

Stereo Review

FEBRUARY 1973 • 60 CENTS

Ten Years of the Beatles



**What's
the best way
to turn on
Blood, Sweat
& Tears?**



18061

Retailers: Notice of display-allowance plan is within last three pages.



Jerry Fisher

"The richness and fulness of my Pioneer system lets me hear and feel music the way it should be. When I listen, I want to hear everything that's played. I like my music loud."



Steve Katz

"I love everything about my Pioneer receiver. Reception is beautiful. In fact, as good as records sound playing on my turntable, it is surprisingly matched by the sound of my favorite FM stations."



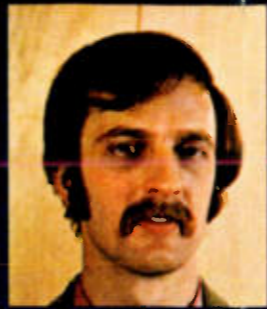
Lew Soloff

"I like the fact that I can listen to clear music at moderate volume. Pioneer equipment makes all types of music sound great."



Georg Wadenius

"The first time I heard of Pioneer was when I lived in Sweden. But I really didn't know how great hi-fi could sound until I bought some Pioneer equipment over here."



Jim Fielder

"Let's face it. I'm not a hi-fi expert. Just a musician who knows what he likes. So when people ask me to recommend hi-fi gear — in all honesty, I tell them Pioneer. It's great."



Chuck Winfield

"When I first heard Pioneer speakers at my hi-fi dealer, they sounded more precise than any other speaker in his comparison test."



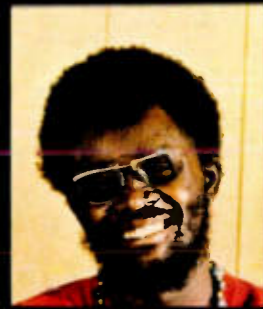
Lou Marini Jr.

"I had a regular compact system which I thought was OK. But then I heard Bobby's Pioneer system and realized that mine was redic. Now that I've got a Pioneer system I've got more friends than Bobby."



Bobby Colomby

"I believe in Pioneer because they work the hardest in bringing you excellent equipment."



Larry Willis

"Living in an apartment, I've compared loads of hi-fi equipment that's supposed to give great sound at low volume. Nothing compares to Pioneer."



Dave Bargeron

"Traveling on tour the way we do, you get to listen to some mighty sad excuses for high fidelity. It's always a pleasure to get back home to real music with my Pioneer system."

Do it with Pioneer hi-fi equipment.



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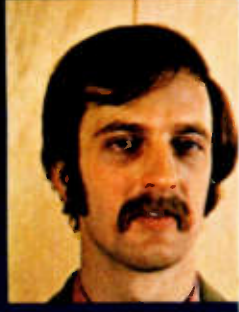
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Do it with Pioneer



Blood, Sweat & Tears are accomplished musicians. They have mastered the art of rock and jazz and have creatively blended them to make their own distinctive sound. Individually and collectively B,S&T demands perfection when they're performing — and when they're listening. So it's really no coincidence they all decided on Pioneer hi-fi components.

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And regardless of which Pioneer components you buy, you get the same top quality that Blood, Sweat & Tears have in their Pioneer components. Quality that assures you the finest in trouble-free performance. Quality that meets our own high standards of sound reproduction — as well as yours.

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RS-277US Freq. Resp. 20 Hz—13 kHz with normal tape; 20 Hz—14 kHz with CrO₂ tape. Wow and flutter under 0.25%. S/N better than 55 dB (Dolby)

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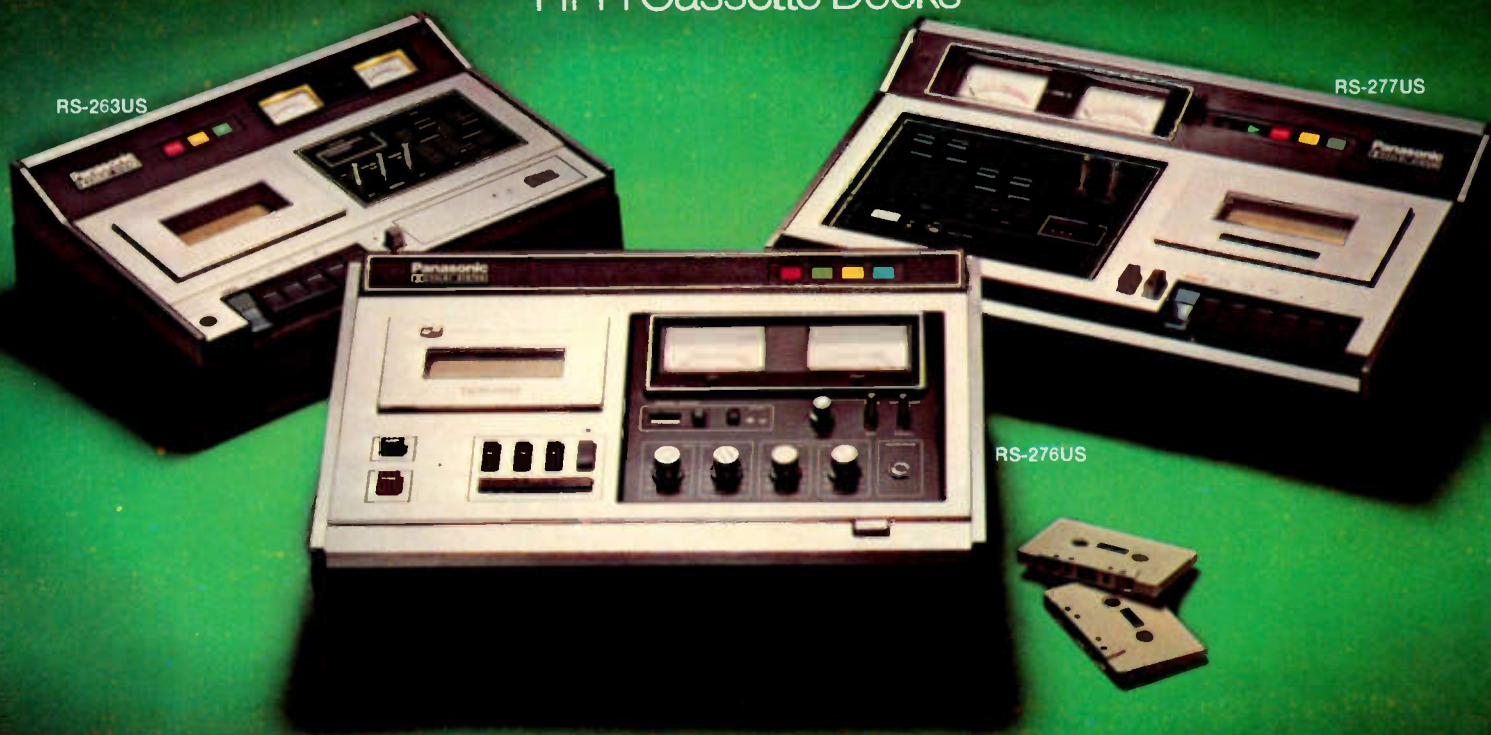
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Stereo Review

FEBRUARY 1973 • VOLUME 30 • NUMBER 2

THE MUSIC

THE BASIC REPERTOIRE

Copland's A Lincoln Portrait MARTIN BOOKSPAN 55

NINE WAYS OF LOOKING AT THE BEATLES

Nine rock critics assay the Fab Four's decade of fame 56

PLACIDO DOMINGO AND SHERRILL MILNES

A duolog between two of opera's most potent new image-makers STEPHEN E. RUBIN 64

SCHLAGOPER

Unlike most confections, Viennese operetta seems imperishable ARAM BAKSHIAN 72

RECORD OF THE YEAR AWARDS—1972

STEREO REVIEW's critics and editors select the industry's top artistic achievements 79

BOWIE AND HOOPLE AND REED

A tale of one pop Svengali and two Trilbys STEVE SIMELS 92

CAPITOL'S NEW "INTERNATIONAL SERIES"

Hits and misses in the first release of pop music from all over PAUL KRESH 108

RAMEAU'S *CASTOR & POLLUX*

Telefunken issues a superb reconstruction of a masterly Baroque opera ERIC SALZMAN 132

THE EQUIPMENT

NEW PRODUCTS

A roundup of the latest high-fidelity equipment 14

AUDIO QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Advice on readers' technical questions LARRY KLEIN 20

AUDIO BASICS

New IHF Standards? RALPH HODGES 30

TECHNICAL TALK

Measuring Phono Cartridge Tracking Ability; Hirsch-Houck laboratory reports on the Thorens TD-125AB Mk II turntable, the Epicure EPI 400 speaker system, the JVC 1667 stereo cassette deck, and the Sherwood S-8900A FM receiver JULIAN D. HIRSCH 35

STEREO HEARING (Part 2)

The perception and the reproduction of auditory space FLOYD TOOLE 67

TAPE HORIZONS

Wow and Flutter CRAIG STARK 142

THE REVIEWS

BEST RECORDINGS OF THE MONTH 82

POPULAR DISCS AND TAPES 89

CLASSICAL DISCS AND TAPES 111

THE REGULARS

EDITORIALLY SPEAKING WILLIAM ANDERSON 6

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR 8

GOING ON RECORD JAMES GOODFRIEND 52

ADVERTISERS' INDEX 142

COVER: THE BEATLES; GOUACHE BY DAVID CHESTNUTT

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2



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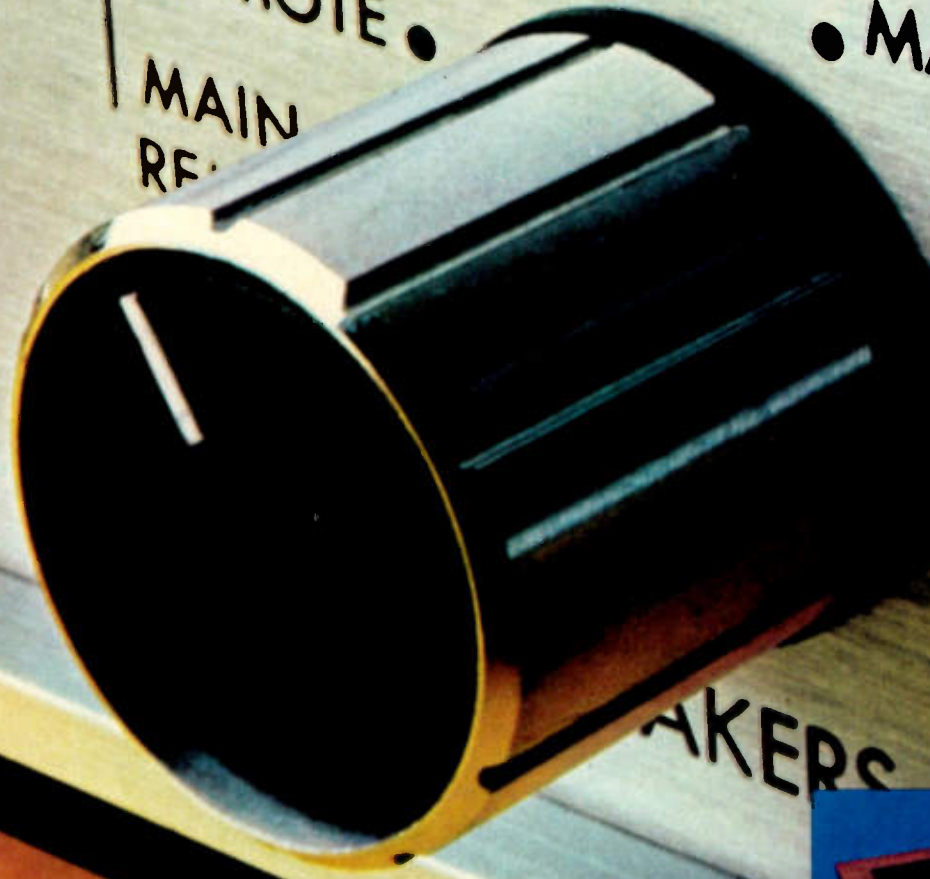
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EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

By WILLIAM ANDERSON

SIC TRANSIT ELEANOR RIGBY

LIFE, according to novelist Mary McCarthy, is not a fountain, but a roller towel; we all have our fatefully assigned places on it, and wound up somewhere in the mechanical innards of the machine are our replacements, awaiting only the tug of Time to bring them down and into our shoes. Hardly what one could call an elegant simile, and hardly an easy one to accept either, for it runs against nature—our certain (and certainly correct) knowledge that we are, every one of us, absolutely unique and irreplaceable, that there will never, ever, be another just like any one of us. But we are talking here only of offices, roles, and the filling of shoes, shoes that need not fit perfectly, and in that respect we are all—golden lads, girls, TV repairmen, and editors alike—eminently replaceable.

It must, however, be more painful for some than for others to move out of the spotlight, off the stage, and down the towel, to surrender their places to those next in line. The Beatles, for example, must find it extremely difficult to accept the fact that their occupation's gone, that they are no longer the absolute monarchs of pop music, the apple(s) of the world's eye, after a glorious reign of close to ten years. And how much harder it must be when they contemplate those who have deposed them: the Mick Jagers, Alice Coopers, David Bowies, Lou Reeds, Edgar Winters, and Gary Glitters, a vaudeville troupe of trendy transvestites whose sequined surrealism now holds in thrall the pubescent replacements for those of the previous generation who found their thrill in Beatlemania. How unsettling, moreover, it must be for those parents who, in fear and trembling, safely shepherded their broods through the cultural perils of the Beatles era and must now protect younger siblings from the seductive enchantments of those who appear to be collateral descendants of Julian Eltinge, the nieces or nephews of Nurse Peterson. Perhaps it is true that it has all been downhill since Eden, that things (in the words of limericist Edward Gorey) do not get better, but worse. But if we accept that as true, then we must also accept a corollary, that things are never quite as bad as they at first seem to be. However shocked some of us were by the rambunctious arrival of the Beatles with their (not very) long hair, their odd-mod clothes, and their noisy music, candor compels us to admit that it is now hard to see what all the fuss was about. This should teach us to refrain from making final pronouncements about the awfulness—or the excellence, for that matter—of any music while our emotions are deeply engaged in it, pending our arrival at some cool distance at least as great as that we now find between ourselves and the Beatles.

And how, across that distance, *do* we view the Beatles? It is still too early to guess which Beatles songs will endure (or for how long), but perhaps the roll of the towel came at just the right time. It is not merely that it would have been a tremendous (and unsuccessful) effort of the imagination for us to go on seeing the aging quartet much longer as Kute Kiddie Kut-ups. There is also evidence to show that, rather than discovering the short-cut to Parnassus promised them by irresponsible and scarcely disinterested critics ("songs as good as Schubert's, lyrics better than Shakespeare's"), they had run simultaneously into two unbridgeable chasms: the limitations of their talent and the limitations of the medium in which they worked. Which, of course, takes nothing away from them. They refreshed us with their irreverent impudence and taught us to take ourselves less seriously, they awakened us to the rich actuality and the potent possibility of American popular music, and they even braced, with their frail Liverpudlian shoulders, the sagging English pound. Their sovereign gave them a medal for that—too little, too late. They had already received—no, *earned*—oceans of love, torrents of publicity, a tidal wave of fame, and floods of lovely money. Are there any other artists, high or low, before or since, who so completely captured the attention of the world?

**We are the Garrard Engineers.
When you finish reading this ad
we will have one thing in common.
You will understand the Zero
100 the way we do.**

We aren't teachers. And you are probably not engineers.

But we can explain the Zero 100 to you because, in all honesty, the Zero 100 is not a difficult concept.

Neither was the wheel, although it took millions of years to come into being.

It took us seven years to create the Zero 100.

And it would take more than this ad to explain those seven years. The attempts that failed, the plans drawn and redrawn, the designs built and discarded, computed and re-measured.

Actually the problem seemed to be simple. Distortion.

Until the Zero 100, no automatic turntable could play a record without causing distortion in the sound you heard.

Records are cut at right angles, from the outside groove to the final one. To reproduce this sound perfectly, you need a turntable with a cartridge head that tracks the record exactly as it was cut, at the same 90 degree tangency.

But seven years ago, there was no automatic turntable that could achieve this consistency of tracking.

Our solution?

A turntable like no other turntable. A turntable with two arms.

The first arm of the Zero 100, the normal looking arm, is the one with the cartridge head. The auxiliary arm, our innovation, is attached to the first arm by a unique system of ball bearing pivots.

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Today, you can play a record on the Zero 100 and hear reproduction you've never heard before.

Free of tracking distortion.

Today, you can pick up issues of Stereo Review. High Fidelity. Audio. Rolling Stone. The Gramophone. And read what the reviewers say about the Zero 100.

After seven years, we are men who have achieved our goal.

We are proud to present it to you.

The Garrard Engineers

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"A Modest Proposal"

● Thanks to my modest exposure in the past to James Goodfriend's writings in your eminently enjoyable magazine, I could say with some assurance that he is a thoughtful, level-headed writer. Then I received my November issue in the mail, read his "Going on Record" column "A Modest Proposal," and nearly fainted. I can do little but hope that he is being facetious when he states that "records should be issued in exceedingly limited quantities . . . and then *never* issued again," among other even more outrageous statements. As a mere high-school student I rarely have enough cash on hand to buy more than about one new record every six weeks.

Mr. Goodfriend cannot be thinking straight when he says that all the "masters" of classical recordings should be destroyed. What with wear and tear and the like, in fifty years' time the performances of such conducting greats as Szell, Reiner, and Toscanini would be lost forever. It is my hope that no one takes any serious heed of what he has said.

WILLIAM SPENCER
Eric, Pa.

● My first (and second, for that matter) reaction to James Goodfriend's "Modest Proposal" is to wonder whether he doesn't have a screw loose.

There are not scores but *hundreds* of recordings that any given music lover would like to buy at any given time. Why should he be penalized because he picks them in the "wrong" chronological order, and ends up having all the later items on his list permanently unavailable? As for "applying to libraries to hear them," has Mr. Goodfriend heard an L.P. from a library collection lately? Most of them have been so ill-used that they are barely listenable.

The point of reissuing the recordings of great artists such as Schnabel and Walter is not that these musicians be "esteemed" or "revered," but that the musical legacy they left be enjoyed. If recordings are something to be salted away like stocks and bonds, I must have been suffering from a great misapprehension all these years. My musical tastes were nurtured as much by purchases from lists of ancient 78's sent out by a dealer in Jersey City as by new issues. With Mr. Goodfriend's odd plan in effect, no doubt none of these used records would have been available, because

all the original purchasers would have still been hoarding their "investments."

Near the end of the Orson Welles broadcast of *The War of the Worlds*, the astronomer meets a man with a gruesome vision of man's future. The astronomer, horrified, starts walking away, and the other man calls after him, "Where are you going?" The professor replies what I reply to this bizarre, destructive proposal, "Not to *your* world."

DAVID PIERCE
Vero Beach, Fla.

● On reading James Goodfriend's "A Modest Proposal," I don't know whether to be disturbed, to laugh, or to cry. If he is really serious, then his proposal is in the same class as the senseless destruction of the Alexandria Library. This type of thinking seems more and more to be permeating our so-called Western civilization. In many ways our heritage of music, the arts, and even technology seems bent on destroying itself, so that the future will have no links with the past. Future generations may never know of the foundation stones on which they stand.

If all the record companies producing classical discs are really in such deep trouble, perhaps they should consider forming a single corporation for the sole purpose of producing classical recordings, turn over all their master tapes and necessary production facilities, and let all classical recordings come out under one label. This may run counter to federal monopoly laws, but it is a better suggestion than destroying master tapes of bygone greats.

ROBERT J. MCWATERS
North Bennington, Vt.

● I don't usually write letters to the editor, but "A Modest Proposal" by Music Editor James Goodfriend especially disturbed me. It is not merely that his suggestions would disrupt my own record-purchasing habits; his ideas present no real solution to the problem to which he addresses himself.

Mr. Goodfriend seems to believe that a major factor in the "classical crisis" is the failure of record outlets to sell classical records because they do not know which ones to stock. Actually, I suspect that most dealers who do not now handle classical records are not interested in selling them at all, believing there is not a sufficient market. I would also venture that most classical purchasers do not

expect every store to have every record in any case. Actually, if there is a "classical crisis," it is in the low profits that the record companies can make on classical records. Mr. Goodfriend's proposal would actually worsen this situation, however. The major cost factor for classical records is at the time of the original recording, for the orchestra, technicians, etc. The cost of stamping a larger number of discs is relatively small and essential to the recovery of initial costs. The "proposal" would cut the companies' gross income while keeping their costs at virtually the same level.

But why should record prices be higher? Those of us who have limited incomes would simply have to cut our record purchases. I find little solace in the notion that a record will rise in market value. I buy my records to keep, not to sell. If Mr. Goodfriend has any other ideas about how to save the classical record industry, I suggest he lie down until they go away.

BEN HADDOX
Chicago, Ill.

Music Editor James Goodfriend replies: "I suppose it is inevitable in a humorless time like ours, when absolutely everything is taken dead seriously, that many people cannot recognize irony when they see it. I have the disturbing feeling that if Dean Swift's A Modest Proposal were published today, brought up to date a little in language and style, and made to refer to the unwanted children resulting from the mass rapes in Bangla Desh instead of the children of the poor in Ireland, that too would be taken seriously. And yet, how can one blandly accept as authentic a suggestion that children be killed and eaten or, on a lesser plane of horror, that the invaluable recorded legacy of a great musical artist be destroyed for the possible benefit of a small jump in sales? Have the accepted norms of civilized behavior been stretched so far that one may propose—and perhaps carry out—anything, without fear of more than polite disagreement?"

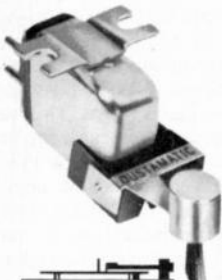






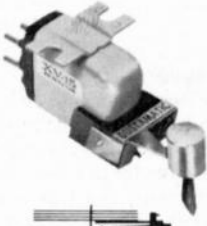
"My 'modest proposal,' like Swift's, is ironic because it points up a problem, ignores all the possible reasonable solutions to the problem (since those who are concerned with it and have the power to do something about it have themselves ignored those solutions), and sets forth an outrageous solution, presenting it with as much logic and rationality as I can muster. The point of it is to reawaken people to the fact that the problem does exist, and to force them, through the despicability of the proposed solution, to consider once again, or perhaps for the first time, those more reasonable solutions that they have in the past ignored. And so, when someone asks me how serious I am about the proposal I have offered, my answer is that I am precisely as serious about it as Jonathan Swift was about his. I find it unfortunate that some people could not see this without asking, but even more unfortunate that to some others the question has not even occurred."

Memories of Who?

● The one blemish in Messrs. Bolcom and Kimball's article on Noble Sissle and Eubie Blake (November) has to do with the ever-green *Memories of You*. Given its initial impetus by the pioneering effort of Louis Armstrong in 1931 (Okeh 41468), the song was well on its way to becoming a standard when it was seized upon by trumpeter Sonny Dun-

(Continued on page 10)

The right Pickering cartridge for your equipment is the best cartridge money can buy.

<p>XV-151200E DCF 1200</p>  <p>MANUAL TRANSCRIPTION TURNTABLE AUTOMATIC TRANSCRIPTION TURNTABLE</p>	<p>XV-15750E DCF 750</p>  <p>MANUAL TRANSCRIPTION TURNTABLE AUTOMATIC TRANSCRIPTION TURNTABLE</p>	<p>XV-15400E DCF 400</p>  <p>MANUAL MANUAL/AUTOMATIC</p>	<p>XV-15350 DCF 350</p>  <p>MANUAL MANUAL/AUTOMATIC</p>
<p>XV-15200E DCF 200</p>  <p>MANUAL/AUTOMATIC</p>	<p>XV-15150 DCF 150</p>  <p>MANUAL/AUTOMATIC</p>	<p>XV-15140E DCF 140</p>  <p>CHANGER</p>	<p>XV-15100 DCF 100</p>  <p>CHANGER</p>

There's a "right" Pickering cartridge for every record player, and only Pickering has developed a way for you to be absolutely certain you select the "right" cartridge for your high fidelity music system.

It is a simple way for you to precisely match one of our XV-15 (100% Music Power) cartridges to whatever kind of record player you have or plan to buy. It's called Dynamic Coupling Factor – DCF for short.

We have taken virtually every record player and pre-analyzed the vital variables affecting cartridge design and those related to the engineering features of the various turntables and changers. So, no matter what

equipment you own or plan to purchase, there is a Pickering XV-15 cartridge exactly "right" for it. The DCF number enables you to select the proper Pickering XV-15 cartridge in relation to a particular type of playback equipment to achieve maximum performance.

If you're ready to buy your next cartridge, be certain you end up with the Pickering XV-15 cartridge that's best for your system. *Have your Pickering high fidelity dealer show you our DCF Chart, or write Pickering & Co., Inc., Dept. V, 101 Sunnyside Boulevard, Plainview, N. Y. 11803.*



"for those who can hear the difference"

The **100%** Music Power Cartridges

All Pickering cartridges are designed for use with all two and four-channel matrix derived compatible systems.

ham of the Casa Loma Orchestra as a virtuoso vehicle; in no time at all he came to "own" the piece. Casa Loma recorded it after Dunham's departure (Decca 1672), but he really took it with him. Sonny's extravagant style may not be to everyone's taste, but he was the first star trumpeter of the big-band era. Benny Goodman, contrary to the authors' allegation, had no hand in the popularization of *Memories of You*.

DAVID WILSON
Carmel, Cal.

Messrs. Bolcom and Kimball reply: "We want to thank Mr. Wilson for calling attention to Louis Armstrong and Sonny Dunham as early promoters of Memories of You. There were several recordings of this tune in the early Thirties, but, unfairly or not, Goodman is now considered the 'owner' of Memories. Perhaps this is largely because of the film The Benny Goodman Story, yet he had been associated with it for quite a number of years before the film."

Publicizing Obscurity

● Great day in the morning! J Marks' "Hall of Obscurity" (December) is a great idea whose time has come. I hope the "Hall" will become a regular feature so that many fine performers and their excellent work can receive the recognition denied them in the massive deluge of vinyl from the late Sixties through the present. Groups such as Siren, Kaleidoscope, Dillard and Clark, Wildweeds, Jackson Heights, Spooky Tooth, Autosalvage, and Ekseption readily come to mind as bands that remained obscure in spite of their talent, and this is but scratching the surface.

RICHARD RUNQUIST
Floodwood, Minn.

"Significance"

● As my contribution to the "significance" discussion by Messrs. Anderson and Goodfriend in the December issue, may I suggest a modern solution for those who are not content with their own reaction to a musical selection: a computerized FM tuner, with a special scan mode and appropriately labeled program cards. Upon inserting a card, the tuner would scan the dial until it came to a selection with the characteristic shown on the card—e.g., "immortal." The listener would then be assured of the quality of his listening fare. For the not-so-demanding (or uptight), additional cards would be provided: "top-fifty," "dreck," and "all of the above." For the true connoisseur, an oscilloscope display could be programmed to show the actual level of significance of the music—the probability, say, that the selection will still be considered "significant" two centuries hence.

RONALD J. KONOPKA
Mountain View, Cal.

Diamond's Had It Rough

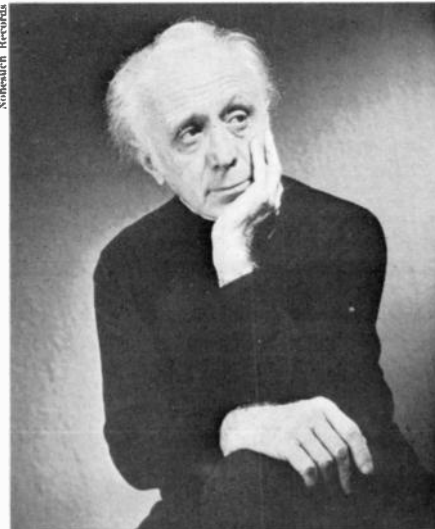
● Don Heckman's review of Neil Diamond's album "Moods" in the December issue was just unbelievable. Criticism, criticism, criticism! Several close friends and I, whose pastime is listening to good music, think that Neil Diamond is a great artist. He is *not* a crashing bore. His song-writing is very impressive, and he sings with great feeling and depth. We all think his backing music is superb—and we *do* listen to him very closely.

If music be the food of love, play on, Neil.
NOEL CAMERON
North Battleford, Sask.

Jascha Horenstein Society

● I'd like to announce the formation of the Jascha Horenstein Society in Portland, Oregon. Most societies and archives are meant to honor the memories of renowned deceased artists. Our very different purpose will be to make better known the extraordinary work of Jascha Horenstein, whom we consider one of the greatest of living conductors. While most societies take the opportunity of the death of their hero to collect and catalog their existing recordings, we intend to beg, pressure, lobby, and otherwise coerce the recording industry into finally doing justice to Horenstein's remarkable genius. Our primary hope is that the maestro be given the opportunity to record his many incredible interpretations from Bach to Schoenberg and beyond in the finest modern sound.

In addition, we would be very grateful to hear from readers who share our interest in Jascha Horenstein, and who can perhaps supply us with encouragement, information,



JASCHA HORENSTEIN
A legend in his own time

and/or recordings (out-of-print, private, etc.). We ask only that interested parties get in touch with the society at the address below so that arrangements can be made to make the best possible use of their materials and suggestions.

DAVID WALKER, *President*
Jascha Horenstein Society
3203 South East Alder Street
Portland, Ore. 97214

Pop Piffle?

● In the December "Letters to the Editor" column, Ms. Barbara Drew calls pop music of the Thirties to the mid-Sixties "piffle" and blames it on males. Talk about *male* chauvinism!—she displays the female variety. Many of the composers of that era were women with an occasional hit: Julie Andrews just did a TV program on them. And to call the works of Gershwin, Kern, Berlin, Porter, and Rodgers "piffle" is to display abysmal ignorance. As a matter of fact, if anything is "piffle" it is the most current "relevant" guitar banger with his three basic chords, a complete lack of any kind of singing voice, and microphones in the armpits and groin. And the kind of drivel Ms. Drew writes is a purple example of Fem-Lib "piffle"!

JOE BILLINGS
Hollywood, Cal.

Full Logic

● Ralph Hodges' "Audio Preview 1973" (December) gave a balanced and generally accurate picture of sound-industry developments for the year to come. However, we'd like to point out that the Sony SQR 6650 four-channel receiver does not in fact contain the "full-logic" SQ decoding attributed to it in the article. To our knowledge, the Lafayette LR-4000 is the only receiver presently available with that feature.

DAVID KIPNES
Lafayette Radio Electronics
Syosset, N.Y.

Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue

● Inspired by Paul Kresh's enthusiastic review of Earl Wild's new recording of the Gershwin *Rhapsody in Blue* on Turnabout (November), I dashed out and bought a copy, and found it to be all that he said, except for one thing. This version is not "as Gershwin personally arranged it." Gershwin got no further than a two-piano score. This version is Grofé's original arrangement, specifically tailored to the instrumentation of Paul Whiteman's band. When it became obvious that they had a hit on their hands, Grofé then beefed up the orchestration to symphonic proportions for the concert trade. To the best of my knowledge, the first performance of this original version by a band other than Whiteman's was given on March 2, 1968, in Constitution Hall by Earl Wild and the National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Howard Mitchell, and was repeated in New York on the following day.

RODNEY H. MILL
West Hyattsville, Md.

Mr. Kresh replies: "Several other alert readers also have called this error to my attention. A clear case of wishful reading on the reviewer's part. The liner notes described the work Gershwin turned in to Paul Whiteman as 'a composition for Piano and Jazz Band' from which I erroneously concluded that the piece must have been orchestrated originally by Gershwin himself. Actually, all he included with the piano score, it turns out, were indications suggesting the use of certain instruments. At any rate, Grofé's original orchestration is certainly leaner and cleaner than the 'symphonic' one he was ultimately to develop."

December Cover

● Your December cover was impressively futuristic, but just what are those present-day components visible in the sound installation at the left?

DOM CORSARO
Brooklyn, N. Y.

According to House of Sound, Westport, Connecticut, who were responsible for the model-room installation, the equipment includes a Pioneer QX-8000A receiver, a QT-2100 four-channel cartridge player, and a custom control panel. Visible in the center of the picture is one of four pedestals which, in addition to displaying rock specimens, conceal Fairfax FX-200C speakers.

The Furtwängler Ring

● George Jellinek's review of the Furtwängler *Ring* (December) was discouraging indeed for those of us who have waited years for its release on commercial discs, fully
(Continued on page 12)



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Ask any artist or musician, any recording engineer or audiophile, chances are he uses TDK for his professional work. Unmatched in purity and fidelity over the full range of human hearing, crystal clear in its dynamic response and with complete reliability, TDK truly is the tape of the expert. Cassettes, 8-track cartridges or reel-to-reel, in the widest choice of formulations and lengths, including cassettes running as long as 3 hours.

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aware of its sonic "limitations." It's no wonder record companies are discouraged from issuing the work of Furtwängler, Mengelberg, Koussevitzky, De Sabata, Cantelli, et al. Come on! Where are your priorities, man?

RIC ZANK
Iowa City, Iowa

Mr. Jelinek replies: "My priorities are crystal clear: (1) to write the truth as I see and hear it; (2) to serve the interests of STEREO REVIEW readers. From there on, everything else is irrelevant."

"Mr. Zank is a reader and a record buyer. Would he have wanted me to conceal those 'sonic limitations' from him?"

Defects—Disc or Equipment?

● I appreciated Larry Klein's reply to Steven Amato on the matter of defective discs ("Audio Q & A," November). The question as to whether a playing problem is the fault of the record or of the cartridge and tone arm will always be with us. However, we feel that it is incumbent upon the producers of all of these items to avoid designing and manufacturing their products in such a way as to aggravate each others' problems.

JAMES H. KOGEN, Vice President
Development & Design Engineering
Shure Brothers, Inc.
Evanston, Ill.

The Sky Is not Falling

● From the moment I first heard the works of such popular artists as, say, Chubby Checker or, more recently, Frank Zappa, I was immediately convinced that the cultivation of such popular music was absolutely indispensable to the perpetuity of art music on the American continent. I also felt, instinctively, that the boundless resources—the "raw materials," as the Editor so aptly puts it—of soft rock, hard rock, acid rock, or whatever, could never be fully developed until the popular record reviews were forced upon the smug readers of STEREO REVIEW, those hidebound devotees of such "European," and thus alien, composers as Mozart, Bach, Haydn, Beethoven, et cetera ad infinitum *nauseamque*. I have long been satisfied that if there is a single soul in an absolutely suffering condition for want of the inspiration of popular music, it is that modern day Mozart who is even now, perhaps, playing an ignoble career as some obscure civil servant, his "imported air plant" having expired for lack of fertile soil. Ah, but if only he were to learn of the new format of STEREO REVIEW, as explicated in the Editor's November Editorial, how quickly would he be led to discover that fertile ground which lies beneath the weed patch of popular music!

D. MICHAEL ENFIELD
San Francisco, Cal.

The Editor replies: "Mr. Enfield's hyperbolic little scherzo might have achieved a greater credibility had his musical examples (Chubby Checker and Frank Zappa indeed!) not so ably demonstrated how utterly out of touch he is with what constitutes the folk strain in American popular music. I would pose only one simple question to Mr. Enfield: Why is it that a country of over 200 million people has not, in close to two hundred years, been able to come up with even one major classical composer while its popular music has become the much-imitated envy of the entire world?"

"Fond as I am of European art and folk music, they are more hindrance than help to us in solving a real and present problem, the disastrous split between folk and art music in this country. A child growing up confronted by this built-in cultural bias can only choose between snobberies—the one that says all popular music is beneath the notice of a cultivated person, the other that considers all classical music contemptibly effete. The grafting of an 'alien' European art music onto the American stem was undoubtedly well-intentioned, but it had one fatal flaw: it didn't take. Our Mozarts may not be mute, but they are certainly inglorious."

● I'm no musicologist, but Mr. Anderson put into words what I have for some time suspected were the reasons for the "rise" of popular music at the expense of classical music. From the age of three to the age of twenty I listened to almost nothing but the music of the Classicists and the Romantics. Now, at age twenty-five, I listen to almost nothing but rock, returning only periodically to the "old favorites." Why? Well, Colin Davis said it: melody is the thing we treasure most, and yet that's what we find less and less of in twentieth-century "classics." I've had to look for melody elsewhere, and to a large extent I've found it in popular music. The amazingly simple yet intriguingly beautiful melodies of the Beatles, Cat Stevens, and others spark in me an emotional response similar to the one I get from Beethoven, Brahms, Schumann, and even Rachmaninoff. I don't think the reasons for the dilemma of classical music today are really all that complex. What we want is music that appeals to the heart, not the head—or at least the former before the latter.

DAVID DOLAN
Monterey Park, Cal.

Cutting Commentary

● With all deserved respect for the vast knowledge of records past and present shown each month by David Hall, I feel it necessary to correct one mistake he made in his review of the Ashkenazy-Previn performance of the Rachmaninoff concertos and Rhapsody (November). When discussing the Third Concerto, Mr. Hall states categorically that, with the exception of Van Cliburn's 1958 performance, this is the only version to present the concerto complete in its original version.

From among the twenty-nine or so recordings made of this wonderful work, there are at least two previous performances that are uncut. The first is a 1963 recording by Ashkenazy himself. The second is a Melodiya recording by Yevgeni Mogilivsky led by Kiril Kondrashin, which has never been issued here. In addition to these two, the performances by Merzhanov, Weissenberg, Schein, and Pennario come very close to being complete, avoiding as they do the "traditional" cuts previously made on records and in concert. The comments made by Mr. Hall deploring the cuts in this work are extremely well taken.

THOMAS L. DIXON
Sodus, N. Y.

Mr. Hall replies: "Many thanks to Mr. Dixon for the information regarding performance practice in the matter of cuts in the various recorded versions of the D Minor Concerto. For better or worse, my own review referred to recorded performances with which I myself was familiar (apologies for not qualifying my remarks accordingly)."

Deanna Durbin

● A note of appreciation to STEREO REVIEW and Robert Connolly for the November review of the recently released Deanna Durbin record. The full-page write-up was as unexpected and welcome as the recording. I agreed with everything Mr. Connolly said, and especially hope that any future releases will do away with the simulated stereo effect. Three recent Coral recordings from England are in mono and sound far more natural. There are, of course, many other Durbin selections not available on records, so why not a two-record set in the format suggested by Mr. Connolly?

D. H. MARKS
Philadelphia, Pa.

Rocking the Baroque

● In reference to Peter Reilly's review of David Axelrod's "rock interpretation" of Handel's *Messiah* (October): why should any non-Baroque interpretation of a Baroque work be necessary at all? We do not appreciate Giotto through comic-strip reductions, nor Michelangelo through styrofoam copies: why must we hear Bach and Handel through Beecham and Axelrod, in alien dress? Why is it not possible to develop extra-cultural sympathy in its root sense, a sharing of experiences, perceptions, and outlooks? Ideally it should be possible for a man to appreciate things beyond his cradle, his fatherland, and his era. A man who can enjoy *lasagna*, *Sauerbraten*, and carried chicken ought, on a less corporeal plane of appreciation, to be able to enjoy Verdi, Wagner, and Indian ragas (not to mention Chinese opera). As Nikolaus Harnoncourt observes, full appreciation of Baroque style begins with hearing Baroque performances; one can then reasonably decide his attitude toward the Baroque. This experience, this expansion of his horizons, will never be the lot of the Axelrodian or Beechamite: in this sense, these two represent the forces of parochialism, darkness, and ignorance, and (to indulge one last flight of hyperbole) from these spring hate, mistrust, and war.

JAMES L. BUTRICA
Toronto, Ont.

Tchaikovsky Piano Music

● Re David Hall's review of Tchaikovsky's "Piano Music, Volume II" in the December issue: it might be of interest to Mr. Hall and readers to know that the piece *Aveu passionné*, which is not listed in standard reference works, is a piano transcription of the love theme from the composer's symphonic ballad *The Voyevode*, Op. 79. The score was destroyed by the composer after the premiere of the work and was reconstructed from instrumental parts after Tchaikovsky's death. It was published by M. Belaieff in 1897.

CHARLES MAROITIAN
Paterson, N. J.

Sale of the Decade

● I have nearly every issue of STEREO REVIEW from July 1963 to the present. Do you know where I might be able to sell these?

HENRY PASHKOW
42 West Coulter Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19144

Although we cannot imagine what straitened circumstances could possibly bring Mr. Pashkow to part with this treasure, and though we do not ordinarily deal with such problems in these columns—go get 'em, readers!

At Pilot, our best four-channel receiver is our best stereo receiver.

It takes a lot more than adding two plus two to produce an outstanding four-channel receiver.

Technological change must be anticipated, as well as the needs — present and future — of those who will use the equipment.

Unfortunately, not all companies recognize this.

Fortunately, Pilot does.

We knew from the beginning that many of you would not be able to make the switch to four-channel all at once. That's why the Pilot 366 four-channel receiver (30/30/30/30 Watts RMS into 8 ohms) incorporates an ingenious "double power" circuit that permits you right off to enjoy the full power of this receiver in stereo (60/60 Watts RMS into 8 ohms).

Not only does the 366 provide advanced SQ circuitry, but it can also reproduce any other matrix system currently in use. Plus it will extract hidden ambience information from conventional stereo material.

Naturally, the 366 is fully adaptable to any discrete system.

We didn't stop there, however, in considering the manifold uses of this receiver. An ultra-sensitive FM tuner section (1.8 μ V, IHF) has a special detector output to accommodate proposed FM four-channel transmissions.

Finally, we saw to it that setting up in four-channel would be a simple operation. The 366 provides a special balancing signal, we call it Pilotone[®] which makes channel balancing a virtually foolproof procedure.

No matter how you use it, the very things that make the Pilot 366 our best four-channel receiver also make it our best stereo receiver.

And yours too.

For complete information and the name of your nearest Pilot dealer write: Pilot, 66 Field Point Road, Greenwich, Conn. 06830.

The Pilot 366 Four-Channel Receiver \$499.90*

*Manufacturer's suggested retail price



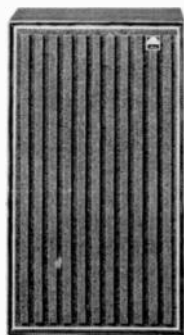
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Columbus II Speaker Systems



● RSC (Radio Speakers of Canada) is introducing three speaker systems to the U.S. market: the Nina II (shown), Pinta

II, and Santa Maria II, in order of increasing size. The Nina and Pinta are two-way systems, employing 3½-inch cone tweeters above 2,250 Hz (one in the case of the Nina, two for the Pinta) and woofers of 8 and 10 inches in diameter, respectively, for the lower frequencies. Their power-handling capabilities are 25 and 30 watts continuous per channel. The rated frequency-response upper limit is 18,000 Hz for both, with low-frequency response extending down to 40 (Pinta) and 45 (Nina) Hz. Both systems have three-position tweeter-level controls. The Santa Maria II has a 12-inch woofer and 6-inch mid-range along with two 3½-inch cone tweeters. Crossover frequencies are 1,250 and 7,000 Hz, and

frequency response is 32 to 18,000 Hz. The system has a three-position mid-range level control as well as the tweeter-level control. Power-handling capability is 40 watts continuous. The three speaker systems employ sealed enclosures finished in oiled walnut, and have nominal 8-ohm impedances. Approximate dimensions: 19 x 11 x 9 inches (Nina); 22¾ x 13½ x 11 inches (Pinta); 25 x 14¾ x 12 inches (Santa Maria). The Santa Maria comes with interchangeable grille cloths in shades of brown, gold, and red. The Pinta is provided with gold and brown grilles, while the Nina comes with brown only. Prices: Nina \$85; Pinta \$130; Santa Maria \$180.

Circle 115 on reader service card

Heathkit AR-1214 AM/Stereo FM Receiver



● HEATH now offers in kit form a low-price (\$169.95) AM/stereo FM receiver, the Model AR-1214. Rated at 15 watts continuous per channel with both channels driven into 8 ohms, it has less than 0.5 per cent harmonic and intermodulation distortion across the entire audio band at maximum specified power output. Hum and noise are -65 dB for the

magnetic phono inputs. The power bandwidth is 5 to 30,000 Hz, and the frequency response is 7 to 100,000 Hz ±1 dB. The FM section's IHF sensitivity is 2 microvolts, with 60-dB alternate-channel selectivity, and a capture ratio of 2 dB. AM suppression and image rejection are both 50 dB, and the tuner section's frequency response is 20 to 15,000 Hz ±1 dB. Stereo FM separation is typically 40 dB, and 35 dB at the minimum. The i.f. rejection is 75 dB, and harmonic distortion for stereo reception is 0.75 per cent for full modulation at 1,000 Hz. The kit's FM tuner section is supplied fully preassembled, and requires four alignment adjustments after installation in the chassis.

The AR-1214 has a black-out tuning dial and knob-operated controls for tuning, volume, balance, bass, and treble. The remaining front-panel controls are

pushbuttons for input selection (AM, FM, phono, and tape), mono/stereo mode, tape monitor, speakers on/off, and power on/off. There is a front-panel stereo headphone jack. The rear panel has two a. c. convenience outlets, one of them switched, and controls for matching the levels of the phono inputs to those of other program sources. Assembly of the kit, which is based on three printed-circuit boards, is said to be a three-evening project. The finished unit has a black vinyl top and walnut end pieces that come as part of the kit. Dimensions are approximately 17 x 4 x 13 inches. The equivalent of the AR-1214 is also available in separate components as the AA-1214 integrated stereo amplifier and the AJ-1214 AM/stereo FM tuner, both of which are kits; price, \$89.95 each.

Circle 116 on reader service card

Lamb/Revox MiniStudio



● REVOX is marketing a packaged ensemble of tape-recording equipment that

functions as a complete live-recording studio in portable form. The Lamb/Revox MiniStudio consists of a modified Revox A77 10½-inch reel tape recorder with remote-control unit, the Lamb Laboratories PML 420 four-input/two-output portable mixer, four Beyer dynamic microphones with suitable cables, stands, and booms, and a Beyer DT 100 stereo headset for monitoring. The tape recorder, modified by Lamb Laboratories especially for this application, is a half-track stereo machine with operating speeds of 15 and 7½ ips. Both speeds can be continuously varied for special effects by a pitch-control attachment. The recorder also has a "Sel-Sync" feature by which the recording-head

gap of channel one can be switched to the playback mode, enabling new material to be recorded in synchronization on channel two. Monitor speakers and amplifiers are built in. The four input channels of the Lamb mixer will accept line sources or unbalanced microphone inputs, with sensitivity controls to adjust levels and match impedances. Each channel has three equalization controls (high, mid, and low frequencies, acting at 10,000, 3,500, and 60 Hz, respectively, with the low- and high-frequency controls providing up to 15 dB of boost or cut, and the mid-frequency affording 12 dB of boost), a "pan pot" for distributing the input channel be-

(Continued on page 16)

Hitachi has the deck for you whether you want 8-track or cassette.

CASSETTE STEREO TAPE DECK

TRQ-2000: Built in "Dolby" sound reproduction system eliminates tape noise by a cycle of sound compression and expansion. A 4-pole hysteresis synchronous motor and balanced flywheel reduce wow and flutter. Special tape selector permits use of chromium dioxide tapes. Hitachi's Auto Stop system automatically halts the motor and switch when the tape end is reached. 4-digit tape counter. Two VU meters. Convenient push button and slide controls. \$229.95.*

TRQ-262: A large-scale flywheel and 4-pole hysteresis synchronous motor drastically reduce wow and flutter. And included are shut-off device, pause button, clearly visible level meters for right/left channels and lever indicator along with easy push button controls. \$149.95.*

8-TRACK CARTRIDGE TAPE DECK

TPQ-144: Automatic switchover to 4-channel or 2-channel operation according to the type of cartridge you insert. Unique easy loading system. The motor is an elaborate 4-pole hysteresis synchronous outer rotor design usually found only in the most costly hi-fi equipment. Integrated circuits assure improved frequency characteristics and top reliability. \$129.95.*

TRQ-134: Hitachi's Auto Stop system automatically halts the motor when the tape end is reached. Two VU meters are provided for accurate level adjustment. Easy loading mechanism. Fast forward winding possible. Auxiliary features include headphone jack, program indicator lamp, slide volume controls, program selector button and a pause button. \$149.95.*

No matter what you want in 8-track or cassette . . . Hitachi has the deck for you. For more information, write, Dept. SR-3, Hitachi Sales Corp. of America, 48-50 34th St., Long Island City, N.Y. 11101

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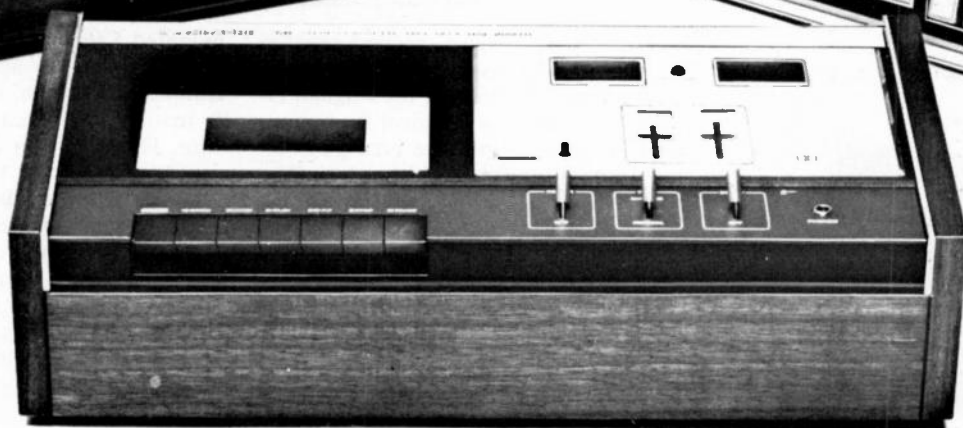
TPQ-144



TRQ-262



TRQ-134



TRQ-2000

NEW PRODUCTS

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tween the left and right output channels, and an "echo send" control with appropriate output and input jacks for routing the channel through an external reverberation device or other signal processor. Input levels are governed by four calibrated slider-type "fader" controls. The mixer's two output channels are equipped with another pair of faders, two illuminated VU meters, "echo re-

turn" controls, and switchable limiters that can be adjusted for threshold and release time.

Completing the MiniStudio are two Beyer cardioid ribbon microphones, a moving-coil omnidirectional microphone, a moving-coil cardioid microphone, and the stereo headphones. Microphone stands (with booms for the two ribbon cardioids) and cables are sup-

plied. The complete Lamb/Revox MiniStudio is priced at \$2,400. However, a MiniStudio can be rented on a three-day trial basis for \$150, which will be applied toward the purchase price if the renter decides to buy. The Dolby-equipped version of the tape machine is available as an option with an increase in price.

Circle 117 on reader service card

Astrocom Model 407A Stereo Tape Deck



● ASTROCOM's Model 407 stereo tape deck has acquired an "A" suffix to denote various internal improvements.

including the substitution of high-reliability relays in the pushbutton transport controls for the solenoid switches previously used. The 407A remains a three-motor, two-speed (7½ and 3¾ ips) deck with automatic reversing in playback activated by sensing foil applied to the tape. Four heads (erase, record, play, and reverse play) permit simultaneous off-the-tape monitoring while in the record mode. Frequency response is 30 to 20,000 Hz at 7½ ips and 40 to 16,000 Hz at 3¾ ips. Wow and flutter for the two speeds are under 0.07 and 0.11 per cent, respectively, and the signal-to-noise ratio is 50 dB or better. Harmonic distortion is below 1 per cent for a 0-VU recording level. Besides the transport pushbuttons, the Model 407A

has separate recording-level controls for microphone and line inputs to facilitate mixing, concentric playback-level controls for the two channels, and pushbutton switching for sound-on-sound and echo. The holdback tension on the supply reel can be reduced when tapes thinner than the 1½-mil standard are used. Microphone inputs are rated at 10,000 ohms unbalanced. Fast-forward and rewind time for a 1,200-foot reel of tape is under one minute. The transport will accommodate tape reels of up to 7 inches in diameter. The frequency of the bias oscillator is 85 kHz. With its wood base, the Model 407A has dimensions of 21 x 14½ x 10½ inches. The weight is 40 pounds. Price: \$459.95.

Circle 118 on reader service card

Nortronics Tape Maintenance Kits



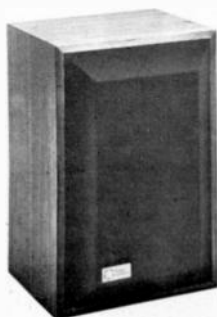
● NORTONICS is packaging a selection of eight tape-machine maintenance prod-

ucts in each of three carrying cases called ToteKits. There are separate ToteKits for open-reel, cassette, and eight-track cartridge machines, containing accessories for tape-head inspection, cleaning and demagnetizing, and tape splicing. For example, ToteKit 2 for eight-track cartridge machines (shown) includes cartridges for head and capstan cleaning and demagnetizing, a supply of cotton swabs on sticks, a liquid head cleaner, inspection mirror, soft bristle brush, splicing tape, and a swivel-arm

tape splicer. The other kits are similarly equipped. All the kits come with illustrated instruction manuals that describe the use of each accessory and explain the general principles of tape-machine maintenance. Prices: ToteKit 1 (cassette), \$20.50; ToteKit 2 (eight-track cartridge), \$22.50; ToteKit 3 (open-reel), \$24.30. These prices are said to represent about a 33 per cent saving over the purchase of the accessories separately.

Circle 119 on reader service card

Design Acoustics D-6 Speaker System



● DESIGN ACOUSTICS' second speaker system, the D-6, is intended to provide the basic performance of the original D-12 system, but in a physical form more easily integrated into the arrangements and decor of typical listening rooms. The essentially rectangular enclosure, approximately 24½ x 16 x 14½ inches, has a projecting front-panel surface that provides four facets angled 45 degrees from the frontal plane. A 2½-inch tweeter is mounted on each of these facets—with a fifth tweeter directed straight forward—in a configuration calculated to produce 180-degree horizontal and vertical dispersion. The D-6 also has a front-

mounted 5-inch cone mid-range that radiates through an aperture designed to enhance dispersion, and a 10-inch woofer mounted to radiate behind the enclosure. The crossover frequencies are 800 and 2,000 Hz, and the nominal impedance of the system is 8 ohms. Switches in the rear adjust the high- and low-frequency output over a ±3-dB range. The D-6 can produce a sound level of 103 dB in a 4,400 cubic foot listening room. The enclosure is finished in walnut veneer, with a removable grille cloth available in black, blue, brown, gold, white, and two shades of red. Price: \$249.

Circle 120 on reader service card

When you make a better cartridge the world beats a path to your door.

From the U.S.

"Separation was tops... square wave response outstanding. We tracked it as low as 1/4 gram."
Audio Magazine

"Among the very best. The sound is superb. Frequency response was flat within $\pm 1\frac{1}{2}$ dB from 20-20,000Hz. Compliance measured 35×10^{-6} cm/dyne."
High Fidelity

"The I.M. distortion at high velocities ranks among the lowest we have measured. A true non-fatiguing cartridge."
Stereo Review

From Great Britain

"A real hi fi masterpiece. A remarkable cartridge unlikely to wear out discs any more rapidly than a feather held lightly against the spinning groove."
Hi-Fi Sound

A design that encourages the hi-fi purist to clap his hands with joy."
Records and Recording Magazine

From Canada

"One of the world's greatest cartridges,"
Dealer's Choice, Scotty's Stereo.
Sound Magazine

From Japan

Grand Prize for cartridges in first all Japan Stereo Component competition.
Radio Gijutsu Magazine

For your free
"Empire Guide to Sound Design"



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the Sansui Seven

Here is another wonder from Sansui. Who else but Sansui engineers could have achieved it? We've highlighted seven significant features of the many that will make this total-capability FM/AM Stereo Receiver the most wanted instrument of its kind. Actually there are more than 30, many of them Sansui exclusives, that set the SEVEN off from others. Yours for \$459.95.

- 1. DIRECT-COUPLED POWER AMPLIFIER WITH AUTOMATICALLY RESTORING DOUBLE-PROTECTED OUTPUT.** Direct coupling from one end of the power amplifier to the other yields unimpaired damping factor and transient response at exceptional power bandwidth and phenomenally low distortion levels. Both quick-acting fuses and relay circuits protect both amplifier and speakers if failures occur, with automatic self-restoration if the problem is transient.
- 2. FULL-FEATURED JACK FIELD FOR DOLBY, QUADAPTERS AND MORE.** Connect any noise-reduction adapter, Dolby or other, and activate it with push-button convenience for tape recording. Go to four-channel stereo simply by connecting an adapter and rear-channel amplifier any time you wish, again with pushbutton activation. Connect two tape decks through a choice of regular pin jacks, three-contact phone jack or DIN multiple connector. Connect two phonographs. In addition, quick connect/disconnect links between amplifier and preamp sections permit separate use or addition of other add-on devices.
- 3. CERAMIC FILTERS AND IC'S IN FM IF.** For exceptional selectivity and rejection characteristics with full bandwidth, minimum phase shift and remarkable freedom from distortion. The IC embodies a 3-stage differential amplifier. Two ceramic resonators filter each of three stages.
- 4. SIGNAL-GRABBING FM FRONT END WITH DUAL-GATED MOSFET, 4-GANG TUNING CAPACITOR AND WIDE-DIAL LINEAR FM SCALE.** A sophisticated two-stage RF amplifier and mixer stage uses a low-noise MOSFET in conjunction with three costly, special-purpose silicon transistors and a 4-gang frequency-linear tuning capacitor. That's why the SEVEN is outstanding with respect to sensitivity, IM distortion and image ratio, and offers a dial scale precisely calibrated in 250kHz steps for pinpoint tuning.
- 5. TRIPLE, STEPPED EQUALIZER-TYPE TONE CONTROLS.** Separate treble, bass, and midrange tone controls, the first two calibrated in 3dB steps, the midrange in 1dB steps, for custom tailoring of response across the full audio spectrum.
- 6. THREE-STAGE, DIRECT-COUPLED EQUALIZER/PREAMP AND CONSTANT CURRENT DRIVER AMPLIFIER.** High signal-to-noise ratio, high stability, extremely wide dynamic range and elimination of crossover distortion, as well as other types, all contribute to an exceptionally clean, effortless, unclipped sound. Broad frequency response beyond the audio extremes also prevents phase shift at the low or high end of the spectrum, to add to the exceptional purity of reproduction.
- 7. NEW-DESIGN, QUALITY AM TUNER.** AM reception is not just an "also" on the SEVEN: learn again how good AM can sound, at its best. An RF preselector-amplifier combines with a 3-gang tuning capacitor and an IF section that includes a 2-resonator ceramic filter for ideal bandpass characteristics. A 2-stage Automatic Gain Control Circuit acts on both RF and IF sections for constant volume regardless of signal strength. A whistle filter eliminates other-station beat interference.

MORE THAN SEVEN—Other features of the SEVEN include: **Sharp-cutoff, Negative-feedback High and Low Filters.** Low-distortion circuitry using especially designed transistors provide 12dB/octave characteristics.

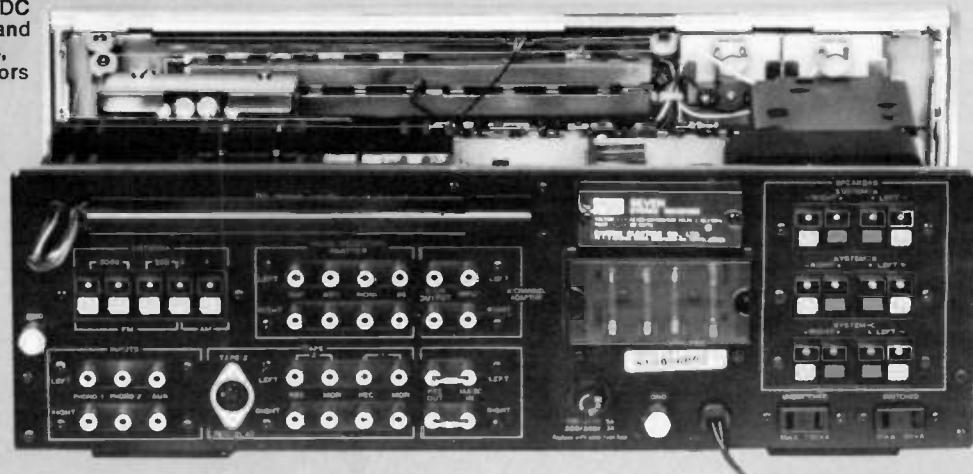
Brute-strength Power Supply. High plus-and-minus DC power supplies with constant-voltage stabilization and ripple filter applied to the equalizer/control circuits, plus 4 bridge rectifiers and 2 huge 4,700-mf capacitors for the power amplifier. All for clean, rock-steady handling of signals with ample power reserve.

Two Large Tuning Meters. One for signal strength, the other for center channel, for precision tuning.

FM Muting Switch. Off for hunting distant stations; on for velvet-quiet tuning.

Three-System Speaker Selector Off for headphone-only listening; also A, B, C, A+B and A+C.

