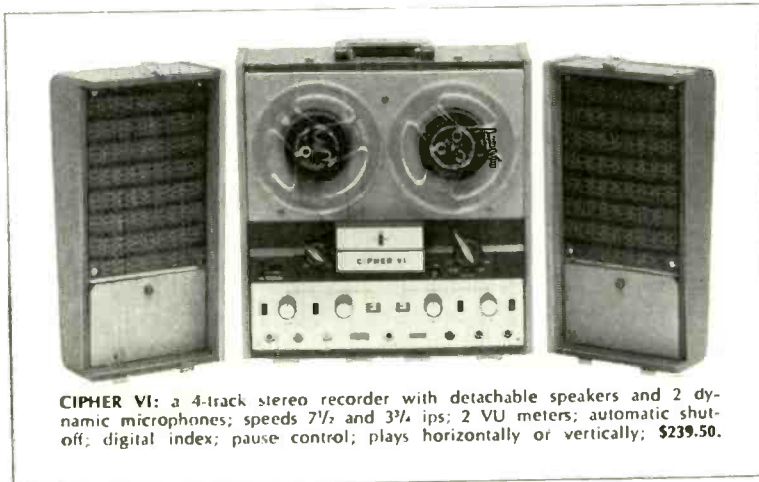
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LaFarge. The best are by LaFarge. They are *White Girl*, which contains the beautiful line about a dead love affair, "It was splendid while it ran"; *The Ballad of Ira Hayes*; and *As Long as the Grass Shall Grow*, based on the magnificent and disregarded language of the land treaty with the Iroquois nation signed by George Washington.

These, and others, are performed by Cash with his customary angry, masculine understatement. This is perhaps Cash's most important album, and it is too bad that he relied on some of his hackneyed pop tricks: it is not really necessary to play Taps during *Ira Hayes*. But Cash's is a deeply felt, deeply moving performance nonetheless, and I hope that the singer's popularity awakens a wide audience to his message. J. G.

Ⓢ Ⓜ RAY CHARLES SINGERS: *Songs for Lonesome Lovers*. Ray Charles Singers (vocals); unidentified orchestra. *One More Time*; *By Myself*; *People*; *Smile*; and eight others. COMMAND RS 874 SD \$5.98, RS 33874* \$4.98.

Ⓢ Ⓜ RAY CHARLES SINGERS: *Al Di La and Other Songs for Young Lovers*. Ray Charles Singers (vocals); unidentified orchestra. *Bluesette*; *Satin Doll*; *The Girl From Ipanema*; *Al Di La*; and eight others. COMMAND RS 870 SD \$5.98, RS 33870* \$4.98.

Performance: Bland
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Excellent

The two newest albums by the Ray Charles Singers have as their main asset sharp, clear, truly incredible sound, the kind Command is noted for. The albums are authentic sound spectacles.

But that almost says what there is to say. One is an album of happy love songs, the other of unhappy love songs, both sung by a precision vocal group. Some of the songs are good, some not so good. I cannot believe, as the notes claim, that Charles looked through more than 150 Italian songs before deciding to record the very popular *Al Di La*. But on the other hand, he includes the sly, charming Coleman-Leigh *Real Live Girl*, and a Swingles-type number by Dick Hyman bluntly titled *Johann Sebastian Bach*. There is also the latest Henry Mancini hit, *Dear Heart*, which surprisingly has a piano solo influenced by the other Ray Charles, and which proves that Mancini can write anything well. On *I Wish You Love*, the gentleman who sings the line "No use leading with our chins" provides an unintentionally funny moment. And there are a good many favorite standards.

If you like skillful (but bland) pop groups and overwhelming sound, this is for you. Otherwise—perhaps for most of us—it is not. J. G.

Ⓢ Ⓜ SAM COOKE: *At the Copa*. Sam Cooke (vocals); orchestra, Rene Hall cond. *The Best Things in Life Are Free*; *You Send Me*; *When I Fall in Love*; *This Little Light of Mine*; and nine others. RCA VICTOR LSP 2970 \$4.98, LPM 2970* \$3.98.

Performance: Commanding and relaxed
Recording: Good on-location sound
Stereo Quality: First-rate

Sam Cooke, who died suddenly this past
(Continued on page 114)



Mr. Miller is an audiophile. He's also a cost-conscious accountant who wants a new stereo receiver.

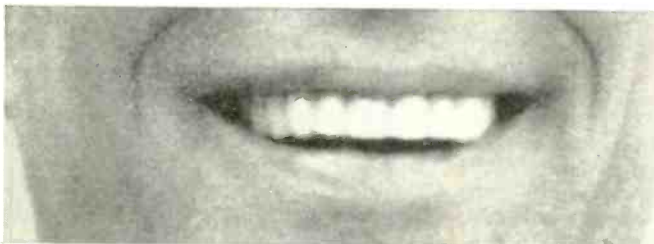


He listened to Brand X. \$425.



He listened to Brand Y. \$319⁹⁵.

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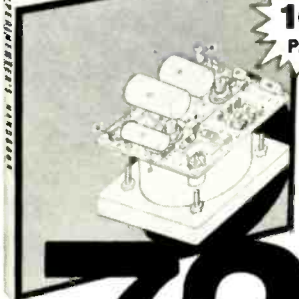


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December, was one of the most accomplished of all those young performers who have gone from a foundation in Negro gospel music and blues to a career in the big-league night clubs. As this recording of a performance at New York's Copacabana illustrates, the gospel pulse and the bold hot colors of rhythm-and-blues suffused everything Cooke did, but he also could fit a wide variety of material into his distinctive style.

His ballads here, for example, are fervently believable, and he adds the textures and rhythms of urban Negro life to such folk pieces as *If I Had a Hammer* without distorting them. Cooke could take as vacuous a song as *Tennessee Waltz* and transform it with a leaping vitality into a number with hitherto unsuspected emotional dimensions. Had Cooke lived, he would certainly have become one of the major night-club performers of his generation. N. H.

© LES AND LARRY ELGART: *Command Performance*. Les Elgart (trumpet), Larry Elgart (reeds); orchestra. *Skyliner; Sentimental Journey; Blues in the Night; Jersey Bounce*; and eight others. COLUMBIA CS 9021 \$4.98, CL 2221* \$3.98.

Performance: Slick dance music
 Recording: Strong presence
 Stereo Quality: Pronounced separation

Charles Albertine, arranger for the Elgarts, has scored a dozen songs identified with prestigious band leaders of the past and present. The writing style, however, is very much his own. Since the Elgarts lead an orchestra whose primary function is to produce music, one cannot fault Albertine's scores for lacking the superior inventiveness of the best writers for Ellington, Basie, and other leaders to whom he pays tribute here.

But, even on the Elgarts' own terms, this is not an especially infectious dance set. The rhythm is too often mechanically precise rather than flowing. The section writing, though expertly played, is the result of so predictable a formula that listening is somewhat like working on a large, overly simple jigsaw puzzle. In each number, all the pieces fit in quickly and neatly, but there is little sense of a cohesive, organically living entity. The playing is mostly ensemble, and perhaps more space for soloists might have helped provide some needed surprises. N. H.

© ETHEL ENNIS: *Eyes for You*. Ethel Ennis (vocals); Jimmy Jones (piano); George Duvivier (bass); Osie Johnson (drums); Walt Namuth (guitar); Jimmy Wells (vibraharp). *I Only Have Eyes for You; Summertime; Angel Eyes*; and nine others. RCA VICTOR LSP 2984 \$4.98, LPM 2984 \$3.98.

Performance: Polished
 Recording: Slick
 Stereo Quality: Ditto

In Ethel Ennis' previous records for RCA Victor, she has been forced to wander through swamps of big-orchestra commercial arrangements, calling out Chloë-like through tangled roots of so-so brass writing and the pendant Spanish moss of not very sensitive string scoring. Lackluster backgrounds were eliminated for this disc. Miss Ennis' sure, clear voice is permitted to stand up in freedom and glide effortlessly through a batch of good standards. The accompanying quintet builds her a firm foundation and then stays

out of her way. The result is one of Miss Ennis' best and most representative discs to date.

Miss Ennis can still be shallow on ballads. For example, she only skates across the surface of *Here's That Rainy Day*. On the other hand, her *Yesterdays* is quite good. What she lacks in emotional depth she makes up in beautiful musicianship and the clarity of her approach to her material.

In up-tempo material, Miss Ennis is irreproachable. Her training as a musician (she plays piano, and well) shows in her sure time sense, good harmonic hearing, and accurate intonation. This girl is very, very talented, and I hope she becomes a star.

I don't want to sound as if I am riding a hobby-horse about Dynagroove, but I am supposed to comment on recording quality—and I just haven't been able to get with Dynagroove. In this instance, it is slick, velvety, and characterless. G. L.



ETHEL ENNIS
 On the way to stardom

© ELLA FITZGERALD: *Ella Sings Gershwin*. Ella Fitzgerald (vocals); Ellis Larkins (piano); Billy Kyle Trio; orchestra, Bob Haggart cond. *Someone to Watch Over Me; Maybe; Soon*; and nine others. DECCA DL 74451 \$4.98, DL 4451 \$3.98.

Performance: Pristine
 Recording: Good
 Stereo Quality: Synthetic

After the title "Ella Sings Gershwin," there is the footnote "with an assist by Duke Ellington and Jimmy McHugh." This means that when Decca decided to reissue this material and was looking for a *raison d'être* for the disc, somebody thought it would be a good idea to cash in on the success of Miss Fitzgerald's songbook series on Verve by putting together an all-Gershwin program. Catch: there apparently weren't enough Gershwin tracks for a full disc. So one McHugh and one Ellington tune were thrown in to fill it out.

This is schlockmeister merchandising, and Decca is very prone to it. It follows through even to the jacket of the disc. Decca wraps its records in some of the crummiest commercial art to be found in the entire music business. And it's a shame, because Decca has some

(Continued on page 116)

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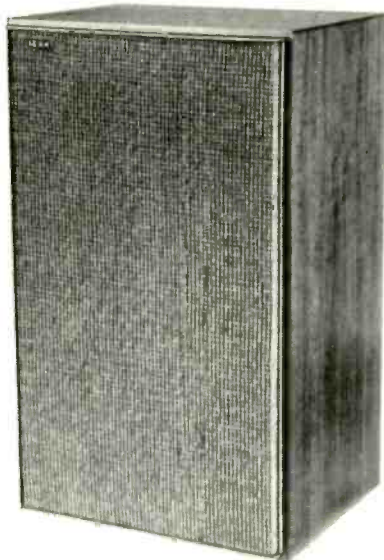
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HFS-3

marvelous stuff in its archives, material that should be reissued in appropriate presentations. Why doesn't Decca commission somebody like Willis Conover to edit and tastefully package some of the great material it has lying around?

Much more could have and should have been done with this package. I am not one of Miss Fitzgerald's ardent fans—too often her work strikes me as coolly flawless but superficial. Yet she has made many classic recordings, and some of them are in this album. On nine of the tracks she is accompanied only by Ellis Larkins on piano. Few are the singers who could get away with such vocal nudity; even fewer are the pianists who could provide a setting to make the whole thing natural and unaffected. Fortunately, Larkins was, in the days these tracks were

made, the best accompanist in American light music—the Gerald Moore of popular song. He still is, as a matter of fact, but he rarely records these days. The Fitzgerald-Larkins collaboration—and they made other tracks that are not on this disc—produced performances of striking simplicity, purity, and luminous clarity.

The other three tracks are an intrusion on the mood of the record. On *Ob Lady Be Good* (this is the famous performance of it), Miss Fitzgerald is backed by an orchestra directed by Bob Haggart, and on the Ellington and McHugh tunes by the Billy Kyle Trio. All three are good tracks, but they just don't belong in this album.

The so-called stereo version of the disc is made from mono tapes and isn't worth the extra buck. G. L.

Ⓢ Ⓜ ARETHA FRANKLIN: *Rummin' Out of Fools*. Aretha Franklin (vocals); orchestra, Belford C. Hendricks cond. *Mockingbird; How Glad I Am; My Guy*; and nine others. COLUMBIA CS 9081 \$4.98, CL 2281 \$3.98.

Performance: Affected
Recording: All right
Stereo Quality: All right

Aretha Franklin is a pops singer in the gospel vein. This means she skitters up and down scales, bends notes indiscriminately, breaks single vowels into two, three, four, or twenty parts, leaves great open spaces in the music, and then-sings-quick-like-sixty-to-get-everything-in-place-in-time. The voice is very good, and powerful, but the way it is used is tedious—particularly on this disc. G. L.

