

Stereo Review®

BUYERS' GUIDE TO RECEIVERS

Tape Deck Care For Better Sound

Audiophile Analog Discs

Pop Stars on Videodisc

EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS

- Signet TK7Lc Phono Cartridge
- Mordaunt-Short Carnival 3 Speaker System
- Sony TC-K555 Cassette Deck
- JVC R-X40 AM/FM Stereo Receiver
- Scott 558T AM/FM Stereo Tuner



DISC SPECIALS

- Cheryl Lynn • King Crimson
- Robert Plant • Pete Townshend
- Crosby, Stills & Nash • *Cats*
- James Levine's Mahler No. 7
- Charles Ives's Sonatas
- Cyprien Katsaris • Gérard Souzay

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The Most Unique Part Of Mitsubishi Component TV Is In The Lower Right-Hand Corner Of The Screen.

Mitsubishi is pleased to present its remarkable new component TV system.

In some ways, it's just what you'd expect in state-of-the-art component TV:

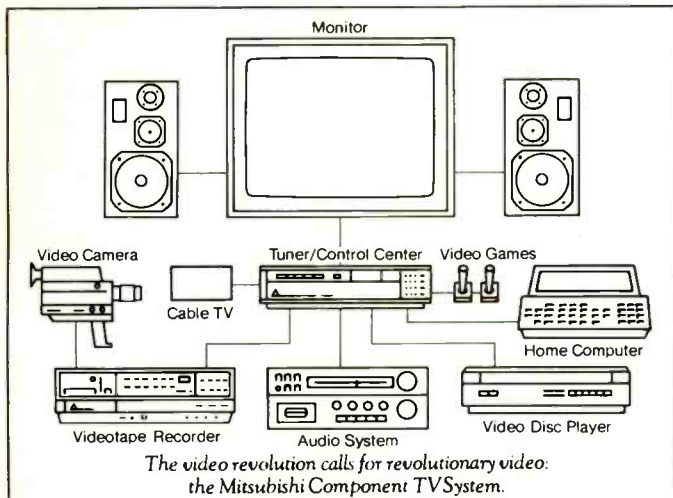
There's a frequency-synthesized tuner/

control center with multiple video inputs for your VCR, video disc player, video game console, home computer or any of the other video wonders looming on the horizon.

Electronic mode selection allows you to



switch instantly from one program source to another — at the control center itself or from



your favorite chair via the wireless remote.

The 25-inch (diagonal) professional-quality monitor features an Automatic Picture Latitude Circuit and a comb filter that yield 330 lines of resolution (versus the normal 280) for a crisper, sharper over-the-air picture. Or a stunning 400 lines of resolution from direct tape or disc input, achieved by bypassing the picture-degrading RF signal conversion process.

A pair of big, beautiful, high-fidelity speakers deliver sound that's actually as good as the picture. Even stereo, from stereo video discs, videotapes and FM simulcasts.

In short, Mitsubishi component TV offers the picture and sound upgrade that results when individual components aren't compromised by the need to fit them all into one box.

But there's something more. Something you won't find in any other company's TV, component or otherwise.

Our exclusive, patented Diamond Vision™ picture tube.

UP TO 40% WIDER COLOR RANGE WITH DIAMOND VISION.

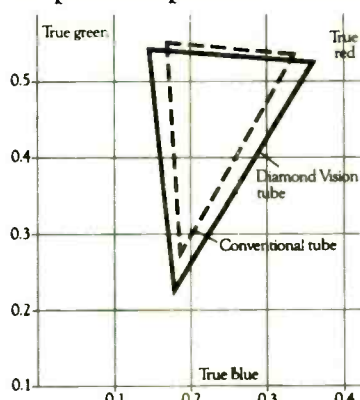
Diamond Vision is the most important picture tube innovation in years.

It was developed initially to eliminate

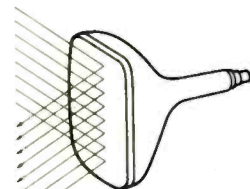
image-fading sun glare on our outdoor electronic scoreboards. And was based on the proven fact that certain chemicals absorb certain colors in the light spectrum. The result was a combination of chemicals mixed with the glass to absorb the offending light.

In adapting this principle to our home screens, we added other color-absorbing chemicals to eliminate the undesirable light elements emitted by the phosphors of the picture tube. Then painstakingly re-engineered the phosphors themselves to match the new screen's transmission characteristics.

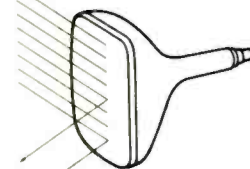
The result is not only a picture relatively unaffected by ambient light, but a significantly improved picture overall. Brightness. Contrast. Color fidelity.



Comparison of the color range reproduced by Diamond Vision and conventional TV tubes under ambient light.



Conventional screen reflects most ambient light.



Diamond Vision absorbs most ambient light.

And compared to conventional picture tubes, the color reproduction range is 15% to 40% wider, depending on the amount of ambient light present.

So when you shop for a component TV system, look for that little "Diamond Vision" sign in the lower right hand corner of the screen. It tells you a lot about what's inside.

And there's another sure sign just below that. Something that speaks even more eloquently about how that system is built.

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FORMERLY HI FI/STEREO REVIEW (ISSN 0039-1220)

Stereo Review®

NOVEMBER 1982 • VOLUME 47 • NUMBER 11

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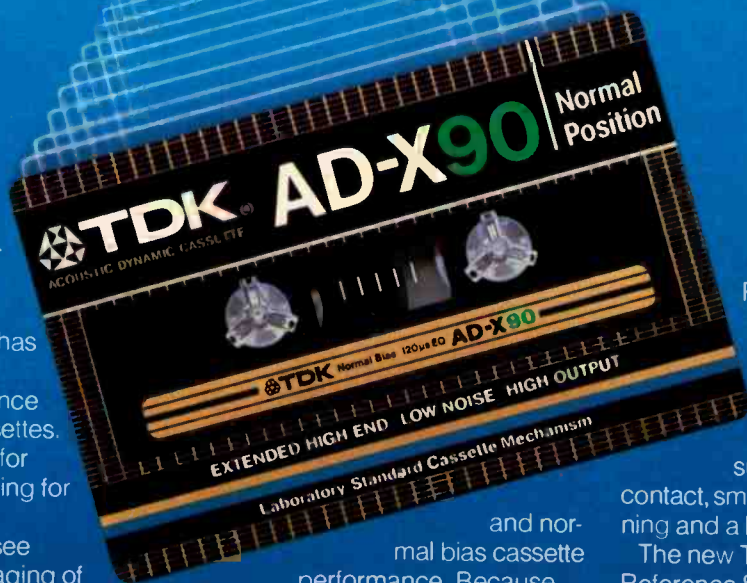
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COVER: Design by Borys Patchowsky; photo by Bruce Pendleton. See page 46 for the Hirsch-Houck Laboratories test report on the JVC R-X40 receiver.

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Listen. And you'll hear the ultimate in metal bias, high bias

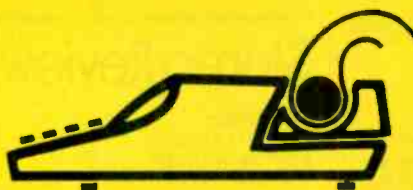
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Edited by Christie Barter

● AM STEREO is now being broadcast in more than a dozen cities across the nation using systems developed by Kahn Communications or the Harris Corporation. If you have two analog AM radios, you can enjoy AM stereo now from the following stations that use the Kahn system: WNBC, New York; WLS and WGM, Chicago; KFRC, San Francisco; KHJ, Los Angeles; WMAV, Washington; KSC, Salt Lake City; KMBZ, Kansas City; WOW, Omaha; WFIL, Philadelphia; KTSA, San Antonio, and quite a few others by the time you read this. Since the Kahn system effectively broadcasts the left channel on the lower sideband and the right channel on the upper sideband, by tuning one radio slightly above center and the other slightly below center frequency you get stereo. But do not mistune so far that you get distortion....The Harris system is being used on five stations: WQXI, Atlanta; WNOE, New Orleans; WESC, Greenville, S.C.; CKLW, Windsor, Ontario; and KROW, Reno. However, you must have a specially equipped radio to receive them in stereo. The Mura Corp. hopes to deliver Kahn-type FM/AM stereo personal portables to dealers in time for Christmas.

● CAT STEVENS'S song Morning Has Broken has been chosen by the Episcopal Commission on Church Music for inclusion in the church's new hymnal. Entitled Hymnal 1982, the new collection was approved by a convention of the Episcopal Church held in New Orleans in September. My Country 'Tis of Thee, also known as America, was among the hymns scheduled to be dropped, but the delegates voted to retain it. Morning Has Broken was recorded in the early 1970's and was included in Stevens's album "Teaser and the Firecat" (A&M SP 4313), which is still in print.

● AMSTERDAM'S CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA, which has played an important role in the history of recordings and is practically the house band for Philips Records, is faced with very serious financial problems. When it was proposed that the orchestra dismiss a fifth of its musicians in response to

cuts in government subsidies, the Concertgebouw's music director, Bernard Haitink, threatened to resign and move to England. Conductor Antal Dorati said it would be like "wantonly ripping five meters from Rembrandt's Night Watch."

● SINGLES FOR LESS THAN A DOLLAR--much less than a dollar according to what CBS expects. The company that introduced the two-sided record in 1908 has just hit the market with a release of one-sided, seven-inch singles. The initial titles are all proved hits by such artists as Kenny Loggins, Elvis Costello, and REO Speedwagon. At twenty-nine cents wholesale, the new records could retail for as little as fifty cents....Telarc, at the other extreme, has come up with a limited-edition pressing on super-thick Super Vinyl of its sonic-booming recording of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture by the Cincinnati Symphony conducted by Erich Kunzel. It lists for \$49.95.

● MISS PIGGY has joined the stars who are cashing in on the exercise fad. The Muppet femme fatale's new LP "Miss Piggy's Aerobiques Exercise Workout Album" (Warner Bros.) stresses such things as exercising one's rights, snacking, and breathing. ("Where you breathe is important, too. Do not breathe under the sink or in back of the closet near the mothballs.") According to the Recording Industry Association of America, Judi Shepard Missett's "Jazzercise" (MCA) was the first exercise disc to go gold, and Richard Simmons's "Reach" (Elektra) has gone platinum. "Jane Fonda's Workout Record," a two-disc set, is coining money for CBS, but at press time RIAA had not audited its sales.

● TICKET CENTRAL. Visitors to New York and residents alike will be served, beginning next spring, by a reduced-price ticket booth much like TKTS in Times Square. This one, though, will handle music and dance events of every kind all over the city. It will be located behind the Public Library in an ever-improving Bryant Park.

Speaking My Piece

By William Livingstone



Editor Livingstone with sopranos Eleanor Steber and Leontyne Price

TAXES AND AXES

As we have pointed out several times in the last few months, there is legislation now under consideration in both houses of Congress that would put a tax on tape recorders and on blank tape. If these laws are passed, the funds raised by the tax are supposed to go to copyright holders whose work may be taped from broadcasts or copied from records without permission.

Those who favor the tax have banded together as the Coalition to Save America's Music, which is headed by Beverly Sills, general director of the New York City Opera Company. The Coalition's members include the American Federation of Musicians, the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers, Broadcast Music, Inc., the Recording Industry Association of America, and other interested parties. The interested parties who oppose the tax have formed the Audio Recording Rights Coalition, a group of retailers, manufacturers, and users of audio recording products.

We have printed the claim made by Warner Communications that \$2.85 billion dollars worth of music and other entertainment was taped at home by Americans in 1980, and we have printed the opposing claim that a tax on tape and recorders would be "taxation without justification." A September letter to the editor said it would be un-American to tax people in advance because they *might* infringe copyright if they bought a recorder or blank tape. Another reader claimed that what is proposed is not a tax, but a *royalty*.

Well, I say it's a tax, and I say the hell with it. I am unconvinced by the Warner study. Its dollar figures seem to be derived from the assumption that every blank cassette sold represents cheating a record company out of the sale of at least one LP. I think it's unfair to penalize people who use tape re-

corders for completely ethical purposes simply because others use them to take music off the air instead of buying records. It's very handy for the record companies to find in the consumer a scapegoat to blame for declining sales.

And who is going to get all that tax money? Who will decide how much of it should be sent to Beverly Sills and how much to some other soprano whose records may be dubbed by people who want to hear them without paying for them? And how much should go to Melissa Manchester and how much to Olivia Newton-John? Do you want to leave such decisions to, say, the people who run the post office?

I admire Beverly Sills as an artist and as a humanitarian, and I am fond of her personally. When she raises a banner that says Save America's Music and marches off to battle, I feel uncomfortable not following her. But I don't think this tax on tape is what is needed to "save America's music."

It makes me feel ungentlemanly to point out that as a recording artist Miss Sills has an axe to grind in this matter. As director of an opera company who must negotiate with unions, she may have another axe or two I don't know about. Manufacturers of tape and equipment oppose the tax because it may reduce sales by raising prices. That's their axe. Yours is that you will have to pay these prices. I suggest that you grind your axe by urging your representatives in Congress to vote against the tax on tape and recorders.

The editors of this magazine have always held that it is dishonest to make tape dubs of records to avoid buying them. But I don't think home recording can be policed by the government, and I don't think it can be taxed fairly. This editorial is protected by copyright, but if you Xerox it for your Congressman, I won't ask for a tax on copy paper. □

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An equally important example of Denon's design approach for the DR-F Series is the use of DC (capacitorless) electronics throughout, a principle developed for Denon's Advanced Engineering Series.

Denon products share more than name alone.

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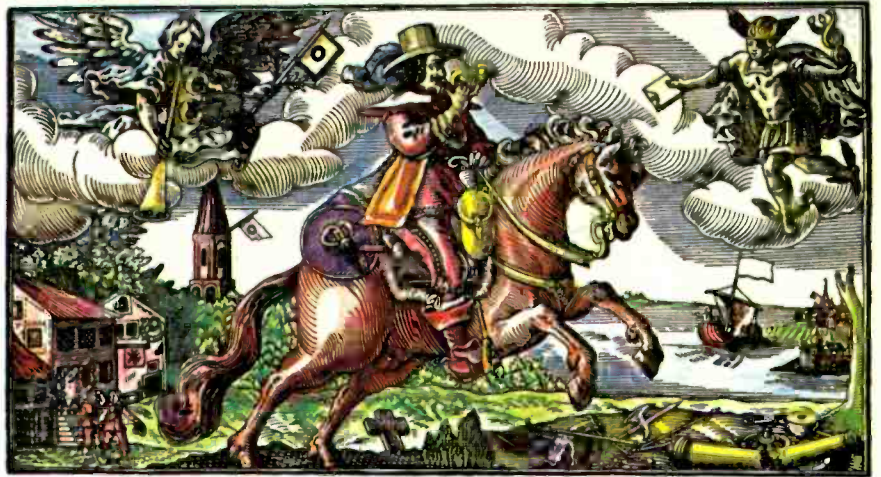
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Elton John

● Regarding Chris Albertson's September review of Elton John's "Jump Up!": the tribute to John Lennon is not the opening track, *Dear John*, but *Hey Hey Johnny (Empty Garden)* on side two, and it was not written with Garry Osborne but with Bernie Taupin. Also, this album does not mark Elton's "debut with Geffen Records" as was erroneously stated; that honor goes to last year's album, "The Fox."

RANDY C. SCHRAMM
Cincinnati, Ohio

Popular Music Editor Paulette Weiss replies: Mr. Schramm and others who wrote us about this review can lay off Chris Albertson for the confusion of Hey Hey Johnny with Dear John; it was my editing error, for which I apologize. Overlooking "The Fox" was Chris's mistake, for which he apologizes. But absolutely no apologies are extended for Chris's opinion of the album.

Record Handling

● I read with great interest David Ranada's September article, "How to Handle Records." I commend Mr. Ranada and STEREO REVIEW for bringing to the attention of casual record listeners and audiophiles alike the importance of proper record handling for the preservation of clear sound and a contamination-free record surface. The article's shortcoming, however, was the failure to acknowledge products currently available in the marketplace to aid in the delicate manipulations discussed. Products such as the Discwasher DiscHandler have been specially designed and engineered to address the problem of hand contamination due to incorrect record handling.

DALE C. BERLAU
Director of Marketing Services
Discwasher
Columbia, Mo.

"Springfield's"

● Regarding an item in September's "Popular Music Briefs," I have watched

The Guiding Light for about seven years now, and the name of the "notorious disco" has never been "Springfield's." It is called *Wired for Sound*. The town the soap opera is placed in is called Springfield, and it has nothing to do with Rick Springfield.

SANDY GORDON
Bethalto, Ill.

A number of regular viewers of The Guiding Light wrote in about this matter, and we stand corrected.

Passages

● I would like to express my regrets and best wishes to William Anderson, for I was saddened to learn of his retirement as Editor in Chief of STEREO REVIEW. I have subscribed to the magazine for fourteen years and have saved most of my copies, in large part because I admire his editorials, which he always infused with valuable insights about music and the home-entertainment industry. I am grateful for Mr. Anderson's "didactic and often deliberately provocative" style, and special thanks are due for his obvious loving care with the English language.

GARY W. HOWE
Tahuya, Wash.

● I noticed a new face and byline for the "Going on Record" column in the October issue, and a check of the masthead showed that Christie Barter has replaced James Goodfriend as Music Editor of STEREO REVIEW. While Mr. Barter's debut column (aptly titled "Comings and Goings") seems promising, I must express my regret at Mr. Goodfriend's departure. His columns over the years have often been amusing, occasionally moving, and nearly always thought-provoking. The review sections, which he supervised, have been an unflinching source of timely information and informed opinion. That, I trust, will not change.

HERBERT CONLON
Ashokan, N.Y.

William Anderson and James Goodfriend have both retired after nearly two decades each on the staff. For a while at least, An-



NOW YOU CAN HAVE DIGITAL RECORDING WHERE YOU WANT IT MOST: AT HOME.

There are moments when a musician is so inspired he stops making music and starts making magic. And, as most artists agree, these peak periods of supreme inspiration don't always occur in the clinical conditions of the recording studio.

Which explains why Sony, the inventor of digital audio processing, has just created the world's smallest, lightest and most compact digital audio processor — the PCM-F1.

Already touted by every major audio magazine, the PCM-F1 leaves one awestruck by its vital statistics.* Its level of performance surpasses that of even the most sophisticated analog recording studio. Its unique 3-way power supply allows you to use it anytime, anyplace.

And because Sony consciously designed it without a built-in VCR, it can be used with any VCR — 1/2 or 3/4 inch.

But perhaps its greatest feature is its price.

Obviously, we can go on and on about the brilliance of this new machine, but by now we figure you've heard enough about it and you're ready to go to your Sony dealer and hear it for yourself.



SONY The one and only.

*Features and Specifications: Wow and flutter — unmeasurable; dynamic range — greater than 90dB; distortion — less than 0.005%; frequency response — 10-20,000 Hz, ± 0.5 dB. Weight — 9 lbs.; height — 3 3/4"; depth — 12"; width — 8 1/2"; 14- and 16-bit quantization. © 1982 Sony Corp. of America. Sony is a registered trademark of the Sony Corp.

erson plans to travel. Goodfriend, who is a dealer in prints and drawings, will devote most of his time to his art business. Stability and longevity still characterize the staff. William Livingstone, the present Editor in Chief, joined the staff in 1965, and Christie Barter, who has replaced Goodfriend as Music Editor, was one of our regular reviewers for several years in the 1960's. Among long-time contributors are David Hall, the dean of our record reviewers, who has written for STEREO REVIEW since the first issue in February 1958, and George Jellinek, who began reviewing opera recordings for us that same year. Hirsch-Houck Laboratories began testing equipment for the magazine in October

1961, and Julian Hirsch started writing his "Technical Talk" column the following month.

Melanie

● I would like to commend Noel Coppage for his almost affectionate review in the September issue of Melanie's new album, "Arabesque." He credits her with being "one of the genuine stylists of the rock generation," and, while that certainly seems obvious to Melanie's admirers, it is a view still dismissed by most rock-music critics. Melanie has been making records for more than a decade, but each new release seems

more deliberately ignored by critics than the last (Mr. Coppage being an enlightened exception). Melanie might seem a *passé* antiquity to some, since she emerged in the Woodstock era, but like very good wine she has aged and matured—and, more important, she is still evolving.

JEFFREY DAVIS
Indiana, Pa.

Mail-Order Records

● I am writing in response to Judith Ann Miller's letter in the September issue concerning the Discount Music Club. My own experience with DMC's service has been bad. I ordered six records in two separate orders and received three, the others being marked as "not available." I have not received a shipment sooner than three weeks after ordering. I don't think that STEREO REVIEW's editorial pages should become a consumers' battleground, but, since this can of worms has already been opened, I thought that other readers should be aware of my contrasting experience with the same company.

DAVID DUDINE
Jasper, Ind.

Defective Discs

● I've finally gotten mad enough to write about the poor quality of record albums and to suggest what the consumer can do about it. The first thing to do is to return the album to the store and exchange it for a decent pressing. If you're still unsuccessful after several attempts, write directly to the record company's quality-control department and ask for a replacement album. Don't be abusive, but do point out the inconvenience you've suffered to get a playable disc. You will most likely receive a form letter telling you where to send the defective album for replacement. I've done this several times in the past few months and have received replacements in perfect condition. By writing to the manufacturers you accomplish two things: (1) you let them know about problems with their quality control, and (2) you receive a decent album.

LEONARD BERNACKE
Huntington, N.Y.

Alexander Tcherepnin

● The Tcherepnin Society, a new organization committed to perpetuating the memory and ideals of composer Alexander Tcherepnin, who died in 1977, has been formed in New York City. Yehudi Menuhin is the Society's honorary president. The Society's projects will include a program of exchange fellowships to enable deserving musicians, scholars, and students to broaden their experience through personal contact with cultures other than their own. The Society will also commission new works from gifted young composers of all nationalities. Finally, it will promote the general understanding and appreciation of Tcherepnin's own music.

For more information, write to the Tcherepnin Society, Inc., 270 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016.

YOU ARE A WINNER

in the Ohm/Mobile Fidelity \$100,000 Speaker and Record Giveaway

Be one of the first 12,500 to enter and you will be an instant third prize winner of a complete set of coupons worth \$326 toward the purchase of Mobile Fidelity Original Master Recordings™. And you can win one of the 6,003 top prizes too!

No purchase is necessary to enter. Simply spend five minutes listening to the new Ohm Walsh 2 at your nearest dealer. America's reviewers listened, and said:

THE COMPLETE BUYER'S GUIDE TO

Stereo/Hi-Fi Equipment

© The Complete Buyer's Guide to Stereo/Hi-Fi Equipment, Summer 1982

"Sound quality was notable for a very smooth midrange with a satisfying bass, surprisingly good for such a small system. But where the system really scored was in the remarkably consistent frequency response over a 120 degree angle. As you might expect, the stereo image was stable with excellent location and an unusual sense of spaciousness."

© Audio & Electronics Digest, April 1982

The New York Times

"... spacious acoustic ambience linked with precise stereo imaging creates a 'reach-out-and-touch-it' realism that this listener has experienced rarely and only with the very best speakers. What's more, the effect is maintained over a broad listening area, so you are not confined to a particular listening position for best results... Add the exquisite clarity of the treble and ample bass free from false boominess, and you have the making of musical truth. As speaker prices go these days, the Ohm Walsh 2 seems a bargain."

© New York Times, June 1982

"These little truncated pyramids are efficient, coherent, smooth and easy to place in a room. They gave our reference speakers, at 3.5 times the price, some real competition. Clearly, Ohm Acoustics has a winner."

Greenhill

"GOS: Having owned both Ohm Fs and Gs, I agree with Larry's statement that these are the best Ohm's yet. Good value!"

© Audio Alternatives, July 1982

Stereo Review

"... a very fine performing unit. Its sound was surprisingly natural, to the point that we were hardly aware we were listening to speakers, and this is one of the greatest compliments one could pay to a loudspeaker."

© Stereo Review, June 1982, Excerpted by permission of Ziff-Davis Publications

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Ohm Acoustics Corp.
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We make loudspeakers correctly

CIRCLE NO. 36 ON READER SERVICE CARD

You'll be sold on our DRS 900 amplifier after just one peak.

Our new DRS™ 900 amplifier will bring you as close as you can get to concert hall sound without buying a ticket. How? Power and lots of it. And after all, who knows more about high power amplifiers than Phase Linear? We became known for them back in the days when everyone's idea of good stereo was loud stereo. If you could blow the windows out of your home, you had a good stereo. And nothing could blow out windows like an amplifier from Phase Linear. Well, the volume era is over. The quest for purity is on. The trouble is, you just can't

get pure sound reproduction out of a low power amplifier. You need lots of power... power for

purity. Advances in recording technology like direct-to-disc and digital audio disc recordings require enormous amounts of peak power. Without it, the amplifier simply clips the peaks leaving you without the full musical experience. For example, accurately reproducing the final cannon shot from a digitally recorded version of

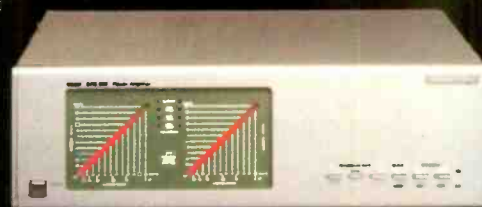
Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture can require 900 watts of peak power! And that's at reasonable volume levels. That much power is needed because the dynamic range (the ratio of the loudest note to the residual noise) of a digital audio disc is about four times that of a conventional record.

Our DRS 900 handled the previously mentioned cannon shot. No clipping, no distortion. Yet, the DRS 900 is conservatively rated at 150 watts per channel RMS (see specifications). You see, efficient power is the key. The DRS 900 has a dual voltage power supply. It operates at an efficient 150 watt capability. Then, when the music approaches a peak requiring more dynamic headroom (more power to keep it from clipping), the

secondary supply kicks in, instantly providing up to 900 watts of peak power per channel. A conventional 150 watt amplifier has a peak power rating of just about 300 watts. Keep that in mind the next time you're comparing amplifiers. Don't go by RMS alone. You have to compare dynamic headroom, too. When you do, you'll be sold on our DRS 900.

See the entire line of Phase Linear audio components at your Phase Linear Dealer, today. For the address of the dealer nearest you, call us toll free at (800) 323-4815. In Illinois call (800) 942-8833. Or write us at 4134 N. United Parkway, Schiller Park, IL 60176. Oh, and remember to give us your address so we can send you a copy of "The Phase Linear Report: Power for Purity." It's an exciting analysis of audio amplification in the eighties. We think it should be required reading for anyone serious about audio.

DRS 900 SPECIFICATIONS
150 Watts per channel continuous output power, minimum RMS into 8 ohms, with no more than .015% total harmonic distortion, 20-20kHz, 900 Watts peak per channel momentary output power into 8 ohms with no more than .02% THD, 20-20kHz.



phase linear

Power for Purity™

CIRCLE NO. 38 ON READER SERVICE CARD



Beyond quartz, the world's most precise tuning system, lies the extraordinary ability to expand sound.

Imagine you're in a room with Technics SA-828 receiver. What you hear is beautiful stereo. Then you activate Technics variable Dimension Control. Incredibly, the sound begins to move. The stereo image widens to the point where the music begins to surround you. You're intrigued by its richness and depth. You're enveloped by a new experience in sound. That's the wonder of the patented technology in Technics Dimension Control.

Just as wondrous is quartz synthesis, the world's most precise tuning system. That's how the SA-828 quartz synthesizer eliminates FM drift as well as the hassle of tuning. You can even preset and instantly retrieve 7 FM and 7 AM stations, all perfectly in tune.

Another perfect example of Technics technology is our

synchro-bias circuitry. What it does is constantly send minute amounts of power to the amplifier transistors. And since they can't switch on or off, switching distortion is eliminated.

And when it comes to power, the SA-828 has plenty: 100 watts per channel minimum RMS into 8 ohms from 20Hz to 20kHz with no more than 0.005% total harmonic distortion.

The SA-828 goes on to show its sophistication with a super-quiet phono equalizer, soft touch program selectors, fully electronic volume control, and a Dimension Control display that doubles as a power level meter.

Technics SA-828 is part of a full line of quartz synthesized receivers. Hear it for yourself. Beyond its quartz synthesizer lies a new dimension in sound.

Technics
The science of sound

CIRCLE NO. 56 ON READER SERVICE CARD

New Products latest audio equipment and accessories



AKG's Lightweight Double-Transducer Headphone

□ The AKG K-4 is claimed to be the only headphone set with a gold-plated electrostatic element in each earpiece to reproduce high frequencies *and* a dynamic transducer for low frequencies. The headphone contains an electrostatic-element matching transformer so that it can be powered directly from the standard headphone output of a home component or personal stereo. The unit's earpads, made of foam-filled fabric, are easily removed for cleaning.

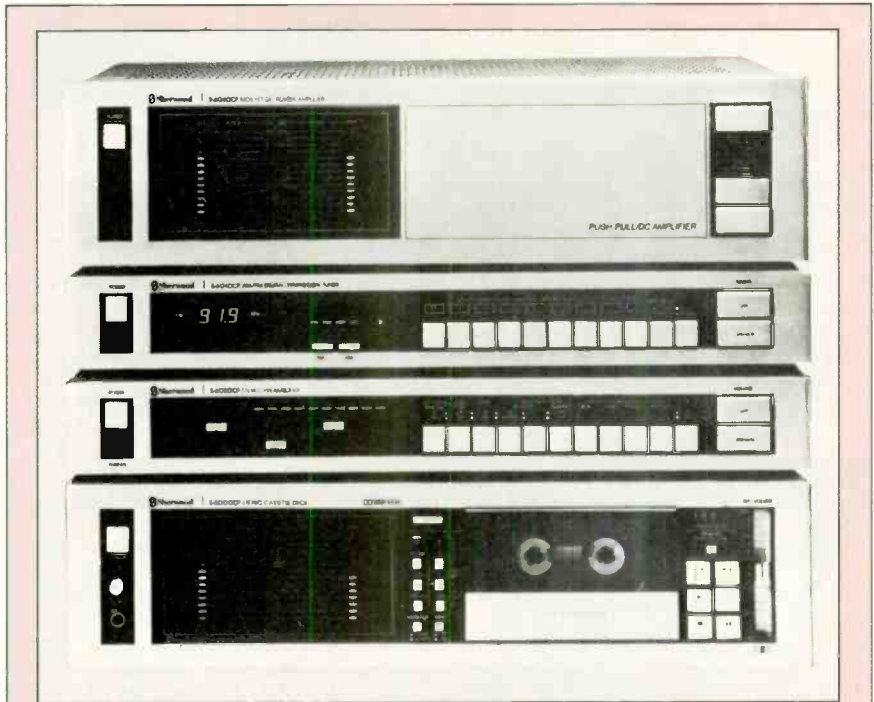
Specified frequency response is 20 to 25,000 Hz. Nominal impedance is 400 ohms per earpiece. Total harmonic distortion is given as less than 1 per cent. The headset weight is about 2¼ ounces; cable length is about 9¾ feet. An adaptor is supplied for use with portable stereo equipment. Price: \$99.

Circle 120 on reader service card



David Hafler's Equalizer Kit

□ The DH-160 stereo octave-band equalizer kit from the David Hafler Company matches the styling of the Hafler DH-110 preamplifier. It was designed so as to reduce circuit noise, said to be a significant problem with other equalizers. The number of switch contacts has been minimized, and individual slide controls are grounded at their center detents so only the desired correction is applied to the signal. For convenience in recording, the unit's electronic "location" can be switched so that it operates on the input signal to a tape deck rather



Sherwood's Deluxe Component Stack

□ Shown above is the Sherwood 6000 Series of deluxe stacking components, which consists of (from the top) a power amplifier, a digital-synthesis tuner, a preamplifier, and a cassette deck. All of the units are 17¾ inches wide and 1½ inches deep.

The S-6040CP power amplifier has a MOSFET d.c. circuit design and is rated to deliver 100 watts per channel into 8 ohms from 20 to 20,000 Hz. Output at 1,000 Hz is 180 watts into 4 ohms and 250 watts into 2 ohms. Dynamic headroom is given as 1.67 dB. The circuit design includes full push-pull d.c. circuitry with a J-FET input stage, a cascode driver stage, and a MOSFET source-follower output section. A built-in low-pass filter rolls off the input at 40,000 Hz. Switching for two pairs of loudspeakers is provided. Height is 4¾ inches, and weight is 30 pounds.

Along with a dual-gate MOSFET r.f. amplifier, a four-section varactor-diode front end, and matched linear-phase ceramic i.f. filters, the S-6010CP AM/FM stereo digital-synthesis tuner has presets for up to eight AM and eight FM stations. Stereo 50-dB quieting sensitivity is 38 microvolts (36.5 dBf). Signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) is 75 dB in ster-

eo. Height is 2¾ inches, and weight is 10 pounds.

The S-6020CP preamplifier features FET circuitry and push-pull outputs. Pushbuttons control volume while sliders control bass, treble, and balance. Connections and switching for two tape decks are provided. A CX decoder is provided for noise reduction with CX-encoded discs. An ultra-low-bass equalization circuit provides a 6-dB boost at 30 Hz along with infrasonic filtering. Frequency response extends from 0 to 100 kHz. RIAA-equalization accuracy is ±0.5 dB. Distortion is 0.005 per cent with a 1-volt output. Height is the same as that of the tuner; weight is 11 pounds.

Three heads, Dolby-B and Dolby-C noise reduction, and metal-tape compatibility are featured in the S-6000CP microprocessor-controlled cassette deck. Frequency response with chrome tape at a -20-dB recording level is given as 30 Hz to 19.5 kHz +1, -3 dB. S/N with chrome tape and Dolby-C is 76.5 dB. Wow-and-flutter is specified as 0.055 per cent (wrms). Height is 4¾ inches, and weight is 14 pounds. Prices: S-6040CP, \$350; S-6010CP, \$250; S-6020CP, \$250; S-6000CP, \$400.

Circle 121 on reader service card

than on the output. An accessory kit to be made available later will contain a calibration disc and a microphone that plugs into the unit's back panel, enabling the front-panel LED readout to display the room re-

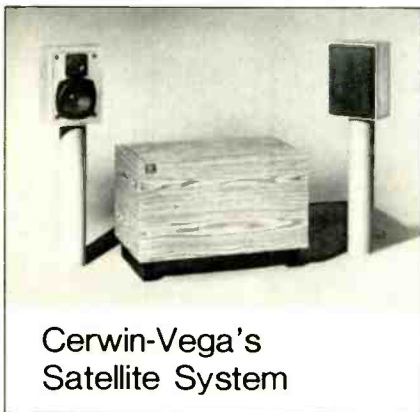
sponse in each band. The DH-160's single preassembled and pretested circuit board includes all the device's active circuitry. Kit builders can finish the unit in an evening.

The equalizer's control range is ±12 dB

New Products

in each of ten bands spaced at octave intervals from 32 to 16,000 Hz. The overall-level control has a ± 8 -dB range. Frequency response with the controls centered is 20 to 20,000 Hz, ± 0 , -3 dB. Total harmonic distortion is less than 0.004 per cent; intermodulation distortion is less than 0.003 per cent. Hum and noise are more than 115 dB below an 8-volt output (A-weighted). Prices: kit, \$299; assembled, \$399. David Hafler Co., Dept. SR, 5910 Crescent Boulevard, Pennsauken, N.J. 08109.

Circle 122 on reader service card



Cerwin-Vega's
Satellite System

□ Cerwin-Vega's Sat-1 two-way speakers are specifically designed to operate with a subwoofer in a three-piece system. Each speaker has a 6-inch-cone woofer with Butyl surround and a 1-inch-voice-coil horn for the upper frequencies. The high-frequency driver has an adjustable level control and a resettable circuit breaker for overload protection. The crossover frequency is 3,000 Hz. Impedance is given as 8 ohms, frequency response as 100 to 17,000 Hz ± 3 dB. Sound-pressure level at 1 meter is 90 dB with a 1-watt input. Driven to its maximum 40-watt power-handling capacity, a Sat-1 speaker will produce a 109-dB output at 1 meter. The sealed enclosures are made of pressed wood clad in woodgrain vinyl with either a walnut or oak finish.

Containing a built-in crossover at 110 Hz, Cerwin-Vega's SW-12 subwoofer system (center) has a 12-inch high-output woofer with a 2-inch voice coil and cast aluminum frame. Frequency response extends down to 30 Hz. The woofer is mounted facing down in a cabinet that can be either sealed or vented. The dual-voice-coil construction of the driver sums the bass information from both left- and right-channel inputs. Sensitivity with a 1-watt input is 95 dB sound-pressure level at 1 meter. Driven to full power (100 watts), the unit will generate a 115-dB sound level. Dimensions of the Sat-1 are 12 x 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 5 inches; the SW-12 measures 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 16 $\frac{1}{3}$ x 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The

Sat-1 weighs about 10 pounds, the SW-12 about 60. Prices: Sat-1, \$500 per pair; SW-12, \$250.

Circle 123 on reader service card

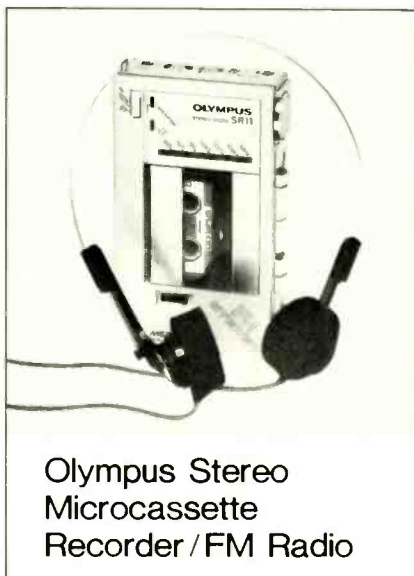


Sansui's Top
Cassette Deck

□ Sansui's D-970 three-head cassette deck features a "Compu-Trec" system that automatically optimizes bias, reference recording level (sensitivity), and equalization for each cassette. The unit also has both Dolby-B and Dolby-C noise reduction, a "Dyna-Scrape" filter and "Hold-Back-Tension Servo" for lower wow, flutter, and modulation noise and fewer dropouts, a coreless direct-drive capstan motor, and light-touch transport controls.

Other features include magnetic brakes on the take-up hubs, a four-digit tape counter that doubles as a clock, and a tape lead-in button that advances the tape past the leader. The twelve-segment LED peak-reading displays have calibrations from -28 to $+8$ dB. Controls include three tape-selection switches, a source/tape monitor switch, an output-level control, and a timer-start switch. Two microphone inputs and a headphone output are on the front panel. Rated frequency response is 30 to 22,000 Hz ± 3 dB with metal tape, the signal-to-noise ratio is 81 dB (above 1 kHz) with metal tape and Dolby-C, and wow-and-flutter is given as 0.025 per cent (wrms). Price: \$650.

Circle 124 on reader service card



Olympus Stereo
Microcassette
Recorder/FM Radio

□ Incorporating both a stereo FM tuner and a stereo microcassette recorder with metal-tape capability, the Olympus SR11

utilizes a quiet, energy-saving coreless motor. It has a permalloy stereo record/playback head, automatic recording-level control, and a die-cast zinc chassis. The tuner section has a phase-locked-loop stereo decoder and a stereo-broadcast indicator light. The unit can be powered by either two AA batteries (battery life about 7 hours) or optional a.c.-line or car-battery adaptors.

Controls include a tape-speed selector (2.4 or 1.2 cm/sec), a tape counter with reset button, an FM/stereo switch, metal/normal tape selector, tape/radio/line selector, and volume and balance knobs. Standard accessories include an Olympus HPI stereo headphone (which doubles as an FM antenna), a socket-mounted telescoping antenna, and a carrying case. Frequency range is given as 100 to 10,000 Hz with metal tape at the 2.4-cm/sec speed. Inputs receive external microphone or line signals through subminiature phone jacks. Dimensions are about 5 x 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 1 inches; weight is 10 ounces with batteries. Price: \$199.

Circle 125 on reader service card

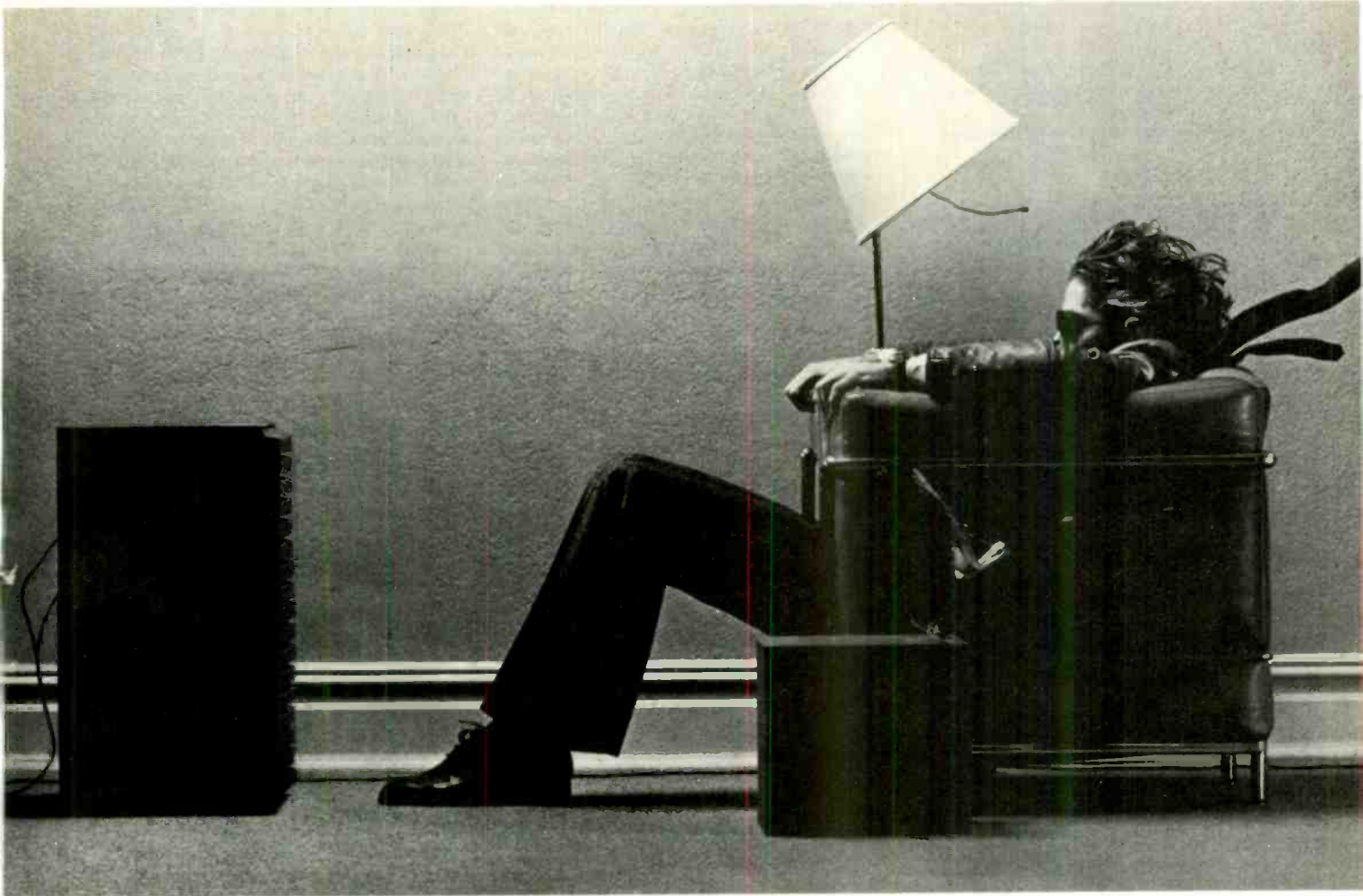


Very-High-Power
Amplifier from
Carver Corporation

□ The Carver Corporation states that the new M-1.5 Magnetic Field power amplifier is deliberately designed to accommodate the full dynamic range of all-digital recordings. The unit has several types of protection circuitry to guard speakers from damaging levels. A comparator circuit responds to any significant difference between input and output and reduces the drive level accordingly. Other mechanisms protect against amplifier temperatures above 70 degrees C., excessive out-of-phase infrasonic signals, and excessive d.c. currents. The unit keeps track of the average level fed to the speakers; when the output exceeds safe limits for high-quality speakers, power is interrupted momentarily to allow the speakers' woofer coils to cool.

The rack-mountable 16-pound amplifier is rated at 350 watts per channel into 8 ohms from 20 to 20,000 Hz with no more than 0.1 per cent total harmonic distortion. Continuous power per channel at clipping is 550 watts into 4 ohms, 430 watts into 8 ohms, and 240 watts into 16 ohms. Short-term output into 4- and 8-ohm loads is given as 750 watts per channel. A-weighted signal-to-noise ratio is greater than 100 dB. Intermodulation distortion (measured by the SMPTE method) is given as 0.1 per cent. Transient intermodulation distortion is unmeasurable, and the slew factor is greater than 100. Bandwidth at a 1-watt output level extends from d.c. to 250 kHz. The front-panel output-power display LED's have a 10-millisecond response time and are peak reading. The infrasonic filter has its -3 -dB

AFTER 500 PLAYS OUR HIGH FIDELITY TAPE STILL DELIVERS HIGH FIDELITY.



If your old favorites don't sound as good as they used to, the problem could be your recording tape.

Some tapes show their age more than others. And when a tape ages prematurely, the music on it does too.

What can happen is, the oxide particles that are bound onto tape loosen and fall off, taking some of your music with them.

At Maxell, we've developed a binding process that helps to prevent this. When oxide particles are bound onto our tape, they stay put. And so does your music.

So even after a Maxell recording is 500 plays old, you'll swear it's not a play over five.



IT'S WORTH IT.

CIRCLE NO. 31 ON READER SERVICE CARD

New Products

point at 0.4 Hz. Input impedance is 150 kilohms. Dimensions are 3 1/2 x 19 x 10 1/2 inches. Price: \$899.

Circle 126 on reader service card



Grace Cartridge Has Ruby Cantilever

□ The Grace F-9E Ruby moving-magnet phono cartridge has a low-mass solid-ruby cantilever said to allow "an almost perfect, one-to-one energy transfer characteristic from stylus to generating element." Sonic benefits are said to be better resolution of detail and improved pulse response. The diamond stylus is nude mounted through a laser-drilled hole in the cantilever. Other features include hand-wound coils, "omni axial" cantilever suspension, and samarium-cobalt magnets. Frequency response is given as 10 to 50,000 Hz \pm 2 dB; separation is 30 dB at 1,000 Hz. Rated compliance is 25×10^{-6} cm/dyne, and output is 2.6 millivolts at 1,000 Hz with a 5-cm/sec groove velocity. Recommended tracking force is 1.2 grams. Price: \$300. Sumiko, Dept. SR, P.O. Box 5046, Berkeley, Calif. 94705.

Circle 127 on reader service card



Teac Deck Has dbx and Equalizer

□ Teac's three-head V-2RX cassette deck features both dbx and Dolby-B noise-reduc-

tion circuitry. The two-motor unit has electronic transport controls including block-repeat, memory-stop, and memory-play facilities. The deck can be operated by an external timer or by the optional Teac RC-90 remote-control unit. Level indicators are two fourteen-segment peak-reading fluorescent displays.

An unusual feature for a cassette deck is the V-2RX's parametric-equalizer control designed to make frequency-response changes in a specific part of the musical spectrum. The equalizer is tunable from 60 to 500 Hz and offers up to 10 dB boost or cut, which can be switched to affect either recording or playback. Other features include a fine-tuning bias control, switching for metal, chrome, or ferric tapes, a switch setting for recording dbx-encoded discs, and slide-type record-level controls. With metal tape, frequency response is given as 20 to 20,000 Hz (19,000 and 18,000 Hz with chrome and ferric tapes, respectively). Weighted signal-to-noise ratio is 60 dB without noise reduction; the dbx circuits improve this to 92 dB. Weighted wow-and-flutter is 0.035 per cent. Price: \$520.

Circle 128 on reader service card



New Technics Multi-Purpose Speaker Systems

□ The Technics SB-F40 (shown) and SB-F20 are three-way speaker systems with four design features meant to optimize their performance in a variety of applications. First, they can be switched from bass-reflex to acoustic-suspension operation; second, they can be used either vertically or horizontally; third, their frequency response can be altered; and fourth, there are numerous mounting and positioning options. On both systems a front-panel switch changes the crossover circuitry, adjusting impedance and frequency response to suit the listening room. Mode A provides an 8-ohm impedance for wide-range frequency response in large listening rooms. Mode B switches the impedance to 4 ohms for car-stereo and public-address applications; the frequency response is also altered to compensate for the boominess typical of car interiors. The midrange and tweeter units are mounted on a two-position revolving plate so they can be kept vertically aligned regardless of the system's orientation. Placed vertically, the system operates as a bass-reflex design; placed horizontally, it uses the acoustic-suspension principle. The enclosure's 45-degree front slant makes it possible to use two or more

speakers side by side to produce a broad listening area in PA applications.

The SB-F40 uses the proprietary Technics honeycomb-disc flat driver units throughout, aligned for linear phase response. The 14-cm woofer has a heat-resistant voice-coil assembly. The front baffle is made of aluminum with the speakers protected by metal grilles. Rubber grips aid in lifting the unit and protect it from jolts. Frequency range is given as 75 to 35,000 Hz when the speaker is used horizontally and 70 to 35,000 Hz when it is used vertically. Sensitivity is given as 88 dB sound-pressure level (SPL) at 1 meter with a 1-watt input in mode B and an 87-dB SPL in mode A. Dimensions are 12 3/8 x 6 x 7 3/8 inches; weight is 7 3/4 pounds. The SB-F20 uses cone drivers. Vertical-use frequency response is 75 to 20,000 Hz, 80 to 20,000 Hz horizontally. Dimensions are the same as the SB-F40, but weight is 5 1/2 pounds. Both units are sold in pairs. Prices per pair: SB-F40, \$360; SB-F20, \$240.

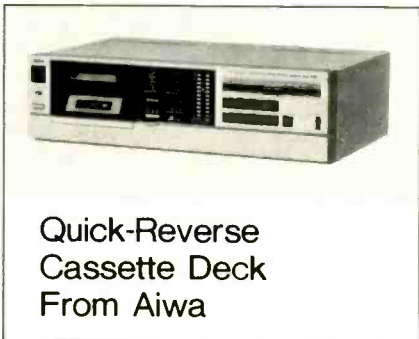
Circle 129 on reader service card



Ultra-Powerful Head Demagnetizer From Nortronics

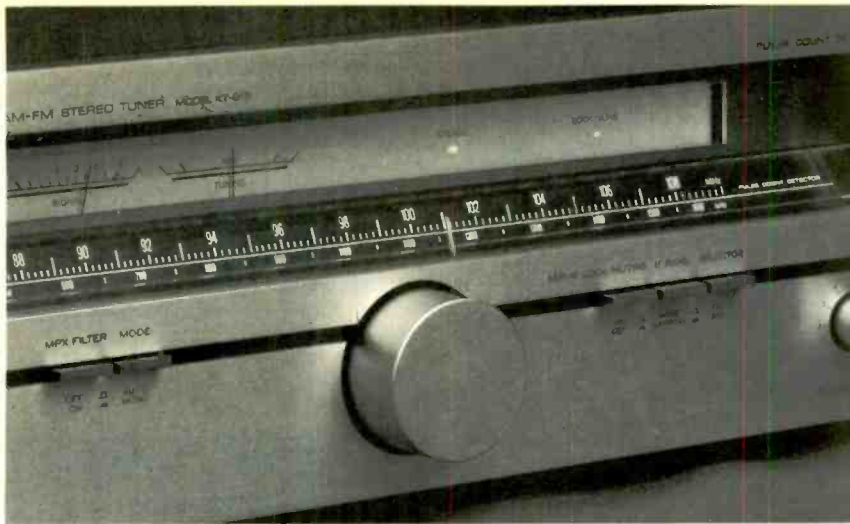
□ Said to be the most powerful hand-held degausser currently available, the Nortronics PF-208 is designed to demagnetize tape heads and guides up to 2 inches wide. Other features include an auto-reset thermal protection device, which prevents coil burn-out damage from too-high temperatures, a snap-action on/off switch, a rubber-coated plastic tip to prevent head scratches, and a high-impact Lexan housing. Maximum field strength at the demagnetizer tip is 1,000 gauss. Power consumption is 15 watts at 0.5 amperes. Weight is 12 ounces. Price: \$39.95.

Circle 130 on reader service card



Quick-Reverse Cassette Deck From Aiwa

□ Aiwa's AD-R600 cassette deck features a photoelectric sensor for its fast-acting (0.4 second) reversing mechanism. The reversing operation is initiated when the system



Kenwood cut \$300 to \$139



For Your Receiver?

Here's Kenwood's top of the line \$440 AM & FM audiophile tuner with Pulse Count FM Detection, Servo-Lock Tuning and Pilot Canceller. Price slashed to \$139.

If you tape. Or if you're really into FM, Kenwood's top of the line audiophile AM and FM stereo tuner is for you.

We've cut its \$440 price down to \$139 by a large cash purchase (more than a \$300 savings) and we've reproduced Kenwood's actual 1981 price list below to prove our point.

DO YOU NEED IT?

Here's our challenge. Put this tuner on top of your current receiver or tuner. Then, plug Kenwood's tuner into any 'aux' input on your receiver or amp.

Tune in the same FM stereo station on both tuners. You'll hear the enormous improvement that the most sophisticated top of the line Kenwood AM/FM audiophile tuner with MOS FET, can bring to your music.

You'll hear a staggering difference in depth of response and especially in signal to noise and distortion.

You see, Pulse Count FM Detection

separation at 1,000hz is 55db and the FM usable sensitivity is 10.3dbf (1.8uV).

In short, this \$440 audiophile tuner can make a staggering difference in your FM music listening. There are two sets of outputs, and an output level control.

NOW, ON WITH THE TEST

Now that you've heard the kaleidoscopic difference in sound, let's compare reception.

The Kenwood FM Tuner section actually is two tuners in one. FM stations are often very close together on the dial.

So, most manufacturers must make their selectivity at the IF stage relatively narrow. The problem is that this increases distortion.

Kenwood has two separate IF tuner bands. Wide for when there is no adjacent station interference, and narrow for areas of your dial where stations are close together. So, you get the best sound from every station.

comes on brightly, the station is locked in, drift free and utterly stable.

PILOT CANCELLER

All FM radio stations broadcast stereo programs by means of a multiplex carrier signal. The subcarrier or pilot as it's called is at 19,000hz. And, you're never supposed to hear it.

Here's the big difference: Most conventional tuners employ some type of low pass filter to remove the pilot signal. The problem is that part of the upper range of the music is filtered out along with the 19,000hz pilot.

The Kenwood Pilot Canceller circuit is completely different because it eliminates the 19,000hz signal by applying an identical reverse-phase signal, which leaves the audio entirely unaffected.

This top of the line AM/FM audiophile tuner is 17 1/4" wide, 6 1/4" tall, and 15 1/2" deep. It is backed by Kenwood's 2 year limited factory warranty.

TRY FABULOUS FM STEREO RISK FREE

We've really tested this tuner. And, it's the best we've ever tried by far. So, whether you've got a receiver or audiophile separates already, you're in for a shock when you hear just how good your FM reception can really be.

Try the Kenwood Audiophile AM/FM stereo tuner risk free in your own system. If you don't get incredibly better sound, and more stations, just return it in its original box within 30 days for a courteous refund.

To order your Kenwood KT815 audiophile AM/FM Tuner risk free with your credit card call our toll free hotline, or send your check, not for Kenwood's list of \$440, but for only \$139 plus \$7 for postage and handling. Order No. 9458. CA residents please add 6% sales tax.

Forget your receiver's tuner. Now your FM can be the cleanest sound of all!

June 1981 Price List	Suggested Retail	Dealer Cost	WT.
KT-815 AM/FM Stereo Tuner	\$440.00	\$264.00	20 lbs.



- Pulse Count Detector
- Sample-and-Hold Multiplexing
- 2 IF Bands
- Touch Sensor Servo Lock Tuning
- 0.04% THD
- S/N 84dB

circuitry is so superior to conventional discriminators and ratio detectors, that now for the first time ever, a tuner can provide an audio quality that is as good as the broadcast studio's monitor tuner.

Synthesizer tuning systems, digital readout, quartz locked servo systems and other related gadgetry give you nothing in terms of improved audio quality compared to Pulse Count Detection.