Adjustment-free Sharp-cutoff Filter for Multiplex Carrier. **Front-panel Headphone Jack, Grounding Terminals, Switched and Unswitched AC Outlets, One-Touch Connector Terminals for Speakers and Antennas, 300-ohm/75-ohm FM Antenna Inputs, Loudness Switch . . . and more, more, more.**



Sansui

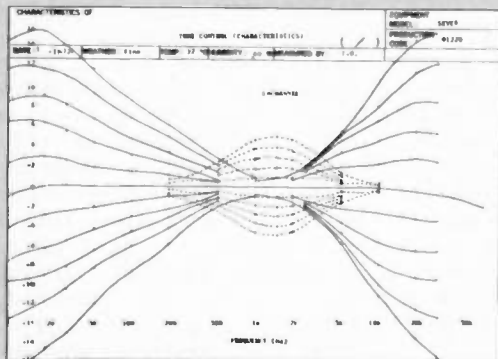
and its seven wonders



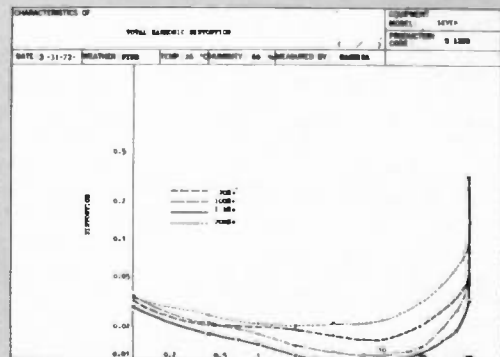
SPECIFICATIONS

Power Output	160 watts, 4 ohms
IHF Music	47/47 watts, 8 ohms
Continuous RMS	
Power Bandwidth, IHF	10 to 50,000 Hz, 8 ohms
Frequency Response, Overall	15 to 40,000 Hz +1dB, -1.5 dB (1 watt)
Distortion, Overall	
Total Harmonic	below 0.3%, rated output
IM	below 0.3%, rated output
Hum and Noise, Overall (IHF)	80 dB (AUX input)

FM Sensitivity (IHF)	1.8 microvolts
FM Signal/Noise	better than 63 dB
FM IF or Spurious-Response Rejection	better than 100 dB
FM Capture Ratio	below 1.5
AM Sensitivity	46dB/m (bar antenna)
AM Selectivity	better than 30dB (±10kHz)
Phone Input Sensitivity	2.5 mv
Phone Input Maximum	100 mv



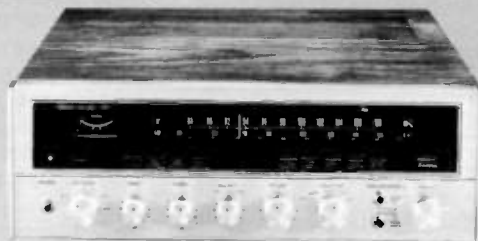
Action of the Triple-range Tone Controls



Total Harmonic Distortion vs. Power (20 to 20,000 Hz)

THE SANSUI MODEL SIX:

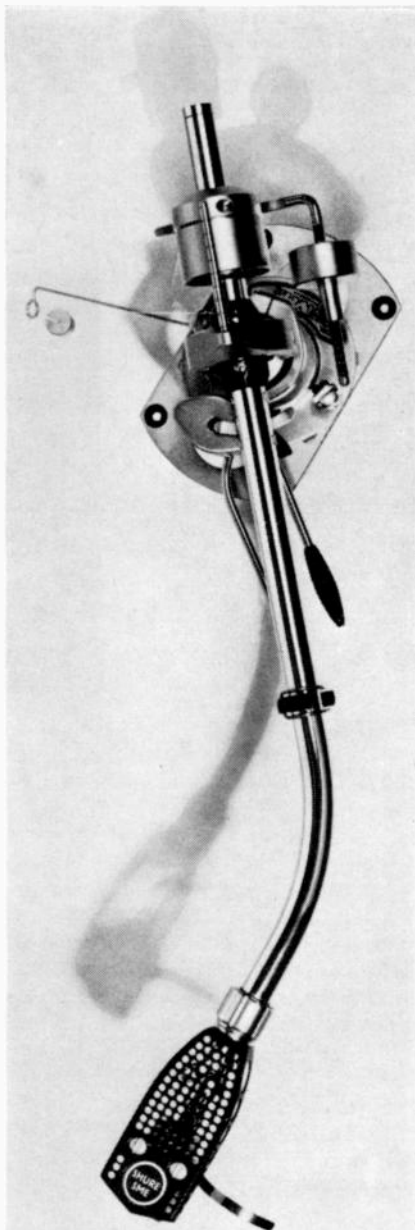
There's great news for those who want the essential performance capability of the Model SEVEN, but whose power-output requirements are somewhat less demanding. Look into the Superb Sansui SIX, close relative of the SEVEN with basically the same design, features and performance capability. **\$389.95.**



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AUDIO QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

By LARRY KLEIN *Technical Editor*



Dome Tweeters

Q. *Can you explain to me the advantages of a dome tweeter over a cone tweeter?*

EDWARD SILLIE
Hollis, N. Y.

A. Contrary to popular belief, the dome provides very little improvement in dispersion over a cone—if the cone has the same effective radiating area. One major reason for the dome shape is that many designers find it easier to minimize break-up distortion in the radiating surface with a dome. There are many other factors, such as mass, resonant frequency, power-handling capacity, and size of the radiating surface (the smaller the better), that determine the quality of a tweeter, other than the simple question of whether it is a dome or a cone.

Sound Proofing

Q. *I am taking voice and violin lessons and need to build a sound-proof booth, both to keep from bothering my parents as well as to provide myself a distraction-free and acoustically correct place to practice. Do you know where I could obtain plans for building one or any information about them in general?*

GERALD SEIDMAN
New York, N. Y.

A. There is a confusion in most people's minds between sound proofing and sound treatment. Most of the techniques that are used for sound treatment (that is, adjusting the acoustics of a room) are *not* suitable for sound proofing (preventing noise originating inside the room from getting out—or noise from outside the room getting in).

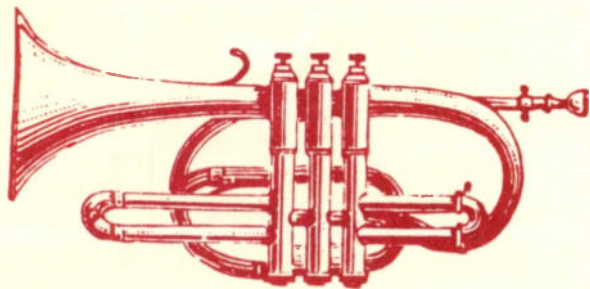
Let's look at sound proofing first. For present purposes, what we call sound is vibrations of (not in, of) the air which impinge on surfaces and cause them to vibrate. Therefore, to keep sound out—or in—one has to make sure that all possible pathways of vibration from one area to another are eliminated. First of

all, this means that all *air* transmission passages must be totally blocked. This includes ventilation ducts, seams around doors, *etc.* Numerous measurements have shown that even the smallest air leak can defeat an otherwise effective approach.

Once the airborne sound paths are eliminated—and that isn't always easy—then we also have to minimize the vibrations in solids that also serve to carry sound from one area to another. A frequently used technique is to increase the mass of the solids forming the transmission path. For example, we can use heavy wall panels instead of thin ones and/or we can brace the panels with 2 x 4 studs at more frequent intervals than is usual in normal construction practice. Or, instead of studs and panels, we can use brick, concrete, cinder blocks, *etc.*, which are excellent acoustic barriers.

Another isolating technique is to build up a wall or a door using sandwiched layers of different types of material to take advantage of the fact that vibration tends to be "de-coupled" when traversing the interfaces of disparate substances. But it must be noted that even the screws or nails used to hold such an assemblage together can provide a transmission path. The mastic material commonly used to mount ceiling tiles is therefore preferred in this sort of application. The double glass windows (with air spaces of 3 inches or more in between) used in the control rooms of recording studios also function on this principle. Another example: I recently sound-insulated a glass-paned door by using a layer of 1-inch glass-fiber wool pressed against the panes by a 3/4-inch panel of dense Homasote wall board screwed to the door. (Foam rubber would have done as well as the glass fiber.) The door treatment actually represents a dual approach to the problem in that the compressed fiberglass damped the glass vibration, and the Homasote panel (which is relatively inert because of its softness and mass)

(Continued on page 24)



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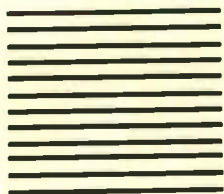
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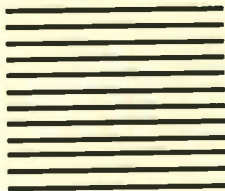


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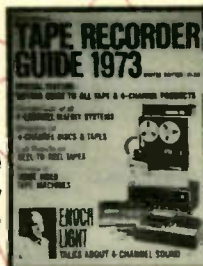
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served as a sound barrier. The door edges were also lined with adhesive-backed foam tape to inhibit the transmission of airborne sound.

Inert materials, because of their vibration-free qualities, are excellent sound barriers. Sheet lead, for example, is a popular sound shielding material either by itself or bonded to other materials. Sand poured between panels also forms an excellent inert sound barrier. But it is worth repeating that a sound barrier, no matter how well constructed, will achieve nothing if there is an air-leakage path around it.

Now we come to the question of sound treatment—which actually is another ball game altogether. The two subjects do coincide slightly, in that a very reverberant room (highly reflective or hard surfaced) is going to be “noisier” internally and hence will tend to emphasize any noise that leaks in from the outside. (You can demonstrate the effect yourself quite easily by turning a portable radio on and walking into, say, a tiled bathroom while it is playing. It not only sounds louder, but it is less pleasant—noisier—because of the emphasis through reflection of the upper mid-range frequencies.) I have found that, for best music reproduction (and even best voice intelligibility), a room should be fairly “soft” acoustically—though, if it is *too* soft, much of the “live” quality will be lost.

Through practice and training I can judge fairly well by ear how a room is affecting the sound in it. But I have not been able, unfortunately, to come up with an easy formula or test that will enable John Q. Audiophile to tell whether his room is “right.” One very rough test of a room’s acoustic qualities is to clap your hands, once and sharply, and listen carefully. In an anechoic chamber, the total lack of sound reflection will cause a handclap to have a dull “thud” rather than a “snap” quality. Conversely, a loud handclap in a reverberant test chamber will have a bright “bwan-n-g” quality and may take a second or so to die down. Is it helpful to say that an acoustically “good” room should be somewhere between these two extremes? I find that a room with a barely perceptible “bwan-n-g” to it seems just right, but I’m sure that taste is a factor here. In any case, heavy carpeting, wall hangings, heavy drapes, upholstered furniture, *etc.* can be used to damp high-frequency reverberation, and their absence will encourage it. Your ears will have to take it from there.

Because the number of questions 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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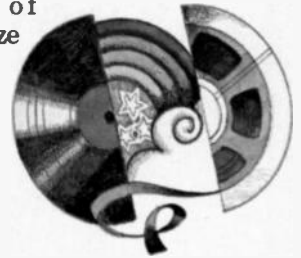
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Why should the Koss PRO-4AA Stereophone be so superior? Because it contains the first driver designed exclusively for Stereophones. A unique diaphragm with 4 square inches of radiating area. And an extra large 1-inch voice coil that's virtually "blow out" proof. In other words, the Koss PRO-4AA was designed from the start to provide the finest sound ever achieved in a dynamic headphone. And it does . . . with a clean, uncolored response 2-full octaves beyond the range of other dynamic headphones on the market. And with a typical frequency range of 10-20,000 Hz. In fact, High Fidelity Magazine rated the PRO-4AA a "superb" headphone. But then, everyone who has heard the Sound of Koss rates it superb.

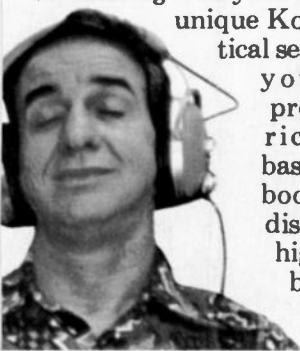
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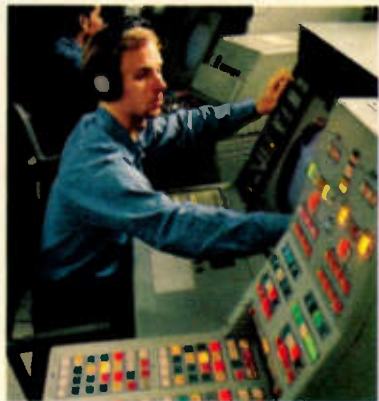


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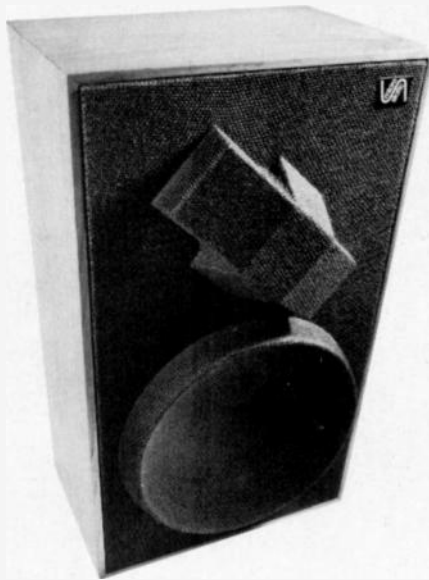
The new Navy still gives you a chance to find out what the sea is all about and a chance to see the world. But now you start out as the best paid sailor in history (more than \$320 a month after just 4 months) plus food, housing, health care and some of the best retirement benefits you can get.

And if you qualify, the new Navy offers you an opportunity to achieve real success in life with some of the world's best career training in more than 300 interesting job categories. From computer technology and electronics to welding and aviation mechanics. Action-packed jobs you can build a future on, inside the Navy or out.

There are still more reasons to join the new Navy. Like the new three-year enlistment which guarantees choice of East or West Coast. Like the join-now, report-up-to-six-months-later plan. Like the Naval Reserve two-year active duty plan.

If you think you've got what it takes to make it in the new Navy, if you want to go places fast—or know someone who does—send in the attached coupon. Or call toll free **800-841-8000**.

Be someone special in The New Navy



If this design is right, then all the others must be wrong.

As you can see, the new full-range Microstatic is a radically different design.

What other bookshelf speaker has a cluster of five tweeters and a woofer sticking way out in front, bulging against the grill cloth?

No other.

That's why no other bookshelf speaker radiates directly over an angle of 180°, both horizontally and vertically, at all frequencies. Without any diffraction effects from the edge of the cabinet. Without any boxiness, mid-range honk or high-frequency veiling.

If that's not the kind of sound you've been hoping to have for only \$149.50, then—and only then—we're wrong.

And all the others are right.

For detailed literature, write us directly.



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30 CIRCLE NO. 44 ON READER SERVICE CARD



AUDIO BASICS

By RALPH HODGES

NEW IHF STANDARDS?

IF HIGH fidelity is the realistic reproduction of sound, what, then, is a piece of high-fidelity equipment? I wish I could reply that it is a sound-reproducing device that meets certain basic standards having to do with the goal of high fidelity. The trouble is that, officially, there are practically no such standards. Late last year, at the first meeting of a new standards committee organized by the Institute of High Fidelity Manufacturers, I was reminded that, in its nineteen years of existence, the IHF (an association of manufacturers and other concerned parties formed in order to represent the industry to the consumer public) has managed to establish standards for only two types of equipment: tuners and amplifiers. Of these, the tuner standard, enacted in pre-stereo-FM 1958, is all but obsolete, and the one pertaining to amplifiers defines output power in several, but often incompatible ways. So now the engineering chiefs of the industry are meeting to tackle the job again, and have ambitiously set up subcommittees for turntables, phono cartridges, tape equipment, and speaker systems, as well as amplifiers and tuners.

A standard, or so states the IHF, should (1) name the *important* properties (the real "specs") that contribute to high-fidelity performance for each type of component, and (2) describe, with an absolute absence of ambiguity, the procedures for measuring these characteristics. It goes without saying that the first objective is likely to raise a good deal of spirited disagreement. As for the second, there is no particular difficulty except that the procedures decided upon must satisfy the requirements of meaningful measurement, be ironclad and without possibility of misinterpretation (deliberate or otherwise), and be within the means, financial and technical, of the member companies to perform. These last points raise numerous questions: the well-documented discrepancies between samples of even the best calibrated test records and tapes; the unavailability of special speaker test chambers to all, if the committee requires them; and many more. Even without the disagreement on *what* to measure, deciding *how* to measure is an intimidating task.

High-fidelity manufacturers have gotten along without uniform standards up to now, so any standards the IHF might adopt will obviously not be for their exclusive benefit. Primarily they will be for us, the consumers, so that we'll at last be able to compare components directly on the basis of advertised specifications. The industry's motive? A chance to promote fair, open-handed competition in the marketplace, and to create a clear distinction between itself and manufacturers who hesitate to use a rigorous rating system. But there is a serious risk here too. If, on philosophical or procedural grounds, a manufacturer with an established high-fidelity reputation decides to ignore the standards, the whole experiment could come to an end. Then, for the consumer, it would be back to the cacophony of uninterpretable numbers and catchy advertising phrases; for this column it would mean more qualifications and *caveats* every time a given specification is discussed. For *all* our sakes, let's wish the IHF committee luck.

STEREO REVIEW

SONY® 7065

Dedicated to the proposition that an enlightened listener is a happy listener



You've got a really great receiver. With an air of confidence, you switch it on, prepared to demonstrate the soul-stirring quality of the FM Stereo. And get, instead, an embarrassing silence. Because the source switch is on phono.

It won't happen with the Sony 7065, because it keeps you informed. Enlightened, with easy-reading function lights on the dial. AM, FM, Phono, Aux, Tape, Mic. You always know where you are, at a glance. Without squinting or stooping.

But that's just the beginning. The 7065 delivers 60+60W RMS into 8 ohms from 20Hz to 20kHz. That means full rated power at each and every frequency across

the entire audio spectrum. You don't lose the power you paid for when you need it, particularly for those gut-stirring lows. The sound is clean and natural, because direct-coupling eliminates the output coupling capacitors that stand between you and the music.

You can pluck stations from even the most crowded dials, or from fringe locations (thanks to the sensitive $2\mu\text{V}$ FET front end and a 1 dB capture ratio). Switch to AM and the center-channel meter winks out, while the signal strength meter stays lit. AM isn't just an afterthought in the 7065. It's quiet and sensitive.

The controls make all that superb performance easy to enjoy. Smooth acting levers switch in positive muting, the two tape monitors (with direct dubbing), and loudness compensation. Or click in your choice of three speaker pairs, high and low filters, or mix one or two microphones with any source. The 7065 is ready for SQ 4-channel and any of the other matrix systems.

The price? An enlightened \$459.50 (suggested retail), including a handsome walnut finish cabinet. The 7065 highlights a line of Sony receivers starting under \$200. Sony Corporation of America, 47-47 Van Dam St., Long Island City, N. Y. 11101.

Buy a Sony, and see the light.

CIRCLE NO. 55 ON READER SERVICE CARD

**Your records will
appreciate Dual precision
even more than you do.**



Dual 1215 S, \$109.50



Dual 1218, \$155.00



Dual 1229, \$199.50

There are many different types of Dual owners. Some, such as audio professionals, want to know about every technical feature and nuance of Dual design and engineering.

Others are content with just the knowledge that they have a turntable everyone recommends as the very finest available.

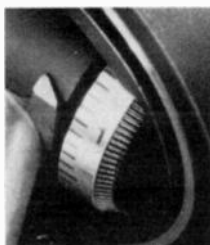
But all Dual owners have two things in common: a sizeable investment in their record collection and an interest in protecting it. They all realize that since the turntable is the only component that handles records, it's the only component that can damage them.

So even if equipment details don't ordinarily interest you, we suggest you think for a moment about your investment in records and some of the unhappy things that could be happening to them. You may find the following information of considerable interest.

It's up to the tonearm.

If the tonearm does its various jobs properly, your records can last a lifetime.

Stylus pressure in all Dual models is applied around the pivot, maintaining perfect dynamic balance of the tonearm.



The tonearm must apply just the right amount of pressure to the stylus, keep this pressure equal on both walls of the groove, and follow the stylus without resistance as the groove spirals inward. Then the stylus will be able to respond freely to all the twists and turns in the record groove.

Otherwise, there's trouble. Especially with the sharp and fragile curves which produce the high frequencies. Instead of going around these peaks, the stylus will simply lop them off. And with those little bits of vinyl go the lovely high notes, the record and your investment.

Twin-ring gyroscopic gimbal suspension.

The gyroscope is the best known scientific means for supporting a precision instrument that must remain perfectly balanced in all planes of motion.



Gyroscope twin-ring gimbal of Dual 1229 and 1218 tonearms. Tonearm pivots vertically along axis of inner ring; horizontally along axis of outer ring. All four suspension points have identical low-friction needle-point bearings.

In the gyroscope gimbal used by Dual, the low-mass tonearm is balanced within two concentric rings, and pivots around their respective axes on identical low-friction needle-point bearings.

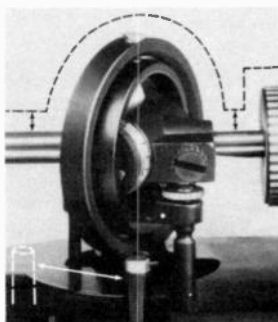
Every Dual gimbal is individually assembled and tested with gauges specially designed by Dual for this purpose. This assures that horizontal bearing friction will be less than 0.015 gram, and vertical friction less than 0.007 gram.

Only when such consistency is combined with low bearing friction can the calibrations for stylus pressure and anti-skating be truly accurate.

Perfect vertical tracking in single play.

Ideally, a stylus should track a record at the same angle at which records are cut. But the conventional

Mode Selector of 1229 parallels tonearm to record in single play; moves tonearm up to parallel center of stack in multiple play. In 1218, the Tracking Angle Selector is designed into the cartridge housing.



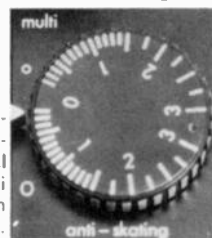
automatic tonearm is designed to track at the correct angle only when playing the center record of the stack. In single play, such tonearms are tilted down.

In the Dual 1229, however, the tonearm is designed to parallel a single record on the platter. For multiple play, the tonearm is moved up by the Mode Selector to parallel the center of the stack. In the Dual 1218, a similar adjustment is provided within the cartridge housing.

Anti-skating for both stylus types.

The elliptical stylus traces the groove wall with a narrower edge than most of the conical stylus, and thus presses slightly deeper into the inner wall of the groove as the tonearm is pulled inward during play.

Separate anti-skating calibrations for conical and elliptical styli are provided on all Duals.



As a result, more friction is created, increasing the inward pull of the groove on the stylus. The difference in this friction between the conical and elliptical stylus is very slight, but still significant with low bearing friction tonearms.

For this reason, Dual has long provided separate anti-skating calibrations for each type of stylus.

How to learn still more about turntables.

If you want to learn more about Dual precision, we suggest you write for our full-color brochure. We'll also send you complete reprints of test reports from independent labs. And an article from a leading music magazine that tells you what to look for in turntables.

Better yet, just visit your franchised United Audio dealer and ask for a demonstration. He'll really appreciate it. Almost as much as your records will.



United Audio Products, Inc., 120 So. Columbus Ave., Mt. Vernon, N.Y. 10553

Exclusive U.S. Distribution Agency for Dual

Inside artistry in sound...

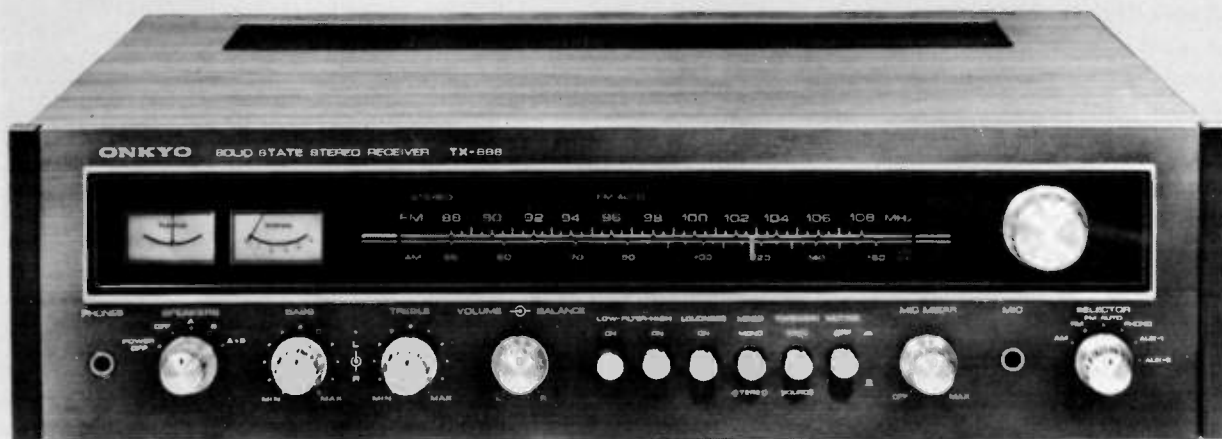
Take a brief, close-up look into an Onkyo Audio System. Your immediate, lasting impression will be ... "Here is unmistakable excellence in craftsmanship and materials that can only result in outstanding performance." Our Model TX-666 Solid State AM/FM Stereo Receiver (detailed below) illustrates the point. But, ultimately, sound quality concerns you most! That's simple to resolve. Stop in at any of our select franchised dealers ... and listen! You will experience sound that audio experts say is "almost beyond belief". Along with our Model TX-555, this receiver has created genuine excitement among audio enthusiasts because Onkyo **guarantees** performance will meet or exceed published "spec's". For instance, we **guarantee** 1.8 μ V FM Sensitivity (0.2 μ V for TX-555); 1.5dB Capture Ratio; 0.2% Harmonic Distortion (mono); differential & direct coupled amplifier circuitry; ASO protection circuits; Damping Factor 100 plus; 10 to 40KHz Power Bandwidth (TX-666) and 15 to 35KHz (TX-555).

These are priced at \$349.95 & \$429.95, with a 3 year parts/2 year labor **guarantee**.

What about Onkyo's contribution to 4-channel sound? Our exclusive Automatic Matrix System reproduces any 4-channel matrix (SQ, EV, etc.) program material with Onkyo's traditional excellence.

The Scepter Speaker Systems constitute the dramatic essence of Artistry In Sound. They re-create the entire audible range of original source material as an optimum expression of Onkyo's technical expertise and artistic sensitivity. Available in 5 models — from \$149.95 to \$499.95, with a 5 year **guarantee** on labor and parts.

The component conscious will take special interest in our MARK II Speaker Components. This remarkable group can make a significant contribution to custom designed, state-of-the-art systems ... 5 year **guarantee** for labor and parts.



Model TX-666 Solid State AM/FM Stereo Receiver.

50W/RMS Per
Chan. Output,
20-20KHz, At
0.2%THD; Both
Chan.'s Driven; 8 Ω

6-Element
Ceramic Filter
& 4-Stage Diff.
IF Ampl.

Direct Coupled
& Diff. Ampl.
Circuitry

Dual Safety
Speaker Protection
Systems

ASO Type Pro-
tection Circuitry

200mV/RMS
Phono Overload
Permits Use of Any
Cartridge

"Mic" Mixing
Circuitry

FM Muting
Circuitry

AM, IF Stage,
Ceramic Filter

Thermal Protec-
tion Circuits

Transient Killer
Circuits

Automatic
Function
Beacons

Tuning Meter &
Signal Strength
Meter

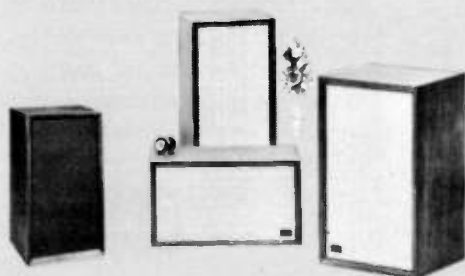
R/L Channel Tone
Controls

Linear Scale
FM Dial

Push Button
Switch Controls

Lighted Station
Pointer

Walnut Grained
Wood Cabinet



WE GUARANTEE THAT PRODUCT PERFORMANCE
WILL MEET OR EXCEED PRINTED SPECIFICATIONS

Write for complete details.

ONKYO
Artistry in Sound

Mitsubishi International Corp./Onkyo Sales Section
25-19 43rd Avenue, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101 / (212) 729-2323



TECHNICAL TALK

By JULIAN D. HIRSCH

● **MEASURING PHONO-CARTRIDGE TRACKING ABILITY:** A basic requirement for a phono cartridge is that its stylus be able to follow (trace) accurately the microscopic undulations of the record groove. In addition, of course, the internal system of the cartridge must generate an electrical voltage exactly proportional to either the amplitude or the *velocity* (amplitude times frequency) of the stylus motion. The most difficult part of cartridge design, however, is solving the mechanical problem of tracing the record groove.

There are two distinct (and often confused) aspects of tracing a record groove. *Tracing* refers to the ability of the pickup stylus to follow precisely the convolutions of the groove walls. The aim, of course, is ultimately to re-create the waveform of the recorded signal. However, among the several complications here is the fact that the stylus used to cut the record and the stylus used for its playback do not have the same shape, and there are inevitable distortions as a result. These can be reduced by introducing a special type of "pre-distortion" in the recording and/or by using an elliptical playback stylus.

Obviously, accurate tracing of the groove cannot take place unless the playback stylus is in firm and constant contact with the groove walls. Almost any cartridge can achieve this if enough vertical tracking force is applied, but in the interests of low record wear it is desirable to use the lowest practicable force. The degree to which a stylus "stays with the groove" at any given force is called its *tracking ability*. Mistracking is usually very audible as a harsh or "shattering" distortion of high-level, high-frequency transient sounds such as orchestral bells, cymbals, or harpsichord. This is because the tracking ability of a stylus is a function of the recorded *velocity* as well as the tracking force, and, for a given signal strength, the velocity increases directly with frequency.

Low frequencies can also present a tracking

problem. Even when the actual velocity is moderate, very large amplitudes may be recorded on the disc, and a mistracking stylus can literally jump out of the groove. Low-frequency tracking ability is relatively easy to achieve by making the stylus' compliance (and its available excursion) large enough, so this is rarely a serious problem.

Testing the tracking ability of a cartridge in quantitative terms has been difficult in the past, owing to a lack of suitable test records. Many modern cartridges can track very high velocities, but recording cutters cannot withstand the operating levels necessary to cut a high-level, steady-state signal on a test disc. We (and many others) have depended largely on a non-instrumented evaluation using the Shure "Audio Obstacle Course" test record. This has musical selections of some of the most demanding types of instruments, recorded at successively higher velocities. By noting the level at which audible mistracking occurs on each section of the record, one can judge, in rather general terms, the tracking ability of a cartridge.

Shure has now released a new high-frequency tracking-ability test record that can give *quantitative* numerical data on mistracking. (The theory behind the disc is described in the *Journal of the Audio Engineering Society*, Vol. 20, No. 3.) It contains 10.8-kHz (10,800 Hz)

tone bursts, with a 25 per cent duty cycle (the ratio of "on" time to "off" time) at a repetition rate of 270 bursts per second. The recorded bursts have been filtered to contain only frequencies near 10.8 kHz, specifically excluding those at the 270-Hz repetition rate.

When the record is played by an "ideal" pickup, the output contains a band of energy around 10.8 kHz, but virtually nothing around 270 Hz. Any degree of mistracking makes the playback burst asymmetrical, which re-introduces a 270-Hz component. If a wave analyzer or special filter is used to

TESTED THIS MONTH

●
Thorens TD-125AB Mk II Turntable
Epicure EPI 400 Speaker System
JVC 1667 Stereo Cassette Deck
Sherwood S-8900A FM Receiver

separately measure the levels of both the 270-Hz and the 10.8-kHz signals in the cartridge output, their ratio can be expressed as a percentage of "repetition-rate distortion," or "tracking distortion."

The test signal is separately recorded for left and right channels at four velocity levels from about 15 cm/sec (centimeters per second) to 30 cm/sec (at the normal 45-rpm speed of the record). This makes it easy to plot a curve of distortion *versus* velocity at any selected tracking force or to plot distortion *versus* tracking force at a fixed velocity. Additional test points can be obtained by playing the record at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm or 16 $\frac{2}{3}$ rpm, which reduces the frequencies and velocities proportionately. Although this record is intended for laboratory measurements, it is easy to see the distortion of the tone-burst signal on an oscilloscope, or to hear it through speakers. The residual distortion is heard as a smooth, low-level 270-Hz burst signal; mistracking stands out clearly

since it produces a ragged and higher-level sound.

As we mentioned in last month's test reports, we have begun to use the new record, which Shure designates the TTR-103, in our cartridge tests. It will take a little while before we establish a background of data on the actual distortion figures, and as we gain experience with the record we will include such numerical results in our test reports. Note that these distortion figures have *no* particular relationship to any other type of IM distortion measurements. They must be considered separately and only in relationship to results obtained from other cartridges tested with the same disc. However, based on our brief acquaintance with the TTR-103, we consider it one of the most powerful tools available for evaluating a cartridge's tracking ability and, incidentally, for establishing optimum tracking force, even when one simply listens to the output signal as played through a system.

EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS

By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories

Thorens TD-125AB Mk II Turntable



● SINCE its introduction several years ago, the Thorens TD-125 turntable has established itself as one of the most advanced instruments of its type. The current version, carrying the "Mk II" designation, is basically similar, but features a new Thorens tone arm and an automatic arm-lift/cueing device. The TD-125 Mk II has a solid-state electronic motor-drive system. A stable Wien-bridge oscillator feeds a power amplifier driving a sixteen-pole, low-speed synchronous motor. The motor speed is directly controlled by the oscillator frequency, which is switched to provide turntable speeds of 16 $\frac{2}{3}$, 33 $\frac{1}{3}$, and 45 rpm. A vernier control electronically adjusts each nominal speed over a range of approximately ± 2 per cent.

The motor is belt-coupled to a 7-pound, two-piece non-ferrous turntable platter. Stroboscope markings on the underside of the platter are illuminated by a neon lamp and are visible through a viewing window. The turntable speed is independent of line frequency and voltage over a very wide range. Separate markings are provided for two stroboscope frequencies (50 and 60 Hz) with an adjustment so that only one set of markings is visible in the window. The platter, motor, and arm system are floated on springs which isolate them effectively from external

vibration and acoustic feedback. The controls are on a separate plate integral with the wooden base, and are therefore isolated from the operating portion of the unit.

The Thorens TD-125AB Mk II uses flat slider controls. Viewed from left to right, they are the speed selector, power switch, and arm lift. Between the speed selector and the power switch is the stroboscope viewing window and red thumbwheel which operates the vernier speed adjustment. The 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-diameter platter is covered with a ribbed anti-static mat which contacts the record only at its outer diameter.

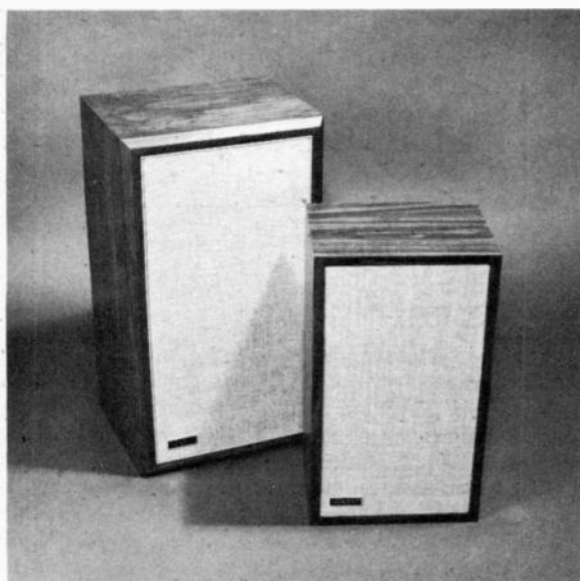
Although the TD-125 Mk II is available without an arm and will accommodate almost any standard tone arm, the version we tested is supplied with the new Thorens TP-16 arm. This lightweight arm has a low-mass, perforated plug-in cartridge shell and an adjustable, elastically isolated counterweight. Tracking forces from 0 to 4 grams can be set by a click-stop adjustment in the pivot structure. The adjustment steps are at $\frac{1}{4}$ -gram intervals up to 1 gram, and at $\frac{1}{2}$ -gram intervals at higher forces. The anti-skating system uses magnetic repulsion instead of the usual springs or weights. Most anti-skating systems have two scales, one for conical and one for elliptical styli, since the latter require a slightly higher corrective force. The Thorens has two additional scales, for use when the record is covered by a film of water (used by some European record-cleaning systems). The Thorens TD-125AB Mk II is 18 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches wide x 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches deep x 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches high (to the top of the cartridge shell with the arm in its rest). The complete unit weighs 30 pounds on its walnut base. Price: \$310 (less cartridge).

● *Laboratory Measurements* The Thorens TD-125 AB Mk II had exceptionally low rumble: -55 dB with RRL weighting, -36 dB unweighted in the vertical plane, and

(Continued on page 38)

If You Would Like Nothing Less Than the Best in Loudspeakers, But Doubt That You Can Afford Them, Please Read This Ad.

Both the loudspeakers shown—the original Advent Loudspeaker and The Smaller Advent Loudspeaker—are intended to be compared in audible performance, including frequency bandwidth, with the most elaborate and expensive speakers available. That may be difficult to



accept, we realize, but it is true and verifiable in the listening.

Both Advent speakers were designed after more than fifteen years of experience in designing and manufacturing high-performance speaker systems, including some of those of other brands still held in highest regard by critical listeners. They were designed simply, out of knowledge that most complex, multi-speaker systems are the result of long-outdated notions that got their start when the first high-fidelity speakers for the home were adapted from the theater speakers of the 1940's. And they were designed to take advantage of new manufacturing techniques that had been developed over many years of experimentation.

Over-engineering—needless elaboration of design in imitation of what has existed so far—

is a common problem in audio equipment, and one for which the customer often pays heavily in many ways. Good design to us is represented by the simplest approach that permits reaching a design objective without compromise.

Both Advent speakers are two-way systems. A single speaker would be a more “ideal” device, but in practice has to give up either the frequency range or the power-handling needed for a no-compromise speaker. The use of several “full-range” speakers of any size doesn't preserve the theoretical advantage of a single speaker. And three-way and four-way systems are not only unnecessarily expensive and elaborate, but often inferior-sounding because of interference effects and abrupt electrical cut-off of drivers in different operating ranges. The two-way design is simple and effective, and both Advent systems exploit it more thoroughly than any previous speakers. No more elaborate design is capable of wider range or subtler characteristics.

Both Advent systems were also designed to waste nothing in imitation of theater speakers. They are intended for use—heavy and hard use—in a home, not an auditorium or laboratory, and they include nothing but what is needed for the best possible performance in a home.

The original Advent Loudspeaker, which costs between \$105 and \$125 depending on its cabinet finish and the part of the country we have to ship it to, can withstand absolute, no-holds-barred comparison with any speaker of any price, and sounds obviously and dramatically better than many far more expensive speakers. The Smaller Advent Loudspeaker (\$70-\$75) sounds the same as the original, but will not play quite as loud as the original in as big a living room.

We will be happy to send you a full explanation of the design of both Advent speakers. Please write us at the address below and ask for our Speaker Packet, which includes reprints of reviews.

Thank you.

Advent Corporation, 195 Albany Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139.

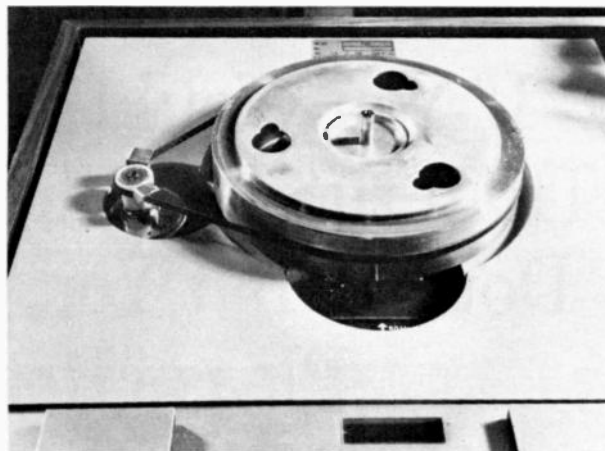
-42 dB in the lateral plane. Its wow and flutter were also among the lowest we have measured on a turntable, respectively 0.03 and 0.04 per cent at both 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ and 45 rpm. The turntable speeds could be varied over a range of approximately +3.1 to -2.5 per cent at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm, and from +5 to -3 per cent at 45 rpm.

The tracking error of the TP-16 arm was as low as we have measured on a conventional pivoted arm, and was actually within our normal measurement error limits over most of the record surface. Between the extremes of 2- and 6-inch radii, the maximum error was only 0.5 degree per inch; over the range 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 inches it was less than 0.2 degree per inch.

The tracking-force calibration was also highly accurate, within 0.05 gram up to a 2-gram setting and with a maximum error of 0.15 gram at 3 grams. The anti-skating calibration was approximately correct. However, since we find this parameter non-critical in any case, the provision of four scales for its adjustment seems superfluous.

The arm-lift action was very smooth, damped in both directions, and returned the pickup to the precise point on the record from which it was raised. However, it was quite slow, requiring 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ seconds to lift the pickup (about $\frac{3}{8}$ inch) and 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ seconds to lower it. Elpa Marketing Industries, the importer of the Thorens turntable, informs us that the amount of lift (and hence the cycling time) can be reduced. Check with them if the 10-second up-down cycle bothers you.

● *Comment.* The instruction manual that arrived with

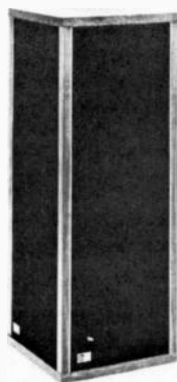


The TD-125AB's platter is in two parts. Removing the outer section exposes the drive belt and pulley. The unusual flat switches at bottom are slid from side to side to activate their functions.

our test sample, although written in German, French, and English, is not as explanatory as it could be in respect to some of the set-up steps. Elpa states that the manual is presently being revised. If the Thorens TD-125AB Mk II does not quite achieve perfection, it is close enough that it invites the liberal use of superlatives. Until perfection arrives, this beautiful instrument provides a mark for others to aim at.

For more information, circle 105 on reader service card

Epicure EPI 400 Speaker System



● **THE EPI 400** is one of a broad line of speaker systems manufactured by Epicure Products, Inc. Their somewhat unusual approach to speaker design is to use a basic module, consisting of a small woofer (6 or 8 inches in diameter) and an unconventional tweeter (1 inch in diameter), whose efficiency and natural crossover-frequency requirements closely match those of the woofer. A number of EPI systems employ one, two, or four of these modules in different physical configurations.

The EPI 400, or "Mini-Tower," is a scaled-down version of their huge (and expensive) "Tower" system. It is a rectangular column, 14 inches square and 38 inches high, and it weighs about 90 pounds. On each of the four sides, near the bottom of the column, there is a six-inch, long-throw woofer and a single 1-inch tweeter. The system impedance is nominally 8 ohms. It is normally used in a free-standing position rather than against a wall or in a corner, and it is effectively omnidirectional in the horizontal plane.

Although the individual woofers are small, all four operate in unison to extend the low-frequency response to about 30 Hz. The crossover to the tweeters occurs at 1,800 Hz, with a cut-off slope of 18 dB per octave. However, this is primarily due to the natural roll-off characteristics of the drivers; the only electrical crossover component is a single small capacitor in series with the tweeter voice coil. A toggle switch under the base of the column provides a choice of three high-frequency response characteristics. The tweeter, unlike most we have seen, has a concave diaphragm which is driven around its full circumference by a 1-inch voice coil. The multiple driver array also permits the EPI 400 to operate at high volume levels, and it can be used with amplifiers capable of delivering continuous outputs of 30 to 200 watts per channel. Price: \$389.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The omnidirectional characteristics of the EPI 400 lend themselves admirably to our "quasi-reverberant" measuring environment. This was confirmed by the virtually identical response curves obtained at a single microphone location from two speakers set up at different distances and directions relative to the microphone. With the tweeter-level control set at HI, the overall response was ± 4 dB from 50 to 15,000 Hz, with a slightly rising characteristic from 3,000 to 10,000 Hz. In the MED position of the switch the level dropped 3 to 5 dB at frequencies above 3,000 Hz, and in the LO position the output dropped another 3 to 5 dB in the same frequency range.

The low-frequency response of a multi-woofer system such as this is almost impossible to measure in a simple or direct manner, since we can only measure the output of

(Continued on page 42)

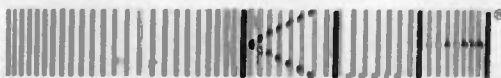
KLH has always made a lot of very good loudspeakers. Now we make a lot of very good receivers, too. And like our loudspeakers, our receivers deliver an inordinate amount of performance at a very modest price. For instance our new Model Fifty-Five is an AM/FM stereo receiver with power, dependability and every feature you could possibly want—all for \$199.95.* Team it with our nifty Model Thirty-Two loudspeakers and our new automatic turntable made especially for us by Garrard (includes base, dust cover, Pickering cartridge and diamond needle) and you've got a super sys-

tem for just about \$300! Or step up to a pair of Sixes with the Model Fifty-Two. Or match a pair of Seventeens with the Model Fifty-One. Or simply mix and match them anyway they sound best to you. It's fun. It's easy. And it really doesn't cost a whole lot of money. So why settle for someone else's "bargain" system, when you can get the best for less? Complete KLH component music systems. At your KLH dealer now.

For more information on KLH components, write to KLH Research and Development Corporation, 30 Cross Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02139.



**Now
you can
mix and match
a complete
KLH component
music system
for as little as \$300.**



KLH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CORP.
30 Cross St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139

CIRCLE NO. 24 ON READER SERVICE CARD

*Suggested retail price.

Why the first name in recording has the last word in quad.

It Takes A Little Longer To Be Right.

While a lot of the other companies were busy bragging about how sensational their matrix quad recordings sounded, we knew that what they touted to be true quadraphonic sound really wasn't. The Discrete RCA Quadradisc is.

The Discrete RCA Quadradisc Was Worth Its Wait.

The sound reproduction from our discrete Quadradiscs is the standard in high fidelity recording. Its "in-person presence" a technical triumph for the most demanding connoisseur. The Quadradisc's realism is revolutionary because the Quadradisc wraps its sound around you. To make you feel like you're sitting in the center of the sound on stage; or, it can treat sound as the ambient reflection of the concert hall and provide you with the best seat in the orchestra. No matrix system is capable of doing this. The RCA Quadradisc is. Every one of its four channels is recorded and reproduced on its own separate track. That's what makes us discrete and everyone else, well, just everyone else.

The RCA Quadradisc Delivers Better-Than-Stereo Sound On A Stereo.

Even if you don't own a quad system right now, you can enjoy RCA Quadradiscs on your present system. In a recent issue, Time Magazine said "...the stereo sound from one of RCA's new Quadradiscs is stunning."

Quadradisc Compatibility Guaranteed

An analysis by a leading independent research laboratory, in accordance with standards set by

the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), has enabled us to guarantee full compatibility of the RCA Quadradisc when played on standard stereo systems. They have also certified that the RCA Quadradisc plays with excellent frequency response, in full accord with The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) Disc Recording and Reproduction Standards.

Guaranteed Quality Doesn't Cost More

While a lot of other companies are charging extra for their quad recordings, RCA Quadradiscs are available at the same price as regular stereo records.

The Pros Agree

• Walter Carlos - Columbia Recording Artist: "When Rachel Elkind and I began our *Sonic Seasonings* album, we planned for quadrasonic and recorded all the material in quadrasonic... We tried to process this master on all the known matrix systems... I am most unhappy to report that the results were catastrophic. "No other product will be marketed in quadrasonic now for awhile - until a non-matrix system is accepted as an industry standard. Perhaps the JVC/RCA carrier disc is the answer... "With a discrete release available we can have the best of all worlds."
• New York Times: "Since there can be no doubt in anyone's mind who has heard both systems that the discrete method is clearly superior, it probably should be used for all new recordings."

• Stereo Review: "...the ideal way to record and reproduce four channels of information is with a discrete system in which each channel remains completely independent of the others throughout the recording and

reproduction process.

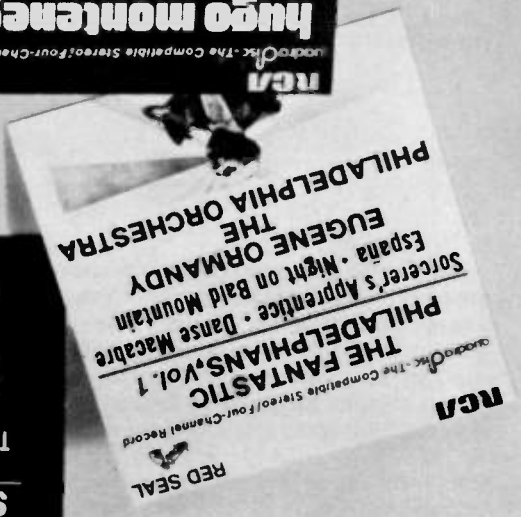
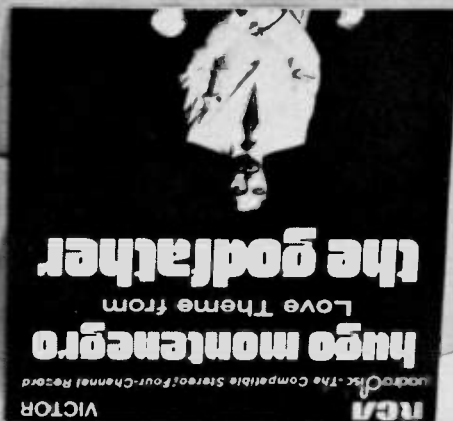
"The Quadradisc can provide discrete material from all speakers simultaneously - something no matrix system can do."

They Chose To Be First. We Chose To Be Best.

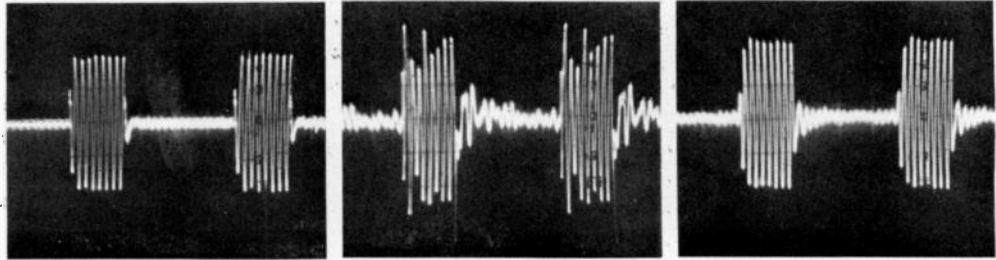
All quads are not created equal. Other companies spoke too soon and claimed too much. We stayed silent until we had our quad recording system perfected. Now we do. And we're working with high fidelity manufacturers like JVC, Panasonic and others to implement the state-of-the-art. And we are working with our artists and producers, creating musical material that will utilize the RCA Quadradisc to its greatest potential. That way you'll get the best of both worlds - the artist's creative freedom coupled with engineering integrity. In rock, pop, classical, country and rhythm and blues. For now and for the future. The Discrete RCA Quadradisc. The first quad record that's true quad.

Sometimes you have to save the best for last.

quadrasonic
nca



The EPI 400's tone-burst response, shown here for (left to right) 100, 1,500, and 5,000 Hz, was generally excellent.



one woofer with a closely spaced microphone. For what the information is worth, our curve showed a broad rise of about 4 dB in the 100- to 150-Hz range, and the output fell off steadily below 60 Hz. In practice, however, all four woofers are contributing to the audible output, which is subjectively strong down to about 30 Hz. The low-frequency distortion measurement was limited by the same factors that affected our response measurements in that range. The distortion was under 5 per cent down to 40 or 50 Hz, rising quite steeply to 10 to 20 per cent in the region of 35 to 37 Hz. We suspect the actual effective behavior of this system in the low bass is somewhat better than these figures would indicate; to our ears the EPI 400 is richly endowed with extended, clean bass output.

The only clearly identifiable anomaly in the measured response of the EPI 400 was a dip of about 4 dB between 1,300 Hz and 2,000 Hz. This was evidently because of a gap in the crossover characteristics of the woofers and tweeters. It was not audible in our listening tests. The tone-burst response was excellent at all frequencies except in the crossover region, where interference effects between the two drivers were unavoidable. The electrical impedance was relatively uniform, varying somewhat about its nominal 8-ohm value, but never exceeding the lower and upper limits of 5 and 20 ohms (the latter at the bass-resonance frequency of 52 Hz). The speaker efficiency was moderately low (typical of most acoustic-suspension systems), with 1.3 watts of power input required at mid-frequencies for a 90-dB sound-pressure level three feet from the speaker.

In our simulated "live-vs.-recorded" tests, the EPI 400 earned an "A" rating. Best results were obtained with the

tweeter level on HI, and the sound at middle and high frequencies could rarely be distinguished from the original program. At lower frequencies we noted a slight tendency toward "heaviness" in the upper bass, probably the result of the increased output between 100 and 150 Hz.

The spatial characteristics of the EPI 400 are immediately identifiable as true "omni" sound. A firm stereo image is created, independent of the listener's position in the room. Like other omnidirectional speakers, these can be placed almost anywhere in a given room without loss of effectiveness, but, by the same token, their overall sonic balance can be strongly affected by the high-frequency absorption of the listening room.

● *Comment.* It is interesting to note that, in the small group of extraordinarily good speaker systems we have come across during the past several years, all have been either true omnidirectional, have used a combination of direct and reflected sound, or have simply had exceptional dispersion characteristics. Unlike many other controversial (and often arcane) speaker properties—such as phase shift, time-delay distortion, and doppler distortion—the unique sound character of a very wide dispersion speaker can be heard by anyone, under almost any circumstances.

In our judgment, wide dispersion at all frequencies is the major factor separating an excellent speaker from a merely good one. The airy, open quality of the EPI 400 not only sets it apart from the vast majority of conventional forward-radiating speakers, but in our view earns it a place in the select group of superb speaker systems.

For more information, circle 106 on reader service card

JVC 1667 Stereo Cassette Deck



● THE JVC 1667 is a high-quality cassette deck featuring the manufacturer's own Automatic Noise Reduction System (ANRS) as well as bias switching for standard or chromium-dioxide (CrO₂) tapes. In concept, ANRS (which was originally developed for use with JVC's four-channel discrete-disc system) is similar to the widely used Dolby system. It modifies the high-frequency characteristics of the signal being recorded. During playback, a

complementary equalization is applied that restores flat response and simultaneously cuts back, by 5 to 10 dB, any high-frequency noise that has been added to the original signal. With the ANRS system, high frequencies, starting at about 500 Hz, are progressively boosted as the recording-signal level drops, and an exactly complementary high-frequency roll-off is introduced during playback. The net result is unchanged frequency response, but a reduction of 5 to 10 dB in audible hiss.

The ANRS circuits are completely different from those employed by Dolby, but the response characteristics at all levels are reasonably close to those of the Dolby system. The result is sufficient "compatibility" so that tapes recorded with ANRS can be played through Dolby decoders, and *vice versa*, without sacrifice of noise reduction or a serious effect on sound quality.

The JVC 1667 has a handsome brushed satin-finish face panel with two level meters, a three-digit index counter, and two slider-type recording-level controls (the playback levels are fixed). A toggle switch controls the power.

(Continued on page 44)

Sony's new chromium dioxide cassette tape is hungrier for high frequencies.



Sony chromium dioxide CRO-60 tape will record up to 50% more volume before you encounter distortion on playback. CRO-60 is hungrier than other tapes for high frequencies.

This means more recorded sound than standard cassette tapes before distortion sets in.

What you hear.

Far less distortion, a smoother frequency response, and a greater dynamic range than standard tape. Every aspect of the sound, especially the higher ranges, comes through with sparkling fidelity.

Sony CRO-60 gets it all together from bottom bass lows to high howlin' highs. And everything in between.

A Sony tape for every purpose.

The new Sony CRO-60 cassette tape becomes a member of a highly advanced line of tapes for every recording requirement.

In addition to standard open reel, cassette, and 8-track cartridge tapes, Sony also offers the finest in high performance tape: SLH-180 Low-Noise High Output tape on 7" and 10½" reels, plus Ultra-High Fidelity Cassettes.

These high-performance tape configurations take advantage of the added performance of today's highly sophisticated recorders by providing wider dynamic range, greatly improved signal-to-noise ratio, extended frequency response, and reduced tape hiss.

How's your appetite?

Now if your appetite has been whetted and you're hungry for more information or a demonstration of CRO-60 or any other Sony tapes, get on down to your nearest Sony/Superscope dealer (he's listed in the yellow pages) and get an earful.



SONY SUPERSCOPE
You never heard it so good.®



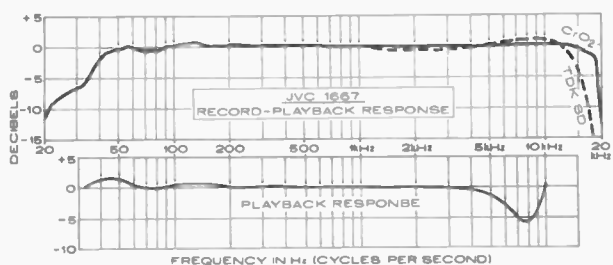
The cover for the 1667's cassette well is completely removable; lifting off another cover plate exposes the heads, capstan, and pinch roller so that they can be easily cleaned and demagnetized.

and two small switches select the correct bias and recording equalization for standard or CrO₂ tapes and turn on the ANRS system. An ANRS identification lights up in soft blue when it is used, and a red recording light is located between the meters.

The transport controls are the familiar "piano key" variety, metal clad to match the panel. The keys are cupped to fit the finger tips, and operate with a light, yet positive action. Their sequence (left to right) is RECORD, REWIND, FAST FORWARD, PLAY/REC, STOP, and PAUSE. Unlike most cassette mechanisms, the JVC 1667 does *not* require the user to go through STOP when changing tape speed or direction. The instruction manual recommends using STOP between such changes, but we experienced no harmful effects from operating the controls in any sequence (with C-60 cassettes, that is; possibly C-120's would be less forgiving).

Pressing the separate EJECT button during any operating mode stops the tape, pops up the cassette cover, and partially ejects the cassette for easy removal. At the end of play (even in a fast speed), or if the cassette jams, a photoelectric sensor shuts off the deck and operates the EJECT mechanism. The cassette cover of the JVC 1667 can be detached with a light pull, exposing the cassette carrier. Another cover plate lifts off as easily, completely exposing the heads for cleaning (most cassette mechanisms require some groping when cleaning heads).

In the rear of the wooden base are the line inputs and outputs, including a DIN connector, and two screwdriver-adjusted input-level controls that supplement the top panel controls. The recording gain of the 1667 is quite high, and—depending upon the program source—there may occasionally be a signal large enough that it requires undesirably low settings of the front-panel controls. In that event, the gain can be reduced with the rear adjustments, so that the sliders operate in the upper half of their range.



The two phone-jack microphone inputs and the stereo headphone jack are set into the front apron of the base. The JVC 1667 is designed to use fairly high-impedance dynamic microphones, since its input impedance is 30,000 ohms. Plugging in a microphone disconnects the line input for that channel. The headphone output will drive 8-ohm phones to a comfortable level, and a two-position switch provides some adjustment of the headphone volume.

The JVC 1667 is 15 inches wide x 10½ inches deep x 4¾ inches high, and it weighs about 11 pounds. It is supplied with a special demonstration tape. Price \$199.95.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** We made record/playback frequency-response measurements with TDK SD tape and Memorex CrO₂ tape. The TDK SD tape produced a frequency response of 36 to 14,000 Hz ±2 dB, and was down 6 dB at 32 and 15,500 Hz. This is comparable to the response of several other top-grade decks. JVC, like most cassette recorder manufacturers, has chosen to change only the recording equalization and bias for CrO₂ tape. In playback, this provides extended high-frequency response, with approximately the same signal-to-noise ratio as a good ferric-oxide tape. In the case of the 1667, the result is a frequency response surpassing anything we have measured up till now on a cassette recorder. Specifically, the record/playback response was within ±1 dB from 42 to 18,500 Hz, -3 dB at 40 and 19,000 Hz.

In addition, the choice of operating levels within the 1667 has resulted in low distortion up to some rather high recording levels (for a cassette machine). Even at +3 dB (full scale on the meters) the distortion was still under 2 per cent with TDK SD tape and under 3 per cent with the CrO₂ tape. The 3 per cent distortion level was reached at about +6 and +4 dB, respectively. A standard Dolby-level calibrating tone produced a +2 dB meter reading. In practical terms, this means that, unlike the situation with many cassette decks, one can safely record with the meter needles indicating in the vicinity of 0 dB with some confidence that an occasional full-scale deflection—and beyond—is not likely to produce any audibly objectionable distortion.

