High Fidelity

THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS

GERMANY'S RENOVATED OPERA by Alfred Frankenstein

SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE BODILESS VIRTUOSO by Herbert Kupferberg

CHARACTERS WITH GOLDEN EARS by William H. Burke

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Your records can be a lasting joy, their original brilliance preserved for many hundreds of performances. This takes special care to guard against undue record wear. The new GS-77 handles records more gently than any other automatic record playing mechanism.

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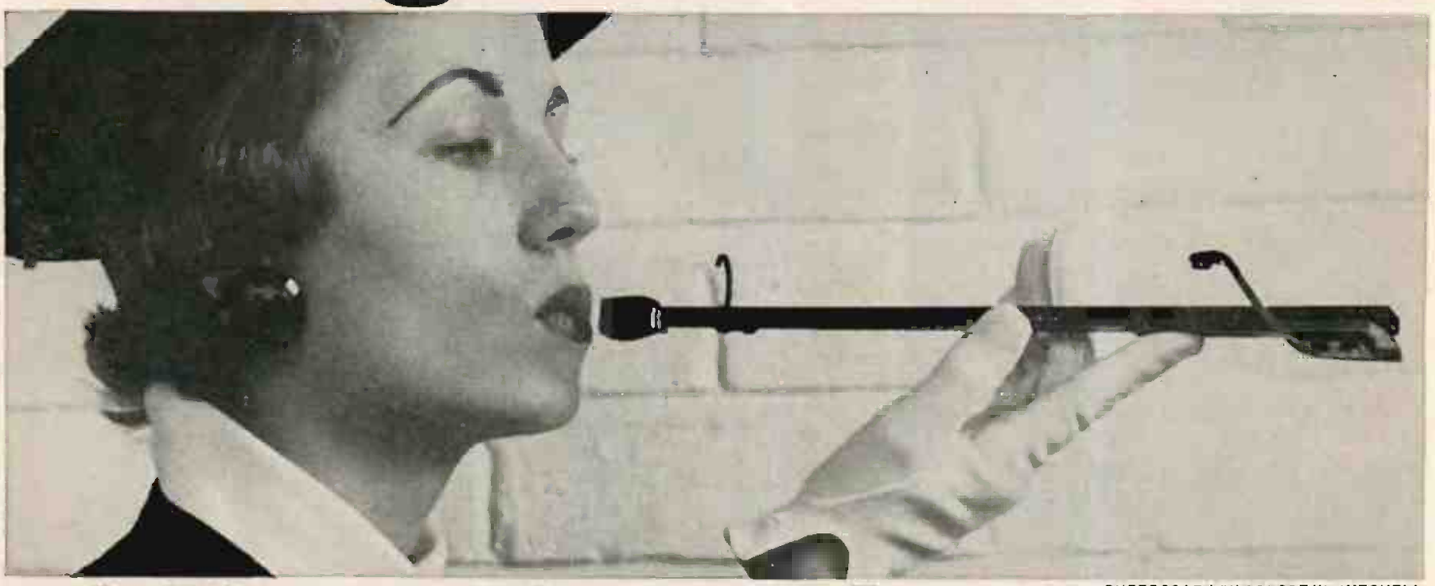
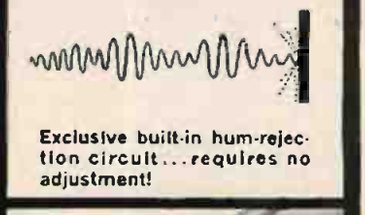
For a greater measure



PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT W. MITCHELL

# of listening pleasure...



Exclusive built-in hum-rejection circuit... requires no adjustment!

Exclusive "T-GUARD" stylus assembly... no precarious fingernail fumbling!

Low feather-touch tracking pressure, preserves the quality and prolongs the life of your records.

*Important Quality Features, as necessary for high fidelity reproduction from records

play your records with the incomparable *fluxvalve*®

PICKERING'S *truly* miniature FLUXVALVE magnetic phonograph cartridge represents the *newest* concept in high fidelity cartridge design since PICKERING introduced the *first* really lightweight high fidelity pickup more than a decade ago.

You get a *full measure of listening pleasure*... because the FLUXVALVE has a full range response, flat within 2 db, from 10 to 30,000 cycles. Hermetically sealed, the FLUXVALVE is impervious to any and all of the elements... heat, cold, humidity, etc. Moreover, the FLUXVALVE has the exclusive PICKERING *hum rejection* circuit built-in, assuring hum-free performance.

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Only the FLUXVALVE has 100% IQF*, and it may interest you to know that because of its ability to make *precise* and *reproducible* record measurements, the FLUXVALVE is used for calibrating recording channels and record masters.

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Enjoy the quality of a FLUXVALVE at your favorite HI-FI shop today... you can hear the difference. For the dealer nearest you or for complete literature write to Dept. Q-58

volume 8 number 5

The vibrant metronome which decorates the cover is a woodblock by Antonio Frasconi.

ARTICLES

REPORTS

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MAY 1958

The principle of the moving magnet has been employed by Shure Brothers in the Professional Dynetic Cartridge. Since the magnet turns on a vertical axis, the stylus tip is placed at the end of a light metallic beam, providing very low stylus-point mass. Tracking force is 3 to 6 grams; response is stated as flat from 20 to 20,000 cps. Price is $27.50 with 1-mil diamond or $15 with 2.7-mil sapphire.

The Garrard RC121/II Record Player which replaces the RC121 is a four-speed unit that may be operated either manually or as a changer on which 10- and 12-in. records may be intermixed. Cabinet dimensions are 14½ by 13 by 8⅝ in.; price is $42.50.

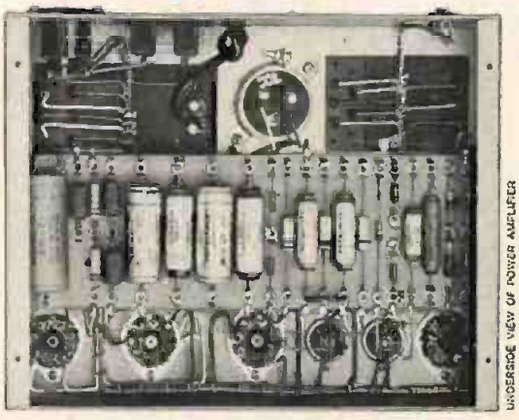
Tape It off the Air is a free Pamphlet, issued by ORRadio Industries, with how-to-do-it information for the recordist. It also contains a warning about just what is legal when recording broadcasts.

From Allied: the Knight K15 N-3 Uni-Fi Tuner-Amplifier-Preamp combining an FM-AM tuner and 15-watt amplifier. The amplifier-preamp section contains seven controls. Inputs are provided for magnetic phono and one other high-level source; output terminals match 4-, 8-, and 16-ohm speakers and there is a high-impedance output jack. Amplifier response is stated as ±1 db from 20 to 20,000 cps at 15 watts, with distortion at rated output reported as 2%. Rated sensitivity of the tuner is 4μv for 20 db quieting on FM, and 10 μv for 20 db signal-to-noise ratio on AM. The stock number is 92 SZ 410 and the price is $119.50. A brown plextone case is available as an accessory.

Also from Allied: the Knight Model W two-way Speaker System consisting of a 12-in. heavy-duty woofer, two 3½-in. metal-backed cone-type tweeters, and a crossover network—all wired and mounted on a 16-by-

Continued on page 6

Can You Hear



UNDERSIDE VIEW OF POWER AMPLIFIER

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Listen to a Leak "Point One" Amplifier! You will hear more realistic, satisfying music... and enjoy it without fatigue, because the Leak keeps harmonic distortion at the lowest figure ever achieved... 1/10 of one per cent (0.1%) at rated power!

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... 12, 25, 50 watts ... all at 1/10 of 1% distortion

The aim in producing these amplifiers is to provide the benefits of professional components and workmanship for use in your high fidelity system. All three feature the incomparable Leak triple loop negative feedback circuit, which incorporates the finest components ... and great skill in testing and assembly. All components are utilized well below their maximum ratings to insure great stability and long life. Power ratings are very conservative. In actual fact, each amplifier delivers power far beyond its stated wattage, and still maintains negligible distortion. Leak craftsmanship is traditionally outstanding. *Turn any Leak amplifier upside down* and compare the circuitry and workmanship with that of any other make. Do this at your dealer and judge for yourself.

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"POINT ONE"
BRITAIN'S FINEST AMPLIFIERS

2 NEW LEAK PREAMPLIFIERS . . . "POINT ONE PLUS" & VARISLOPE III
... built specifically and only for the Leak Power Amplifiers!

The handsome, compact look of these new preamplifiers is matched by their exceptional versatility. For example, exclusive tape recording and playback jacks on front *and* rear panels facilitate portable, as well as permanent, tape recorder installations. The new "Point One Plus" features playback characteristics covering all records ever made! The inputs for tuner, tape and phono cartridge each have their own balancing controls. You simply could not buy more preamplifier for the money. The great new Varislope III preamplifier provides all the advanced features of the "Point One Plus" and the exclusive, *infinitely variable* Leak Slope Control. Records which may sound harsh or shrill can be controlled to remove distortion while keeping all the musical content.

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PREAMPLIFIERS

"POINT ONE PLUS" Full complement of controls for records and tone. Inputs for tuner, tape and phono. $55.00.

VARISLOPE III All "Point One" features plus two magnetic inputs, rumble filter, Leak Slope Control. $79.00.

For free literature and a list of dealers, write Dept. LE-28 **BRITISH INDUSTRIES CORP., PORT WASHINGTON, N. Y.**

ON THE COUNTER

Continued from page 4

20-in. baffle. Suitable for bass-reflex or corner installation. Stock No.: 93 DX 444. Price: $39.95.

Fairchild has introduced a two-speed (33⅓ and 45) double-belt-drive TURNTABLE, Model 412-2. Rumble, wow, and flutter characteristics are said to be excellent. Price is $129.50.

Fisher Radio has issued a CATALOGUE describing their complete line of consoles; free on request.

Broadcast Equipment Specialties is offering the Tapak Duplex Musicale and Triplex Musicale spring-driven portable TAPE RECORDERS, for recording outdoors and away from power lines. Both record at 7½ ips and contain Gyro Drive, consisting of a tape-driven flywheel and ball-bearing idler which act as a mechanical wow and flutter filter. The Triplex contains a VU meter and 600-ohm output. A third recorder, the Tapak-Rangersync, is designed for synchronous recording with motion pictures and has the features of the Duplex Musicale. No prices are stated.

Dynamic Electronics' Q1500PA 12-watt AMPLIFIER supersedes the Q1500 but sells for the original price of $59.50. The unit includes a built-in preamp, four controls, three inputs, and has outputs for matching 4-, 8-, and 16-ohm speakers. Frequency response is said to be undistorted from 20 to 20,000 cps. Dimensions of the copper-finished cabinet are 11 by 4½ by 7 in.

The Lafayette LT-70 FM TUNER features three outputs for multiplex, tape recorder, and audio. According to specs, sensitivity is 4 μv for 20 db quieting, distortion is less than 1%, and frequency response is ±1 db from 20 to 20,000 cps. Modern styling includes gold-finished removable front panel and black metal cabinet. The unit sells for $47.50.

Metzner's four-speed 60A Starlight TURNTABLE can be adjusted to any speed between 16 and 84 rpm. It is claimed that wow and flutter are less than 0.18% and that rumble is down better than 52 db. It contains an automatically retracting 45-rpm center hub. Available with a decorator black or blond wood base. Price is $64.50.

The Ruxton Debutante SPEAKER SYSTEM requires only a little more than a square foot of floor space. It employs an 8½-inch dual-cone driver which faces upward in the enclosure. Dimensions are 12 by 14 by 29 in. Price is $89.95 or $94.95, depending on finish.

A thrilling new sense of presence!

THE NEW TRUSONIC 15-INCH 150 FR SPEAKER

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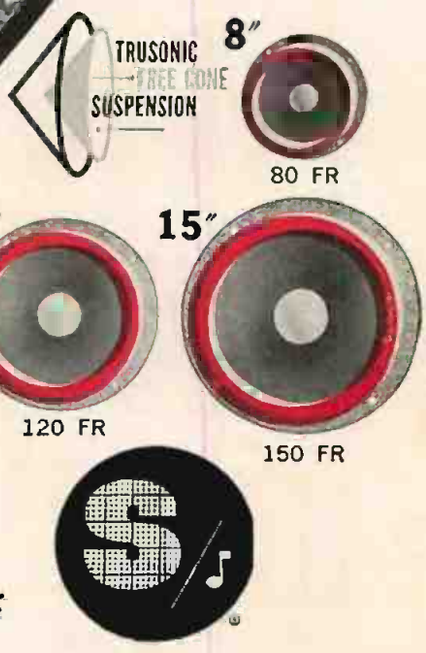

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Notes FROM Abroad

ROME—As the Italian opera season goes into its last weeks, critics here are already beginning to balance the year's musical books. Seldom has opera in Italy gotten so much front-page publicity (the Callas opening in Rome, the Corelli-Christoff "duel," Anita Cerquetti's amnesia in Palermo, etc.). But most of this publicity was unfortunate, and from a musical point of view this has not been an especially happy season. The Rome opera produced nothing of importance; the San Carlo in Naples revived some interesting minor works like *La Rondine* of Puccini and *La Bohème* of Leoncavallo, but lack of funds kept these productions on a modest level and deprived them of the international echo they deserved. Even La Scala's year got off to a slow start—though the interest of Milanese opera-goers is likely to be held by its end-of-the-season productions: Janácek's *Sly Little Fox*, Donizetti's *Anna Bolena*, and Bellini's *Il Pirata*.

The major Italian opera houses have a very short intermission when the season is over; the seats are soon taken up and the recording apparatus installed. As this is being written, actual recording dates and plans in most cases are still vague—coördination between singers, conductors, and theater managers being difficult to arrange much in advance. A few things are certain, though. Philips will again take over the San Carlo to record a *Rigoletto* with Ettore Bastianini, Gianni Poggi, and the American soprano Gianna d'Angelo (Francesco Molinari-Pradelli will conduct). Some of the same singers will also participate in a recording of *Cavalleria* and *Pagliacci* to be conducted by Ugo Rápalo, a house conductor of the San Carlo. Scheduling recording sessions at the Rome Opera has been even more difficult, because the company is going on a German tour at the close of the season here and will not be back until June 20. Tentatively, EMI plans to record a *Gianni Schicchi* with Gobbi. RCA, which shares the Rome Opera

with EMI, is planning—in early summer and in the fall—to record three or four operas.

Certain rare operas seem to enjoy occasional outbursts of general interest. *Il Pirata*, which is being sung in Milan, has also been done this year in Palermo and on the Italian radio. Verdi's *Macbeth*, certainly one of his lesser-known works, probably will be recorded not only in Rome by RCA, with Leonie Rysanek as Lady Macbeth, but also in Milan by EMI, whose Lady Macbeth will be Maria Callas (she sang the role at La Scala some seasons ago). *Macbeth* has been chosen too by Gian-Carlo Menotti to inaugurate his "Festival of Two Worlds" in the little Umbrian town of Spoleto. Though RCA has bought a recording option on Spoleto productions, they have so far not made definite plans.

Song and Story. Popular music is taken almost as seriously as opera in Italy, and the annual "festivals" of popular song—at San Remo, Velletri, and Naples' "Piedigrotta"—are followed with enormous attention and full, front-page coverage. Most of the hits of these festivals are recorded promptly by the big national company, Cetra, which has recently merged with another Italian company, Fonit. The government is part owner of these companies, and both of them are linked with the Italian radio. In fact, Cetra's classical production consists largely of tapes of radio broadcasts, generally with young singers not under contract to the big international record companies. These radio performances are of varying quality; one of the most interesting released recently is a version of Paisiello's *La Semiramide in Villa*, conducted by Arturo Basile, with a cast of young singers including sopranos Elda Ribetti and Gianna Galli, tenor Ezio de Giorgi, and basso Agostino Ferrin.

Culturally, Cetra's most important —and surprisingly successful—undertaking has been a "literary series," featuring Italian writers reading their own works, or Italian actors and actresses (including matinee idol Vittorio Gassmann) reading from great writers of the past and present. The most ambitious recording in this series is the soon-to-be-released complete recording of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*, translated by Gilberto Tofano and acted by the famous Piccolo Teatro di Milano under the direction of Giorgio Strehler. In spite of the high price of records in Italy (an LP usually costs between $8.00 and $10), and in spite of the small audience for poetry, these records sell steadily and well.

WILLIAM WEAVER

Stereo FM in Boston

A coöperative effort of two FM stations in the Boston area is bringing double-FM stereo to listeners. Most stereo broadcasting is now achieved by coupling FM and AM halves of a single station. The stunt in Boston was to couple two FM stations—WGBH and WBUR. Note that two FM receivers are needed for reception. WGBH on 89.7 mc takes the left ear, WBUR on 90.9 mc is the right-ear channel.

Different Stereo Disc System

The Minter stereo disc system was demonstrated in New York on January 23. It was developed by Jerry B. Minter, assisted by the technical staff of Electro-Sonic Laboratories in the development of playback apparatus.

The release states that the system uses a completely different principle than other systems. The stereophonic properties are obtained from a supersonic, frequency-modulated carrier recorded in the grooves, together with original lateral recording. The Minter system is said to be completely compatible and permits monaural reproduction with a standard monaural pickup without damage to the stereo properties of the record. (Editor's note: this refers to a situation all too complex! Stereo disc systems demonstrated so far record laterally and vertically in the same groove or, with a slight twist, 45/45 as the Westrex system is being called. If such a disc is played back with a present-day monaural cartridge of standard manufacturing design, there is reported to be a strong chance of serious damage being done to the vertically recorded channel. The reason is that most modern pickups have excellent lateral compliance or flexibility but are quite stiff vertically. Hence the stylus will wear out the vertical cutting, thus damaging the record for stereo purposes. According to reports, this does not occur with the Minter system.)

The Minter report continues with

Continued on page 12

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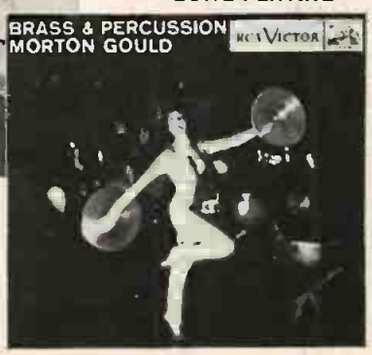

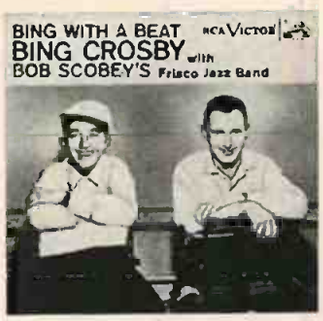

THIS exciting new plan, under the direction of the Book-of-the-Month Club, enables you to have on tap a variety of popular music for family fun and happier parties . . . and at an immense saving. Moreover, once and for all, it takes bewilderment out of building such a well-balanced collection. **YOU PAY FAR LESS FOR ALBUMS THIS WAY**—than if you buy them haphazardly. For example, the extraordinary introductory offer described above can represent as much as a 40% saving in your first year of membership. **THEREAFTER YOU SAVE ALMOST 33⅓%.** After buying the five albums called for in this offer, you will receive a *free* 12-inch 33⅓ R.P.M. album with a retail price of at least $3.98, for every two albums purchased from the Club. **A WIDE CHOICE OF RCA VICTOR ALBUMS** will be described each month. One will be singled out as the *album-of-the-month*. If you want it, you do nothing; it will come to you automatically. If you prefer one of the alternates—*or nothing at all in any month*—you can make your wishes known on a simple form always provided. You pay the nationally advertised price — usually $3.98, at times $4.98 (plus a small mailing charge).

SINGING STARS • BROADWAY MUSICALS • JAZZ
DANCE MUSIC • MOOD MUSIC • COLLECTORS' ITEMS

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☐ **BELAFONTE** *Scarlet Ribbons, Matilda, Waterboy*, 8 more. Folk songs, ballads, spirituals.

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☐ **LET'S DANCE WITH THE THREE SUNS** Forty show tunes, standards in "society" dance medleys.

☐ **SHORTY ROGERS PLAYS RICHARD RODGERS** Modern jazz by combo and big band. Stars Giuffre, Perkins, etc.

☐ **THE FAMILY ALL TOGETHER** Fiedler, Boston Pops, light classics: Ravel's *Bolero, Clair de Lune*, etc.

☐ **MUSIC FOR DINING** Melachrino Strings in hi-fi mood music. *Tenderly, September Song, Charmaine*, etc.

☐ **PETER PAN** Original Broadway, TV cast and score. Mary Martin, Cyril Ritchard, etc.

☐ **BOUQUET OF BLUES** Dinah Shore torch songs. *Blues in the Night, St. Louis Blues*, 10 others.

☐ **SWEET SEVENTEEN** Ames Brothers in 12 standards. *Little White Lies, I Don't Know Why, For Sentimental Reasons*, etc.

☐ **THE HEART OF HAVANA** Authentic Cuban cha-cha-chas by Orquesta Aragón. Ideal dance rhythms, native color.

☐ **THE EYES OF LOVE** Hugo Winterhalter's lush orchestra in 12 standards: *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes, I Only Have Eyes for You*, etc.

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NOTE: If you wish to enroll through an authorized RCA VICTOR dealer, please fill in here:

Dealer's Name _____

Address _____

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Send no money. A bill will be sent.

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 10

mention of 30 db channel separation and of the need for a simple but special preamplifier. Since response up to 30,000 cycles is required from the disc, best results are said to be obtained by using a ½-mil stylus, although adequate operation over most of the record can be had with a standard 1-mil tip.

The Changing Scene

An announcement from Bill Schwann noted that the 100th issue of his catalogue became available on March 25. With a bit of nostalgia peering through the lines, the report compared the first with the hundredth issue. The first—October 1949—had 674 listings on eleven labels in twenty-six pages. The 100th lists 19,830 recordings on 303 labels in over 200 pages!

An interesting observation is the growth of interest in serious contemporary music. Of ninety-six composers originally listed, only nineteen were contemporary and only four of those were Americans. Today, out of 718 composers listed, 330 are contemporary and 165 are American. Obsolescence takes its toll. One out of every three records gets the black diamond treatment: withdrawal by the manufacturer. Roughly speaking 30,000 listings have appeared during the ten-year period. 20,000 are still current; 10,000 have been deleted.

Complete Set Available

Leo W. Sudmeier, 3017 Stocker Place, Los Angeles 8, has a complete set to date of HIGH FIDELITY Magazines which he would like to donate to some boys' club, school, or organization that would be able to put them to constructive use. Further, to add frosting to the cake, he'll be glad to deliver within the Los Angeles area.

This is a fine and generous thing to do . . . anyone else want to dispose of back copies this worthwhile way?

Record Filing

No, we're not going to get into any long discussion of new methods of filing and indexing record collections. There's been enough of that in NWI lately. But we did want readers to know that Old Colony, whom we wrote up some months ago, has expanded its system. They now offer

Continued on page 14

the experts say... in High Fidelity the best buys are EICO®

EICO KITS and WIRED

HFS2 Speaker System

BETTER ENGINEERING Since 1945 EICO has pioneered the concept of test instruments in easy-to-build kit form — has become world-famous for laboratory-precision instruments at low cost. Now EICO is applying its vast experience to the creative engineering of *high fidelity*. Result: high praise from such authorities as Canby of AUDIO, Marshall of AUDIOCRAFT, Holt of HIGH FIDELITY, Fantel of POPULAR ELECTRONICS, Stocklin of RADIO TV NEWS, etc. — as well as from the critical professional engineers in the field.†

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DOUBLE 5-WAY GUARANTEE Both EICO, and your neighborhood distributor, guarantee the parts, instructions, performance . . . as well as *lifetime* service and calibration at nominal cost . . . for any EICO kit or wired unit.

BEFORE YOU BUY, COMPARE At any of 1200 neighborhood EICO distributors coast to coast, you may examine and listen to any EICO component. Compare *critically* with equipment several times the EICO cost — then you judge. You'll see why the experts recommend EICO, kit or wired, as best buy.

† Thousands of unsolicited testimonials on file.

HFT90 FM Tuner with "eye-tronic" tuning

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NOTED WITH INTEREST

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Signs of the Times

Old-timers in the high-fidelity hobby (an old-timer, in this business, is someone who's been at it for more than three or four years) should send off for the Switchcraft catalogue S-580, just so they can shake their heads in sad nostalgia.

Remember making up connecting cords? When you wanted to go from a microphone connector to a phone plug, or from a phone plug to one of those little phono jacks? We still have dozens of interconnector wires, everyone with solder slopped over everything. Well, well; Switchcraft has *four pages* of catalogue. There are 68 different types of interconnectors and interconnecting cables illustrated in this folder!

Long Way Round

The story of high fidelity and of good music seems to have been one of battling odds to get what you want. Many of the FM stations have had a rough time; the trend is now the other way.

Jim Hodges, of KQXR in Bakersfield, Calif., wrote us a very frank letter about how they got into good music. They went on the air in June of 1955, to be a good music station. Well, that didn't work. Limited schedule, limited money. So they went to background music, which Hodges admits many high-fidelity people hate. But, he says, it made the difference. It provided the hard commercial core.

Last June (1957) they slipped in a little high fidelity, with a special week-end series which is still on the air. And in January of this year, their multiplex gear was completed so "once again we're in business as an FM station that can do some of the things that high-fidelity people like."

Jim Hodges says: "Wish us luck!" We most certainly and heartily do. This may have been the long way round, but KQXR now has "Great Music in High Fidelity" seven nights a week at 9:30, on 101.5 mc. 'Nuff said!

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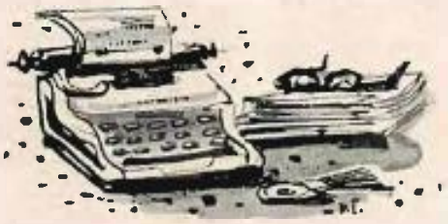
FROM LETTERS  READERS

Castrati Article Castigated

SIR:
I think Dr. London's article on the *castrati* [Feb.] is lewd and sensational and its approach quite inappropriate to a serious publication. . . . Moreover, Dr. London's article abounds in statements which are highly debatable or downright wrong.

Although many children were no doubt castrated in Apulia, it is not true that the majority of these operations were executed there; a belief perpetuated by Dr. Burney. The most esteemed doctors for the operation came from Bologna and it is well known that they carried on their trade throughout the Italian peninsula in places where authority was lax . . . .

It is also untrue that the manufacture of *castrati* "never passed the Italian frontiers." Many Bolognese doctors were taken into Germany for the express purpose of castrating boys . . . .

"The ramifications of the *castrato* trade" are far from unknown as Dr. London suggests. There are still in existence literally hundreds of documents (diaries, contracts, printed books, etc.) which give a complete picture . . . .

Dr. London is also wrong when he says that the *castrati* were "carefully and skillfully produced. Only the best young male sopranos were chosen and assiduously trained up to that point before puberty (the judging of which demanded even greater skill than the aging of wine) when the gelding should be done."

Here are two contemporary comments; and I could give others:

Dr. Burney: ". . . it is my opinion that the cruel operation is but too frequently performed without trial, or at least without sufficient proofs of an improvable voice. . . ."

J. W. von Archenholz: "They are generally people of the meanest description who give their children for such operations, in hope that they may be able one day to support their parents. But this hope is frequently disappointed in many different respects; sometimes the voice does not display itself or the child has no natural parts for music."

There was no particular significance in the time of castration as long as it preceded puberty (although it was once commonly supposed that the later the operation the greater the likelihood that the voice would lie in the contralto range) nor were the children "sheared," as Dr. London picturesquely puts it; usually the testacular ducts were simply severed and the glands left to wither.

. . . I shall only ask for space to pin down one more [mistake] . . . Dr. London drives the *castrato* from the stage of history just half a century too soon when he says that when Velluti died in 1861 "the *castrato* voice was never heard again."

The last of the professional *castrati* was, in fact, Alessandro Moreschi, "Soprano della Capella Sistina" who only retired from his post of director of the papal music in 1913 . . . .

John Drake
New York, N. Y.

I would like to answer Mr. Drake's points of fact at great length, but space limitations do not permit. The same space limitations obtained for the article: it was not meant to be a doctoral thesis in medical musicology but a short broad-based exposition on a remarkable historical curiosity. . . .

Since no social phenomenon is ever absolutely restricted in time and space, that of the singing *castrato* did exceed these bounds but he was extremely rare at other times and in other places. For all practical historical purposes, these temporal and spatial restrictions remain the only significant ones; with this premise, all authorities from Dr. Burney (whom Mr. Drake codifies or disparages, to suit his purpose) down to the present agree unanimously, to wit: (1) the *castrato* was an Italian phenomenon, (2) who hailed mostly from Apulia, (3) and flourished between 1650 and 1860.

There are two important points, however, upon which Mr. Drake needs more detailed correction: (1) severing the "testacular" ducts will *not* produce a *castrato;* it merely renders the individual infertile. Since the testosterone-secreting cells are not affected, the secondary male sex characteristics remain intact. However noisome the term is to Mr. Drake, the process *was* one of shearing, and for the unpleasant surgical details I refer him to Gould and Pyle: *Anomalies and Curiosities of Medicine* (Saunders, 1896). (2) Alessandro Moreschi was not a surgical *castrato*, according to Dr. Annibale Longo of the University of Padua, but a congenital eunuch, a condition known in the trade as pituitary hypogonadism.

As for the propriety of the article, I regret that Mr. Drake found it lewd and sensational. Unfortunately there are no biological or chemical tests for the objective identification of either lewdness or sensationalism. The best test lies in a quote from one of my professors of medicine, a poetical gentleman: "Always remember that there are those to whom a sniffle is like a reverberation in the Cave of the Winds, a flatus like a Jovian thunderbolt."—Sol London, M.D.

A Rose By Any Other Name . . .

SIR:
It was with nostalgia and amusement that I read Paul Affelder's review of the new Ormandy version of Glière's *Ilya Murometz* [November, 1957].

As a temeritous freshman at the University of Minnesota in 1941, I took on the job of music critic for its *Minnesota Daily*.

Sometime during the first year of my career as music critic, I received from RCA Victor a review copy of Stokowski's recording of *Ilya* . . . I wrote, in part:

"Here is an overpowering recording of a gigantic symphony-symphonic poem. The music describes a sort of Russian King Arthur . . . his life and his death."

The following week, this letter to the editor of the *Minnesota Daily* arrived:

"In a recent record review by Arnold Rosenberg, he called Glière's *Ilya Murometz* a gigantic symphony-symphonic poem . . . Symphonies and symphonic poems are antithetical. The problem of the former is unity from diversity. That of the latter is diversity from unity. The best reference on this is the discussion of

Continued on page 19

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LETTERS

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the Seventh Symphony in Cecil Gray's excellent little pamphlet—*Sibelius: The Symphonies.*"

Mr. Affelder wrote as follows:

"*Ilya Murometz* is a four-movement tone-poem symphony depicting the exciting events in the life of the tenth-century legendary Russian hero whose name it bears. Ilya was a combination of Arthurian knight, Paul Bunyan, and Superman." . . .

Perhaps Mr. Affelder, who appears to have committed the same heinous error [as I], can come to the fore and rescue both of us.

Arnold Rosenberg
St. Paul, Minn.

It would be nice to be able to help Mr. Rosenberg and myself out of this dilemma with a few choice words, but the problem could very well be dealt with in a full-length thesis. Mr. Rosenberg's correspondent of fifteen years ago seems to have swallowed whole the utter nonsense written about the symphonic form by the usually astute Cecil Gray in his otherwise perceptive study of Sibelius' music. Many of Gray's generalizations are absurd, with almost every phrase open to refutation. Even he admits that there are contradictions to his views. As an answer to Gray's contention that a true symphony contains few or no thematic cross references between its movements, I refer Mr. Rosenberg to one of the most eye- and ear-opening books I have ever read, Rudolph Reti's *The Thematic Process in Music*, wherein the author traces, with concrete examples, unsuspected relationships between movements of a number of our best-known symphonies.

The forms of the symphony and symphonic poem are quite free and open to endless variation. Therefore a work like *Ilya Murometz* is difficult to classify. In the *Harvard Dictionary of Music*, Willi Apel mentions Vaughan Williams' *A London Symphony* in his article on the symphonic poem, while in Grove, Richard Aldrich refers to this same composition in his discussion of the symphony. A rose by any other name. . . .

Perhaps the matter is best resolved, as it has been to some extent by both the Harvard and Grove dictionaries, by calling *Ilya Murometz*, *A London Symphony*, the *Symphonie Fantastique*, and others of their ilk "program symphonies," after the form introduced by Beethoven and Spohr.

As to Mr. Rosenberg's and my reference to Ilya in connection with the knights of King Arthur, that is an understandable coincidence. But how did Mr. Rosenberg, a Minnesotan, overlook Paul Bunyan? The State Chamber of Commerce shall hear about this!—Paul Affelder.

Books in REVIEW

Caruso: His Life in Pictures. It's oblique testimony to the powerful role recordings have come to play in music history that this pictorial documentation of Caruso's career should have been compiled by an admirer—now assistant manager of the Met—who never had the opportunity of hearing the great tenor in person. Despite (or perhaps partly because of) that handicap, Francis Robinson has done a magnificent job of exhaustive research and illuminating commentary: his collection of some 235 photographs, plus ten reproductions of Caruso's own caricatures, vividly illustrates almost every phase of the singer's triumphal career and boisterous offstage life. And for good measure there is a detailed 12-page discography, compiled by John Secrist, which lists and dates all the 78, 45, and LP editions of Caruso recordings ever issued for public sale, as well as the few others as yet unpublished (Studio Publications and Crowell, $6.50).

The Background of Passion Music. Even the best-read Bachian specialist can find new illuminations on the great *St. Matthew* and *St. John* Passions in Basil Smallman's monograph. Although it is concentrated into 125 pages, it not only analyzes these works in rich detail, but sets them in proper historical perspective by tracing their retentions of (and departures from) the traditions established by Schütz, Alessandro Scarlatti, Handel, and a host of still earlier passion-music composers whose names as well as music are likely to be wholly unknown to present-day listeners (Philosophical Library, $3.75).

The Social Psychology of Music. Some years ago Paul R. Farnsworth published a fascinating monograph on "Musical Taste," based on analyses of leading orchestras' programs, listener "preferences," and American Musicological Society members' hierarchical rankings of "standard" composers. Much of that material has been revised for inclusion in the present larger work, which also deals with such other facets of musical psychology as "language aspects," nature and measurements of musical abilities, musical applications to therapy and industry, etc. Professor Farnsworth's personal point of view is relativistic rather than behavioristic, but he is generally less interested in doctrinal arguments than in infecting readers with his own enthusiasm for a provocative subject. Moreover, he writes far more straightforwardly and zestfully than most musical psychologists (always excepting James L. Mursell!), so that even the heavy weight of the statistics here is not likely to overburden any musically interested layman. (Dryden Press, $4.50).

Hanslick's "The Beautiful in Music." Among the many blessings of the current activity in "class" paperback publishing is the rescue from the out-of-print limbo of "milestone" works which nowadays are more often respectfully cited than actually read. One of these is the great Viennese critic's pioneering monograph in musical aesthetics—at once a provocative introduction to the whole subject and the first wholly lucid exposition of the "autonomist" canon, which anathematizes the belief that music is a "language of the emotions" and advances the argument that it is essentially "sound in motion," to be understood solely in its own tonal terms. Originally written in 1854, the 127-page study is here reprinted, with a few modernizations in spelling and a brief introduction by Morris Weitz, in the standard Gustav Cohen translation (1891) of the author's revised seventh German edition (Liberal Arts Press paperback, 80¢).

Music in History. One of the best of the newer type of textbooks was Howard D. McKinney's and W. R. Anderson's profusely illustrated overall survey of 1940, which endeavored with considerable success to correlate musical developments with those in other arts. The present McKinney-Anderson revision proves anew that their work is outstanding in this direction. In addition, the authors' amplifications of their earlier text accurately reflect an enhanced current interest in the pre-Bach, baroque, and contemporary repertories; and not surprisingly (since Professor McKinney is a discriminating record collector, and W. R. A. one of *The Gramophone's* oldest and best reviewers) there is an exceptionally valuable 23-page discography of the eras up to, but not including, Bach and Handel. Further, this big book (some 800 pages, over 200 illustrations, plus many musical examples) has been completely reset to give it a more attractive appearance. (American Book Co., $6.50).

The Technique of Film Music. Although music for movies (and now television) has enlisted the services in recent years of a surprising number of "serious" contemporary composers and is finding its way to records more often than it ever did in the past, the standard books on the subject (by Eisler, London, *et al.*) have been allowed to fall out-of-date or even out-of-print. But the present survey, written and compiled by Roger Manvell and John Huntley, is welcome as much for its comprehensiveness as its timeliness. Sponsored by the British Film Academy, it not only reviews the history of music in the silent and sound films, but analyzes in great detail the functions of various types of film music and the roles of musical directors and recordists as well as of composers themselves—analyses which are largely based on a symposium to which many outstanding practitioners of all these roles contribute. And discophiles will prize in particular the 56-page annotated discography, a model of its kind (Focal Press, via Hastings House, $9.00).

All About FM Antennae and their Installation. L. F. B. Carini may have produced his 24-page *Theme and Variations* booklet primarily as promotional material for his own FM/Q series of broadband "yagi" antennas, but his sales pitch is discreetly restricted to a couple of pages. The rest are crammed with useful information: diagrams explaining straightforwardly the characteristics of various types of antenna design and lead-in lines, the problems of long-distance reception, safety precautions, etc., plus a convenient directory of FM stations in the United States and Canada (Apparatus Development Company, Wethersfield 9, Conn.; 2nd printing, 1957, 25¢).

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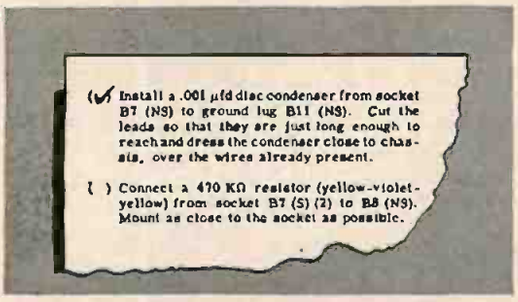

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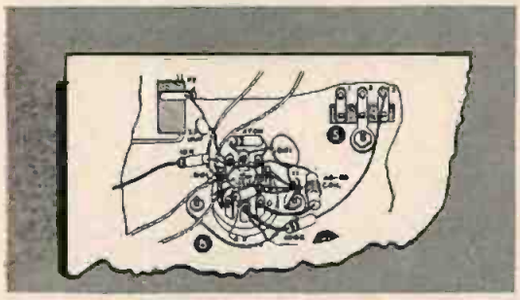

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MODEL EA-2

$27.95

NEW

There are many reasons why this attractive amplifier is a tremendous dollar value. You get many extras not expected at this price level. Rich, full range, high fidelity sound reproduction with low distortion and noise . . . plus "modern" styling, making it suitable for use in the open, on a bookcase, or end table. Look at the features offered by the model EA-2: full range frequency response (20—20,000 CPS ± 1 db) with less than 1% distortion over this range at full 12 watt output—its own built-in preamplifier with provision for three separate inputs, mag phono, crystal phono, and tuner—RIAA equalization—separate bass and treble tone controls—special hum control—and it's easy-to-build. Complete instructions and pictorial diagrams show where every part goes. Cabinet shell has smooth leather texture in black with inlaid gold design. Front panel features brushed gold trim and buff knobs with gold inserts. For a real sound thrill the EA-2 will more than meet your expectations. Shpg. Wt. 15 lbs.

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NEW This beautiful equipment enclosure will make your hi-fi system as attractive as any factory-built professionally-finished unit. Smartly designed for maximum flexibility and compactness consistent with attractive appearance, this enclosure is intended to house the AM and FM tuners (BC-1A and FM-3A) and the WA-P2 preamplifier, along with the majority of record changers, which will fit in the space provided. Adequate space is also provided for any of the Heathkit amplifiers designed to operate with the WA-P2. During construction the tilt-out shelf and lift-top lid can be installed on either right or left side as desired. Cabinet is constructed of sturdy, veneer-surfaced furniture-grade plywood ½" and ¾" thick. All parts are precut and predrilled for easy assembly. Contemporary available in birch or mahogany, traditional in mahogany only. Beautiful hardware supplied to match each style. Dimensions are 18" W x 24" H x 35½" D. Shpg. Wt. 46 lbs.

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CE-1CB Birch
CONTEMPORARY

CE-1T Mahogany
TRADITIONAL

Be sure to specify model you prefer

$43.95 each

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high fidelity FM tuner kit

For noise and static free sound reception, this FM tuner is your least expensive source of high fidelity material. Efficient circuit design features stablized oscillator circuit to eliminate drift after warm-up and broadband IF circuits assure full fidelity with high sensitivity. All tunable components are prealigned so it is ready for operation as soon as construction is completed. The edge-illuminated slide rule dial is clearly numbered for easy tuning. Covers complete FM band from 88 to 108 mc. Shpg. Wt. 8 lbs.

MODEL FM-3A $25.95 (with cabinet)

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broadband AM tuner kit

This tuner differs from an ordinary AM radio in that it has been designed especially for high fidelity. A special detector is incorporated and the IF circuits are "broadbanded" for low signal distortion. Sensitivity and selectivity are excellent and quiet performance is assured by a high signal-to-noise ratio. All tunable components are prealigned before shipment. Incorporates automatic volume control, two outputs, and two antenna inputs. An edge-lighted glass slide rule dial allows easy tuning. Your "best buy" in an AM tuner. Shpg. Wt. 9 lbs.

MODEL BC-1A $25.95 (with cabinet)

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master control preamplifier kit

Designed as the "master control" for use with any of the Heathkit Williamson-type amplifiers, the WA-P2 provides the necessary compensation, tone, and volume controls to properly amplify and condition a signal before sending it to the amplifier. Extended frequency response of ± 1½ db from 15 to 35,000 CPS will do full justice to the finest program material. Features equalization for LP, RIAA, AES, and early 78 records. Five switch-selected inputs with separate level controls. Separate bass and treble controls, and volume control on front panel. Very attractively styled, and an exceptional dollar value. Shpg. Wt. 7 lbs.

MODEL WA-P2 $19.75 (with cabinet)

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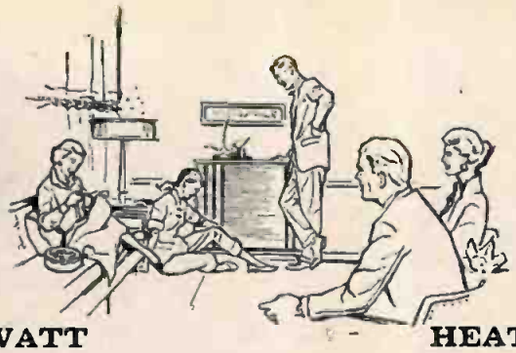


HEATHKIT 25-WATT **HEATHKIT 70-WATT**

MODEL W-5M
$59.75

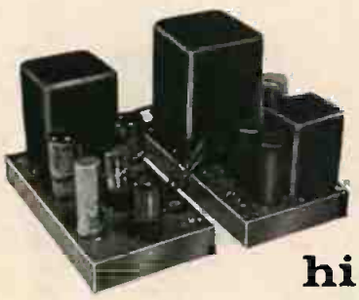
high fidelity amplifier kits

MODEL W-6M
$109.95

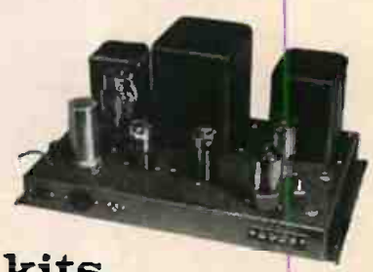
To provide you with an amplifier of top-flight performance, yet at the lowest possible cost, Heath has combined the latest design techniques with the highest quality materials to bring you the W-5M. As a critical listener you will thrill to the near-distortionless reproduction from one of the most outstanding high fidelity amplifiers available today. The high peak-power handling capabilities of the W-5M guarantee you faithful reproduction with any high fidelity system. The W-5M is a must if you desire quality plus economy! Note: Heathkit WA-P2 preamplifier recommended. Shpg. Wt. 31 lbs.

For an amplifier of increased power to keep pace with the growing capacities of your high fidelity system, Heath provides you with the Heathkit W-6M. Recognizing that as loud speaker systems improve and versatility in recordings approach a dynamic range close to the concert hall itself, Heath brings to you an amplifier capable of supplying plenty of reserve power without distortion. If you are looking for a high powered amplifier of outstanding quality, yet at a price well within your reach, the W-6M is for you! Note: Heathkit model WA-P2 preamplifier recommended. Shpg. Wt. 52 lbs.

HEATHKIT DUAL-CHASSIS
MODEL W3-AM
$49.75



HEATHKIT SINGLE-CHASSIS
MODEL W4-AM
$39.75

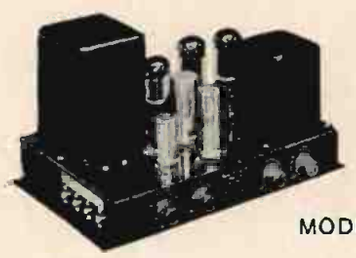


HEATHKIT

high fidelity amplifier kits

One of the greatest developments in modern hi-fi reproduction was the advent of the Williamson amplifier circuit. Now Heath offers you a 20-watt amplifier incorporating all of the advantages of Williamson circuit simplicity with a quality of performance considered by many to surpass the original Williamson. Affording you flexibility in custom installations, the W3-AM power supply and amplifier stages are on separate chassis allowing them to be mounted side by side or one above the other as you desire. Here is a low cost amplifier of ideal versatility. Shpg. Wt. 29 lbs.

In his search for the "perfect" amplifier, Williamson brought to the world a now-famous circuit which, after eight years, still accounts for by far the largest percentage of power amplifiers in use today. Heath brings to you in the W4-AM a 20-watt amplifier incorporating all the improvements resulting from this unequalled background. Thousands of satisfied users of the Heathkit Williamson-type amplifiers are amazed by its outstanding performance. For many pleasure-filled hours of listening enjoyment this Heathkit is hard to beat. Shpg. Wt. 28 lbs.



HEATHKIT

high fidelity amplifier kit

MODEL A-9C **$35.50**

For maximum performance and versatility at the lowest possible cost the Heathkit model A-9C 20-watt audio amplifier offers you a tremendous hi-fi value. Whether for your home installation or public address requirements this power-packed kit answers every need and contains many features unusual in instruments of this price range. The preamplifier, main amplifier and power supply are all on one chassis providing a very compact and economical package. A very inexpensive way to start you on the road to true hi-fi enjoyment. Shpg. Wt. 23 lbs.

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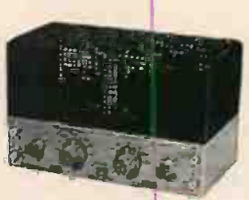
electronic crossover kit



MODEL XO-1 **$18.95**

One of the most exciting improvements you can make in your hi-fi system is the addition of this Heathkit Crossover model XO-1. This unique kit separates high and low frequencies and feeds them through two amplifiers into separate speakers. Because of its location ahead of the main amplifiers, IM distortion and matching problems are virtually eliminated. Crossover frequencies for each channel are 100, 200, 400, 700, 1200, 2000 and 3500 CPS. Amazing versatility at a moderate cost. Note: Not for use with Heathkit Legato Speaker System. Shpg. Wt. 6 lbs.

HEATHKIT "LEGATO"

high fidelity speaker system kit

Wrap yourself in a blanket of high fidelity music in its true form. Thrill to sparkling treble tones, rich, resonant bass chords or the spine-tingling clash of percussion instruments in this masterpiece of sound reproduction. In the creation of the Legato no stone has been left unturned to bring you near-perfection in performance and sheer beauty of style. The secret of the Legato's phenomenal success is its unique balance of sound. The careful phasing of high and low frequency drivers takes you on a melodic toboggan ride from the heights of 20,000 CPS into the low 20's without the slightest bump or fade along the way. The elegant simplicity of style will complement your furnishings in any part of the home. No electronic know-how, no woodworking experience required for construction. Just follow clearly illustrated step-by-step instructions. We are proud to present the Legato—we know you will be proud to own it! Shpg. Wt. 195 lbs.

MODEL HH-1-C
(Imported white birch)
MODEL HH-1-CM
(African mahogany)

$325.00 each

HEATHKIT BASIC RANGE | HEATHKIT RANGE EXTENDING

high fidelity speaker system kits

MODEL SS-1 **$39.95**

A truly outstanding performer for its size, the Heathkit model SS-1 provides you with an excellent basic high fidelity speaker system. The use of an 8" mid-range woofer and a high frequency speaker with flared horn enclosed in an especially designed cabinet allows you to enjoy a quality instrument at a very low cost. Can be used with the Heathkit "range extending" (SS-1B) speaker system. Easily assembled cabinet is made of veneer-surfaced furniture-grade ½" plywood. Impedance 16 ohms. Shpg. Wt. 25 lbs.

MODEL SS-1B **$99.95**

Designed to supply very high and very low frequencies to fill out the response of the basic (SS-1) speaker, this speaker system extends the range of your listening pleasure to practically the entire range of the audio scale. Giving the appearance of a single piece of furniture the two speakers together provide a superbly integrated four speaker system. Impedance 16 ohms. Shpg. Wt. 80 lbs.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Continued from page 20

terned on the *Opera Annuals* edited by Harold Rosenthal, and handsomely printed in Vienna with a frontispiece in color and 32 pages of excellent photographs) makes its bow in a 168-page collection of 21 brief, informal articles on the 1956-7 season in various countries. Included are the centennial of the Hallé Orchestra, televised concerts, new compositions, outstanding current recordings, reappraisals of Stravinsky and Toscanini, obituaries, etc. The American contributors are Alfred Frankenstein, Raymond Ericson, Francis J. Perkins, Rosalyn Turek, Julius Katchen, and Larry Adler; the editor, who is also one of the many British contributors, is Evan Senior (John Calder, London; Doubleday, N. Y., $6.00).