LOOK AT THESE SPECS

The frequency response is 30hz to 15,000hz which isn't a lot better than other good tuners until you look at truth in packaging. Kenwood's is not plus or minus 3 to 5db like the others. Kenwood's is +0.3db -0.5db, or roughly 10 times better and of course Kenwood's response doesn't stop at 15Khz.

The signal to noise is an incredible 80 db stereo, and 84db mono. THD at 1000hz is only 0.04%. Wow! The stereo

So, here's the test. Start at the bottom of the dial and begin a count, station by station, and compare tuners. You'll find more and cleaner FM music stations.

SERVO-LOCK TUNING

Here's where the real advantage over quartz lock digital tuning comes in. If you've tried to tune stations only to find that although signal strength seems ok, they still sound distorted, now there is fine tuning.

With Kenwood's Servo-Lock tuning, you tune to the approximate station frequency using the tuning knob, checking the signal-strength and center channel meters. When the dial is within about 75 KHz either way of center frequency, the Lock/Tune LED glows dimly.

You release the knob, and the system takes over, using an induction method to draw the tuner to the exact center where distortion is least. Once the light

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detects clear leader tape. The record/play head pivots 180 degrees to give the same audio performance in both forward and reverse directions. Other features include Dolby-B and Dolby-C noise reduction, light-touch transport controls, preset record-level control for recording from a tuner, automatic Type II or IV tape selection (for chrome or metal tapes), a record-mute control, a remote-control terminal, and provisions for timer-activated recording. Frequency response is given as 30 to 13,000 Hz +2, -3 dB with ferric tape, 30 to 15,000 Hz with chrome-type tapes, and 30 to 17,000 Hz with metal tape. Wow-and-flutter is given as 0.035 per cent (wrms). Price: \$450.

Circle 131 on reader service card



TDK Revamps Its Cassette-Tape Line

□ TDK has made improvements in its entire line of audio cassettes, including introducing a new tape formulation and changing the line's packaging. There are two categories of TDK cassettes, the Professional Reference Series and the Reference Standard Series. The former includes the new tape, AD-X, a normal-bias Super Avilyn formulation said to have 1.5 dB greater dynamic range and 2 dB greater sensitivity in the high frequencies than other ferric-oxide tapes. Remanence is 1,650 gauss, coercivity 380 oersteds. (Increases in remanence generally mean higher output at low frequencies; increases in coercivity imply greater high-frequency output.) Other changes in the Professional Reference Series include improved remanence and print-through characteristics in the MA-R (metal) formulation and increased coercivity and remanence in SA-X (chrome-equivalent) tape.

The Reference Standard Series includes MA (metal), SA (chrome-equivalent), and AD (premium ferric-oxide) tapes with increased remanence or coercivity or both. The general-purpose TDK D (ferric) formulation has been repackaged. Prices for C-90 cassettes: MA-R, \$11.99; SA-X, \$6.99; AD-X, \$5.49; MA, \$8.99; SA, \$6.19; AD, \$4.79; D, \$3.39.

Circle 132 on reader service card



Compact Speaker From JBL

□ The bass driver of JBL's two-way L15 loudspeaker incorporates a "Symmetrical Field Geometry" magnetic structure that is said to reduce second-harmonic distortion. The 6 1/2-inch driver is mounted in a die-cast aluminum frame. Crossover at 2,500 Hz is to a 1-inch phenolic-dome tweeter backed with a 1-inch voice coil and a 1 1/2-pound magnet structure. The system is said to offer the spatiality, power-handling capability, efficiency, and flat response usually found only in much larger three- and four-way designs. Recommended amplifier power range is 10 to 100 watts per channel. Nominal impedance is 8 ohms. Sensitivity is 87 dB sound-pressure level at 1 meter with a 1-watt input. Finish is oiled American black-walnut veneer with a brown grille. Dimensions are 14 3/4 x 9 3/8 x 7 3/16 inches. Price: \$150.

Circle 133 on reader service card



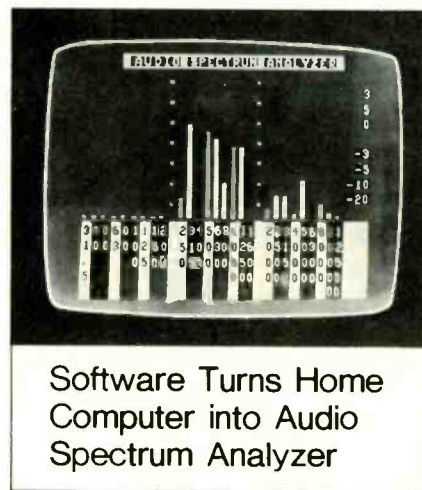
Proton's New Car-Stereo Line

□ Proton Corporation has introduced several car-stereo products including two AM/FM/cassette units and two power amplifiers. The tuner/cassette units feature the Schotz Variable Bandwidth PLL detector circuit. Low capture ratios and high sensitivities are claimed to help the units receive and hold onto a signal despite changing signal paths and obstructions. Minimal FM noise is said to be achieved without sacrifice of stereo separation.

The FM section of the dash-mounting top-of-the-line Proton 207 (shown) has a 50-dB quieting sensitivity of 2.5 microvolts. Capture ratio is 1.5 dB; signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) with a 65-dBf input is 65 dB. Image rejection is 80 dB, and stereo separation is

44 dB at 1,000 Hz. The cassette section has a frequency response of 50 to 14,000 Hz \pm 3 dB, S/N (Dolby circuits on) is 68.5 dB, and wow-and-flutter is 0.2 per cent. Front-panel features include pushbutton and switch control of all operating functions. Included are five AM and five FM presets, scanning tuning, 70- or 120-microsecond cassette equalization, and a front/back speaker fader. Price: \$479.95. Proton Corp., Dept. SR, Pacific Tower Plaza, 1431 Ocean Avenue, Suite B, Santa Monica, Calif. 90401.

Circle 134 on reader service card



Software Turns Home Computer into Audio Spectrum Analyzer

□ Radio Shack has introduced a plug-in program cartridge (part number 26-3156) for its TRS-80 Color Computer that turns the machine and a connected TV into an audio spectrum analyzer. Using the program, vertical color bars calibrated in decibels represent twenty-seven one-third-octave spectrum segments from 31.5 to 15,000 Hz. Since audio program signals can vary greatly in average level, the Audio Spectrum Analyzer program automatically locks onto the loudest one-third-octave segment and scales its measurements from that reference. The display range is from -20 to +5 dB, and both peak and rms modes are available. A peak-hold option locks each one-third-octave display segment at the highest level it reaches. "Snapshots" of the screen display are possible using a "freeze" command. Another command switches the display into a full-octave mode.

The program cartridge comes with an instruction manual that explains how to hook up the computer to various audio components (audio signals should be from a low-level source such as a headphone or tape output). Price: \$19.95.

Circle 135 on reader service card

NOTE: All product descriptions and specifications quoted in these columns are based on materials supplied by the manufacturers, who will respond directly to reader requests for further information.

Domestic inflation and fluctuations in the value of the dollar overseas affect the price of merchandise imported into this country. Please be aware that prices quoted in this issue are therefore subject to change.

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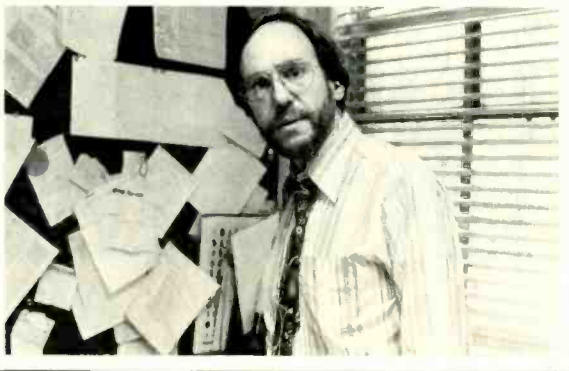
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Audio Q. and A.

By Larry Klein



Fluorescent Buzz

Q. *How can I eliminate the loud buzz in my stereo system caused by two 4-foot fluorescent lights that share the only available circuit? It takes about five minutes after the lights are turned on for the buzz to start.*

DAVID STEELE
Diamond Springs, Calif.

A. The fact that the buzz takes five minutes to develop leads me to suspect that a cure may be found in replacing a ballast or starter in the offending fixture that gets noisy after it has warmed up. But as a first step, before attempting anything more complex, make sure that the metal body of the fixture is properly grounded to the a.c.-line ground. This may be enough to eliminate the problem. If not, try replacing the ballast or starter. If that doesn't do the trick, try installing filters. These are available at large electrical supply stores and are meant to be installed inside the fixture wired as close to the ballast as possible and with the metal case of the filter grounded to the fixture.

An excellent source for interference-control products ranging from simple noise filters to complex computer power-line filters is Electronic Specialists, 171 South Main Street, Natick, Mass. 01760. Request catalog No. 821SR.

Long-Throw Woofers

Q. *In some advertisements for bookshelf speakers, I've seen the phrase "long-throw" used in reference to woofers. Exactly what does that mean?*

SAM CHANG
Santa Monica, Calif.

A. A long-throw woofer is not what happens when an engineer is frustrated by inadequate bass performance, nor does it describe the result of accidentally connecting a speaker system to an a.c. line. The term describes a low-frequency driver designed to have a considerable range of in-and-out cone motion. A speaker driver, of course, generates sound by alternately compressing and decompressing the air adja-

cent to its surface. Acoustical physics dictates that in order to push a lot of air at low frequencies a driver cone must either have a large surface or be able to move a considerable distance. The distance a cone moves is called its "excursion" or "throw," and it is limited by the effective length of the speaker's voice coil and the depth of the magnet structure in which it moves as well as by the design of the cone suspension.

Early loudspeakers generally used a driver of very large diameter for bass reproduction and/or horn enclosures, thus avoiding the need for substantial excursion capability. Most contemporary loudspeakers, though, derive extended bass performance from smaller enclosures by using drivers that are designed for substantial excursion—frequently a half-inch or more.

With regard to the relative merits of long vs. short excursions and other design questions, any speaker-system designer will tell you that unless there are no cost or size limitations all speaker designs are compromises in one respect or another. Good design at each price level consists of providing the best cost-vs.-performance ratio—once you decide what constitutes "good performance." All these variables account for the many differences in speaker designs, including the use of long- or short-throw woofers.

Signal Imbalance

Q. *I recently bought a new, high-quality cassette deck and have been doing a great deal of recording from discs. I have noticed that while I am recording stereo discs, the left-channel level is consistently and significantly stronger than the right-channel level. When I record a mono FM signal, the levels are perfectly equal. My phono cartridge is reasonably good (about six months old) and is mounted as accurately as I can do it. My turntable is new, and my receiver is about five years old. Where should I look for the cause of this channel imbalance?*

MICHAEL W. YATES
Shreveport, La.

A. Lest I be accused of sailing in Craig Stark's waters, I hasten to assure Mr. Yates that his difficulties are *not* tape

problems at all. The diagnostic test of playing a mono FM signal and observing equal readings on both meters shows the tape machine to be guiltless. The imbalance problem therefore resides in either the phono cartridge or the phono-preamp section of the receiver. Here's a technique for localizing the problem:

With all equipment turned off, unplug the record-player leads and plug the previous right-channel lead into the left-channel jack, and vice versa. Then turn the system back on. If the weak signal has switched channels, the problem is in the cartridge. If the weakness stays in the same channel, the problem is in the receiver's phono-preamp section, and its manufacturer may have some suggestions regarding servicing. (On balance, I've usually found it best to check with the manufacturer on such matters.)

Hi-Fi Societies

Q. *I understand that there are hi-fi clubs in which members exchange views on equipment and learn about audio from lectures by visiting manufacturers and others. Do you have a list of such clubs?*

B. SCOTTIE
Darien, Conn.

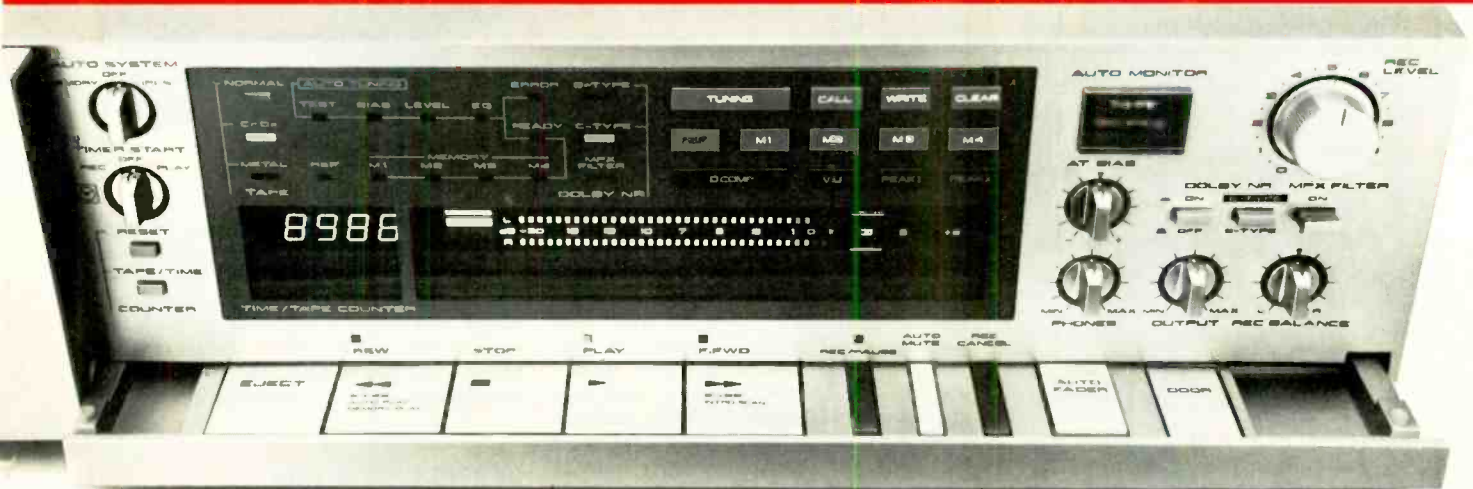
A. No, we don't have such a list, but we would be happy to prepare one if the clubs would let us know where they are and their requirements for membership. One organization I do know about is the very large and active Boston Audio Society, whose monthly newsletter is called the *BAS Speaker*. For more information, write to the Boston Audio Society, P.O. Box 7, Kenmore Square, Boston, Mass. 02215. A New York City club that I helped found in the early Sixties, the New York Audio Society, is still active, publishes a small intermittent newsletter, and holds regular monthly meetings with manufacturers and other guest speakers. Dues are \$20 a year. Write to the New York Audio Society, Inc., P.O. Box 125, Whitestone, N.Y. 11357.

On the more professional level there is, of course, the international Audio Engineering Society. Although it is primarily intended for audio professionals, the AES offers associate membership to others, and local chapters in the larger metropolitan areas have regular lecture meetings that usually, but not always, cover topics of interest to audiophiles. For information write to the Audio Engineering Society, 60 East 42nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10017.

We would like to hear from other audio groups looking for new members and from individuals who would like to start audio groups in their own areas. STEREO REVIEW is prepared to serve as an information clearing house and to help arrange guest lecturers. Write to Larry Klein, Stereo Review, One Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. □

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

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It is literally the face of the future. No knobs. No keys. And no clutter. Instead, a polite presentation of just the basics.

But press the “door” button and, almost by magic, the faceplate automatically lowers to reveal the main control panel.

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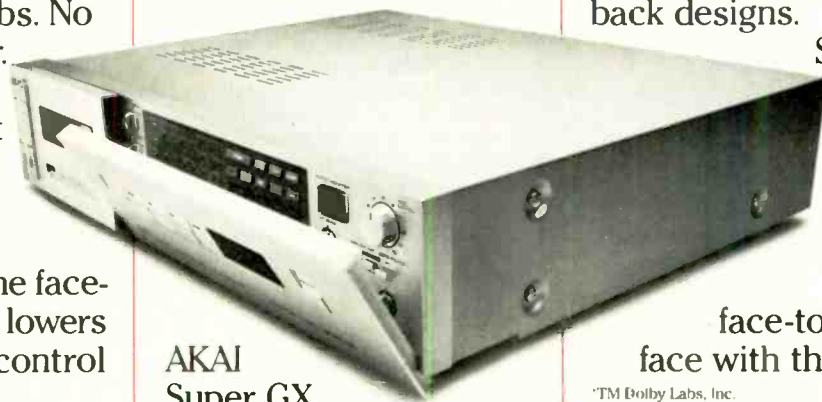
Two microcomputers take charge, first automatically setting the bias. Then, executing a 64-step

“tape tuning” analysis that makes sure the GX-F91 gets the maximum from any tape.

For superior frequency response and dynamic range, the GX-F91 is also endowed with a 3-head design,

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So audition the new GX-F91 at your AKAI dealer's soon.

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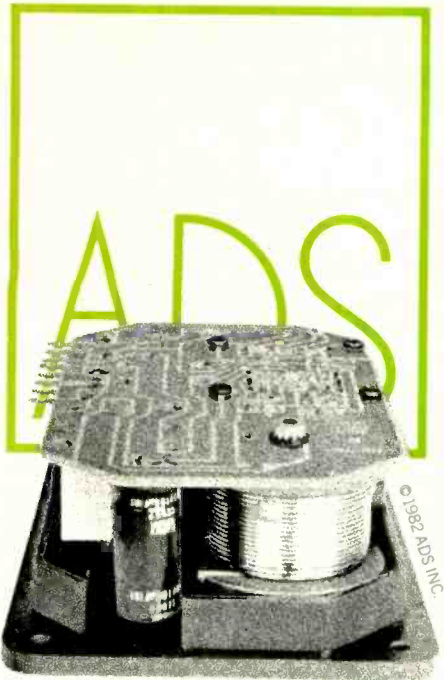
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Car Stereo

By Ivan Berger



Ignition Noise

Q. *I recently replaced my Toyota's built-in sound system with a \$585 component system, which I bought from three separate dealers. Since installing the new system, I hear alternator whine, clicks, pops, and distortion. I had the deck and amp checked out under warranty, and they got a clean bill of health. I can't exchange the equipment because "there's nothing wrong with it." Now what should I do?*

JOSEPH FRANOLICH
Wyckoff, N.J.

A. There's no easy answer. If you'd bought everything from one dealer—and especially if he'd installed it—you'd have a better case, but even then, some installers might charge you for extra interference suppression required by your particular car. If the old Toyota system was noise free, however, it should certainly be possible to get your new one that way.

First, determine which component is responsible. Short out the amplifier inputs at the amp. If you continue to hear noise, it's coming from the amp; if not, it's coming from the deck. Now connect the amplifier cable and short its input. If there's still noise, the cable is picking it up, and you should try cables with better shielding (check your component manuals for the proper impedance). If the noise is coming from the deck, are you getting it on both radio and tape? If you are, work on the power lines and shielding. If just on one source, there's probably a construction or design defect in the deck. Finally, check with Toyota to see what interference suppressors they recommend.

8-Ohm Speakers

Q. *Is there any problem in using 8-ohm speakers in a car? Most car speakers are 4-ohm units.*

K. KATZ
New York, N.Y.

A. The higher a speaker's impedance, the more voltage an amplifier must deliver for a given sound volume. Many car-stereo amplifiers are limited to the voltage

available from the car's electrical system (nominally 12 volts), so lower-impedance speakers can get more power from them. Since more current is used to deliver a given power at a lower voltage, the cables used with 8-ohm speakers in a car should be heavier (14 gauge, say) than with 4-ohm car speakers or 8-ohm home speakers.

Waterproofing

Q. *Can I waterproof my car speakers? If so, how should I go about it?*

AMELIA STANDOUR
N. Plainfield, N.J.

A. Perhaps they already are; check with the manufacturer. If they aren't, he may have suggestions as to the best way to do it. One good approach is to mount a plastic shield (available for most round door-size speakers) over the speaker when installing it; make sure the drain holes at the bottom of your door aren't clogged. Aside from door-mounted units (where rain can leak down the window channels), there's no real need for waterproofing car speakers. Speakers mounted in the rear deck, in the dash, or in the kick panels won't be exposed to water unless your whole car is inundated—and in that case speaker damage will be the least of your problems.

Using Home Speakers

Q. *Can I use conventional home speakers, such as the Allison: Six or the Bose 301, in my Mazda RX-7? I'm particularly concerned about environmental effects such as temperature and vibration.*

MICHAEL J. LANG
Glen Burnie, Md.

A. You're correct to worry. Some home speakers will work in a car, some won't. Bose, for instance, specifically states that their new Model 201 minispeakers should *not* be used in cars, despite their handy size, because of the plastic cabinets' low melting point. That shouldn't be a problem with the wood-finished Allison, but there could be other problems. Better check with the manufacturer in each case. □

The Kyocera R-851 AM/FM Tuner/Amplifier... Beneath the sleek styling lurks the devastating power of an MOS/FET output

Unsurpassed technology. Uncompromising quality. From beginning to end.

"Never design solely for the sake of design, never change solely for the sake of change." This is the philosophy that has kept Kyocera at the forefront of technology in sophisticated audio components. A philosophy that led to the Kyocera R-851.

It utilizes Kyocera's unique MOS/FET output supported by uniform negative feedback at each frequency stage. The result...high power, a full 85 watts/channel* with low distortion. An amazing low 0.015% THD; a slew rate of 70v/ μ sec and a rise time of 0.9 μ sec. A successful Kyocera design with brilliant audible results.

Having satisfied the first goal, Kyocera advanced on the second, "Never change solely for the sake of change." The 3-band parametric equalizer proved vastly superior to conventional tone controls. Quartz locked electronic tuning provided precise station selection with the added convenience of 14 station programmable memory (7 AM and 7 FM) and automatic scanning and station seek. A direct reading LED digital fluorescent panel vividly presents you with accurate frequency and mode indications.

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Please stop by your local audio retailer and see why once you get past the sleek styling, the Kyocera R-851 is just one of a distinguished series of devastating audio components and systems.



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*85 watts/channel minimum RMS both channels driven into 8 ohms from 20-20,000 Hz with no more than 0.015% THD.

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YAMAHA

Audio/Video News

By David
Ranada



UPGRADING THE ANALOG DISC

ANALOG discs are far from being an endangered species. It will be years, maybe decades, before digital-audio technology sends stylus-in-a-groove discs the way of slide rules and wind-up watches. What will preserve the analog-disc format—aside from there being millions of discs and players still in use—are technological innovations and refinements. One of the most significant of the former recently arrived from Germany; the best new example of the latter comes from this country.

Germany's Teldec has developed a new method of cutting the record masters from which molds are made for production-line pressings; they call it Direct Metal Mastering, or DMM (as it appears on the copper-colored logo). Cutting a recording in a metal substrate is not a new idea. After all,

sonic frequency (reportedly 80 kHz) during cutting; the amplitude of the oscillation increases with the groove depth. This effect is said to reduce the power demands on the cutter-drive system and to produce an extremely smooth groove wall, albeit one overlaid with low-level 80-kHz oscillations. (Anti-digital fanatics looking to DMM for solace should note that during the playback of a DMM disc the comparatively large playback stylus is essentially *sampling* the closely spaced peaks of the ultrasonic oscillation; it is not in continuous contact with the groove surface.)

The vertical tracking angle of the DMM cutting stylus is almost 0 degrees. Since most phono cartridges have a vertical tracking angle (VTA) of about 20 degrees, the DMM groove shape must be altered to keep tracing distortion to a minimum. The DMM process therefore employs an electronic compensator that changes the audio waveform so that the resulting groove is shaped as if cut with a stylus having a 20-degree VTA.

Claims for the DMM process are numerous and impressive. They include "elimination" of pre- and post-echoes (faint traces of a sound several revolutions before and after it occurs, caused mainly by lacquer-groove deformation), reductions in hiss and rumble, longer playing times (up to 15 per cent more), and improved transients. Benefits that help the disc manufacturer more than the consumer include the elimination of one step in the electroplating process necessary to produce disc stampers, less delay between cutting the master and making final pressings (as little as two hours), and freedom from problems of variable lacquer quality and lacquer's bothersome storage requirements.

While I am in no position to evaluate the claimed manufacturing advantages, which would make DMM an important development even if there were no audible benefits, I did try to confirm some of the claimed improvements in sound quality by sampling some of the very few DMM discs available in this country, all on the Telefunken label. I found that DMM in and of itself did not "eliminate" groove echoes from the final pressings, although they may be absent

from the master discs. As documented in a recent Audio Engineering Society paper presented by PolyGram, echoes can develop during the pressing process itself. Several of the DMM discs I auditioned contained instances of pre-echo, though at a *greatly* reduced level than their conventionally mastered equivalents. The echoes were inaudible except when I was using headphones turned up louder than usual.

I also heard several discs with a curious "pumping" or "breathing" of mid- to high-frequency noise. This could be due to analog-tape modulation noise or a misaligned analog-tape noise-reduction system, except that I heard the same effect on some digitally mastered material as well. It may or may not be a DMM side effect.

In overall noise level, the DMM discs were no quieter than non-DMM Telefunken releases, nor did they show any consistently lower noise on our one-third-octave Badap spectrum analyzer. Indeed, *all* the Telefunken pressings I checked measured only slightly noisier in the lower mid-frequencies than JVC pressings, currently the quietest commonly available discs. (JVC pressings are used for Mobile Fidelity, Varèse Sarabande, and the latest Telarc releases, among others.)

Where I *did* notice a marked improvement in DMM discs was in inner-groove performance, an area of the disc where distortion usually rises and treble response falls. For example, the first side of Cyprien Katsaris's recording of the Chopin waltzes (Telefunken 6.42706, reviewed in this issue on page 84) is cut close to the label, but the piano sound at the end of the side is unusually similar to that at the start of it. (This disc, however, suffers more than others from the noise-pumping described above.)

These evaluations may sound rather equivocal. It could be that the sonic improvements DMM offers are wasted on the already superior Telefunken pressings and that appreciable differences would only show up with DMM discs from a label not usually so scrupulous. In any case, I found no audible drawbacks definitely ascribable to the DMM process, and its advantages from the manufacturing standpoint represent a significant breakthrough.

QUANTITY-CONSCIOUS U.S. record buyers have long abjured most domestic pressings for their high noise levels, poor-quality vinyl, and a host of other ills. It comes as a

the very first audio recording ever made, Edison's recitation of *Mary Had a Little Lamb*, was engraved in tin foil, and the master discs for some videodisc systems are all-metal. What Teldec has done is to apply the concept to the modern stereo audio disc by using a diamond stylus cutting into an amorphous-copper layer electro-deposited on a stainless-steel plate.

Several new techniques were developed to make the process work since a metal blank presents a higher resistance to cutting than the traditional film of lacquer (cellulose acetate). For example, the stylus used in DMM has no burnishing facet (used to produce a smooth groove surface in lacquer cutting). More interesting, the elastic characteristics of the combination of the cutting stylus, the stylus holder, and the copper surface cause the stylus to vibrate at an ultra-



very pleasant surprise, therefore, to find one of the largest domestic record manufacturers, CBS, doing extensive research to improve the quality of their pressings. In addition, CBS is making an effort to extend the research to upgrade other aspects of disc manufacture.

All this was brought home to me during a

EASY ON THE EARS EASY ON THE POCKETBOOK



The New Hafler DH-355 loud-speaker system provides an accuracy of performance and an audible quality which is generally only available in speakers of a much higher price. Of course, you'll want to verify this for yourself by listening at one of our authorized dealers.

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CIRCLE NO. 16 ON READER SERVICE CARD

recent visit to the CBS Technology Center in Stamford, Connecticut. Every three months, randomly selected pressings from CBS plants worldwide, along with discs from other manufacturers, are brought to the center for analysis. Tests and evaluations are conducted in seven categories: packaging, appearance, surface noise, audio quality, molding quality, warpage/dishing, and mastering quality. Each of these categories embraces several tests. For example, surface-noise evaluation is done by specially constructed equipment that not only quantifies the amount of rumble (low-frequency noise from 10 to 50 Hz) and "ocean roar" (noise between 100 and 300 Hz) but also categorizes transient noises (ticks and pops) into four different intensity levels (-40, -30, -20, and -10 dB referred to a 3.54-cm/sec groove velocity). These noise-measurement procedures are performed on the lead-in and lead-out grooves and have been found to correlate well with the perceived noise levels of a record.

Simpler, but no less important, examinations include measurements of center-hole diameter (holes that are too small can impede the operation of record changers; holes that are too large cause wow), disc eccentricity, and the radii at which the music starts and ends on each side. Visual checks are made for "blisters," "dents," "orange peel," scratches, fingerprints, stains, and sleeve scuffs. Jackets are examined for printing flaws, and inner sleeves are checked for folded or bent corners.

All of this data gathering would be worthless if it did not result in better pressings. I'm happy to say that CBS's quality-improvement program, which extends from the disc-mastering stage down to the pressing and packaging operations, seems to be succeeding. Comparisons of about a dozen randomly selected early- to mid-Seventies CBS pressings of pop and classical releases from my collection with recently recut and newly pressed discs of the same albums have shown improvements in noise levels, better-looking surfaces, fewer instances of cutting too close to the label, and fewer ticks, pops, bumps, and grinds. (There is, unfortunately, no way for the average record buyer to tell if he is getting an early or a recent pressing of a given album.)

Deserving of special mention are the remasterings in CBS's mid-priced classical Great Performances series. Spectrum-analyzer comparisons of these releases with their earlier incarnations showed reductions in noise levels in the 80- to 600-Hz region of from 6 to 12 dB (a large and audible improvement). Several of these releases measured as quiet as the Telefunken recordings mentioned above. Of course, nothing much can be done about the variable quality of the master tapes involved, but my measurements and listening have convinced me that a major American record company can produce, and finally has produced, domestic pressings that are nearly the equivalent of prized imported discs (and at non-premium prices). There is still room for improvement—in consistently lower noise levels, more accurate disc centering, and better-made master tapes—but the progress embodied in the latest CBS pressings should serve as a model to other American manufacturers and bodes well for the survival of the good old analog-record format. □



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We are pleased to announce the **NAD 4150**, the first stereo tuner ever to use the new Schotz Variable-Bandwidth PLL Detector. This amazing circuit allows the 4150 to cleanly receive **far more** FM stations than most good tuners. Its sensitivity rating is better than previously thought possible, and its capture ratio is so low it can't be accurately measured.*

To find out more, send us the coupon. We'll send you a description of how the Schotz Detector works, an explanation of how we design stereo components for real-life (as opposed to "on paper") performance, and a list of our dealers.

Thanks. *1HF Sensitivity 1.0 μ V, Capture Ratio -12 dB

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Audio engineer, Larry Schotz,
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Think Speak

On the job, on the field, or on the road. Now you can talk and listen hands free at a new breakthrough price.

SWAT teams use them. So do quarterbacks and firemen. Now you too can talk and listen to people near and far totally hands free while you are jogging, riding a bike, or hiking.

Both at work and at home this unique communications system with a range up to 1/2 mile will let you keep in touch.

You'll keep in close contact with your hunting partners when you hunt, and you'll communicate for ease and safety on construction sites.

Plus, you can effortlessly perform tasks like fine tuning your TV antenna when you need to communicate with someone on the ground or out of sight.

NOT A WALKIE TALKIE

This is no toy. The Think Speak is totally automated. When you speak, a special voice activated circuit (VOX) automatically engages the transmitter so you are broadcasting. When you stop speaking, it automatically returns to 'stand by' to await a reply.

It is virtually noise free because it uses a quartz crystal locked dual conversion superheterodyne communication circuit that operates on an FM band.

So, your communication won't sound like a CB or an AM radio. You'll speak and hear with the full power and clarity you'd expect from an FM radio station.

HERE'S WHAT IT IS

You wear the Think Speak just like a personal stereo. There is an adjustable headphone that you wear on either your right or left ear. The other ear is clear to hear the outside world for safety.

A flexible boom microphone lets you speak normally while you transmit. The entire shaft of the boom mike is adjustable and will retain any position you set.

All of the electronics are contained in a small 6 1/2 oz. case that easily clips to your belt or with its removable clip fits

into your pocket. And, what controls.

The voice activation circuit has a 3 level sensitivity switch. If you're riding a motorcycle or breathing hard while you jog, you can set the sensitivity to low so that you won't transmit in error.

If you are hunting or fishing and you can't talk much over a whisper, you can set the sensitivity to high. Plus the headphone has a 3 level volume control too.

In addition to the VOX voice operated circuit, you have 'PTT' which means Push to Talk. When you want to talk, you just push the PTT button.

This is a really great feature when you want to whisper very quietly below the threshold of even the high sensitivity setting of the Voice Operated Circuit. You may be into surveillance or photographing wildlife. When you can only whisper, you'll especially appreciate the super quiet FM reception of this system.

SOME SPECIFICS

You can expect long battery life from a standard 9V battery (not included). In the 'stand by' mode, the Think Speak only consumes 13.5 milliamps of power while it's ready to transmit or receive.

The antenna is conveniently clipped to the headband for normal use. For full range use, the antenna pops up.

The system operates on the 49 mhz band using FM so you shouldn't be bothered by any other radio transmissions as you are with CBs and Walkie Talkies.

There are 5 channels (A-E) allotted to the Think Speak to further prevent interference. We will ship all units ordered on each order with the same channel.

The transmission output is a full RF of 10,000uV/m @ 3 meters max. No FCC license is required. And, the FM hum and noise is almost good enough for a high fidelity system at 40db min. The case is 4-9/16" x 2 1/4" x 15/16".

PERSONAL OR GROUP

You can talk to 1 or even 10 people with Think Speaks. So, if you're the head of a Search and Rescue team you can talk to everyone at once and get responses from one at a time.

The Think Speak is great if you're skiing with a friend, using two boats on a lake or at sea, hiking in the mountains or just jogging around the block.

If you're a pitcher you can talk to your catcher or the coach. If you're on a loading dock, you can talk to the man in the truck or on the forklift. If you're a security guard, you'll never be alone.

The Think Speak is manufactured and backed by a limited warranty from Maxcon Electronics, the two way specialists.

TRY A THINK SPEAK RISK FREE

Walk around the block. Take a bike ride and really test the range of this breakthrough in personal communication. If you aren't 100% satisfied with the incredible sound quality or the range, return it in its original box within 30 days for a courteous refund.

To order your Think Speak risk free with your credit card, call the DAK toll free hotline or send your check for the incredible breakthrough price of only \$49.95 each (minimum of 2 required). Plus \$2.50 each for postage and handling. Order Number 9415. CA res. please add 6% sales tax.

When you think out loud, people will listen. Try a Think Speak risk free today.



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Tape Talk

By Craig Stark



Tail of the Tapes

Q. *I've always stored my audio tape recordings head-in/tail-out, rewinding them just before playing. Recently I started doing this with videotapes, but when I returned a rented videocassette in a played rather than a rewind condition, I was sternly lectured by the dealer that this practice will not only shorten the tape's life but is also discourteous to the next user. How say you?*

JAMES R. PERRY
South Windsor, Conn.

A. According to John Dale of Fuji, whose background is specifically in video engineering, you are right and the dealer is wrong. An audio or video tape stored in a played (head-in, rewind-before-play) state has a more even wind and is therefore less subject to tension variations within the tape pack that might deform the tape's plastic base material over long periods and through changes of temperature or humidity. Storing a tape in fast-rewind condition is likely to expose the tape edges to accidental damage. Note, however, that unless it is first cleared by rapid rewinding at some point before playing, any tape may have slight layer-to-layer adhesions that can prevent optimum tape-to-head contact. For best results, therefore, Dale recommends that even a brand-new tape be fast-wound from end to end before being used.

With audio tapes there is yet another reason for head-in storage, namely, reduction of "print-through," which is the transference of magnetic signal between adjacent tape layers; it may be heard as a pre- or post-echo. This consideration does not apply to video recordings, however, since they use a different recording technique.

I suspect that your dealer's real concern was with the possibility of a negative reaction by a subsequent user of the videotape, who would probably expect to receive a ready-to-play tape. True, it's less convenient to rewind tapes before rather than after playing, and old habits die hard. Indeed, a number of videocassette decks incorporate an *automatic* rewind-after-play feature. Though this is not technically preferable, the likelihood of doing any serious damage to a totally enclosed videotape is

relatively slight. Nonetheless, yours is the best policy for critical applications, and it's the one I follow as well.

Normal / Over Bias

Q. *Am I going to hurt either the tape or my deck by recording a "normal-bias" cassette with the CrO₂ switch on? To me it seems to act like a second Dolby noise-reduction system.*

KIM LYDENS
Hart, Mich.

A. No, there won't be any damage, except to the program material. Since tape hiss is primarily heard in the upper frequency area (the ear is most sensitive to it in the 3,000-Hz region, known as the "presence range"), rolling off the highs by over-biasing a "normal-bias" tape with CrO₂-type bias, together with using less treble-boosting playback equalization (another characteristic of the "chrome" position), will certainly reduce audible tape noise. In terms of fidelity, however, forget it; what you hurt is neither the tape nor the machine, but the fidelity of the recording. Why not try recording with the proper switch position(s) and turning down the treble control (or high-frequency filter) on your amplifier when your ears alone must be satisfied?

Too Many NR Systems?

Q. *I'm confused about all the noise-reduction systems available today—Dolby, Dolby-A, Dolby-B, Dolby-C, dbx, DNR, and probably several more I haven't heard of. Are any of them compatible with each other? I'm buying a car deck and a home deck and I want to be able to play the tapes I make at home in the car.*

GREG SAUNDERS
Reston, Va.

A. First, forget about Dolby-A. It's a professional system (with price to match!) that you won't be able to find on any home equipment. "Dolby," used alone, is usually a synonym for Dolby-B, far and away the most widely used noise-reduction system in consumer decks. It provides some

8 to 10 dB of noise reduction and is what I would call "semi-compatible" when played back on a car deck that has no noise-reduction system. Some people actually prefer the slightly overbright sound of a Dolby-B-encoded tape played back in the car without Dolby decoding, since it keeps the high frequencies above the road noise and helps to compensate for the high-frequency deficiencies of many car-stereo systems.

Dolby-C is a recently introduced system that provides about 20 dB of noise reduction. Again, you *can* play a Dolby-C recording on a Dolby-B system, the major effect being a slight "brightening" of the sound. Dolby-C with *no* decoding is likely to sound too bright even in a car system, however.

The dbx system is entirely different, although like Dolby it involves two steps: encoding while recording and decoding during playback. Tapes made with dbx are not meant to be listened to without decoding, though with a proper decoder their dynamic range can be very impressive. Unless you have a car system with dbx, don't count on home/car compatibility.

DNR (Dynamic Noise Reduction) is one of a number of one-step noise-reduction systems. It reduces noise on tapes that have *not* been encoded with either a dbx or a Dolby system. By itself it isn't as effective as Dolby-B, but it certainly is much better than nothing for those tapes that need it.

Home-Recording Highs

Q. *The live recordings I make at home seem to achieve the same degree of high-frequency clarity one hears on records. The best cassettes seem to strive for flat response, so should I try to look for a non-premium tape with a high-end rise above 5,000 Hz?*

ROBERT LABERGE
Charlesbourg, Quebec

A. Both TDK AD (ferric) and BASF Professional II (chrome) used to exhibit a somewhat elevated treble response when recorded with the bias and equalization settings most deck manufacturers seem to prefer, but my tests of recent samples indicate, as you suggest, a preference for flat response. Moreover, you're not likely to find a second- or third-line tape with an excessively "hot" high end—you'll probably find just the reverse.

It may well be the case that your microphones (or the mic preamplifier in your deck) simply will not produce the extended high-end output you seek. You will maximize your chances for enhancing the "punch" in the treble range by placing your microphones relatively close to the sound source(s) and by backing off a couple of decibels in your record level. Cassette decks were really not designed for live "master" recording, and with closely placed good microphones it is easy to overload the treble storage capacity of the tape. When this happens you actually get *less* high-frequency response than you would by recording at a slightly lower level.

So far as tape type is concerned, I would recommend trying a *metal* cassette tape if you want the greatest high-frequency storage capacity. □



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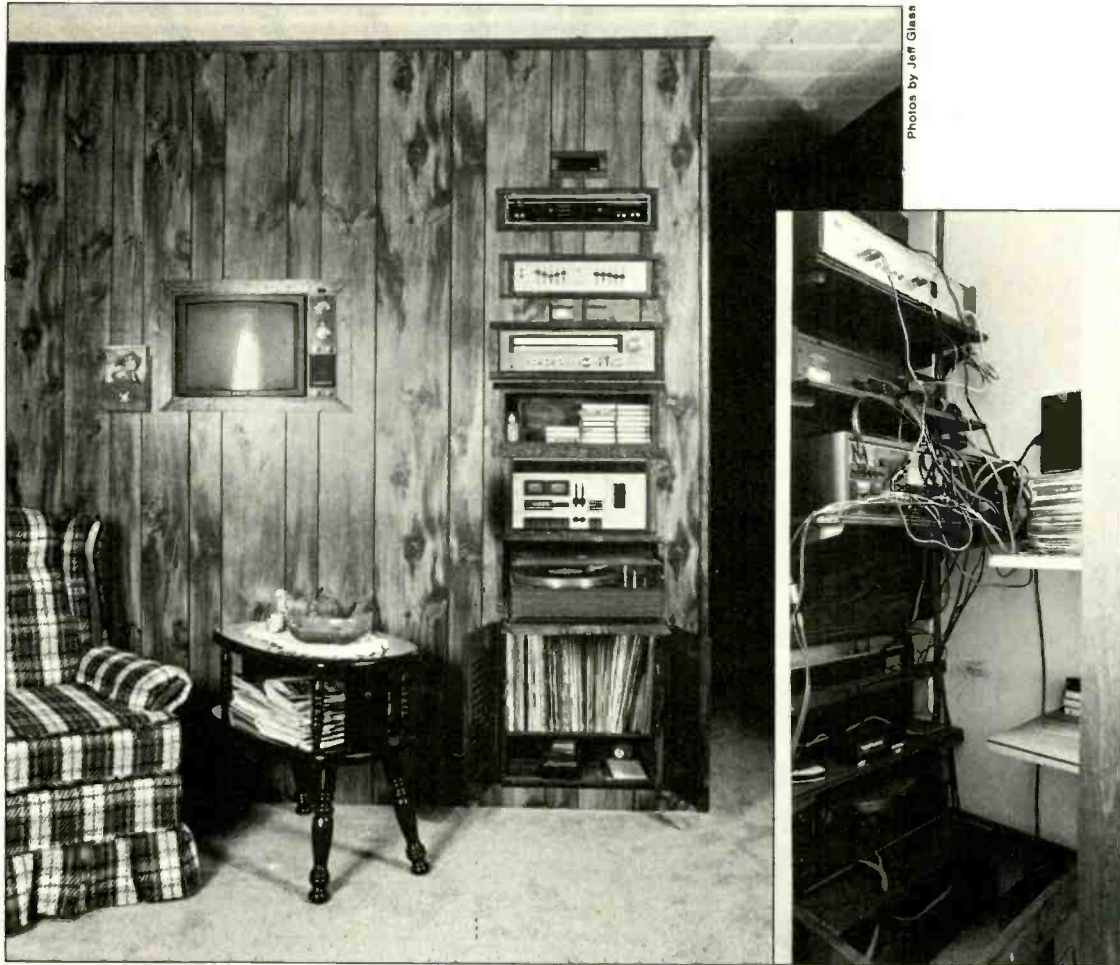
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Installation of the Month

By Gordon Sell



MOVING into a new home usually presents both challenges and opportunities to an audiophile. What will the new listening-room acoustics be like? Where should the speakers be placed? How can the other components best be installed for convenience, safety, security, etc.?

This last question in particular bothered Jim Ackerly when he moved into a new house on Long Island (New York). Then he noticed that one side of a hall closet backed up against a paneled wall of his living/listening room, and that inspired him to install adjustable shelves inside the closet and cut holes through the common wall to fit the front panels of his components. From the living-room side the panels are flush with the wall paneling; the operating controls are accessible in front while the connections in back can be easily reached from inside the closet.

The turntable is mounted on a rigidly braced slide-out tray. A storage cabinet with louvered doors for records and accesso-

ries is below the turntable, and an extra cutout above the tape deck that is now used for storing cassettes could house an additional component in the future. Ventilation in the closet is more than adequate for the electronic components, and the installation provides a high degree of security against theft since each component is bolted to its shelf and the closet has a lockable reinforced door. A little to the left of the stereo installation is another cutout, this one backing on a stairwell, that holds a Sony KV-1710 color television set.

The audio system currently includes (top to bottom in photo) a digital clock, a dbx 3BX dynamic-range expander, a Heathkit AD-1305 graphic equalizer, Radio Shack power meters, a Hitachi Model 903 receiver, a Tandberg TCD 310 MkII cassette deck, and an Acoustic Research AR-XB turntable with an Ortofon LM-30 phono cartridge. The audio output of the TV set is connected to the stereo system with a Rhoades Teledapter. The loudspeakers (not

shown) are AR-11's. Mr. Ackerly plans to add a pair of Audio Technology Model 510 peak-level wattmeters and a dbx Model 224 noise-reduction system in the future.

Jim Ackerly has had no special training in carpentry or electronics. "I'm just a hobbyist," he says. He works as the day manager of a dairy store, and the music he prefers to listen to on his well-thought-out installation is pop and rhythm-and-blues. □

HAVE you installed your system in some special or interesting manner that might contain ideas other readers could use for their setups? For us to judge whether your system qualifies as an "Installation of the Month," send a clear snapshot and a brief description of the components to STEREO REVIEW, Dept. ICTM, One Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Please include return postage.

TAPE DECK SO ADVANCED IT HAS A FEATURE THAT FINDS NOTHING.

We call it
Blank Search.
You'll no
doubt call it the
best thing to happen to recording since
magnetic tape.



Because, the Pioneer CT-9R tape deck with Blank Search finally puts an end to the old Fast Forward/Stop/Play/Reverse/Stop/Play method of finding where your last recording left off and the next one can begin.

Now, all you have to do is push a button and let the tape deck do the work. It'll find the blank area that's long enough to tape on, back up to the last recorded piece, leave a four second space and stop, ready to record.

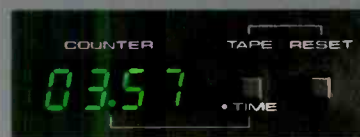
And there's more wizardry where that came from. Like Index Scan, Music Search, Blank Skip and a Real Time Counter that reads out the amount of tape left in meaningful minutes and seconds instead of meaningless inches. In other words, features that will revolutionize the way you record and listen to tapes.



But don't thank us.

Thank the little brain that made it all possible. A tiny microprocessor that makes the CT-9R more than a tape deck, it makes it smart.

Smart enough to make your music easier to listen to. Even smart enough to make your music sound better, with Automatic Bias Level Equalization.



What Auto B.L.E.

means, to those without a degree in electronics, is that the tape deck automatically analyzes the tape being used (no easy task with over 200 different tapes on the market) and then adjusts itself for optimum recording with that tape. Improving the quality of your recordings faster than you can say "wow and flutter."

Auto B.L.E. aside, all of the CT-9R's features, from Blank Search to Blank Skip, do only one thing.

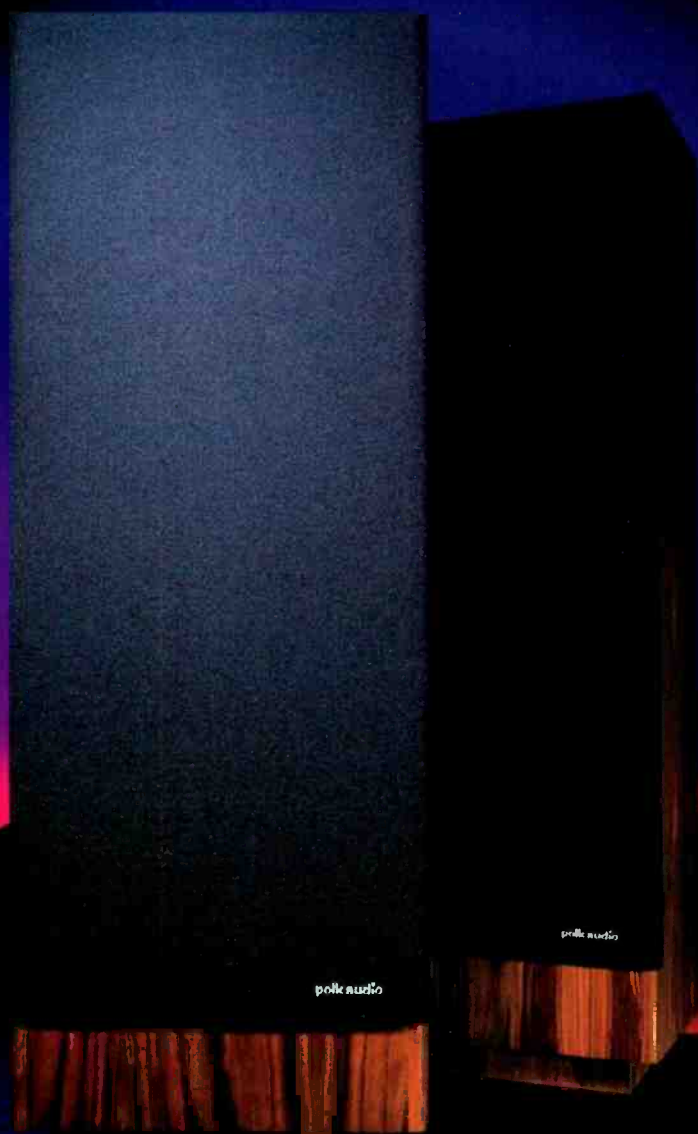
Let you spend a lot less time looking for your music.

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Polk's unique Stereo/Dimensional technology is based on a fundamental analysis of stereo recording and the auditory process. For the first time, a pair of loudspeakers has been designed to work together properly and thus to realize the full potential of stereophonic reproduction. It could be said that the SDA-1TM is the world's first true "stereo" speaker. Listening to them will be a revelation.

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CIRCLE NO. 43 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Technical Talk

By Julian D. Hirsch



● Speaker Impedance and Amplifier Output ●

JUDGING from recent letters from readers, many people are still confused about the relationship between an amplifier's rated load impedance and the nominal impedance of the loudspeaker load and about the effect of a mismatch between the two on system performance. For example, one reader asks whether, if he is driving 8-ohm speakers with the full 45-watt output of his receiver at a certain volume-control setting and he replaces the 8-ohm speakers with 4-ohm units, the amplifier would then be delivering 90 watts and thus overload the output transistors.

While it is true that halving the load impedance on a constant-voltage source (which many transistor amplifiers approximate) will double the current (and hence the power) delivered to the load, this process cannot go on without limit. It would be analogous to adding more and more lights and electric appliances to one's household power system, thus drawing ever increasing power from the mains. Eventually, a fuse will blow to interrupt the current before it achieves an unsafe value. If the current were not interrupted, the house wiring would eventually overheat and possibly cause a fire.

Transistor amplifiers are also protected against excessive load-current demands, which could damage the output transistors if not cause a fire. The protective system may be as simple as fuses in the speaker outputs or in the internal d.c. power supplies, or it may be in the form of complex internal current-limiting circuits that reduce the drive signal to the output devices

as their load current approaches dangerous values. Sometimes output connections are opened by relays operated from the sensing circuits, but the aim is always the same—to prevent excessive current from being passed through the transistors.

If the load on an amplifier is reduced to the point where it draws enough current to damage the components, or even to cause serious distortion, some "safety value" will act to prevent improper operation. The program may actually be interrupted, or there may be audible distortion. Even if the amplifier were not in jeopardy, it would deliver a "clipped" or distorted output waveform when called upon to produce more power than it is capable of delivering. In the case cited above, one of these effects would certainly prevent damage to the transistors, but it is likely that the sound quality would be severely diminished.

Power transistors, even though protected, can still be burned out by certain types of incorrect operation, but such instances are usually much less obvious than the example given. Damage is most likely to result from attempting to pass a high-level, high-frequency signal through an amplifier that is not adequately protected, by the designer's choice of output transistors or other means, against such operation. Some very expensive and powerful amplifiers have expired on our test bench during slew-factor measurements (which involve applying a full-power-rating drive signal at frequencies far above the audio range).

A letter from another reader touches upon a related subject—the so-called "effi-

ciency" of a loudspeaker. He asks why we measure speaker "efficiency" (the quotes are mine) with a fixed drive signal of 2.83 volts, equivalent to 1 watt into 8 ohms. He suspects that this gives 4-ohm speakers an unfair advantage, since they will receive twice as much power and thus earn a 3-dB higher rating than an 8-ohm speaker under the same conditions.

First of all, let me stress that this is *not* a measurement of efficiency. The correct term is *sensitivity*, standardized as the acoustic sound-pressure level measured 1 meter in front of the speaker when it is driven by 2.83 volts. As yet there is no universal standard for the test-signal characteristics other than its amplitude. A common choice is "pink noise," which has uniform energy per octave of bandwidth. I prefer to filter the pink noise and use only an octave bandwidth centered at 1,000 Hz. This avoids undesirable emphasis (and apparently greater output) due to response peaks in the higher or lower audible octaves, which are not necessarily as audible as a midrange output. I have found good correlation between my sensitivity measurements and those made by various speaker manufacturers; in fact, they correlate well with my own measurements made with full-range pink noise on speakers having a very smooth frequency response.

To return to the reader's question about "efficiency," the sensitivity measurement is quite "fair" to speakers of any impedance rating. Its purpose is to indicate how loud a speaker (whatever its impedance) will sound when driven by a standard signal

Tested This Month

Signet TK7LCa Phono Cartridge ● Mordaunt-Short Carnival 3 Speaker System
Sony TC-K555 Cassette Deck ● JVC R-X40 AM/FM Stereo Receiver
Scott 558T AM/FM Stereo Tuner

level. Most transistor amplifiers do not "know" what impedance they are driving and will deliver much the same voltage to a speaker regardless of its impedance, from 2 ohms to an open circuit. Thus the sensitivity rating is a valid way of comparing different speakers in respect to how loud they will play in a system. All else being equal, for the same input signal a speaker rated at 88 dB will deliver 3 dB more sound output than one rated at 85 dB; conversely, for the same volume the 88-dB speaker will require only half as much amplifier power as the 85-dB unit.

This is a good time to dispel any notions that the impedance of a speaker has any fundamental relationship to its efficiency or quality. Impedance is simply the ratio of the voltage supplied to the speaker by the source (the amplifier) to the current passing through the speaker. Efficiency (the relationship between electrical power input to the speaker and its total acoustic power output) is a very complex matter to determine and actually has little to do with a speaker's suitability for home use. A 4-ohm speaker will require about 70 per cent as much voltage (and 140 per cent as much current) to deliver the same acoustic power output as

an 8-ohm speaker of the same *efficiency*. In each case, the same power is required, but at different values of voltage and current.

Some amplifiers are designed to give their optimum performance when driving 4-ohm loads and will deliver much less power into 8 ohms. With others, the reverse is true. It is always wise to avoid any large and obvious mismatches between the amplifier and speaker, but rarely will there be any clearly audible change in sound character from a 2-to-1 mismatch.

If the amplifier operates as a constant-current source (as some of today's Japanese models do), reducing the load impedance decreases the available power instead of increasing it. One reason why we test amplifiers with 2-ohm loads as well as the more usual 4- and 8-ohm loads is to ferret out this behavior. If speakers had a constant impedance across the audio range, it would not matter very much, since simple arithmetic would warn of a serious mismatch. But speaker impedance is not constant—it can vary over a range of 20 to 1 or more as the frequency changes.

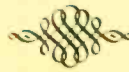
Impedance variation per se need not cause a problem, since a speaker normally delivers its designed frequency response

when driven by a constant voltage. At the bass resonance, the impedance may rise to many times its rated value, but the efficiency also is higher at resonance so the total output tends to remain fairly constant. If the amplifier is designed to deliver a constant current instead of a constant voltage, the power delivered to the speaker will rise at its bass resonance and (probably) produce an undesirably bassy quality. In any event, one would *not* expect the same frequency response from a speaker driven by a constant-current amplifier as with a more usual constant-voltage amplifier. This factor accounts for some of the differences heard between amplifiers with some, but not all, speakers. Tested with a load *resistor* such an amplifier will probably measure flat over the audible range.

Another effect of constant-current drive (or any approximation of it) is to reduce the available power as the load impedance drops, as when more than one pair of speakers are paralleled. This can be seen immediately in our maximum-power measurements with 2-, 4-, and 8-ohm loads. It may matter little if only a single set of speakers is to be driven, but be aware of the possible effects of adding speakers. □

Equipment Test Reports

By Julian D. Hirsch
Hirsch-Houck Laboratories



By Craig Stark
Starksonic Studio

Signet TK7LCa Phono Cartridge



THE Signet TK7LCa is a "Twin Flux" moving-magnet phono cartridge that has two small cylindrical magnets emerging from its beryllium cantilever at right angles to each other and parallel to the walls of the record groove. The magnets are located just forward of the fulcrum of the moving system of the cartridge, where they make a minimal contribution to the effective tip mass of the stylus assembly.