Ⓢ Ⓜ LENA MARTELL: *Someone New Someone Blue*. Lena Martell (vocals); orchestra, Johnny Keating cond. *Something Simple; Where Is Love; You're Free; Comes Love; Too Soon; Lost in the Stars*; and six others. LONDON PS 386 \$4.98, LL 3386* \$3.98.

Performance: Striking
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Very good

Lena Martell, who looks to be a very pretty, pixie-ish young lady, is billed on the back of this, her first disc, as "a female Sammy Davis Jr." If I were in the business of supplying such tag-lines for performers, I think I would have suggested "the English Barbra Streisand." Comparisons with Miss Streisand—none of them invidious—are inevitable: the same big voice, the same presence, the same (if I may) quality. Miss Martell, for instance, does the same thing to *The Masquerade Is Over* that Miss Streisand did to *Happy Days Are Here Again*. And, like Miss Streisand, Lena Martell has a penchant for scattering irritating little off-beat numbers through her supper-club repertoire. Finally, she too tends to overdramatize her material.

But I like her very much. She hasn't fully assimilated what she has learned from blues singers, and she apparently hasn't quite settled on her personality, but I suspect we will be hearing a good deal more from her. J. G.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓢ Ⓜ JOE MOONEY: *The Greatness of Joe Mooney*. Joe Mooney (vocals, accordion, electric organ); orchestra, Mundell Lowe cond. *But Beautiful; The Good Life; Lollipops and Roses*, and nine others. COLUMBIA CS 8986 \$4.98, CL 2186 \$3.98.

Performance: Delightful
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: All right

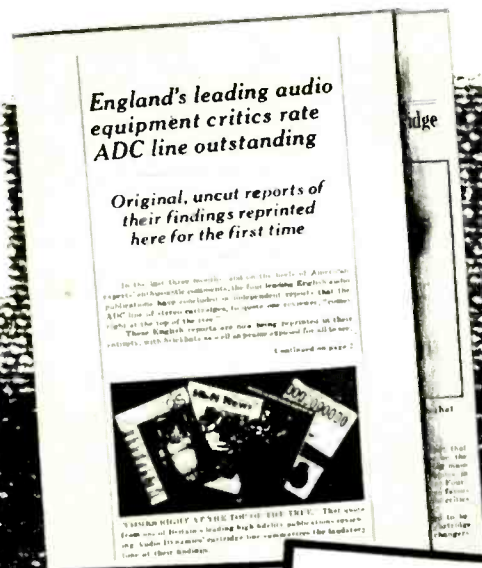
One could argue that a reviewer's concern is aesthetics—that economics, advertising, and promotion are beyond his province. I demur. Advertising and promotion policy decisions made at RCA Victor, Capitol, Columbia, and other big record companies have a great deal to do with the musical climate you and I will enjoy—or endure—in coming years.

Recently I have been seeing extensive Columbia advertising for an unimportant record by Robert Horton, an actor become bland singer. At the same time, the company

(Continued on page 118)

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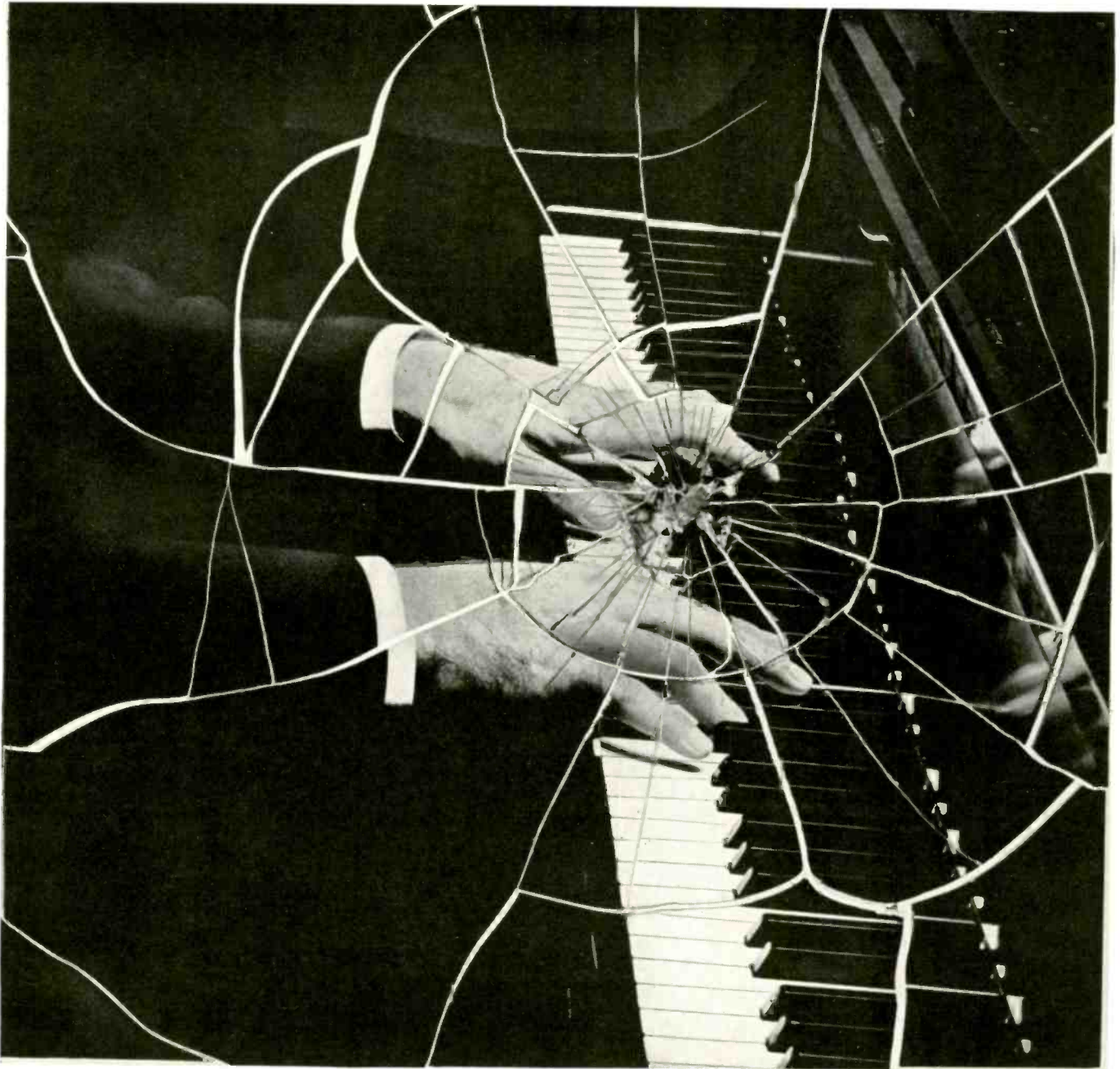
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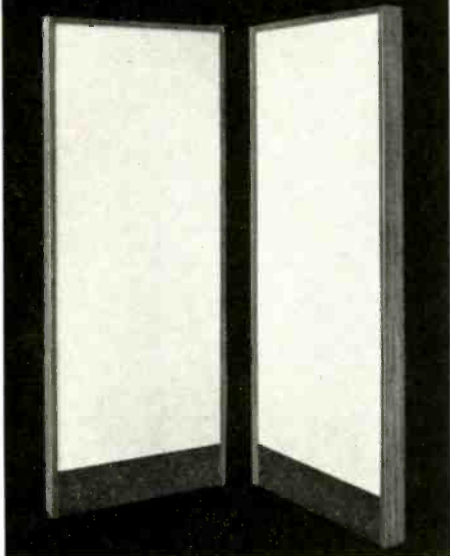


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has released this disc by Joe Mooney—a superb little adventure in popular song—as if they were trying to keep it a secret. They failed, or didn't bother, to send review copies to several important publications that I know of. Several distributors don't seem to have the Mooney record, and most stores don't stock it. If Columbia succeeds in pushing Horton into our national musical picture while as important an artist as Mooney falls into obscurity, a sin against American aesthetics will have been perpetrated.

This is Mooney's first disc in several years. He became known nationally as the leader of a superb and subtle quartet in the mid-1940's. In the 1950's, he lived comfortably and well in Florida. Last year he returned to New York to appear in clubs and to record.

An excellent accordionist and organist, and a very good pianist, Mooney is also a singer who describes himself as having "no voice—only a delivery." But what a delivery! It is so thoughtful, so meaningful, so attuned both to the content of lyrics and the musical values of a tune, that the listener must attend carefully if he is to be rewarded with all the pleasures it offers. Mooney is about fifty now, but, like Ella Fitzgerald, he has a twenty-year-old's voice.

There is no point in discussing individual tracks of the album: all are done in Mooney's unmistakably personal style, and all are splendid. Mundell Lowe did the arrangements for the album, largely expansions of Mooney's usual organ self-accompaniment, and the effect is a little like an augmented version of the old Mooney quartet.

If this album doesn't move—and how can it, considering how little noise has been made about it—it will be said that "Mooney doesn't sell." But Robert Horton does—right?

Do yourself and American light music a favor: listen to this record, and if you like it, buy it. *G. L.*

Ⓢ Ⓜ PETER NERO: *Plays Songs You Won't Forget*. Peter Nero (piano); orchestra. *Hello, Dolly; I Want to Hold Your Hand; Tender Is the Night*; and nine others. RCA VICTOR LSP 2935 \$4.98, LPM 2935* \$3.98.

Performance: Corny

Recording: Good

Stereo Quality: Good

Peter Nero can play the piano very well. But he seldom does. He has good technique and tone, and on occasion there are signs of sensitivity. But he has been neatly wrapped in cellophane by the record business, and he spends most of his time erecting quack classical arpeggios on tunes too small to support them. Sometimes he comes close to playing jazz, but those moments are rare. Most of the time he sounds like Alec Templeton without the sense of humor.

I feel sorry for this guy. Obviously he aspires to do good things, but he's too far gone in show-biz success ever to get the chance now. Indicative of his hunger for something better is a tune of his own called *Autumn*, which is quite lovely—the best thing on the album. Perhaps because he wrote it, he didn't let the arranger gook it up. *G. L.*

Ⓢ Ⓜ JOHNNY RIVERS: *Go, Johnny, Go!* Johnny Rivers (vocals); unidentified

orchestra. *Blue Skies; To Be Loved; Losers Can't Win; Dream Doll*; and eight others. UNITED ARTISTS UAS 6386 \$4.98, UA 3386* \$3.98.

Performance: You have to be there

Recording: Fair

Stereo Quality: Fair

To see Johnny Rivers in his native habitat—a Hollywood wide-screen version of the Peppermint Lounge called the Whiskey A Go Go—presiding over the nearest thing we have to Roman revels is a fascinating, electrifying experience. Those of his recordings that are taped at the Whiskey give you some of the feeling of his performances. But not this latest recording, a studio with-strings date, some tracks of which have been electronically converted to stereo. The recording is often poor, but even more important, the pounding background that Rivers prefers and the audience participation he gets at the



COLUMBIA

JOE MOONEY

An adventure in popular song

club are missing. You are left with the feeling that you are listening to a pretty good young Presley-derived singer, and no hint at all of the excitement Rivers can generate in person. *J. G.*

Ⓢ Ⓜ FRANK SINATRA: *Softly, as I Leave You*. Frank Sinatra (vocals); orchestra. *Emily; Here's to the Losers; Available*; and nine others. REPRIS FS 1013 \$4.98, F 1013 \$3.98.

Performance: Polished

Recording: Mostly excellent

Stereo Quality: Good

Just when it begins to seem that Sinatra's singing has had it—that his reputed growing indifference to the music business and his refusal to take care of his voice have at last undermined him—he turns out something superb. It seems to depend on whether, at the time of the recording, he happened to give a damn. Most Sinatra Reprise discs of the last couple of years have been indifferent affairs, and the pros were getting ready to assign him an honorable place in the museum of musical history. Then a few months ago came "It Might As Well Be Swing," made with the Count Basie band. It was a good if uneven disc. This one, on balance, is not

as good, but Sinatra's singing as such is better.

What pulls this record down is the inclusion of some substandard tunes among the excellent ones. *I Can't Believe I'm Losing You*, for example, has a lyric so trite that it rhymes "schemes" and "dreams," a match I consider only one notch above "moon" and "June" and maybe a notch or two below "laughter" and "after." What's more, some of the arrangements—namely the three by Ernie Freeman—are pretty sad. One of them is the title tune, *Softly as I Leave You*, which has been a hit single for Sinatra. This is an almost excellent tune that, in Freeman's handling, becomes sublimated rock-and-roll. I can appreciate Sinatra's need to get something going with the disc jockeys, but that doesn't mean I have to enjoy it.