Man and His Music, III and IV. Wilfrid Mellers' *The Sonata Principle* and *Romanticism and the Twentieth Century* (which cover, with some overlappings, the periods c. 1750-1800 and 1800 to today) are in their general approach considerably more subjective and less scholarly than Paul Henry Lang's monumental one-volume *Music in Western Civilization*—which the *Man and His Music* series is intended to rival—and his "sonata-principle" thesis often is unduly strained; but most of Mellers' liveliest enthusiasms—and prejudices too—are likely to be shared by the majority of present-day listeners, and he provides some quite arresting new insights not only into such familiar giants as Mozart, Schubert, and Brahms, but also into more controversial composers such as Bruckner, Mahler, Liszt, Smetana, Janácek, Bartók, and Stravinsky. It is unfortunate, however, that there are no discographies or bibliographies; and the occasional footnote-definitions of common technical terms are hardly consistent with the adult tenor of the text itself. (Essential Books, $7.00 each.)

First Person Plural: The Lives of Dagmar Godowsky. The breathless confessions of the onetime film vamp warrant mention here only for the incidental light they throw on her father and a host of other musical celebrities—Hofmann, Rubinstein, Stravinsky, Rachmaninoff, *et al.* Like so many other "attractive men" in Miss Godowsky's life, "they all talked too much," and their verbosity evidently was catching. Unfortunately, however, very little of what they said is preserved intact in the torrent of the author's own uninhibited monologues. (Viking, $3.95). R.D.D.

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just like being there!

"I CHATTER OVER STORMY WAYS,
IN LITTLE SHARPS AND TREBLES, I
BUBBLE INTO EDDYING BAYS, I BABBLE
ON THE PEBBLES."

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One of nature's most inspiring concerts, right in your living room! Splashing music punctuated with a staccato of pattering bubbles and swirling gushes... every murmur reproduced in full-dimensional stereo by an American Concertone Series 60 tape recorder. Music by nature or music by man, the new Series 60 captures every decibel of sound and plays it back in thrilling stereo, or single track. It accommodates reels up to 10½" for four hours of continuous recording, is controlled by push-buttons on the machine or by remote control, and shuts off automatically. Engineered to studio specifications, the Concertone 60 can be mounted on the wall, installed in a console, or used as a portable. Available on easy terms... at your dealer's now. Write for bulletin 5000.1E

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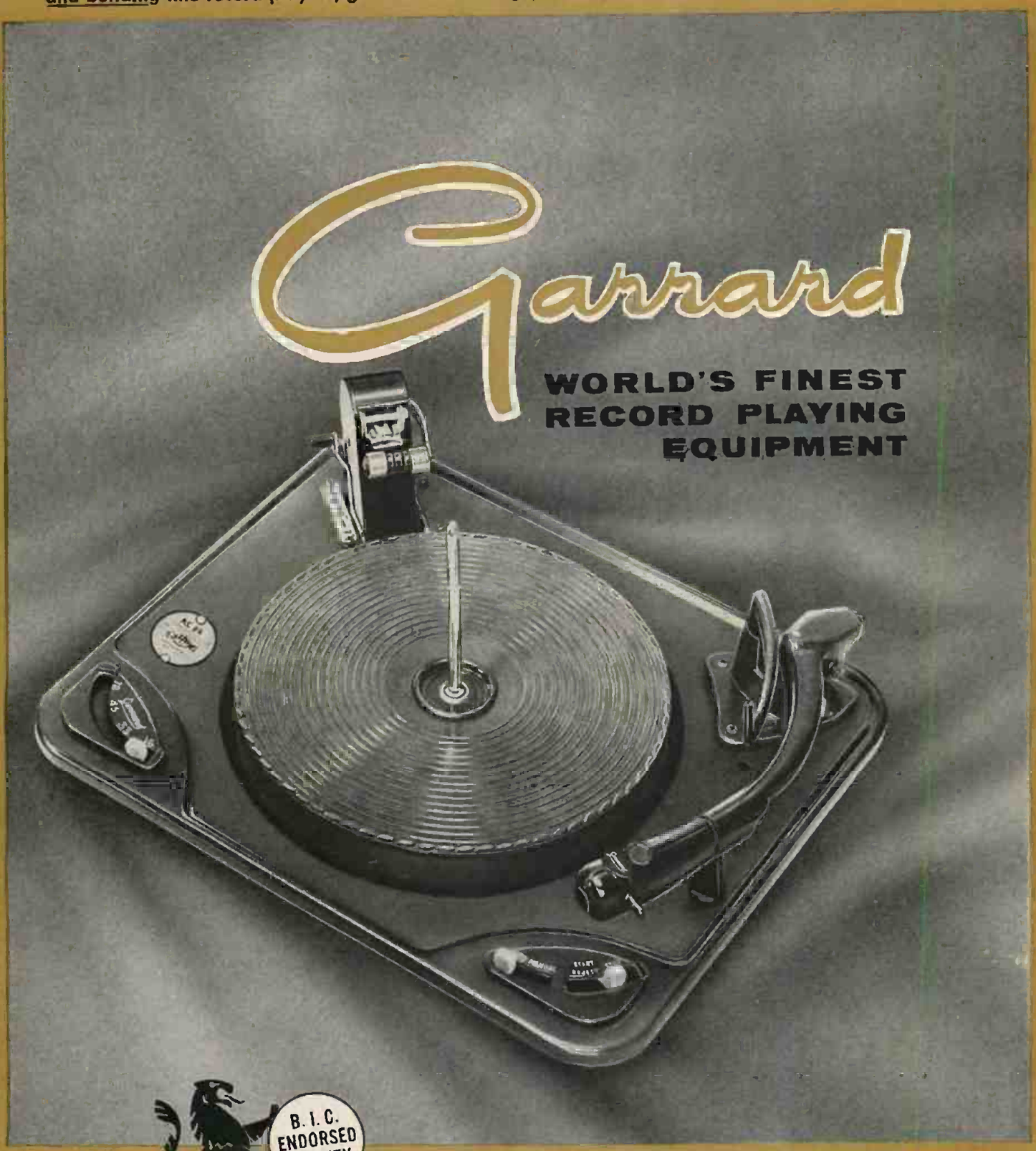

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The Diskeries' Dilemma

SOMETIMES people get themselves into a pickle through no fault of their own at all. At such times it behooves their friends to get them out again if they can.

Since I am a record reviewer, I own about 3,000 LPs. From where I sit, as I write I can see approximately 600 of these. Of this 600, I think at least 100 were produced without much thought of making money. They were not intended, of course, to *lose* money. The hope was that they would break even. But if any profit attended, it was not expected to be an economic profit. The people who made the records were making what I think can be called quite honestly an aesthetic, or an artistic, offering. I am grateful. Were it not for them, I might never have met Villa-Lobos' *Cirandas*, or Virgil Thomson's Second String Quartet, or Vivaldi's *La Stravaganza;* and I am sure none of these made anybody rich, except maybe me and some few of my fellow listeners.

I could number compositions until I enlisted all your sympathies (being lazy, I stuck with the tail end of the alphabet; these are the records in my study). What I am getting at is that the record companies, as a general thing, have earned and do deserve our fidelity as friends. They have turned out a modicum of junk, but they also have given us much of what we yearned for, and much delectable that we hadn't even known enough to yearn for. Yes, some of it was off-center, and some of it screeched or crackled, but most of it wasn't and didn't. And, to tell the truth, after assaying most of the output of the LP era, I cannot think of much to complain about. The job done, it seems to me, has been magnificent.

Back to the pickle (which does not strike me as a very fearsome pickle, but I am not in the record business). The pickle is disc stereophony and—more specifically—the question of how to introduce it.

Disc stereo *had* to come, and it had to come this year, simply because tape stereo was so startlingly successful. If the disc companies didn't move in promptly, tape would preëmpt the whole field, and steal the future. So they're moving, but not altogether happily. Stereo will be a great boon to audio-equipment makers (*two* of everything!) and great fun for us. But it poses a problem for the major record makers, who must think of their dealers as well as their customers. Can they simply change all their output to 45–45 stereo, affirming its "compatibility" with present (nonstereo) equipment, and discontinue their monophonic discs? Or must they continue to make the latter, thus burdening the dealer with twin lines of records? And if they do this, will sales slump as buyers hesitate between the two types of record? (Everyone remembers the Speed War.)

I can offer an opinion, and it is an optimistic one. I doubt that buying will slump seriously. On the average medium-fi phonograph, the 45–45 stereo disc *is* compatible. On high-fidelity monophonic equipment it is lower in fidelity—today, anyway—than its monophonic counterpart but definitely *not bad*. And, in any case, most high-fidelity folk are going to go stereo as soon as they can afford it. (Reverse compatibility, incidentally, is no problem: stereo pickups play conventional discs very well.) The implication of this?

Companies that can afford to do so should probably continue to manufacture monophonic discs during the transition period—maybe a year—but they needn't make all dealers stock them; these can be items "available on demand" to critical nonstereo buyers. Most people will happily buy the compatible stereo discs, especially since playing them with good conventional equipment will not injure them. Stereo pickup styli will have smaller tips than present microgroove styli; they will play deeper in the groove and not even "hear" any wear inflicted earlier.

Meanwhile there is something else we can do, for ourselves and for our friends the record producers. There are now in the catalogues, forever monophonic, hundreds and hundreds of treasurable performances. Not all of them, however good, still will be there after ten years of stereo — or even five years.

So do what I've been doing. Get out your Schwann or Long Player catalogue, and your HIGH FIDELITY *Record Annuals*, and start listing records to buy now, before the substitutions and deletions begin. There's Boito's *Mefistofele* Prologue by Toscanini, for instance; no one will ever surpass that, stereo or no stero. There are the Schnabel Beethoven sonatas, gems of unique mastery. (As a matter of fact, a piano seems to me to gain nothing at all through stereo; neither do most solo instruments nor single voices.) There are Helmut Walcha's Bach organ works. There is the Casals performance of the Schumann Cello Concerto. And of course the imperishable *Well-Tempered Clavier* from the fingers of that great lady, Mme. Wanda Landowska. There are some very lovely flights of lighter pianism by the late Art Tatum, who died too soon for stereo. And the Benny Goodman Carnegie Hall Jazz Concert, which was a full twenty years too early for two channels, still enchants. . . . But need I go on? You take it from there. J.M.C.

AS THE EDITORS SEE IT

by Alfred Frankenstein

Germany's Renovated

SOME SIXTY opera houses serve the fifty million people of Western Germany. Most of them are open eleven months a year, and most of them offer a repertoire of approximately forty operas and ten ballets; and the result is that there are not enough first-class singers and conductors to go around. There seems, however, to be no shortage of first-class stage directors and scenic designers and no shortage of money for new productions. Furthermore, brand-new opera houses, built by the country's finest architects, are to be found in every other town. As a result, an American who has an opportunity to tour the German theaters, as did I not long ago, finds himself in a looking-glass world. The performances are uniformly brilliant in action and magnificent in their *mise en scène*, and many of them are presented in physical surroundings whose up-to-date luxuriousness has no parallel on our side of the Atlantic. But much of the music making would not be tolerated if it were offered by a dollar opera company in the United States.

Our party was introduced to this curious situation in Cologne, whose new opera house is said to be the most "advanced" in all of Germany. Its auditorium can accommodate 1,200 people, 900 of them in the orchestra and the rest in a series of loges, each holding perhaps twenty seats, which jut from the back wall at a steep angle, like so many toboggan slides about to crash on the heads of those below. There are no aisles on the main floor; every available foot of viewing space is employed, and one enters the long rows of seats from either end. The backstage area, including workshops, dressing rooms, and offices, is approximately eight times larger than the auditorium. The stage is actually four stages — the one the audience sees directly behind the curtain and three others of equal size at either side and behind the cyclorama. By means of this arrangement, several complete stage settings can be assembled on rollered platforms, held in readiness, and whisked before the audience without loss of time.

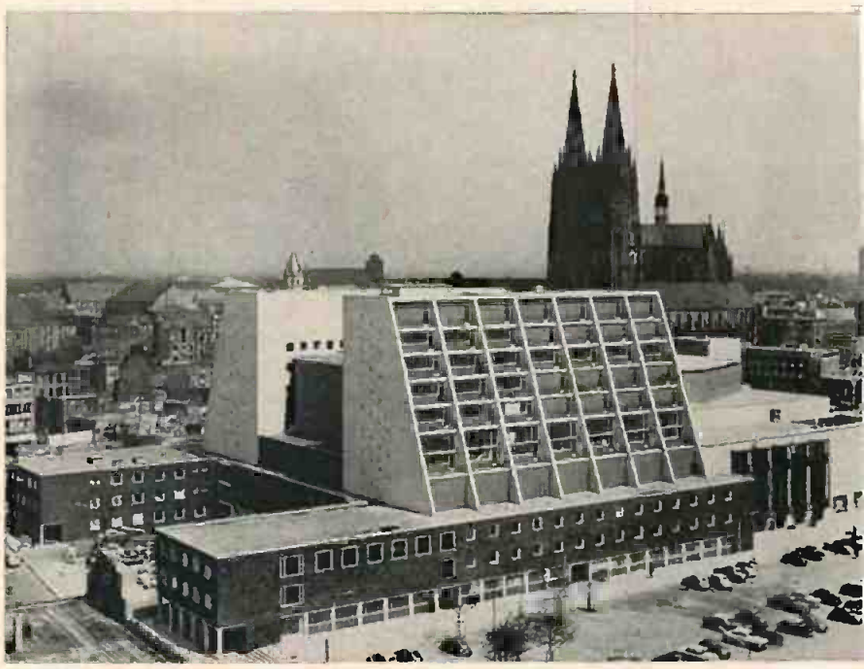
This pattern is followed, with minor variations, by all the other new opera houses in the country. It is a pattern which can come into being only when, as is the case in Germany, a considerable part of the operatic budget is provided by state or municipal subsidy,* for private enterprise must have larger auditoriums to keep its deficits down. It is a democratic pattern; there are no boxes in the new German theaters, and ticket prices are likely to range between one and sixteen marks, or between twenty-five cents and four dollars in our money. Tickets are difficult to come by. Only once during a month in Germany did we see an ill-filled house, and sellouts were the rule.

The emphasis on speed in the changing of scenery is either the cause or the effect of a strange, and to a foreigner rather trying, practice which I understand has sprung up in Germany only since the war. It now is customary to give a five-act opera with only one intermission, starting early (usually at 7:30) and ending early; but the sittings from overture to interval and from interval to final curtain may last two hours or more, and the structural considerations that led the composer to divide his work into acts are totally disregarded. The vast stress upon stage facilities affirms the ascendancy of the stage director over the entire operatic complex. One is told that the company strives for a well-balanced ensemble; but in practice the man in charge of staging is the star, and some producers do not seem to care if the music is well performed or not.

Certainly no one took much pains with the music of *Der fliegende Holländer* as we heard it in Cologne, but one cannot judge a theater's standards by a single performance. In Hamburg we heard three performances. *Götterdämmerung* was superb. *Così fan tutte* was frightful. *Die Zauberflöte* was uneven, with good and bad elements in equal proportion. In this respect the Hamburg picture was often repeated as our tour went on.

* The Städtische Oper in West Berlin receives an annual subsidy of 6,000,000 marks and takes in 1,600,000 marks at the box office. This house is probably subsidized a bit more heavily than others in Western Germany because of its peculiar status vis-à-vis the opera in the Communist sector of the city.

Opera



At top: Günther Rennert's rocky setting for Götterdämmerung. *Above: Wiesbaden's rebuilt opera house, pure rococo of the Kaiser Wilhelm vintage. At right: sharp contrast between new and old in Cologne, spired cathedral and angled opera house.*

Götterdämmerung was staged by Günther Rennert, who is one of the finest producers in Germany. His whole *Ring* at Hamburg is quite celebrated, and I am sorry we saw only its finale. Rennert and his designer, Helmut Jürgens, do the entire cycle on a vast, mushrooming rock which fills the entire stage. Everybody in Germany seems to be obsessed with slanting stage floors, which must give the singers and especially the dancers some bad moments, but in this case the uneven floor is justified. The production of *Götterdämmerung* was most remarkable for its simple monolithic spaciousness. Dawns and darks were painted in light as if by some Teutonic Claude Monet. The Gibichungs' hall was a single vast presentment, big as a steel bridge tower but medieval-barbaric in its feeling. The final scene, wherein the spectator seemed to stand up to his neck in the middle of the Rhine while Walhalla first burned and then dissolved into distant mist, was incredibly spectacular; but unlike merely mechanical tricks, it was altogether legitimate and very moving as a work of theatrical art.

Leopold Ludwig's conducting brought great warmth, richness, and luxury of sound from the orchestra, and the singing was especially notable for the work of two artists whom America should know. One was Maria von Ilosvay, a contralto of marvelous intensity, purity, and power, who sang the First Norn and Waltraute. The other was Arnold van Mill, a huge man with a big, velvety bass, who made Hagen the hero of the proceedings. These two, plus the appealing Brünnhilde of the familiar Martha Mödl, Ludwig's conducting, and the Rennert-Jürgens staging, overcame shortcomings in the rest of the cast. On the whole, this performance was of the kind that produces the special madness whereby all opera lovers know each other. We did not often hear its like during the rest of our stay in Germany.

Hamburg's *Così fan tutte* was cleverly staged; but all

the voices wobbled with the horrible quaver that seems so peculiarly the property of German singers, and the conducting was dull. It was also dull in *Die Zauberflöte*, but Van Mill as Sarastro, Horst Günter as Papageno, Anny Schlemm as Pamina, and Kurt Marschner as Monostatos were well worth hearing; and the staging, directed by Rennert and designed by Ita Maximowna, was a perfect delight. The whole Egyptian set, including the distant prospect of pyramids, seemed to be made of lightly stained wood, as if it were a scene from some humorously designed piece of inlaid furniture come to life. All kinds of marvels happened. The three boys flew around on a piece of bamboo bark. Things and people were there one second and not there the next, and the mechanism of their vanishment could not be detected. A true Mozartean magic show, and it was wonderful.

In Berlin the operatic situation is like none other in the world, for it is part of a general situation without parallel in human history. Communist East Berlin spends vast sums on its two opera houses, lures singers from everywhere with huge salaries paid in West German marks, and gives its directors the freest possible hand. Grand opera in East Berlin is popularly regarded as the best in Germany, and West Berlin is unashamedly jealous of it. What we saw in East Berlin — which I myself disliked intensely — helps to explain why.

We could not get tickets for the grand opera in the Eastern sector, but we did attend the *première* of a new production of Offenbach's *Hoffmanns Erzählungen* at the Komische Oper. This house is run by Walter Felsenstein, a latter-day Klingsor whose very name causes West Berlin opera people to blanch and stagger. Felsenstein, they tell you, can do anything. If he wants to cancel all performances and close his theater for a month of rehearsals, he does so. If he is then not satisfied, he can postpone his reopening for as long as he likes. He represents the rule of the stage director raised to the infinite power — and all other producers and heads of opera houses in Germany wish they were in his shoes.

Germans possess their own *mystique* with regard to *Hoffmanns Erzählungen*. (The German title seems indicated here.) They are all brought up on the tales of E.T.A. Hoffmann, and they project their childhood memories of them into Offenbach's feeble, trifling score, giving it a value it actually does not possess. Felsenstein's production played upon this *mystique*. He went back to the archives, discovered a play by Barbier and Carré on which Offenbach's libretto had been based, and incorporated yards of its dialogue into the opera. He played the Antonia act second and the Venetian act third. He had Hoffmann kill Giulietta; and he rearranged the music in a very liberal way, always with the excuse that this was the original, but whose original it was we were not informed.

The singing in this production was mediocre, the conducting on the musical comedy level; but the setting was the most lavish I have ever seen. Luther's cellar looked not at all like a stage but like a proper rathskeller, and Spalanzani's laboratory was stocked with enough equipment to fill a supply house. This laboratory was one of numerous extra scenes added to the opera solely for pictorial effect. In another a gondola seemed to float on actual water and in still another, barely a moment long, Hoffmann and Schlemihl fought a duel before an immense stone wall. After a time it became all too clear that the whole purpose was to demonstrate the ease with which Felsenstein could materialize sets as thick and heavy as the real thing and whisk them off again at the wave of his wand. Here was a demonstration of virtuosity as brilliant, empty, vulgar, and naïve as the flimsiest of coloratura operas — but in this case, the prima donna was the stage director.

We saw a production of exactly the opposite kind at the Städtische Oper in West Berlin. Apologies were offered for it as a leftover from the days immediately after the war when things had to be improvised. This was a *Fidelio* wherein the set was nothing much more than a wall pierced by a huge, studded door, and I thought it was altogether magnificent in its appeal to the spectator's imagination. The West Berlin settings for *Falstaff* and *Nabucco*, on the other hand, were realistic to the point of fussiness.

Fidelio was poorly sung but beautifully conducted by a young man from Bremen named Heinz Wallberg, who is someone to watch. *Falstaff* was magnificently sung by two members of its cast — Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau in the name part and Sieglinde Wagner, the Mistress Quickly — and its action was magnificently directed by Carl Ebert. Ebert also presided magisterially over *Nabucco;* but this early Verdi work needs a great voice in every role, and only one singer in the Berlin cast was adequate to the demands of the music — Arnold van Mill, our old friend of the previous week in Hamburg.

In Berlin also we saw our first ballet evening — *Le Sacre du Printemps*, given with starkly powerful choreography by Mary Wigman weakened at the end by too obvious a reliance upon the *plastique* of the Expressionist painters of 1910. This was combined with a fetching modern piece, *Maratona di Danza*, a ballet about a dance marathon in a cheap dive in Rome, much influenced by the realism of the contemporary Italian film. Two Italians — Luchino Visconti, librettist and producer, and Renzo Vespigniani, the stage designer — were responsible for this work; but the choreography was by a

Dutchman, Dick Sanders, and the music by one of the best of the younger German composers, Hans Werner Henze. The choreography combined ballet, ballroom, and character dancing in very effective ways, while the music made superb use of the contrast between a symphony orchestra in the pit and a jazz band on the stage. The production was completely convincing, and *Maratona di Danza* should make a good export product.

All the ballets we saw in Germany were given by dance companies attached to opera houses. None of these companies seemed to have the slightest interest in *Swan Lake*, *Les Sylphides*, or any of the other Russian "classics," but they all performed ballets, mostly modern, for which important scores have been composed. In Munich we saw Bartók's *Miraculous Mandarin* on a double bill with the same composer's one-act opera, *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*. The music of *The Miraculous Mandarin* sounds forced and unconvincing by itself, but in the context of the stage it is altogether right. The repulsive story also seems altogether right when it is staged by Alan Carter, Munich's English choreographer, and performed by such as Natascha Trofimowa and Paul Wünsch, who had the principal roles.

Our first opera in Munich was Werner Egk's *Zaubergeige*, a delightfully folkish affair that has taken the place, at least in Germany, of Jaromir Weinberger's forgotten hit, *Schwanda der Dudelsackpfeifer*. The performance was especially memorable for the contributions of Antonia Fahberg, one of the few sopranos in Germany who can sing a pure, sustained tone; Marcel Cordes, an excellent tenor; and Egk himself. The composer conducted. Richard Strauss's *Daphne* was not very well sung, but it was marvelously well conducted by Meinhard von Zallinger, and the little-known work itself was a major experience.

But the high point of our operatic experience in Munich came with Bartók's *Bluebeard*. What a wonderful piece this is! Even the professional Bartókians fail to recognize its greatness because it is a fairly early work and reveals the influences of Wagner, Debussy, and Mussorgsky; yet *Bluebeard* stands on an equal footing with *Tristan*, *Pelléas*, and *Boris*. The performance, with Keith Engen (one of the few Americans singing in Germany who do their country credit) and Hertha Töpper in the two singing roles and Janos Kulka conducting, was overwhelming in its impact.

Another memorable evening was the Frankfurt performance of *Traviata* with Irene Salemka, a young Canadian soprano who is beautiful, knows how to sing, and should make a tremendous hit when she returns home. The *Traviata* performance was also remarkable for the contribution of Willi Wolff, an artist of a kind we do not have in America, to our considerable loss. Wolff, who sang the elder Germont, is past his prime vocally, but is wise in all the arts and courtesies of the stage, and his support of Miss Salemka was an index of the real depth and solidity of the European repertoire tradition. *Traviata*, by the way, was fabulously staged, by Arno Assmann and Hein Heckroth, in a garish 1900 period style, with a tin-horn phonograph and numerous stuffed parrots in the love nest of the second act.

Later we were taken to Wiesbaden for a mediocre *Hoffmanns Erzählungen* (how they love it!) and there, poking around backstage, we discovered a program announcing that on the following day *Wozzeck* would be given in Nuremberg. Nuremberg was not on our schedule, but we dashed off anyhow, and I am glad we did.

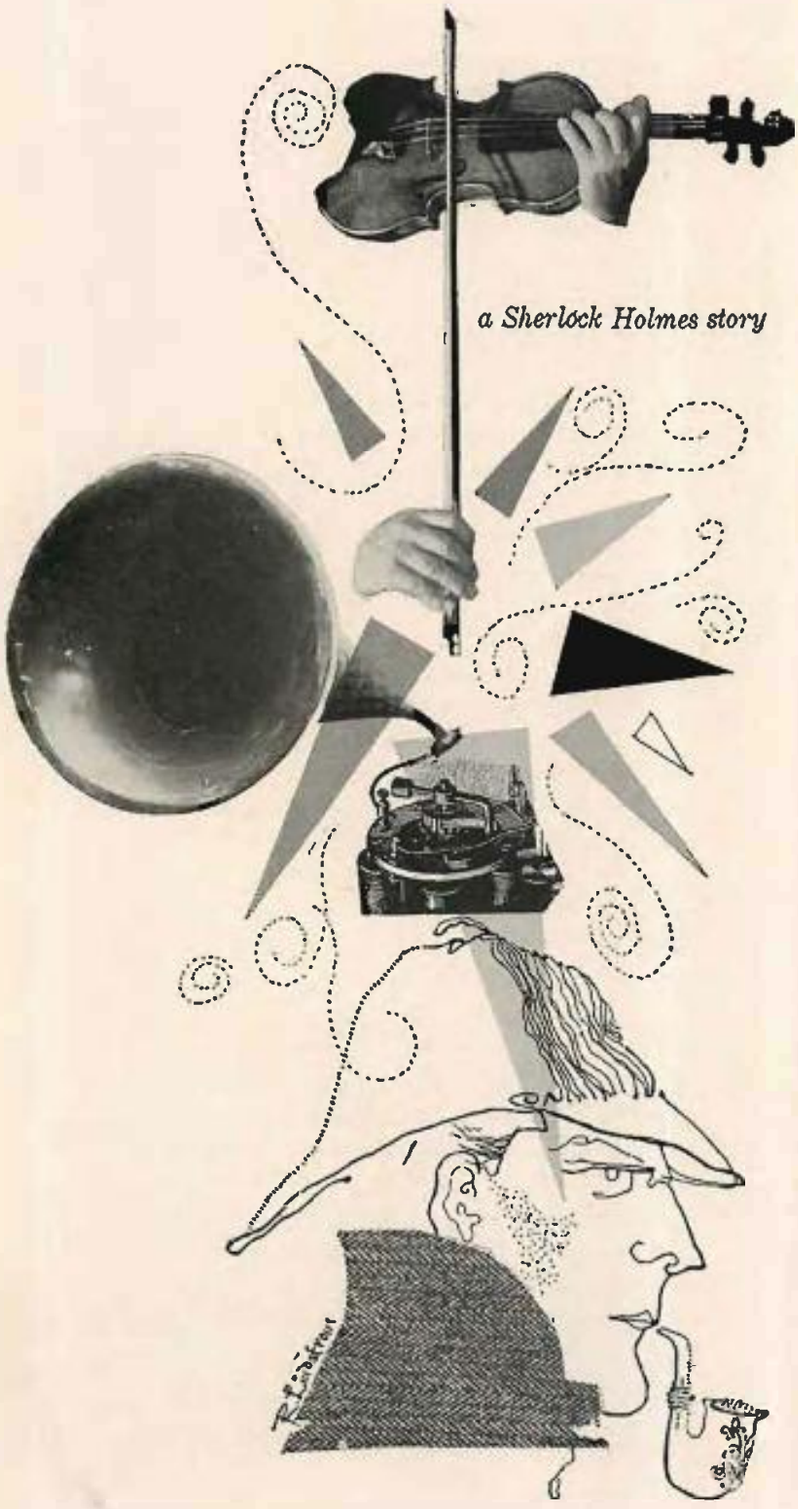
Berg's masterpiece was staged by Rudolph Hartmann, intendant of the Munich opera, who had apparently combed the country to find the perfect interpreter for every role, no matter how minor. Given without any intermission at all, the piece went right on in one sweeping, devastating arc of drama lasting about an hour and a half (the only case wherein the running together of acts seemed justified). The setting whisked, but it looked like whisk-scenery; there were no such tricks as those of Herr Felsenstein in East Berlin. The performance, with Willi Domgraf-Fassbänder (the Figaro of the 1934 Glyndebourne recording) as Wozzeck, Gerta Schopenhauer as Marie, Leonardo Wolovsky as the Doctor, Robert Licha as the Captain, and Erich Riede conducting, was flawless — musically, vocally, and histrionically. Here was one instance wherein the ideal of ensemble was fully attained, wherein it was impossible to disengage the musical from the dramatic, wherein, to put it briefly, everything was ripe. And this production shed a new light on *Wozzeck*, bringing forth its tragedy as the classic purge through pity and terror. Berg understood his Sophocles, and by contrast the lyric tragedy of the nineteenth century seems merely a vulgar error.

We ended our tour in Düsseldorf, where, as in Cologne and Hamburg, there is a new opera house. The old opera houses in West Berlin, Munich, and Frankfurt also were destroyed during the war. Berlin and Frankfurt are using theaters built originally for the spoken drama. Berlin, however, is building a new opera house on the site of the one that was bombed out; Frankfurt is content with its present facilities. Munich is using the old Prinz Regenten Theater, built around 1900 as a shrine for Wagner; it has plans for a new opera house but not enough money to put them *Continued on page 125*

Cologne's new opera house seats 300 in its projecting loges.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE BODILESS VIRTUOSO

a Sherlock Holmes story



THE RECENT APPEARANCE of the first phonograph record devoted to the exploits of Sherlock Holmes [1] raises hopes that the greatest of all detectives is at last about to get his due from the recording industry. The adventures of Sherlock Holmes have flourished, even if in garbled form, in motion pictures, radio, and television. But records have ignored them. Nowhere on discs can you hear the baying of the Hound of the Baskervilles, the thumping of Jonathan Small's wooden leg, the murmurings of drugged wretches in the London opium den to which Holmes journeyed in quest of the Man With the Twisted Lip.

In neglecting Holmes's adventures until now, the record companies have been guilty not only of irresponsibility but of ingratitude. For Sherlock Holmes merits commemoration as a great musician and, even more important, as one of the earliest phonograph enthusiasts known to history. It was he who, more than fifty years ago, first made use of the phonograph record in finding the solution to a criminal case.

This feat is fully recounted in *The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes* under the title *The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone* — a highly instructive case worth careful study not only by amateurs of crime, but by audio enthusiasts as well. For unless the present writer is greatly mistaken in his deductions, *The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone* clearly points to the conclusion that Sherlock Holmes half a century ago was the possessor of a long-playing record and that, indeed, he himself very likely was the inventor of this scientific marvel.

Holmes himself once laid down the dictum that "it is a capital mistake to theorize before you have all the evidence." [2] The evidence for his use of an early model of the LP record is both suggestive and significant, and rooted firmly in his musical and scientific backgrounds.

Sherlock Holmes was an accomplished violinist. More than that, he was one of the most talented musical amateurs of his generation. His faithful companion and chronicler, Dr. John H. Watson, describes the detective's violinistic talents very early in their association:

"That he could play pieces, and difficult pieces, I knew well, because at my request he has played me some of Mendelssohn's Lieder, and other favorites. When left to himself, however, he would seldom produce any music or attempt any recognized air. Leaning back in his armchair of an evening, he would close his eyes and scrape carelessly at the fiddle which was thrown across his knee. Sometimes the chords were sonorous and melancholy. Occasionally they were fantastic and cheerful. Clearly they revealed the thoughts which possessed him, but whether the music aided those thoughts, or whether the

[1] *Dr. Watson Meets Sherlock Holmes* and *The Final Problem*. London LL 1568.
[2] *A Study in Scarlet*.

by Herbert Kupferberg

playing was simply the result of a whim or a fancy, was more than I could determine. I might have rebelled against these exasperating solos had it not been that he usually terminated them by playing in quick succession a whole series of my favorite airs as a slight compensation for the trial upon my patience."[3]

We observe from this passage that Holmes, in addition to possessing an almost incredible facility for extracting chords from a violin without even grasping it firmly, was a master at transposing music mentally from one instrument to another. Mendelssohn's *Songs Without Words* (the *Lieder ohne Worte*), presumably the work Watson is referring to, were written for solo piano, but Holmes plays them upon a solo violin. When we consider that there are forty-nine such Mendelssohn Lieder and that Holmes could presumably play them all "in quick succession," his feat becomes all the more impressive. We shall return to it shortly, when we consider the music Holmes selected for his first long-playing record.

Holmes's interest in music was by no means limited to his own performances. He was an active concert and opera goer, almost invariably dragging the patient Watson with him. He hears Mme. Norman-Neruda, the leading female violinist of the day, at the Halle concert[4] and Sarasate, the great Spanish virtuoso, at St. James's Hall.[5] Observe that, as a true violinist, Holmes never goes to hear a pianist although Paderewski, for one, was a frequent visitor to London at the time.

When no instrumentalist is involved, Holmes was more than likely to head for the opera — a sure sign of the LP mentality. Thus, after running to earth the Hound of the Baskervilles, Holmes celebrates by taking a box for *Les Huguenots*, with the De Reszkes, no less. After his successful solution of the case called *The Adventure of the Red Circle* Holmes goes to Covent Garden, where "a Wagner night" is in progress. For this performance, unlike the *Huguenots*, no box has been reserved; Holmes merely expresses the hope that he will be "in time for the second act."

The most astounding revelation of Holmes's musical aptitude comes in *The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans*, wherein Watson discloses that Holmes, after making a hobby of the music of the Middle Ages, has written a definitive monograph upon "the Polyphonic Motets of Lassus."[6] Since Roland de Lassus wrote no fewer than 516 motets which occupy eleven volumes of the Breitkopf and Hartel complete critical edition[7], Holmes's monograph, which, alas, was "printed privately" according to Dr. Watson and apparently has disappeared, would surely rank as one of the landmarks of modern musicology.

Even this brief summary of the musical tastes and talents of Sherlock Holmes establishes beyond doubt that he was no mere dilettante and dabbler but a serious and resourceful musician.[8] When the time came for Holmes to apply his musical knowledge to the solution of a mystery, one could logically expect it would be with the same cunning and originality with which he exercised his other intellectual resources.

The opportunity arrived in the twilight of the great detective's career with *The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone*. Although the year of this case is not indicated in the story, Holmes authorities, on the basis of internal evidence give it as 1903, or a few years before Holmes's retirement to beekeeping on the Sussex Downs.[9] The date is important, as will become evident shortly.

Let us now summarize briefly the problem presented in *The Mazarin Stone* and Holmes's procedure in resolving it. One of the Crown diamonds, the glittering, yellowish Mazarin stone, has been stolen and the British Government has retained Holmes to get it back. Holmes knows who have it — Count Negretto Sylvius, a famous big-game hunter gone bad, and an accomplice named Sam Merton, a brawny if not brainy prize fighter. Holmes inveigles the two crooks into his rooms at 221-B Baker Street and offers them a deal: give up the diamond to him, and he will let them go free. He gives them five minutes to talk it over in private, informing them that he is retiring to the bedroom to "try over the Hoffmann *Barcarolle* on [his] violin."

Left alone, Count Sylvius and Merton, with nothing to distract them except the sound of the *Barcarolle* coming faintly from the next room, argue at length over what to do. After a time, the Count takes the diamond from his secret pocket to show it to Sam, whereupon Holmes leaps from a place of concealment, seizes the diamond, and covers the two ruffians with his revolver. When the slow-witted Sam cries out, "But, I say, what about that bloomin' fiddle! I hear it yet," Holmes serenely answers: "Tut, tut! You are perfectly right. Let it play. These modern gramophones are a remarkable invention." His stratagem, of course, is obvious. He has merely put a record of the *Barcarolle* on the gramophone in the bedroom, stolen back into the room where the villains were conversing all unaware, eavesdropped on their discussion, and, finally, seized the diamond itself from them. "A fair cop!" as Sam Merton himself was grudgingly forced to admit.

But — there is more here than meets the eye, to say nothing of the ear. What was this record played by Holmes? How came he to have it? And just what kind of a record was it?

One's natural impulse, of course, is to assume that the record Holmes played that summer evening in 1903 was simply a recording of the *Barcarolle* from *The Tales of Hoffmann* purchased from *Continued on page 122*

[3] *A Study in Scarlet.*
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *The Red-Headed League.*
[6] *The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans.*
[7] *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (14th ed., 1929), XIII, 736.

See Guy Warrack, *Sherlock Holmes and Music* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1946) for a scholarly and urbane account of Holmes's complete activities in this line.
H. W. Bell, *Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson: The Chronology of their Adventures* (London: Constable and Co. Ltd., 1932), p. 118.

1915

Guiomar Novaes Lady

by Harold C. Schonberg

"She was spontaneous then and she is spontaneous now."

ALTHOUGH Guiomar Novaes has been giving public recitals for some fifty years, has as faithful a group of followers as any concert artist could wish, and has achieved critical acclaim as one of the greatest of all pianists, she has never won the popular notability of a Rubinstein or a Horowitz. Part of her relative anonymity stems from her avoidance of interviews. "My dear husband told me to keep away from journalists," she has said time and time again. It must be many years since she has been the subject of a full-dress interview. As a matter of fact, Miss Novaes — she prefers to be called Mme. Novaes-Pinto, but she has not used the hyphenated name for public appearances — up to a few weeks ago appeared singularly innocent of the nature of an interview. "How much will I have to write?" she asked her manager when arrangements for the present tête-à-tête were being made.

And yet, despite the fact that her name is rarely in the papers except under a reviewer's by-line, Miss Novaes commands one of the top fees of any musician currently active — $3,000 for a recital appearance. She has all the engagements she desires; and if she were willing, she could play many more than the twenty recitals for which she has contracted during the 1957–58 season. She wanted to play only twelve, but her manager, Herbert Barrett, after much argument, talked her into twenty. She is at once Mr. Barrett's pride and his despair: his pride, because of her genius and the fact that she never gets a bad review; and his despair, because she is totally uninterested in the publicity side of the music business. "She is childlike," says Mr. Barrett, throwing up his hands. "She lives in another world."

Connoisseurs nf piano playing compare Miss Novaes to such great practitioners as Hofmann and Gabrilowitsch. Like Hofmann towards the end of his career, Miss Novaes has a rather small repertoire; and, like Hofmann, what she plays she plays perfectly, with much the same kind of aristocratic approach and singing tone. Several things make her playing unique among today's pianists. Her tone, many believe, in its color and subtlety recalls the magic note-spinning of the great romantic pianists of two generations ago (the generation, of course, in which Miss Novaes was trained). She is an extraordinary technician; the piano is an extension of her fingers and she can do miraculous things with no apparent effort. She never strives for effect and she is no pounder; at all

of the Singing Line

times her playing is intensely feminine, with its conceptions backed up by a patrician musical mind. Part of her appeal lies in the fact that her playing is never cut and dried. Seldom does she play the same piece of music twice the same way. Each time she brings to it a different point of view; and each time the new approach seems perfectly natural and inevitable.

Apparently her playing was perfectly formed at a very early age. When she was fourteen she played Beethoven's *Les Adieux* sonata for Isidor Philipp, her teacher at the Paris Conservatoire. "No, no," said Philipp. "The second movement is much too fast. Play it again." Novaes thought it over for a moment and then played it again — with somewhat different detail but with exactly the same tempo. Philipp gave up. "Even at fourteen she had a mind of her own," he once remarked. Philipp considered her by far the best pupil of the hundreds he had nursed to the concert stage, She has not changed much, musically, since her Conservatoire days. Veteran critics like Noel Straus, who heard her in the 1920s, say that essentially her playing has remained the same. She was spontaneous then and she is spontaneous now; her tonal characteristics, her unexpectedness, her quality of bringing new light to the same piece of music through the years — all these were part of her make-up from the beginning.

As most great musicians, she started young, Grove's *Dictionary* puts her birth date at 1895. She was the seventeenth of nineteen children. At the age of four, she recalls, she was playing little marches in kindergarten. This was in her native Brazil; the family lived in a suburb of São Paulo. By the time she was seven she was studying with Luigi Chiafferelli, an Italian who had been a pupil of Busoni. She heard her first concert at the age of eight. It was a joint recital by Pablo Casals and Harold Bauer. "I was so impressed I never forgot anything about the concert," she says. "Later I played under Casals' baton the Mozart E flat Concerto and the Beethoven Fourth, with The Friends of Music in New York. I was invited to Prades a few years ago, but I never had the time."

As a child, Novaes also studied harmony, composition, and the organ, which she played at Sunday morning Mass. Her debut took place in São Paolo when she was eleven, the year her father died. The young artist had been called upon at short notice to substitute for an indisposed pianist. Dressed in a pretty frock with a huge bow in the back, she went on stage and played Gottschalk's *Brazilian National Anthem*, a ferociously difficult piece of neo-Lisztian writing. (Gottschalk, the American pianist-composer, had died in Brazil in 1869 and his music was popular there. Novaes, in the early 1920s, was to record this very *Brazilian National Anthem* for Victor.)

Soon all São Paulo was watching the progress of its *Wunderkind*. Word of her got to officials in the Brazilian government, who saw to it that she received a grant for four years of study in Europe. Chiafferelli sent her with a letter of introduction to Philipp. That year, vacancies for two foreign students were open at the Conservatoire. Novaes got to Paris about two weeks late (a fact that surprises nobody who knows her), was the last to register, and found 387 prior applicants for the two openings. She was the last one to play for a jury consisting of Debussy, Fauré, and Moszkowski. Her pieces included Liszt's *Paganini* Etude in E, Chopin's A flat Ballade, and Schumann's *Carnaval*. She took first place, and the jury even asked her to repeat the Ballade. Novaes says that there is in existence a Debussy letter in which he writes with amazement about the little Brazilian girl who came to the platform, forgot about the public and the judges, and played so beautifully, with such complete absorption.

She was fourteen at the time. By the end of the following year she was a concert veteran, having played with the Chatelet Orchestra under Gabriel Pierné (this was her official debut), under Sir Henry Wood in England, and on tour in Italy, Switzerland, and Germany. She remembers admirers sending her gifts of jewels (she was a stunningly attractive girl and has remained a very handsome woman), and she giggles when she recalls playing for dukes and princes in country estates.

She also heard all of the great pianists: Busoni, "with that wonderful technique"; Paderewski, "such a poet;

his personality was so great that you would accept anything he did"; Hofmann, "that immense pianist"; Rachmaninoff and Rosenthal; Philipp, her teacher ("he was a *big* pianist"); and Pugno.

The war interrupted her concert career, and she returned to Brazil. She had had no intention of coming to America but was talked into doing so by a close friend of the family — José Carlos Rodriguez, who was leaving for Washington at the request of President Wilson, to serve as neutral arbitrator for a special treaty between the United States and Norway. Novaes and her mother came North with Rodriguez. She made her first New York appearance at Aeolian Hall ("I miss it, with its wonderful blue color; it was beautiful") before a half empty house, and threw the critics into a tizzy. Aldrich of the *New York Times* called her "a musician by the grace of God." Sanborn in the *Globe* described her as "the young genius of the piano." Finck of the *New York Post* compared her to his idol, Paderewski, and said that "more inspired playing has never been heard in Aeolian Hall." It was Huneker who, a year or so later, gave her a title that may have been a little off, geographically, but which stuck for a long time. In a *Times* review he called her "The Paderewska of the Pampas."

From then on, hers was the life of a touring pianist. She made a tremendous success playing several concerts with The Friends of Music in 1916, returned for a forty-concert American tour the following year, and shuttled between America and Brazil until she married Ottavio Pinto in 1922.

Pinto, who died in 1950, was a remarkable man. He too had come from São Paulo and had studied with Chiafferelli. He was a good pianist, an accomplished all-around musician, and a composer of attractive short pieces for the piano. But music was with him a sideline. "His father was afraid he would die of hunger," says Novaes. So he also studied engineering and architecture and became one of Brazil's most important city planners. It was a happy marriage for both. Novaes worships his memory. She feels that he is constantly at her side; and, indeed, some people who know Novaes well say that the only reason she still gives concerts is because she is sure her late husband would have wanted it so. She did retire, off and on, during their marriage.

It was not until the advent of microgroove records that she became a busy recording artist. She had made a few acoustics for Victor before 1925, and during the 1930s she made a few single discs for Columbia. For Vox, however, she has put virtually her entire active repertoire on records, and also is preparing some concertos — Beethoven's *Emperor* and the Chopin E minor — that she has not played in public for many years, if ever. She realizes that her present concert programs tend towards repetition. This was not always true: examination of her programs of the 1920s reveals such pieces as Beethoven's Op. 111; the Liszt Sonata and *Mephisto* Waltz; sections of the Albéniz *Iberia*; the Brahms *Variations on a Theme by Handel*; Franck's Prelude, Chorale, and Fugue; Bach's third *English* Suite and *Chromatic Fantasy*; and the Strauss-Godowsky *Fledermaus Fantasy*. She has not programed any of these for many years, however. "I read through much music," she says. "My dear husband told me that I should play the Granados *Goyescas* in public. But I don't have time to prepare it. I am so busy at home." At her home in São Paulo, Novaes plays host to her children (she has two), grandchildren, numerous relations, government officials, and friends.

Her methods of practice probably would be the death of most artists. "When I have a concert, I work. Otherwise I have other things to do." No six or eight hours a day for Novaes, though she dutifully says, possibly without meaning it much, "I wish I was that way." At most she works four or five hours daily when preparing her program. "But I think I have a natural technique. Also I meditate, I read, I do my best to follow the composer's intentions. Sometimes I cry when I think of Beethoven's sufferings."

She thinks that concentration is much more important than mechanical finger exercise. "One must know *how* to work. A lot can be done in two hours. Much also can be done away from the piano. I studied the Beethoven G major Concerto that way." It seems that Philipp gave her two weeks to prepare the concerto. She took it with her to Milan, read it on the train, and kept on reading it. At the first rehearsal, she says, she knew it perfectly.

Seldom has she given a recital or made a recording that satisfied her. Of all her records, she thinks she prefers her first version of the Beethoven G major Concerto, conducted by Otto Klemperer. Last November she played the Schumann concerto with the New York Philharmonic under André Cluytens, and she thinks that Thursday evening performance was about as nearly perfect as she can do. Her Sunday broadcast, which many heard with rapture, did not satisfy her at all. "It was not nearly as good as the Thursday," she says.

No record can really capture the evanescent quality of her playing, which is one reason she listens to her LP discs with a certain dissatisfaction. Another reason is that she constantly feels differently about the music she plays. One of her most recent discs is that of the first book of Debussy preludes. The LP came out last year, and it will undoubtedly be of great interest to Vox to know that she wants to re-record it. "We change," she says simply. "I'd play them differently if I had the chance to make them over." She adds, jokingly, "It depends on the moon. When the moon goes up we play better; down, worse. So many things enter into performance — the day, the weather, the degree of inspiration."

The chances are that Novaes would want to spend the rest of her life in search of the perfect recording. This will come as no surprise to Vox and to some recording engineers with whom she has worked. She may spend hours on a single movement of a sonata; take after take after take, with recording costs *Continued on page 119*

HOW TO DRIVE A SALESMAN MAD

. . . and get a loudspeaker you can live with

by Norman H. Crowhurst

IF YOU CAN arrange with a local high-fidelity dealer to let you try one or two different loudspeaker systems in your home for a week or so, as I suggested in an earlier article [HIGH FIDELITY, April 1958, p. 43], this is the most satisfactory and reliable way to choose one that is right for you. Obviously, if you live too many miles from a suitable dealer, it may not be a practical method. In that event should you make a selection on the basis of catalogue information? Or should you take the earliest opportunity of going to a high-fidelity showroom, where you can listen to different systems and compare them, even if under listening conditions different from those at home?

Selecting loudspeakers by catalogue is generally a tricky business. Catalogues and advertisements can help you narrow your possible range of choice, but a final decision shouldn't be made on the basis of this information alone. If you find it absolutely impossible to get to a high-fidelity showroom to *listen* to a loudspeaker, then read carefully the magazine equipment-review sections (such as "Tested in the Home") and, if possible, get an opinion from someone whose judgment you trust.

Much better is to listen before you buy — being sure, however, to make allowances for the difference between the acoustics of the showroom and of your own living room. When you walk into the showroom, notice first of all how it compares in size and shape with your living room and consider the relative ceiling height. These details will affect the relationship between the size and type of loudspeaker that will sound fine in your living room and one that will sound the same way in the showroom. Notice particularly how the showroom is decorated — whether it has voluminous drapes, carpeting on the

floor, and well-upholstered furniture — or whether it is relatively bare. Compare the furnishings of your own living room and try to estimate what difference they will make on the sound reproduced. With a little experience this kind of "aural compensation" becomes almost intuitive.

A good way of learning to do this is to make a conscious effort to notice the sound of your own voice and that of friends in different rooms. Try to get used to separating mentally the sounds you hear from their background. For example, in a room where there is plenty of upholstery to absorb sound your voice will sound quieter and less resonant than in kitchen or bathroom, which abound in hard, sound-reflecting surfaces. Form the habit of noticing how different rooms affect the sound of your speech, as well as other common noises such as those of hand clapping and footsteps. Get used to listening to these subtle differences in sound. They will help you in assessing the differences likely to occur when a loudspeaker is played in different rooms.

With this kind of practice your ears will tell you more effectively than I can describe here exactly how the high-fidelity showroom differs acoustically from your living room. Then it will not be too difficult to reverse the process, and imagine how the loudspeaker will sound in your living room instead of the showroom.