A feature of the "Twin Flux" design is that only one of the magnets is accelerated by stylus motion from the modulation in one of the groove walls. The other merely ro-

tates on its own axis, contributing almost nothing to the moment of inertia of the moving system or the output of the other channel. The TK7LCa uses two fixed coils per stereo channel. Each pair is wound from a single length of fine wire, with no soldering or welds in its circuit. Internal mu-metal shielding isolates the coils of the two channels, and the entire cartridge is shielded against hum pickup from external fields.

The stylus of the Signet TK7LCa is a square-shank nude diamond with an extended "Straight Line Contact" shape. The

cartridge is designed to track at forces between 0.8 and 1.6 grams and has a vertical tracking angle of 20 degrees. Its removable stylus assembly has an integral hinged guard, and its total weight, 6.5 grams, makes it compatible with most popular tone arms. The recommended load for the Signet TK7LCa is 47,000 ohms in parallel with 100 to 200 picofarads. Its minimum channel separation is rated at 33 dB at 1 kHz and 23 dB at 10 kHz. Suggested retail price: \$200.

(Continued on page 38)



Because Sony redesigned the car stereo, the auto makers don't have to redesign the car.

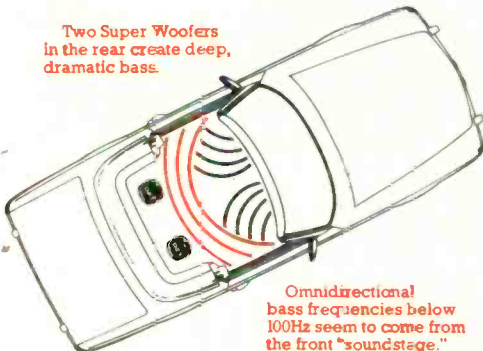
The interior of an automobile is designed with a lot of purposes in mind. Unfortunately, great stereo sound reproduction isn't one of them.

Fortunately, Sony did more than just tackle this problem. They actually solved it. By designing a stereo system that meets the acoustical challenges inherent in a car.

INTRODUCING THE SONY SOUNDFIELD™ SYSTEM.

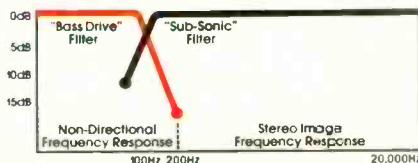
As the very name of our system indicates, we started with the acoustical sound field itself by treating the entire front of the car as a stage. The very directional high-end and mid-range frequencies emanate from this stage in an accurate stereo image.

Two Super Woofers in the rear create deep, dramatic bass.



Omnidirectional bass frequencies below 100Hz seem to come from the front "soundstage."

So the highs come across clear and soaring. The midrange, natural and accurate.



The bass frequencies below 100Hz actually are directed from the rear of the car, where the Super Woofers are placed. However, since these frequencies are omnidirectional, they seem to be coming from the proper "stage" location.

The result is richer, fuller, and more dramatic bass.

CONVERT WITH COMPONENTS.

The optimum SoundField System consists of a powerful amplifier (XM-120) driving a pair of 8" Super Woofers (XS-L20), along with a medium-powered amplifier driving the front speakers. This means full-range speakers can be used without risk of modulation distortion.

But you can begin to enjoy the

SoundField System simply by adding one of our lower powered amplifiers and the Super Woofers to the car stereo you already have. Then you can slowly build up your system, adding a higher powered amplifier, more speakers, and an equalizer.

A SOUND THAT TAKES A BACKSEAT TO NONE.

Although the technology of the Sony SoundField System is complex, the reason for it is simple.

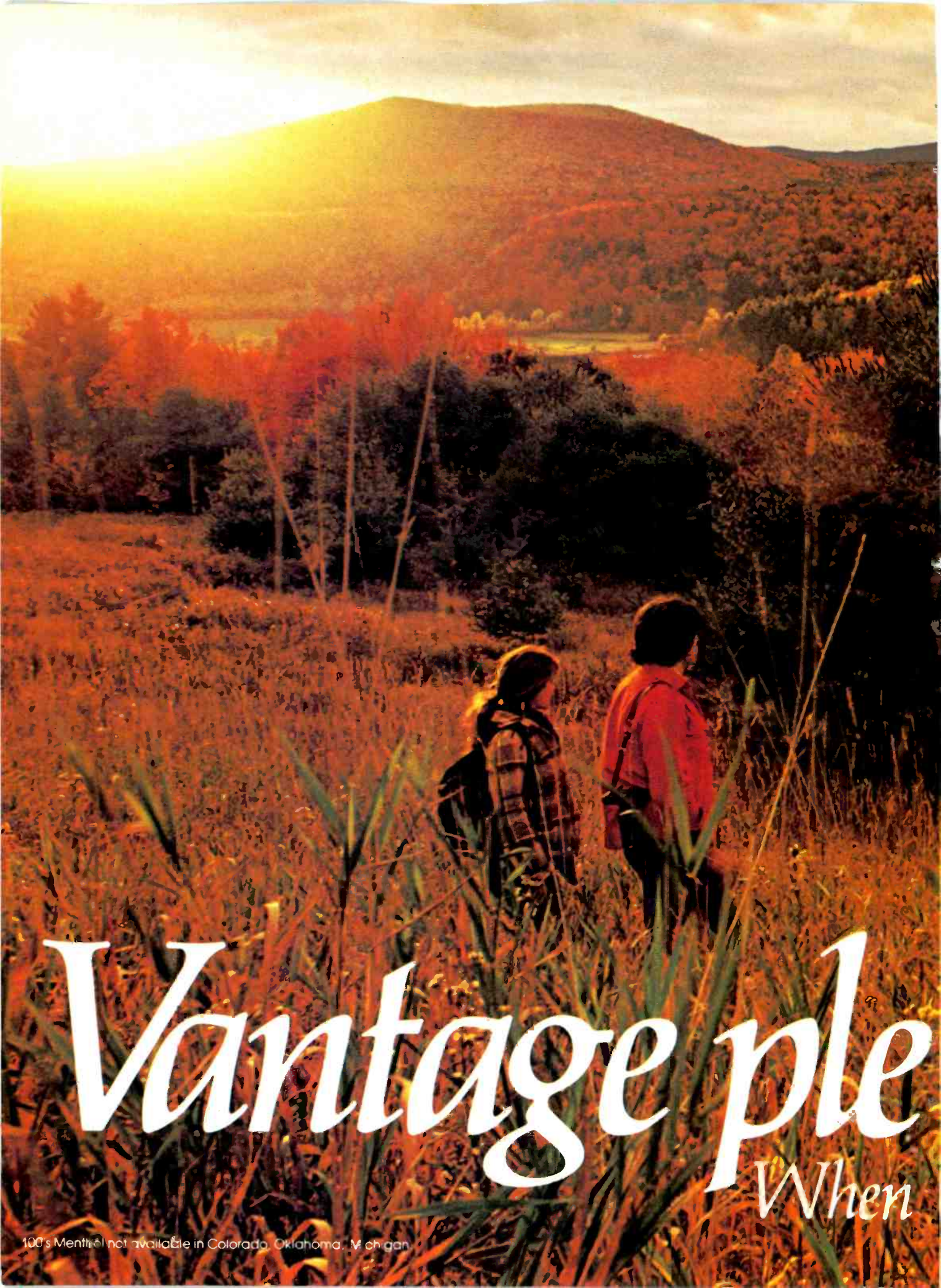
It will give you high dB levels with very low distortion, extremely precise stereo imaging, and an amazingly broad frequency response. In addition, you'll be pleasantly surprised at just how easily a SoundField System can be installed in your car.

So come into your local Sony dealer and ask to hear the next generation in autostereo systems.

One listen and you'll know why the auto makers don't have to redesign the car.

SONY
THE ONE AND ONLY





Vantage ple

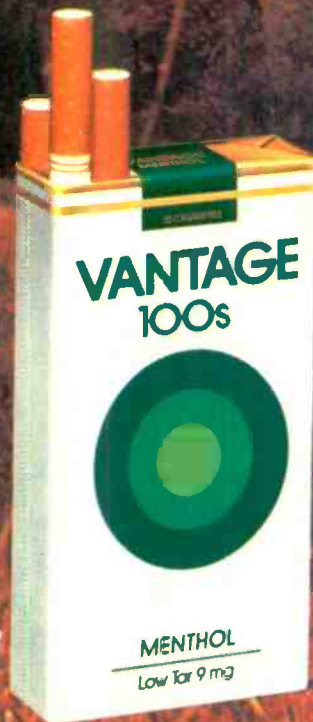
When

100's Mental not available in Colorado, Oklahoma, Michigan

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined
That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

9 mg. "tar", 0.7 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

New!
100s Menthol

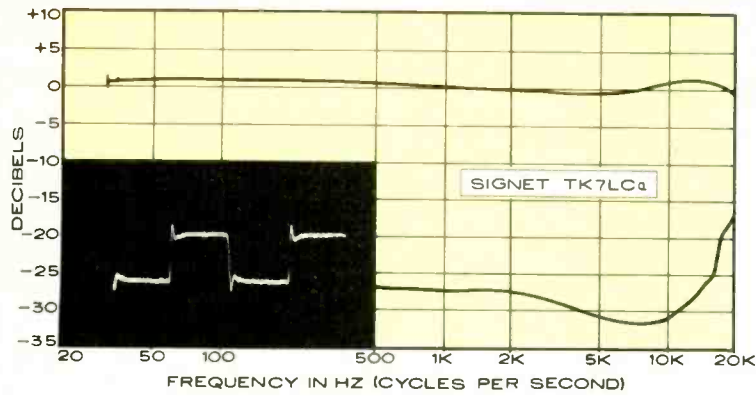


9 mg

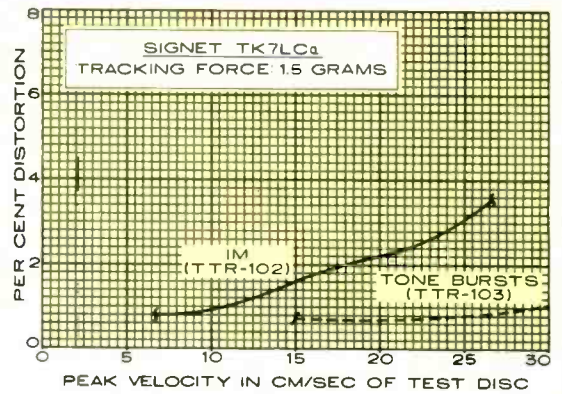
Low Tar 9 mg

ASURES

you want good taste and low tar, too.



In the graph at left, the upper curve represents the frequency response of the cartridge. The distance (measured in decibels) between it and the lower curve is the average separation between the two channels (anything above 15 dB is adequate). The inset oscilloscope photo shows the cartridge's response to a recorded 1,000-Hz square wave, which indicates resonances and overall frequency response (see text). At right is the cartridge's response to



the intermodulation-distortion (IM) and 10.8-kHz tone-burst test bands of the TTR-102 and TTR-103 test records. These high velocities provide a severe test of a phono cartridge's performance. The intermodulation-distortion readings for any given cartridge can vary widely, depending on the particular IM test record used. The actual distortion figure measured is not as important as the maximum velocity tracked before a sudden increase in distortion occurs.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** We tested the Signet TK7LCa in the low-mass tone arm of a Dual 741Q record player. First, the frequency response was measured with several values of load capacitance, from 200 to more than 400 picofarads. The flattest response was obtained with the lowest capacitance (it is unlikely that lower values would be readily obtainable from most contemporary record-player/amplifier combinations). The response was essentially flat up to about 8,000 Hz, rising to +2 dB in the 12,000- to 20,000-Hz range on one channel and to about +1.5 dB at 12,000 Hz on the other. An average of the two channel responses (using the CBS STR 100 test record) would be +1.5, -0.5 dB from 40 to 20,000 Hz. The response to the 1,000-Hz

square wave of the CBS STR 112 record was very good, with one overshoot of about 35 per cent and no significant ringing.

The crosstalk response in the midrange exceeded 35 dB on one channel and 20 dB on the other. At 10,000 Hz the separation averaged 25 to 35 dB, and it was still 12 to 13 dB at 20,000 Hz. The vertical stylus angle was 20 degrees, as rated, and the output of 4.7 millivolts at 3.54 cm/sec was appreciably more than the rated value of 3.54 millivolts (both channels were identical).

The tracking ability of the cartridge was checked with several high-velocity test records. Low and middle frequencies could be tracked well at only 1 to 1.1 grams, at which force the cartridge could play the 300-Hz, 70-micrometer level of the German HiFi:2

test record. Increasing the force to 1.5 grams enabled the cartridge to track the 90-micrometer level, an achievement matched by very few cartridges we have tested.

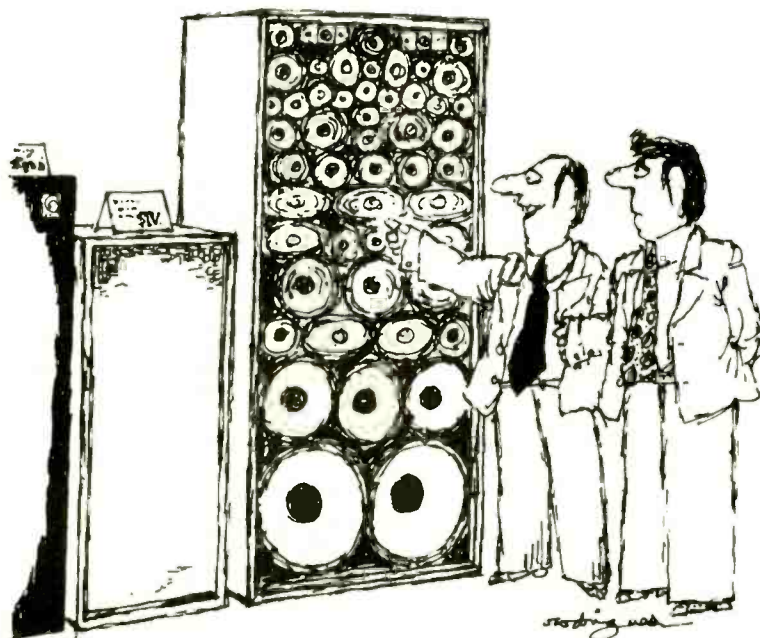
We used 1.5 grams for most of our listening tests and tracking measurements. At that force, the intermodulation distortion with the mixed 400- and 4,000-Hz signals of the Shure TTR-102 test record rose smoothly and gradually from about 1 per cent at velocities under 10 cm/sec to 3.5 per cent at the record's maximum of 27 cm/sec. At no point did the TK7LCa mistrack. High-frequency tracking was checked with Shure's TTR-103 test record, using 10.8-kHz tone bursts at a 270-Hz repetition rate. In this test, the distortion was both very low and nearly constant, ranging from 0.7 per cent between 15 and 20 cm/sec to a maximum of just over 1 per cent at 30 cm/sec.

● **Comment.** The subjective tracking evaluation of the Signet TK7LCa was done with the aid of the various Shure "Audio Obstacle Course" records. The older Era III version was played in its entirety without audible mistracking. With the Era IV record, we heard the slight strain and hardness that indicate incipient mistracking on the highest-level bell and flute sections.

With music records, including a number of demanding audiophile discs, the TK7LCa never seemed to be pushed anywhere near its limits. It was a very smooth, uncolored-sounding cartridge, with no edginess or any other idiosyncratic character. The cartridge was strikingly quiet, with no trace of hum pickup or other noises even at preamp level settings far exceeding any that would be used when listening to records.

The Signet TK7LCa is one of the better cartridges we have used recently, with a quality of sound and level of tracking ability that are fully commensurate with its not inconsiderable price. It impresses us as an excellent, honestly engineered product.

—Julian D. Hirsch



"... And that brings us to the post-sub-low pre-midrange right here ..."

Circle 140 on reader service card

(Continued on page 40)

MARANTZ INTRODUCES THE SOUNDEST CHOICE IN VIDEO.



MARANTZ REVOLUTIONIZES HOME VIDEO WITH STEREOGRAPHIC SOUND AND DOLBY® C NOISE REDUCTION.

Until now, video sound has been restricted to the tiny two-inch speaker in your television. Not exactly choice listening. But now Marantz sets a new gold standard in home video entertainment. The VR-200. It's the only VCR engineered with the hi-fidelity sound specifications of Marantz.

With rich stereophonic sound and Dolby C-type noise reduction, the Beta VR-200 is today's best choice for recording TV/FM simulcasts,

playing prerecorded stereo cassettes, or creating your own stereophonic home video productions.

Fully compatible with your present stereo system, the VR-200 is packed with the kind of sophisticated audio features you'll expect from Marantz; record-level LED's, manual/automatic record level controls, stereo audio inputs and feather-touch transport controls. Even 24 Karat gold-plated audio connections, for the ultimate in clean, distortion-free stereo reproduction.

The VR-200 also features the solid gold convenience of full-function remote control and a 14-day programmable timer. Plus the fashionably distinctive Marantz Gold look.

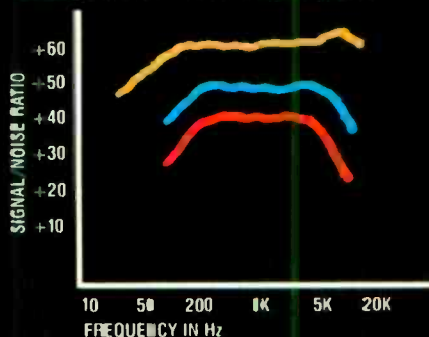
Choose the first VCR that's worth listening to... and worth looking at, as well. The Marantz VR-200. It's a choice so sound, you could make it with your eyes closed.

© 1982 Marantz Company, Inc.,
20525 Nordhoff Street, Chatsworth,
CA 91311.

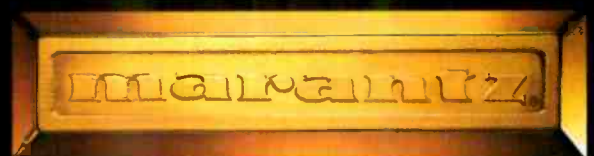
CAUTION The unauthorized recording of television programs and other materials may infringe the rights of others.

*TM Dolby Laboratories
**Monitor not yet available.

AUDIO PERFORMANCE COMPARISON



- Marantz VR-200 Rec/play response with Dolby "C"
- Other VCRs with Dolby "B"
- Other VCRs without Dolby



THE SOLID GOLD SOUND



Mordaunt-Short
Carnival 3
Speaker System

THE Mordaunt-Short Carnival 3 is a compact "bookshelf"-sized speaker, suitable for mounting on a wall or shelf or on the optional pillar stands that support it some 14 inches from the floor. Although normally used vertically, the Carnival 3 can also be placed horizontally, and a matching veneered end cap is available from the manufacturer to replace the black wooden base for such installations.

The Carnival 3 is a two-way system with an 8-inch woofer operating in a sealed enclosure. It crosses over at 3,000 Hz to a 1/2-inch dome tweeter whose voice coil is damped and cooled by ferrofluid. The nominal system impedance is 8 ohms, and the speaker is rated to handle a continuous input of 40 watts of contoured random noise (it is recommended for use with an amplifier rated between 15 and 80 watts per channel).

The free-field frequency response of the system is specified as 80 to 20,000 Hz \pm 3 dB at 1 meter on the tweeter axis. Its rated sensitivity is 88.5 dB at 1 meter for a 2.83-volt input of pink noise. The Carnival 3 is sold in pairs whose frequency responses are matched to within 1 dB up to 10,000 Hz.

The cabinet, veneered in teak or walnut, is 16 1/2 inches high, 9 3/4 inches wide, and 7 3/4 inches deep. The base is finished in matte black, and the grille is a brown fabric. The input connectors, recessed into the rear of the base, are spaced 3/4 inch apart to accept standard dual banana-plug connectors, and the connecting cables supplied with the speakers are fitted with matching plugs.

Price per pair: \$395. A pair of optional black-finished steel pillar stands is \$50.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The Carnival 3 speakers were tested on their stands, placed about 2 feet from a rear wall. The smoothed room response was unusually uniform from 100 to 20,000 Hz, with only a 5-dB overall variation through most of that range. The maximum output was at about 13,500 Hz, owing to a peak in the tweeter output that affected the response between 11,000 and 16,000 Hz.

The close-miked woofer response was flat within \pm 1 dB from 400 to 2,000 Hz, rising to about +5 dB at 100 Hz. At lower frequencies the output fell rapidly, reaching -10 dB relative to the average midrange level at about 50 Hz. The spliced composite frequency-response curve was within 6 dB overall from 60 to 20,000 Hz except for the additional 2.5-dB rise at 13,500 Hz.

The system impedance was about 6 ohms at three minima (20 Hz, 150-300 Hz, and 7-12 kHz), but it averaged 8 ohms or more over most of the audio range. The sensitivity with 2.83 volts input in an octave band centered at 1,000 Hz was 89.5 dB at 1 meter, which is relatively high for a sealed speaker system. The woofer distortion at a nominal 1-watt (2.83-volt) input was low in its useful output range, varying from 0.5 per cent at 100 Hz to 2 per cent at 60 Hz and rising to 6.3 per cent at 35 Hz. At 10 watts input, the distortion was still low at 100 Hz (1.1 per cent) but rose to 5.6 per cent at 60 Hz.

The quasi-anechoic axial response meas-

urements at 1 meter, made with the FFT capability of our IQS signal-analysis system, confirmed the essential features of our room-response measurements. The response was quite smooth, with a 5-dB total variation from 350 Hz to almost 13,000 Hz and a sharp peak of several decibels at 14,000 Hz. The effect of this high-frequency resonance was also visible in a "three-dimensional" spectral decay plot, which showed ringing at that frequency for more than 1 millisecond after the driving impulse and after the speaker's output had decayed at other frequencies. The speaker's phase response was good, with the principal (and quite small) departures from constant group delay occurring below 1,000 Hz and at 14,000 Hz.

● **Comment.** Standing well away from room walls on their pedestals, the Mordaunt-Short Carnival 3 speakers produced the excellent stereo effect (often referred to as "imaging") that is frequently associated with free-standing speakers having good phase characteristics. Their sound, in general, was smooth and uncolored, although the balance often tended to favor the higher frequencies and deep bass (below 50 or 60 Hz) was more likely to be produced psychoacoustically than physically.

We were concerned that the 14-kHz high-frequency tweeter-resonance peak might be audible as coloration. However, since the peak was relatively narrow and of moderate amplitude, it had little effect on the audible sound from the speakers (it is

(Continued on page 44)

JBL Automotive Loudspeakers.

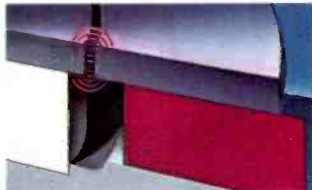
When you understand how well they're put together, the argument for buying anything else simply falls apart.



A unique flat-wire voice coil (Patent applied for) helps JBL Automotive Loudspeakers achieve both high efficiency and high power capacity.



Each speaker features a die-cast aluminum frame to ensure complete freedom from warping or corrosion.



The loudspeaker's magnetic structure produces a symmetrical magnetic field around the voice coil gap of the low frequency driver. This design provides a dramatic reduction in distortion.

You're looking at the inner workings of a remarkable automotive product. It's manufactured to tolerances so precise that they actually rival those found in critical engine components. It incorporates some of today's most advanced metalworking and chemical engineering techniques. And its performance is unsurpassed.

The product is JBL's T545, 3-way automotive loudspeaker. Part of a full line of new JBL speakers designed with innovative features you can see as well as hear. Each model, for example, utilizes a rugged die-cast aluminum frame to ensure tight tolerances and complete freedom from warping and corrosion. The loudspeakers also feature large, long-excursion, flat-wire voice coils. This design uses the magnetic field in the voice coil gap more efficiently so the speakers need less power to operate.

And that's only part of the story. Through the use of large-diameter, high-temperature voice coil formers and the latest in high-temperature adhesive technology, power capacity has also been improved. Combined with the loudspeakers' high efficiency, this provides outstanding dynamic range and significantly higher maximum sound output.

Other features include a massive, barium ferrite magnetic structure, powerful high frequency and ultra-high frequency drivers, and bi-amplification capability on 6 x 9-inch models.

Of course, the best way to appreciate their advanced engineering is to audition them for yourself. So ask the audio specialists at your JBL dealer for a complete demonstration of JBL Automotive Loudspeakers. Once you hear

them, the argument for buying anything else will simply fall apart.



First with the pros.

JBL/harman international

Achieve Mitsubishi
in a sportscar that's
charged with more
than a turbo



STARION

The charge begins the moment you slide into the cockpit of the Mitsubishi Starion — it's the exhilarating feeling of complete control.

Imaginatively and very deliberately thought out, the design of this ultra-sophisticated "command capsule" positions controls, instrument panel, adjustable steering column, and 6-way adjustable driver's seat* in an ideal relationship to the driver.

Making you master of power and performance.

Alone among manufacturers, Mitsubishi designs and builds turbos specifically for its own engines. And the Starion's perfor-

mance proves the power of this idea. Its turbo blasts in at about 2,000 rpm.

The Starion's engine is a turbo-charged, computerized, fuel-injected 2.6 liters. And through all five gears, acceleration produces exaltation.

But its responsiveness is no greater than its precision and grace. The Starion's exquisitely aerodynamic body has a 0.35 drag coefficient. Not even a drip channel mars its flush surface. And it slices through the wind like a fine blade.

Handling? The car is like an extension of your own will. Because of great, classic sportscar features like fully independent suspension with MacPherson struts, and 4-wheel ventilated disc brakes.

And advanced optional features, like our Limited Slip Differential and Rear Brake Lock-up Control System.

See your new Mitsubishi Motors Dealer. Slice the wind on a test drive.

Only that will show you how incredible the Starion really is.

*Available on the LS model.



**Mitsubishi
takes you where
you've never
been before.**

Call 800-447-4700 for the new Mitsubishi Motors Dealer nearest you. In Illinois call 800-322-4400.

CIRCLE NO. 33 ON READER SERVICE CARD



test reports

far above most musical overtones, let alone the fundamental frequencies). Occasionally we detected a trace of "edginess" on some material, but this happened only when the program contained distortion or noise in the frequency range of the tweeter resonance, which then exaggerated it.

The Carnival 3 impressed us as a good, easy-listening speaker whose price and size bring it within the range of most of the hi-fi public. If it does not necessarily outperform some other speakers in the same general price range, it is nevertheless free of any objectionable qualities that we could hear or

measure. In other words, this is an honestly and realistically rated speaker, well constructed and tastefully styled. In addition to those basic qualities, it sounds good!

—Julian D. Hirsch

Circle 141 on reader service card



Sony TC-K555 Cassette Deck

THE Sony TC-K555 is a three-head, dual-capstan cassette deck with Dolby-B and Dolby-C noise-reduction systems, an elapsed-time tape counter, and solenoid-operated transport functions. The heads use Sony's Sendust-and-Ferrite construction for resistance to wear, and the separate record and playback heads have gaps optimized for their different functions and permit immediate comparison between the incoming and recorded signals. One motor drives the two capstans in a closed-loop configuration to minimize wow and flutter; a second motor is used to turn the reel hubs.

Cassettes are inserted, tape openings downward, into slides behind the cassette well door. The well itself is illuminated, and the door is easily removed for head cleaning and demagnetizing. LED indicators are provided for the PLAY, RECORD, and PAUSE pushbuttons, and the PAUSE button flashes for five seconds when the REC MUTE button is pressed. The muting period may be extended beyond five seconds manually, but in either case the machine is halted in the pause mode after muting. The words SOURCE, TAPE, DOLBY-B, DOLBY-C, and MEMORY are illuminated when the appropriate pushbuttons are pressed; the memory function will either stop at or repeat play from the zero point on the tape counter.

The tape counter reads out directly in minutes and seconds, and, although it does not claim the accuracy of a true digital clock, we found its rough indications of elapsed time far more useful than the usual arbitrary and nonlinear counter units. Recording levels are indicated on a sixteen-segment peak-reading fluorescent display whose highest illuminated segment remains on for an appreciable period. The display is

calibrated from -40 to $+8$ dB, and it is supplemented at the upper end of its scale by a line of red dots whose length varies with the tape selected and which shows the maximum recommended recording level.

Four pushbuttons are used to select proper bias and equalization for metal, ferrichrome, CrO_2 -equivalent, and ferric-oxide cassettes. For Type I (ferric) tapes an additional adjustable bias control is included. This control has a detent for today's premium ferrics and a marking at a slightly lower bias level for use with older or more economical formulations.

A dual concentric knob controls the recording level, and a second knob adjusts the volume at the front-panel headphone jack without affecting the output from the rear jacks. No facilities for microphone recording are provided. Additional switches are used to insert a multiplex filter for recording FM broadcasts and to permit the user to activate the deck via an external timer. A remote-control accessory is also available. The rear panel contains only the customary line-level input and output phono jacks. Overall, the Sony TC-K555 measures 17 inches wide, 4 inches high, and $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches deep; it weighs $13\frac{1}{2}$ pounds. Price: \$420.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** Our sample of the TC-K555 was factory adjusted for Sony SHF (ferric), Sony UCX-S (CrO_2 -equivalent), Sony FeCr (ferrichrome), and Sony Metallic (metal) tapes, and all easily met the published specifications. In two cases slightly better performance was obtained by substituting TDK SA-X (CrO_2 -type) and Fuji FR (metal), so we used these as the references for our evaluation. At the same time we tried a large number of other

formulations in the various categories (from Maxell, BASF, Fuji, and Memorex), and all gave practically identical performance.

Playback frequency response, shown in the lower section of the accompanying graph, was measured using the new IEC-standard BASF test tapes, and it was extremely flat ($+2$, -1 dB from 31.5 to 18,000 Hz). On an overall record-playback basis the frequency response for all four of the reference tapes (measured at the customary -20 -dB level) was ± 2 dB from approximately 30 to 18,000 Hz. Especially noteworthy was the lack of the usual "camelback" dip in response in the 1,000- to 5,000-Hz region normally found with ferrichrome tapes. At a 0-dB recording level the FeCr tape's response did fall off seriously (and typically) in the high-frequency area, and the Fuji FR metal showed an extraordinary ability to resist treble saturation, being down only 5 dB at approximately 16,000 Hz.

At a 0-dB recording level a standard 315-Hz tone produced 0.55 per cent third-harmonic distortion with the ferric Sony SHF formulation, 2 per cent with TDK SA-X (high-bias), 0.87 per cent with Sony's ferrichrome FeCr, and 1 per cent with Fuji FR (metal). To reach the traditional 3 per cent distortion level used for signal-to-noise measurements required increasing the input levels by 3.2, 1.1, 5.8, and 5.6 dB for the four tapes, respectively. On an unweighted basis, with no noise reduction employed, the respective signal-to-noise ratios measured 54, 54.6, 58.7, and 56.4 dB. Adding the effects of Dolby-B noise reduction and CCIR/ARM weighting increased these numbers to 65.3, 66.7, 70.8, and 68.2 dB.

(Continued on page 46)

PERFECT GIFTS



***For the person owning records
from Abba to Zappa.***

The Discwasher® DiscKit includes the D4™ Record Care System, the SC-2™ Stylus Care System, Zerostat® Anti-Static Instrument, and the Discorganizer™ Walnut Storage Tray with dustcover.

The Discwasher® DiscSet includes the D4 Record Care System, the SC-2 Stylus Care System, and a walnut storage tray.

For your free copy of "Guide to Record Care", write:

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A DIVISION OF JENSEN an ESMARK Company

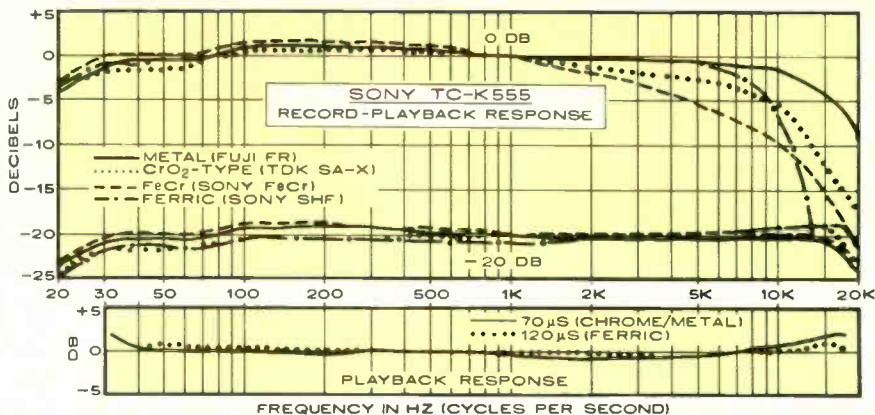
CIRCLE NO. 20 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Dolby-C noise reduction (again using CCIR/ARM weighting) increased the respective signal-to-noise ratios to 74, 75.2, 80, and 76.8 dB, which is truly outstanding performance.

The wow-and-flutter of the TC-K555 measured 0.05 per cent on the usual weighted root-mean-square (wrms) basis and 0.08 per cent according to the DIN peak-weighted standard. Input sensitivity was 93 mV for a 0-dB indication, which produced a 0.43 volt output at the line-output jacks. The Dolby-level indication on the recording-level display was perfectly accurate, and Dolby tracking error was within ± 1 dB for either Dolby-B or Dolby-C at -20- and -30-dB levels throughout the frequency range of the deck. A C-60 cassette took between 82 and 85 seconds to go from end to end in either fast-forward or rewind modes.

● **Comment.** As its measured performance would suggest, the TC-K555 acquitted itself more than admirably both in playing top-quality prerecorded cassettes and in dubbing discs, FM, and master tapes. With Dolby-C switched in, the last vestiges of tape noise simply disappeared, and it introduced no objectionable side effects that we could discover.

No less impressive than the TC-K555's



The upper curves indicate overall record-playback response at the manufacturer's indicated 0-dB recording level using the tapes designated on the graph. In the center are the same measurements recorded at -20 dB relative to the upper curves, a level conventionally used for tape-deck frequency-response measurements. Bottom curves show playback response from calibrated test tapes and indicate performance with prerecorded tapes.

sonic performance, however, was the evident attention that had been given to its "human engineering." It is an exceptionally comfortable deck to live with and use. The counter is genuinely useful; the pushbuttons have an excellent feel to them; the overall illumination and choice of LED indicators

is right; the mechanical noise level from the machine is low. And at the price—between \$100 and \$150 less than we guessed while testing it—the Sony TC-K555 is a real bargain in a cassette deck. —Craig Stark

Circle 142 on reader service card



JVC R-X40 AM/FM Stereo Receiver

THE JVC Model R-X40 AM/FM stereo receiver is rated at 40 watts per channel output into 8-ohm loads between 20 and 20,000 Hz with no more than 0.008 per cent total harmonic distortion. Its power amplifier employs the JVC "Super-A" circuit, which dynamically varies the operating bias of the output transistors to eliminate the crossover distortion sometimes associated with class-AB or class-B amplifier operation. The Super-A circuit combines the efficiency of a class-AB circuit with the extremely low distortion of class A.

The preamplifier section of the R-X40 features the five-band graphic equalizer (in lieu of conventional tone controls) that has

long been a hallmark of JVC receivers. This "S.E.A." (Sound Effects Amplifier) control system provides individual adjustments of ± 12 dB in bands centered at 63, 250, 1,000, 4,000, and 16,000 Hz. The lightly detented vertical slider controls have strongly detented center positions. A front-panel pushbutton connects the S.E.A. equalizer circuits into the tape-recording outputs for recording an equalized signal.

The receiver is tuned by a quartz-controlled frequency synthesizer in 0.1-MHz steps for FM and 10-kHz steps for AM. Pushbuttons cause the tuning to scan upward or downward in frequency. There are two tuning modes: automatic and manual.

The automatic setting with the MODE/SCAN button out provides automatic switching between stereo and mono FM reception. In this mode the tuner scans in the selected direction (with the audio output muted) until a signal of sufficient strength is encountered; then it stops and unmutes. When the tuning MODE/SCAN button is pressed in (for manual tuning) the receiver operates only in mono. Each touch of a tuning button steps the receiver through one frequency increment; holding the button in causes it to scan rapidly until it is released. The interstation-noise muting is disabled in this mode. The same tuning modes are available

(Continued on page 50)

No matter what you've heard, it is possible to make a high quality speaker at low cost.



The Boston Acoustics A40

Most speaker manufacturers like to talk about their most expensive systems. When money is no object, they can build in whatever they need to get the kind of quality they can brag about.

Unfortunately, that kind of quality doesn't usually filter down to the bottom of the line. Less money, less quality.

At Boston Acoustics, we think that every speaker that bears our name should be built to our top of the line standards. That's why we want you to know about our least expensive speaker... the A40.

By making intelligent choices, we designed and built a minispeaker that delivers exceptional performance at a very reasonable price.

For example, we used wood grain vinyl over non-resonant particle board instead of wood veneer, because it saved money and didn't make a difference in sound quality. We used an expensive $\frac{3}{4}$ inch ferrofluid cooled dome tweeter because that did make a difference. And we designed a unique $6\frac{1}{2}$ inch long-throw woofer with a natural high frequency rolloff because it didn't require costly crossover circuitry.

When *Stereo Review* critic Julian Hirsch reviewed the result, here's some of what he had to say about the A40:

"The A40 comes surprisingly close to matching the essential sound quality and character of the best and most esteemed speakers at a small fraction of their cost..."

...very few forward-radiating systems we have seen can match its dispersion..."

In respect to sound quality per dollar, the A40 is surely one of the most cost-effective speaker designs we have seen in recent times; we are impressed."

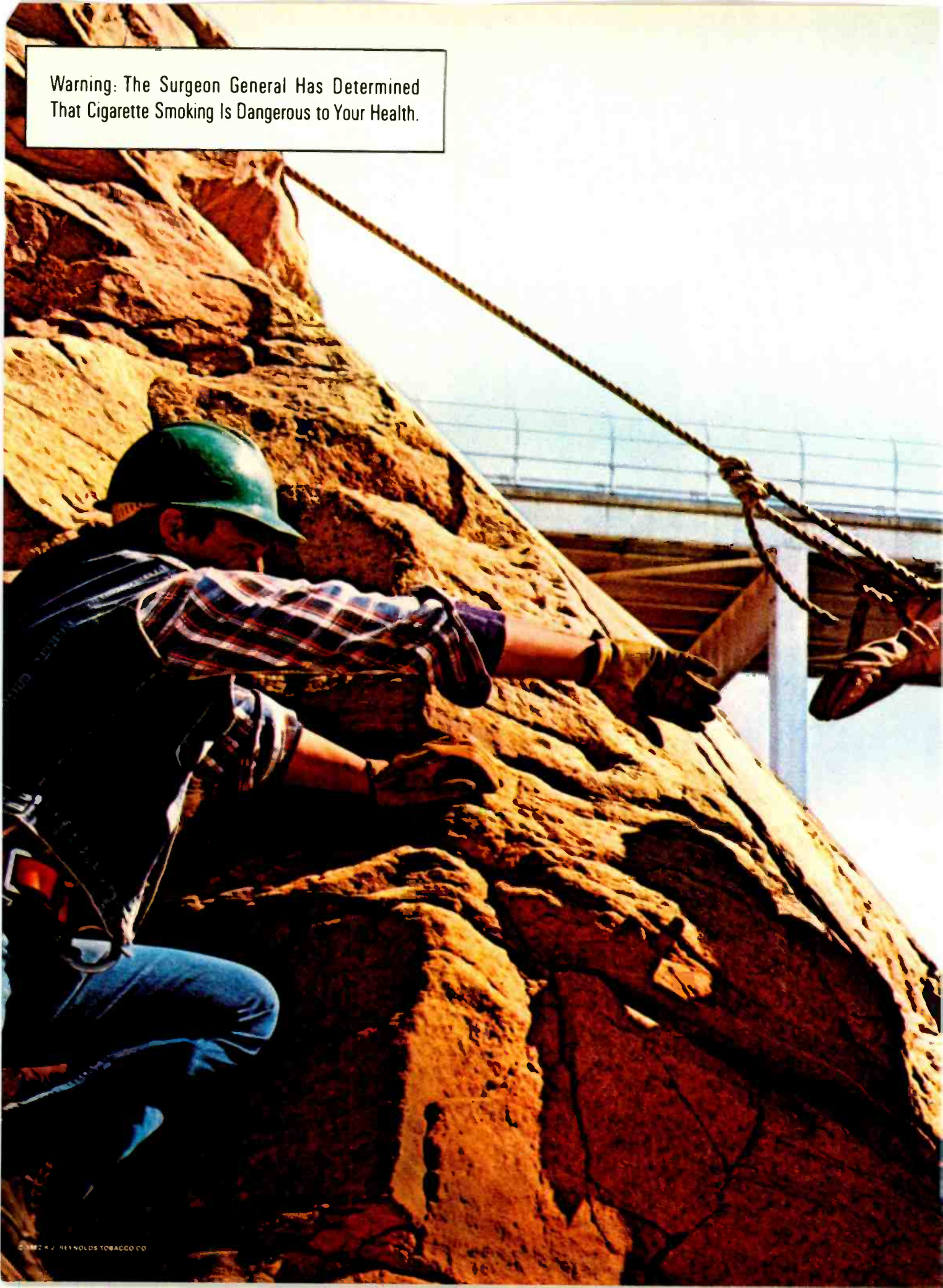
We think you'll be impressed, too. The A40 is priced at \$75.

For a complete copy of what Mr. Hirsch had to say, and where to hear the A40, write to us.

Boston Acoustics
130 Condor Street
Boston, MA 02128
(617) 569-5114

Boston Acoustics speakers are available at all price levels, up to \$375. The A40 is our least expensive speaker. If it's as good as the critics say — and it is — imagine what the rest of the line sounds like!

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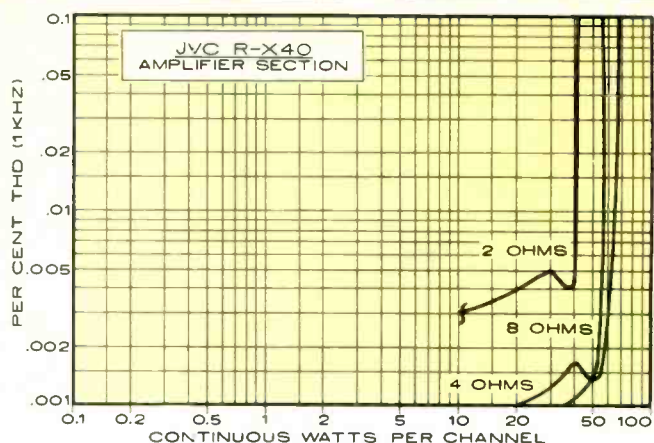
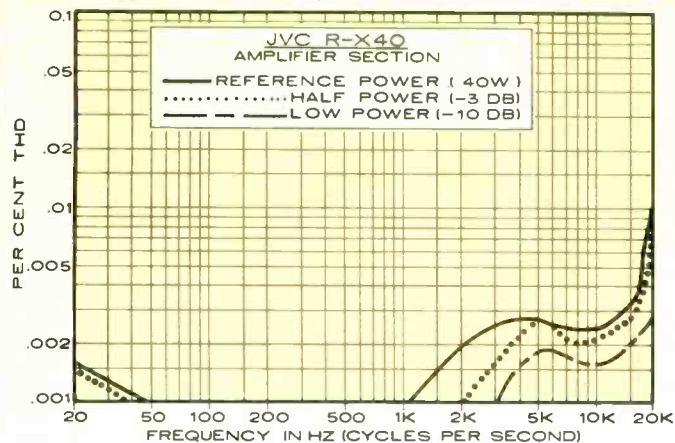


ULTRA LIGHTS: 4 mg. "tar", 0.4 mg. nicotine, LIGHTS: 11 mg. "tar", 0.9 mg. nicotine, KING: 15 mg. "tar", 1.1 mg. nicotine, av. per cigarette, FTC Report DEC. '81.

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in AM reception (though without stereo, of course). An interesting feature of the JVC tuning system is the audible "beep" that accompanies each frequency step. When a station is acquired (in automatic) there is a longer beep, followed by a short one when the receiver unmutes.

The R-X40 has six tuning-memory buttons (presets), each usable for one FM and one AM channel. A frequency is put into memory by tuning the receiver to that frequency, pressing the MEMORY button located between the tuning buttons, and then pressing one of the channel-memory buttons (each of which has a red light that shows when it has been selected). When turned on, the receiver returns to the station last tuned in.

Pushbuttons are used for input selection (AM, FM, PHONO, VIDEO/AUX, and TAPE), as well as for activation of either or both of the two pairs of speaker outputs, loudness compensation, and power. Horizontal sliders are used for the volume and balance controls. A display window in the center of the panel

shows the tuner frequency (with large blue-white numerals) and the presence of a stereo-pilot carrier in a received FM signal. In the left half of the display window are light groups for signal strength and output power, as well as a red TAPE MONITOR light.

On the rear apron of the JVC R-X40, in addition to the input and output phono jacks, AM and FM antenna binding posts, and a hinged AM ferrite-rod antenna, there are two sets of speaker-output binding posts, two unswitched a.c. outlets, and a slide switch that changes the AM channel spacing from the 10 kHz used in this country to the 9 kHz used in other parts of the world. A headphone output jack is behind a small plastic door on the front panel.

The JVC R-X40 is 17 1/8 inches wide, 14 1/2 inches deep, and 4 3/8 inches high. Its entire exterior is silver colored. The receiver weighs 14 1/2 pounds. The suggested retail price is \$350.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** After the amplifier was preconditioned (resulting in

only a moderate temperature increase above the output-transistor heat sinks), the output waveform clipped at 55 watts per channel into 8 ohms, 74 watts into 4 ohms, and 41.4 watts into 2 ohms, with both channels driven at 1,000 Hz.

The 1,000-Hz harmonic distortion was too low to measure at most power outputs, being masked by random noise or hum levels (both of which were low). With 8-ohm loads, the distortion reached 0.0005 per cent at 40 watts, 0.0013 per cent at 50 watts, and 0.14 per cent at 55 watts. With 4-ohm loads, the distortion was 0.0013 per cent at 30 watts, rising to 0.0032 per cent at 60 watts and 0.19 per cent at 70 watts. The 2-ohm distortion measured between 0.0032 and 0.005 per cent for power outputs from 10 to 40 watts. With the pulsed input signal of the dynamic-headroom measurement, the maximum output was 66.4 watts into 8 ohms, 92.2 watts into 4 ohms, and 46.8 watts into 2 ohms. The IHF clipping headroom was 1.38 dB, and the dynamic headroom was 2.2 dB (both for 8-ohm loads).

The distortion over the audio frequency range, at all power levels, was also extremely low. It was completely unmeasurable at one-tenth rated power, and at full rated power and half power the readings were less than 0.005 per cent from 20 to 15,000 Hz. At 20,000 Hz, we had to make a THD+N measurement (total harmonic distortion plus noise), since the distortion harmonics exceeded the frequency range of our spectrum analyzer, and the inclusion of noise resulted in values from 0.01 per cent at 40 watts to 0.028 per cent at 4 watts.

The slew factor was 3.3, and the amplifier was stable with reactive loads (its IHF reactive-load rating was 1.18 dB at 63 Hz). The IHF intermodulation distortion, measured with inputs of 18 and 19 kHz, was literally undetectable, being lower than the -100-dB noise "floor" of our measurement system. The amplifier required an input of 24 millivolts (mV) through the high-level input or 0.29 mV through the phono input for a reference output of 1 watt. The respective A-weighted noise levels (referred to 1 watt) were -78 and -74 dB. The phono input overloaded with a 110-mV input at 1,000 Hz and with inputs between 90 and 115 mV over the 20- to 20,000-Hz range. The phono input impedance was 57,000 ohms in parallel with 50 picofarads.

The audio response was perfectly flat



"... And if by chance you happen to have a 0.5-ohm speaker, this baby will put out 1,800 watts per channel!"

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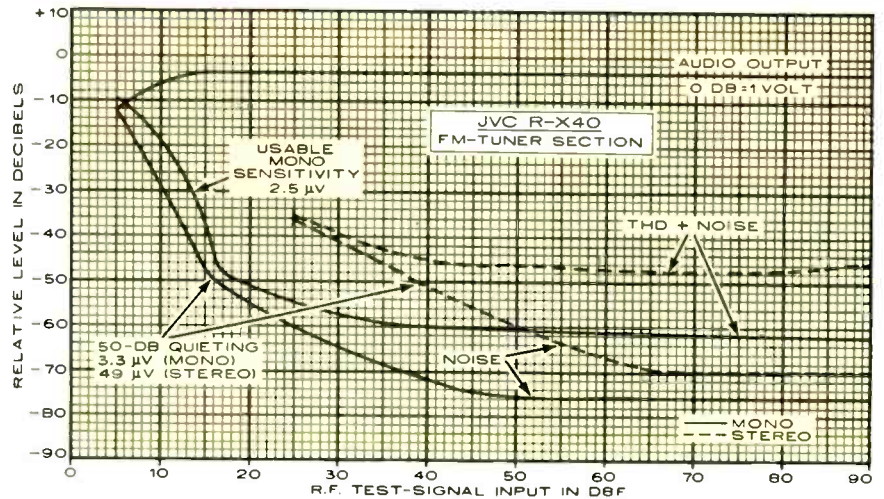
test reports

with the S.E.A. controls centered, and when the controls were adjusted, the system had the specified effect on the frequency response. The RIAA phono equalization was flat within 1 dB overall from 20 to 20,000 Hz, and it was not significantly affected by cartridge inductance. The loudness compensation was conventional, boosting both low and high frequencies moderately as the volume setting was reduced.

The FM tuner had a usable sensitivity (mono) of 13.5 dBf (2.5 microvolts, or μV). The stereo sensitivity was determined by the switching threshold of 25 dBf (10 μV). In mono the 50-dB quieting sensitivity was 15.6 dBf (3.3 μV), and in stereo it was 38.8 dBf (49 μV). The distortion at 65 dBf (1,000 μV) was 0.087 per cent in mono and 0.46 per cent in stereo, and the corresponding noise levels were -75.5 and -69.5 dB. The mono IHF IM distortion, with modulating frequencies of 14 and 15 kHz, was -64 dB for the 1,000-Hz difference frequency and -46 dB for the third-order components at 13 and 16 kHz (the latter figure is relative to the levels of the high-frequency tones, the former figure to 100 per cent modulation at 1,000 Hz). In stereo, the 1,000-Hz component was -56 dB, but the others were unchanged. In addition, there were the usual number of low-level intermodulation products, mostly between -60 and -70 dB.

The capture ratio was a very good 0.9 dB at 65 dBf. AM rejection was 55 dB at 45 dBf (100 μV) input. The image rejection was 51 dB, alternate-channel selectivity was 63 dB, and adjacent-channel selectivity was 9.4 dB. The 19-kHz pilot carrier in the audio was at a low -72-dB level, and the power-line hum was -68 dB (principally at 180 Hz).

The FM-tuner frequency response was within ± 1 dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz. The



stereo separation was in the range of 37 to 42 dB from 40 to 7,000 Hz, falling to about 30 dB at 15,000 Hz. The frequency response of the AM tuner section was down 6 dB at 140 and 2,400 Hz.

● **Comment.** Although the sonic benefits of unmeasurably low distortion are debatable, it is impressive to find the amplifier of the JVC R-X40, a relatively inexpensive receiver, producing distortion levels well below the ability to our test instruments to detect, let alone measure. In fact, the entire audio amplifier section of the receiver would do credit to a much more expensive product. Unlike many competing receivers, this one is capable of functioning quite well with 2-ohm loads, so that one need have no worry about driving two pairs of 4-ohm speakers.

The tuner section is satisfactory and will

certainly not limit the sound quality from the receiver (that limit, as usual, is likely to be set by the FM stations and their program sources). In several respects (notably its stereo distortion) the FM tuner does not match the superb quality of the amplifier section, but from the user's standpoint it is always smooth, quiet, and easy to use. The signal-strength and power-output indicators on the front panel are little more than cosmetic features, however, and provide little useful information.

All in all, we found the JVC R-X40 to be enjoyable to use, attractively styled, and fine sounding. Few people require more features than it offers, and many aspects of its electrical performance are unmatched, let alone surpassed, in other receivers at far higher prices.

—Julian D. Hirsch

Circle 143 on reader service card



Scott 558T AM/FM Stereo Tuner

THE Scott 558T AM/FM tuner is a compact unit constructed in the low-profile format featured in a number of hi-fi product lines. Since it has digital-synthesis station tuning and fixed audio-output levels, it has no knobs or dials. All tuning is done by pressing either the UP or DOWN tuning button or one of the seven memory buttons (after station frequencies have been entered into the tuner's computer memories).

A button selects either AUTO or MANUAL tuning modes. In AUTO, a single touch of one of the tuning buttons causes the tuner to scan in the selected direction until it receives a signal, at which point it stops and remains tuned exactly to that frequency. In MANUAL, each momentary touch of one of the tuning buttons advances the tuning one channel in that direction (the tuning intervals are 200 kHz for FM and 10 kHz for

AM). If the button is held in, the tuner scans rapidly, stopping when it is released. The interstation-noise muting is disabled in the MANUAL mode, which can be helpful when trying to receive a very weak FM signal, but is operative at all other times (while the tuner is shifting between channels, in either the AM or FM mode, it is effectively muted).

Other buttons on the panel operate the HI

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Introducing UCX-S with Wide Fidelity Sound.



Sony's revolutionary UCX-S has the widest dynamic range of any high-bias tape; it has actually *expanded* recording capacity.

We call it Wide Fidelity Sound.

With UCX-S, you can record at higher volume levels with less distortion than any other high-bias tape. So you can also capture the soft sounds buried before in background noise.

UCX-S has unsurpassed frequency response in the low and middle ranges. And



at the delicate high frequency ranges, the enhanced responsiveness of UCX-S gives you exceptionally beautiful high notes.

The incredible specifications include Retentivity and Squareness higher by far than any other high-bias tape. Retentivity: 1800 Gauss. Squareness: 93%, an astounding figure.

Of course, the real test comes when you lean back, close your eyes and listen. You'll hear *every* instrument. You'll hear more than you've ever heard on a high-bias tape. You'll hear it on UCX-S, with Wide Fidelity Sound.

SONY

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CIRCLE NO. 51 ON READER SERVICE CARD

test reports

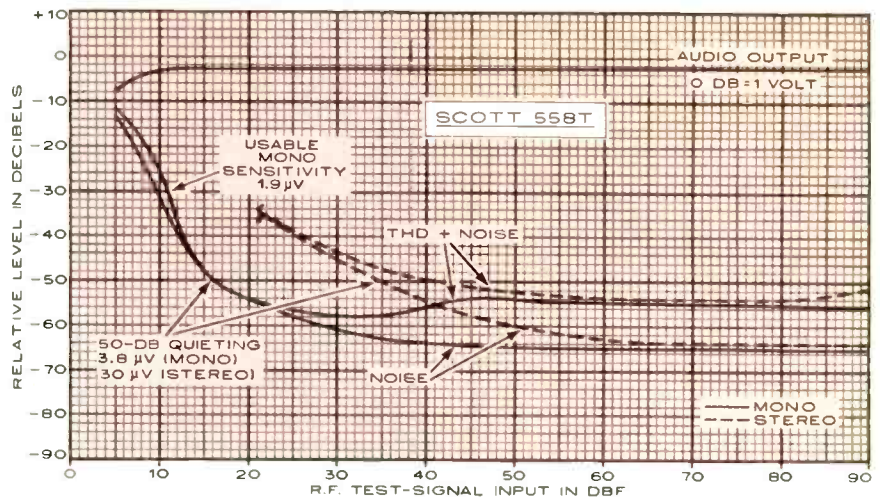
BLEND circuit, for reducing noise on weak stereo FM signals by sacrificing some high-frequency channel separation, and switch the tuner to the MONO mode, useful when a stereo signal is too weak for noise-free reception even with the HI BLEND. Two mechanically interlocked buttons serve as AM and FM band selectors, and power is switched by a large square button at the left of the panel.