Sinatra sings beautifully throughout the album, sometimes with more sensitivity, sometimes with less. When this man is on, there is no one in the business to touch him. And he is very much on in *Here's to the Losers* and *Emily*, to my mind the best tracks. The Sammy Cahn-James Van Heusen tune *Come Blow Your Horn*, which he first sang during the credits of the film of that name (he appeared in the film, too), is included here. This is a great tune, one that should not be overlooked by singers gathering disc material.

Various arrangers besides Freeman contributed to the record. Marty Paich, Nelson Riddle, and Don Costa each did several, and Billy May did one. Riddle's writing is still the best for Sinatra's approach.

Despite this disc's weaker tracks, this is Sinatra worth having. G. L.

© KEELY SMITH: *Keely Smith Sings the John Lennon-Paul McCartney Songbook*. Keely Smith (vocals); orchestra, Ernie Freeman and Benny Carter cond. *If I Fell: This Girl: A Hard Day's Night*; and nine others. REPRIS RS 6142 \$4.98, R 6142* \$3.98.

Performance: **Cute**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Spacious**

The retching that is heard from one end of show biz to t'other whenever some record company, in concert with flacks and disc jockeys, succeeds in foisting yet another rock-and-roll wonder on the credulous American adolescent lasted only a brief while with the emergence of the Beatles. It ceased when professionals began to notice that, under all them there triplets and the other garbage that constitutes the standard impedimenta of r&r, there were a few decent tunes to be heard.

The charm of the songs lies in their melodies, some of which are quite good. But the lyrics are banal, geared as they are to the cotton-candy contents of the skull of the average teenager. But the most banal thing about this disc is Miss Smith. She has so many vocal idiocies that she produces exquisite squirms in a listener of any sensitivity. She has a ridiculous habit of applying a sort of glottal stop to terminal /s/. It makes me feel as if I'd got an aspirin stuck in my throat. And she does something weird to /n's/. They wander off into one of her sinus cavities and get lost or stuck or something. Finally, her cornpone Southernisms are a drag. It's I love you, not ah luhv yew! That's all right for *Grand Ole Opry*, but Miss Smith is—and

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is presented as—a singer of quality, and such things are utterly out of place in her basically precise style of enunciation.

What makes all this multiply distasteful is that Miss Smith is really a very gifted singer. She has control, areas of good taste, a comprehension of lyrics, and a lovely sound. If affectedness is going to be her future course, however, forget it.

Ernie Freeman's and Benny Carter's arrangements are all right, but the orchestra sounds stiff on most tracks. G. L.

© ® CATERINA VALENTE: *Valente & Violins*. Caterina Valente (vocals); orchestra. Roland Shaw cond. *I Believe; Ebb Tide; Day By Day; Love Letters*; and eight others. LONDON PS 363 \$4.98, LL 3363* \$3.98.

Performance: Professional
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Good

As the liner notes state, "Caterina Valente is a pro, through and through." She certainly is. But while professionalism is to be admired, it is nothing to stand up and cheer about unless it is coupled with an additional spark of personality. And that extra spark is what I do not hear in this album—just all the professionalism in the world, and nothing else.

Miss Valente makes her way through an interesting, slightly off-beat program that includes *Somewhere, My Coloring Book*, and *This Is All I Ask*. I am especially grateful that she included the lovely verse to *All the Things You Are*. But she has so nearly effaced her accent that the slight remaining traces of it are irritating; her version of *What Now, My Love* is too overheated to be believable; and some of Roland Shaw's backgrounds are so clever that they lessen the pleasure of the songs. J. G.

JAZZ

© ® ART BLAKEY: *And the Jazz Messengers Play Selections from Golden Boy*. Art Blakey (drums), Lee Morgan and Freddie Hubbard (trumpets), Curtis Fuller (trombone), Wayne Shorter (tenor saxophone), Julius Watkins (French horn), James Spaulding (baritone saxophone), Bill Barber (tuba), Charlie Davis (baritone saxophone), Cedar Walton (piano), Reggie Workman (bass). *Yes I Can; Lord's Here; This is the Life; There's a Party*; and two others. COLPIX SCP 478 \$5.98, CP 478* \$3.98.

Performance: Usual Blakey
Recording: Average
Stereo Quality: The same

Jazz versions of Broadway show scores were at one time the hottest a&r idea around. For a while they practically disappeared, but now they seem to be coming back. This is one of the newest, a version of *Golden Boy* by Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, who are expanded to eleven pieces for the project. I cannot comment on the score as it was originally performed, having neither seen the show nor heard the original-cast disc, but it sounds, in this version, no better and no worse than the workmanlike jobs that Charles Strouse and Lee Adams have turned out before. One suspects that the audience leaves the theater talking about Sammy Davis, not whistling the tunes.

At any rate, given the changes inevitable

with a larger group, this is the standard Blakey performance: the New East Coast Conservatism—funk-plus-modes—that he has been purveying for the past few years. As always, he has some fine young soloists who turn in good jobs, but the material is not completely suited to them. In any case the score is probably not one you will treasure.

© ® PETE FOUNTAIN: *Pete's Place*. Pete Fountain (clarinet), Earl Vuiovich (piano). Paul Guna (guitar, banjo), Oliver Felix (bass), Nick Fatool and Paul Edwards (drums), Godfrey Hirsch (vibes). *Oh, Lady Be Good; That's a Plenty; The Preacher; March to Peruna*; and seven others. CORAL 757453 \$4.98, 557453* \$3.98.

Performance: Too derivative
Recording: Crisp and clear
Stereo Quality: Well-balanced

This album is a session recorded at Pete Fountain's French Quarter Inn during the



BLUE NOTE

JACKIE McLEAN

Up with the times, yet still individual

1964 Mardi Gras in New Orleans. Fountain is a clarinetist so indebted stylistically to Benny Goodman that there is little reason to listen to Fountain rather than to the original Goodman recordings. He receives energetic backing from his colleagues, but they too lack individuality. The simple arrangements are relentlessly predictable, and no matter what the tune—from a Dixieland standard to Horace Silver's *The Preacher*—the approach is always out of the same undistinctive swing-era bag. Too, Fountain's playing has scant emotional depth. His *Black and Blue*, for example, comes through as bland watercolors. N. H.

© ® STAN GETZ: *Getz Au Go Go*. Stan Getz (tenor saxophone), Astrud Gilberto (vocals), Kenny Burrell (guitar), Gary Burton (vibraphone), Gene Cherico and Chuck Israels (bass), Joe Hunt and Helcio Milito (drums). *Corcovado; One Note Samba; Summertime*; and seven others. VERVE V 68600 \$5.98, V 8600 \$4.98.

Performance: Languid
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Adequate

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This is the first in-concert recording made by Stan Getz in his new persona as the bossa nova king, "the man who gave you" *Desafinado* and *The Girl from Ipanema*. Included in his new group is vocalist Astrud Gilberto, wife of the Brazilian singer João Gilberto. Mrs. Gilberto's voice is astonishingly close to the quality of Getz's tenor: soft, warm, intimate, nostalgic—what the Brazilians call *saudades*. Their affinity is perhaps best shown on the little figure that opens and closes *It Might as Well Be Spring*. The most notable of Getz's sidemen is vibraphonist Gary Burton, whose piece *The Singing Song* is quite similar in mood to the "Focus" pieces Eddie Sauter wrote for Getz.

Getz's technique and lyricism are still phenomenal, but in his performance of the lovely and little-known *Here's That Rainy Day*, one feels that perhaps he has refined his best qualities too far, that he is now a bit too sweetly mournful to play jazz. Altoist Paul Desmond, who is as sweet and mournful as Getz, has retained the resiliency that makes it possible for him to play fine jazz. But on the evidence of this set (recorded at New York's Cafe Au Go Go), Getz himself seems on his way to becoming an excellent pop musician.

J. G.

© Jackie McLean: *Destination Out*. Jackie McLean (alto saxophone), Grachan Moncur III (trombone), Bobby Hutcherson (vibraphone), Larry Ridley (bass), Roy Haynes (drums). *Love and Hate: Esoteric; Kablil the Prophet; Riff Raff*. BLUE NOTE ST 84165 \$5.98, 4165* \$4.98.

Performance: Emotional
 Recording: Good
 Stereo Quality: Satisfactory

Some musicians make great successes for a brief time, and then drop into obscurity or else work on the periphery of public acceptance, playing to a small coterie. Some few become stars. The alto saxophonist Jackie McLean, still a young man, has been playing for the better part of two decades, and all of that time he has been one of the best jazz alto players in the country. Furthermore, his work has steadily improved, gaining depth and breadth, keeping up with the latest trends, always remaining strikingly individual. For all this, McLean has never become a highly popular jazz musician.

His new record is made with the soloists with whom he has most recently been involved—Grachan Moncur III on trombone and Bobby Hutcherson on vibes—but with Roy Haynes replacing Tony Williams, the remarkable young drummer who apparently divides his time between McLean and Miles Davis. Three of the four long pieces are by Moncur, the last is by McLean. All are sectional works involving changes in time. McLean's playing seems to be more conservative, after a time spent with some of Ornette Coleman's concepts, and Hutcherson seems to be growing out of some of his Milt Jackson mannerisms into a potentially important soloist. The album is not as startling or exhilarating as McLean's "Let Freedom Ring!" (Blue Note 84106, 4106) or "A Fickle Sonance" (Blue Note 84089, 4089), but is still a better than respectable effort by an important musician.

J. G.

© Jimmy Smith: *The Cat*. Jimmy Smith (organ); orchestra, Lalo Schifrin (Continued on page 123)

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Swingers Billy Daniels
(left) and Sammy Davis
on stage in
"Golden Boy"

MELODY RETURNS TO BROADWAY



FRIEDMAN-ABELES

THE popularity of original-cast recordings of Broadway musicals presents a problem to the reviewer. Should he consider the music in the context of the show? Or should he, as I choose to do, forget about the show and review it strictly as music?

For many, perhaps most, listeners, a record such as any of the three reviewed here serves a nonmusical purpose. It is a souvenir of something its buyer has seen, an auditory aid to memory, an extension into another dimension of the souvenir program with its photographs and tedious little biographies of the show's principals. That this is an important function of a show disc is attested to by the fact that the record jackets of two current musicals, *Golden Boy* and *Ben Franklin in Paris*, contain copies of the theater programs themselves.

But Bizet's *L'Arlésienne Suites* owe nothing of their charm to the fact that they were written as incidental music to an Alphonse Daudet play. Memories of Nijinsky are not requisite to the enjoyment of Stravinsky's *Le sacre du printemps* or Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*. You do not have to have seen the Eisenstein film *Alexander Nevsky* to derive pleasure from the score Prokofiev wrote for it. And as far as I'm concerned, you should not have to see a Broadway show in order to enjoy its musical score on records. If you do, then the music is no good—and this, alas, is the case with too many Broadway scores. I don't care how good so-and-so was in the leading role, how clever and comic his or her movements on stage. I don't care about the lighting, the staging. That has meaning when I go to the theater, but not when I listen to a record, which is a separate and distinct aesthetic experience.

If you listen to most show discs with this in mind, you are bound to be struck by their colorlessness, their tunelessness, and the narrow focus of their lyrics. Why is this? Because the songs for today's musical shows must advance the plot. We are in the era of the "integrated musical"—meaning that everything has to be fitted together to form a seamless unit. That is the goal; it is rarely met, but the very effort makes the majority of Broadway shows musically tiresome. "Integrated musical" is Broadway's term for it. I call it quack opera.

Golden Boy got mixed reviews upon its

opening. I have no idea how good the show is visually, but I do know it is good musically. Charles Strouse has written what in many ways is the freshest score in some time. What's more, it is unmistakably American, drawing heavily on jazz for the flavor of its songs and the orchestrations, which are superb (Ralph Burns wrote them). The show does not use those marble-throated "legit"-trained singers who inject rigor mortis into the songs of most shows, but singers rooted in the feelings of popular music and jazz. I refer particularly to Billy Daniels and the brilliant Sammy Davis Jr., though the newcomer Paula Wayne is also very good. All of them understand the rhythmic subtleties, the plastic texture, of American music. Steve Lawrence was able to get a similar feeling into parts of the score of *What Makes Sammy Run?*, and one-time band-singer Art Lund did the same in *The Most Happy Fella*. Just using such people on Broadway is an advance. Thanks to Davis, Daniels, and Burns, the *Golden Boy* score has a quality I've never heard in any Broadway show album: it swings. And *Golden Boy* contains good songs, with good though too-"poetic" lyrics by Lee Adams, including the title tune and *Night Song*, which unquestionably will become a major standard in our light music.