The ideal arrangement, as I said before, is to have one or two loudspeaker systems delivered to your home where you can listen to them at leisure. It takes a while to become certain you're making the proper choice. For the same reason, you should not make a hurried decision in a showroom. Take your time, listen to a variety of different program materials, and listen from different positions in the room; become as familiar as possible with the sound of each loudspeaker to which you listen.

Listening is something to which your hearing faculty conditions itself. Don't be in a hurry, switching from one loudspeaker to another in quick succession — a procedure comparable to a woman's picking out drapery materials at a crowded bargain counter: too many colors and patterns confuse the eye, and she usually regrets her purchase. Similarly, listening to a variety of loudspeakers in quick succession confuses your ear-conditioning faculty, with the result that you cannot form a good judgment of how they will sound when you are listening in a relaxed fashion.

That brings up a variation of a problem that occurs in many aspects of life: how to be relaxed and alert at the same time. Failure to achieve this aural condition explains why loudspeakers often seem to perform differently at different times. If your hearing faculty (or your nervous system) is in a tense state, then sounds affect you differently. Be careful in listening to each loudspeaker you want to consider.

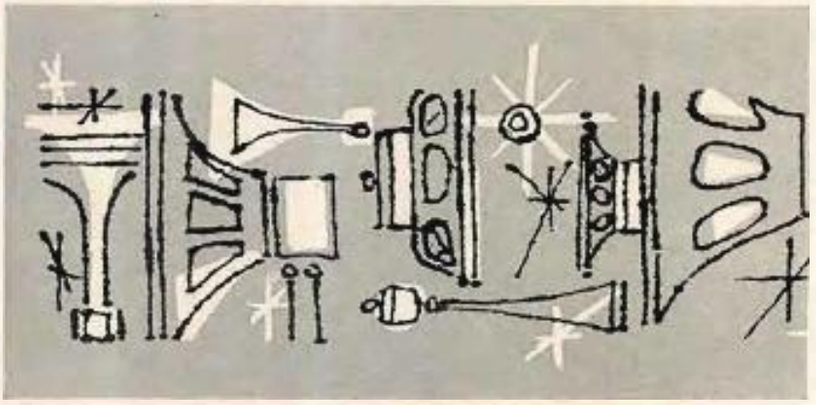
MAKE SURE the parking meter is taken care of, so that you will not need to watch the clock. Sit down and relax. Listen to a speaker for a while. Get up, move around, listen to it in different room positions, and try to assess just how the *loudspeaker* sounds, as distinct from the music — whether it is a faithful reproducer and to what extent it departs from the ideal. Allow your developed intuitive faculty to tell you how it will sound in your own living room.

For this purpose you must listen for the same sort of defects in the reproduction that you would if you had the loudspeaker actually in the living room, trying to make allowance where necessary for the differences in size, shape, and furnishings. The fact that you may be closer to or farther away from the loudspeaker than you would be with the placement you have in mind at home, for example, will change your impression of its performance to a considerable extent.

A good piano recording should sound like an actual piano being played *in that room*, just as you would expect the piano recording when played at home to sound as the piano played in your own living room does. That is why it is important to get as familiar as possible, through careful listening, to the effect contributed by different rooms to the various sounds to which we listen. If the sound of the piano has a hollowness or boxy effect, which does not sound natural to the room in which you are listening, it may sound even worse when you hear it in your own listening room.

A good organ recording with some heavy bass notes is a way to test a loudspeaker for intermodulation distortion. Satisfy yourself that the showroom is using satisfactory auxiliary equipment: a good record player or tuner, and amplifiers that will not themselves cause intermodulation distortion. Then listen for the shaky kind of effect that intermodulation can produce in the middle frequencies when deep bass frequencies are played at the same time. This kind of intermodulation is not particularly dependent on the kind of room in which you listen.

But this is not so true of other effects of intermodulation distortion — for example, that produced by a violin or guitar playing two notes separated by a fairly close, but possibly slightly dissonant musical interval, with which intermodulation distortion causes a buzz. The



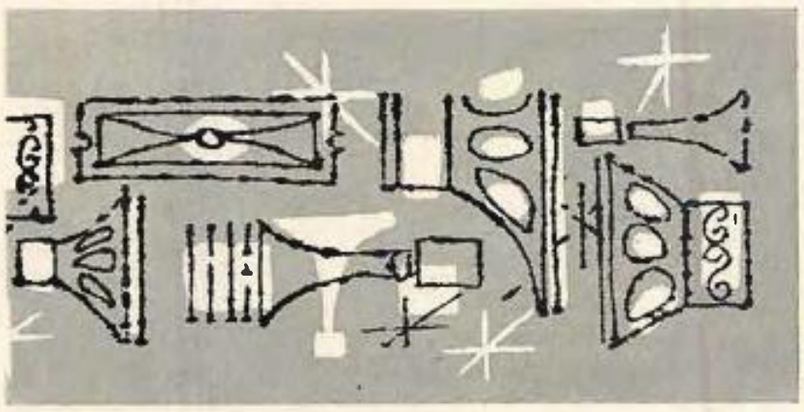
audibility of these effects can vary according to the listening room, because listening rooms have different absorption characteristics at various frequencies. In a listening room that is well damped by the use of heavy carpeting, draperies on the walls, and well-upholstered furniture, you will need to listen extra carefully for this distortion; otherwise, you may find it quite annoying when you listen to the same kind of material at home. If you do hear a trace of buzz, perhaps you can persuade the salesman to disconnect the woofer and discover whether the intermodulation buzz comes from the loudspeaker unit, the pickup cartridge, or the amplifier (or maybe even is in the program material itself).

Next, ask to have played something with a predominance of wind instruments, preferably brass. Brass, fully reproduced, can sound extremely harsh — even more so than it does originally. Unfortunately, this too is not exclusively a test of the loudspeaker. A lot of harshness in the reproduction of brass instruments is caused by the amplifier, even some of the modern feedback amplifiers. Consequently it may be well in this listening test to try using two or more amplifiers on the same loudspeaker, simply to find out how much of any harshness you hear is caused by the loudspeaker.

Listen for harshness on brass or fuzziness on other wind instruments, even when string instruments and other kinds of program may sound quite clear. But try different combinations. (Sometimes the recording itself may be fuzzy.)

Then take a recording with particularly good percussion or drums (perhaps a small jazz combination) and listen to the way the brush sounds. You should be able to identify the surface on which the brush is played: the cymbal or the drums. These things should be clearly discernible if the loudspeaker has a smooth high-end response. Remember, a good high end gives clean, detailed treble without accentuating background hiss.

Listen also to the performance of violin solos. Do you get the true edginess of the violin's tone when it is abruptly bowed or jabbed? Is it genuine fiddle? Or is it a sudden, dead "plop," which bears practically no resemblance whatsoever to the musical character of the original instrument?



Strings played pizzicato make a very good test for the kind of resonances that occur inside an enclosure. In listening to such material you will have to make more than the usual allowance for differences among the kinds of listening room. It is a particularly good test if the listening room is well damped with good furnishings; try to discover deficiencies in the loudspeaker enclosure that cause emphasis on certain frequencies more than others.

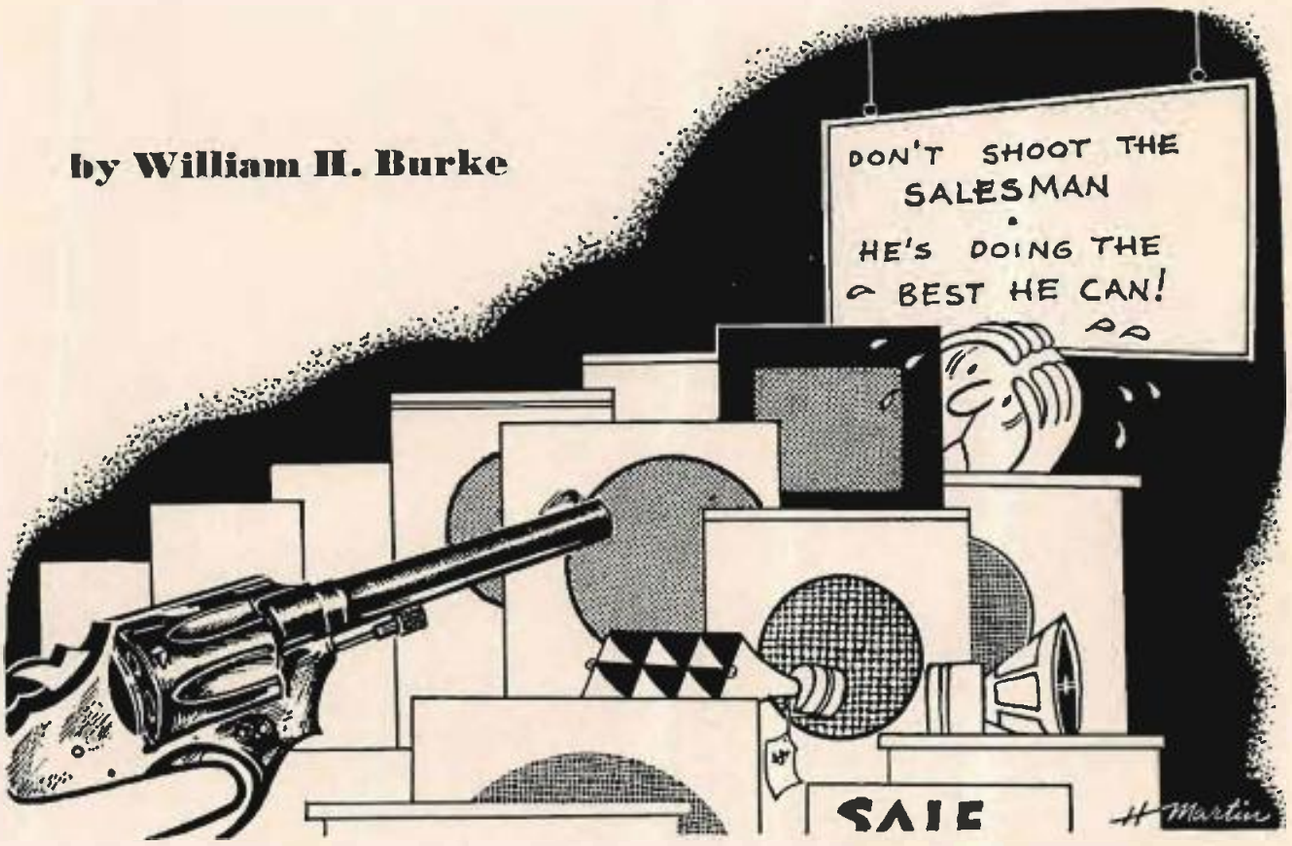
In listening to all kinds of program material, incidentally, notice carefully whether there are any notes at all, throughout the frequency range, that seem to be overemphasized whenever they occur. If you spot anything like this, try moving around. It is just possible that the effect is a characteristic of the listening room. If you change your position and the same note still seems overemphasized, it is probably a fault in the speaker system.

It is helpful when you hear an effect like this to try to visualize what could be causing the resonance that you happen to notice. Does it sound like what you might get if you tapped a box of the same dimensions as the loudspeaker enclosure? Any box that you rap produces a characteristic tone. If a tone like this gets emphasized in the musical production, it is a sign that the loudspeaker's natural resonances are insufficiently damped by acoustic padding inside.

Finally, try either some light orchestral music, or small combos, with both winds and strings in the high registers. Move around the room to see how consistently realistic both kinds of instruments sound from different listening positions. This checks for satisfactory radiation pattern as well as smoothness of response.

IT IS ASSUMED, in all these listening tests, that the loudspeaker will be mounted in a position typical for that particular system. If it is a large corner loudspeaker, then it must be in a corner. If it is the kind of loudspeaker intended for mounting against a wall, possibly as part of a music-wall construction, then the loudspeaker should be so placed. If it is of the small acoustic suspension or miniaturized bass-reflex type, then you will probably play it on a small coffee table against the wall of the room, preferably near a corner. It should be placed in a similar position in the showroom, if you are to get a true impression of how it will sound at home.

Sometimes the smaller loudspeakers are mounted, as a matter of convenience, on shelves in the showroom. This usually leaves space at their ends and over the top, which is not the way you will use the speaker at home. Such a mounting will give you no idea of the inherent quality, because each of these spaces has its own acoustic resonance which will completely upset the sound of the loudspeaker. This can make a good loudspeaker, fairly free from resonance, sound resonant or harsh. And it may even make a poor loudspeaker sound good, although this happens rarely. In any case you should definitely have the loudspeaker removed from its shelf to a position like that you plan for it at home. *Continued on page 126*



by William H. Burke

Characters with Golden Ears

The author identifies himself below as proprietor of a Kalamazoo, Michigan, high-fidelity shop. Before entering this hazardous occupation, he was an English teacher. He holds a Master of Arts degree from Columbia University.

AS ALL television watchers know — whether it's true or not — every barroom in the Old West had a sign which said: "Please don't shoot the piano player, he's doing the best he can." May I solicit a similar forbearance, for like reason, on behalf of the hi-fi salesman?

What I'm driving at is this: suppose that you enter a hi-fi temple and engage a hi-fi salesman in conversation. Now, you rightly conceive of his calling as a noble one, similar to that of a dealer in Rembrandts and Titians; and therefore you are surprised, disappointed, wounded, enraged — choose one — when his patience, courtesy, and lucidity in answering your queries seem to fall short of the ideal. In case you are (a) trigger-tempered and (b) equipped with a firearm, it is at this point that I beg you to refrain from potting the salesman, while you reflect that he, a mere human being after all, has his crosses to bear also and that the customer just before you may have been one of the heavier ones. I who thus admonish you am a hi-fi salesman; and I can assure you that while, taken as a whole, the people who enter hi-fi sales rooms are probably as pleasant a group to deal with as can be found in the human race, a few pass through the portals who, upon their departure, leave the salesman muttering to himself. (If he is capable of spiritual heroism he may merely be muttering I Corinthians 13, but he'll be muttering it desperately.)

So that you may gain some notion of what varieties of customers may have beaten you to the salesman and sabotaged his *savoir-faire* (or so that you may appreciate the possible advantages of abandoning bird watching in favor of hi-fi-customer watching), let me catalogue some species of the genus *Hi-Fi Shopper* which may be observed in the vicinity of Kalamazoo, Michigan, an active hi-fi city.

Species number one, the Masochist, may be charitably regarded as a victim of his milieu. He would agree with an assertion made recently in a glossy magazine that the typical hi-fi salesman is "a supercilious fellow who isn't

really a salesman at all. He is, at least in his own mind, a theoretical physicist. . . ." (Actually, in *my* own mind I am Charles Van Doren.) The Masochist wants to be browbeaten into buying. Most of us are so accustomed to being high-pressured that we welcome a low-pressure approach with a feeling of relief; the Masochist is affronted when he is not high-pressured. "*Well*," says he, "if you don't *want* my business I'll take it elsewhere." I may conservatively aver that I harbor a modest amount of missionary zeal, yet I fear I cheat the Masochist of his birthright: I do not fix him with a sincere gaze, supported by sincere teeth and a sincere necktie, and proclaim that — yes! — he should have custom hi-fi *right now;* I do not intone that the only conceivable place to buy it is *right here*, where my superior knowledge and judgment have caused to be gathered a complete selection of the only hi-fi components worth considering. In brief, I am subversive. Happily, I encounter far fewer hi-fi Masochists than one might expect in view of the hard-sell nature of our economy.

A semi-sibling of the Masochist is the Prescription Hunter. He wants custom hi-fi, all right, but he doesn't want to *choose*. Confront him with as many as three speaker systems, for instance, and his knees turn to jelly. He wants a prescription; to be told: "You want this, and this, and this." Since I am inclined to insist, for the sake of the small inner voice if for nothing else, that the speaker system at least be chosen by ear, I lose one of these chaps now and then. He goes out with a worried look, saying that he'll be back, but he won't be. One sympathizes with him, as no doubt a physician sympathizes with the patient who demands a flat diagnosis in a case where several diagnoses seem equally possible; but one has one's integrity and one's Hippoklipschic Oath to look to. The patient can always find some one to tell him that he has tired blood, and the hi-fi Prescription Hunter can always find someone to write one.

As often as not, the prescription will be written by a Self-Appointed Expert. This bird, as he impinges upon the life of the hi-fi salesman, exhibits a number of unlovable characteristics. One endeavors to be philosophical about him; one recognizes that hi-fi, like politics, baseball, religion, or any other pursuit that commands passionate devotion, will inevitably produce its crop of self-appointed experts; but it remains hard to clasp him to the bosom in fraternal love. For example, I am engaged in conversation with a customer utterly innocent of technical knowledge and utterly uninterested in acquiring any. I have just gotten around to recommending a certain amplifier when a Self-Appointed Expert of the Ready-Knowledge-Dropper subspecies, who has been hovering on the fringe of the conversation registering frowning disapproval, feels obliged to break in and point out that amplifier B would be a better choice because the over-all feedback loop is carried over fewer stages. This pronouncement he can and does defend with a ten-minute dissertation on feedback theory, including a digression into the question of whether the ultralinear output connection is not simply a means of applying some local feedback. Sometimes I can salvage this customer; at other times my loss is the nearest Bagnabox dealer's gain. For another example, the Self-Appointed Expert is prone to assume that the mere fact that we don't carry a certain brand of component automatically guarantees its superiority; in other words, my judgment is reliably rotten. What we have is for the herd, not for the real connoisseur. He may persuade his friends and acquaintances, and even some strangers, that he has the key to the mystic truth. For some, he does have it; others he leads expensively astray. When he condescends to enter our store, it is to sniff, to argue, but seldom to buy (although after about ten hours of talking, his conscience — he has one — compels him to buy a new stylus or some other small item from us).

What with this fellow and the Masochist, I find myself falling squarely between two stools. Since I run a small operation and can't carry even a third of all the component lines available, I make a modestly herculean effort to carry the "best" and the "best-buys," where data for forming such judgments seems available, and to carry components classifiable as "as good as" in the large number of cases where no final judgment can honestly be made. As noted, this effort is wasted: for the Self-Appointed Expert, because he Knows Better; for the Masochist, because I will not trumpet the superiority of my judgment with the sublime assurance of a major prophet.

Another species, the Cat's-Paw, comes into my ken because the Self-Appointed Expert does occasionally send someone to our store. The Cat's-Paw arrives knowing just what he wants; what he does not know is why the Self-Appointed Expert has written the prescription. The Expert wishes his friend to serve as a guinea pig in trying out something new and dubious. The fact that if it is *really* dubious we do not carry it matters not. We'll special-order it; we'll stand behind it if it's no good; and if it *is* good the Expert will order one for himself — from a big-city catalogue house.

Yet another species executes an occasional end run around me to the catalogue house: the Price Hunter. It is fairly easy to be philosophical about him. He'll be around as long as it is human nature to take the cash and let the credit go. There is a way this chap really can hoist my hackles, however. To wit, by spending several hours mining me for knowledge and advice and *then* announcing that he can get the same stuff out of a catalogue for less money. Brethren, this is dirty pool. If you have your eye on certain equipment and are going to buy on price, and if your local dealer stoutly declines to be dickered down to the level of certain mail-order outfits which — not having to give the kind or amount of service that a local dealer must—can shave even net prices somewhat, then get the price issue disposed of at once and depart. Thus do you *Continued on page 120*

* New Transcription-Type Tone Arm Makes Collaro World's First True High Fidelity Changer

When you select your high fidelity system—an amplifier with low distortion and low noise level, a speaker capable of reproducing the entire audible range—you want to make certain you pick the right record player. Because that's where the music begins. That's why today's fine high fidelity systems require the all new Collaro—*the turntable that changes records*—featuring the revolutionary transcription-type tone arm.

The new arm is one-piece, counter-balanced and will take any standard cartridge. Resonances are below the audible level. Between the top and bottom of a stack of records there's a difference of less than 1 gram in the tracking weight as compared with 4 to 8 grams on conventional changers. This insures better performance for your precious records and longer life for your expensive styli.

It's worth noting that Collaro quality is so well recognized that leading American manufacturers of fine console units incorporate Collaro into their instruments in order to achieve the best possible performance in a record player.

In addition to the transcription-type arm, the Collaro Continental features:

Four speeds, manual switch that permits playing single record or portion of a record; jam proof mechanism, hold the arm in mid-cycle and it won't jam; automatic intermix, plays 7", 10" or 12" records in any order; automatic shut-off after last record has been played; wow and flutter specifications, ¼ (0.25%) RMS at 33⅓ RPM, superior to any changer in the world; muting switch and pop filter to eliminate extraneous noises; extra heavy duty 4-pole induction motor; heavy rim-weighted, balanced turntable for fly wheel action; removable heavy rubber turntable mat; pre-wiring for easy installation; attractive two tone color scheme to fit any decor; factory custom-testing for wow, flutter, stylus pressure and correct set-down position. Reflecting their custom English craftsmanship Collaro changers are tropicalized to operate under adverse weather and humidity conditions. The base, in blond or mahogany, is optional at slightly extra cost and the Collaro mounts easily and quickly on a pre-cut mounting board or base.

When you buy your Collaro, you're buying professional quality equipment at a record changer price. Collaro prices start at $37.50. The Continental, featured above, is $46.50. (Prices are slightly higher west of the Mississippi.)

ROCKBAR Corporation

FREE: Colorful new catalog, containing guide on building record library plus complete Collaro line.

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Rockbar is the American sales representative for Collaro Ltd. and other fine companies.

by ROLAND GELATT

music makers

STATISTICS by the barrelful have been promulgated to attest the remarkable interest of America's citizenry in good music. We are told that we spend more money on concerts than on baseball, etc., etc. The incredible infancy of the RCA Victor Society of Great Music will now provide further ammunition for the statisticians of our developing musical appetites. This joint RCA and Book-of-the-Month Club venture was launched just after Christmas. Ten weeks later, 250,000 members had been signed up. What the membership will be by the time this column appears in print is anybody's guess. It does not seem beyond the realm of possibility that the million mark may be reached before the year is out.

RCA and BOMC put forth an almost irresistible inducement to join by offering new members Toscanini's recordings of the nine Beethoven symphonies for $3.98. Even people basically "anti-club" in their buying habits were attracted by this premium. Recently, the Society has been advertising as an alternate premium the complete *Well-Tempered Clavier* of Bach played by Wanda Landowska—again for $3.98. By means of split runs and other mail-order testing procedures, the Book-of-the-Month Club has discovered that the Landowska set is bringing in large numbers of new members. Toscanini keeps drawing as heavily as ever, while Landowska adds substantially to the ranks—indicating a high degree of sophistication in America's mass market for music.

The extraordinary success of this club has prompted RCA and BOMC to get together on another similar undertaking, this time in conjunction with the Metropolitan Opera Association. Next fall will see the debut of the RCA Victor-Metropolitan Opera Club. Without doubt there will be another whopping premium to gather opera lovers into the fold, though what this will be has not been announced. Samuel Barber's *Vanessa* (performed by the original Metropolitan cast) and *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Tebaldi and Bjoerling) will be among the first of the new club's offerings. It is emphasized that all opera recordings put out by the club will be made available simultaneously as regular RCA Victor record releases. You won't have to join the club to buy the merchandise.

This new tie-in between RCA and the Met means that more and more of Victor's complete opera recordings will be made in New York rather than abroad. Already one of the recordings originally scheduled to be taped in Italy this summer has been cancelled. Rossini's *Barber of Seville*, with Roberta Peters as Rosina, will now be recorded in Manhattan Center as one of the new Metropolitan Opera productions instead of at the Rome Opera House. Just when it will be made is as yet undecided. The Metropolitan must now begin to integrate recording sessions into its future schedules. It would seem reasonable to assume that they will take place just before or just after the Met's regular season.

The agreement between RCA Victor and the Metropolitan Opera Association does not, of course, affect existing contracts between Met stars and the various large record companies. RCA will not be able to record singers under exclusive contract to competing labels. However, Victor's own operatic roster, plus that of its European associate, Decca-London, will give the new club a pretty impressive assortment of Metropolitan artists.

SPOKEN ARTS RECORDS, now on its own following a parting of the ways with Westminster, is about to release an LP with the provocative title "The Psychology of Sexual Intercourse." It takes the form of a discussion between the well-known psychoanalyst Dr. Theodor Reik and two of his disciples, Dr. and Mrs. E. Kronhausen; and it opens—most appropriately—with the introductory music to *Der Rosenkavalier*. "The value of this record," says Spoken Arts vice-president Arthur Luce Klein, "is not so much what is said but how it is said. It demonstrates anew that a spoken-word record plays a role quite different from a book dealing with the same material. By the way it presents its subject—a carefully prepared conversation—this record of 'The Psychology of Sexual Intercourse' banishes factors that have deformed the subject, the fearful silence enforced by decades of prejudice, the crude obscenities. It shows a positive and objective way of discussing sex that is both fruitful and healthy." French-born Mrs. Klein rather expects the sales of the record to be fruitful and healthy as well.

RECORD CHATTER: Capitol Records will put up a million-dollar record manufacturing plant in Los Angeles to supplement the LP facilities of its factory in Scranton, Pa. It is expected to be in operation by April 1959. . . . George Feyer, the Hungarian cocktail pianist whose records have been Vox best sellers for many years, has switched his allegiance to RCA Victor. His first recording for the RCA label will be out this spring. . . . E. R. Lewis, chairman of the Decca Record Company Ltd. (London Records in the United States), reports that his firm last year exported merchandise to this country and Canada "equivalent to about one day's total British exports to those countries." Decca-London produced thirty million records out of a total of seventy million for the British industry as a whole. . . . Manuel de Falla's unfinished opera-oratorio *L'Atlantida*, now completed from the composer's sketches by his onetime pupil Ernest Halffter, may receive its first performance at La Scala this year. Falla's brother, after years of negotiation, has turned over publication rights to G. Ricordi of Milan. Many a Spanish nose is out of joint as a result. It had been assumed that the honor of publishing and introducing *L'Atlantida* would belong to Falla's native city of Cádiz.

Available in

May

Opera

DIE MEISTERSINGER VON NÜRNBERG

A star-studded album which the *London Times* calls "Wonderful . . . an elegant performance." FERDINAND FRANTZ *(Hans Sachs)*, ELISABETH GRÜMMER *(Eva)*, RUDOLF SCHOCK *(Walther)*, BENNO KUSCHE *(Beckmesser)*, MARGA HÖFFGEN *(Magdalene)*, GOTTLOB FRICK *(Pogner)*, GERHARD UNGER *(David)* and others. with Choruses of Berlin State and Municipal Operas, Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral, and the Berlin Philharmonic conducted by RUDOLF KEMPE.

5 records. **Angel Album 3572 E/L (35575-76-77-78-79)**

(Illustrated line-by-line libretto)

LA FORZA DEL DESTINO — HIGHLIGHTS

MARIA MENEGHINI CALLAS, RICHARD TUCKER. CARLO TAGLIABUE. ELENA NICOLAI. NICOLA ROSSI-LEMENI and RENATO CAPECCHI in selections from Angel's complete recording which the *N. Y. Herald Tribune* described as "A showcase of dazzling operatic singing."

(Leaflet of Italian-English texts) **Angel 35432**

(*La Forza del Destino* is available, complete, on three Angel Records: 35199-200-201 or in gala factory-sealed album 3531 C/L)

A Thrilling Angel Debut

EILEEN FARRELL in GRAND OPERA

Long awaited, this collection of eight great arias—marking Eileen Farrell's debut on the Angel label—surpasses all expectations, and undoubtedly will be rated one of the great records of the year. Gluck: *Divinités du Styx* (Alceste); Weber: *Ozean, du Ungeheuer* (Oberon); Verdi: *Ernani, involami* (Ernani); Ponchielli: *Suicidio!* (La Gioconda); Tchaikovsky: *Adieu, Forêts* (Jeanne d'Arc); Massenet: *Il est doux, il est bon* (Hérodiade); Debussy: *Air de Lia* (L'Enfant Prodigue); Menotti: *To this we've come* (The Consul). Philharmonia Orchestra. Thomas Schippers, *Conductor.* **Angel 35589**

Piano

GIESEKING plays MOZART and CHOPIN

The keyboard master in Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 24 in C Minor, K. 491 and the Chopin Barcarolle, Op. 60. Philharmonia Orchestra. Herbert von Karajan, *Conductor.*

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Violin

IGOR OISTRAKH plays BEETHOVEN

The brilliant son of David, already acclaimed for his other Angel Records, performs the Beethoven Violin Concerto. Pro Arte Orchestra. Wilhelm Schuechter, *Conductor.*

Angel 35516

Orchestral

BEECHAM conducts SCHEHERAZADE

Sir Thomas Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic infuse Rimsky-Korsakov's beloved score with new life and color—very hi-fi but with fidelity to the music, too. Vivid album cover by Marc Chagall. **Angel 35505**

KLEMPERER conducts BRAHMS SYMPHONY NO. 4

Final album in the Brahms symphony series conducted by Otto Klemperer. *Note:* Symphony No. 1 (35481), Symphony No. 2 *and* Tragic Overture (35532), Symphony No. 3 *and* Academic Festival Overture (35545). All with Philharmonia Orchestra. **Angel 35546**

TWO GAY BALLETS

Ballet suites from Lecocq's MAM'ZELLE ANGOT and Glazounov's BIRTHDAY OFFERING—the latter recently seen here in the Royal Ballet production—played with foot-tapping zest by the Royal Philharmonic under the baton of Robert Irving. **Angel 35588**

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HAROLD C. SCHONBERG MURRAY SCHUMACH CARL MICHAEL STEINBERG JOHN S. WILSON

CLASSICAL

ALBERT: *Tiefland*

Gré Brouwenstijn (s), Marta; Dodi Protero (s), Nuri; Judith Hellwig (s), Pepa; Ruth Nixa (s), Antonia; Kerttu Metsälä (c), Rosalia; Hans Hopf (t), Pedro; Waldemar Kmentt (t), Nando; Paul Schöffler (b), Sebastiano; Eberhard Wächter (b), Moruccio; Oskar Czerwenka (bs), Tommaso; Vienna State Opera Choir and Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Rudolf Moralt, cond.
EPIC SC 6025. Two 12-in. $7.96.

There were piano giants in the earth when Eugen d'Albert flourished (1864–1932). He studied with one of them (Liszt) and married another (Teresa Carreño), and he himself stood among the mightiest. But his heart was in the lyric theater. During his long lifetime he poured out more than twenty operas. Only two of these works have had any stage history to speak of: *Tiefland* (Prague, 1903) and *Die Toten Augen* (Dresden, 1916). Grove's *Dictionary* characterizes these works as displaying Puccinian sensationalism and German solidity. *Tiefland* I find a curious mixture of dullness and inspiration; which is to be equated with German solidity, and which with Puccinian sensationalism, is anybody's guess.

The libretto, drawn from a Catalonian drama, combines the most improbable elements of Verdian melodrama with the most maudlin aspects of *verismo*. It concerns a lonely shepherd, Pedro, who is tricked into leaving his mountain fastnesses and descending into the evil "Tiefland" (lowland) by Sebastiano, a villainous landowner, who promises to make the beautiful maid of the mill, Marta, Pedro's bride. Marta, however, is the unwilling mistress of Sebastiano, and he has rigged the marriage to quiet gossip and clear the way for his own union with an heiress. He has no intention of giving up Marta but apparently contemplates an extravagant *ménage à quatre*. On his wedding night Pedro finds out what a dupe he has been made and decides to return to the highlands; but Marta, who has fallen in love with him, begs him to take her along or else to kill her. He goes her one better by taking her along and killing Sebastiano (with his bare hands).

The absurdities and inconsistencies of the plot are legion, the characters mere stereotypes. There are some pretty vigorous stage situations, however, and enough good music to make the opera well worth adding to the more adventurous listener's repertoire. Pedro's first act aria, the so-called *Wolfserzählung*, is brutally effective (and foreshadows Mandryka's first act aria in Strauss's *Arabella*). The long and touching monologue of Marta, *"Ich weiss nicht, wer mein Vater war"*—recorded memorably by Emmy Destinn, who sang the role at the Metropolitan in 1908—is, in its use of the interval of a falling diminished second, a stroke of genius, as in the almost Hebraic pathos of its vocal line, accompanied by solo strings only. The most beautiful part of the score, though, is the expansive orchestral melody that accompanies the first act ensemble, *"Ja, ich bin bereit."* One is struck with the similarity between this great tune and the equally great one (again, for orchestra only) that closes the second act of *Tosca*.

The new recording is in every conceivable way better than the older SPA version. On the practical side, it gets almost as much of the opera on two discs as SPA got on three. Both make approximately the same cuts, suggesting that they are traditional ones. As to the singers, Epic's are immeasurably finer. Gré Brouwenstijn's voice has much in common with De los Angeles', pure and chaste, handled with the utmost intelligence and control, the top B flat a very exciting thing. She plays down the luridness of Marta's part and lends it more of humanity than it really has. The same remark applies to Schöffler's Sebastiano, raised by the singer's great artistry almost to credibility. Oskar Czerwenka, who sings the patriarchal Tommaso, also arouses enthusiasm; and Hans Hopf's strenuous Pedro is a model of headlong simplicity (whether by nature or art). A word of praise is owing the Canadian soprano Dodi Protero, too, for her fetching characterization of the innocent little village maiden Nuri.

The orchestra performs its part (frequently more interesting than the vocal parts) with admirable clarity and precision; and although more than two hours are crowded onto the four sides, the engineering is always bright and resonant.
D.J.

ARNOLD: *Symphony No. 2; Tam O'Shanter; Beckus the Dandipratt*

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Malcolm Arnold and John Hollingsworth, conds.
EPIC LC 3422. 12-in. $3.98.

Cheerful, tuneful music by Malcolm Arnold, a composer who has written a great deal for the films and nevertheless has managed to retain his good taste. Fine

performance and recording. A "dandipratt," one hastens to inform one's American readers, is an English street urchin and not what you might think. A.F.

AURIC: *Bonjour Tristesse*

From the sound track of the film.
RCA VICTOR LOC 1040. 12-in. $4.98.

Adieu bonheur. A.F.

BACH: *Chorale Preludes (12) from the Orgelbüchlein; Toccata, Adagio and Fugue, S. 564*

André Marchal, organ.
ZODIAC 335. 12-in. $3.98.

A pleasing demonstration of the rather generous endowments of M. Marchal's studio organ in Paris. One or two of the stops seem to have a touch of asthma, but the rest are agreeable and the full organ makes a splendid sound. The performer's excellent pedal technique shines in the Toccata, and that movement and the Fugue receive a lively reading. The sound is very clear but, as I suppose it must be under the circumstances, rather dry and two-dimensional. N.B.

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor")*

Clifford Curzon, piano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Knappertsbusch, cond.
LONDON LL 1757. 12-in. $3.98.

An orthodox and effective performance in which Curzon's fluent pianism is well blended with Knappertsbusch's forceful statement of the orchestral part. Unfortunately, the recording seems to be suffering from master troubles. I have two copies. They came from different lacquers, and their sound is not at all alike. Neither is outstanding. The faults are a weakness in the middle registers and an unpleasant peaking in the highs; moreover, both are too deeply engrained to be corrected with the controls on my preamplifier. Those interested in the set would be wise to wait until Decca-London does some further lab work on it. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor")*

Rudolf Firkusny, piano; Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond.
CAPITOL PAO 8419. 12-in. $4.98.

Both pianist and conductor turn in performances worthy of their well-documented skills, but once more Steinberg is ill-served by the engineers. Balance and dynamics are both faulty. The piano always dominates, and at times it seems to be accompanied by a thirty-piece orchestra in the next room rather than a symphonic group of the Pittsburghers' strength. Although the piano ranges from *p* to *ff* (the mikes are too close to permit a real *pp*), the orchestra rarely gets much above *mf*, never yields the big solid chords essential for its full partnership in this work. All the lightly scored instrumental detail is soft in focus, and some is altogether lost.

One can hope that, as in the case of the disappointing Beethoven Seventh disc, the stereo edition is a better account of the performance. Meanwhile the Gilels-Ludwig set (Angel) remains a more brilliant and intense version, the best of the recent editions. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: *Overtures: Leonore No. 3, Op. 72a; Egmont, Op. 84*
†Brahms: *Overtures: Tragic, Op. 81; Academic Festival, Op. 80*

New York Philharmonic Symphony, Bruno Walter, cond.
COLUMBIA ML 5232. 12-in. $3.98.

This is a big orchestra in a small room. Evidently the product of Columbia's Thirtieth Street studio, these performances—although obviously from different sessions—consistently lack the richness and body that comes from well-controlled reverberation.

The *Leonore* No. 3 is new and welcome, the *Egmont* is from a sampler, and the Brahms from the complete edition. In all cases the point of view reflects the excellence associated with the conductor; but if sound is of equal consideration to interpretation, other versions are preferable. R. C. M.

BEETHOVEN: *Short Piano Works, Vol. I*

Rondos: Op. 51, Nos. 1 and 2; Fantasia, Op. 77; Six Bagatelles, Op. 126; Six Ecossaises; *Für Elise;* Minuet in G.

Artur Balsam, piano.
WASHINGTON WR 401. 12-in. $4.98.

The first volume of a needed edition of Beethoven's short piano works, this must be accepted on the basis that anything is better than nothing. The recording is afflicted with that false, warbly underwater sound one had thought piano discs had outgrown. 'Tis sad, too, because the performances are very good ones and, in a couple of cases, there is no alternate version in print. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: *Thirty-two Variations in C minor; Andante, in F ("Andante favori"); Ecossaises, in E flat; Six Bagatelles, Op. 126*

Andor Foldes, piano.
DECCA DL 9964. 12-in. $3.98.

Three of these selections duplicate music in the lamentably poorly engineered Balsam edition of the shorter piano works. The sound of Foldes' instrument is by no means the best piano recording I've heard, but it is tolerable and the performances are good. The Op. 126 Bagatelles are late Beethoven—significant, beautifully scaled miniatures. This music alone justifies the price of the record, though the other works are more than likely to contribute their share to your delight in it. R.C.M.

BRAHMS: *Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 102*

Mischa Mischakoff, violin; Frank Miller, cello; NBC Symphony, Arturo Toscanini, cond.
RCA VICTOR LM 2178. 12-in. $4.98.

Toscanini participated in regrettably few concerto recordings. The present one stems from a broadcast of November 13, 1948. Mischa Mischakoff and Frank Miller were, respectively, concertmaster and first cellist of the NBC Symphony. The violinist has a rather wiry tone; but he also has sturdy rhythm, fine musicianship, and, as might be expected, the ability to submerge his individuality in Toscanini's. Miller is a brilliant cellist, who plays with all the technique in the world, consistently good intonation, and a warm tone—though not much of the latter quality comes through the dated sound of the recording. This disc, however, must be classed as an important historical item. Toscanini's unfaltering strength, his ability to keep a piece of music in constant motion, his wondrous musical logic are all present here. Hardly anybody has been able to duplicate this kind of control and virility. H.C.S.

BRAHMS: *Overtures: Tragic, Op. 81; Academic Festival, Op. 80*—See Beethoven: *Overtures: Leonore No. 3, Op. 72a; Egmont, Op. 84.*

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 3, in F, Op. 90; Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond.
ANGEL 35534. 12-in. $4.98 (or $3.98).

Angel is releasing Klemperer in a chronological Brahms cycle, of which the first two symphonies already have appeared. In years to come, this series will be among the monuments of twentieth-century conducting on records, along with the four Brahms symphonies conducted by Toscanini (and Klemperer enjoys much the better recorded sound). Klemperer's ideas about the Brahms F major are powerful and unhurried. (He even takes the first-movement repeat.) The third movement may sound a little flat to those who like the cello theme to well up from the orchestra; whatever the temptation to do otherwise, the conductor observes the *mezza voce* mark at the beginning of the movement, and holds the Philharmonia down. The entire performance is full of felicities that Klemperer gets merely by following the composer's indications. In the *Academic Festival* he introduces a few unorthodox tempos but carries them off brilliantly. A wonderful record. H.C.S.

CARTER: *Eight Etudes and a Fantasy*—See Porter: *Quartet No. 8.*

CHOPIN: *Scherzos (4)*

Alexander Uninsky, piano.
EPIC LC 3430. 12-in. $3.98.

Reliability without much excitement: that

about sums up this disc. Uninsky is a fleet technician, but somehow he seldom provides complete musical satisfaction, despite details here and there that are ravishing examples of piano playing. The trouble is that there are soft spots in each of the scherzos where Uninsky fails to rise to the big moments. Rubinstein remains the exemplar. H.C.S.

CHOPIN: *Scherzos (4)*

Ruth Slenczynska, piano.
DECCA DL 9961. 12-in. $3.98.

Slenczynska here is disappointing, especially after the brilliant Liszt disc she made for Decca a short time ago. She is very sentimental about the music, drags lyric sections interminably, prefaces each run with a ritard leading into it, and in general plays like anything but a finished artist. H.C.S.

DVORAK: *Symphony No. 2, in D minor, Op. 70*

Hallé Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli, cond.
MERCURY MG 50159. 12-in. $4.98.

It is easy to understand why the Hallé Orchestra under Sir John Barbirolli is generally ranked as the second best in England and one of the finest in Europe. It has a rich tone, an unpressured air about it, and exceedingly capable first-desk men. This is a superb disc of the Dvořák D minor, easily the best since the now discontinued Schmidt-Isserstedt version (London). Barbirolli conducts it as the big late-romantic work it is, reveling in its sonorities yet at all times keeping the choirs in proportion. Only once does he grow careless—in one section of the third movement, where he lets the strings swamp the important countermelody. Otherwise, resonant, large-scale playing that sets the music in its best light. Very clear recorded sound, too. H.C.S.

FRANCAIX: *Le Diable boiteux; La Cantate de Méphisto; Songs*

Hugues Cuénod, tenor; Doda Conrad, bass; instrumental ensemble, Jean Françaix, cond.
WESTMINSTER XWN 18543. 12-in. $4.98.

Le Diable boiteux is a chamber opera for two voices, employing a cynical, somewhat surrealistic text by Françaix himself; in brief, the devil shows the hero the world, and the latter learns that wearing horns can signify several different things. *La Cantate de Méphisto,* for bass voice and orchestra, is the devil's philosophic *apologia pro vita sua* taken from the *Faust* of Paul Valéry. The music of both works strongly reflects the diablerie of Stravinsky's *Histoire du Soldat,* but it also has the perky, tuneful, light touch characteristic of Françaix. The disc is completed with two songs for tenor and guitar, the first a magnificent *Prière du Soir* in the declamatory, arioso style, the second a cheerful *Chanson* about *"une amie en tétins bonne rondeur."* Superb performance and sensationally fine recording help this production enormously. A.F.

GIROUST: *Missa Brevis: Gaudete in Domino semper; Motet: Super flumina Babylonis*

Edith Selig, Denise Monteil, sopranos; Jeannine Collard, contralto; Michel Hamel, tenor; Georges Abdoun, Xavier Depraz, basses; Marie-Claire Alain, organ; Orchestra and Chorus of Jeunesses Musicales de France, Louis-Martini, cond.
WESTMINSTER XWN 18544. 12-in. $4.98.

A most interesting composition from a field that is practically unknown, even to musical scholars. Good work has been done in exploring French sacred music of the time of Louis XIV, and as a result we have on records some splendid pieces by Lully, Lalande, and M.-A. Charpentier; but from the time of Lalande's death (1726) to the Revolution of 1789 there yawns a vast void. Now comes Westminster with a couple of works by François Giroust (1738–1799), for years director of religious music for Louis XVI. The present Mass, in fact, was written for Louis's coronation in 1775, and the motet a few years before. Both compositions are eye openers. They are full of elegant melody and expressive harmony; and while counterpoint is not featured, it is handled very skillfully when it does appear. The Mass is, as might be expected, a festive affair, with trumpets and drums, but a good deal of it is mellifluous and it is by no means devoid of feeling. The *"Osanna"* has an almost Beethovenian breadth. In the cantata that Giroust made out of *By the Waters of Babylon* there are some bits of tone painting that might have been written a century later; the soprano air *"In salicibus"* is especially lovely.

In view of the unusual nature of this music, it is a pity that the recording is far from first-rate. The sound of the voices is consistently blurred and distant, and of the orchestra one can usually hear only top and bottom. N.B.

GOEB: *Symphony No. 3*
Weber: *Symphony on Poems of William Blake*

Warren Galjour, baritone (in the Weber); Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond.
COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 120. 12-in. $5.95.

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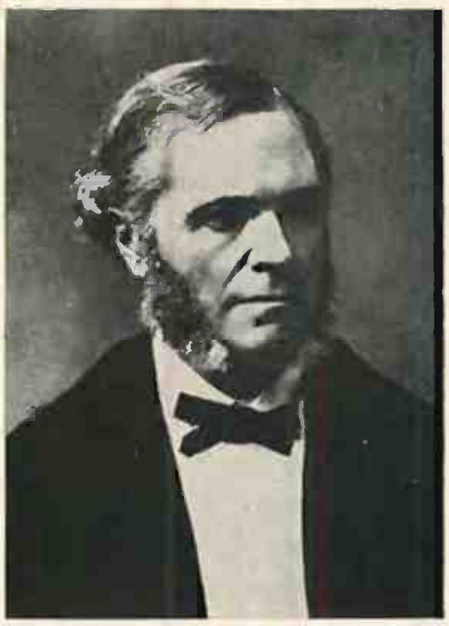
Big Ideas for Folk with Big Loudspeakers



César Franck

CONGRATULATIONS to Mercury for having taken advantage of the recent visit to this country of the renowned French organist Marcel Dupré to record some of the seventy-one-year-old artist's matchless performances. M. Dupré is one of the most communicative organists before the public today, and far too little of his work is available on modern discs. Choosing one of the nation's finest instruments, the newly rebuilt Aeolian-Skinner organ at St. Thomas' Church in New York City, the company evidently spared no effort to achieve a faithful re-creation of the sumptuous sound it is capable of producing. The engineer kept his hands off the controls, once they were set, and allowed M. Dupré free rein to express his ideas of interpretation and registration.

And his ideas are big ones. In both the *Pièce héroïque* and the *Chorals* his playing is along broadly conceived lines. The climax at the end of the first *Choral* is tremendous. By contrast, his relatively subdued, introspective treatment of the second *Choral* makes the big passages seem even grander. The only point at which one might cavil is the lyrical middle section of the third *Choral,* where the tempo is a trifle slow, with an accompanying halting effect in the phrasing. There is also a moment towards the end of this *Choral,* as well as one in the *Pièce héroïque,* where the organist was obliged to pause to change stops. These are awkward halts that could easily have been eliminated by a bit of deft tape splicing.

In order to do this recording full justice, it must be played on a system with a big speaker. Those with more modest equipment might be safer with the excellent presentation of the *Chorals* by Jeanne Demessieux on London. But for those whose equipment—and neighbors—can take it, this is a superlative disc. It is to be hoped that it will have many sequels, among them a recording of some of M. Dupré's incomparable improvisations. PAUL AFFELDER

FRANCK: *Pièce héroïque, in B minor; Trois Chorals*

Marcel Dupré, organ.
MERCURY MG 50168. 12-in. $4.98.

The *Mikado* and *Gondoliers:* Non-Savoyard, but Good

In today's swiftly changing world, few things have seemed more immutable than the long-standing association of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company with the Gilbert and Sullivan operas. The duet between Strephon and Phyllis in Act I of *Iolanthe* seems to describe the situation perfectly: "None shall part us from each other . . One in life and death are we," they sing. And certainly these sentiments have been echoed by most old Savoyards, for whom the only authentic performances of the Savoy operas have been those issued with the imprimatur of the celebrated D'Oyly Carte.

But the monopoly, so long enjoyed, has been broken. In 1950, Sullivan's music (and presumably Gilbert's lyrics too) was freed from the shackles of the copyright laws and thrown into public domain. First to take advantage of this new-found gold mine was Allegro-Royale, which three years ago issued a complete *Mikado*. It was a generally disappointing effort, despite a most stylish and engaging performance by the erstwhile D'Oyly Carte star, Martyn Green, as Ko-Ko. His fellow artists had little idea of the necessary style, and they were seldom more than acceptable vocally. The chorus work was distinctly shabby, and often unintelligible, while the recorded sound was weak and fuzzy.

Now Angel presents us with new recordings of the two most popular operas in the entire series, *The Gondoliers* and *The Mikado*. Like the competitive versions on London, both are labeled "Complete," though neither includes the important Gilbertian dialogue. This seems to me a most unfortunate error. I realize that its inclusion by Angel was impossible, since it will not emerge from copyright until 1961; but surely London easily could have managed to provide it.

Angel has made every possible effort to ensure the success of this new venture. The direction has been placed in the knowing hands of Sir Malcom Sargent, no newcomer to these works, as those who know his fine recordings of the Thirties will attest. Raiding the roster of both Covent Garden and Sadler's Wells, Angel has engaged as splendid a cast of singers as England can offer today. The Glyndebourne Festival Chorus is certainly as well drilled and competent a group as its rivals on the London issue; and the Pro Arte Orchestra, on the evidence of these two sets, is far superior to the New Promenade Orchestra, with which Isidor Godfrey works on London. And yet . . . are these new issues so much superior to the older versions?

I should be tempted to say yes, where *The Condoliers* is concerned. Sargent's admirably spirited and musicianly direction of this most entrancing of all Sullivan scores, plus the polished playing of the Pro Arte group, completely outpoint the pedantic, stodgy reading of Godfrey on London.

When one comes to assess the soloists, the problems are more involved. Angel

Sir Malcolm Sargent

has a formidable trio of singers in Richard Lewis, Geraint Jones, and Owen Brannigan; judged purely as vocalists they are undoubtedly superior to their London counterparts. In the Savoy operas, however, beauty of tone and vocal technique are not always quite enough. A sense of characterization is just as important. So, however beautifully Evans sings "In enterprise of martial kind" or "Small titles and orders," he never quite manages to convey the ludicrous side of the Duke, as Martyn Green does on London. As the Don, Owen Brannigan offers an impeccably sung, but rather undistinguished portrait. Richard Lewis as Marco (with a charming "Take a pair of sparkling eyes") and John Cameron as Giuseppe both strike me as being superior to their London vis-à-vis. On the distaff side, I find very little to choose between the two recordings. In each case there is the usual tendency of nearly all English female singers to sound too refined, a prettified sound that makes me feel uncomfortable. Yet in view of the enormous difficulties of establishing a homogeneous style—a Gilbertian style, that is—in a group who do not regularly sing this work together, the result is remarkably effective.