The memory system of the Scott 558T operates like those on most digital-synthesis tuners and receivers. After a channel has been selected with the tuning buttons, the MEMORY button is pressed, followed by one of the numbered buttons to its right (the seven buttons each store one FM and one AM frequency, for a total of fourteen). Subsequently touching any of the buttons instantly returns the tuner to its stored frequency. When not in use, the tuner should be kept plugged into an a.c. outlet to keep the memories alive; they will be retained for at least 24 hours without power, so occasional brief power outages will not require resetting them.

Behind a window on the left side of the panel are a number of blue-white fluorescent displays that show the complete operating status of the tuner at all times. The tuned frequency, for either AM or FM, is shown by $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-high numerals. To their left appears either AM or FM to show the selected band. To the right of the frequency readout, either "kHz" or "MHz" also appears, depending on the selected band.

Further to the right are a TUNING display, which lights when a station is received, and a sloping line of light segments whose length is proportional to signal strength. In a row across the bottom of the display window are the numerals 1 through 7, to show which of the memories is in use at any time, and MEMORY, to indicate that the correspondingly named button has been pressed when one is storing a frequency.

On the rear apron of the Scott 558T there are antenna terminals for 300- and 75-ohm FM antennas and an AM wire antenna as



well as a hinged ferrite-rod AM antenna. The audio outputs are through an integral cable pair fitted with phone plugs at its free end. The Scott 558T tuner is 17 inches wide, $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches deep, and $1\frac{7}{8}$ inches high, and it weighs about $7\frac{3}{4}$ pounds. Price: \$279.95.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The usable FM sensitivity of the Scott 558T was 10.8 dBf (1.8 microvolts, or μV) in mono. The stereo sensitivity was set by the switching threshold of 21.5 dBf (6.5 μV). The 50-dB quieting sensitivity in mono was 17 dBf (3.8 μV), and in stereo it was 35 dBf (30 μV).

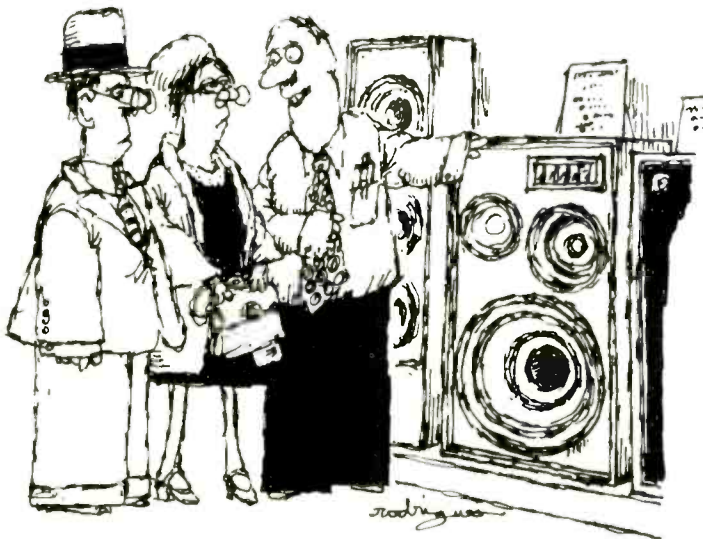
At an input of 65 dBf (1,000 μV) the tuner distortion was 0.18 per cent in mono and 0.2 percent in stereo. The respective noise levels were -65 and -63.5 dB. The frequency response was almost ruler-flat, within 0.5 dB overall from 30 to 15,000 Hz. The channel separation was about 52 dB in the midrange and greater than 42.5 dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz.

The capture ratio was an excellent 0.58 dB at 65 dBf input, and the AM rejection

was 54 dB at 45 dBf (100 μV) input. The image rejection was a good 81 dB. Alternate-channel selectivity was 74.5 dB, and adjacent-channel selectivity was 5 dB. The muting (and stereo) threshold was 21.5 dBf (6.5 μV). The 19-kHz pilot-carrier leakage was a low -78 dB, and the tuner hum was exceptionally low at -72 dB. The IHF intermodulation distortion was measured with two modulating tones, at 14 and 15 kHz, whose peak amplitude was equal to 100 per cent modulation of the FM carrier. The second-order (difference-tone) distortion at 1,000 Hz was -62 dB referred to full modulation at that frequency, and the third-order (13- and 16-kHz) components were -55 dB referred to full modulation at that frequency. The readings were the same for mono and stereo, although in stereo there were the usual large number of additional spurious products visible on the spectrum analyzer (their amplitudes were between -60 and -80 dB, so they were not audible in listening tests). The only measurement made on the AM section of the 558T was of its frequency response, which was down 6 dB at 30 and 3,500 Hz.

● **Comment.** The Scott 558T is an attractive, full-featured, and compact tuner that operated perfectly during an extended use-test period. Reviewing its measured performance and comparing our data with the data on the same unit as measured by Scott, we found that our measurements essentially confirmed theirs (surpassing them in some cases, such as the image rejection and capture ratio). The only significant difference between the two sets of data was in the tuner noise level, with our readings being about 4 dB higher than theirs. This is a minor difference, given the variability between signal generators and other test conditions. When we listened to the tuner, we found that the background noise was not noticeably different from that of some other tuners with slightly better measured performance. In sum, the very modest price of the Scott 558T buys a thoroughly modern and very good-sounding tuner with practically all the features of much more expensive units.

—Julian D. Hirsch



"... Sure, lady, \$1,450 is a lot of money, but wouldn't you rather have him home listening to a pair of VX-7's than out every night on monkey business?"

Circle 144 on reader service card

Toshiba's CX receivers give you so much music, there's no room for noise.

Toshiba's new CX receivers can do more for music than you've ever heard.

But to understand just how much, it's necessary to understand two things: record surface noise and dynamic range.

WHERE DOES RECORD SURFACE NOISE COME FROM?

Not from the music, but from the record itself. Other than dust on the record, the reason you hear noise is that it lies in the same grooves as the music.

In the past, you had to go out of your way to try to silence this problem, with everything from expensive audio equipment to premium audiophile discs.

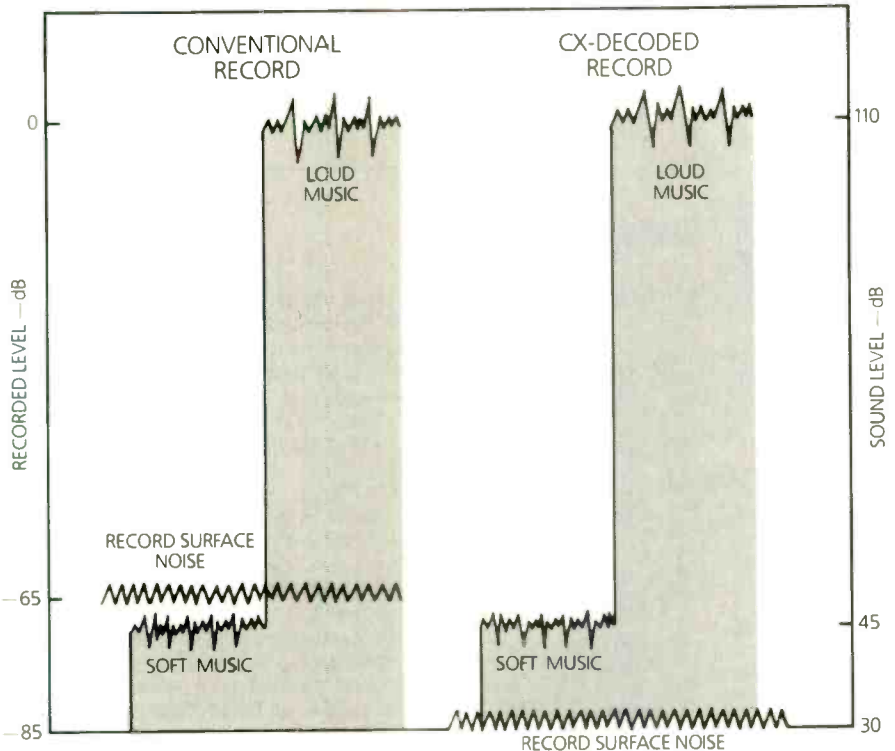
But now you don't have to go any further.

CX RECORDS ARE WHAT YOU'VE BEEN WAITING TO HEAR.

CX records are the latest development in audio technology. CX is a coding process that actually extends the dynamic range of music, and in the process virtually eliminates record surface noise.

Dynamic range is simply the difference in sound level between the loudest and softest passages of music. The dynamic range of live music is usually around 85 dB. But the same music on an ordinary record only approaches 65 dB.

What CX does, is give you the 20 dB of sound you would otherwise miss. Loud passages are louder, soft passages are softer.



And because there's more room for music, there's less room for noise.

YOU HAVEN'T HEARD EVERYTHING YET.

You can play a CX record on an ordinary receiver and it will sound ordinary. But we know you won't settle for that.

That's why Toshiba has included a CX decoder circuit in our new receivers, so you can hear the startling difference CX makes.

Close your eyes and you might think you're in a concert hall. That's how close a CX record comes to reproduction of live sound.

And we've given you a lot more than just a CX switch on our new receivers. Our SA-R3 CX Receiver has 40 watts per channel, with a digital-synthesized tuning system and 12 station pre-sets.

You'll get 25 watts per channel from our SA-R2 CX Receiver, along with servo-lock tuning.

Now all you have to do is listen to our CX receivers for yourself. We think you'll be amazed at what you'll hear.

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CIRCLE NO. 57 ON READER SERVICE CARD



Going on Record

By Christie Barter



Larry Klein

LIVING WITH CHANGE

NEARLY a hundred years ago *Publishers Weekly*, still, today, the leading trade publication in its field, warned book publishers that their days of prosperity were numbered, that Americans would soon forsake books for the bicycle, which was enjoying ever-greater popularity at the time.

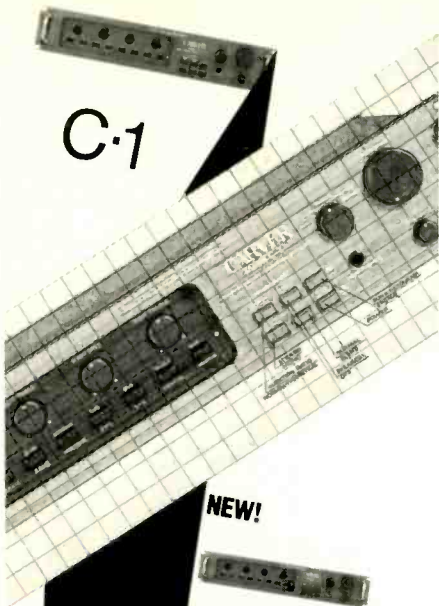
The same dire warnings are being sounded today regarding the threat posed to the record business by video games. And, indeed, the growth of a company like Atari over the last few years, with its Asteroids, Defender, and Pac-Man games, is truly phenomenal. At the same time the major record companies, with an enormous stake in what eighteen- to thirty-year-olds do with their discretionary income, have suffered a series of Black Fridays. One such, late this past summer, prompted a front-page story in the *New York Times* leading to a banner headline within proclaiming, "Pop Music's Heyday Is Said to Be Coming to an End Amid Slumping Sales." Not only did it seem that the bottom had dropped out of record sales, but rock-concert promoters were chalking up the summer of 1982 as a near disaster. Kids with perhaps even less money to spend this year than last were pumping what quarters they had into video games in arcades and on boardwalks from coast to coast instead of buying records or concert tickets. Added to this, and potentially more serious, was (and is) the extent to which home taping eats into pop record sales; deadlier still, of course, is the burgeoning rent-a-record shop.

But is the total picture so unrelievedly grim? Are there no bright spots? Well, yes. The classical end of the business, for one thing, seems to be holding its own pretty well, and more than that in some quarters. Although one classical-label spokesman told me that it would be "unrealistic to say that we have been unscathed" by the general decline in record sales, another said that his label's sales this year are up nearly 40 per cent over last year's, which is possibly only qualifiedly realistic. But it stands to reason that if pop sales are significantly depressed, steady classical sales will look considerably better in comparison, and prerecorded cassette sales, in all categories, are making constant gains.

Meanwhile, at a meeting of the Concert Music Broadcasters Association in Lenox, Massachusetts, in August, Robert Conrad, then president of the CMBA, stated that "Economically, classical-music radio appears to have never been in better shape. . . . In an informal survey . . . of some two dozen stations, [all but one] indicated that their business in the first six months of 1982 was ahead of the same period in 1981. The increases ranged from 1 per cent to 60 per cent." As for live music, the Tanglewood Festival reported that ticket sales this summer outpaced last year's by 10 per cent; the Santa Fe Opera claimed a 30 per cent increase!

Ah yes, but that's classical music. And, speaking of radio, the so-called AOR (for album-oriented-rock) stations have been cited as severely endangering the health of the pop record business. These stations, so the argument goes, have become conservative and resistant to new music from the heavy-metal set; record companies can't afford the risks, therefore, of launching new acts and thus stimulating or renewing consumer interest in What's Happening. "Okay," says a Warners executive, "but this overlooks the fact that music television [MTV] via cable has gone a long way toward exposing new acts." A Los Angeles-based group with a promotional film or video clip may be seen (and heard) in Kansas City, say, even if the radio outlets in that city have not seen fit to play that group's records. And surely this is happening more and more across the country.

WHAT it all comes down to, I think, is that the record companies must take advantage of this period of adjustment and recognize that they're in the business to sell music. Obviously the demographics, and with them the tastes, of the audience they're selling this music to have shifted in recent years (the Baby Boom buyers have grown up, for one thing), and the problems introduced by a rapidly accelerating technology must be met with imaginative, even "unthinkable," solutions. After all, the book business had to make these adjustments some time ago and has learned to live with, perhaps even to love, the bicycle. □



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A quality instrument replete with precision gold-band laser-trimmed resistors, life-time lubricated sealed switches, G-10 glass epoxy boards, machined solid metal parts and vapor deposited 24-Karat gold contacts, the C-1 provides moving coil input, soft touch controls, an infrasonic filter, a headphone amplifier, dual tape monitors, variable turnover tone controls, silent muting, and an external processor loop.

Its straight-wire engineering assures that a watt of input leaves with just 0.000000000251 watts of distortion. Or less.

If your goal is new levels of detail, openness and three-dimensionality in an audiophile preamplifier, you must hear the surprisingly affordable C-1.

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It's quite a claim, we realize.

But our goal of constantly perfecting sound has resulted in the first line of car stereos which offers true high fidelity specifications, and therefore true high fidelity sound reproduction.

So for the first time, the uncompromising listener can hear music in the car — and feel truly at home.

As an example, let's take a look at Concord's latest, the HPL-130.

lasting Sen-alloy tape heads in car stereo, and the playback frequency response of the HPL-130 is something you really have to hear to believe (out to 20,000 Hz).

To ensure enough power to take advantage of all these features, there's a superb amplifier which — like all the others in the Concord line — is designed with exactly the same high fidelity specifications as



fader which lets you install a front/rear speaker system and adjust the balance without loss of power or frequency response.

Quite a list! But then the HPL-130 is quite a machine.

It all adds up to the first car cassette deck that can accurately reproduce your DBX recorded tapes through its built-in amplifiers, and perform comparably to the high fidelity equipment in your home.

So as you perhaps suspected, at around \$600 the HPL-130 costs a little more than average.

But as with all Concord equipment, we think you'll find the difference is worth the difference.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Tuner Section

Sensitivity	30dB Quieting
	1.0 Microvolts 11.2 dBf
Stereo separation:	min. 35dB
Frequency responses:	± 2dB
	30-16,000 Hz

Tape Section

Frequency response:	± 2dB
Standard tape:	30-15,000 Hz
Metal tape:	30-20,000 Hz
Wow & flutter	0.08% WRMS

Amplifier Section

Maximum power	25 watts/Ch
High fidelity power:	12 watts min. RMS
	per ch into
	4 ohms, 30-20,000 Hz with
	0.8% THD max

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CONCORD

Anything else is a compromise.

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Tarzana, California 91356 (213) 344-9335



First and foremost, it features Concord's exclusive signal processor circuitry which (with our plug-in HPQ 90 adaptor) lets you enjoy the superb high fidelity of DBX recorded tapes. Alternatively, you can plug in a stereo imager or equalizer for further sound enhancement.

But quite apart from its exclusive DBX capability, the HPL-130's other features take it far beyond the current state of the art.

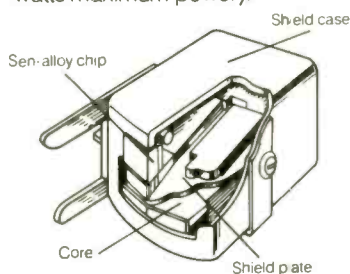
Take the tuner; it's a quartz digital four gang unit which offers significantly improved selectivity and performance over the three gang tuners used by our competitors, plus automatic scan and a 10-station preset memory.

Then there's the HPL-130's unidirectional tape mechanism, continuing Concord's 22-year-old reputation for excellence in this area with outstanding wow & flutter and speed regulation characteristics, along with the convenience of power-off auto eject.

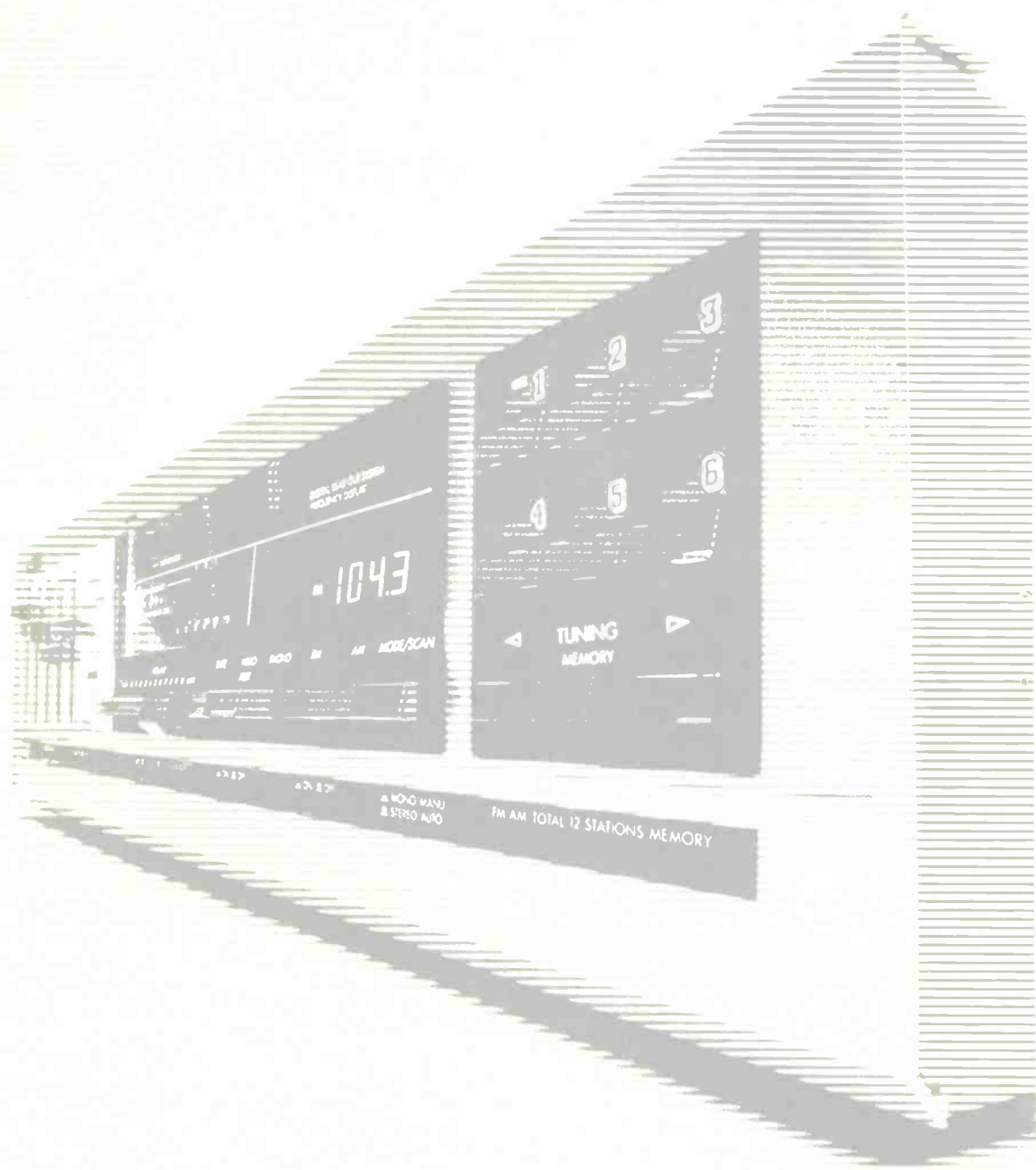
Concord originated the concept of using high performance long-

home amplifiers. That's why we can give you complete specifications: 12 watts per channel into 4 ohms from 30-20,000 Hz with less than 0.8% distortion.

And if you'd like more power than that, just plug in our new HPA-25 amplifier for a 48-watt system (100 watts maximum power).



Other important HPL-130 features include a built-in bass equalizer for overcoming bass speaker deficiencies, equalizer level, loudness and treble cut/boost controls, Dolby noise reduction, speaker pop muting circuitry, adjustable dual line outputs, and a low level preamplifier front/rear



RECEIVERS

A practical guide for the serious shopper

MOST audiophiles used to look down on receivers, considering them suitable only for use in a secondary system or for recommending to less-demanding friends. But over the past decade the receiver has evolved to the point where current state-of-the-art units compare very well with separate components in performance and versatility, and the *average* quality level is high enough to make a receiver a more attractive choice than ever for first-time buyers and even for many audiophiles with space limitations or budgetary constraints. The receiver's combination of several components in a single chassis saves money, reduces the often bewildering variety of buying decisions a stereo consumer must make, and simplifies the process of installing the system for optimal convenience and appearance.

Choosing a receiver wisely doesn't require extensive research or mastering a lot of technical jargon. The main thing is to keep in mind that your receiver is only *part* of a complete hi-fi system and to evaluate possible choices in terms of their compatibility with the other components—loudspeakers, record player and cartridge, and tape deck(s)—that you already have or plan to buy. Checking just a few key specifications and making some simple, unambiguous tests should tell you whether a particular combination of a receiver and other components is going to give you the kind of performance you want from your system. Beyond that, you can base your choice on such personal criteria as appearance, convenience features, and price.

Any receiver consists of three sections: a power amplifier, a tuner (FM only or AM and FM), and a preamplifier. We'll consider each of these sections separately, indicating what you should look for—and what you can ignore—in the available specs and features. But it's important to stress one basic principle at the beginning: so far as the *sound* of your system is concerned, as long as you operate within the receiver's power limitations, the other elements—particularly the loudspeakers and the phono cartridge, in that order—will affect the overall sound much more strongly than any part of the receiver. This is not to say that all receivers with the same power rating will "sound alike"; some will work better with a given set of speakers and cartridge than others. But that is precisely why you need to evaluate a proposed system as a whole.

The Amplifier Section

Most shoppers automatically classify receivers in terms of rated output power. For example, a typical receiver specification sheet might say, "50 watts continuous power per channel at 0.05 per cent maximum distortion from 20 Hz to 20 kHz with both channels driven into an 8-ohm resistive load." Salespeople and customers alike will probably boil all that down to "a 50-watt receiver." Along with this simplification there is usually a tacit assumption that the power rating is associated with overall quality, so that, for example, a "70-watt" receiver will be substantially better than a "50-watt" one, or even a "65-watt" one, for that matter.

In fact, in shopping for a receiver *you can safely ignore all differences in output power of less than a factor of ten.* Although there is *some* justification for using output power as an informal measure of quality—the tuner and preamplifier specifications are usually better and the number of convenience features greater in higher-powered (and, generally, higher-priced) receivers—there is no reason to believe that, other things being equal, a 70-watt-per-channel receiver will *sound* significantly better than a 50-watt-per-channel receiver—or even that it will make any given pair of loudspeakers play noticeably louder.

To determine how much output power you actually *need*, use the table on page 60. The audible difference between 50 and 70 watts output is small—an all but *inaudible* 1.5 dB. An increase in level of 10 dB, which most listeners rate subjectively as "twice as loud," requires a *tenfold* increase in amplifier power. How loud you like your music, how efficient your speakers are, and the acoustics of your listening room will all make a bigger difference in the maximum available loudness than will doubling the rated power of your receiver.

Another thing to be aware of is that not all receivers can deliver their full rated power into a real loudspeaker rather than an 8-ohm test resistor. Most "8-ohm" speaker systems have an impedance that fluctuates with frequency and often falls to 5 ohms or less at some frequencies. This causes the speakers to demand extra current from the amplifier that it may not be able to supply. In most cases it is the receiver's ability to put out current—which, after all, is what moves the speaker cones—that governs how loud it will play. Unfortunately, output-current capability is almost never listed in the specification sheets.

So how can a buyer identify a receiver

with current limitations? Laboratory test reports in *STEREO REVIEW* and elsewhere can help a great deal. Look at the test results to see how the amplifier section performs into 4 and 2 ohms. An amplifier that is not current-limited will deliver exactly twice the power into 4 ohms that it will into 8 ohms. Few receivers (or separate amplifiers) meet this criterion, but the good ones will deliver at least 50 per cent more power at the lower impedance. (If the unit is current-limited at 4 ohms, the power into 2 ohms will be about half the 4-ohm figure.) This criterion is especially important if you intend to use speakers with a nominal 4-ohm impedance or if you want the receiver to drive more than one pair of speakers.

Given these complications, how can you tell if the receiver you're considering has enough power? Most hi-fi showrooms are quite dead acoustically and therefore require more power for a given sound level than most living rooms do. To be safe, play your proposed system (speakers and receiver) in the showroom just a bit louder than you think you will ever need or want. If the receiver isn't doing the job, the consequences will be obvious even to an untrained ear. When the amplifier reaches its limits and starts to clip the signal waveform or otherwise misbehave, the distortion level will rapidly reach 30 per cent or more. Check the loudness at which that starts to happen and notice whether the onset of the distortion is especially unpleasant sounding or relatively smooth. Some amplifiers overload "gracefully" and simply refuse to play any louder, but others suddenly sound harsh and grating. If the system sounds "clean" when playing louder than you will ever want it to at home, the amplifier section is adequately powered.

Is there such a thing as *too* much power? What if you want the features that come only on a 100-watt receiver, but the speakers you like are rated for a maximum of 50 watts? In that case, you should go ahead and buy the 100-watt receiver. The extra power will most likely be used only on very brief musical peaks, and even a modest speaker system can safely absorb several hundred watts for a few milliseconds with no damage. It may actually be riskier to use an *underpowered* receiver than an overpowered one; some protection circuits, under certain kinds of overload conditions, can cause an amplifier to go into ultrasonic oscillation at full power for long enough to burn out a tweeter.

One important corollary of the above is that *you can safely ignore the distortion specifications for the amplifier*

By E. Brad Meyer

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section. Virtually all reputable receivers today deliver their rated power at any audible frequency with less than 0.2 per cent total distortion of any type, whereas the threshold of perception of harmonic distortion for most listeners on most types of music is between 2 and 6 per cent (no, that's not a misprint). While it is possible to notice a few tenths of a per cent distortion when listening to single-tone sounds, such as a solo flute, in a carefully controlled laboratory situation, such combinations of music and environment do not usually occur in ordinary rooms with ordinary program material.

Similarly, you needn't concern your-

self with special amplifier circuitry whose function is to reduce the distortion at full power from, say, 0.1 to 0.007 per cent. Some of these circuits may help the amplifier section to cope with the varying impedance of loudspeakers in ordinary (not laboratory) conditions; but, if so, their effects will show up in the high-level listening test described above, and you needn't worry about how they were achieved.

The power race that brought us receivers with 250 or more watts per channel is over now; top-of-the-line models typically have ratings of around 120 watts per channel. If you need more power than that, you will have to shop for a separate power amp and preamp or a high-power integrated amplifier. But by looking at the table below you can see that it would probably be more economical just to buy more efficient speakers.

The Tuner Section

We have already stressed the importance of considering the associated components in evaluating a receiver's power-amplifier section realistically. This principle is just as important for evaluating the tuner section. The tuner's performance depends on the user's home location and on the type and placement of his antenna, neither of which can be duplicated in the showroom. Fortunately, that doesn't matter too much, because tuner sections at almost all price levels are very good nowadays. Many have digital frequency-synthesis tuning, which not only eliminates drift but assures that the home user actually obtains the same low distortion levels that laboratory measurements suggest. In non-synthesis tuners, modern versions of the old AFC (automatic frequency control)

The calculations in this table are for a listening room that measures 17 x 25 x 8½ feet, is fairly "dead" acoustically, and contains an area rug, heavy curtains, and several pieces of heavy stuffed furniture. Doubling the volume of the listening room will increase the power required for the same sound volume by about 1.6 times. Adding or removing furniture will have a stronger effect, changing the power requirements over a range of about three to one.

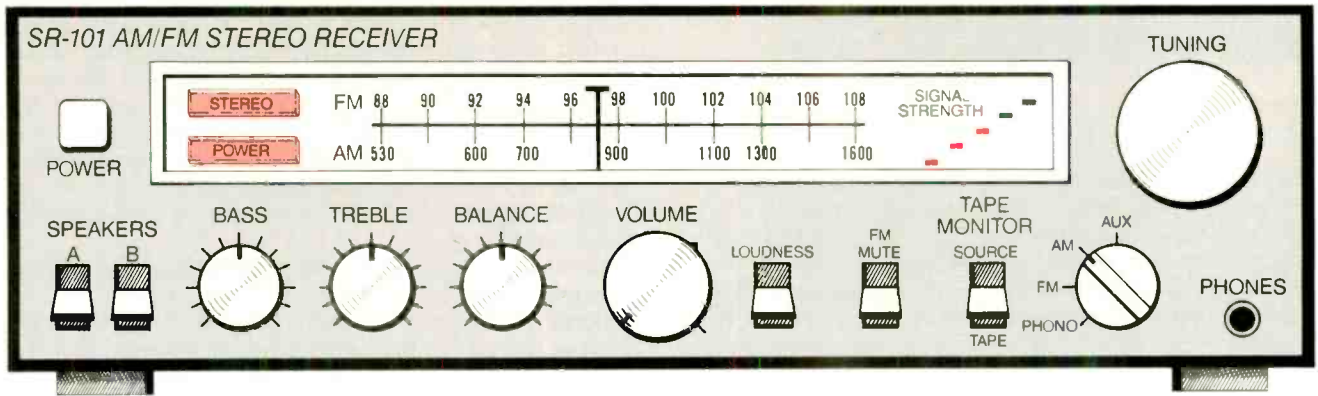
The table illustrates several important points: (1) How much power you need depends very strongly on how loud you like your music. If you never listen above moderate background levels, 20 watts per channel is plenty, even with inefficient speakers. (2) The average power required for most systems, even playing loud classical music at concert levels, is quite low (unless you're driving two pairs of speakers at once, which needs a lot more power). It is the momentary peaks that require a big amplifier. Be aware, though, that a well-designed amplifier can "clip" the highest peaks as much as 3 or 4 per cent of the time with only a mild effect on the subjective sound quality. (3) The choice of loudspeaker can change your power requirements by as much as a factor of twenty. (In general, a 3-dB increase in speaker sensitivity halves the power required for the same sound level.) The examples chosen pretty much cover the range of efficiency of most commonly available loudspeakers.

The value for "very loud rock music" represents the levels encountered at an actual concert (even if your system can reproduce such levels, we advise against your doing so for the sake of your personal health and community relations). The level labeled "Cannon (peaks)" is approximately correct for a 105-mm Howitzer firing blanks (as called for in the score of a well-known Tchaikovsky overture) at a distance of about 100 yards.

HOW MUCH POWER DO YOU NEED?—SOUND LEVEL VS. WATTS

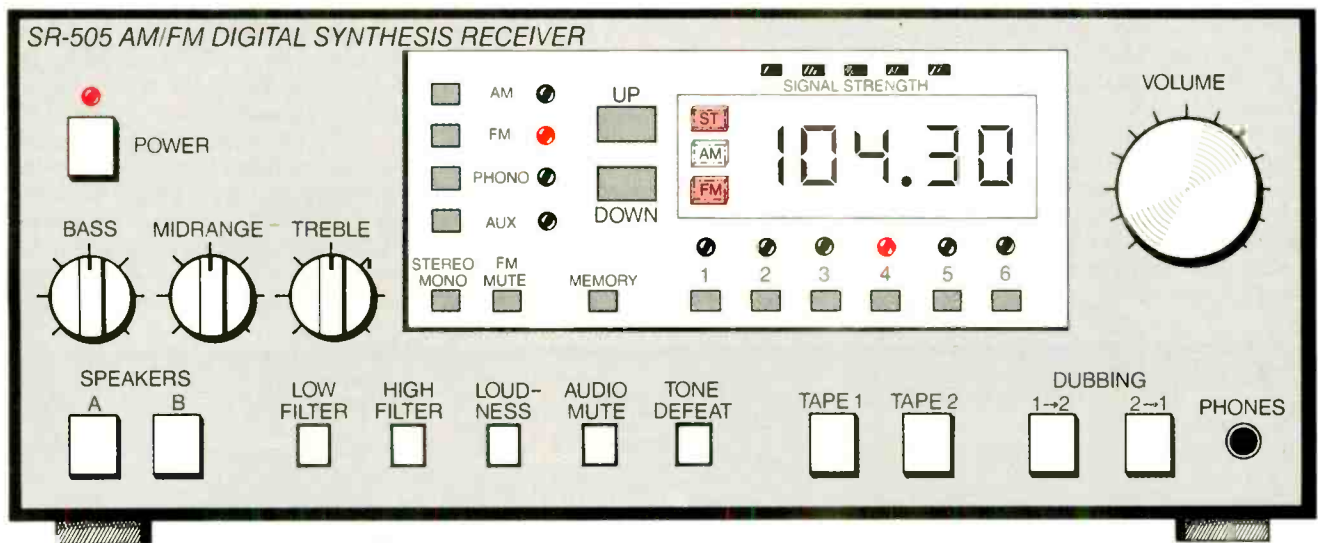
Type of Sound	Approximate Sound-Pressure Level (in dB)	Necessary Output Power (watts per channel, both channels driven)		
		Speaker Efficiency		
		High (94 dB/W/m)	Medium (87 dB/W/m)	Low (81 dB/W/m)
Cannon (peaks)	130	2,512	12,600	50,120
Very loud rock music (peaks)	116	126	631	2,512
Very loud classical music (peaks)	112	40	200	795
Very loud classical music (average)	102	4	20	80
Loud classical music	94	0.6	3.2	12.6
Moderately loud classical music	84	0.08	0.4	1.6
Soft popular music	74	0.006	0.03	0.12
Soft classical music	68	0.0016	0.008	0.03
Very soft classical music	52	0.00004	0.0002	0.0008
Background noise, city apartment	46	*	*	*
Background noise, suburban day	36	*	*	*
Background noise, country night	24	*	*	*
Threshold of hearing	0	*	*	*

*Insignificant



One of the best values on the market today is the basic no-frills receiver as shown in this composite of typical units. It usually costs around \$200-\$300 (suggested retail price) and has a 20- to 30-watt-per-channel output. It will probably have an analog tuner with good performance and automatic frequency control (AFC), a volume control, separate bass and treble tone controls, a balance control, out-

puts for two speaker systems, one or two sets of tape-recorder connections, a headphone jack, a source selector (FM, AM, phono, aux), an FM-mute-defeat switch, and perhaps a loudness switch. If you don't need very much power or sophisticated operating features, then this sort of unit may just fill your bill. It would be ideal for a second system in a small room.



The typical modern mid-priced receiver has a digital frequency-synthesis tuning section with touch-pad tuning and from five to eight station presets for both AM and FM. These units typically have from 35 to 75 watts per channel of output power and cost between \$250 and \$500. They usually have more preamplifier-section features than the

economy receivers. There is often a midrange tone control, a high filter, a low or rumble filter, an audio mute (for quick volume reduction when the phone rings), and a tone-control-defeat switch. There should be two tape-recorder loops plus switching provisions to allow dubbing from one deck to the other.

circuit and reliable center-channel indicators do the same job nearly as well. (But be sure you know what you are getting. Some "digital" tuners have digital frequency displays but an analog tuner. A frequency-synthesis tuner will almost always have pushbutton tuning rather than a rotary knob. Digital-synthesis models usually have five or more programmable station-preset buttons, which make them extremely convenient to use. Most will automatically tune to the station that was playing when it was last turned off.)

In the same way that they automatically classify amplifiers by rated power, people tend to rate a tuner by its sensitivity. There may be several sensitivity figures specified, but the important one is the sensitivity for 50-dB quieting in stereo. This is the input signal that is

required to give reasonably noise- and distortion-free stereo sound, and for virtually every receiver on the market it lies between 34 and 38 dBf (28 and 43 microvolts). These figures range from good to very good, and the differences generally derive either from variations in measuring techniques or from a deliberate decision by the tuner designer to compromise on sensitivity to achieve better distortion figures. Only recently has significantly better sensitivity been available for less than \$1,500 even in separate tuners.

In the great majority of urban and suburban locations, FM signal strength is simply not a problem. The real problem is multipath distortion, caused by interference between a broadcast signal and its reflections from buildings, mountains, airplanes, etc. A tuner's

ability to lock onto the primary signal and ignore reflections is expressed as its capture ratio, which gives the minimum necessary difference (in decibels) between the stronger and the weaker signal for good reception. The lower the capture ratio the better. Capture ratios under 1.5 dB are very good, and even lower values are now commonplace.

The most effective way to fight multipath distortion has nothing to do with the receiver at all: rotate your antenna. For urban locations compact indoor antennas are available that can be rotated either mechanically or electrically. For suburban and rural locations there is the old standby, the roof antenna with rotor, which gives both increased received signal strength and directional specificity.

If stations in your area are crowded

RECEIVERS

close to each other in the broadcast spectrum, you'll need a tuner section with good *alternate-channel selectivity*, which is a measurement of the ability to receive one station's signal clearly while rejecting that from another located two channels (that is, 0.4 MHz) away. A similar but less critical specification is *adjacent-channel selectivity*, which measures the ability to reject signals from stations only *one* channel away from the desired station. Since the FCC requires a large geographical separation between stations using adjacent channels, this is not usually a problem—unless you happen to live equidistant between two large cities, in which case you may well receive equally powerful signals from stations on adjacent frequencies.

As with multipath distortion, the best solution to selectivity problems is using a directional antenna, but the receiver can also help if it has a good capture ratio and offers a choice of *wide or narrow i.f. filtering*. For most tuners, the designer must strike a compromise be-

tween high selectivity and low noise and distortion. A wide-band i.f. filter will favor audio performance at the expense of selectivity, while a narrow-band i.f. filter will do the reverse. Specifications for tuners that offer a choice of i.f. bandwidth will have two sets of measurements, one for each switch position, for selectivity, noise, and distortion.

The relatively poor antennas usually encountered in hi-fi stores make it easy to test one important aspect of tuner performance: the behavior of the *muting circuit*. With the volume set fairly high, tune gradually across the spectrum, turning the knob on an analog tuner or pushing the scan button on a digital model. If the muting circuit works well, all stations will have acceptable sound quality, and you'll hear no noise between stations. A poor muting circuit will let through loud bursts of interstation noise and can be a constant annoyance in day-to-day use.

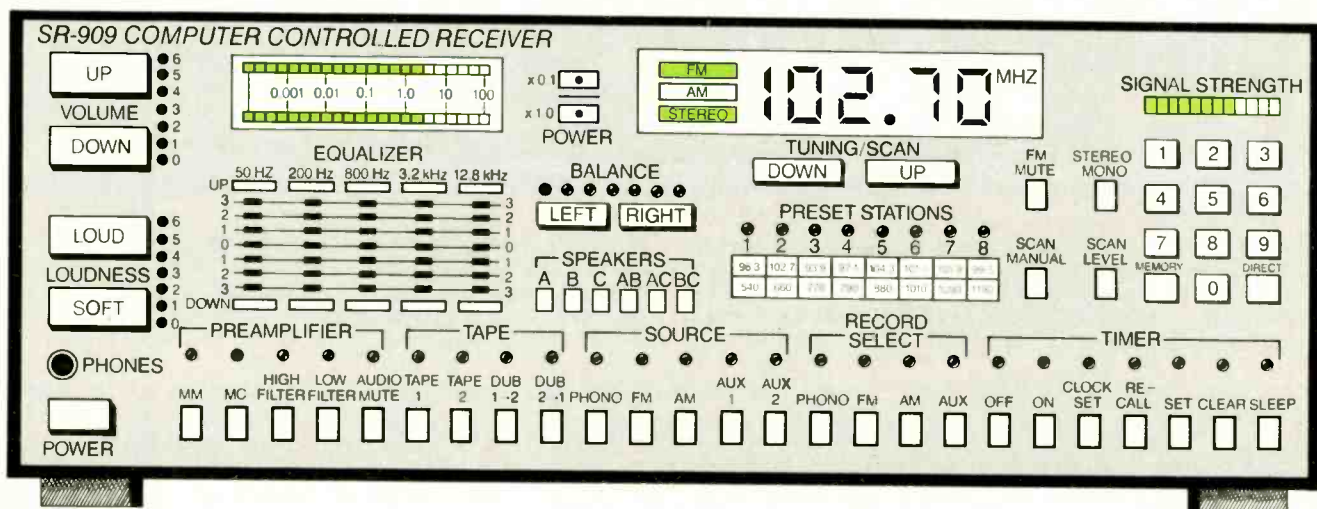
You may have one or more stations in your area that use Dolby-B encoding for their broadcasts. To decode these signals properly you will need to add an outboard Dolby decoder to your system *and* change the frequency response of the tuner's audio output. The frequency response is determined by a circuit called a de-emphasis network. Some re-

ceivers have *switchable de-emphasis*; the standard position is usually identified by the label "75 μ sec," the one for Dolby reception by "25 μ sec." Other models may have a switch position labeled "Dolby FM" that both switches the tuner's de-emphasis to 25 μ sec and switches in an external Dolby-B unit.

The Preamplifier Section

A preamplifier has two principal functions: it must provide gain and equalization for the relatively weak signal from the phono cartridge, and it must control the volume, balance, tone, and switching functions for all other signal sources—tuner, tape, etc.

The phono section of the preamplifier should have (1) accurate frequency response and (2) noise that is below the level of record-surface noise. Most preamps meet these criteria fairly well. The spec sheet will give the phono frequency response as the *RIAA Equalization*; a typical value is 20 to 20,000 Hz \pm 0.5 dB. Variations in frequency response from one cartridge to another are frequently much greater than this, and, in addition, some preamp sections interact with some cartridges in a way that changes the frequency response still further. So don't pay a lot of atten-



A typical top-of-the-line receiver like the one depicted above has every conceivable feature, and then some. This unit is a composite of some of the many computer-controlled receivers we have seen. It has no mechanical potentiometers; all level adjustments are made by voltage-controlled amplifiers that change levels according to instructions routed through a microprocessor. Light-touch volume-control pushbuttons adjust the sound level, and LED's indicate the level. A variable loudness control adjusts equalization and sound level simultaneously. Power indicators use a fluorescent-type high-resolution display with two switch-selectable ranges for reading both low and high levels. The built-in graphic equalizer is pushbutton-controlled and uses LED's to indicate the band levels. LED's also indicate the position of the balance control. The unit has outputs for three speaker systems and can drive any combination of two of them. The preamplifier section includes a switch-selectable moving-magnet or moving-coil input (some have two separate inputs), a high filter, a low and/or infrasonic filter, an equalization-defeat switch, and an audio-mute

switch. Each has an LED to indicate its operation. Switches for two tape machines and bidirectional dubbing are included. Next along the bottom of the front panel are the source selectors, followed by a record selector that enables the user to tape from one source while listening to another. The timer section enables the user to set the receiver to turn on and off at specific times. (When used in conjunction with the switched power outlet on the rear panel, the timer can also turn on record players and tape recorders.) Above all these are the controls for the digital frequency-synthesis tuner section. Like the mid-priced unit, it has station presets and scan tuning, but it also has direct-access tuning—the station frequency can be punched in on the keyboard. The frequency display turns into a digital clock at the touch of a button. Another convenience feature is a labeling system that allows the user to put frequency tags next to the preset lights. The signal-strength meter is also fluorescent for greater resolution. A receiver such as this would ordinarily have at least 90 watts per channel and a suggested retail price of over \$500.

tion here to the specification; judge the system you're considering by ear. Play a variety of music, listening for any annoying qualities that show up again and again on very different kinds of recordings, and try different cartridges to see which sounds best to you.

The signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) of the phono sections in today's receivers generally varies from good (74 dB) to excellent (84 dB). (You may see phono S/N specifications in excess of 88 dB quoted occasionally. These are generated using a nonstandard test method and should be disregarded.) Checking the noise in the phono section with the particular cartridge you want will tell you much more than looking at the spec sheet. At some point during the listening test described above, turn the system up loud and stand near one speaker. Have the salesperson lift the stylus (gently!) from the record without touching the volume control. If you have to get within a foot or two of the speaker to hear any hiss or hum, the preamp is quiet enough.

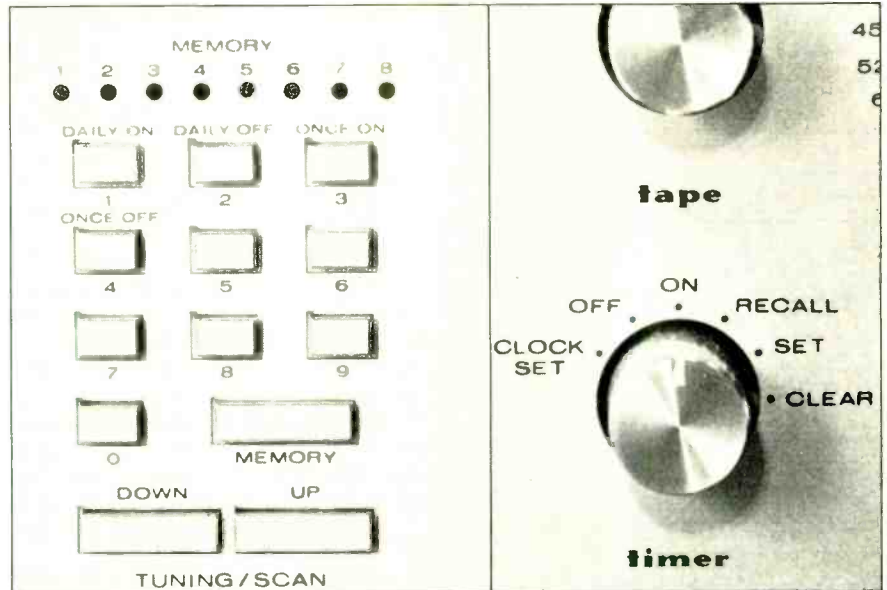
You may want to try one of the growing variety of low-output moving-coil phono cartridges in your system. Some receivers now include a separate moving-coil pre-preamp. You can determine its suitability by testing it with the moving-coil cartridge of your choice.

Besides checking out the human-engineering aspects of a receiver's controls (see box on page 64), there are a few convenience features that you might consider even if you don't feel an immediate need for them:

□ **Two tape-monitor loops with dubbing circuits.** Having two tape recorders in your system makes it easy to copy recordings from one tape to another, whether in the same or a different format (open-reel to cassette, say). Also, you can connect a signal processor in one of the tape loops and use it either for listening or to make processed tapes. Some receivers even have a separate monitor loop for a signal processor so that you don't have to tie up one of your tape monitors.

□ **Record-selector switch.** Another handy feature is a separate selector switch for the tape outputs. With one of these you can tape a signal from any source while listening to any other source, just as if you had an entirely separate taping setup.

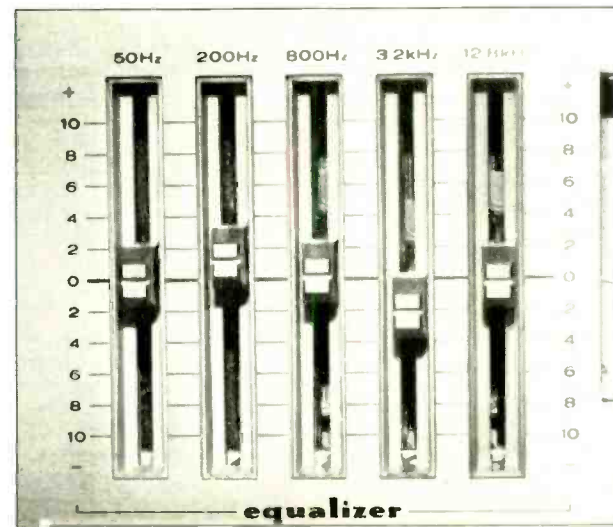
□ **Extra tone controls.** Many receivers have a separate midrange control in addition to the standard bass and treble, some have tone controls whose operating frequency is switch-selectable, and some contain a five- or seven-band graphic equalizer. In general, the more flexibility you have, the better you will be able to correct for frequen-



Once people have tried microprocessor-controlled tuner sections they are usually hooked. The station-preset buttons provide instant access to favorite stations. On most units, a tuned station is programmed by touching the "memory" or "preset" button, then the desired numbered button. Many such receivers have built-in clocks, on/off timers, sleep timers, etc.



A 25-μsec de-emphasis switch equalizes the signal from Dolbyized FM broadcasts for decoding by an external Dolby processor. A record-selector switch permits listening to one source while recording from another. A loudness control provides needed bass boost at low levels; some variable controls adjust the listening level together with the loudness contour.



Receiver tone controls can range from simple bass and treble knobs to seven-band equalizers. These controls allow you to tailor your system's response to your own taste or to correct for gross speaker or room anomalies. Adjusting an equalizer takes some skill and acoustic acuity to do right—it is easy to do more harm than good.

RECEIVERS

cy-response aberrations in your recordings, in broadcasts, or resulting from peculiarities of your listening room.

□ *EQ or tone-defeat switch.* Some members of the audiophile community view *all* tone controls and equalizers with a jaundiced eye. Most of these people are blissfully unaware of how much signal processing is already present in their recordings, starting with the microphones, whose placement and frequency response make them inherently colored. Nevertheless, a switch that removes all tone controls from the circuit can be a handy thing; quickly returning the system to flat response is a quick way to determine the effect of any correction as well as making it easy to play those records that do sound best with no response alterations.

□ *Variable loudness control.* Most receivers have a button or switch labeled "Loudness" that activates a circuit designed to correct for the change in the ears' frequency response at low listening levels. But such a circuit must be matched to the actual sound levels in the room if it is to work properly, and a simple on-off switch hasn't much chance of achieving proper calibration because of variations in speaker sensitivity and room acoustics (see table on page 60). With a variable loudness control you initially set the receiver's volume control for a comfortably loud level with your own speakers and room; after that, you leave the volume control alone and turn the system up or down with the loudness knob, the action of which is now calibrated to your individual system.

□ *Full-mode switching.* An ordinary stereo/mono switch can reduce the rumble and surface noise on mono records and remove noise and distortion from many weak FM signals. But a mode switch that can send either the left or the right channel through both speakers will enable you to compare the two channels of a source, which can help in troubleshooting the system, evaluating problematic source material, or operating an open-reel recorder in dual-mono configuration.

□ *Filters.* Switchable low- and high-frequency filters for removing audible rumble and hiss can be useful, but to do the maximum amount of good with the minimum detrimental effect on the music they should have slopes of 12 dB per octave or more; 6-dB-per-octave filters are not sufficiently selective. The same is true for infrasonic filters, which are

like rumble filters but take effect at a lower frequency, typically between 15 and 20 Hz. An infrasonic filter can be very useful, especially if your speakers have vented enclosures; removing inaudible sonic garbage can often make a real improvement in audible clarity and transparency by reducing excessive woofer-cone motion.

□ *Timers and remote operation.* The latest top-of-the-line receivers have microprocessors for all control functions, including tuning, source selection, and even volume and balance. This offers the opportunity for the same sort of programmable operation found in modern video recorders. In many models, the FM frequency display can also serve as a digital clock. The built-in timer can be set to turn the system on

and simultaneously start up a tape recorder, sometimes as much as a week in advance. Some models also allow wireless remote control of all functions, a feature that is difficult if not impossible to get with separate components.

In sum, today's reputable receivers are efficient, versatile, and usually offer good value for the dollar. Their popularity is well deserved. Although there are many models available, it is not necessary to have an engineering degree to choose wisely among them. By making a realistic assessment of your power requirements before you shop, you can narrow the field down to a few units, from which you can safely choose on the basis of features, styling, and control layout. □

ENGINEERING FOR HUMANS

The reliability of contemporary audio electronics make it likely that you will own your receiver for several years. Therefore, make sure *before* you buy one that its controls are satisfying to use and that their layout makes the most common operations easy and natural.

One of the best ways to determine the merits of a particular control layout is to spend five or ten minutes in the store putting the receiver through its paces: change from PHONO to TUNER to AUX; have a tape deck connected to the system and record and replay a brief segment of tape; use the tone controls, filters, and balance control. If the system suits you, you will start to get faster at doing these things after just a few minutes. If, on the other hand, at the end of this period you are still reading the fine print on the front panel to remind yourself which control does what, you are likely to find that particular layout a constant source of minor irritation.

The big trend nowadays is toward light-touch pushbuttons for tuning instead of rotary knobs. Frequency-synthesis tuners jump from one station frequency to another without passing through those in between; the logical way to control such a circuit is with two pushbuttons, one to raise the frequency and the other to lower it. A brief push moves the tuner one channel, and holding the button down moves it steadily along the spectrum (no longer a dial) with each successive frequency displayed in illuminated digits. This system works better than a rotary knob for scanning closely spaced stations, but it can't move rapidly to a frequency far from the initial setting. That problem is solved by providing five or more station presets, programmable controls that give instant access to a few favorite stations. It can be confusing, though, especially to someone who doesn't use the system every day, to be confronted with a row of buttons labeled "1" to "8."

Some receivers have a convenient means of marking the buttons with the station frequencies.

Pushbuttons are also now appearing as volume controls, for which their merits are less obvious. You can move a typical rotary volume control through its entire useful range quickly and precisely without either looking at it or taking your fingers off it, because the knob gives you positional feedback through your arm and hand. That's a big help, especially when you want to turn the volume down in a hurry. It is also faster and easier to read the pointer on a dial than to decipher a numerical display.

Another characteristic increasingly found in volume controls of all types is that they act in discrete steps instead of continuously. This is a mixed blessing. Discrete settings are easily and conveniently repeatable, but they are often rather widely spaced, especially toward the low end of the scale, so that the available settings may be either too loud or too soft for your needs. If you are contemplating a receiver with a stepped volume control, wait for a quiet moment in the store and check its behavior at the very low end of the scale.

While you have the volume down low, check the power-level displays, if there are any. These are handy for telling you when the amplifier section is nearing its limit, but if the display has a sensitivity control (typically a button labeled "X 0.1") you can also follow the behavior of the music at normal volume. Such a display can be fun to watch.

Finally, if you decide you want a receiver with microprocessor control and sophisticated programmable functions, check out the manual to see if it is written in comprehensible English. You won't be able to figure out how to get such a unit to do what you want just by reading the front-panel labels, and it will be a while before you will be able to operate everything by memory.

Counterfeit Sound



Hardly larger than the cassettes it plays, DAK's new Micro-Entertainer produces 'Counterfeit Sound' so massive that it'll knock your socks off.

It happens in the dead of night. And, it happens in smoke filled rooms.

Imagine dozens of engineers. Each is pouring over the latest innovation from companies like Sony. Each is trying to capture the essence of the success that makes Sony a leader.

Whether you call it spying, industrial espionage or counterfeiting, read on to see why it's really a neat deal for you.

Frankly, the new DAK Micro-Entertainer system pictured above is a rip-off of the Sony Walkman idea.

While the two don't actually look alike we think you'd need an 'electronics expert' to have any chance of determining the counterfeit from the original, by the sound quality alone.

We think you'll find the main differences are in what we've added; an FM stereo cassette, satellite speakers and some fancy electronic aids. And we have definitely not counterfeited the price.

A FACE IN THE CROWD

With personal stereos selling for as little as \$29 it's just about impossible to tell the good from the bad without a road map. But, the first place to look is at the headphones.

Samarium Cobalt headphones—As you put on the almost weightless 1½ ounce headphones you'll be transported into a dramatic kaleidoscopic world of sound images you can almost taste and feel.

With an incredible frequency response of 20-20,000hz and sound levels up to 110db, you'll experience a mind blowing sound extravaganza. Samarium Cobalt headphones make it all possible and they'll easily surpass a \$2-3000 stereo.

The headphones are the most important part of a personal stereo. So, be sure to check that you're not getting alnico, ferrite or ceramic types.