Golden Boy moves forward in time to the borders of jazz to achieve its musicality. *Ben Franklin in Paris* moves backward—and *Bajour* moves sideways, as it were, into another culture.

Little analysis need be given *Ben Franklin*, the plot of which centers on Ben's attempts to get French support for the young American nation. Mark Sandrich's music is froth-light, amusing, and when required, fairly sensitive. Sidney Michaels' lyrics (he also wrote the book for the show) are craftsmanlike, clean, witty, and at times quite fresh. Robert Preston's singing has the same kind of bumptious verve that made *The Music Man* score seem more exciting than it really was.

Bajour turns for inspiration to gypsy music (it deals with members of two gypsy tribes in New York) the way *Fiddler on the Roof* looked to Russian-Jewish tradition. Both are attempts to get freshness into a tired Broadway. Musically, *Bajour* is the more successful. Less "authentic" perhaps than the *Fiddler* score, it nonetheless contains better tunes. But it is uneven. Walter Marks' music and lyrics

are sometimes quite clever—and sometimes self-consciously clever. And sometimes they are shopworn. On the one hand, there is *Where Is the Tribe for Me*, in which an ingenu anthropologist expresses an amusing hunger to find a tribe untouched by Margaret Mead or Albert Schweitzer. On the other hand, one of the show's love songs, *Must It Be Love*, is an uninspired tune built on a tired idea. After describing various symptoms (shivers and so forth) it continues, "chills or illness can't explain my plight." Aside from the dubious taste of the word "illness," the song repeats an idea so long in use that Larry Hart saw fit to turn it around in the line "This can't be love because I feel so well. . . ." The whole thing got laughed out of the theater—or so I had hoped—with *You're Not Sick, You're Just in Love*. (Some anonymous wit later suggested writing a tune called *You're Not in Love, You're Just Sick*.) Yet Mr. Marks falls back on this chestnut. Indeed, it seems to me that, like Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick, who wrote the *Fiddler* score and whose work Marks' otherwise resembles, he is not good at the direct expression of emotions or ideas, but can only handle them well when he is approaching them diagonally through satire.

Despite these reservations, I found charm in his *Bajour* score. But I liked *Ben Franklin* better, and *Golden Boy* better still. Maybe melody ain't gone forever from Broadway. Gene Lees

Ⓢ Ⓜ GOLDEN BOY (Charles Strouse-Lee Adams). Original-cast album. Sammy Davis Jr., Billy Daniels, Paula Wayne (vocals); orchestra and chorus. *Golden Boy*; *While the City Sleeps*; *No More*; and eleven others. CAPITOL SVAS 2124 \$5.98, VAS 2124* \$4.98.

Ⓢ Ⓜ BEN FRANKLIN IN PARIS (Mark Sandrich Jr.-Sidney Michaels). Original-cast album. Robert Preston, Ulla Sallert (vocals); orchestra and chorus. *We Sail the Seas*; *I Invented Myself*; *Half the Battle*; and twelve others. CAPITOL SVAS 2191 \$5.98, VAS 2191* \$4.98.

Ⓢ Ⓜ BAJOUR (Walter Marks). Original-cast album. Chita Rivera, Nancy Dussault, Herschel Bernardi (vocals); orchestra and chorus. *Love Line*; *Bajour*; *Guarantees*; and twelve others. COLUMBIA KOS 2700 \$5.98, KOL 6300 \$4.98.

cond. *The Cat: Basin Street Blues; Chicago Serenade; Delon's Blues*; and four others. VERVE V 68587 \$5.98, V 8587* \$4.98.

Performance: Powerful but factitious
Recording: Bristling clarity
Stereo Quality: Very good

Jimmy Smith, who usually treats the organ as if it were a piece of artillery, is heard here in a big-band setting with arrangements by Lalo Schiffrin. The band, composed of crack New York studio men, is admirably proficient. The arrangements, however, are much like Smith's organ playing—they substitute power for imagination. There is no denying the kinetic thrust of this music, but the repetitiousness of Smith's ideas and the artificial excitement of Schiffrin's scores end up being wearying rather than stimulating. The liner notes insist on awkward comparisons between Jimmy Smith and Paul Bunyan; a more accurate analogy might be between Smith and a neon-lit computer. N. H.

FOLK

Ⓜ **BARBARA DANE**: *Sings the Blues*. Barbara Dane (vocals, six- and twelve-string guitar). *Stranger's Blues; Victim to the Blues; Special Delivery Blues; Hard, Oh Lord*; and eight others. FOLKWAYS FA 2471 \$5.95.

Performance: In the tradition
Recording: Good

The almost too comprehensive booklet accompanying this disc tells us that Barbara Dane didn't always sing the kind of music she performs here, that she came to it gradually and after a few false starts. This is revealing, because Miss Dane is something of a cult-figure. She sings Negro blues, some well known, others not so well known, and she sings them like, if I may attempt to invent a category, a white Odetta. She sings with skill, with feeling, with commitment, and with a fine voice. But there is the feeling that she is trying very hard to be something she is not. J. G.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓜ **RICHARD DYER-BENNET**: *Songs of Ships, Seafaring Men, Watery Graves, Card Sharpers, a Giant Ram, an Indian Scalping, and One Edible Rat*. Richard Dyer-Bennet (vocals, guitar). *The Drunken Sailor; The Willow Tree; Australian Girls; Billy Barlow*; and ten others. DYER-BENNET 12 \$4.98.

Performance: Skilled minstrelsy
Recording: Superb

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓜ **RICHARD DYER-BENNET**: *Stories and Songs for Children and Their Parents*. Richard Dyer-Bennet (vocals, narration, guitar). *The Soldier and the Lady; The Man Who Was Full of Fun; The Old Gray Goose; The Wolf Who Was a Friend*; and four others. DYER-BENNET 13 \$4.98.

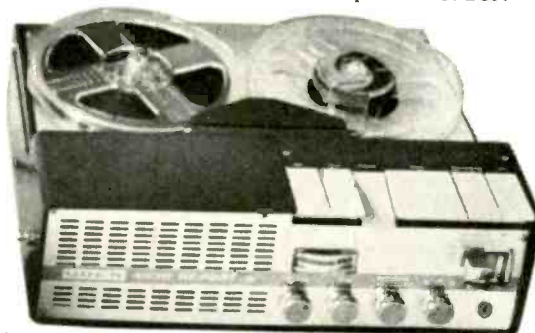
Performance: Absorbing story-telling
Recording: Excellent

These two additions to the definitive collection of Richard Dyer-Bennet's repertoire on his own label sustain the standards of superior musicianship and exemplary recording techniques set by previous releases in the

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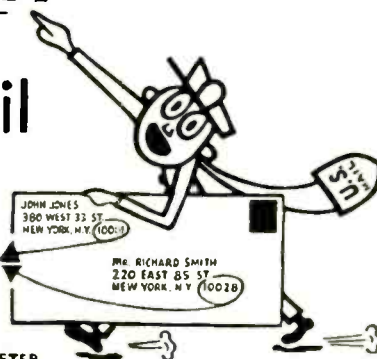
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series. Dyer-Bennet's performances are characterized by an incisive sense of dramatic pacing, thoughtfully constructed guitar accompaniments, and an enlivening wit. His high, clear, rather dry tenor is a supple instrument. He uses his voice with such control and sensitivity that he achieves a more subtle spectrum of dynamics and a more flexible melodic flow than do many of his contemporaries in the folk field.

Dyer-Bennet 12 is a collection of songs from England, Australia, and America. Most are familiar, but Dyer-Bennet transmutes them into his own conception of contemporary minstrelsy. He does not try for ethnic authenticity, but functions instead as a refreshingly unpretentious and highly astute "art singer" of folk material. Along with chanted and such vintage favorites as *The Charleston Merchant* and *The Derby Ram*. Dyer-Bennet includes his effective musical setting of Bret Harte's *Plain Language from Truthful James*.

Dyer-Bennet 13 contains four songs, but most of the record is devoted to the artist's spoken interpretations of four Russian folk tales from George and Helen Papashvily's book of Georgian tales, *Yes and No Stories*. He is an artfully simple tale-spinner, neither overdramatizing nor indulging in coyness, and always keeping the lines of suspense taut. As the envelope says, this set is for children and their parents—those parents who are still open to the wonder and fantasy of the inner life of children. N. H.

Ⓢ Ⓜ FERNANDA MARIA: *Fadista!* Fernanda Maria (vocals), Francisco Carval-

hinho (Portuguese guitar). Martinho De Assunção (Spanish guitar). *It's Festival Time; Bullfight Fado; Dream; Perdition;* and eight others. MONITOR MFS 425 \$4.98, MF 425* \$4.98.

Performance: Forceful
Recording: First-rate
Stereo Quality: Tasteful

Monitor has become the leading American label for Portuguese fado, and its most recent release by twenty-seven-year-old Fernanda Maria is one of the more compelling fado recitals in its catalog. Miss Maria sings with throbbing power, unusual rhythmic impact, and a sense of total immersion in the songs. The range of moods in this set is broad—from an exultant invitation to a festival through vivid descriptions of various quarters of Lisbon to songs of acute loneliness. As is true of all fadistas, Miss Maria is essentially a lyrical performer, but her lyricism has a depth, bite, and intelligence that make her very special. The traditional accompaniment by Spanish guitar and Portuguese guitar is fitting. N. H.

Ⓢ Ⓜ THE NEW LOST CITY RAMBLERS: *Old Timey Music*. John Cohen (vocals, guitar). Mike Seeger (guitar, violin, dulcimer), Tracy Schwartz and Tom Paley (guitar). *Billy Grimes; Coo Coo Bird; Rambler's Blues; Crow Told Me;* and ten others. Disc DS 1102 \$4.98, D 1102* \$3.98.

Performance: Bumptious
Recording: Generally good
Stereo Quality: Artificial

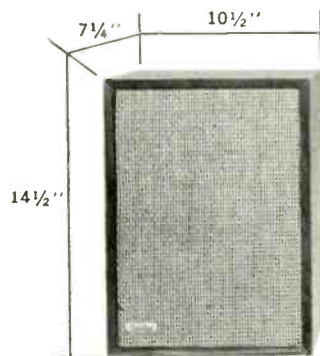
As far as I can determine, these performances by the New Lost City Ramblers are rereleases of performances from the Folkways catalog. This Disc repackaging includes a "bisonic stereo" version. The use of *ex post facto* electronic processing to produce "stereo" sound is no more satisfying with folk music than it is with other forms of music. This objection to the disc aside, the work of the New Lost City Ramblers remains unpretentious and beguiling. These city-reared musicians base their performances on old recordings that used to appeal to country folk. Among their models are such units as the Fruit Jar Drinkers, the Buckle-Busters, Dr. Smith's Champion Horse-Hair Pullers, and the Skillet Lickers.

The New Lost City Ramblers approach this material with neither undue solemnity nor any hint of patronizing of their sources. They obviously admire their models, and they show their respect by trying to approximate the spirit and ease of the originals. Although none of the Ramblers has a distinctive voice, each sings with knowledgeable verve in these idioms, and they blend with tart drive. Along with novelty tunes, the program contains blues, rags, and an affecting cowboy ballad, *Tom Sherman*. N. H.

ALMEDA RIDDLE: *Songs and Ballads of the Ozarks* (see Best of Month, page 72)

Ⓜ PETE SEEGER: *Broadsides*. Pete Seeger (vocals, guitar, banjo). *The Dove; From Way Up Here; Get Up and Go; We Shall Overcome;* and six others. FOLKWAYS FA 2456 \$5.95.

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Performance: Convincing
Recording: Good

◎ **PETE SEEGER: *Songs of Protest (1930-1950)***. Pete Seeger (vocals, guitar, banjo). *Step by Step: Joe Hill; Talking Union; The D-Day Dodgers*; and eight others. FOLKWAYS FH 5233 \$5.95.