I have considerably more reservations about the Angel recording of *The Mikado*. Perhaps my reaction is almost too personal, for while I can revel in Ko-Ko, Pooh-Bah, the Mikado, and even Nanki-Poo, I find those three little girls insufferable bores. And when they sound, as in this recording, as if they had left that seminary some years ago, I find them extremely irritating. Katisha is, of course, a different matter entirely. I cannot imagine any contralto not throwing herself full-bodied into the role of this terrifying female. But here is Monica Sinclair . . . portraying it very carefully, playing without any malevolence (that I could hear), and acting almost as if it were unladylike to be found in such a role. Loodon's Ella Halman is far, far superior, both vocally and dramatically. Hers is a performance in the Bertha Lewis style, and I can think of no higher compliment to pay her.

Brannigan's Mikado and Evans' Ko-Ko are by no means negligible performances, but they have to meet extremely stiff competition in the superlative performances of Fancourt and Green in the London set, and they just do not make it. Compare Green's incomparably pointed "I've got a little list" (not, of course, the first line of the song, which is too long to quote here) with Evans' good, but by no means as sharply etched, version. Or Fancourt's fantastically demoniac singing of "A more humane Mikado never" with the considerably less sinister rendition by Brannigan. Green and Fancourt both have that little something that makes the difference between good and great. Ian Wallace is a suitably resounding Pooh-Bah; and Richard Lewis a sweet-voiced, though occasionally placid, Nanki-Poo. As in *The Gondoliers*, the chorus is tremendously impressive, for exactly the same reasons. Certainly it would be difficult to fault Sargent's reading of the score or his delicate and well-considered support of the singers. A particularly ravishing reading of the Overture opens the album.

Both Angel albums have the benefit of really superb sound; and it would be unfair to attempt to evaluate this product of 1957 against the London recordings of 1950, or even earlier, since both London sets were originally issued on 78-rpm records. Rumor has it that London now is embarked on new recordings, with the D'Oyly Carte group, of the entire G. and S. repertoire.

J. F. Indcox

GILBERT AND SULLIVAN: *The Gondoliers* (or *The King of Barataria*)

Edna Graham (s), Casilda; Elsie Morison (s), Gianetta; Stella Hitchens (s), Fiametta; Lavinia Renton (s), Vittoria; Monica Sinclair (c), The Duchess of Plaza-Toro; Helen Watts (c), Giulia; Helen Watts (c), Inez; Marjorie Thomas (c), Tessa; Alexander Young (t), Luiz; Richard Lewis (t), Marco Palmieri; Alexander Young (t), Francesco; Geraint Evans (b), The Duke of Plaza-Toro; John Cameron (b), Giuseppe Palmieri; James Milligan (bs-b), Antonio; James Milligan (bs-b), Georgio; Owen Brannigan (bs), Don Alhambra del Bolero. Glyndebourne Festival Chorus, Peter Gellhorn, chorus master; Pro Arte Orchestra, Sir Malcolm Sargent, cond.
Angel 3570 B/L. Two 12-in. $10.98 (or $7.96).

GILBERT AND SULLIVAN: *The Mikado* (or *The Town of Titipu*)

Elsie Morison (s), Yum-Yum; Jeannette Sinclair (s), Peep-Bo; Marjorie Thomas (c), Pett-Sing; Monica Sinclair (c), Katisha; Richard Lewis (t), Nanki-Poo; Geraint Evans (b), Ko-Ko; Ian Wallace (b), Pish-Tush; Owen Brannigan (bs), The Mikado of Japan. Glyndebourne Festival Chorus, Peter Gellhorn, chorus master; Pro Arte Orchestra, Sir Malcolm Sargent, cond.
Angel 3573 B/L. Two 12-in. $10.98 (or $7.96).

This recording of Roger Goeb's energetic, zestful, and brilliantly colored symphony seems to be identical with the one issued on RCA Victor some years ago and now withdrawn. It is a distinguished recording of a distinguished work which one is happy to see back on the active list, but the symphony by Ben Weber on the other side is a much more important piece.

I know of no twelve-tone work by an American that says so much so eloquently as this *Symphony on Poems of William Blake*. It creates a whole new world of sound—as complex, richly organized, and apparently free in association as the plastic textures of a great abstract-expressionist painter—and places it magnificently at the service of Blake's poetry. It achieves, in short, much the same sort of identification between music and poem that is achieved by Alban Berg in *Wozzeck*; and it is not too much to suggest that with this score Ben Weber becomes the Alban Berg of the American twelve-tone school.

The vocal part must be fiendishly difficult, but Galjour performs it superbly. The orchestral performance is equally fine, and the recording leaves nothing to be desired. A.F.

HAIEFF: *Ballet in E*
†Nabokov: *Symboli Chrestiani*

William Pickett, baritone (in the Nabokov); Louisville Orchestra, Robert Whitney, cond.
LOUISVILLE LOU 58-1. 12-in. Available on special order only.

Alexei Haieff's Ballet in E is a light, tuneful entertainment-piece, indifferently recorded. Nicolas Nabokov's *Symboli Chrestiani* is a kind of ecclesiastical *Carmina burana*, based on early Christian inscriptions and excerpts from the writings of early Church fathers. It contains one movement called "The Dove on the Bough." No pigeons on the grass, alas. A.F.

HAYDN: *Concertos for Harpsichord and Orchestra: in C; in F*

Helma Elsner, harpsichord; Reinhold Barchet, violin; Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart), Michael Gielen, cond.
Vox PL 10300. 12-in. $4.98.

The outstanding Haydn release of the year to date and one of the happiest things to appear on records in a long time, this pair of mercurial performances should prove an equal delight to Haydn collectors, classicists, and the general record buyer.

Chances are that both works will be completely unfamiliar. But these lively scores should win friends quickly; and when the brilliant finale of the Concerto in F arrives, the place of this disc among your special favorites should be guaranteed. The music is mature Haydn, turning the baroque style into an ideal vehicle for the composer's own imagination and wit. The performances give him full reign, and the engineering is excellent, supplemented by unusually quiet surfaces on my copy. R.C.M.

HAYDN: *Quartets for Strings: in D, Op. 64, No. 5 ("Lark"); in D minor, Op. 76, No. 2*

Hungarian Quartet.
ANGEL 45018. 12-in. $3.98.

Available recordings of Haydn quartets being dismally few, the thought that Angel may eventually give us the lot in their Library Series is a welcome one indeed. This *Lark* has no real competition; the D minor (*Quinten*) is up against the Budapest edition of Op. 76 complete. I vote for the Angel on two grounds: a sensitive yet full-bodied performance, and clean, well-balanced sound that has the bite of the cello as well as the brilliance of the violin, projecting the group into the room with wonderful realism. R.C.M.

HERBERT: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, No. 2*
†Peter: *Sinfonia in G*

Georges Miquelle, cello (in the Herbert); Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra, Howard Hanson, cond.
MERCURY MG 50165. 12-in. $4.98.

As James Lyons puts it in his notes, "Victor Herbert has no longhair identity today"; but in fact he wrote symphonies and grand operas, was famous as a cello virtuoso, and conducted the Pittsburgh Symphony. His second cello concerto is charming and gracefully written, and the gorgeous performance and recording given it here probably make it sound better than it is. That its composer's gifts lay essentially in the field of light music is clear, but a cello concerto in a light style is not a bad idea.

Johann Friedrich Peter (1746-1813) was a member of the Moravian Brotherhood who, in 1789, was sent from the Moravian mother-colony at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, to supervise music in the branch colony at Salem, North Carolina. There Peter sat himself down and in a period of six weeks composed six string quintets, of which this *Sinfonia* (retitled because it is performed by a string orchestra) is the third. These quintets seem to be Peter's only secular works, and they are said to be the first pieces of chamber music ever written on this continent. The whole series was recorded some years ago as part of the American music project undertaken by the now defunct venture known as New Records. All sound like especially innocent Haydn—tuneful, straightforward, polished—without a trace of the variety, surprise, and revelation that justify one's calling Haydn a genius. The performance by Hanson is magnificent, and the recording is all that could be desired. A.F.

HINDEMITH: *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra; Nobilissima Visione: Suite*

Louis Cahuzac, clarinet; Philharmonia Orchestra, Paul Hindemith, cond.
ANGEL 35490. 12-in. $4.98 (or $3.98).

Louis Cahuzac is probably the most celebrated clarinetist in Europe; more great pieces have been written for him than for any other performer on his instrument since Richard Mühlfeld, for whom Brahms composed his sonatas, trio, and quintet. Rather strangely, he is represented in American LP lists only by this disc. (His recording of the Mozart concerto now has been withdrawn.)

The Hindemith concerto, which Cahuzac and the orchestra play magnificently, is not an easy work to describe. It is less a concerto than a *sinfonia concertante* for wind instruments and orchestra in which the clarinet takes the leading part. It is actually one of Hindemith's most eloquent and grandly scaled symphonies, and yet its texture is consistently open and soloistic. At all events, the concerto is major Hindemith, as is the celebrated *Nobilissima Visione* on the other side. A splendid recording by Otto Klemperer has been the standard disc version up to now; but this new one, part of a series wherein Angel is bringing out many orchestral works by Hindemith under his own direction, has special authority as well as top quality in every respect. A.F.

HONEGGER: *Symphony No. 5*—See Milhaud: *Les Choephores.*

LALO: *Symphonie espagnole, Op. 21*

Leonid Kogan, violin; Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Charles Bruck, cond.
ANGEL 35503. 12-in. $4.98 (or $3.98).

Kogan continues to impress with his concerto recordings. This one includes all five movements of the *Symphonie espagnole*, with the too frequently omitted Intermezzo emerging as the most interesting part of a performance that is rewarding from beginning to end. There is just enough fire in the violinist's interpretation, one that is finely tempered with subtleties of phrasing. There is tonal solidity, too, and it has been well balanced with Bruck's incisive accompaniment. Definitely one of the better versions of this work on discs. P.A.

LISZT: *Organ Music*

Vol. 1: *Variations on Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen; Evocation à la Chapelle Sixtine.* Vol. 2: Fantasy and Fugue on *Ad nos, ad salutarem undam;* Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H. Vol. 3: Mass for Organ; Requiem. Vol. 4: *Ora pro nobis, Litanei; Der Papst-Hymnus; Kirchen-Hymne: Salve Regina; Kirchen-Hymne: Ave maris stella;* Adagio. Vol. 5: Introitus; *Trauerode; Ave Maria von Arcadelt; Angelus: Prière aux anges gardiens.*

Richard Ellsasser, organ.
M-G-M E 3576/80. Five 12-in. $3.98 each.

Although Liszt had been interested in organ playing during the early part of his career, it was not until after the spread in the 1840s of the use of pneumatic levers—a device that made depressing an organ key, previously requiring considerable physical force, more nearly like pressing piano keys—

that he wrote his first work for this instrument. Curiously, this first organ composition, the *Ad nos* Fantasy and Fugue based on a chorale from Meyerbeer's *Prophète*, is probably his best in the field. It is a dramatic, turbulent, grandiose piece, filling its half-hour length with massive chordal passages, coruscating cadenzas, sections of transparent serenity, and a vigorous fugue that quickly succumbs to straight virtuosic ideas.

Five years later, in 1855, Liszt composed a shorter work in much the same vein, the Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H (revised in 1870). The B-A-C-H (B flat, A, C, B) theme lends itself to the highly chromatic treatment that Liszt loved, and we find such treatment even more intensely developed in the *Weinen, Klagen* Variations, composed in 1863. The theme of the latter work was used by Bach as the basso ostinato of the first movement of his cantata *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen* and also in the *"Crucifixus"* of the B minor Mass. Its chromatically descending motive inspired some dense, almost nontonal music, which Liszt shrewdly relieves with a simple, diatonic setting of the chorale *Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan*. Although empty compared to the Bach *"Crucifixus,"* it does establish a mood of anguish (it was inspired by the death of Liszt's eldest daughter), and the repetitiousness can be compensated by skillful registration on the part of the performer.

There remains a body of organ music by Liszt that is relatively unknown and is in a contrasting style. It is not large in quantity—and it is almost all devotional, static, and slow in tempo. Few of these pieces were originally written for organ. *Trauerode* (1860) is a version of *Les Morts*, an oration for full orchestra and male chorus; *Ave Maria von Arcadelt* (1862) is a free setting of a vocal work spuriously attributed to the Netherlands composer; and *Evocation à la Chapelle Sixtine* (1862) combines free treatments of a famous *Miserere* by Allegri and the *Ave verum corpus* of Mozart. *Der Papst-Hymnus* (1863), originally for organ, became part of Liszt's oratorio *Christus*. *Salve Regina* and *Ave maris stella* (after 1868) are, as titled, settings of church hymns. The *Angelus* (1877) is a transcription of one of the piano pieces in the *Années de Pèlerinage*. The Mass for Organ (1879) and Requiem (1883) stem from Liszt's own sacred choral works. The music that exists only for organ includes *Ora pro nobis, Litanei* (1864), the Introitus (1884), and, possibly, the Adagio.

After 1861, Liszt's concentration on sacred music grew; but his interest in the organ was mainly in transcribing for it as a matter of convenience and utility. While this music is not without merit or even aural appeal, more important are its reflections of the relatively unfamiliar style of Liszt's final years, when he was searching for simplicity, even austerity, of expression. Unfortunately, the daring harmonic experiments of Liszt's secular music are missing here (properly so in devotional music), and their omission leaves the organ music rather bland and pallid.

This is best illustrated by the Mass and Requiem, quietly functional, background music vaguely suggesting Gregorian chant and modal harmonic progressions and with Romantic overtones. In the same vein but more substantial are the quite lovely *Trauerode*, the loudly noble *Papst-Hymnus*, the serene *Ora pro nobis*. More conventional and pretty are the *Ave Maria von Arcadelt*, *Evocation*, and *Angelus*.

Mr. Ellsasser plays as usual on the organ of the John Hays Hammond, Jr., Museum in Gloucester, Massachusetts, an appropriately Romantic instrument for Liszt's music. He is at his best in the lyric and devotional music. For the three large works he has the right flair and technical skill for splashy theatrics, but the engineers cannot keep the rapid figurations from blurring or the fortissimo passages from sounding shrill. In a couple of places the organist makes tiny deviations from the score—perhaps justified by the editions he uses; and in one place the pitch of the recording is lowered noticeably, although less than half a tone.

Of other recordings of the *Ad nos* Fantasia, that by Jeanne Demessieux (London) has more sweep, contrast, and exciting accentuation. I have not heard the Pierre Cochereau version, but all his other Oiseau-Lyre recordings have been bad acoustically. Karl Richter gives, perhaps, the best recorded performance of the B-A-C-H Prelude, on his Bach-Liszt organ recital (London). Bruce Prince-Joseph's version, on his "Organ Recital at Columbia University, Vol. 1" (Hi-Fi Record), is clean and colorful, with some original registration. E. Power Biggs plays the work rather stodgily on the overpowering but impressive organ at the Methuen Memorial Music Hall (Columbia). As to the *Weinen, Klagen* Variations, Eduard Nies-Berger has recorded them in a massive but live performance for Concert Hall. Ilona Kabos plays the piano transcription adequately on a Bartók disc.

I do not feel that Mr. Ellsasser and M-G-M have unearthed any neglected masterpieces, but artist and company have performed a valued service in satisfying our curiosity about an obscure corner of musical history and in making it available for study. Perhaps too, the project will stimulate further exploration of Liszt's late works, still largely unknown territory and promising more rewards than the organ music offers. R.E.

LISZT: *"Transcriptions from Opera"*

Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor:* Sextet. Verdi: *Il Trovatore: Miserere.* Bellini: *Réminiscences de Norma.* Weber: *Oberon:* Overture. Berlioz: *Benvenuto Cellini: Bénédiction et Serment.* Wagner: *Tannhäuser: Pilgrim's Chorus; Tristan und Isolde: Liebestod.*

Alfred Brendel, piano.
Vox PL 10580. 12-in. $4.98.

Liszt somehow found time in his busy career to make dozens of transcriptions for the piano—partly to familiarize the concertgoing public with works he admired, and partly to provide himself with brilliant piano redactions of works which they admired. With the latter he took great liberties, writing virtually original compositions upon well-known subjects. The *Réminiscences de Norma* and the pieces by Verdi and Donizetti are of that sort, as are the even finer sets of "reminiscences" of *Sonnambula* and *Don Giovanni*. On the other hand, the Wagner transcriptions and the Weber overture are scrupulously faithful to the originals, and the tempting tidbits from *Benvenuto Cellini* are half fantasy, half fact.

In such works as these the pianist ought to be seen as well as heard; but with a bit of imagination one can picture Mr. Brendel (or, with a bit more imagination, Liszt) flailing away in grand style. Occasionally a passage proves too much for human technique—at any rate, for Mr. Brendel's—but by and large he does a very impressive job. The engineering is rather raucous, even with the volume turned down. D.J.

MILHAUD: *Les Choephores*
{Honegger: *Symphony No. 5*

Geneviève Moizan, soprano; Hélène Bouvier, contralto; Heinz Rehfuss, baritone; Claude Nollier, narrator; Chorale de l'Université (in the Milhaud); Lamoureux Orchestra, Igor Markevitch, cond.
Decca DL 9956. 12-in. $3.98.

Here is the first microgroove recording of one of the greatest vocal works of modern times, the product of collaboration between one of the century's foremost composers (Milhaud) and one of its foremost poets (Paul Claudel), yet the text is not given. To be sure, the savagery, terror, and doom-laden color of the music come through, but how crudely when one cannot follow the words; and how badly Decca has treated its artists by forcing them to address us in a vacuum. Still and all, the recording and performance are magnificent, and this must rank as one of the most remarkable releases of the year.

The performance of the richly dramatic symphony by Honegger on the other side is also extremely good, and since the several previous LPs of it have been withdrawn, it rules the field. A.F.

MOZART: *Mass No. 16, in C, K. 317 ("Coronation"); Vesperae Solennes de Confessore, in C, K. 339*

Wilma Lipp, soprano; Christa Ludwig, contralto; Murray Dickie, tenor; Peter Bender, bass; Vienna Oratorio Choir; Pro Musica Symphony (Vienna), Jascha Horenstein, cond.
Vox PL 10260. 12-in. $4.98.

The *Coronation* Mass may not be the finest of Mozart's Masses, but there is

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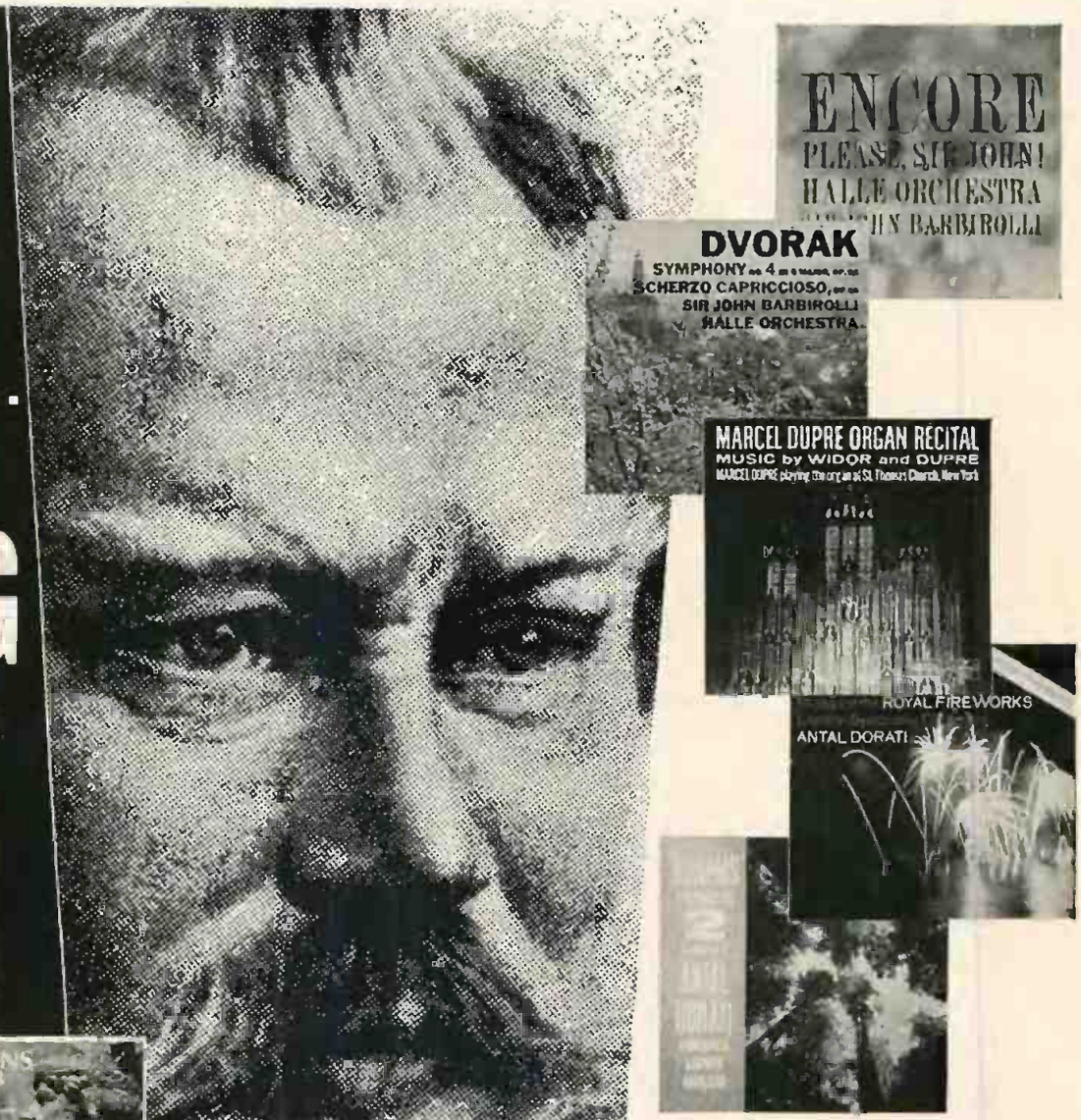

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Brahms: Symphony #2 in D Major, Op. 73. Minneapolis Symphony, Dorati. **MG50171**

enough first-class music in it to warrant close acquaintanceship. Especially striking are the dramatic and probing *"Et incarnatus est"* and the lovely Benedictus. The latter is nicely sung here by the solo quartet, and indeed the performance as a whole is marked by an agreeable competence on the part of all concerned rather than by any outstanding individual qualities. The same is true of the Vespers, somewhat more imaginatively done and recorded with a warmer sound on Angel 35409. In the *"Laudate Dominum"* of the Vespers, however, Wilma Lipp here sings more steadily than Angel's Erna Berger. Latin texts and English translations are provided. N.B.

MOZART: *Symphony No. 35, in D, K. 385 ("Haffner"); Divertimento in B flat, K. 287*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.
ANGEL 35562. 12-in. $4.98 (or $3.98).

The delicious Divertimento, a sextet for two horns and strings, is deliciously played. The Philharmonia strings sing gloriously; there don't seem to be too many of them, and they play as cleanly and as sensitively as a fine quartet. The *Haffner* performance is less winning. In the first movement one cannot hear the theme when it is muttering away in the violas. The Andante gives the impression of being constantly whipped on, as if Karajan equated tranquillity here with boredom, while the Minuet, on the other hand, seems a little sluggish. Recommended for the Divertimento, and despite slightly unreal violin tone. N.B.

NABOKOV: *Symboli Chrestiani*—See Haieff: *Ballet in E.*

PETER: *Sinfonia in G*—See Herbert: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, No. 2.*

PONCHIELLI: *La Gioconda*

Anita Cerquetti (s), La Gioconda; Giulietta Simionato (ms), Laura; Franca Sacchi (c), La Cieca; Mario del Monaco (t), Enzo Grimaldo; Ettore Bastianini (b), Barnaba; Cesare Siepi (bs), Alvise Badoero. Soloists, Chorus, and Orchestra of the Florence May Festival, Gianandrea Gavazzeni, cond.
LONDON A 4331. Three 12-in. $14.94.

La Gioconda distributes so many effective moments among so many of the singers that it would be difficult indeed to find a performance with no merit at all. Conversely, a perfect performance is, perhaps, not to be hoped for. For one thing, leading mezzos and contraltos don't like to sing the small and glamorless part of La Cieca. But no second-string singer can do justice to the role; it calls for a superb actress with a voice worthy of *"Voce di donna,"* the best piece in the opera. Franca Sacchi is no more successful as La Cieca than are her rivals on the discontinued Cetra (Maria Amadini) or the Urania (Rina Cavallari). The Urania set, indeed, is so far below the artistic achievements of the London and Cetra ones, except for the singing of Fernando Corena and Giuseppe Campora, that comparison can safely be limited to the latter two, particularly since the Cetra operas seem to stand a good chance of being reissued.

What Cetra has, of course, is Callas—the pre-Angel Callas, her voice more luxuriant and her temperament no less flaming. To compare Anita Cerquetti's Gioconda with Callas' is a revelation. Cerquetti brings to the role intelligence, musicianship, and an appealing voice, invariably prettier than Callas' above high G (but surprisingly small; the engineering in her previous London recital LP is misleading in this respect—she is closer to a lyric than a dramatic soprano). Callas burrows beneath the surface of Ponchielli's music to the bedrock of Victor Hugo's drama and Boito's extravagant but splendid poetry. Cerquetti's *"Suicidio"* is touching; Callas' makes one's palms sweat. And yet what Cerquetti does with the part is considerably more than merely acceptable. Her singing and acting become progressively better throughout the opera, and the whole of Act IV is genuinely impressive.

With Del Monaco it is the same old tale: too much lung, too little heart or head. The duet *"Laggiù nelle nebbie,"* its gentle fifths completely foreign to the bellowing style, he sings in falsetto, since he lacks enough control to produce a true *mezzo voce*. But Enzo Grimaldo is, for the most part, his kind of role, and there is no denying the sheer animal excitement he imparts to *"Cielo e mar."* Bastianini is a vocally and dramatically convincing Barnaba (as is Cetra's Paolo Silveri), but Cesare Siepi is not in good voice in the somewhat redundant role of Alvise; Cetra's Giulio Neri almost makes one forget that Alvise's Act III scene (*"Sil morir ella de'!"*) is the dullest thing in the score. The two Lauras are excellent in different ways: Cetra's Barbieri projects the part more convincingly, London's Simionato sings with ravishing opulence. The Cetra sound is not significantly inferior to London's (Side Two of the latter is cut at a much higher level than the rest), but there can be no doubt that Cavazzeni delivers the more brilliant *Dance of the Hours.* D.J.

PORTER: *Quartet No. 8*
†Carter: *Eight Etudes and a Fantasy*

Stanley Quartet (in the Porter); Members of the New York Woodwind Quintet (in the Carter).
COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 118. 12-in. $5.95.

Each of Quincy Porter's string quartets is a shade more beautiful than the one that preceded it, but each is altogether masterly in the finesse and originality of its conception. The Eighth Quartet is notable for a somewhat impressionistic nostalgia, but it also demonstrates that subtlety is not inconsistent with strength.

Elliott Carter's *Eight Etudes and a Fantasy* is a prime example of the way in which the musical mind takes fire when confronted with purely musical problems. The work is an outgrowth of a classroom demonstration of the uses of wood-wind instruments. It is full of extraordinary resonances and colors set forth with enormous gusto and zest; it explores not only timbre but the relationships of timbre to such things as rhythm and harmonic spacing. In short, it covers every aspect of its subject vividly, excitingly, and with the highest degree of imagination. Thanks to the music itself, to the excellent recording, and to superb playing by both ensembles, this is perhaps the most distinguished disc in the whole Composers list. A.F.

POWELL: *Divertimento for Violin and Harp; Divertimento for Five Winds; Trio for Piano, Violin, and Cello*

Herbert Sorkin, violin; Margaret Ross, harp (in Divertimento for Violin and Harp). Fairfield Wind Ensemble (in Divertimento for Winds). Helura Trio (in the Trio).
COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 121. 12-in. $5.95.

The music of the New York composer, Mel Powell, here makes its first appearance on discs. Earliest is the Divertimento for Violin and Harp, which is very tuneful, crystal-clear in line and texture, and altogether winning in its sentiment. Next is the Divertimento for Five Winds, a rigorous tick-tock piece which reveals the fact that Powell once studied with Hindemith. The latest and best work on the record is the Trio—grandly scaled, very rich in invention, and beautifully proportioned. Performances and recordings are first-class. A.F.

PROKOFIEV: *Concertos for Violin and Orchestra: No. 1, in D, Op. 19; No. 2, in G minor, Op. 63*

Isaac Stern, violin; New York Philharmonic Orchestra, Dimitri Mitropoulos, cond. (in No. 1); Leonard Bernstein, cond. (in No. 2).
COLUMBIA ML 5243. 12-in. $3.98.

Beautiful on all counts. How these versions compare with the competition, it would be difficult to say. The current Schwann catalogue lists no less than seven discs of No. 1 by David Oistrakh, each with a different orchestra, and three of No. 2 by Leonid Kogan. But Stern stands up to the concertos superbly, and he is given the best of support from the conductors, the orchestra, and the recording engineers. A.F.

PROKOFIEV: *Lieutenant Kije: Suite, Op. 60*
†Stravinsky: *Le Chant du Rossignol*

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond.
RCA VICTOR LM 2150. 12-in. $4.98.

Although the Prokofiev is on Side 1, the important thing here is the Stravinsky, of which no other recording is now available. Based on the Chinese fairy-tale

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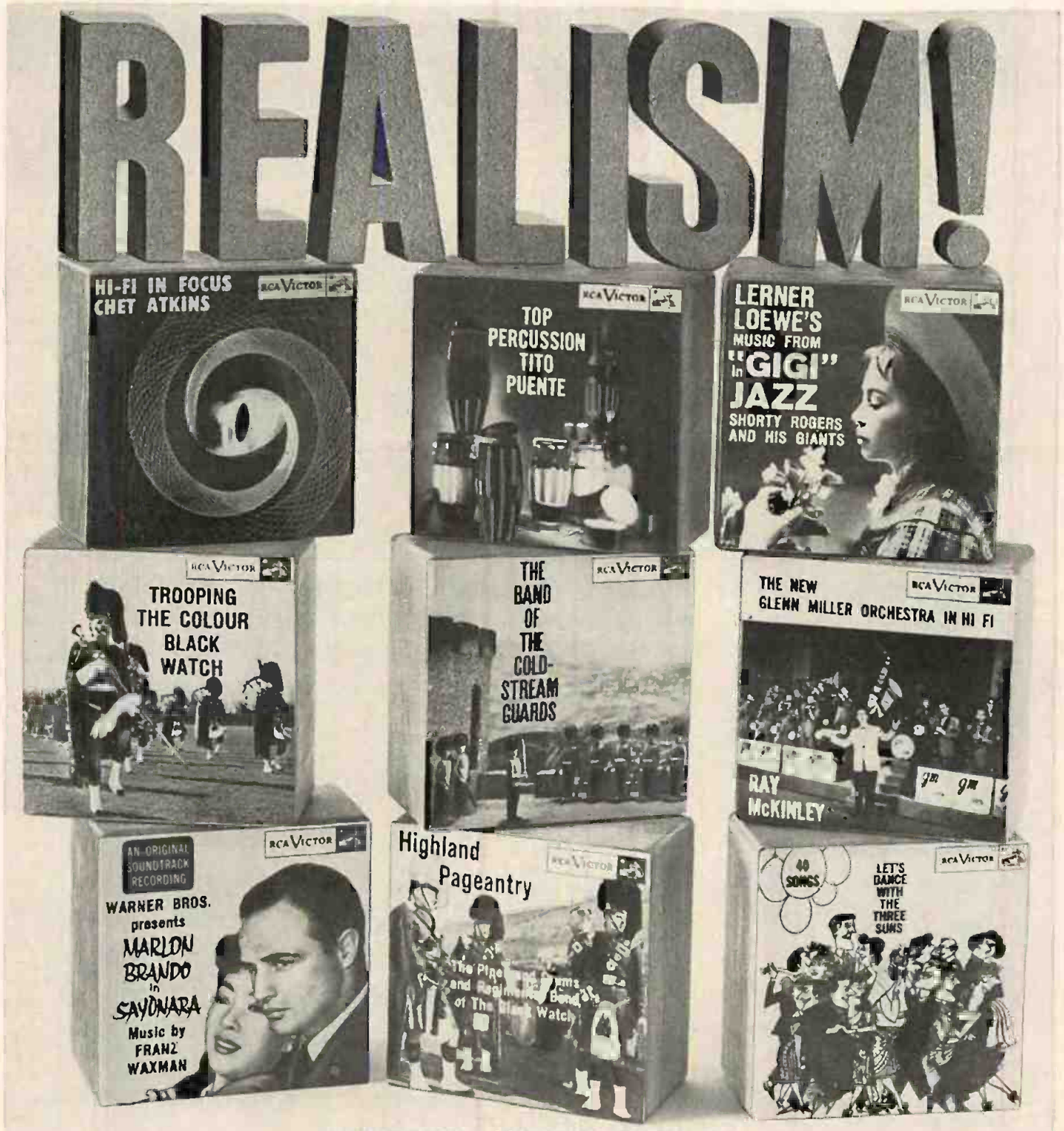
REALISM!



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opera *Le Rossignol, The Song of the Nightingale* completes a great quartet of early Stravinskyan masterpieces whose other three members are *The Fire Bird, Pétrouchka,* and *The Rite of Spring.* A brilliant, colorful, zestful, and individual piece, it is perhaps a little more taxing to perform than the famous ballets, being essentially a network of soloistic lines as ornate, complicated, and subtly intertwined as the threads of a Chinese embroidery. It demands a great virtuoso orchestra and the last word in transparent registration; in this case it has been given both, but the interpretation might well have more lightness and humor. Reiner is not famous for sly wit, and that quality would be valuable here; it is absolutely essential for *Lieutenant Kije,* of which there are many competing versions in the catalogues.

A.F.

PROKOFIEV: ***Romeo and Juliet, Op. 64*** **(excerpts)**

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.
RCA Victor LM 2110. 12-in. $4.98.

A handsome package which, in addition to the record, contains an eleven-page pamphlet wherein one may find a long essay by Robert Lawrence and five delightful line drawings by Eugene Karlin; each page has the dimensions of a twelve-inch record sleeve, and the whole thing is a very distinguished example of fine printing. The disc contains eleven excerpts from the score of the ballet, very sensitively played and magnificently recorded. For my money, the best disc of selections from Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* is the one by Stokowski, a past master of the luxuriant, romantic sonority this music requires; but the present release presents more than twice as much of the score as the Stokowski version and is very beautifully done.

A.F.

ROSSINI: ***La Comte Ory***

Sari Barabas (s), Comtesse Adèle; Jeannette Sinclair (s), Alice; Cora Canne-Meijer (ms), Isolier; Monica Sinclair (c), Ragonde; Juan Oncina (t), Comte Ory; Ian Wallace (bs), the Tutor; Michel Roux (bs), Robert; Glyndebourne Festival Chorus and Orchestra, Vittorio Gui, cond.
Angel 3565 B/L. Two 12-in. $10.96.

I defy anyone not to fall in love with this opera at first hearing. Except for some surprising *longueurs* in the accompanied recitative, there is not a dreary moment from start to end. Describable as the Swan of Pesaro's last will and testament as a composer of comic opera, it was composed in 1828 to a libretto by Eugène Scribe, the patron saint of the "well-made play," who here brought to his task an enthusiasm and a genuine wit which few of his hundred later products display.

The plot concerns one of the amorous adventures of Comte Ory, a thirteenth-century nobleman who, disguised as a holy hermit, has taken up residence outside the castle of the beautiful Countess of Formoutiers. Though she is a widow faithful to her husband's memory, the Countess consults the hermit about her love for her cousin Isolier (who happens to be Comte Ory's page). His counsel is so like what she wants to hear that

Continued on page 58

A Great Callas Performance Sparks a Bright New *Barbiere*

Some day, perhaps, we will get an uncut *Barber of Seville.* It will take eight sides, just as the complete *Marriage of Figaro* does, but it will be well worth the added space and expense. The greatest shortcoming of this new Angel *Barber* is its lack of reverence for Rossini's manuscript: every conventional cut is observed and, what would be worse if the artists weren't so superb, the vocal line is loaded with roulades and flourishes that might well have astonished Rossini himself, hardened though he became to the vandalism of singers. But let me add immediately that this is the most brilliant and exciting performance of the opera I have ever heard, on or off records.

And how the miraculous Callas sings! Her voice has not sounded so fresh and controlled and sweet since the days of her *Puritani.* Those who listen to this recording will find that she has regained all of Elvira's wondrous facility in producing beautiful high Bs and Cs. The fact is, of course, that Rosina should not be singing high Bs and Cs. Callas is supposedly doing the part in the original mezzo-soprano range. In reality this is the merest ruse; for though she sings the part without transposing keys, she transposes phrases up a sixth or an octave at will, choosing to sing the original notes only when they lie comfortable for her and show her voice off to the best advantage. That she could have done it throughout as written there is no doubt; she takes the first low C sharp in Rosina's first aria without the slightest effort. But one somehow cannot complain at the odd mixture of sound, half Lily Pons, half Conchita Supervia, that results from this eclecticism. The upper range is so marvelous that one would not willingly miss it; and the chest notes are a blanket of velvet.

It is easy to get lost, however, in the technical adroitness of this performance. More remarkable still is the dramatic insight. There is nothing of the usual *strepitosa* in Callas' interpretation. She sees Rosina as a shy creature, a perfect lady who indulges in plots because she has been put into an impossible position by her guardian rather than for sheer joy of intrigue. She inflects the role with a myriad of delicate touches, never forgetting that Rosina has a charming sense of humor but never overemphasizing that quality as is often done. Her seriousness when she chides "Lindoro" for his supposed treachery seems almost to remove Rosina from the world of comic opera; there are overtones of the enkindled Norma here.

The other members of the cast deliver, with hardly an exception, performances worthy of coupling with Callas'. Luigi Alva disposes of the vocal demands with aplomb and is a very funny Almaviva (e.g., his superbly nasal *"Pace e gioia sia con voi"*). I cannot remember a finer Dr. Bartolo than Fritz Ollendorff, and his Italian is a joy to hear. The little arietta he sings after Rosina's lesson aria to show her how much better they used to write music in his day is irresistibly comic. Nicola Zaccaria is somewhat gruff as Maestro Basilio, but his *"La calunnia"* is an impressive display of controlled breath and nicely calculated climax.

Angel Records

EMI's Walter Legge, Zaccaria, Callas, Gobbi, and Alva listening to playback.

The Figaro of Tito Gobbi is the kind of performance that grows richer the more one listens to it; nice bits of insight begin to reveal themselves at the second or third hearing that at first pass unnoticed in the general brilliance of his singing and acting (e.g., the mixture of servility, sly patronage, and affection in his aside to the irate Almaviva, *"Signor guidizio, per carità"*).

The two rival *Barbers* have a number of things to recommend them. Both De los Angeles (RCA Victor at the moment, but soon to be transferred to Angel or Capitol) and Simionato (London) stick closer to the printed score and sing Rosina in the authentic mezzo range. And though Bastianini (London) is an unsuccessful Figaro, I have always thought Gino Bechi (RCA) a splendid one, despite his harsh vocal production. Furthermore, the De los Angeles-Bechi set has the great advantage of Serafin's leadership; Angel's Alceo Galliera is several pegs below him, but he has the Philharmonia to work with. As a total experience, however, neither the RCA nor London versions challenges this new Angel offering.

David Johnson

ROSSINI: ***Il Barbiere di Siviglia***

Maria Meneghini Callas (s), Rosina; Gabriella Carturan (s), Berta; Luigi Alva (t), Count Almaviva; Mario Carlin (t), Fiorello; Tito Gobbi (b), Figaro; Fritz Ollendorff (bs), Dr. Bartolo; Nicola Zaccaria (bs), Don Basilio; Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra, Alceo Galliera, cond.
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she is about to invite him into the castle when he is unmasked by his disgruntled tutor who, along with Isolier, has been sent out to find him and fetch him home. Act II takes place inside the castle where the peaceful sewing chorus of the ladies is interrupted first by a storm and then by a group of female pilgrims—dressed as nuns in the Glyndebourne production—who beg asylum from the pursuit of Ory and his companions. The Countess, apparently untroubled by the fact that the pilgrims sing in tenor and baritone voices, takes them in. The lady pilgrims are, of course, none other than Ory and his entourage. The situations become progressively funnier. There is a rousing drinking chorus sung by the "nuns," a scene in which the Countess reacts with astonishment to the amorous gratitude of "Soeur Colette," and the glorious final trio in which the disguised Ory makes love in the dark to his page Isolier, who in turn takes the same opportunity to make love to the Countess. The ending is disappointingly precipitous: the return from the Crusades of the Countess' brother is announced and Ory and his men take a hasty departure. But there is an exhilarating little march to send them—and the audience—off happy.

For the most part *Le Comte Ory* is as Italian as *Il Barbiere* or *Cenerentola*. There is the same fantastic decoration of the vocal line; the quick patter on a single note while the orchestra spins out inimitable Rossini melodic fragments, at once sly and tender; the perfect handling of large ensembles; the expected yet constantly surprising crescendos. Combined with these elements, however, there are some decidedly new ones which may be called French because French musicians eagerly took them up: the enchanting sewing chorus at the opening of the second act and the trio, "*A la faveur de cette nuit obscure*," are examples.

This performance is, I truly regret to say, disappointing. None of the singers is inept or incapable of doing a reasonable job with the difficult *fioritura*. But one suspects that most of them were chosen with that consideration only in mind. The bubbling fun, the high spirits, the opportunity for significant or comic inflections go for very little here. Ory himself, Juan Oncina, is the least satisfactory comedian of all, despite the rich endowment of his part. The Countess, Sari Barabas, produces all of her voice in the throat and is as inept in comedy as Oncina, but her command of coloratura fireworks is impressive. The best actor of all is Ian Wallace as the tutor, but he gets very little opportunity to prove it since most of his long aria is cut in the recording. The conducting of Vittorio Cui goes a long way toward making up for the dramatic deficiencies of the singers, however. He gets his orchestra to sigh and sneer and chortle and titter in a way marvelous to hear.

The production is in the original French, though much of it is enunciated as only the British can enunciate French. I am ignorant of Miss Barabas' place of origin, but surely she studied the language "after the scole of Stratford atte Bowe." The recorded sound is not as impressive as, say, the new Angel *Turandot*, but 'twill more than do. D.J.

SCHOENBERG: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 42; Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 36*

Alfred Brendel, piano; Wolfgang Marschner, violin; Symphony Orchestra of the Southwest German Radio, Michael Gielen, cond.
Vox PL 10530. 12-in. $4.98.

In his notes on the jacket of this record, Hans Keller argues against what he calls "The twelve-tone bogey." His point is that Schoenberg's music is to be listened to like any other music and that the approach by way of intellectual analysis obscures rather than clarifies its essential meanings. This argument is worth dwelling on because it is symptomatic of a change in the status of Schoenberg's work for which time and the phonograph record are responsible. Twenty years ago this music was so bewildering that one had to approach it intellectually in order to get anything out of it at all. Today it can be heard without that prop. Analysis is certainly useful in the case of Schoenberg; but now it comes after the music, as with Beethoven or Mozart, and not as its preliminary conditioner.

Both the concertos here recorded are essentially romantic works in the line of Brahms and Mahler. They are infinitely complex, somewhat austere, but their austerity is imposed on romantic expressiveness in order to give it shape. Both are inordinately difficult for all concerned, and both receive astonishingly brilliant performances. This recording must supersede previous discs of the same works because it deals more adequately with the lacy, feathery, ethereally coloristic effects in which all of Schoenberg's scores abound. A.F.

SCHUBERT: *Fantasy in C, Op. 159; Sonata for Violin and Piano, in A, Op. 162*

Rafael Druian, violin; John Simms, piano.
Mercury MG 50120. 12-in. $4.98.

There seems to be a current renascence of interest in Schubert's violin-piano works. Decca recently issued an excellent recording of the A major sonata and two of the sonatinas, and Angel followed this with a series of three discs containing the complete works for this combination. The present recording is in some ways less distinguished than its predecessors, but nevertheless contains the best performance of the great C major Fantasy to date. Unlike Johanna Martzy, on Angel, Druian is not reticent about drawing a full volume of sound from his instrument. He and his partner rightly conceive of the work less as chamber music than as a big, bravura piece written to be performed by virtuosos in a concert hall. Simms, however, is a less satisfactory technician than Angel's Jean Antonietti, especially in the taxing *tremolandos* which open the work. Still, as a whole the performance gives a good idea of the bold virility of this music.

The sonata, written ten years earlier, is not bold and virile but feminine and reticent; and unhappily neither performer changes his approach sufficiently to mark the contrast. Too frequently, dynamic markings are ignored in favor of a uniform *mezzo forte*, and at one point in the slow movement, marked "*Dolce*" (one of those luxuries of the lazy composer which Schubert rarely allowed himself), the instrumentalists take quite the other course and play the passage in a bouncy, jovial fashion. D.J.

SCHUMANN: *Symphony No. 1, in B flat, Op. 38 ("Spring")*
†Smetana: *My Country: No. 2, Vltava ("Die Moldau")*

Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra (in the Symphony), Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Ferenc Fricsay, cond.
Decca DL 9960. 12-in. $3.98.

More and more, Ferenc Fricsay continues to impress as one of the most talented of the younger conductors. This performance is alert-sounding, intelligent, and it conveys the romantic quality of the music. Even the last movement, taken at a faster pace than usual, nevertheless has quality. Too many conductors consider Schumann's orchestral work a good take-off point for fantastic temperamental excursions. Not Fricsay, who has temperament but keeps it under control.

Decca has placed the first two movements on the first side, unfortunately, for the second movement leads directly into the third, and continuity is thus broken. Recently London got the entire symphony on one side; surely Decca could have taken care of three movements. Fricsay, by the way, takes every single repeat, including the one in the last movement (very rare). I think this performance the best available, with due respect to Krips's genial work on the above-mentioned London disc. Krips, however, has the more logical coupling—a fine performance of the Fourth Symphony. He also enjoys better recording than Fricsay does. The Decca version of the *Spring* Symphony inclines toward unresonance; and in Smetana's *Moldau*, which Fricsay conducts most stylishly, the sound is hollow. H.C.S.

SMETANA: *My Country: No. 2, Vltava ("Die Moldau")*—See Schumann: *Symphony No. 1, in B flat, Op. 38 ("Spring")*.

STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Don Juan, Op. 20; Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24; Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28*

Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond.
Epic LC 3439. 12-in. $3.98.

The distinction of being the first to get all three of Strauss's most popular tone poems on a single record belongs to Vox; but Szell's performances are superior to Horenstein's on that earlier

Continued on page 62

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Up the Jungfrau—with Schumann, Byron, and Beecham

THREE POETS above all captured the imagination of Romantic composers—Shakespeare, Byron, and Goethe; and of the three, it was Byron who most inflamed them. Byron: rich, handsome, dissipated, romantically handicapped (the club foot), aristocratic scorner of convention and mocker of society—and a genius too. Small wonder that composers adopted Byronic poses, set him to music, and tried all they could to identify themselves with him, even to the point of clothing themselves in Byronic dress and turning an affected profile to the world.

Although *Manfred,* written in Venice in 1817, has three acts and many scene changes, it obviously was never meant for the stage, and Byron was careful to call it a "dramatic poem." In idea and treatment it is strongly suggestive of Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* (which Byron claimed he had never read) and of Goethe's *Faust,* which his friend Monk Lewis had translated for him orally. Reviewing it in 1820, Goethe wrote: ". . . a wonderful phenomenon, and one that closely touched me. This singularly intellectual poet has taken my *Faustus* to himself, and extracted from it the strangest nourishment for his hypochondriac humor. He has made use of impelling principles in his own way, for his own purposes, so that no one of them remains the same; and it is particularly on this account that I cannot enough admire his genius." Goethe complains about "the gloomy heat of an unbounded and exuberant despair"; yet he concludes, "the dissatisfaction we feel is always connected with esteem and admiration."

As the poem opens, Manfred bids spirits arise to obey his bidding. He seeks forgetfulness; they cannot help him. He hears a voice in an incantation: "I call upon thee! and compel/Thyself to be thy proper Hell! . . . Nor to slumber, nor to die,/Shall be in thy destiny." (This motivating thought runs throughout the poem.) He attempts suicide on the Jungfrau but is saved by a chamois hunter. He summons the Witch of the Alps, but she can give him no comfort. He invades the regions of Arimanes and has him summon up Astarte (who represents Byron's half-sister, and the object of a probably incestuous passion). The poetry here is incandescent: "And I would hear yet once before I perish/The voice which was my music—Speak to me!/For I have call'd on thee in the still night,/Startled the slumbering birds from the hush'd boughs/ . . . I have outwatch'd the stars,/And gazed o'er heaven in vain in search of thee . . ." Manfred now awaits his death. He spurns the efforts of the Abbot who wants to give him spiritual aid, and he dies damned.

The point of the poem is the identification of Byron with Manfred: his wandering; his incapacity for emotional or spiritual relief; his conclusion that "knowledge is not happiness, and science/But an exchange of ignorance for that/Which is another kind of ignorance." Manfred cannot rest, knows not what he asks nor what he seeks. He is the intellectual rebel set apart from humanity. There is a certain amount of posturing and strutting, and a good deal of Gothic nonsense too; but the poem remains a white-hot, tortured cry containing some of the greatest lines that the nineteenth century conceived. And in Scene 4 of the last act, Manfred's final soliloquy in depth of emotion and purity of language comes close to Shakespeare.

Schumann idolized Byron. He had read *Manfred* in 1829 and made a note

Robert Schumann

in his diary to that effect: "*Manfred von Byron—schrecklich!*" In 1848 he composed incidental music for the poem. He told a friend that he had never devoted himself to any composition with such lavish love and power.