Speed stability—Most fine stereo equipment is designed to be lovingly placed on a shelf and never moved. Obviously, this isn't a practical way to listen when you're walking your dog, flying in a plane or jogging.

No pocket stereo is perfect, but elec-

tronic speed control can help. DAK utilizes a sophisticated electronic voltage control circuit that can tolerate up to a 15% voltage drop and still remain stable, unlike the cheap types of mechanical-governor speed controls.

The Micro-Entertainer weighs just 12½ ounces and is 5-1/5" X 3-3/4" X 1-1/5". You can see just how small it really is in the picture above compared with the cassettes it is sitting on, which aren't included by the way. It comes with a leatherette case that attaches to your belt, and an adjustable shoulder strap.

MUSIC AT YOUR COMMAND

You won't be roughing it when you leave home. You can play all your cassettes since there is an equalization switch for Metal or standard cassettes.

The sound is incredibly crisp and clean with a wide frequency response. It's operated by 3AA batteries (not included).

You'll have lock-in fast forward and rewind buttons, plus cue and review.

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How to Care for a Tape Deck

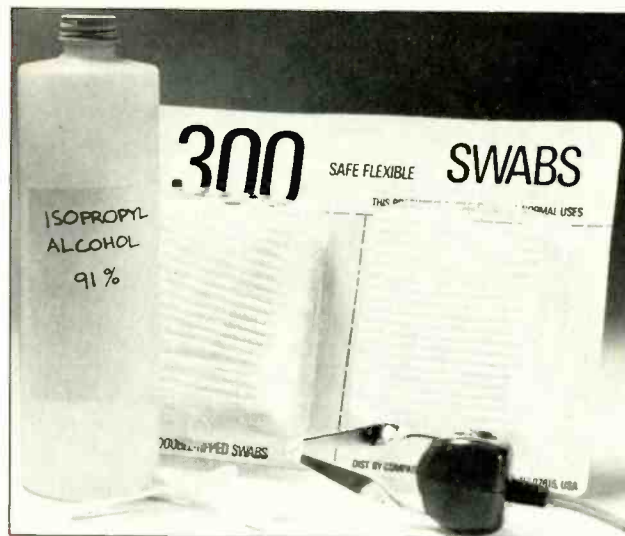
Do your cassette tapes sound noisier than they used to? Has your deck's wow and flutter apparently increased? Are the high frequencies of your tapes attenuated? Has your cassette deck been "eating" tapes lately, even those C-90's made by reputable companies? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then your deck probably needs to be cleaned and demagnetized, the two most basic and necessary procedures for keeping a tape machine in good condition.

Cleaning a deck removes oxide particles that tapes inevitably shed. In addition to accumulating between heads and tape, thereby reducing high-frequency response, these particles also build up on capstans, pinch-rollers, and tape guides, creating uncontrolled and varying amounts of friction that can lead to uneven tape movement.

Demagnetization simply means removing any residual magnetic fields from the magnetizable parts that contact the tape. This residual magnetism can, in extreme cases, partially erase tape recordings.

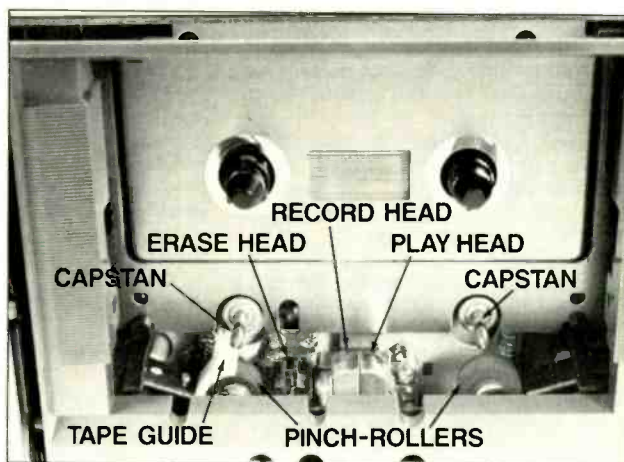
Both cleaning and demagnetization are simple and inexpensive, and they should be done at least every 8 to 10 hours of deck use (certainly before any critical recording session). The pictures that follow demonstrate an effective way to perform these procedures on a cassette deck, but there's no reason you can't use the techniques on personal cassette players, "boom boxes," and open-reel decks as well. There are many specialized products available for cleaning and demagnetizing tape recorders which often make these jobs easier, more convenient, or (very rarely) less expensive than the methods shown here. Indeed, some car decks cannot be maintained without special cleaners and demagnetizers.

Note: If any of the procedures outlined here directly contradict anything your deck's instruction manual says, especially in regard to choice of cleaning fluid, *follow the manual*.

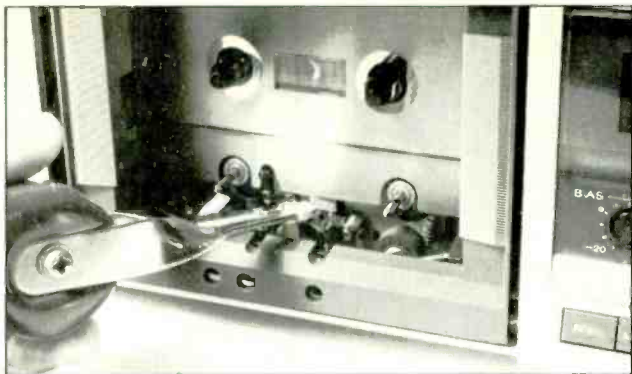


Photos: Geoff Rosenberg

1 If you do not have specially designed products (and if your instruction manual says nothing to the contrary), you can still clean your tape deck. I use inexpensive "generic" cotton swabs and concentrated isopropyl alcohol (a 91 per cent "bathing compound") available from a drug store. Other liquids suitable for recorder cleaning are denatured alcohol (from hardware or paint stores) and special varieties of Freon (sold as a recorder-cleaning fluid or aerosol). Do not use commonly available "rubbing alcohol" since, in addition to being more diluted, such mixtures contain compounds that might damage recorder pinch-rollers. The demagnetizer I use is an old probe type suitable for reaching all the parts of interest in the cassette well. The tip is covered with a rubber compound to prevent scratches to the heads. It also has a convenient line-cord switch so that it can be turned on and off easily. Look for these features in any demagnetizer you buy. There are a few battery-powered, electronically controlled head demagnetizers available that are quite convenient for use in on-location, live-recording situations.



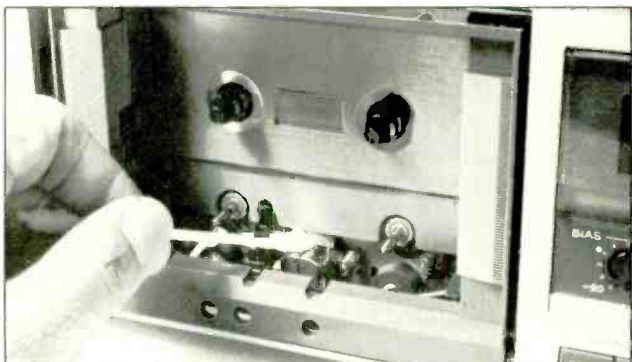
2 The battle zone. The objectives in the operation will be to remove any oxide particles from all parts of the deck that touch the tape during use and to demagnetize all parts of the machine that might become magnetized by the passing tape (including capstans and tape guides as well as tape heads). Not every cassette cleaning or demagnetizing device will reach all the parts that should be treated, a fact to remember when shopping for such products. The picture is of the cassette well in a dual-capstan tape deck with separate record, playback, and erase heads. Some three-head machines are constructed so that the record and play heads make contact with the tape through separate openings in the cassette shell. Personal-portable units usually have only one capstan and no erase or record heads. They also usually have unremovable cassette-well doors.



3 To demagnetize your tape recorder, first turn it *off*. Remove any recorded tapes from the vicinity (they should be at least a foot away from the path of the demagnetizer). While the demagnetizer is *at least* one foot away from the deck, turn the demagnetizer on. Bring it slowly and steadily—one foot every three to five seconds—up to the heads. Pass the tip over the heads very slowly. The tip needn't touch the heads, but it should come within a sixteenth of an inch of the entire tape-touching surfaces of all of them. Do *not* turn off the demagnetizer yet.



4 While the demagnetizer is still in the cassette well, demagnetize any other metal parts that contact the tape (like the capstan shown here). This is really necessary only if the other parts can become magnetized at all. Since there is no easy way of finding this out, why take chances? When you have finished, slowly and steadily withdraw the demagnetizer unit until it is *at least* a foot away from the deck. *Then* turn it off. Moving the demagnetizer too quickly or turning it off too soon will leave magnetic fields on the heads much stronger than the ones you're trying to remove. The whole demagnetization process need not take more than a minute. You can turn the deck back on now.



5 Clean the heads with a swab lightly moistened in alcohol. The swab need not be dripping to do the job. Rub it across the entire surface of all tape heads. If one head is particularly dirty, change swabs before cleaning the next one. Don't leave any fibers from the swab stuck to the heads or their attached tape guides.



6 Clean other tape-contacting parts (guides, flutter filters, etc.) with the other end of the swab, or a new one, in order not to transfer any tape debris from one part of the machine to another.



7 Use a new swab to clean the pinch-roller. You can either dab at the roller with your moistened swab or put the deck into play mode and hold the swab up to the rotating roller. Place the swab to the right of the capstan so that the swab fibers are not caught by the capstan. The pinch-roller should show little or no sign of tape-oxide discoloration when you are finished.



8 Clean the capstan last. Try not to let any alcohol seep into the capstan bearing. Make sure you remove any swab fibers from the capstan and pinch-roller.



9 Sign of a job well done: dirt on the swab. Do not reuse a dirty swab. A good test for your cleaning technique is to do it all over again. Each part should leave no oxide traces on the swab if the initial cleaning was sufficient. Wipe away any fluid residue with a dry swab.

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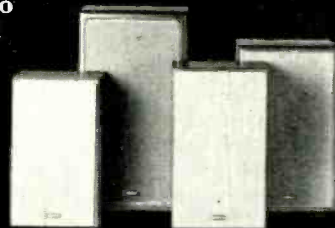
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STEREO REVIEW'S SELECTION OF RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT
BEST OF THE MONTH



● Flawless Performance and Production for Mahler's Seventh ●

It is a pleasure to see a scrupulous production of a major recording, especially when it is a recording of a work as musically and sonically challenging as the Mahler Seventh Symphony, the latest offering in James Levine's "cycle" (with different orchestras) for RCA. As Jack Diether points out in his album notes (excellent, as always), the central triptych of this "Song of the Night"—consisting of an eerie march, a sinister and brutal scherzo, and a magical *Andante amoroso*—is relatively unproblematical for the listener and contains some of Mahler's most beautiful scoring. It is the two end movements that are the tough nuts to crack, especially the finale. Leonard Bernstein, in his Mahler cycle for Columbia, was the first conductor to offer really convincing readings of them on disc, and I think Levine is the first since Bernstein to pull off the same feat.

Absolutely everything works in the opening movement here, starting with the solo by the tenor horn (Arnold Jacobs?) at the beginning, which for once doesn't sound strained. Levine's tempos and dynamics are so flawlessly gauged that one arrives at the end of this twenty-three-minute slow movement not exhausted but exhilarated. The same is true of his handling of the shorter but denser and more complex finale, where he illuminates the textural interweaving and the relationships of the various episodes in a way that helps one appreciate the humor and ingenuity of the whole immense composition. Unlike some other recordings of the Mahler Seventh, this one leaves no sense that it is all just too much.

Of course, to make its full effect, superb conducting must be backed up by



Conductor James Levine: the first since Bernstein to give a fully convincing reading (photo by Stan Fellerman)



John Kirkpatrick and Daniel Stepner: convincing, appealing Ives sonatas

these works (HB-73025), one of the most valuable phonographic consequences of the observance of the composer's centenary. Now Kirkpatrick himself has recorded the sonatas on Musicmasters with Daniel Stepner, a violinist he met a dozen years ago when Stepner was a graduate student at Yale. Kirkpatrick and Stepner have been performing the Ives sonatas together for nearly ten years—about as long as Zukofsky and Kalish had been doing so when they made their Nonesuch recording—and for the last five years or so they have been playing the music from memory. The credentials of both teams are impeccable, the recorded performances are equally committed, and the sound quality of both sets is so good that it is not a factor in deciding between them. There are some conspicuous differences, however.

While Zukofsky and Kalish include the largo from the "Pre-First" Sonata in their set, Stepner and Kirkpatrick give us instead an entire additional sonata, No. 5, which actually consists of violin-and-piano versions of three of the four orchestral pieces that Ives gathered together as his *Holidays* Symphony. The omitted segment is *The Fourth of July*, and *Thanksgiving*, the longest and most elaborate of the orchestral *Holidays*, is represented here only by the brief meditation on *The Shining Shore* from the original organ prelude of 1897. This "extra" sonata, by the way, is *not* played from memory, Kirkpatrick explaining in his annotation that "the final orchestral versions were too much in our ears for us to trust them without the copy."

The timings for Sonatas Nos. 1-4 are all conspicuously shorter on Musicmasters than on Nonesuch, with a difference of as much as ten minutes in the case of No. 3. This is accounted for in part by different choices from the various sources, but also by the generally brisker pacing in the new set. For example, Zukofsky and Kalish include the thunderous "drum corps" piano clusters at the end of the middle movement of No. 2, but Stepner and Kirkpatrick do not "because they only smudge the strong bass line"; eliminating them also makes possible a fleet, freer-flowing treatment of the passage. Throughout the new set the feeling for the music seems a bit freer and folksier, with that engaging spontaneity, as well as cragginess, that most of us tend to identify as "Ivesian"—which is not to say that profound sobriety is either out of place or missing where called for. Kirkpatrick points out that Ives "did know that 'adagio' does not mean 'slow,' but 'at ease'." In some of the movements that are not even headed

the most alert orchestral response, and that is certainly the case here. The Chicago Symphony plays magnificently throughout, particularly in the Mahlerian portamentos, which Levine directs with the utmost in musical tact. And, as I mentioned at the beginning, RCA's production and engineering are superlative. The microphone setup is flawless and the acoustic surround just right. I was particularly struck, for instance, by this recording's success with the timpani transients and horn echo effects in the first *Nachtmusik* movement and the lovely mandolin timbres in the slow movement. Overall, the recording is extremely wide in frequency and dynamic range. Last, but not least, the pressings are up to the highest standard. This is one premium-priced release that is well worth the money.

—David Hall

MAHLER: *Symphony No. 7, in E Minor* ("Song of the Night"). Chicago Symphony

Orchestra, James Levine cond. RCA Ⓛ ATC2-4245 two discs \$31.98, © ATK2-4245 \$31.98.

A Superb New Set of Charles Ives's Violin/Piano Sonatas from Authoritative Performers of His Music

EIGHT years ago pianist John Kirkpatrick, the pre-eminent authority on the music of Charles Ives, made his comparisons of the variant sources of the four sonatas for violin and piano available to Paul Zukofsky and Gilbert Kalish for their Nonesuch recording of

Adagio, but only *Andante*, the new performances strike me as slightly more convincing than those on Nonesuch, even though the latter are no less affecting now than they have been in the years I've been enjoying them.

True Ivesians will find it necessary to have both of these sets precisely *because* of the differences between them. I feel it is the Steptner/Kirkpatrick set that has the more direct appeal, though, and it is the one I expect to be returning to more frequently for enjoyment of these remarkable works.

—Richard Freed

IVES: *Sonatas for Violin and Piano: No. 1; No. 2; No. 3; No. 4 ("Children's Day at the Camp Meeting"); No. 5 ("New England Holidays")*. Daniel Steptner (violin); John Kirkpatrick (piano). MUSICMASTERS MM 20056/57 two discs \$17.96.

progressions seem extraordinary. Interestingly, these are the same qualities that finally brought success to Luther Vandross after years of relatively unnoticed back-up work while others snared the spotlight. I suspect that both singers approached this recording date with mutual respect and understanding.

A major element in the success of "Instant Love" is the fine material, not only the selections by Lynn and Vandross themselves but especially two songs, the lushly intimate *Day After Day* and *Say You'll Be Mine*, by talented newcomer Tawatha Agee. Agee's contributions are so promising that she should be discouraged from doing anything else but composing. The last two selections are *Believe in Me*, one of Ashford and Simpson's better recent efforts, and Marvin Gaye's *If This World Were Mine*, which caps the set with a stunning duet between Lynn and

Vandross. Popular music doesn't come much better than this.

I would be remiss if I didn't also mention the impressively sensitive keyboard work of Nat Adderley Jr., who is upholding the proud tradition of his distinguished forebears as an exponent of musical excellence. All in all, this album meshes the contributions of several very talented people so skillfully that it becomes a true celebration of music making.

—Phyl Garland

CHERYL LYNN: *Instant Love*. Cheryl Lynn, Luther Vandross (vocals); Nat Adderley Jr. (keyboards); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Instant Love; Sleep Walkin'; Day After Day; Look Before You Leap; Say You'll Be Mine; I Just Wanna Be Your Fantasy; Believe in Me; If This World Were Mine*. COLUMBIA FC 38057, ©FCT 38057, no list price.

(Continued overleaf)

Cheryl Lynn's Singing And Luther Vandross's Production Spell Instant Success for "Instant Love"

FROM time to time, less often than we might wish, a talented performer is teamed with just the right producer to make what could have been a merely pleasant recording into a truly special one. That is just what happened with Cheryl Lynn's new Columbia album, "Instant Love," which deserves instant success. Actually, it's no surprise that this release is exceptional, for Lynn herself is hardly a raw newcomer, and her admirably sympathetic producer is none other than Luther Vandross, a Grammy-winning popular singer in his own right.

Cheryl Lynn's career started gathering momentum with her debut album in 1978. Since then she has proved herself to be one of the more substantial talents to emerge from the disco genre. Her special gift is to work within a relatively restricted framework, such as disco or contemporary r-&-b, but to breathe new life into its tired formulas by a fresh approach and a sharp musical intelligence. And she has the vocal equipment to pull it off, with a full-bodied lower register and enough control to hit a high note and hold it for all it's worth. Beyond these capabilities, Lynn has that elusive extra quality that marks out a star, an inborn musicianship that lets her play with the nuances of a melody, to make common chord

Cheryl Lynn: a fresh approach, a sharp musical intelligence, and a fine voice



Columbia Records

King Crimson's "Beat": An Unbeatable Combination Of Poetic Words and Strong, Rhythmic Music

IF you thought that the reconstituted King Crimson was going to be primarily a commercial outlet for Robert Fripp's avant-garde guitar experiments, the group's new Warner Bros. album, "Beat," should dispel that notion, at least for the time being. There is, to be sure, some technically formidable playing here, particularly in *Sartori in Tangier*—a brilliant fusion of African polyrhythms, "Frippertronics," and Adrian Belew's amazing guitar effects—and in *Requiem*, an excursion into the outer reaches of accessibility. But for the most part on "Beat," the exotic, often gnarled melodies, the dense, shifting layers of harmony, the

syncopation, and the complex repeating guitar figures that one associates with Fripp are bent to the service of some surprisingly lyrical music.

King Crimson has a new, "softer" edge here, and its source is Belew's sensitive, resourceful, even romantic lyrics. The music's not soft—as the album title suggests, there is a very powerful rhythmic underpinning. But half the songs—*Neal and Jack and Me*, *Heartbeat*, *Waiting Man*, and *Two Hands*—have such a strongly poetic quality that their power derives as much from the words as from the intricate musical settings. *Two Hands*, a sensual meditation on a painting of two lovers, clearly began as a poem (the lyrics are by Belew's wife, Margaret). All four deal with romantic themes: the longings of the heart, the pain of separation, the intensity of moments of intimacy. Even the hard-driving *Neal and Jack and Me*, a piece of latter-day beat poetry that sets the tone for the whole album, is inspired by those central romantic figures

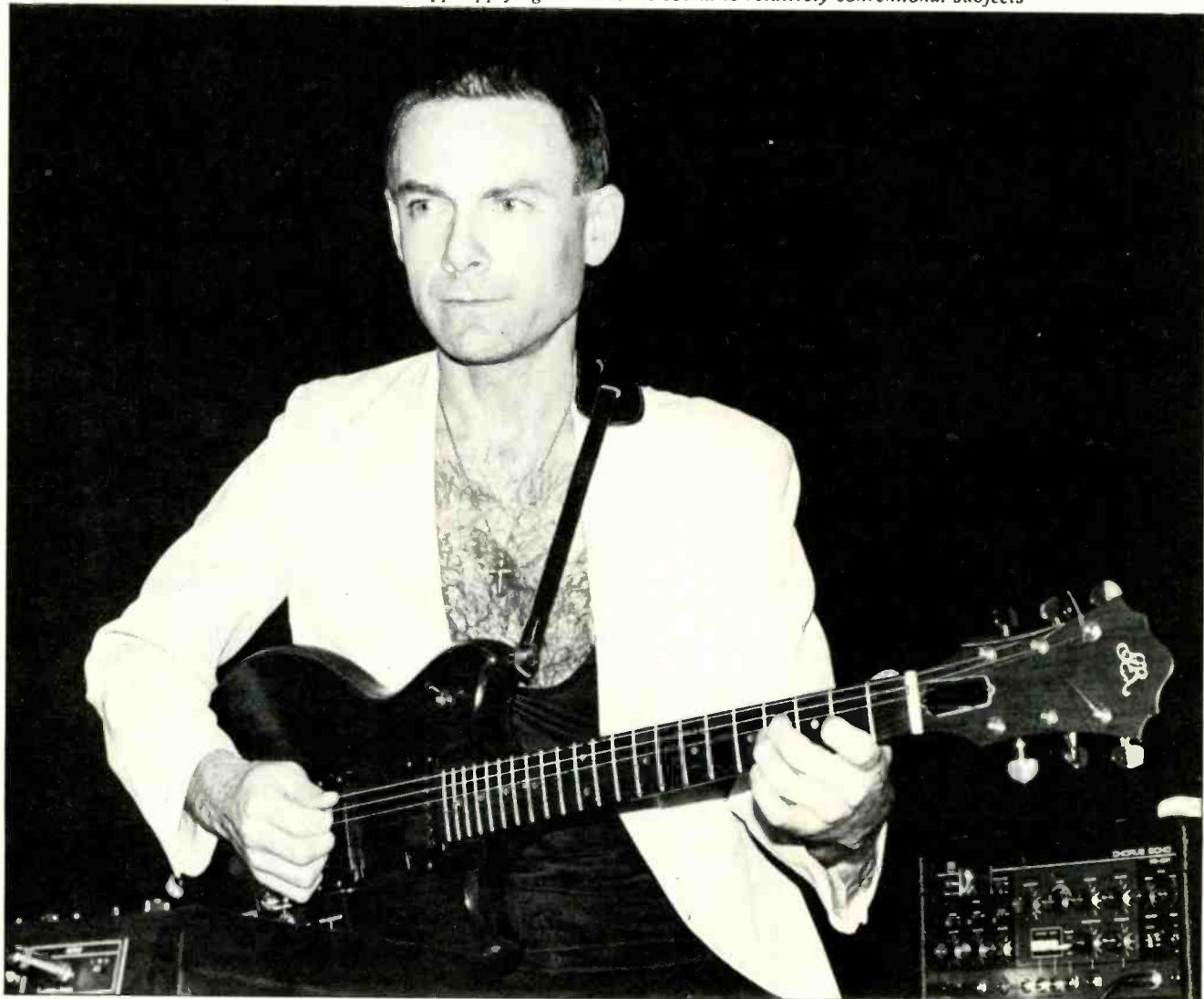
of the Beat Generation of the Fifties, Jack Kerouac and Neal Cassady.

Two of the songs here—the grim *The Howler* and the bizarre, surrealistic *Neurotica*—are about as romantic as a cold bath, but that there are *only* two such songs in an album from a band as eclectic as King Crimson underscores the album's romanticism. "Beat" retains much of the flavor of its immediate predecessor, "Discipline," but it seems less frenzied. Belew, Fripp, and Co. have taken the distinctive sound developed for the more experimental "Discipline" and applied it successfully here to more conventional subjects. The excellent results suggest that the new King Crimson may be set for a long reign.

—Mark Peel

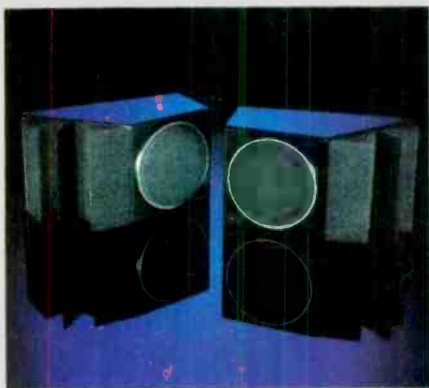
KING CRIMSON: *Beat*. King Crimson (vocals and instrumentals). *Neal and Jack and Me*; *Heartbeat*; *Sartori in Tangier*; *Waiting Man*; *Neurotica*; *Two Hands*; *The Howler*; *Requiem*. WARNER BROS./EG 1-23692 \$8.98, © 4-23692 \$8.98.

King Crimson's Robert Fripp: applying a distinctive sound to relatively conventional subjects



Ebel Roberts

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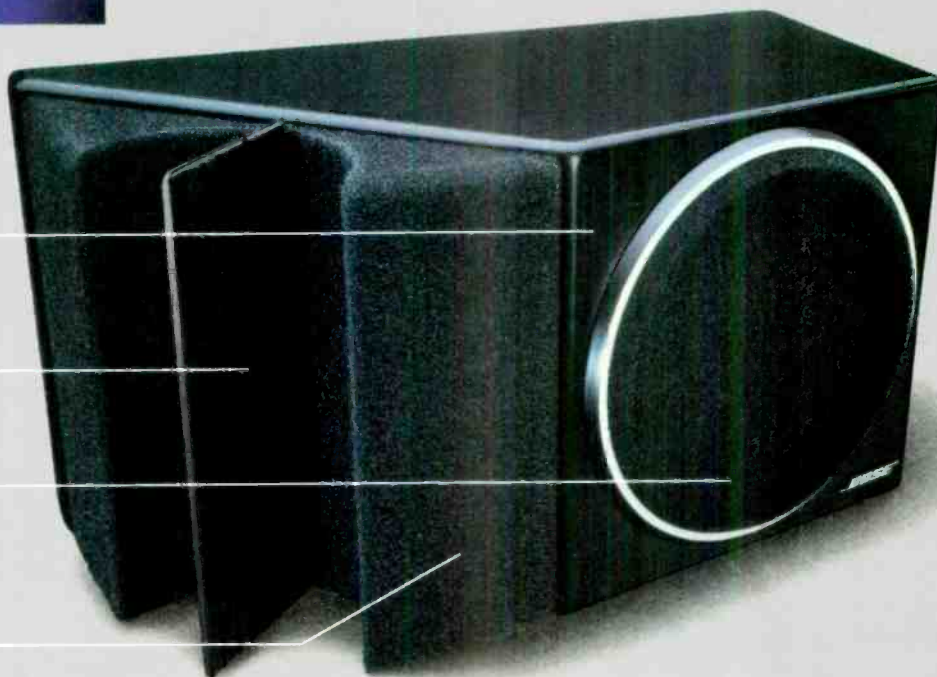
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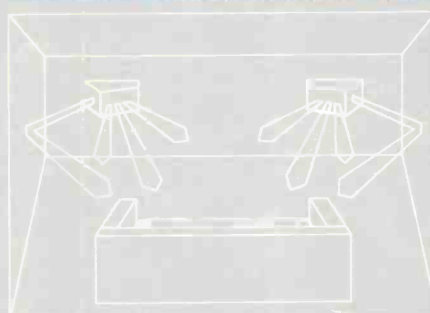
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Classical Music

News Briefs



Christian Steiner/Angel/EMI

AHANDSOME new art book just published by Vendome Press in New York is *Opera People* (112 pages, \$30) with photographs by **Christian Steiner** and commentary by **Robert M. Jacobson**, the editor of *Opera News*. Some of the photographs will look familiar to collectors of opera on records because many of the singers and conductors included in the book were sent to Steiner by record companies requiring portraits of the artists for use on album covers and in press kits. A particularly beautiful example is the photograph of **Renata Scotto** reproduced here, which is on the cover of the soprano's new digital recording

of Puccini's *Tosca* for Angel (DSX-3919).

At the end of the book, following Jacobson's excellent biographical summaries, there are several pages of notes by Steiner describing the conditions under which he met and worked with each of his exalted and sometimes temperamental subjects. According to Steiner, these were "really only an afterthought." Don't skip them, though, for they often make for juicy reading.

Not limited to the world of opera, Steiner is a leading international photographer of classical musicians. The photo of **Ransom Wilson** on the facing page is another example of his work. *C.B.*

AMERICAN record companies may call the tune in pop music, but for many reasons Europe has enormous influence on classical recordings and the way they are marketed around the world. With London, Deutsche Grammophon, Philips, and their related labels, the PolyGram

conglomerate alone accounts for about 40 per cent of the classical records sold in the United States. And even the domestic policies of such large American companies as RCA and Columbia are influenced by the activities of their European branches.

For example, boxed sets of

records sell well in the fall season in Europe, and such packages prepared by CBS Masterworks in Europe are also being issued in the United States. The boxes are manufactured in the Netherlands and the records are pressed in West Germany. The CBS recording of Mussorgsky's *Salammbô* and the Horowitz Chopin set released last year are examples of this series. They sold well enough here that more packages of this kind are on the CBS list this fall. Among the September and October releases were two Rossini operas conducted by **Riccardo Chailly**—*The Turk in Italy* with **Montserrat Caballé** and **Samuel Ramey** and *The Barber of Seville* with **Marilyn Horne** and **Ramey**. Also scheduled are a digital *Messiah* conducted by **Jean-Claude Malgoire**, analog recordings of Haydn quartets by the Tokyo String Quartet, a repackaging of **Claude Bolling's** crossover hits entitled "Suite Inspiration," a set of madrigals by the Collegium Vocale, Haydn symphonies by **L'Estro Armonico**, a three-disc set of the Bartók quartets by the Juilliard String Quartet, and others. Columbia does not specify list prices, but these are not premium-priced sets. The cost will vary depending on how many discs a given box contains and whether the recordings are analog or digital. □

THE Berlin Philharmonic included Carnegie Hall audiences in its ongoing Jubilee celebrations last month, and Deutsche Grammophon has added considerable weight (literally) to its own observance of the orchestra's hundredth birthday by releasing a mammoth seven-volume set of recordings. The set comprises a total of thirty-eight LP's at prices ranging from \$7.98 to \$11.98 per disc. Six of the volumes trace the progress of the

BPO from 1913, the year of its very first recording of a complete symphony, Beethoven's Fifth, under the orchestra's second chief conductor, **Arthur Nikisch**, to the current digital output of **Herbert von Karajan**, who is only the fourth chief conductor. The seventh volume, conceivably the most interesting of them all, offers on five records performances by chamber ensembles drawn from the various ranks of the Philharmonic—including a rendition of the *Blue Danube Waltz* by the double-bass section (!)—as well as by groups with identities of their own apart from the Philharmonic, such as the Westphal and Brandis Quartets. □

ESTABLISHED five years ago to "give the fullest possible recognition to Americans who have made significant contributions to the nation's culture through the performing arts," the Kennedy Center Honors going to musicians this year will be awarded to the Philadelphia Orchestra's conductor laureate, **Eugene Ormandy**, and to the King of Swing himself, **Benny Goodman** (also a 1982 STEREO REVIEW honoree). Ceremonies, including a White House reception, are scheduled for the weekend of December 4-5. . . . The Philadelphia Art Alliance bestowed its 1982 Medal of Achievement this fall on one of its "native persons," soprano **Anna Moffo**, for her outstanding contribution to the arts generally and in Philadelphia in particular. Honorary chairman of the award ceremony was Maestro Ormandy, who was himself a medalist in 1940. □

THE prominent soloists who have yielded to the urge to conduct an orchestra include several singers, numerous string players, a lot of pianists, and even a few super-

star flutists. But flutist **Ransom Wilson** has gone the others one better and has formed his own chamber orchestra, Solisti New York. Wilson has a full schedule conducting the orchestra this fall, but he has set aside four weeks for a West Coast tour on which he performs as flute soloist with harpist Nancy Allen, and as a flutist he remains under contract to Angel Records.

From the beginning of his career Wilson has led groups of one kind or another, and he confesses to a bossy streak—he calls it “an executive frame of mind”—that wasn’t always appreciated by his first wind quintet. “I’m very serious about conducting. I’m not just up there waving a stick,” he said recently at his home in New York. “I’ve studied privately with several people including a wonderful man named James Dixon, who conducts and teaches in Iowa City.

“I have so much music in me that it requires another outlet, and conducting is a way for me to expand. I feel that I have important things to say about the music of Ravel, who is my favorite composer but unfortunately didn’t write any music for flute. And when Samuel Barber was on

his deathbed, I reminded him that years earlier I had promised him I would become the best conductor of his works, and he said he remembered. I’m going to do it.”

On his latest Angel record, “Baroque Concertos for Flute” (DS-37338), Wilson conducts the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and plays the flute in works by Tartini, Blavet, Devienne, Grétry, and Gluck. And Arabesque Records has just released a performance of Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 23, in A Major, and Haydn’s Piano Concerto in D Major in which Wilson conducts the Mozartean Players, a period-instrument group, with Steven Lubin as fortepiano soloist.

Lest anyone think he is stuck in the Baroque and Classical periods and lacks forward momentum, however, Wilson has recorded an album of avant-garde American works scheduled for imminent release by Angel. It includes a piece by Steve Reich and one by Frank Becker for flute, percussion, and synthesizer. Wilson doesn’t conduct on this one but just plays the flute. “No matter how much I enjoy conducting, I’ll never abandon the flute,” he says. “I agree with the composer André Jol-



Christian Steiner/Columbia Artists Management, Inc.

ivet [1905-1974], who considered the flute the best musical instrument because ‘it is animated by the breath which

emanates from the depths of man, its tones charged with what is both visceral and cosmic within us.’” *W.L.*

Disc and Tape Reviews

By RICHARD FREED • DAVID HALL • GEORGE JELLINEK • PAUL KRESH
STODDARD LINCOLN • ERIC SALZMAN

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

J. S. BACH: *The Harpsichord Concertos*. *Seven Concertos for Harpsichord and Strings (BWV 1052-1058); Three Concertos for Two Harpsichords and Strings (BWV 1060-1062); Two Concertos for Three Harpsichords and Strings (BWV 1063-1064); Concerto for Four Harpsichords and Strings (BWV 1065).* Trevor Pinnock, Kenneth Gilbert, Lars Ulrik Mortensen, Nicholas Kraemer (harpsichords);

Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓢ = eight-track stereo cartridge
- ⓐ = stereo cassette
- Ⓣ = digital-master recording
- Ⓛ = direct-to-disc
- Ⓧ = CX-encoded

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ

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

the English Concert, Trevor Pinnock cond. ARCHIV 2723 077 four discs \$43.92.

Performance: **Powerful**
Recording: **Brilliant**

Bach’s thirteen remarkable concertos for one, two, three, and four harpsichords with string accompaniment constitute a priceless legacy, and this thrilling Archiv album of the complete set, with the finest performers playing the finest instruments available, will be hard to beat for years to come. Leader Trevor Pinnock, who plays the seven solo concertos and one of the solo parts in each of the other works, is an amazingly well-rounded musician: a virtuoso harpsichordist, a strong conductor, and a scholar well versed in the complexities of authentic performance practice. His readings of the solo concertos are powerful and vigorous, catching the listener up in a swirl of overwhelming energy.

The concertos for multiple harpsichords demand the utmost precision, and often performances of them produce a bewildering clatter and jangle. But Pinnock has surrounded himself with players of his own sta-

ture and judiciously chosen fine historical instruments by such builders as Rubio, Wittmayer, Clayson, Garrett, and Goble, with the result that the multiple concertos seem here as if performed by one player, treating us to a sheen of glorious sound. Also armed with early instruments, the strings of the English Concert attack the music boldly and place the orchestra where it should be: on an equal footing with the harpsichords. Finally, discreet engineering has caught the perfect balance; each part finds its proper place in a complex weaving of joy and energy. This is by all means the best available recording of the Bach keyboard concertos. *S.L.*

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Sonata No. 23, in F Minor, Op. 57 (“Appassionata”); Piano Sonata No. 32, in C Minor, Op. 111.* Carol Rosenberger (piano). DELOS Ⓣ DMS-3009 \$17.98.

Performance: **Good to outstanding**
Recording: **Superb**

Some might say that Carol Rosenberger, in recording these two familiar sonatas in the

Souzay Sings Schubert



Philips Records

NO matter how many Schubert recital albums you may have, you must not overlook the treasurable new Philips Sequenza release of Gérard Souzay singing Schubert lieder. Someone at Philips (who deserves instant promotion) must have carefully examined Souzay's considerable number of Schubert recordings and taken special pains to select these fourteen little masterpieces and to arrange them in a logical and meaningful sequence.

The program has been chosen to show Souzay's artistry at its best. What his voice may lack in amplitude is compensated for by its expressiveness and coloristic variety. The intimate songs, such as *An Sylvia*, *Die Forelle*, and *Die Taubenpost*, are all gems, and *Im Abendrot* and *Wanderers Nachtlied* are delivered with a rapt lyricism and muted intensity. Unquestionably, *Der Tod und das Mädchen* calls for a more resonant

instrument and *Erk König* needs more power in the climaxes, though Souzay admirably differentiates the voices in the latter. In general, within his limitations, his judgment of dynamics is everywhere remarkable.

Dalton Baldwin is an outstanding partner. Voice and piano are perfectly blended. You'd never guess that these songs were recorded nearly twenty years ago.

—George Jellinek

SCHUBERT: *Lieder. Erk König; Der Tod und das Mädchen; Ganymed; Im Abendrot; Der Musensohn; An die Musik; An Sylvia; Die Forelle; Heidenröslein; Der Lindenbaum; Das Wandern; Wanderers Nachtlied; Die Taubenpost; Abschied.* Gérard Souzay (baritone); Dalton Baldwin (piano). PHILIPS SEQUENZA 6527 103 \$6.98, © 7311 103 \$6.98.

face of competition from almost every major Beethoven interpreter past and present, is venturing where younger pianists should fear to tread. However, aside from the finale of the *Appassionata*, where closer observance of the *ma non troppo* indication would have made the mad Hungarian dance ending more effective, she offers intensely committed and convincing interpretations, aided by piano sonics as fine as one can expect to hear today. There are power and momentum aplenty in the *Appassionata*'s first movement, with effective but not exaggerated stress on the dot-dot-dot-dash rhythmic figure, and the slow movement emerges both serenely and with just the right amount of the *con moto* element.

The Op. 111 sonata comes off even better, with startling dynamic contrasts at the opening and splendid delineation of inner voices in the developmental episodes. The incomparable variations movement gets off to a wonderfully poised beginning, and the same fine level of musicianship is maintained throughout, reaching peak intensity with the famous trills that weave their way

through the closing pages. Except for the *Appassionata* finale, this disc would certainly rate a "Recording of Special Merit" designation.

The quality of the piano sound and the nearly total lack of background noise are major positive factors here. Whereas Rosenberger's memorable "Water Music of the Impressionists" (Delos DMS 3006) of 1979 tended to make her Bösendorfer Imperial concert grand seem a little outsize (but what a glorious sound!), here the beast is kept under full control, and the result is eminently satisfactory. The price is stiff for a single disc, but if you want excellent Beethoven performances and near sonic perfection, it's worth it. *D.H.*

BERLIOZ: *Béatrice et Bénédict.* Yvonne Minton (mezzo-soprano), Béatrice; Plácido Domingo (tenor), Bénédict; Ileana Cotrubas (soprano), Héro; Nadine Denize (mezzo-soprano), Ursule; Roger Soyer (baritone), Claudio; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone), Somarone; John Macurdy (bass), Don Pedro; Geneviève Page (narrator).

Chorus and Orchestra of Paris, Daniel Barenboim cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2707 130 two discs \$21.96.

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

Considering the problems inherent in its staging, it is surprising that *Béatrice et Bénédict*, Berlioz's third and last opera, was so successful at its 1862 première in Baden-Baden at the theater that commissioned it. Creating his own libretto out of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, Berlioz treated the play with a free hand, omitting lengthy episodes, reducing and even eliminating certain characters while adding one of his own (Somarone, a caricature of nineteenth-century conductors). Much of the music in *Béatrice et Bénédict* represents Berlioz at his highest level of inspiration, but there are long stretches of spoken dialogue that militate against its successful staging. The opera's first recording, a very fine one under Colin Davis (L'Oiseau-Lyre SOL 256/7, now deleted), omitted the spoken portions; the second (Philips 6700 121, also under Davis) retained them in a sensibly abbreviated form. Daniel Barenboim's new Deutsche Grammophon set substitutes a skillfully written and well-executed narration.

However, narration tends to lose its appeal on repeated hearing, and the Philips set may be preferred for that reason. It has other attractions as well: the expert conducting of Davis, the Béatrice of Janet Baker (in less than top form, but still distinguished), and a cameo buffo characterization of Somarone by Jules Bastin. Otherwise the singing in the Philips set is uneven; its *Bénédict*, in fact, is barely acceptable.

This new DG version offers singing of nearly consistent excellence. *Bénédict*'s bantering music may not be the ideal medium for Plácido Domingo's ardent style, and his French is not pointed enough to make much of the text, but a luscious singing tone is too rare nowadays not to be acknowledged with gratitude. Happily, even more tonal luxuriance is provided by Yvonne Minton, Ileana Cotrubas, and Nadine Denize. The last two deliver the famous Duo-Nocturne in a manner worthy of Berlioz's ravishing music, and Minton sings the aria "*Il m'en souvient*" with a poignant beauty. Roger Soyer and John Macurdy are good in their small roles, but Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau is rather wasted in the part of Somarone.


I find that Daniel Barenboim's reading lacks the transparency and animation Colin Davis brought to this music, but the performance is lush-sounding and so lovingly projected as to do justice to the score's most inspired pages. These moments, reminiscent of the nocturnal music in *Les Troyens* and of much of *Nuits d'Été*, richly compensate the record listener for dullish stretches of dialogue or narration. *G.J.*

BRUCKNER: *Symphony No. 8, in C Minor.* Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam, Bernard Haitink cond. PHILIPS 6769 080 two discs \$25.96, © 7654 063 \$25.96.

Performance: **Carefully considered**
Recording: **Imposing**

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A photograph of Ed Meyer, an older man with glasses, wearing a dark suit, light blue shirt, and red tie. He is standing in a recording studio, looking towards the camera. In the background, there are shelves with various audio equipment, including a rack of components and a turntable. The lighting is dramatic, with a strong light source from the left creating highlights on his face and the equipment.

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Clearly, the Audio-Technica AT155LC excels in just about every area of cartridge performance, and it came as no surprise to find that it was as silky smooth and "forgettable" when playing music as its measurements would suggest. We would have difficulty describing the "sound" of the cartridge, since it contributes so little of itself to the final sonic quality. Good records of ten sound superb when played with the

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tink the intensity of utterance achieved by Herbert von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic in their remarkable 1976 Deutsche Grammophon recording. Indeed, Haitink's temperament has never impressed me as a heaven-storming one. What he does bring to this new recording is a deeply reflective reading, more yearning than fiercely striving. Given the total responsiveness of the Concertgebouw players and the splendid acoustic ambiance of their hall, the set is superior to DG's in terms of pure beauty of sound.

Of Haitink's command over the vast expanses of Bruckner's tonal architecture there can be no doubt whatever, and I was particularly happy with the way he maintains movement in the bell-haunted, wind-swept scherzo without creating a sense of haste. The slow movement is just a little too slow for my taste—two and a half minutes longer than the one by Karajan, who does heed Bruckner's tempo direction, *doch nicht schleppend*. Haitink's performance of it does not drag, but there are times when the motion seems almost suspended. The finale comes off in glorious martial splendor at the opening, and here it becomes the true climax of the work rather than a letdown following the great adagio. While the digital mastering is not particularly evident as such, the final pages, wherein all the basic thematic elements are heard together, sound considerably less congested than in previous recordings.

As with most musical works of this dimension and substance, I would not willing-

ly settle for any single reading, however distinguished. While this new one by Haitink would not be my first choice, I would certainly like it as an alternative, with sonics being a major consideration. *D.H.*

CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO: *Guitar Concerto in D Major, Op. 99*. MORENO TORROBA: *Homenaje a la Seguidilla*. Angel Romero (guitar); English Chamber Orchestra, Federico Moreno Torroba cond. ANGEL DS-37880 \$10.98, © 4XS-37880 \$10.98.

Performance: **Spirited, atmospheric**
Recording: **Excellent**

Sound buffs will enjoy the castanet and other percussion effects in the colorful *Homage to the Seguidilla* by Spain's veteran composer-conductor Federico Moreno Torroba, who at the age of ninety-one directs the performances on this disc with the vitality of a man half his age. But the real musical substance here is in Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's elegant *Guitar Concerto*, composed for Andrés Segovia in 1939. The ingenious and charming opening movement is a flawless little masterpiece. The slow movement partakes of an oddly Tchaikovskian nostalgia—perhaps not so odd if we recall the Russian composer's *Souvenir de Florence* string sextet and remind ourselves that Castelnuovo-Tedesco was a native of Florence. The Iberian styling of the finale may be taken as a tribute to Segovia.

Angel Romero, of the famous Romero family, plays both works with brilliance,

subtlety, and a great variety of coloration. Angel's digital mastering contributes a noise-free background and clarity of the transient sonic details that abound in music of this type. *D.H.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

CHARPENTIER: *Les Arts Florissants; Le Mariage Forcé, Interlude*. Les Arts Florissants, William Christie cond. HARMONIA MUNDI HM 1083 \$11.98, © HM40 1083 \$11.98 (from Brilly Imports, 155 North San Vicente Boulevard, Beverly Hills, Calif. 90211).

Performance: **Superb**
Recording: **Resonant**

The blatantly propagandistic text of Charpentier's *Les Arts Florissants* portrays the arts of music, poetry, architecture, and painting arrayed in support of Louis XIV, as the author of order and peace, in his struggle against discord and war. The power of the work derives from Charpentier's ability to convey this struggle by striking musical contrasts and from his subtle blending of French and Italian techniques; the recitatives, airs, and dances are pure French in style, the stunning choral writing a product of Charpentier's studies with Carissimi in Rome. *Les Arts Florissants* is a substantial composition that is well worth repeated hearings and careful study. The interlude from Charpentier's music for Molière's *Le Mariage Forcé* is a delightful bonus. Comic music from this period is rare, and this por-

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JANÁČEK: *Glagolitic Mass*. Felicity Palmer (soprano); Ameral Gunson (contralto); John Mitchinson (tenor); Malcolm King (bass); Jane Parker Smith (organ); City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Simon Rattle cond. ANGEL DS-37847 \$10.98, © 4ZS-37847 \$10.98.

Performance: **Fervent**
Recording: **Splendid**

This first digital recording of Janáček's unconventional treatment of the Old Slavonic Mass text has been blessed by a fervently youthful reading in a virtually ideal acoustic surround. We are made gloriously aware of Janáček's tonal vistas—line, rhythm, sonority, expanse—and yet there is no obscuring of the wealth of detail.

Aside from the special speech-rhythm elements that permeate the whole, a particular feature of the Mass is the inordinately high tessitura called for by the soprano and tenor solos. Felicity Palmer does beautifully in the Kyrie and Gloria, and tenor John Mitchinson copes bravely, if not entirely without strain, in the Credo. The important solo-organ episodes are performed with appropriate fierceness by Jane Parker Smith, and they are gorgeously recorded. But the greatest credit here belongs to the Birmingham chorus and orchestra for what they have accomplished with music and texts that are not exactly second nature to them. Simon Rattle brings zest and cohesion to the whole performance, and the production is admirable in its rightness of balance, richness of detail, and fullness of sonority. Especially considering that no one involved here is Czech, this is a remarkably satisfying realization of Janáček's nationalistic masterpiece. *D.H.*

KOTIK: *Many, Many Women*. The S.E.M. Ensemble. LABOR LAB-6/10 five discs \$39.98.

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

When I was in Prague in the mid-Sixties—during the so-called Prague Spring before the Russian invasion—I had the privilege of staying in the Kotik household, which was one of the nerve centers of the bursting, burgeoning creative life of that period. For at least three generations, the Kotiks have been artists. Most of them are or were involved with the visual arts, but there is a musician in the family. Petr Kotik, a flutist and composer, was one of the founders of the *Musica Viva Pragensis*—as far out (remember, we are talking about 1965) as anything in the West at the time. Most of the family left Czechoslovakia after the invasion, and Petr came to the Creative Center at the State University of New York at Buffalo, where he has been ever since.

Kotik's recent music can, with some confidence, be placed in the minimalist camp. *Many, Many Women* consists of 173 fragments in parallel fifths or fourths or octaves based on lines from Gertrude Stein's work of the same name. These are literally dozens and dozens of flat-out Steinish lines concerning, well, many, many women. (In *The Making of America* Stein said that she wanted "to describe every kind there is of men and women.") Kotik's "settings" may be performed by any combination of from

(Continued on page 86)

trayal of dogs, cats, donkeys, and nightingales singing an ode to music is hilarious.

Early-music ensembles have made great strides in mastering the difficulties and intricacies of the French Baroque vocal style, but I have never heard any bring it to life as convincingly as William Christie's *Les Arts Florissants*, which takes its name from Charpentier's work. Using light, natural voices, the singers project the meaning of the poetry with dramatic intensity, and their diction is clarity itself. The sonorities of the old instruments used by the ensemble are positively sensuous; the theorbo in particular sounds ravishing. This recording is a splendid achievement. *S.L.*

DAHL: *Concerto a Tre for Clarinet, Violin, and Cello* (see WEBER)

DAVIS: *Wayang No. II (Shadowdance); Wayang No. IV (Under the Double Moon)*. Anthony Davis (piano); Epistēmē—Shem Guibbory (violin); Abdul Wadud (cello); Rick Rozie (bass, in *Wayang No. II*); Dwight Andrews (flute, piccolo, bass clarinet); George Lewis (trombone); Jay Hoggard, Warren Smith, Pheeroan Aklafl (percussion); Mark Helias cond. *A Walk Through the Shadow*. Anthony Davis (piano). GRAMAVISION GR8101 \$8.98.

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

"*Epistēmē*," which means knowledge in Greek, is the name of the instrumental ensemble that Anthony Davis assembled for this record and not of his music, which is strongly influenced by traditional Balinese music, contemporary so-called minimalism, and even modern classical music. Interest in non-Western music among Western composers has grown tremendously in recent years. Davis' own background is in jazz, but his concerns, like those of many of his colleagues, are really no different from those of the non-jazz avant-garde.

Davis' playing is excellent, and his music has, despite the noted influences, a strong breakaway profile and individuality. *Wayang No. IV* is already much more highly developed than the earlier *Wayang No. II*; unlike real minimalist music, however, it goes somewhere. *A Walk Through the Shadow*, the third and last piece on the rec-

ord, is a short and moving piano solo that is beautifully played by the composer. Talented man. *E.S.*

DOUGLAS: *Celebration II for Clarinet and Strings* (see WEBER)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

FRANCK: *Quintet in F Minor for Piano and Strings*. MAHLER: *Quartet in A Minor for Piano and Strings*. İdil Biret (piano); London String Quartet. FINNADAR SR 9035 \$8.98.

Performance: **Sympathetic**
Recording: **Good**

Mahler's Piano Quartet, actually the first movement of a projected fuller work, was composed in 1876 when the composer was only sixteen years old. He himself acknowledged that his student works showed little originality, and one finds near echoes of Schumann and Brahms here as well as reminders of various other composers. Yet it is a solid piece, sound in workmanship and mature in character. As performed here, with great spirit and commitment, it is at the very least a worthwhile curio and surely a most imaginative filler for the Franck quintet, with which it shows a surprising similarity of language (the Franck of the quintet being one of the "various other composers" alluded to above). After a long period of neglect on records, the Franck has had three new recordings in the last few months. The performance by Jorge Bolet and the Juilliard Quartet on CBS (M 36701) is superb, and it is more richly recorded than this new one. But the Finnadar team is no less sympathetic in general, and their slower tempo for the middle movement, surely closer to Franck's marking (*Lento, con molto sentimento*), provides a more effective contrast with the outer movements and takes us deeper into the brooding intensity that is the heart of the work without allowing momentum to falter. Altogether a very enjoyable pair of performances. *R.F.*

HINDEMITH: *Trauermusik* (see SHOSTAKOVICH)

IVES: *Sonatas for Violin and Piano* (see *Best of the Month*, page 70)

2

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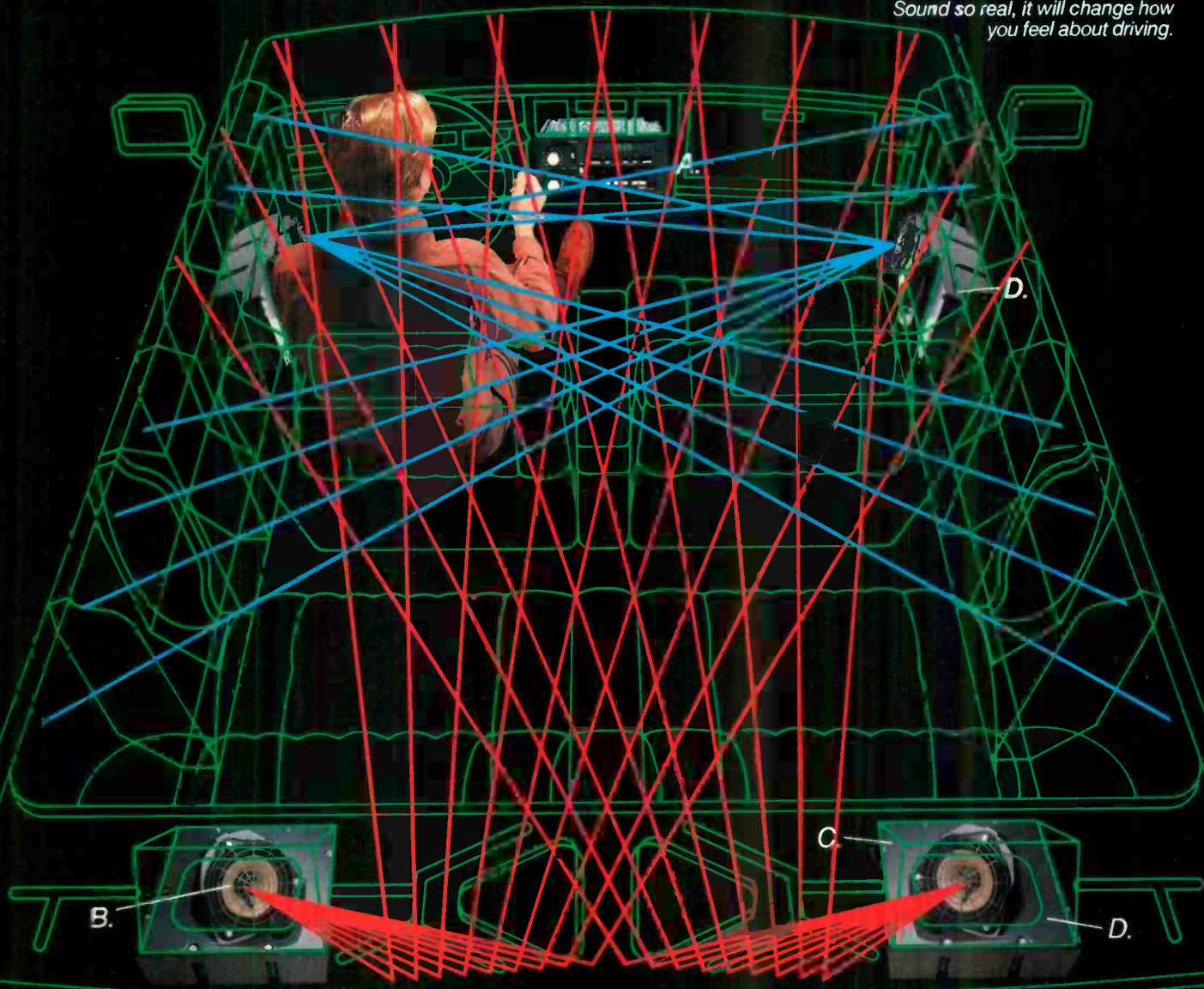
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Cyprien Katsaris

FRENCH pianist Cyprien Katsaris, thirty-one years old now, initiated his discography at one of the four pianos in Leonard Bernstein's recording of Stravinsky's *Les Noces* (Deutsche Grammophon 2530 880) and more recently turned up as soloist, with Ormandy and the Philadelphians, in three concerted works by Liszt (Angel DS-37888). Now Telefunken has issued three solo discs by Katsaris that give us a somewhat more comprehensive idea of his style and his range—and make such a happy impression that his name should become very easy to remember. By way of simplification, I would describe him as a younger standard-bearer of the Jorge Bolet/Earl Wild school of Lisztian brilliance, a brilliance very much concerned with substance.