Performance: Skillful and committed
Recording: Acceptable

Although Pete Seeger's huge repertoire goes far back in time and includes songs from many countries, he is particularly effective as a singer—and occasional writer—of topical American folk songs. In the first of these two new releases, "Broadsides," Seeger is mainly concerned with "soft" polemics, songs that make their social points gently, although they often have a sardonic tinge. The lyrics, both those by the singer and by others, are not arrestingly fresh, but Seeger sings them with such conviction that they sound more substantial than they do when read in the accompanying booklet. And a few lyrics make it on their own, among them *Get up and Go*, an anthem on old-age homes, and *The New York J-D Blues*. From the latter is this telling verse: "There's a cop from the youth squad,/The kids call him Bat-man,/This cop from the youth squad/ The kids call him Bat-man,/When he comes to talk to you./You better speak good American." Also provocative are an anti-nuclear-testing adaptation of *Mack the Knife* and *Coyote, My Little Brother*, one of Peter LaFarge's abrasively angry songs in a quasi-American Indian style.

"Songs of Struggle and Protest (1930-1950)" offers a much broader cross-section of socially engaged folk material. Many are familiar (*I Don't Want Your Millions Mister, Talking Union, Los Cuatros Generales, The D-Day Dodgers, Joe Hill*, and Leadbelly's *Bourgeois Blues*). Somewhat less well known are the stinging satiric *What a Friend We Have in Congress* (the music is *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*), Woody Guthrie's capsule analysis *Pittsburgh*, and *Harry Simms*, a grim song about the murder of a union organizer by a Kentucky coal miner.

For this collection, Seeger has chosen from among the best of topical song-writing during the past three decades, and he brings to this material his increasingly mature musical conception and his capacity to identify fully with each of the subjects. The album is a valuable introduction for those new listeners to folk music who are aware only of such current topical writers as Bob Dylan and Phil Ochs. There is a strong, durable heritage of American broadsiding, and Pete Seeger—as he proves again here—has been intimately connected with the last quarter-century of that heritage. N. H.

◎ ◎ **PETE SEEGER: *Sing With Seeger!*** Pete Seeger (vocals, guitar). *Roll on Columbia; Down by the Riverside; Reuben James; Irene. Good Night*; and twelve others. DISC DS 1101 \$4.98, D 1101* \$3.98.

Performance: Persuasive
Recording: Somewhat hollow
Stereo Quality: Unimpressive

◎ **PETE SEEGER: *Live Concert, Volume Two***. Pete Seeger (vocals, guitar). *John Riley; The Water Is Wide; She Moves through the Fair; The Strangest Dream*; and ten others. ARAVEL AB 2004 \$3.98.

Performance: Seeger at his best
Recording: Competent

The Disc album "Sing With Seeger!" was recorded some four years ago at the Village Gate in New York and has not been previously released. The Aravel set, recorded at a London concert at a time not specified by the company, is also being issued for the first time. By and large, Pete Seeger is most effective when performing before an audience rather than in a recording studio. He has a rare ability to communicate instantly his enthusiasm and sheer delight in his varied material. Accordingly, his live performances are suffused with the glow of his rapport with his listeners. And his own work benefits from the lift he gets as that rapport deepens in the course of a program.

In both of these collections, as in his recorded work as a whole, Seeger is most convincing in lyrical pieces, in songs with social point, and in humorous numbers. Highlighting the Village Gate disc, for example, are I.W.W. parodies of Salvation Army hymns, the whimsical *Big Rock Candy Mountain*, the fragile *Sootheram*, and the romantic *Oh, Shenandoah*.

The British concert on Aravel is the better of the two because it contains more of the kind of material to which Seeger is especially attuned. The album includes a lilting *Aunt Rhodie*, several proud union songs, a sardonic

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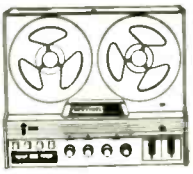
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piece on a logger's discovery that he must educate himself to avoid being cheated at work, a lovely personalization of the British song *The Water Is Wide*, and a wittily dramatized *Abi Yo-Yo*, the fairy tale about the tricking of a giant. Also adding to the superiority of the Aravel set are Seeger's lucid, candid, and unforgettably engaging spoken introductions. N. H.

© © JEAN SHEPARD: *Lighthearted and Blue*. Jean Shepard (vocals); unidentified accompaniment. *Half a Mind; The Big Wheel; Just Call Me Lonesome; The Violet and a Rose*; and eight others. CAPITOL ST 2187 \$4.98, T 2187* \$3.98.

Performance: Straightforward
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Good

A lot of country singers use tricks of one kind or another to put over their material, but Jean Shepard is not one of them. She uses a direct, straightforward approach to her songs, and it might be that she will someday inherit the audience of the late Patsy Cline.

Her newest disc could be called a program of classics. Many of the numbers here have passed into the standard country repertoire, and some of them are written by the leading singers in the field: Don Gibson, Lefty Frizzell, Marty Robbins. Included are *I Can't Stop Loving You, Born to Lose, Loose Talk*, and one of the best of all country songs, Fred Rose's *Foggy River*. There is also an amusing example of the way country composers can change anything into a love song—the piece called *When Two Worlds Collide*. Miss Shepard sings them all honestly and sweetly, over an uncredited Hollywood-Nashville background. J. G.

© SMOKY MOUNTAIN BALLADS. Uncle Dave Macon; Carter Family; Monroe Brothers; others (vocals and accompaniment). *Ida Red; Worried Man Blues; Darling Corey; I'm Bound to Ride*; and twelve others. RCA VICTOR LPV 507 \$4.98.

Performance: Varies
Recording: Ancient

Folk music in general, and Bluegrass in particular, has become so popular that it is particularly instructive to have "Smoky Mountain Ballads" reissued at this time. Originally released on 78's in 1941, the songs were recorded during the Thirties in the Southern Appalachians and selected by John Lomax from the Victor catalog. The names of some of the performers—Uncle Dave Macon, for example—will be familiar primarily through reputation. But there are others, such as the Carter Family, whose work is more widely known.

Some pieces, such as *Chittlin' Cookin' Time in Cheatam County* by the Arthur Smith Trio, are likely to amuse today's audiences, and are perhaps included only in the interest of offering as many different styles as possible. Others—the pieces by Macon, the Carters, and the wonderful *Down with the Old Canoe* by the Dixon Brothers, for example—will give far more real pleasure to Bluegrass lovers than the current synthetic re-creations do. J. G.

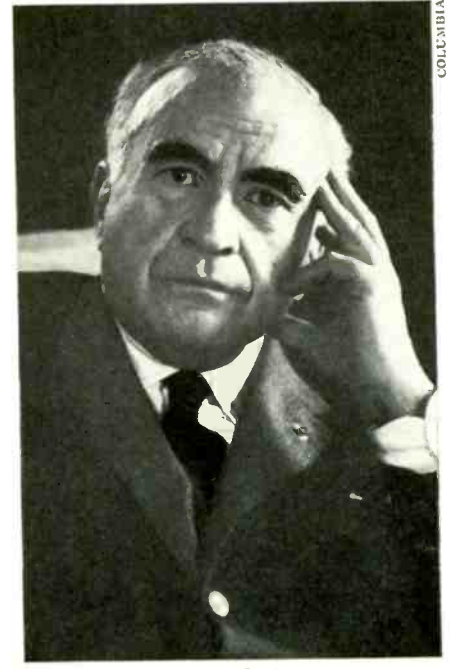
© © YULYA: *Sings Russian Folk Songs*. Yulya (vocals); Jerry Silverman (guitar, mandolin); Walter Raim (guitar). MONITOR MFS 422 \$4.98, MF 422* \$4.98.

Performance: Warm
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Good

This is the fourth album of Russian songs to be made by the Russian singer Yulya, now living in this country as Julie Whitney, the wife of foreign correspondent Thomas Whitney. She has a rich, dark, expressive voice, and sings to the accompaniment of guitar and mandolin. She is also a composer, and one song here is her setting of a poem by Yevtushenko.

Yulya uses overdubbing discreetly to sing with herself, but perhaps too often for the taste of some. Her repertoire is varied, and she does it all with verve and feeling. She sounds more like a café entertainer than a folk performer—one can almost see the candlelight and vodka. English lyrics are printed on the back of this album, and an enclosed sheet contains Russian texts and transliterations. J. G.

FOLK COLLECTIONS



CARLOS CHÁVEZ
Brilliant explorer of Mexico's music

© © ERIC ANDERSON/BUFFY SAINTE-MARIE/ROOSEVELT CHARLES/OTHERS: *The Sound of Folk Music, Volume Two*. Eric Anderson. Buffy Sainte-Marie. Roosevelt Charles. The Greenbriar Boys, John Hammond, Hedy West, Ian and Sylvia, Jackie Washington, Clara Ward and her Singers, The Rooftop Singers, Jack Elliott, Jim Kweskin and the Jug Band, Mike Seeger, Almeda Riddle, Doc Watson, The Weavers (vocals and instrumentals). *Darby Ram; Katy Dear; Tom Cat; Fight On*; and twelve others. VANGUARD SRV 140 SD \$5.95, SRV 140 \$4.98.

Performance: A very mixed bag
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Well-balanced

From previous albums in its catalog, Vanguard has selected tracks by sixteen different soloists and groups. This kind of anthology is of dubious value, since there is not likely to be any experienced collector so catholic in his taste as to be drawn to all or even most

of these performers. For those looking for an introductory folk sampler, however, this set may be of some use.

The collection's primary assets are the wryly understated country singing of city-born Jack Elliott, the vivid Bluegrass music of the Greenbriar Boys, the tangy authenticity of Hedy West from the North Georgia hills, the rich, vibrant blues of Roosevelt Charles from Louisiana, the utterly authentic, unaccompanied Ozark balladry of Almeda Riddle, and the smooth but poignant white country blues of Doc Watson. Attractive but less penetrating are the high-spirited Canadian singers Ian and Sylvia, the softly eloquent Jackie Washington, the still unformed but arresting Eric Anderson, the mockingly romantic Jim Kweskin Jug Band, and the fervent Weavers.

There are various degrees of failure. Young John Hammond's attempt to find his musical identity in old Negroes blues remains thoroughly unconvincing. The Roof-top Singers are bright and slick but far too concerned with commercial effect. Mike Seeger is accurate though colorless in his singing—he is, however, a fine instrumentalist. Buffy Sainte-Marie is earnest but quite self-conscious, and the Clara Ward unit is represented by one of its most awkward gospel performances. "The Sound of Folk Music, Volume Two" does serve to indicate the diversity of contemporary folk styles. N. H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓢ Ⓜ MEXICO: ITS CULTURAL LIFE IN MUSIC AND ART. Mexican Orchestra and Chorus. Carlos Chávez cond. *Danza A Centeotl; Xochipilli; El Venado; La Paloma Azul; Sones Mariachi; La Bamba*. COLUMBIA LS 1016 \$16. LL 1015* \$15.

Performance: Strikingly expert
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: First-rate

"Mexico: Its Cultural Life in Music and Art" is an addition to Columbia's lavishly produced Legacy Series. The single record is included in an album-size, hard-cover book of sixty-six pages with essays on Mexican music and art, as well as on other aspects of the country's cultural history, by Carlos Chávez, Carleton Beals, Antonio Castro Leal, and Stanton Cutlin. The book is profusely illustrated, often in color, with maps, prints, photographs, and well-reproduced paintings and murals by Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, José Clemente Orozco, and Rufino Tamayo. The text is in English and Spanish.

The recording itself, made in Mexico under the direction of Carlos Chávez, is a brilliant exploration of Mexican music as defined by Chávez ("... the Indian music of the ancient Mexicans, the music of Spanish or other origin implanted in Mexico, and finally, the music that resulted from a mixture of these elements"). Using the instrumental and harmonic resources of the European tradition, Chávez succeeds in evoking in the first number, *Danza A Centeotl*, the tidal rhythmic pull and the shattering drama involved in an ancient ritual dance in adoration of the Goddess of Maize. Chávez's *Xochipilli* is "imagined Aztec music" based on the idiomatic use of percussion and wind instruments found in pre-Cortesian Mexican music; its moods comprise fervor, dread, and introspection.

Luis Sandi's arrangement of *El Venado* is

founded on the dance music of the Yaquis, one of Mexico's primitive tribes, and along with its rhythmic fascination, the music has an appealing melodic airiness. *The Blue Dove* is Chávez's arrangement of a characteristically ardent Mexican traditional song. Blas Galindo has scored a swirling, gay selection of *Sones Mariachi*, and Gerónimo Baqueiro Fóster is responsible for the prideful *La Bamba*, a Mexican adaptation of the Spanish fandango form.

The performances by the Mexican Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Chávez are skillful, and the quality of recorded sound is equal to the multiple demands of the scoring. The price may be steep, but this Legacy production provides a useful and certainly a varied introduction to Mexican art and music. N. H.