To our surprise, the playback frequency response of the JVC 1667, measured with a Nortronics test cassette, showed an abrupt dip of 6 dB centered at about 8,000 Hz on both channels. Frankly, we can offer no explanation for this, and would not have suspected its existence on the basis of preliminary listening tests with prerecorded cassettes. Record/playback response does not show the dip.

The JVC 1667 required 83 millivolts at the line inputs, or 0.72 millivolt at the microphone inputs, for a 0-dB recording level. The corresponding playback output was 0.8 volt. The weighted signal-to-noise ratio, referred to 0-dB input, was 48 dB without ANRS and 54.5 dB with ANRS (with either tape). Through the microphone inputs the noise was about 1.5 dB higher at maximum gain. Referring the signal-to-noise ratio to the standard 3 per cent distortion level, it could be specified as 54 dB without ANRS or 60.5 dB with ANRS. With CrO₂ tape, these figures would be reduced by 2 dB, since 3 per cent distortion was reached at a slightly lower signal level.

Wow and flutter were, respectively, 0.03 and 0.18 per cent (unweighted), typical of today's better-grade cassette machines. The operating speed was slightly fast (about 1 per cent). A C-60 cassette was handled in fast forward or rewind in 95 seconds.

By measuring the record/playback response at a number of levels from 0 to -40 dB, both with and without the ANRS, we confirmed that the recording and playback characteristics of ANRS are truly complementary. The

(Continued on page 46)

The ADC-XLM "...in a class by itself."



That's the way Stereo Review described our XLM. High Fidelity headlined their review, "Superb new pickup from ADC" and went on to say, "...must be counted among the state of the art contenders." And Audio echoed them with, "The ADC-XLM appears to be state of the art."

With the critics so lavish in their praise of the XLM, there's hardly any necessity to add anything. Far better to let the experts continue to speak for us.

Frequency response The CBS STR-100 test record showed less than ± 1.5 dB variation up to 20,000 Hz. *Stereo Review*
...response is within ± 2 dB over the entire range. *Audio*
Frequency response is exceptionally flat. *High Fidelity*

Tracking This is the only cartridge we have seen that is really capable of tracking almost all stereo discs at 0.4 grams. *Stereo Review*
The XLM went through the usual torture test at 0.4 grams (some top models require more than a gram). *High Fidelity*
The XLM is capable of reproducing anything found on a phonograph record. *Audio*

Distortion Distortion readings...are almost without exception better than those for any other model we've tested. *High Fidelity*

The XLM has remarkably low distortion in comparison with others. *Audio*
At 0.6 grams the distortion was low (under 1.5 per cent). *Stereo Review*

Hum and noise The XLM could be instrumental in lowering the input noise from the first stage of a modern transistor amplifier. *Audio*
The cartridge had very good shielding against induced hum. *Stereo Review*

Price This would be a very hard cartridge to surpass at any price. *Stereo Review*
We found it impossible to attribute superior sound to costlier competing models. *High Fidelity*
Priced as it is, it is a real bargain in cartridges. *Audio*

**The Pritchard High Definition
ADC-XLM \$50.**



AUDIO DYNAMICS CORPORATION

Pickett District Road, New Milford, Connecticut 06776

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overall frequency response at any level was changed by less than 1 dB by the ANRS system. The noise reduction offered by ANRS at a -30-dB signal level was a maximum of about 9 dB (quite similar to Dolby). When we plotted the playback response at -30 dB of the ANRS-equipped JVC deck and a top-grade Dolby recorder, it was apparent that although their maximum noise-reduction capabilities were about the same, the shape of the two curves differed somewhat (a maximum of about 2 dB) between 300 and 3,000 Hz. In addition, the frequency at which the Dolby system starts to operate is signal-dependent, while the ANRS uses a fixed frequency (500 Hz) as an operating point.

● **Comment.** In view of the question of compatibility between ANRS and Dolby, we devoted a great deal of our testing time to this subject. Aside from what was shown by the measurements of the relative performances of the two systems, we attempted to evaluate the systems in practical user terms. After recording Dolby-encoded material from cassettes, open-reel tapes, and Dolbyized FM broadcasts and playing them back through the ANRS circuit, we concluded that, with most program material, the two systems can be considered aurally compatible—that is, one could not usually tell by listening

alone that two different systems were involved. However, there were notable exceptions to this generalization: certain Dolbyized recordings containing a solo instrument, such as a piano or violin, are reproduced with a slight "swish" at the beginning and end of each note when played through ANRS. (We have noted similar effects when using some of the "open-ended" playback-only dynamic noise filters.) With most orchestral music, the ANRS and Dolby systems can be considered completely compatible: with solo instruments, the degree of "compatibility" is a function of the critical sensibilities of the listener. The effect we noticed was not gross or obtrusive, but it could be heard—and it does not happen with a properly operating Dolby unit playing Dolbyized tapes.

On the basis of its measured performance, the JVC 1667 obviously ranks with the best cassette recorders, some of which sell for perhaps 50 per cent more than the 1667. But there is more to a recorder than the graphs it produces. The excellent human engineering, the quietness and smoothness of its operation, the foolproof action of its controls, and general freedom from unpleasant performance idiosyncrasies—such as a critical maximum recording level—make the JVC 1667 a thoroughly satisfying machine to use.

For more information, circle 107 on reader service card

Sherwood S-8900A Stereo FM Receiver



● **THE Sherwood S-8900A** stereo receiver, in addition to its very powerful amplifiers and top-quality FM tuner, features built-in Dynaquad speaker matrixing, which gives it some of the capability of a four-channel receiver. Like all two-channel receivers, it can also be used with an external quadraphonic decoder and rear-channel amplifier. The output-power rating is 60 watts per channel from 20 to 20,000 Hz with both channels driven into 8 ohms. Its tuner specifications include a 1.7-microvolt sensitivity, 1.9-dB capture ratio, and above-average spurious-signal and image rejection.

The upper half of the S-8900A's front panel has the dial scale, a large zero-center tuning meter, and the two major operating controls—the tuning and volume/power switch knobs. Across the lower half of the panel are five small knobs and seven pushbuttons. The **MODE** selector plays either channel through both speakers, or sums them for mono, as well as providing normal and reversed-channel stereo. The input selector has **PHONO**, **FM**, and **AUX** positions. The bass and treble tone controls are ganged for the two channels. The last knob in the lineup is the balance control. The pushbuttons give the first clue to the special features of the receiver. Two of them are for tape monitoring; however, the first is identified as **4 CH/NORM**, in the expectation that some form of external quadraphonic decoder will be connected to its terminals. In a two-channel installation, the S-8900A can be used with two tape decks. A front-panel **TAPE DUBBING** jack permits connecting the second machine from the front and dubbing from one recorder to the other. The other pushbuttons

control the high-cut filter, loudness compensation, FM muting, and two pairs of speakers. There is also a headphone jack on the front panel.

In the rear, besides the various input and output jacks and terminals, there is a Dynaquad slide switch. When the rear speakers are connected to the **REMOTE** terminals, and both speaker buttons are depressed, this switch connects the internal matrixing to synthesize rear-channel ambiance from two-channel programs. Added features are the output terminals for driving additional speakers with a mono (**L + R**) output. Completing the rear controls are a three-position phono-sensitivity switch and two a. c. outlets, one of which is switched. The Sherwood S-8900A measures 16¼ inches wide x 5¼ inches high x 14 inches deep. An optional wooden cabinet is available for \$24.95. The price of the S-8900A is \$429.95. The S-7900A, at \$459.95, is identical with the addition of **AM**.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The 60-watt power rating of the S-8900A was quite conservative: in our tests, signal-waveform clipping occurred at 75 watts per channel, with both channels driven into 8-ohm loads. Even with 16-ohm loads, the output was 46 watts per channel, and into 4 ohms it was an impressive 108 watts per channel. The 1,000-Hz harmonic distortion was typically about 0.025 per cent in the 1- to 10-watt range, and did not exceed 0.1 per cent from 0.1 watt to over 70 watts per channel. **IM** distortion was under 0.2 per cent for all power outputs under 60 watts—all the way down to the vicinity of 15 to 20 milliwatts. There was a typical level of about 0.05 per cent **IM** at most usable power levels. Unlike many receivers, the S-8900A can deliver its rated power at all audio frequencies. At 60 watts per channel, and at 30 and 6 watts as well, the distortion stayed within the 0.06 to 0.07 per cent range over the full 20- to 20,000-Hz band.

The **AUX** inputs required 48 millivolts for a 10-watt output, with a -76-dB noise level. The phono sensitivity,

(Continued on page 48)

EPI'S LINEAR SOUND. YOU HAVE TO SEE IT TO BELIEVE IT.

Everybody talks about linear sound.

But only EPI has EPI's Linear Sound. And there's a difference.

CURVE "A"

See the curve marked "A" on our linear response graph? We recorded curve "A" in the usual manner, placing our microphone (a B&K Model 4133) directly in front of our EPI speaker.

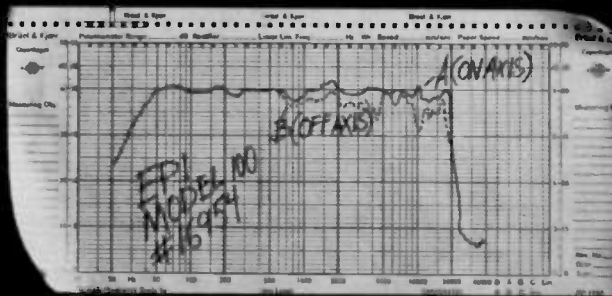
That's a remarkable thing, that curve "A". From way down on the bass end all the way up to the high treble end, it's practically a straight line.

What you see is what you hear: a pure, uncolored, natural sound from top to bottom. With no artificial boosting of the bass to impress the innocent. And all the nuances and overtones at the treble end that, on ordinary speakers, just fade away.

CURVE "B"

Now look at curve "B", and you'll see something even more remarkable: another virtually straight line.

What's remarkable about this is that curve "B"



This is what EPI's Linear Sound looks like.

was recorded by placing our mike at a point 60 degrees off axis. So EPI's speakers disperse Linear Sound not just straight ahead, but in all directions, and at all frequencies.

In fact, up to 15KHz, the off-axis dispersion is down only an average of 3db. This is the

result of EPI's unique one-inch linear air spring tweeter.

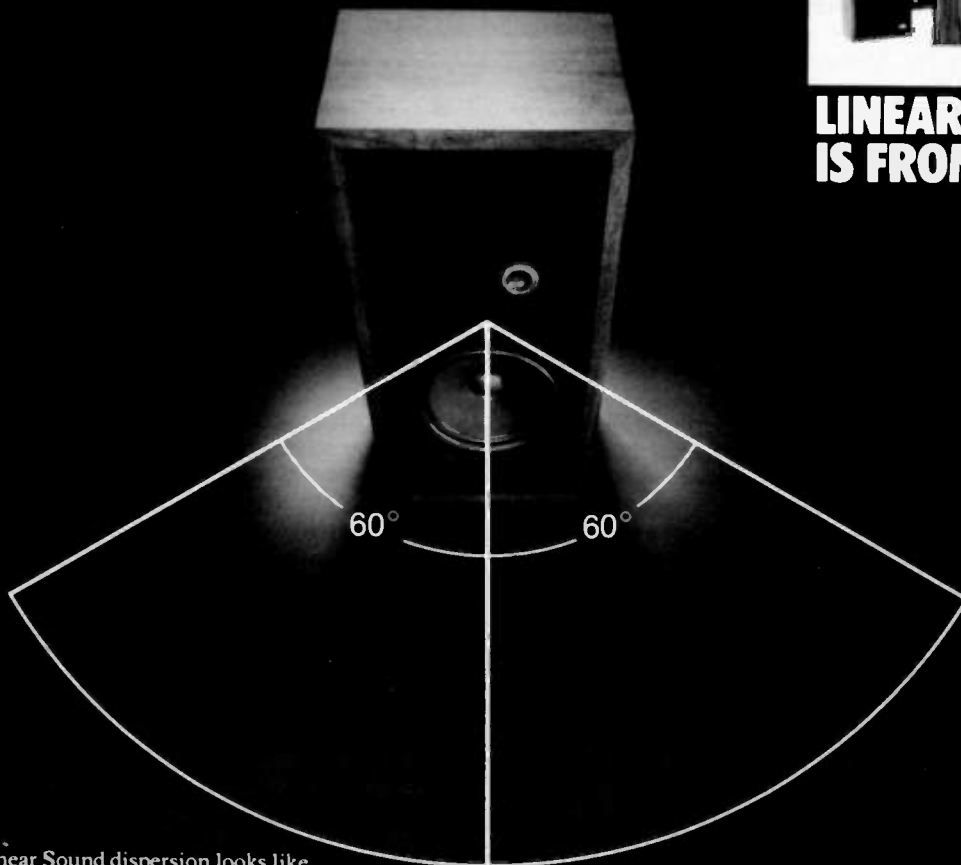
What does that mean?

It means that when you're listening to music, you can sit anywhere in the room, and you'll be hearing that big, full, natural sound you've just seen on our graph.

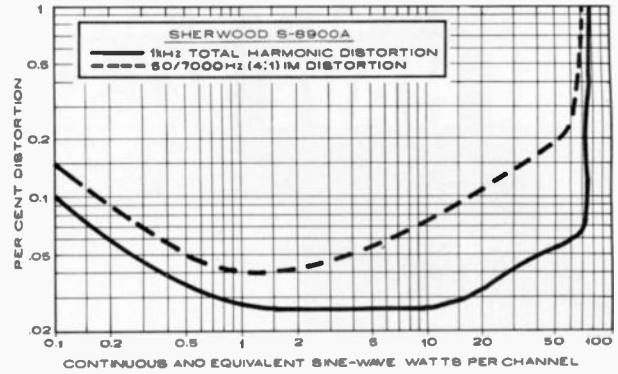
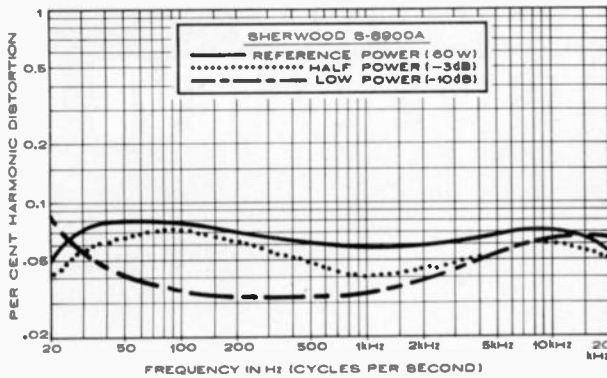
EPI's Linear Sound. It comes out of eight great speakers, from \$55 to \$1000, made only by Epicure Products Inc., Newburyport, Mass. 01950.



**LINEAR SOUND
IS FROM EPI.**



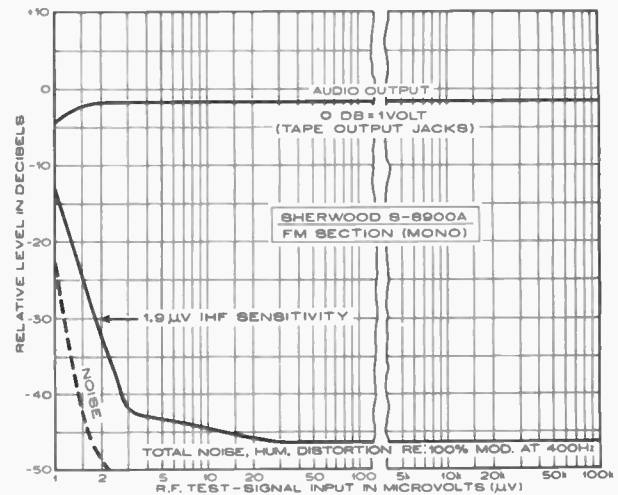
This is what EPI's Linear Sound dispersion looks like.



depending on the setting of the rear switch, was 0.44, 1, or 2.3 millivolts, with a very low noise level of -65 dB or better. The corresponding overload input levels were 16.5 millivolts, 38 millivolts, and 86 millivolts. The safest procedure seems to be to use the lowest sensitivity switch setting, which should avoid any overload problems and still produce enough gain for almost any cartridge.

The tone-control characteristics were "hinged" at about 1,000 Hz, with a full ± 20 -dB control range at the frequency extremes. The loudness compensation boosted only the low frequencies. It was moderate in its action and quite listenable. The HI filter, which had a desirable (and rarely used) 12-dB-per-octave slope, cut off above 5,500 Hz. RIAA phono equalization was within ± 1 dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz.

The S-8900A's FM tuner was as noteworthy as its amplifier section. Its measured IHF sensitivity was 1.9 microvolts, and a 50-dB signal-to-noise ratio (with which a program could be considered listenable) was achieved at only 2.3 microvolts. The measured distortion was essentially the 0.5 per cent residual of our signal generator, and the noise was a very low -76 dB for signals exceeding about 100 microvolts. The FM frequency response had a slightly rising high end, possibly because of component tolerances in the de-emphasis network. Nevertheless, it was well within the acceptable limits of ± 2 dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz. Stereo separation was exceptional, exceeding 40 dB from 170 to 2,200 Hz, and more than 27 dB from 30 to 10,000 Hz. The capture ratio was a very good 1.2 dB at 1,000 microvolts, falling to 7 dB at 10 microvolts. The AM rejection was 54.5 dB, a typical figure for a good FM tuner. Alternate-channel selectivity and



The dashed curve labeled "noise" shows how random noise (principally hiss) drops below the audio output with increasing signal strength. Ultimate quieting level achieved was -76 dB.

The "Dynaquad" switch on the S-8900A's rear panel routes synthesized rear-channel information to the REMOTE speaker terminals.

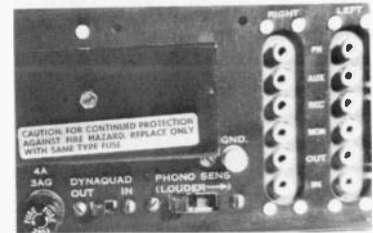


image rejection were outstanding, measuring, respectively, 91 and 100 dB. The muting action was positive, with no noise and only a slight thump when tuning on or off a station. The operating threshold of the muting circuit was 6.5 microvolts.

● **Comments.** The performance of the Sherwood S-8900A left nothing to be desired. Both its FM and audio sections delivered what we would consider "state of the art" performance for a receiver. With the current publicity being given to various quadraphonic recording systems, it is well to remember that the Dynaquad can synthesize rear-channel ambiance from stereo material as well as any system—and better than most. Furthermore, we have found that it does a rather good job of decoding programs recorded with the Sansui QS matrix.

The performance of the S-8900A is of such a high caliber that limitations in its sound quality will almost always be the result of external factors, such as the FM broadcast, phonograph record, or speaker systems. Although no receiver is likely to have "enough" power for confirmed audiophiles using today's low-efficiency speaker systems, the excellent Sherwood S-8900A certainly qualifies for a leading position in the power race.

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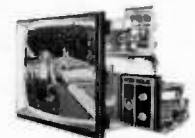
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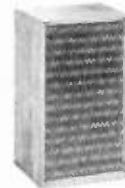
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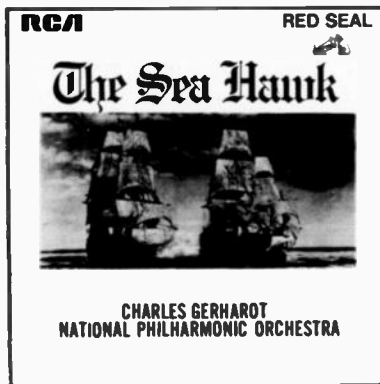
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By **JAMES GOODFRIEND**

Music Editor



SONGS WITHOUT WORDS

ONE of the results of the current interest in chess, its psychology, and its personalities may very likely be a renewed and deepened interest in the whole field of nonverbal creative thought. Musical composition, as we know, also belongs to that *milieu*, although the accretion of years of misguided "interpretations" sometimes tends to hide the true nature of the substance underneath. Mathematics is also a form of nonverbal thought, certainly as hospitable to the creative flights of genius as either of the other two. It is a little strange, then, seeing the close relationship of the three, that we have for centuries classified one as an art, one as a science, and one as a game.

Of course, it is those very classifications that prejudice our thinking about the subject. Who, after all (except perhaps the most inventive mathematicians themselves), thinks of mathematical theory as an expression of personality? Mathematics, we say, is a *science*, a field not of invention but of discovery, dealing with the immutable laws of the universe. Well, partially. But *what* a man discovers and how he discovers it is very much a function of how he thinks, of the mental leaps he is capable of making, ultimately of what sort of personality is his.

This matter of personality in abstract thought has been very much pointed up in recent writings on chess, particularly in those concentrating on the special phenomenon that is Bobby Fischer. For, whatever one may think about Fischer, he has a very definite personality, one expressed both in his verbal and physical actions and in his chess playing: primitively in the former, with great finesse in the latter.

Those same articles — when written by capable and knowledgeable men — make us understand that there is not only science in chess, which is easy to allow, but art as well, which is a little harder to take. Chess, we say, is a game. When

one has finished a game there is no art work to show for it. And yet that is not quite so. The possibilities in chess are, for all mortal purposes, limitless, which is not to say they are all equally good. As in mathematics and music there are numerous ways of accomplishing the same immediate purpose, some of which are obvious and some arcane, some crude and some elegant, some so striking in their inventiveness and economy as to constitute things of beauty in themselves for those who are wise enough in the ways of the game to see how beautiful they are. And, therefore, there is a direct connection between the way a chess master handles a particular point of defense and the way a Schubert organizes a modulation — and, for that matter, the way a master mathematician proves a theorem. And chess games, like music, are repeatable.

But music we consider to be an art, and we therefore impute to it many things that are really only secondary to it and some that are not an intrinsic part of musical creativity at all. Music, after all, and even the simplest sounds and combinations of sounds, is something that attaches itself to our memories, and thence to our emotions, in a way not related to the intrinsic meaning of the music at all, and certainly in a way that mathematical ideas or chess positions do not. The music we love best, as Marcel Proust maintained, is often that music we remember from a time when we were younger and happier. Whatever psychological or philosophical revelation may come from that, it is something imposed upon the music, not a part of it. And yet it is one of many things that cloud our perception of music as nonverbal creative thought.

We tend also, perhaps for reasons that have to do with the physiological aspects of hearing, to equate a certain prettiness of sound with the idea of beauty in music. One form of musical beauty it certainly is, essentially a sensual one. But

there is another: the beauty inherent in a masterly transformed modulation, in a superb counterpoint, in the transformation of a theme over a period of time, in the establishment of sound relations in a new way. I hesitate to call this an intellectual beauty, because whether it is appreciated purely intellectually or both intellectually *and* sensually depends entirely upon the perceiver. But it certainly is the beauty one finds in those masterpieces of music that offer us few sounds that are appealing in themselves.

There is a fiction around that a great piece of music can be composed by almost anyone, should the right inspiration strike and the lucky individual have some method of permanently capturing what he has imagined. Sadly, it isn't so, any more than that a complete duffer like myself could be suddenly inspired to produce a masterful game of chess against a Fischer or a Spassky. And not only isn't *that* so, but, I'm afraid, the very *comprehension* of a great piece of music is dependent also upon one's innate and acquired abilities. In other words, there are levels of nonverbal *understanding* as well as of creation.

I OFFER you a story. Years ago I took composition lessons with a prominent American composer. Our assignment one week was to choose any Bach chorale, take the melody line only, and, without reference to Bach's solution, harmonize the melody ourselves in traditional four-part harmony. One very talented student in the class brought in her assignment and the composer said, "Oh, but you've used Bach's bass line." He wasn't accusing her of cheating—there would be no point in cheating on such an assignment—but rather of having misunderstood the assignment and having copied Bach's bass line. The student admitted that she was a little hazy on the matter but thought that she had composed the bass line herself. The composer, without even bothering to check the Bach original, insisted that she had not. "It isn't so much that *you* couldn't have written that bass line," he said, "as that even *I* couldn't have written it." And, of course, he was right.

Levels: the talented student who knew that the bass line was good but thought it quite within her abilities to have written it; the composer who had sufficient genius himself to know that what he saw was beyond his ability to have created; and Bach, who composed it—and many hundreds of others like it.

But that is why, centuries afterward, we still listen to the works of musical geniuses (and replay the games of chess geniuses, and build our lives on the discoveries of mathematical geniuses) when the pretty tunes of their day have long since faded into silence. They are all profound thoughts in a nonverbal language that mean only what they mean.

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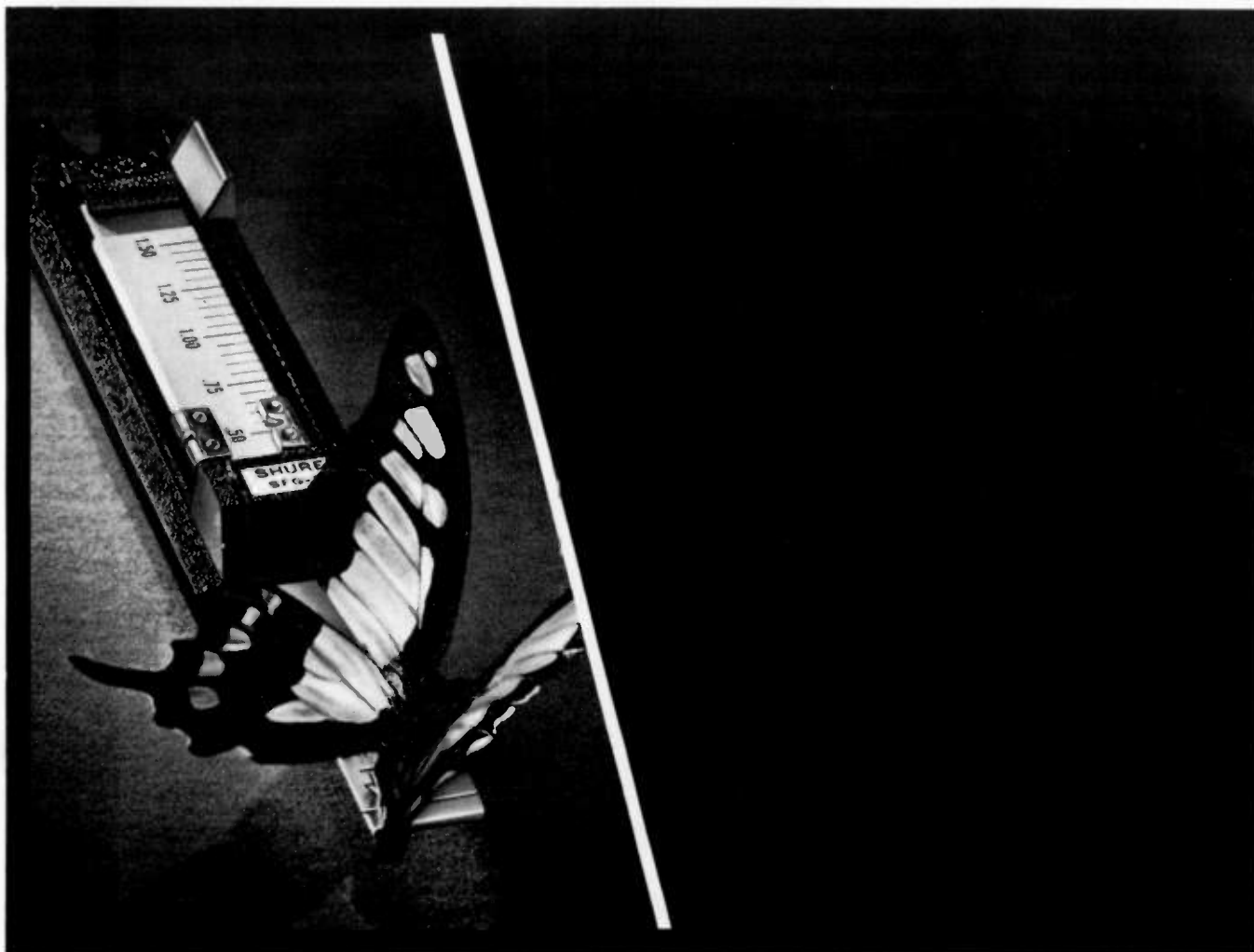
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Copland's A Lincoln Portrait

IT was 1942, a few months after the United States entered the Second World War. The home front was mobilizing all its resources for waging war against barbarism and despotism. Music was one of those resources, and, whether spontaneously or by commission, America's composers were creating works aflame with patriotic fervor. Much of the material served its purpose and was quickly forgotten. But at least one man's efforts proved to be more than a *succès d'occasion*: Aaron Copland's. This was the year Copland wrote *Fanfare for the Common Man* and *A Lincoln Portrait*.

Copland was one of eighteen composers invited by Eugene Goossens, then conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, to create brief fanfares on behalf of America's war effort; *Fanfare for the Common Man* is the only one of these to have survived. (Copland later employed the materials of the fanfare as a bridge passage leading to the final movement of his Third Symphony.) Similarly, Copland was one of three composers asked by André Kostelanetz to write a score "to mirror the magnificent spirit of our country." Jerome Kern composed a Mark Twain portrait for orchestra; Virgil Thomson composed a salute to New York City's crusading mayor of the time, Fiorello La Guardia; and Copland composed his *Lincoln Portrait*. The Kern and Thomson scores have been neglected for years, but Copland's *Lincoln Portrait* continues to be frequently played and recorded.

Ironically, Copland had first thought of choosing Walt Whitman for his musical portrait, but it was Kostelanetz who persuaded him to select a statesman. "From that moment on," Copland has written, "the choice of Lincoln as my subject seemed inevitable." Copland continues:

The letters and speeches of Lincoln supplied the text. It was comparatively a simple matter to choose a few excerpts that seemed particularly apposite to our own situation today. I avoided the temptation to use only well-known passages, permitting myself the luxury of quoting only once from a world-famous speech. The order and arrangement of the selections are my own. The first sketches were made in February [1942] and the portrait was finished on April 16th. The orchestration was completed a few weeks later.

I worked with musical materials of my own, with the exception of two songs of the period: the famous *Camp-*

town Races and a ballad that was first published in 1840 under the title *The Pesky Sarpent* but is better known today as *Springfield Mountain*. In neither case is the treatment a literal one. The tunes are used freely, in the manner of my use of cowboy songs in *Billy the Kid*.

The composition is roughly divided into three main sections. In the opening section I wanted to suggest something of the mysterious sense of fatality that surrounds Lincoln's personality. Also, near the end of that section, something of his gentleness and simplicity of spirit. The quick middle section briefly sketches in the background of the times he lived in. This merges into the concluding section where my sole purpose was to draw a simple but impressive frame about the words of Lincoln himself.

THERE was once a cracklingly fine recording of *A Lincoln Portrait* narrated by the poet Carl Sandburg, with André Kostelanetz and his Orchestra (Columbia MS 6040), in which Sandburg brilliantly captured a cracker-barrel flavor and homespun humor in his delivery. Unfortunately, that recording has now apparently been withdrawn, along with earlier versions that had Melvyn Douglas and Kenneth Spencer as narrators. Of the four currently available recorded performances, three feature Hollywood actors as narrators: Henry Fonda, with Copland conducting the London Symphony Orchestra (Columbia M 30649, cassette MT 30649); Charlton Heston, with the Utah Symphony under Maurice Abravanel (Vanguard VSD 2115); and Gregory Peck, with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Zubin Mehta (London CS 6613). Each of them adopts a rather understated approach—especially Fonda, whose delivery is positively somnolent. Heston wins my vote among the actor-narrators, because he characterizes and inflects his part more personally than his colleagues do.

But my favorite among the available recorded performances is the one with Adlai Stevenson as narrator (Columbia MS 6684). A memento of the opening-week concerts in New York's Philharmonic Hall, the statesman's collaboration with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra reflects the integrity, sincerity, and passionate conviction that were hallmarks of the personal style of both Stevenson and Abraham Lincoln. We are fortunate to have this recording as part of the Stevenson legacy and the Copland repertoire.

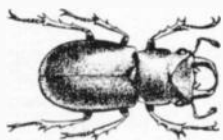
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NINE WAYS OF LOOKING AT THE BEATLES 1963-1973



NOSTALGIA, as you are probably painfully aware by now, is *in* this year. One of the ways in which this has been manifested in musical terms is a tremendous reawakening of interest in artists of the Fifties. Only a month or so ago, for example, there were simultaneous Top Ten singles by Rick Nelson, Chuck Berry, and Elvis. And there is already a rumor (I believe it) that the folks who put together those Rock Revival shows are getting ready to hit us with a British Invasion package. I can hear it now: "Live on stage! Gerry and the Pacemakers! The Searchers! The Dave Clark Five!" Or, as Ray Davies observed last summer, "We're the Kinks. We wear matching velvet hunting jackets, and we're from England." Nostalgia for the Sixties, by God, when the Seventies are not even half over. The mind boggles.



"The Beatles...were the first poets of technological culture."

● Who could have predicted that a middle-class American version of funky black music would come to such a glorious flowering in down-and-out working-class Liverpool and, via the naughty *Reeperbahn* in Hamburg (with some nifty assistance from the Royal College of Music), thereby set off a cultural revolution of Renaissance proportions?

There is no way to explain this impossible chain of circumstance except on the assumption that the world has changed, and that the Beatles were themselves both the result and the harbinger of change. They were, in effect, the first poets of technological culture, the first to listen to and *play* on the loudspeaker, the first to strum the mass media as their instrument, to tune their lyres to 60-cycle hum, to take inputs from the Global Village and turn them into messages for our time.

To find precedents for the Beatles one really has to look to the "fine arts"—to Cage and the pop artists. But whereas musicians and artists have been busy making art less "arty," the Beatles were turning folk/pop into "art." The essential point about the Beatles is that they were English working-class and at least once removed from their sources. Their music was, from the start, *studied* and *learned*—"artifice" in the best sense. But the Beatles were artists not in the self-conscious Romantic/Modern style, but in the old way. Their

music was produced, not merely for its own sake, but as part of a very real struggle to say something, to express something real about the world they were born into. And, in the 1960's, when art was something detached, abstract, and remote, American pop music provided the natural frame for saying something and reaching people—even for the sons of hard-working Liverpudlians.

The Beatles' starting point was a music that can only be described as teeny-bopper (those who were teenagers with the Beatles will violently disagree with this characterization, but I think it is nonetheless true). Rock-and-roll was already well established in Europe by this time—it was known variously as *yé-yé* (French for yeah-yeah) or *beat* music—thus completing a remarkable world-wide takeover.

The return of the beat and its nearly total dominance of the scene was a striking reaction to the progressive breakdown of heavy, strict pulse that had been taking place in *avant-garde* music, in jazz, and, to a degree, in sophisticated pop. The return to the beat was widely attacked as "primitive" and, along with associated physical movements, crudely and pornographically sexual. Remember all that fuss about Presley? It is one of the great ironies that the Beatles helped—was it because they were English?—to make it a bit more respecta-

Anyway, it may come as a small shock to you (it certainly did to me) to recall that the very first official Beatles album ("Please Please Me" in England, "The Early Beatles" in its slightly altered American form) was released in April of 1963. A tenth anniversary, incredibly enough, is almost upon us, and clearly (trendily?) a commemorative is in order. So we have asked a group of noted rock critics and pop fellow travelers to ramble on about those four adorable mop-tops, and to reflect—with the perspective of a decade—on What It All Meant.

"The Beatles," wrote Jann Wenner in 1968, "are the perfect product and result of everything that rock & roll means and encompasses." These days, especially as the Fab Four's Morning After drags along interminably, that's rather nice to remember.

— Steve Simels, *Popular Music Editor*

ble. The sex was there, but somehow idealized; indeed, they were even to be attacked by some self-appointed socio-musico pundits for idealizing romantic love at a time when everybody was supposed to get down to the nitty-gritty!

But the Beatles worked with a much wider group of themes than just romantic love; indeed, as they developed, the whole of contemporary culture—pop and otherwise—became their subject matter. With a certain art and artifice, they often created a fascinating ambiguity about their material: were these songs "expressing" their subjects or commenting on them? Are the "sexist" attitudes expressed in *Little Girl* the Beatles' own, or are they a comment on a certain kind of sexism in our society? As in Stravinskian neo-Classicism, there is always a double-take, a sense of involvement and of being once-removed at the same time. The Beatles' schizophrenia is a reflection of the larger schizoid splits in our culture; instead of going crazy, they made art for our time out of it.

All the while, their music got richer: more inputs, more diversity, more complexity. They hooked up with a rare pop producer worthy of their collective talents—George Martin, the "fifth Beatle"—and this super-collaboration began extending the musical ideas 'way beyond the rock-and-roll format of guitars, drums, and studio backup. The Beatles came to understand—consciously or intuitively, it doesn't matter—that the simplicity and constancy of the beat made the most subtle variations highly effective, and cross-rhythms and rhythmic elision became a hallmark. The old principles of contrast and irony became the basis of a remarkable and highly refined art brought to its first peak in "Revolver" and kept at an incredibly high level through "Abbey Road." Who could say any more what rock-and-roll was—or could be? Raga rock, chamber rock, folk rock, music-hall rock, electronic rock, neo-Classical, black blues, swing, *musique concrète*. . . . The

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The Early Beatles



super album was born, music theater was just around the corner, and the stereo record became a creative medium in its own right.

The Beatles went about as far as they could go. They pushed the pop song—in both subject matter and musical content—to its outer limits, incorporating any and all ideas that seemed relevant or interesting to them. In a few years, they recapitulated a cycle that took classical music several centuries and jazz a few decades to accomplish—from a simple, “natural,” big-beat pop to a classical synthesis to idealism and ultra-romanticism to experimentation and avant-gardism to neo-Classicism and electronics to . . .

But that was it; there was no further way to go. The Beatles “era”—the Beatles “ear,” I almost typed—was over. More than anyone else the Beatles turned mass media into art and expression for our time, but they were ultimately stymied by the very mass-culture system which produced them and fed their art. The questions of art, mass media, and contemporary society are a little heavy to be dealt with here at any length, but in writing about the Beatles it is impossible to avoid them altogether. Can mass culture produce art? The Beatles have shown that it can, and yet even they—riding the crest of their success, seemingly able to do what they wanted, carrying their audience anywhere—could not continue. How could they develop as creative artists in a culture that puts art in museums and academies and

to redefine a newer and wider sense of what art and culture can be in a technological society. They could not by themselves heal the old splits between pop and non-pop, “high” art and mass art, experimentation and communality, tradition and innovation, technique and content, expression and communication, but they helped put these basic issues back on the table.

—Eric Salzman



“The Beatles’ moralizing was insipid and self-righteous.”

● Remember 1967, when “Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band” was, if not the pinnacle of “serious” music for our time, at least a supreme testament that pop music had transcended its humble origins? When the Beatles, if they weren’t going to save the world, were going to bring us together through the cross-generational drawing power of sheer eclecticism?

How many people do you know who have listened to “Sgt. Pepper” lately? How many people do you know who regard it at this late date as anything more than slightly antique?

Nobody questions the profundity of Lennon and McCartney’s influence on popular music, but that influence has had its negative side effects. Perhaps, in fact, the “profundity” is deceit; who before the

cause of that it is endearing. Most of the rest of their late work is not so lucky. If *Getting Better* seems merely cloying, *I Am the Walrus* drowns in its literary and avant-garde pretensions, and *All You Need Is Love* is positively pompous. The double white album was littered with material alike in temperament, if not in quality. By the time they reached the final, production-tattered “Let It Be” album, they were down to telling us to “dig a pony; you can celebrate anything you want,” which was so mawkish as to be beneath notice if it had come from anybody else.

It’s not merely that none of the declamations they made on the human condition and the state of the universe were true, although they weren’t; things do *not* necessarily get better all the time, you *do* need more than love. When George Harrison wrote that “Piggies . . . need a damn good wacking,” he was only asking someone like Charles Manson to take him at his word.

What’s really troublesome about all this, though, is that we live in a time when people should feel constrained to make something that started as sheer entertainment into a platform for moral philippics. Yes, the world’s in a hell of a mess; yes, we need moralists; but the Beatles’ moralizing was insipid and self-righteous, and it—though not it alone—has given birth to a

Capitol ST 2047



values entertainment only for its economic potential?

The story of the breakup of the Beatles is complex, but their decision to follow their individual paths was inevitable. The Sixties were over; Heath was Prime Minister and Nixon was President. Golden ages, epochs of creative ferment, classical periods, never last very long anyway, and they are often succeeded by revolutions that afterwards seem never to have taken place at all. Nevertheless, in art as in life, there are certain processes of change that are irreversible. The Beatles’ effect on the course of pop music may turn out to have been of less importance than their long-range impact on culture and on our sense of ourselves. The Beatles were not only artists of the electronic age, they helped us

Capitol ST 2080



Beatles and Bob Dylan ever made people feel that pop and rock music necessarily *should* be profound? Just because everybody is “liberated,” it doesn’t necessarily follow that everybody is going to have something to say.

The Beatles themselves were trapped by this syndrome. *With a Little Help from My Friends* is a great pop song because, much as it philosophizes, it remains human and universal. It doesn’t preach, it doesn’t pretend to cosmic significance—except perhaps by implication—and be-

Capitol ST 2108



Something New

culture bounded on one side by the Mansons and on the other side by “today is the first day of the rest of your life” greeting cards. It’s a culture where the sense of oneness with the universe and unreasoning rage at the seeming lack of it in the rest of humanity are equally cheap.

The Beatles had as much to do with all this as any other single force, and thus it’s no wonder that in the aftermath of the breakup John should push sophomoric dada-ism and political dilettantism disguised as righteous wrath, while George counsels cosmic solipsism and Paul retreats to the suburbs in equal self-righteousness. Only Ringo, it seems, has retained any of the initial magic that made us love the Beatles instead of finding them pedantic bores. But then, Ringo was also the first one to reject the Maharishi; always the odd man out, he managed throughout his career to avoid the preten-

sions that the others muddled themselves in. By remaining true to his roots as a working-class bloke who likes his corner pub as his collection of old armor, Ringo brought the demigod image that destroyed the Beatles down to the ebullient persona of a real Working-Class Hero. I hope he keeps recording songs like *Back-off Bugaloo* forever. After all, it says a hell of a lot about the Irish situation.

—Lester Bangs

“An uninterrupted five-year stretch of genius.”

● The Beatles went out the same way they came in, musically and personally. In explanation of that cryptic remark, I hope you will accept my designation of the “first” Beatles and the “last” one. I may be bending history a bit, but I think the point I’m going to make will hold.

The first recordings done by the group were made in Germany in 1962, when Peter Best was the drummer. The Beatles had been booked into a Hamburg club, and their mission was mostly to provide backup for a singer named Tony Sheridan, an English expatriate (he’s still over there) with a vocal style swiped from Presley.

Eight sides were made, six of them in support of Sheridan and two odd cuts by the band alone. One was *Ain’t She Sweet*, with John singing lead; the other was an instrumental, *Cry for a Shadow*, written by John and George. The a-&-r man for Polydor at the time was Bert Kaempfert, a smoothie mood-music trumpeter and bandleader. Asked later why he hadn’t signed the Beatles, he replied that they had talent but didn’t know what to do with it.



The German sessions, finally released a few years ago on American Polydor, are what I call the “first” album. Their “last” is “Let It Be” (which was made a year before “Abbey Road” but was the last released). Although there are some wonderful moments on “Let It Be,” it is a sadly ramshackle way to end the recording career of the most important popular music group of the decade. There is ample testimony, from Lennon at least, that the Bea-

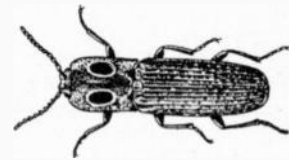
ties themselves felt they were disintegrating at the time they made it. Lennon, in a way, was paraphrasing Kaempfert’s verdict about their talent, except that in 1969 and 1970 the difference was that they didn’t know what to do with their talent *any more*.

Comparing the two albums, I think I liked George better when he was eighteen, playing what is probably the most exuberant solo of his life on *My Bonnie*. I’m still enchanted by Paul’s gutsy, basic bass and John’s background screams—and let us not forget Pete Best, who, like the beloved Ringo, always did what a rock drummer should do: keep the beat going hard and heavy. For “Let It Be,” I think of John’s wonderful *Across the Universe* and *One After 909*, one of the earliest Lennon-McCartney numbers, written not long after the Hamburg sessions. But finally I think of Phil Spector, who as a producer was not necessary to the Beatles, except that they had themselves defaulted. Selecting Spector to pull the casual, sometimes sloppy and unrelated recordings into an album, was, you see, Lennon’s idea; John was always the prime rocker of the group, and Spector, because of his brilliant productions of the late Fifties and early Sixties, was one of his heroes. Just from the approach made to him (*i.e.*, “Can you fix this mess?”), he certainly must have had an idea that the Beatles no longer knew what to do with their talent, as Kaempfert had known they didn’t in the first place.

Both the Hamburg and “Let It Be” albums have one thing in common; they are childlike. Hamburg is aggressively show-off, and “Let It Be” is a plaintive cry of “what do I do now?” In between, of course, was the Beatles’ magnificent period of manhood. And what a group they were: they could write like Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, Kurt Weill, and Bertolt Brecht—and they could do it all by writing like Lennon, McCartney, Harrison, and (yes) Starr. They reigned for five years. An uninterrupted five-year stretch of genius is the most, I think, that anyone can reasonably ask for in the pop world, and about as much as we’re likely to get.

The Beatles went out the way they came in. I’m awfully glad they came, and I’m awfully sorry they’ve left. Hello, and goodbye.

—Joel Vance



“Sgt. Pepper...was dazzling but ultimately fraudulent.”

● Ten years is perhaps too short a maturing period to inspire an accounting of any artist’s work. The wine has not yet ripened in our memories, the fermentation process has barely begun, the bouquet is bound to be crude and reminiscent of its original ingredients—long hair, sexiness, English accents—all those spectral qualities that attracted us to the Beatles long before we ever stopped to hear their music.

Except: wasn’t there more, even to an early Lennon-McCartney composition, than mere performance? You heard them on the radio and said to yourself, “Yeah, that’s the kind of man I want to be, except I always thought if I let myself, women would think I was a fag.” So the value of the early Beatles was in the challenge they offered to a system of masculine values that seemed outmoded long before Germaine Greer fashioned a career from their denial—a system oppressive to men and women alike, and soon to be replaced by a softer, more lyric sensuality that contained more of the seeds of decadence than those of war.

And what the early Beatles seemed to suggest musically was a far more expressive nature than we were inclined to accept from our rock stars, helping to fashion the very ethic of the-senses-for-their-own-sake that guided artists in the Sixties. All those vocal dips and flourishes and unexpected changes in the early ballads, all leading up to “Rubber Soul,” confronted us with the most elliptical rock music to date—melodies that moved in an impressionistic swirl (*Michelle*), or a lone sitar in the Nordic wilderness (*Norwegian Wood*). And the lyrics: unresolved romances, ambiguous jealousies, working-class lavishness—and lust. “Rubber Soul” was the most important rock LP of the Sixties. It did for rock what Benny Goodman did for Swing: it created an authentic melodiousness that took the music off the killing floor of race. So, the achievement of the middle Beatles was that they made rock respectable, and they also made it white.

Finally came “Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band,” about which we were probably in disagreement back in 1967, and probably still are. I didn’t like it then, and never listen to it now. It is studded with musicological kitsch, tape-loop pretension, hippy-hoppy rhythms. I have remarked that the album was “dazzling but

ultimately fraudulent," a line which some of my contemporaries suggested might serve as my own epitaph. I still feel the same about "Sgt. Pepper," but I will grant you this repentance: the album, even more than "Rubber Soul," brought to a culmination an ethic of the sensual. It was the most lavish, most tonally opulent rock album of its time, and in some ways the most expressive, containing enough traces of the old McCartney lyricism that it appeared to be bringing us up against the future even as it tied us nostalgically to the past.

It doesn't really matter that the future that "Sgt. Pepper" presaged would vanish

Capitol ST 2358



Beatles VI



before our eyes like the Woodstock Nation. At the moment—and very little else counts in pop culture—"Sgt. Pepper" represented the precise vision people were applying to their lives. Don't ask me how the Beatles managed to transmit that vision. But they did, and I'm willing to back-track on this crucial point: "Sgt. Pepper," in its grasp of the direction we thought we were moving in, does represent an important accomplishment. Even though the parts remain less than satisfactory for me, the whole, in its time, was to be far more meaningful than I then imagined. Especially in rock, it is possible for a work that fails to be important nonetheless. This is perhaps as good a summing up of the Beatles as we can offer. Even when they failed—ineptly, pompously, blandly—they kept their eyes on the moment and drew us into that moment. Nothing they ever did can be remembered merely as rhetoric.

—Richard Goldstein



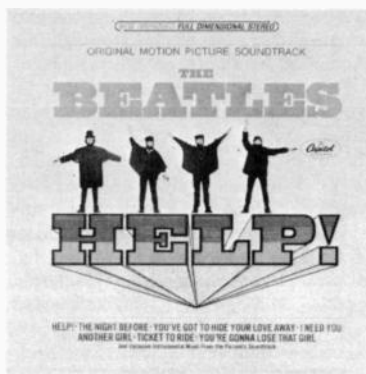
"I still believe in the Beatles."

● *Synergy*: the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. It does not exist in the grade-school-level mathematics I'm familiar with, but it occurs now and then in the

arts, and it had a great deal to do with the Beatles.

We have celebrated the Fab Four all these years because of their genius as *conceptual* artists—what set them apart from others was not that they could play better, or sing better, but that they could *conceive* better; they imagined music the Rolling

Capitol SMAS 2386



Help!

Stones never dreamed of, or that, say, the Animals never dreamed could be dreamed of. They often executed it extremely well, too, at least in the studio, but more about that later. Together, the Beatles faced the blank canvas as one, and the strokes were bold and sure, no matter which of their hands held the brush (I'm apparently in the minority who couldn't care less whether Lennon touched pen to paper in the writing of the "Lennon-McCartney" song *Yesterday*, or if McCartney spent ink on the "Lennon-McCartney" song *Help!*: the songs were written in the *environment* of the Beatles, period).

Separately, the ex-Beatles are given to stylistic excesses. John's music becomes rigidly fixated on peace-love, social-consciousness themes. Paul's puffy romanticism comes apart like exploding cotton candy. Ringo's shuffling amiability takes him into this and that kind of music (when he isn't making this or that kind of film or tagging along behind George or John). George's tendency to put the double-talk of gurus into song lyrics is unleashed—although it must be said that George had less invested in the synergism of the Beatles than any of the others and therefore can afford to be less defensively individualistic now. And he will remain the most viable solo performer until either John or (more likely) Paul resolves the battle between talent and psyche.

I think the Beatles edited one another—if only because being afloat in the chemistry of the Beatles caused them to edit themselves more effectively—and in that way they inspired each other. When the concept was taken to the studio, the chemistry bubbled again, and there was George Martin to help it along. He was part of the synergism, too. Once the Beatles had conceived, he was more than a producer-engineer-adviser-midwife-critic; he was part of the thing, and the gooey creativity that stuck the other four together engulfed him as well.

Capitol ST 2442



Rubber Soul

On my terms, the only way to really understand what the Beatles were is to understand the tuggings and pushings and fittings together that make the ideal family "bigger" and "better" than it has any physical-mental right to be. My own family is often not ideal, but I still believe in ideal families. And, despite the advice ("...the dream is over") John Lennon's post-mortem depression prompted him to offer, I still believe in the Beatles.

—Noel Coppage



"Only very rarely did they deserve credit as innovators."

● From the moment that *Glad All Over* expelled the Beatles momentarily from the top spot on the singles chart, people have been claiming to have found "The Next Beatles." What I've stepped out of retirement for a moment to express is the depressing opinion that not only have there been no Next Beatles to date, but also that we most probably won't see same during our lifetimes.

Before elaborating on this grim thought, I wanna make clear that I don't think the main thing the Beatles were (and the Next Beatles will have to be) was musical superheroes. To serve the Fab Four their retro-active just deserts, they did indeed remain intriguing until the very end by virtue of their fascination and consequent constant experimentation with form, but certainly at every stage of their existence they had contemporaries in whose work a greater proportion of unmistakable brilliance to mere intriguing cleverness can now be perceived. And while only an imbecile would debate that they set trends just like ringin' a bell, it's become clear in retrospect that only very rarely did they deserve credit as innovators: in most cases

they only showed a mass audience a refined version of a lick they'd heard somebody else fooling around with.

Yesterday and Today Capitol ST 2553



Rather, consider that three and a half years after their arrival—more than sufficient time for everyone to have gotten bored to death with the very thought of them—they weren't only getting away with murder, but in fact being canonized for it. Not only did "Sgt. Pepper" their worst album up to that time, immediately get designated the official soundtrack of Sixties youth's most ecstatic summer, but in many quarters it was actually cited as the *inspiration* of the Summer of Love's blissful excesses. (My perception of "Pepper" as embodying their lowest ratio of true splendor to triviality up to that time may indeed be owing to the fact that it was the first Beatles album not to have the less stupendous selections from the British source left off the Capitol version, but I'm nevertheless one of those who agree that history has vindicated Richard Goldstein.) Thus it wasn't artistic pre-eminence itself that characterized the Beatles, but the fact that in light of their astonishingly durable mythic stature it was naturally presupposed that anything they'd do would be colossal.

Now then, not only is it supremely dubious that, whatever mythic stature the acts currently being called the Next Beatles will enjoy, they will not withstand the parade of time as well as the Beatles, but it's also bozoid in the extreme to suggest that any of their arrivals have created a buzz enormous enough to have spawned a mythic stature *comparable* to the F.F.'s.

Has the anticipation of or reaction to their first Ed Sullivan appearance ever been even approximated? Who since them has monopolized the airwaves as they did in February '64? Who's so captivated the news media as well as the pop audience as to qualify as a *bona fide* Current Event? Can the modern average Joe in the street recite the names of the five Jacksons or Osmonds or even the three G. Funx as effortlessly as he could have reeled off "JohnPaulGeorgean'Ringo" in 1964? Has anyone, as were the Beatles, been so closely associated in the mass public mind with the ecstacizing power of youth that cripples gather in their dressing room?

Indeed not. And don't be fooled by the figures: not only are there simply more people around now to buy records and camp out in front of Shea Stadium's ticket office than in 1965, but also, since "rock" has been universally recognized as commercially and culturally durable, the percentage of the total population willing to engage in such behavior must certainly be greater now than in the Beatles' heyday.

Never mind that the incidence of the ambition to be the Next Beatles must surely be on the wane, what with the accelerating popularity of drugs that reduce the user pretty much to a heap of dirty hair and greasy denim whose loftiest aspiration is to bellow, "Boogie!" during quiet moments at concerts. And pay little attention to the fact that, since James Taylor, it's been lots more chic to whine tortured little songs about one's own neuroses in front of quite ersatz c-&-w accompaniment than to deal, as the Beatles did, in Big Beat and exuberance. No, these sorrowful circumstances mean little in comparison with the

Capitol ST 2576



Revolver

fact that the atmosphere is not only now all wrong for the emergence of the Next Beatles but also promises not to be otherwise while you and I are still young enough to care.

For one thing, we're inestimably too well off, and promise to continue to be so. The presence of one Rod Stewart, for example, is sufficient to make it impossible for us to experience a buzz of Beatalic proportions. Had they not both appeared at times when pop had stagnated to the point at which no one could even have conceived of its meaning more than nothing, as it did then, neither Elvis nor the Beatles could have dreamed of becoming legendary. Consider this: would anyone anywhere really describe John Fogerty's stature as mythic?

Equally crucial to the extent to which they shook the world was that the Beatles were in all ways exotic nearly to the point of otherworldliness, and thus infinitely captivating. Now I may be demonstrating fully as little power of imagination as that historic anonymous geezer in the Patent Office who, convinced that everything that could be invented *had* been invented, retired to go fishing, but I daresay that nothing's gonna strike eyes and ears that have seen and heard what ours have since the

Beatles as being all that thrillingly distinct.

Ear-wise, the Beatles themselves pretty much ensured that no sound would ever again shake the earth as theirs had when they made it a matter of course for self-respecting pop artists to cherish the eclectic above all else. Granted that by this writing most everyone has given up trying to shotgun-marry his own conception of "rock" into some mindblowing new hybrid, and has instead devoted himself to trying to fill his own solo albums with more pathos than anybody else's, but I

Capitol 2653



Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts

still maintain that it'll be a good quarter-century before ears that were hearing in the late Sixties can twitch as excitedly as they did at the sound of *She Loves You*.

Eye-wise, it occurs to me: that while it's inconceivable that we've seen it all, we've certainly seen *sufficient* clean-cut wholesomeness on the one end and all-out outrageous decadence and glamour on the other not to be dumbfounded by whatever distinct visual styles haven't yet been exploited: probably everyone's willing to own up that, say, Bowie & Co. are original and even striking in their own way, but has the look of them inspired wholesale jaw-dropping, as did the Beatles?

No, I honestly don't think we're going to find the Next Beatles while we're young enough to enjoy them for the simple reason that they can't emerge until we're once again as innocent, as empty-handed, and as hopeless about ever being otherwise as we were in 1964. Good luck to us all.

—John Mendelsohn



"They may well have surprised even themselves."

● The early Beatles (how quickly the stages blur in looking back at so relatively short a career) attracted me because of

their playfulness, their *almost* innocence. Yes, they were eclectic and obviously derivative, and yet there was a rather singular natural high in their music. (We later learned that not all the highs were that natural.)

I did not take the Beatles seriously, however, until what I suppose we'd now call the late-middle or early-late period ("Rubber Soul," "Revolver," and the culminating "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band"). By "seriously," I mean my conviction that the Beatles had grown into an original musical force, the continuing eclecticism being fused into a whole that quite transformed its parts. Their lyrics became more provocative and multi-dimensional, both reflecting and helping to

Magical Mystery Tour
Capitol 2835



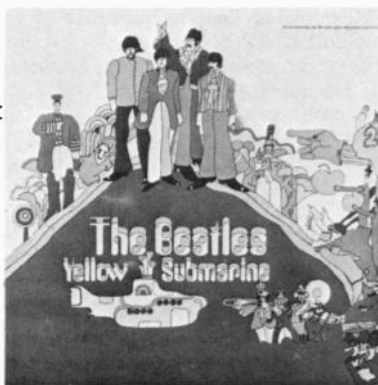
shape their times/our times. The phrase, "a little help from my friends," became part of the common language of the "greening" of the country (as it seemed then). Simultaneously, *A Day in the Life* compelled us to look into the void beneath the surface ascendancy of the counter-culture. The Beatles were in touch with the banality of destruction, with the self-destruction and long-distance killing by bright careerists shuffling pieces of paper that turned into body counts.

I don't mean the Beatles had become heavy explainers of us all. That part of their last period was much overplayed in strained essays in such newcomers to the revelations of pop culture as *Partisan Review*. I was culpable too, with an overly portentous essay on the Beatles in *Ramparts*—if anybody could understand it in the first place. But they were, in the "Revolver-Sgt. Pepper" stage, striking deeply evocative chords—clashing chords—that reverberated in most of us. Chords of hope in possibility, hope in letting go, but also a dissonant sense of the fragility of those hopes in the face of powerful institutions manned by dead spirits.

I was also much intrigued by the growing musical risk-taking of the Beatles—the reaching out into suddenly unexpected melodic structures (form very much following function). And more absorbing was the success of a new expressive gestalt of *human* use and transmutation of electronics (from multi-dubbing to actual new sound-colors) in "Sgt. Pepper." And then it stopped. The last stage of their music

was sometimes appealing (as in all-we-are-asking-is-give-peace-a-chance); but most of it was incantatory, an attempt to make music almost literally magical. They were trying to cast spells—maybe to ward off the inner sounds of their breaking up. Anyway, musically they had regressed; and when they finally dissolved, I thought it was past time.

Apple SW 153
Yellow Submarine



Still, there was that brief period of authentic originality during which they may well have surprised even themselves. And *those* records will last, as will the playfulness that kept on in most of their work. That playfulness and their nonmalicious irreverence, together with some solid musical advances, constitute a valuable enough legacy. Especially for now, when it's so necessary, and sometimes very difficult, to remember the possibility of possibility.

I think warmly on them, for they gave me warmth, and I am glad they were.

—Nat Hentoff



"Perhaps one in five of McCartney's songs is memorable on any level other than hummability."

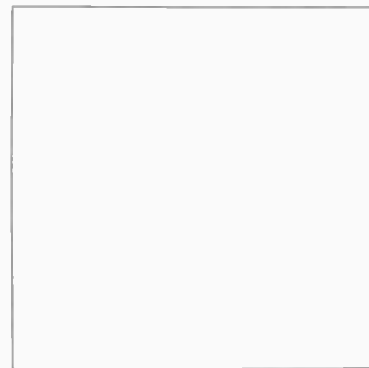
● "What a waste of human power, what a waste of human love!" That's John Lennon singing while Yoko Ono warbles shrilly in the background, and a heavy metal rock band plays thunderous chords. Lennon sings many a line like that these days, when everybody's going through Cold Turkey in New York City, and Woman is the Nigger of the World, and even the ability to Imagine seems to have gone the way of universal love, Esalen therapy, and

good vibes in Greenwich Village. But perhaps that isn't true; maybe it's not really everybody, though God knows the germs of gloom are abundant this season.