The idea of piano transcriptions of Beethoven symphonies, even by Liszt, has never had much appeal for me, so it was Katsaris's record of the *Pastoral* Symphony I put on first, to get it out of the way. But what a surprise! What an unalloyed delight! Katsaris performs this music with such exceptional sensitivity that the thought of its being a transcription hardly ever intrudes; it is simply a beautiful work whose medium is the keyboard. Like some of Schubert's more ambitious piano compositions, it manages to evoke the orchestra (not necessarily the one we're familiar with in the original version) while at the same time sounding thoroughly and idiomatically pianistic.

Katsaris advises, in a brief album note,

that he found a number of instrumental touches in the original Beethoven score missing in Liszt's transcription and therefore made some additions of his own, thereby rendering the performance "infinitely more difficult . . . since I have only added things, and have subtracted nothing." The difficulty is at no point apparent to the listener, but it is quite possible that these additions—small ones in all five movements—contribute significantly to the overall pleasure of the performance. The instrument built for Katsaris by Mark Allen (also used in the aforementioned Angel recording) must be acknowledged for its contribution to the sensual appeal of the sound of this recording, and so must the difference made by Teldec's "Direct Metal Mastering" (to my ear, one of the really meaningful developments in high-technology disc processing), but these are, after all, only the vehicles for Katsaris's imaginative and communicative music making.

His new record of the Chopin waltzes—all seventeen of them—also benefits from "DMM," though a different, unidentified piano is involved. The approach here is big and bold, with plenty of flair and freedom, yet it is totally free of any excess and by no means superficial or lacking in intimacy where appropriate. No detail is overlooked or glossed over, and none is given an unnatural prominence that impedes momentum. It is clear throughout that Katsaris does not view the waltzes as mere "vehicles," but as

music he loves bringing to life, music whose *raison d'être* is to be enjoyed—as directly and as free of clutter as possible. While this record may not supersede those by Zimmerman, Vásáry, and Lipatti, it can hold its own in their company.

The third of these discs, for some quaint reason labeled "Virtuoso Chamber Music," is not chamber music at all but a collection of short pieces recorded live at recitals in various parts of Europe between 1975 and 1980. Katsaris is represented as a composer in his *Improvisation* inspired by Yacov Agam's sculpture *Le Coeur Battant* and as arranger in versions of Liszt's *Csárdás Obsstiné* and Gottschalk's *The Banjo*. I didn't care much for his treatment of the Gottschalk, which seems to leave little of that work's original character or rhythmic integrity, but everything else in the collection is quite appealing. *Improvisation* is one of those pieces that sound as if they cannot possibly be played, even though what we hear betrays not a hint of any problem for this performer. It is a super-toccata, with Lisztian thunder and echoes of Scriabin, subsiding to a bizarre second section with a less driving pace and less irruptive coloring. The other pieces, ranging from György Cziffra's knuckle-busting Concert Etude on Rimsky-Korsakov's *Flight of the Bumblebee* to Liszt transcriptions of Schumann and Schubert, from original Schumann and a Chopin nocturne to the Prokofiev Toccata and one of Bach's most familiar concerto slow movements, all come off superbly. This record may move more than a few listeners who like to make such comparisons to invoke the name Horowitz as well as those of Bolet and Wild. It is quite a showcase, it is well recorded, and the applause has been trimmed to unobtrusive proportions.

Nothing on these discs suggests how Katsaris might fare in, say, the big Schubert B-flat Sonata or Beethoven's Op. 111, but his tasteful enlivenment of what he has chosen to record so far is the sort of approach that serves almost any music well, and his *Pastoral* in particular is a gem.

—Richard Freed

BEETHOVEN (arr. Liszt): *Symphony No. 6, in F Major, Op. 68 ("Pastoral")*. Cyprien Katsaris (piano). TELEFUNKEN 6.42781 \$10.98.

CHOPIN: Waltzes. Cyprien Katsaris (piano). TELEFUNKEN 6.42706 \$10.98, © 4.42706 \$10.98.

VIRTUOSO CHAMBER MUSIC. Cziffra: *Étude de Concert No. 1*. Schumann: *Variations on a Theme by Clara Wieck; Träumerei*. Schumann (arr. Liszt): *Liebeslied*. Liszt: *Soirées de Vienne*. Liszt (arr. Katsaris): *Csárdás Obsstiné*. Mozart: *Das Butterbrot*. Prokofiev: *Prelude, from Op. 12; Toccata, Op. 11*. Chopin: *Nocturne No. 20, in C-sharp Minor, Op. posth*. Katsaris: *Improvisation d'Après une Sculpture d'Agam*. Gottschalk (arr. Katsaris): *The Banjo, Op. 15*. J. S. Bach (arr. Craxton): *Largo (from BWV 1056)*. Cyprien Katsaris (piano). TELEFUNKEN 6.42479 \$10.98, © 4.42479 \$10.98.

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two to six pairs of voices or instruments. In this recorded performance, there are two sopranos, two high male voices (one tenor and one countertenor), two low male voices, two flutes, two clarinets, and two trombones. Each pair chooses whether to play or sing along in octaves, fourths, or fifths, what transposition to play or sing in, and when to come in. The result is five records' and about three and a half hours' worth of what might be called aleatory organum. This is very pure, hermetic music—all sackcloth and ashes. They say if you fast long enough you begin to see visions. Listening to this set is a kind of musical fasting. Stein's plain speaking has been somehow converted into medieval European athletic aestheticism—

Shakerism all mixed up with Husitism and monasticism. The fare at this monastery is awfully thin, vision-inducing or not.

The S.E.M. ensemble—I don't remember what the initials stand for if I ever knew—includes Kotik himself and an excellent group of singers and players. The recording, which is superb, was produced by the always interesting and imaginative Heiner Stadler, formerly resident guru at Tomato Records and now off on his own. *E.S.*

LAZAROF: *Volo—Three Canti da Requiem* (see SHOSTAKOVICH)

MAHLER: *Quartet in A Minor for Piano and Strings* (see FRANCK)

MAHLER: *Symphony No. 7, in E Minor* (see Best of the Month, page 69)

A. MARCELLO: *Six Concertos ("La Cetra")*; Heinz Holliger, Louise Pellerin (oboes); Camerata Bern, Thomas Fürti cond. ARCHIV 2533 462 \$10.98.

Performance: **Invigorating**
Recording: **Splendid**

Like his better-known younger brother, Benedetto, Alessandro Marcello was a noble amateur—and a fine one judging from these fascinating concertos. Writing for amateurs, Marcello lightened the burden of the soloists by constantly shifting the solo part from one to another during the course of a concerto, much as Handel did in his Op. 3 set. Thus the textures with their ever-shifting sonorities are the most interesting aspects of these works, which are basically bland tonally.

The performances here are crisp and clear; the freshness of the Camerata Bern is invigorating. The various soloists, led by Heinz Holliger, are uniformly excellent and serve the music very well indeed. *S.L.*

MORENO TORROBA: *Homenaje a la Seguidilla* (see CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO)

MOZART: *Apollo et Hyacinthus (K. 38)*; Cornelia Wulkopf (contralto), Apollo; Edith Mathis (soprano), Hyacinthus; Hanna Schwarz (contralto), Zephyrus; Arleen Augér (soprano), Melia; Anthony Rolfe Johnson (tenor), Oebalus. Salzburg Chamber Chorus; Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra, Leopold Hager cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2707 129 two discs \$21.96.

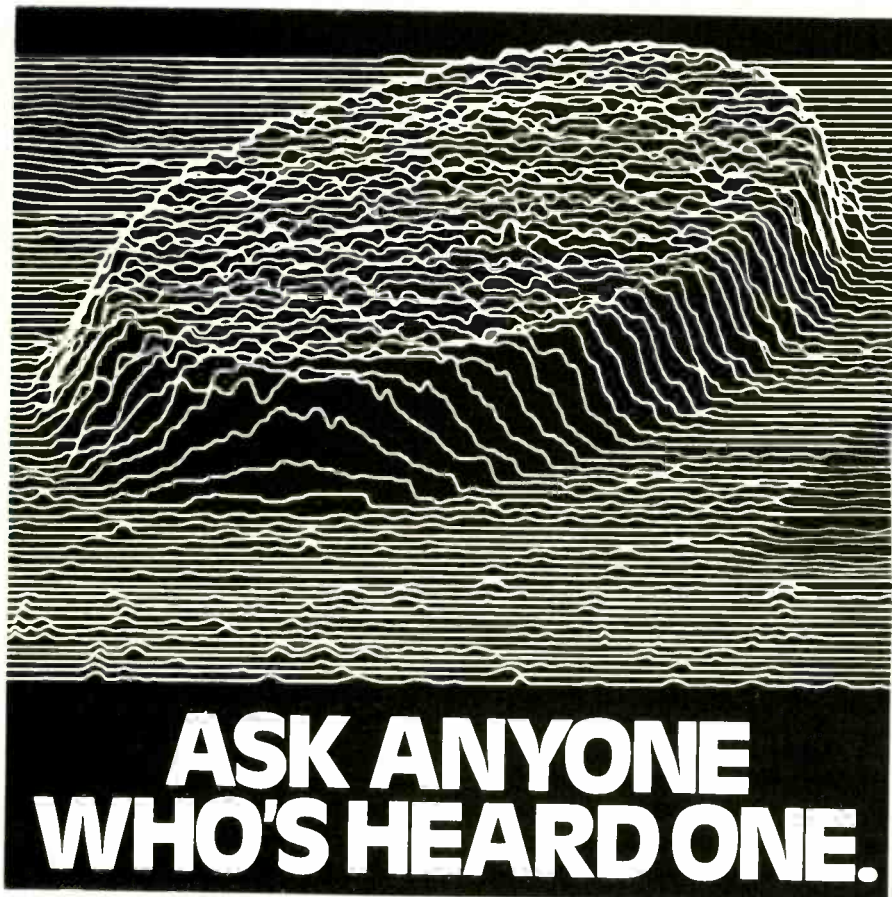
Performance: **Fine**
Recording: **Very good**

On returning to Salzburg after touring Europe with his family for four years, the eleven-year-old Mozart received a commission from the Benedictine University to write an *intermedia* to be performed between the acts of a Latin play. Thus came into being Mozart's first opera, *Apollo et Hyacinthus*. The libretto, also in Latin, concerns Apollo's love for both Hyacinthus and his sister, Melia, and the jealousy of Zephyrus, which results in Hyacinthus's death. Although the plot is stiff and artificial, it apparently had enough passion to fire Mozart's imagination and dramatic genius in his first stage work. Much of the music is in a formalized Baroque idiom, but Melia's "*Laetari, iocari*" and the duet between Oebalus and Melia, "*Natus cadit*," clearly foreshadow Mozart's later achievements.

The performance by the Salzburg Mozarteum is basically solid. Anthony Rolfe Johnson and Arleen Augér are particularly excellent. As Hyacinthus's father, Oebalus, Johnson maintains regal dignity while displaying alternate emotions of anger and grief. Augér's clear, supple soprano is a joy to hear as she develops her love-hate relationship with Apollo. The rest of the cast is adequate if uninspired, and they deal bravely with the impossible tessituras designed for husky-sounding choirboys. All in all, a fine performance. *S.L.*

PARTOS: *Yizkor* (see SHOSTAKOVICH)

(Continued on page 88)



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Purcell's "Tempest"

John Eliot Gardiner



Of all the lovely music inspired over the past four centuries by Shakespeare's magical fantasy *The Tempest*, some of the loveliest is in Purcell's "semi-opera" first produced in the 1690's. There is very little Shakespeare in the text of this version of *The Tempest*, and musicologists are unsure whether anything but one song—*Dear Pretty Youth* in Act IV—was actually written by Purcell. But whoever composed the music, it is marvelous, full of masques and dances, sweet airs, and dulcet song. The recording recently released by the Musical Heritage Society omits all dialogue and includes only self-contained musical scenes. Erato originally released it overseas, and it is good to have it available here.

The singers are all first-rate and at home in the Baroque idiom, as are the instrumental soloists and ensemble ably led by John Eliot Gardiner. Especially beguiling is Carol Hall in the role of Ariel, singing *Full Fathom Five, Come unto These Yellow Sands*, and two of the other songs with choral accompaniment. As Doriinda, Rosemary

Hardy is notably effective in *Dear Pretty Youth*, and in *Neptune's Masque* Jennifer Smith makes a regal Amphitrite, Stephen Marcoe is a Neptune in benign mood, and John Elwes is an affably obedient Aeolus calling off his "stormy winds" at Neptune's command. Enchanting music, flawlessly performed, beautifully recorded.

—Paul Kresh

PURCELL: *The Tempest*. David Thomas (bass), First Devil; Roderick Earle (bass), Second Devil; Carol Hall (mezzo-soprano), Ariel; Rose-Mary Hardy (soprano), Doriinda; Jennifer Smith (soprano), Amphitrite; Stephen Varcoe (baritone), Neptune; John Elwes (tenor), Aeolus. Marilyn Sanson (cello); Nicholaes Kraemer, Alastair Ross (harpsichords, organ); Michael Lewin (theorbo); Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra, John Eliot Gardiner cond. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 4479 \$7.75 (plus \$1.60 postage and handling charge from the Musical Heritage Society, 14 Park Road, Tinton Falls, N.J. 07724).

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

RACHMANINOFF: *Scherzo in F Major; Symphony in D Minor, First Movement; Symphonic Poem, Prince Rostislav; Fantasy, The Rock, Op. 7; Caprice Bohémien, Op. 12; Cantata, Spring, Op. 21; The Isle of the Dead, Op. 29; Vocalise, Op. 34, No. 14; The Bells, Op. 35; Three Russian Songs for Chorus and Orchestra, Op. 41; Symphonic Dances, Op. 45.* Marianna Christos (soprano); Walter Planté (tenor); Arnold Voketaitis (bass-baritone); Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Leonard Slatkin cond. Vox VCL 9013X four discs \$29.98, © VCS 9013X \$29.98.

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

Leonard Slatkin and the Saint Louis Symphony have established a fine track record

as interpreters of Rachmaninoff with their previous recordings of the symphonies and the concertos for the Moss Music Group labels. In many respects this new package is the most interesting of all, including all the remaining works for orchestra or with orchestral accompaniment.

The scores that predate the First Symphony, Op. 13, are for the most part only mildly interesting curiosities. Mendelssohn's influence on the 1887 *Scherzo in F Major* is clearly evident. The single finished movement for an early D Minor Symphony echoes bits of the first movement of the Tchaikovsky Fourth. *Prince Rostislav* and *The Rock* are tinged with elements of Balakirev and Rimsky-Korsakov, but here we begin to sense Rachmaninoff achieving a measure of the special tonal dramaturgy characteristic of his mature output. The *Caprice Bohémien*, built in Rimskian fash-

ion on a kind of all-purpose Russian gypsy folk tune, shows him developing a real flair for colorful instrumentation. With the somewhat fevered *Spring* cantata, on a text by Nekrassov (sung here in Russian by baritone and chorus), we reach the full-blown Rachmaninoff lyrical-dramatic style. The hand of the mature master is at work throughout the remaining five pieces.

Slatkin's reading of *The Isle of the Dead*, with its fine pacing, keen dramatic sense, and sensitivity to timbre, is on a par with Fritz Reiner's (RCA AGL1-1523) and the composer's own with the Philadelphia Orchestra (RCA ARM3-0295, now deleted). *The Bells* here is sung in an English version translated from Konstantin Balmont's free Russian rendering of the Poe original, and Slatkin not only has a superbly trained chorus but excellent tenor, soprano, and baritone soloists. While I am still partial to the Sixties Soviet recording conducted by the late Kyril Kondrashin (recently reissued on Quintessence), Slatkin's reading is a very strong second musically and benefits from handsome sonics.

The Op. 41 folk-song settings, under the title "Three Russian Songs," have always been considered small treasures of Rachmaninoff's art. Back in the early Fifties the short-lived Rachmaninoff Society label issued the third song, *Powder and Paint*, as a filler for the First Piano Sonata (RS-6); it was sung by Nadezhda Plevitskaya, from whom Rachmaninoff learned the song, with Rachmaninoff at the piano. Presumably this was from the concert that annotator Richard Freed mentions in his excellent notes accompanying this new set, which offers fine performances of all three.

I have waited a long time for a recorded performance of Rachmaninoff's last work, the *Symphonic Dances*, that would match the one by Sir Eugene Goossens originally issued by Everest in 1959. Except for a certain lack of volatility in the *tempo di valse* central movement, Slatkin and his orchestra have filled the bill admirably. As in their past Saint Louis productions, the team of Marc Aubort and Joanna Nickrenz has provided a first-class recording. D.H.

ROSSINI: *Stabat Mater*. Katia Ricciarelli (soprano); Lucia Valentini Terrani (mezzo-soprano); Dalmacio Gonzalez (tenor); Ruggero Raimondi (bass); Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus, Carlo Maria Giulini cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2532 046 \$12.98, © 3302 046 \$12.98.

ROSSINI: *Stabat Mater*. Catherine Malfitano (soprano); Agnes Baltza (mezzo-soprano); Robert Gambill (tenor); Gwynne Howell (bass); Orchestra and Chorus of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Riccardo Muti cond. ANGEL DS 37901 \$10.98, © 4XS 37901 \$10.98.

Performances: **Both good**
Recordings: **Both excellent**

Rossini's *Stabat Mater* may be imperfect liturgy, but it is a vivid and deeply moving devotional piece conceived in operatic terms—and opera was Rossini's true element. The solo and combined voices, chorus, and orchestra are all so imaginatively and effectively employed that even a moderately successful performance cannot fail to make an impact. With four outstanding

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soloists and a knowing conductor the *Stabat Mater* could be a thrilling listening experience. I have not yet been granted that experience, and I must regretfully report that, although these two new versions have much in their favor, neither really fulfils the composition's splendid promise.

Both conductors love the work—that much is clear from their faithful and transparent revelation of textual details. Carlo Maria Giulini sees a monumentality in this *Stabat Mater* that may exceed Rossini's own vision of it: the noble spaciousness of his interpretation at times restrains the soaring quality of the music. The sonorities he obtains, however, are marvelous. Riccardo Muti does not quite equal Giulini's architectural grandeur and polished execution, but, to my ears, he comes closer to the overall ideal, though he too has his didactic moments (such as the finicky delineation of orchestral detail in the "Pro peccatis").

Both vocal quartets are good but fall short of the kind of perfection I dream of. Katia Ricciarelli has the right dramatic quality for the soprano's music, but her lovely tone is undermined by moments of insecurity. Catherine Malfitano, bravely essaying music that taxes her resources, sings the high-lying phrases and ornamentations more accurately. (Rossini does expect a great deal from his soprano!) Both mezzos sing securely, with velvety legatos, but Valentini Terrani sounds more comfortable in the tessitura and therefore more authoritative. Both tenors contribute nicely to the ensembles but are defeated by the bravura requirements of "Cujus animam" (which was written for the legendary Mario). The contradictory marking of *Allegretto maestoso* is not much help to conductors. Giulini understates the martial element in the music, with less than ideal results. Muti displays more urgency, but he too needs a more assertive tenor (like the young Pavarotti on London 26250). As for the basses, Muti's Gwynn Howell is satisfactory and surely more involved than Giulini's Ruggero Raimondi, who has a superior voice but whose singing is bland.

Lucia Popp:
never disappointing



Both performances are beautifully recorded. In overall merit they surpass all previous recorded versions. Forced to choose between them, I would recommend the Deutsche Grammophon disc for the homogeneity of its vocal quartet. If you cannot accept Giulini's Olympian view of the work, Muti's Angel disc is a good alternative.

G.J.

SCHUBERT: *The Six Latin Masses*. Cappella Vocale, Hamburg; Spandauer Kantorei, Berlin; Bach Collegium, Berlin, Martin Behrmann cond. VOX CUM LAUDE 4-VCL 9016X four discs \$29.98, © 3-VCS 9016X \$29.98.

Performance: **Noble**
Recording: **Fine**

The beauties of Schubert's six Masses need not be extolled here. Their dates of composition range from 1814, when Schubert was seventeen, to 1828, the year of his death, and they contain some of his most heartfelt music, his noblest gestures, and a few errant struggles with fugal writing. They constitute a rich and appealing legacy.

In these recordings the combined choruses of Berlin's Spandauer Kantorei and Hamburg's Cappella Vocale sing beautifully and give the music a rich, supple sound. Their carefully worked out dynamic shadings are subtle and effective. The blend and balance with the orchestra is good in both the homophonic and contrapuntal writing, and conductor Martin Behrmann's dignified sense of pacing brings out the underlying nobility and devotional aspects of the music. Twelve soloists (too many to list individually) are used in the various performances. While none rise to any great height, they all have fine voices, are good ensemble singers, and do stylistic justice to Schubert's music.

S.L.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SCHUMANN: *Carnaval, Op. 9; Faschingschwank aus Wien, Op. 26*. Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli (piano). DEUTSCHE

GRAMMOPHON 2536 415 \$10.98, © 3302 415 \$10.98.

Performance: **Extraordinary**
Recording: **Listenable**

Whatever you do, don't confuse this recording of *Carnaval* with the same pianist's version on Angel (S-37137), which is the most perverse, and probably the worst, rendition of the piece by a major pianist I have ever heard. *This* one, recorded in mono by the BBC in 1957 (it has been rechanneled for stereo), may very well be the best.

As I've said before, Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli is among the greatest of all pianists who can be heard on recordings. What is so incredibly impressive about this performance is the sheer naturalness of the music, the way character is effortlessly brought out, the way everything speaks in the most direct and telling way. At his best, Michelangeli's instinct for the infinitesimal degrees of rubato and dynamics that go into shaping a phrase is uncanny; nothing ever sounds studied, stilted, or fussy, and yet *everything* is shaped. In back of this, of course, is a technique that allows him to do precisely what he wants, no matter how digressively difficult, with no audible sign of effort. The interpretation is invariably cool; the feeling always seems to be that of the music itself.

The recording, which is not at all bad, does show its age and is afflicted with a certain amount of hiss—which you no longer notice after a few measures. If you wonder why it waited so long for release, I can tell you that there *is* a wrong note or two, and Michelangeli has never been tolerant of imperfections.

—James Goodfriend

SCHUMANN: *Frauenliebe und Leben, Op. 42; Er Ist's; Frühlingst; Schneeglöckchen; Erstes Grün; Mein Garten; Röselein, Röselein; Mit Myrten und Rosen; Mignon; Reich Mir die Hand, O Wolke*. Lucia Popp (soprano); Geoffrey Parsons (piano). EURODISC 201 296-366 \$9.98.

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

Lucia Popp has been a most dependable presence on the recording scene for some fifteen years now. She has excelled in operas by Handel, Mozart, Richard Strauss, Massenet, and Donizetti, in songs by Schubert and Mahler, in oratorios, operettas, and so on. Not once to my recollection has she turned in a disappointing performance, and she is not disappointing here. I only wish I could work up a little more enthusiasm for this recital.

Frauenliebe und Leben suffers from overexposure on records: despite all the deletions, we still have versions by Ameling, Baker, Mathis, and Schwarzkopf. In tonal sheen Popp is at least the equal of all these others; in spontaneity Ameling and Mathis may be preferable. The ten brief songs on side two deal mainly with springtime and similar flowery subjects. Some are not easily found on records, but, to be frank, some are minor Schumann indeed. (*Erstes Grün*, a delight, is a notable exception.) In all, this is a rather dispensable program, but it is charmingly sung, expertly accompanied, and very well recorded.

G.J.

(Continued on page 94)



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Schoenberg: Beauty and Beast

The Schoenberg Ensemble



Philips Records

UNLIKELY as it seems, given his fierce reputation, Arnold Schoenberg wrote a fair amount of occasional music, both original compositions and arrangements, for various purposes ranging from a Berlin cabaret revue to benefits for his own Society for Private Musical Performances to an army party to a projected tour of *Pierrot Lunaire*. Now the Schoenberg Ensemble (did you know there was such a thing?) has made a record of a number of the smaller-scaled and mostly lighthearted pieces of this type. The Philips album includes arrangements of two Johann Strauss Jr. waltzes, Schubert's *Hark, Hark, the Lark*, a popular Viennese song, and *Funiculi, Funicula*—the last three scored for clarinet, bassoon, mandolin, guitar, and string quartet!

More on the serious side is a gorgeous arrangement of the very beautiful Busoni *Berceuse Élégiaque* (an arrangement that is probably not by Schoenberg but by his pupil Erwin Stein) as well as three original pieces: an early (1897), Brahmsian string-quartet movement, a curious, unfinished work for oboe, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano in Schoenberg's best post-Romantic/almost-modern manner, and a brief work for piano and string quartet. Everything on the album is played with skill and charm by an excellent group of musicians under the direction of the excellent and enterprising Reinbert de Leeuw. Incidentally, the album carries the title "*Wien, Wien, Nur Du Allein*," a reference to the popular song *Vienna, City of My Dreams* that Schoenberg wrote a bitter parody of in 1939 (it is not included here, however).

If there was a Viennese side to Schoenberg's character, there was also what we might call the official, professorial, Berlin side, and this came out more and more as his career developed, especially in the early "neo-Classical" twelve-tone works he wrote in the Twenties and early Thirties. An example is the Quintet for Winds, Op. 26, played on a new Gasparo release by the Oberlin Woodwind Quintet. The album's

back cover features the following quotation: "I will not show you that my music is beautiful. You know it not. . . . I know it." This makes a nice *pendant* to my own favorite Schoenberg quote: "My music is not *avant-garde*, only badly played."

Well, I have to say that the work in question must qualify as the ugliest piece of music ever written. It was the first extended twelve-tone composition, a four-movement sonata-type piece lasting forty minutes. Why Schoenberg chose woodwinds for such an enterprise is obscure, but the result is a work of extraordinary difficulty—difficult to play and difficult to listen to. We all used to think the trouble was the players' inability to grasp it, to master it, to project it adequately. But now a couple of generations have gone by and wind ensembles consider the work a high point of their repertoire. It has been recorded many times, and I have heard it, live and recorded, at least a dozen times. Alas, it doesn't get any more grateful. The Oberlin players are good; they are not struggling to hit the notes. But technical mastery—and a good recording and a scholarly booklet to go with it—are not enough to make one love the piece. Sorry.

The Chamber Symphony, Op. 9, is another Schoenberg work that used to suffer in performance. Here the problem was the orchestration—the piece is a big post-Mahlerian, twenty-two-minute symphony scored for only fifteen players, with solo strings pitted against some heavy wind-ensemble writing. However, this work written twenty years before the Wind Quintet, on the edge of that dark abyss between post-Romanticism and proto-modernism, has been taken in hand by a new generation of conductors and performers (and record producers). It has turned out to be quite beautiful and, while still astonishing, not really *avant-garde*. Deutsche Grammophon's excellent new digital recording of it by the Berlin Philharmonic—made in the city from which Schoenberg was fired and exiled forever by the Nazis—is a case in point.

The other side of the DG disc is devoted to Giacomo Manzoni's *Masse*—"masses" as in "the masses are revolting" or "I compose music, not in melodies and harmonies, but in volumes and masses." It's a rather odd case. Written for pianist Maurizio Pollini (and performed here by him with the Berlin Philharmonic), it is one of those cluster and density pieces that one associates with the early careers of such composers as Penderecki and Ligeti—indubitably under the influence of Varèse, as is acknowledged openly in the subtitle. This is rough and rocky modern music, but, like a lot of similar work (and quite unlike the complex Schoenberg compositions), it uses big, simple, dramatic gestures. It is effective enough, especially in this excellent performance and recording. I recommend it—if you like ear-blasters.

—Eric Salzman

THE SCHOENBERG ENSEMBLE.

Schoenberg: *Scherzo for String Quartet; Ein Stelldichein; Die Eiserne Brigade*. **Busoni (arr. Schoenberg?):** *Berceuse Élégiaque, Op. 42*. **Johann Strauss Jr. (arr. Schoenberg):** *Roses from the South; Emperor Waltz*. **Schubert (arr. Schoenberg):** *Ständchen (D. 889)*. **Sioly (arr. Schoenberg):** *Weil i a Alter Draher Bin*. **Denza (arr. Schoenberg):** *Funiculi, Funicula*. The Schoenberg Ensemble, Reinbert de Leeuw cond. PHILIPS 6570 811 \$10.98.

SCHOENBERG: Quintet for Wind Instruments, Op. 26. Oberlin Woodwind Quintet. GASPARO GS-204CX \$8.98.

SCHOENBERG: Chamber Symphony, Op. 9. Members of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Giuseppe Sinopoli cond. **MANZONI: Masse (Homage to Edgard Varèse for Piano and Orchestra).** Maurizio Pollini (piano); Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Giuseppe Sinopoli cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2532 023 \$12.98, © 3302 023 \$12.98.



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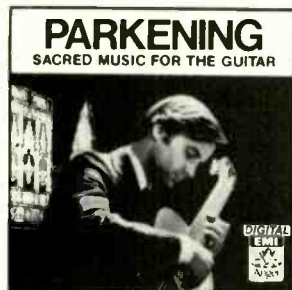
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SHOSTAKOVICH: Viola Sonata, Op. 147. Milton Thomas (viola); Doris Stevenson (piano). **LAZAROF: Volo (Three Canti da Requiem).** Milton Thomas (viola); two string ensembles, Henri Lazarof cond. LAUREL LR-118 \$9.98.

Performance: **Excellent**

Recording: **Very good**

SHOSTAKOVICH: Viola Sonata, Op. 147. Nancy Uscher (viola); Allan Sternfield (piano). **PARTOS: Yizkor. HINDEMITH: Trauermusik.** Nancy Uscher (viola); Jerusalem Ensemble. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 4484 \$7.75 (plus \$1.60 postage and handling charge from the Musical Heritage Society, 14 Park Road, Tinton Falls, N.J. 07724).

Performance: **Good**

Recording: **Good**

SHOSTAKOVICH: Violin Sonata, Op. 134. Emanuel Borok (violin); Tatiana Yampolsky (piano). SINE QUA NON SUPERBA SA 2045 \$5.98.

Performance: **Very good**

Recording: **Very good**

The repertoire of important music for viola and piano has never been large enough for violists to assemble a meaningful portfolio without relying on transcriptions; even the Brahms sonatas are, after all, the composer's own transcriptions of his clarinet sonatas. The appearance of so substantial a work as the Shostakovich Viola Sonata—the last work completed by that composer, finished only days before his death in August 1975—must have gladdened the hearts of violists everywhere and has understandably sent several of them into the recording studio. The definitive statement of this work would appear to be the Melodiya recording by violist Fyodor Druzhinin (for whom Shostakovich composed it) and pianist Mikhail Muntyan, very conveniently coupled with the Shostakovich Violin Sonata, played by Gidon Kremer and Andre Gavrilov, on CBS M 35109. However, collectors who have the now-deleted Angel disc of the Violin Sonata with Oistrakh and Richter (paired with the Quartet No. 13 in a performance by the Beethoven Quartet, whose violist Druzhinin is) might wish to consider one of the two new recordings of the Viola Sonata.

The elegiac nature of the Viola Sonata was perhaps unintentional, or unconscious, but it makes the respective companion works on both Laurel and MHS curiously appropriate, since all three are elegies of one sort or another. Henri Lazarof's *Volo*, a three-movement ("canti da requiem") work for viola and two string ensembles composed for Milton Thomas, is dedicated to the memory of the composer's father and, like the Shostakovich sonata, cites music by an earlier composer. Shostakovich alludes to material from two of Beethoven's piano sonatas; Lazarof bases his final movement on the aria "Di Provenza il mar," sung by the elder Germont to his son in Verdi's *La Traviata*. *Yizkor*, also for viola and strings, by the late Hungarian-Israeli composer Oedoen Partos, was composed in 1946 as a memorial to the victims of the Holocaust; Hindemith's more familiar *Trauermusik* was written ten years earlier to mark the death of King George V of England. The

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Partos and Hindemith works add up to a more persuasive coupling than the Lazarof piece, but the performance of the Shostakovich by Milton Thomas and Doris Stevenson is more compelling than the one by Nancy Uscher and Allan Sternfeld (though theirs is quite good in its own right) and benefits further from superior sound and an utterly silent surface.

The performance of the Violin Sonata by Emanuel Borok (the Boston Symphony Orchestra's Russian-born assistant concertmaster) and pianist Tatiana Yampolsky is a fine, authoritative statement of the work, very well recorded. I have to question the necessity, though, as well as the desirability, of spreading this thirty-two-minute work over two full sides, when each of the earlier recordings cited above fits snugly on a single side. **R.F.**

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Manfred Symphony, Op. 58.* Philharmonia Orchestra, Riccardo Muti cond. ANGEL ① DS-37752 \$10.98, ② 4XS-37752 \$10.98.

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

Tchaikovsky's sprawling counterpart to Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* needs the finest, most red-blooded, yet tenderly lyrical conducting and a virtuoso ensemble to make a convincing case. Toscanini could do it, though with some hefty cuts in the score. Riccardo Muti does it here without cuts and with the benefit of some of the best recorded sound that Angel has given us thus far in its digitally mastered recordings.

There is a marvelously dramatic ebb and flow to the twenty-five-minute opening movement here, and it is clear that Muti has the Philharmonia players on their toes for every measure. The Queen Mab-like scherzo is as magical as it can be, and the pastoral slow movement with its turbulent central episode has both flow and subtle coloration. There isn't much anyone can do with the highly episodic finale, with its labored fugues and synthetic bacchanale, until the epilogue, which is Tchaikovskian musical mime at its most effective. Muti manages to keep things moving at a good clip and with plenty of dynamic contrast up to that point, and he then makes the most of the final pages in terms of drama and color.

This is a magnificently theatrical treatment of the *Manfred* Symphony, but one that is also sternly controlled and with particular attention given to the finest details of phrasing and dynamics. And everything comes through in the recording, from the tiniest plink of a harp string to the simply gorgeous full-orchestra passages. By and large, I'd say this *Manfred* is done about as well as it is possible to do it. **D.H.**

TELEMANN: *Partita in E Major; Partita in A Major; Partita in D Major; Partita Polonaise in A Major.* Narciso Yepes, Godelieve Monden (guitars). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2531 350 \$10.98, ③ 3301 350 \$10.98.

Performance: **Delightful**
Recording: **Clarity itself**

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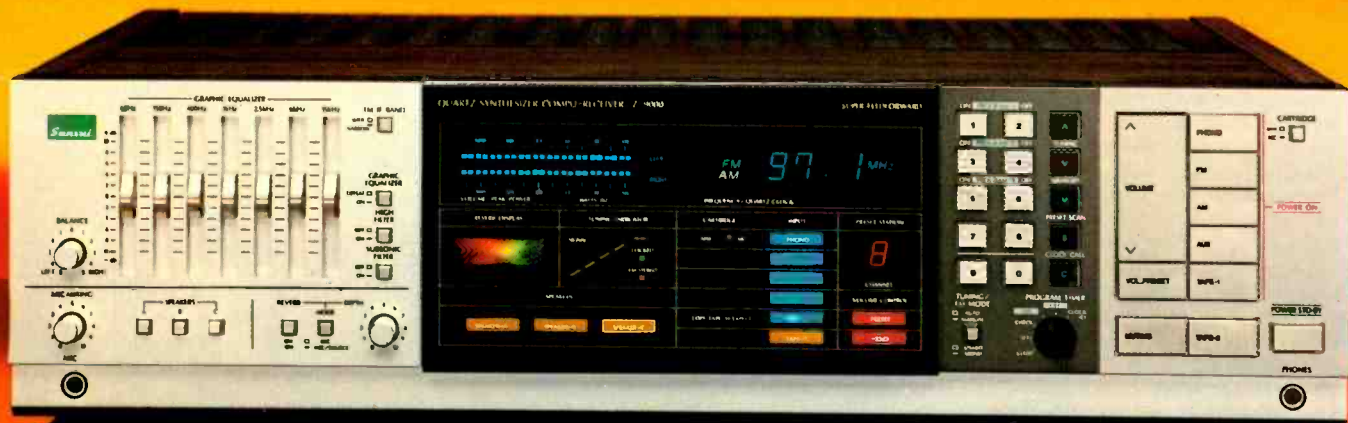
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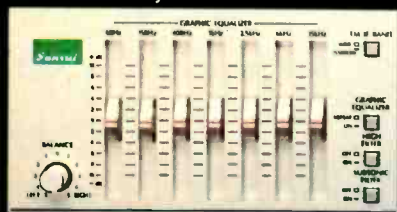
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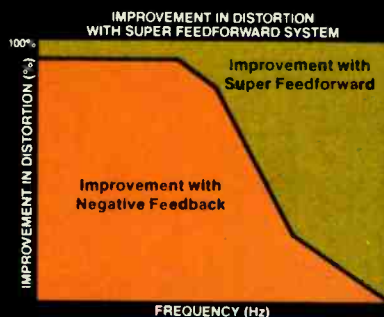
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partitas in the Warsaw University Library. Telemann scored them for two lutes, but, as transcribed by Yepes and Monden, they make excellent music for guitars: they seem idiomatic and use the full resources of the instrument. Although the music is on the light side, there is such a variety of textures and good humor that even routine diatonic harmonies hold the listener's interest. The performances are not only captivating but a model of ensemble down to the last trill and mordent. A charming record. *S.L.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

VIVALDI: Bassoon Concertos: B-flat Major, Op. 8, No. 36; A Minor, Op. 8, No. 2; C Major, Op. 8, No. 17; C Minor, Op. 8, No. 14. Robert Thompson (bassoon); Philip Ledger (harpsichord); London Mozart Players, Philip Ledger cond. MUSICMASTERS MM 20018 \$8.98.

Performance: **Resplendent**
Recording: **A bit thick**

Until I listened to this record it never occurred to me just how seriously Vivaldi took the bassoon. Robert Thompson's strong performances—sure-footed in tempo and agile in the bristling figurations—certainly make a good case for the quality of the Op. 8 concertos, or at least the four out of thirty-six that he has selected. They are splendid pieces that abound in inventiveness. The orchestral support is rich in sound with an emphasis on the bass line, and Philip Ledger, conducting from the harpsichord, provides excellent continuo playing. *S.L.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

WEBER: Quintet for Clarinet and Strings in B-flat Major, Op. 34. DOUGLAS: Celebration II for Clarinet and Strings. Richard Stoltzman (clarinet); Ida Kavafian, Theodore Arm (violins); Ik-Hwan Bae (viola); Fred Sherry (cello). DAHL: *Concerto a Tre for Clarinet, Violin, and Cello.* Richard Stoltzman (clarinet); Theodore Arm (violin); Fred Sherry (cello). RCA ARL1-4328 \$9.98, © ARK1-4328 \$9.98.

Performance: **Splendid**
Recording: **Well-balanced**

Weber's adorable Clarinet Quintet was very well served earlier this year by David Shifrin and the Sequoia Quartet in their Nonesuch digital recording (D-79017), and it is served with at least equal distinction here by three-quarters of the Tashi ensemble (Richard Stoltzman, Ida Kavafian, and Fred Sherry) and two "guest artists." Choosing between the two versions can be both delightful and frustrating. Oversimplifying a bit, I might suggest that Shifrin and the Sequoia bring out more of the earthy, spontaneous qualities of the work while Stoltzman & Co. favor a more subtle and elegant approach. In fact, neither team is actually deficient in any of these qualities, though Stoltzman sometimes lingers more over a phrase and indulges himself (and the listener) in exhibiting his instrument's capacity for the most delicate gradations of color. RCA has, I think, achieved a more just balance between the clarinet and the strings than Nonesuch, and a more agreeable sonic frame in general.

The respective couplings, of course, are a

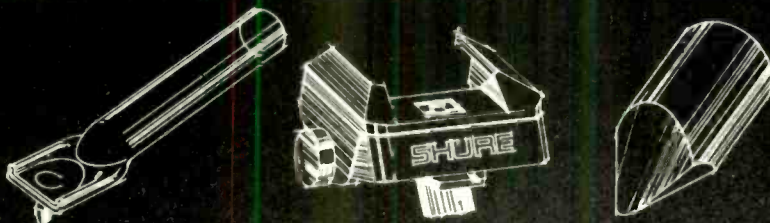
strong factor in determining a choice. On Nonesuch, Shifrin and pianist William Doppmann give us more Weber; on RCA, continuity is in terms of the performers rather than the composer. This is Tashi without Peter Serkin, and in Ingolf Dahl's *Concerto a Tre* it is not Ida Kavafian but Theodore Arm who performs with Stoltzman and Sherry. The piece is not otherwise available on records, and it is very much worth hearing with its occasional reminders of Stravinsky, its piquant rhythms, and its sometimes astonishing range of colors. The much shorter *Celebration II* by Canadian-born Bill Douglas (now resident in Colorado) was composed for Stoltzman, to be performed either with string quartet, as in

this recording, or with string orchestra. It is an ingratiating work, improvisatory in character and evoking various exotic flavors. The composer allows the insertion of one of his "rock etudes" toward the end of the piece, and since it is vocal rather than instrumental, the effect, to my ear, is a jarring interruption of the otherwise seamless and seductive flow. The performance, though, is as splendid as the other two on the disc. *R.F.*

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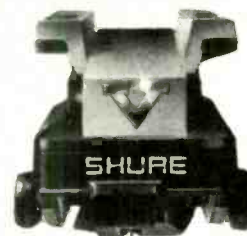
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The Music of Mexico

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WHEN Fernando Lozano brought his Orquesta Filarmónica de la Ciudad de México to perform in Washington last year, I was impressed by the group's size (an unusually large string section), apparent enthusiasm, and overall proficiency in both Mexican and European music. These same qualities are happily apparent in the three entirely Mexican programs in which Desto is introducing this orchestra and its conductor to U.S. discophiles, an assortment in which no more than three of the eight titles—Pablo Moncayo's *Huapango*, Silvestre Revueltas's *Sensemaya*, and Carlos Chávez's *Sinfonía India*—are likely to be at all familiar to most listeners in this country.

The most impressive of the three discs is the one devoted entirely to Revueltas, coupling his *Homage to Federico García Lorca* and *Night of the Mayas*. If the latter has been recorded before, it has not come my way. Like some of Revueltas's other concert works, it derives from a film score, but it is longer (more than a half hour) and more varied in its material than anything else of his known to me, filled with the sorts of colors and contrasting moods suggested by its movement headings: "The Night of the Mayas," "The Night of the Jaranas," "The Night of Yucatán," and "The Night of Sorcery." Both works are handsomely performed and smoothly recorded.

The shorter work on Lozano's Revueltas disc, the *Homage*, is somewhat more persuasively performed by Enrique Bátiz and the Orquesta Sinfónica del Estado de México on Varèse Sarabande (VCDM 1000.220), which also includes the three familiar titles (cited above) in Lozano's "Classical Music of Mexico" collection. Bátiz shows a little more subtlety (in some not particularly subtle material, it might be argued), flair, and polish than Lozano, and Varèse Sarabande's digital recording falls

in the "sonic showpiece" category, while Desto's is merely quite good. Many enthusiasts may be happy enough to duplicate *Homage to García Lorca* in order to enjoy *The Night of the Mayas*, but I can't imagine many being willing to duplicate all three of the other titles on the Bátiz disc in order to acquire the pleasant but unmemorable suite from Carlos Jiménez Mabarak's ballet *Ballad of the Deer and the Moon*.

The last of the three Desto releases, "Ballets Mexican!" (what *can* one say about such a scrambled title?), is made up of decidedly less familiar works, and all three of them are characterized more by intensity and a certain austerity of color than by the extrovert opulence running through the other four sides. Blas Galindo's music for the tragic ballet *La Manda (The Vow)* may be more effective with the stage action; on its own it seems less imaginative than the Jiménez Mabarak score already mentioned. The two other pieces are more substantial. Chávez's *Encantamiento* and *Zarabanda*, the second and third of the five movements of his ballet suite *La Hija de Colquide*, display the noble austerity familiar to us from his *Sinfonía de Antígona* and Symphony for Strings, and Moncayo's *Tierra de Temporal* (included in this ballet collection because it was adapted for a ballet called *Zapata*) shows him working in an idiom closer to that of Ravel than to his Mexican roots. Again the performances are very good indeed, but on this disc the sound has a dryish character, not apparent on the other two, that is no help at all to the already greyish textures.

It must be noted, and not merely in passing, that the annotation of the relatively unfamiliar material on these three discs is hopelessly confusing and frustrating. It is not just a matter of misprints and misspellings—as when we read of a "farmer" (instead of the "former") suddenly appearing

in the scenario of *La Manda*. Jiménez Mabarak is listed simply as "Mabarak" (in the tradition of RCA's identifying Vaughan Williams as "Williams" on the composer's own recording of his Fourth Symphony or Telefunken's more recent listing of "Bartholdy" as the composer of Mendelssohn's early string symphonies). Between the label and the liner notes for *La Noche de los Mayas*, it is impossible to be sure whether that work comprises six movements or only four. The listing on the ballet album's jacket makes it appear that *Zapata* is an excerpt from a ballet called *Tierra de Temporal*. Nowhere are we advised that Martha Graham actually performed *La Hija de Colquide* under the title *Dark Meadow*, though Chávez retained his original title for his concert suite from that score.

Despite such lapses, the music is all played well and (mostly) recorded well. Lozano may be slightly outclassed by Bátiz in the works in which they compete, but his new Revueltas disc is surely every bit as indispensable as Bátiz's earlier one. —Richard Freed

REVUELTAS: *Homenaje a Federico García Lorca; La Noche de los Mayas*. Mexico City Philharmonic Orchestra, Fernando Lozano cond. DESTO DC 7215 \$8.98.

CLASSICAL MUSIC OF MEXICO. Jiménez Mabarak: *Balada del Venado y la Luna*. Moncayo: *Huapango*. Revueltas: *Sensemaya*. Chávez: *Sinfonía India*. Mexico City Philharmonic Orchestra, Fernando Lozano cond. DESTO DC 7218 \$8.98.

BALLETS MEXICAN! Galindo: *La Manda*. Chávez: *La Hija de Colquide: Encantamiento; Zarabanda*. Moncayo: *Tierra de Temporal*. Mexico City Philharmonic Orchestra, Fernando Lozano cond. DESTO DC 7220 \$8.98.

ber: *The Bronze Horse*. Glinka: *Ruslan and Ludmilla*. Williams: *The Cowboys*. Rossini: *L'Italiana in Algeri*. Bernstein: *Candide*. Boston Pops Orchestra, John Williams cond. PHILIPS ● 6514 186 \$12.98, © 7337 186 \$12.98.

Performance: **Stimulating**
Recording: **Sensational**

There's nothing like a full-blooded orchestral overture to wake up an audience and set its pulses racing. This particular program, made up entirely of rousing curtain-raisers, keeps the listener wide awake from start to finish. From the brisk, spine-tingling strains of Kabelevsky's *Colas Breugnon* to the airy potpourri of melodies from Bernstein's *Candide*, there isn't a dull moment. Conductor John Williams's own "overture" for the movie *The Cowboys*, with its echoes of similar works by Copland and Gould, may not be in the same class as the rest of the pieces, but Williams puts the Pops through its paces so briskly that he may be forgiven these nine minutes of self-indulgence. From the dash and color of the overtures to Glinka's *Ruslan and Ludmilla* and Suppé's *Boccaccio* to the hair-raising excitement of Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algeri*, these performances are among the most lively any of these works has received on discs. And the excellent digital recording shows each display piece at its most dazzling. P.K.

FREDERICA VON STADE: Live! Vivaldi: *Filli di gioia vuoi farmi morir*. Durante: *Danza, danza, fanciulla gentile*. A. Scarlatti: *Se tu della mia morte?* B. Marcello: *Il mio bel foco*. Rossini: *La Donna del Lago: Tanti affetti*. Ravel: *Cinq Mélodies Populaires Grecques*. Canteloube: *Breizairola; L'Aio dè Roiso*. Copland: *Why Do They Shut Me Out of Heaven?* Hundley: *The Astronomers; Come Ready and See Me*. Thomson: *A Prayer to St. Catherine*. Trad. (arr. Hughes): *The Leprechaun*. Frederica von Stade (mezzo-soprano); Martin Katz (piano). CBS ● IM 37231, © HMT 37231, no list price.

Performance: **Highly polished**
Recording: **Excellent**

Frederica von Stade's recital programs often introduce refreshing novelties, and this one is no exception. Even when she delves into the Italian *arie antiche* repertoire, she is likely to come up with unfamiliar selections. She brings her customary and much-praised musicality, lovely tone, and sensitive control of dynamics to just about everything in this latest program. There is now a certain intensity in her singing that is most welcome; in some of her past recitals there was at times too much reliance on beautiful tone for beauty's own sake.

The Rossini aria here suffers somewhat from being presented out of context (without orchestra and chorus) as well as in comparison with Marilyn Horne's unforgettably bravura performance on London (OS 26305). But Von Stade is a wonderful performer in her own exquisite style, and, occasional hints of artificiality aside, this program offers renewed proof of her exceptional artistry. The American songs, all worth knowing, are sung with great charm and excellent diction. Martin Katz provides his customary fine accompaniments, and the digital sound is outstanding. G.J.

NOVEMBER 1982

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Popular Music

News Briefs



THE jazz world has had to wait a long time for a new artist as gifted as **Wynton Marsalis**, the young trumpeter from New Orleans. Marsalis, who made his recording debut this year on the Columbia label, is only twenty-one, but things are moving very fast for him. He is already performing with some of the finest musicians in the business. The Wynton Marsalis Quintet played in an all-star concert at Constitution Hall in Washington, which was taped by Columbia Records for fall release. Also due this fall is an album by the Herbie Hancock Quartet, which includes Marsalis, Ron Carter, and Tony Williams. A third fall release

to look for is the debut solo album by Wynton's brother Branford Marsalis, who plays the saxophone.

Wynton Marsalis toured Europe in July, returned to the U.S. for important engagements in New York, Chicago, and Washington in August, then embarked in September on a return trip to Japan. Toward the end of the year he will record another jazz album for Columbia, and in December he will return to Europe to be guest soloist with the Prague Chamber Orchestra, playing trumpet concertos by Johann Nepomuk Hummel and Henri Tomasi, which will be recorded by CBS Masterworks. □

SINCE their formation in 1964, the **Who** have survived a lot of things, including the death of Keith Moon, but apparently not even such resilient rock musicians can survive the rigors of concert tours indefinitely. "For a tour you have to change your life totally. It's been too much," said **Roger Daltrey**, the Who's lead singer, announcing to the press what seems to be the

British band's farewell tour.

Beginning in September and scheduled to cover the United States from coast to coast, the tour was laid out in two parts. After a rest period early in November the second segment starts November 24 in Atlanta. This part of the tour was not fully booked at press time, but the last concert will probably be the one in Toronto in mid-December.

After that, Daltrey (thirty-seven), Pete Townshend (thirty-seven), John Entwistle (thirty-eight), and Kenney Jones (thirty-four), who replaced Moon in 1978, may continue to record together. (Their latest album, "It's Hard," released just before the tour began, will be reviewed in the December issue, and Townshend's solo album, "All the Best Cowboys Have Chinese Eyes," is reviewed on page 108 this month.) Just how long the Who will survive if they only make records together is a matter of conjecture. Will they still be together for their twentieth anniversary in 1984? "It's been a long time," Daltrey admitted. "I'm very nervous."

Also coming apart after two decades of performing together are the **Bee Gees**. The Gibb brothers—Barry, Maurice, and Robin—survived a breakup that followed their first big successes in the Sixties. Regrouping in the Seventies, they had an even greater wave of popularity that crested with the disco craze and seems also to have ebbed with that fad. Their last album as a group, "Living Eyes" (RSO 3098), sank quietly. Now the brothers are thinking only of solo projects, at least until 1984. Speaking for the family, Barry Gibb has emphasized that the breakup is temporary—they are just taking an eighteen-month vacation from each other. But we think the prospects for their future as a group should make him as nervous as Roger Daltrey. P.W.

STRANGE rumblings from Jimmy Buffett Country: the latest independent EP to cross my desk (in this case, a twelve-inch) is "Electricity," by the **Pacific Orchestra**, a band from Key West, Florida, an area not known as a hotbed of New Wave ferment. Given that, and given the EP's producer (Jeremy Wall, of suc-

cessful jazzbo fusioners Spyro Gyra), I was expecting the usual laid-back, marijuana-and-margarita style Gulf Rock. But, to my pleasant surprise, the Orchestra turns out to be a hot little dance outfit, a slightly jazzier version of ska bands in the manner of the Specials and the English Beat. Very interesting stuff (Cargo Records 668, available from JEM).

From closer to home (if your home, like mine, is Manhattan), comes the debut single by **Bill Ferns and the Jump**, which, as the name suggests, is an r-&-b outfit with a vaguely retro dance bent. The sound is somewhere between Johnny Otis and Southside Johnny (the band has a terrific sax section), and though leader Ferns is not the world's greatest blues singer, he's convincing, he's got soul, and he's a demon harp player. He's also got a terrific female vocalist in the charmingly named Jo Pacific, no relation to the orchestra mentioned above. In all, a nifty piece of work from a promising group that seems determined to prove the r-&-b verities are still applicable, perhaps especially during a depression. (Available from Caffeine Records, 150 East 3rd Street, Suite 5A, New York, N.Y. 10009). S.S.

GRACENOTES: The catalog of **Chess Records**, the legendary blues, rock, and soul label of the Fifties and Sixties, is back in circulation thanks to the folks at New Jersey's Sugarhill Records. Among the first reissues (nicely repackaged and sequenced, by the way) are a double-LP greatest-hits album by founding father Chuck Berry, a gospel album by the fourteen-year-old (!) Aretha Franklin (predating her somewhat better-known work on CBS), and a compilation of the best tracks from the Muddy Waters/Howlin'

Wolf super sessions done in the early Seventies with Eric Clapton, Paul Butterfield, and members of the Rolling Stones. About time too. . . . Born-Again Legend **Bob Dylan** stopped by to see Los Angeles's favorite punk rockers **X** at a recent concert in Minneapolis (Bob's old stomping ground) and was apparently much impressed, particularly with Billy Zoom's guitar playing. Considering that Dylan recently met the Clash under similar circumstances, and considering Dylan's penchant for hiring his favorite musicians (as in "Slow Train Coming" with backing by Dire Straits), could this signal a change in musical direction for the enigmatic folk rocker? I sure hope so. . . . Nice Work If You Can Get It: That's **Judas Priest** lead singer Rob Halford in the cheesecake shot with former *Penthouse* Pet Cheryl Rixon. The two are pictured relaxing poolside before the start of the Priest's

current American tour. Burning question: can you swim safely in biker drag? . . . The cover of "Now and Forever," latest album from multiplatinum MOR behemoths **Air Supply**, has been scuttled because of geopolitics. The original cover depicted a parachutist floating over a pastoral landscape, but, according to lead vocalist Russ Hitchcock, "When the British saw it, they winced. All they could think about was the paratroop assault on the Falkland Islands." The offending photo has been replaced with a group portrait, which strikes me as a bad bargain for all concerned. . . . Wit and Wisdom of the Rockers: We offer the following recent quotes without editorial comment. From **Malcolm McLaren**, British entrepreneur behind the Sex Pistols and Bow Wow Wow: "Giant ghetto blasters [large portable stereos] embody real rock-and-roll communication, while Walkmans are



for white sissies." From Richard Butler, lead singer of the **Psychedelic Furs** (soon to be produced by Todd Rundgren): "Pop music should educate people." And from **Billy Joel**,

whose latest recording is "Nylon Curtain" on Columbia: "I don't want to kick back and have a life of satisfaction. Without pain, there's no pleasure." S.S.

Disc and Tape Reviews

By CHRIS ALBERTSON • NOEL COPPAGE • PHYL GARLAND • PAUL KRESH
MARK PEEL • PETER REILLY • STEVE SIMELS • JOEL VANCE

BIG TWIST AND THE MELLOW FELLOWS: *One Track Mind*. Big Twist and the Mellow Fellows (vocals and instrumentals). *Living It Up; I've Got the Blues; Rescue Me; Lo & Behold; Cold Woman*; and four others. FLYING FISH FF 268 \$8.98.