THEATER

Ⓢ Ⓜ ERIC BENTLEY: *Songs of Hanns Eisler*. Eric Bentley (vocals, piano, harmonium). *Peace Song; To the Little Radio; Supply & Demand; The Love Market*; and twenty-four others. FOLKWAYS FH 5433 \$5.95.

Performance: Appropriate
Recording: Satisfactory

Among Eric Bentley's several accomplishments, such as the authorship of the recent and superb book *The Life of the Drama*, is the fact that he is the foremost proselytizer for Bertolt Brecht in this country. So, although this album is called "Songs of Hanns Eisler"—a German composer who suffered several setbacks, not the least of which was having the alleged Soviet agent Gerhard Eisler as a brother—it is safe to say that Bentley's primary interest in performing these songs is the lyrics, most of which are by Brecht.

Most of these are theater songs, and the typical Brechtian ironies are readily apparent: "there's nothing quite like money as an aphrodisiac." So are some less typical ironies: "Where are the tears of Friday evening? Where are the snows of yesteryear?" The music is reminiscent of Kurt Weill, in a way that gives me the impression that both Eisler and Weill were writing in the café style of the day, and that the songs took their character from the lyricist.

Mr. Bentley is by no means a professional entertainer, but he has a quality, a remarkable cross between geniality and commitment, that makes him pleasing to hear. And the lyrics are well worth anyone's attention. J. G.

Ⓢ Ⓜ THE RED BALLOON. Adapted from the film by Albert Lamorisse. Jean Vallin (narrator); orchestra, Al Barr cond. NONESUCH H 72001, H 2001* \$2.50 (stereo and mono).

Performance: Charming
Recording: Silken
Stereo Quality: Splendid

Albert Lamorisse's color film of the friendship between Pascin, a lonely little boy in Paris, and a balloon with a singularly winning personality was one of the most subtly magical movies ever to conquer the heart of child or adult. A book made up of photographs taken during the production retained much of the charm of the original, but added a written text to explain the action.



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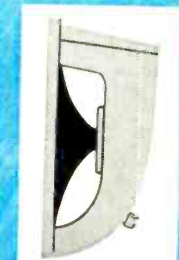
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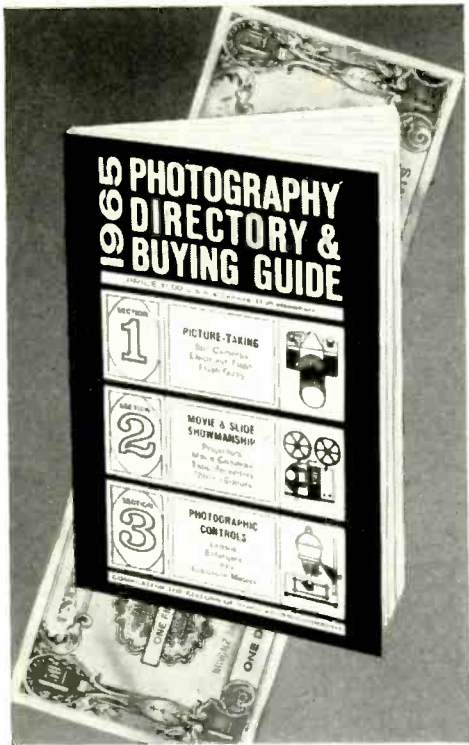


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which on screen explained itself in merciful silence. The record, a bargain at \$2.50, not only makes use of the whole text as narration, but also contains a new score by Al Barr for full orchestra, and a series of original songs besides. Mr. Barr's not-so-incident music is colorful and witty. The songs are not—they are a clutch of ditties with insipid words (by Martin Barr) like "Why will you not obey, balloon, and do just as I say, balloon?" intoned by one of those dreamy celestial choruses, and they intrude upon the story like irrelevant radio commercials. The narrator, Jean Vallin, with his Chevalier-type accent, is charming, if at times a bit self-consciously *too* charming, and the narration itself seems excessively wordy and explicit for so simple and forthright a story. Yet enough of the original spirit filters through, and the recording itself is so silkily resplendent, especially in stereo, that bright members of the junior set should be totally fascinated—the more so if the book is also on hand. P. K.

SPOKEN WORD

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓜ BYRON: *Don Juan (Cantos I and II)*. Richard Johnson, Peggy Ashcroft, Janette Richer, George Rylands, director. ARGO RF 374 \$4.98.

Performance: Dashing
Recording: Topnotch

When Byron finished the 198 stanzas that make up the first canto of *Don Juan* in 1818, he was not even sure he would sign his name to the work. Attacks came, as he had anticipated, but not on poetic grounds: the critics simply condemned the adventures of the libertine of Seville in Byron's version as patently immoral. It remained for Shelley in 1821 to insert an uplifting "I": "It sets him not only above, but far above, all the poets of the day—every word is stamped with immortality."

To us a century and a half later, weaned as we were on brutality and a steady diet of anatomically accurate literary description, the Don's dalliance is pretty tame stuff. The poetry, however, remains a heady brew, a remarkable mixture of the picaresque and the urbane, in which passages of sweeping romantic action alternate with self-parody, and light verse accompanies serious poetry cheek-by-jowl, like a jester skipping along mockingly in the wake of his stately monarch's gaudy train.

The first canto (there are sixteen in all) deals with the hero's virtuous upbringing in Seville, his seduction of Donna Julia ("whom to call pretty were but to give a feeble notion") practically under her husband's pompous nose, and Juan's subsequent flight, naked, through the streets of the town. It is performed—in an astute abridgement by Ian Scott-Kilvert that speeds the pace but does not dilute the flavor—with immense adroitness by Richard Johnson, whose sonorous voice responds perceptively and flexibly to every turn and trick of the poet's so carefree and yet so painstaking style. Peggy Ashcroft as Donna Julia and Janette Richer as her maid add the spice of variety.

Canto Two is cinematic. It deals with Juan's departure from Cadiz on a ship wrecked in a wide-screen storm, and his discovery and rescue by Haidee, daughter of a



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fisherman on the Greek island where the hero is washed ashore. These events, and the details of the love affair he enjoys with the highly responsive Haidee "amidst the barren sand and rocks so rude" are recounted in an idiom saturated with wildly romantic imagery and atmosphere. Yet the poet also carefully documents the time, place, and weather of every scene, and uses meticulous description like an artfully aimed camera to bring action into focus. Mr. Johnson calls this scenario to life with a full appreciation of the wit, sensuality, and sagacity with which it abounds. When it is over, one wishes—as one seldom does after a long bout with the recorded word—that Johnson would turn the page to Canto Three and go right on. P. K.

Ⓜ COYLE AND SHARPE: *The Insane Minds of Coyle and Sharpe*. Jim Coyle and Mel Sharpe (performers). WARNER BROTHERS 1573 \$3.98.

Performance: Abysmal
Recording: Windy

BYRON

His Don Juan is perceptively read



This aptly named collection of phony street interviews taped in San Francisco by a pair of crudenicks who style themselves the "greatest con men alive" is not a fount of amusement but of torture. Mr. Coyle and Mr. Sharpe, who turned in an equally dismal album some time ago, are out on the street this time harassing supposedly gullible victims with such submimetic notions as selling packaged germs, attending a cannibal death ritual, asking permission to do a brain operation. . . . Enough? Since the interviewees are obviously character actors, and unconvincing ones at that, the only person really being conned is the listener. To make matters worse, Coyle and Sharpe perform mindless little skits between excursions. There is a three-minute respite of something approaching a plausible hoax when the pair are introduced as ethnic performers from Bulgaria at a folk-singing festival on the University of California campus. The rest is painful going, augmented by the kind of blurry, headache-inducing sound you get from tape recorders left running on windy street corners. P. K.

© M DICK GREGORY: "So you see . . . we all have problems." COLPIX SCP 480 \$5.98, CP 480 \$4.98.

Performance: Shaky
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Pointless

Mr. Gregory's topical humor, aimed at the enemies of civil rights, suffers from the built-in disadvantage of being dated in many of its references before his words hit the market. On this occasion, they are also only fitfully on target. I was interested in the news of a Hertz Rent-a-Negro service for cocktail parties given by white liberals, and the description of new Negro residents putting on the dog in a previously all-white neighborhood is top-drawer Gregory. But too much of the material sounds familiar—some of the jokes are actually warmed over from earlier recordings. As for the repetition of the catch phrase, "So you see, we all have problems," it becomes downright depressing. Every barrel has its bottom, but surely a man of Gregory's cleverness does not need to stoop to this kind of appeal. P. K.

SHAKESPEARE: *Romeo and Juliet* (see Best of Month, page 73)

© SHAKESPEARE: *Woman (Glimpses of Portraits from Shakespeare's Gallery of Women)*. Claire Luce (reader). FOLKWAYS FL 9650/2 two 12-inch discs \$11.90.

Performance: Virtuoso
Recording: Good

Anyone who undertakes a reading covering the entire gallery of Shakespeare's women from Cordelia to Cleopatra might be accused of many things, but never of cowardice. Miss Luce, moreover, did her own art work for the fancy album cover, and it was she as well who wrote the clever continuity for this two-hour tour de force. And as one who has played Cleopatra, Beatrice, and Viola at Stratford-on-Avon, and Kate in the New York City Center's *Taming of the Shrew*, she does bring field experience to a somewhat cheeky undertaking.

This "concert reading" starts with *The Tempest's* Miranda, then proceeds to *Lady Macbeth*, Juliet, Olivia and Viola in *Twelfth*

Night. Emilia in *Otello*, Imogene in *Cymbeline*, Queen Margaret in *Richard III*, Beatrice in *Measure for Measure*, to Cressida, and then Cleopatra. After a brief intermission, during which it may be necessary for the listener to down a couple of aspirin or break the mood with a Beatles record, she returns as Adriana and Luciana in *The Comedy of Errors*, Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, all three of King Lear's daughters, Constance in *King John*. Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew*, and Helena in *All's Well that Ends Well*. Phew!

I must say she acquits herself forgivably. True, some of her younger women seem almost unintentional caricatures—the dewiness of her Juliet and her Viola, and the lilting tone of her Titania sound more like take-offs than earnest portraits; she also brings little insight to the roles of Portia and Helena; her Cordelia is a fairly superficial try. But there are remarkable moments in other roles—in fact, the more difficult and complex the character, the more successful this actress is. Her Cleopatra, for example, is a fierce and fiery but witty woman, and the long passage in which the queen nearly murders a messenger for having the bad taste to deliver bad news brings the first record to a rousing end. Her Kate is colorful, vitriolic, and vital, her Constance affecting, her Rosalind—in the speech from *As You Like It* that questions the whole concept of romantic love—persuasive. In sum, Miss Luce manages the brainier women better than the tender ones. Yet even in this category there are roles that are beyond her: a few harsh growls and a tense tone are not enough to evoke the power and terror of *Lady Macbeth*. But the actress is so game for every task (although for some reason she avoids Desdemona) that the album is a fair success. In fact, the only really objectionable element is the recorded laughter. P. K.

© JONATHAN WINTERS: *Whistle Stopping*. Jonathan Winters. Pat McCormick, Tom O'Malley, Pat Bright. VERVE V 15037 \$4.98.

Performance: Undisciplined
Recording: Loud

A good idea has gone wrong here—in fact, nearly a dozen good ideas—because Mr. Winters insists on running his comic campaign train off the track. In a nobly intended attempt to spoof the American political scene from left to right through a series of interviews in which he impersonates liberals, left-wingers, right-wingers, farmers, housewives, teenagers, labor leaders, elder statesmen, and even the Presidential nominee himself, Winters simply keeps getting in the way of his own humor with strenuous irrelevancies that blunt his satirical points. He is at his best in the role of a redneck farmer who wants the government to go on paying him for not planting crops, and makes of Price Boothcourt, "former President and grand old man of the party," a believable and laughable figure who reminisces about the good old days when a Presidential campaign "cost \$2,700."

Throughout this rather dated record, the comedian is defeated by his own heavy hand and a deplorable tendency to fill in all the outlines of every caricature without discipline or restraint. As a result, the notes on the album, which confine themselves to a terse description of each prototype, are funnier than the record inside. P. K.