The doubt is significant because there was a time—we remember it well—when you could hardly hear yourself for the din of people singing along with Beatles songs. And now there is something very private about the politicized musical anguish of Joko, as there usually is with plain ugly facts coming from the mouths of artists addressed to a public that already knows how to scream, at least internally. Perhaps Lennon's become too honest now that he's abandoned his Beatle identity. Perhaps the fault lies in the divorce of Conscience and the Fool, which, for Lennon, seemed to happen at the time of his junction with his wife and her art and politics—the same point which, as the chroniclers of these things tell us, also signalled the end of the Beatles.

The Beatles have become localized—in place, style, and identity. While Joko copes with the hard life of Gotham City in the Nixon era, an outrage at every turn, the McCartneys make eyes at each other across a mixing board somewhere in woolly Scotland, making plump music about

Apple SWBO 101
The Beatles



plump things and plump ideas, scoring a James Bond movie in 1972. Ringo promotes the failed Marc Bolan and otherwise we don't hear from him. Of all the four single extensions of the Beatle quadrant, only George Harrison's seems to have grown into something almost equal to what it was, perhaps because he is so aloof from the petti-fogging concerns of the domestic syndrome and the powerful urge to reveal all to your public. All things must pass, and a man has a mission, his little piece of wisdom to add to the Great Stream. Strangely, dignity seems to be what most people love about George Harrison. Inaccessible, he remains a star—but there is an element of righteousness that irritates.

These are all clichés now because we all know that it was the "unique chemistry" of the four and their father figure Epstein that together made the Beatles so utterly magnificent through the last note of "Abbey Road." (Incidentally, and this is no small point, that chemistry also changed the world. Look at the hair around you, the

clothes, and the spreading of Hip in all directions, in every way, and remember that it all started in Liverpool—or at least it was transmitted from the slums of that dirty old port city to the mass markets of the world.)

Now the ex-Beatles *follow* trends; they are no longer in positions to make them. More than that, apart from the issues of how we perceive them and how they see themselves now that they are gone from the front line of show-biz and pop culture, there is certainly what one can only term an objective decline in musical quality. The urge to innovate is gone.

Perhaps one in five of McCartney's songs are memorable on any level other than hummability. Lennon's flashes of melodic brilliance and lyrical power are

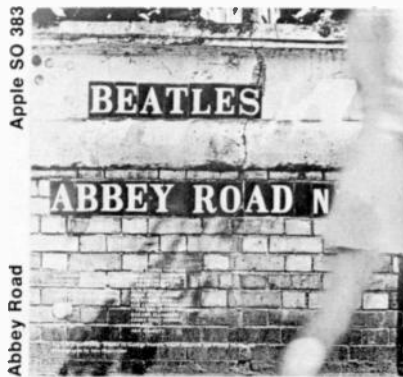


Apple SW 385

Hey Jude

dulled by what seems to be an almost obsessive urge to rock and roll—not an unworthy ambition if fully realized—which is reduced to mundanity by overemphasis and Elephant's Memory, a band remarkable for its commitment to the Big Beat and plenty of it, time after time after time. One hopes that the prominence of the Elephants in Lennon's recent exploits is part of a romance with New York City funk and nitty-gritty root-searching which may in time be transcended. One fears, though, that Yoko's theories on the value of musical assault and battery will grow with the years. But all we can do is speculate and try not to wince too obviously. John is now working on Yoko's next album. George is working on *his* new album and we have high hopes. Its content is shrouded in a mystery that tastes of the old days, but somehow a pessimistic expectation of more of the same is stronger than the almost unbearable suspense that preceded the release of "Sgt. Pepper."

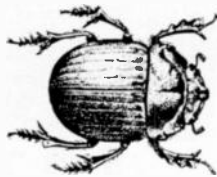
It's not just the mystique that's gone, the unprecedented giddy glamour and optimism of the Beatles' years as reigning deities of their generation. By all accounts, those years when they turned the world around were unhappy ones for them, and now with the approach of early middle age



Apple SO 383

and an easing of pressure they are busy trying to find some sort of sanity in the present. Excepting George, they seem less concerned with musical creativity than with music as instant self-expression or even as therapy (or, in Ringo's case, something he just *does*). They don't believe in the Beatles, but the problem is that a great many of their contemporaries still do.

—Patrick Carr

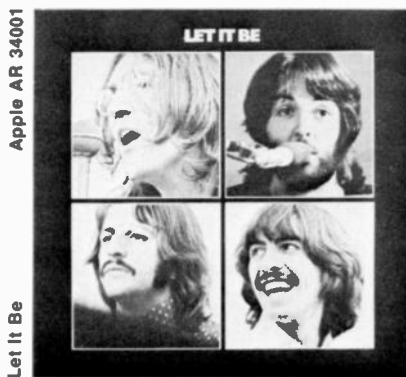


"Why not a Beatle museum in Times Square?"

● Incredible as it may seem, a whole bunch of fourteen-year-olds all across the country have just discovered the Beatles—the *early* Beatles, that is. For about the last year or so they have been writing to me asking if I know of any books that chronicle early Beatle history. (Remember *Cellarful of Noise*, which the famous Beatle press agent Derek Taylor ghost-wrote for Brian Epstein?) They loved Peter McCabe's *Apple to the Core*, but they really don't want to know about Ringo, Paul, John, and George *now*, only *then*. They've been buying all the early records, lining up to see *A Hard Day's Night* and *Help* and *Yellow Submarine* over and over and over. They dream of knowing Gloria Stavers (Editor of *Sixteen*) well enough to look at her 1964-1966 files, and wish they could talk Art Unger (now on the staff of *Ingenué*, but then editor of *Datebook*) into reissuing the one-shot Beatle book that made him a small fortune.

Where can they get early fan-club ma-

terial? I only wish I knew. In any case, I love any phenomenon that makes both Yoko and Linda un-persons. (Come back, Cynthia and Jane Asher! Fast!) My favorite teenage Beatlemaniac is Linda Kretschmann whom, I am proud to say, I have encouraged to start a fanzine called *Apple Press*. A young lady called Linda Woods puts out a newsletter which is mainly about Paul, and rarely shows that



Apple AR 34001

Let It Be

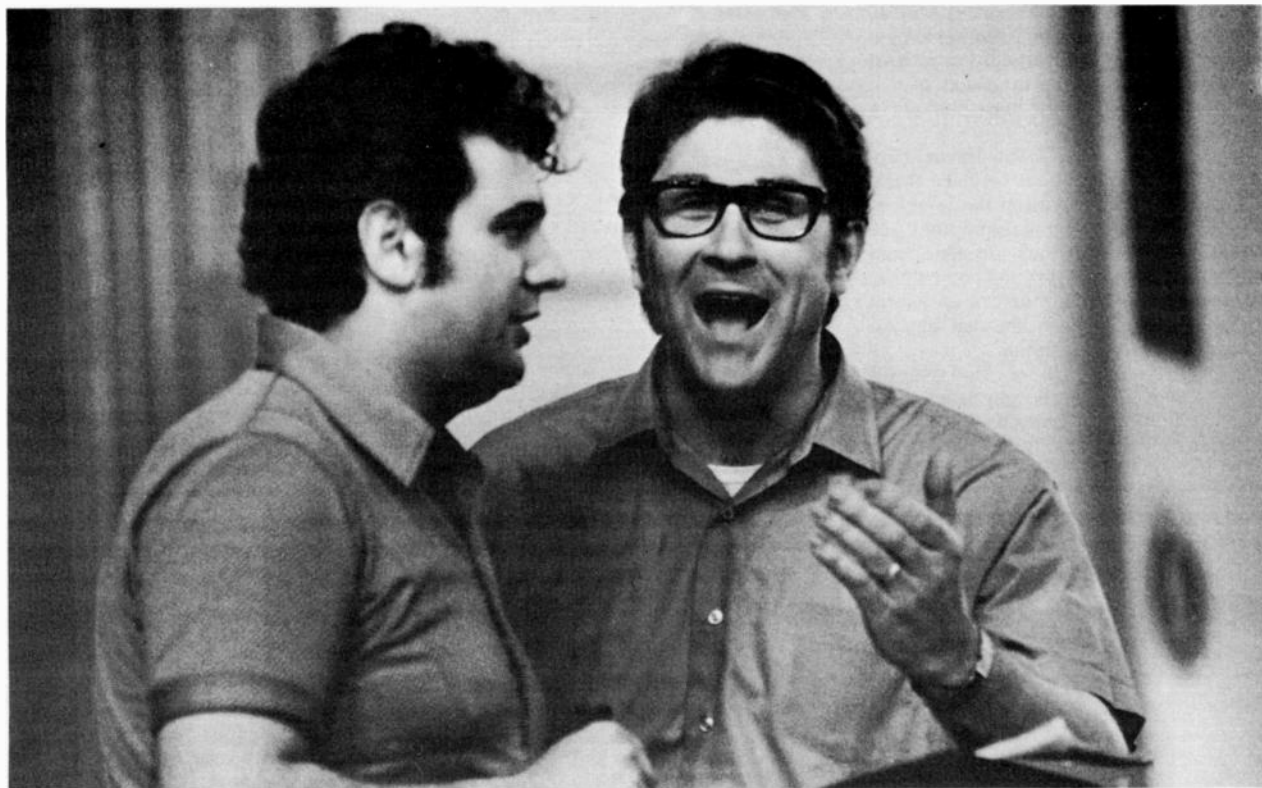
other Linda in a favorable light. (If you can think back far enough, it was only Paul that everyone loved to desperation.) A David Cassidy look-alike called Dave Morrell collects early Beatles tapes and memorabilia, and I think it only a matter of time before the youthful Mr. Morrell arranges chartered flights to Liverpool, complete with ceremonial visits to the Cavern, for those too young to remember.

These new-breed Beatle fans don't care much for the Beatles after the white album; in fact, I think you can say that after "Sgt. Pepper" it's all over for them. (Not surprising, really; post-Pepper just sounds a bit too much like now.) What does all this mean? Your guess is as good as mine, but I have some suspicions. The emergence of a brand-new youth audience (too young actually to remember the Beatles in the flesh) that is passionately devoted to this earlier music is, in some ways, oddly reminiscent of all those intellectual kids in the early Sixties who were equally devoted to the music and life of Woody Guthrie, or the early Delta blues singers. Out of that fascination, you may recall, emerged a Bob Dylan. Who knows—it may yet turn out that this current crop of Beatlemaniacs will yield up the new pop Renaissance we're all waiting for.

In the meantime, I have a few concrete suggestions. First of all, let's have a special reissue of *Sixteen* from the relevant years. Then Gloria Stavers, Art Unger, Derek Taylor, and others should write their early Beatles memoirs; Cynthia Lennon can start touring high schools as a lecturer, and even—why not?—establish a Beatles museum in Times Square.

—Lillian Roxon

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RCA Records

PLÁCIDO / SHERRILL DOMINGO / MILNES

A duolog on the subject of high notes between a pair of operatic heavies

By Stephen E. Rubin

"He's sort of a lovable teddy bear," Sherrill Milnes says of Plácido Domingo. "The girls love him and want to hug him. I think I'm less of a teddy bear and more of a jock."

"A what?" Domingo asks.

"A jock. You know, athletic, butch. The all-American football singer."

Baritone Milnes and tenor Domingo are engaged in discussing each other's public image. "I think we are both valuable to the layman's idea of the world of opera," the jock adds. "Our image negates some of the old, bad mystiques of the past."

Sprawled comfortably on a couch in the baritone's rambling New York apartment, the singers hardly look like ranking members of the Age of Aquarius. But with their colorful shirts, youthful good looks, and unoperatic abandon, they don't resemble representatives of the Golden Age very much either. Milnes does look like the football player of his mind's eye, or perhaps the lead

cowboy in a horse opera. His sweater and tight-fitting jeans show off a brawny physique to good advantage. Domingo is a dark, curly-haired, romantic Latin type, rather given to heft, and his loose trousers do little to disguise an ample middle.

Free as they are of most of the stereotype characteristics of opera performers, the singers have understandably been promoted and publicized by at least one record company in a manner usually reserved for pop artists. But they are, in fact, prime specimens of jet-age operatic superstars. Their fast-moving careers are wholly of today. Although both have been on the international scene only since the late Sixties, they are in demand by almost every major opera house in the world. Recording companies, too, seek them out. Initially, they were both exclusive RCA artists. Today, because RCA cannot always match the operatic projects offered by competitors, they—like most of their big-time colleagues—play the game of label-hopping with great facility. Milnes made his first record-al-

bum in 1967 and has already, as of this past summer, completed twenty-five recordings for four companies. Domingo began a year later, and has seventeen disc appearances on six labels under his generous belt.

What is immediately striking about both is the natural beauty of their voices. Domingo possesses an Italianate tenor of ample size, warm sound, and ravishing lyrical quality. Milnes has a big, bright baritone with a ringing top and surprising agility. Both are well-trained musicians, and display considerable musical intelligence. Their repertoires are large and diverse, and both have been known to learn new parts and perform them on a few days' notice.

The critics have been, for the most part, kind. Little fault has been found with their vocalism *per se*, but they have come under fire for being interpretively superficial and, on occasion, technically rough-and-ready. But critics feel too that Domingo, at thirty-one, and Milnes, at thirty-seven, have the time and the means to overcome these youthful shortcomings and develop fully into substantial singing actors.

A new facet of their art will be unveiled when RCA soon releases a record on one side of which Milnes sings and Domingo conducts, and on the flip side of which they reverse the roles. Largely because of their RCA obligations, the two have been thrown together on so many occasions that a close friendship has developed between them: hence this unusual project, which both are quick to defend as being more than a commercial gimmick.

"Let me tell you something," Domingo says in his Latinized English. "The results, I don't know what they're going to be. But I can assure you it's not a gimmick. I wouldn't allow myself, and I'm sure Sherrill wouldn't either, to do something unless we felt prepared."

"We've both conducted before," Milnes adds. "Not major-league forces, but the skills are the same and the working with the people is the same."

"I consider very difficult the career of a conductor, especially to create something," Domingo continues. "Not to play music in a monotonous way, but to make something with *rubato*, *accelerando*, dynamics. I believe that many of the conductors of today trust orchestras and musicians, who are so good, and don't pay attention to any of these details. Believe me, at least I will be honest. I have my own ideas of what I want the orchestra to do, and I will transmit them, and it will be my honest feeling. I know what I want. I might be wrong, but it is not a gimmick."

CONDUCTING, it appears, is something more than a whim for the Spanish-born tenor. "A secret dream of mine, which I suppose is not a secret any more, is that I want to be a conductor. It's a very deep thing, but let me put it this way. I don't think, despite everything, that conducting is more exciting than singing. Not for me. I love my career, I'm very happy to sing, and I hope I can sing twenty years more. The thing is, in case something goes wrong with the voice, and I am prepared and will be able to be a good conductor, it will be an escape for me. I would always have something to do with music."

Milnes feels similarly about a career in music, but does not believe he would ever opt for conducting. It is not surprising that their backgrounds, though remarkably diverse, are both firmly rooted in music. But neither's is a typical operatic story—which explains, perhaps, their contemporary and often unoperatic outlooks.

They were born six years and many miles apart—Milnes on a farm in Downers Grove, Illinois, Domingo in Madrid. While little Sherrill stayed put and led a typical farm boy's existence, getting up early and milking cows, little Placido was learning the ins and outs of show business. At nine, he emigrated to Mexico with his parents, who formed their own zarzuela company there. Domingo's mother, Pepita Embil, is a popular figure still and in Mexico is often referred to as the "Queen of Zarzuela." Milnes' mother, who died in 1969, was something of a star in her own right: she established and conducted a community choir and was both a singer and a pianist.

As youngsters, both baritone and tenor showed great potential. Sherrill studied the piano and violin as well as voice. In high school, he won a state music contest in five separate categories, yet upon entering college signed up as a pre-med student. Placido was publicly at the keyboard by the time he was eight. In his teens he studied conducting; for a short while his teacher was Igor Markevitch. At sixteen, he made his debut—as a baritone—with the family troupe in a work called *Gigantes y Cabezudos*. He also conducted zarzuelas, played the piano in night clubs, sang in musical comedies, including a local production of *My Fair Lady*, and even tried his hand at bull-fighting.

DOMINGO'S bull-ring ambitions were probably a little shorter-lived than Milnes' medical aspirations. Within a year, the baritone had switched from medicine to music, but had enough native caution to take education courses so that he could always teach. His first professional job was with the Margaret Hillis Choir, which performs regularly with the Chicago Symphony. In 1960, he took the big step and decided to pursue an operatic career. A year later, he made his debut with Rosa Ponselle's Baltimore Civic Opera as Gérard in *Andrea Chénier*.

Domingo sang his first major operatic role, Alfredo in *La Traviata*, that same year. He had been offered a contract with Mexico City's opera company if he would switch from baritone to tenor—a transition the manager of the company suspected was lurking within him—and did so. For Domingo to become the seasoned veteran he is (he has more than seven hundred performances behind him), he had to travel the usual operatic route—overseas. Milnes, on the other hand, broke the old rule about developing a career abroad. He is strictly an American-made product.

Americans, in fact, are more familiar with him than they might realize. He is the fellow who informed them that "you get a lot to like with a Marlboro." He also advised prospective consumers musically that they couldn't go wrong with other products such as Falstaff beer and Kellogg's cornflakes. "I've made more than \$20,000 in residuals alone," Milnes says of the commercials. He eventually stopped making them when opera became a full-time occupation.

Today, both Domingo and Milnes are in the front rank of practitioners in their respective voice categories. Oddly, when viewed in the light of operatic legend, there are more good tenors to compete with Domingo than there are baritones to challenge Milnes for his crown. Both are chiefly hailed for their performances in Italian roles, but they frequently venture into other areas, including contemporary music. They are riding high; they also realize they are far from perfect, and are even willing to criticize one another.

(Continued overleaf)

"I have one criticism of Sherrill, and I hope he has one for me," Domingo says. "He is almost too worried all the time thinking about extra high notes. For instance, he sings B-flats and A-naturals, which is very exciting for the public to hear from a baritone. But I think that just now, being at the top of the world as a baritone, he should concentrate more on the register from E to G and A-flat. And give a little more color on the E-natural and the F."

Milnes retorts, "Well, I'm very busy and run around a lot, but Placido does it even more. If I jam my schedule, I don't know what the word is for him. Maybe *jam anche più*. Also he's been working on one area, and it's grown and will probably grow more. That is, the highest high, B and C. There are parts for a tenor that can't be sung if he doesn't have a high C. For Placido, this is still growing."

"It's still a problem for me," Domingo agrees. "There's an explanation. When I sing cold, I can hit the C, even the D-flat. I sing *Puritani* when I'm completely cold at home. But when I am putting everything behind me, I arrive at a note and the throat, it closes. I have to find a technique to be able to do that because I want to sing the *bel canto* repertoire."

There isn't a tenor alive who doesn't warm to the subject of high notes—whether he's got them or not. Milnes, with his explosive upper register, is equally fascinated with the subject. One gets the impression that they could discuss high notes far into the night.

Milnes: Composers were unfair to tenors. If you think that the difference between a tenor and a baritone is a minor third, how many B-naturals does a tenor have versus A-flats for a baritone? The point is that composers didn't write the same number of high notes a minor third lower for the baritone as they did for the tenor.

Domingo: I have eighteen B-flats in *Aida*.

Milnes: I don't have a single G, just two G-flats, in *Aida*.

Domingo: I have read some books about *bel canto*. All the high C's Rossini wrote were to be sung in falsetto. Everything from A-flat up was. Can you imagine singing "*A te, o cara*" [from Bellini's *I Puritani*] today with a falsetto? You'd be laughed off stage.

Milnes: It was a much smaller vocal approach then. The orchestras were not as big.

Domingo: And the pitch was about a tone lower.

Milnes: Those two little membranes [vocal cords] have remained the same, but, as houses and orchestra sizes have grown, we've had to make more sound.

Domingo: When people talk about the age of *bel canto* as being the best, the Golden Age, I don't give a damn and I don't believe it, because they had an easy life. Tenors never sang over the G—it was a falsetto. If I don't have to go over the G, I swear to you I can sing 365 days a year.

Milnes: It's interesting. I can sometimes vocalize to a C, and I don't mean falsetto. But the voice gets narrower and narrower. The higher pitch increases the power of the note, but it has to peak somewhere and the sound gets thin. There's a point where it stops being beautiful.

Domingo: It happens to me also. The B-natural I can really hit—strong and with volume. The high C, when I hit it, sometimes it gets narrow. That's the reason I'm afraid to do it, because I cannot attack it with all my strength. Then there's the danger of cracking. I vocalize sometimes to E-flat in voice, not falsetto. But it's one thing to do it when vocalizing, another to do it on stage.

What is it about high notes, I asked, that drives per-

formers to strain themselves and drives audiences to the point of frenzy?

Milnes: There's a physical sensation in singing high notes that's second only to sex.

Domingo: That's a fantastic description. I have another one that's not as good. When you go to an opera, you want the music to touch your heart. You are in a romantic mood, but still the high notes are like the Romans bringing the Christians to the lions. That's the excitement, the savage approach.

Milnes: From the audience point of view, there is the danger element—will he make it? And there are people who dig sound *per se* so much that a high note with no theatrical connection is enough for them.

Both Milnes and Domingo are wary of audience reaction based solely on high notes. They are also aware of the fact that audiences can be indiscriminating.

Domingo: I sang *Tosca* in Turin, and they gave me an ovation after singing the B-natural before Scarpia's entrance. That makes me think that if another tenor will stink in the whole rest of the act, but will hold that note, he will get the same reaction at that moment. This doesn't happen with other publics, who judge you for everything. In London, for example, the audience has a fantastic memory. Because sometimes they don't applaud throughout the whole opera, but at the end they remember this *piano*, that high note.

Milnes: The British public is very unusual. And they can throw you off, because you belt a high note, there's a big cadence, and nothing greets you but silence.

Domingo: On my debut, I didn't have any applause after the two arias in *Tosca*. But at the end, it was an ovation not to believe. Aaaaah! They even brought me a laurel what-you-call-it. . . . You know, there's a colleague of mine who has a chronometer to check how long he holds notes and then to check how long the applause goes on.

Milnes: That's insane. I've checked applause, but only on tapes after I'm home.

HIGH notes and applause—the stuff that makes Italian opera unique among art forms. Both artists have had their fair share of demonstrative ovations, but neither feels that the public displays of affection have gone to their heads.

Domingo: If there has been any change in Sherrill, it has been an improvement. Since he has been traveling around the world so much, there have been many changes, even in his personality. Friendly he has always been, but his attitudes, they are different.

Milnes: Perhaps, in a sense, Placido has an advantage over American singers. Being born in Spain, brought up in Mexico, doing a lot of early singing in Israel, he has a more international flavor. He gained sophistication—in a good way—much earlier. Amazingly, though, there's been little change in him. Even with the many enormous successes he's had in lots of theaters, he's still a "buddy" kind of guy. That may not sound like star talk. But, you know, you can be a star and still be a nice guy. At one time, that wasn't in. To be a star, you had to have a mystique. No one would ever see you in public, and you'd race from the dressing room quick into your limousine and be whisked away. People like to elevate you a little bit, but they also like to think of you as a real human being. I think Placido has stayed this way.

So it ended, on a note of mutual admiration—one more meeting of the jock and the teddy bear, with many more, their fans must hope, to come.

STEREO HEARING

(Part 2)

The recording and reproduction of auditory space is still more art than science, despite our relatively complete understanding of the nature of auditory perception

By Floyd Toole



Stereo-, from the Greek, meaning "solid," a prefix used in the formation of compound words to denote the quality of three-dimensionality.

WHenever two physically separated speaker systems produce a sound whose apparent source is somewhere between them, the listener's ear is being tricked through the perceptual process known as *binaural fusion*. (The process was described in detail in last month's article, "Stereo Hearing," which dealt with our perception of auditory space.) The ear is fooled by this process whether one is listening to a few sharply defined voices and instruments, as in any one of a number of popular-music recordings, or to the subtly blended panorama of a large symphony orchestra spread out, through recording techniques, across the width of the stereo "stage."

Most illusions, whether auditory or visual, are very fragile things—they persuade the observer of their reality only when they are perceived from one favorable aspect and under carefully controlled circumstances. The stereo effect is no exception. Whatever the intent of a stereophonic recording—realism or surrealism, artifice or actuality—its success depends on the intelligent use of the medium both in the recording and in the reproduction. Many of the criticisms leveled against stereo—especially in its infancy, but persisting still today—are not inherent faults of the medium but of the shortcomings of people misusing it.

There is little the listener at home can do about irresponsible or misguided recording engineers who create products that will not hold together under aural scrutiny, except refuse to buy their products. But there are also rules for setting up the apparatus of realistic *reproduction*—rules governing the placement of speakers and listening locations and, to some extent, the adjustment of room acoustics—for which the listener himself must be held account-

able. If these are violated, he must simply expect to sacrifice some of the aesthetic pleasures multichannel sound reproduction has to offer.

Many of the original experiments with stereophony were performed with headphones, and the techniques of binaural recording and reproduction based on them are straightforward and theoretically well founded. A two-channel recording is made using a dummy head with accurately replicated external ears and with microphones in place of eardrums. When the recording is played back through stereo headphones, the sounds delivered to the listener's two ears are much like those he'd have heard if he had been at the dummy head's location at the recording site.

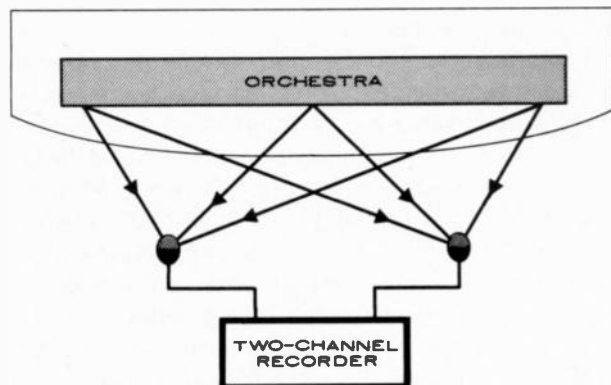
This technique of binaural recording provides one of the most "realistic" and engrossing listening experiences possible within the limitations of today's state of the art, but for a variety of reasons it doesn't work perfectly. Aside from the "normal" technical problems of recording and reproduction, there are also the psychological problems associated with the lack of visual cues, for there are not even loudspeakers to encourage external localization of the stereo image. Furthermore, the location of the performers, whether soloists or symphony orchestra players, changes with the head movements of the listener—which is hardly a normal listening experience!

Consequently, though impressions of spaciousness can be provided fairly well with headphones, specific sound images are frequently perceived inside or just outside (and often behind) the head. Since this is true even for carefully made binaural recordings, the situation can certainly be no better when headphones are used with conventional stereophonic recordings, which often employ more widely separated microphones. The effect may be pleasant, even exciting, but it is little more than a suggestion of realism. *(Continued overleaf)*

With stereo headphones, the principal problem for the listener is to believe in the illusion that the sound originates somewhere "out there." With loudspeakers, however, the concern is with the placement of sound sources and the credibility of the acoustical ambiance—that is, with presenting the aural size and perspective of a "real-life" listening experience. Unfortunately, both the visual and acoustical properties of the listening room militate against the "concert-hall" illusion. Other impediments, some of them the unwitting fault of the listener and the way he has set up his equipment, can exist as well. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate, in vastly simplified form, two different approaches to stereophonic recording. Figure 1 illustrates a scheme that might be used for recording classical music, where the musicians play together in a group and some contribution from the acoustic environment is considered desirable. In this arrangement *both* microphones pick up sound from the *entire* orchestra, but from different perspectives: the left microphone favors the left half of the orchestra, the right microphone the right. When these halves are "reassembled" in the listening room, the orchestra, with its surrounding ambiance, is spread between the two stereo speakers.

Figure 2 represents a typical studio setup for pop-music recording. Each instrument (or voice) is allotted its own close-up microphone, and each microphone feeds a separate track on a multi-track tape machine. The physical locations of the performers in the studio have nothing to do with where they may appear in the finished recording. In fact, the artists are often miked while acoustically isolated from one another, and they must wear headphones in order to hear what the other members of the group are doing. This ensures that the sound of the intended instrument and that instrument only is laid down on the track set aside for it. The finished

Fig. 1. A possible "concert-hall" recording setup, in which two (or more) mikes pick up the same instruments from different perspectives. The recording will have built-in crosstalk.



tape—in effect four mono tracks for four instruments, six tracks for six, *etc.*—is merely the raw material for the final stereo (or four-channel) version, which is created to the producer's taste during the mix-down process.

Mixing down involves, among other things, distributing each of the mono tracks between the two (or four) stereo channels of a second tape recorder. Any track can be confined to one channel only, or it can be shared by and/or moved among several channels through the manipulation of a "pan pot"—a special type of balance control on the mixing console that can distribute a signal among several channels—say, by turning it up in one channel while turning it down in others. As we know from last month's discussion of interaural differences, this will cause the instrument's location in the stereo image to shift in the direction of the speaker channel favored when the recording is played back.

THE stereo effect provided by a record made according to Figure 2 is fairly easy to predict, since the "stereo" has been artificially created, with a specific intent in mind, through combinations of mono signals. Obviously a signal meant for left-front or right-front (or left-rear or right-rear in a "discrete" four-channel recording) will appear in that speaker only, and the listener will localize it there wherever he is in the room. Only the overall loudness balance will be altered as he approaches or recedes from the source speaker. However, any voice or instrument intended for localization *between* speakers has to be produced by pan-potted signals applied to at least two speaker channels. The perceptual process of binaural fusion then takes over to blend two or more separated sound sources into a single image. To appreciate how this works—and how it can fail to work if all isn't as it should be—let's take a specific example.

BINAURAL DEMO RECORD

READERS intrigued by the idea of binaural recording can sate their curiosity with STEREO REVIEW's Binaural Demonstration Record, made according to the technique described in this article and intended specifically for headphone listening. Side one conducts you on a walking tour of New York City; side two is devoted to music, with jazz, organ, and chamber music selections. The 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ -rpm LP record costs \$5.98; it can be ordered from: Binaural Demonstration Record, Ziff-Davis Service Division, 595 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. Payment (check or money order) should accompany your order. New York State residents add local sales tax.

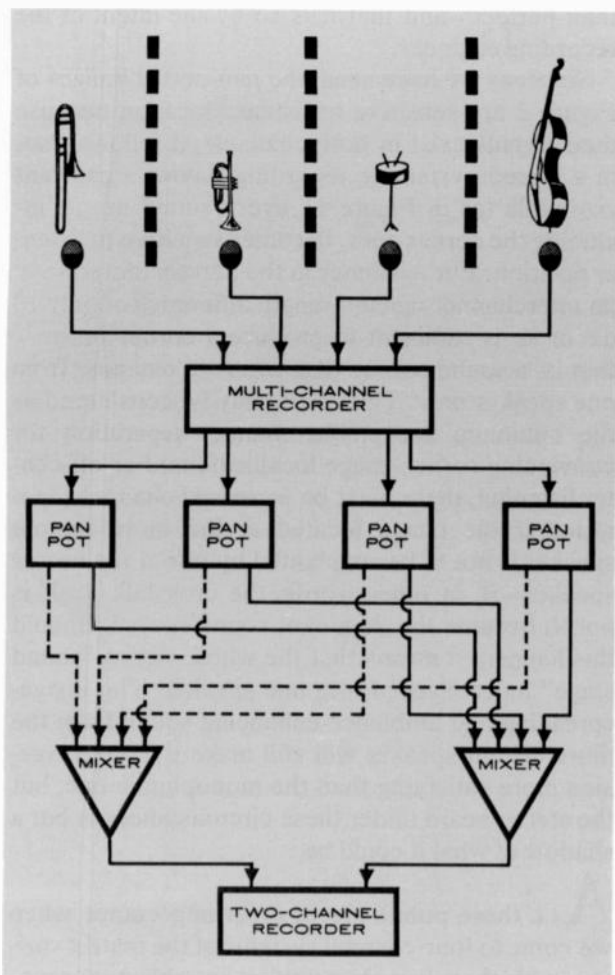


Fig. 2. A typical "studio" setup records each instrument in acoustical isolation. In the stereo mix-down, instruments can be pan-potted so as to appear at or between the two speakers.

Figure 3 shows a listener located on the center line between two speakers with the pan-potted signal represented by rectangular pulses. The sound from *each* speaker travels to *both* ears simultaneously, arriving later (and with slightly reduced amplitude) at the more remote ear. However, because of the perfect symmetry of the situation, the signals arriving at the two ears are identical to one another. In real life this can occur only for a sound source directly ahead or directly behind. Predictably, the brain responds to this bit of trickery with the perception of a sound image mid-way between the speakers. Note that sound from the left speaker also reaches the right ear, and *vice versa*. These are, in truth, unwanted sounds, since they can only contribute to the confusion of the imagery. (Incidentally, such acoustic mixing is not present in headphone listening.) Fortunately, temporal masking (the mental suppression of a later sound by a similar earlier sound) steps in to let the earlier signals dominate the spatial impressions.

As was remarked before, the recording engineer has the option, by means of his pan pots, of locating a sound source at left, right, center, or anywhere in between. The control achieves this by introducing inter-channel amplitude differences, since these are heard as interaural amplitude differences. You can demonstrate this technique to yourself at home by switching your system to the mono (A + B or L + R) mode and listening to a record. While sitting at a point *exactly* equidistant from the speakers, have someone rotate the balance control slowly to one extreme and then to the other. At the center of the control's range the sound image should be at dead center. With increasing imbalance, the image should move toward the side producing the louder sound. With most equipment, rotating the balance control to an extreme position should cause the sound to emanate from only one speaker. By this one demonstration the listener can experience, individually, all possible image locations which appear in combination in close-miked two-channel stereo recordings: full left, full right, and the intermediate panned images. Note that the binaurally fused image remains intact, although its apparent size may alter as it moves because the interaural *time* differences that would normally accompany a change in position are not introduced by the balance control.

Now, to appreciate how sensitive the stereo illusion is to even minor deviations from ideal circumstances, try restoring the balance control to its center position and move yourself slowly sideways from the point of exact symmetry. The stereo image will move away from center in the direction of your motion. How far it moves and how rapidly depends on a variety of factors; in general, one finds that just a few inches of sideways motion will displace the sound image well away from its intended center location. And the closer one sits to the loudspeakers, the greater the effect is. The cause of this unhappy phenomenon is revealed in Figure 4: it is the time difference created by the unequal sound-path lengths to the two ears. In normal hearing, an earlier signal in the left ear indicates a sound source to the left of center. A time difference of 0.6 to 0.7 millisecond (equivalent to a difference of less than a foot in sound-path lengths) is normally indicative of a sound image at 90 degrees from straight ahead. Thus, in this stereo configuration, even a small sideways movement by the listener can be sufficient to displace the intended center image completely to the nearer loudspeaker. Six to twelve inches is usually sufficient, so that leaning on an elbow can move some or all of the center images to one side or the other. Although the extreme left and right images, being confined to their respective speakers only,

remain in place, the center images collapse to the side, producing a "hole in the middle" effect.

Once a listener is seated more than a foot or so away from the axis of symmetry, the situation changes further, as shown in Figure 5. The first sounds to arrive at both ears are from the same speaker, and they are hotly pursued by signals from the more remote speaker. Since the sound that arrives first determines the apparent direction of the sound source, the tendency in this extreme case of listener (mis)location is to hear everything as coming from the near speaker, while the remote speaker's later contribution influences the quantity and quality of the sound and the size of the sonic image. This phenomenon has been given various names, among them the "precedence effect," the "Haas effect," and the "law of the first wavefront."

But what about the stereo balance control, which is supposed to exist to correct for these aberrations? It is true that within the narrow range in which image fusion is still possible as depicted in Figure 4, one can counteract the image shift due to listener movement by means of an opposite adjustment of channel balance, thus preserving a centered image. Too much of this, however, and the left and right corner signals become grotesquely unbalanced. And beyond the range of simple image fusion, no amount of knob twiddling or speaker juggling will restore a clearcut center image. The best that can be achieved is a smeared sound source that may be construed as being vaguely between or at both speakers. From this we can see that the concept of the "stereo seat"—the proper listening location relative to the positions of the speakers—is still as much a prerequisite to the full realization of the stereo effect as it has ever been.

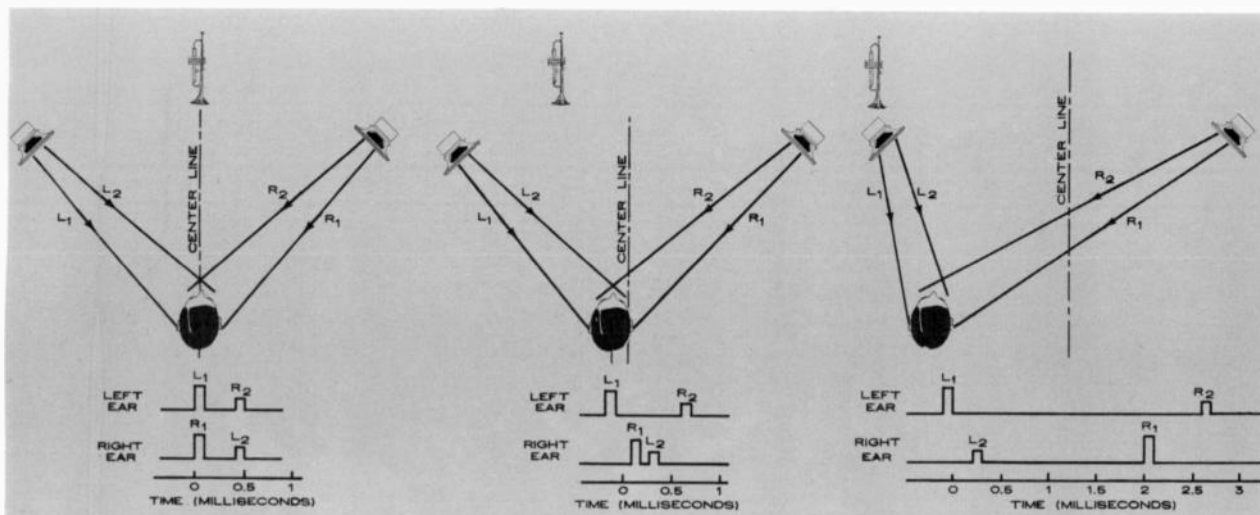
UP to now we have been talking about recordings made by the method depicted in Figure 2, in which the corner images (extreme left and extreme right) are produced by signals existing only in those respective channels. Under these circumstances, listener location does not interfere very much with the ability to localize these corner images. Another way of expressing this is to say that, for these signals, the recording and the reproduction system have perfect separation, with no crosstalk between speakers. But let us, for a moment, take another look at the recording situation in Figure 1. Here, as we recall, both microphone channels pick up a lesser or greater amount of sound from all the instruments in the orchestra. It cannot be predicted just how much of the sound from extreme stage right, say, is picked up by the left microphone, but it is safe to assume that interchannel separation is less

than perfect—and that it is so by the intent of the recording engineer.

Since, as we have seen, the pan-potted images of Figure 2 are sensitive to listener location because their signals exist in both channels, it follows that, in a stereo system or recording having significant cross-talk (as in Figure 1), every sound image, including the corner ones, becomes sensitive to listener position. For a listener in the correct stereo seat, an interchannel signal-strength difference of only 10 dB or so is sufficient to produce a corner image—that is, a sound source that seems to emanate from one speaker only. This, then, may be considered as the minimum acceptable channel separation for convincing corner-image localizations. For off-center listening, there must be increased channel separation if the image located at the more remote speaker is not to be supplanted by one at the nearer speaker—if, in other words, the crosstalk itself is not to become the dominant sound source. Should this happen, it means that the whole stereo "sound stage" has collapsed into one speaker. The image-spreading and ambiance-enhancing sound from the more distant speaker will still make the stereo version more satisfying than the monophonic one, but the stereo heard under these circumstances is but a shadow of what it could be.

ALL these points are of great importance when we come to four-channel systems of the matrix variety, with their less-than-perfect interchannel separation. Depending on the recording company's specific choice of matrixing system and the skill and care in its execution, the separations among the channels without the use of special "logic" or "gain riding" circuits range from 3 to about 25 dB. At the 25-dB separation level, everything is fine, but this rarely occurs between more than one pair of the channels. In one or more of the other channels some unwanted signal will exist at a level only 3 to 6 dB lower than the wanted component.

This being the case, it is obvious that matrixed four-channel stereo—and even discrete four-channel, when non-corner images are involved—will do little to liberate the listener from the restrictions of the stereo seat and correct speaker placement. If anything, it may pose more stringent requirements. Few living rooms will lend themselves to the arrangement of the speakers in a perfect square with the listener at dead center—the "classic" quadraphonic array. But, even in awkward rooms, some beneficial compromises should be possible. For example, many listeners will find themselves sitting along the back wall with the rear speakers beside them. If the rear speakers are spread far enough



The apparent location of a sound reproduced in stereo depends on the relative strength and timing of the signals reaching the listener's ears. In Fig. 3 (left), signals at both ears are identical; the apparent sound source (a trumpet) therefore appears to be directly ahead. In Figs. 4 and 5, as the listener shifts in varying degrees from the center position, the image shifts as well.

apart so that the distance—as the crow flies—from left rear to listener equals the distance from left front to listener (and the same rule is followed for the two right speakers), then the system will have the best possible chance of reproducing the interaural amplitude and time differences engineered into the recording.

Because interaural time and amplitude differences are symmetrical for sound sources in front and behind, it is possible, even in real life, for one to confuse front and back. Such occurrences usually last only a moment, since visual cues and head movements are sufficient to resolve the ambiguity. However, even in two-channel stereo, one occasionally can get a clear impression of sound from behind. A twitch of the head will put it back up front, and it may never move again. Yet, some recordings do a creditable job of generating an impression of aural spaciousness including, if one faces forward and sits still, ambient sound from above and behind. These aural illusions arise out of a simple misinterpretation of the sounds at the two ears. The more confused the directionality of the sound to begin with, the more easily it is misinterpreted. Hence, ambiance or reverberation in a recording can, with relative ease, be *believed* to be anywhere and everywhere in the listening room.

Quadraphonic sound is obviously an attempt to stabilize such illusions by providing *real* sources of sound behind and to the sides of the listener. With four discrete channels this is certainly possible, and, in addition to ambiance, individual sound sources can also be localized to the rear of the listener. The ambiguity of front-to-back aural localization, plus the limited separation of matrixed four channel, however, can make listener position especially criti-

cal. Leaning forward can shift the images to the front, moving back can take them to the rear. As in two-channel stereo, there will be a spatial ambiguity and an image-broadening effect contributed by the more remote speakers.

The so-called gain-riding "logic" circuits can ease the restrictions on the stereo seat by singling out solo passages and squelching all but the intended channel(s). However, when the system attenuates the unwanted cross-talk it also attenuates any low-level—but nevertheless wanted—sounds that may happen to be in that channel. But, even with its faults, logic assistance can only be welcome in what is, at best, a difficult situation.

Gain-riding logic cannot function when voices and instruments are playing simultaneously through all four channels. Image localizations under these circumstances are, predictably, rather vague, with sounds originating from several places at once. Nevertheless, the perspective from the proper stereo seat can be quite good. With the logic circuits from time to time emphasizing the true location of specific instruments, the spatial effects can be quite impressively realistic (if that was the intention) or just impressive (if pure artistry was the object).

Again, however, at positions away from the stereo seat, the same old problems are back, and any spatial organization of images is more a matter of accident than of the intentions of the recording engineer. And just there, of course, we enter the realm of spatial sound effects which, credible or not, is the basic rationale of the "anything goes" school of recorded popular music. Success, in this context, depends largely on being different, and it cannot be denied that it is indeed a vast new sonic dimension whose reaches we have not yet begun to explore.



The first American performance (New York, 1903) of *The Merry Widow* starred Ethel Jackson (in white dress) in the title role.

SCHLAGOPERA

The brand of operetta once concocted in Vienna continues to find its way to the world's sweet tooth

An appreciation by ARAM BAKSHIAN

FOR too many otherwise cultivated lovers of music, Viennese operetta is nothing but schmaltz. Some of these benighted souls went into paroxysms of rage when Sir Rudolf Bing, at the outset of his tenure as the Metropolitan Opera's general manager, staged Johann Strauss' *Die Fledermaus* in 1950. But their protests soon turned to quiet grumbling, for the production ran for a successful twenty performances, to considerable popular acclaim. On the other hand, operetta devotees themselves sometimes overstate the case, too, by labeling such staples of the repertoire as *Fledermaus* "champagne opera." It has always seemed to me that *Schlag*, the Viennese word for whipped cream, comes closer to the mark. *Schlag* is a representative Viennese item. It is a natural product, pleasing to the taste, at once heavy and light, frothy and yet substantial. Cynics might add that a little of

it goes a long way—but then there really is only a little good operetta available, recorded or live, in today's America.

Nevertheless, much popular Broadway and Hollywood music is derivative of the last great wave of Viennese operetta, drawing (and sometimes plagiarizing) from the style and work of Lehár, Kálmán, Stolz, and Oscar Straus. For instance, most Americans are probably familiar with a tune, usually identified as *Play, Gypsy* (with or without lyrics), that is taken directly from Kálmán's *Countess Maritza*. You come across it in the oddest places—played by aging Italian violinists in third-rate trattorias, booming through Muzak systems to captive audiences in high-rise elevators. Yet how many of these listeners have ever heard of Emmerich Kálmán? Very few, I suspect. The average American musical, both in its strengths and weaknesses, also owes a great deal to

Viennese operetta. Insidious plots, and songs that outlive them, are only two of many similarities. But if you are really to appreciate Viennese operetta, you must love it not as a fossilized evolutionary link in music history, but for itself. Given half a chance, such a love comes easily, and it lasts.

Why, though, is it Viennese operetta that endures, as opposed to the vast body of German operettas that were ground out during the same period and that were nearly as well received? Why have the works of Marschner and Cornelius—who, as STEREO REVIEW's music editor recently reminded me, survive mainly in the form of marble busts adorning the foyers of German opera houses—failed to attain the immortality of Strauss and his heirs?

Perhaps it is because, even in the most reactionary phase of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy, Viennese operetta was a supranational institution. Unlike German operetta, it drew directly from several cultures, and, like Vienna herself, managed to coalesce these elements without homogenizing them. "If you view the land from Kahlenberg, you will understand what I am and what I write"—thus the greatest of Austrian poets, Franz Grillparzer, summed up the impact of the nineteenth-century Viennese environment on himself and his art. But to appreciate Viennese operetta fully one must take the same view and extend it farther down the Danube to embrace the Hungarian plain and other former Habsburg lands whose temperaments and melodies were an intrinsic part of this immortal "lightweight" of the music world. The two dominant strains are Viennese and Hungarian—the Viennese waltz and incidental music, and the strings, tambourines, cimbaloms, and czardas of Hungary. But there are lesser tinctures of the wild Habsburg *Grenz*, or frontier land to the east, too.

It was this cultural diversity, a broad blending of complementary elements, that made Vienna, and its operetta, distinctly richer than, for example, Berlin, the newer "Imperial" capital of the late nineteenth century, and that led Viennese of all classes to sing, with considerable feeling,

*Es gibt nur eine Kaiserstadt,
Es gibt nur ein Wien;
Es gibt nur ein Räubernest,
Und das heisst Berlin!*

(There's only one Imperial City,
There's only one Vienna;
There's only one robbers' nest,
And it's called Berlin!)

For the first of the two dominant strains, Viennese waltzes and incidental music, one must look to the early years of the nineteenth century. At

the outset, the waltz was denounced by solid citizens and self-appointed guardians of morals as "degenerate." It was too fast, and involved too much body contact, they said. One anti-waltz tract even denounced the new dance as the "main cause of feebleness of body and mind in our generation," a scourge of the "sons and daughters of Germany"—all of which, no doubt, helped to boost its popularity with the younger set. By the time of the Congress of Vienna, in 1814, the aged Comte de Ligne could complain that the Congress didn't move much, but waltzed a great deal.

GRADUALLY, two men emerged as the leaders of the new craze, Joseph Lanner and Johann Strauss, Sr. Strauss, probably the lesser composer of the two, but definitely a better showman, began as junior partner. Three years younger than Lanner, he was the son of a modest suburban innkeeper, fonder of fiddling than of business or study. He began his musical career playing the viola with a small dance band. In the same band, as first violinist, was Joseph Lanner, who soon decided to form a trio of his own. Strauss, then only fifteen, defected with him. By 1824 the two men were universally acknowledged as the superstars of Viennese light music. From trio to quartet, quintet, and full-scale orchestra, their enterprise grew, changing the waltz from a delicate, small instrumental piece to a full-blown orchestral form. By the 1830's the team had split, first on friendly terms (two orchestras could meet the demand for their music better than one), but later with growing rivalry, the ultimate victor being Strauss. Lanner never fell into obscurity, but his swarthy, melodramatic junior partner soon developed a more numerous, fervid following, and was definitely *the* "Waltz King" in 1842, when Lanner died of typhus. Yet there is something to be said for Lanner's lighter, more natural style, as you can hear for yourself by listening to his *Die Schönbrunner* waltz on an excellent reissue of Viennese waltzes (Seraphim 60018), with Henry Krips conducting the Philharmonia Promenade Orchestra.

Having won out over Lanner, Johann Strauss soon ran into heavier competition from an unexpected source, his own son. Johann Jr., despite his jealous father's efforts to force him into a "respectable" profession, began a musical career of his own that eventually overshadowed his father's. The generation gap also extended to politics: Johann Sr. was a staunch defender of the old regime during the March uprising of 1848, and young Johann manned the barricades with the revolutionaries. One of old Strauss' best remembered pieces is, in fact, a paean to the old order. The famous *Radetzky March* was a

With a few isolated exceptions, the masterpieces of the Viennese waltz, and of the operetta genre based upon it, were the work of a mere handful of composers.

The first wave (seen here left to right) included Josef Lanner (1801-1843), Johann Strauss, Sr. (1804-1849), his son Johann Strauss, Jr. (1825-1899), Franz von Suppé (1819-1895), and Karl Millöcker (1842-1899).

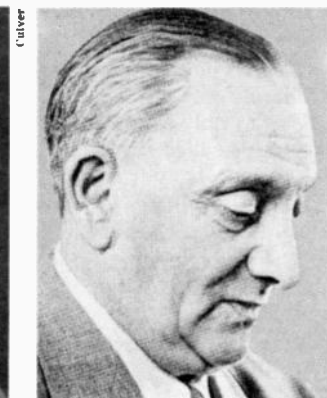
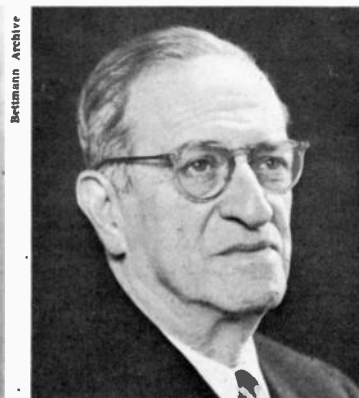


written in honor of "Papa" Radetzky, the Imperial Field Marshal who restored order in parts of Austrian-held Italy, and who became a symbol of moderate reaction to the real and imagined excesses of the radicals. Although public opinion swayed a few degrees to the right when order returned, Johann Strauss Sr. never fully regained his popularity, especially with the younger segment of the artistic community—ever in the vanguard of radical thought. He died in September of 1849 of scarlet fever, honored by officialdom and the Viennese bourgeoisie, but already outstripped by his eldest son, who conducted at the funeral parade.

The new Waltz King did more than turn out superior waltzes. He successfully incorporated the Viennese waltz into a new form that took the world by storm, especially the emerging middle-class audience. By the 1870's the operetta had swept not only Vienna, but Germany, France, England, and most of the rest of the Western World as well. There is a curious parallel development—with occasional cross-currents—of the French-style operetta (led by a transplanted German Jew, Offenbach), the emergence of Gilbert and Sullivan in England, and the ascendancy of the Strauss-style operetta in Vienna. Sometimes the paths crossed, as in London in 1875, when a new one-act musical entertainment, *Trial by Jury* by Gilbert and Sullivan (their second collaboration but first real success), shared a bill with a British production of Offenbach's *La Périchole*, a romping anti-authoritarian farce set in eighteenth-century Peru, and based, very remotely, on

the life of the real Périchole, a sultry Creole beauty who captured the fancy, and a good chunk of the personal fortune, of Peru's Spanish viceroy. A two-record set of *La Périchole*, featuring Suzanne Lafaye, Raymond Amade, Louis Noguéra, and the Lamoureux Orchestra is currently being marketed in the United States on the EMI/Pathé label (C 053-10669/70), and makes for interesting comparative listening with some of the Viennese works cited in this article. Strauss himself became an international star, touring Europe and the United States triumphantly. In tone, style, and bite, Offenbach, Strauss, and Gilbert and Sullivan vary, largely because of the differing natures of their national audiences and the degrees of political and social expression tolerated in their several capitals. But all of their operettas share a lightheartedness and good humor, and none is entirely free of satire.

Strauss' greatest success, *Die Fledermaus*, is a good example. It pokes fun at the airs and foibles of both the real and the sham aristocracy of Viennese society, and the few slaps it takes at the Russian nobility actually caused a minor diplomatic crisis. There are a number of recordings of all or part of *Die Fledermaus*, varying greatly in quality and style. A personal favorite of mine—though I suspect this may be a minority opinion—is the Everest two-record version with dialogue (S-463/2). For an American audience, the cast seems not exactly celebrated, but the conductor, Robert Stolz (a master of operetta composition in his own right), is a man who truly understands the dynamics of Viennese





operetta, and the Vienna Symphony and Vienna State Opera Choir are admirable vehicles for his talent. Another notable version of *Fledermaus* is the two-record London set (1249) with Karajan and the Vienna Philharmonic. London also has a three-record set (1319) of the same production including a gala sequence with guest appearances by such stars as Renata Tebaldi and Ljuba Welitsch.

SECOND only to *Fledermaus* in popularity is *Der Zigeunerbaron* (*The Gypsy Baron*), a later Strauss effort that combines an eighteenth-century setting, more of the Hungarian strain, and an elaborate rags-to-riches plot. First produced in October of 1883, *Zigeunerbaron* was a musical affirmation of the real, if uneasy, partnership of Austrian and Magyar under the Dual Monarchy. The waltz, polka, march, and, of course, czardas combine to evoke the musical spirit of that vanished Danubian polity in a way that is probably unmatched to this day. Though the plot is admittedly frivolous, the same can be said of many "heavy" operas, and, at least in *Gypsy Baron*, there is some good humorous development of characters, particularly the vulgar but wealthy hog breeder Zsupan. Whatever its failings, it was a popular success from the beginning, running for eighty-four consecutive nights at the famous Theater an der Wien in Vienna, and forever afterwards on professional and amateur stages around the globe. As the curtain falls on the final act, the hero, Sándor Barenkay, can honestly claim that

*Alles gelungen,
Den Feind bezwungen,
Ein Weib errungen,
Drum sei aus voller Brust gesungen.*
(All is settled,
The foe is beaten,
I've got a wife —
So I can sing with a stout heart.)

— which he does, followed by a jubilant chorus.

Silly? Perhaps, but by the time the finale approaches, the plot has been overwhelmed by the music anyway, and one is left with a delightful headful of the *Blue Danube*, *Ja, das Alles auf Ehr*, *Komm zu den Husaren*, and the absurd but firm conviction that, as Arsena and Mirabella sing together in the second act, "Far and wide there is no town so full of happiness as Vienna, none so fine, where merry tunes spring so fresh and bold, and your appetite for singing, wine, and women is fulfilled." As with *Fledermaus*, there are several recordings of *The Gypsy Baron* to choose from. Again, my personal favorite is the Stolz-conducted Everest two-record set (S 469/2), though this time (horror of horrors!) the chorus and orchestra are those of the Berlin Opera. Angel has produced a good two-record set (BL 3612) featuring Hilde Gueden, Karl Terkal, Erich Kunz, and Anneliese Rothenberger, with the Vienna Philharmonic conducted by Heinrich Hollreiser.

Johann Strauss Jr. launched the first wave of great Viennese operettas, but others followed close on the crest of the wave, notably Franz von Suppé and Karl Millöcker. To the latter goes credit for



The second wave of the Viennese operetta (which, incredibly, continues to our own day) includes, left to right, Franz Lehár (1870-1948), Oscar Straus (1870-1954), Paul Abraham (1892-1958), Emmerich Kálmán (1882-1953), and the still-active Robert Stolz (born 1892).

creating an especially noteworthy work, *Der Bettelstudent* (*The Beggar Student*). What sets *Bettelstudent* above the common herd is at least partially its supranationality, its appeal to audiences other than the Viennese. Typically, the plot is one in which, to quote W. S. Gilbert, “things are seldom what they seem.” Several of the leading characters are disguised—sometimes *double*-disguised! The setting is Cracow, Poland, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, a time when Poland groaned under the burden of a Saxon king (Augustus the Strong, so named for his three-hundred-and-sixty-odd bastards, all raised at state expense). Many of the barbs aimed by Polish characters at their Saxon overlords could, just as easily, be taken as criticism of the Russian, Prussian, and Austrian soldiers and administrators who ruled a divided Poland in 1882, when Millöcker wrote *Bettelstudent*. Colonel Ollendorf, the crude, swaggering governor of Cracow, stands for all of them.

While Polish audiences enjoyed *Beggar Student* for its nationalism, the Viennese laughed loudly at its jabs at pompous German militarism, thinking, no doubt, of their upstart Prussian rivals. Elsewhere, it has been well received as good musical fun with a lilting score and some generous moments of broad humor. For some years, a single disc of excerpts from *Bettelstudent* (Period RL 1901) was the only version readily available in America. It was none too sharp a monophonic recording, but the cast of principals from the Vienna State Opera were directed by Stolz, so it is still worth owning as a specimen of style. More recently, Everest has come to the rescue with a two-record production with dialogue (S 466/2), again under the baton of Stolz, this time conducting the Berlin Symphony Orchestra and Berlin Opera Choir. The best thing about this version is the portrayal of bullying Colonel Ollendorf by his modern-day namesake, bass Fritz Ollendorf, who is perfect as a booming, swaggering rascal.

In its light way, *Bettelstudent* is also a social document, depicting the emergent force of nationalism, which, together with decay among the ruling classes and unrest among the governed, would bring the charming but antiquated edifice of the Dual Monarchy crashing into the dust in the early 1900's. The “first wave” of operetta greats predeceased the world they amused, and lightly debunked, by only a few years—von Suppé in 1895, Millöcker and Strauss in 1899. The English ambassador at the Austrian court witnessed the Waltz King's last public performance, a few months before his death, at a benefit concert:

The old man stepped up to the conductor's desk very stiffly and with some difficulty, amidst a storm of ap-

plause. But once there, he led a new waltz of his own composition with all the inimitable fire and *entrain* of his youth. With Strauss it almost seemed as if her light, joyous spirit of old had deserted Vienna. He was buried with great popular honours, the *Ringstrasse* being blocked by the crowds that followed him to the grave.

THE vast, quarrelsome Danubian realm of which Vienna was mistress was, indeed, in its death throes—but Viennese operetta was not. A second wave of talent would rise high, even as night descended on the Dual Monarchy. In December of 1905, the Theater an der Wien again witnessed operetta history when a relatively obscure composer-conductor in his thirties, Franz Lehár, presided over the premiere of his *Lustige Witwe* (*The Merry Widow*). Since then, *The Merry Widow* has waltzed her way around the world, but the sour opinion of a Viennese critic and theater director, Wilhelm Karczag, almost tripped the lusty lady in the wings. Fortunately, Karczag's opinion that the score “wasn't music” was not shared by the other directors of the Theater an der Wien, and he succeeded only in trimming the production budget to the bone (the premiere was performed with second-hand props and wardrobe). Even in threadbare attire there was no stopping the widow. She and Lehár won the hearts of Vienna. A snappy, mustachioed figure with a military air about him, Lehár was to have a successful composing career that would last for decades: he died in 1948, having written major works at least as late as 1934, the year of *Giuditta*, which he always considered his best work.

Lehár was himself a flesh-and-blood personification of the Danubian mixture. His ancestry was a congenial blend of Hungarian, Slovak, and French. The success of his most memorable work also typi-

On the occasion of the five-hundredth Viennese performance of *The Merry Widow*, Franz Lehár (left) celebrated with two collaborators, Leo Stein and Victor Leon, who wrote the libretto.





Composer-conductor Robert Stolz must certainly have gained inspiration for his Viennese confections from his wife Einzi.

fies the impact of Viennese operetta on international theater. The first Broadway production of *Merry Widow* ran for 416 performances. So widespread and lasting was its fame that it was even produced as a silent (!) movie starring Mae Murray and John Gilbert. Later, it returned to the American screen in more appropriate form as an early "talkie" starring Jeanette MacDonald and Maurice Chevalier, and, later still, made the rounds in a mediocre but colorful remake starring those two immortals of song, Lana Turner and Fernando Lamas! An unenviable fate, but it is, nevertheless, a tribute to the durability and appeal of Lehár's work, which is still widely performed today. Orchestral excerpts from it, too, remain concert favorites. As for recordings, I once again place a Stolz-conducted version first (Stolz took over conducting the first production of *The Merry Widow* from Lehár after opening night). It is a two-record Richmond set (SRS 62518) featuring Hilde Gueden, Per Grunden, and the Vienna State Opera Chorus and Orchestra. Another good two-record set, available from Angel (S 3630), stars Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Nicolai Gedda, both of them, needless to say, top-flight performers.