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

Big Twist and the Mellow Fellows are a well-drilled octet who have been a show band on the college and club circuit, opening for James Brown, Southside Johnny, and Ray Charles, among others. Lead vocalist Larry Nolan sings a lot like Albert King, the horn section plays a little jazz here and there, the guitarist throws in the required funky licks, and the rhythm section works patiently and industriously. It is all precise without being passionate.

The band's own material is clever but so

derivative as to be sterile. They don't work up much enthusiasm either for down-home items such as Leo Nocentelli's *I Got the Blues* or the old Fontella Bass hit from Chicago, *Rescue Me*. No doubt Big Twist and the boys give a good show, but they are technocrats, not tiger cats. J.V.

THE BOSWELL SISTERS: *Volume Two, 1930-1935*. The Boswell Sisters (vocals); various orchestras. *Dinah; Heebie Jeebies; 42nd Street; Alexander's Ragtime Band; Way Back Home*; and seven others. BIOGRAPH ® BLP-C-16 \$7.98.

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

The Boswell Sisters—Connee, Martha, and Helvetia—were a hugely successful trio of sweet harmonizers on radio and records in the Thirties. And I do mean sweet. Listening to them now, I find it hard to take them seriously, but they were good pop musicians beneath all the caramelized corn of such things as *Way Back Home* and *If I Had a Million Dollars*. They were not above putting themselves on, as they do in *Heebie Jeebies*, or averse to plain old vaudeville grandstanding, as they show in *Alexander's Ragtime Band*. There's a lot of historical interest here, but for the casual listener one or two bands will probably be more than enough. The sound is only fair. P.R.

GARY BROOKER: *Lead Me to the Water*. Gary Brooker (vocals, keyboards); Phil Col-

lins (drums); Eric Clapton (guitar); other musicians. *Mineral Man; Home Loving; Another Way; Hang On Rose; The Cycle; Lead Me to the Water*; and three others. MERCURY SRM-1-4054 \$8.98, © MCR4-1-4054 \$8.98.

Performance: **Disappointing**
Recording: **Fine**

Once upon a time, Gary Brooker was the lead singer and songwriting mainstay of Procol Harum, the only "progressive" band (in the early-Seventies sense of the phrase) I ever liked. One of the great underrated figures of British rock, Brooker is still a sensational blues singer and a marvelous Ray Charles-style pianist, but since Procol wound down, he's mostly disappointed me. This new album, with the usual stellar supporting cast, has the pop-blues and soft-soul feel of late Procol, occasionally laced with some discreet contemporary electro-pop synthesizer stuff, but there's nothing in it of more than casual interest. *Mineral Man*, the lead cut, works up a fair head of steam, and *Low Flying Birds* rocks out in a nicely genteel manner. But *Sympathy for the Hard of Hearing*, a big classical/conceptual piece that strongly recalls Brooker's old band, is gloomy, turgid, and riff obsessed; it goes nowhere at moderate speed. In the immortal words of Iggy Pop, no fun. S.S.

THE BUS BOYS: *American Workers*. The Bus Boys (vocals and instrumentals). *American Workers; New Shoes; Last For-*

Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓢ = eight-track stereo cartridge
- Ⓢ = stereo cassette
- Ⓛ = digital-master recording
- Ⓛ = direct-to-disc
- ⓈX = CX-encoded

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓢ

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

ever; *Opportunity; Heart and Soul; I Get Lost*; and four others. ARISTA AL 9569 \$8.98, © ACT 9569 \$8.98, © A&T 9569 \$8.98.

Performance: **Okay**
Recording: **Good**

Ah yes, the Bus Boys. Five black guys and one Chicano playing . . . New Wave rock? Unlikely as it may seem, that was exactly the point of their debut album, in my opinion one of the best of 1981. It was a stunning record: great singing, great musicianship, and brilliant songs that managed to be upsetting and funny at the same time. The long-overdue but still outrageous skewerings of a host of racial stereotypes were far more radical in their way than anything the hard-core punks ever dreamed of. I was an instant fan.

So it pains me to observe that this follow-up effort is considerably less audacious and memorable. In their lyrics, the Bus Boys have moved to a more generalized kind of vaguely political protest (the title song and *Yellow Lights*), and there's a similar failure of nerve in the music, which sounds like it's directed toward getting air play: a little heavy-metal here, a little imitation Springsteen there. The only thing that really works is *Soul Surfing U.S.A.*, which, like their earlier gems, is both a brilliant genre parody and a genuinely unsettling commentary. "American Workers" is not a bad album by any means, but anybody who thought the Bus Boys were a one-joke act is unlikely to have it change his mind. **S.S.**

CHICAGO: 16. Chicago (vocals and instrumentals). *What You're Missing; Waiting for You to Decide; Bad Advice; Chains; Hard to Say I'm Sorry/Getaway*; and five others. FULL MOON/WARNER BROS. 1-23689 \$8.98, © 4-23689 \$8.98.

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

The supergroup Chicago started as the Chicago Transit Authority. Now, fifteen albums later, still pounding away, they go right on feeding raw energy into the microphones in songs with lyrics you can hardly

make out but for which no texts are supplied—possibly because the clichés in which they abound might prove an embarrassment on the printed page. This could be overlooked if the music still had some of the original earthy flavor. Once in a long while it does, as in *Bad Advice* here, but by and large the music is as trite as the words. All that's left of the old Chicago is the big-ness—and badness. **P.K.**

THE CHORDETTES: *Greatest Hits.* The Chordettes (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Mr. Sandman; Lollipop; Just Between You and Me; Lay Down Your Arms; Eddie My Love*; and three others. EVEREST GOLDEN GREATS 4115 \$5.98.

Performance: **Silly**
Recording: **Good**

Remember the Chordettes? Some years after the Andrews Sisters and considerably before the Bee Gees, this close-harmony female quartet rose to the top of their profession, filling an ecological niche, as it were, and paving the way for the Supremes, the Pointer Sisters, and who knows what future products of musical evolution. The Chordettes' biggest hit was *Mr. Sandman*, a million-seller in 1951. When the Chordettes weren't begging Mr. Sandman for a dream, they were extolling the praises of lollipops, marching along to the tune of *Lay Down Your Arms*, or reducing the sexy rhythms of *Never on Sunday* to flavorless, gelatinous blandness. Frankly, I was glad to hear the last of them and never thought they would reappear in my lifetime. Yet here they are, dredged up by Everest for its Golden Greats series. So it's going through my head all over again, unwelcome and unbanishable: "Mr. Sandman . . . 'Yes?' 'Bring me a dream.'" How will I ever get the silly ditty out of my poor head now? **P.K.**

FRANK CHRISTIAN: *Somebody's Got to Do It.* Frank Christian (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. *Musician's Lament; Nancy Reynard; All Night Long; Drops from the Faucet; Love Burlesque; Song for Autumn*; and five others. GREAT DIVIDE GDSR 1764 \$7.98 (or \$7 postpaid

from Great Divide Records, 178 West Houston Street, New York, N.Y. 10014).

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

Whatever else is wrong with this album, it is not overproduced, making do with anywhere from one to four instruments at a time. The open space in it is a treat. And it is good enough to establish Frank Christian in that rank of good regionally known performers—such as Bill Staines, Tom Dundee, and Michael Cooney—who are not nationally known partly because they ignore trends.

Christian is a pretty good singer and guitar player, in a quiet way. Most of his songs lack melodic hooks, and, though hooks are overemphasized in radio pop, this does tend to diminish a Christian tune's chances of getting into your head and driving you crazy. On the other hand, it's an album you can live with in a relaxed way. The first song sounds a little amateurish, with a mismatch of words and melody, although the idea isn't bad. The rest are pretty well constructed in the jazz-influenced folk mode pioneered by Tim Hardin, and the little back-up combo never falters. **N.C.**

THE CLASH: *Combat Rock.* The Clash (vocals and instrumentals). *Know Your Rights; Car Jamming; Should I Stay or Should I Go?; Rock the Casbah; Red Angel Dragnet; Straight to Hell; Sean Flynn*; and five others. EPIC FE 37689, © FET 37689, © FEA 37689, no list price.

Performance: **White flag**
Recording: **Excellent**

This seems to be Dump on the Clash Month. I hate to be a bandwagon jumper, but "Combat Rock" does find the last angry punk band railing at a variety of predictable targets and overreaching like mad musically. Convincing funk merchants they're not.

This is the best-produced record the guys have ever made, however. Glyn Johns, who mixed it, has produced such non-punk types as Eric Clapton and the Who, and the sound here has a marvelous high-gloss

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sheen. Unfortunately, that can't disguise the paucity of ideas (an ode to Erroll Flynn's son?) and an overall feeling of floundering around. As somebody once observed, if you're gonna sing political songs, it helps to have tunes. S.S.

JIMMY CLIFF: *Special*. Jimmy Cliff (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Special*; *Love Is All*; *Peace Officer*; *Treat the Youths Right*; *Keep On Dancing*; and six others. COLUMBIA FC 38099, © FCT 38099, no list price.

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

Jimmy Cliff's first album for Columbia is a deliberate bid for the commercial success that has eluded him throughout his career—not in the sense that it makes grave compromises, but rather in its uncompromising commitment to craftsmanship. The result, while no doubt prompted by an eye to the bottom line, is the kind of crisply performed and generally well-produced album Cliff has deserved for a long time.

"Special" rides on crackerjack back-up work, produced with a clean, scintillating sheen by Chris Kimsey. Buoyed by this support, Cliff throws himself completely into the music, a mix of personal and political statements grounded in reggae. Simple and straightforward, Cliff's songs here prove that you don't have to be a great lyricist to be an affecting songwriter and that reggae doesn't have to be angry to light a fire. What keeps "Special" from being a great album is a certain stogy, overly meticulous feel to it—a lesser performer than Cliff would have been lost in this production—as well as an annoying chipmunk-like shrillness in Cliff's upper register on several tracks. M.P.

RY COODER: *The Slide Area*. Ry Cooder (vocals, guitar); Jim Keltner (drums); Tim Drummond (bass); Jim Dickinson (keyboards); other musicians. *UFO Has Landed in the Ghetto*; *I Need a Woman*; *Gypsy Woman*; and five others. WARNER BROS. BSK 3651 \$8.98, © M5 3651 \$8.98.

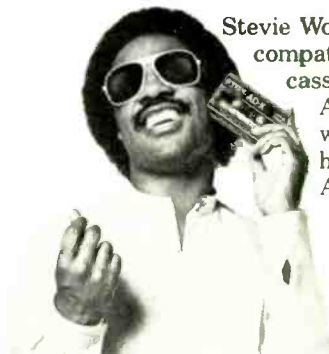
Performance: **Funk über alles**
Recording: **Good**

This album really isn't as disorganized as it seems at first; Ry Cooder always knows what he's doing, and sooner or later, it seems, he'll get around to doing every kind of music in America. But the funky, purposely dirty arrangements and such things as the (to me) pointless rewrite of *Blue Suede Shoes* make the music run in place and never really get anywhere. Curtis Mayfield's *Gypsy Woman* responds to this treatment more gracefully than anything else here, but Cooder has cast it about one key too low (probably favoring his guitar side) to get maximum pizzazz into the vocals. There's a new Bob Dylan song, *I Need a Woman*, but it's a rather offhand effort and Cooder's herky-jerky treatment doesn't complement it. Most of the other stuff just isn't that interesting—he even managed to find a boring Willie Dixon song. Cooder could probably have gone into a funk with stronger material and pulled it off, but he lost me with this one. N.C.

(Continued overleaf)



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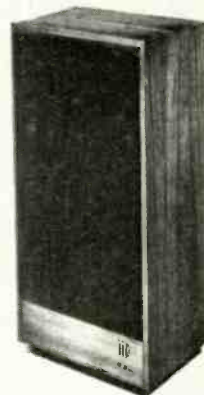
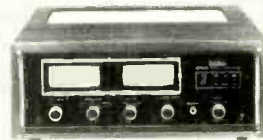
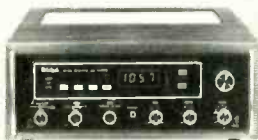
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Atlantic Records

David Crosby, Graham Nash, and Stephen Stills

Crosby, Stills & Nash

HISTORY never repeats itself, Voltaire said, but a man always does. Yet sometimes it works out, and the new Crosby, Stills & Nash album on Atlantic, "Daylight Again," may be a winner in the category of Best Performance by an Over-the-Hill Gang. Those shimmering, carefully dubbed studio harmonies of 1968, among the more distinguished sounds in rock history, are back. (CS&N, in that regard, is to vocal groups what Glenn Miller was to the big bands.) Don Heckman organ to point out that there was "flawed intonation" going on in that sound, and if you insist on harmonies cordoned off into neat thirds and fifths, there is, but that doesn't make the effect any less appealing. Indeed, any style is a deviation from perfection; we could, after all, have robots playing drums, or real musicians could use those organs that play the rhythm in perfect time, but "human timing" sounds better to most of us.

The material here is better than average, although there is nothing as really grand as *Suite: Judy Blue Eyes*. Stephen Stills, who writes to the Sound better than anyone else, has become increasingly like David Brinkley over the years: both have a stylish way of putting things but not much to say. His best efforts here are an update of *Southern Cross*, from 1974, and an annex to the 1970

Find the Cost of Freedom called *Daylight Again*, which features Art Garfunkel as guest vocalist. The best new song is Graham Nash's *Wasted on the Way*, followed closely by *Might As Well Have a Good Time*, written by Judy Henske (remember, old folkies?) and Craig Doerge.

There are eleven songs in all, and I like the first four and the last two and grow a little fidgety during the middle ones. There's not enough conflict, I think, in their lyrics. But my overall response to this revival of the Sound tells me that I, and maybe you, didn't get enough of it before. The boys are all in great voice—which was not always true of Stills, at least, in the intervening years—and they do it up to a fine turn.

—Noel Coppage

CROSBY, STILLS & NASH: *Daylight Again*. David Crosby (vocals); Stephen Stills (vocals, guitar, keyboards, banjo); Graham Nash (vocals, piano, harmonica); other musicians. *Turn Your Back on Love*; *Wasted on the Way*; *Southern Cross*; *Into the Darkness*; *Delta*; *Since I Met You*; *Too Much Love to Hide*; *Song for Susan*; *You Are Alive*; *Might As Well Have a Good Time*; *Daylight Again/Find the Cost of Freedom*. ATLANTIC SD 19360 \$8.98, © CS 19360 \$8.98, © TP 19360 \$8.98.

ELVIS COSTELLO AND THE ATTRACTIONS: *Imperial Bedroom*. Elvis Costello and the Attractions (vocals and instrumentals); other musicians. *Beyond Belief*; *Tears Before Bedtime*; *Shabby Doll*; *The Long Honeymoon*; *Man Out of Time*; *Almost Blue*; and nine others. COLUMBIA FC 38157, © FCT 38157, no list price.

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

The lyric sheet on the inner sleeve of "Imperial Bedroom" could pass for one of the

more pretentious art pieces you see on the walls of certain trendy Manhattan restaurants. It looks like a cross between an eye chart and a microfilm of a coded spy document. Unintentionally, I think, it has the effect of rendering Elvis Costello's breathless array of puns, word plays, and speed-freak rhymes just about meaningless. The irony is that the aural version, the record itself, has the same effect. I suppose I should be grateful that any songwriter in 1982 is so concerned with the use of words, but apparently the only way Costello can demonstrate

that is by using a *lot* of them. There's no denying his cleverness, but getting at the truth of male/female relationships, as he seems to be trying to do, requires more than sloganeering and occasional obeisances to old Cole Porter songs.

In terms of production, this is the slickest record Costello has done. The Attractions are augmented with strings and horns, and the musical idiom ranges from late Beatles to Philly Soul to French cabaret. But the tunes are shapeless and dull, the lyrics sophomoric and verbose. Costello constantly reaches for vocal effects that are beyond him, fine singer though he is. The overall impression I got is of an unpleasant, garrulous smugness. In short, a record that only a determinedly trendy rock critic could love.

S.S.

THE CRICKETS FEATURING DEAN BARLOW. The Crickets (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Be Faithful*; *Your Love*; *Changing Partners*; *Milk and Gin*; *I'm Going to Live My Life Alone*; *Man from the Moon*; *Fine as Wine*; and ten others. RELIC ® 5040 \$7.98 (from Relic Records, P.O. Box 572, Hackensack, N.J. 07602).

Performance: **Good**

Recording: **Good mono**

Unless you're a dedicated collector of early r-&-b recordings, it's unlikely that you've ever heard of Dean Barlow and the Crickets. The group never became known nationally, and they had just one local hit, *You're Mine*, in New York City in 1953. But you don't have to be a dedicated collector to enjoy this set of all the sides Barlow and the Crickets recorded for independent producer Joe Davis's Jay-Dee and other small labels. Barlow was a fine and very smooth lead singer, a real crooner, and he and the group were skilled professional entertainers. Since fashions in pop music have almost come full circle, their mid-Fifties style sounds almost modern today.

Most of the cuts here are ballads—polite and genteel protestations of love and devotion—and most of them are teeth-gnashingly banal. But there are several fun jump-up and novelty numbers too, and Barlow puts them all over in fine style. Kudos to Donn Fileti's new Relic Records for reissuing such worthy but forgotten material. The sound restoration is excellent.

J.V.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

LACY J. DALTON: *16th Avenue*. Lacy J. Dalton (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *16th Avenue*; *Rained On*; *Blue-Eyed Blues*; *One of the Unsatisfied*; *Jamaica*; *Heartbeat*; and four others. COLUMBIA FC 37937, © FCT 37937, no list price.

Performance: **Versatility binge**

Recording: **Very good**

There are seven or eight different kinds of song here, as if Lacy J. Dalton were trying to showcase as many facets of her talent as possible before the "honky-tonk singer" label has a chance to set. Since she is one of the best singers to come along in the last decade, it works all right, even if the relatively weak *Imagine That* smacks of r-&-b tokenism and a couple of others are better as examples of genres than they are as

songs. Dalton's own fine writing is back, though, with various collaborators, and her taste in other people's stuff is pretty good.

The title song, by Thom Schuyler, a ballad of the hopefuls who come to Nashville (where a stretch of 16th Avenue is also known as Music Square East, heart of the music biz), starts side one in a folkie mode, and what follows touches bases with the blues, country-swing, and, in the simple and lovely *One of the Unsatisfied*, something approaching white gospel. Side two is similarly diversified, with fake reggae, torchy slow-downs, and that r-&b thing. The program does show that Dalton can handle just about anything, fast or slow, hard or soft. The production is up with the best we get these days from Billy Sherrill, and the backing features some particularly distinguished work by Phil Baugh on guitar and Terry McMillan on harmonica. The thing is a bit too round-uppy in nature, but Dalton cracks a mean whip. **N.C.**

THOMAS DOLBY: *The Golden Age of Wireless.* Thomas Dolby (vocals, synthesizer); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Europe and the Pirate Twins; Leipzig; Windpower; Commercial Breakup; Urges;* and five others. HARVEST ST-12203 \$8.98, © 4XT-12203 \$8.98.

Performance: **Beep!**
Recording: **Good**

Mix Gary Numan with Pink Floyd, throw in some Robert Palmer, and you have Thomas Dolby. Whether that's good or bad news depends on your point of view. Myself, I tire of such poses. All the synthesizer gimmicks and muddled vocals in ominous minor keys appear to be Dolby's attempt to establish himself as an English eccentric. I call it highfalutin jive. **J.V.**

DURAN DURAN: *Rio.* Duran Duran (vocals and instrumentals). *Rio; My Own Way; Lonely in Your Nightmare; Hungry Like the Wolf;* and five others. HARVEST ST-12211 \$8.98, © 4XT-12211 \$8.98.

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

New Wave is getting middle-age spread. No longer recognizable as a distinct music, it endures as a fashion. And "Rio" is a fashion statement. Technically, Duran Duran plays with more skill and authority and writes with more musical sophistication than such "first generation" New Wave bands as Blondie did in their early days. But the thrill just isn't there any more. Sheets of arid synthesizer sounds, a steady disco backbeat, congas and synthesized drums—they've become pop music's symptoms of aging just like thinning hair on a forty-seven-year-old accountant. "Rio" is dance music with "design values." And nothing ages faster than designer fashion. **M.P.**

BRIAN ENO: *Ambient #4—On Land.* Brian Eno (synthesizers, tapes, etc.); instrumental accompaniment. *Lizard Point; The Lost Day; Tal Coat; Shadow;* and four others. EDITIONS EG EGED 20 \$7.98.

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

Brian Eno's "ambient music" is certainly ambient (it creates an encompassing atmo-

sphere, even with just two speakers and no fancy signal processing), but it's certainly not music. His four "Ambient" albums are like those "Environments" records, except that the "Ambient" sounds are man-made (or at least made by man-made machines). There's not a melody in evidence, not a hint of harmony, not even a rhythm, just pitch, tone, and pulse. They seem to be intended for people who just like *sound*—or who like to puzzle or annoy those who don't.

I'm sure Eno didn't intend these creations to have any particular utility, but somehow you want to use stuff like this for something. I'll bet plants love it. As for me, I'm just going to let it lull me to sleep. **M.P.**

GEORGIE FAME/ANNIE ROSS/HOAGY CARMICHAEL: *In Hoagland.* Annie Ross (vocals); Georgie Fame, Hoagy Carmichael (vocals, keyboards); instrumental accompaniment. *Hong Kong Blues; Rockin' Chair; Stardust; Up a Lazy River; Two Sleepy People; Georgia on My Mind; Drip Drop;* and six others. DRG SL 5197 \$8.98.

Performance: **For fans**
Recording: **Variable**

On the face of it, I wouldn't expect jazz singer Annie Ross (once of Lambert, Hendricks, and Ross) and popster Georgie Fame to be the ideal interpreters of the glossy but essentially folksy work of the late Hoagy Carmichael. Turns out they're not. Everything they attempt here seems overstated, oversung, and overlaid. Ross is a particularly mannered artist, and by the time she finished *I Get Along Without You Very Well*, I had decided I could get along without her.

The album includes Carmichael's own last two recordings. One, a recitative called *Hoagy's Help*, is intensely boring; the other, a rendition of *Rockin' Chair*, is only slightly less so. The album's sound quality ranges from excellent to very poor indeed. **P.R.**

STEVE FORBERT. Steve Forbert (vocals, guitar, piano); the Jordanaires (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *He's Gotta Live Up to His Shoes; Ya Ya (Next to Me); Listen to Me; You're Darn Right; Prisoner of Stardom; Lost;* and five others. NEMPELOR ARZ 37434, © AZT 37434, no list price.

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

Each Steve Forbert record has a little more production than the last. Producer Steve Burgh has hung more decoration on this one than I think is good for Forbert's limited, rather stylized singing voice, but the core musicians are good and Burgh has at least overdone it with some taste. The most impressive thing about it, in fact, is Burgh himself in his other role as guitarist, both acoustic and electric; his playing is lyrical, fluid, and sneaky. Forbert's songwriting—what most of us are most interested in, in his case—continues to be good without growing much. A lot of his songs continue to sound alike; he tends to recycle certain musical phrases and to tackle a minimum of new subjects in his lyrics. But, in an era when pop songs often have hooks and nothing else, Forbert's tunes can still stand out

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as bright spots, as *Beautiful Diana* does here. On the other hand, *Ya Ya (Next to Me)* is so tuneless that David Sanborn's sax solo is little more than vamping. On balance, though, this album is a stronger effort than "Little Stevie Orbit" and quite a bit better than the average new album you could buy this month. *N.C.*

THE FOUR TOPS: *One More Mountain.*

The Four Tops (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Sad Hearts; Givin' It Up; I Believe in You and Me; I'm the One; Keep On Lightin' My Fire;* and four others. CASABLANCA NBLP 7266 \$8.98, © NBL5 7266 \$8.98, © NBL8 7266 \$8.98.

Performance: **Monotonous**
Recording: **Satisfactory**

On "One More Mountain" the Four Tops struggle to ascend a peak too steep for them, and the climb is too monotonous for my taste. They do sing with admirable vigor here, but they seem to be enjoying what they're doing far more than I enjoyed listening to it. This is standard r-&-b male-vocal-group singing of two decades ago that has been embellished with some contemporary instrumental twists to give the set a "now" feeling. I preferred them then. *P.G.*

FRANKE AND THE KNOCKOUTS: *Bellow the Belt.*

Franke and the Knockouts (vocals and instrumentals). *Never Had It Better; Without You (Not Another Lonely Night); Any Way That You Want Me; Shakedown; Keep On Fighting; Have No Fear;* and three others. MILLENNIUM BXL1-7763 \$8.98, © BXK1-7763 \$8.98, © BXS1-7763 \$8.98.

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

Franke and the Knockouts are what the music industry refers to as a "chart group." They have the bravura kind of straight-ahead pop sound that is the mainstay of the industry. Their first single, *Sweetheart*, scored last year with a good melodic hook. Their most recent single, *Without You*, taken from this, their second album, has a lot of wallop but not as much melody. Franke

sings high and hard, seemingly always on the verge of a busted lung or a coronary. Predictable as this kind of music is, the album is well made. *J.V.*

GLENN FREY: *No Fun Aloud.* Glenn Frey (vocals, guitar, keyboards, bass); instrumental accompaniment. *I Found Somebody; The One You Love; Partytown; I Volunteer; Sea Cruise; That Girl;* and four others. ASYLUM EI-60129 \$8.98, © E4-60129 \$8.98.

Performance: **Fair and mild**
Recording: **Very good**

Ah, that quotidian bland *Angst*. Glenn Frey does it better in the context of the Eagles than he does here, not because this MOR setting is bad but because the Eagles suit his style so well. He does have an ear for a tune, though, and he works hard, so much of this album is not unpleasant. The licks may not be new, but they are well played, and the mix is particularly good. Still, you couldn't have blood pressure so high that this would pose any threat to your health; it's about as exciting as Valium. *N.C.*

THE FUN BOY THREE. The Fun Boy Three (vocals and instrumentals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *It Ain't What You Do; The Telephone Always Rings; Way On Down; The Lunatics; Funrama 2;* and six others. CHRYSALIS CHR 1383 \$8.98, © CCH 1383 \$8.98, © 8CH 1383 \$8.98.

Performance: **Dreary**
Recording: **Pretty good**

No matter how you may have felt about the Specials—whether you thought them a refreshing synthesis or just another white band cashing in on black music—you had to give them credit for a zany wit and manic energy. This album by former Specials Terry Hall, Neville Staples, and Lynval Golding unfortunately has neither wit nor spark. The teetering chaos that made the Specials such perilous fun to listen to is reduced here to little more than a time-keeping rhythm section and mopey chanting that reminded me of those caravans of dreary, skeptical

natives in the old Tarzan movies. In fact, carrying around one of these songs in your head is like toting a hundred-pound pack for some Great White Hunter. Sad to say, Fun Boy Three just isn't much fun. *M.P.*

ADRIAN GURVITZ: *Classic.* Adrian Gurvitz (vocals, guitar, synthesizers, piano); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *No Fears in the Night; Hello New York; Your Breakdown; End the Story;* and four others. GEFEN GHS 2014 \$8.98, © M5 2014 \$8.98.

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

Back in the late Sixties, Adrian Gurvitz was the head of a group called the Gun, which at that time had the reputation of being the loudest band in England. He switched to a soft acoustic sound a few years later and has been alternating ever since between decibels and decorum. In the Seventies he teamed with ex-Cream drummer Ginger Baker in a hard-rock trio, the Baker-Gurvitz Army. On "Classic" he appears as a soft-rock balladeer.

Gurvitz's vocals resemble those of the de-rasped Joe Cocker on the latter's recent "Sheffield Steel" album, and "Classic" suffers from the same monotonously genteel *Angst*. By the third cut on side one the lyrics and sentiments sound interchangeable. *J.V.*

BUDDY GUY AND JUNIOR WELLS: *Drinkin' TNT 'n' Smokin' Dynamite.*

Buddy Guy (vocals, guitar); Junior Wells (vocals, harmonica); Pinetop Perkins (piano); Bill Wyman (bass); Terry Taylor (guitar); Dallas Taylor (drums). *How Can One Woman Be So Mean; Ten Years Ago; Messing with the Kid; Checking On My Baby; Hoodoo Man Blues;* and three others. BLIND PIG 1182 \$7.98.

Performance: **Working hard**
Recording: **Good**

Rolling Stone bassist Bill Wyman assembled the rhythm section for this Montreux Jazz Festival concert date by Chicago bluesmen Buddy Guy and Junior Wells.

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Wyman also played on the set and produced the album. Guy and Wells put on a good show, but it's standardized. There's little of the "fire and spontaneity" the liner notes promise. For some odd reason, true believers in the blues seem to think that each performance by an authentic blues group is automatically a peak experience. 'Tain't so. Guy and Wells work hard, but it doesn't sound like they're having fun. *J.V.*

LEVON HELM. Levon Helm (vocals, drums, mandolin); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *You Can't Win 'Em All; Lucrecia; Even a Fool Would Let Go; Money; The Got Song; Give a Little Bit*; and four others. CAPITOL ST-12201 \$8.98, © 4XT-12201 \$8.98, © 8XT-12201 \$8.98.

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

My impression is that Levon Helm works a little too hard at having a good time here, although, as albums go, it's worth a listen. Helm's solo albums strike me as a search for an environment that suits him as well as the Band did, and it's hard to match something that nearly ideal. He doesn't have the kind of voice that can be gentle with a song, so now he has to deal mostly with songs that like to be manhandled. In the Band someone else, someone with a more delicate touch, could take on such things as *Tears of Rage* while Helm became famous for singing *The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down* like nobody else could.

On this release Helm uses a more or less standard rock-band sound most of the time, and the rock-oriented songs are better than average, though only *Lucrecia* stands out. It's not a bad sound at all, but I found that the extra air in *The Got Song*, a leisurely novelty number propelled by acoustic guitars and a clarinet, came as a blessed relief in the middle of side two. I kind of like most of this album, but it does bother me, the way it keeps reminding me that hard work is a poor substitute for inspiration. *N.C.*

HI-FI: Moods for Mallards. Ian Matthews, David Surkamp (vocals, guitar); Bruce Hazen (guitar); Gary Shelton (bass); Bob Briley (drums). *Walk Away; Blue Shirt; Holding Out for Rain; Throw a Line; S.O.S.; Desire*; and four others. FIRST AMERICAN FA 7795 \$8.98.

Performance: **Mallard de mer**
Recording: **Good**

Ian Matthews apparently intends to keep fiddling with the New Wave business until he gets it right. "Moods for Mallards," with Matthews's new band, Hi-Fi, is a more facile effort than his last, a solo album in this vein, but he and David Surkamp, who share songwriting duties, apparently have little to say lyrically and tend to give a song more of an inflection than a tune. There are some interesting instrumental textures here, though, along with some ugly ones. Surkamp's *Walk Away* sounds a little like an updating of the vintage "Volunteers"-era Jefferson Airplane, and *Desire* is reminiscent of T-Rex. But most of the other material is so thin that it forces the band to play rock clichés. This stuff is more satisfying than Devo, but then so are warts. *N.C.*

(Continued overleaf)

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NOVEMBER 1982



Plant and Townshend Go It Alone

BACK in the early Seventies, a lot of folks had trouble telling the Who and Led Zeppelin apart. After all, both bands were English, both pioneered the power-trio format and featured genuinely innovative guitarists, both played at thunderous volume, both were rooted in the blues, and both were fronted by curly-blond, high-tenor yowlers. Of course, beyond such superficial similarities the two couldn't have been more different. The Who was about speed, aggression, wit, imagination, adolescent lack of pretense, honesty, and melodic charm. Despite Jimmy Page's instrumental brilliance, if Zeppelin was about anything at all (besides making money), it was about obnoxious macho-stud posturing.

I bring all this up because the best-known individuals in these groups have released new solo albums, and you'll have no trouble telling them apart even though they're both duds of major proportions.

Robert Plant's "Pictures at Eleven" on Swansong actually sounds a lot like Led Zeppelin, which comes as something of a shock. Although Plant wrote most of the group's hippy-dippy lyrics and used Led Zep as a vehicle for his fantasies, conventional wisdom has had it that it was Page as producer/arranger who defined the band's sound (the layers of overdubbed guitars, the bonecrushing dynamics). That sound, however, is faithfully duplicated here, so either Plant learned how to do it himself or else his new guitarist, co-writer, and co-producer, Robbie Blunt, is the reclusive Mr. Page under a *nom du disque*.

In any case, I find "Pictures" close to worthless musically. While it has the old Zeppelin sound and attitude, it has nothing to say (and says it at length in the case of *Moonlight in Samosa*). Page's occasional arranging quirks, which might have leavened what Woody Allen would call the album's "heaviness," are nowhere in evidence. The album is just a caricature of Led Zeppelin, which is not exactly my idea of a good time.

Pete Townshend's "All the Best Cowboys Have Chinese Eyes" on Atco is a more am-

bitious failure but a no less annoying one. The fundamental problem here is perfectly exemplified by the title, a metaphor so obscure that no one outside the author's immediate family is likely ever to know what it means. To his credit, Townshend probably thinks more about the meaning of rock (and life) than anybody else in the business, but he has a tendency to retreat inside his own head. Singing here in a choked voice that eerily recalls bandmate Roger Daltrey's mid-Seventies arena style, Townshend offers us tuneless, overarranged songs that are light years removed from the lean, brainy creations of vintage Who.

The lyrics on "Cowboys" occasionally address interesting themes, but more often than not they collapse into some of the most bathetically maudlin poesy I've seen on an album sleeve in ages. The sole exception is the closer, *Slit Skirts*. A meditation on the feel of a relationship with the shadow of middle age on it, this is perhaps overly familiar territory for Townshend, but it's still a perceptive, heartfelt song with grand music and a moving, committed performance. Everything else is the kind of dinosaur pomp that Townshend continually poo-poo's in the press. He must know better. I hope.

—Steve Simels

ROBERT PLANT: *Pictures at Eleven*. Robert Plant (vocals); Robbie Blunt (guitars); Phil Collins (drums); other musicians. *Burning Down One Side; Moonlight in Samosa; Pledge Pin; Slow Dancer; Worse Than Detroit; Fat Lip; Like I've Never Been Done; Mystery Title*. SWANSONG SS 8512 \$8.98, © CS 8512 \$8.98.

PETE TOWNSHEND: *All the Best Cowboys Have Chinese Eyes*. Pete Townshend (vocals, guitar); other musicians. *The Sea Refuses No River; Communication; Exquisitely Bored; North Country Girl; Slit Skirts; Uniforms; Prelude; Somebody Saved Me; Face Dances Part Two; Stardom in Acton; Stop Hurting People*. ATCO SD 38-149 \$8.98, © CS 38-149 \$8.98, © TP 38-149 \$8.98.

JOE JACKSON: *Night and Day*. Joe Jackson (vocals, keyboards); other musicians. *Another World; Chinatown; T.V. Age; Target; Steppin' Out*; and four others. A&M SP-4906 \$8.98, © CS-4906 \$8.98, © TP-4906 \$8.98.

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

This is Joe Jackson's *Innocent Abroad* album. In his brief career Jackson has appeared both as the Elvis Costello of the Tall Man set and as a latter-day Cab Calloway; now he's gone native with a vengeance. "Night and Day," as he informs us on the back cover, was "written and recorded in New York City," where he's been hanging out of late. Well, he's hardly the first English rock star to do that, and he won't be the last, but it hasn't done wonders for him creatively.

There's a mild Latin influence on some of the stuff here—added percussion—and Joe's piano work sometimes sounds as if he had OD'd on old Joe Cuba records. But the songs are as ephemeral musically as any I've heard in a while; they contain lots of chromatic meandering and occasional pretty noises, but not much meat. Lyrically, Joe retains some of his old bite. *Cancer*, a polemic on how everything causes it, is fairly effective, and *Real Men* seems to be a heartfelt rumination on sex roles, but the music is so tepid that it's hard to care about what he says.

S.S.

THE KENDALLS: *Stickin' Together*. Royce and Jeannie Kendall (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Cheater's Prayer; That's What I Get for Thinking; Sweet Temptation; Looks Like Rain Today; Honey Dew*; and five others. MERCURY SRM-1-4046 \$8.98, © MCR4-1-4046 \$8.98, © MC8-1-4046 \$8.98.

Performance: **Perky**
Recording: **Good**

The Kendalls, a father-daughter team, continue to traffic mostly in gimmick songs with certain mitigating musical values. Here they stoop so low as to include *A Dallas Cowboy and a New Orleans Saint*, a rather lifeless and predictable ditty by Larry Kingston that is, nonetheless, a real sequel to *The Pittsburgh Stealers*. But they stick to *tuneful* trivia, for the most part, and their performances have a kind of energy you don't encounter every day. The background pickers really do pick—and are given space in which to do it. The gap between the Kendalls' taste in songs and their taste in performing said songs must in turn fill some gap in country music. It's a gap I personally would as soon leave open.

N.C.

KING CRIMSON: *Beat* (see *Best of the Month*, page 72)

CARRIE LUCAS: *Still in Love*. Carrie Lucas (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Sweet Love; Men; Still in Love; Dreamer; Rockin' for Your Love*; and three others. SOLAR E1-60008 \$8.98, © E4-60008 \$8.98.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Huge**

Carrie Lucas is a better-than-average singer who just about gets done in here by over-

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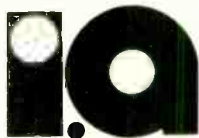
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production. Every once in a while she gets a chance to be heard on her own, without echo chamber, multitracking, or gigantic orchestral back-up. When this occurs, as it does in parts of *Dreamer* or *Still in Love*, the results are charming. Lucas has a nicely poignant way with a note or a phrase, and her voice is easy and sexily confidential. Dick Griffey, the producer, obviously sees the recording process as a challenge to create special effects; he's used enough here for a live production of *Star Wars* at the Astrodome. I'd like to hear a lot more of Lucas and a lot less of Griffey. *P.R.*

CHERYL LYNN: *Instant Love* (see Best of the Month, page 71)

THE MARSHALL TUCKER BAND: *Tuckerized*. The Marshall Tucker Band (vocals and instrumentals); other musicians. *Reachin' for a Little Bit More; Even a Fool Would Let Go; Sea, Dreams & Fairy Tales; Mr. President; Heartbroke*; and five others. WARNER BROS. BSK 3684 \$8.98, © M5 3684 \$8.98.

Performance: **Pretty good**
Recording: **Good**

The Marshall Tucker Band has a history of playing better than it writes. For "Tuckerized" it went to outside songwriters for most of the material, and even though said outside material is of top quality only twice (Randy Newman's *Mr. President* and Tim Hardin's *Unforgiven*), the overall result is better than the average MTB album. Doug

Gray's stylized vocals make even many of the MTB songs sound like they weren't written by the group, and the instrumentals are adjusted nicely—except that, for my taste, there's too much sax and not enough flute from Jerry Eubanks. Anyway, this band can play. Toy Caldwell does some especially tasty guitar fills, slide, steel, and straight, and most of the arrangements are still better than the songs. *N.C.*

MISSISSIPPI FRED McDOWELL: *Shake 'Em On Down*. Fred McDowell (vocals, guitar); Tom Pomposello (bass). *Shake 'Em On Down; I'm Crazy About You Baby; You Got to Move; Mercy*; and five others. LABOR LAB-15 \$8.98.

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

This session, Fred McDowell's last, was recorded live in a Greenwich Village club in 1971, and despite some sound-balance defects, it's clear that his Delta-style wailing voice and attack were in excellent form. He stretches out comfortably on all the selections, including the title track, a jump number he'd been playing at farm-country dances for decades; *You Got to Move*, which I heard sung as a gospel tune in a tent revival in the 1950's; and Big Joe Williams's famous *Baby Please Don't Go*. McDowell also displays his accomplishments on the slide or "Hawaiian"-style guitar; he isn't showy but interrupts the slow figures with sudden, surprising stings and swoops. A fine last testament. *J.V.*

STEPHANIE MILLS: *Tantalizingly Hot!* Stephanie Mills (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Last Night; Still Lovin' You; Keep Away Girls; You Can't Run from My Love*; and four others. CASABLANCA NBLP 7265 \$8.98, © NBL5 7265 \$8.98, © NBL8 7265 \$8.98.

Performance: **Too familiar**
Recording: **Good**



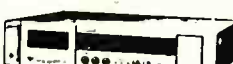












Stephanie Mills's new album is a disappointment, probably because her earlier sets seemed so fresh and vocally intense. This time around, I got a disturbing sense of *déjà vu*. Although the songs were written and produced by such front-rank pop talents as Ashford and Simpson and Mills's former collaborators Reggie Lucas and James Mtume, and although Mills is still belting them out in fine musical form, there is little here that demands instant replay. Compared with last year's "Stephanie," for instance, "Tantalizingly Hot" is neither tantalizing nor hot. *P.G.*

EDDIE MONEY: *No Control*. Eddie Money (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Shakin'; Think I'm in Love; My Friends, My Friends; No Control; Hard Life*; and six others. COLUMBIA FC 37960, © FCT 37960, no list price.

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

Eddie Money, the ex-cop from Brooklyn, took a two-year vacation and now returns with his fourth album. The hiatus seems to

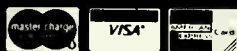
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have done him some good. He sounds far less tense and seems to have made the transition from sudden rock star to professional musician. The subjects of the songs are predictable—fast cars, fast girls, lost friends, love gone sour, love found—but he sings them with confident self-awareness in place of his former self-consciousness. The production by Tom Dowd, who began as a recording engineer at Atlantic during that label's heyday, is smooth and assured. Money is still a basic hard rocker, but he's having a better time with it, and I think his listeners will too. **J.V.**

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

NANA MOUSKOURI: *Song for Liberty.* Nana Mouskouri (vocals); orchestra. *Song for Liberty; Daydreams; The Guests; The Rose; To Potami; Bad Old Days; Sweet Music Man;* and five others. MERCURY SRM-1-4049 \$8.98, © MCR4-1-4049 \$8.98.

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

In the United States Nana Mouskouri keeps receiving uniformly good reviews from the critics but consistent indifference from the record-buying public. Just why American audiences have refused to accept this superior artist on anywhere near the same scale that she's appreciated in Europe, or even in Canada, is one of those perverse mysteries of national taste that can probably never be satisfactorily explained. Any-

way, here she is again in another fine album, singing beautifully, etching lyrics in that hypnotic voice of hers, and performing even such stately nonsense as a pop English-language version of Verdi's *Song for Liberty* from *Nabucco* with total earnestness and conviction. When she hits her accustomed stride in more plausible material, such as Kris Kristofferson's *Loving Him Was Easier* or Bob Dylan's *Every Grain of Sand*, she is so very good that it seems unbelievable that neither performance ever made the charts. I think Mouskouri is one of the best pop singers around. Then again, a lot of Frenchmen think Gene Kelly is America's greatest actor. **P.R.**

OZZIE NELSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA, 1937. Ozzie Nelson and His Orchestra (vocals and instrumentals). *Night Ride; Never in a Million Years; They All Laughed; Sophisticated Swing; The Girl on the Police Gazette; Head over Heels in Love; They Can't Take That Away from Me; Whirligig;* and eight others. CIRCLE ⑧ CLP-27 \$7.98.

Performance: **Typical of the period**
Recording: **Very good**

Devotees of the TV series *Ozzie and Harriet*, which rode high in the ratings from 1952 to 1968, and subsequent fans of teenage rock star Ricky Nelson, the son of Ozzie and Harriet, who rode even higher in the early Sixties, now have an opportunity to hear what made Ozzie Nelson famous in the first place: the big band he led during

the Thirties (in the Forties he and Harriet were running their family show on radio). The Nelson band was extremely popular, and so was the voice of Harriet Hilliard, the singer Ozzie hired and later married. Frankly, I don't hear much on this record to distinguish Ozzie Nelson and His Orchestra from most of the other big bands of that day, but if you get a kick out of hearing the old songs sung the old way—including such silly novelty numbers as *Swing, Swing, Dear Mather-in-Law* and *The Kid in the Three-Cornered Pants*—you'll just have to add this one to your collection. **P.K.**

PETER NOONE: *One of the Glory Boys.* Peter Noone (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *You Got Me Anyway; I'm Gonna Rock Tonight; One of the Glory Boys; Give Me Just a Little More Time;* and five others. JOHNSTON ARZ 37369, © AZT 37369, no list price.

Performance: **Good, but . . .**
Recording: **Very good**

Peter Noone was the "Herman" of Herman's Hermits, a British group that had a hot run between 1965 and 1967 with *There's a Kind of Hush, Mrs. Brown You've Got a Lovely Daughter*, and other low-key, harmless, and tuneful ditties. By the late Sixties Noone wanted out of the group, but he found he was typecast as "Herman." From then until the mid-Seventies, he worked resorts and built a reputation as a surefire night-club attraction.

(Continued overleaf)

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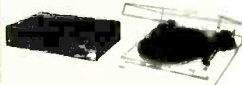
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Noone cracked the American market again last year with a new group, the Tremblers, whose debut album was a sprightly piece of rock that was well received here. He recently appeared in the role of Frederic in the national tour of the Joseph Papp production of *The Pirates of Penzance* and has now recorded his first true solo album. In it he displays a lot of zip and dash, and his performances are thoroughly professional. The careful production is by Spencer Proffer, and the sound is quite effective. What the album lacks is material commensurate with Noone's verve, savvy, and charm. His remakes of *If You Gotta Make a Fool of Somebody* (done in an affectionate parody of Jimmy Cliff's Caribbean accent) and *Give Me Just a Little More Time* are really good; the performer and the songs are worthy of each other. But the rest are vague and listless. I'd like to hear more of Noone; I just wish he'd aim higher. *J.V.*

JOHNNY PAYCHECK: *Lovers & Losers.* Johnny Paycheck (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. *D.O.A. (Drunk on Arrival); We've All Gone Crazy; Gonna Get Right; Award to an Angel; The Highlight of '81; Sharon Rae;* and four others. EPIC FE 37933, © FET 37933, © FEA 37933, no list price.

Performance: **For fans**
Recording: **Good**

No question that Johnny Paycheck makes good copy. He's been a hobo, been in the Navy—three times in the brig, twice escaped—been an alcoholic, a dope fiend, a bankrupt, and various other colorful things. But sooner or later you have to listen to a singer as well as read about him, and Paycheck's musical talent is limited. He's all right with a hell-raising song, but something gentler, such as *You're the Only Song I Sing Today*, plumb evades him; he just makes it sound even cornier than it seemed before he took up with it. Subtlety and understatement are not his things, and there are too many songs here that could use one or both of those qualities. If you're a Paycheck fan, for whatever extramusical reasons, I suppose that makes no difference. It helps that most anyone can like the simple, direct, honest picking behind him here, but there's no denying that "Lovers & Losers" isn't nearly as colorful as the liner copy. *N.C.*

ANTHONY PHILLIPS AND ENRIQUE BERRO GARCIA: *Private Parts and Pieces III—Antiques.* Anthony Phillips (acoustic guitars, bass guitar); Enrique Berro Garcia (acoustic and electric guitars). *Motherforest; Danse Nude; Old Wife's Tale; Suite in D Minor; Otto's Face; Elegy;* and three others. PVC 8908 \$8.98.

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

Anthony Phillips and Enrique Berro Garcia have a fine lark with this very pleasant collection of guitar duets, the steamier examples of which owe quite a lot to Ravel. Their playing displays craftsmanship and pride, but no other emotion is allowed to intrude directly; it must be inferred. An entertaining but not deeply involving way to while away an idle hour. *J.V.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

POINTER SISTERS: *So Excited.* Pointer Sisters (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *I'm So Excited; See How the Love Goes; All of You; Heart Beat; If You Wanna Get Back Your Lady;* and three others. PLANET BXL1-4335 \$8.98, © BXK1-4335 \$8.98.

Performance: **So fine**
Recording: **Good**

While rock and r-&-b share a common, basically black heritage, these two types of music have evolved along such different paths since the late Sixties that they now have separate and not always compatible sounds. The differences are most apparent in musical texture—the raw, rasping guitar styles of rock contrast sharply with the smoother, blues-derived instrumental backings of r-&-b—but they also extend to chord progressions, singing styles, and even song structure.

Given this divergence, there are few artists who can produce sounds palatable to both musical camps. Stevie Wonder is perhaps the most notable example of one who can. While the Pointer Sisters hardly rank with the multitasking Wonder, they have pulled off a minor musical coup here by successfully fusing or alternating the basic rock and r-&-b styles. "So Excited" straddles the fence very comfortably. *I'm So Excited* is raucously rocking, *Heart Beat* is strictly mellow r-&-b, and *American Music* is updated Sixties rock-and-roll. Then there are others—*If You Wanna Get Back Your Lady*, for instance—that are so engagingly and cleverly crafted that anyone can enjoy them. An impressive outing. *P.G.*

CHARLEY PRIDE: *Everybody's Choice.* Charley Pride (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *I Don't Think She's in Love Anymore; I See the Devil in Your Deep Blue Eyes; You're So Good When You're Bad; When She Dances;* and six others. RCA AHL1-4287 \$8.98, © AHK1-4287 \$8.98, © AHS1-4287 \$8.98.

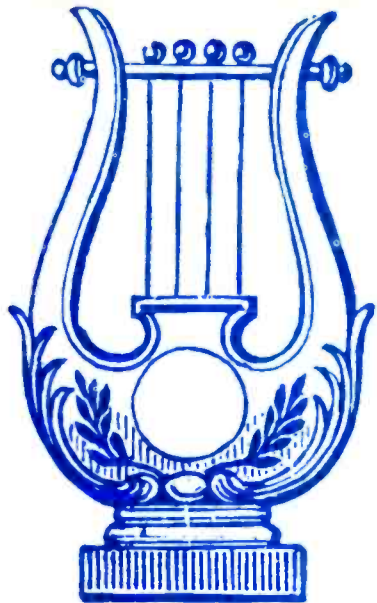
Performance: **Routine**
Recording: **Good**

Charley Pride sings well, especially if you like rangy baritones, but all of his albums seem the same. Each has one or two sure-fire commercial country songs, several gimmicky throwaways, and everywhere the Nashville Sound. So it is once again with "Everybody's Choice." There's not a boat-rocker in this batch, and there are about as many surprises in the arrangements as there are jazz chords, namely, none. The instrumentals do liven up a bit in the very last cut (*I Hope*), but they don't depart from the formula, and neither does the song. Pride's talent deserves less conservatism. *N.C.*

REO SPEEDWAGON: *Good Trouble.* REO Speedwagon (vocals and instrumentals). *Keep the Fire Burnin'; Sweet Time; I'll Follow You; Stillness of the Night;* and six others. EPIC FE 38100, © FET 38100, © FEA 38100, no list price.

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

REO Speedwagon's brand of hard rock is about the most palatable I've heard recent-



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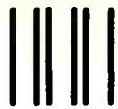
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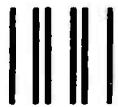
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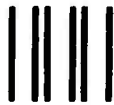
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ly. Where most bands of this type are irritating and bumptious, REO plays with a disarming exuberance. Their latest hit single, *Keep the Fire Burnin'*, bounces along merrily, and *Let's Be-Bop* is a charming, candid rouser about their success, their enjoyment of it, their appreciation of their audience, and their awareness that it can't last forever. REO has been going strong for eleven years, much longer than hard-rock "teen" bands are supposed to last. This band knows what it's doing. If we must have hard rock, I would prefer it be left almost entirely in REO Speedwagon's very capable hands. *J.V.*

TOM ROBINSON: *North by Northwest*. Tom Robinson (vocals, bass, keyboards); Richard Mazda (guitar, saxophone); Steve Laurie (drums). *Atmospherics; Now Martin's Gone; Can't Keep Away (Part II); Looking for a Bonfire; Those Days;* and five others. IRS SP 70028 \$8.98, © CS 70028 \$8.98.

Performance: **Tedious**
Recording: **Passable**

"North by Northwest" had songwriting help from Peter Gabriel and "strategies" by Brian Eno and a production by Richard Mazda, but most of the blame for it must be laid on Tom Robinson himself. As a lyricist he is caught between wanting to say something out of the prevailing Dick-and-Jane ordinary and keeping up his standing at being, like, not into words. And as a "composer" he hasn't yet shown that he would recognize a tune if it hit him in the face. As a result, the album's script is a mess, and the performances don't exactly bail it out. It comes off as an ugly little record trying to catch a New Wave here and there. It was recorded in Hamburg, the latest in a series of little things that are starting to make me wonder about Europe. *N.C.*

THE ROLLING STONES: *Still Life*. The Rolling Stones (vocals and instrumentals). *Under My Thumb; Let's Spend the Night Together; Shattered; Going to a Go-Go; Satisfaction;* and five others. ROLLING STONES COC 39113 \$8.98, © CS 39113 \$8.98, © TP 39113 \$8.98.

Performance: **Dull**
Recording: **Cavernous**

Last year was the first since 1969 that I didn't get to see the Rolling Stones on tour at least once, and it was also the first time I didn't particularly care. The fact is—and I say this as a Stones loyalist of long standing—their live show has degenerated into excess and arena posturing. If you don't believe me, I suggest you compare this new album recorded during last year's tour with the still-available LP derived from their 1969 extravaganza. The latter sounds like the Rolling Stones on a good night, the former like an amateurish bar band mangling some of the Stones' numbers. Mick Jagger has abandoned singing for bellowing, and you can't distinguish the guitar playing of Keith Richards and Ronnie Wood; they sound equally anemic and uninspired. A palpable air of fatigue hangs over the whole thing. You can almost hear them quaffing Gatorade between songs. Add to this a recording that deliberately emphasizes that these are stadium performances,

and you have an album that's about as much fun as the night shift on a suicide-prevention hotline in Detroit. *S.S.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ROXY MUSIC: *Avalon*. Roxy Music (vocals and instrumentals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *The Main Thing; Take a Chance with Me; To Turn You On; True to Life; Tara; More Than This;* and four others. WARNER BROS./EG 1-23686 \$8.98, © 4-23686 \$8.98.

Performance: **Coolly intense**
Recording: **Excellent**

"Avalon" might be the album to define rock in the Eighties: it's languid and ambivalent, urbane and seductive. It's about the search for genuine emotion in a world deadened by constant bombardment of the senses. It is a masterpiece of understatement. Bryan Ferry, Roxy Music's lead singer and keyboardist, never breaks into a sweat, never moves faster than a shuffle. Yet for all its cosmopolitan detachment, "Avalon" really succeeds on the *feel* of its dreamy, seamless rhythms and lean but sinewy guitar and saxophone lines. Even Ferry is freed by his technique to explore the synthesizer's "natural" expressive possibilities. Deliberately, I think, the sketchy lyrics never quite come into focus. They deal with relationships, for the most part, but they only suggest the possibilities between man and woman—cold prospects at that. While I like "Avalon" a great deal, its cool reserve comes across as though Roxy Music were playing to the regulars at a super-chic, expensive disco. But even that gives the album an ironic power. Ferry's *Avalon*, like King Arthur's, is a paradise, but it is also a burial place. *M.P.*

SKY 4: *Forthcoming*. Sky 4 (instrumentals). *Ride of the Valkyries; My Gisselle; Skylark; Fantasy; Xango;* and five others. ARISTA AL 9604 \$8.98, © ACT 9604 \$8.98, © A8T 9604 \$8.98.

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

This is heavy stuff, and that is the problem with Sky 4, a quintet whose members are identified only by first names and initials on this new album. I recognized classical guitarist John Williams right off, and the other members of this group—Herbie Flowers, Kevin Peek, Tristan Fry, and Steve Gray—are well-established musicians in their own right. There is no doubt that all have full command of their instruments (which here add up to nineteen), but their popping-the-classic efforts, though not entirely offensive to the ear, tend to stomp with the might of a thunderous Sousa march. Wendy Carlos did this so much better when she switched on Bach. *C.A.*

GINO SOCCIO: *Face to Face*. Gino Soccio (vocals, keyboards); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *It's Alright; Who Dunnit?; Dream On;* and three others. ATLANTIC SD 19358 \$8.98, © CS 19358 \$8.98, © TP 19358 \$8.98.

Performance: **Functional**
Recording: **Good**

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CIRCLE NO. 27 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Steel Pulse

From left, Selwyn Brown, Steve Nesbitt, David Hinds, Phonzo Martin, and Ronnie McQueen



Elektra Records

Two minutes of "True Democracy," the essential new Elektra album by Steel Pulse, was all it took to send me back to "Reggae Sunsplash '81" (review starts on facing page) to check if this was the same group that slogged through the first side of that documentary recording of reggae's answer to Woodstock. A picture of songwriter/vocalist/guitarist David Hinds's unmistakable haystack of hair confirmed the identity. What a difference a studio makes!