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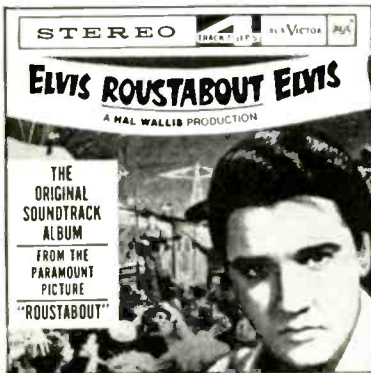
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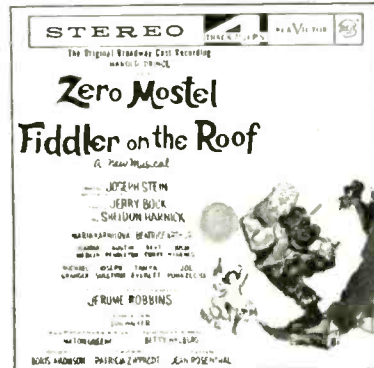
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STEREO TAPE

Reviewed by CHRISTIE BARTER • DAVID HALL • IGOR KIPNIS

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© BACH: *Harpsichord Concerto No. 1, in D Minor; Harpsichord Concerto No. 2, in E Major*. George Malcolm (harpsichord); Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra. Karl Münchinger cond. LONDON LCL 80147 \$7.95.

Performance: **Superb**
 Recording: **Intimate**
 Stereo Quality: **Fine**

George Malcolm performs the first two of Bach's seven harpsichord concertos with stunning effect in this only tape issue of these works. His fingerwork is impeccably clear, and his interpretations are sensitive, sympathetic, and vital—and fortunately devoid of the eccentricities of registration change that are often heard on his recordings. Tempos in the fast movements, particularly the finales, are somewhat slower than one hears in other recordings, but the results make far more musical sense. Münchinger and a string complement of the correct size provide strong support, and the recorded sound, close-up for both solo instrument and orchestra, has a pleasant, intimate quality. At times, the harpsichord seems swallowed up by the greater volume of the accompaniment, but the balance nevertheless is most realistically accomplished. The disc version (London 6392, 9392) is an example of modern recording at its best; except for a slightly more natural harpsichord tone, the tape version is not noticeably superior—both are examples of first-rate reproduction. There is a very slight pre-echo at the start of each of the concertos, but this does not seriously mar the release. All told, these performances can be recommended as among the very best available. I. K.

BEETHOVEN: *Wellington's Victory, Op. 91* (see TCHAIKOVSKY)

© BIZET: *Carmen*. Leontyne Price (soprano). Carmen: Franco Corelli (tenor), Don José; Robert Merrill (baritone). Escamillo: Mirella Freni (soprano). Micaëla; Monique Linval (soprano), Frasquita; Geneviève Macaux (soprano), Mercédès; Jean-Christophe Benoit (baritone). Dancaïro; Maurice Besançon (tenor). Remondado; Frank Schooten (bass). Zuniga; Bernard Demigny (baritone), Morales. Vienna State Opera Chorus. Vienna Boys' Choir; Vienna

Philharmonic, Herbert von Karajan cond. RCA VICTOR FTC 8009 two reels \$21.95.

Performance: **Debatable**
 Recording: **Brilliant**
 Stereo Quality: **Outstanding**

To a prospective buyer of *Carmen* on tape—a buyer dubious about the engineering on the splendid De los Angeles-Beecham recording for Angel (ZC 3613), which after all dates back to the late Fifties, or one unconvinced of the vocal promise held out by Regina Resnik's recent performance for London (LOR 90070)—this release might seem to be the logical answer. Certainly a *Carmen*

velously balanced, the solo voices are nearly always in proper focus, and the big ensembles in the first and fourth acts are truly stunning.

At the top of my list of complaints is the quality of the French one hears sung by virtually all of the principals, ranging from barely passable to painfully bad. So bad is it most of the time that anyone who is at all familiar with the language will find his appreciation of the performance considerably soured. The worst offender is Franco Corelli, who as Don José otherwise sings quite gloriously and without his usual excesses. He clearly knows what he is singing about, but

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*A fine
 full-blooded
 Carmen*



sung by Leontyne Price should prove to be a pretty exciting affair. And that same *Carmen* conducted by Herbert von Karajan, recorded in Vienna under the most favorable circumstances, could even verge on greatness. The sad fact is that it does not, that coming to it with the highest hopes and the greatest anticipation (as I did), one is bound to be disappointed.

Much has been said and written to the credit of this performance. In several quarters it has been hailed, with some reservations, as the best *Carmen* of them all. But my own reservations appear to outweigh a great many of the good things I can think of to say about it.

Foremost among the latter is the sense of excitement it does indeed deliver (despite generally slow tempos) in much of the singing and in the freshness and realism Karajan brings to a well-worn if sturdy score. Technically, the recording cannot be faulted; it really *sounds* great, especially on tape. Orchestral timbres are well defined and mar-

only the greatest conceit could lead an artist of his stature into the belief that his audience can guess his meaning just from the color and pitch of his vocal outpouring. Next is Mirella Freni, who seems to have made a sincere effort to master the French tongue and failed. Her rendering of Micaëla's "*Je dis*" is nevertheless a thing of rare beauty, and her portrayal of a thankless role utterly disarming. Robert Merrill for his part diligently applies himself to Escamillo's lines, delivers them in fine voice, and leaves behind an impression of the Toreador as an absolute square.

Miss Price, as expected, creates a fine full-blooded *Carmen*, but being the hothouse creation it is (she has yet to try the role on stage), it carries less conviction than it might. It is, in fact, terribly uneven. At her best—in, say, the *Seguidilla* or the eloquently moving *Card Song*—Miss Price is very, very good: passion and dignity fuse convincingly. At her worst, in the extremely mannered *Habañera* and elsewhere, when she suddenly

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and unnecessarily resorts to guttural vulgarities of tone, she betrays the fact that she still has some thinking to do about the character itself.

The transfer to tape is marred only by a bad break between sequences on the first reel. It occurs at a particularly awkward moment in Zuniga's brief questioning scene leading into the *Seguidilla*, where a cut only a minute or two earlier (or later) would have been more appropriate. Notes and libretto contained in the handsome folio gotten up by the Sorias for the disc release are available free of charge upon request. C. B.

DUKAS: *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (see RAVEL)

HONEGGER: *Pacific 231* (see RAVEL)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© MAHLER: *Symphony No. 2, in C Minor ("Resurrection")*. Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano); Lee Venora (soprano); Collegiate Chorale; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein cond. COLUMBIA M2Q 604 \$11.95.

Performance: Stuningly dramatic
Recording: Extraordinary
Stereo Quality: The best

All of the laudatory comments that I made about the disc version of this superior performance in the January issue of this magazine receive renewed validation on the evidence of this fine tape processing. It is the awesome finale, with its fresco-like unfolding of Mahler's vision of Judgment Day and the final resurrection, that gains most through transfer to the tape medium, for the chorus, soloists, augmented orchestra, and organ in the final pages come through in all their blinding splendor, unmarred by the inevitable tracking distortion imposed by the physical limitations of discs. And it is good also to be able to experience the hour-and-a-quarter span of this music with but one interruption for turn-over, as against two for the disc version (the fourth side of the disc set offers Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* sung by Mme. Tourel with Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic).

On a rival Angel tape, Otto Klemperer, the Philharmonia Orchestra, chorus, and soloists offer substantial musical competition for Bernstein and his forces, but Klemperer's noble reading fails to convey the nervous energy inherent in the music to the same extent as Bernstein's. Considering, too, that the Columbia tape is four dollars cheaper, there can be no question which is the greater bargain. D. H.

© RAVEL: *La Valse; Boléro*. DUKAS: *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. HONEGGER: *Pacific 231*. Suisse Romande Orchestra, Ernest Ansermet cond. LONDON LCL 80151 \$7.95.

Performance: Idiomatic
Recording: Fine
Stereo Quality: Good

This tape and its disc counterpart represent a rerecording with the Suisse Romande Orchestra of a highly successful Ansermet program with the Paris Conservatory Orchestra issued some ten years ago by London. Now as then, Ansermet brings to the much-abused

(Continued on page 134)

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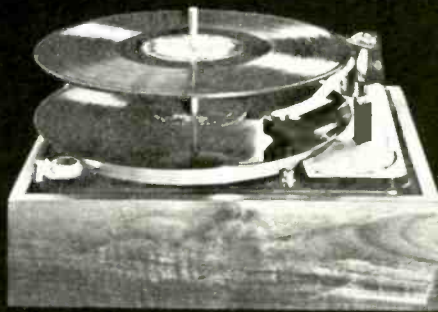


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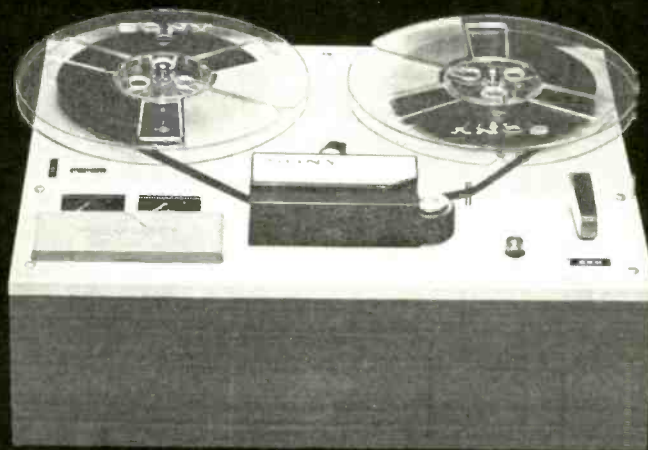
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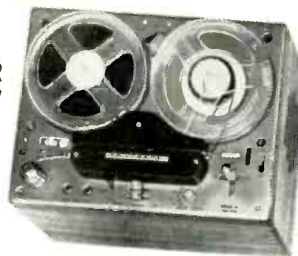


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Ravel and Dukas scores a sense of proportion and a flair for just instrumental coloration and balance that enable us to experience these pieces as music rather than as orgasmic sonic sensation.

For me, however, the rather neglected Honegger locomotive tour de force gets the most powerful and revealing performance of all—one that makes the score interesting as music, and as well underlines its relationship to the mechanist-abstract paintings of Léger and others of the 1920's. D. H.

© SIBELIUS: *Symphony No. 2, in D Major, Op. 43; Symphony No. 4, in A Minor, Op. 63.* Suisse Romande Orchestra. Ernest Ansermet cond. LONDON LCK 80152 \$11.95.

Performance: Fourth more convincing
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Good

With virtually an hour and a half of music, this tape, which combines the most popular and the most problematic of the Sibelius symphonies, represents a remarkable value. As to its musical worth, Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra on a Columbia tape reveal far more of the drama of the D Major Symphony's "victory-through-struggle" progression than does Ansermet's rather overrefined and not always sure performance. The windswept dissonances and enigmatic pronouncements of the A Minor Symphony provoke a considerably more meaningful response from Ansermet, and though he fails to communicate the uttermost meaning of this music, he does bring out much of the nobility of the slow movement, and the atmospherics of the faster ones as well.

As performances by a major conductor who is not normally associated with Sibelius, these are of more than usual interest—most notably the Fourth Symphony, which has not heretofore been recorded in stereo. The sound is generally excellent, and the Fourth Symphony profits especially from good tape stereo. D. H.

© TCHAIKOVSKY: *The Nutcracker: Ballet Suite.* Philadelphia Orchestra. Eugene Ormandy cond. COLUMBIA MQ 689 \$7.95.

Performance: Extremely enjoyable
Recording: In part constricted
Stereo Quality: Natural

In this performance Ormandy includes all of the familiar sections of the first orchestral suite as well as most of those usually included in the synthetic—that is, not arranged by Tchaikovsky—second suite. In contrast to Ansermet's Suites Nos. 1 and 2 (London L 80037, or, coupled with *Swan Lake* excerpts on an extended-play reel, K 80131), Ormandy plays the movements in the original sequence. The two versions are almost identical in playing time and contents, though each recording contains something not in the other—the major difference being Columbia's inclusion of the *Journey through the Snow* (performed without choral participation). Ormandy's pacing and choice of tempos are exceptional, and his orchestra plays with marvelous precision and a beautiful glow. But Ansermet has the advantage in the clarity of reproduction: the Columbia tape, for all its full-bodied bass response, is constricted-sounding in the upper strings
(Continued on page 136)

HIFI/STEREO REVIEW

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THUS:

$$\frac{15 \text{ inches}}{\frac{\text{second}}{15,000 \text{ cycles}}} = \frac{15 \text{ inches}}{\text{second}} \times \frac{\text{second}}{15,000 \text{ cycles}} = \frac{1 \text{ inch}}{1000 \text{ cycles}} = 1 \text{ mil wave length}$$

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and almost strident in the heaviest passages. Stereo placement is natural. I. K.