Schumann did not use the entire poem. He cut about a third. For his score he composed an overture (the only section commonly played today), four musical sections to Act I, seven to Act II, and four to Act III. Much of this is "melodrama"—that is, musical background against a recitation (the role of Manfred is a speaking, not a singing role). Two or three numbers are choruses. Several are vocal solos. An orchestral entr'acte prefaces Act II. All of the music is present in this recording, though Beecham has made a few additional cuts in the poem, notably the Herman-Manuel dialogue in Act III: no great harm here. To compensate, Beecham has added some poetry not selected by Schumann, including the great tower soliloquy.

On first hearing, the music may appear minimal. Certain things immediately stand out: "When the moon is on the wane," with its use of the main theme from the *Symphonic Etudes;* the exquisite entr'acte; the songs of the spirits. But on the whole, one's attention is riveted on the rolling, sonorous voice of George Rylands, who reads the poetry with full respect not only for its meaning but also for its own musical values, divorced from Schumann's contribution. When one replays the discs, the composer's commentary takes on more and more value. Naturally the music is episodic and undeveloped, but I know nothing in the entire body of Schumann's works to surpass the poignancy of the background to Manfred's apostrophe to Astarte. A positively otherworldly quality is communicated. Only in several cases does the inspiration fall off: the conventional Latin hymn at the end, and the chorus of demons. Otherwise this is Schumann at his most imaginative and his most delicate. There is not too much of it, for a good section of *Manfred* is declamation, but what there is remains unforgettable.

The recording is beautiful. Beecham, with his usual taste, does not try to push the orchestra into prominence during the melodramas, contenting himself with quietly reinforcing the mood. (Even the engineers have coöperated; the volume at the end of the Astarte sequence drops to such a pianissimo that the music is actually difficult to hear.) In the well-known overture, he leads a stirring, romantic performance without ever becoming mannered, and he is fortunate in his flexible chorus and competent cast of singers and actors. There is only one slight fluff. Some editions of the poem contain a misprint in Act III, when the Abbot refers to the "sacred" peasantry. Byron wrote "scared" peasantry. Laidman Browne, reading the line, says something like this: "My pious brethren—the sacr—*scared* peasantry." His tiny slip should have been edited out of the tape. One other mild complaint: the liner notes are interesting as far as they go, but they are woefully inadequate. The year of composition of the poem is not mentioned, nor is a clue given as to when Schumann composed the music. It seems a pity that in a two-disc recording as unusual as this, annotator Charles Burr was not given enough space to develop the interesting ideas he only broaches.

HAROLD C. SCHONBERG

SCHUMANN: *Manfred, Op. 115*

Speakers: George Rylands (Manfred); Jill Bacon (Witch of the Alps and Astarte); Raf de Torre (Nemesis and the Spirit Genius of Manfred); Laidman Browne (A Spirit and Abbot of St. Maurice); David Enders (Chamois Hunter and Servant of Manfred). Singers: Gertrude Holt, Claire Duchesneau, Niven Miller (Song of the Spirits); Niven Miller, Glyndwr Davies, Ian Billington (Incantation). BBC Chorus, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond.

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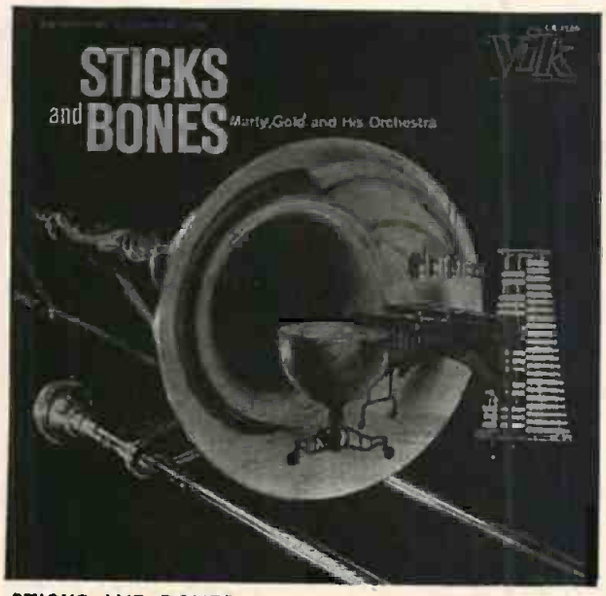

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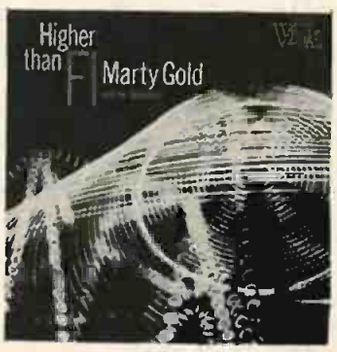

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Continued from page 58

disc, placing this new release at the head of the best buys.

Till, irrepressibly devilish and moving at a fancy pace toward his come-uppance, provides the best part of the trio. A virtuoso performance without a slack moment, this version rates among the finest we have. In *Don Juan* the brisk clip is a little too much. (Playing tricks on the run is one thing, making love another.) It's exciting, nonetheless. *Death and Transfiguration* provides admirable contrasts and rings triumphantly in its culmination.

The recorded sound appears to have added resonance, but retains a clean over-all quality. The highs are really quite bright, giving the feeling of some lack of body down below, so that a boost of bass and middle is desirable. R.C.M.

STRAUSS: *Der Rosenkavalier, Op. 59: Orchestral Suite; Don Juan, Op. 20*

Philharmonia Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond.
CAPITOL PAO 8423. 12-in. $4.98.

The Philharmonia has amply proven its affinity for the *Rosenkavalier* music in the complete Angel recording, but this generous orchestral potpourri from the opera (largely the same as the well-known Antal Dorati arrangement) makes for interesting comparison. Whereas Von Karajan kept the orchestra under close and sometimes oppressive surveillance, reining them in and letting the singers hold sway, Steinberg's more indulgent hand permits them to expand heartily. The magnificent horn section romps through the Introduction to Act I and the waltzes from Acts II and III in fine style, and the oboe and celesta in the Presentation of the Rose shimmer "like shook foil." This is not a greater performance than that given by Von Karajan of the same parts of the score; the latter contains subtleties which I am still in the process of exploring. But it is a thoroughly captivating one and easily the best *Rosenkavalier* suite on the market.

The *Don Juan* on Side Two shares in the high spirits. Steinberg does a commendable job of contrasting the delicate oboe solo in the middle of the score with the famous, declamatory tune for four unison horns that follows it. The acoustics partake of the best qualities of EMI and Capitol engineering. D.J.

STRAVINSKY: *Le Chant du Rossignol* —See Prokofiev: *Lieutenant Kije: Suite, Op. 60.*

STRAVINSKY: *The Rite of Spring*

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.
LONDON LL 1730. 12-in. $3.98.

A marvelously sensitive and brilliant recording, but the performance, like the ones previously recorded by Ansermet, is on the slow side and lacks the tension and fire of Stravinsky's own. A.F.

TARTINI: *Concertos (6) for Violin and String Orchestra, Op. 2*

Renato Biffoli, violin; I Musici Virtuosi di Milano, Dean Eckertsen, cond.
Vox DL 373. Three 12-in. $14.94.

Giuseppe Tartini, an important figure in the history of the violin and violin playing, was a much esteemed composer in his day, but little of his music is played nowadays except for the famous *Devil's Trill* Sonata. The present album is therefore especially welcome, despite reservations to be mentioned.

In general style and layout these concertos are very similar to Vivaldi's. Particularly attractive, to me, are the fast movements of No. 2, which have a jolly, healthy, Handelian vigor, and the expressive slow movements of Nos. 4 and 5. Tartini, like Vivaldi, was good at inventing well-defined, ear-catching themes, but he was not always as successful as the older master in working them out engrossingly. The performance is adequate, but remarkable neither for insight nor for technical polish; and the sound is of the close-up variety—faithful enough but a little rough. N.B.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Toward the Unknown Region; Serenade to Music; Fantasia on Greensleeves; The Wasps: Overture*

London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Sir Malcolm Sargent, cond.
ANGEL 35564. 12-in. $4.98 (or $3.98).

Angel inexplicably fails to provide the texts of the two choral pieces, though the music of the Serenade is so utterly breath-taking in its beauty and felicity that one can hear it with pleasure even without knowing what the singers are mouthing. The piece was written in 1938 to honor Sir Henry Wood on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his career. Its text is drawn from *The Merchant of Venice*, and the music is the very essence of Shakespearian romance.

Toward the Unknown Region, written in 1905 to a text from Whitman, was the first composition of Vaughan Williams to make a great impact on English musical life. Today it sounds dangerously close to the stuffy, official English choral style of its time, and it is mainly of interest as an historic document.

The two choral pieces have not previously been available on microgroove, at least in this country. The two short orchestral pieces with which the disc is filled out exist in numerous competing versions. Performances throughout are excellent. The recording of the orchestral sound is quite good, that of the choral sound rather pasty. A.F.

VERDI: *Overtures: La Forza del destino; Nabucco; I Vespri Siciliani; La Traviata: Preludes to Acts I and III*

London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond.
MERCURY MG 50156. 12-in. $4.98.

It takes only a few moments of listening to this record to realize that Dorati and Verdi are not strangers to one another. Seldom, apart from a Toscanini performance, have I heard these overtures delivered with as much surging dramatic impact and as disciplined orchestral execution. Mercury's big, brassy sound is perfectly suited to this music, too, which helps to make this a most stirring listening experience even for jaded ears. P.A.

WEBER: *Symphony on Poems by William Blake*—See Goeb: *Symphony No. 3.*

More Briefly Noted

Bach, C.P.E.: Six Sonatas from the *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments.* Lyrichord LL 63.
Rather mechanical playing by Elisabeth Katzenellenbogen, piano, and unprofessional tape editing. An unhappy state of affairs since this is some interesting—and in the finales of Nos. 4 and 6 particularly—really expressive music.

Beethoven: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in C, Op. 15; Sonata for Piano, No. 27, in E minor, Op. 90. Angel 35580.
Genuine John Bullish, and somewhat heavy-handed, performances by Solomon and the Philharmonia Orchestra under Herbert Menges. The Sonata, one of the less well-known, is, however, rather rare on a single disc; and one is grateful to find it easily available.

Beethoven: Sonatas for Piano: No. 27, in E minor, Op. 90; No. 28, in A, Op. 101. Unicorn UNLP 1051.
Ernest Levy is energetic and forceful, if his playing does not display real majesty. The effect of the large and reverberant auditorium where the sonatas were recorded is open to considerable question.

Boccherini: Quintets, Vol. 5 (selections). Angel 45010.
First-class performance from the Quintetto Boccherini and fine recording. The Quintet in D minor, Op. 25, No. 1 and in C, Op. 25, No. 3 are especially original, skillful, and dramatic.

Busoni: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 35a; Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 2, in E minor, Op. 36a. Columbia ML 5224.
The Concerto shows the inspiration of Beethoven, Brahms, and Bruch; the Sonata has more of Richard Strauss. Joseph Szigeti, associate of the composer, is the violinist (not in good tone here), and Horszowski the pianist. Thomas Scherman conducts the Little Orchestra Society. Competing discs are Urania with Siegfried Borries for the Concerto, and Westminster with Max Rostal for the Sonata.

Dvorak: Trio in E minor, Op. 90 (*Dumky*) (with Smetana: Trio in C minor, Op. 15). Vox PL 10440.
In these works the Trio di Bolzano sounds thick, and their intonation—especially the cellist's—indifferent. Listen to

Continued on page 64

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Grieg: *Peer Gynt*: Suite No. 1, Op. 46; *Symphonic Dances*, Op. 64; *Two Elegiac Melodies*, Op. 34. Mercury MG 50164.
Barbirolli with the Hallé Orchestra is sometimes boisterous in the *Dances*, but is tender when the lyrical passages call for tenderness. The Suite from *Peer Gynt* gets a forthright treatment; but the reading of the *Elegiac Melodies* is perfunctory.

Handel: *Messiah* (highlights). Westminster XWN 18676.
Excerpts from Scherchen's famous version (with the London Philharmonic Choir and London Symphony) of 1954, with its efforts to recapture the style of 1742. The soloists contribute some fine singing, and the orchestra remarkable virility. A good condensation.

Haydn: Symphonies: No. 100, in G (*Military*); No. 101, in D (*The Clock*). Mercury MG 50155.
The Wøldike edition on Vanguard is superior in both performance and engineering; but this version from the London Symphony under Antal Dorati is certainly a second-best.

Mendelssohn: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in E minor, Op. 64 (with Ravel: *Tzigane;* Saint-Saëns: *Havanaise*, Op. 83). Angel 35572.
Michael Rabin here shows himself a violinist of great technical virtuosity but less musical insight. He is oversweet in the Mendelssohn, better in the Saint-Saëns, and really good only in the Ravel. Boult conducts the Philharmonia in the Mendelssohn, Alceo Galliera in the other works.

Monteverdi: *Lagrime d'amante al sepolcro dell'amata* (with works of Schütz, Lotti, and Lasso). Westminster XWN 18596.
David Randolph conducts a chorus of 117 voices that are well trained in their flexibility, balance, and intonation; but the performance of the Monteverdi, the major work on the disc, is highly theatrical. The smaller pieces on Side 2 are less mannered. (For a convincing version, try the Hindemith on Overtone 4).

Mouret: Fanfares; Symphonies (with Lalande: *Symphonies des soupers du roy;* Marais: Suite from *Alcione*). Westminster XWN 18538.
Jean-Francois Paillard's Jean-Marie Leclair Instrumental Ensemble plays with taste and precision a fine collection of French pieces from the first quarter of the eighteenth century. The Suite from Marais's opera is perhaps the most appealing work on the disc, simply constructed and directly affecting, by turns elegant and pathetic.

Mozart: Sinfonia Concertante for Oboe, Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon, and Orchestra, K, Anh. 9; Quintet for Clarinet and Strings, in A, K. 581. Lyrichord LL 67.
The Westminster edition of the Sinfonia is more enjoyable than this version by the Wind Quartet of Paris and the Orchestre des Concerts Disenhaus. The Quintet, played here by Sidney Forrest and the Galimir String Quartet, still awaits a really satisfying recording.

Mozart: Symphonies: No. 32, in G, K. 318; No. 35, in D, K. 385 (*Haffner*); No. 36, in C, K. 525 (*Linz*). Vox 10140.
Very respectable performances from the Pro Musica Symphony (Vienna) under Jonel Perlea, unhappily marred by overresonant sound and edgy violins.

Rachmaninoff: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in D minor, Op. 30 (with Paganini-Liszt: Etudes: No. 4; No. 5, in E; No. 3, in G sharp minor). Monitor MC 2012.
Victor Merzhanov is a pianist of formidable technique, big tone, and an impulse towards velocity. He has less musical artistry. The sound of the State Orchestra of the U.S.S.R., under Nikolai Anasow, has little depth or resonance.

Rimsky-Korsakov: *Scheherazade*, Op. 35; *Easter* Overture, Op. 36. Period SHO 313.
An inexpensive edition of one of twenty-five versions of this work in the catalogue. Neither in sound nor in interpretation (Rafael de Cross and the Salzburg Festival Orchestra) can it possibly compete with Ansermet and the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra.

Schubert: Symphony No. 8, in B minor (*Unfinished*) (with Mendelssohn: *A Midsummer Night's Dream:* Overture; Incidental Music). Columbia ML 5221.
The merits and demerits of this recording by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy seem to balance each other. The sound is geared to the public address system, and the orchestra much of the time follows suit. On the other hand, some passages from both composers' works are done beautifully.

Schumann: Symphony No. 3, in E flat, Op. 97 (*Rhenish*). Westminster W-LAB 7062.
It is difficult to see what Sir Adrian Boult, leading the Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra, is trying to achieve here with his inordinately fast tempos. The Toscanini version, even with its bad sonics, and the modern Kletzki edition are preferable.

Strauss, Johann II: Waltzes. Capitol PAO 8421.
In order to crowd six waltzes on this disc Slatkin (conductor of the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra) has had to omit all repeats and make innumerable cuts. Particularly unfortunate, since the conductor has nice feeling for the Viennese idiom and the reproduction is most satisfactory.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in B flat minor, Op. 23; Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 35. Period SHO 307.
A bargain-price record exacts the customary after-price. Pianist Gilels (playing with the Bolshoi Theater Orchestra under Samuel Samoshud) is not in top form. In the Violin Concerto David Oistrakh and the National Philharmonic Orchestra under Alexander Gauk make rather drastic cuts. Sound not satisfactory either.

Tchaikovsky: *Swan Lake*, Op. 20 (excerpts). Capitol PAO 8416.
Impressive sound, and a good deal of ballet know-how from Joseph Levine and the Ballet Theatre Orchestra—sometimes to the music's disadvantage. The excerpts are fourteen, five drawn from the concert suite.

Tchaikovsky: *Swan Lake*, Op. 20 (excerpts). London LL 1768.
Choice items from all four acts of the ballet, played by the London Symphony with Anatole Fistoulari. Fine sound, and for those who do not want the two-disc album an excellent choice of popular orchestral fare.

RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

MARIA CALLAS: *"Callas at La Scala"*

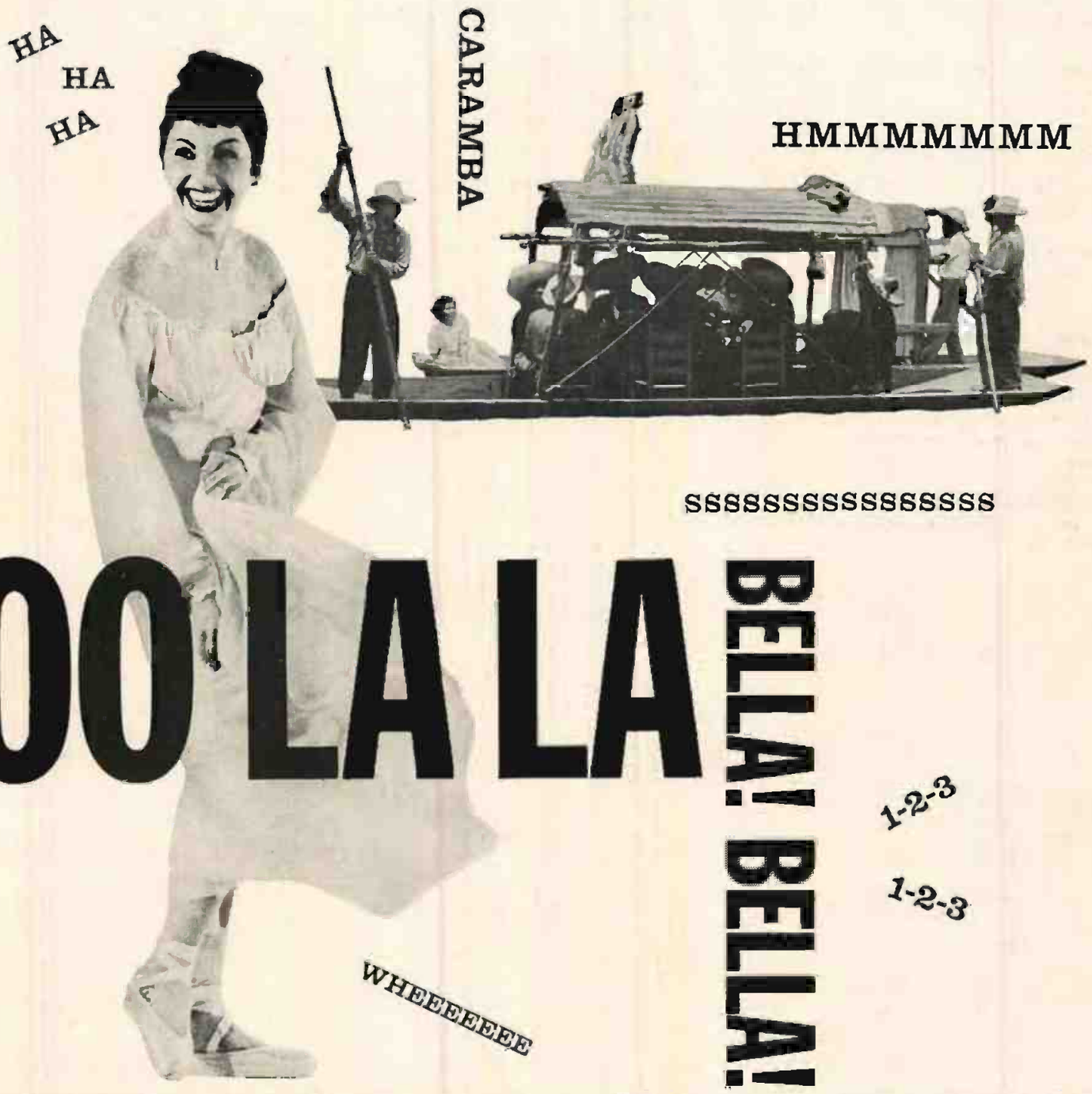
Cherubini: *Medea: Dei tuoi figli.* Spontini: *La Vestale: Tu che invoco; O nume tutelar; Caro oggetto.* Bellini: *Norma: Qui la voce; La Sonnambula: Care compagne . . . Come per me sereno.*

Maria Meneghini Callas, soprano; Orchestra and Chorus of La Scala, Tullio Serafin and Antonino Votto, conds. ANGEL 35304. 12-in. $4.98 (or $3.98).

Medea will eventually come to us in a complete recording, the title role sung by Callas. This preview is an exciting foretaste of what's ahead, so far as the music itself is concerned. The first act aria *"Dei tuoi figli,"* though melodically less distinguished than the three of Spontini recorded here (not to speak of Bellini), has a marmoreal dignity, a grandness of layout which mark it as Cherubini's. Unfortunately Callas sings it less well than anything else on the record. Her voice sounds pathetically tired, hoarse rather than shrill; and she even, for once, lets much of the dramatic possibility of the music escape her.

With Spontini, however, she makes a splendid recovery. Unlike Ponselle's famous recording of *"Tu che invoco,"* which gives us only the opening larghetto, Callas sings the whole scene, including the long and passionate recitative before the cabaletta *Sospendete*

Continued on page 66



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qualche istante. The cabaletta itself, however, has a whopper of a thirty-bar cut, apparently in order to avoid a treacherous spring to high C (which ought not to have bothered Callas). All of the difficult passage work in this deleted section recurs at the end of the aria, and Callas handles it brilliantly. The two scenes from Bellini are not newly recorded but (as Angel ought to have indicated) are excerpted from complete sets. Both of them represent the soprano in top form (literally: she sings a high E flat in the *Sonnambula* selection—though you won't find it in the score). This is a very exciting record indeed. D.J.

GLORIA DAVY: *Recital*

Purcell: *Not all my torments; If music be the food of love; From rosy bowers; Man is for the woman made.* Brahms: *Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer; Ständchen; Auf dem Kirchhofe; Wiegenlied.* Poulenc: *Fiançailles pour rire.* Turina: *Poema en forma de canciones,* Op. 19.

Gloria Davy, soprano; Giorgio Favaretto, piano.
LONDON 5395. 12-in. $4.98.

London vouchsafes us neither information about the artists nor texts of the songs. Miss Davy is a young Negro soprano of great promise who made her debut at the Metropolitan this season. Of the pianist, Giorgio Favaretto, I know nothing except what his playing reveals—namely that he is a virtuoso of no mean qualifications but an accompanist who has yet a great deal to learn.

Miss Davy's voice is not an exceptionally lovely one; it lacks something of light and shade and reminds me a little of the vibrato-less string tone of a viol. Her range in the art song (English, German, French, Spanish) and the charm which much of her singing radiates are impressive, however. She is more at home with Poulenc and Turina than with Purcell and Brahms, but the latter are rarely less than convincing. Although the muted pain in the iterated nine-note phrase of *Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer* is not conveyed with the pathos given it by Ferrier or Lehmann, the *Wiegenlied* is quite wonderfully done—fading out in a barely audible whisper as baby falls off to sleep. The hitherto unrecorded Poulenc cycle, *Fiançailles pour rire* (*Engagement for Laughter*), is sung with style and subtlety, especially the outrageously titled *Mon cadavre est doux comme un gant,* which, as Miss Davy conceives it, is half-sentimental, half-ironic. D.J.

REY DE LA TORRE: *"Plays Classical Guitar"*

Sanz: *Gallardas, Pavanas, Folías.* Sor: Sonata, Op. 15, No. 2; *Variations on a Theme by Mozart.* Llobet: *Three Catalonian Melodies.* Ponce: *Three Mexican Songs.* Torroba: *Suite Castellana.* Tarrega: *Capricho arabe.*

Rey de la Torre, guitar.
EPIC LC 3418. 12-in. $3.98.

Rey de la Torre, Cuban guitarist who has performed widely in the United States and made recordings for minor companies, makes his debut on Epic with material that is, on the whole, less familiar than the list of composers might suggest. In the classic works of Sanz and Sor, he is a rather literal interpreter, taking tempos that are somewhat more leisurely than usual but keeping the rhythms steady. In the Catalonian melodies of Llobet, special coloristic effects suggest they may have come to De la Torre from the composer, with whom the guitarist studied. In the remaining works, conventional but pleasant enough, the performer proves his right to a position among the best guitarists of today, although he does not quite achieve either the delicate poetry of Segovia or the delicate precision of Bream. R.E.

NICOLAI GEDDA: *Mozart Arias*

Idomeneo: Fuor del mar. Don Giovanni: Dalla sua pace; Il mio tesoro. Per pietà, non ricercate (concert aria, K. 420). *La Clemenza di Tito: Se all'impero. Die Zauberflöte: Dies Bildnis. Die Entführung aus dem Serail: Konstanze! Konstanze!; Wenn der Freude Tränen; Pedrillo's Romance. Così fan tutte: Un'aura amorosa.*

Nicolai Gedda, tenor; Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, André Cluytens, cond.
ANGEL 35510. 12-in. $4.98 (or $3.98).

This disc, it seems to me, marks Nicolai Gedda's coming of age as an artist. Here his voice is no longer beautiful but anonymous; it is the instrument of expression for a purposeful and sensitive personality. Every aria has been planned with painstaking care, and yet one's first and lasting impression is of spontaneity and passion. The vocal production is extremely beautiful and wide-ranging—from the reticent self-amazement of the phrase *"klopft mein liebevolles Herz"* in Belmonte's first aria, to the stentorian heroics of Idomeneo's *"Fuor del mar."* This last is the most difficult aria Mozart ever wrote for a tenor, and Gedda does not give the impression of perfect ease in executing the taxing melisma on the word *"minacciar"*; but perfect ease is not wanted here: this is a tormented warrior hurling his reproach and defiance at the sea god, not a lover making sweet sounds. Sweet sounds there are in plenty, when they are called for. Only John McCormack and Richard Tauber solved the knotty problem of breath control in *"Il mio tesoro"* with more suavity and ease.

The orchestral accompaniment is a delight. Since when have the French learned to play Mozart like this? D.J.

ALEXANDER KIPNIS: *"Alexander Kipnis in Russian Opera"*

Mussorgsky: *Boris Godunov: Coronation Scene; Varlaam's Song; I have attained the highest power; Clock Scene; Death of Boris.* Tchaikovsky: *Eugen Onegin:* Prince Gremin's Aria. Rimsky-Korsakov: *Sadko: Song of the Viking Guest.* Borodin: *Prince Igor:* Prince Galitsky's Aria. Dargomijsky: *Russalka:* Miller's Aria.

Alexander Kipnis, bass; RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra, Nicolai Berezowsky, cond.
RCA CAMDEN CAL 415. 12-in. $1.98.

Most of the *Boris Godunov* music on this disc comes from RCA Victor's abridgment of the opera on ten generous sides in the days of 78s. The longest excerpt, however, containing most of the music of the second scene of Act I, was a hard-to-get item not included in the original album. Altogether, we have here a kind of capsule version of the opera sung by a fine artist whose like we have not seen since his retirement.

No one, I think, will claim that Kipnis had a beautiful voice. It was thick, somewhat unfocused, not very agile. But Kipnis made up for it in large measure by his great talents as a singing actor, by the essential humanity of his conception. To Chaliapin's Boris, for instance, one listens with awe, but without participation; with Kipnis one is swept into the situation, recognizing in this remote prince's tormented personality a segment of one's own. Kipnis was not only a superb czar but, like Boris Christoff, a remarkable Varlaam, as he proves on this disc.

The other selections, with one exception, are further testimony of a remarkably versatile artist (particularly his portrait of the sadistic Prince Galitsky). Only in Prince Gremin's wonderful song does he venture on a style unsuited to him; the *bel canto* line is more than he can cope with. The *Boris* selections have been dubbed with reasonable success—the orchestral accompaniment was never very distinguished. The others show their origin only too obviously. D.J.

LEONID KOGAN: *"Virtuoso's Choice"*

Brahms: *Hungarian Dances:* No. 20, in D minor; No. 1, in G minor. Ravel: *Pièce en forme de habanera.* Debussy: *Il pleure dans mon coeur.* Ponce: *Estrellita* (trans. Kreisler). Prokofiev: *Romeo and Juliet: Masques.* Paganini: Caprices for Unaccompanied Violin: No. 23, in E flat; No. 9, in E, Op. 1. Kreisler: *La Gitana.* Milhaud: *Saudades do Brasil: Corcovado; Sumaré.* Sarasate: *Romanza Andaluza,* Op. 22, No. 1.

Leonid Kogan, violin; Andrei Mitnik, piano.
WESTMINSTER XWN 18629. 12-in. $4.98.

It is most pleasant to report that, unlike many dubbings from Soviet tapes, the sonic quality here is equal to the best domestic product, with clear, undistorted tone from both instruments. Furthermore, Kogan's interpretations are all in the best taste, finely colored and sensitively phrased. Of particular note is his performance of the two unaccompanied Paganini Caprices, in which the octave work is a marvel of virtuosic accuracy. Also commendable are the rhythmic bite in the Prokofiev and Sarasate pieces and

Continued on page 68

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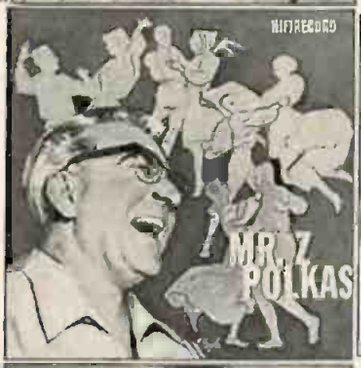

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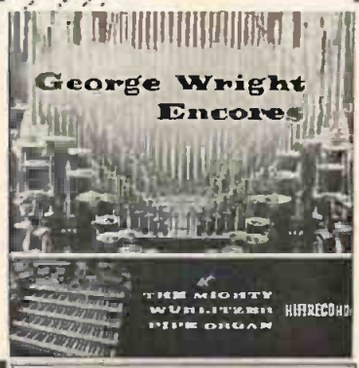

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The numbering of the first *Hungarian Dance* is a bit confusing. It is labeled No. 16, in D minor—perhaps a Joachim or Kreisler sequence, the arranger's name not being given—whereas it is actually No. 20, in E minor, though it is played here in D minor. The Ponce sounds a little out of place in this otherwise more distinguished company, yet it in no way harms the effect of an altogether rewarding recital. P.A.

JOHN McCORMACK: *"John McCormack Sings Irish Songs"*

John McCormack, tenor; Spencer Clay and Edwin Schneider, piano; RCA Victor Orchestra.
RCA CAMDEN CAL 407. 12-in. $1.98.

This record will delight all who remember John McCormack with nostalgia, as well as those who feel curiosity concerning the great Irish tenor. RCA finally decided to place fourteen of the 550-odd records made for them by McCormack during a thirty-year career as a recording artist on one of their popular Camden series discs. "McCormack Sings Irish Songs" is not a strictly accurate title, though, for the arias from *Maritana* and *The Bohemian Girl* are examples of Victorian opera, and there is nothing particularly Irish (except McCormack's accent) about *Somewhere a Voice is Calling* and *I Hear You Calling Me*. The latter, incidentally, was one of the most popular vocal records ever made. However this may be, here is this fabulous Irishman once more pouring his heart out in that lovely, poignant voice, which once heard cannot be forgotten. *Macushla, Mother Machree, Kathleen Mavourneen,* and *When Irish Eyes are Smiling* are snatches of Old Erin that McCormack made completely his own.

Most of these selections stem from the acoustical era, ranging from 1911 to 1921—a period that found McCormack in his vocal prime. It is amazing how vivid his tones sound, but it is a fact that McCormack's voice (like Caruso's) responded satisfactorily to the acoustical method of reproduction. Camden engineers have enhanced the sonic values, and the results are brilliant. M. DE S.

ISTVAN NADAS: *"Modern Piano Sonatas"*

Bartók: Sonata for Piano (1926). Bloch: Sonata for Piano (1935). Prokofiev: Sonata for Piano, No. 7, in B flat, Op. 83 (1942); Stravinsky: Sonata for Piano (1924).

Istvan Nádás, pianist.
PERIOD SPL 736. 12-in. $4.98.

This record is a most interesting documentation of the contemporary state of the piano sonata. Of the men represented here, only two were much concerned with piano music throughout their careers, Bartók and Prokofiev. The former's sonata is an exciting work from one of his most vigorously creative periods. Prokofiev's Seventh Sonata, on the other hand, dates from his weakest years. For a composer of so much fastidiously designed music, this piece of claptrap is a sad comedown. Stravinsky's neoclassical sonata is so quiet and aloof in its elegance that it never really comes off in public performance; but it is perfect living-room music, and even in this relatively minor work, the mastery of the then not-so-old man is completely bewitching. Bloch's sonata, massive in sound and improvisational in character, achieves neither the eloquence of the rhapsodic early Bloch nor the concentration and power of late works like the Second Quartet, but it is a piece well worth knowing much better than our pianists have allowed us to.

Nádás is a very good pianist indeed. He solves all technical problems, and the structural and sonic clarity of his performances bespeaks deep understanding of what he is doing. His one failure seems to be in the Prokofiev slow movement where instead of sounding merely rather cool he seems positively constrained. He gives, in fact, the impression of being embarrassed by this piece of writing; and understandable as that attitude is, the composer is not ideally served. Stravinsky's entertaining roulades could be served up with a little more relaxation, too. Good sound (by Peter Bartók). C.M.S.

DAVID AND IGOR OISTRAKH: *Recital*

Handel: Trio-Sonata in G Minor, Op. 2, No. 7. Sarasate: *Navarra*. Georg Benda: Trio-Sonata in E. Wieniawski: Etude-Caprices: No. 2, in E flat; No. 5, in E; No. 4, in A minor, Op. 18.

David and Igor Oistrakh, violins; Vladimir Yampolsky, piano; Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Franz Konwitschny, cond. (in the *Navarra*).
DECCA DL 9962. 12-in. $3.98.

With the exception of the Bach Double Concerto and an occasional classical trio-sonata, one seldom has the opportunity of hearing music for two violins. The chance of hearing two violinists as perfectly matched as the Oistrakhs, father and son, is even rarer. Their performances on this disc are truly exemplary. The trio-sonatas by Handel and his younger colleague from Bohemia, Georg Benda (brother of the better-known violinist and composer, Franz Benda), are delivered with poise, elegance, and warm, evenly balanced tone. Sarasate's little Spanish dance is a virtuoso tour de force, requiring—and receiving—the most intricate ensemble work between the two fiddlers. Playing here with orchestral accompaniment, they are a bit more forceful in their approach than they were in the recent Monitor release, where they had only a piano for support. The Deutsche Grammophon reproduction on the present disc is also slightly richer than Monitor's but the differences between the two issues are not great. Wieniawski's little showpieces are usually heard in arrangements for one violin and piano; in their original form as unaccompanied violin duets—or rather, violin solos with a second violin for support—they emerge with a delightful freshness. P.A.

EZIO PINZA: *"The Art of Ezio Pinza"*

Verdi: *Ernani: Infelice e tuo credevi.* Meyerbeer: *Roberto il Diavolo: Suore che riposate.* Thomas: *Le Caïd: Air du Tambour Major.* Verdi: *Don Carlos: Dormiro sol nel manto.* Bellini: *Norma: Ah, del Tebro!* (with chorus). Gounod: *Faust: Le Veau d'or* (with chorus). Mozart: *Le Nozze di Figaro: Non più andrai. Die Zauberflöte: Possenti numi.* Halévy: *La Juive: Si la rigueur; Vous qui du Dieu vivant.* Verdi: *Il Trovatore: Abbietta Zingara;* Requiem: *Confutatis Maledictis.*

Ezio Pinza, bass; Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra, Giulio Setti, cond.
RCA CAMDEN CAL 401. 12-in. $1.98.

This is the first record of Ezio Pinza's voice released since his death on May 9, 1957. Pinza went through various vocal stages during his traversal of 753 performances for the Metropolitan Opera Association, but on this RCA Camden disc we find the greatest Italian basso of his day in all his tonal glory. A wonderful voice it was, too—a real *basso cantante,* sonorous yet ductile and flexible, capable of feather-light pianissimos, particularly in the early part of his career.

Several of the records in this collection were made during Pinza's first season at the Metropolitan (1926-27). At that time, Gatti-Casazza rejoiced in so worthy a successor to the imposing Spanish basso José Mardones. And well he might, for Pinza, a man strikingly handsome, with an altogether exceptional voice trained in the best Italian traditions, brought an aura of authority to his performances.

The arias from *Ernani* (with its lovely pianissimo conclusion), *Robert the Devil* (with a resounding high F sharp), *Le Caïd, La Juive,* and *The Magic Flute* were all recorded early in 1927, when Pinza, though he had a career at La Scala behind him, was not yet thirty-five years old. The earliest of this batch is the great aria from *Don Carlos,* in which Pinza's voice sounds wonderfully fresh and flexible, showing an ease in the high notes not always present later in his career.

In recent years, Pinza was much associated with the Mozartean repertoire. RCA is fortunate in being able to provide Camden with two of the best Mozart records Pinza ever made—*"Possenti numi"* from *The Magic Flute* and *"Non più andrai"* from *The Marriage of Figaro.* The latter suited his bass voice and mercurial temperament to perfection. Incidentally, it is here the disc of latest vintage (May 8, 1939).

Pinza's French was consistently faulty, thoroughly Italian in the treatment of the vowels—all of which can be clearly heard in his singing of the two arias from *La Juive,* and those from *Faust* and *Le Caïd.* The latter poses a provocative reflection on the steady decline of

Continued on page 70

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vocal technique. While Pinza's scales and agility are better than Corena's in a recent record, they fall far short of the elegant virtuosity attained by Pol Plançon. The engineers have done a first-rate processing job. M. DE S.

EZIO PINZA: *Recital*

Mozart: *Don Giovanni: Madamina; Mentre ti lascio, o figlia*, K. 513; *Le Nozze di Figaro: Se vuol ballare; Aprite un po' quegli occhi; Don Giovanni: Serenata: Deh, vieni alla finestra.* Puccini: *La Bohème: Vecchia Zimarra.* Rossini: *Il Barbiere di Siviglia: La Calunnia.* Mussorgsky: *Boris Godunov: Ho il poter supremo.* Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra: Il lacerato spirito.* Halévy: *La Juive: Si la rigueur.*

Ezio Pinza, bass; Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus; Bruno Walter, Emil Cooper, and Fausto Cleva, conds. COLUMBIA ML 5239. 12-in. $3.98.

Most of these recordings were made by the lamented basso when he was about fifty. It is an inescapable fact that the youthful ease of his vocal emission was not all it had once been, and that the pristine brilliance of the voice had by then become blunted. A comparison of the present record with RCA Camden's 1927 dubbings offers a fascinating demonstration of what happens to most singers' voices between the ages of thirty-five and fifty. Nevertheless, the Pinza voice was still a handsome instrument, and the fact that he was also a personality comes through splendidly, especially in the Mozart selections, which occupy one side. His "*Se vuol ballare*" seems to suffer least from the ravages of advancing years.

On the reverse, we find a beautifully sung "*Vecchia zimarra,*" and an aria from *Simon Boccanegra* which is a model of Verdian style. There is only one duplication of material with the Camden disc (the aria from *La Juive*), so that people owning both records will have adequate and representative testimony of Pinza's distinctive talents.

Columbia has removed much of the booming bass heard on the original discs; sonically, the record stands up well in this trigger-sharp hi-fi age. M. DE S.

More Briefly Noted

Laurindo Almeida: "Duets with the Spanish Guitar." Capitol PAO 8406.
Beguiling performances by the guitarist, with Martin Ruderman, flutist, or Salli Terri, contralto, of fourteen unfamiliar and luscious Brazilian songs.

Sir Thomas Beecham: Orchestral Overtures. Columbia ML 5247.
A recoupling of material from four different discs. Berlioz's *Roman Carnival*, Suppé's *Morning, Noon, and Night in Vienna*, Beethoven's *Coriolanus*, Elgar's *Cockaigne*, and Brahms's *Tragic* Overture in interpretations by the conductor and Royal Philharmonic of great vitality. Though the recordings were made at different times, fine resonant sonics.

Alceo Galliera: Italian Opera Intermezzos. Angel 35483.
Orchestral excerpts from late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Italian operas, many unfamiliar in this country. Luminosity of sound, and fine performances from the Philharmonia Orchestra under Galliera's baton.

Lamoureux Orchestra: "Russian Orchestral Favorites." Epic LC 3432.
Virtuoso performances, under Jean Fournet and Ohan Dourian, of Mussorgsky's *Night on the bare mountain*, Borodin's *In the Steppes of Central Asia*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio espagnol*, and Glinka's *Kamarinskaya*. Rimsky's and Glinka's extraverted works perhaps come off less well than the others, but these performances at the least will show off hi-fi equipment.

André Marchal: "A Demonstration of the Studio Organ at 22 rue Duroc." Zodiac LP 334.
A disc for avid organ lovers. The famous organist demonstrates the twenty-eight stops, alone and in combination, of the brilliant little baroque organ built in his Paris home by Gonzalez. Marchal will use this instrument for a newly planned series of recordings.

Robert McFerrin: "Deep River." Riverside RLP 12-812.
Fourteen Hall Johnson arrangements of popular spirituals sung scrupulously and with glowing warmth to Norman Johnson's sensitive piano accompaniments.

Eugene Ormandy: Orchestral Program. Columbia ML 5242.
Stunning performances from the Philadelphians of their conductor's own *Rumanian Rhapsody*, two of Enesco's *Rumanian Rhapsodies*, Dvořák's *Carnival* Overture, and Tchaikovsky's *Francesca da Rimini*. Superb recording also.

Eugene Ormandy: "The Wonderful Waltzes of Tchaikovsky and Strauss." Columbia ML 5238.
There are failures to observe repeats, unlicensed cuts, and unexplained embellishments, but Ormandy has always had a way with a waltz. On the whole, pleasing interpretations and the customary lustrous sound of the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Paul Paray: Orchestral Program. Mercury MG 50145.
Ravel's *Ma Mere l'oye*, Chabrier's *Bourrée fantasque*, Roussel's Suite in F, and Barraud's *Offrande à une Ombre* played by the Detroit Symphony under a very literal and logical conductor. Technically very good musicianship, but nothing very memorable.

Artur Rubinstein: Recital. RCA Victor LM 2181.
Music by Falla, Albéniz, Granados, and Mompou agreeably recorded in Rubinstein's familiar interpretations. Falla's *Noches* also features the San Francisco Symphony led by Enrique Jorda; here the Soriano and Argenta editions are superior.

Symphony of the Air: "Tribute to Arturo Toscanini." Roulette RSP 1.
Dvořák's *From the New World*, Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* Suite, Berlioz's *Roman Carnival*, and the Prelude from *Die Meistersinger* taped at a conductorless concert in Carnegie Hall in 1954. The Berlioz and Wagner are quite impressive, the other pieces less so. The reproduction, however, is unfortunately marred by wow.

THE SPOKEN WORD

LEWIS CARROLL and EDWARD LEAR: *Nonsense Poems*

Selections read by Beatrice Lillie, Cyril Ritchard, and Stanley Holloway.
CAEDMON TC 1078. 12-in. $5.95.

This record has been played and replayed to allow for the influence on the reviewer of barometric pressure, vitamin deficiencies, and strontium 90, for it is puzzling indeed to have three pros like Miss Lillie, Mr. Ritchard, and Mr. Holloway turn their attention to two pros like Carroll and Lear and produce a disappointment. It would appear that much of the material just isn't substantial enough to carry the burden of loving attention the three readers lavish upon it.

It is also painful to report that the one-and-only Miss Lillie doesn't emerge from this encounter as well as her companions do—perhaps because she is so adept at creating her own brand of nonsense that when the japes are already *in situ*, as they are with Carroll and Lear, she hasn't enough elbow room for her unique talents. An exception to this stricture is *The Mock Turtle's Song*, where she keens along in a musical style that is catatonic in more ways than one. The rest of the time she recites in a strait jacket.

As for the limericks included, they are simply not so amusing as they were in good Victoria's golden day, and the most that can be said for them is that they rhyme.

In spite of the foregoing, there are some real pleasures on the record: Miss Lillie, Mr. Ritchard, and Mr. Holloway sound like themselves, reward enough for their many admirers; teaming up, Mr. Ritchard and Mr. Holloway bring that classic slaughter of the innocents, *The Walrus and the Carpenter*, so vividly to life that it becomes a landmark in the annals of crime; Mr. Ritchard, going it alone, is especially good in *Father William* and *The Jumblies*; and Mr. Holloway in *The Pig-Tale* and *The Dong with a Luminous Nose*. While some listeners, then, will find this superimposing

of Lillie, Ritchard, and Holloway on Carroll and Lear a little pretentious, others who keep themselves awake during brainstorming sessions by mumbling *Jabberwocky* or *The Owl and the Pussycat* will find it a happy aid to memory and to diction. CYNTHIA S. WALSH

DOROTHY PARKER: *An Informal Hour with Dorothy Parker*

Horsie and a selection of verse, read by the author.
SPOKEN ARTS 726. 12-in. $5.75.

When even such an accomplished old wordsmith as Somerset Maugham was forced to admit (in his introduction to Viking's *Portable Dorothy Parker*) to an inability to say anything new about the biting wit of his subject, then what can a young fellow like myself be expected to say when confronted with this informal hour? I, too, can only confess that there is nothing new to be said about Miss Parker, only that she fractures me as she has fractured all the rest.

Like Maugham again I too must admit to a preference for her poetry over her stories. The essence of her talent, beautifully captured on this recording, is the ability to weave a poetic mood around a usually tender theme, then to pierce it with one final line—a biting thrust of rapier wit. Miss Parker's stories often tend to follow the opposite pattern. That is, here she will often devote most of the narrative to biting satire and ironic observation, then finish on a rather touching and thoughtful note. Certainly this is true in *Horsie*, a tale about the irritating presence of an unattractive, horsie-type visiting nurse in the home of a young couple who have just had a baby. The new parents can't wait for Horsie's departure, which, when it comes, proves a very sad day for the unfortunate nurse who has been exposed to five weeks of a happy world she herself will never know. Miss Parker sees all of Horsie's faults with the critical and devastating eye of a true Algonquin Round Tabler, but she also sees deep enough to appreciate the pathos of Horsie's solitary life.

All this—and the Parker voice too—makes for a very special kind of enchanted evening. R.H.H., Jr.

KENNETH PATCHEN

Selections from the verse of Kenneth Patchen, read by the author, with the accompaniment of the Chamber Jazz Sextet.
CADENCE CLP 3004. 12-in. $3.98.

Not being an ancient Greek familiar with local bards strumming the lyre to their own strophes in the neighboring *boite* (or Attic equivalent), I'm afraid I find this mating of muses decidedly disconcerting. According to Allyn Ferguson, its composer, the music here was written not to provide background or to recreate the literal meaning of the texts but to underscore the poet's own reading and his interpretative sense of the works' emotional values. Those values seem to

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Here at Home

"Desire Under the Elms." Recording from the soundtrack of the film. Dot DLP 3095. $3.98.

Without the heavy brass of publicity that often accompanies movie music these days, Elmer Bernstein—Juilliard-trained composer of the music for *The Man with the Golden Arm*, *The Ten Commandments*, and *The View from Pompey's Head*—has put forth an outstandingly good screen score for *Desire Under the Elms*. In this orchestral suite Mr. Bernstein has captured both the openness of bucolic America and the ominousness of the Eugene O'Neill tragedy. At no time could I detect the fiddle-strewn mush that characterizes so many movie scores, or the choppiness that mars so many others.

"The Dream Girl." Ray Anthony Orchestra. Capitol T 969. $3.98.

Ray Anthony and his orchestra have been making good dance music for some years. This record has Mr. Anthony's usual smooth trumpet and mellifluous orchestral playing of such good melodies as *Bewitched*, *My Foolish Heart*, *I Didn't Know What Time It Was*, *The Nearness of You*.

"A Handful of Stars." Johnny Douglas and Orchestra. London LL 1741. $3.98.

Johnny Douglas, an English arranger and pianist, has a band that will bring peace of feet to those who admire the English ballroom. Many Americans may find his quiet blend of strings, brass, and tinkling piano a bit dull with such numbers as *You Are Too Beautiful* or *How High the Moon*.

"Having a Wonderful Weekend." Mitchell Ayres Orchestra. RCA Victor LPM 1603. $3.98.

For those who like dancing without acrobatics or ear strain this should work out nicely in the living room. The band is relaxed, yet lively, with a strong beat, careful balance of instruments, and such pleasant numbers as *Taking a Chance on Love*, *You Stepped Out of a Dream*, *If You Were only Mine*, and some medleys. This is the sort of warming dance music that has made the band the accompaniment on Perry Como's television shows.

"Hims." Anita Ellis. Epic LN 3419. $3.98.

For a long time Anita Ellis was the voice for such "names" as Rita Hayworth. Records have permitted her to show herself as the good torch singer night clubs have known. Here, though constrained by the title of the album—the sort of catchall that I wish would end—Miss Ellis' sophisticated style and fine understanding of lyrics are excellent for *Bill*, *You Know Me, Al*, and *That's Him*.

"Hooray for Hollywood." Doris Day. Columbia C2L 5. $7.98.