There is also a historical reason for singling out *The Merry Widow* from Lehár's several other outstanding pieces. It was a sharp, telling satire of Balkan politics at the time. Its picaresque hero, Prince Danilo, is based on a real Montenegrin prince of the same name. A friend of mine, who is now in his late sixties, discovered this for himself in an unusual way in the early 1920's. He had gone to Dartmouth's Nugget Playhouse with Colonel Anton Dietrich, his college fencing coach, to see the silent film version of *Merry Widow*:

The show was enjoyable. As we left the theater, I asked Colonel Dietrich how he had liked it. "It was pleasant," he replied, "but they made several technical errors. I knew Prince Danilo quite well." I thought he was kidding,

as I hadn't the slightest idea that the story was based on fact. As it turned out, the colonel went on at some length about the real people. Before World War I, Colonel D., who was Hungarian, had had an estate in Bosnia right next to Franz Lehár. Through him he had met Danilo, the hero, and his brother, Prince Mirko. As for the widow herself, he couldn't swear there was a specific prototype, but he assured me Danilo had plenty to draw from. . . .

Another composer born in Vienna in 1870, the same year as Lehár, soon established himself in the front rank of the new wave of operetta masters. His name, though short one "s", was prophetic: Oscar Straus. A year after the premiere of *The Merry Widow*, Straus unveiled his own *Waltz Dream* at the Carltheater, to another enthusiastic Viennese audience.

Oscar Straus was fond of recalling a secret visit he made to Johann Strauss, shortly before the latter's death. Young Oscar, who had been trained from childhood to be a classical musician, harbored a secret fondness for operetta. He played a few light selections for the aging Waltz King and was gratified when Strauss urged him to give up the classics for light music. A few years spent as a conductor in various German cities, and two modest operetta productions in Vienna in 1904 and 1906, preceded the success of Straus' *Waltz Dream*, which has been played more than a thousand times in Vienna, and has been successfully produced and revived for several generations. An early recording of *Waltz Dream* on the Period label (RL 1903) affords the listener an opportunity to hear the Vienna State Opera perform it under the composer's direction, an advantage that makes up for the technical inadequacies. The same goes for another old Period disc (RL 1904) of one of Straus' later efforts, *The Last Waltz*. Both recordings are monophonic.

Like so many Viennese artists, Straus fled Austria with the onset of Fascism, and ultimately became an American citizen. He spent some time in Hollywood turning out background music, but still kept a finger in operetta. As an octogenarian, he successfully premiered another of his works, *Her First Waltz*, at the Munich State Operetta Theater, and continued as an active composer for several more years.

If you bother to follow the plots of Straus operettas, except in cases where the story is an adaptation of a classic, as in *The Chocolate Soldier* (after George Bernard Shaw), you will be struck at once by their shallowness *and* their tangle. Forget the plots—at least, don't let them get between you and the music, for it is the music that has enduring value, and that has influenced later music in Hollywood and on Broadway.

Even more absurd plots (and, in my opinion,

slightly inferior music) are to be found in the works of Paul Abraham, who died in 1958 at the age of sixty-six. Two excellent examples of how far out operetta story lines can go are *Victoria and Her Hussar*, which had its premiere in 1930 at the Theater an der Wien, and *Flower of Hawaii*, which opened a year later at the Neues Theater of Leipzig. I cite these two examples because excerpts from both of them are available in America on a single Westminster disc (WST 14146), performed by the Ensemble and Chorus of the Vienna Opera. *Victoria and Her Hussar* takes place in Shanghai (yes, Shanghai) after the First World War, where the heroine, thinking her pre-War lover Koltay (a dashing Austro-Hungarian hussar officer) fallen on the Russian front, has married the American ambassador, a Mr. Cunlight. But Koltay pops up alive, an amorous game of musical chairs is played, the lovers are reunited, and Ambassador Cunlight, a true diplomat, gracefully bows out. In *Flower of Hawaii*, America again figures in the plot, with racial overtones involving the conflict between native Hawaiians bent on re-establishing their independence, the American governor, his niece, his swarthy subordinate, "John Buffy," *et al.* Naturally, all ends happily, with the races, factions, and assorted couples merrily reconciled. (In 1931, after the humiliating defeat of World War I and the crushing economic woes that followed, Vienna was a town still desperately in need of happy endings wherever they could be found.) Again, forget the plot; listen to the music, and you may well find it enjoyable.

A contemporary of Abraham's who has achieved greater fame, and whose scenarios are generally less extravagant, was Emmerich Kálmán, born in Siofok, Hungary, in 1882. By the time of his death, Kálmán's reputation was worldwide, and many of his works had had successful runs on Broadway. Emmerich Kálmán practiced his musical trade in Budapest and then Vienna, where his first operetta bowed in 1905. He is probably best known in America for *Gräfin Mariza* (*Countess Maritza*) and *Csárdásfürstin* (*Czardas Princess*), which had their premieres in 1924 and 1915, respectively. Both are filled with lively, soulful melodies in the best mainstream tradition of Viennese operetta.

And both of them include more than one melody that American listeners will recognize without being able to name, *Komm' Zigany* (cited earlier as *Play, Gypsy*) being perhaps the most familiar. Like Oscar Straus, Kálmán found in America a refuge from the horrors of Nazism, reaching these shores in 1939. One of the last of the Viennese operetta greats, he died in 1953, having spent his final few years in Paris. Westminster disc WST 14147 de-

votes one side to *Countess Maritza* and the other to *Czardas Princess*, featuring the Ensemble and Chorus of the Vienna State Opera Orchestra. Other recordings of *Countess Maritza* include an old Period version (SHO 324), adequately performed but monophonic.

And so we come to a name that has occurred repeatedly in this short examination of Viennese operetta: Robert Stolz. Stolz long ago earned the mantle of elder statesman in the operetta field, both as composer and as conductor. His own *Zwei Herzen im Drei-viertel Takt* (*Two Hearts in Three-Quarter Time*) achieved initial acclaim as a film—the first "talkie" ever produced in the German language—first seen in Berlin in 1931. Subsequently it was successfully produced as an operetta in the Opera House of Zürich in 1934. Despite this foreign staging, it is pure Viennese in inspiration and style, as is its creator. Stolz, the son of a Viennese conductor of considerable stature, studied music at the Vienna Conservatory, made some early tours as a child piano prodigy, and eventually became chief conductor at the prestigious Theater an der Wien. Long before he produced *Zwei Herzen*, with its memorable title song, Stolz was famous for conducting revivals of Strauss, Millöcker, and Lehár, and for his global tours as a guest conductor, which included visits to the podiums of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Vienna Philharmonic, and the New York Philharmonic. Many of the best performances (as opposed to the best casts or best recordings) of operettas on records today remain those under the baton of Robert Stolz. His active musical career continued into his nineties, when, like the Austrian poet Grillparzer, quoted earlier, Stolz would "view the land from Kahlenberg" during his annual appearances in Vienna, soaking in the true source of the art form he had done so much to keep alive and thriving.

How better could one choose to end this brief appreciation of Viennese operetta than with this image? For, despite the collapse of the First World War and the horrors of the Second, the ancient *Kaiserstadt* has perpetuated its beloved *Schlagoper*—a good, if not a great, form of music that has achieved almost universal acceptance. Like the wines of Grinzing, and their eastern sisters from Hungarian vineyards, this music has never pretended to the eminence of certain French, Italian, and German vintages, but it has an amiability and a piquancy that are very much its own. No doubt it will continue to improve with age, for in a world that grows ever shorter of innocent mirth and good-natured grace, *Schlagoper* is a precious commodity.

*Stereo Review's
Record of the Year Awards
for 1972
in recognition of significant
contributions to the arts of music
and recording
during the 1972 publishing year*

**

THIS issue of February 1973 marks the sixth occasion on which STEREO REVIEW has offered to its readers its selection of the best records of the year. The "year" we refer to is our publishing year of 1972, with the addition of the issue of January 1973, and the records selected have been drawn from those reviewed during that span. We emphasize this because years are different things for different people, and though for a record company a disc issued on December 15, 1972, is part of that year's release, we, who must work months ahead, will look upon that disc as an integral part of 1973.

As in the past, our award-winning records have been chosen by polling the critical and editorial staffs of the magazine, adding up the results, and attempting to make something meaningful of the precipitously descending series of numbers that emerges. Also as in the past, the votes are cast, and the awards given, on the basis of genuine artistic and technical achievement and have nothing to do

with sales figures, personalities, and favors or slights, real or imagined. Records may be articles of commerce, but some of them are more than that: they are permanent contributions to our culture and to our continuing entertainment, and they ought to receive some sort of credit for being just that. That is the rationale of what we do.

If, by some chance, the acclamation of an award brings a record to the attention of people who previously had not noticed it and thereby increases its sales, that, we feel, is to everyone's good. Perhaps it will convince record companies that good work and good taste are *not* limited to being simply their own reward but can pay off in coin as well. If so, fine, for, like everyone else, we look forward to a world in which justice will always triumph and merit be automatically rewarded. But until that happy day arrives, a little extra push for the deserving must certainly do more good than harm.

—James Goodfriend, *Music Editor*



Record of the Year



MONTEVERDI: *Madrigals, Books VIII and IX* (Raymond Leppard, conductor). PHILIPS 6799006.



VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Riders to the Sea* (Meredith Davies, conductor). ANGEL S 36819.



BACH: *Cantatas Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4* (Nikolaus Harnoncourt, conductor). TELEFUNKEN SKW 1/1-2.



LISZT: *Piano Transcriptions* (Jorge Bolet, piano). RCA LSC 3259.



MAHLER: *Symphony No. 8* (Georg Solti, conductor). LONDON OSA 1295.



MUSIC FOR TWO HARPSICHORDS (Igor Kipnis and Thurston Dart, harpsichords). COLUMBIA M 31240.

Honorable mentions

JOHN BALDRY: *Everything Stops for Tea*. WARNER BROTHERS BS 2614.

COUPERIN: *Pièces de Clavecin* (Rafael Puyana, harpsichord). PHILIPS 6700035.

PAPA JOHN CREACH. GRUNT FTR 1003.

DEBUSSY: *Images, Sets I and II* (Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli, piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 196.

JOHN DENVER: *Aerie*. RCA LSP 4607.

DR. JOHN: *Gumbo*. Arco SD 7006.

DONIZETTI: *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Richard Bonyngue, conductor). LONDON OSA 13103.

DONIZETTI: *Maria Stuarda* (Aldo Ceccato, conductor). ABC/Audio TREASURY ATS 20010/3.

Awards for 1972



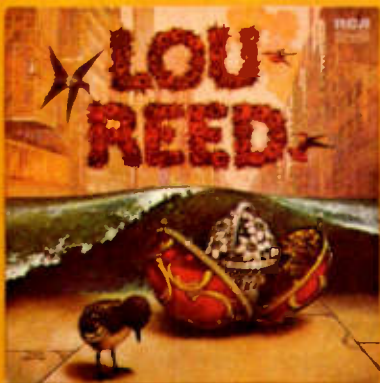
KINKS: *Muswell Hillbillies*. RCA LSP 4644.



PAUL SIMON. COLUMBIA KC 30750.



RANDY NEWMAN: *Sail Away*. REPRISE MS 2064.



LOU REED. RCA LSP 4701.



BOBBY SHORT: *Bobby Short Loves Cole Porter*. ATLANTIC SD 2-606.



STEPHEN FOSTER: *Songs*. NONESUCH H 71268.

ARETHA FRANKLIN: *Amazing Grace*. ATLANTIC SD 2-906.

J. GEILS BAND: *Full House*. ATLANTIC SD 7241.

GREATEST SONGS OF WOODY GUTHRIE. VANGUARD VSD 35/6.

EARL HINES: *Hines '65* (Earl Hines, piano). MASTER JAZZ RECORDINGS MJR 8109.

JANÁČEK: *Complete Works for Piano* (Rudolf Firkušny, piano; Rafael Kubelik, conductor). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2707 055.

MAHLER: *Songs* (Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Leonard Bernstein, piano). COLUMBIA KM 30942.

MONTEVERDI: *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* (Nikolaus Harnoncourt, conductor). TELEFUNKEN SKB-T 23/1-4.

THE NONESUCH EXPLORER. NONESUCH H 7-11.

TOM PAXTON: *Peace Will Come*. REPRISE 2096.

ROLLING STONES: *Exile on Main Street*. ROLLING STONES COC 2-2900.

STRAVINSKY: *Le Roi des Étoiles; Le Sacre du printemps* (Michael Tilson Thomas, conductor). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 252.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Pilgrim's Progress* (Sir Adrian Boult, conductor). ANGEL SCL 3785.

VERDI: *Arias* (Montserrat Caballé, soprano). ANGEL S 36830.

VILLA-LOBOS: *Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra* (Julian Bream, guitar; André Previn, conductor). RCA LSC 3231.

WAGNER: *Tannhäuser* (Georg Solti, conductor). LONDON OSA 1438.

JIMMY WEBB: *Letters*. REPRISE MS 2055.

STEREO REVIEW'S SELECTION OF RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT BEST OF THE MONTH



CLASSICAL

SHOSTAKOVICH'S SYMPHONY NO. 15: A DOUBLE PREMIERE

New recordings for Melodiya/Angel and RCA are notable in their separate ways

LIKE some of the New York concert reviewers who heard Eugene Ormandy conduct the American premiere of Dmitri Shostakovich's Fifteenth Symphony last fall, I was a bit non-plussed by my first exposure to the score, with its recurring *William Tell* Overture quote in the first movement and a finale built around the *Fate* motive from Wagner's *Ring*. However, after a half-dozen further turntable sessions with two new recordings of the piece, plus others with such recent major Shostakovich works as the Fourteenth Symphony, the Violin Sonata, and the Thirteenth Quartet, I am of the opinion that the new symphony stands alongside the First, Fourth, Eighth, and Tenth as one of the composer's most eloquent and haunting works.

Following the neo-Mousorgskian Thirteenth ("Babi Yar") Symphony and *The Execution of Stepan Razin*—both big choral pieces with bass soloist—Shostakovich appears to have worked out a musical language more refined in texture, more gracefully nuanced, and with a wider timbral spectrum than any he has used before—it is a style akin in some respects to that of his friend and colleague Benjamin Britten. The great song-cycle Symphony No. 14 (dedicated to Britten) has human mortality as its theme. The same concern with last things seems to be implicit in much of the music of the Thirteenth String Quartet and, if we credit the observations of the composer's

son Maksim in the liner notes for his recording (he is conductor), in the Fifteenth Symphony as well.

As for the Rossini quotation, Maksim mentions a remark of his father's calling attention to the conscious "toyshop" imagery of the first movement, which permits us not only to accept the validity of the *William Tell* quote on its own terms, but even to extend its meaning beyond a generalized "scenes of childhood" ambiance to more specific autobiography—perhaps to the composer's recollections of his days as a teenage piano player in a stuffy little Leningrad movie house. The linked slow movement and Scherzo are suggestive to me of an elegy, a funeral procession, and a *danse macabre*. The combination of an infinite musical

malleability with the potent drama of its original context makes the *Fate* motive from Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* funeral music (the repeated soft timpani beats are the clue here) a superb vehicle for the symphony's great variation-finale. The movement reaches its culmination in a gigantic passacaglia, subsides into references to earlier thematic materials, and rounds out its course with a long-drawn-out *pianissimo* A in the strings against an *obbligato* of tinkling bells and clicking-clacking wood sounds—for all the world like the clockmaker's shop in Ravel's *L'Heure Espagnole*, but in a temporal and spatial context beyond that of this world.



DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH
A concern with last things?

These are but fugitive impressions of a score I find singularly rich in communicative substance and dazzling musical craft, almost wholly free of the clichés often associated with the Shostakovich manner. For me, the work belongs in the *comédie humaine* tradition exemplified by the Sixth Symphony of Carl Nielsen and the two last symphonies of Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Maksim Shostakovich, whose recent Melodiya/Angel recording of his father's Fifth Symphony is the most convincing reading I have yet heard of that very popular work, delivers a superbly eloquent and persuasive performance here as well—one that leads me to hope that he will eventually record all the major Shostakovich orchestral pieces. His musicians are up to the very highest standard, the playing of the solo trombone in the slow movement and of the solo string bass in the Scherzo being especially notable.

Eugene Ormandy's Philadelphia Orchestra tops the fine Moscow ensemble in performance polish and sonic gloss, but I feel in this instance that the glitter comes at the expense of impact. Ormandy's solo trombone and solo bass, for example, do not come through as distinctive *personalities* in the musical action the way their Russian counterparts do; Ormandy's soloists seem more like perfectly functioning parts in a well-oiled machine. However, the Ormandy recording, as heard on two-channel equipment (I do not yet have proper equipment to play the *discrete* four-channel RCA Quadradisc—who does?), is distinctly superior to the Soviet product on two counts: the infinitely detailed polyphonic texture in the first movement and the Scherzo comes through with greater clarity, and the *tutti* climaxes emerge with more opulence. On the other hand, the somewhat raw brilliance of the Russians' sonics (the result, to my ears, of using a large, acoustically bright concert hall for the recording sessions) adds significantly to the drama of their performance.

The Quadradisc format would appear to be responsible for one musical liability of the Ormandy issue: the division of the slow movement and Scherzo between the two sides of the disc, a division that neatly contravenes the composer's intention that they be played without pause. To compound this unfortunate situation, the break comes not just before the bassoon chords that usher in the Scherzo, but at the final statement for brasses in the slow-movement Coda. Hirsch-Houck Labs' up-to-date report on four-channel hardware and software in *STEREO REVIEW* for December 1972 implied that there is a twenty-five-minute time limit per side for RCA's Quadradisc, which may explain their deci-

sion not to attempt the 27' 47" of the first three movements. Lastly, it should be noted that the climaxes of the Ormandy performance as recorded on the RCA Quadradisc come through at a decidedly lower volume level than on the Melodiya/Angel pressing; this may or may not be owing to the Quadradisc format. RCA has no plans, by the way, to issue the disc in stereo format, since the discrete four-channel version is designed to be compatible.

To sum up: both of these recorded performances of the Shostakovich Fifteenth Symphony are superb in their very different ways, and the music belongs, on its own great merits, in any representative record library of twentieth-century symphonic composition. Aside from RCA's awkward splitting of the slow movement and Scherzo, any purchase decision between the two versions boils down to a matter of taste in orchestral playing style and recorded sound: RCA and Ormandy for those who insist on smooth polish and sonic beauty; Maksim Shostakovich and Melodiya/Angel for those who prefer their vodka straight.

David Hall

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Symphony No. 15, in A Major, Op. 141 (1971)*. Moscow Radio and Television Symphony Orchestra, Maksim Shostakovich cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR 40213 \$5.98.

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Symphony No. 15, in A Major, Op. 141 (1971)*. Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. RCA □ ARD1-0014 \$5.98.

FELIX MENDELSSOHN, TEENAGE SYMPHONIST

*Telefunken issues the first integral recording
of the composer's twelve early symphonies*

TO HEAR musical history being made is always a fascinating experience. As far as the twelve symphonies (plus one isolated movement) for string orchestra that Mendelssohn wrote in his early teens are concerned, the history is not world-shaking. But, in a way, it is even more instructive to watch the early growth of a genius destined to burn itself out not quite fulfilled than to contemplate the imposing masterworks of a finished artist. In the present case, the first integral recorded collection of these works (released by Telefunken in brilliant performances by Marinus Voorberg's Amsterdam Chamber Orchestra) is so well done that it makes the process of observation as entertaining as it is informative.

(Continued overleaf)



Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy at the age of twelve
(Portrait by Karl Begas, 1821)

Since, apart from a couple of displacements required by the dictates of side-timing, the symphonies are coupled on these four discs in chronological order, the listener can easily follow the young composer's development step by step. And, sure enough, there are early hints of the ailment—a sort of creeping flaccidity of the musical muscles—that was later to turn Mendelssohn from a great composer at seventeen into a great composer *manqué* in chronological maturity.

The earliest among the symphonies juxtapose Baroque-ish quick movements of insistent, almost hectic activity with Andantes that already breathe the indolent 6/8 sweetness of Mendelssohn's familiar *Lieder ohne Wörter* vein. These first Allegros are not fully achieved, by any means. Their odd quirks of harmony and rhythm suggest a child's clumsiness as often as they suggest C. P. E. Bach, but they are fresh, sometimes exciting, pieces with a voice of their own.

The first real taste of the Mendelssohn we know does not come, in fast movements, until the first Allegro of Symphony No. 4, which looks distinctly forward to the second theme of the much later *Midsummer Night's Dream* Scherzo. Gradually, however, the sharp contrast between Andante languor and Allegro hoppitiness is smoothed out, until in the weaker parts of the later symphonies the immaculate, somewhat effete Mendelssohn of the mature works stands fully revealed.

Even in the later ones, however, student conscientiousness still kept the composer at his counterpoint firmly enough to preserve a welcome variety of texture. We may feel at times that the contrapuntal work is too obviously *work*, but it is certainly preferable to unrelieved tune-with-accompaniment writing.

There is an interesting hint in these symphonies of another Mendelssohn trait: his predilection for the minor mode. Six of the twelve (and the single movement) are nominally in minor keys; of the rest, No. 11 (listed as "in F Major") actually spends most of its Allegro time in the minor, and the others turn regularly to the minor for their slow movements. If you have ever noticed Mendelssohn's taste for minor keys and thought it curious for a composer not, on the face of it, given to profound or tragic expression, listen to these early essays and you may find a clue to his later failure to scale many heights. It is almost as if the young man were crying "Wolf!" too often. Until the mid-eighteenth century, the expressive issues involved were different. But in anything like a Romantic style, the minor mode (like the clash of cymbals) is subject to the law of diminishing returns, and it is rather sad (!) to hear Mendelssohn calling on it again and again, with less and less obvious reason, less and less success.

If I have emphasized the negative side of the youthful symphonies, it is only because negative judgments, rarely to be derived from "the classics," are for that reason apt to make us think more searchingly than positive ones. But there are many rewards of a purely pleasurable kind in these works. Symphony No. 8 in D Major shows us positive and negative in perhaps the clearest contrast: the minuet is wonderfully original in phrase construction, with a first section of twenty-five measures, a middle of twenty-seven (actually twenty-eight, with the last measure lopped off), and a closing section of twenty-nine, and the trio that follows is derived with some subtlety from the minuet's melodic shape. Then we find a finale whose *Allegro molto* marking is an increasingly typical misnomer. Its opening, at least, is characteristic of the nineteenth-century tendency to write music that is really *andante* no matter what the alleged tempo—but, here again, counterpoint comes to the rescue and has the movement really moving before long.

The last completed symphony of all, No. 12, is a thoroughly accomplished piece with very few weaknesses. It has a slow movement of real melodic charm, and a seriously contrapuntal finale in which the picking-up of tempo at the end functions as a release for tension very legitimately built up, instead of being, as so often, a mere casting-about for

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Reviewed by NOEL COPPAGE • DON HECKMAN • PAUL KRESH
REX REED • PETER REILLY • JOEL VANCE

MISS ABRAMS AND THE STRAWBERRY POINT 4th-GRADE CLASS. Rita Abrams and members of her fourth-grade class at Strawberry Point School, Mill Valley, California (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Wonder; Floating Away; Buildin' a Heaven on Earth; Running in the Green Grass; Mill Valley*; and five others. REPRISE MS 2098 \$5.98.

Performance: **Teacher's triumph**
Recording: **Very good**

Rita Abrams is a real live school teacher who made a single, using her third-grade class as vocalists, of one of her own songs called *Mill Valley*. It became a big hit and got her written up in *Life*. Now she has rounded up her fourth-grade class at Strawberry Point School and made a disc on which the pupils sing eight of her tunes and one by Norman Greenbaum, and an oppressively cheerful arrangement of *You Are My Sunshine*. I must say that I found Miss Abrams a lot more bearable than I had expected, and her pupils better rehearsed than a lot of their slightly older professional competitors in the field.

Miss Abrams, who once was a member of a rock-'n'-roll band before she took to school-marming, writes lively, up-to-date arrangements to which her charges take like singing ducks to musical water. Mostly the numbers in the program are such carefree items as *Floating Away* ("Far away from today/I'll close my eyes and go floating away"), but she is careful to include thoughtful items dealing with ecology—*I Wonder Why* ("Why can't we work and why can't we try/To clean up our earth and pretty blue sky") and *This Time of Life*, which deals with the misguided impatience of the young to grow up. Of course the fourth-grade class at Strawberry Point, not to be outdone by the third grade, sings its own version of *Mill Valley* here, and a sticky little tribute it is to the town that has since made Miss Abrams famous.

By and large, though, if you like to hear

children sing in the current idiom about cheerful subjects, you'll like Miss Abrams' album. The children, according to her, are just "normal kids who like to sing," and besides, they gave up "part of their lunch periods and some after-school time to practice Rita's songs," so the least you can do is plunk down your six bucks and bring them home. A text of the lyrics is supplied in case you want to try them. P.K.

THE BAND: *Rock of Ages*. The Band (vocals and instrumentals). *Don't Do It; King Har-*



THE BAND

Repeat performance of superb material

vest; Get up Jake; and fourteen others. CAPITOL SABB 11045 (two discs) \$7.98, © 8XBB 11045 \$7.98, © 4XBB 11045 \$7.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Excellent**

It has been a long time between albums for the Band, and the initial hoopla about them seems by now to have died down. This is understandable, since they have not come up with any material to match their superb earlier compositions, most of which are recorded here in "live" concert with an added horn and reed section (Garth Hudson of the Band taking tenor and soprano sax solos) giving a pleasant extra sound. This album is really fine; the pity is that we've heard it all before so many times. Perhaps this is why you cannot see the list of tune titles until you take the shrink wrap off and unfold the double gate-fold covers (i.e., until you buy the album). There are four sides, all proving what has been known for some time: that the Band are marvelous musicians. But, fellows, when are you

going to give us something new—when are you going to tell us something more?

I must note that Garth Hudson's organ solo—*The Genetic Method* (which leads smoothly into *Chest Fever*)—is absolutely astonishing. J.V.

MARC BENNO: *Ambush*. Marc Benno (vocals and guitar); orchestra. *Poor Boy; Donut Man; Jive Fade Jive; Southern Women; Shave*; and four others. A & M SP 4364 \$5.98.

Performance: **Unreal**
Recording: **Good**

Unfortunately for Marc Benno, and for my ability to render an unclouded judgment of his work, I played his new album shortly after listening to a new one by B. B. King. It was an experience somewhat akin to going to see Olivier in one of his classic roles, and the next night attending a high-school production of the same play with a novice in the Olivier part. If you hadn't seen the first, you'd certainly be more generous about the second. But as it stands, I'll confine myself to the observation that I never think how utterly hopeless white blues singing is as a means of real communication until I am forced into a comparison such as this one. P.R.

BIG STAR: #1 Record. Big Star (vocals and instrumentals). *Feel; The Ballad of El Goodo; The India Song; My Life Is Right; In the Street; Thirteen*; and six others. ARDENT ADS 2803 \$4.98.

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Very good**

Big Star is a very good white quartet from the Memphis area—skillful musicians, excellent singers. They have cut a nice album (sometimes very nice, as in *The India Song*), and they are all very talented youngsters. What keeps the album from being any more than the work of a very good young band is that they lack strong material. All of it is composed by a member of the band, and though at times it is extremely pleasant, the capabilities of the songs never match the capability of the band. They have also produced the album, and the production job is fine. But without superior material, I fear Big Star will stay where it is musically.

I looked forward to this album because I knew Alex Chilton was in the group. Chilton was the amazing prodigy with the gently raspy voice who sang lead for the Box Tops (*The Letter, Cry Like a Baby*) back in the mid-Sixties. He was, as I recall, barely sixteen when he began recording. His recording career with the Box Tops was greatly aided by Dan Penn, a producer and songwriter who

Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓜ = reel-to-reel stereo tape
- Ⓢ = eight-track stereo cartridge
- Ⓒ = stereo cassette
- = quadraphonic disc
- Ⓡ = reel-to-reel quadraphonic tape
- Ⓢ = eight-track quadraphonic tape
- Ⓒ = quadraphonic cassette

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ

The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.

is an ignored genius. Chilton had his troubles and disappointments with the Box Tops and their surrounding angels and devils; doubtless he rejoiced when joining (or forming) Big Star, and he surely had a hand in the fine production of this album. But I regret to report that he has either lost or abandoned his astonishing vocal style. The range of interpretation he had with ballads, Southern white soul-blues, country, and rock tunes on the Box Tops albums is nowhere heard on the Big Star album. But that's my problem, not his.

Oh, buy the Big Star album. It can't hurt. Chilton, my boy, I wish you all happiness, and never mind my sniveling here in the archives. J.V.

ROY BUCHANAN. Roy Buchanan (guitar); the Snakestretchers (vocals and instrumentals). *Sweet Dreams; I Am a Lonesome Fugitive; Cajun; John's Blues; Haunted House; Pete's Blue; The Messiah Will Come Again; Hey, Good Lookin'.* POLYDOR PD 5033 \$4.98, 8F 5033 \$6.98, CF 5033 \$6.98.

Performance: **Often dazzling**
Recording: **Good**

Roy Buchanan is a master technician who gets everything out of the electric guitar except tonal beauty. He either *wants* the metallic tone he achieves or does not make the emotional connection with the music that, say, George Harrison makes. At any rate, like other good guitarists, he has spent too much time in the shadow of musicians inferior to him, and this recording is bound to raise some eyebrows. Buchanan has been around for a long time, and one thing he has apparently learned is to assemble a band that doesn't intrude upon his guitar playing; the Snakestretchers don't do anything but back him. Chuck Tilley's vocals are pure country, eminently forgettable, and involved in only three cuts anyway. I think Buchanan should hook up with a blues singer, or learn to sing the blues himself, since *John's Blues* and *The Messiah Will Come Again* draw out his most sensitive playing. His tone, as I said, is hard and brassy for my taste; he doesn't make the guitar weep, he makes it sound defiant. But what he does with his fingers is extraordinary. The recording isn't outstanding—too many clinkers like *Hey, Good Lookin'* hold it down—but it marks the beginning of the "discovery" of Roy Buchanan. It will be a rewarding find for many. N.C.

DAVID BUSKIN. David Buskin (guitar, piano, vocals); various musicians. *When I Need You Most of All; Come With; The Winter Comes; Softly Rocking; After All; Flying Child; It Will Come to You Again; Morning Glory; Just for the Children; If I'm Lucky.* EPIC KE 31233 \$5.98.

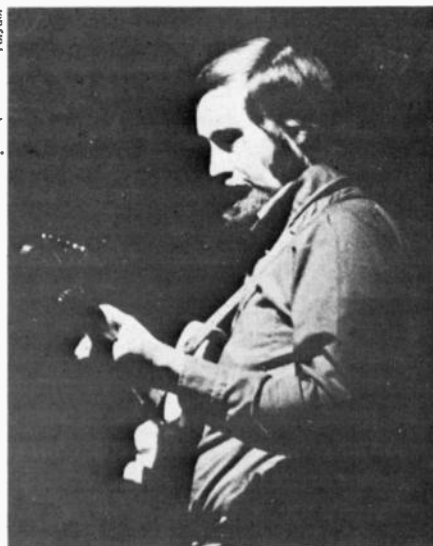
Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Very good**

David Buskin wrote those beautiful, old-fashioned love songs on the latest Mary Travers album, some of which are included in this, his debut recording. It's frustrating: Buskin has a fairly good voice, but somehow it seems all wrong for his own songs. Mary's versions of several of the songs are clearly superior, mostly because she gives them the seamless, unadorned phrasing they need and holds the notes long enough, and Buskin does not. Sometimes Buskin writes a melody he cannot sing at all without busting into falsetto (*Come With* and *If I'm Lucky*, both pretty good

songs). Sometimes he writes a song that would seem almost perfect for some other singer—in addition to those identified with Mary, there's *After All*, a natural for Tom Rush. Sometimes his lyrics are not wise but clever, but generally they penetrate, and they always make a good first impression.

In short, the lad writes quite well, fashioning genuine melodic structures whose verses, choruses, and bridges actually sound like they belong together, and usually managing economical, sensitive lyrics. I don't know what's to be done about the way he sings his own songs, but we need the songs—even if that means taking his singing along with them. N.C.

JOHNNY CASH: *America.* Johnny Cash (vocals and recitations); instrumental accompaniment). *Opening Dialogue; Paul Revere; Begin West Movement; The Road to Kaintuck; To the Shining Mountains; The Battle of New Orleans; Southwestward; Remember*



ROY BUCHANAN
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the Alamo; Opening the West; Lorena; The Gettysburg Address; and ten others. COLUMBIA KC 31645 \$5.98, CA 31645 \$6.98, CT31645 \$6.98.

Performance: **Uplift for urchins**
Recording: **Fair**

Johnny Cash has put together a "200-year salute in story and song" apparently aimed at instilling patriotism and a Sense of History in children. To do so, he has had to rewrite the Preamble of the Constitution in basic English, sum up the Revolutionary War in three sentences, and compose such poetical lines as "like a young colt, the country was now growing fast." So you see there is no question but that he has succeeded, and the next generation should be the best-informed of any. Cash has not been content with simply composing and delivering his mindless, simplistic history lesson in rhyme and the metrics of *Hiawatha*, nor even with reciting the Gettysburg address in accents that seem to mingle strangely the speaking styles of John Wayne and Al Jolson. He also sings, deadpan and sullenly, songs about Paul Revere, the Battle of New Orleans, the death of President Garfield, and, to usher in the Age of Flight, a favorite he says "my Mama sang back about 1910 or 1915" called *Come Take a Trip on*

My Airship. In his solemn romp through American history, Cash stays neutral about the Civil War, but, having Indian blood himself, is right up to date in telling it from the Indian point of view in *Big Foot*, a song about that battle at Wounded Knee. Prospective purchasers will be relieved to know that he does not fail to mention God, or to invite his little listeners (if there are any left) to reach "for the Stars," presumably to spread litter and ecological problems throughout the galaxy. In all, this one is suitable for extraordinarily retarded young people or reform schools specializing in the crueller forms of rehabilitative torture. P.K.

CHICAGO: *Chicago V.* Chicago (vocals and instrumentals). *A Hit by Varèse; All Is Well; Now that You've Gone; Dialogue; While the City Sleeps; Saturday in the Park; State of the Union; Goodbye; Alma Mater.* COLUMBIA KC 31102 \$5.98, CR 31102 \$6.98, CA 31102 \$6.98, CT 31102 \$6.98.

Performance: **Okay**
Recording: **Very good**

Bear with me; this may take time. I'm trying to figure out why I don't like Chicago. Well, what do I know of them? They are the product, really, of a demanding and talented young producer, James William Guercio, who produced all the Chicago albums and the second (and most important) album by Blood, Sweat & Tears. Am I penalizing Chicago because I don't like BS&T? Is that why Chicago's lead singer tends to sound more and more like David Clayton-Thomas?

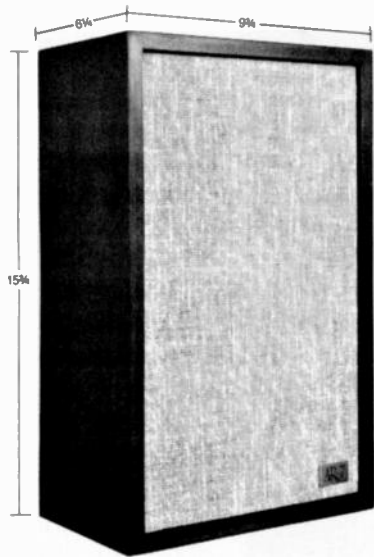
Do I dislike them because they seem to combine the most obvious things about intellectual jazz with worse things about preachy-lyric rock? Are they bad musicians? No—they are very good musicians, in fact. Why, why, why? Hm. Scratching of forehead. Pacing of room. Snap of fingers. Slapping of brow. Exultant shout of "Eureka!" Dash to the typewriter. Locking of keys into upper case. Wetting of lips, tensing of fingers, short rush of air as hands descend to the keys—THEY BORE ME! J.V.

EL CHICANO: *Celebration.* El Chicano (vocals and instrumentals). *Mas Zacate; Brown-Eyed Girl; Satisfy Me Woman; Juntos; Señor Blues; I Feel Free;* and four others. KAPP KS 3663 \$4.98, K8 3663 \$6.95.

Performance: **Frantic**
Recording: **Good**

I guess I'm a stinking purist, but when I want Latin music I'd rather hear the music that gets the people into the clubs 'way uptown or the extended holes in the walls in Yorkville. Or I'd rather pose as a buyer for a five-and-dime in El Barrio and go to a record distributor on Tenth Avenue and buy a batch of albums by Tito Puente, Ray Barretto, and some of the old Joe Cuba and Pete Rodriguez discs.

Fortunately, I met a man some years ago named Tomás Fundora who had a retail shop in Spanish Harlem, and he clued me in. Since that time, I haven't been able to consider Santana or Malo or—here—El Chicano as representative of gut-Latin because of their addition of rock elements. I don't think rock and Latin necessarily go together, though I realize why the combination is popular. Santana, *et al.*, is a cosmopolitan, sophisticated version of something raw and dignified and fine. Latin-
(Continued on page 94)



AR-7

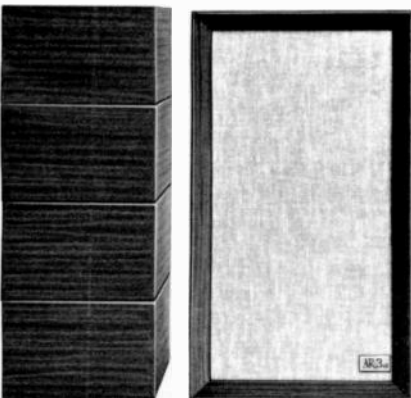
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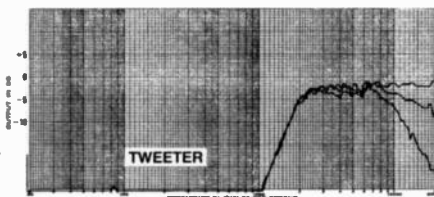
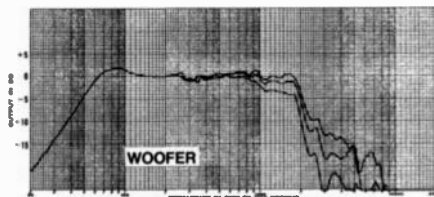
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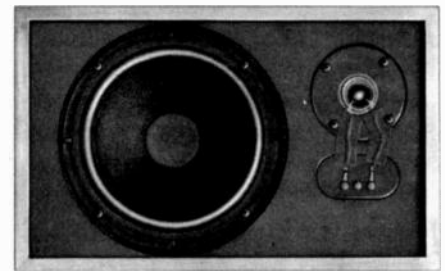
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BOWIE AND HOOPLE AND REED

A tale of one Svengali and two Trilbys

Reviewed by STEVE SIMELS

THE David Bowie affair gets curiously and curiously. No sooner had the type-writer cooled off from my rather impatient review of "Space Oddity" and "The Man Who Sold the World" (see the January issue) than I discovered he had written and produced an incredibly powerful single (*All the Young Dudes*) for Mott the Hoople, a group I've long been enamored of. Next I heard that he was producing that group's new album, one slated to include a cover version of Lou Reed's classic *Sweet Jane*. And then, for toppers, it turned out that he had rendered a similar service for Reed himself by producing Lou's second album. It sounded, at least, like a great idea. Reed's first solo outing (produced by Richard Robinson, and good enough to win a STEREO REVIEW Record of the Year award) was superb, but the overall sound and the playing by the various studio heavies Robinson assembled teetered at times on the brink of impersonality. Bowie, for a variety of reasons—not the least of which would be the devastating production expertise demonstrated by his recent records—seemed like the ideal man to better that situation. And when word went out that the Who's Keith Moon (an inspired choice) would be the drummer on the date, I began to drool in anticipation. But now, here are the two albums, both produced by Bowie, both featuring material by Lou Reed, and, oddly enough, Mott's is by far the better of the two. In fact, it's one of the most solidly exciting rock-and-roll packages since "Sticky Fingers." Lou's, on the other hand, is a major disappointment after his brilliant first effort. Who would have thought that the man who wrote *Sister Ray* could turn out—

and so soon—to be just another pretty face?

Well, of course, that's not really fair. Reed, you'll recall, was the creative force behind the Velvet Underground, that strange and still misunderstood aggregation that sang about heroin and Jesus before either was pop-fashionable. In 1966, in fact, Lou and the Velvets were about as avant-garde as could be—which consequently obscured the fact that they were a classic hard-rock band cut from the same cloth as the original Byrds or the early Rolling Stones (in the sense that their textures depended essentially on two rhythm guitars, rather than rhythm and lead), and that Lou was an exquisitely acute songwriter and one of the most convincing rock singers this side of Mick Jagger.

That's all *still* true, but you'd be hard put to prove it with anything from Reed's new "Transformer." There are a few cuts that suggest the Reed of old, and predictably they're the rockers—the cosmic punk-stupidity of *Vicious* and *Hangin' Round*, for instance—but even there the effort is sabotaged by limp production values; the instruments burp when they obviously ought to roar, and everything sounds as refined and polite as the Youngbloods. I could probably abide this (after all, a similar problem flawed the last album) if so many of the songs weren't obvious throwaways. *Good Night Ladies*, for example, is a music-hall monologue that is perhaps wryly amusing the first time through, but to say that it lacks staying power is something of an understatement.

I won't dwell on the sexual posturing of the rest of the material; Lou's gayness interests me even less than Bowie's; if anything, it comes off here simply as a commercial

ploy. On that level, at least, I wish him luck; if some of the Bowie magic rubs off on him, fine, but artistically it's a dead end. What Lou should do—and fast—is to get himself back to New York City where he belongs, and find a powerhouse band that understands him. Like the Velvet Underground, perhaps? And by the way, Keith Moon didn't make it to the sessions. More's the pity.

"ALL the Young Dudes," fortunately, is a different kettle of fish altogether. Mott has always been a killer ensemble, the last purveyors of the wall-of-sound approach distilled in the Sixties by such masters as the Who and the Kinks, neatly blended with a touch of Procol Harum's organ and piano thing. They are also the band the Stones honored by copping *Bitch* from, and the band that did a dead-serious "Blonde-on-Blond"-style rendition of Sonny Bono's awesomely inconsequential protest classic, *Laugh at Me*. In fact, over the space of four albums, they have consistently produced some of the least affected, legitimately rocking music of the Seventies. As a result, of course, nobody took them seriously.

Enter (again) David Bowie, and inexplicably (considering how badly he botched the Reed album), he has done a really exemplary job with "Dudes." The earlier Mott stuff was densely textured in the extreme; Bowie has cleaned up their sound without sacrificing any of the power, allowing us to hear, finally, just how well they play. The band has responded with what is easily their best material to date—especially the Stones-derived *Jerkin' Crocus* and Mick Ralph's haunting *Ready for Love*. As a bonus, Ian Hunter (someone once called him the world's finest living exponent of the Dylan basement-tapes) has finally found his own voice; on *Momma's Little Jewel*, in particular, he strikes just the right note of punk insouciance. He's terrific.

In concert, Mott may have gone the drag route of their producer (though I doubt they'll pursue it seriously for long), but they still have in spades the funk that he so desperately lacks. Obviously that's what attracted him to them in the first place, and perhaps David Bowie's real role is as the Svengali of Rock. If he can keep Mott turning out albums of the quality of "All the Young Dudes," he just may justify all the hype. Considering the lameness of his own albums, it would be a pleasant surprise.

LOU REED: *Transformer*. Lou Reed (vocals and guitar); other musicians. *Vicious*; *Andy's Chest*; *Perfect Day*; *Hangin' Round*; *Walk on the Wild Side*; *Make Up*; *Satellite of Love*; *Wagon Wheel*; *New York Telephone Conversation*; *I'm So Free*; *Goodnight Ladies*. RCA LSP 4807 \$5.98, © P8S 2095 \$6.98.

MOTT THE HOOPLE: *All the Young Dudes*. Ian Hunter (vocals and piano); Mick Ralphs (vocals and guitar); Overend Watts (bass); Verden Allen (vocals and organ); Buffin (drums). *Sweet Jane*; *Momma's Little Jewel*; *All the Young Dudes*; *Sucker*; *Jerkin' Crocus*; *One of the Boys*; *Soft Ground*; *Ready for Love*; *After Lights*; *Sea Diver*. COLUMBIA KC 31750 \$6.98, © CA 31750 \$6.98, © CT 31750 \$6.98.

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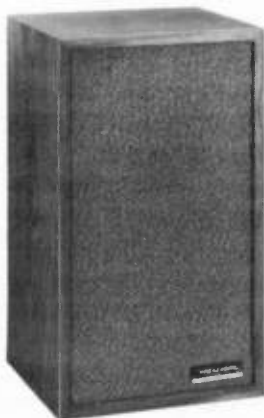
Conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra and recording artist for Polydor and RCA-Victor.



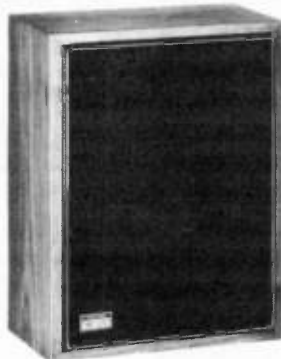
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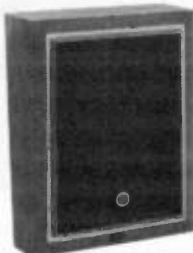
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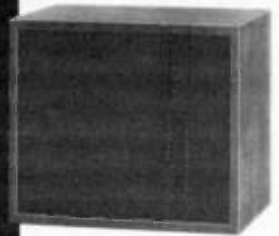
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rock will eventually become as necessary and precious to the Latin communities in this country as slick soul has to black communities—it is, eventually, a way up the social ladder of dignity, power, and money, which both groups need and to which both have a right. But I still prefer the old Stax/Volt soul to the new, syrupy Isaac Hayes version, and I still dislike the Brother Tom music of Motown. So I also prefer the gut-Latin to the rock-Latin. *J.V.*

MIKE D'ABO: *Down at Rachel's Place*. Mike D'Abo (vocals and keyboards); orchestra. *Rachel's Place; Belinda; Poor Man's Son; Salvation Song; Battlefield*; and four others. A & M SP 4346 \$5.98.

Performance: **Fair**
Recording: **Good**

"There's a welcome for the world down at Rachel's Place/ In a bowl of soup and a smiling face./ If you are weary there's a single bed—if you want it." Mike D'Abo chants the lyrics to the title song here as if they had just occurred to him. That won't fool most listeners—they'll know immediately where they come from. Which goes to prove that you really can get anything you want at you know who's restaurant (not Rachel's), including, in this case, inspirations for rip-offs. The rest of D'Abo's material shows about the same degree of originality, in both its writing and its performance. *P.R.*

JIM DAWSON: *You'll Never Be Lonely with Me*. Jim Dawson (vocals, guitars, piano); Warren Nichols (guitars, keyboards); various other musicians. *When You Finally Come Around; I'm in an English Garden; Heather; Wednesday; This Good Earth; The Other Side*; and four others. KAMA SUTRA KSBS 2049 \$4.98.

Performance: **Good write, no sing**
Recording: **Very good**

Jim Dawson's second album is beautifully arranged, sets up some nice textural contrasts, and is heavy with drama. It is poorly sung, although there are indications that Dawson is starting to learn how to use the weakness of his voice to enhance the effects he's after. Its songs are for the most part well written. Songs such as *Wednesday*, *This Good Earth*, and *Stephanie* establish their lyrics' strength immediately, and their melodies grew on me.

Dawson likes to end a song, or hit its climax, with a chorus going full blast and the instruments going *banga-banga-banga*—which would be better if it didn't happen so often. He does get good mileage out of the background singers, and out of overdubbing generally. And this is as good a time as any to note that instrumental arrangements have lately been getting increasingly complex and sounding better for it. A few months ago, it appeared this was an empty dream—or, perhaps, a crowded dream. *N.C.*

JAMES LUTHER DICKINSON: *Dixie Fried*. James Luther Dickinson (vocals); orchestra. *Wine; Louise; John Brown; Dixie Fried*; and five others. ATLANTIC SD 8299 \$5.98, © M 88299 \$6.95, © M 58299 \$6.95.

Performance: **Frantic**
Recording: **Frantic**

White gospel blues are projected frantically here by James Luther Dickinson, who works

up such a sweat in everything he does that it might be a good idea to spray your speakers with Arrid before putting on the record. Some of it, such as *Wine* or the traditional *O How She Dances*, is appropriate. But after a few bands I began to feel I'd stumbled into a revivalist meeting on a particularly humid night. *P.R.*

DION: *Suite for Late Summer*. Dion (vocals and guitar); orchestra. *Soft Parade of Years; Seagull; Jennifer Knew; Wedding Song; Didn't You Change*; and five others. WARNER BROS. BS 2642 \$5.98, © C 2642 \$7.95, © M8 2642 \$6.95, © M5 2642 \$6.95.

Performance: **Good but strained**
Recording: **Excellent**

I continue to admire Dion. He had the guts to see that there was something beyond teenybopper stardom (at a time when that term hadn't yet been coined) and set out to become a real musician. This album proves that he has



JONATHAN EDWARDS
Striking arrangements and honest lyrics

succeeded, but it also hints that his particular talent—applying high romanticism to everyday adolescent life—is about ten years out of date. *Soft Parade of Years*, for example, is a lovely song. But it is essentially a reminiscence, and an inaccurate try at describing the mood of today. Of course, if the performances and songs were of a slightly higher quality it wouldn't matter whether or not they were "now." But Dion still seems to draw from his late-Fifties teenage experience and values. Like others of his generation—Neil Sedaka, for instance—he is trying hard to reach new audiences, but he doesn't seem to be able to resist the occasional "commercial" fillip in his work. It is a fatal temptation, for that sort of thing has long since gone, and only strikes today's audiences as hokey. *P.R.*

JONATHAN EDWARDS: *Honky Tonk Stardust Cowboy*. Jonathan Edwards (vocals, guitar, harmonica, mandolin, tambourine, bass); Stuart Schulman (bass, piano, string arrangements); Richard Adelman (drums); Eric Lilljequist (guitar); other musicians. *Stop and Start It All Again; Everything; Longest Ride; Give Us a Song; Dues Day Bar; Morning Train; Ballad of Upsy Daisy; It's a Beautiful Day; Sugar Babe*; and four others. ATCO SD

7015 \$5.98, © TP 7015 \$6.98, © CS 7015 \$6.98.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Very good**

One of Jonathan Edwards' problems is that his poorer songs get on AM radio and wear out their welcome—stuff like *Sunshine* and (I'm betting) *Stop and Start It All Again*—and that causes some to write him off as another AM-hit-fashioning robot. Another of his problems is that he *does* have a banal bone or two in his body, tending to hammer hackneyed figures into "new" melodies that already seem half worn out, and to go the lonesome-picker-weary-traveler route in the lyrics. But he has some saving graces, too: a fine singing voice that grows on you; a knack for sometimes finding and inserting just the right, slightly corrosive element into a melody to save it from becoming a boring jingle; and a basic honesty that prohibits intellectual and moral posturing in his lyrics.

The striking thing about this album, though, is the arrangements: in *It's a Beautiful Day* a woolly electric bass and congas drive through the mesh of the acoustic guitars; in *Dream Song* (Edwards at his best) an upright-sounding piano serves as a backdrop for the contrasting figures of strings, and a heavy bass sets up an excellent harmonica break that fits into place like the cam in a Rolls Royce engine. The album has its tedious moments, but it zings too, now and then—enough to make fair-minded persons like me give Edwards' non-AM stuff an honest hearing. *N.C.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ELEPHANT'S MEMORY. Elephant's Memory (vocals and instrumentals); various other musicians. *Liberation Special; Baddest of the Mean; Cryin' Blacksheep Blues; Chuck 'n Bo; Gypsy Wolf; Madness*; and four others. APPLE SMAS 3389 \$5.98, © 8XW 3389 \$6.98, © 4XW 3389 \$6.98.

Performance: **All-points rock 'n' roll**
Recording: **Good**

Elephant's Memory's principal reputation has come, thus far, from their association with John and Yoko Ono/Lennon, but both their recent live appearances and the collection of hard-edged, enormously eclectic rock music in this set should effectively take them out of anyone else's shadow.

Curiously, much of the lyrics' content is socially oriented (*Liberation Special; Gypsy Wolf; Madness; Power Boogie; Local Plastic Ono Band*), but, in the best rock tradition, it is couched in such a powerful surge of hard-driving rhythms that it never becomes merely self-serving, never an end in itself. Stan Bronstein's marvelously tough tenor saxophone playing, with its evocative traces of Flip Phillips and Coleman Hawkins, pokes in and out of the textures; the singing recalls Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, and Bo Diddley (directly so in the song *Chuck 'n Bo*); and professionalism mixes easily with street-toughened performing enthusiasm.

My only carp, at the moment, is with the record's mixing: it simply runs on and on at the same dynamic level, and many of the pithier moments are buried in the waves of sound. But it's a minor annoyance, and one that shouldn't deter you from hearing this promising group. *Don H.*

(Continued on page 96)

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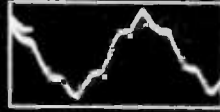
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RECYCLED CREAM

A quartet of reissues from Polydor

Reviewed by JOEL VANCE

THE history of Cream reads something like a genealogy from one of the small German duchies of the nineteenth century and before, with their smothered-in-the-cradle legitimate heirs, favored women of the duke, twitchy princes, and duchesses who succumbed at an early age to pneumonia or displaced hormones.

Cream, a brilliant group, was composed of Eric Clapton, Jack Bruce, and Ginger Baker, representing lead guitar/vocals, bass/vocals, and drums/vocals, respectively. They made four albums. They broke up. Clapton and Baker joined Stevie Winwood and Rick Grech in a one-album recording group called Blind Faith. Clapton then went on tour with Delaney & Bonnie, during which time he cut his first album, backed—and sometimes overpowered—by D & B, Leon Russell, and scads of other people. Clapton, it appears, was either shy or too good-natured about his first solo effort, and it was disappointing. Later he formed a band called Derek & the Dominoes, in which he shared guitar honors with the late and very much missed Duane Allman. The Dominoes' LP, which took two years to be a hit, contained *Layla* and the astonishing *Bell Bottom Blues*.

Ginger Baker, meanwhile, went off and formed an amorphous group called Ginger Baker's Air Force, which perpetrated two dud albums. Jack Bruce went off and also did two dud solo albums.

Now: selections by Cream and Messrs. Clapton, Bruce, and Baker from all the above-mentioned periods have been freshly culled by Polydor to make up a whole series of re-reissues drawn from many parts. So here we go back into those German-duchy family trees. Cream and the solo efforts of its members were recorded by English Polydor, a subsidiary of the parent German Polydor. In the United States, they were released on Atlantic/Atco under a licensing agreement. The stated time period of that agreement has now lapsed, so the master tapes have reverted to German-English Polydor, which has now assigned them to its American subsidiary (you guessed it) American Polydor.

And thus we come, at last, to the music. There was no reason, other than what I assume was the *diktat* of the Robert Stigwood Organisation, management for Cream *et al.*, to give Baker a solo album. In the context of Cream he was an exciting if crude drummer; outside of Cream he is merely noisy. He surrounded himself with competent but unexciting cohorts to found the Air Force, and the albums are hardly worth the reissue. Bruce's albums were (and are) duds because although he had been, in many ways, the guiding power of Cream with his writing and singing (and his excellent bass playing), he too needed the discipline of being a group member. Some tracks on his solo albums are

very good, but the albums themselves don't hold together. Since Bruce could never make up his mind to do *one* thing, he shot-gunned his talent among several styles which either clashed with one another outright or simply refused to jell.

Clapton's major artistic statements outside of Cream are in the Derek & the Dominoes and the Blind Faith albums. Generous samples of the former are given in this collection, but the Clapton fan would probably be better off buying another copy of the original American Atco release—it is still available.

"Heavy Cream" is a re-repackaging of the original trio's most famous work, including the marvelous *Badge*—which is mostly Clapton's (co-written with George Harrison who plays rhythm guitar)—and Bruce's maniacal *Doing That Scrapyard Thing*.

At \$7.95 per two-record set, these reissues are not exactly incredible bargains, and you can safely pass up the Bruce and Baker sets (though the Blind Faith cuts in the Baker package are good). But it is nice, particularly in the case of the Clapton and Cream packages, to have them still in circulation.

CREAM: *Heavy Cream*. Cream (vocals and instrumentals). *White Room; Badge; Spoonful; Sunshine of Your Love; I Feel Free; Sitting on Top of the World; I'm So Glad; Born Under a Bad Sign; Crossroads; Politician*; and twelve others. POLYDOR PD 3502 two discs \$7.98, ⑧ 8F2 3502 \$10.98, ⑥ CF2 3502 \$10.98.

ERIC CLAPTON: *At His Best*. Eric Clapton (guitar and vocals) with instrumental and vocal accompaniment. *Bottle of Red Wine; Bell Bottom Blues; Layla; Sea of Joy; After Midnight; Key to the Highway; Little Wing; I Looked Away; Presence of the Lord*; and eight others. POLYDOR PD 3503 two discs \$7.98, ⑧ 8F2 3503 \$10.98, ⑥ CF2 3503 \$10.98.

GINGER BAKER: *At His Best*. Ginger Baker (drums) with vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Let Me Ride; Had to Cry Today; Do What You Like; Well All Right; Sweet Wine; I Don't Want to Go on Without You; Da Da Man; Can't Find My Way Home; Aiko Biaye*. POLYDOR PD 3504 two discs \$7.98, ⑧ 8F2 3504 \$10.98, ⑥ CF2 3504 \$10.98.

JACK BRUCE: *At His Best*. Jack Bruce (bass and vocals) with instrumental accompaniment. *Morning Story; Theme for an Imaginary Western; Post War; Folk Song; He the Richmond; A Letter of Thanks; Hckhh Blues; Weird of Hermiston; The Consul at Sunset*; and ten others. POLYDOR PD 3505 two discs \$7.98, ⑧ 8F2 3505 \$10.98, ⑥ CF2 3505 \$10.98.

LESTER FLATT & MAC WISEMAN: *On the Southbound*. Lester Flatt and Mac Wiseman (vocals, guitars); Bluegrass band. *Salty Dog Blues; Just a Strand From a Yellow Curl; Mama's and Daddy's Little Girl; How Lonely Can You Get; On the Southbound; Me and Your Memory*; and four others. RCA LSP 4688 \$5.98, ⑧ P8S 1921 \$6.95.

Performance: **Lacks punch**
Recording: **Excellent**

Despite statements in the liner notes about the abundance of material available to Lester Flatt and Mac Wiseman for their second collaboration in two years, this album is clearly hurting for material. Compared to "Lester 'n Mac," it seems loose and undirected. Even though it's top-heavy with old-timey ballads, it somehow fails to make use of Wiseman's unique vocal style. There's *Salty Dog Blues* to break up the ballads, but another version of *Salty Dog* by Lester Flatt and *anybody* is superfluous. The band, nevertheless, gets in some good licks, and Wiseman does get to make the title tune hum down the rails.

Another interesting thing about the liner notes is that they scrupulously avoid any mention of the dobro player, Buck (Uncle Josh) Graves, even though his obviously is the key instrument in the album. The omission is understandable; Uncle Josh went over to join Flatt's former partner Earl Scruggs, apparently after the album was in the can. From the drift of the notes, Roland White, the mandolin player, may be on his way to becoming Flatt's new right-hand man—White does take some pretty good solos here. From what I've seen of White, I'd say he's musician enough—and likeable enough—for that role. This album sounds as if it were made twenty-odd years ago. It sounds good, but the material is threadbare. N.C.

FLYING BURRITO BROTHERS: *Last of the Red Hot Burritos*. Al Perkins (pedal steel guitar); Kenny Wertz (guitar, banjo); Chris Hillman (bass, mandolin); Rick Roberts (guitar); Michael Clarke (drums); Byron Berline (fiddle); Roger Bush (acoustic bass). *Devil in Disguise; Six Days on the Road; My Uncle; Dixie Breakdown; Don't Let Your Deal Go Down; Orange Blossom Special; Ain't That a Lot of Love; High Fashion Queen; Don't Fight It; Hot Burrito #2; Losing Game*. A & M SP 4343 \$5.98, ⑧ 8T 4343 \$6.98, ⑥ CS 4343 \$6.98.

Performance: **Foreclosed promise**
Recording: **Good**

The last time I reviewed a Burritos album I said they were a fine band but that their label (or at least the liner-note writers) claimed more for them than was due or true. I still feel very much the same, but my admiration for them has been increased and frustrated at the same time by this their latest and last album. The first side is country-rock, the second rock-rock; both are excellent, though I prefer the first. Like the original Byrds, out of which the nucleus of the Burritos sprang, their main problem was revolving-door personnel, even though the musicians at any given time were excellent. And, like the Buffalo Springfield, they never really "made it" though they were much respected. I'm sorry the Burritos have broken up—we can never afford to lose a good band—but I hope the individual members go on to stardom elsewhere. J.V.