© TCHAIKOVSKY: *1812 Overture, Op. 49*. BEETHOVEN: *Wellington's Victory, Op. 91 ("Battle Symphony")*. Minneapolis Symphony, London Symphony, Antal Dorati cond. MERCURY STE 19 \$4.95.

Performance: Explosive
Recording: Poor
Stereo Quality: Effective

This is a recoupling, bringing together two sonic blockbusters Mercury first released on tape only a few years ago. Tchaikovsky's salute to the Russian campaign of 1812, however, was originally recorded by Dorati and his forces back in the spring of 1958, and the Beethoven—commemorating the struggle with Bonaparte in the Peninsular War of 1813—two years later. Both, for all their stereo effectiveness, show their age. C. B.

© VERDI: *Rigoletto*. Robert Merrill (baritone), Rigoletto; Anna Moffo (soprano), Gilda; Alfredo Kraus (tenor), the Duke; Ezio Flagello (bass), Sparafucile; Rosalind Elias (mezzo-soprano), Maddalena; others. RCA Italiana Opera Chorus and Orchestra, Georg Solti cond. RCA VICTOR FTC 7008 two reels \$21.95.

Performance: Taut
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Lacks drama

From the very opening of this performance, one is conscious of Georg Solti's taut conductorial hand and keen dramatic sense. There are plenty of opportunities for the singers to use this opera for their own vocal ends and to squeeze all the juice out of the arias, but Solti keeps everybody well in line and concentrates on the relentless sweep and impact of Verdi's dramatic action, from the opening festive scene to the final horrifying denouement.

Robert Merrill in the title role has greatly expanded the human dimensions of his character portrayal over the years. Here intelligence and a fine voice work in splendid harmony, achieving genuine poignancy in the moments of pathos with Gilda. Merrill realizes well the undertones of irony and cynicism too, but in the climactic moment of outrage against the courtiers over the kidnapping of Gilda, Merrill's "*Cortigiani, vil razza dannata*" is strangely lacking in thrust. Indeed, his singing is almost covered by the violin figuration (this may well stem from faulty engineering). Anna Moffo makes an appealing and vocally lovely Gilda, but Alfredo Kraus sounds a bit threadbare vocally in the role of the Duke—here the Duke is hardly the splendidly accoutered smooth operator that the late Jussi Bjoerling made him. Ezio Flagello as the assassin Sparafucile and Rosalind Elias as his daughter-accomplice Maddalena turn out thoroughly creditable performances.

As an over-all dramatic effort, this *Rigoletto* production packs plenty of punch. However, some elements of the recording puzzle me, in view of the superb facilities of RCA's studio in Rome. I have already mentioned the vocal-orchestral balance in *Rigoletto*'s great outburst. In general the performance, both vocal and orchestral, is rather closely miked and has a very brilliant and "you-are-there" effect, but at the same time

it is lacking the varied perspective that one experiences in the opera house, particularly in the kidnapping scene with its "Zitti, zitti" chorus, the final encounter of Rigoletto and Monterone as the latter is taken to prison, and the whole of the final act with its action in and around Sparafucile's inn. I would have liked more effective exploitation of stereo directionality and perspective—perhaps even some tasteful exaggeration on occasion. Lastly, it seems to me that the humming chorus that Verdi scored into the storm scene as wind sound-effect is much too much in the "sound picture" to achieve a properly eerie effect.

One inexcusable editorial *gaffe* in the finished recording is the first side-break, which interrupts the musical flow of the Rigoletto-Gilda duet at the point where the Duke is first heard stealing into Rigoletto's house. Surely, on the tape at least, the extra three minutes needed to conclude the scene could have been added to the first sequence.

Metropolitan Opera fans will undoubtedly enjoy this recorded performance, since it shows Merrill and Moffo to fine advantage. But we must wait for some other recorded *Rigoletto* to combine the full potentialities of stereo with the drama of Toscanini's great mono recording of the final act and the musicality of Merrill and Bjoerling in the 1957 RCA Victor recording—or of Callas and Gobbi in the 1956 Angel album. *D. H.*

SPOKEN WORD

© SHAKESPEARE: *Hamlet*. Richard Burton, Hume Cronyn, Alfred Drake, Eileen Herlie, Linda Marsh, William Redfield, George Rose, George Voskovec (players), John Gielgud, director. COLUMBIA DOQ 665 \$16.95.

Performance: Spotty
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Unfocused

Columbia's 3¾-ips recording, exemplifying the now rather unfashionable use of Shakespeare as Vehicle, may outrun *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* in playing time by half an hour, but it offers substantially less as theater-in-the-home. Burton himself is magnificent, given his approach to Hamlet, which is virile, forthright, and often touched by genius. But most of the people supporting him are pretty awful. Hume Cronyn plays Polonius as if he were the show's Top Banana. Alfred Drake turns in an elegant but shallow King, and Linda Marsh is a totally inept Ophelia. With such materials, director John Gielgud, appropriately spooky as the Ghost, understandably fails to give the performance any consistency of style. Yet he does preside over one enormously effective scene, and that is the scene between Hamlet and his mother, played by Eileen Herlie. Technically this recording has one problem not encountered in Columbia's other releases: the marked changes in vocal timbre that occur whenever one of the actors turns away from the microphones, which frequently makes it difficult to determine who is saying what to whom (though we should all know by this time). The sequence break is made a little before the entrance of the players in Act Two, but right in the middle of one of Hamlet's speeches, which is both unfortunate and unnecessary. Otherwise the transfer to tape has been executed with care. *C. B.*

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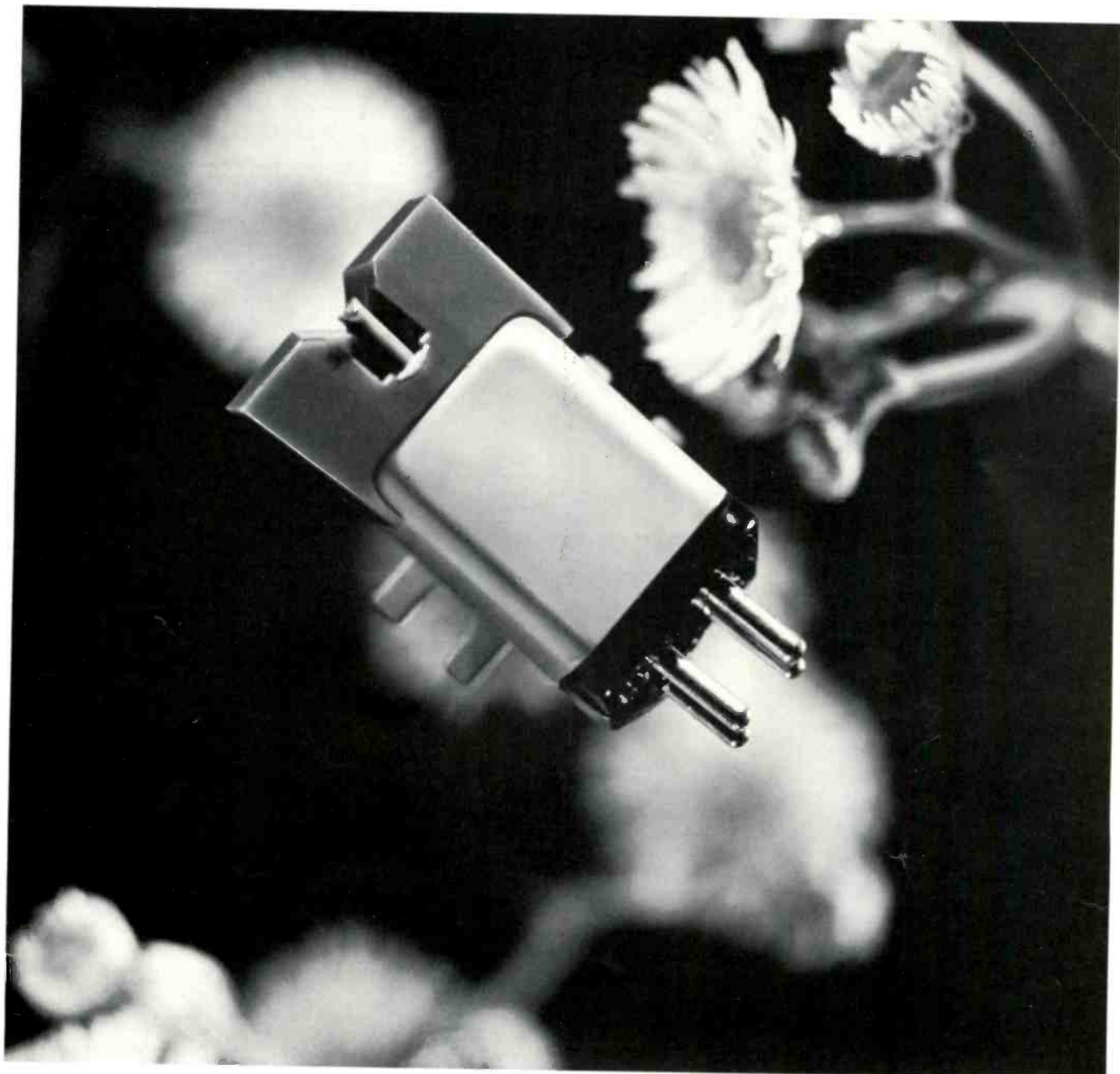
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Whether you own a record changer, automatic turntable, or a professional type manual turntable Pickering has engineered the RIGHT V-15 pickup for you. Each of these applications requires a cartridge with specific characteristics and specifications to produce the maximum in NATURAL SOUND that is possible from the record playing equipment and other components in your system. If it's RECORD CHANGER application, where high output and heavier tracking forces are required try the **V-15 AC-1**. Most of you, no doubt are tracking lighter on the late model AUTOMATIC TURNTABLES and will use the **V-15 AT-1**. Or if a professional type MANUAL TURNTABLE is your choice you'll need the even more compliant **V-15 AM-1**. And if it's unexcelled tracking ability you're seeking, you will demand the ELLIPTICAL STYLUS PICKUP **V-15 AME-1**. All of these pickups are radically different from any other cartridge. You can see the difference. You can hear the difference. Pick up a V-15. Note its light weight—only 5 grams. Perfect for low mass tone arm systems. Now, see how Pickering's exclusive "Floating Stylus" and patented replaceable V-Guard assembly protects your record and diamond as it plays.

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For Tough Jobs Choose The Only Microphone With Backbone!

 The backbone of the Electro-Voice Model 676 is no mere decoration. It's visible proof of the most exciting idea in directional microphones—Continuously Variable-D (CV-D)[™].

Here's how it works. We attach a very special tapered tube to the back of the microphone element. This tube automatically varies in effective acoustic length with frequency. It's a long tube for lows—a short tube for highs. All this with no moving parts! The tube is always optimum length to most effectively cancel sound arriving from the back of the microphone, regardless of frequency.

This ingenious solution* is years ahead of the common fixed-path designs found in most cardioid microphones. The 676 offers significantly smoother response at every point—on or off axis—plus more uniform cancellation to the rear. It is also less sensitive to wind and shock. There is almost no "proximity effect" . . . no boosted bass when performers work extra close.

Long life and smooth response are guaranteed by the exclusive E-V Acoustalloy[®] Diaphragm. And the 676 has unusually high

*Pat. No. 3,115,207

CIRCLE NO. 26 ON READER SERVICE CARD



**ELECTRO-VOICE
MODEL 676
DYNAMIC CARDIOID**

output for a microphone so small. Of course you get dual output impedances, high efficiency dust and magnetic filters—all of the hallmarks of Electro-Voice design that have made E-V a leader for years.

But that's not all. The 676 has an exclusive bass control switch built in. Choose flat response (from 40 to 15,000 cps) or tilt off the bass 5 or 10 db at 100 cps to control reverberation, reduce low frequency feedback and room rumble.

Write today for complete specifications, or visit your E-V sound specialist's to see this remarkable new microphone. And when difficult sound problems must be faced squarely, stand up and fight back with the microphone with a backbone (and CV-D)—the new Electro-Voice 676 dynamic cardioid!

*Model 676 Satin Chrome or TV Grey,
\$100.00 list; in Gold, \$110.00 list.
Shown on Model 420 Desk Stand, \$20.00 list.
(Less normal trade discounts.)*

ELECTRO-VOICE, INC.
Dept. 352F, Buchanan, Michigan 49107

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