Doris Day, a lady whose folksiness is brightened with a touch of urbanity, is the star of a two-record album of songs made famous in movies. Miss Day's voice, still fresh and gay as a sunny day in the park, here turns out twenty-four songs, among them the best tunes ever to come from Hollywood. Her girlish quality is handy for *It Might as well Be Spring*; her mixture of wholesomeness and sophistication gives a pretty lift to *Nice Work if You Can Get It*. She also breezes eloquently through such numbers as *The Way You Look Tonight*, *I'll Remember April*, *Easy to Love*, *Pennies from Heaven*, well supported by an orchestra conducted by Frank DeVol.

"Music from the Soundtrack of April Love." Dot DLP 9000. $3.98.

Pat Boone and Shirley Jones are well matched, though the gentleman has not yet learned to bring feeling into songs as well as the lady does.

"Oh Captain!" Original cast recording. Columbia OL 5280. $4.98.

On the stage this musical labored to make sex compensate for lack of wit. On records, without the good-looking gals, it is handicapped. Tony Randall, usually a sharp man with a line, does his best with the weak satire of *A Very Proper Town*, *Life Does a Man a Favor*, and *Three Paradises*. Eileen Rodgers, actually a better singer than Abbe Lane of the show itself, has a good husky rhythm delivery for *Femininity*. My favorite is Susan Johnson, who sounds as though she is having a good time when she does *Give It All You Got*. For the most part, I'm afraid, music and lyrics just aren't Broadway quality.

"Pal Joey." Tops L 1607. $1.98.

This is a grab bag of Rodgers and Hart songs, with several singers taking chances with them. The only one I liked was Martha Tilton, survivor of the Swing Era, who plays the bouncy all-American girl in *The Lady Is a Tramp*.

"Peabody Parade." Dot DLP 3080. $3.98.

Eddie Peabody made a big hit with his banjo in the vaudeville of the Twenties. I prefer the old-fashioned style of *For Me and My Gal* on this record to his concession to rock 'n roll in *Hindustan*.

"Prez." Perez Prado and his Orchestra. RCA Victor LPM 1556. $3.98.

Perez Prado, whose yeoman work in introducing the mambo to the United States has earned him the title "King of the Mambo," also is an ingenious cross pollinator of jazz and Latin beat. The examples of his art on this well-recorded disc range from *Maria Bonita* to *Lullaby of Birdland*. The maestro punctuates his interpretations with frequent orgiastic shouts—a gimmick that pays rapidly diminishing returns. The appeal here would seem to be limited to the inner circle of Latin-jazz buffs.

"Sea of Dreams." Nelson Riddle. Capitol T 915. $3.98.

The originality and balance of Nelson Riddle's arrangements have made him much coveted by such singing stars as Frank Sinatra and Nat "King" Cole. Here Mr. Riddle's orchestrations show themselves good enough to stand alone. His *Autumn Leaves* has melancholy but is never moribund. Languor slips into his *Tangi Tahiti*, but never lethargy. Always, Mr. Riddle seems to have a new variation, boundless vitality.

"The Frank Sinatra Story." Columbia C2L 6. $7.98.

In the ephemeral world of pop singing, where two years is often a full career, Frank Sinatra today has the same sort of prestige as Ted Williams in baseball. A musical summary of this twenty-year singing career has been gathered on this two-record album that spans the sentimental Sinatra style of the early Forties to the more recent interpretations that have extended his appeal far beyond the teen-age set. These twenty-four songs range from *All or Nothing at All*—which sounds very much like the version made with Harry James in 1939—to his *One for my Baby*, one of his most sophisticated blues ballads from the opening jazz piano to the lonely closing

whistle. In between are such Sinatra favorites as *You'll Never Know, The House I Lived In, April In Paris, I'm Glad There Is You.*

"South Pacific." Recording from the soundtrack of the film. RCA Victor LOC 1032. $4.98.

Put bluntly, *South Pacific's* soundtrack, apart from its superior orchestral tones, is distinctly inferior to the original cast recording of the Broadway show (Columbia ML 4180). Georgio Tozzi, whose voice was borrowed for actor Rossano Brazzi, shares none of Ezio Pinza's simplicity and sincerity in *Some Enchanted Evening*. Mitzi Gaynor, though appealing, lacks Mary Martin's humor in *A Cockeyed Optimist*, her zest in *I'm Gonna Wash that Man Right outa my Hair*, and, most important, her genuineness, in *A Wonderful Guy*. The voice dubbed in for John Kerr is a long way from the required tenderness and passion in *Younger than Springtime*. Tozzi's *This Nearly Was Mine* is a beautiful job, though; and the woman whose voice was dubbed for Juanita Hall is excellent. Why Miss Hall, who played Bloody Mary on Broadway too, was not allowed to sing the role here I do not understand. Hollywood can be more mysterious than Bali Ha'i.

"Tip Toe Thru the Tulips." Nick Lucas. Cavalier CVLP 6007. $3.98.

Mr. Lucas and his guitar have made a happy disc, using a style reminiscent of old vaudeville, but lacking the corn. He brings infectious rhythm and good humor to such songs as *I'll Get By, Lady Be Good, Tip Toe Thru the Tulips.*

"Gene Vincent Rocks." Capitol T 970. $3.98.

By suggesting some of the sincerity of a revival meeting and disciplining his singing and guitar playing, Gene Vincent seems more effective than most rock 'n' rollers. His collection includes *You'll Never Walk Alone, Your Cheatin' Heart*, and *It's no Lie*. The last is a song by Otis Blackwell, who wrote the rock 'n' roll success *Teddy Bear*. Mr. Vincent, said to be twenty-one, has, of course, plenty of exuberance and is abetted by a quartet known as The Blue Caps.

"The Waltz Queen." Patti Page. Mercury MG 20318. $3.98.

Because Miss Page had enormous success with such hillbilly waltzes as *Tennessee Waltz* it was assumed she could handle an entire record of waltzes of a much more lyrical nature. She can't. *What'll I Do, Falling in Love with Love, Wondering, The Boy Next Door* suffer.

"When Your Lover Has Gone." Sue Raney. Capitol T 964. $3.98.

This husky-voiced young singer—her company says she is still in her teens—has survived television without losing her love of a good song. She has the breath to back up the sad phrasing of *When Your Lover Has Gone;* the beat for *If I Could Be With You One Hour Tonight;* the taste for *My Ideal*. And on this record she has the backing of Nelson Riddle's orchestra.

MURRAY SCHUMACH

Foreign Flavor

"Grand Bal Musette." Joss Baselli and his Ensemble. Columbia WL 109. $4.98.

A sumptuously engineered echo of nineteenth-century Paris when *bals musettes* were the rage and *apaches* prowled the midnight cafés. Actually, the *bals* were rooted in the folk dances of the Auvergne; migrants from that sunswept province originated the Paris version to preserve a sense of solidarity. The accordion is the heart and soul of this type of dance music and Maestro Baselli features it tirelessly. His repertoire, however, leaves something to be desired, studded as it is with such anomalies as *Armen's Theme* and *Bambino*.

"In The Mystic East." Frank Chacksfield and his Orchestra. London LL 1780. $3.98.

The "East" of the title probably refers to the east side of Tin Pan Alley, the "mystic" to the disc's *raison d'être*. If you've ever heard the tuneful popular music of the East, this will leave you chilled. Only two of Chacksfield's selections actually hail from Asia: the Chinese *Rose, Rose, I Love You* and the perennial Japanese hit *China Night*, which somehow comes out as *Moon Over Malaya*. In between lie such tidbits as *Japanese Sandman, On a Little Street in Singapore*, and (shades of that famous Asiatic, Josephine Baker) *La Petite Tonkinoise*.

"Italian Interlude." Murray Dickie, tenor; Gianni Monese and his Orchestra. Vox VX 25190. $3.98.

When a tenor hazards a program of Neapolitan favorites, he runs squarely into the standard by which all such audacity must be measured: the big, ringing, colloquial renditions of Giuseppe di Stefano. Scotch-born Murray Dickie bears the comparison surprisingly well. His voice is lighter in texture than Di Stefano's, and stylistically he is less given to the sob and the catch in the throat. But this less florid approach may well prove more congenial to the Anglo-American ear. In any case, both performance and recorded sound are excellent.

"A Moment of Love." Trio Los Panchos. Columbia WL 112. $4.98.

The Trio Los Panchos purveys to perfection what the American public fondly believes to be typical Mexican music. Guitars throbbing, they sing sweet-voiced love plaints that are peculiarly at home in the better *cantinas* of *Distrito Federal*, if not in back alleys. Suffice it to say that Los Panchos are outstanding of their type. If you like Mexican songs in a romantic vein, this well-engineered disc will be hard to resist.

"Mucho Gusto!" Columbia WL 113. $4.98.

Here is one of the few recordings available of real *mariachis*, replete with trumpets. Originally these groups provided music in small Mexican towns for fiestas both sacred and profane; but in recent years *mariachis* have become fixtures at every tourist stop from Matamoros to Acapulco. To hear their captivating, infectious way of making music is to grasp immediately the reason for their popularity.

"Paris: Its Sounds and People." Robert Berthe, narrator. Capitol T 10142. $3.98.

This represents an improvement over Capitol's first venture into this medium by way of Amsterdam. As a result of wiser editing, few sonic episodes drag beyond the point of diminishing returns. Jacques Dubourg's tape recorder picks up café conversation, taxicabs, the Métro, the spiels of various guides. The only false note is a contrived conversation between two alleged tourists and an alleged policeman. A good deal of French is spoken on this disc, and it is regrettable that no translations are provided. But if Paris is the city of your dreams, this is for you. Sound? Dazzling.

"Roberto G. Rivera Sings." Accompanied by The Mariachis and Los Cantores del Bosque. Toreador T 506. $2.98.

Accompanied by these two skilled groups, baritone Roberto G. Rivera offers a program of Mexican songs mercifully free of the super-sweetness so often laid on for tourist consumption. An attractive disc, apparently derived, however, from previously issued 78-rpm records.

"The Soul of Haiti." Sung by Jean Vincent; Alberto Socarras, cond. Vanguard VRS 9015. $4.98.

A superabundance of sound effects—screeching birds, pounding surf, thunder, ad nauseam—gives this portrait of Haiti all the verisimilitude of a Cecil B. DeMille sound stage. The roster of the nine performers evidences only one Haitian name: this is about the batting average of the record.

"Viva España!" Banda de Aviacion Española, Manuel Gomez de Arriba, cond. Montilla FM 106. $4.98.

With an ear ever cocked for melodic line, Señor Gomez leads his band through favorite instrumental excerpts from nine first-rate zarzuelas, tossing in the Intermezzo from Granados' *Goyescas* for good measure. True, one misses the sheen of strings, but Gomez's orchestrations have a sparkling validity in their own right. Anyone searching for a convenient *entrée* to the charms of Spain's unique operetta form would do well to investigate this disc forthwith.

O. B. BRUMMELL

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me pretty negative and a bit old hat: society is generally hostile and whatever-powers-there-be indifferent ("We're in it raw-blind, like burned rats" with "A heartbreak at the center of things—In which we don't figure at all"). Mr. Patchen, for more than twenty years the *enfant terrible* of American poets, reads these short poems—including a series of rather grubby, somewhat surrealistic limericks—in a tone that drawls, mutters, and sometimes takes on portentous notes of doom. What the jazz combo is attempting with *its* notes still mystifies me.

Still and all, if you're young enough to find the very old very new, or if you're simply tired of middle-aged poets who are also new critics, you may find this record a refreshing indication that contemporary poetry does not reside completely in hallowed academic halls. In any case it should provide at least a new conversation piece. J.G.

DYLAN THOMAS

Dylan Thomas, reading his own *Visit to America* and selections from the verse of Walter de la Mare, W. H. Auden, Henry Reid, Edward Thomas, and Thomas Hardy.
CAEDMON TC 1061. 12-in. $5.95.

Doomed, damned, possessed by the black fatality which fascinated the healthy and wealthy even to the point of hysterical adulation, the self-flagellating Byronic hero of our time left behind him a public image that threatens to obscure the poet in the frenzied bacchanal of his biography. It is good to read Thomas instead of memoirs by his friends and enemies; and it is good again to hear the Thomas voice.

On this record, the fourth of a series of Thomas readings, Caedmon presents the poet primarily as the very considerable actor he also was. The range is considerable. For the special delight of those who appreciate Thomas' wit there is the slapstick humor of *A Visit to America*, a dissertation on the vicissitudes of "fat poets with slim volumes" who are persuaded into becoming itinerant lecturers on these shores. (Yet even here is mordant irony: ". . . myself among them booming with the worst.") A slyer kind of comedy is evident in Henry Reid's parody of T. S. Eliot, *Chard Witlow*, where the voice of the Welshman manages somehow to take on the dry and vaguely clerical accents of Mr. Eliot himself. And the gentle whimsey of De la Mare's *Bards* is full of charm and grace.

Most listeners will, however, probably find "the true Dylan" most fully and most movingly expressed in the selections from Hardy and Auden. Particularly in the reading of the latter's *As I Walked Out One Evening* there seems to be a near-perfect meeting not only of minds but of sensibilities. Here one poet pays another the great tribute of bringing his own intuitive understanding to the service of the other's greater comprehension, even though "The clocks [have] ceased their chiming, / And the deep river [runs] on." J.G.

FI MAN'S FANCY

by Philip C. Geraci

"Banjo in Hi-Fi." Paul Martin and his Old-Timers. Tops L 1572. $1.98.
Paul Martin's banjo is backed up by an extremely competent small group of jazz musicians and, occasionally, vocalists; but it is the banjo which stars in each of the twelve songs, including some (*Sheik of Araby, Oh By Jingo*) that are universal banjo favorites. Tops's bargain price does not fit the fidelity, which, to coin a phrase, is tops.

"Carillon in Hi-Fi." Columbia WL 115. $4.98.
Columbia's engineers recorded this "Adventures in Sound" record at the First Presbyterian Church in Jackson, Tennessee, taping the forty-seven-bell tower instrument with no attempt to suppress extraneous sounds (mostly birds, which chatter incessantly). The carillon is played by Arthur Lynds Bigelow, who does a marvelous job of preventing an often discordant instrument from sounding that way. Columbia engineers handled their recording project well.

"Electronic Organ." Audio Fidelity AFLP 1856. $5.95.
Twenty-one-year-old Jack Anderson plays an unidentified "electronic organ" with adroitness and control. Show-off embellishments are lacking; the tone is quiet, soft, soothing. The organ itself has a tone in many ways unlike its sister instruments, and Anderson exploits this sound to the fullest. The recording is perfectly executed in every technical respect.

"Ralph Flanagan in Hi Fi." RCA Victor LPM 1555. $3.98.
In this age of trumpeting bands and super-loud arrangements it's refreshing to find a record which has its loud spots yet which also has its pace-changing softer moments. Flanagan can be as brassy as the best of them, but his muted moments are often more appealing. Here are a dozen of Flanagan's most requested numbers, dressed up in a very good version of modern fi.

"Mexican Bird Songs." Cornell University Records. $6.75.
I have always found it difficult, when someone inquires about the sound of a Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, to reply with any degree of authority. Furthermore, the sound, produced as it is at the tip of the vocal chords, tickles, and I usually sneeze. This record may banish such social hazards for all eternity, since it contains, in addition to that of the Pygmy Owl, songs of seventy-three other species of Mexican birds recorded on their home grounds by specially built parabolic microphones. Each call is identified by Mr. L. Irby Davis, a retired chemist who has pursued his ornithological hobby for twenty-three years. Useful, interesting, and lots of fun.

"Moon River Music." Lee Erwin, pipe organ. Zodiac LP 333. $3.98.
Most organ records reviewed in this column recently have laid claim to the adjectives "mighty," "powerful," "the biggest," and superlatives of like genre. This is an exception. Time-tempered Lee Erwin, once of the famed WLW Cincinnati "Moon River" night-watch program and for ten years organist with Arthur Godfrey, plays in a quieter and more subtle vein. His instrument (housed in a private residence in Summit, New Jersey) is a combination Moeller, Wurlitzer, and U. S. Pipe Organ. Erwin manipulates its three manuals with unfailing dexterity. His approach is generally restrained, his styling unique, and his songs (*Stardust, Blue Moon, Laura, As Time Goes By*, etc.) expressly planned for mood-hour listening.

Although mechanical organ noise is somewhat bothersome between selections (most of the record appears to have been recorded in one take) the over-all sound is quite good. Particularly outstanding is the reproduction of the organ's lower register—some notes go down so far they are not really heard at first; eventually one realizes that it is the record (and

not the furnace in the basement) which is creating such powerful, subsonic ear pressure.

"Night Mist." George Shearing Quintet with voices. Capitol T 943. $3.98.
Capitol blends the familiar rhythms of the Shearing quintet with a choir of voices. The songs are misty, an adjective which might well be applied to the Shearing group itself. Exceptional, reverberant sound, and a recording that is virtually flawless.

"The Reiner Sound." Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond. RCA Victor LM 2183. $4.98.
The "Reiner Sound" on this record is full-blown, round, spacious, all-encompassing—the sort of sound that speaks of a large concert hall when the atmosphere is just a little damp. There's nothing bright about it, though strings and brasses are not dulled either. It's extremely pleasant, and certainly is one undisputable version of realism. Reiner conducts Ravel's *Rapsodie espagnole* and *Pavan for a Dead Princess*, and Rachmaninoff's *Isle of the Dead*—lush music all.

"Rods, Wheels, and Whistles." North Jersey Recordings RR LP 1131.
This record of steam and diesel engine sounds was produced partly along the tracks of the New York and Long Branch Railroad, and partly in sections of Virginia near Roanoke. Most of the bands start from silence, build to peaks as the trains pass, then die to silence again as the sounds recede into the distance. The record is cut at a low level, which reduces the possibility of overload, yet it is exceptionally quiet between bands. Though the railroad-record market may soon reach a surplus (three have appeared in as many months), this example rates stars for clean recording.

"Serenade." Capitol Symphony Orchestra, Carmen Dragon, cond. Capitol PAO 8413. $4.98.
"A World of Music." Capitol Symphony Orchestra, Carmen Dragon, cond. Capitol PAO 8412. $4.98.
Melodies as sweet as nectar, as soothing as a spring breeze, with the bite of an occasional summer storm thrown in for variety—that's the Carmen Dragon recipe for easy listening. Dragon's strings are as fluid as warm molasses; his over-all approach richly, but gently, compelling. The menu on both records is similar: public-tested melodies like *La Cucaracha*, *Londonderry Air*, *All Through the Night*, Smetana's *Dance of the Comedians*, etc. Capitol has provided wondrous concert-hall atmosphere and some of the silkiest sounds on vinyl.

"With Bells On." Sid Bass and his Orchestra. Vik LX 1112. $3.98.
Sid Bass dresses twelve stand-by type tunes in big bells and little bells, powders their noses with classy and clever arrangements, and cloaks the works with a big, brassy band. The result is a very loud but happily well-recorded mixture suitable for those moments when you feel like licking the world and breaking plate glass windows.

"The World Famous Dagenham Girl Pipers." Capitol T 10125. $3.98.
The Dagenham lassies make up one of the United Kingdom's unique ensembles. To qualify for membership in the Girl Pipers, the aspirant must *not* know how to play pipes when she joins (at eleven years of age). But constant practice and energetic performances soon teach the girls all the tricks. Capitol's sound is glossy, full, and revealing.

FOLK MUSIC
by Edward L. Randal

THE PRINCIPALS of *Marilyn Child and Glenn Yarbrough Sing Folk Songs* (Elektra 143) bring vitality and freshness to a selection of English and American ballads. Both soprano Child and tenor Yarbrough are gifted and versatile singers; in collaboration, they complement each other—vocally and stylistically—to a striking degree. Most of the songs they have chosen to record are unhackneyed (*Mary Had a Baby*, *New York Girls*, *Nickety Nack*, etc.), but their uncompromising lyricism imparts new shadings even to the commonplace fare.

Judson's *Music for Moonshiners*, L 3031, presents the Laurel River Valley Boys in their disc debut. These three genuine North Carolina mountaineers—fiddler Byard Ray, his son John, a guitarist, and banjoist Ervin Lewis—saw and strum their way through a dozen toe-tapping and very authentic exemplars of contemporary mountain music, with Lewis lending his easy baritone to several choruses. The discerning ear will note both jazz and country music influences in the performances. Superior sound for a field recording.

Montilla, veteran purveyor of Spanish material, again serves folk music well with a brace of new releases. *Fiesta Flamenca* (FM 110) is an exciting collection by a platoon of expert Hispanic artists of the various forms of flamenco: *bulerias, alegrias, sevillanos, soleares.* The singing of Enrique Montoya is particularly impressive, as is the dancing of Faico and the guitar of Mario Escudero. The same Escudero teams with the virtuoso Sabicas in a two-guitar recital of flamenco rhythms on *Sabicas and Escudero* (FM 105). Here is flashing technique and superb instrumental control; here too is improvisation that extends the idiom to its near ultimate expression. An electrifying, handsomely recorded disc.

Columbia has performed a genuine service in providing *The Sounds of India* (WL 119), a brief but illuminating introduction to Indian music. Ravi Shankar, whose instrument is the stringed sitar, supplies a spoken commentary that goes far toward explaining the salient characteristics of this long-lived musical system. Four *ragas*, in which Shankar is joined by Chatur Lal on the tabla and N. C. Mullick on the tamboura, round out the offering.

AT sixty-five, John Jacob Niles is the dean of American ballad singers. To hear his eerie, high-pitched voice again is to have the years roll back. Not that the Niles voice doesn't show its age; but he has hewed doggedly—and successfully—to his own peculiar style despite the ebb and flow of time and musical fashion.

Niles occupies a strange place in the world of traditional song. He has given our nation three of its finest "folk" songs: *Black Is the Color of My True Love's Hair*, *Go Way from My Window*, and *Venezuela*. Yet, because "composed" folk songs are pilloried into oblivion, he was forced to maintain the fiction that he had "collected" these masterpieces—at all times, however, jealously demanding the use of his copyright.

Incredibly enough, Tradition's *I Wonder as I Wander* (TLP 1023) is Niles's first high-fidelity recording. Among the eighteen ballads he sings are most of those that have contributed to his fame. Happily, the Tradition engineering is outstanding. As with rare brandy, John Jacob Niles is a cultivated taste. But, as with rare brandy, it is a pleasure to recommend him.

From Riverside comes *English Folk Songs* (RLP 12-814), featuring the reedy tenor of John Runge, accompanying himself on the guitar. Runge's approach is strikingly reminiscent of that of Richard Dyer-Bennet, for he treats folk songs primarily as songs rather than as sociological testaments and is unafraid to present them in an art context. The songs he has chosen, with a few glaring exceptions, are first-rate and he has been well recorded.

Catalonia, that region of northeastern Spain slopping across the Pyrenees into France, has long preserved its own language and its own culture. In the Spanish Civil War its proud and independent people were ardent Loyalists—less through devotion to the Republic than in the interest of their own separatist aims. With the triumph of Franco, the Catalan dream faded. Catalonia's greatest musician and one of her most fervent patriots, Pablo Casals, exiled himself to France.

The Catalan national dance is the *sardana*, traditionally played by a *cobla*, or ensemble of eleven musicians using native instruments. Simultaneously, both Angel and Capitol have released collections of *sardanas*, both played by the *Cobla Gerona*. Angel's offering, *Pablo Casals Presents Sardanas of Catalonia* (Angel 35475), is remarkable for presenting several concert *sardanas* composed by Casals himself. This is haunting music—stately and medieval, yet strangely fraught with barbaric overtones. Casals' *Sant Martí del Canigó* is a noble expression of the form.

Capitol's entry, titled *Spanish Sardanas* (T 10121), is probably more representative of the genre as a whole. It also holds an edge in sound quality. If this type of exotic music interests you, you cannot go wrong with either disc.

THE BEST OF JAZZ

by John S. Wilson

PEPPER ADAMS QUINTET: *Critics' Choice*
World Pacific PJM 407. $4.98.

Adams' work on baritone saxophone is brimming with vitality and assurance. He charges through this disc with provocative bullishness and as long as he is playing, the performances have a vivid appeal. There are times, however, when trumpeter Lee Katzman or pianist Jimmy Rowles takes over and, although Rowles works out a warming, slow, lacelike blues on one occasion, neither he nor Katzman are on a level with Adams' intense, all-encompassing displays.

MANNY ALBAM AND HIS JAZZ GREATS: *West Side Story*
Coral 57207. $3.98.

Unlike other attempts to mix Broadway and jazz, Albam's effort here involves a score that actually uses some elements of modern jazz. On this sound basis, he has written arrangements that extend the spirit of the original and give his soloists leeway. The mixture of agitation and tenderness in Leonard Bernstein's music not only has been kept but is pointed up in these surging big-band performances. Albam's writing is brightly imaginative and his soloists—particularly Bob Brookmeyer and Gene Quill—have risen strikingly to their opportunities. This is easily the most valid and provocative of the many current adaptations of show material to jazz.

LOREZ ALEXANDRIA: *Lorez Sings Pres*
Federal 365. $3.98.

A potentially good jazz singer lies behind the various influences Miss Alexandria reveals on this disc. The most noticeable sources are Ella Fitzgerald and Sarah Vaughn, with Billie Holiday less strongly in evidence. Miss Alexandria has the voice and a sufficiently sensitive selection of phrasing to be very effective once she finds her own means of expression. She gets warm support from a group highlighted by bass trumpeter Cy Touff's casual authority.

MOSE ALLISON: *Local Color*
Prestige 7121. $4.98.

The promise that was evident in Allison's first disc (*Back Country Suite*, Prestige) is developed slightly in this second set. His own compositions, played in his unique and engaging mixture of primitive blues and modern jazz, have a bit more substance, and his striking talent for blues improvisation on the piano is in a broader vein. He also sings again in his slight but idiomatically accurate voice and shows his versatility with a muted trumpet solo that smacks strongly of Harry Edison's style. This is a varied and generally successful disc.

THE PERRY BRADFORD STORY
Crispus-Attucks 101. (No price given.)

This disc lights up some of the dim corners of jazz history in which Bradford, pianist, singer, band leader (Bradford's Jazz Phools), composer, and promoter, has been concerned. The point that Bradford apparently wants to establish here is that he was instrumental in having the first vocal blues recordings (by Mamie Smith) made. He was also associated with Louis Armstrong, Bessie Smith, James P. Johnson, Jelly Roll Morton and others during the Twenties. Bradford's story is told by means of a banal script, read sloppily by Noble Sissle as the questioner, but warmly and sincerely answered by Bradford. Facts appear to be bandied about carelessly (Bradford claims that Louis Armstrong made his recording debut with him in 1924 although Armstrong recorded frequently with King Oliver in 1923), and Bradford is restricted to obvious answers except when he gets into his relationship with Mamie and Bessie Smith. But the ten and a half illustrative records that are part of the script make this disc invaluable to collectors of early jazz for they include an excellent Tommy Dorsey solo disc on which he plays trumpet, accompanied by Eddie Lang; a moving Bessie Smith selection, *My Home Ain't Here* (also known as *Dixie Flyer Blues*); a fine Jelly Roll Morton group with the almost completely overlooked trumpeter, Johnny Dunn; as

well as snatches of James P. Johnson, Leo Watson and, of course, Mamie Smith. All the recordings are well off the beaten track.

BILLY BUTTERFIELD AND HIS ORCHESTRA: *Thank You for a Lovely Evening*
RCA VICTOR LPM 1590. $3.98.

Polite, cleanly played, but routine big-band dance music brightened occasionally by Urbie Green's smoothly eloquent trombone.

RED CAMP: *The New Clavichord*
COOK 1133. $4.98.

The clavichord, we are advised, has been unusually difficult to record because the thud of the keys is often as loud as the musical tone. Emory Cook has now solved this problem; and we are offered unalloyed clavichord sound, capable of amplification to monstrous heights and sounding like a velvet-mittened harpsichord. But to what purpose? Red Camp, an edgy, honkish-tonkish pianist, draws some warm and prancing sonorities from it when he has a melodic base to function from, but when he is improvising on thin air—as he does throughout one side—he produces little more than garrulous galumphing.

EDDIE CONDON AND HIS ALL-STARS: *The Roaring Twenties*
COLUMBIA CL 1089. $3.98.

Fine meat-and-potatoes jazz by Condon's hand-picked beauties who include, on this occasion, Vic Dickenson and his Bronx-burst trombone and trumpeter Billy Butterfield, who has rarely played with such biting brilliance. A major point of interest is clarinetist Bob Wilbur's use of a bubbling upper register in some of the ensembles, giving them an unusually light and merry sound. And not to be overlooked is a furiously driving version of Fats Waller's 1929 arrangement, *Minor Drag*, in which Condon was one of the original participants.

MORTY CORB AND HIS DIXIE ALL-STARS: *Strictly from Dixie*
TOPS 1581. $1.49.

John Best, the onetime Artie Shaw, Glenn Miller, and Benny Goodman trumpet man, plays some magnificently full-bodied Dixie-*cum*-swing horn with a group that is, aside from an unbelievably clumsy saxophonist, otherwise able if not especially inspired.

BARBARA DANE: *Trouble in Mind*
SAN FRANCISCO 33014. $4.98.

"A voice like this hasn't been recorded for thirty years," exults the liner. Well, at least not since 1954, when Claire Austin explored the same Ma Rainey-Bessie Smith vein that Miss Dane is working. Like Miss Austin, Miss Dane catches inflections, phrasing, and other surface qualities of the métier. But the deep-souled conviction at the heart of this type of blues singing is not so easily come by, and that is what one misses in the singing of both Miss Dane and Miss Austin. Miss Dane comes close at times, but just as often her fervor veers off on a Sophie Tucker tangent. Her accompaniment, however, is delightfully archaic, played with particular wit and perception by Darnell Howard, clarinet, Don Ewell, piano, and Bob Mielke, trombone.

DORSEY BROTHERS ORCHESTRA: *Their Shining Hour*
DESIGN 20. $1.49.

These 1935 performances by the Dorsey Brothers orchestra, assertedly made at the band's last recording session before it broke up, are not reissues. The liner notes do not reveal the source, but presumably they were made for a transcription service. They are remarkably good recordings for 1935—far, far better than the band's Decca discs of the same period—although the roomy, echo-chamber sound gets a little out of hand at times. The program is a mixture of the band's light, bright two-beat jazz style (*Sugar Foot Stomp, Eccentric, By Heck*), and some of its straight pop dance numbers with Bob Crosby vocals. It is a much better presentation of this engaging and unassuming band than the ten-inch Decca disc (no longer available) that has been its only other collected representation on LP. Because it is made up of hitherto unreleased material that reveals a long-departed group in better engineering circumstances than its known releases do, this disc genuinely deserves to be classified as a collector's item. At $1.49, it's a collector's bargain.

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA: *Ellington Indigos*
COLUMBIA CL 1085. $3.98.

Minor Ellington. Billed as a dance set, these ballads are designed for very slow, self-absorbed dancers although the unique qualities of the Ellington band cannot be completely disguised. Duke's piano is heard frequently, Johnny Hodges takes off on his purple flights, and trumpeter Shorty Baker does some interesting things to *Willow Weep for Me* (but he should have left *Mood Indigo* alone).

DON ELLIOTT OCTET: *Jamaica Jazz*
ABC-PARAMOUNT 228. $3.98.

Here is one of the more rational translations of a Broadway score to jazz terms. Harold Arlen's blues and calypso accented music for *Jamaica* has been thoughtfully and modestly arranged by Gil Evans, using a small wood-wind group and the conga drum of Candido as his principal backdrops, to form an effective setting for Elliott's versatile use of trumpet, marimba, mellophone, vibraphone, and bongos. This treatment drains away much of the repetitious calypso feeling that covers the original score and enables Evans to get away from his

customary somber, shifting panels of sound. Elliott, playing in easy, unforced fashion, is most impressive in his mellophone shifts.

GIL EVANS AND TEN
PRESTIGE 7120. $4.98.

Evans shares with Duke Ellington a pervading interest in the manipulation of tonal colors, but much of his writing lacks the inherent swing in the Duke's work. On this disc there is a stronger sense of overt swing than Evans has offered in the past; there are also the lugubriously weaving rhythms and sections more typical of him (and reminiscent of his service as an arranger for Claude Thornhill). However, this is the most varied and provocative collection of Evans' arrangements that records have offered so far, played by an alert, responsive group, and with notable solos by trombonist Jimmy Cleveland, soprano saxophonist Steve Lacy, trumpeter Jake Koven, and Evans himself, who affects a very high, plinking single-note piano style. The recording gives the soloists an advantage over the ensembles, which are muffled and diffuse.

JOHN GRAAS: *Coup de Graas*
EMARCY 36117. $3.98.

A trio of lightly stepping selections and the consistently enlivening presence of Art Pepper's alto saxophone save this set from bumbling its way into straight monotony. Otherwise the gray quality of Graas's French horn and the gray atmosphere of most of the arrangements blur into dogged routines despite generally capable playing.

THE HARD SWING
WORLD PACIFIC JWC 508. $3.98.

Of the five groups heard on this disc—the quintets of Chet Baker, Jack Sheldon, Pepper Adams, Elmo Hope, and the Jazz Messengers—only the Messengers are steady purveyors of the raw, driving jazz suggested by the title. They perform on cue here, Adams meets their challenge and Baker, normally a limp and hesitant performer, shows unexpected evidence of force and sweep in two selections. In large part, this is unostentatious, smoothly flowing swing—firm but yielding, rarely hard.

FLETCHER HENDERSON ALL STARS: *The Big Reunion*
JAZZTONE 1285. $4.98.

Less than half of this disc is actually concerned with the reunion reminiscences of a big band made up largely of celebrated Henderson alumni. This is a virile, shouting group—it has to be with such raw-boned plungers as Rex Stewart (who leads the band), Coleman Hawkins, Ben Webster, J. C. Higginbotham, Benny Morton, and Dickie Wells on hand—and it dives into Henderson's old sketches for *Sugar Foot Stomp, Wrappin' It Up, Honeysuckle Rose,* and

Ella and the Duke Assemble a Somewhat Mixed-up Songbook

THE FACT that a parlay of Duke Ellington's tunes played by Duke Ellington's orchestra and sung by Ella Fitzgerald produces a group of resplendent performances that roam enticingly between jazz and pop music should probably occasion no surprise. Ellington is one of the most appealing composers of popular tunes, largely because he creates most of his works in terms of the jazz potential of his band rather than the stereotypes of Tin Pan Alley—*Solitude, I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart, Do Nothing Till You Hear from Me, I Got it Bad, Sophisticated Lady, Mood Indigo, All Too Soon, I Didn't Know About You, In a Sentimental Mood* and many more serve as vital witnesses. Miss Fitzgerald, for her part, is a singer whose best métier is the ballad, but who has been bred professionally in a thoroughgoing jazz atmosphere. Aside from the fact that these two musical double-threats should logically complement each other, they are the most polished exemplars of their special arts appearing before the public today.

So, as one might expect, *Ella Fitzgerald Sings the Duke Ellington Songbook* contains many matchless interpretations. What one does not expect—and what comes as a shock—is that some of it is so much less than one might anticipate. There is, to be sure, Miss Fitzgerald's absolutely superb rendition of *All Too Soon* with its astute touches of Mildred Bailey's lovely lyric quality, her vocal parallel of Johnny Hodges' alto saxophone on *Day Dreams,* the rollicking zest with which she sets the stage for Ben Webster's tenor saxophone on *Cottontail,* her pure-toned ballad quality on *Do Nothing Till You Hear from Me, Sophisticated Lady,* and *I Didn't Know About You.*

But there is also the dismaying discovery that the Ellington band has been caught in one of its inordinately casual periods. Here it produces some of the tritely leaden performances that have dogged it for the past ten years as readily as it swirls into the richly panoplied settings that are one of its special provinces. Nor is the band helped by the fudgy recording which seems to be the

Ella Fitzgerald: "calm magnificence."

common fate of all big bands on Norman Granz's labels—Count Basie has suffered *in extremis* while Dizzy Gillespie and, most recently, Woody Herman have been the victims.

The stolidly unimpressive backing that the Ellington band frequently provides for Miss Fitzgerald is accented on four of the eight sides in this set. Here she is accompanied by a small group, usually one in which Webster and violinist Stuff Smith are featured, at least adequately complementary (it frequently rises far above this level, notably in Smith's close-as-a-girdle support of Miss Fitzgerald on *Just Squeeze Me*), and recorded with much more presence than the full Ellington band. The set is further complicated by the fact that the so-called "Ellington Song Book" contains many tunes without words, quite admirable as instrumental vehicles, to which Miss Fitzgerald is asked to improvise wordless vocals—an amusing trick in its proper place, but not the sort of thing to be repeated as often as it is here. It is deeply dismaying to hear such a fondly remembered Ellington work as *Rockin' in Rhythm* fall apart into a noisy clatter brought on by the current band's apparent inability to come to grips with the piece and Miss Fitzgerald's fruitless efforts to find some means of projecting it vocally.

The set includes a specially commissioned long work—*Portrait of Ella Fitzgerald*—that runs about par for the Ellington long course: one of the four sections has an immediately compelling quality, a slow, warmly melodic theme developed by Shorty Baker on trumpet. There is also an overwrought ad-lib blues involving both Miss Fitzgerald and the band.

Despite its flaws, however, there is so much of lasting merit in this set—Miss Fitzgerald has a calm magnificence even when the cards are stacked against her and the Ellington band seems to remember what it is supposed to be more frequently than these somewhat carping comments might indicate—that it is bound to become a basic part of any jazz collection. But there is no getting away from the nagging realization that much of it should have been better.

JOHN S. WILSON

ELLA FITZGERALD AND DUKE ELLINGTON'S ORCHESTRA: *Ella Fitzgerald Sings the Duke Ellington Songbook.*

Verve 4010/4. Four 12-in. $19.92.

King Porter Stomp with rampant enthusiasm. But the men who were elements in the band thirty years ago are now strong personalities in their own right, and while there is still some suggestion of the loose unity of the old Henderson band, these pieces are now essentially a parade ground for a group of virtuosi. Hawkins is especially striking, flaring vividly into all his solos. He also does a warm, easy ballad with a small group that plays the rest of the selections—one a pretty alto saxophone working of *'Round About Midnight* by Hilton Jefferson, another a showcase for the three gutty trombones, still another a walloping ad-lib blues which roars to a furious finale. The hand of Fletcher Henderson shows through only dimly on this disc, but the memory of the late band leader has provided a rallying point for some of the great and still fruitful older men of jazz.

WOODY HERMAN: *Featuring The Preacher*
VERVE 8255. $4.98.

The 1957 edition of the Herman Herd is portrayed as an adequate but unexciting group on this disc. Aside from Herman and the veteran trombonist, Bill Harris, the soloists are undistinguished and the arrangements tend toward a sludgy monotony.

HI-FI DRUMS
CAPITOL T 926. $3.98.

Drum solos by Buddy Rich, Louis Bellson, Chuck Flores, and others. For addicts only.

CLAUDE HOPKINS: *The Golden Era of Dixieland, 1887-1937*
DESIGN 38. $1.49.

Hopkins, once a popular band leader who has lately been playing piano at the Metropole in New York, leads a group of topflight jazz veterans (Pee Wee Erwin, Buster Bailey, Vic Dickenson, Milt Hinton, George Wettling) through a group of Dixie war horses which are roused from mere adequacy by Hopkins' occasional sparse, impressionistic solos, a couple of spirited slapped bass solos by Hinton, and flashes of Dickenson's amusingly bleary trombone.

PAUL HORN: *The House of Horn*
DOT 3091. $3.98.

Horn, the general utility man in the Chico Hamilton Quintet, is surrounded here by the Quintet plus a string quartet, piano, and vibes. The group plays a program closer to chamber music than to jazz as Horn moves nimbly from flute to piccolo to clarinet to alto saxophone to alto flute. Except for *Siddartha*, a darting, flaring composition by Fred Katz for clarinet and string quartet, the overall feeling of the disc is pastoral and subdued. Of the jazz-influenced selections, the most interesting—and the most fun—is a slinking, blues-touched march on which Horn plays a rather remarkable jazz piccolo.

DICK JOHNSON: *Most Likely . . .*
RIVERSIDE 12-253. $4.98.

Within a small area and in limited doses, Johnson is a light, bright, and engaging alto saxophonist. But his conception becomes repetitious over the full length of this disc. Fortunately he has the edgy, charging pianist, Dave McKenna, in his rhythm section to provide some basic, close-to-the-bone jazz on almost every selection.

JONAH JONES QUARTET: *Swingin' On Broadway*
CAPITOL T 963. $3.98.

Uncomplicated, perky, sometimes witty, and always very rhythmic interpretations of recent show tunes by a man who has adapted to the trumpet some of the broad appeal of Erroll Garner's piano style.

LEE KONITZ: *Very Cool*
VERVE 8209. $4.98.

Introduced by Tristano-like ensembles, Konitz moves erratically through these selections. He has moments when he floats lightly and smoothly, but they give way to periods of plodding clichés. With him are Don Ferrera, an outgoing but undeveloped trumpeter, and a rhythm section which is occasionally sparked by Sal Mosca's piano.

JOHN LEWIS: *The John Lewis Piano*
ATLANTIC 1272. $4.98.

The austere but kindling piano normally heard laying a foundation for the Modern Jazz Quartet takes the full spotlight here. Lewis is at his most inviting when he is working in what might be termed his MJQ vein—building simple, single-note passages through increasing degrees of swinging fervor to an ultimate level that can be gently but insistently overpowering. He works in this manner on two or three occasions on this disc, but he also indulges himself in some trivial romanticism (Lewis has an odd weakness for the compositions of David Raksin). The most provocative piece in this rather studied set is *Harlequin*—an odd and extremely effective development of a theme through a broken, stabbing series of suggestions by Lewis' piano, held together by Connie Kay's sensitively brush-beaten cymbal.

JACK LIDSTROM STOMPERS: *"Look, Dad, They're Comin' Down Our Street (in Hi-Fi)"*
WORLD PACIFIC PJ 1235. $4.98.

Swedish musicians are known primarily for their ready assimilation of postwar jazz styles and, to a lesser degree, for their aptitude in picking up the surface characteristics of swing. There are also, this disc reveals, Swedish traditionalists. Lidstrom's Stompers are a more than adequate ensemble band and Lidstrom,

the best of the soloists, can play a strong, incisive trumpet. But he lives too dangerously in this set. Most of the pieces are associated with Louis Armstrong (*Potato Head Blues, Wild Man Blues, Lazy River,* etc.) and Lidstrom tries to follow the Louis pattern. There may be simpler ways to commit musical suicide but none more certain.

JACKIE McLEAN AND JOHN JENKINS: *Alto Madness*
PRESTIGE 7114. $4.98.

Two hard-toned, monotonous Parker imitators shrill their relentless way through an endless series of solos.

HERBIE MANN'S CALIFORNIANS: *Great Ideas of Western Mann*
RIVERSIDE 12-245. $4.98.

Instead of his customary flute, Mann plays bass clarinet throughout this disc, assisted by Jack Sheldon, trumpet, and a rhythm section. In Mann's hands, the bass clarinet is at least as rational a jazz instrument as the flute and it seems to have more fluidity. Not enough, however, to go on at the length demanded when only three selections occupy each side of this disc. These basically pleasant performances underline one merit of 78-rpm discs, for here mere pleasantness is stretched far beyond the limits of interest. Sheldon's solos have more shape and force than he has shown in the past, but pianist Jimmy Rowles is disappointingly subdued.

THE MASTERSOUNDS: *The King and I*
WORLD PACIFIC PJM 405. $3.98.

Subtitled "A Modern Jazz Interpretation," these performances of tunes from the Rodgers and Hammerstein score have scarcely any jazz qualities. They are, however, beautifully voiced and warmly played nonjazz versions and, as such, are extremely good.

RED MITCHELL QUARTET: *Presenting Red Mitchell*
CONTEMPORARY 3538. $4.98.

A quartet led by a bass player, as this one is, is almost bound to give undue emphasis to bass solos. This one does. And even though Mitchell is an exceptionally clean, firm-toned bassist, his solos amount to far too much of what might otherwise be a good thing. Unfortunately, his is the only strong, forthright voice in the group (tenor saxophone, piano, drums).

ART MOONEY AND HIS ALL STARS: *Hi-Fi Dixieland*
M-G-M 3516. $3.98.

If nothing else, Mooney is alert. Right after the war when the Glenn Miller sound was the big thing, Mooney had one of the first Miller-styled bands. A few years later when Philadelphia's marching string bands had an unaccountable flare of wide popularity, Mooney quickly surrounded himself with a

welter of plinking strings. And now that Lawrence Welk has led the way into Dixieland, here is Mooney two-beating with vigor. Precisely what Mooney had to do with this recording is not clear because it is played by members in good standing of the Hollywood Dixie clique with clarinetist Matty Matlock at the helm. They do obeisance to the usual tunes in the usual way. The only notable difference between this and other Matlock discs is the unpleasantly shrill recording.

GERRY MULLIGAN AND BOB BROOKMEYER: *Jazz Concerto Grosso*
ABC-PARAMOUNT 225. $3.98.

Phil Sunkel's *Jazz Concerto Grosso*, played by a big band and a small ensemble made up of Sunkel, cornet, Brookmeyer, valve trombone, and Mulligan, baritone saxophone (all three also solo individually) has a pleasant basic theme; but there seems little reason for carrying it on for fifteen minutes. Mulligan and Brookmeyer contribute little and are quite overshadowed in the solo spots by Sunkel's light, sensitive playing. There are also two shorter Sunkel works played by a gruff-voiced septet in which John Wilson's fluegelhorn is added to the uther three solo voices. Mulligan is closer to his usual swaggering self in these pieces, but again it is Sunkel who does the most with his attractive and oddly turned melodies.

THE NEW BILLY TAYLOR TRIO
ABC-PARAMOUNT 226. $3.98.

There is less surface glibness and more strongly stated jazz feeling here than Taylor has shown in his recent trio discs (the appearance of Ed Thigpen on drums makes this a *new* trio). *Round Midnight* serves as an ideal meeting place for both his intellectual and "funky" approaches, a mating that colors most of his playing throughout the disc. There are also two sterling samples of his brisk, flowing, glancingly bright treatments of ballads.

BERNARD PEIFFER TRIO
DECCA 8626. $3.98.

Peiffer is a rarity among jazz pianists —a legitimately schooled musician with brilliant technique who can transfer much of this brilliance to jazz performances without falling into the trap of believing that technique is all. His ability to swing strongly even while juggling a variety of virtuoso lines produces on this disc some of the most hair-raising pianistic daredeviltry since Art Tatum's hands were stilled. He is not always able to provide adequate continuity for his flow of ideas, but when he holds to direct, straightforward exposition—*Soon, I Could Write a Book*, and portions of *Yesterdays* and *Lullaby of Birdland* have this quality—he is a tremendously exciting jazz pianist. He has some good reflective moments, too, but on a lengthy *Requiem* for Tatum he mulls around without making much of a point.

BUD POWELL TRIO: *Blues in the Closet*
VERVE 8218. $4.98.

One side of firmly played, neatly stacked piano solos by Powell is offset by a side marked by sloppy recording and sloppy performances. Powell's full talent flashes on and off throughout the disc, but bassist Ray Brown consistently plays with distinction.

THE RAMPART STREET PARADERS: *Texas! U.S.A.*
COLUMBIA CL 1061. $3.98.

The Hollywood Dixieland Association, headed by Matty Matlock and featuring such stalwarts as Abe Lincoln, Clyde Hurley, Eddie Miller, and George Van Eps, has not been especially roused by playing tunes which suggest some aspect of Texas (*Dallas Blues, Red River Valley, You Are My Sunshine*, etc.). Miller and Matlock have a few impressive moments, but the Paraders sound as though they had had a hard day at the studios before they taped this set.

LYLE RITZ: *How About Uke?*
VERVE 2087. $3.98.

The dexterity with which Ritz gives the ukulele a gentle but thoroughly persuasive jazz voice on this disc hardly presages the emergence of the uke as a jazz instrument of consequence, but it does result in several pleasantly light-voiced, swinging performances. Ritz's accompaniment is bass and drums (the latter recorded too strongly) and, on a few numbers, Don Shelton's flute, a mixed blessing which sometimes provides a balancing cushion of sound for the shrill plinkety panic of the ukulele at fast tempos.

RED RODNEY: *1957*
SIGNAL 1206. $4.98.

A familiar figure in the bop bands of the late Forties, Rodney has not played much during the Fifties. His return on this disc reveals a vastly matured trumpet player—a richer, warmer performer who digs in and talks with a full, authoritative voice instead of frisking through surface figures. He is joined here by Ira Sullivan whose hard-toned tenor saxophone has acquired more breadth and flexibility than most of the other hard-lined men. On one selection Sullivan switches to trumpet and holds his own in a bright, strongly expressed duet with Rodney.

SING A SONG OF BASIE
ABC-PARAMOUNT 223. $3.98.

The ingenuity involved in this disc staggers the imagination — mine, anyhow. Working from ten Count Basie arrangements, Jon Hendricks has written remarkably appropriate and witty lyrics for the brass and reed section parts and for the various instrumental soloists. Then, backed by the Basie rhythm section (with Nat Pierce sitting in for Basie

at the piano), the various parts have been sung by Hendricks, Dave Lambert, and Annie Ross—using multitaping to create the necessary effect of depth in the ensemble and section passages—resulting in a startling simulation of the arrangements as played by the Basie band but with the added fillip of Hendricks' complementary lyrics. The three singers have been particularly skillful in catching the tonal qualities of Basie's soloists—Dave Lambert's interpretation of the trumpet part in *One O'Clock Jump* is a particular delight. This is a very unusual and extremely fascinating disc.

JIMMY SMITH AT THE ORGAN: *Volume 1*
BLUE NOTE 1551. $4.98.

The meritorious moments on this disc come from alto saxophonist Lou Donaldson and, occasionally, from guitarist Kenny Burrell. Donaldson's surging, firmly formed playing—a leaner version of Johnny Hodges' style—produces a singing *Summertime* and makes a long blues sporadically effective. Smith's organ is sometimes calmly sonorous, sometimes statically sputtering, rarely communicative.

LEROY VINNEGAR SEXTET: *Leroy Walks!*
CONTEMPORARY 3542. $4.98.