(Continued on page 98)

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BOBBY GOLDSBORO: *California Wine*. Bobby Goldsboro (vocals); unidentified accompaniment, Chuck Cochran arr. *California Wine*; *Lizzie and the Rain Man*; *Southern Fried Singin' Sunday Mornin'*; *Love the One You're With*; *Back That Way You Came*; *The Nights of Your Life*; *Born to Make You Happy*; *Country Feelin's*; and four others. UNITED ARTISTS UAS-5578 \$5.98.

Performance: **Vin ordinaire**
Recording: **Very good**

All right, America, here's something to go with your plastic cheeseburgers and your Hostess Twinkies. Some albums—and some wines—are so bad they're almost interesting. Listening to this one, however, I can't even imagine anyone saying, "Here's a little domestic album of no breeding, but you might be amused by its presumption," to paraphrase Thurber's well-known line. That means instant oblivion, I guess.

There are some ungodly noises in *Born to Make You Happy* and a song called (really) *Southern Fried Singin' Sunday Mornin'* (my mama warned me about two apostrophes in place of g's in the same song title), but even their Muzak arrangements fail to make them the grade-one disaster that might perk things up. Goldsboro does have a vocal style, after a fashion, a tiny vibrato that, in this album, at least, wavers between sobbing and somnolence—but hell, that's not the stuff of great flops, like Smead Jolley making three errors on a single batted ball. ~ N. C.

AL GREEN. Al Green (vocals); orchestra. *Back Up, Train*; *Hot Wire*; *Guilty*; *Don't Leave Me*; *Let Me Help You*; and six others. BELL 6076 \$4.98, © M 86076 \$6.98, © M 56076 \$6.98.

Performance: **What a talent!**
Recording: **What a recording!**

Al Green is scheduled to star at the reopening of the Copacabana (or the "Koper" as we ringsiders call it) this season. The night-club business in New York hasn't been just bad, it's been miserable. Al Green may perk things up a bit for a while. He's been 'way up on the charts for several months, and the "Koper" has been traditionally kind to record acts. Green is, of course, a lot more than a record act. In fact, he is an Act, with a capital A. This album gives a good sampling of what the customers can expect in the way of simulated fireworks—"simulated," because I believe very little of what he does, and I would like to think that he is, at least in part, something of a put-on. His attack on his material is uniformly ferocious. His singing sounds like an alley cat with its tail caught in the door: he rants, he raves, and he almost sobs, but he never convinces me. His seems a largely manufactured style, designed to cover a sameness of conception (or lack of it) for whatever he is singing. He can be very good in a superficial way, doing numbers such as *Back Up Train* or *Don't Hurt Me No More* with the kind of bring-'em-back-alive bravado that will have all us ringsiders shaking our heads in wonder at all that talent. Just as we used to when Sammy Davis Jr. left us all thunderstruck and with eggroll on our chin in the old days.

In other words, a Mr. Standing Ovation package, starring a black male Liza Minnelli. P.R.

GUESS WHO: *Live at the Paramount*. The Guess Who (vocals and instrumentals). Albert

Flasher; *New Mother Nature*; *Glance Bay Blues*; *American Woman*; *Runnin' Back to Saskatoon*; *Pain Train*; *Truckin' off Across the Sky*. RCA LSP 4779 \$5.98.

Performance: **Passable**
Recording: **Very good**

The Guess Who have always been strong on vocals and weak on practically everything else. This album, recorded in Seattle, emphasizes that split, as one would expect a "live" album to do. The guitars just aren't handled with much imagination, and the rhythm section simply pounds out your basic, no-risk, teenybopper tap-tap. In addition to such predictable problems, the album features a long, self-indulgent re-do of *American Woman* that shows off all the band's weaknesses to an embarrassing degree. *Truckin' off Across the Sky* may have the most ardently pro-drug lyric of the year, but just in case anyone missed the point, the Guess Who also included their oldie, *New Mother Nature*. Well, they can sing



DAN HICKS AND HIS HOT LICKS
Taste, humor, and restraint

about tokin' and all that, but they can't play Airplane-style psychedelic music. The boys sing well enough, however, and the vocal mix here is nearly perfect. And they are quite often tuneful, in a way that's somehow so healthy it's appealing. It's a good radio group, but chronically too immature to be considered one of the Heavies. N.C.

MICKEY HART: *Rolling Thunder*. Mickey Hart (drums); Phil Lesh (vocals, bass); Bob Weir (vocals, guitar); Jerry Garcia, Barry Melton, Sam Andrew, and John Cipollina (guitars); David Freiberg (vocals, piano, bass, guitar); Stephen Stills (bass); various other musicians. *The Main Ten (Playing in the Band)*; *Fletcher Carnaby*; *The Chase (Progress)*; *Blind John*; *Young Man*; and five others. WARNER BROS. BS 2635 \$5.98, © M8 2635 \$6.98, © M5 2635 \$6.98.

Performance: **Ambling**
Recording: **Excellent**

Yes, well: take a spin-off from the Grateful Dead, add some former Quicksilver Messengers, some Jefferson Airplanes (Paul and Grace), a Big Brother, a Fish, a member of the Family Stone (Greg Errico), the Tower of Power horn section, Alla Rakha and Zakir on the tablas, and have an Indian Medicine Man say a few words over the whole

menage—not forgetting, of course, to have Steve Stills play bass on one song so you can put his name on the jacket—and something is bound to happen. In fact, too much is likely to happen at any given moment, and that's the case here. Ex-Dead drummer Mickey Hart brings a measure of psychedelic expertise to the task, but Toscanini, Timothy Leary, and Red Cloud rolled into one couldn't gentle this beast of a thousand egos. The result is bulky jazz-rock, with Jerry Garcia, David Freiberg, and Alla Rakha wandering in and out of good moments and Grace Slick's one-of-a-kind vocals making the so-so *Blind John* one of the high points. The freaky sounds are well done, many fetching rhythms are introduced, and everyone plays well, but it's a collection of too many styles adding up to no style, and the burning question is: so what? N.C.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

DAN HICKS AND HIS HOT LICKS: *Striking It Rich!* Dan Hicks (vocals, guitar); John Girtton (lead guitar); Sid Page (violin, mandolin); Maryann Price (vocals, rhythm instruments); Jaime Leopold (bass); Naomi Ruth Eisenberg (vocals, fiddle). *You Got to Believe*; *Walkin' One and Only*; *O'Reilly at the Bar*; *Moody Richard*; *Flight of the Fly*; *I Scare Myself*; *The Laughing Song*; *Canned Music*; and six others. BLUE THUMB BTS 36 \$5.98.

Performance: **Strong vein**
Recording: **Excellent**

Jump tunes that are not jump tunes (*Walkin' One and Only*), jazz that is not jazz (*You Got to Believe*), country that is not country (*Presently in the Past*)—such is the stuff of Dan Hicks' special incongruity. The music is a funny, lopsided blend of nostalgia and some elements that are ahead of their time. Practically any style of music can serve as fuel for Hicks' neatly tuned machine. *Presently in the Past*, for example, is country milked of its very essence—its plaintiveness—and the cream whipped to a froth with some richly sophisticated musicianship. The Dan Hicks Method is something like hiring a great pitcher to throw custard pies: he can make you swallow clichés the size of boulders (perhaps a littler larger in such a ditty as *O'Reilly at the Bar*, the piece I liked least). He also gets away with none-too-committal lyrics, which seem afraid of being emotional and afraid of not being emotional.

Hicks has taste, humor, and restraint. Many times the instruments could grab the high notes for a little showboating, but instead they plunk back into the normal octave for a much more subtle trip. It all adds up to an oddly familiar and yet totally unusual listening experience. N.C.

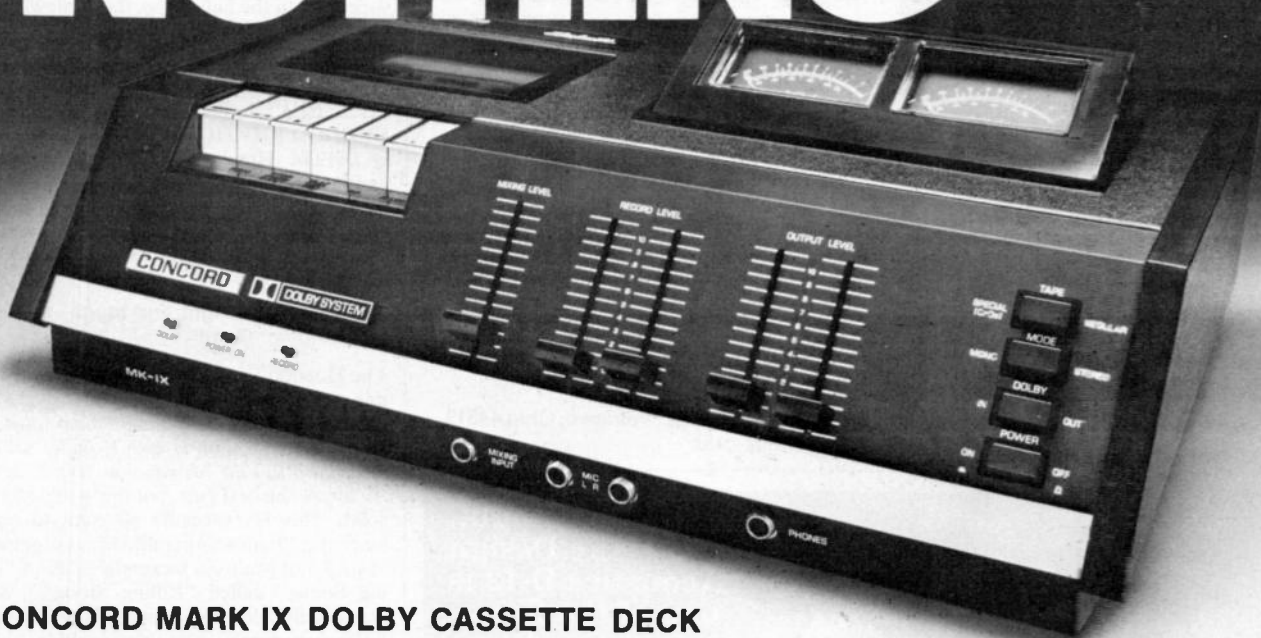
BUDDY HOLLY: *A Rock & Roll Collection*. Buddy Holly (vocals); unidentified accompaniment. *Rave On*; *Tell Me How*; *Oh Boy!*; *Not Fade Away*; *Bo Diddley*; *Maybe Baby*; *That'll Be the Day*; *Peggy Sue*; *Ready Teddy*; *It Doesn't Matter Anymore*; and fourteen others. DECCA DXSE7 207 two discs \$6.98.

Performance: **Uh-oh**
Recording: **Variable**

In this age of electronic total recall, it's possible for nostalgists to get what's coming to them. That's certainly what's going to happen to the Buddy Holly cult when its members hear what the real thing really sounded like.

(Continued on page 100)

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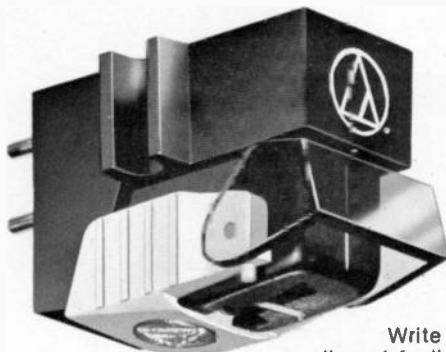
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Making a case for the transcending importance of Holly was ridiculous in the first place. What made him stand so tall in the early Sixties was the fact that he was surrounded by dwarfs of rock-and-roll. He had a knack for stringing together catchy singles—often on tunes other people had written, such as Paul Anka's *It Doesn't Matter Anymore*—and he had a distinctive if undistinguished vocal sound, which of course made a great deal of hay with the uh-oh gimmick someone else had invented. Behind that there was a forerunner (of sorts) of the country-rock band, although this one was very sparse compared to today's experiments. My honest impression from listening to it is that it sounded that way simply because it had to—thus was the "Tex Mex sound" created. Anyway, this album should cool the Buddy Holly craze, and we can move on to other things, or back to looking for a successor to the hula hoop, the Agnew watch, the Nixon dartboard, or whatever. N.C.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

HOODOO RHYTHM DEVILS: *The Barbecue of DeVille*. Hoodoo Rhythm Devils (vocals and instrumentals). *Truer than Me*; *Too Hot to Handle*; *All Tore Down*; *Eating in Kansas City*; *I Was Wrong*; *Lotta Fine Mama*; *Arkansas*; and four others. BLUE THUMB BTS 42 \$5.98.

Performance: **Tight and tough**
Recording: **Good**

The Hoodoo Rhythm Devils have turned in a fine, swingly album, about evenly divided between charge-the-blockhouse jump tunes and bluesy laments. *Too Hot to Handle*, *All Tore Down*, *Lotta Fine Mama*, and *Sign Your Life Away* are the best cuts, but the whole album is solid. This is especially pleasant to report, since the album was heralded by a promotional stroke of genius: a facsimile satire of "Rolling Stone," called "Ruling Stooze," which was deadly accurate, beautifully written, and hilariously funny. After this buildup, the album *had* to be good. I hope both the album and "Ruling Stooze" find a large and receptive public. J.V.

IAN AND SYLVIA: *You Were On My Mind*. Ian Tyson (vocals, guitar); Sylvia Tyson (vocals); the Great Speckled Bird (instrumentals). *Get Up Jake*; *Old Cheyenne*; *Antelope*; *Miriam*; *Lonesome Valley*; *You Were On My Mind*; *Joshua*; *You're Not Alone Anymore*; and three others. COLUMBIA KC 31337 \$5.98, © CA 31337 \$6.98.

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Passable**

Oh, what I'd give for a new *acoustic* Ian and Sylvia album! But it looks as if the die is cast; an electric band, the Great Speckled Bird, is given star billing on album covers now. This should not be construed to mean I dislike the album—it's a good album. The vocals are still marvelous, and the songs are still the kind (subject matter: the rodeo, antelopes, salmon) that give the listener a healthy, open-air, Western perspective. And the band complements that by sounding country rather than hard-rocking. But what the electricity adds doesn't equal what the concomitant harshness subtracts from the lyricism latent in the songs and vocals. The all-acoustic treatment of *Salmon in the Sea* confirms that.

The team has changed labels again, sharp-
(Continued on page 102)

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Hirsch-Houck Laboratories, Stereo Review, January 1973

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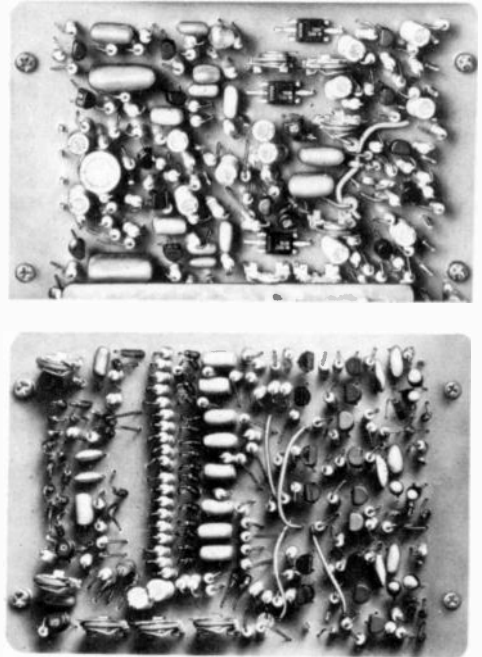
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eyed readers will have noticed. They may wonder, too, as they listen to the print-through ghosts and built-in scratches, just why the Tysons bothered to do so. But nothing can cancel out the subtle statement of Sylvia's *Miriam* or prevent Ian from bringing the album to its peak with *You're Not Alone Anymore*, a beautiful ballad of the sort only he and Gordon Lightfoot and a couple of others (all Canadians) write nowadays. It's a good album. But why can't I have my way about these things?
N.C.

LUTHER INGRAM: *If Loving You Is Wrong I Don't Want to Be Right*. Luther Ingram (vocals); orchestra. *Help Me Love; I Can't Stop; I Remember; Always*; and six others. KOKO KOS 2202 \$4.98, Ⓟ 2202 \$6.98, Ⓒ 2202 \$6.98.

Performance: **Ring around Aretha**
Recording: **Very good**

Poor Aretha. Bad enough that she's being ripped off by what seems to be every second female singer in the Western world who has access to a recording studio. But now we have Luther Ingram, who sounds enough like Miss Franklin to be her twin. The production is slick, and Ingram is a solid enough musician that the album is reasonably entertaining in a synthetic way; but other than that it's strictly a curiosity item.
P.R.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JAMES GANG: *Passin' Through*. James Gang (vocals and instrumentals). *Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet; One Way Street; Had Enough; Up to Yourself; Everybody Needs a Hero; Run, Run, Run*; and three others. ABC ABCX 760 \$5.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Very good**

I started out not liking this album, and then—as the young people say—"got into" it. There's some swell stuff here. The material, all composed by the group, is above average. I admire drummer Jim Fox's quick dash to the organ for one song (*Had Enough*—"I ain't never had enough of nobody like I've had enough of you," etc.), and the lead-vocal work of Roy Kenner is consistently strong and pleasing. There is a contingent of Nashville musicians on some of the sides—Charlie McCoy on harmonica and David Briggs on piano, among them—and that can't hurt. But the main credit for a fine, solid, and inventive collection of mostly short and tight performances goes to the group itself. Er . . . um . . . right on!
J.V.

JOY OF COOKING: *Castles*. Joy of Cooking (vocals and instrumentals). *Don't the Moon Look Fat and Lonesome; Waiting for the Last Plane; Lady Called Love; Three-Day Loser; Castles; Beginning Tomorrow; Let Love Carry You Along; Home Town Man; All Around the Sun and the Moon; Bad Luck Blues*. CAPITOL ST 11050 \$5.98, Ⓟ 8XT 11050 \$6.95, Ⓒ 4XT 11050 \$6.95.

Performance: **Sprightly**
Recording: **Very good**

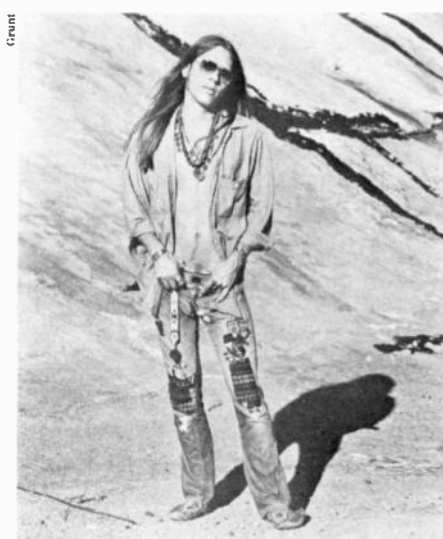
Now here's a pleasant surprise! Pianist-vocalist Toni Brown and guitarist Terry Garthwaite have written the material, all of which is very easy to take. Miss Brown is a skillful pianist who plays in an elfin style. The band is augmented by saxes on *Three-Day Loser*, and

there's a good ensemble ride-out. This is an album you can play once a day.
J.V.

PETER KAUKONEN: *Black Kangaroo*. Peter Kaukonen (guitar and vocals); various musicians. *Up or Down; Postcard; What We All Know and Love; Billy's Tune; Barking Dog Blues*; and three others. GRUNT FTR 1006 \$5.98, Ⓟ P8FT 1006 \$6.98, Ⓒ PKFT 1006 \$6.98.

Performance: **Promising new rock guitarist**
Recording: **Very good**

Peter Kaukonen is the brother of the Jefferson Airplane's lead guitarist Jorma Kaukonen, and shows signs, in this first solo outing, of upstaging his more famous sibling. His material is, unfortunately, flat-out dull. The practice of encouraging young musicians to produce all-original albums is surely one of the most potentially destructive in the recording industry. Kaukonen plays and sings with a



PETER KAUKONEN
Free intensity reminiscent of Hendrix

loose, free intensity that is strongly reminiscent of the late Jimi Hendrix, and I would wager that, given better material and more careful direction, he just might achieve stardom. This record won't do it, but keep an ear open for Peter Kaukonen in the future; the potential is there.
Don H.

MARK MOOGY KLINGMAN: *Moogy and the Rhythm Kings*. Mark Moogy Klingman (keyboards, guitar, vocals); other musicians. *I Can Love; Liz, When You Waltz; Kindness; Crying in the Sunshine; Kilpatrick's Defeat; Just a Sinner*; and six others. CAPITOL ST 11072 \$5.98.

Performance: **Vague studio rock**
Recording: **Very good**

There really isn't much to say about Klingman. He is a good-enough keyboard player with pretensions of leadership that just don't quite make it on this album. He is assisted by a wide array of some of the best young studio musicians available, and the heavy hand of producer-engineer Todd Rundgren manages to blend everything into a mix of sound without substance.

What results is not unpleasant, but not appealing either. It demonstrates that rock players, like jazz musicians before them, are going to have to learn that technical competence

combined with inflated egos doesn't always result in hit records.
Don H.

MOM'S APPLE PIE. Mom's Apple Pie (vocals and instrumentals). *People; Mr. Skin; Good Days; Lay Your Money Down*; and four others. BROWN BAG BB 14200 \$5.98.

Performance: **Excellent instrumentally, middling vocally**
Recording: **Excellent**

"Never judge a book by its cover" is a just maxim and should also apply to record albums and their covers. I thought we'd got well past put-on covers, so, with a few exceptions, I choose to ignore them. But here is one that is so gratuitously and grossly obscene in a juvenile and goatish way that I think it might well deprive the album of some prospective listeners. I'm not taking any moral position here. Jack Bonus' recent cover was obscene too, but it was also very funny. And the Bonus album had a concealing sticker on the back so that the casual shopper wasn't offended as he or she flipped through the bins. Mom's Apple Pie's joke (?) is right there in full view. I should, I suppose, say *was* in full view, since Terry Knight (he who invented Grand Funk and has now gone into the pastry business) withdrew the cover with barefaced mock astonishment when a persuasive number of radio stations demonstrated that they recognized porn when they *saw* it even though they may still be a little hard of hearing.

I wouldn't have bothered with all this if the group didn't have real quality and weren't very much worth listening to. They have drive and power, and instrumentally they are easily one of the best (although vocally, I'm sorry to say, they have a long way to go). Their work has touches of gospel, touches of blues, touches of just about everything going on today; and it all comes off with energy and expertise and excitement. *I Just Wanna Make Love to You* is the best track here, since it is the one in which the group vocally gets it together most consistently. This is a group that definitely has a future.
P.R.

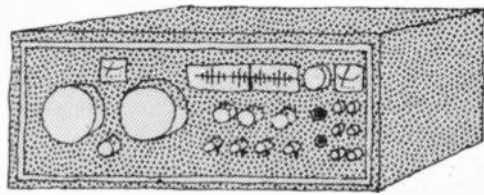
GILBERT O'SULLIVAN: *Gilbert O'Sullivan Himself*. Gilbert O'Sullivan (vocals); orchestra. *Alone Again (Naturally); January Git; Houdini Said; Matrimony; Permissive Twit; We Will*; and nine others. MAM MAM 4 \$5.98, Ⓟ M 84 \$6.98, Ⓒ M 54 \$6.98.

Performance: **Hardfelt**
Recording: **Flashy**

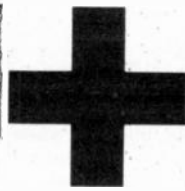
The Mills of Gordon continue to grind exceeding shrewd. Gilbert O'Sullivan is the latest creation to emerge from Dr. Mills' pop laboratory, and from the way I see him being trotted around to the top TV shows he'll probably be another commercial winner before the season is out. His assigned gimmick is a plasticized "sensitivity." By that I mean that he sounds "young" in that rapid, navel-gazing way that I thought we'd all had enough of by the time Erich Segal made his first million. You see, Gilbert O'Sullivan writes all his own songs! And he'll even accompany himself on the piano while he sings them to you! Since I've always had the impression that Mills-Jones and Mills-Humperdinck learn their songs only after strenuous hours of watching the bouncing ball, I suppose this does represent some sort of advance.

Alone Again (Naturally) is O'Sullivan's big

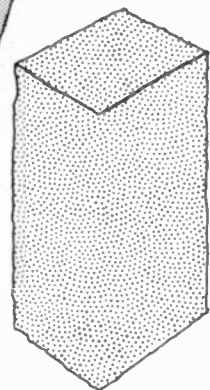
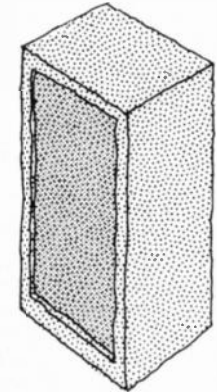
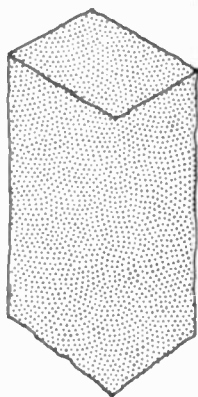
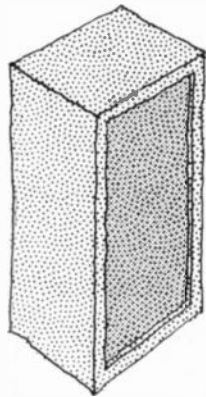
(Continues on page 104)



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We haven't found any way to build speakers into the Spectrosonic SQ4 quadapter, but the small box shown above does contain everything else you need to convert a stereo system to four-channel, and for only \$119.95 at that.

The Spectrosonic SQ4 has an integrated circuit decoder for SQ-matrixed four-channel records and FM broadcasts. It also has a synthesizer so you can enjoy four-channel effects from your present stereo collection. You can connect a discrete four-channel tape unit, and when the JVC/RCA discrete four-channel records become available, the SQ4 will also accommodate the adapter necessary for them.

The only other thing you need for almost any type of four-channel sound is additional amplifiers for the rear channels, and the SQ4 has those too. Its direct-coupled amplifier section is capable of delivering 40 RMS watts of power from 20 to 20,000Hz. Rear speakers won't be distorted or drowned out no matter how powerful your receiver. In fact, if you have a modest stereo system now, you may wish to upgrade it by using the SQ4 to drive the front speakers.

Ample power and four-channel flexibility might be enough to expect from a \$120 quadapter, but the SQ4 also provides monitoring for four-channel recording and lets you use four-channel headphones. The blackout front panel lights up to show the mode in operation, and separate left and right volume controls help balance a four-channel sound field.

The Spectrosonic SQ4 can be used with any receiver which has a tape monitor circuit. All four Spectrosonic receivers were designed in conjunction with the SQ4 to provide a complete four-channel setup for a moderate price. (The four models are priced from \$179.95 to \$399.95.)

SPECTROSONIC

If you'd like more information about converting your stereo system to four-channel and about the different four-channel processes in use, send 50¢ for a complete SQ4 manual and brochure to Spectrosonic, 1301-65th St., Emeryville, Calif. 94608

gun, and so successful has it been on the charts that it has already been "covered" by such old time manipulators as Andy Williams, Johnny Mathis, and the Ray Conniff Singers. They, too, are products of the shrewd packagers who see to it that they are always right in there for the next payoff. *Alone* is a nice-enough little ditty, the kind of tune just enough in touch with the folk to make it a low-threshold musical toothache; the maudlin lyrics just may be autobiographical.

The album itself is a cookie-cutter job, with such heavy "production values" (lots of double tracking on the vocals, grandiose but murky arrangements) swirling around O'Sullivan that one can't be sure one is listening to anything at all alive. Of course, he's going to be a hit. But then so are TV dinners and Bac-O's. Someday, if we're lucky, the Mills organization will find a Mary Shelley to document the goings on in its dark laboratories. P.R.

DAVID PEEL & THE LOWER EAST SIDE: *The Pope Smokes Dope.* David Peel (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *I'm a Runaway, I'm Gonna Start Another Riot; Birth Control Blues; The Hip Generation; Everybody's Smoking Marijuana; The Ballad of Bob Dylan;* and six others. APPLE SW 3391 \$4.98, © 8XW 3391 \$6.98, © 4XW 3391 \$6.98.

Performance: **What performance?**
Recording: **What recording?**

This is David Peel's second album. The only reason he got to do a second album is that John Lennon continues to seek ways to express his second childhood and make a fool of himself in the process. Lennon (with his faithful far-out companion Yoko) produced this collection of infantile dreck. Peel belongs to the East Village era of the late Sixties, when the two area papers were the *Hobo News* (on the way down) and the *East Village Other* (on the way up). Both are nowhere now. The leftovers occupying the area—neanderthal motorcycle gangs, dippy college girls dropping in to seek "experience," old winos and new junkies, rip-off boutiques where ordinary bluejeans go for \$10 a pair with a needlepoint flower sewn on the left leg—are all obsolete, though they can't or won't admit it. Now they sit and wait for some cockeyed messiah—and here comes Lennon, to record the sounds of the New Bowery. Right on? Right off!

Just so you really understand what you're being warned against: *Marijuana* is about how groovy it is that everybody's smoking it, and it's really outasite to be stoned all the time; *Hip Generation* is about how Peel's part of the young people are gonna turn everything around and knock off those old foofs; *Dylan* is about how Dylan sang and made everybody free; the title tune is about how the Pope smokes dope, according to expert Peel. The sentiments expressed are not new, not news, not needed. Even the people most loudly proclaiming them in 1968 now have fun laughing at them in *Fritz the Cat*. Spend your money on a movie ticket, not on this wasted (in both meanings) piece of . . . er, plastic. J.V.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BONNIE RAITT: *Give it Up.* Bonnie Raitt (vocals and guitar); orchestra. *Give it Up or Let Me Go; Nothing Seems to Matter; I Know; If You Gotta Make a Fool of Somebody; Love Me Like a Man; Too Long at the*

Fair; and four others. WARNER BROS. BS 2643 \$5.98.

Performance: **Tangy and smooth**
Recording: **Good**

"My little girl, pink and white as peaches and cream is she . . ." as John Raitt sang to an entire generation of theatergoers as Billy Bigelow in Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Carousel*. Raitt's *Soliloquy* always was, and still is, a guaranteed show-stopper. Now it seems that he has produced another one, and that in the person of his daughter Bonnie, whose second album shows her as one of the most delightful additions to the pop scene in a long time. She may indeed have grown up pink and white and soft and sweet, but her singing is more like a mixture of vinegar and honey. It is by turns tangy and sweet, salty and smooth.

Bonnie Raitt's looseness and high spirits pervade everything she does. To hear her toy with something like the ancient 'Sippie Wallace blues *You Got to Know How*, with that sly, cajoling gait to her voice, is a refreshing



BONNIE RAITT
Pervasive looseness and high spirits

reminder that not everyone under thirty sees the world only in terms of gloom and doom. *Too Long at the Fair* is a prime example of how to transmit a poignant story idea to an audience without blubbing. Two of her own songs, *Give it Up or Let Me Go* and *Nothing Seems to Matter*, are admittedly dark but never depressing—and they have a tough-mindedness about them that expresses quite well the sort of realistic New Positivism that seems to be creeping, all too slowly, into pop these days.

Her backup musicians and arrangements are all superior, especially the playing of Freebo (that's it—"Freebo") on a variety of instruments. Michael Cuscuna contributes a minutely sensitive and evocative production. Overall, the best description of the album would be to borrow another line from *Carousel*. "This was a real nice clam bake." I'm awfully glad I came. P.R.

JOHN SIMON: *Journey* (see Best of the Month, page 84)

CAT STEVENS: *Catch Bull at Four* (see Best of the Month, page 85)

LON & DERREK VAN EATON: *Brother.* Lon and Derrek Van Eaton (vocals); instrumental

accompaniment. *Warm Woman; Sun Song; More than Words; Hear My Cry; Without the Lord; Sweet Music; Help Us All;* and four others. APPLE SMAS 3390 \$5.98, © 8XW 3390 \$6.98, © 4XW 3390 \$6.98.

Performance: **Pleasing**
Recording: **Good**

Despite the implications of the album cover, this really is a brother act. And despite the blah lyrics reproduced on the inside cover, the brothers write and sing good, straight-ahead pop stuff. I quarrel with the packaging; the album itself is most pleasing. Klaus Voorman, the shadow character associated with the Beatles before and after breakup, did the producing, except for one cut, *Sweet Music*, which was captained by George Harrison. Ringo Starr appears as drummer on two cuts, reinforcing my belief that he is one of the better common-sense drummers. All in all, it is a great relief, in this time of non-tunes and overblown lyrics, to hear two fellows who make their lyrics come true by writing nice melodies and backing them up with fine arrangements and solid performances. Try some. J.V.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

WEST, BRUCE & LAING: *Why Dontcha.* Leslie West (guitar and vocals); Jack Bruce (vocals, bass, keyboards, harmonica); Corky Laing (vocals, drums). *Why Dontcha; Out into the Fields; The Doctor; Turn Me Over; Third Degree; Shake Ma Thing (Rollin' Jack); While You Sleep;* and three others. COLUMBIA/WINDFALL. KC 31929 \$5.98, © CA 31929 \$6.98, © CT 31929 \$6.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Very good**

Things seems to have come full circle: Cream is reunited, but with different musicians playing different roles. The only original-cast member is bassist Jack Bruce. Guitarist and vocalist Leslie West essays the role of Eric Clapton, and drummer Corky Laing appears as Ginger Baker. It was the same show when the group, with former Cream producer Felix Pappalardi on bass, was known as Mountain.

What are the results? Outside of the whole thing sounding ominously and hopelessly familiar—after all, 1968 is *gone*—the reconstituted Cream/Mountain is still a very good hard-rock band, perhaps the best going. Certainly Jack Bruce sounds more comfortable here than he has at any time since Cream broke up. Leslie West is a fine hard-rock guitarist, and the excesses of the form (which is composed almost entirely of excesses) are easier to take with him than with anyone else. Their version of *Third Degree* is a terrific blues performance by any standard.

The album ranges from West's hysterical vocals, with the others backing him up, to Bruce's introspective wanderings, with the others backing him up. It's a good album and will probably be good years from now, even though it is already obsolete. J.V.

THE WIND HARP: *Song from the Hill. Cycle One: Seasons. Beginnings; Springsong; Solstice; Summersong; Turnings; Harvest; Winterwhite; Circle's End. Cycle Two: Elements. Fires; And Earth; And Air and Water.* UNITED ARTISTS UAS 9963 two discs \$6.98.

Performance: **Lovely to look at**
Recording: **Windy**

The circumstances surrounding the making of

STEREO REVIEW

this album are fascinating. It seems that there is a real wind harp that stands on a hilltop above a Massachusetts town. The harp, several times the height of a man, was created by a twenty-one-year-old sculptor named Ward McCain, who spent a year and a half of his young life constructing it, and then left his creation to the elements "to stand and sing alone, to fall when it is time." He never came back, but in all seasons the wind harp sings to the invisible plucking of the wind's willful fingers, and people come from miles around to hear its song. Two young producers, Chuck Hancock and Harry Bee, decided to record the wind harp in all weathers and seasons, and the result is a handsome album with some lovely color photographs of the harp, a marvelous full-color poster of it, and verses composed in its honor by girl poets ranging in age from around three to full adolescence. These, though shaky in their grammar, are charming, and the layout of the package deserves some sort of prize—as do its producers, for their prose as well as for their sweetness in saving and reconstructing the wind harp with a steel brace after vandals damaged it.

But the harp itself lets us down. Four sides of the wind sounding through those unmusical strings is a big disappointment. The bands have evocative names, as can be seen in the listing above, but the wind itself is tone-deaf. Winter and summer, it does little but blow through those wires like the blustery bore it is. With a little straining of the imagination the listener can at times persuade himself that he is hearing far-off, invisible heavenly choirs, but even this becomes a monotony after a while. By the time all four sides were over, I was wishing I had never *heard* of the wind harp. It is a beautiful album to look at and examine, and might make a good white sound for a dentist's office, but is merely a ringing in the ears to the rest of us. P.K.

PAUL WINTER & THE WINTER CONSORT: *Icarus*. The Winter Consort (vocals and instruments), Paul Winter cond. *Icarus: The Silence of a Candle; Sunwheel; Juniper Bear; All the Mornings Bring*; and four others. Epic KE 31643 \$5.98.

Performance: **Melted mishmash**
Recording: **Excellent**

Paul Winter and the Winter Consort are nothing if not dogged in pursuit of their muse. To recording sessions they lug along not only oboes, English horns, soprano saxes, Fender basses, electric and acoustical guitars, and trunkfuls of percussion instruments from Ghana, but also such reputable vocalists as Paul Stookey and David Darling to join the chorus. What does Winter in here is the sheer pretension and overambition of the enterprise. The album is vaguely concerned with moods of light and darkness—sunlight, candlelight, midnight. But then a *Whole Earth Chant* and an *Ode to a Fillmore Dressing Room* are thrown in—and what is *Ode to a Fillmore Dressing Room* doing, pray tell, in such rarefied company? The very title renders absurd the endless straining for exotic Indian and African effects. In all, amid the chants and the tinklings, strummings, and pounding on thirty-five kinds of drums from Ghana, the real musical ideas in "Icarus" are thin and few. Like Icarus himself, they try to soar too high and end up earthbound, with melted wings. P.K.

(Continued on next page)

FEBRUARY 1973



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JAZZ



RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ORNETTE COLEMAN: *The Skies of America*. Ornette Coleman (alto saxophone); London Symphony Orchestra, David Measham cond. COLUMBIA KC 31562 \$5.98.

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Very good**

I had heard Ornette Coleman's first major orchestral work, *The Skies of America*, in concert before the release of this recording. Since it is a work that depends strongly upon a variable interchange between improvisations and written sections, between sheer spontaneity and absolute control, it was to be expected that the performances would differ. But I found the "live" performance considerably more exciting, and, I would say, considerably more enlightening in terms of what Coleman was trying to do with this work than the recording is.

It is a work based primarily upon an episodic series of textures—dense string sounds voiced in the upper registers and underpinned by staccato drumming. Rapid-fire riff patterns similar to Coleman's bubbling jazz lines suddenly come flying out of the strings, and every now and again a strutting melody comes sliding in and out.

Coleman's solos are rare, much rarer than in the "live" performance, and one misses the interplay and contrast they provided with the orchestral timbres. The point, however, is that *The Skies of America*, with its twenty-one subtitled sections, manages to avoid the stylistic inconsistencies that have plagued so many other efforts to integrate symphony orchestras with jazz, rock, folk groups, etc. With it, Coleman has taken the step forward that all his fans have long anticipated, and has demonstrated, in extremely pragmatic fashion, that the solutions he worked out as a contemporary jazz improviser may very well be applicable to the composition of large orchestral works. In spite of its failure to approach the level of the "live" event, this one is a must-have recording. *Don H.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ERROLL GARNER: *Gemini*. José Mangual (conga drums); Jimmie Smith (percussion); Ernest McCarty, Jr. (bass); Erroll Garner (piano and harpsichord). *How High the Moon; It Could Happen to You; Gemini; When a Gypsy Makes His Violin Cry; Tea for Two; Something; Eldorado; These Foolish Things*. LONDON XPS 617 \$5.98.

Performance: **Just fine**
Recording: **Good**

Erroll Garner goes his own errant but arresting way in his new album, "Gemini," improvised on the spot for London Records, yet obviously guided by plans set down some-

where inside his own resourceful head. José Mangual, a conga drummer, Ernest McCarty, Jr., a bassist with an excellent ear, and Jimmie Smith, a fine percussionist, seem singularly adept at reading Garner's mind as they travel with him on this voyage through largely familiar waters. Two of the pieces are Garner's own—*Gemini*, described as "a portrait of the artist in the process of self-renewal and discovery" in Dan Morgenstern's respectful notes, and *Eldorado*, which mines the Afro-Latin vein that Garner has been exploring for some twenty years. Both are intriguing tunes, but not half so interesting in themselves as what the group makes of them is.

For the rest, gypsy idioms are both exploited and lampooned in *When a Gypsy Makes His Violin Cry*, which I thought had long since been put to rest but is reawakened affectionately here. *These Foolish Things*, another exercise in nostalgia, also benefits from Garner's inventiveness; *How High the Moon* rises and soars through nine idea-

London



ERROLL GARNER

Inventive resurrection of jazz dialects

packed choruses; and *It Could Happen to You*, after a gospel introduction, threatens to resurrect Swing. Indeed, Mr. Garner finds new life not only in that half-forgotten idiom, but in bop, traditional jazz, and the inflections of the blues. In *Tea for Two* he also provides alternate obbligatos on both harpsichord and piano. Garner, though seeming to linger deliberately behind contemporary trends, is so resourceful in reviving and updating old jazz dialects that he paradoxically winds up ahead of them. *P.K.*

PROFESSOR LONGHAIR: *New Orleans Piano*. Professor Longhair (piano and vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *In the Night; Tipitina; Hey Now Baby; Walk Your Blues Away; Hey Little Girl; Willie Mae; Professor Longhair Blues; Ball the Wall*; and five others. ATLANTIC SD 7225 \$5.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Good**

Professor Longhair was the patron saint of New Orleans music between the late Forties and the early Sixties. All the great pianists to come out of the Crescent City in that time (Huey Smith, Allen Toussaint, Fats Domino, Dr. John) learned from Longhair. Domino's

Fifties recording of *Mardi Gras* is taken directly from Longhair's, and Domino's *Are You Going My Way?* is a kidnapping of Longhair's *Hey Little Girl*. Dr. John, whose recent album "Gumbo" is a tribute to New Orleans' second Golden Age, describes Longhair's style as "over-boogie," and it has as much Spanish in it as Jelly Roll Morton's playing did fifty years ago. Longhair is basically a highly developed "crude" pianist, a local wonder who cut the records contained on this album and enjoyed their popularity, but who refused, like many New Orleans musicians before him, to make a national tour and grab at country-wide fame.

Listening to this album gives us a good idea of what was going on in New Orleans nearly twenty-five years ago (the disc is culled from two sessions, in 1949 and 1953), and you can feel the pulse and throb and ham-kick-dance exuberance of that most folk-European of cities in the United States. Longhair is a considerable talent—the record proves that—and this one should be added to any tasteful collection. But I think it also shows that Longhair is one of those unusual people who suffer an unfortunate twist of fate: he is the fountainhead, no doubt, but his students, especially Dr. John, surpass the teacher. A P.S. to the liner notes says that Longhair may record again soon and has done some "demo" sessions that surpass anything he has done before. Well and good. I call on all the positive scrawlings on the tomb of Marie LeVeau to guide Longhair to good fortune. *J.V.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MONGO SANTAMARIA: *Up from the Roots*. Mongo Santamaria (congas); instrumental and vocal accompaniment. *Ebora (Yeza); En La Habana (Guaguanco); Pan de Maiz (Conga); Para Ti; Sofrito; Little Angel; Virtue*; and six others. ATLANTIC SD 1621 \$5.98.

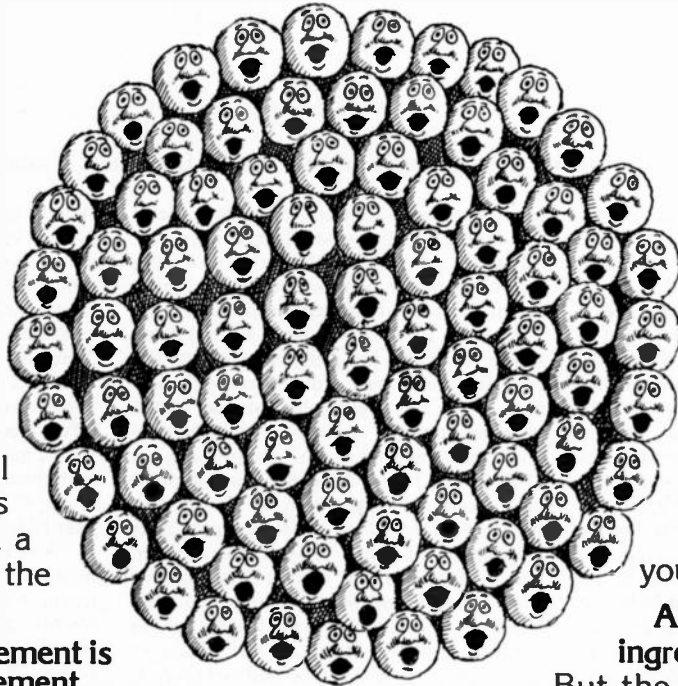
Performance: **Super**
Recording: **Excellent**

Mongo Santamaria is a major figure in Latin music—more specifically in the Afro-Cuban style, which is regarded by Latin musicians as being the "mother" of all Latin music. This is probably his most ambitious album. It is a mini-history of how basic Afro-Cuban rhythms, powerful enough to stand on their own, contributed to Latin music, and how Latin music contributed to jazz—the only major contribution to jazz in the last twenty years, and one which jazz badly needed with its directionless floundering of those years.

I hasten to say that this album is not a formal documentary. There is no spoken narration, professor-to-student stuff; it is all done through music and it is not until the last band of side one that the intent of the album comes through. By that time you are happily entranced. Side two goes into the Latin and jazz styles in greater detail. The last cuts on side two, where it is mostly jazz, with the Afro-Cuban squad reduced to faithful rhythm section, are the least exciting on the album, but everything up to that point has been wonderful. Huzzas for all concerned, especially flutist Felix Watkins, the soprano-alto-tenor-baritone sax section of Carter Jefferson and Bill Saxon, and trumpeter Ray Maldonado. Mongo has been around a long time; this album shows his staying power and the energy that, I hope, will keep him with us for even longer. *Salud!* *J.V.*

STEREO REVIEW

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An improvement you can see but can't hear.
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is a timing leader. And we've marked the place where it starts with three little arrows so you'll always know exactly where you are.

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CAPITOL'S NEW "INTERNATIONAL SERIES"

Paul Kresh reviews the first releases of pop music from just about everywhere

"THIS MONTH," says some promotional material that came along with the first batch of releases in Capitol's new International Series, "Capitol aggressively re-enters the 'international music' business with a newly formed label. . . ." The letter—it is obviously intended for salesmen and distributors, but through some lapse in company security wound up with the review discs in my hands—goes on to advise that "aggressive tactics should be geared toward accounts who do not presently carry our International product," and asserts that the potential market for it "far exceeds the limited ethnic one." It is a point well taken, for while Nonesuch, for example, sends its engineers out into the field to bring back the "music of the people" for its "Explorer Series," Capitol seems to be deploying its recording crews to the lounges of local hotels and night clubs.

All the albums are "authentically recorded in the music's country of origin," the handout continues. This turns out to be almost true—the music of Beirut, for example, having been recorded in London by an English orchestra. But never mind. What we have here are the first twelve albums in what is planned as a monthly issue of recordings from the EMI archives, none of them previously released in this country. (Again, this is almost true—see below). The initial batch contains music of Ireland, France, Peru, Japan, Germany, Greece, Sweden, Africa, and the Near and Middle East. The sound is clean and clear, the notes are concise and reasonably informative, and the packaging is handsome. Let's spin the series on the turntable and hear what comes out.

Generally speaking, the programs in this first release are best when they are content to be popular and pleasant, and they make the most uncomfortable listening when they go in for pretentious experimentation or the popularization of authentic folk or classical materials. Starting in our own hemisphere, we have the Pachacamac Septet noodling about with the sacred music of the Incas in popularizations that retain the original colorings but distort them, as in an early Kodachrome. The effect is not unpleasant—especially in things like a quirky, charmingly clumsy waltz called *Quequita del Jarron*. I must admit, too, that the music of Peru and Ecuador is bastardized stuff to begin with, being a mixture of Incan pipe and flute music, the strumming of the *charango* (a

sound-box made from an armadillo's shell), and arrangements for string instruments of European derivation. Still, it has a unique exotic character, and was certainly never meant to go down as easily as it does here.

Crossing the sea to Ireland, we find Anne Byrne, a girl who has probably worn out her Joan Baez and Judy Collins record collection while developing her singing style, sounding terribly authentic in ballads of Irish resistance from *The Croppy Boy* of 1798 to *The Foggy Dew* (the original, political version associated with the Easter Uprising of 1916), all of which she puts over with plenty of spirit. Miss Byrne, assisted vocally and on guitars by two chums named Paddy Roche and Mick Crotty, also sings heartily a couple of imports by Tom Paxton—*Hold on to Me, Babe* and *I'm Bound for the Mountains and the Sea*, and just to show she's not parochial offers J.P.A. Schwartzendorf's *Plaisir d'amour* (partly in Gaelic-flavored French) and the Scots ballad *Mary Hamilton*. It's a wholesome program, and one of the few in the series that smells of fresh air rather than the cocktail lounge.

The French scene is represented by Gilbert Bécaud, "France's most idolized male singing star," according to that handout, exerting himself all over the place in songs about thwarted love (*La Fin d'un grand amour*), a sentimental number about paternal pride (*Il s'en va mon garçon*), and a wicked bit of satirical caricature in *Mon Grandpère le militaire*. If you like Bécaud's hard-breathing approach, this record will delight you. Personally, I felt more at home with Enrico Macias, a young *chansonnier* and dazzling guitarist from Algeria who, we are told, was discovered by M. Bécaud's musical director. Incidentally, while we are on the subject, it seems that Vanguard discovered him before Capitol did, all the songs on this disc having been previously released on Vanguard 6523. But whoever got there first, Macias was worth discovering. He writes many of his own ballads, the best of which, like *Adieu, mon pays* and *Ma Patrie*, are nostalgic tributes to his native land. Described as "a warm sirocco blowing into the cool north," he is loaded with talent in both his voice and his fingers.

ON to Germany, where we find a dogged group of hikers—the kind you can see clinging to mountainsides and thronging the town squares all summer anywhere in Europe—

singing some forty hiking songs at the tops of their voices in "Wanderlust," summoning up images of beer-gardens, *Lederhosen*, and youth hostels. The songs are pleasant or unpleasant, in line with your own predilections. But when Germany's Günter Noris Trio started playing its "jazz version" of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, torturing that Baroque masterpiece with all sorts of show-off effects and banal variations, I began to wish I had stayed with the hikers. Far more venturesome are the "cool, contemporary stylings" of Swedish folk songs offered by Merit Hemmingson and her Stockholm pals in "Swedish Modern." Yet here the Hammond organs, vibraphones, and synthesizers (along with a church organ and a harpsichord) rummage so frantically in their search for novelty that I developed a longing to hear the same program of folk melodies without their modern trappings.

OUR next stop is Africa—Ghana, to be exact—and our host here is Oscarmore Ofori (nicknamed by his fans, who used to cry out "More, Oscar, more!") and his "Highlife Music." Mr. Ofori provides a fascinating program, reflecting both the African and Caribbean influences on the music of his country. *Bus Conductor* and *Worries to Spare* are pure Calypso, the sort of jaunty ballad you might hear on almost any island in the West Indies, and are sung in English. Other ballads, sung in Ewe, Twi, and Krobo, are far more African in flavor. Ofori and his musicians obviously play for fun, and it's fun to hear them.

"The Greek Scene" is a first-rate if fairly standard parade of "happy and sad pop hits" offering the familiar *Ton Agapo* ("I Love You") and other songs in the proper contemporary trappings, with bouzouki and a big orchestra. Three singers—Vicky Mosholiou, Grigoris Bithikotsis, and Stamatia Kokotas—take turns as vocalists. Miss Mosholiou, billed as possessing "that 'never-on-Sunday' gentility and pride," lives up to her notices, and although there must be hundreds of albums in this vein, the record is most satisfactory. "Jet Flight to Beirut" is not; it's a fraud and a bore. These "favorite pop songs from the Near East" were recorded in London by Ron Goodwin and one of those big, big English orchestras. Mr. Goodwin is described as having made "a particular study of Lebanese melody and instrumentation," but this is strictly salon

We Call It Total Energy Response

stuff. "Fairuz in America," on the other hand, was recorded in Lebanon, and not in America at all: the title refers to the program, which is identical with the one by means of which this talented girl elicited wild applause in Carnegie Hall, and in the concert halls of a dozen other cities on this continent, during a 1971 tour. Her style is Arabic, and the music she sings is self-consciously Near-Eastern stuff written for her by a pair of composers who call themselves "the Rhabani Brothers." But her approach to a melody and her ornamentation of it are downright ravishing.

Our last stop is Tokyo, where we are offered a program in Playboy-style Japanese by a lass named Chiyo Okumura, touted on the album cover as "the sexiest voice in Japan." Although Miss Okumura rarely raises her voice above a murmur, she tackles a wide range of moods—hung over in *Asahi Ga Mabushii* ("The Morning Sun Is Too Bright for Me"), full of rhythmic rock energy in *Shoko* ("Evidence"), and gloomy in *Buru Durivu* ("Lonely Drive"). The orchestral arrangements are chock full of local color, from strumming on the koto to the clacking of woodblocks, but the record is Miss Okumura's, and she certainly makes the most of it.

ANNE BYRNE: *I Chose the Green*. Anne Byrne, Paddy Roche, and Mick Crotty (vocals and instrumentals). CAPITOL SP 10543 \$5.98.

GILBERT BÉCAUD: *The Great Bécaud*. Gilbert Bécaud (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. CAPITOL SP 10544 \$5.98.

PACHACAMAC ENSEMBLE: *Music of the Incas*. The Pachacamac Ensemble (vocals and instrumentals). CAPITOL SP 10545 \$5.98.

CHIYO OKUMURA. Chiyo Okumura (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. CAPITOL SP 10546 \$5.98.

GÜNTER NORIS TRIO: *Four Swinging Seasons* (jazz version of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*). Günter Noris Trio (instrumentals). CAPITOL SP 10547 \$5.98.

HAPPY WANDERERS: *Wanderlust*. The Happy Wanderers (vocals—children's chorus and orchestra). CAPITOL SP 10550 \$5.98.

THE GREEK SCENE. Vicky Mosholiou, Stamatis Kokotas, and Grigoris Bithikotsis (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. CAPITOL SP 10551 \$5.98.

ENRICO MACIAS: *My Guitar*. Enrico Macias (vocals and guitar); orchestral accompaniment. CAPITOL SP 10553 \$5.98.

OSCARMORE OFORI: *Afrika!* Oscar More Ofori and His Highlife Music (vocals and instrumentals). CAPITOL SP 10557 \$5.98.

FAIRUZ: *Fairuz in America*. Fairuz (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. CAPITOL SP 10558 \$5.98.

RON GOODWIN: *Jet Flight to Beirut*. Orchestra, Ron Goodwin cond. CAPITOL SP 10560 \$5.98.

MERIT HEMMINGSON: *Swedish Modern*. Merit Hemmingson (keyboards and synthesizer); orchestra. CAPITOL SP 10564 \$5.98.

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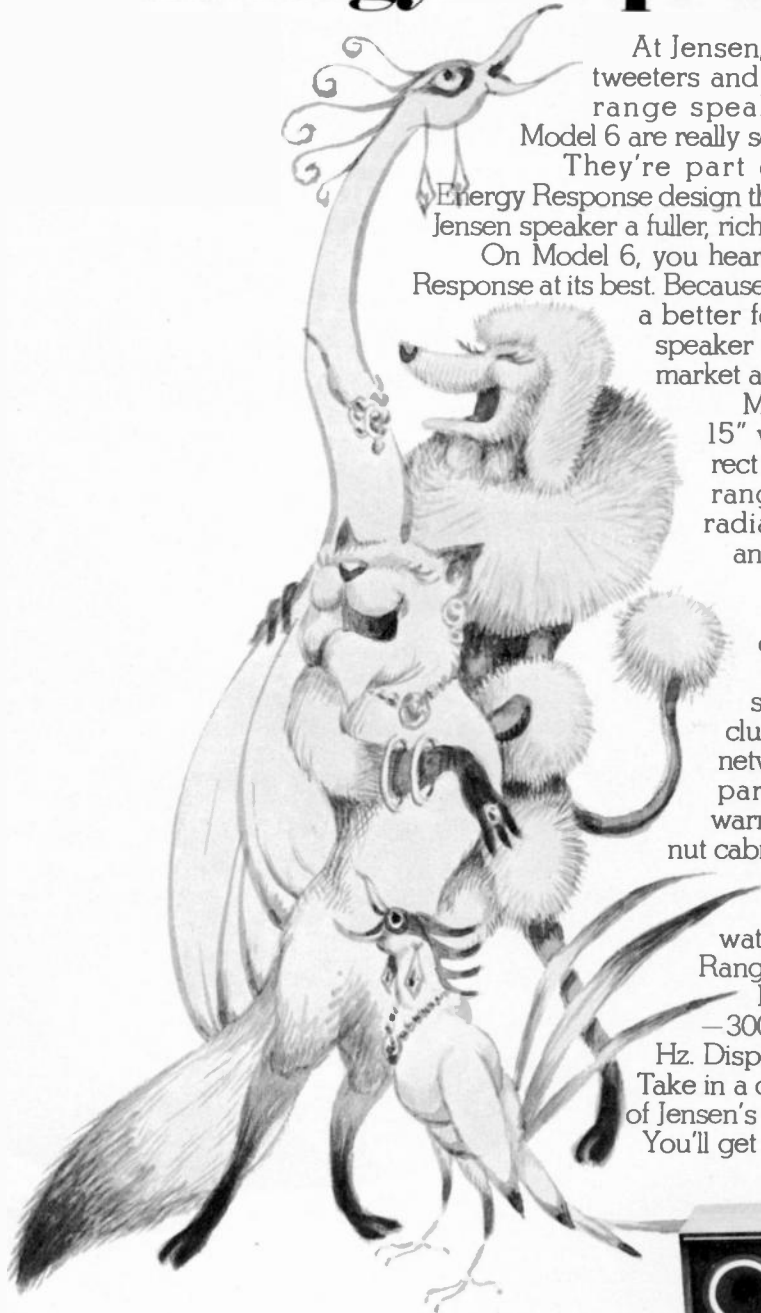
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CLASSICAL

Reviewed by DAVID HALL • BERNARD JACOBSON • GEORGE JELLINEK • IGOR KIPNIS
PAUL KRESH • ERIC SALZMAN • LESTER TRIMBLE

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BACH, J.S.: *Cantatas: No. 12, "Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen"; No. 13, "Meine Seufzer, meine Tränen"; No. 14, "Wär Gott nicht mit uns diese Zeit"; No. 16, "Herr Gott, dich loben wir."* Walter Gampert (boy soprano, in 13); Peter Hinterreiter (boy soprano, in 14); Paul Esswood (countertenor); Kurt Equiluz (tenor, in 12 and 13); Marius van Altena (tenor, in 14 and 16); Max van Egmond (bass); Tölzer Boys' Choir; King's College Choir, Cambridge; augmented Leonhardt Consort, Gustav Leonhardt dir. TELEFUNKEN SKW 4/1-2 two discs \$11.96.

Performance: **Fresh, historical approach**
Recording: **Superior**

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BACH, J.S.: *Cantatas: No. 13, "Meine Seufzer, meine Tränen"; No. 28, "Gottlob! Nun geht das Jahr zu Ende"; No. 58, "Ach Gott, wie manches Herzeleid"; No. 61, "Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland"; No. 63, "Christen ätzt diesen Tag"; No. 64, "Sehet, Welch eine Liebe hat uns der Vater erzeiget!"; No. 65, "Sie werden aus Saba alle kommen"; No. 81, "Jesum schläft, was soll ich hoffen"; No. 82, "Ich habe genug"; No. 111, "Was mein Gott will, das g'scheh' allzeit"; No. 121, "Christum wir sollen loben schon"; No. 124, "Meinen Jesum lass ich nicht"; No. 132, "Bereitet die Wege, bereitet die Bahn"; No. 171, "Gott, wie dein Name, so ist auch dein Ruhm."* Sheila Armstrong (soprano, in Nos. 58 and 64); Edith Mathis (soprano, in Nos. 13, 28, 61, 63, 111, 121, 132, and 171); Lotta Schädle (soprano, in No. 124); Anna Reynolds (alto, in Nos. 13, 63, 64, 81, 111, 121, and 132); Hertha Töpfer (alto, in Nos. 28, 124, and 171); Ernst Haefliger (tenor, in Nos. 65 and 124); Peter Schreier (tenor, in Nos. 13, 28, 61, 63, 81, 111, 121, 132, and 171); Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone, in Nos. 13, 28, 58, 61, 63, 64, 82,

121, and 171); Theo Adam (bass, in Nos. 65, 81, 111, 124, and 132); Munich Bach Choir (in all except Nos. 58 and 82); Munich Bach Orchestra, Karl Richter cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIVE ARC 2722 005 six discs \$27.00.