"True Democracy" is truly classic reggae, combining the vocal excitement of streetcorner soul with the rhythm and quirky energy of roots-reggae and dub. Hind's eclectic, maniacally inventive lyrics are a virtual primer of Rastafarianism, but they display a remarkable range of interests and insights. Whether spiritual (*Chant a Psalm*), funky (*Ravers*), humanitarian (*Find It . . . Quick!*), angry (*A Who Responsible?*) or humorously moralistic (*Leggo Beast* and *Man No Sober*), the songs are consistently convincing.

The instrumentals are terse but powerful, totally commanding, but what's really winning about "True Democracy" is the rich lead vocal lines and vocal harmonies. As in a torrid Motown session by such soul masters as the Four Tops or the O'Jays, Hinds's idomatic reggae tenor slides up and down, in and out, playing off layers of back-up vocals and the propulsive bass and drum backbeat. Excellently recorded, "True Democracy" is the long-awaited reggae album that finally wrestles the backbeat away from white punk rockers and brings it back home to its roots. An absolute must.

—Mark Peel

STEEL PULSE: *True Democracy*. Steel Pulse (vocals and instrumentals). *Chant a Psalm; Ravers; Find It . . . Quick!; A Who Responsible?; Worth His Weight in Gold (Rally Round); Leggo Beast; Blues Dance Raid; Your House; Man No Sober; Dub' Marcus Say.* ELEKTRA E1-60113 \$8.98, © E4-60113 \$8.98.

Performance: **Small tales**
Recording: **Good**

The title notwithstanding, this Statler Brothers album is one of their weaker efforts in recent years. Since nothing else changes much from one Statlers album to the next, the onus is on the songs. Here it's an undistinguished, rather scraggly lot,

with more than the usual number written by members of the group. The closest the boys come to their usual gimmicky cleverness is in *Whatever*, but it quickly degenerates into a laundry list: pops your corn, mows your lawn, melts your butter, etc. Except for *Life's Railway to Heaven*, an old white gospel number you may remember as *Life Is Like a Mountain Railway*, the rest of the material seems designer disposable, inoffensive and doggedly forgettable. N.C.

RAY STEVENS: *Don't Laugh Now*. Ray Stevens (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Such a Night; Written Down in My Heart; Take That Girl Away; Always There; Where the Sun Don't Shine; Oh Leo Lady;* and four others. RCA AHL1-4288 \$8.98, © AHK1-4288 \$8.98, © AHS1-4288 \$8.98.

Performance: **Crowded**
Recording: **Good**

It wasn't a bad idea, having Ray Stevens go straight and do a spate of ordinary songs rather than his zany novelties, as he has a rather pliant and facile singing voice. But it got lost in "production"; there are at least 50 per cent more sounds here at any given time than the song or Stevens or anyone else needs. The little songs, by various people, have had more care put into their melodies than their lyrics, but they can't breathe under all this mush. Stevens can sing a little—he gets beyond his depth only in *His Old Piano*—but these arrangements are strictly for masochists. N.C.

SYLVIA: *Just Sylvia*. Sylvia (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Sweet Yesterday; Nobody; Like Nothing Ever Happened; I Feel Cheated; You Can't Go Back Home; Not Tonight;* and four others. RCA AHL1-4312 \$8.98, © AHK1-4312 \$8.98, © AHS1-4312 \$8.98.

Performance: **Trendy c-8-w**
Recording: **Good**

Sylvia made a fair dent in the country charts last year, and she seems on the way to repeating her success with this new album. Kye Fleming and Dennis Morgan have provided her with at least two pieces of strong new material, *Nobody* and *Sweet Yesterday*, and her performances have a quietly heartfelt sincerity about them. She can dab away a tear, vocally, with the best of them. Tom Collins's trendy production provides a scattering of disco effects and a back-up chorus that wails at suitable intervals. Sylvia still hasn't made the crossover into pop, but she seems to be inching her way toward it. P.R.

thing that echoed the bland accompaniments to silent films, a far cry from the synthesized precision thumping that made Gino Soccio a star of the disco era. But there is an analogy to be drawn here, and I discovered it recently while strolling with Soccio's latest album, "Face to Face," oozing out of my Walkman—it was *perfect* walking music. Sure, you can dance to it too, but there is better music for that sort of thing, and you certainly wouldn't want to sit still and just *listen* to this stuff. C.A.

THE STATLER BROTHERS: *The Legend Goes On*. The Statler Brothers (vocals); in-

strumental accompaniment. *Whatever; I Had Too Much to Dream; I Don't Know Why; Life's Railway to Heaven; A Child of the Fifties;* and five others. MERCURY SRM-1-4048 \$8.98, © MCR4-1-4048 \$8.98, © MC8-1-4048 \$8.98.

10CC: *Ten Out of 10*. 10cc (vocals and instrumentals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Don't Ask; Les Nouveau Riches; The Power of Love; Run Away; We've Heard It All Before;* and five others. WARNER BROS BSK 3575 \$8.98, © M5 3575 \$8.98.

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

Eric Stewart and Graham Gouldman, who essentially *are* 10cc (session musicians are added for recordings) seem to lose more of their humor each time they go into a studio. Their professionalism remains, but—with

three notable exceptions—the material and performances on this album are little more than journeyman exercises in stamina.

The three exceptions are *Notell Hotel*, written and produced by the dyspeptic duo, a bizarre fantasy visually illustrated on the album cover; *Run Away*, an ingratiating ballad much in the style of the early 10cc when the group was a quartet; and *We've Heard It All Before*, a bald statement of boredom and disgust with pop music that includes a parody of interchangeable pop-music styles something like Paul McCartney's sleight-of-hand material. Andrew Gold produced *We've Heard It All Before* and *Run Away* as well as collaborating with Gouldman and Stewart on the writing. His presence is invigorating—at least he got the guys to sound the way they used to and then admit that they've had it. It sounds as if Gouldman and Stewart need a long rest. J.V.

TOM VERLAINE: *Words from the Front.* Tom Verlaine (vocals, guitar); other musicians. *Present Arrived; Postcard from Waterloo; True Story; Clear It Away;* and three others. WARNER BROS. BSK 3685 \$8.98, © M5 3685 \$8.98.

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

I thought Tom Verlaine's last album, "Dreamtime," was one of the marvels of the twentieth century (well, maybe just a terrific rock-and-roll record), but this new one, though superficially similar, doesn't do much for me. Verlaine's guitar playing remains astonishing, but the songs seem sketchy at best and merely atmospheric at worst. There's nothing to hang those acidtinged, modal guitar excursions on. New Waver Lene Lovich appears briefly on sax here, and the back-ups are, as usual, splendid, but overall it's more like snoozetime than dreamtime. S.S.

COLLECTIONS

THE GOLDEN GROUPS: Volume 19. The Blenders: *Don't Play Around with Love.* The Sparrows: *Tell Me Baby; Love Me Tender; Why Did You Love Me;* and two others. The Goldentones: *Meaning of Love.* The Scaletones: *Dreaming & Dreaming.* The Chestnuts: *Forever I Vow; Love Is True; It's You I Love.* The Pyramids: *OK Baby.* The Romancers: *No Greater Love; You'll Never Know.* Continentals: *Don't Do It Baby.* And three others. RELIC © 5038 \$7.98 (from Relic Records, P.O. Box 572, Hackensack, N.J. 07602).

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Good mono**

Joe Davis was an independent record producer who slipped into r-&-b in the Fifties. Before specializing in r-&-b, he had produced Harry James, the Deep River Boys, Otis Blackwell (who wrote many songs for Elvis Presley), Wingy Manone, and Champion Jack Dupree for his Jay-Dee label. Among his session men were Cozy Cole and Panama Francis on drums and Milt Hinton on bass. None of the hundreds of r-&-b recordings he subsequently produced made more than a small local splash in New York City and the immediate environs, and Davis abandoned this work by 1956.

What prevented nearly all of the Davis sessions from 1951 to 1956 from being hits was the failure to realize that rock-and-roll had replaced the jazz elements in early r-&-b. Davis was, in fact, a good producer judging by the results he achieved in both performance and sound balance. None of the recordings on this reissue are outstanding, but they are all entertaining and well made. Occasionally Davis tried to liven things up to approximate rock-and-roll, as on the Continentals' *Don't Do It Baby*, and he was foresighted in assembling groups with female lead singers. But he could never quite make the transition to the kind of music the mass public wanted to hear despite ample evidence in the success of Elvis Pres-

ley, Bill Haley, Little Richard, and Fats Domino.


Titling this collection "Golden Groups" is a whopping misnomer, since none of them ever achieved national fame. But as a historical document—and for pure enjoyment—it has value, presenting the last days of early r-&-b as it adapted itself to a public taste that wanted less gentility and more guts. J.V.

REGGAE SUNSPASH '81: A TRIBUTE TO BOB MARLEY. Original-soundtrack recording. Steel Pulse: *Sound System; Smile Jamaica;* and two others. Rita Marley and I-Threes: *Belly Full.* Melody Makers and the Wailers: *Sugar Pie.* Dennis

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CIRCLE NO. 53 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Brown: *If I Had the World*. Black Uhuru: *Plastic Smile*; *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*. Gregory Isaacs: *Soon Forward*. Third World: *1865 (96 in the Shade)*; *Rock the World*. And four others. ELEKTRA E1-60035 G two discs \$11.98, © E4-60035 \$11.98, © E8-60035 \$11.98.

Performance: **From natty to dreadful**
Recording: **Pretty good**

This is not the state-of-the-art reggae album you'd expect from a filmed concert that included the Wailers, Third World, Black Uhuru, Gregory Isaacs, and Dennis Brown. As an anthology it suffers from an excess of mediocrity—mediocre performances by some good bands and some by bands that are just plain mediocre. Although the album is billed as a tribute to the late Bob Marley, only one of Marley's songs (*Smile Jamaica*) and one other he was identified with (*Belly Full*) are included, and the Wailers are reduced to playing back-up for the Melody Makers (a pre-teen vocal quartet) and Eek-a-Mouse, neither of them what you'd call heavyweight. The whole album has an air of perfunctoriness. Band after band files onstage in a weary procession, runs lazily through a slow number or two, then heads for the next flight out of Montego Bay.

Particularly disappointing nondescript performances are turned in by Brown and Isaacs, two of reggae's brightest lights. The high points include Third World's *1865 (96 in the Shade)* and *Rock the World*, which show more vocal and harmonic sophistica-

tion than the rest of the album combined; Carlene Davis's big-voiced, soulful cover of Jimmy Cliff's *The Harder They Come*; two cuts by Black Uhuru that score very high marks for energy and conviction; and the number by the Melody Makers, who give reggae a new dimension of cuteness. The rest of the songs are lackluster. *M.P.*

60 YEARS OF COUNTRY MUSIC. Henry Gilliland and Eck Robertson: *Arkansaw Traveler*. Vernon Dalhart: *The Prisoner's Song*. Jimmie Rodgers: *Blue Yodel (T for Texas)*. Carter Family: *Wildwood Flower*. Hackberry Ramblers: *Jolie Blonde*. Bill Monroe and His Blue Grass Boys: *Orange Blossom Special*. Sons of the Pioneers: *Cool Water*. Hank Snow: *I'm Movin' On*. Elvis Presley: *Heartbreak Hotel*. Jim Reeves: *He'll Have to Go*. Chet Atkins: *Yakety Axe*. Eddy Arnold: *Make the World Go Away*. Waylon Jennings: *Good Hearted Woman*. Dolly Parton: *Jolene*. And ten others. RCA CPL2-4351 two discs \$11.98, © CPK2-4351 \$11.98, © CPS2-4351 \$11.98.

Performance: **Some landmarks**
Recording: **Good salvage jobs**

This doesn't compare with "The Smithsonian Collection of Classic Country Music," but it is a good retrospective country anthology for the money. RCA and its forerunners, Victor and Bluebird, have recorded more country music for a longer time than any other labels, including some of the biggest and best moments from the Carter

Family to Elvis. The cuts here are arranged chronologically, and it isn't until you reach side four—modern times—that you'd be likely to quarrel much with the selections. The last few years are always the toughest in doing this sort of thing.

Of course, since the material comes from the vaults of just one company, it doesn't totally represent historical reality. Women are represented only by Dolly Parton and Maybelle and Sara Carter. Well, Decca had Kitty Wells and Patsy Cline, and Columbia had Molly O'Day and Patsy Montana. And since this kind of collection invites arcane esoteric reminiscing, I'll lay this little arcane bit on you: the Sons of the Pioneers' 1945 recording of *Cool Water* included here is not the original, to me classic, version I heard on the radio as a kid. That one was recorded for Decca in 1941. It was a little slower and mellower, the harmonies were tighter (three-part rather than four-part since fiddler Hugh Farr didn't sing in 1941), and the instrumentation was very sparse. The RCA version has Ken Carson replacing Lloyd Perryman and uses two basses, two fiddles, and a steel guitar.

As for what do to about modern times, we'd never settle that in this space, but it does seem that the Jerry Reed, Ronnie Milsap, and Alabama selections were included solely on the basis of record sales. Still, there are some major country-music landmarks reflecting at least some diversity in styles and influences, and some good licks, lyrics, yodeling, twangs, and scrapes. A good buy. *N.C.*

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THE KLEZMORIM: *Metropolis*. The Klezmorim (instrumentals). *Constantinople; Bucharest; The Tuba Doina; Hot Dishes; Kramtweiss Steps Out*; and seven others. FLYING FISH FF 258 \$8.98.

Performance: **Jewish jamboree**
Recording: **Very good**

This is the third Flying Fish album by the Klezmorim, a group of irrepressible young Californians who have made a career out of reviving the Jewish music that used to be played by itinerant musicians at weddings, in taverns, and later on the streetcorners of American cities. They're still in there playing the kind of music that made their forbears popular. These traditional tunes—some droll, some drunken, some somber—range from the sad, droning lament of the *Shryer's Doina* to the rollicking rhythms of the vodka-drenched *A Wild Night in Odes-*

sa. It was disappointing not to hear any vocals like those comical Yiddish ballads that distinguished their first album, but even confining themselves to instrumentals, the Klezmorim are consistently crisp, keen performers. Everything here was recorded without benefit of multiple tracks, fancy overdubbing, or elaborate mixing at the console, yet it all sounds just great. **P.K.**

THE ROVERS: *Pain in My Past*. The Rovers (vocals and instrumentals); instrumental accompaniment. *Me and Millie; Willie McBride; Roly Poly Ladies; No More Bread and Butter*; and six others. EPIC/CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FE 37706, © FET 37706, no list price.

Performance: **Mild**
Recording: **Good**

The Rovers (they've decided to drop the "Irish" connection) are a folk band that works out of Canada. This album was recorded in Toronto and Vancouver, but it sounds like Nashville to me, and not particularly exciting Nashville at that. The five-man group tackles such topics as trendies (*The People Who Read People Magazine*), chubbies (*Roly Poly Ladies*), and c-&-w vamps (*Pain in My Past*), with mildly satirical results. A heavy commercial sheen has settled over everything the Rovers do, and their somewhat forced good humor here almost obliterates memory of their touchingly lovely long-ago hit *The Unicorn*. There's nothing even remotely like it in this new collection. **P.R.**

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SIMPLE GIFTS: BRITISH AND AMERICAN FOLK SONGS. Benjamin Luxon (vocals); Bill Crofut (vocals, banjos, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. *The Fox; Four Loom Weaver; Foggy Foggy Dew; Turtle Dove; Old Paint/The Carter*; and nine others. STOLAT SZM 0124 \$5.98.

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

It was a happy day for folk music when Britain's great opera and concert baritone Benjamin Luxon met the American banjo strummer, singer, and composer Bill Crofut and they decided to collaborate on a record. The program ranges from the Shaker hymn *Simple Gifts* (the same one Aaron Copland made such memorable use of in *Appalachian Spring*) to the *Four Loom Weaver* from Lancashire to a thrilling version of the powerful Irish ballad *Johnny I Hardly Knew You* that builds to a chilling crescendo. Crofut's singing style is rather like Pete Seeger's, and he is particularly effective in Seeger's own *Get Up and Go*. Luxon's voice, which is familiar to classical audiences—he has sung at Covent Garden in London and at the Metropolitan Opera in New York—is aptly applied in one ballad after another. And when the two singers join voices in, for example, English and American versions of that sly perennial *The Fox*, they make beautiful music together. They also get splendid backing throughout from a fine instrumental ensemble. **P.K.**

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BACK in 1970, when I asked Laura Nyro why she was such a stranger to television, she said it annoyed her that "those technicians are so concerned over whether your eyes are going to show up the right color, they don't give a damn about the sound." Unfortunately, that holds true for the most part even today. But although some television producers still seem to have the notion that musicians should be seen and not heard, they had better revise their thinking, for video no longer offers the mere fleeting glimpses of musical performers it once did. And with consumers more and

of videocassettes. (If that is the case, an upswing may be around the corner, for rumor has it that the likes of Linda Lovelace, Miss Jones, and the Devil await their turn to spin madly at 1,800 rpm.) Then there are the skeptics who argue that the lack of recording capability spells doom; the answer to them, of course, is that the phonograph record caught on, and has survived, quite well without such a feature. The most persuasive argument for LaserVision, however, is the system's performance—and if you're wondering what all this has to do with your favorite audio magazine, let me tell you that,

circumstances, and what you see is what you hear. Shot only with available light—which diminishes as the sun sets—the picture is not always as clear as one would like, but the atmosphere of a Central Park concert is captured very well, right down to the anti-establishment socializing that takes place around Bethesda Fountain (nowhere near the site of the concert). This is a standard-play disc, which means that you can take advantage of your equipment's freeze-frame and slow-motion features during some of the fast-cut crowd and around-the-park footage. There was apparently more to

Videodisc Roundup

America's Dewey Bunnell and Gerry Bickley. Facing page, Melissa Manchester



Elly Inman/Goldmark/Retna

more assuming control of when, what, and how often they watch a given program, there is an opportunity for close scrutiny that can prove downright embarrassing.

Though videocassettes are well on their way to becoming as commonplace in the home as good audio equipment, the designers of the Beta and VHS systems seem to suffer from the same preoccupation with things visual that discouraged Ms. Nyro twelve years ago, and only recently has there been serious talk of giving VCR's stereo sound capability. Videodisc players employing the Pioneer LaserVision (LV) system are a different matter. They were designed from the start to reproduce high-quality sound, whether mono or stereo, and now even that has been improved upon with the introduction of the CBS-developed CX noise-reduction system.

Unlike its tape counterpart, LaserVision (as well as RCA's comparatively archaic CED videodisc system) has been slow to catch on. Some attribute this to the total absence of porno software, which, let's face it, contributed measurably to the popularity

great as it is to watch *Tess* or *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* with superb picture and sound quality, the highest potential of LV discs is to provide a superlative musical experience.

Pioneer Artists, a label whose parent company is banking on the success of LV, already has a growing catalog of music discs, including sets by Paul Simon, Joni Mitchell, Liza Minnelli, and Japanese rock guitarist Masayoshi Takanaka. It has also released a two-hour concert featuring the Kingston Trio, the Limelighters, and Glen Yarbrough as well as such musical stage works as *Pippin*, *Peter Grimes*, and *The Tales of Hoffmann*. Pioneer's latest LV releases are a mixed bag that is as varied visually as it is musically.

"America, Live in Central Park," filmed in 1979 by Peter Clifton, features the popular rock group without original member Dan Peek, who left in 1977. They play a fine program that includes such hits as *Tin Man*, *Ventura Highway*, and the tune that started it all for them, *Horse with No Name*. The sound is good, considering the

film, however, than meets the laser beam: the credits make mention of *California Dreaming*, but the tune is not included on the videodisc.

Except for one ill-advised zoom into the audience, "Grover Washington, Jr. in Concert" is a perfect disc. It captures the popular saxophonist in a concert at Philadelphia's Shubert Theatre that appears to have been staged expressly for video presentation. Thus, the lighting is favorable and the sound well balanced; here one really gets a demonstration of the kind of quality LV can bring to home reproduction. I have to admit that Grover Washington is not among my favorite players, but he is good at what he does—which is to serve up funk with a modicum of jazz—and I have never heard him play better than he does on this release. The band is full of familiar faces, and with Richard Tee, Eric Gale (whose amplified guitar lights up *Mister Magic*), and Steve Gadd on board, it is not surprising that the music bears a strong resemblance to that produced by the group Stuff. Good input also comes from Paul Griffin on synthesizer

and percussionist Ralph MacDonald, but I am not at all impressed by the singing of Zack Sanders. A one-time member of the back-up group the Constellations, Sanders is a rather average vocalist. I suppose he does a passable job on *Just the Two of Us*, but it would have been nice if Bill Withers had been on hand.

Also taped in what appears to have been a special concert is "The Music of Melissa Manchester," an uninterrupted hour during which the former Harlette sings eighteen songs, delivers well-rehearsed rap, and attempts a few dance steps. Except for the

be able to freeze Manchester's awkward gyrations because this is a one-side extended-play disc.

"Dead Ahead" is another extended-play disc, but it has material on both sides and yields almost two hours of music by the Grateful Dead, taped in concert at New York's Radio City Music Hall two years ago. The inclusion of the comedy team of Al Franken and Tom Davis—known from the *Saturday Night Live* television show—mars the proceedings somewhat, but they make only two appearances and can easily be scanned away. Sad to say, the old balance problem also occurs here, making it difficult to hear the vocals at times. I don't mean that you have to be a lip reader, but a little more volume would not have been out of order as Jerry Garcia softly delivers songs you will want to hear. Things are a little better when Bob Weir imitates a black blues singer on Willie Dixon's *Little Red Rooster*. The Dead can be very laid-back, and for the first half of this set they are, but things pick up after that, and the only dull moment in the second half is a lengthy percussion duet in *Fire on the Mountain*, a free-form exercise in boredom. The director tries to alleviate the pain with visual distractions, but they are so poorly done that it is as if someone in the control room were experimenting with the special-effects generator. These tricks were, of course, not seen by the live audience, whose indiscriminate whooping and hollering throughout the concert is clear proof that the Grateful Dead are still very much alive and exciting to their fans. I have never really been a Dead fan, but I did for the most part enjoy this offering.

I have saved the most outrageous for last, and if porn is in the cards for LV, the Tubes have already dealt the first hand on a platter called "The Tubes Video." Pioneer is downright stingy when it comes to supplying information with the discs, but it would appear that this Tubes set consists of "videos"—visuals taped in sync with audio recordings for promotional purposes—for a Capitol album entitled "The Completion Backward Principle" and the singles *White Punks on Dope* and *Mondo Bondage*. Such "videos" are a fairly recent phenomenon (if you have cable TV, you have probably seen many of them), and they are often fairly primitive, low-budget productions. But they can also be quite imaginative, and the Tubes' LV disc serves well to demonstrate that. Like Alice Cooper (who produced *White Punks on Dope*), the Tubes have a very visual stage act, so videodiscs can do them better justice than audio discs ever could.


The Tubes sound more conventional than they look and could certainly have made it on their music alone, but the theatrics are wonderful. This is all studio footage, so I assume the fuzziness and unnatural color is deliberate, but with videos one never knows (do one?). Much of the disc is predominantly in blue and red, an effect rather like Fifties movies shown by television stations that don't take the trouble to make color adjustments. I'm not bothered by it, however, because there is so much going on here, and


each playing reveals details that eluded the eyes and ears before. There is a punkishness about the Tubes, though that word had no musical meaning when the group was formed in the mid-Seventies, yet their music is very accessible, even pretty at times.


If you liked the Tubes' records, you will not be disappointed in their videodisc, but if you have children around, I think you will want to put them to bed before watching it. Like all the other discs covered in this review, this one was pressed in Japan, where the factory does a superior job but the authorities tend to be rather prudish. It is said that such R-rated Hollywood films as *Apocalypse Now* and *First Monday in October* could not be pressed in Japan, even for export, because local censors found them objectionable, which makes me wonder how the Tubes passed inspection. Sure, there is a red square covering something here and there, but very little is left to the imagination, especially in the bondage sequence (which incidentally, takes place in a kitchen). Since it is a standard-play disc, it is possible to examine each frame, and while we all know what lurks behind the little red square in front of leader Bill Spooner, I wonder what the orange squares in frames 30510 and 30902 on side two could possibly be hiding.


I am convinced that even better LV music discs will be forthcoming when more people discover the wonders of this technology and what it can do for music, and when producers begin to exploit the characteristics of this extraordinary medium. The five discs reviewed here are all CX-encoded, and while that did enhance the sound on some of them, especially the America set, I have yet to come across a side in my collection of forty LV discs that desperately cries out for noise reduction. I expect that my CX decoder will serve me best for discs of vintage films.

—Chris Albertson

AMERICA LIVE IN CENTRAL PARK. America (vocals and instrumentals). Twelve selections. Standard play, running time 53 minutes. PIONEER LASERDISC  PA-82-013 \$24.95.

THE MUSIC OF MELISSA MANCHESTER. Melissa Manchester (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Eighteen selections. Extended play, running time 59 minutes. PIONEER  PA-82-015 \$24.95.

GRATEFUL DEAD: *Dead Ahead*. Grateful Dead (vocals and instrumentals). Fifteen selections. Extended play, running time 114 minutes. PIONEER  PA-82-010 \$24.95.

GROVER WASHINGTON, JR. IN CONCERT. Grover Washington, Jr. (soprano, alto, and tenor saxophones); Eric Gale (guitar); Paul Griffin (synthesizer); Richard Tee (keyboards); Anthony Jackson (bass); Ralph McDonald, Steve Gadd (percussion); Zack Sanders (vocal). Five selections. Standard play, running time 53 minutes. PIONEER  PA-82-011 \$24.95.

THE TUBES VIDEO. The Tubes (vocals and instrumentals). Thirteen selections. Standard play, running time 53 minutes. PIONEER  PA-82-012 \$24.95.

Lynn Goldsmith



last, all goes well, but I wonder if the talk that links eight songs under the heading "Women's Saga" will stand up to repeated listening. Joe Layton conceived, staged, and produced the concert (although his name was left off the jacket), but without the razzle-dazzle and special effects he gave Diana Ross a few years back. Manchester—who has since undergone a highly publicized change of image—looks quite pretty as she puts her voice to tests it does not always pass, and the songs, mostly written by her along with Carole Bayer Sager and others, are the stuff her career has been built on. There is rich accompaniment, complete with back-up singers and strings, and the sound is very good with the odd exception of the star's own microphone; it tends to pop, an annoying flaw in an otherwise well-planned production (it could probably have been remedied with a simple foam-rubber shield). Unless you are an absolute stickler for perfect sound, don't let this bother you—most of the time, the microphone serves its holder well. Those dance steps, however, are another matter, and you won't

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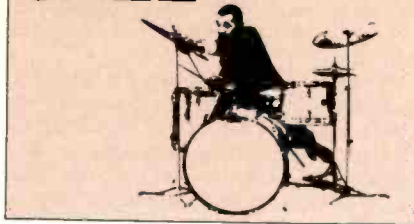
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JAZZ



ART ENSEMBLE OF CHICAGO: *Urban Bushmen*. Art Ensemble of Chicago (instrumentals and vocals). *Bush Magic; Theme for Sco; New York Is Full of Lonely People; Uncle; Ancestral Meditation; Peter and Judith*; and six others. ECM ECM-2-1211 two discs \$13.98, © 2E5-1211 \$13.98.

Performance: **Velled brilliance**
Recording: **Very good**

Painted faces and colorful "native" costumes may look interesting in live performance, but such visual frills do nothing for the Art Ensemble of Chicago on an audio recording. Personally, I think they look plain silly done up like African tribesmen on a movie set, and the visuals detract from music that often demands more than the usual concentration from a listener. Sure, the group is prone to fall into contrived nonsense, but it is also quite capable of generating wonderful, exciting music, music that can and should be appreciated on its own merits.

The Art Ensemble's latest album, a two-record set of performances from a 1980 concert in Munich, is a mixture of the bad, the bold, and the beautiful. As if to complement the make-up and costumes, the group lapses into some very strained, grueling moments of anti-musicality, but then it suddenly springs into dynamic, thoroughly musical passages. If the Art Ensemble of Chicago left the shenanigans to Barnum and Bailey, they would have my unqualified approval—and, I suspect, a larger, more serious following. C.A.

CHET BAKER, JIM HALL, HUBERT LAWS: *Studio Trieste*. Chet Baker (trumpet, flugelhorn); Hubert Laws (flutes); Jim Hall (guitar); Kenny Barron (piano); other musicians. *Malagueña; Django; Swan Lake; All Blues*. CTI 9007 \$8.98, © C-9007 \$8.98.

Performance: **Slick formula stuff**
Recording: **Very good**

After a prolonged absence, the CTI label has reappeared. Among its first new releases is "Studio Trieste," a set that could well have been recorded in the label's heyday. It was actually made earlier this year with a group of artists closely associated with CTI. The arrangements are by Don Sebesky, and the players include such past CTI regulars as Chet Baker, Hubert Laws, and Steve Gadd. The engineer was Rudy Van Gelder.

The music? Often pretty, but more often pretty dull. There is a mechanical run-through of *Malagueña*, a languid *Django*, a *Swan Lake* that is bad Tchaikovsky and only slightly better mood jazz (even pianist

Kenny Barron fails to yield an interesting solo), and a creeping, crawling version of Miles Davis's *All Blues*. Not an auspicious new beginning for CTI. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

KENNY BARRON: *Golden Lotus*. Kenny Barron (piano); John Stubblefield (soprano and tenor saxophones); Steve Nelson (vibraphone); Buster Williams (bass); Ben Riley (drums). *Dewdrop; Cinco; Darn That Dream*; and two others. MUSE MR 5220 \$8.98.

Performance: **Eloquent jazz**
Recording: **Good**

Kenny Barron has long been one of the more interesting jazz pianists around. He has never sacrificed his artistry for money and popularity but has instead consistently surrounded himself with good players of similar integrity and dedication. The latest example is "Golden Lotus," a Muse album recorded in early 1980 that features a quintet whose sole aim seems to be the production of fine modern jazz. The four distinguished ensemble performances perfectly complement Barron's solo track, *Darn That Dream*. It is all worthwhile listening. C.A.

CARLA BLEY: *Live! Carla Bley Band* (instrumentals). *Blunt Object; The Lord Is Listenin' to Ya, Hallelujah!; Time and Us*; and three others. WATT/ECM ECM W-12 \$9.98, © ECM MSE-12 \$9.98.

Performance: **Disappointing**
Recording: **Good remote**

Carla Bley's music has taken many directions in the past, and it goes in a few diverse ones on this latest album, recorded at the Great American Music Hall, San Francisco, in the summer of 1981. It features a ten-piece band that often sounds like a smaller group. There is nothing wrong with that per se, but I had hoped for more. As usual, the compositions are all by Bley, and, again as usual, they are like traditional landscapes framed in Lucite. Except for an occasional intriguing solo by trombonist Gary Valente, this is pretty boring stuff. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JACKIE CAIN AND ROY KRAL: *High Standards*. Jackie Cain (vocals); Roy Kral (vocals, piano); Paul Johnson (vibes); Dean Johnson (bass); Jeff Brillinger (drums). *I Got Rhythm; Stardust; Loving You; Am I Blue; Joy Spring*; and five others. CONCORD JAZZ CJ-186 \$8.98.

Performance: **Very fine**
Recording: **Good**

Jackie Cain and Roy Kral by now probably have an encyclopedia-sized scrapbook stuffed with rave reviews of their work over the years. I hope they add this one to it. Just how far, and by what measure, they transcend the tired label "jazz singer" can be heard on every groove of this new album. "High Standards" is a loving mix of almost-forgotten old beauties, such as Rodgers and Hart's *Nobody's Heart* (from *By Jupiter*), and newer, as yet not really fully "discovered" songs, such as Richard Rodney Bennett and Joel E. Siegel's lovely and lithe *I Watch You Sleep* (originally the theme for

the film *Yanks*). The performances as usual blend the artists' astonishingly high level of personal musicianship with a performing panache and brilliance that have to be heard to be believed. So get hold of this record and become a believer. **P.R.**

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

THE CAPP/PIERCE ORCHESTRA: *Juggernaut Strikes Again!* The Capp/Pierce Orchestra (instrumentals); Ernie Andrews (vocals). *Parker's Mood/Word from Bird; I Remember Clifford; Charade; Little Pony; New York Shuffle;* and four others. **CONCORD JAZZ CJ-83 \$8.98.**

Performance: **Power-packed swing**
Recording: **Excellent**

"Juggernaut Strikes Again!" is the third and—if memory serves—finest album by the energetic, well-oiled Capp/Pierce Orchestra. Drummer Frankie Capp and pianist Nat Pierce are deeply attuned to the big-band sound of the Forties, but they do not imitate it. Their style is a distillation of those of such worthy models as Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Woody Herman, and Charlie Barnet plus many tasteful original ingredients. Some in the band have yet to establish their names while others have distinguished credentials in the jazz world, but all are excellent musicians. This first studio recording by the band is a superbly engineered album that captures every nuance of the performances.

Ernie Andrews lends vocals to two selections, Billy Preston's *You Are So Beautiful* and Charlie Parker's *Parker's Mood*, but they are not his best performances and only the latter adds anything to the album. The rest of the disc is wonderful. Even Henry Mancini's *Charade*, which I have never cared for, becomes a joy in Nat Pierce's bouncy arrangement. **C.A.**

MAYNARD FERGUSON: *Hollywood.* Maynard Ferguson (trumpets, flugelhorn, Superbone, Firebird, soprano saxophone, baritone horn); instrumental accompaniment. *Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough; Déjà Vu; Hollywood; Nine to Five;* and four others. **COLUMBIA FC 37713, © FCT 37713, no list price.**

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

Canadian-born Maynard Ferguson, a veteran of forty years in the music business, is still in there playing a mean trumpet—not to mention a mean flugelhorn and an even meaner soprano sax, baritone horn, "Firebird," and "Superbone"—on this latest record put together with a bunch of expert jazz musicians in Hollywood. There's a big, busy sound to this album, as one might expect from a musician who in the Fifties was known as the youngest of the big-band leaders. He can still blow a horn with the best of them and does so almost continuously throughout this interesting release. The tempos are smart and brisk, the playing light and lively, and the selections are all worth an attentive listen. **P.K.**

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

RED GARLAND: *Strike Up the Band.* Red Garland (piano); Julian Priester (trom-

bone); George Coleman (tenor saxophone); Ron Carter (bass); Ben Riley (drums). *Receipt, Please; Straight, No Chaser; In a Sentimental Mood;* and two others. **GALAXY GXY-5135 \$7.98.**

Performance: **True blue Red**
Recording: **Very good**

Between 1956 and 1962, pianist Red Garland recorded profusely under his own name for the Prestige and Jazzland labels; he did one session with John Coltrane and a couple with other horns, but most of his dates were trio affairs. Of course, Prestige also recorded him as a Miles Davis sideman, and I found his work on those sessions more interesting than most of his trio sets.

Now Fantasy—which, incidentally, owns the Prestige and Jazzland sessions—has released a 1979 Red Garland quintet date on its Galaxy label, and it is superb.

"Strike Up the Band" held my interest from beginning to end each time I played it. It is, of course, a formidable quintet, and someone had the good sense to give each of the two horn players a solo track on which to strut his stuff. Trombonist Julian Priester's rendering of *In a Sentimental Mood* could have sustained a whole album, and George Coleman's *Everything Happens to Me* supports my contention that his tenor saxophone should be heard more often. The opener, Thelonious Monk's *Straight, No Chaser* has everybody contributing with

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ATLANTIC RECORDS has one of the richest catalogs of rock, blues, and soul music from the Fifties and Sixties. Now, some of the best recordings from Atlantic's vaults have been reissued in four special packages on the new Atlantic/Deluxe label. The initial release features sets by Ray Charles, Albert King, Professor Longhair, and the Coasters.

The Charles set is the most elaborate, with an illustrated booklet and five discs covering his astonishing career with the label from 1953 to 1959. They simply confirm again what everybody knows, that Ray Charles is a colossus of American music. This package presents the early "rhythm-and-blues" sides—*I Got a Woman*, *Hallelujah I Love Her So*—that sent shock waves through the industry and floored other musicians. Charles's mixture of blues and gospel was revelatory and emotionally explosive. Also, of course, there is his special gift for ballad singing, which for me reached a peak in this period with *Come Rain or Come Shine*. Twenty years after I first heard it, it still gives me ecstatic shivers. Charles's talents as a jazz pianist are also well represented in this set, but it is no denigration of his genius to say that he is not an especially distinctive keyboard jazz stylist. As with Duke Ellington, another pianist, Charles's real jazz instrument is the orchestra—all of the concepts and arrangements here are his own. About the only drawback to this collection is that recording dates are not given, though there are detailed personnel lists.

Bluesman Albert King, whose guitar style was so influential on Jeff Beck, Eric Clapton, and all their subsequent imitators, came to Atlantic through a distribution deal with the Stax label in Memphis. After Stax collapsed, King free-lanced for various small labels. The two-disc reissue set includes the best of King's classic Stax dates (*Born Under a Bad Sign*, *Crosscut Saw*, *Laundromat Blues*, *The Very Thought of You*) as well as highlights from his later recordings (*Truckload of Lovin'*, *Call My Job*, *Blues at Sunrise*). King has a voice like juicy roast beef, and his guitar playing will hit you like a double scotch. Most of these sides have been out of print for many years, so their reissue is most welcome and a long overdue tribute.

The late Roy Byrd (Professor Longhair) was a New Orleans boogie pianist, writer, and singer acknowledged as the dean of Crescent City musicians. Fats Domino, Huey "Piano" Smith, and Dr. John all took him as their model. Byrd's original recordings for Atlantic in the Fifties were reissued in the early Seventies. The new two-disc Atlantic/Deluxe package is a live session recorded at the club Tipitina (named after one of Byrd's songs). The band is solid on the ensemble riffing, but the soloists were at odds with the novice producer, and even Byrd's urgings to "Blow, blow, blow!" had no effect. Fans or initiates would be better off hearing the Professor's last studio recording, "Crawfish Fiesta" (Alligator AL 4718), which was made shortly before he died in 1980.

The Coasters were merely a capable Los

Angeles black vocal group until they met writer-producers Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, two white enthusiasts whose inspired sense of satire turned the Coasters into first-rate comedians and the most successful novelty group of the Fifties and early Sixties. Using humor as a weapon, the producers and singers scored points against the mores of the time and white attitudes

blazing years, and the new Atlantic/Deluxe series is a justly deserved celebration for label and listener alike. —Joel Vance

Atlantic Deluxe: A Celebration



Ray Charles

toward blacks. Some of the group's hits were pure fun (*Charlie Brown*, *Yakety Yak*), but others had a cutting edge. *Poison Ivy* is about venereal disease, *Shoppin' for Clothes* a bitter comment on blacks as "credit risks," and *Riot in Cell Block #9* an indictment of crowded prison conditions.

The liner notes for the packages are detailed in the case of Robert Palmer's for the King and Coasters sets, evocative by Nat Hentoff for the Charles bonanza, and modest by Albert Goldman for the Professor Longhair fiasco. All the Charles selections are in mono, but it's a tribute to the care Atlantic took in recording in the golden years that the sound is crisp and sharp. The Longhair and King releases are all stereo. The Coasters set, running from 1954 to 1968, is a mixture of stereo and mono.

Atlantic had a strong claim to being the foremost label in its field during its trail-

RAY CHARLES: *A Life in Music*. Ray Charles (vocals, piano, alto saxophone); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *The Sun's Gonna Shine Again*; *What Would I Do Without You*; *Ain't Misbehavin'*; *Leave My Woman Alone*; *Love on My Mind*; *Sweeney River Rock*; *The Genius After Hours*; *I Got a Woman*; *How Long Blues*; *Yes Indeed!*; *Just for a Thrill*; *Soul Brothers*; *Sinner's Prayer*; *That's Enough*; *Lonely Avenue*; *Let the Good Times Roll*; *Greenbacks*; *Mr. Charles' Blues*; *Music, Music, Music*; *It Should've Been Me*; *What'd I Say*; *Funny (But I Still Love You)*; *Losing Hand*; *A Bit of Soul*; *Cosmic Ray*; *A Fool for You*; *I Want a Little Girl*; *Soul Meeting*; *Blackjack*; *Drown in My Own Tears*; *Ain't That Love*; *The Man I Love*; *Come Rain or Come Shine*; *Hard Times*; *You Be My Baby*; *What Kind of Man Are You*; *It's All Right*; *I Wonder Who*; *Talkin' 'Bout You*; *Hornful Soul*; *Heartbreaker*; *Bag of Blues*; *Hallelujah I Love Her So*; *Rockhouse*; *Tell Me How You Feel*; *Sweet Sixteen Bars*; *I Believe to My Soul*. ATLANTIC/DELUXE AD5-3700 five discs \$39.98, © CS5-3700 \$39.98.

ALBERT KING: *Masterworks*. Albert King (vocals, guitar); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Personal Manager*; *Cadillac Assembly Line*; *Chump Change*; *Angel of Mercy*; *The Very Thought of You*; *Call My Job*; *Born Under a Bad Sign*; *Truckload of Lovin'*; *Rub My Back*; *Laundromat Blues*; *Cold Women with Warm Hearts*; *Kansas City*; *We All Wanna Boogie*; *Blues at Sunrise*; *Good Time Charlie*; *Crosscut Saw*; *Ain't Nothing You Can Do*; *As the Years Go Passing By*. ATLANTIC/DELUXE AD2-4002 two discs \$15.98, © CS2-4002 \$15.98.

PROFESSOR LONGHAIR: *The Last Mardi Gras*. Professor Longhair (vocals, piano); instrumental accompaniment. *Big Chief*; *Jambalaya*; *Mess Around*; *Cry to Me*; *Rum & Coca Cola*; *Got My Mojo Working*; *Everyday (I Have the Blues)*; *Doin' It*; *Gone So Long*; *She Walks Right In/Shake, Rattle & Roll*; *Hey Now Baby*; *Bald Head*; *Stag-o-Lee*; *Tipitina*; *Her Mind Is Gone*; *How Long Has That Train Been Gone*; *Boogie Woogie*; *Carnival in New Orleans*. ATLANTIC/DELUXE AD2-4001 two discs \$15.98, © CS2-4001 \$15.98.

THE COASTERS: *Young Blood*. The Coasters (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Little Egypt*; *Shoppin' for Clothes*; *Searchin'*; *Charlie Brown*; *Down in Mexico*; *Girls, Girls, Girls*; *Yakety Yak*; *Run, Red, Run*; *Poison Ivy*; *Young Blood*; *Down Home Girl*; *That Is Rock and Roll*; *D. W. Washburn*; *Along Came Jones*; *Three Cool Cats*; *Riot in Cell Block #9*; *The Shadow Knows*; *I Must Be Dreamin'*; *Smokey Joe's Café*; *Framed*; *Turtle Dovin'*; *Bad Blood*; *The Idol with the Golden Head*; *Love Potion #9*. ATLANTIC/DELUXE AD2-4003 two discs \$15.98, © CS2-4003 \$15.98.

spirit and swing. I only wish that this fine set had run beyond its somewhat miserly thirty-seven minutes. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

STAN GETZ QUARTET: *Pure Getz*. Stan Getz Quartet (instrumentals). *Blood Count; I Wish I Knew; Tempus Fugit; Sipping at Bell's*; and three others. CONCORD JAZZ CJ-188 \$8.98, © C-188 \$8.98.

Performance: **Articulate jazz**
Recording: **Very good**

Have you ever heard a bad Stan Getz recording? I haven't, not even a so-so side, and that still goes after listening to "Pure Getz," a quartet album recorded at the beginning of this year. In fact, this is a very fine set, and I say that even though I have never been terribly fond of pianist James McNeely's work; either he's improving or I'm mellowing, although I suspect it's the former. The quartet (with two different drummers, Billy Hart and Victor Lewis) plays with sustained imagination on a fascinating program that includes rarely heard compositions by Bud Powell, Billy Strayhorn, and Miles Davis. "Pure Getz" is pure joy, not to mention pure jazz. C.A.

JAY HOGGARD: *Mystic Winds, Tropic Breezes*. Jay Hoggard (vibraphone); Dwight Andrews (bass clarinet); Anthony Davis (piano); Cecil McBee (bass); Billy Hart, Don Moye, Wilson Moorman III (percussion). *Mystic Winds, Tropic Breezes; The Golden Ashanti; Listen in Silence; Other Side of the Ocean*. INDIA NAVIGATION IN 1049 \$8.98.

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

Vibraphonist Jay Hoggard has a tendency to make his instrument sound like wind chimes, which is a bit too tinkly for my taste, but "Mystic Winds, Tropic Breezes" emphasizes his composing talent, and—so far—I find that side of him more interesting. I say "so far" because Hoggard is still young and styles have a way of evolving.

One composition here, *Listen in Silence*, is by pianist Anthony Davis. A somber piece in low gear, it follows Hoggard's more intense work, and, coming on the heels of the seething, emotion-charged *Other Side of the Ocean*, it soothes the senses at just the right time. Hoggard's three pieces are interrelated impressionistic sound pictures of pre-slavery Africa and the horrors that followed with the slave trade. He claims to have been inspired by the television adaptation of *Roots*, but I am happy to report that his music does not have the shallow commercialism of its catalyst. C.A.

BIRELI LAGRENE: *Routes to Django*. Bireli Lagrene (guitar, bass); Gaiti Lagrene, Tschirglo Loeffler (guitar); other musicians. *Fiso Place; Bireli Swing 1979; All of Me; Tschirglo Waltz; Latches; I've Found a New Baby; My Melancholy Baby*; and five others. ANTILLES AN 1002 \$7.98.

Performance: **Whiz kid**
Recording: **Good**

When this recording was made in 1980, guitarist Bireli Lagrene was all of thirteen years old. His astonishing emulation of



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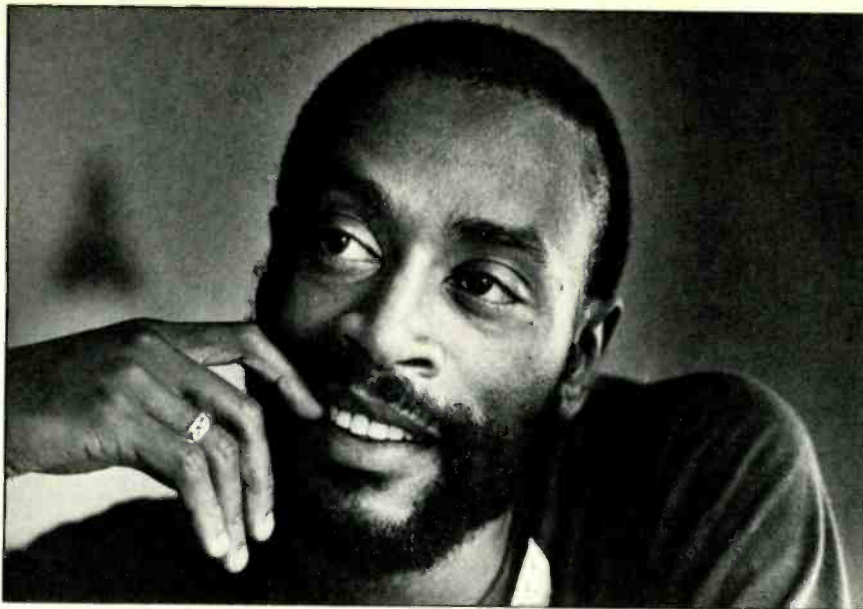


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Bobby McFerrin: a lesson in vocal gymnastics

Django Reinhardt—the attack, the technique, the lyricism, even Django's acoustic-guitar sound—qualify him as a child prodigy. Bireli, a gypsy like Django but from a different tribe, has created an exact replica of Django's Thirties group, the Quintet of the Hot Club of France, complete down to the small detail of Bireli's brother Gaiti playing rhythm guitar just as Django's brother Joseph did. The group is rounded out with various musicians from what the liner notes describe as "the Stuttgart jazz scene." Fascinating as young Master Lagrene is, child prodigies tend to fade quickly. At this writing, Bireli is only fifteen, so he has loads of time to develop his own musical style if he cares to do so. J.V.

BOBBY McFERRIN. Bobby McFerrin (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Dance with Me; Feline; Moon-dance; All Feets Can Dance; Peace;* and five others. ELEKTRA/MUSICIAN E1-60023 \$8.98, © E4-60023 \$8.98.

Performance: **Promising, but . . .**
Recording: **Very good**

Imagine a combination of Al Jarreau, a whistling tea kettle, and a high-pitched Ella Fitzgerald. There you have Bobby McFerrin's vocal style. My description may not make it sound so hot, but it actually works fairly often. What does not work too well is McFerrin's approach to more orthodox singing. On *Moondance*, an awful Van Morrison tune, he plows through the lyrics in a deeper-than-usual voice before abandoning words altogether for an elevating lesson in vocal gymnastics, but most of the straightforward singing here is just boring. Even the wordless performances can be trying (*All Feets Can Dance*), but McFerrin's talent is never in question. Just listen to *Hallucinations*, a wonderful product of multitracking in which he accompanies himself, and *Chicken*, a marvelous vocal exercise supported by a rhythm section.

McFerrin probably can't go through life singing only wordless songs, so he should either work on his delivery of lyrics or keep it to a minimum. He could, of course, team up

with someone else, and on Smokey Robinson's old hit song *You've Really Got a Hold on Me* he does. But he makes soggy cardboard of the lyrics, and the track would have fared better had he left all the more traditional singing to his partner, Phoebe Snow. Various rhythm instruments and background singers appear throughout, and there is nice work by pianist Vic Feldman, but this is very clearly McFerrin's album—his first, though surely not his last. C.A.

ART PEPPER: Roadgame. Art Pepper (clarinet, alto saxophone); George Cables (piano); David Williams (bass); Carl Burnett (drums). *Roadgame; Road Waltz; When You're Smiling; Everything Happens to Me.* GALAXY GXY-5142 \$7.98.

Performance: **Articulate**
Recording: **Good remote**

When saxophonist Art Pepper died earlier this year at the age of fifty-six, it did not come as a great surprise; what was extraordinary was that he survived as long as he did and continued to create eloquent jazz. Pepper, who spent a good portion of his life in a netherworld of drugs and prison, told of his grueling experiences in a startlingly frank autobiography a few years back, and the anguish also showed up in his music.

"Roadgame," recorded at a Los Angeles club date in August 1981, is a new release, but there are undoubtedly more unheard Pepper tapes around, for he was enjoying a well-deserved comeback when the end finally came. The new album is a good and representative quartet set with the ever-reliable George Cables on piano (catch his beautiful solo on *Everything Happens to Me*). The opening blues-drenched title track is the best performance, but the most interesting is *When You're Smiling*, which conjures up a contrasting mood and has Pepper playing the clarinet to good advantage. Art Pepper will be missed. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

DAVID SANBORN: As We Speak. David Sanborn (alto and soprano saxophones);

other musicians. *Port of Call; Better Believe It; Rush Hour; Back Again; As We Speak;* and four others. WARNER BROS. 1-23650 \$8.98, © 4-23650 \$8.98.

Performance: **Fine fusion**
Recording: **Very good**

Saxophonist David Sanborn so deftly combines the hyponotic pulse of popular dance music with the more imaginative rhythms and innovative techniques of jazz that considerations of musical categories become irrelevant. Unlike some of his fellow travelers in fusion, he does not simply transpose the familiar old pop-vocal formulas to instrumental settings but proceeds from an instrumental base, fashioning the music to fit his versatile and soulful horn explorations.

This album presents Sanborn in top form; his lead on soprano and alto sax is alternately searing, intricate, and tender, and the selections have been arranged so seamlessly that the musicians all seem to be of a single mind. There is no clutter, no aural upstaging or overkill. They simply blend their best efforts to create music that stimulates the mind and engages the emotions. Kudos especially to bassist Marcus Miller, who wrote several of the exceptionally melodic cuts, and to Sanborn himself for *Rain on Christmas*, which is hauntingly lovely. This album will sing to you as exquisitely as any vocalist. P.G.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MAXINE SULLIVAN: With the Ike Isaacs Quartet. Maxine Sullivan (vocals); Ike Isaacs (bass); Herman Foretich (reeds); Don Wall (piano); Steve Ellington (drums). *I Could Write a Book; This Heart of Mine; By Myself; This Can't Be Love; Come Rain or Come Shine; You Go to My Head;* and five others. AUDIOPHILE AP-154 \$7.98.

Performance: **Inimitable**
Recording: **Good**

At seventy-plus, Maxine Sullivan sails serenely on, performing exactly as she has since 1937, the year of her all-time hit *Molly Malone*. She's still singing such golden-age standards as *This Can't Be Love, By Myself*, and *You Go to My Head* in her inimitable voice and uniquely relaxed, glowing style. Several years ago I thought her then-latest album showed what a class act she was in the recording wasteland. This new one further proves my point. P.R.

JUDY WILLING. Judy Willing (vocals); Steve Novosel Trio (instrumentals). *Blue Skies; Miss Otis Regrets; 'Tis Autumn; The Nearness of You; They All Laughed; My Old Flame; On Broadway;* and six others. LAVENHAM L VH8101 \$8.98 (from Lavenham Records, 10604 Democracy Lane, Potomac, Md. 20854).

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

Here is some very musical, very good low-keyed ballad singing by Judy Willing, a lady with immaculate taste in repertoire. Like so many talented young pop-jazz singers of today, she holds an office job to support herself. Her work on this album indicates that she's more than ready for a full-time performing career. Are you listening, club owners in Washington, D.C.? P.R.

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"Cats"

Ken Wells as Skimbleshanks in the original London production

SEEMS a little precious, doesn't it—making a full-scale musical out of the light verse of T. S. Eliot's *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*? One of those too-British conceits, like *Winnie the Pooh* rendered into Latin or an opera based on Daisy Ashford's *The Young Visitors*. But the lovely result of just that idea, *Cats*, is anything but precious or cloying. Surely that is because it occurred to Andrew Lloyd Webber, who, among other things, wrote the music for *Evita*. With enormous melodic and technical resourcefulness, Lloyd Webber devised a score that is startling and hugely effective both in the theater and on the new Geffen album of the hit London production.

Eliot wrote these poems about the lives and adventures of a variety of cats with fanciful names (Skimbleshanks, Mr. Mistoffelees, Grizabella, and others) in a series of letters to his several godchildren. Published in 1939, the collection quickly became a modern classic for both children and adults. (My own particular favorite, which I once memorized complete, was *Macavity*: "Macavity's a mystery cat./He's called the hidden paw. . .") Eliot, along with Ezra Pound probably one of the most important and influential poets writing in English between the two World Wars, let himself go in these delightful rhymes. Abandoning the chalky gloom of his own self-invented "Prufrock country," where everyone seemed to be turning "a final stair," he created a cast of feline characters that stirred wonder and belief in children and wry recognition in adults. Read aloud or recited, the poems seem closely related to the cozy, enchanted world of *Wind in the Willows*. Lloyd Webber's brilliantly inventive scoring of these poems, however, snatches them from fairy-tale sentimentality and plunges the listener into the company of what sound like disturbingly real cats. And surely cats are the least sentimental of beasts.

In the show Lloyd Webber's cats collect at the bottom of a huge urban rubbish heap where they unfold their stories to the audience. *Cats* has been playing to standing-room-only houses in London for the last two years and is already sold out there through the spring of 1983. This recording is being launched in America on the huge transatlantic swell of curiosity and interest the show generated prior to its opening in New York in October. There is a note on the album that "a complete American cast recording" will be issued as soon as possible after the Broadway opening.

Obviously audiences relish Lloyd Webber's more realistic approach, just as they have been galvanized by his music, a wonderfully gaudy pastiche of styles drawn from rock to Stravinsky and Ravel, from olde-English music hall to Verdi and electronic effects. The highlight of the album is, naturally, the already-famous *Memory* (Streisand's recording of it was a recent smash), performed here by Elaine Paige with heartstopping poignancy and delicacy in her role as Grizabella, the Glamour Cat. But there are many other joys along the way, including the sagas of Skimbleshanks, the Railway Cat; Mungojerrie and Rumpelteazer, who regularly abscond with their owner-family's Sunday roast; and, of course, my old friend Macavity, "The Napoleon of crime!"

The recording was produced by Lloyd Webber himself, and he and recording engineer David Hamilton-Smith have achieved a sound as sleek, iridescent, and glossy as a panther's coat. On all counts *Cats* is a stunning achievement.

—Peter Reilly

CATS (Andrew Lloyd Webber—T. S. Eliot). Original London-cast recording. Paul Nicholas, Wayne Sleep, Elaine Paige, Brian Blessed, others (vocals); orchestra. GEFGEN 2GHS 2017 two discs \$15.98.

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