Vinnegar's walking bass stalks ominously through a group of generally static selections, fired at times by the dark brown thoughts of Carl Perkins at the piano. The other participants include Gerald Wilson, trumpet, Teddy Edwards, tenor saxophone, and Victor Feldman, vibraharp.

GEORGE WALLINGTON TRIO: *Knight Music*
ATLANTIC 1275. $4.98.

Wallington, a neat, precise pianist whose approach is intellectual rather than emotional, goes about his business calmly and without flourishes (or much excitement) in turning out one side of originals and one of sophisticated ballads.

PHIL WOODS QUARTET: *Warm Woods*
EPIC 3436. $3.98.

This appears to be an effort to give Woods, an alto saxophonist, a wider appeal than his uncompromising jazz performances in the past might have had, for there is a prevalence of ballads and easy tempos. Woods manages to temper his shrill, harsh tone a bit, particularly in the middle register, but it is not yet a good vehicle for romantic forays. The inclusion of Dave Brubeck's piece, *In Your Own Sweet Way*, invites unfortunate comparisons with Brubeck's brilliant altoist, Paul Desmond, a much more graceful and fluent improviser. Woods is most at home in two selections which depart from the general pattern of the disc and on which he can loosen up and ride with spirit.

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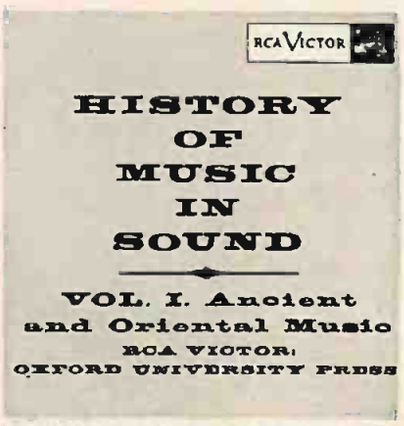

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THE WORLD'S GREATEST ARTISTS ARE ON

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part II

the mass since Bach

A Discography by David Johnson

ONLY TWO OF THE twentieth-century works in this discography employ the large orchestra and chorus that were characteristic of Mass composition from the Neapolitan school onward for nearly two hundred years—those by Janacek (who, be it remembered, was born in 1854) and Paul Paray. A small chorus with no conspicuous solo parts, either unaccompanied (Thompson, Vaughan Williams) or accompanied by organ (Satie, Kaltnecker) or by a limited instrumental ensemble (Stravinsky, Harrison), are the forces encountered most frequently nowadays. The texture of the modern Mass tends to be polyphonic, and its melodic content eschews operatic elements (the nineteenth-century heresy) for folk tunes (the twentieth-century heresy) or ascetic neo-Gregorianism. Whether it is closer to the spirit of worship than are the Masses of Berlioz and Rossini and Bruckner can be left to the argufier. The music lover will be content to judge each work on its individual merits.

Only one towering nineteenth-century Mass has yet to be recorded—the *Requiem* of Dvorak. Schumann's last two works, the Mass, Op. 147 and the Requiem, Op. 148, deserve looking into too, especially after the shameful neglect of the Schumann centennial by the record companies. There are also highly interesting examples of the genre by Weber, Spohr (a Mass for orchestra, five solo voices and ten-part chorus!), César Franck, and Liszt. Our own times have seen a post-Puccini Italian school which is almost as active in church composition as in opera—Requiems by Pizzetti and Malipiero and Masses by Casella, Ghedini, and others. And in Germany there is a group of *a cappella* composers—Otto Jochum, Max Springer, Heinrich Lemacher—reminiscent of the early Flemish masters, at least in their devotion to their craft. All of these are worth a hearing on microgroove. But the field is already richly laden, and both specialist and casual collector have much to rejoice in.

BERLIOZ

GRAND MESSE DES MORTS, OP. 5 (1 Edition)

One hundred and ninety instrumentalists, two hundred and ten singers, four brass choirs, a military corps of twenty-four drums and "additional percussion" took part in the first performance of this megalith. Curiously enough, the more one listens to it, the more its giantism seems to consist in the outwardly quiet passages rather than the boisterous ones. The *Dies Irae* cannot match Verdi's for violence; and even the goblin-haunted *"Lacrymosa,"* with its hysterical sobbing orchestra, elicits more admiration than awe. But in the ascetic *"Quaerens me,"* chanted by an unaccompanied chorus, in the almost hypnotic choral repetitions of the Offertorium is to be found the impression of vastness which led Heinrich Heine to compare the work to a primordial jungle, heavy with vegetation and the crawl of reptiles. A closer parallel, and a decided inspiration to Berlioz, was the doomsday art of the Middle Ages.

The one available recording, originally on the Entré label, is surprisingly good. The orchestra does not always have the virtuosity to do justice to the score, particularly in the *"Tuba mirum,"* but Theodore Hollenbach conducts with skill and a fine regard for tempo and dynamics. The huge chorus (250 voices) handles itself with agility; and the sound is immeasurably better than that the discontinued Jean Fournet version, made in Paris during the German occupation, could boast.

—Ray de Voll (t); Chorus and Orchestra of the Rochester Oratorio Society, Theodore Hollenbach, cond. HARMONY HL 510. $3.98.

GOUNOD

MESSE SOLENNELLE ("ST. CECILIA") (1 Edition)

For the average nineteenth-century music lover the two towering masters of sacred choral music were Mendelssohn and Gounod (in England Handel made a third). Gounod's *Mors et Vita* and *Rédemption* were considered the *ne plus ultra* of the mystic. His *Messe solennelle* still is performed in church services: the appeal of its drippingly sweet tunes and the modesty of its requirements (a four-part chorus singing elementary harmony, three soloists, and organ accompaniment) endear it to provincial choirs and choirmasters. But the source of its religiosity is essentially meretricious and its taste is frequently doubtful: for example, the directions that the chorus hum while the solo soprano sings the opening words of the Gloria (Mr. Welch has the good sense to ignore these directions); or the theatrical broken quavers at the word *"passus"* ("he suffered"). It gets quite as good a performance as it deserves in this recording, although fanciers of Gounod's church music will be annoyed by the haphazard dynamics and the indifferent singing of the soloists.

—Dorothy Dunne (s), William Dunn (t), John Wilton (bs-b); Welch Chorale, James B. Welch, cond. LYRICHORD LL 60. $4.98.

ROSSINI

PETITE MESSE SOLENNELLE (2 Editions)

Perhaps the greatest score of a very great artist, this music was composed when Rossini was seventy-two years old and had virtually stopped composing more than three decades before. All of the pent-up creative urge of those unproductive years was poured into the *Petite Messe* (a jocular title: it is almost as long as the *Missa Solemnis* of Beethoven). Arias, trios, choruses follow one another in glorious procession, each seeming to be finer than the one that preceded it. The orchestral writing surpasses even that of *William Tell* in finesse and imaginative combinations; there can be little doubt that, between 1829 and 1864, Rossini had studied the scores of Hector Berlioz with great care.

This is not a profoundly religious Mass except in the sense that all art is religious wherein the artist gives his best. The "*Crucifixus*" is not a massive chorus, as in Bach, but an aria for soprano; yet, in its own lovely way, it expresses the pathos of the words equally well—and could certainly do without the theatrical sobs with which Angelica Tuccari, who otherwise sings beautifully, invests it.

I have been living on intimate terms with this Period recording for a number of years, and our first acquaintanceship by now has blossomed into a love affair. What magnificent singing the four relatively obscure soloists pour into it! And what surprising power and drama this chorus and orchestra with the unpromising name of "Società del Quartetto" lend to the music! It is true enough that the huge score has been cut, indeed mercilessly so. The long, contrapuntal choruses are virtually excised and the organ offertory is completely missing, while both are found in reasonable fullness on the new Angel version. But I still find the Period recording preferable. It uses the orchestral accompaniment of Rossini's final version, whereas Angel employs the considerably less compelling original accompaniment for two pianos and harmonium. Angel soloists, too, with the exception of Caterina Mancini, are not up to their rivals. Giuseppina Salvi, the contralto on Period, deserves special singling out for her rendering of the interpolated aria "*O salutaris.*" The velvety splendor of her voice wakens memories of Stignani in her prime.

—Angelica Tuccari (s), Giuseppina Salvi (c), Piero Besma (t), Nestore Catalani (b); Chorus and Orchestra Sinfonica Romana della Società del Quartetto, Alberico Vitalini, cond. PERIOD SPL 588. $4.98.

—Caterina Mancini (s), Oralia Dominguez (c), Giuseppe Berdini (t), Mario Petri (b); Piccolo Coro Polifonico dell' Accademia di Santa Cecilia; Gino Gorini and Carlo Vidusso, pianists; Ferruccio Vignanelli, organ; Renato Fasano, cond. ANGEL 3562B. Two 12-in. $9.96 (or $7.96).

BRUCKNER

MASS NO. 1, IN D MINOR (1 Edition)

Bruckner wrote four Masses, but the first is apparently an apprentice work to which he did not give a number. All of them were completed before he began the composition of his Second Symphony; he never returned to the form again because he found in purely instrumental music a more immediate way of addressing his God. The last Masses, though they precede the symphonies, are, however, by no means early works. This so-called First Mass is a product of his fortieth year (1864), and it betrays the master, in the vocal writing as well as the instrumentation. The finest section is the long Benedictus: it is almost startlingly Mahler-like, recalling vividly the mood of the Fourth Symphony; and, like that work, it displays a myriad of ingenious vocal and instrumental combinations (including a passage for solo baritone, solo cello, and solo trombone).

The inadequate annotations of the recording identify the rather mediocre soloists but not the very fine chorus (is it the chorus of the Vienna State Opera?). The sound is suitably brilliant and clean.

—Patricia Brinton (s), Sonja Draeksler (c), William Blankenship (t), Frederick Guthrie (bs); Chorus, Vienna Orchestra, F. Charles Adler, cond. SPA 72. $5.95.

MASS NO. 2, IN E MINOR (1 Edition)

The most ascetic of Bruckner's liturgical music, this E minor Mass (1866) is not easy to listen to. Its gaunt, unadorned form is far from the Wagnerian lushness that begins to show itself in the F minor Mass and blossoms out in the adagios of the symphonies. There are no soloists, no strings; the eight-part chorus is virtually unaccompanied in the Kyrie and thereafter only by an orchestra of wood winds and brass. At times the musical logic seems to cry out for the sustained tones of the strings ("*Et resurrexit*"), but perhaps this impression is owing to the ineffective engineering of the only available recording. The winds are barely to be heard; and when they do manage to come through, most of their distinctive timbres are missing. The chorus, too, delivers a rather sleepy performance, feeble in its *pianos* and half-hearted in its *fortes*.

—Choir and Orchestra of the Hamburg State Opera, Max Thurn, cond. TELEFUNKEN LGX 66033. $4.98.

MASS NO. 3, IN F MINOR (1 Edition, discontinued)

Bruckner's last Mass, completed in 1868, carries the symphonic concept of Mass composition to its farthest development. Both the Credo and Gloria are huge, symphonic movements, organized with more compelling logic than some of the movements from the symphonies themselves. It is a superbly dramatic work filled with memorable music: the brooding, troubled Kyrie; the angular "*In gloria Dei Patris*" fugue (with frightening choral octave leaps and plunges and a stunning pivotal high A flat leading to the breakneck "Amen" stretto); the surging resurrection motif that plays so significant a part in the Eighth Symphony; a Benedictus which gives the lie once for all to those who maintain that Bruckner was no melodist. To know this Mass is to be puzzled by the disparity between the sophisticated musician who produced it and the historical Bruckner, who is generally pictured as a kind of angelic bumpkin.

The recording, though still listed, apparently is no longer being supplied to shops, which is a great pity, both for the gap it leaves in the Bruckner discography and for the value of the performance itself—a good one, despite some groove crowding (the Mass takes almost sixty minutes to perform).

—Dorothea Siebert (s), Dagmar Herrmann (c), Erich Majkut (t), Otto Wiener (b); Akademie Kammerchor and Vienna State Philharmonia, Ferdinand Grossman, cond. Vox PL 7940. $4.98.

LISZT

MISSA CHORALIS, IN A MINOR (1 Edition)

The last two decades of "Abbé" Liszt's creative life were largely devoted to the composition of religious works. The most imposing of them—the *Graner* Mass, the Requiem, and the Wagnerian oratorios *Die Legende von der Heiligen Elisabeth* and *Christus*—still wait for the transforming magic of microgroove to release them from textbook obscurity. This modest work, written in the late 1860s, is chiefly remarkable in that there is nothing here to remind one of the keyboard wizard or the composer of revolutionary symphonic poems. The impression at first hearing is of a uniform dullness; but repeated listenings reveal a charming and delicate lyricism, particularly in the second "*Hosanna*" and the "*Dona nobis pacem.*" It is scored for the same combination, mixed chorus and organ, as Gounod's *Messe solennelle*; but a comparison of the two will indicate that if Liszt's religion did not go deeper than Gounod's his art and good taste did. The volume on this disc (recorded in the Eglise Saint-Roch, Paris) must be turned down to recapture the delicacy with which Leibowitz's chorus of sixteen voices handles this music.

—Paris Select Choir, René Leibowitz, cond. OCEANIC OC 37. $4.98.

VERDI

REQUIEM MASS (6 Editions)

Almost all commentaries on Verdi's only Mass center on the question of whether or not it is sufficiently "religious." Generally they conclude by saying that it is "sincere," which is not quite the same thing. The truth is that this massive link between *Aida* and *Otello* is less an offering to God than to the memory of Alessandro Manzoni, the Italian novelist whom Verdi venerated as artist and pa-

triot. He wanted to give Manzoni his best, and his best was what he had learned as a journeyman in the theater for thirty-five years. He was to find a voice wherewith to address God at the very end of his life, after he had put the theater away from him; but nobody, I think, would claim that those serene late works are greater than the *Manzoni* Requiem.

The Decca set contains excellent analytical notes by Francis Toye (as does the Angel), the immaculate singing of the St. Hedwig's Choir, and a good soprano. But the sound is muddy at climaxes, and Fricsay appears at a loss in interpreting this very Italian music. The tenor, Helmut Krebs, is a specialist when it comes to Monteverdi: when it comes to Verdi he is a woeful failure. The Angel set, despite the distinguished cast it boasts, is disappointing. Recorded in June 1954, it does not reflect Angel's usual high standards of engineering. De Sabata's orchestra plays better than Fricsay's; but their *fff* attacks in the *Dies Irae* and elsewhere are brutal rather than forceful, and the conductor takes unwarranted liberties with tempos, beginning an *allargando* five bars too soon or making an *Allegro moderato* (*Lux aeterna*) a leisurely *andante*. The best solo singing is done by the mezzo, Oralia Dominguez, whose calm, somber voice is well suited to this music. Both Siepi and Di Stefano sing infinitely better under Toscanini; and Schwarzkopf, apparently oppressed by the big voices and booming orchestra, recedes into the background. She comes into her own only at the end of the Mass with the return of the "*Requiem aeternam*," taking the triple *piano* literally (which would probably have startled Verdi) and singing with angelic beauty.

The Toscanini version is orchestrally superb. In it all the doubts and protests one had in following what Fricsay and De Sabata did with the score vanish: Verdi proposes, Toscanini disposes. The soloists, except for Herva Nelli, are first-rate—it is a revelation of Toscanini's methods to compare Di Stefano's singing here with his flamboyant performance on Angel. But, unhappily, the recording was made at an actual performance (January 27, 1951) and the audience on that midwinter day was full of coughs and rheums. It is even possible to hear some barbarian shouting "bravo" after the *Lux aeterna*.

For me the greatest performance of the *Manzoni* Requiem on records is the oldest, the one conducted by Serafin. Originally issued as an album of ten 78s, it represented some of the liveliest sound the recording industry had then achieved. In its present reincarnation (among Victor's "Vault Treasures" series) nothing of that lively sound has been lost. It contains the ripest art of four of the most distinguished *bel canto* singers of this century. Gigli, it is true, occasionally offends by an excessive portamento, invented appoggiaturas, and other tricks of the operatic stage (indeed he sings the "*Ingemisco*" as though it were "*E lucevan le stelle*"); but the level of his art is generally as high as that of the other participants in this memorable recording.

The Urania issue is unimpressive orchestrally and vocally. I have not heard the Remington set.

—Maria Caniglia (s), Ebe Stignani (c), Beniamino Gigli (t), Ezio Pinza (b); Royal Opera Chorus and Orchestra of Rome, Tullio Serafin, cond. RCA Victor LVT 2001. Two 12-in. $9.96.

—Herva Nelli (s), Fedora Barbieri (c), Giuseppe di Stefano (t), Cesare Siepi (b); Robert Shaw Chorale; NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA Victor LM 6018. Two 12-in. $9.96.

—Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (s), Oralia Dominguez (c), Giuseppe di Stefano (t), Cesare Siepi (b); La Scala Orchestra and Chorus, Victor de Sabata, cond. Angel 3520B. Two 12-in. $9.96 (or $7.96).

—Maria Stader (s), Marianna Radev (c), Helmut Krebs (t), Kim Borg (b); Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral and RIAS Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Ferenc Fricsay, cond. Decca DX 118. Two 12-in. $7.98.

—Selma Kaye (s), Miriam Pirazzini (c), Gino Sinimberghi (t), Augusto Beuf (b); Rome Opera House Chorus and Orchestra, Luigi Ricci, cond. Urania URLP 213. Two 12-in. $7.96.

—Ilona Steingruber (s), Rosette Anday (c), Ratko Delorco (t), Oskar Cerwenda (b); Austrian Chorus and Symphony, Gustav Koslik, cond. Remington 105. Two 12-in. $7.96.

PUCCINI

Messa di Gloria, in A (1 Edition)

If by some lamentable oversight any Puccini devotee has let this Mass slip by him, he should repair the omission post-haste. Without doubt, this is a masterpiece—and a masterpiece by an eighteen-year-old boy who had written virtually nothing before it. Its connection with religious ceremony, it must be owned, begins and ends with the text. The "*Qui tollis*" is one of the most gloriously jolly pieces of music in the entire repertory. When I have the vapors and need a musical cure, I no longer listen to something from *Die Fledermaus*; I listen to Puccini's "*Qui tollis*." Others may find the exquisite *valse lente* Agnus Dei more efficacious. Certain it is that there is not a dull microgroove on this most blessed Colosseum disc. Flashes of the incipient master dramatist play over the score as light upon a ruffled lake, from the Dresden-china delicacy of the Gloria's opening pages (high, naïve soprano voices, plucked strings) through the pompous, proclamatory "*Laudamus te*" (a set of trumpets in an upward glissando) . . . from the "*Gratias*," a tenor aria in the great Puccini tradition, to the simple and moving "*Crucifixus*" for baritone solo and an "*Et resurrexit*" right out of Verdi's middle period—with more than a passing bow to the *Dies Irae* of the *Manzoni* Requiem. To think that this score lay dust-gathering from 1880 to 1952!

The recording (made in December, 1952) is worthy of a place with the best specimens of the art of choral-orchestral record making. The performance is beyond adjectives.

—Nasco Petroff (t), Enzo d'Onofrio (b); Scarlatti Chorus and Orchestra di Napoli, Ugo Rapalo, cond. Colosseum CLPS 1053. $4.98.

FAURE

Requiem Mass, Op. 48 (5 Editions)

Fauré is said to have abandoned his habitual mildness when the subject of discussion was Berlioz's Requiem. "Two score brass instruments, six pairs of kettledrums, two bass drums, gong and cymbals, *ad majorem Dei gloriam*," he remarked with a sneer. His own Requiem uses a vastly reduced orchestra (violas, cellos and basses, organ, harp, and rarely employed trumpets and horns). Further, he avoids setting the *Dies Irae* and confines himself to the milder sections of the service for the dead. For those of us who prefer Berlioz, Fauré is likely to sound saccharine, even maudlin. The Sanctus and "*In paradisum*" seem to me to inhabit essentially the same world as the trio from *Faust*. Nevertheless it is an eminently practical work and perhaps a more spiritually comforting one than those of Mozart, Berlioz, and Verdi.

All five editions are more or less acceptable: the score offers few real problems either technical or interpretative. Curiously, what should have made the Ansermet version outstanding—brightness of sound and ampleness of vocal and instrumental forces—count against it. It wants intimacy and reticence. Suzanne Danco uses rather too much of her lovely voice in the "*Pie Jesu*"; her competitors, particularly Pierrette Alarie, for Epic, cultivate a more judicious *mezzo da voce*. Both Epic and Oceanic display some heavy bass sound, not surprising in a work that makes so much of low strings and organ pedal. The Oceanic disc is also rather more faded than the other versions sonically; one can barely make out the repeated organ semiquavers in the final section.

Perhaps the two best editions are the Cluytens (Angel) and the Roger Wagner (Capitol). The former is generally competent orchestrally and contains some excellent solo singing. The latter shows a fine sense of intimacy and teamwork; the chorus is obviously practiced in the miniature art of the score and is faithful to its dynamic range; the orchestra, while far from producing the splendid sounds of Ansermet's Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, is right for this music. Patricia Beems sings her little aria nicely, but her Latin pronunciation is a bit trying.

—Patricia Beems (s), Theodor Uppman (b); Roger Wagner Chorale and Concert Arts Orchestra, Roger Wagner, cond. Capitol R 8241. $4.98.

—Martha Angelici (s), Louis Noguera (b); Les Chanteurs de Saint-Eustache and Orchestra, André Cluytens, cond. Angel 35019. $4.98 (or $3.98).

—Pierrette Alarie (s), C. Maurane (b); Choeur E. Brasseur and Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux, Jean Fournet, cond. Epic LC 3044. $3.98.

—Suzanne Danco (s), Gérard Souzay (b); Union Chorale de la Tour de Peilz and Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond. LONDON LL 1394. $3.98.
—Nadine Sautereau (s), Bernard Demigny (b); Paris Philharmonic Chorus and Orchestra, René Leibowitz, cond. OCEANIC OCS 26. $4.98.

SATIE

MESSE DES PAUVRES (1 Edition)

Satie's *Mass for the Poor*, written around 1895, is not a Mass in the ordinary sense. Only the first section, the Kyrie, makes use of voices; the concluding five are meditations and prayers for organ alone. In this respect it resembles and possibly is modeled upon Couperin's *Mass for the Parishes*. The Kyrie, for unmixed women's and men's voices and organ, is simple, almost wooden, and yet touching. There is no trace of the satirist in these pages. The final "Prayer for the Salvation of my Soul" unfolds a solemn and apparently programmatic dialogue between the organ pedal and the manuals. A tiny chorus of seven singers does its brief job well, and the organist does her extended one very well.
—Marilyn Mason, organ; Chorus, David Randolph, cond. ESOTERIC ES 507 (with Schoenberg: *Variations on a Recitative*, Op. 40). $4.98.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

MASS IN G MINOR (1 Edition)

This masterly setting of the Mass dates from 1922. Although ostensibly in G minor, its sustenance is drawn from the modal world of sixteenth-century polyphony—in particular, from the three Masses of William Byrd. That it also speaks quintessentially the idiom of Vaughan Williams is a tribute to the completeness with which he has absorbed the music of the English Renaissance. Although it is unaccompanied, the Mass is by no means a "little" work; two four-part choruses are employed, either antiphonally or in massed strength, and four solo voices frequently emerge from the polyphonic texture, contributing a peculiar lightness and intensity to it.

It is just here that the one available recording falls down. Apparently the conductor was unwilling to entrust the solo parts to members of his college choir; at any rate, he follows the expedient of assigning these parts to semichoruses and thereby much of the intended effect is lost (see the "*Qui tollis*" and Benedictus). The now discontinued London version (Fleet Street Choir) was faithful to the score in this respect. The singing, otherwise, is exemplary, the choir even giving the illusion that they are observing the hypothetical *pppp* at "*Et homo factus est.*"
—Augustana Choir, Henry Veld, cond. WORD W 4012 (with choral music by Schubert, Howard Hanson, Brahms, Vaughan Williams, Regina Fryxell, Wilhelm Stenhammer). $4.98.

JANACEK

SLAVONIC MASS (1 Edition)

The text of this Mass, dating from 1926, is the ancient Glagolitic (West Slavic) translation of the traditional Latin service. Although this translation has not been used in Slavic churches for five centuries, the seventy-three-year-old Janáček revived it as the natural vehicle for his intensely nationalistic idiom. The voices sing, chant, shout—never far from the accents of speech—while the orchestra weaves a tapestry of pungent sound around them. The Mass is introduced, punctuated by, and concluded with brief but brilliant pages for orchestra or solo organ. To listen to it is a unique experience; Janáček is as complete and unself-conscious an individualist as Charles Ives.

The recording, made in 1953, was a milestone in hi-fi sound, and the quality of the interpretation is probably not to be duplicated outside of Czechoslovakia. Urania ought to have indicated who the excellent quartet of soloists are; the tenor, I am virtually certain, is the brilliant Czech artist Beno Blachut.
—Moravian Mixed Chorus and Brno Radio Symphony Orchestra, Brestislav Bakala, cond. URANIA URLP 7072. $3.98.

PARAY

MASS FOR THE 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF JOAN OF ARC (1 Edition)

For those who think that the symphonic Masses of the nineteenth century—Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Bruckner, Dvořák—have left no trace upon the religious music of our era, this recording will come as a correction. Paray's Mass (1931), with its huge orchestral and choral forces, its personal and emotional response to the text, and its lavish melodic content, is unabashedly in the great romantic tradition. Much of the Mass has a curiously Oriental sound; but so, one remembers, does the music of Joan of Arc's contemporaries, Dufay, Binchois, Arnold and Hugo de Lantins, *et al.* There are barbaric elements, also, recalling Stravinsky's *fauve* period (for instance, the stunning Sanctus which would seem to have been made for hi-fi equipment and was, in fact, made for the acoustics of Rouen Cathedral). The most original and the loveliest part of the score is the "*Dona nobis pacem*"; it suggests that Paul Paray the conductor has unjustly eclipsed Paul Paray the composer.

I find the recording excessively reverberant and insufficiently clear in climactic moments, although the total effect is undeniably brilliant. The tenor's nasal tones are unpleasant, but the other soloists contribute some first-rate singing.
—Frances Yeend (s), Frances Bible (s), David Lloyd (t), Yi-Kwei-Sze (bs); Rackham Symphony Choir and Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Paul Paray, cond. MERCURY MG 50128. $4.98.

POULENC

MASS IN C (1 Edition, discontinued)

During the last twenty years Poulenc has been turning to religious composition with increasing frequency. In addition to this *a cappella* Mass (1937) he has written the *Litanie à la Vierge Noire de Rocamadour*, the intensely moving and essentially religious *Figure Humaine* (perhaps his greatest choral work), the *Stabat Mater* (recorded on Westminster), and the three-act opera, *Dialogue of the Carmelites*. The Mass, despite its key designation, is essentially modal in feeling, but there is very little that is ascetic about it. It brims over with melody and infectious rhythms that recall, if anything, medieval French Christmas songs. The most memorable movement is the Sanctus, a bit of childlike revelry which contrasts effectively with the close, many-voiced texture of the *"Hosanna"* that follows it. The one annoying characteristic of this work is Poulenc's insistence, probably by example of Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*, upon ignoring the natural stress of the Latin words if it doesn't fit his rhythmic scheme: *"in noMIne doMIni"* he has the chorus singing at one grotesque point.

The Robert Shaw Chorale's performance, vanished now, was one of their finest. They approached each movement (there is no Credo) with perfect precision and an almost orchestral variety of tone color—one seems to hear wood winds in the Sanctus and a combination of solo and massed strings in the Agnus Dei. RCA Victor could perform a service to the art of choral singing, as well as to Poulencians, by reinstating this recording in the catalogue.
—Robert Shaw Chorale, Robert Shaw, cond. RCA Victor LM 1088. $4.98.

CHAILLEY

Missa Solemnis (1 Edition)

Jacques Chailley wrote this *a cappella* Mass in 1947, following, according to the jacket description, *"la doctrine des vieux maitres"*; but there is more than a trace of Massenet in the Gloria and Credo and something of Fred Waring (or his Gallic equivalent) in the Sanctus. Indeed, for a work that purports to be in the ancient style there are remarkably few traces of polyphonic texture, the voices instead moving rather monotonously in thickly harmonized block progression. The recording was made in the church of Saint-Eustache, Paris, and employs a small but obviously well-drilled choir. At times the editing is faulty (e.g., somebody snipped off the first few notes of the *"Christe eleison"*).
—La Psalette Notre-Dame, Jacques Chailley, cond. London TW 91145 (with Franck: Prelude, Choral, and Fugue). $4.98.

STRAVINSKY

Mass (2 Editions)

Stravinsky's Mass (1948) begins the series of recent religious compositions which include the Cantata, the *Canticum Sacrum*, and the setting of Bach's canonic variations on *Vom Himmel hoch*. It is

Record Market

scored for small chorus (with occasional passages for solo voices) and what Stravinsky chooses to call "double wind quintet," although as a matter of fact it is made up of the irregular combination of two oboes, English horn, two bassoons, two trumpets, and three trombones. The style is influenced about equally by the work of the fourteenth-century composer Guillaume de Machaut and the twentieth-century composer Igor Stravinsky. The latter's avowed intention was to write "cold music, absolutely cold," and in a word, he succeeds.

Both recorded versions lack authenticity, in a sense, since the boy sopranos and altos required by the score are supplanted by women's voices. Evidently it is no easy task to discover children capable of handling this fiercely dissonant music. The Epic has the sharper sound and Felix de Nobel apparently has taken pains to find female voices which do not have excessive vibrato. This is not true of the Vox offering: the solo soprano and alto (or, rather, mezzo-soprano) are just the sort of voices Stravinsky didn't want. The chorus, also, is too large; it overwhelms the wind band.

—Netherlands Chamber Choir and Wind Instruments, Felix de Nobel, cond. EPIC LC 3231 (with *Les Noces; Pater Noster; Ave Maria*). $3.98.

—New York Concert Choir and Orchestra, Margaret Hillis, cond. Vox PL 8630 (with *Les Noces; Pater Noster; Ave Maria*). $4.98.

KALTNECKER

MASS IN HONOR OF ST. JOAN OF ARC (1 Edition)

I know very little about Maurice Kaltnecker beyond the fact that he is a Catholic *Monsignore* born in 1884. His Mass (which lacks a Credo) is a series of alternations between plain chant (sung by the Mt. Angel Seminary Choir) and mild polyphony (sung by the Portland Symphonic Choir). Its churchly character rather disarms criticism. The chief attraction of this disc is the moving *Missa Dominicalis* by Victoria, which transcends the churchly as completely as it does the worldly; it has its place in the realm of great art.

—Mount Angel Seminary Gregorian Choir, Fr. David Nicholson, cond; Portland Symphonic Choir, C. Robert Zimmerman, cond. EDUCO ECM 4003 (with works of Victoria and Palestrina). $5.95.

KILLMAYER

MISSA BREVIS (1 Edition)

One doesn't need to go to biographical references to realize that Wilhelm Killmayer was a pupil of Carl Orff. The neo-African rhythms of this *Missa Brevis* (1954), its stuttering, satiric, querulous insistence upon phrase or harmony, all point clearly enough to Orff's influence. There is something here, too, of German expressionism, of the half-world of *Pierrot Lunaire* and *Erwartung*. This is hardly an orthodox Mass: not only does it leave out the whole of the Credo and Sanctus, but it is conceived in terms of drama rather than ritual. Killmayer himself describes the mood of the Kyrie as "agitated despair," and says that the final prayer for peace dies away "unanswered and unresolved."

Looked at, then, as a personal response to certain Latin words which the composer has deprived of their traditional application, this unaccompanied cantata is enormously skillful and effective. The weird, half-muttered, half-sung parts for female voices in the Agnus Dei express the very essence of mental—almost of physical—anguish. One is left not with catharsis but with chills.

The performance is pyrotechnic, so far as I can judge, and credit is certainly owing to the anonymous soprano who sings the difficult solos in the Gloria and "*Dona nobis pacem.*"

—New York Concert Choir, Margaret Hillis, cond. EPIC LC 3307 (with Harrison: Mass). $3.98.

HARRISON

MASS (1 Edition)

Lou Harrison is an Oregon-born composer, and his Mass speaks poignantly of the West that was—of its vast distances, its loneliness, its simplicities. According

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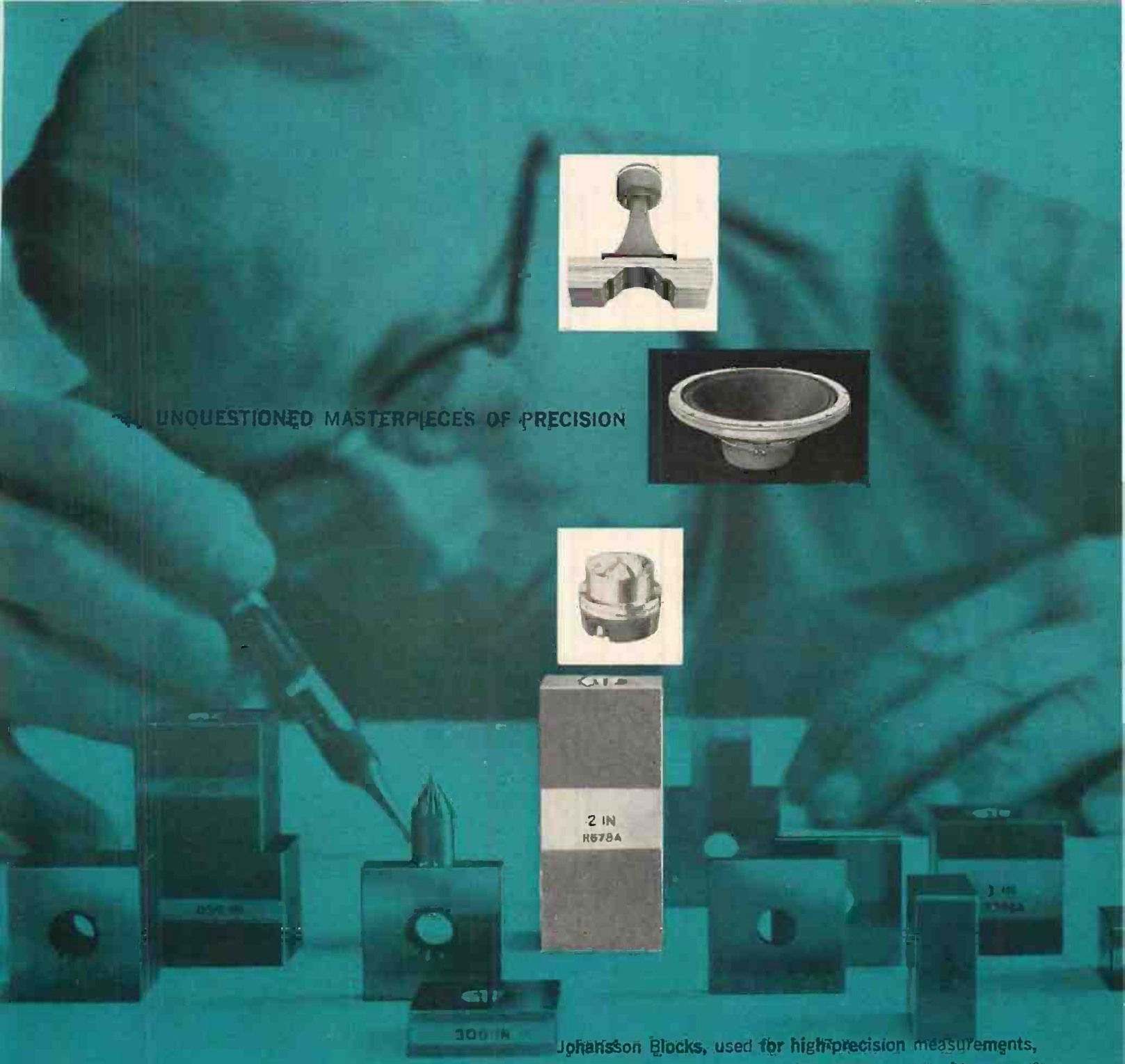

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to Mr. Harrison, this work has gone through several forms. In its present version it was first heard in New York in 1954. The composer intends to make still another version, "frankly for the concert hall," but it is difficult to imagine how the work could be altered without destroying its seemingly instinctive rightness. The scoring in itself is a stroke of genius—a chorus moving in strict homophony, often in unison, and above and beneath it a constant, gentle weaving of several instrumental textures (strings, harp, and one cannily employed trumpet).

The Mass owes something to the art of the fifteenth-century Flemish masters, particularly in its brief, iterated melismas, but here is no self-conscious medievalism. Even without a score one is impressed by the beauty of its formal structure (e.g., the opening Kyrie is for male chorus and the closing Agnus Dei for women's voices; the Credo opens with a wonderful antiphony between two solo sopranos and closes with a solo soprano echoing exactly the final choral melismatic "Amen"). But formal elements are not what this music is seeking to convey: I sense in its quiet motion an evocation of things gone by, and in the sustained trumpet note that concludes it an affirmation that they were good.

The performance is a labor of love. The New York Concert Choir sings Harrison as I have heard the Rome-Vatican Choir sing Palestrina. And they have reason.

—New York Concert Choir and Orchestra, Margaret Hillis, cond. EPIC LC 3307 (with Killmayer: *Missa Brevis*). $3.98.

THOMPSON

MASS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (1 Edition)

Randall Thompson composed this *a cappella* Mass in 1955-56. Except for the Kyrie, the setting is in English. The Kyrie, with its falling sevenths and rising thirds and its conscientious imitation of modal procedures, is rather commonplace, as is the "Glory be to Thee" (from the Credo), a kind of cross between the seventeenth-century English anthem and Bach's unaccompanied motets. But the Gloria has more to recommend it. Its steadily moving quavers borrow from Thompson's own *Alleluia*, and in some ways improve upon it. An especially memorable moment occurs in the Credo at the words "on the third day he rose again," where a syncopated, Shaker-like tune comes into play.

The performance is a sensitive one, although for some reason G. Wallace Woodworth does not observe the places in the score (published in holograph by E. C. Schirmer) calling for solo voices. The review copy took the *fs* and *ffs* very poorly, which may indicate a defective master.

—Harvard Glee Club and Radcliffe Choral Society, G. Wallace Woodworth, cond. CAMBRIDGE RECORDS CRS 403 (with *Alleluia*). $4.98.

STEREO

Reviewed by PAUL AFFELDER R. D. DARRELL ROLAND GELATT ROBERT CHARLES MARSH

• • **ALBENIZ:** *Iberia: Suite Española* (orch. Arbós)

Minneapolis Symphony, Antal Dorati, cond.
MERCURY MBS 5-19. 26 min. $10.95.

Excellent stereo recording sets this apart from the LP version, which was somewhat disappointing. On tape there is a depth and clarity the monaural version lacked, plus a decided improvement in balance. My reservations about the performance remain unchanged. A lighter touch and more direct approach would give a better impression of the idiom. The sonics and the music itself make this a release worth investigating, however, even if it isn't the ideal realization of the score. R.C.M.

• • **BARTOK:** *Quartet for Strings, No. 2, in A minor, Op. 17*

Kohon String Quartet.
STEREO AGE C 1. 29 min. $12.50.

Listening to the first Bartók quartet to appear in stereo, with the earnest young Kohon four (also in a stereo debut), I couldn't help recalling my own first encounter with this music—via a hand-cranked "Victrola" and the Polydor 78s by the Amar Quartet, in which Paul Hindemith was violist. I still am plagued by the subversive notion that here the revolutionary technical advance has scarcely added substantially to the aesthetic reward. Now every detail can be heard infinitely more clearly, and the dissonances grind and grate with the asperity the composer undoubtedly wanted. Yet a large measure of the sheer *magic* (in particular the serenity which Bartók's genius also achieved in this work) tends to evaporate.

I can't remember, of course, how well the Amar-Hindemith group actually played; but in comparison with the Juilliard LP of 1950, the Kohons—for all their intensity and skill—lack a good deal of the Juilliards' insight into the inner drama of this Rhadamanthine work. The present recording is admirably brilliant, lucid, and well balanced; but the marked stereoism exaggerates the physical spread of the performing ensemble; and the tonal contrasts between Loren Bernsohn's rich cello and the thinner violin high registers, together with the inexcusably abrupt signal shut-offs at the end of each movement, distract disconcertingly from the composer's own perfectly sustained *Gestalt*. The appeal here is likely to be far greater to string players themselves than to listeners accustomed to greater psychical as well as aural *distance* between themselves and their music makers. R.D.D.

• • **BRITTEN:** *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34*
†**Dohnányi:** *Variations on a Nursery Song, Op. 25*

Victor Aller, piano; Concert Arts Symphony Orchestra, Felix Slatkin, cond.
CAPITOL ZF 23. 41 min. $14.95.

Here is perfect music for demonstrating the wonders of stereo. The Britten work, designed to show off the individual instruments and sections of the orchestra, reveals them even more distinctly in stereo, where they are nicely distributed about the aural stage. The disc version of this performance (Capitol P 8373) is one of the two best on the market (the other is Ormandy's on Columbia); but even it pales beside its stereo counterpart.

As for the witty and extremely clever Dohnányi *Variations*, Aller and Slatkin collaborate closely to present its intricate score, so difficult of execution, with a transparency, eloquence, and sense of humor that make it completely captivating. Special mention must be made of the handling of the Waltz variation by both soloist and conductor, who impart to it a true Viennese lilt and flavor, and also of the Passacaglia, a model of noble passion in its interpretation here. Again, in stereo the instrumental separation and perspective are truly admirable.

Taken as a whole, this is the most realistic, most exciting, most convincing stereo tape I have had the privilege of hearing. P.A.

• • **DOHNANYI:** *Variations on a Nursery Song, Op. 25*—See Britten: *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34.*

• • **DVORAK:** *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 53*

Nathan Milstein, violin; Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond.
CAPITOL ZF 26. 29 min. $14.95.

Apparent misjudgment of microphone placement detracts from a beautiful and satisfyingly warm presentation of this concerto. As in the disc version (Capitol P 8382), the soloist seems a bit too close to the microphones, a position that does not always flatter his usually suave tone; there is even occasional wiriness. The sound of the solo violin appears to be equally divided between the left and right tracks; so if the amplifiers and speakers are properly adjusted, the performer seems to be standing exactly at stage center. Since it is customary for him to stand at the left of the conductor, a stronger pickup from the left would have emphasized the directional effect of stereo to better advantage. Though the orchestral presence and over-all balance is an improvement over that on the disc, the illusion of direction is also missing from the performance as a whole. Switching from stereo to single-track playback from time to time failed to show up any appreciable differences. This suggests that the microphones may have been placed too close together. But all these shortcomings cannot really spoil the music or its splendid interpretation. P.A.

• • **FRANCK:** *Symphony in D minor*

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.
RCA VICTOR ECS 58. 35 min. $14.95.

The benefits secured by playing this work with adherence to the composer's markings were demonstrated in a Beecham edition now long out of print. Most conductors are inclined toward a pretty free-style approach, and Munch therefore does nothing out of the ordinary by granting himself interpretative leeway. His earlier version for London, incidentally, is no guide to his point of view here.

Espressivo is taken by Munch to mean

dolce e ritardando, and what he takes *ppp* to mean is uncertain; but liberties of this sort are of a different genre than those which go into shaping the symphony into a pretentious monolith of neo-Wagnerian rhetoric. Those who want this work so distorted won't find this a very satisfactory version. For when Munch is not being lyrical in a somewhat melting fashion, his performance has a taut dramatic quality that builds into climactic moments of considerable impact.

As an example of stereo recording this is a successful job: the inner voices are separated so as to disclose details you may never have heard even in a concert hall; the full orchestral passages are big enough to appear impressive in a living room; and there are several good instances of interesting directional effects. Dynamics, however, never go much below *p*, and whether that is due to the engineers or the conductor it robs us of the effects that lie at the low end of the decibel scale. R.C.M.

• • **GERSHWIN:** ***Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in F***

Eugene List, piano; Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra, Howard Hanson, cond.
MERCURY MDS 5-9. 30 min. $12.95.

The disc edition of only a few months ago (MG 50138, which also included the *Rhapsody in Blue*) was so solidly, brilliantly, and expansively recorded that even the notably wide dynamic range and broad spread of stereo sonics here are not markedly more impressive. The taping is outstanding, however, for its well-focused and centered aural "image" of the solo piano—probably a consequence of Mercury's use of three channels for the master tape. The overserious performers, however, never really seem to take much personal relish in what they are playing. For myself I got more pleasure from the more feminine, yet also more zestful and lilting Bianca-Goehr Concert Hall taping, although the orchestra there was far less assured and its naturally less attractive tonal qualities were exaggerated by harsher recording. R.D.D.

• • **KHACHATURIAN:** ***Gayne: Lezghinka***—See Tchaikovsky: ***Marche slave, Op. 31.***

• • **LAJTHA:** ***Quartet for Strings, No. 9, Op. 57***

Amati String Quartet.
STEREOTAPE ST 18. 27 min. $11.95.

László Lajtha probably is a new name to many listeners besides myself; and although another of his string quartets—No. 7, Op. 49—was recorded a couple of years ago by the Paganini Quartet in a Decca LP (DL 9823), it apparently attracted scant attention. Stereotape is to be congratulated for so enterprising a choice for its second classical tape release and also for simultaneously bringing us the stereo debut of the all-feminine Amati ensemble, one eminently suited to Lajtha's nervous intensity and occasional moments of almost kittenish skittishness. A younger contemporary (b. 1891), Lajtha was associated with Bartók and Kodály in the collection of Hungarian folk materials, but if he makes any use of these here it is not obvious. Nor does the present work—for all its skill, energy, and imaginative exploitation of characteristic string potentialities—completely warrant the late master's reputed accolade of "stupefyingly bold." It is, however, consistently interesting and individual, and probably of particular interest to string players in its present ultrarealistic, if somewhat overlifesize, stereo reproduction. For many chamber-music connoisseurs, more accustomed to single-channel miniaturizations of quartet sonorities than the real thing, the sonic strength of this tape undoubtedly will be all too vivid; but it certainly does bring us right up to the edge of the concert-hall stage itself. R.D.D.

• • **CARLOS MONTOYA:** ***"Fiesta Flamenca"***

Carlos Montoya, guitar.
COOK 1027 ST. 24 min. $12.95.

"All a flamenco guitarist is interested in is making a big noise," claims Andrés Segovia, who may not be the most impartial source of information on this subject. This Cook collection of four music and dance numbers is charged with action, and projects the atmosphere of a Spanish night club with a wallop. The fi is *muchos* hi, the stereo effects are exceptional, and the tape duplication is outstanding. But as music goes, unless flamenco sends you, this could become a pretty oppressive item to hear repeatedly. R.C.M.

• • **PROKOFIEV:** ***Peter and the Wolf, Op. 67***

Garry Moore, narrator; Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London, Artur Rodzinski, cond.
SONOTAPE SWB 8029. 26 min. $11.95.

Some Bronx Zoo "natural sounds" are introduced here, but mercifully only to illustrate the narrator's introduction. Moore enunciates the text straightforwardly enough for a TV celebrity, yet with little of the personality and charm that Cyril Ritchard brought to the Columbia version (reviewed here in its stereo version last November). And while the present orchestral performance is a thoroughly competent one, excellently recorded by itself if not too congruously combined with the overly reverberant and overloud narration, Rodzinski seems unduly somber and impersonally detached. *Peter and the Wolf* can indeed become boring with too frequent repetition, but at least it should start out with its innate zest unflawed. R.D.D.

• • **JOHN RANCK:** ***Récital***

On ZST 1005—Debussy: *Clair de lune; La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune.* Mompou: *Song and Dance; Young Girls in the Garden.* Ponce-Ranck: *Estrellita.* Ravel: Sonatine. On ZST 1006—Liszt: *Prelude on a Theme of Bach; Légende* No. 2, *St. François d'Assise.* Rachmaninoff: Prelude in G. Paderewski: Minuet in G. Schutt: *Tendre aveu.* Khachaturian: Toccata.

John Ranck, piano.
ZODIAC ZST 1005/1006. 26 min. $11.95 each.

A young American pianist noted for his *avant-garde* concert programs, John Ranck ranges more widely than most pianists and is not afraid to venture well off the beaten path even in his quasi-encore choices. The mostly impressionistic first program here is particularly attractive, since the familiar *Clair de lune* is followed by Debussy's prelude on the same subject, two of Mompou's strangely poignant miniatures, the pianist's own piquant arrangement of Ponce's haunting, however hackneyed, *Estrellita*, and—for most substantial fare—Ravel's far-too-seldom-heard Sonatine. The second program is more heterogeneous, especially in its jolting jump from the Paderewski and Schutt salon pieces to Khachaturian's slam-bang Toccata. Many listeners will find that its principal appeal lies in the dramatic Prelude and shimmering *Légende* by Liszt.

In the end, however, it is perhaps less Ranck's liquid pianism and lyrical expressiveness than their ingratiating stereo enhancement that endows both these tapes with genuine aural magic. As in Zodiac's earlier Liszt recital by Irén Marik (reviewed here Nov. 1957), the recorded piano tone is extraordinarily rich and glittering; and although the wing-spread of the piano itself is still decidedly overlifesize, the balance between solid low and scintillating high registers has been more successfully achieved here. R.D.D.

• • **RIMSKY-KORSAKOV:** ***Scheherazade, Op. 35***

Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond.
SONOTAPE SWB 9006. 45 min. $17.95.

It's perhaps unfair to cite the jingle of the little girl with the little curl right in the middle of her forehead in connection with the present *Scheherazade*, which perhaps is not entirely "horrid"; but certainly it is excessively mannered, draggy and ponderous, and even suggests at times that the conductor is disdainfully sneering at both his score and his audience. The orchestra here may be a shade better than Rossi's (in the recent Vanguard stereo taping), except that the present unaccredited violin soloist is oversweet and undeft in comparison with Miriam Solovieff; and the recording itself is probably even more sumptuous, although marred—in my copy at least—by an apparently overmodulated percussion bit near the beginning of the last movement. But whether one rapturously loves

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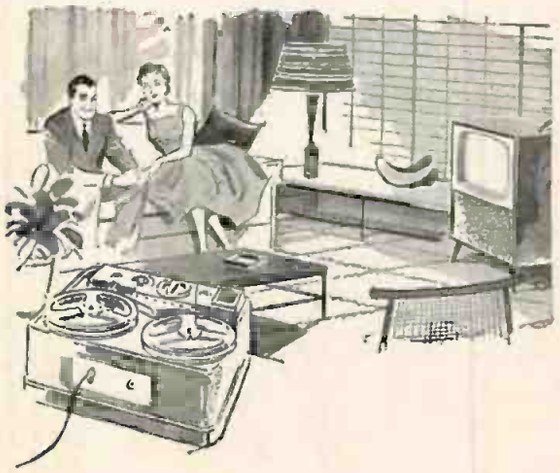

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Rimsky's music or merely esteems it as an engaging sonic fairy tale whose prime appeal is to children, there can be no denying that Scherchen's idiosyncrasies and portentousness effectively strip the present version of the charm it should have had. R.D.D.