Performance: **Richly individual**
Recording: **Excellent**

BACH, J.S.: *Cantata No. 13, "Meine Seufzer, meine Tränen"; Cantata No. 166, "Wo gehest*



GUSTAV LEONHARDT

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du hin." Hanni Wendlandt (soprano, in No. 13); Lotte Wolf-Matthäus (alto); Helmut Krebs (tenor); Roland Kunz (bass); Kantorei St. Nikolai Berlin-Spandau; Bach Orchestra, Berlin, Helmut Barbe cond. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 1316 \$2.99 (plus 65¢ mailing and handling charge, available from the Musical Heritage Society, 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

BACH, J.S.: *Cantata No. 127, "Herr Jesu Christ, wahr' Mensch und Gott"; Cantata No. 171, "Gott, wie dein Name, so ist auch dein Ruhm."* Herrad Wehrung (soprano); Emmy Liskan (alto, in No. 171); Georg Jelden (tenor); Jakob Stämpfli (bass); South German Madrigal Choir, Stuttgart; South West German Chamber Orchestra, Pforzheim, Wolfgang Gönnerwein cond. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 1352 \$2.99 (plus 65¢ mailing and handling charge, available from the Musi-

cal Heritage Society, 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: **Worthy**
Recording: **Very good**

Bach wrote cantatas almost throughout his career, his Cöthen period excepted, and between 1704 and 1744 or so he managed to turn out some three hundred. Not all of these have survived. Of the five yearly cycles he is supposed to have written in Leipzig (it works out to approximately one a month for twenty-one years, or five sets of cantatas for every Sunday and holy day of the church year), some two-thirds of the total have come down to us. There are also the relatively few surviving early cantatas, many of which were revised and used later in Leipzig, and there are the purely secular works in that form, making a grand total of about two hundred and twenty-five cantatas that remain today. It is a staggering list, and one that even makes the above total of ten newly released Bach cantata records seem like mere drops in the bucket.

What with the activities of several European record companies, however, the drops are part of a fairly steady stream. The first listed item—the Telefunken—represents the fourth volume (each a two-record set) of what in ten years will take in the complete cantatas. DGG's Archive division has periodically issued cantatas over the last twenty years, the more recent ones under the direction of Karl Richter. The present six-disc album (Nos. 65, 82, and 124 were previously released in different couplings) is the largest single package to come thus far from this source. Finally, Musical Heritage Society has been releasing cantatas from two sources: the French-based Erato series conducted by Fritz Werner and, as is the case of MHS's two new records, the German Cantata-label discs featuring a variety of conductors and German ensembles and taking advantage of the latest publications of the new Bärenreiter Bach edition.

The prospective purchaser of any of these sets or discs will be pleased to know that there is not one weak cantata among the nineteen offered here. With the exception, possibly, of No. 13, the title of which translates "My sighs, my tears," and No. 82—the well-known "Ich habe genug"—this group does not represent Bach's best-known works in this form, and, in fact, No. 14 "If God were not with us at this time", No. 16 ("Lord God, we praise you"), and No. 121 ("Now must we praise Christ") seem to be first recordings. The dedicated Bach-cantata collector will want them all, even with a couple of duplications (Nos. 13 and 171), but what of others with less devotion to completeness and less money?

(Continued on next page)

Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓜ = reel-to-reel stereo tape
- Ⓢ = eight-track stereo cartridge
- ⓐ = stereo cassette
- Ⓚ = quadraphonic disc
- Ⓡ = reel-to-reel quadraphonic tape
- ⓑ = eight-track quadraphonic tape
- ⓐ = quadraphonic cassette

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ

The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.

Regarding contents, the Telefunken series is working numerically according to the old numbering system of the nineteenth-century, non-chronological publication of the cantatas. Thus, Volume Four contains three Leipzig works intended, respectively, for the second Sunday after Epiphany (No. 13), for the fourth Sunday after Epiphany (No. 14), and for New Year's Day, the Feast of the Circumcision (No. 16, with a particularly impressive jubilant chorus with solo brass passages—"Lassst uns jauchsen"). The album's opening cantata, No. 12, is a much earlier composition, dating from Bach's Weimar days, and was intended for the third Sunday after Easter. It is a gem. After a gorgeous opening *sinfonia* for oboe and strings, the cantata proper—"Weeping, lamenting, grieving, fearing"—begins with a chorus that was later to serve as a model for the *Crucifixus* in the B Minor Mass; musical imagery of weeping, the Cross, and treading after Christ abound in the work.

In contrast, the Archive six-disc album interestingly combines a number of cantatas associated with the early part of the Christian calendar. Numbers 61 and 132 were, respectively, for the first and fourth Sundays after Advent. Numbers 63, 121, and 64 were intended for the first, second, and third days of Christmas, and No. 28 for the Sunday after Christmas. The New Year (the Feast of the Circumcision) is represented by Nos. 171 and 58, respectively for New Year's Day and the following Sunday. Epiphany, celebrating the coming of the Magi, is the theme of No. 65, for the day itself, and Nos. 124, 13, 111, and 81 for each of the following four Sundays. The only exception is the famous bass cantata No. 82, associated with the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, nearer the end of the church year. This performance, featuring Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, has already been available for a couple of years and, because of its rather overblown and Romantic approach, is the least effective of the Archive set. It is almost impossible to single out the musical highlights in this set of fourteen cantatas; one can only note the extraordinary variety of the works, the brilliance of Bach's choral movements (Nos. 111, 171, 64, 63, 121), the picturesque symbolism of his writing (e.g., the "death stroke" in the tenor aria of No. 124), or the expressivity and energy of his solo vocal pieces.

The four cantatas on Musical Heritage Society have no relation to each other. Number 13 for the second Sunday after Epiphany has already been mentioned as one of Bach's most affecting lamenting cantatas. Number 166 ("Where goest thou?"), for the fourth Sunday after Easter, evokes a joyful mood in its final alto aria, which is full of florid laughing effects; the cantata's center of gravity, however, is a lovely albeit long tenor aria. This set of performances, incidentally, has been available for several years on Vanguard (S 251) and is still listed in the catalog at a price comparable to the new issue. The second record contains No. 127 ("Lord Jesus Christ, true Man and God") for the Sunday before Ash Wednesday and No. 171 ("God, as Thy name, so is Thy praise") for New Year's Day. Most impressive is No. 127, which includes a great opening chorus based on a fugal treatment of the chorale melody and a bass aria that, with its trumpet *obbligato*, portrays the Last Judgment.

The three sources of these releases represent as many different performance aesthetics. The Telefunken performances, using origi-

nal instruments or reproductions of them, and no women's voices in either the chorus or as solos, have as their basic premise to reconstruct the sound of the cantatas as they would have been heard in Bach's day. The results, in the previous volumes as well as in this one, are fascinating. First off, there is the extraordinary clarity and beauty of the instrumental sound. Then too, the vocalists, including the two boy sopranos from the Tölzer Boys' Choir, are uniformly excellent. Possibly the best Bach singer here is the tenor Kurt Equiluz, whose exceptionally stylish and rhetorically paced vocal work is sheer joy. Conductor Gustav Leonhardt's approach is direct and unsentimental—Nikolaus Harnoncourt, who led the majority of the cantatas in the three volumes already released, is perhaps a bit warmer in tone, and more inclined to elicit the music's expressivity. Leonhardt's instrumentalists, for example the (natural)



EDITH MATHIS
Expressive soprano in Bach cantatas

horn player in No. 14, are all first-class. Those who have the previous discs in this series will require no urging to buy this album. Incidentally, what happened to Cantata No. 15, a longish, very early example of Bach's writing in this form? It is not included here nor is it announced for the next volume.

Karl Richter's Bach represents a modified traditional approach—much more personal, sometimes quixotic in its individual touches, and more Romantic in the use of dynamic swells and occasionally too fat a choral sound. With the exception of No. 82, however, these are all splendid performances. They have marvelous spirit, the final chorales convey tremendous vitality, and the instrumental playing (including the imaginative organ continuo) is excellent. Among the vocal soloists, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau is invariably satisfying for the dramatic understanding he brings to his arias and recitatives (Max van Egmond on Telefunken and Theo Adam, Richter's other bass soloist, are both paler dramatically, though they each do good work). Ernst Haefliger is likewise ideal, with the younger tenor Peter Schreier also providing some impressive moments (the aria in No. 81). For expressivity, I prefer Edith Mathis' contributions to the cooler vocalism of Sheila Armstrong, but on the whole there are very few weak spots among Richter's soloists. Overall, these are

exciting performances, refined in detail and execution, and they stand up to Richter's best achievements. The bargain price, too, ought to be appealing.

The Cantate releases via Musical Heritage Society stand to some extent as a middle ground between the brilliance and occasional unconventionality of Richter and the historical and sonically fascinating Telefunken set. Gönnerwein and Barbe direct their respective forces with basically a no-nonsense approach. The music is left to speak for itself, without quite the clarity of the authentic-instrument version or the dramatic exuberance of Richter's personality. These are all good performances, with a worthy if not incomparable set of vocal soloists. The readings are earnest, but on occasion also a little inflexible rhythmically. Those who like their Bach performed with reliability and solidity will enjoy these readings, I am certain.

Finally, the Telefunken album is superb in its sonic clarity; Archive's discs, for the most part (the end of No. 124 is a bit overmodulated), are excellent; and the MHS pair, though not quite representative of the best of today's products (Nos. 127 and 171 were made in 1961), are generally quite satisfactory. Texts and translations are included with all of these releases.

I.K.

BECERRA: *String Quartet No. 4*. HEIDEN: *Quintet, for Horn and String Quartet*. Philadelphia String Quartet, Christopher Leuba (horn). OLYMPIC RECORDS OLY 102 \$4.69 (available from University of Washington Press, Seattle, Washington 98195).

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Excellent**

The influence of Bartók and Hindemith was so widespread during the late Forties and the Fifties that I'm hardly surprised to find it in these two works, dating from 1952 (quintet) and 1959 (quartet). Such influence is not a serious blemish if a composer finds something original to say despite it. Gustavo Becerra, the Chilean composer whose string quartet is played by the splendid Philadelphia String Quartet, does say a number of personal things, particularly in the second movement. The first movement, though, despite its adroitness, echoes Bartók's string-quartet style with such accuracy that it seems almost to be quoting passages. That's carrying influence a bit too far.

Bernard Heiden studied with Hindemith in Berlin, and has always remained close to Hindemith's style and technology. This quintet is replete with melodies and rhythms which might have been written by Hindemith himself, most noticeably in the first movement. And yet, since these are seldom developed and extended as Hindemith would have done, the overall effect is still one of considerable freshness within, of course, a very conservative context. The second movement has some strikingly colorful moments; the third is fetchingly melodious; the fourth, though a bit routine in its playfulness, has an interesting touch here and there. All told, it is a well-made piece of *Gebrauchsmusik*, and the Philadelphia Quartet, with hornist Christopher Leuba, gives it a polished and sympathetic performance.

L.T.

BECKER: *Symphony No. 3 (Symphonia Brevis, 1929)*. SCHUMAN: *Prayer in Time of War (1943)*. LABUNSKI: *Canto di aspirazione*
(Continued on page 114)

The research behind the BOSE 901.

By now almost all Hi-Fi enthusiasts know about the performance of the BOSE 901, about its unprecedented series of rave reviews¹ and its unparalleled acceptance by musicians, stereophiles and the public. But few people know how this unconventional speaker was born. In this first article of a series, we would like to share with you the highlights of the twelve years of university research that led to the 901.

The research begins.

In 1956 a basic research program on musical acoustics was started by Professor Bose.² The motivation for this research came from the apparent discrepancy between the acoustical specifications and the audible performance of existing loudspeakers. Musicians were quick to observe the boomy and the shrill sounds produced by loudspeakers for which engineers claimed excellent specifications.

Dr. Bose's research began by making exacting measurements on loudspeakers and setting up experiments to correlate these measurements to aural perception.

By 1959 it was clear that not only were the existing measurement standards (established 30 years before) incomplete, but worse, they were often misleading. For example, measurements of frequency response and distortion made in anechoic chambers not only fail to indicate what a speaker will do in a room, but speakers with better chamber measurements can actually give inferior performance in the home—and vice versa!

Probing psychoacoustics.

By 1960 it became evident that basic psychoacoustic research was necessary to relate the subjective performance of loudspeakers to objective design parameters. This research was launched and the first major results were reported in November 1964 at a joint meeting of the Audio and Computer groups of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers held at M.I.T. It was this research that established the validity of the then controversial concepts of multiplicity of full range drivers, speaker equalization, and flat "power" response. It was also shown, with the help of computer simulations of ideal acoustical radiators, that

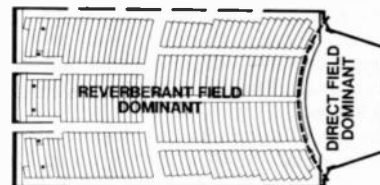


electrostatic, or other types of speakers have no potential performance advantages over properly designed cone speakers—a result that was not known prior to 1964.

Significance of reflected sound established.

At the time of the 1964 meeting, however, little was understood about the spatial properties of speakers. There was some evidence that direct radiating speakers caused shrillness in music but the reasons were not known. From 1964 to 1967 the research concentrated on these spatial problems. With the co-operation of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, measurements were made during live performances to determine characteristics of sound incident upon the listeners.

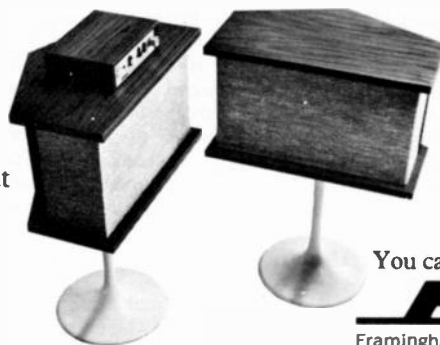
Theoretical studies, verified by experiments, showed that in live performances sound arriving at the listeners' ears from different directions was much more evenly balanced than was the case for loudspeakers in home environments. Experiments then linked this spatial difference to the strident sounds produced by loudspeakers. Then it was discovered that the desirable spatial characteristics could be produced in the home by directing a large percentage of sound away from the listener at precise angles to the rear wall.



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(1953/1963). Louisville Orchestra, Jorge Mester cond. LOUISVILLE FIRST EDITION LS 721 \$5.95.

Performance: **Fair to good**
Recording: **Generally good**

John J. Becker (1886–1961), born in Kentucky and resident in the Midwest for the whole of his professional life, remains at present the least known of the older generation of “advanced modern” American composers. Though his illustrious but (until recent years) equally neglected colleagues Charles Ives (1874–1954) and Carl Ruggles (1876–1971) are now represented on records by virtually the whole of their significant output, Becker has had just three works recorded previously: the *Credo* from the *Missa Symphonica* on Henry Cowell’s New Music Quarterly label in the early Thirties; the *Sound-piece No. 2* for strings, played by the Walden Quartet as part of a private subscription disc; and the *Concerto Arabesque* for piano and orchestra, issued nearly a decade ago on CRI. The *Symphonia Brevis* is by far the biggest and most representative of Becker’s works thus far recorded, but there are still a half dozen more symphonies, a horn concerto, and the big percussion piece *Abongo*—not to mention the major stage works—yet to be explored by the recording companies. During his long career as teacher in various Midwest Catholic colleges, Becker conducted performances of his own music and that of his friends Ives, Ruggles, Cowell, and Wallingford Riegger.

In the titles of its two movements—*Scherzo in the Spirit of Mockery*, and *Memories of War—Sorrow—Struggle—A Protest*—the *Symphonia Brevis* displays its composer’s intense moral concern; the music is flintily eloquent but intensely disciplined in its oscillations between ferociously expressionist and austere linear episodes.

Of lesser interest are the two works on the overside. William Schuman’s *Prayer in Time of War* (originally *Prayer 1943*) typifies this composer’s output of the middle Forties. Its lyrical-dramatic rhetoric alternates between modal brooding and rhythmic urgency, but the piece as a whole displays neither the cumulative power of the earlier Third Symphony nor the lyrical grace of the later *Under-tow* ballet. The Louisville Orchestra performance here is not on a par with their sharply honed reading of the Becker. The intensity of the slow build-up to the central rhythmic section of Schuman’s work is not convincingly sustained, and there are moments of uncertainty in the virtuosic ensemble passages.

The brief and somewhat austere lyrical movement by Polish-born and Cincinnati-resident Felix Labunski is well played here, but is the least arresting of the three works. The recorded sound is good and clean, excellent in its percussion and low-string detail, but almost too revealing—in Schuman—of the lack of upper-string body. *D.H.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concerto No. 3, in C Minor, Op. 37; Sonata No. 8, in C Minor, Op. 13 (“Pathétique”).* Stephen Bishop (piano); BBC Symphony Orchestra, Colin Davis cond. PHILIPS 6500 315 \$6.98.

Performance: **Close to the best**
Recording: **Superb**

No sooner had I finished reviewing the stu-

pendous Eschenbach-Henze version of Beethoven’s Third Piano Concerto than another fine performance came along. The Bishop-Davis reading has most of the virtues familiar from their performances of Nos. 1 and 5. I do not think it quite equals the impact of the Eschenbach on DGG, especially in the slow movement, where Eschenbach’s *pianissimo* is breathtaking. But if you are looking for something a little less monumental, the new Philips would be an excellent choice: it has a sense of spontaneity, of sheer physical energy, that is refreshing.

The “*Pathétique*” Sonata is well played to complete side two. But, as with the last release in this series, I find the solo recording less successful than that of the concerto, and I think Ivan Moravec for one (on the Connoisseur Society recording) plumbs the depths of the slow movement more searchingly. *B.J.*



COLIN DAVIS AND STEPHEN BISHOP
An energetic Beethoven Third

BERNSTEIN: *Fancy Free; Facsimile.* Concert Arts Orchestra, Robert Irving cond. SERAPHIM S 60197 \$2.98.

Performance: **Needs nervousity**
Recording: **Very good**

Fancy Free marked the ballet debut not only of its composer but of a young choreographer named Jerome Robbins, who also danced the part of one of the three sailors when the Ballet Theatre first presented the work at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York on April 18, 1944. *Fancy Free* remains the brightest, spunkiest, most original score Leonard Bernstein ever wrote; it is as far from the pretentious, Promethean aspirations of his *Mass* as the atmosphere of its New York bar is from that of the solemn vaults of St. Patrick’s Cathedral. Here is Bernstein at twenty-six, already the master orchestrator, the melodist, the juggler of rhythmic complexities, writing music as fresh as a harbor breeze, bursting with energy and *joie de vivre*. The light-hearted plot, about three sailors on leave during World War II who try to make out with some girls in a local saloon, afforded the composer a scaffolding for a series of musical episodes marked by dazzling wit. Its godparents may be Gershwin and Stravinsky, but the offspring is entirely recognizable as Bernstein’s; it abounds in invention, melody, and

intriguing variations, and sports a rollicking finale.

The work is available complete on the Columbia label (MS 6677) with the New York Philharmonic responding to Bernstein’s exuberance by playing its heart out for its erstwhile conductor. I do wish, however, that someday the performance might be reissued with the song *Big Stuff*, sung by Billie Holiday, which actually opens the ballet: it was once available as part of the Decca set with Bernstein conducting the original Ballet Theatre orchestra. My favorite of all ballet conductors being Robert Irving, I looked forward to much on this occasion. His approach is broader, riper, and less jittery than Bernstein’s, but is also less impish and a bit too self-contained. Moreover, the loveliest passage in the entire score is a moody piano solo toward the end; this has been cut—a real loss.

Facsimile was Bernstein’s second collaboration with Robbins, a nervous work about a woman and two men on a beach which follows faithfully every cliché of the three-way affair familiar to us through its incessant portrayals on the screen. Shortly after *Facsimile* opened in 1946, Bernstein repudiated the work, which he had composed in three weeks, as “neurotic.” That it surely is, but it is also inventive, hypnotic, and rather more original than the pseudo-Freudian story it accompanies. Mr. Irving does well with it, but the composer does even better for Columbia on a record that also offers his *Chichester Psalms*. The sound is superb on the Seraphim disc, however, the accompanying notes are a model of clarity. *P.K.*

BERWALD: *Piano Concerto in D Major; Theme and Variations in G Minor; Rondeau-Bagatelle in B-flat Major; Tempo di Marcia in E-flat Major; Presto feroce.* Greta Erikson (piano); Swedish Radio Orchestra, Stig Westerberg cond. (in Piano Concerto). GENESIS GS 1011 \$5.98.

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Very good**

In spite of the harsh impression made by the composer’s austere countenance staring from the jacket cover of this album, Berwald is one of the most endearing and enduring of the nineteenth-century “comeback” artists so much in evidence nowadays. He was born in Stockholm in 1796 and thus belonged to the very earliest generation of Romantics. Though Berwald is often associated with the Mendelssohn circle, his talent manifested itself as early as 1819—the date of the G Minor Variations and other short piano pieces recorded here—when Mendelssohn was only ten! In fact, these early Variations and the late (1859–1860) *Presto feroce*, also for solo piano, are the outstanding discoveries here—in character, lyric invention, and dramatic contrast quite comparable to Schubert.

The Concerto, though not as impressive in musical interest, is an engaging and mellifluous work of lyric and high-spirited character. Written in 1855 in a full-blown early-Romantic style, it was apparently never performed in Berwald’s lifetime or, indeed, at all before the twentieth century. It is well played by the Swedish pianist Greta Erikson, with a fine Swedish orchestra. Miss Erikson is also the capable (if not brilliant) interpreter of the solo music on the overside, and the recordings are good. *E.S.*

(Continued on page 116)

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CIRCLE NO. 27 ON READER SERVICE CARD

BLISS: *Meditations on a Theme of John Blow; Music for Strings.* City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Hugo Rignold cond. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 1251 \$2.99 (plus 65¢ handling charge from the Musical Heritage Society, Inc., 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: **Dedicated**
Recording: **Fair (*Meditations*) to excellent**

Sir Arthur Bliss, who bears the splendid title "Master of the Queen's Musick" and who celebrated his eightieth birthday last August (though you could be forgiven for guessing closer to sixty on meeting the man), is a composer of serious purpose and solid achievement. His *Morning Heroes* Symphony, in particular, deserves to be more widely known, for it is a noble, large-scale work, traditional in idiom, certainly, but also unshakably individual in thought and expression. The two pieces on this record (the latest in the Musical Heritage Society's useful series licensed from the English Lyrita label) are not quite on that level. In both of them, the individuality seems to me to be overshadowed by the tradition.

Music for Strings is the stronger of the two. First performed at the 1935 Salzburg Festival, it had a certain currency years ago in a 78-rpm recording. It is a lucid, enjoyable piece written in a fairly tough neo-Classical style with touches of Englishly about the harmony. But to listeners unfamiliar with the various streams of twentieth-century development in English music, it may well sound like not-quite-top-drawer Elgar—certainly both Vaughan Williams and Tippett have made

more compelling statements in the string-orchestra medium.

The more recent *Meditations on a Theme of John Blow*, which dates from 1955, takes its rise from a promising compositional idea. Rather like the first movement of Vaughan Williams' Eighth Symphony (completed the same year), it is essentially a set of "variations in search of a theme." The theme itself is an imposing one from the seventeenth-century English composer's verse anthem *The Lord Is My Shepherd*. Bliss muses on it from various angles, heading each "meditation" with a brief title taken from the words of the psalm, but states it in full only at the end.

In the event, however, the execution is less striking than the idea itself. The music is best when it is quietest, as in the charming woodwind skirls of Meditation III, a little scherzo called *Lambs*, and the soft, spaciouly deployed sonorities of No. V. In *green pastures*. In the louder sections, the vigor seems somewhat forced, and grandeur descends too often into banality.

Both works are performed with evident devotion, though not always as excitingly as might be wished, by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, for which the *Meditations* were written. It's possible that the excitement quotient might have been higher if the recording had coped more successfully with the full orchestral demands of the *Meditations*—this side of the disc is somewhat muffled in sound. But the string side has been managed admirably.

B.J.

BRÜLL: *Overture to Macbeth, Op. 46; Piano Concerto No. 2, in C Major, Op. 24.* Frank

Cooper (piano); Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra, Zsolt Deáky cond. GENESIS GS 1015 \$5.98.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Good**

Genesis Records continues its tasteful exploration of the lesser-known Romantic repertoire, bringing to light here the work of Ignaz Brüll (1846-1907), pianist, teacher, composer, and intimate friend of Brahms. His major works include ten operas (of which *Der goldene Kreuz* was the most successful), three orchestral serenades, two piano concertos, and a violin concerto.

The *Overture to Macbeth*, dating from 1884, is effective in its own fashion, well-crafted, and redolent in various of its pages of both Brahms and Wagner. The C Major Piano Concerto, dating from Brüll's twenty-sixth year, is a much fresher—indeed, very charming—piece in something of a Weber-Schumann style, rightly described in the liner notes as full of "the wide-eyed innocent splendors of a childlike imagination."

Frank Cooper, whose Romantic Music Festival at Butler University has successfully revived a whole sheaf of neglected repertoire, proves himself an A-1 piano soloist, setting forth Brüll's score with great dash and style, abetted by excellent orchestral back-up from the young conductor Zsolt Deáky. Deáky and his players also give an effective account of themselves in the *Macbeth Overture*.

The recorded sound of the piano is excellent and that of the orchestra thoroughly adequate. I would not recommend this disc for

(Continued on page 118)

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Bernstein conducts the music from "Carmen." The album, which is packed with sixty-two minutes of Bernstein at his best, also includes the "Peer Gynt" Suites.

Zukerman performs one of the most popular works in the classical repertoire: "The Four Seasons." His performance with the English Chamber Orchestra reemphasizes the talent that has made him one of the foremost contemporary artists.

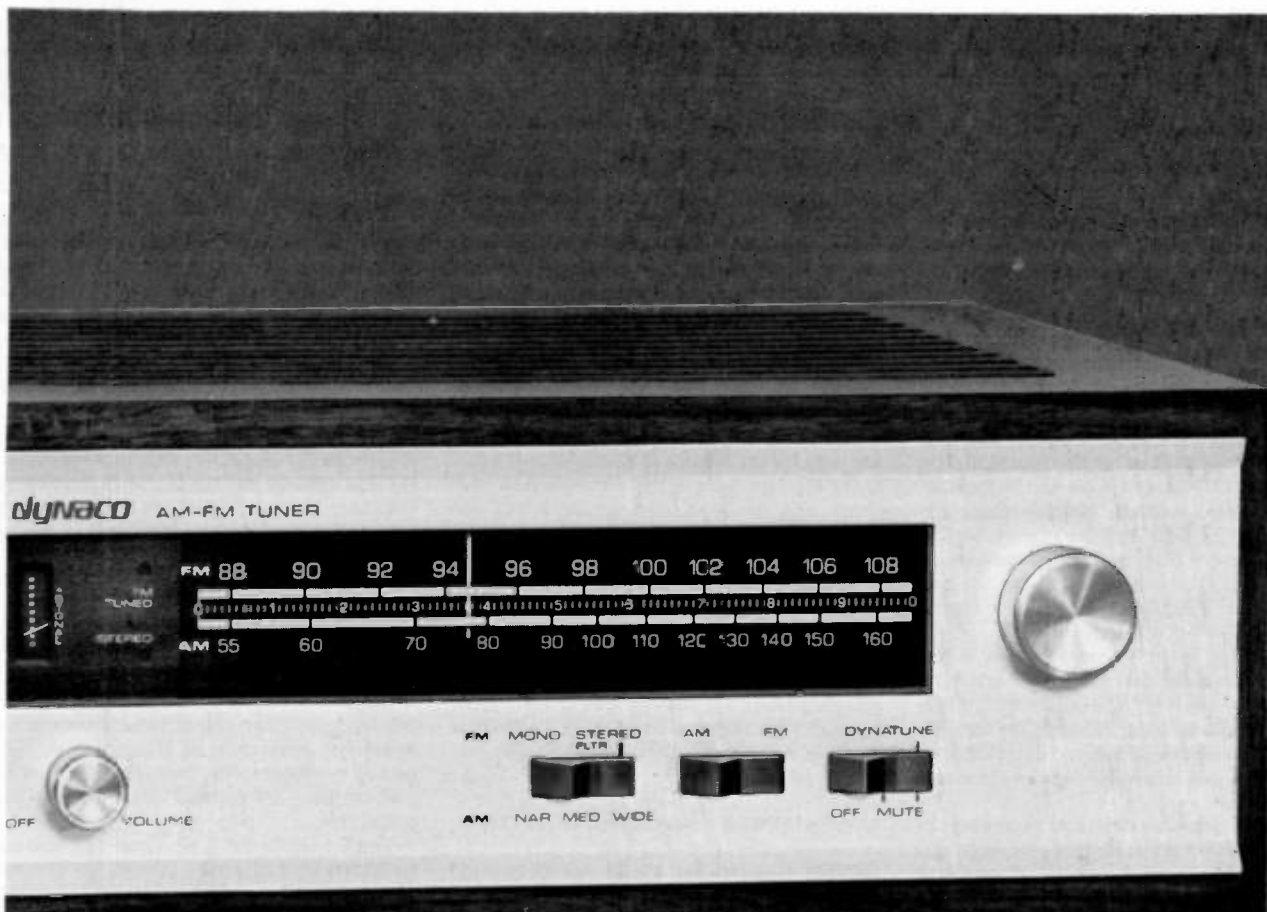
Stravinsky conducts his own ballets, "Jeu de Cartes," "Scènes de Ballet," and his brilliant arrangement of "Pas de deux." This album is being reissued by popular demand.

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anyone's *basic* library, but for fanciers of lesser-known Romantic repertoire that goes beyond mere virtuosic display and empty rhetoric, I'd say this would make a worthy addition to the collection. *D.H.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BYRD: *Missa tres vocum*. **TALLIS:** *Lamentationes Jeremiae*. Pro Cantione Antiqua, Bruno Turner dir. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIVE 2533 113 \$6.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Excellent**

The earlier of these works, the *Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet* by Thomas Tallis (c. 1505-1585), is a deeply moving, sombre setting of part of the liturgical text that is sung at Matins on the last three days of Holy Week. Included in the setting, as was customary with the composers of that period, were not only the lessons themselves but also the Hebrew letters at the start of each section. This five-voice work is one of the great polyphonic masterpieces.

The Mass in Three Voices by Tallis's slightly younger contemporary, his pupil and partner in music printing William Byrd (c. 1543-1623), is similarly great. Though set for only alto, tenor, and bass, it has considerable variety of mood, and admirably reflects the meaning of the text.

There has been no dearth of recordings of either of these works. Perhaps the best version of the Byrd is the King's College Choir version on Argo 5362, and the same group has an admirable recording of the Tallis *Lam-*

entations on Argo ZRG 5479. In both cases, the pieces are given an effective albeit slightly distant church ambience. The Tallis was also recorded by the New York Pro Musica under the late Noah Greenberg (Decca 79404) and by Alfred Deller and his Consort (Vanguard S 287), both of these using only one voice per part and achieving, consequently, a really intimate atmosphere. Archive's new recording, which can hold its own with any of these, presents an effective compromise, a mixture of solo voices and a very small choir (perhaps no more than eight) in a resonant church acoustic. The voices, which are sensationally well recorded, are close enough for intimacy and clarity, but the overall ambience is obviously that of a church. Presence is excellent. The recording is a great success not only for the quality of its sound but equally for the high level of the performances. The group and its conductor, whom I had not previously encountered, are exceptionally sensitive to the demands of both music and text. The singing is properly ethereal but also remarkably vigorous. To judge from the quality of the voices (my advance copy had no information about the location of the recording or about the group itself), the ensemble sounds British, and they obviously have great sympathy for the period and style. I hope that Archive will put them to work again soon on similar repertoire. *I.K.*

CONFALONIERI: *Gala* (see SCARLATTI)

DAVID: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*. Dénes Kovács (violin); Orchestra of the Hungarian Radio and Television, Ervin Lukács

cond. *Sonata for Violin and Piano*. Dénes Kovács (violin); Loránd Szűcs (piano). *Symphony No. 4; Sinfonietta*. Orchestra of the Hungarian Radio and Television, Tamás Breitner cond. HUNGAROTON LPX 11411 \$5.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Fine**

Gyula Dávid, born in Budapest in 1913, makes a very impressive American recording debut with this Hungaroton disc, providing an overview of music he wrote in the decade between 1960 and 1970. As one would expect, Dávid's works sound Hungarian. In my book, that's an asset. As one would *not* predict, the composer has escaped being overpowered by the influence of Bartók, or of Kodály, with whom he studied composition. He also sidestepped the sound of the Second Viennese School despite his use of twelve-tone techniques. Indeed, this music has an identifiable and very compelling personality of its own. I'm surprised it took so long to make the Schwann catalog.

Dávid has a splendid lyrical gift and a stunning sense of color, harmonic and instrumental. One of his favorite slow tempo markings is *Andante tranquillo*, and in this tempo he creates appealing and extremely convincing moods of philosophical introspection. The orchestra floods with beautiful colors, and melodic lines are etched with sensitivity and distinction.

The Concerto for Violin and Orchestra is full of this kind of writing. So are the Symphony No. 4 and the Sinfonietta. (If the third
(Continued on page 120)



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HAYDN SYMPHONIES

Volume Five in Antal Dorati's series for London Records maintains a brilliant standard

Reviewed by BERNARD JACOBSON



It is just over seven years since I spent a delightful couple of days as a house-guest at H. C. Robbins Landon's summer home in the hill country west of Florence, enjoying that genial scholar's company and listening to recordings of several Haydn symphonies that were quite new to me. Among the things we talked about were the death of Max Góberman in the midst of his project of recording all the Haydn symphonies, and the difficulty of replacing him. A number of possible names came up. And then I asked Robbins Landon if he had heard the record of the 59th and 81st symphonies that Antal Dorati had recently made with the pseudonymous "Festival Chamber Orchestra" (actually the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields) for the Mercury label. I thought it the best Haydn symphony record extant. Robbins Landon wasn't yet acquainted with it, and he promised to investigate. In view of the fact that he has been involved in the Dorati-London Records Haydn project from the outset, perhaps my remark to him played some small part in this undertaking.

If ever there was a project that I was proud to claim even the tiniest share of the credit for, it is the Haydn symphony series that Dorati and the Philharmonia Hungarica have now brought close to completion (about half have been released) for London — which has, moreover, had the good sense to make them available at bargain prices.

Many problems are apt to occur between the conception of a big recording project and its completion, and integral sets of even the greatest music are notorious sappers of interpretive enthusiasm long before number ten in any series—let alone number one hundred—is reached. So perhaps the most astonishing thing about this fifth volume is that it more than maintains the brilliant standards of artistry and engineering skill set by its predecessors. There is hardly a dud among the thirty-three works (from No. 49 to No. 81) that Dorati has already given us. But here, with the six "Paris" symphonies and their immediate successors, he is dealing with music on a new plane of greatness, and he and his orchestra respond with dazzling technical prowess and seemingly limitless expressive sympathy.

London's magnificent recording helps. Its exemplary tone and balance contribute substantially to many revelatory moments: the low contrabass D that prepares so tellingly for the recapitulation in the first movement of No. 83 is just one instance; the minuet of No. 85, with its subtle change in the horn parts at measure 17 and the trenchant entry of the oboes into the scoring at measure 36, offers several more.

But recording quality in itself has little to do with the unerring rightness of Dorati's

tempo choices in every one of these forty-seven movements, with the flow of the slow movements, the grace of the minuets and trios, the daring precision of the staccato articulation in the first movement of No. 92, or the sheer athletic vigor of the outer movements of No. 90.

There is the merest handful of details that I could have wished otherwise. Particularly in the first movements of Nos. 89 and 90, where the first and second violins have a quantity of antiphonal work, it would have helped if Dorati had placed the seconds to his right. Some ornamentation would have been welcome in the *Sinfonia concertante* (though this new version stands, with Barenboim's on Angel, as the best available for its supremely pointed solo playing and masterly conducting). And though the engineers perpetrate nothing so spectacular as the insertion of four extra bars into the minuet of No. 87 in Leonard Bernstein's Columbia set, there is what sounds like an editing error at the transition from exposition to development in the first movement of No. 91, where what should be empty space is smudged over by lower-string sound from the following measure. And observation of the repeats in the slow movement of No. 83 could have added to the effect of the piece. But, in any case, Dorati is more generous with repeats than most conductors, for apart from this movement he takes all the exposition repeats in the sonata movements and all the repeats in the variations. I should also mention that there is sound historical justification for including a harpsichord (or fortepiano) continuo, as Leslie Jones did in his Nonesuch set of the "Paris" works and his separate disc of Nos. 90 and 91. On the other hand, these particular late works sound to me as generally "right" without a keyboard instrument as with it. And in other respects, this superb release easily surpasses all previous versions of the music. Furtwängler's currently available 1951 recording of No. 88 will continue to hold a special place in the collections of those lucky enough to possess it. But even they need not hesitate to acquire the London set. Quite apart from the other eleven works, it is a measure of Dorati's stature that his performance of No. 88 is at least the equal of Furtwängler's classic version.

HAYDN: *Complete Symphonies, Volume Five: Symphonies Nos. 82-92; Sinfonia concertante in B-flat Major.* Philharmonia Hungarica, Antal Dorati cond. (In the *Sinfonia concertante*: István Engl, oboe, László Baranyai, bassoon, Igor Ozim, violin, and Zoltan Rácz, cello). LONDON STS 15229/30/31/32/33/34 six discs \$17.88.

movement of the Violin Concerto consistently lived up to the level of the first two, this work could nudge some other Romantic concertos for a steady place in the repertoire. It ought even so to be played, and so should the other works.)

To hedge my enthusiasm a bit, I should say that there are moments when freshness and focus weaken in these pieces. But these are more than overshadowed by their surroundings. The only piece I do not care for at all is the Sonata for Violin and Piano, which falls squarely into the Bartók trap.

As for the performances, they are superb. Soloists, orchestra, and conductor are all exemplary, and so is the recorded sound. Apparently it *does* help to be Hungarian. L.T.

DOHNÁNYI: *Piano Concerto No. 1, in E Minor, Op. 5 (1898).* Bálint Vázsonyi (piano); New Philharmonia Orchestra, John Pritchard cond. GENESIS GS 1022 \$5.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Excellent**

I have not heard a piece of music by Ernő Dohnányi since I was a kid when, if memory does not mislead me, I played some of his chamber music, and experienced only a moderate amount of interest in the doing. The "Romantic Revival" is responsible for bringing his Piano Concerto No. 1 back into view. Dohnányi himself apparently premiered the work in the United States and took it on tour with the Boston Symphony around 1900. The piece was very successful then, had a long eclipse, and finally resurfaced at a "Romantic Festival" in Indianapolis in 1970.

As readers of this magazine know, I don't go very much for engineered "revivals," and the Romantic one has not uncovered many pieces which I think worthy of rediscovery. About this piece, however, I can say that it seems to me for much of its length a very good piece of music of its era. At least the first two movements deserve a fate other than neglect. They are sincere, sweet-hearted, and excellently composed, shaped, and orchestrated, and above all escape the clogging clichés which make so much second-string music of the late nineteenth century an abomination.

I am particularly fascinated to learn that Dohnányi was a Hungarian, rather than a Czech, as the political geography of his birth-town, Bratislava, would make him today. The best movements of this Concerto have to my ears the sweet, intelligent forthrightness which I associate with Czech composers. But he's not! Anyway, two-thirds of this music is a fine and beautiful concerto, and the soloist Bálint Vázsonyi, with the New Philharmonia Orchestra under John Pritchard, do a splendid job with it. Nothing tentative—they seem to understand and love what they are playing (even the last movement). And the recording is first-rate. L.T.

GRIEG: *Melodies; Wedding Day at Troldhaugen* (see SIBELIUS)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

HANDEL: *Alcina: Overture and Ballet Music (Gavotte, Sarabande, Menuet, Act III Sinfonia, Entree, Tamburino); Dream Music (Ariodante/Alcina); Ariodante: Overture, Sinfonia pastorale, and Ballet Music (Gavotte, Musettes I & II, Allegro, Rondeaux I & II, Finale); Il Pastor Fido (2): March and Airs* (Continued on page 122)

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four *les Chasseurs I* & H. Colin Tilney (harpichord continuo); Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner cond. ARGO ZRG 686 \$5.95.

Performance: **Sensationally good**
Recording: **Superb**

Neville Marriner's latest recording presents Handel at his most genial and imaginative. The orchestral effects (the horns, for instance, in the *Pastor Fido* excerpts), the stylish brilliance of the two opera overtures, and the rhythmic variety of the dances all combine to make this one of the most enjoyable Handel discs I know. Particularly enchanting is the scene between the pleasant and the bad dreams in *Alcina*—originally written, incidentally, for *Ariodante*. It goes almost without

saying that the playing is impeccable in its precision, elegance of instrumental tone, and feeling for infectious spirit. Furthermore, the quality of the recorded sound exceeds, if possible, Argo's usual high standard. Don't miss this one. I.K.

HARRISON: Concerto for Violin and Percussion Orchestra. LINN: *Concertino for Violin and Wind Octet.* Eudice Shapiro (violin); Los Angeles Percussion Orchestra; winds of the Crystal Chamber Orchestra, William Kraft cond. CRYSTAL S853 \$5.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Dry and mono-ish**

Lou Harrison, once a major presence in new music in this country, has lived on the West

Coast for many years, rather neglected in the fashionable centers of domestic culture to the East. Harrison, whose earlier work took him close to various aspects of European and American music, has taken an interest in Asian and African music; that is, from his vantage point in California, looking West to the East. There is likely to be some renewed interest in Harrison's work as the cycle of taste, which veered away from the concerns of Eastern and ethnic music, travels back in that direction.

Harrison's Violin Concerto—"Koncerto por la Violino kun Perkuta Orkestro," he calls it in his favored Esperanto—is a good example of his remarkable syncretism (or ecumenism, or, if you will, eclecticism). This is a three-movement work, sketched in 1940 but realized only twenty years later. The form of the work is that of Western Romanticism with the avowed influence of the Berg Violin Concerto. The violin part is not, however, twelve-tone, but is based on a related idea: the entire part—and it is a rich, melodic part—consists of no more than three intervals. In other words, each note can be only a certain distance, up or down, from its predecessor or its successor. Against this is set a "junk" orchestra of pipes, pots, cans, washtubs, clock coils, brake-drums, windbells, and assorted other percussion instruments. But this attractive music sounds nothing at all like the breakup of Western civilization, suggesting rather an open door to the East. Harrison imitates no particular kind of Eastern music; he simply integrates it all at another level, and the results are attractive and successful.

The Linn Concertino is a more obvious piece of neo-Classicism of the sort that one used to hear a good deal of in modern-music concerts and on recordings, but that seems now to have almost disappeared. In fact, the whole project has a curiously nostalgic quality about it: dry, studio recordings—I cannot detect a hair's-breadth difference between the "stereo" channels—and the kind of music, performance, and recording production that can only be described as "hopeful." Even the translucent blue plastic of the record reminds one of the old days when Societies for the Preservation of Contemporary Music were active, and putting pleasant little neo-Classical pieces on recordings was thought to be one of the Good Works. E.S.

HEIDEN: Quintet (see BECERRA)

HENZE: Symphony No. 6, for Two Chamber Orchestras. London Symphony Orchestra, Hans Werner Henze cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 261 \$6.98.

Performance: **Astounding**
Recording: **Excellent**

Don't let the "chamber" designation fool you. Each of these orchestras contains a good-size string section and a dozen winds, as well as harp, grand piano, electric violin, electric guitar, rock organ and all sorts of percussion ranging from timpani to a full set of Afro-Cuban instruments. The work is a huge fresco made up of thousands of details, some set out with the utmost finesse, others painted with broad sweeps of the brush. The score is notable for some mysterious inscriptions and an astonishing array of notational and musical devices—every trick of the last twenty years and then some.

In a way this is a fascinating work, and personally I would like to commend it to your

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attention. I am an "everything" man and so is Henze. I think works of art should be like landscapes or, better yet, like eco-systems: rich, varied, balanced, tremendously productive, and yet conservative of energy—in short a "maximalism" opposed to the minimalism that seems to dominate new music these days. I should praise this work and wax eloquent about its importance, its richness, and so forth. But the truth is that it is not easy to like the Henze Sixth. It is a *proposal* for a musical environment, not a successfully functioning one. Even its presumed diversity seems illusory, submerged in a mass of detail. Perhaps repeated hearings would enable one to sort out the repeated upwellings that constitute its basic material and apparent form, but the insistent, appalling ugliness of the music makes this almost impossible. Henze's humanism—his very range and scope—is important, but, like most Germans, he still wants to play Beethoven, to rival Stockhausen, the great creator and purveyor of revolutionary culture. He insists, he imposes; take it or leave it. Well. . . .

This is an astonishing performance, and a very good recording. E.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

HINDEMITH: *Symphony, "Mathis der Maler"; Concert Music for Strings and Brass, Op. 50.* Boston Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 246 \$6.98.

Performance: **Superb**
Recording: **Superb**

William Steinberg has achieved a tender and elegant performance of *Mathis der Maler* in this recording with the Boston Symphony. Keeping everything in delicate, precise control, he brings out all the little melodies and counterpoints in such a subtly balanced texture that the work's spirituality and reverence are more fully realized than in a majority of the other recorded performances. Without sacrificing a bit of drama, he has somehow turned this drama inward, so that nuances of meaning usually not expressed at all have become the very core of his reading. The orchestral surfaces are suave. And, in a most fascinating way, he makes this operatic symphony sound its Reformation sentiments more clearly than I've ever heard them. Where there is pathos, it is spiritual pathos, not bombastic breastbeating. It is good to witness this fine conductor still growing in depth, richness, and subtlety of vision. Age doesn't always ripen, but in Steinberg's case it is certainly doing so. This is the most perceptive interpretation of *Mathis* I know of.

Hindemith's *Concert Music for Strings and Brass* is a far less familiar piece, and I suspect this is so because it is rarely played with the understanding and cultural rapport Steinberg accords it here. Indeed, if Hindemith could more often have the quality of interpretive support which Steinberg gives him on this recording, the sag in public esteem which occurred after his death would probably go into reverse. Do we often hear Hindemith as he really spoke? I suddenly doubt it. L.T.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JOSQUIN DES PRÉS: *Motets: Benedicta es caelorum regina; Alma redemptoris mater; Illibata dei virgo nutrix; O virgo virginium; Missus est gabriel; Ave nobilissima.* Monteverdi Choir of Hamburg and instrumental

ensemble, Jürgen Jürgens cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIVE 2533 110 \$6.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Excellent**

Josquin des Prés (c. 1450-1521) is acknowledged the greatest Flemish composer of the mid-Renaissance. In his motets, of which there are well over one hundred, one may hear an extraordinary blend of polyphonic virtuosity and textual expressivity, elements that astonished Josquin's admiring contemporaries. The present collection, which duplicates only a few items found in other recorded anthologies (*Benedicta es, Alma redemptoris mater, and O virgo virginium*), is a particularly good one, either to add to a Josquin collection or to start one with. Two of the

lesser known motets here I found especially impressive: *Ave nobilissima*, the longest and most grandiose work on the record, and *Illibata dei virgo nutrix*, a motet of almost overpowering intensity and brilliance. The performances are distinguished; the singing is exceptionally clear and not in the least devoid of sentiment. Phrases, however, are carefully delineated. Instrumental doubling is very properly provided (listen for the delightful recorder embellishments in the *Illibata* motet), and the entire production is knowing, skillful, and extremely stylish. I.K.

LABUNSKI: *Canto di aspirazione* (see BECKER)


(Continued on next page)

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In a fine new album, three phenomenal artists interpret Bach. Violinists Pinchas Zukerman and Itzhak Perlman play the Double Concerto in D Minor; Perlman, the Concerto No. 2 in E; and Zukerman, the Concerto in G Minor. Daniel Barenboim conducts the English Chamber Orchestra.

All three men exhibit a musical maturity rare for artists under 30. This album displays another happy dimension—the exhilarating delight they find in playing together. S-36841



LINN: *Concertino for Violin and Wind Octet* (see HARRISON)

MARTINU: *Fantaisies symphoniques* (Symphony No. 6); *Memorial to Lidice*. Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Ancerl cond. EVEREST 3316 \$4.98.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Good (simulated stereo)**

Bohuslav Martinu's *Fantaisies symphoniques* is a serious, dramatic, and beautifully crafted work which strikes me as being both appealing and slightly anachronistic. Martinu was living in this country at the time he composed it, a refugee from the Nazi terror about which he expressed some of his feelings in the *Memorial to Lidice*. The symphony is couched in an easy-to-grasp tonal language. It is overtly Romantic in ethos, and yet a bit confusing by virtue of being an "expressive" type of music which remains curiously remote. No doubt the slightly flattened-out sound of this simulated-stereo recording contributes to the impression of remoteness, and certainly conductor Karel Ancerl underplayed many of the work's more dramatic moments. I have no doubt that when it was premiered in the United States by Charles Munch and the Boston Symphony in 1955 (when it won the New York Music Critics' Circle Citation) the Symphony surged and dazzled by sheer orchestral sound to a degree it does not here. Nevertheless, this is by no means a recording or a performance to be scorned. It is serious, tasteful, and intelligent, even if not glamorous or fully revealing of the music's potential.

The *Memorial to Lidice* is cut so much of the same cloth as Martinu's Sixth Symphony (though it comes from a decade earlier) that one has to be careful not to let the needle move into the final set of grooves and add a perfectly credible "fourth movement" to the symphony's three. The orchestral writing in this shorter work is, like that in the symphony, exceedingly adroit and effective.

L.T.

MEYERHOFF: *Symphones 1-12 for Strings* (see Best of the Month, page 83)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

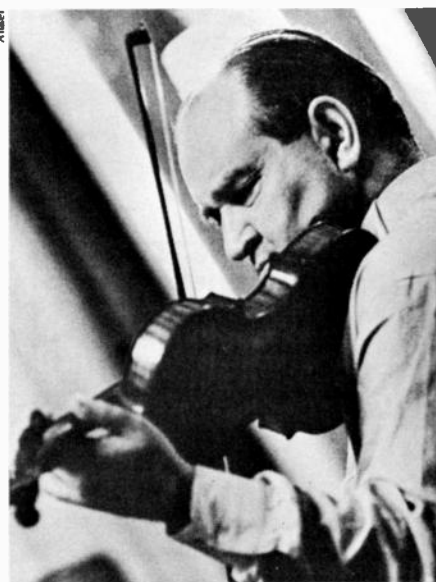
MOZART: *Concertone in C Major for Two Violins* (K. 190). *Violin Concertos: No. 1, in B-flat Major* (K. 207); *No. 2, in D Major* (K. 211); *No. 3, in G Major* (K. 216); *No. 4, in D Major* (K. 218); *No. 5, in A Major* (K. 219, "Turkish"). *Adagio, in E Major* (K. 261); *Rondo Concertante in B-flat Major* (K. 269); *Rondo, in C Major* (K. 373); *Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat Major for Violin and Viola* (K. 364). David Oistrakh (violin, viola); Igor Oistrakh (violin); Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, David Oistrakh cond. ANGEL SD 3789 four discs \$23.92.

Performance: **A-1**
Recording: **Excellent**

There are over three hours of very satisfying listening in this hefty Angel package. Like Joseph Szigeti in his prime years, David Oistrakh in peak form brings to his readings of the Classic repertoire an ideal blend of virility and lyrical warmth, wedded to almost infallible musicianship. He does an excellent job in the role of conductor, with justly chosen tempos and well-gauged dynamics and nuances. The fact that he has the superbly trained and polished Berlin Philharmonic to work with is

a major advantage here. And I was delighted with the solo oboe work of Karl Steins in the *Concertone*.

Only in the crowning work of the series—the eloquent *Sinfonia concertante* (in which David plays viola to his son's violin) does one feel that another conductor might have added something to the whole, especially in terms of orchestral detail. For instance, in the Columbia recording of the Cleveland Orchestra under George Szell, the horn parts in particular are far more effective than in the Oistrakh reading. But this is a minor bit of fault-finding in what otherwise stands as an admirable accomplishment. Rather than include in his set the doubtfully authentic K. 268 and K. 271 violin concertos, Oistrakh has chosen the K. 269 Rondo written as an alternate finale to K. 207, the E Major Adagio composed as an alternate slow movement to K. 219, and the separate C Major Rondo (K. 373). Though



DAVID OISTRAKH
Mozart with virility and warmth

disparate in key, they form almost a miniature concerto in themselves as laid out on the disc.

I thoroughly enjoyed this album—the music, the performance, and the recorded sound, which is endowed with an intimacy and warmth wholly apposite to Mozart's musical language. D.H.

MOZART: *Divertimento No. 6, in C Major* (K. 188); *Serenade No. 10, in B-flat Major, for Thirteen Wind Instruments* (K. 361); *Serenade No. 11, in E-flat Major, for Eight Wind Instruments* (K. 375); *Serenade No. 12, in C Minor, for Eight Wind Instruments* (K. 388). Czech Philharmonic Wind Instruments Ensemble, Vladimír Černý dir. SUPRAPHON 1 11 108 1/2 two discs \$11.96.

Performance: **Straightforward**
Recording: **Excellent**

From the standpoints of balance, intonation, and precision, these are thoroughly satisfactory performances. Comparing them, however, with the playing of the London Wind Soloists (on London Records) or the Netherlands Wind Ensemble (*Serenades 11 and 12* on Philips), one realizes that the Czech players are not particularly long on subtlety, either of phrasing or of dynamics. Everything is quite pleasantly honked out, but sparkle and emotional depth (as in the extraordinary Twelfth

Serenade) are largely absent. Incidentally, outside of a Musical Heritage Society collection (MHS 852) available only by mail order, this seems to be the only domestically available recording at the moment of the K. 188 *Divertimento*, a charming bit of occasional music that Mozart wrote in 1776 for the unusual combination of two flutes, five trumpets, and timpani. Here, as in the three large-scale serenades, the sonics are exceptionally clear, with considerable presence for the variety of instruments. I.K.

MOZART: *String Quartets: Nos. 14-23* (K. 387, 421, 428, 458, 464, 465, 499, 575, 589, and 590). Amadeus Quartet. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2720 055 five discs \$34.90.

Performance: **Pretty**
Recording: **Generally good**

MOZART: *String Quartet No. 14, in G Major* (K. 387); *String Quartet No. 16, in D Minor* (K. 428). Prague String Quartet. SUPRAPHON 111 1090 \$5.98.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Very good**

Considering the greatness of Mozart's last ten string quartets—the set of six dedicated to Haydn, the lone quartet K. 499, and the three written for the King of Prussia—the thinness of their representation in the current catalogs is surprising and regrettable. Deutsche Grammophon's new assemblage of the Amadeus Quartet's versions, previously available separately in various couplings, does not materially change the situation. For with all the polish of the London group's playing, its performances create a general impression of a very superficial kind of prettiness. Instead of any sense of purposefully shaped musical spans, there is a mechanical air about the set, and it is not dispelled by occasional touches of expressive *rubato* that seem to have been stuck on from outside.

The lack of involvement is perhaps evident also in the Amadeus' niggardliness with repeats. Only two first-movement exposition repeats are observed (in K. 575 and K. 590), and several movements in the "Haydn" set seem stunted through the omission. The sound quality in the ten quartets, which were presumably recorded over a long period, varies from fair to good.

I found the single well-engineered Supraphon disc of K. 387 and K. 428 altogether more enjoyable. The Prague String Quartet's performances have much more blood in them. Here musical shaping in a grand, rather Romantic manner is generously and on the whole effectively applied, and there are moments of real imagination. Again, however, too many repeats are omitted. But in any case, for insight and artistry on a far higher level we have to turn to the Fine Arts Quartet, whose recordings of six of the ten works (K. 421, 428, 465, 575, 589, and 590) are available—though hard to find—on three separate records on the Concert-Disc label.

Among other current versions, only the Yale Quartet's Vanguard Cardinal disc of K. 421 and K. 575 is really recommendable. The Budapest Quartet's mono set of the "Haydn" Quartets is no match for the Fine Arts performances, and the Juilliard Quartet's excellent set disappeared with the demise of the Epic label. All in all, it would seem that the field is open for Vox to commission new recordings from the Fine Arts Quartet, which recently completed that company's Haydn

series in superb style, and which is playing even better these days (with a new violist) than when it made its earlier Concert-Disc recordings. *B.J.*

PAGANINI: Violin Concertos: No. 1, in D Major; No. 4, in D Minor. Arthur Grumiaux (violin); Orchestra National de l'Opéra de Monte-Carlo, Piero Bellugi cond. PHILIPS 6500411 \$5.98.

Performance: **Clean and cool**
Recording: **Good**

The Paganini D Major (originally E-flat) Concerto has had an ample number of recordings over the years; there are five currently listed in Schwann. The Grumiaux performance is clean-cut and eminently musical, but it is not the kind of virtuoso performance that a Ruggiero Ricci can turn out when in top form.

Of more interest both musically and for the performance is the D Minor Concerto, which Grumiaux gave its modern premiere in Paris in 1954 and recorded shortly thereafter for Epic. As I mentioned in my November 1971 review of the Ricci recording for Columbia, I find this the most substantial of all the Paganini concertos, chiefly for its splendidly somber and atmospheric slow movement and its infectiously Italianate dance-finale. Grumiaux makes slightly less heavy going than Ricci of the "impossible" flourish for the soloist in the opening movement, and he is a joy to hear throughout the rest of the work.

Oddly enough, he has the same conductor as Ricci had—Piero Bellugi—though with a different orchestra. The backing is fine, but there are decidedly different touches in orchestral coloration and balance in the Columbia and the Philips recordings. Bellugi uses a tambourine in the finale for Columbia, but sticks to a triangle in the Philips rendition; in the slow-movement introduction, trombone coloration adds most effectively to the atmospheric in the Philips version, but it is scarcely audible on the Columbia disc. The Philips recording is in general distinctly superior in orchestral presence and richness of detail. The Columbia recording does offer, however, the highly entertaining Bottesini Grand Duo for violin, double-bass, and orchestra rather than the D Major Concerto. *D.H.*

PUCCHINI: Le Villi. Barry Morell (tenor), Roberto; Adriana Maliponte (soprano), Anna; Matteo Manuguerra (baritone), Guglielmo; Gian-Carlo del Monaco, Narrator. **Edgar: Act II.** Barry Morell (tenor), Edgar; Nancy Stokes (soprano), Tigrana; Walker Wyatt (baritone), Frank. Vienna Volksoper Orchestra and Vienna Academy Chamber Chorus, Anton Guadagno cond. RCA LSC 7096 two discs \$11.96.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Good**

In 1884, six years before Mascagni attained instant fame by winning the Sonzogno competition with *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Giacomo Puccini entered his first opera, *Le Villi*, in a similar competition sponsored by the same publisher—and failed to win even an honorable mention. Nevertheless, the young composer's friends and patrons (Ponchielli and Boito among them) succeeded in securing the necessary funds for a stage production of the work as a one-acter. It scored a surprising success, and led to a contract with the powerful house of Ricordi and an instant commission for a second opera—and Puccini was on

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his way. The future of *Le Villi*, however, was anything but auspicious. Reworked by its composer into a two-act opera, it traveled to various important theaters (Hamburg, Buenos Aires, New York's Metropolitan), but failed to hold the stage. *Edgar*, Puccini's second opera, met with an even more distressing fate. But after *Edgar* (1889), failure and Giacomo Puccini parted company for good.

Le Villi is a somewhat awkward version of the Nordic legend about an abandoned maiden whose faithless lover is punished by avenging dancing spirits—the *villi*, or, in its original Teutonic form, the *willis*. The dilettantish libretto by Ferdinando Fontana requires the services of a narrator to bridge the gap between the events of the two acts. Not yet the highly knowledgeable stage craftsman he was to become, Puccini was content here to do the best he could with the uninspiring material handed to him. The musical treatment is concise and quite attractive, particularly the arias for the soprano and the tenor. (The tenor arias saw circulation on records first in the historic rendition by Alessandro Bonci and, more recently, in a modern recording by Plácido Domingo.) In general, the vocal writing is quite demanding in terms of *tessitura*, but all three singers are fully up to its requirements, particularly Adriana Maliponte, who is in remarkable form. Puccini's expertise with the orchestra is already in evidence in this early work, but of course he was to etch mood and atmosphere with a surer hand later on. The Witches' Dance he brewed for the *willis* on this occasion is energetic but not particularly ominous. Anton Guadagno makes an effective case for the opera, and his orchestra plays well; the chorus is somewhat wanting in incisiveness and clarity of enunciation.

Edgar, judged by its second act, suffers from a similarly earthbound libretto by Fontana. The words are clichés that seem to inhibit Puccini's soaring melodic imagination, though such passages as the tenor's "Sovra un sereno cielo" clearly show the hand of the developing, highly original master. Barry Morell sings with ringing tones and passionate lyricism. Nancy Stokes is adequate as Tigra-na, the she-devil of the drama, and Walker Wyatt is satisfactory in his brief appearance. RCA deserves thanks for making this heretofore virtually undocumented side of Puccini available to us. G.J.

RÁNKI: *Three Historical Tableaux: 1514 (Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra); 1944 (Oratorio for Baritone Solo, Mixed Choir, and Chamber Ensemble); Aurora Tempestuosa (Prelude for Orchestra)*. Endre Petri (piano); Endre Útő (baritone); Chamber Choir of the Ferenc Liszt Music Academy; Hungarian State Orchestra; Orchestra of the Hungarian Radio and Television, Miklós Erdélyi cond. HUNGAROTON 11481 \$5.98.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Very good**

György Ránki (b. 1907) won considerable fame in his native Hungary some fifteen years ago with his successful comic opera, *King Pomade*. The three works on this disc, however, illuminate a different side of his artistic personality. Based upon troubled pages of history, all three are intensely passionate, even disturbing, pieces.

1514, the longest of the three, is also the most impressive. The year is that of Hungary's abortive "peasant rebellion" which was put down ruthlessly by the feudal lords. (The

leader of the revolt—today a national hero—was burned alive on a fiery throne.) This *Fantasy* moves along in *ostinato* style with a relentless momentum: the combination of percussive piano and other percussion instruments sustains an aura of violent emotions throughout, and also suggests the inexorable progress of historical forces. Pianist and orchestra (of the Hungarian Radio) perform exceptionally well.

1944 is an imaginative yet somehow not fully convincing setting of a poem by Miklós Radnóti, written in a Nazi labor camp, where the poet died soon thereafter. The poem itself is emotionally shattering, but, though translations are provided, I doubt that it can make a strong impact on listeners who cannot follow the original Hungarian. Furthermore, though the baritone is adequate, his contribution is not sufficient to put over the *Sprechstimme*-like lines with real effectiveness.



ALIDO CICCOLINI
A glittering Saint-Saëns piano package

The brief orchestral *Aurora Tempestuosa* was written for the fiftieth anniversary of the 1917 October revolution. It conveys the tense dramatic feeling that characterizes the composer's work, but it does not strike me as music of great consequence. Just the same, Ránki is a composer of impressive gifts. Though Bartók seems to have decisively shaped his style, Ránki has clearly absorbed more recent influences while retaining an individual profile. G.J.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

RUBBRA: *Symphony No. 7, in C Major, Op. 88*. **VAUGHAN WILLIAMS:** *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*. London Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult cond. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 1397 \$2.98 (plus 65¢ handling charge from the Musical Heritage Society, Inc., 1991 Broadway, New York, N. Y. 10023).

Performance: **Unsurpassed**
Recording: **Excellent**

Edmund Rubbra is a seventy-one-year-old English composer who has been associated with the teaching of music at Oxford and who has written eight symphonies. Number 5 was, I believe, available at one time in a recording by Sir John Barbirolli. But Rubbra's only cur-

rent representation in Schwann is in the supplementary catalog, which lists three motets on the little-known Austin label. This Musical Heritage Society release, licensed from the English Lyrita Company, will not restore the composer to the pages of the main Schwann, since MHS is a mail-order operation and its extraordinarily interesting catalog is not listed there. But the disc is very welcome, especially since both performance and recording are of a high quality.

Rubbra is primarily a polyphonist, yet he has made a specialty of writing symphonies. Though the tonal vigor of the Classical symphonic forms is absent from his style, his contrapuntal strength—and his ability to write a purposeful bass line is one aspect of that strength—gives his music an energy that may well be thought genuinely symphonic, in contrast to the "going-nowhere-fast" methods of some of his English colleagues or of an American symphonist like—for all his virtues—Peter Menin.

The tone of Rubbra's music is predominantly pastoral and meditative. It is well represented in the Seventh Symphony, a three-movement work of much serious substance, disfigured by moments of banality (particularly in the central Scherzo) but lit by many touches of inspiration. It is a less tuneful piece than No. 5, but may turn out to be a more enduring one.

The London Philharmonic under Boult plays it with splendid conviction—the horn and woodwind solos are remarkably good—and in any case the record would be worth several times its price for the performance of Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia* that fills the second half of side two. Boult is the greatest interpreter of this imperishable masterpiece, perhaps because his restrained handling of vibrato allows its spacious textures to sing with all their inner nobility, and it is good to have his reading of it available in first-rate modern sound. As in the Rubbra, the solemn sonority of the lower strings is strikingly well caught. B.J.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

RUDHYAR: *Syntony; Pentagrams, Book III ("The Release," 1924-1925)*. Michael Sellers (piano). ORION ORS 7285 \$5.98.

Performance: **Impressive**
Recording: **Good**

Dane Rudhyar (b. 1895) grew up and studied in Paris, but has lived in the U.S. since 1916, when he came here for a performance of two of his early dance works. Rudhyar's chief interests have been in astrology and in Jungian depth psychology, and his musical creation has been part and parcel of these dominant passions. Thus he has spoken of his music as "a dynamic and purposeful expression of the dissonant harmony of personality . . . music having value not so much 'esthetically' as for what it can do to human beings (including the composer!)."

Rudhyar is a spiritual confrère of Scriabin and of Messiaen in their mystical aspects. His music, like theirs, is essentially a rhetorical language in which the intellectual is secondary to the "affectful" ambiance. Regrettably, Rudhyar's music has been known only to a small circle of devotees and specialists. One of them was William Masselos, whose recordings for MGM of *Granites* and for CRI of *Granites, Paeans, and Stars* have constituted the sole previous representation of

Rudhyar on disc (except for a poor recorded performance on the Remington label of the Sinfonietta). The titles of the individual numbers in two big Rudhyar piano cycles on the Orion disc explain the character of the music. The *Syntony* comprises a *Dithyramb*, *Eclogue*, *Oracle*, and *Apotheosis*, and *Pentagrams*, Book III, contains *Gates*, *Gift of Blood*, *Pentecost*, *Stars*, and *Sunburst*.

I could go on at length about the Scriabinesque and post-Debussyan aspects of this music, but taken simply on its own terms, it has a largeness of gesture and a command of the harmonic and timbral spectrum of the piano that range from the intriguing to the genuinely impressive.

Impressive is certainly the word to use for the performances by Michael Sellers, which were done under Rudhyar's supervision. The sound is resonant and full-bodied. *D.H.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SAINT-SAËNS: Piano Concertos: No. 1, in D Major, Op. 17; No. 2, in G Minor, Op. 22; No. 3, in E-flat Major, Op. 29; No. 4, in C Minor, Op. 44; No. 5, in F Major, Op. 103 ("Egyptian"). Étude en forme de valse, Op. 52, No. 6. Aldo Ciccolini (piano); Orchestre de Paris, Serge Baudo cond. *Septet in E-flat Major for Trumpet, String Quartet, Double-Bass, and Piano, Op. 65.* Paris Instrumental Group. SERAPHIM SIC 6081 three discs \$8.94.

Performance: **Mostly very good**
Recording: **Excellent**

The brilliantly effective Piano Concerto No. 2 and the tautly constructed and musically more substantial No. 4 have always been my special favorites among the Saint-Saëns piano concertos. But now I am adding No. 1 to my list for its youthful freshness and imaginative qualities—for the lovely brass echo effects in the introduction and the fine neo-Bach slow movements, for example. The Third and Fifth Concertos, for all the solo virtuosity of the one and the Oriental atmospheric of the other, strike me as too lightweight in basic substance to support the solo fireworks and generally gorgeous sounds. Indeed, if the versatile and brilliant Saint-Saëns has one weakness, it is excessive fluency. But at his best, as in the First, Second, and Fourth Concertos, the fluency is endowed with class and zest.

Aldo Ciccolini is the first pianist since Jeanne-Marie Darré in the 1950's to record all the Saint-Saëns piano concertos. His performance has just the right blend of glitter and lyrical feeling, and he gets top-notch backing from conductor Serge Baudo and the EMI recording staff. I take issue only with the deliberate pacing he adopts for the fast movements of the Fourth Concerto, and for this reason I prefer the recent Philips recording on which Michele Campanella plays No. 4.

The Trumpet Septet is a most effective and entertaining proto-neo-Classical piece—composed in 1881 at the request of a Paris musical society called *La Trompette*. The Parisian group on this recording, with Antoine Lagorce as trumpeter and Jean Laforge as the pianist, play with fine spirit and accuracy.

M. Ciccolini comes center stage at the very end of the disc with a suitably glittering encore piece—the *Étude en forme de valse*, Op. 52, No. 6. Despite my reservations about the Fourth Concerto performance, this Seraphim package certainly represents top value. *D.H.*

(Continued on next page)



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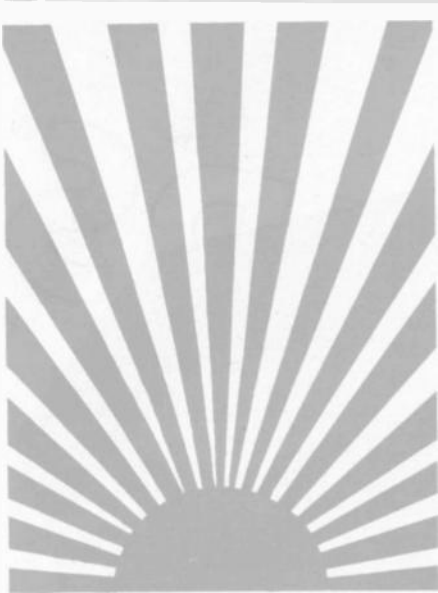
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SCARLATTI, A. (arr. Confalonieri): *The Spanish Lady and the Roman Cavalier*. CONFALONIERI: *Gala (Cosmic Divertissement by Dali)*. Complesso Strumentale Italiano, Giulio Confalonieri cond. (Includes interview with Salvador Dali by Roger Englander.) RICHMOND SR 33153 \$2.98.

Performance: **Primarily curiosity value**
Recording: **Good**

First released a little over ten years ago, this disc stems from a dual production at the Teatro la Fenice in Venice the previous year: the comic *intermezzi* from Alessandro Scarlatti's 1714 opera *Scipione nelle Spagne* were performed in an anachronistic arrangement and orchestration by Giulio Confalonieri together with the latter's musical tribute to the elder Scarlatti, the ballet *Gala*, which is described as a "Cosmic Divertissement" by Salvador Dali. The disc also includes a "sound documentary" of Dali painting on the balcony of the Teatro la Fenice and an interview with the painter by Roger Englander. Dali enthusiasts may be interested in the last, but as far as the major portion of this disc is concerned, I am unable to work up any enthusiasm for it. The wooing of the Spanish lady by the Roman cavalier and their subsequent goings-on are mildly amusing, but the damage done to Scarlatti's score through excisions, awkward key transpositions (the opening *Intrada* and the first recitative, for instance), unstylish conducting and pacing, and undistinguished vocal contributions makes this disc one that Baroque enthusiasts should avoid at all costs. The ballet music by Confalonieri is flabby and eventually tedious. The overall sound is satisfactory and the orchestral playing fair. A libretto is included. I.K.

SCHUMAN: *Prayer in Time of War* (see BECKER)

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Symphony No. 6, in B Minor, Op. 54*. STRAVINSKY: *Apollo (Apollon Musagète)*. Leningrad Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Yevgeny Mravinsky cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR 40242 \$5.98.

Performance: **Exciting Shostakovich, mediocre Stravinsky**
Recording: **Good "live" recording**

The Shostakovich Sixth, coming as it does between far more famous and popular works, tends to be overlooked. It has a long, meditative first-movement *largo* which comes to more than half the length of the work and contains some of the finest music Shostakovich ever wrote; this is followed by two fast movements, a scherzo and a galop-with-a-waltz, that get progressively giddier and giddier. The effect is that of a quarter-of-an-hour high on a mountain top followed by a steep descent (on an old battle horse) down the slope into the Sea of Triviality at the bottom.

This is a "live" performance, recorded in the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory. Except for a slightly botched violin solo just before the last-movement recap, it is a brilliant and exciting performance sharply profiled by a very strong recording. Lots of loud coughs are a bit disturbing, but the compensations are those of an exciting "live" event, admirably captured by one of the Soviet engineers' best efforts.

The appearance of the Stravinsky *Apollo* on the overside is something of a curiosity. This famous and rather campy ballet score of the late Twenties is just the sort of neo-

Classical piece which was long scorned in the composer's native land. The Soviet musicians do not quite seem to know what to make of its arch, beautiful, rather chi-chi, wrong-note salon style; the playing is oddly hesitant, as though the parties concerned had not yet quite made up their minds. E.S.

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Symphony No. 15, in A Major* (see Best of the Month, page 82)

SIBELIUS: *Finlandia; Valse triste; King Christian Suite: Elegie and Musette; Pelléas and Mélisande Suite for Orchestra, Op. 46: Entr'acte*. GRIEG: *Two Elegaic Melodies: Heart Wounds and The Last Spring; Wedding Day at Troldhaugen; Two Melodies: Cow-Keepers Tune and Country Dance*. London Proms Symphony Orchestra, Charles Mackerras cond. LONDON STS 15159 \$2.98.

Performance: **Nordic and nice**
Recording: **Very good**

The music associated with Scandinavia is as clean as the streets of its cities in line, as airy as its landscapes, as pretty as its harbors, and as moody as its weather. It is hardy stuff—as it must be, for some of it is severely tested by overexposure. What we don't need right now, for example, is another *Finlandia*; the last time I counted there were more than a dozen in Schwann. Yet, in my opinion, only two conductors have made this score sound like more, musically, than the national anthem it is. One was Toscanini, the other is Karajan. Ormandy's version, available in several packages from Columbia, uses singers from the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, but is ultimately less effective.

For this album, Charles Mackerras stirs in bits of Grieg and some of the most charming passages from Sibelius' scores of incidental music for the theater in excerpts from the suites for *Pelléas and Mélisande* and *King Christian*. His *Finlandia* is a lively one, though it exposes nothing new on that over-tramped territory. The rest is set forth with clarity, theatricality, and a welcome awareness of the dance element in these attractive, still-popular pieces. Mackerras' celebration of Grieg's *Wedding Day at Troldhaugen* is vigorous, and exploits the colorful contrasts in the tonal picture: his *Valse triste* ranks with the most haunting version I have heard—Beecham's—in its restraint and respectful attention to the work's dark hues and somber rhythms. The album is not a necessary addition to anybody's collection, but is picturesque and pleasant. P.K.

STRAVINSKY: *Apollon Musagète* (see SHOSTAKOVICH)

TALLIS: *Lamentationes Jeremiae* (see BYRD)

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* (see RUBBRA)

RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT

VERDI: *Requiem*. Leontyne Price (soprano); Jussi Bjoerling (tenor); Rosalind Elias (mezzo-soprano); Giorgio Tozzi (bass); Society of the Friends of Music, Vienna, and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Fritz Reiner cond. LONDON OSA 1294 two discs \$11.96.

VERDI: *Requiem*. Mirella Freni (soprano); Christa Ludwig (mezzo-soprano); Carlo Cosutta (tenor); Nicolai Ghiaurov (bass); Wie-

ner Singverein and Berlin Philharmonic, Herbert von Karajan cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2707 065 two discs \$13.96.

Performance: Both first-rate
Recording: Both very good

The last time I had the pleasure—and it is a pleasure, every time—of reviewing two versions of the Verdi Requiem side by side (November 1970), I remarked that this miraculous score “has always attracted the best of conductors, and inspired each to equal or surpass his best efforts.” The first part of this observation may be unhesitatingly applied to the newly issued versions led by the late Fritz Reiner and by Herbert von Karajan. As to the second part, however, some qualification may be in order.

The Reiner version is a reissue of a performance originally released by RCA (LDS 6091) some eleven years ago. It was a sonic spectacular then, and technically it holds up extremely well; my single reservation is, as it was eleven years ago, that the softest passages are reduced by the engineers to virtual inaudibility. This is a deeply reverent, profound, and illuminating Requiem, and it is also unusually slow. The opening section, in particular, seems barely to move at times, yet such is Reiner’s control that he makes a convincing case for even his most idiosyncratic pacing. And the singing is even better than I had remembered. Leontyne Price, in glorious form, handles the high-lying passages with ease and invests all she does with expressive beauty. Jussi Bjoerling combines ringing tone and lyric grace in a way only he could, and Giorgio Tozzi offers a kind of eloquence and smooth legato he has rarely matched on records. The tone of Rosalind Elias is lighter than what the music requires, but she too is in admirable form, and the voices are blended very beautifully. Though far from being the most exciting Requiem on records, this is a thoroughly pleasing one, and an exceptional souvenir of four fine singers in their prime.

“Pleasing” is also the word, I suppose, for the Karajan interpretation. Except for the tenor aria “*Ingemisco*,” which is a bit too slow, his pacing is more or less conventional and always effective, and his mastery of the massed forces matches Reiner’s. But he doesn’t have Reiner’s surgical knack for nuances. Such a sure-fire episode as the “*Confutatis*” in the *Dies Irae* section, for example, fails to stir the blood, nor can Karajan bring out all the magic in the soprano’s “*Sed signifer sanctus Michael*” in the *Offertorio* with that sustained crescendo through five measures, as the tone drops from E-natural to E-flat. This in spite of the fact that the soprano, Mirella Freni, is almost as radiant as Price, bringing her own special excellence to the phrase “*Salvame, fons pietatis*.” (Both sopranos find the low *tessitura* of *Lux Aeterna* a bit troublesome. The part really calls for the Milanov kind of dramatic soprano.) This is the second recorded Requiem for Christa Ludwig and Nicolai Ghiaurov: both are in fine form individually and in ensemble as well. Carlo Cossutta is a good lyric tenor, but on this occasion he has to be measured against Bjoerling, and neither the elegance of his phrasing nor the steadiness of his tones can meet the challenge.

Reservations aside, both performances are very good, as are competing versions conducted by Solti, Barbirolli, and Ormandy. But the one which, in my opinion, eclipses all others in serving this glorious score is still

Angel 3649, conducted by Carlo Maria Giulini, with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Christa Ludwig, Nicolai Gedda, and Nicolai Ghiaurov as soloists. G.J.

VIVALDI: *Il Pastor Fido*, Op. 13. Eduard Melkus (violin); Alfred Sous (oboe); René Zosso (hurdy-gurdy); Hans-Martin Linde (flute and recorder); Walter Stiftner (bassoon); Garo Atmacayan (cello); Huguette Dreyfus (harpsichord). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIVE 2533 117 \$6.98.

Performance: Good
Recording: Excellent

Despite its title, there is nothing programmatic about this set of six sonatas, which was published in Paris in 1737, four years before

Vivaldi’s death. For that matter, with only a few exceptions among the movements, there is little that will even remind one of this composer’s usual style. Instead, possibly as a result of Vivaldi’s spreading fame, the composer seems deliberately to have tried to write music of a Gallic pastoral quality. Perhaps *The Faithful Shepherd* was a French commission; in any case, the scoring appears to have been designed to appeal to the French through the use of such rustic instruments as the hurdy-gurdy, bagpipe, flute, oboe, and violin, together with the standard continuo instruments. The movements on occasion adhere to the *da chiesa* (slow-fast-slow-fast) pattern, but dance movements are also thrown in.

These sonatas, especially the best of them, are good material for recorder players—there

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is a superb recording of No. 6 with Brünnen on Telefunken SAWT 9518—and it is obvious that they are not apt to be recorded on such exotica as the hurdy-gurdy or bagpipes. This complete recording doesn't provide bagpipes, but everything else offered by Vivaldi as alternates is included. The opportunity of hearing the hurdy-gurdy (*vielle* in French, *Drehleier* in Archive's listing) is almost worth the price of the disc, although in its plangent and insistent tone it can scarcely be described as a subtle instrument. Wisely, I suppose, Archive has it alternating with the oboe even within a movement. Variety seems to be the keynote, for the sonatas are seldom played by a solo instrument all by itself. Generally, the playing is good, if not quite as gracious (especially by the continuo forces) as one might like. But the interpretations do have style, and this well-balanced recording may intrigue a good many listeners. *I.K.*

WAGNER: *The American Centennial March; Huldigungsmarsch; Kaisermarsch; Die Feen—Overture; Das Liebesverbot—Overture.* London Symphony Orchestra, Marek Janowski cond. ANGEL S 36879 \$5.98.

Performance: **\$5,000 bore**
Recording: **Very good**

When the United States celebrated its first Centennial back in 1876, the people who put on the Philadelphia Exposition naturally wanted something special by way of a march to make visitors sit up and take notice. The 9,910,966 persons who attended the fair would be seeing their first bicycle, telephone, typewriter, steam-powered thresher-separator, electric arc light, and linoleum, but what would there be to hear? The committee in charge decided to ask Richard Wagner to compose a march. *Der Ring des Nibelungen* was having its first production that summer at Wagner's own theater in Bayreuth, but the composer took time out to fill the commission, remarking afterwards that the best thing about his *American Centennial March* was the \$5,000 he got for writing it.

Listening to this empty piece of bombast for very large orchestra as the opening band on a record album is an ordeal. There is a "rising figure" in it that is supposed to recall the tune of *The Star-Spangled Banner*, but all I could hear was so much windy pomposity that I think it might have been only decent of the composer to give the money back. The rest of the program is more interesting. The *Kaisermarsch* and *Huldigungsmarsch*, written for various military occasions, are long-winded but persuasively ardent exercises in nationalism. The overture to Wagner's first opera, *Die Feen*, is marvelously melodious in the manner of Weber, although Wagner's musical fingerprints are already detectable. The overture to *Das Liebesverbot*, Wagner's second opera, which was based on Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, reveals another side of his genius I rather wish he had chosen to cultivate—an Italianate, Rossini-inspired idiom of marvelous spirit abounding with colorful effects on castanets, tambourine, and triangle.

At any rate, there's enough that's different and diverting in this beautifully performed concert to make it a fascinating acquisition for the venturesome collector. *P.K.*

COLLECTIONS

ETTORE BASTIANINI: *Operatic Recital* (see LJUBA WELITSCHE, Collections)

130

RICHARD BONYNGE/ENGLISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA: *Eighteenth Century Overtures.* Kraus: *Olympia.* Gassmann: *L'Amore Artigiano.* Boieldieu: *Zoraïme et Zulnar.* Paër: *Sargino.* Grétry: *Le Magnifique.* Sacchini: *La Contadina in Corte.* Haydn: *Orlando Paladino.* Salieri: *La Fiera di Venezia.* English Chamber Orchestra, Richard Bonyngé cond. LONDON CS 6735 \$5.98.

Performance: **Enjoyable**
Recording: **Good**

This disc, like Raymond Leppard's similar collections on Philips 802901 and 802893, is devoted to overtures that belie the proposition that there is nothing left to record. The selection is a clever one, involving virtually unknown works by, in some cases, reasonably well-known composers (Grétry, Boieldieu,



A hurdy-gurdy ("German lyre") player, from Bonanni's *Gabinetto Armonico* (1723)

and, of course, Haydn) plus virtually unknown works by names that are only that—names in a history book. Haydn's not especially well-known overture to *Orlando Paladino* (1782) is, in fact, about the only one of these pieces to be represented currently in the catalogs.

Most interesting of all these overtures, which belong, strictly speaking, to the very late eighteenth century (with the exception of the Rossini-like Ferdinando Paër overture of 1803), are the romantically and atmospherically conceived pieces by Boieldieu and Grétry. The disc on the whole is well worth investigating (it duplicates no selection on the Leppard discs); Bonyngé has an obvious sympathy for the repertoire, and the only disappointment I felt had to do with the recording, which in its lack of detail and transparency is not up to this company's other, sonically very impressive Bonyngé collections. *I.K.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

WILFRED BROWN & JOHN WILLIAMS: *Folk Songs. The Wealthy Farmer's Son; The Death of Queen Jane; Le pont de Morlaix; Le roi a fait battre tambour; The Gentleman*

Soldier; The Crow; David of the White Rock; The Cherry Tree; Poor Old Maid; Muss i denn . . . ?; Maria im Dornwald; Bingo; The Nightingale; The Unquiet Grave; Das Weinhauerlied; The Turtle-dove; My Love's an Arbutus; The Knifegrinder; Catherine; Noël nouvelet; Death and the Lady; The Country Farmer's Son. Wilfred Brown (tenor); John Williams (guitar). L'OISEAU-LYRE OLS 131 \$5.98.

Performance: **Dazzling**
Recording: **Excellent**

Folk music has been subjected to so much decoration and general tampering, through misguided efforts to make up-to-date what is already timeless, that it is possible to forget how moving the unadorned, original item was before the improvers laid hands on it. In this collection (a reissue, incidentally), Wilfred Brown, an incredibly expert tenor whose voice is not as eccentric as Peter Pears' but is almost as resourceful, is put through his paces in a dazzlingly varied program. He sings of the sons of wealthy farmers and of poor ones; of English crows and Somerset turtledoves and Kentucky nightingales; of old maids and kings' wives and gentleman soldiers; of dogs named Bingo, and restless ghosts, and a lady wooed by Death himself. He sings in German and French, as well as in English, and there isn't a dud in the entire collection.

A very few of these songs are familiar versions from the mainstream of the folk tradition; others are surprising variations on songs usually heard with other melodies and slightly different lyrics. All deserve to be better known. The way Wilfred Brown sings them, some unaccompanied, the rest discreetly accompanied by John Williams, they add up to a delightful record. *P.K.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ADOLF BUSCH/RUDOLF SERKIN: *A Busch-Serkin Recital.* Bach: *Partita in E Major (BWV 1006); Prelude; Sonata for Violin and Continuo in G Major (BWV 1019).* Gemilani-Busch: *Sonata for Violin and Continuo in C Minor; Siciliano.* Vivaldi-Busch: *Sonata for Violin and Continuo in A Major, Op. 2, No. 2.* Reger: *Sonata No. 5, in F-Sharp Minor, for Violin and Piano, Op. 84; Allegretto.* Schubert: *Sei mir gegrüsst* (Heinrich Rehkemper, baritone; Manfred Gurlitt, piano); *Fantasia in C Major, for Violin and Piano, Op. 159, D. 934.* Adolf Busch (violin), Rudolf Serkin (piano). PERENNIAL 2006 \$6.00 (available from Perennial Records, P. O. Box 437, New York 10023).

Performance: **Classic German style**
Recording: **Oldies but goodies**

It is not in fact true that all violinists of a certain generation used *portamento* instead of *legato*, that is to say, slid around from one note of a melody to another on greasy schmaltz. There was, as this record attests, a "school" of German fiddle playing descended from the Central European Classical tradition. Adolf Busch, one of the last of this tribe, was an excellent soloist but equally an ensemble musician of the highest type. The Bach Prelude, recorded in 1910 when Busch was nineteen, shows a certain Romantic freedom and freshness. The other pieces, from 1930 and 1931, with his son-in-law Rudolf Serkin, represent the chamber-music tradition still in its finest flower.

(Continued on page 134)

STEREO REVIEW



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CASTOR & POLLUX

Rameau's apotheosis of Baroque opera
superbly reconstructed for Telefunken

Reviewed by ERIC SALZMAN

down, and a grand astrological festival of the planets, stars, satellites, and gods celebrating the elevation of the twin brothers to stardom. What more can you ask for?

The first impression one gets from all of this is the sense of integration and flow. There is tremendous diversity and vividness in this music, from the classic Lullyan overture, the weeping, imploring, or celebratory choruses, and the dances (played and sung), to the simple airs and occasional larger aria form, the simple, characteristic tone painting, and, particularly, the evocation of the classical scenes of war games, gates of hell, and celestial celebrations. In spite of this diversity, the sense of continuity and unity is as great as, or greater than, it is in Gluck or even Wagner. The intense, personal drama of Italian opera is missing, but the totality is as complete and interwoven as a Wagnerian music drama.

Rameau was famous, then and now, for his expression of "tender sentiment"—páthos, love, ecstasy—always expressed with a typically French love of ornament and a certain clarity of form and expression. Well, *Castor and Pollux* fully lives up to its reputation in this respect. When Hébé and her flower maidens try to prevent Pollux from going down to hell to look for the spirit of his dead brother, I for one fail to see how he can resist their blandishments. Compared to these graces, Wagner's flower girls are a bevy of Bavarian beer-garden maidens. Pollux's aria "*Nature, amour*" at the beginning of the second act and Castor's Elysian-Fields aria at the beginning of the fourth must surely refute once and for all the charge of unmelodic and unvoiced writing so often leveled against Rameau and French eighteenth-century opera. But Rameau is hardly less successful in his wonderful expression of heroic funeral games or the glittering, scintillating festival of the stars and planets. Everything is set out with the simplest, most telling strokes, and with such individuality that it is difficult to decide whether this work is old-fashioned or extremely modern—it sounds like both at once.

The individuality of French music in general, and of Rameau's work in particular, accounts in part for its limited success outside of France. The very continuity and integration of diversity which we can admire today was a stumbling block to audiences conditioned to the popular and effective division of recitative and display aria in Italian works. There is relatively little vocal display, and the most extravagant effects are realized with simplicity and subtlety. This is opera not for the pit but for the connoisseur. Connoisseurs love to be enchanted and amazed, but always in terms of a certain taste and order—qualities which Rameau understood perfectly.

But most significant of all is the fact that this music is so closely bound up with the genius of the French language. Here is the origin of the fluid continuity, the time shifts, and the ornamental graces that have hindered wider appreciation of this music but that are, in fact, among its chief glories. Unlike most of the other European languages—(although supposedly like Latin), French is organized in quantities without strong tonic accents. The typical French verse form, the alexandrine, which sounds like repetitious

Since the opera *Castor and Pollux* is the masterpiece of Jean-Philippe Rameau, one of the most famous and admired composers of Western culture, it comes as something of a shock to realize that it has been as totally forgotten as the works of many a second-rate peddler of crochets and quavers. Thanks to Nikolaus Harnoncourt and his always remarkable Concentus Musicus, we have it back—the sound of it, at least—in a superb reconstruction.

In a way, the history of this beautiful work illustrates the fate of French opera, now at such a low ebb. Rameau was fifty and a famous composer before he turned to the genre that was to occupy him for the rest of his life. His first *tragédie lyrique*, *Hippolyte et Aricie*, appeared in 1733, and, in spite of a tremendous controversy (of the sort the French love), it was an enormous success. Rameau took the traditional French operatic form of Lully and imbued it with modern content. *Castor and Pollux* appeared in 1737 and was an even greater success. It was revived in 1754 to represent the highest triumphs of French opera against the novelties of Pergolesi and the Italians in the infamous "*Guerre des Bouffons*." The success of Rameau, then an old man and laden with honors and *hommage*, was so great that he and French music were considered to have won the war. Alas, it was really only a skirmish; in the long run, the war was lost.

Castor and Pollux, like most French opera, was appreciated at home but not much abroad. Burney, in his history of music, goes out of his way to analyze and criti-

cize it in spite of his professed admiration for its composer. The Italians and the Italo-philosophes were still harsher, insisting that French opera was without melody, rhythmically confused, overladen with ornaments, lacking in symmetry, ungrateful for the voice, and generally unclear in shape. Only the dance music was widely appreciated; French opera, then as later, featured dance as an essential element, and Rameau's dances quickly spread through Europe and had a major influence on the course of Baroque and Classical style.

After the French Revolution, Rameau did not fare well in his native country, being supplanted entirely by Gluck, Spontini, and Sacchini. *Castor and Pollux* was reprinted toward the end of the nineteenth century, and revived in 1900 to the astonishment and enthusiasm of many musicians and critics, notably Debussy, who pointed out that many of Gluck's so-called reforms in fact derived from Rameau. Nevertheless, perhaps because of the general decay of French singing and operatic tradition, the work has remained in that peculiar limbo inhabited by revered, disembodied spirits of the Golden Age.

In a way, the work is a kind of apotheosis of Baroque opera. It has a magnificent allegorical prelude, a scene of Spartan funeral games, another in the temple of Jupiter with gods and goddesses descending a different kind of descent to hell—flames, demons, and all—and the Elysian fields. And finally, there is a scene in the country, complete with thunderstorms, more gods coming

jargon in English, is in fact a fluid form in the hands of a good French poet. With a master like Rameau, these qualities extend to the music, particularly the beautiful and integrated use of the voice. The dance music is something else again; because of its great regularity of accent and of form—it generally goes in nice eight-bar measures and has regular accentual patterns—it can be easily appreciated outside of France.

WE are very fortunate to have *Castor and Pollux* brought back to us through the sensitive scholarship of such musicians as Harnoncourt and the Concentus Musicus. No other organization could have so fully revealed to us the beauties of Rameau's orchestra, here represented by an extraordinary collection of eighteenth-century instruments. All of the instrumental realizations are sweet perfection. The vocal problems are a little harder to deal with—we really know so little about eighteenth-century singing of any sort, let alone the very special challenges of French style. My guess is that the glorious high-tenor sound of Zeger Vandersteene comes closest to it, while the baritone of Gérard Souzay—a great artist, but now past his prime—is least appropriate. Nevertheless, even in this difficult area, everything is so carefully prepared and beautifully realized that it finally comes off as all of a piece.

Nikolaus Harnoncourt's grasp of the problems of ornamentation—essential in this music—is so exceptional that I hesitate to take issue with him. Nevertheless, I believe that his highly studied *use* of ornaments, in spite of the avowed intent of endowing them with a "certain something," is finally somewhat terse and Germanic. And I do wonder whether his constant use of the short rather than the long *appoggiatura* is really accurate. Every early commentator mentions constant, languishing *appoggiaturas* and other ornaments, but Harnoncourt's careful, clipped use of them hardly makes that kind of stand-out impression at all, tending rather to blend them with the flow of the background of the music. In contrast to what I must add a word about magnificent phrasing—vocal and instrumental, ornamented and unornamented. In its constant and beautiful rhythmic plasticity and dynamic penetration right to the core of the music, the recreation of Baroque music. The sound and flow of this realization, and its superb recorded reproduction, merit the highest praise—not to mention your respectful attention and involvement. Few recent recordings have given me as much pleasure as this one!

RAMEAU: *Castor et Pollux*. Jeanette Scovotti (soprano), Minerve, Têlaire; Märta Schéle (soprano), Venus, Follower of Hébé, Happy Spirit, a Planet; Zeger Vandersteene (tenor), Cupid, Castor; Rolf Leanderson (baritone), Mars, Athlete; Norma Lerer (mezzo-soprano), Phébé; Gérard Souzay (baritone), Pollux; Jacques Villisech (bass), Jupiter; Sven-Erik Alexanderson (tenor), Grand Priest, Athlete. Stockholm Chamber Chorus and Concentus Musicus Wien, Nikolaus Harnoncourt cond. TELEFUNKEN SAWT 9584/5/6/7-A four discs \$23.92.

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Side one (watch for reversed labels) includes a couple of dubious Baroque arrangements (the Vivaldi sounds nothing at all like that composer) and an odd little fragment from Reger. The Schubert—preceded by an unrelated 1928 recording of the song on which it is based—is the real center of interest here. The recording of the curiously neglected Fantasia is welcome simply as a masterly realization of a work that rarely gets its due. Serkin's clear and sensitive playing is perfectly integrated with Busch's strong, beautifully shaped lines.

The copious album notes do not give any information on the whats and wheres of the originals, but the recordings and transfers convey the sense of the music in an admirably effective way. Most important, the balance—a true partnership—is perfectly realized. *E.S.*

ANITTA CERQUETTI: Operatic Recital (see LJUBA Welitsch, Collections)

COLUMBIA-PRINCETON ELECTRONIC MUSIC CENTER TENTH ANNIVERSARY ALBUM. Varèse: *Déserts*. Group for Contemporary Music at Columbia University, Charles Wuorinen cond. Luening: *In the Beginning, from Theater Piece No. 2*. Babbitt: *Vision and Prayer*. Bethany Beardslee (soprano). Ussachevsky: *Computer Piece No. 1; Two Sketches for a Computer Piece*. Smiley: *Kolyosa*. Shields: *The Transformation of Ani*. Arel: *Stereo Electronic Music No. 2*. Davidovsky: *Synchronisms No. 5*. Ray Des Roches, Richard Fitz, Claire Heldrich, Donald Marcone, Howard Van Hyning (percussion); Harvey Sollberger cond. COMPOSERS RECORDINGS INC. CRI SD 268 two discs \$11.90.

Performance: **Authentic**
Recording: **Good, with reservations**

The Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center was founded in early 1959 by putting together the pioneering Experimental Tape Studio of Vladimir Ussachevsky and Otto Luening, the involvement of Milton Babbitt, the new RCA Electronic Music Synthesizer, the official backing of the two universities, and \$175,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation. Time has passed, electronic music has come in and gone out again, and synthesizers are pop and "pops," but the Columbia-Princeton Center still stands—the most important American studio and possibly still the most productive and useful electronic studio anywhere in the world.

The Columbia-Princeton Center has always been open to composers from all over the world and all over the stylistic spectrum. Many people deserve the credit for the establishment and operation of this unusual institution, but a great deal of the fundamental work, energy, and know-how, as well as the broad, selfless, and forward-looking policy-making, stem from Ussachevsky, one of the relatively unsung good guys of American music.

Ussachevsky is represented here with two recent and attractive computer-generated pieces. The other members of the older generation associated with the center take up the first disc of the album. Otto Luening's *In the Beginning*, written for a dance-theater piece by Doris Humphrey and an early example of a tape mix with voice, actually dates back to the pre-center days, when the "studio" consisted of a few primitive pieces of equipment in someone's back room. Milton Babbitt's *Vision and Prayer*, set to a Dylan Thomas

poem, was one of the first synthesizer works, the first of two striking pieces for Bethany Beardslee and tape, and one of several important works of the late Fifties and early Sixties to use voice with electronic sounds. The piece, superbly performed here by Miss Beardslee, retains its power after more than a decade.

The Varèse *Déserts*, one of the earliest works to use "live" and electronic forces, is included here because the tape parts were revised at the Center (they were originally created at the French Radio in the early Fifties). The performance appears to have been recorded at a concert and is probably a souvenir of the actual tenth-anniversary concert from which these recordings stem. It would have been better to say so. As it is, the rather dry, clipped sound of the "live" portions of the piece is not impressive and limits the value of the performance.

The second disc comprises more recent works, most of them composed expressly for the anniversary celebrations; the composers have all been directors or assistants at the Center. Mario Davidovsky, Argentine-born but a New York resident for more than a decade, is represented by one of his effective *Synchronisms* for "live" performers and tape. Alice Shields' *The Transformation of Ani* uses texts from the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, incorporating her own voice into the final tape mix in a dramatic way. Ironically, only the works by Bulent Arel and Pril Smiley are exclusively based on electronically produced sound—an indication of how much the mixed approach has become the favored one by American composers.

The sonic production of the album is, with the reservations already noted, excellent, and there is a booklet and other explanatory material, all of which is helpful and of considerable interest. *E.S.*

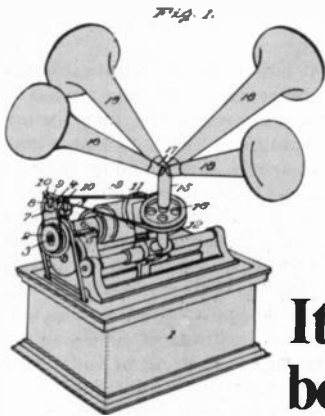
DELTRA EAMON AND LAURINDO ALMEIDA: Virtuoso! Villa-Lobos: Aria from Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5; Canção do Carreiro. Ponce: Mazurka. Gershwin: My Man's Gone Now. Barrois: Aconquija. Lecuona: Malagueña. Anon.: No Jardim de Oeira; Boi Tungão; A Casinha Pequeninã; Tindo La! Deltra Eamon (soprano); Laurindo (guitar). ORION ORS 726

Performance: **Disapp.**
Recording: **Excellent**

Laurindo Almeida, one of the best of our modern musicians, has created some of the most surprising musical folk songs to the ears of Americans. He and Ibert—for his "Angel," "Duets with me to expect a was disappointed.

Almeida is performing this time with his wife, Deltra Eamon, a lyric soprano from Canada who has been widely applauded at her concert appearances. But the aria from Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5* is a challenge that has defeated far greater sopranos than Miss Eamon. It is certainly too much for her here, even with the support of a special arrangement for guitar, cello, string bass, and trombone; she cannot sustain the long line or the impassioned *legato* flow. Undaunted, she moves on to Gershwin, where, for all her emotional involvement, she makes Serena's lament from *Porgy and Bess* sound more like

(Continued on page 136)



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a Brazilian folk song than the widow's grief-stricken outcry.

When Miss Eamon—with enthusiastic support from Almeida's guitar—gets around to *real* Brazilian folk songs, she fares better. And when she turns to Villa-Lobos for a bout with the *Canção do Carreiro* (*Oxcart Driver's Song*), she finally triumphs over the challenge of difficult material. To meet the requirements of the guitar accompaniment for this melancholy, haunting ballad about a driver moving thirsty oxen across a drought-parched Brazilian landscape, Almeida braved another danger—the technological one of adding sound-on-sound, tuning his E-string to E-flat for a *basso-ostinato* effect that works marvelously well. But the album as a whole—Almeida's abridged, perfumatory run-through of Lecuona's *Malagueña* included—does not. P.K.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY HUNTING MUSIC. Koželuh: *Three Hunting Fanfares for three horns.* Anton: *Hunting Signal for natural horn.* Anonymous: *Two Duets for hunting horns.* F. X. Dušek: *Parthia in F Major for Two Oboes, Two Horns, and Two Bassoons.* Vranický: *Six Hunting Marches for Wind Instruments.* B. D. Weber: *Quartet No. 3 for Four Horns.* Krommer-Kramář: *Parthia in E-flat Major for Two Oboes, Two Clarinets, Two Horns, and Two Bassoons.* Collegium Musicum of Prague. TRADITION 2102 \$5.98.

Performance: Tally-ho
 Recording: Good

Whether in the hunting scenes from Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie*, Weber's *Der Freischütz*, and Berlioz's *The Trojans*, or the scherzo from Bruckner's Fourth Symphony, there has always been a curious Continental mystique surrounding hunting that finds one particularly picturesque outlet in musical representations. That this interest—both in the sport and the musical associations—was not restricted to Germany, Austria, and France is evident in the present compilation of mainly Bohemian fare played by the Collegium Musicum of Prague. The composers, of whom the seventeenth-century figure Ondřej Anton is the earliest and Bedřich Weber (1766-1842) the latest, are by and large not important, although Leopold Koželuh (1747-1818), František Xaver Dušek (1731-1799), and František Krommer-Kramář (1759-1831) knew considerable musical acclaim in their day. Dušek, in fact, was quite a good friend of Mozart's. Musically, there is a perhaps too much innocuous fare here, but there is some very pleasant listening. Particularly entertaining—and very skillfully written for four French horns—is the quartet by Weber, which opens with a *Marcia di caccia*, a very expressive slow movement (while the hunters sleep?), and a real hunting finale. The horns used are for the most part modern ones, but in the brief Anton hunting signal a natural horn is used, and what sound like hunting horns in the two short anonymous duets. The playing throughout is spirited and colorful; the recorded sound, originally from Supraphon, is good. I.K.

MUSIQUE À LA COUR DE PRAGUE. Anonymous (14th C.): *Intrada de la tour; Rondel "Flos florum"; Danses "Czaldy waldy"; Canon.* Machaut: *Instrumental Motet.* Zavis de Zapy: *Introduction du ménestrel à la chanson du troubadour.* De Jenstejn: *Antifona adventualis.* Anonymous (Codex specialis Reginaegradecensis, 15th C.): *Three Instrumental Madrigals.* Harant de Polzice: *Motet à 5*

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STEREO REVIEW

voix. Otto: *Dances pour les musiciens des Seigneurs de Rozmberk (Intrada, Paduana, Isabela, Gagliarda, & Courante)*. Campanus de Vodnany: *Oda pastoralis*. Vejvanovsky: *Sonata vesperina*. Michna de Otradovice: *Musique pour une cérémonie nuptiale, 1653*. Anonymous (Kromeriz, 17th C.): *Musique pour cornemuse*. Cernohorsky: *Sonate en trio sur l'Alleluia de Pâques*. Zelenka: *Ouverture pour les fêtes du Couronnement, 1723*. Linek: *Symphonie pastorale pour les fêtes du Couronnement, 1743*. Symposium "Pro Musica Antiqua" de Prague, L. Vachulka dir. CHARLIN CL-39 \$5.95 (by mail from Advanced Electroacoustics, 1610 Park Ave., Buffalo, New York 14220).

Performance: **Commendable if not ideal**
Recording: **Very good**

This import features some enterprising programming, divided into Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque groups. The material, by and large, is rare (a few works, such as Pavel Vejvanovsky's *Sonata for Performance during the Office of Vespers*, excepted), and most of it can be associated, at least loosely, with the Prague court. The variety of instruments, too, is of interest: cornets, serpent, vièle, tromba marina, crwth (a lyre-shaped stringed instrument), lute, gambas, recorders, and even a cornemuse, the French bagpipe. There are pictures of some of these on the back of the jacket, along with a listing of what instruments are used in each piece. Unfortunately, there is no information about the instruments themselves, nor is the source identification for the repertoire fully presented. The annotations, by the artistic director of the ensemble, Carl de Nys, are in French and are quite general. The performances themselves have good vitality, but in matters of style (for example, the almost total absence of ornaments of any kind) the Pro Musica Antiqua of Prague has quite a way to go before it rivals the imaginative forays into early music by such groups as the Studio der Frühen Musik or the Vienna Concentus Musicus. The instrumental reproduction has excellent presence and detail, but the pressing quality is marred by a number of faults, including noisy grooves. *I.K.*

NEW MUSIC FOR STRING QUARTET. Boulez: *Livre pour Quatuor: Parts I, II, and V*. Parrenin Quartet (I and II); Hamann Quartet (V). Seels: *Quartetto d'Archì No. 4*. Quartet for New Music. Brown: *String Quartet*. New York String Quartet. MAINSTREAM MS 5009 \$5.98.

Performances: **Impressive**
Recording: **Fine**

As I have pointed out before, the contemporary interest in the ultra-Classical medium of the string quartet derives from its homogeneity; no other ensemble medium offers such a beautifully continuous field of sound through more than five octaves. And, remarkably enough, a number of fine ensembles have risen to or even helped create the challenges that new music offers to their ancient medium. Four quartets from four countries are represented here, all adept at dealing with some difficult technical and interpretive problems.

The presence of four quartets in three works is explained by the character of the Boulez *Book for Quartet*. This work, composed in 1949 in a fascinating transitional area between twelve-tone chromaticism and true serialism, is a kind of Well-Tempered

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String Music, a road map for the developments of serialism in the Fifties.

Giacinto Scelsi is a remarkable example of a European composer of an older generation—he was born in 1905—whose work is closely related to that of younger men. His String Quartet No. 4 grows out of the "density school" of Xenakis, Ligeti, and Penderecki, and is also related to certain American "minimalist" tendencies. Nevertheless, its date (1964) and Scelsi's long involvement with the exploration of the basic elements of sound obviate the idea that the composer is merely an older man trying to hop on the new-idea bandwagon. This is a true continuum piece, forming a changing band of string sonority in which all four instruments participate; this intense, slowly shifting ribbon of sound comes from nowhere, builds to a high point of tension, and then dissipates itself.

Earle Brown's String Quartet of 1965, previously recorded by the La Salle Quartet (DGG 2543002), is one of a number of pieces by that composer that combine improvisational or performer-choice techniques with a closer control of overall structure than was the case in earlier works. There is a mastery of a wide-ranging material—fixed and sliding, structural and gestural—and, paradoxically enough, a certain sense of freedom and invention which makes this one of the best and most expressive new works for the medium.

Without close reference to scores (and perhaps not even then) it would be hard to pick and choose between these groups. But there is no need; they are all impressive, and the recordings are good. E.S.

LJUBA WELITSCH: *Opera and Operetta Arias*. Tchaikovsky: *The Queen of Spades: Ich muss am Fenster lehnen; Es geht auf Mitternacht*. Verdi: *Un Ballo in Maschera: Ma dall'arido stelo divulsa; Morrò, ma prima in grazia*. Lehár: *Zigeunerliebe: Lied und Csárdás*. The Merry Widow: *Viljalied*. Der Zarewitsch: *Einer wird kommen*. Millöcker-Mackeben: *The Dubarry: Ich schenk' mein Herz*. Ljuba Welitsch (soprano); The Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Rudolf Moralt cond. RICHMOND Ⓜ R 23188 \$2.98.

ANITA CERQUETTI: *Operatic Recital*. Verdi: *Aïda: O patria mia, I Vespri Siciliani: Bolero*. Nabucco: *Anch'io dischiuso un giorno*. Ernani: *Ernani, involami*. La Forza del Destino: *Pace, pace, mio Dio*. Bellini: *Norma: Casta diva*. Spontini: *Agnes von Hohenstaufen: O re dei cieli*. Puccini: *Tosca: Vissi d'arte*. Anita Cerquetti (soprano); Chorus and Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Gianandrea Gavazzeni cond. RICHMOND SR 33189 \$2.98.

ETTORE BASTIANINI: *Operatic Recital*. Rossini: *Il Barbiere di Siviglia: Largo al factotum*. Donizetti: *La Favorita: Vien Leonora; A tanto amor*. Ponchielli: *La Gioconda: O monumento; Pescator, affonda l'esca*. Giordano: *Andrea Chénier: Son sessant'anni; Nemico della patria*. Verdi: *La Forza del Destino: Urna fatale; Invano Alvaro* (with Mario del Monaco). Ettore Bastianini (baritone); Orchestras of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia of Rome and the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Gianandrea Gavazzeni, Alberto Erede, and Francesco Molinari-Pradelli cond. RICHMOND SR 33190 \$2.98.

GIULIETTA SIMIONATO: *Operatic Recital*. Saint-Saëns: *Samson et Dalila: Printemps qui*

commence. Thomas: *Mignon: Connais-tu le pays? Massenet: Werther: Air des lettres*. Bizet: *Carmen: Habanera*. Rossini: *Il Barbiere di Siviglia: Una voce poco fa*. Verdi: *Don Carlo: O don fatale*. Bellini: *I Capuleti ed i Montecchi: Deh! tu bell'anima*. Rossini: *La Cenerentola: Nacqui all'affanno*. Giulietta Simionato (mezzo-soprano); Orchestra of L'Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Fernando Previtali and Franco Ghione cond. RICHMOND SR 33191 \$2.98.

Performances: **Good to excellent**
Recordings: **Fair to good**

These are the initial releases in Richmond's popular-priced "Great Singers Series," taken from the London catalog and showcasing singers who made headlines fifteen to twenty years ago. The four discs now at hand are devoted to the late and lamented Ettore Bastianini (1922-1967), the retired Anita Cerquetti and Giulietta Simionato, and the semi-retired Ljuba Welitsch.

Of the four, the Cerquetti disc is likely to land with the greatest impact. This well-endowed (in every respect) soprano sizzled through the operatic scene like a meteor in the 1950's, reaching the end of her trajectory much too soon. According to the liner notes, a paralyzed vocal cord finally signaled the doom of her career. Her awesome vocal gifts—tone, technique, endurance, the works—are stunningly displayed in this collection of bravura pieces that range from the familiar hazards of "Casta diva" to the unfamiliar but murderous demands of Spontini's interesting aria. Vocal connoisseurs are urged not to pass up this thrilling record.

Giulietta Simionato did have a long career, and she ended it wisely, while still in possession of her generous gifts. She is heard on this disc (half in true and half in electronic stereo) in her characteristic dependable form: a sumptuous-toned Delilah whose seductive sound needs no histrionic reinforcement, a somewhat Italianate but nonetheless very effective Carmen and Mignon, a secure and velvet-toned Charlotte, and a properly passionate Eboli. The coloratura technique she displays as Rosina has since been surpassed by that of Teresa Berganza, but Miss Berganza is a specialist while Simionato ranged all over the mezzo scene. Sonically, both the Cerquetti and the Simionato discs are remarkably good.

The Welitsch recording dates back to the early long-play era, and this is already its third incarnation. The orchestral sound is a bit faint, but the voice comes through with its well-remembered precious-metal quality. Never mind that the Russian arias are sung in German and that her German and Italian are . . . well, quaint: this is Ljuba Welitsch, a true and always cherishable original!

That the Bastianini release is less successful than the others is no fault of the artist, because the singing is always distinguished. The engineering, however, is very careless here: levels are uneven, some of the selections have been poorly edited, others are handicapped by the peculiar engineering perspectives that plagued London's early opera releases. The late baritone's many admirers will nonetheless want this record.

The Simionato, Bastianini, and Cerquetti discs have excellent annotations by Gerald Fitzgerald. The Welitsch liner is passable, but its listing of selections contradicts the labels. In sum, a very fine beginning for the "Great Singers Series." May it long continue! G.J.

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SR-273

TAPE HORIZONS

By CRAIG STARK



WOW AND FLUTTER

SINGERS and violinists employ vibrato (a fluctuation of pitch and intensity) for artistic expressiveness. But if you hear a somewhat similar, vibrato-like wavering of pitch when listening to a tape of piano or oboe music, the result isn't musically satisfying at all, for these sounds should be rock steady. The unwanted quavering in these cases is a result of one of the most common tape recorder faults: wow and flutter.

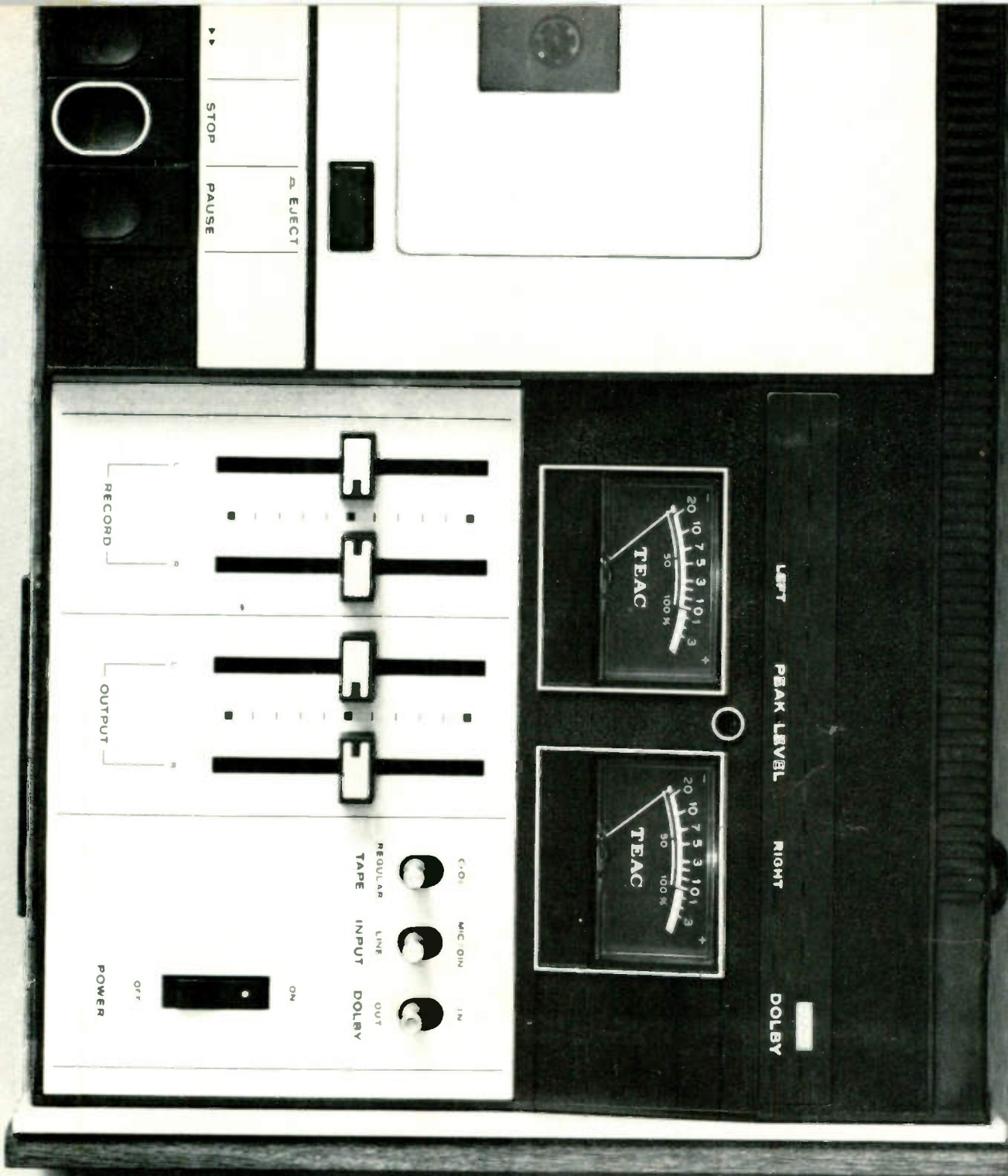
Wow and flutter are caused by repeated, momentary changes in the speed at which the moving tape passes the recorder's heads. These brief deviations from the ideal of absolutely constant speed are reflected in the pitch you hear, and can be expressed as a percentage. Thus, if a tone that should be heard as a steady 3,000 Hz wobbles instead by ± 3 Hz, the wow and flutter is, by definition, 0.1 per cent—one part in a thousand. Just as important as the extent of these frequency shifts, however, is the *rate* at which they occur. If the wobbling takes place anywhere between once every two seconds and six times in a single second, it is called *wow*, which takes its name from the audible effect of the malfunction. Higher waver rates, up to about 250 per second, are referred to as *flutter*.

Extensive psychoacoustic tests have been conducted to determine the sensitivity of the human ear to various wow and flutter rates. Using a 3,150-Hz tone (a standard test frequency for wow and flutter), it has been found that one is most sensitive to pitch variations if they occur at a rate of about four per second. To place this in musical perspective, the musician's intentional vibrato rate has been found to be most pleasing in the five- to nine-per-second range. At a rate of about twelve the listener does not hear the change in pitch, but instead experiences a pulsation in the intensity of the sound—a so-called "tremolo." And at flutter rates above sixteen per second one simply hears a general "roughening" of the tone. Thus, by taking the ear's subjective characteristics into account, it is possible to combine the rate and the percentage of the variation in a single ("weighted") figure that can be used to determine the potential annoyance of any machine's wow and flutter.

Good recorders today leave the factory with inaudible wow and flutter, though if you dub back and forth several times, it will add up and you'll hear it on the final copies. But without scrupulous upkeep, wow and flutter can increase tremendously, for everything in the tape path and the recorder's drive system is a potential contributor. A flat spot on the rubber pinch roller will introduce wow at its rate of rotation—you can often synchronize the wavering pitch with the rotating part visibly. A worn bearing or eccentric capstan can also cause audible wow, for the usual 1/4-inch capstan rotates four to five times per second at the 3 3/4-ips speed. Dirt on pressure pads, heads, or tape guides can cause the tape to vibrate, creating flutter. Improper tension adjustments and warped reels can also contribute. Given a good recorder to start with, however, the moral is clear: cleanliness and regular maintenance are the best ways to prevent a case of the audio shakes.

STEREO REVIEW FEBRUARY 1973 ADVERTISERS INDEX

READER SERVICE NO.	ADVERTISER	PAGE NUMBER
1	A.D.R. Audio	138
	A & M Records	88
2	Acoustic Research	91
	Advent Corporation	37
3	AKAI American Ltd.	95
4	Angel Records	123
5	Audio Dynamics Corporation	45
6	Audio Technica	100
7	Audio Warehouse	134
8	BSR (USA) Ltd.	136
9	Baltimore Stereo Wholesalers	127
11	Bose Corporation	113
103	British Industries—Garrard	7
	Columbia Records	116
10	Concord Division, Benjamin Electric Sound Corp.	99
12	Design Acoustics	100
13	Deutsche Grammophon	129
14	Discwasher	128
15	District Sound	134
16	Dixie Hi-Fidelity Wholesalers	118
17	Dokorder, Inc.	53
18	Dual	32, 33
20	Dynaco, Inc.	117
19,22	Electro-Voice, Inc.	4th Cover
85	Empire Scientific Corp.	17
99	Empire Scientific Corp.	110
21	Epicure Products, Inc.	47
	Fisher Radio Company	4, 5
23	Heath Company	49 thru 51
30	Hitachi	15
25	Illinois Audio	53
26	International Hi Fi Distributors	136
27	JVC America, Inc.	115
	Jack Daniels Distillery	105
29	Jensen Sound Laboratories	109
28	Kenwood	121
24	KLH Research Development	39
31	Klipsch & Associates	119
32	Koss Electronics	25
33	Lafayette Radio Electronics	101
	Leslie Speakers, Electro Music KBS Musical Instruments	135
34	London Records	125
35	London Records	133
37	Maxell Corporation of America	107
44	Micro/Acoustic	30
38	Midwest Hi Fi Wholesalers	138
39	McIntosh Laboratory Inc.	137
40	National Union Electric	13
42	North American Philips Corporation	127
43	Onkyo Sales Section, Mitsubishi International Corp.	34
36	Panasonic	2
52	Phase Linear Corporation	122
41	Pickering & Co., Inc.	9
40	Pilot	13
46	Rabsons 57th Street Inc.	127
47	Radio Shack	93
48	RCA Records & Tapes	40, 41
49	RCA Records & Tapes	52
54	Revox Corporation	87
51	Rose Records	136
45	Sansui Electronic Corp.	18, 19
53	Shure Brothers Inc.	20
50	Shure Brothers Inc.	54
55	Sony Corporation of America	31
63	Sony Superscope	43
	Spectrosonic	103
57	Stanton Magnetics	131
58	Stereo Corporation of America	137
59	Stereo World	53
60	Suporex	97
61	Tandberg of America, Inc.	23
62	TDK Electronics Corp.	11
72	TEAC Corporation of America	3rd Cover
64	Telex	24
65	Tokyo Shapiro	52
18	United Audio	32, 33
	U.S. Navy	26 thru 29
	U.S. Pioneer Electronics Corp.	2nd Cover, 1



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