• • **SCHOENBERG:** *Suite, Op. 29*

Septet, Gunther Schuller, cond.
PERIOD PST 7. 31 min. $11.95.

Originally released in a 1955 LP (SPL 705), this more-earnest-than-assured performance of one of the landmarks in the evolution of Schoenberg's twelve-tone technique was soon eclipsed by the Craft version on Columbia ML 5099. Its present appearance in stereo is welcome, nevertheless, since both the music's intelligibility and its oddly fascinating scoring (for three different types of clarinets plus strings and piano) benefit markedly by the increased clarity. Unfortunately, however, the studio acoustics are very dry; and although the channel blending is good, the stereo "expansiveness" is minimal. Hence the tape can be commended only to specialists, for the music itself is too cerebral as well as fragmentary to have immediate appeal to unmodernized ears. Yet it is obvious that a powerful logic is operative here and no less obvious that stereo—even short of its best—is far superior to single-channel recording as a medium for the meaningful communication of even the most *avant-garde* works. R.D.D.

• • **SIBELIUS:** *Quartet for Strings, in D minor, Op. 56 ("Voces Intimae")*

Pascal String Quartet.
CONCERT HALL HX 59. 32 min. $11.95.

Sibelius' lone surviving chamber work, one of his more introspective compositions, is appropriately subtitled *Intimate Voices*. But it also contains much music of vigor and dramatic power, a fact which the Pascals have overlooked in their extremely cautious approach. Tempos are almost always too slow; and though the playing itself is technically sure, one has the impression of hesitancy on the part of the performers.

A string quartet may not reveal the miracle of stereo as dramatically as does a full orchestra, but there is no denying the added feeling of realism and sense of direction. In the present instance, for example, it is easy to tell that the Pascals are arranged so that the viola and cello are on the right. Even so, I noted that the cello, in its higher passages on the A string, occasionally spilled over into the left-hand channel. This was not disturbing, nor was the resinous sound of bows on strings; the latter, in fact, lent further realism to the listening experience. But a major drawback was the accentuation of highs, to the extent that they made the violins sound wiry. I was able to ameliorate this partially by cutting down the treble, which also served to minimize the unusually high ratio of tape hiss.

Perhaps the recent Budapest Quartet recording will be made available on stereo. It's worth waiting for. P.A.

• • **STRAUSS, JOHANN:** *Morning Papers, Waltz, Op. 279*
‡**Strauss, Josef:** *Village Swallows, Waltz, Op. 164*

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond.
RCA VICTOR ACS 63. 15 min. $6.95.

Reiner's *echt Wienerwalzer* insights are scarcely complete (there surely is more bubbling humor and zestful lilt than even his warm sympathies disclose here); but the present combination of unhackneyed selections, poetic orchestral playing, and enchantingly transparent stereo recording is hard to resist. Regretfully, though, the present packaging omits the handsomely illustrated brochure that was the bonus attraction of the LP collection (LM 2112) in which these two waltzes originally appeared. R.D.D.

• • **STRAUSS, JOSEF:** *Village Swallows, Waltz, Op. 164*—See Strauss, Johann: *Morning Papers, Waltz, Op. 279.*

• • **STRAVINSKY:** *Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra*

Charlotte Zelka, piano; South-West German Radio Orchestra (Baden-Baden), Harold Byrns, cond.
PHONOTAPES S 714. 18 min. $11.95.

It has been years since I dragged the old shellac sets of this impudent Capriccio out of storage, and I missed the two LP editions. So I was shocked anew on first encounter with the present stereo tape, not so much by the music's unaged ribaldry, as by what seemed to be the biting stridencies of Byrns's German wood winds. On repeated listening, the recording, though still uncomfortably closely miked as far as the wood winds are concerned, seemed more properly piquant rather than merely shrill. Yet the hitherto-unrecorded Miss Zelka still strikes me as overly reticent if not timid, despite occasional moments of authentic lilt; and Harold Byrns is so busy trying to ginger up his players into unaccustomed vivacity that the reading over-all is considerably lacking in authority.

I can't be too hard on anyone who relishes this impish music enough to record it; but I'm afraid that this version is at best "acceptable" and at worst (as in the tendency of the piano tone to split into high- and low-frequency rather than left and right channels) not even that. R.D.D.

• • **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Eugene Onegin: Waltz, Act II*

Bamberg Symphony; Heinrich Hollreiser, cond.
PHOTOTAPES SC 403. 8 mins. $4.98.

Undistinguished orchestral execution (rough strings, wobbly brass) and only so-so recording. No bargain. R.G.

• • TCHAIKOVSKY: *Marche slave, Op. 31*
KHACHATURIAN: *Gayne: Lezghinka*

Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond.
SONOTAPE SWB 7009. 13 min. $6.95.

The unpredictable Scherchen brings almost as distinctively individual a touch to this popular war horse as he does to the *Boléro*, and the contrast between his buoyant reading and the more martial Fiedler version (reviewed here last October) is as marked as that between the Scherchen and Slatkin interpretations of Ravel. Yet while more exciting, this vivid version is probably not as solidly impressive as Fiedler's. And the inclusion of the even more brilliant, clattery *Lezghinka* movement from the *Gayne* ballet suite (reviewed last November) makes for a rather pointless "filler" as well as a quite superfluous duplication. R.D.D.

• • TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 2, in C minor, Op. 17 ("Little Russian")*

Vienna Philharmusica Symphony Orchestra, Hans Swarowsky, cond.
URANIA UST 1205. 33 min. $11.95.

It is good to see this neglected symphony getting a flurry of attention via discs and tape. Though in the finale it becomes a trifle heavy-handed, this newest performance, available thus far only in stereo, is notable for its crispness and spirit. And while the first violins sound thin, wood winds and brasses have better presence, with their sound emanating, as it should, from the rear of the center stage. The over-all sonic perspective of the orchestra, in fact, is superb, though it is occasionally marred by some wiriness and distortion in the high frequencies, as well as by some tape hiss that decreases toward the end. P.A.

• • TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 4, in F minor, Op. 36*

Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Heinrich Hollreiser, cond.
PHONOTAPES S 904. 41 min. $14.95.

The sound is exceptionally clear and well defined, the playing generally first-rate, and Hollreiser's interpretation sensibly and rightly conceived. But in the review copy the right-left relationship is the strangest I have yet encountered. The left channel has been reserved for winds and percussion, with all the strings concentrated on the right—the result, I suspect, of the channels being accidentally reversed when the tape was copied. I tried switching the leads midway in the symphony; from that point on, with the violins then coming from the left, the effect was certainly less disconcerting, though the sharp division of choirs was still far from ideal. This Fourth is quite good, but you would be wise to buy it only on condition that the channels are where they belong. P.A.

More Briefly Noted

• • "Clambake on Bourbon Street," Vol. 2. Lizzie Miles. Cook 1182 ST, 24 min., $12.95.
The labels and notes refer to Vol. 1 (1181 ST), so I'm not sure of all the correct titles here, but all that really matters is that Miss Miles is in top form . . . varies her pace with a balladlike *Can't Help Lovin' That Man, There'll Be Some Changes Made*, and *Lazy River* . . . and receives lusty if often raucous support from pianist Red Camp, Buglin' Sam DeKemel, and her other wholeheartedly swinging accompanists. The channel separation is more marked than in the other Cook (ex-"BN"-disc) stereo tapes I've heard, but the balance and clarity are excellent.

• • "Harp with a Beat." Verlye Mills with Billy May Orchestra. HiFi-Tape R 606, 28 min., $12.95.
Miss Mills, although hardly a natural jazzist, is not only a deft solo and ensemble harpist, but one who blends her passages piquantly into the spirited, well-contrasted performance of Billy May and his sidemen. The eccentric *Polly*, and a riotously jazzed-up Rachmaninoff Prelude (*C Sharp Minor Beat*) are perhaps the best of the ten pieces here, but all are zestfully played, and brightly—and not at all dryly—recorded.

• • "Hot Songs My Mother Taught Me." Lizzie Miles, Tony Almerico Orchestra. Cook 1183 ST, 24 min., $12.95.
Here Miss Miles shifts from her left-center "Bourbon-Street" location to one definitely on the right (perhaps the channels simply have been transposed in processing), but she still is wisely placed well back for her characteristically exuberant *Mama Don't Allow It, Bill Bailey*, and *Waiting for the Robert E. Lee*, with occasional choruses in what I assume is Creole patois. Her more closely-miked balladlike pieces are much less distinctive.

• • "Marimba Tropicale." José Bethancourt Orchestra. Concertapes 506, 5-in., 14 min., $7.95.
Four conventional-enough Latin-American dances, plus an imaginative arrangement of *La Cumparsa* and the leader's dramatic original, *Jungle Flute*, feature some of the most boldly recorded and natural-sounding marimba and bongo-drum timbres one is likely to encounter in any tape or disc. The thunderous drumming in *Jungle Flute* in particular is tops in dynamically impressive hi-fi (and widespread stereo) demonstration material.

• • Jerry Murad's Harmonicats. "Dolls, Dolls, Dolls." Mercury MS 2-8, 22 min., $8.95.
For once a band featuring harmonicas (including special electronic and chord-rhythm types) eschews vaudeville-comic trickery to play an ingeniously chosen and arranged program of "doll" and "toy" pieces, topped by a bouncy *Parade*

*audiofacts

What's the difference between "wow" and "flutter?"

Have you ever heard a phonograph record with an off-center hole? The constant rising and falling in the pitch certainly grates on the nerves. This is very appropriately called "wow." In a tape recorder, wow is caused by variations in the speed of the tape across the heads. If tape speed is absolutely constant (a very difficult condition to achieve) there is no wow.

If this same rising and falling in pitch takes place too rapidly for the ear to detect the individual fluctuations, it is called "flutter."

Wow is always due to mechanical imperfections in the tape recorder. Flutter, however, can be reduced — by using tape which moves over the heads with minimum friction. Any remaining flutter is caused by the recorder.

Obviously one of the best ways to keep your recorder as free from flutter as possible is to use the best tape you can buy. This is Audiotape. Available in eight different types and a complete range of reel sizes, Audiotape answers every recording need. And regardless of which type you choose, you know you're getting the very finest tape that can be produced. For information on which type of Audiotape is best suited to your recording needs, write for Bulletin 250. Write Dept. AF, Audio Devices, Inc., 444 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N. Y.

* *one of a series*

of the Wooden Soldiers and jazzy *March of the Toys*. The brilliant high-level recording, with rather marked channel separation but quite dry acoustics, is particularly effective in showing off the percussive hits and the strangely groaning timbres of the bass and double-bass harmonicas.

• • "New Glenn Miller Orchestra in Hi-Fi." RCA Victor CPS 82, 26 min., $10.95.
Ray McKinley, probably the only ex-member of the old Miller forces in the present big band, here recaptures much of the spirit of the famous wartime orchestra, most zestfully perhaps in *Whistle Stop* and *Lullaby of Birdland*. McKinley himself contributes a couple of vocal choruses as well as some vigorous percussion solos. The recording is notably smooth and broadspread, yet with ample power and brilliance.

• • "Pee Wee Plays." Stere-o-Craft TN 105, 25 min., $10.95.
Disarmingly relaxed *divertissements* by clarinetist Pee Wee Russell, larking jauntily with an easy-going but responsive rhythm trio through eight gracefully florid performances. Here again the distinct channel separation, with the soloist definitely left of center, demonstrates the fallacy that optimum stereo "blending" is equally essential or even desirable for all types of music.

• • Joe René. "Central Park South." Manhattan MRC 101, 12 min., $6.95.
A short program of four orthodox dance performances (*So in Love* in beguine style, a brisk *Thou Swell*, graceful *Shadow Waltz*, and romantic *But Beautiful*) given considerable distinction by tasteful arrangements and gleamingly recorded ingratiating tonal qualities.

• • "'S Marvellous." Ray Coniff Orchestra. Columbia GCB 14, 23 min., $10.95.
The orchestra is only half of it, for the sidemen's steady-beat standards are richly embellished throughout by wordless singing—sometimes merely reinforcing the basic harmonies, but often less effectively da-de-da-ing the main melodies. I suppose the taste for such "vocestrations" can be acquired. At any rate, Coniff handles them deftly and the recording here is beautifully clean, broad, and well blended.

• • Frank Sinatra. "Where Are You?" Capitol ZD 17, 30 min., $12.95.
Rich expressivity and restraint on Frankie's part in nine mostly unsentimentalized and sometimes quite haunting ballads. There is not much variety of mood or treatment, and Gordon Jenkins' Orchestra is a bit lush, but the recording is beautifully balanced and transparent.

• • Stereo "Treasure Chest." Omegatape OP 1 (5 tape reels with 20-reel-capacity cabinet), $49.50.
This is a special promotional offer: a birch box (not available separately as yet) with space for 20 seven-inch reels, of which five specimen Omegatapes are supplied—among them the previously released "Stereo Holiday" sampler (STD 10, $5.95) and "Themes from *Around the World in 80 Days*" (ST 59, $8.95) together with three new 14 min. $8.95 tapes. Of these, André Montero's "Paris Dances by Night" (ST 50) and Heinz Sandauer "Plays Pops for Dancing" (ST 52) are only routinely attractive; but the Hans Hagen Hollywood Radio City Orchestra's "Show Hits for Dancing in Stereo" (ST 51), while conventional enough performances, rank with the "80 Days" taping in impressively showing off Omegatape's technology.

• • U. S. Air Force (A Portrait in Sound). Arthur Godfrey, narrator. Phonotapes S 908, 39 min., $14.95.
Most of this sonic documentation of S.A.C. and A.D.C. activities is probably just as effective in the LP version (Vox PL 10520), yet its most dramatic moments—the thunderous takeoffs and low-level "passes," and especially the sky-splitting boom of a sonic breakthrough—benefit immeasurably by stereo. And even in some of the traffic-control-tower and plane-cabin conversations, their regulation to one channel while the other provides appropriate background noises enhances both intelligibility and realism. Godfrey is as adenoidal as ever, but he provides a remarkably straightforward and informative commentary. (Note: A shorter tape of the first part of the complete documentary is also available as a Phonotapes "Cameo," *Sonic Boom* SC 411, $4.98.)

• • Gerry Wiggins Trio. "In My Stereoldsmobile." Stereotape ST 16, 30 min., $11.95.
Pianist Wiggins' cuteness is strictly restricted to program-title punning: his playing, with rhythm accompaniment, scintillates with rhythmic vivacity and is infectiously blithe throughout a nine-item program in which the opening *In My Merry Oldsmobile* is repeated at the end of the reel. There is good contrast too in several easier-going but always deftly animated tunes, and the recording itself is no less admirably wide in dynamic range and electrifying in its crisp brilliance.

• • George Wright's Varsity Five. "Jazz'n Razz Ma Tazz." HiFiTape R 805, 28 min., $12.95.
I've never relished George Wright a fraction as much as I do here where he's shifted from a theater organ to what must be the jangliest of honky-tonk pianos ever to test the transient-response capabilities of audio systems, and where he leads an inspired if zany little ensemble in no less than fourteen zestful evocations of the Flaming Twenties. Whether historically authentic or not, these performances are a joy in their own Wright; and there certainly can be no question about their sonic authenticity.
R.D.D.

ON THE COUNTER

ESL's 45-45 electrodynamic stereo CARTRIDGE will fit in all standard arms and is provided with a three-terminal output. Two rotating coils form a V-shape, with the apex at the specially designed stylus shoe. The range is said to extend from 20 to beyond 18,000 cps with excellent transient response. Price not given.

The circuit of the Grommes 208 stereo PREAMPLIFIER consists of two independent channels for each of five inputs with six controls. Each channel has variable equalization for stereo records. Styling is in charcoal gray and brass. Price not stated.

Shure Brothers has announced that the Stereo Dynetic CARTRIDGE will be marketed as soon as stereo discs go into distribution. Price will be $45.

The Amplifier Corporation of America has recently made available a stereo version of their Magnemite TAPE RECORDER. This compact unit measures 8½ by 11 by 10 in. and weighs 17 lb. It is self-powered by dry-cell flashlight batteries and a B battery. Three single-speed models are made for 3¾-, 7½-, or 15-ips operation. No prices specified.

The XP-4 stereo CARTRIDGE, designed to play back 45-45 discs, has been announced by Fairchild and sells for $79.50. A transcription ARM, Model 282, to accept the cartridge also has been announced: it will cost $42.50. Conversion kits are also available for owners of Fairchild 280A and 281A arms who wish to convert them to accept the cartridge.

Fairchild also has a new stereo PREAMPLIFIER, the 248, consisting of two self-powered 245s. Master controls include a stereo/monaural switch and gain control for setting the level of both channels. All filaments use DC and there is full shielding of all AC leads. Price of the 248 is $239.50.

The *Complete Catalogue of Stereo Music* is a complete LISTING of stereo tapes on the market, representing the output of thirty recorded-tape companies. It is published quarterly by Mooney-Rowan Publications and sells for 50¢ per copy.

Another stereo CARTRIDGE is the SC-1D, manufactured by Webster Electric of Racine. This small lightweight unit has a replaceable diamond stylus, and will plug in to any standard record player or changer; $24.50.

Lafayette has a new line of stethoscope-type binaural HEADPHONES. Included are: MS-431, 6 ohms impedance, magnetic, $2.65; MS-432, 5,000 ohms impedance, magnetic, $2.95; MS-433, 100,000 ohms impedance, crystal, $2.25.

STEREO FORUM

CCIR vs NARTB

SIR:

I read in a leaflet for an HMV "stereosonic" tape sent me by a friend in England that it should be reproduced according to the "CCIR" playback curve. What does CCIR mean? If this differs from the NARTB playback curve specified for the American stereo tapes I have, why is it that the English tape sounds OK when played on my NARTB-equalized equipment?

Jerry Watkins
New York, N. Y.

CCIR stands for Comité Consultivo Internacional de Radiocomunicaciones *—i.e., the International Radio Consultative Committee, which has set up recording and reproducing standards generally adopted by British and European manufacturers of recorded tapes and tape recorders.*

This overseas standard does not differ markedly (except at the frequency-spectrum extremes) from the NARTB American standard; hence a CCIR tape can be reproduced quite satisfactorily with NARTB playback equalization, although actually it will be somewhat deficient in both extreme highs and lows. These losses, however, can easily be corrected by setting one's tone controls for slight additional high-end and low-end boosts. But it is more difficult to make an NARTB tape sound right when it is played on CCIR-equalized (British or European) reproducing equipment. Hence, most overseas manufacturers are now providing NARTB equalization facilities in their models exported for sale in this country.

For visual comparison, the NARTB (solid line) and CCIR (dashed line) curves are shown below.

Stereo Speaker Phasing

SIR:

What is the best way to go about phasing the speakers in my stereo set-up?

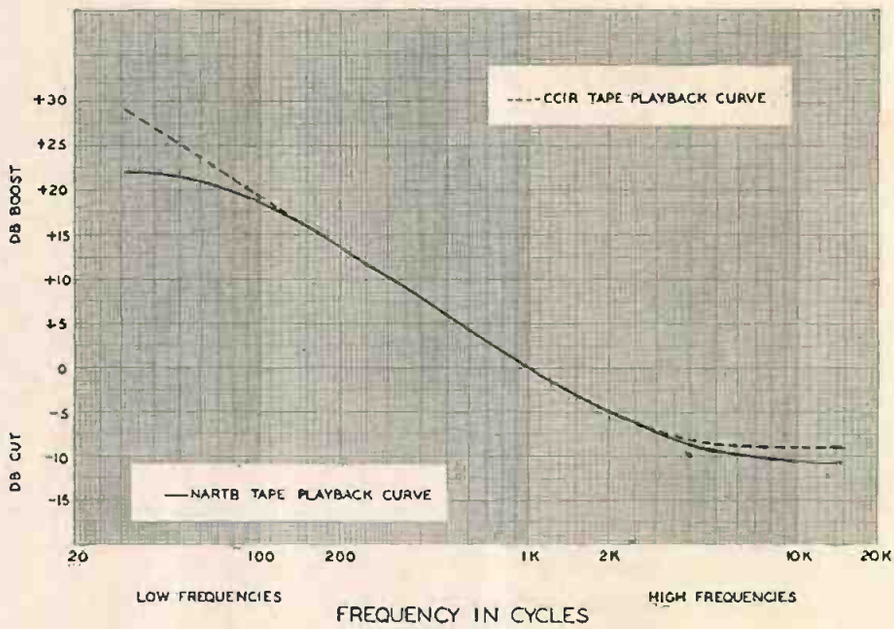
I have rigged up one speaker with a switch to change the polarity of the leads, and when I flip the switch I can hear a distinct difference, but I can't tell which one is correct.

Is there any sure way of doing this, or doesn't it matter?

Mario Panacelli
Baltimore, Md.

Your procedure is correct, since you have been careful to switch the leads to one speaker only. To determine which switch position provides proper speaking phasing: play a full-track tape of music or voice (or listen to the voice announcements on a full-track test tape), and after flipping the switch several times, leave it in the position which results in the best illusion of a single sound-source located exactly midway between the two speakers.

This should serve as the optimum position for most stereo tapes of musical recordings, but there still is a chance that some individual manufacturer's releases, or even an individual tape, may have been recorded or processed with out-of-phase channels. Whenever you're in doubt, as when a particular tape seems to have unusually poor center fill, try reversing the phasing switch. If this im-



proves matters, mark the box or reel of this particular tape so that you'll remember to re-phase the speakers whenever you play it again. If, however, re-switching results in no perceptible improvement or an actual lessening of the stereo "effect," return to the basic position determined by monaural-signal checking.

Compatibility

Sir:

What is meant by compatible stereo discs?

I thought that you had to have a stereo system to play the new stereo discs, but I am led to believe that they are compatible, which is supposed to mean that I can play them on my monaural system. How can I play stereo on a monaural system? It's impossible, isn't it?

Fred Fallon
Camden, N. J.

The meaning of "compatibility" in this application is completely confused at the present moment, but undoubtedly will be clarified before commercial stereo discs are actually available. Meanwhile, of course, stereo sound is impossible to reproduce—as stereo—on single-channel equipment. The question is rather twofold: 1) Can stereo reproducing equipment be used satisfactorily to perform single-channel recordings?; and 2) Can single-channel reproducing equipment be used to perform stereo recordings in satisfactory monaural form?

Consequently, complete compatibility should mean that a stereo-disc system (in addition to reproducing stereo discs stereophonically) could play ordinary LPs in the normal fashion, except for the fact that the same music is reproduced through both speakers — unless, of course, one of them is switched off. But it should also mean that an ordinary single-channel LP-playback system is able to play a stereo disc monaurally—that is, by satisfactorily combining the originally separated channel signals.

Both conditions for complete compatibility possibly may be met by the experimental Westrex system, although as yet there have been no confirmed claims that a Westrex type of stereo pickup will reproduce LPs as satisfactorily as an ordinary pickup, or that all ordinary pickups can play Westrex stereo discs without damaging them and with a fully satisfactory combination of the two groove channels.

In any case, compatibility remains a theoretical problem until an explicit (and, let us hope, reasonable) definition of the term is made.

Tested in the Home

Equipment reports appearing in this section are prepared by members of HIGH FIDELITY'S *staff, on the basis of actual use in conjunction with a home music system, and the resulting evaluations of equipment are expressed as the opinions of the reviewer only. Reports are usually restricted to items of general interest, and no attempt is made to report on items that are obviously not designed for high-fidelity applications. Each report is sent to the manufacturer before publication; he is free to correct the specifications paragraph, to add a comment at the end of the report, or to request that it be deferred (pending changes in his product), or not be published. He may not, however, change the report. Failure of a new product to appear in TITH may mean either that it has not been submitted for review, or that it was submitted and was found to be unsatisfactory. These reports may not be quoted or reproduced, in part or in whole, for any purpose whatsoever, without written permission from the publisher.*

Lafayette Transcription Arms

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): **Model PK-170**—viscous-damped pickup arm for records up to 16-in. diameter. Adjustments for damping viscosity, arm height, stylus force, and leveling. Plug-in cartridge slides (three supplied) accept all standard cartridges. Removable button for GE turnaround cartridge knob. **Over-all length:** 14½ in. **Price:** $17.95. **Model PK-150**—viscous-damped pickup arm for records up to 12-in. diameter. Adjustment for damping viscosity. Plug-in cartridge slides (four supplied) accept all standard cartridges and supply automatic stylus force adjustment. Slot at front of arm permits easy plug-in insertion of GE turnaround cartridge. **Over-all length:** 10-in. **Price:** $19.95. **DISTRIBUTOR:** Lafayette Radio, 165-08 Liberty Ave., Jamaica 33, N. Y.

A viscous-damped pickup arm is one whose bearings are immersed in a sticky, syrupy substance which allows the arm to move freely at low speeds, but which applies increasing resistance to more rapid motion of the arm. When the damping is properly adjusted the arm is free to follow the groove path or to ride easily over warped discs, but is held rigidly to its base when subjected to rapid vibration. Thus, the damping will resist the arm's tendency to jump grooves when the phono unit is jarred, and will smooth out the low-frequency resonant peak that is invariably set up between a pickup arm and the compliance of its cartridge. The viscous damping will also afford some protection for delicate cartridges, because if the arm is dropped from a height it will drift gently to rest instead of slamming down onto the record or motor board.

These two viscous-damped arms, which are manufactured for Lafayette Radio by a Japanese firm, have sealed or sealable damping chambers to prevent spillage of the fluid when the arm is being shipped or is laid aside while working on the turntable assembly. Both arms are damped vertically and laterally, both have plug-in cartridge slides for easy cartridge insertion, and both are superbly crafted products.

The PK-170 arm, for 16-inch or smaller discs, carries the lower price tag despite its greater size. A knob atop the rear of the arm provides adjustment of the damping viscosity; the base height and leveling are also adjustable. Even the arm rest is of adjustable height, so the arm may be made to lie perfectly horizontal when at rest as well as when playing records. Three plug-in cartridge slides are supplied, as are a selection of weight inserts that are used to obtain the proper tracking force for any given cartridge mounted in its slide. Removal of a slide is facilitated by finger grips which remain exposed when the slide is fully inserted in the arm.

Inside the PK-170 arm, directly over its base, is a large knurled thumb screw, accessible through a slot in the side of the arm. This screw is a cover for the viscous damping fluid cup. If the arm is to be shipped, or if it is removed from the turntable for any reason, the knurled thumb screw cap can be screwed down to immobilize the bearings and seal the top of the damping fluid cup,

The PK-170 arm for 16-inch discs.

to prevent loss of the fluid. When the arm is remounted, unscrewing the cover frees the bearings and permits normal operation of the arm.

The higher price of the smaller PK-150 arm may be hard to understand until one has had a chance to examine the arm closely. The PK-150 does not have nearly the height adjustment range that the PK-170 has, and its cartridge slides do not have finger grips on them, either.

Continued on next page

TESTED IN THE HOME

Continued from preceding page

But it does have a *permanently* sealed fluid chamber, it has a slot at the front of the arm to allow plug-in insertion of the GE turnaround cartridge, and its workmanship looks like something out of a Swiss watch factory. Even the four cartridge slides supplied with it have a smooth, satiny finish like that found on precision laboratory instruments.

Performance tests carried out on both arms failed to reveal any difference between them at all. They handled

Damping fluid is sealed in the PK-150.

superbly, and had a sufficiently wide range of damping adjustment to permit optimum setting for any current-model magnetic pickup. Both arms seemed able to elicit the maximum cleanness and smoothness from cartridges that the cartridges themselves were capable of. The only thing I might raise a question about is the rather high moving mass of the PK-170 arm. This did not cause observable record wear during the course of my tests, but I suspect that over a long period of time the high mass of this arm might aggravate wear of warped discs.

Sonically speaking, these are pickup arms for the perfectionist who demands that his pickup cartridges perform at the peak of their capability.—J.G.H.

Fisher 90-R and 90-T Tuners

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): **Model 90-R—** FM-AM basic tuner. **Sensitivity:** FM, 1.7 uv for 20 db quieting on 300-ohm input; AM, 3 uv. **Frequency response:** ±1 db, 20 to 20,000 cps on FM; AM range depends upon setting of bandwidth selector. 10-kc whistle filter. **Hum and noise:** 77 db below 2 v. output. **Inputs:** 72-ohm or 300-ohm FM antenna, external AM antenna. Supplied with FM dipole antenna and built-in AM ferrite loop antenna. **Controls:** channel selector (FM, AM); AC power; FM muting or AM bandwidth selector buttons (OFF, MEDIUM, FULL muting; SHARP, MEDIUM, BROAD bandwidth); flywheel tuning; rear-of-chassis output level-set; tuning indicator for FM and AM. **Outputs:** two at low impedance, to main amplifier and tape recorder; one at high impedance to FM multiplex stereo demodulator. **Tubes:** 6BE6, 2—6BJ6, PCC88, EF86, EBF89, 2—6BH6, 6AV6, EZ80, ECC85, EM840. **Dimensions:** 15⅛ in. wide by 10⅞ deep by 7 high, over-all. **Price:** $199.50; wooden cabinet, $19.95. **Model 90-T—** FM-AM tuner and preamplifier-control unit. Tuner specifications same as 90-R. **Inputs:** four, from magnetic phono, tape playback head, and two high-level sources. **Controls:** function selector (AM; FM; Phono RIAA, LP, EUR; TAPE; AUX 1; AUX 2); concentric volume control and loudness contour switch; bass (±15 db, 50 cps); AC power and treble (±15 db, 10,000 cps); presence switch; noise filter (5 kc, 8 kc, 20 kc); rumble filter (100, 50, 20 cps); flywheel tuning control; FM muting or AM bandwidth selector buttons. **Outputs:** two, at low impedance, to main amplifier and to tape recorder (unaffected by tone and volume controls); one at high impedance to FM multiplex stereo demodulator. **Tubes:** 6BE6, 2—6BJ6, PCC88, EF86, EBF89, 2—6BH6, 6AV6, EZ80, ECC85, EM840, 6C4, 2—12AX7. **Dimensions:** 15⅛ in. wide by 10⅞ deep by 7 high, over-all. **Price:** $239.50; wooden cabinet, $19.95. **MANUFACTURER:** Fisher Radio Corp., 21-25 44th Drive, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

It is often very difficult for a component manufacturer designing a truly de luxe item to resist the temptation to bedeck it with gadgets that, while occasionally useful, cost the consumer more than they are worth to him. The urge to gild the lily can, in fact, be quite irresistible when the product is a tuner or a tuner-control unit priced at or above $200, so it is to Fisher's credit that the "extra" features on these two units are few and, on the whole, highly functional.

For instance, as a basic FM-AM tuner, all the 90-R really *needs* is a switch to select AM or FM, and a tuning knob. In addition to these, though, it has a new type of variable-sensitivity tuning indicator (which is a joy and a delight to use), three push buttons marked in terms of receiving distance, and an array of tiny pilot lights that show what control settings are being used. The pilot lights are no more than convenience features, but the tuning meter and "distance selector" are of undeniable worth.

The tuning indicator is perhaps more important in this tuner than in most others; since it relies upon its own excellent frequency stability rather than upon AFC to hold it centered on a station, the initial accuracy of tuning is quite important. Actually, the 90-R's tuning is very uncritical, except on the narrowest-range (and most selective) AM distance selector setting. Unlike most tuning indicators, however, this one has the advantage of being most sensitive to the weakest stations and least sensitive to the strongest ones, so the indicator gives accurate readings on all stations that are strong enough to be listenable.

The three push buttons directly under the tuning dial (marked DISTANT, STANDARD, and LOCAL) are for tailoring the receiver's characteristics to the incoming signal. When

The Fisher 90-T tuner-control unit.

receiving FM, they provide two degrees of interstation hiss suppression plus a third OFF (DISTANT) position for maximum sensitivity to interstation noise and weak stations. In the STANDARD position the noise gate becomes just effective enough to suppress all interstation hiss along with the feeblest of stations, leaving only those stations which are strong enough to be consistently listenable. Pressing the LOCAL button brings in the full noise gating action, allowing reception of only the most powerful of the local stations.

On AM, the same push buttons give a choice of three selectivity (and high-frequency range) characteristics. For strong local stations, free of adjacent-station interference, the LOCAL button gives the widest high-frequency range (which sounds almost as good as some FM transmissions). The other buttons narrow down the selectivity and upper frequency response as much as is necessary for interference-free reception of more distant stations.

These are possibly the most sensitive tuners I've encountered to date. On both FM and AM I was able to get highly listenable signals from some stations that I had always considered to be beyond my receiving range, and

Continued on page 106

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CARLTON, IVA—Mahogany, Net $265.00; Limed Oak or Walnut, Net $270.00.

CARLTON IV (Deluxe speaker components)—Mahogany, Net $359.00; Limed Oak or Walnut, Net $364.00.

SHERATON EQUIPMENT CONSOLE—matches Carlton enclosure. Dimensions: 33½" high, 37½" wide, 19½" deep. Compartment A: 10¼" high x 18" wide x 17¼" deep. Record player mounting board adjustable. Clearances 3½" and 6" above board. Compartment B: 10¼" high x 18" wide x 17¼" deep. 1½" clearance above mounting board. Mahogany, Net $173.00; Limed Oak or Walnut, Net $181.00.

*The **CARLTON** 15" 4-way system utilizes new Electro-Voice Phase Loading. The "K" type driver is actually at the rear of the cabinet, close to the floor and facing the wall. This positioning adds almost a full octave to your bass range. Crossover at 300 cps to coaxial mid-range driver; the VHF driver takes over at 3500 cps to 21,000 cps in the Carlton IV; 18,000 cps in the Carlton IVA. Individual "brilliance" and "presence" level controls in both models. Size: 33½" high, 26¼" wide, 19½" deep.

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TESTED IN THE HOME

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the sound on both channels (subject to the limitations of AM) was superb. FM quieting on stronger stations was unusually good; background hiss from local FM stations was well below the level of audibility.

All in all, a very fine job of engineering, and about as well worth its price as anything is these days.

The 90-T is a 90-R tuner combined with a comprehensive preamplifier-equalizer-control unit. In addition to all the 90-R's controls, it has input and equalization facilities for a magnetic pickup, a tape playback head, and two auxiliary inputs, as well as the usual equalizer-selector and tone controls (feedback type), a loudness compensator switch, a presence switch, and switched rumble and scratch filters. The selector gives a choice of three of the most commonly needed record equalization positions (all of which are accurate to within a db or so), as well as a tape playback curve that conforms closely to the NARTB standard for recorded tapes.

The presence control may be switched in to introduce a broad 7-db peak centered at about 4,000 cycles. The effect of this on an average loudspeaker is shocking, but there are probably some listeners who feel the need for this much more "presence" from their systems. Rumble and scratch filters are sharp-cutoff types which perform their respective functions efficiently and without unnecessary sacrifice of frequency range, but I would think it rather a shame were someone to purchase a unit like the 90-T and feed it with program material that was poor enough to require frequent noise suppression.

Sonically, the 90-T compares favorably with the 90-R, although it is almost inevitable that a certain amount of transparency will be lost in the control section of a reproducing system. The 90-R has a sweeter and subtly more detailed sound than the 90-T. The differences between these units are, however, very slight, and it is not likely that they would be audible except to a trained listener with a very fine amplifier and speaker system. Both of these are perfectionist's items, only the 90-R is more so.—J.G.H.

Fairchild Electronic Drive Turntable

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a single-speed or four-speed transcription turntable. **Speeds:** 33⅓ only, or 16⅔, 33⅓, 45 and 78 rpm. **Drive motor:** inside-out "squirrel-cage" hysteresis-synchronous. **Speed variation:** below 0.15%. **Rumble:** more than 47 db below 5 cm/sec level. **Speed change:** effected by changing frequency of supply voltage to motor. **Speed control:** electronic control regulator available as separate unit, to convert single-speed turntable to four-speed model. **Dimensions:** 12½ in. wide by 15 long by 1½ above motor board; requires irregular mounting hole 11¾ in. diameter by 15 long; requires 6 in. depth below top of motor board. **Price:** four-speed system, $229.50; single-speed unit, $99.50; electronic control regulator, $135; hardwood base, walnut, mahogany, or korina, $31.50. **MANUFACTURER:** Fairchild Recording Equipment Co., 10-40 45th Ave., Long Island City 1, N. Y.

Commercial power and light companies manage to maintain a power-line frequency of precisely 60 cycles, but one thing the power company has little control over is the loss in voltage that occurs when electricity runs through long distribution lines. An unvarying loss can be corrected, but the trouble is that the loss *will* vary, depending upon the amount of electricity being used by the community. It is for this reason that mechanical devices which require absolute speed constancy are usually equipped with synchronous motors.

A synchronous motor has the ability to "lock" in step with the frequency of its alternating voltage supply. It becomes synchronized with the alternations; so as long as the AC supply's frequency remains constant, the synchronous motor's speed will remain constant, even though the voltage of the AC supply may vary from 90 to 125 volts or so. This is why synchronous motors are always used to drive electric clocks, and why professional recording and playback equipment is equipped with hysteresis-synchronous motors.

The basic component in Fairchild's new system is a single-speed turntable driven by a hysteresis-synchronous

Fairchild's basic single-speed turntable.

motor. When fed 60-cycle AC power, over a wide voltage range, the motor will synchronize with the line frequency and rotate the turntable at 33⅓ rpm.

If the supply frequency is 30 cycles, the motor will lock in with that and will run the turntable at 16⅔ rpm. Similarly, power-source frequencies of 81 and 141 cycles will rotate the turntable at 45 and 78 rpm, respectively.

Used by itself, from a 60-cycle household supply, this basic turntable unit is simply a high-quality 33⅓-rpm turntable. Used with Fairchild's electronic control regulator, it is a fully versatile four-speed unit.

This regulator—the heart of the electronic drive system—is a device containing four tone generators and a power amplifier. The generators produce 30, 60, 81, and 141-cycle tones, a "speed change" switch selects one of these, and the power amplifier delivers it to the synchronous motor. The result? Precisely regulated turntable speed, which is independent not only of house voltage, but of household supply frequency too.

The control regulator can be powered from an AC source of just about any frequency and of between 85 and 135 volts. Or, it can be fed by a storage battery, through an ordinary unregulated vibrator supply, or from a household DC supply through a simple AC converter. Each tone generator has a screwdriver-slot frequency adjustment for varying the turntable speed within ±3% of the nominal speed, and the specifications claim adherence to within 0.15% of the pre-set speed.

The basic turntable assembly is built up on a metal box with open ends, which fits down into the wooden turntable base cutout. At the rear of the assembly is an octal socket with a dummy shorting plug inserted into it. To add the control regulator, you simply slide it into the end of the metal box frame, insert its power supply plug in place of the dummy plug, and fasten the regulator's speed selector knob in place. The conversion is so simple that you may conveniently buy the basic assembly, planning to add the control regulator at a later date.

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TESTED IN THE HOME

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Our sample Electronic Drive turntable proved to have extraordinarily good speed regulation. I could not detect a trace of pitch unsteadiness in any form of program or audible test material. Its rumble was also extremely low; deep bass components were practically nonexistent. Hum interference radiation from the drive motor was negligible, even when using hum-sensitive pickup cartridges.

It is of course inevitable that many persons, whose electric clocks keep perfectly good time, will ask, "Why go to all this trouble and expense to do what other turntables do with a stepped drive motor shaft and a rubber idler wheel?" This is a good question, but the advantage of this system is not in what it does that other turntables can do, but in what it does that others cannot. For example, it can provide a constant-speed phonograph drive in areas where a constant-frequency house supply is not available. It is ideal for use in remote locations where storage batteries are the only source of electricity, and it does away with the mechanical drive linkages that are the major causes of speed variation and rumble in some conventional multi-speed turntables.

All in all, this is a superb job of engineering and a precision product. It is the most costly single-speed or multi-speed turntable on the high-fidelity market, but it is also a first-class performer, and well worth the expense to anyone who has power supply problems or who feels that he cannot rely upon the frequency regulation of his local AC supply.—J.G.H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: The single-speed turntable is factory adjusted to within ±0.15% of its nominal 33⅓ rpm speed, and the unit has enough torque to maintain this speed even under the load imposed by a disc cutting stylus. This degree of accuracy is for more than most users need, since 0.15% is only a very small fraction of a musical semitone.

There are some cases, however, where accuracy of *pitch* is more important than accuracy of rotational speed (for instance, when accompanying an "Add-a-Soloist" or "Music Minus One" recording), and the only way of adjusting the speed of a hysteresis-motor turntable is by the use of variable mechanical linkages (which may increase mechanical vibration) or by changing the frequency of the AC supply to the motor. The latter method is used when the single-speed turntable is coupled to its electronic drive control system.

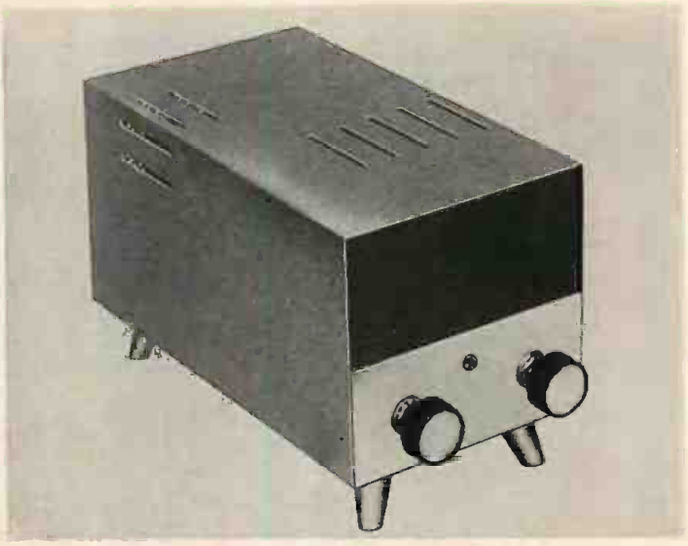
Since the electronic drive turntable does not use rubber pucks for motor coupling, there is no possibility of idler flat spots developing and introducing thumping noises into the reproducing system.

A two-speed turntable, without electronic drive, is now available for $134.50.

Bogen ST-10 Stereo Tape Recorder

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a two-channel tape preamplifier with power amplifier for one channel. **Frequency response:** ±2 db, 20 to 20,000 cps. **Tape equalization:** NARTB standard reproducing curve. **Harmonic distortion:** 1% @ 10 watts out, Channel 1; 0.25% @ 0.85 volt out, Channel 2. **Hum and noise:** 50 db below rated output, from tape inputs; 75 db below rated output, with gain control fully off. **Inputs:** Total of four, two from playback head (Tape 1, Tape 2), and two from external tape preamplifiers (Aux 1, Aux 2). **Controls:** combined AC power and Channel 1 treble control; combined Channel 1 and Channel 2 gain control. **Outputs:** total of four, from Preamp 1 and Preamp 2, and from Channel 1 power amplifier (0, 4, 8, 16 ohms) and Channel 2 control amplifier (via a cathode follower). **Sensitivity:** Tape 1, 1.8 mv in for 10 watts out; Tape 2, 1.8 mv in for 0.85 volt out; Aux 1, 0.8 volt in for 10 watts out; Aux 2, 0.8 volt in for 0.8 volt out. **Tubes:** 2—12AX7/ECC83, 6C4, 6U8, 2—6AQ5, 6BW4/EZ80. **Dimensions:** 5¾ in. wide by 12 deep by 6½ high, over-all, with case and legs. **Price:** $52.50; $59.50 with case and legs. **MANUFACTURER:** David Bogen Co., Inc., Box 500, Paramus, N. J.

The ST-10 is a converter amplifier for use in expanding present monaural systems for stereo playback. It contains



The compact ST-10 stereo adapter.

on a single chassis two separate stereo tape preamplifiers, a ganged volume control providing simultaneous adjustment of both channels (a convenience that is almost worthy of being called a necessity), and a 10-watt power amplifier for use with the second channel. Thus, the only additional equipment needed to "go stereo" would be a second, modest loudspeaker, a tape deck, and (of course) several dollars worth of stereo tapes.

Two separate preamplifier stages in the ST-10 provide NARTB tape playback equalization, and connect to a pair of output sockets on the rear of the chassis (marked PA 1 and PA 2). A pair of removable jumpers connect these into a pair of rear-chassis input receptacles (AUX 1, AUX 2) and thence through the ganged volume control. The Channel 1 section of the control feeds directly to the built-in 10-watt amplifier, while the Channel 2 control passes through a cathode follower and appears at another rear-chassis socket labeled CH 2 OUT.

The jumpers between the tape preamps and the latter stages of the ST-10 are to permit bypassing either preamp, in the event that the tape deck should have a preamp of its own for at least one channel. They could also accept the outputs from a stereo tuner, to extend to it the dual volume control and power amplifier facilities of the ST-10.

Distortion from the ST-10's preamplifier stages was very low, but distortion from the cathode follower output was considerably higher, although still within specifications.

Tape equalization was found to conform closely to the NARTB standard down to about 100 cycles, with diminishing bass below that. Over the range above about 100 cycles, the ST-10 will reproduce an NARTB test tape, from a standard quarter-mil playback head, to within ±0.25 db to beyond 15,000 cycles.

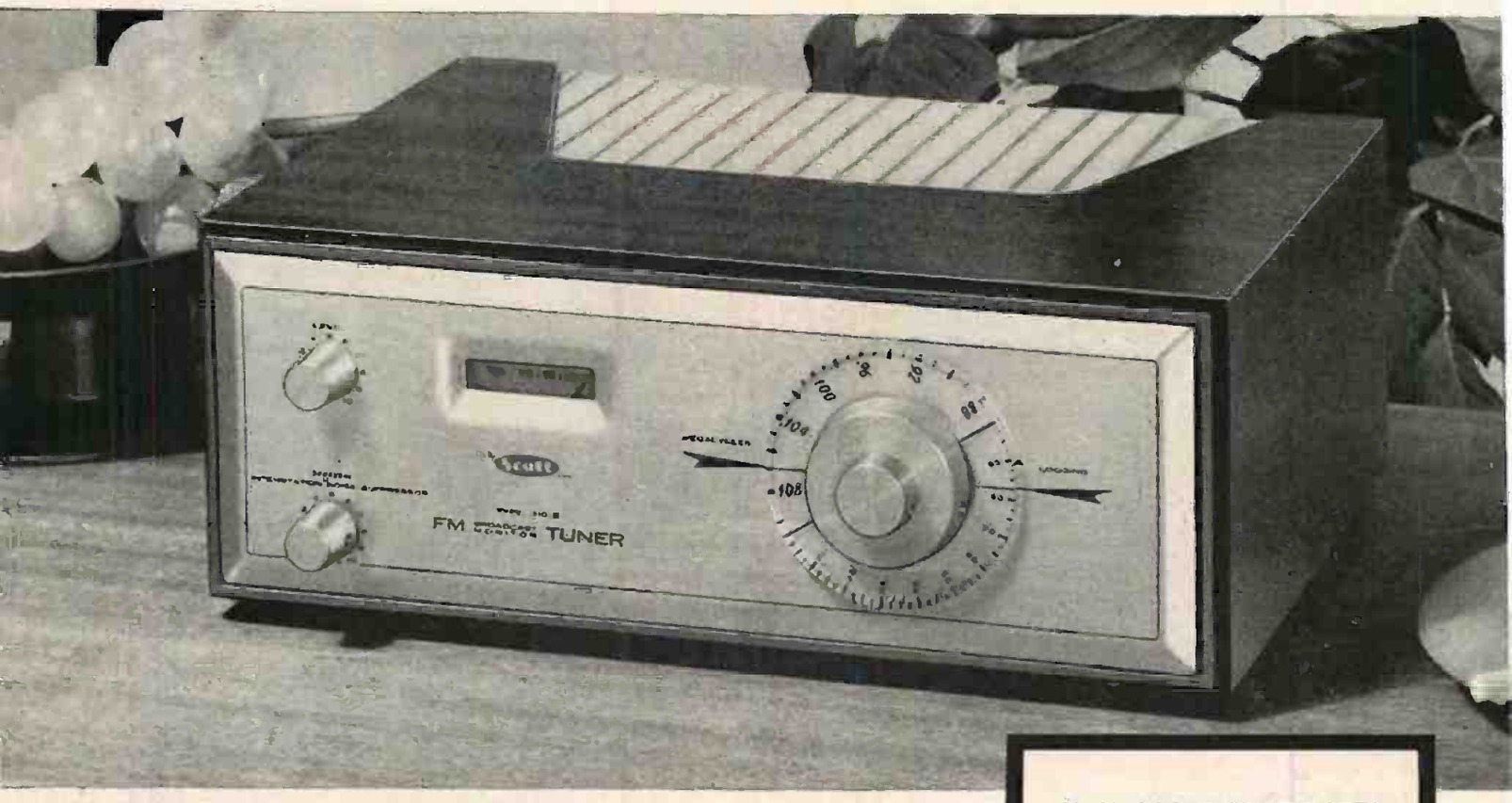
The power amplifier similarly met all of its specifications as far as I could determine, which is to say that it is a good performer within its price limitations. I believe it would have been a good idea, though, if Bogen had equipped the power amplifier channel in the ST-10 with an output connection that could be used when the built-in amplifier is eventually replaced with something a little more ambitious.

The ST-10 is an item that should have appeared on the market long before it did, because there has certainly been the need for it. It is an excellent starting point for the monauralist who wants to convert to listening with both ears.—J.G.H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: A new model, designated the ST-10A, is now available. This has stereo disc provisions as well as tape equalization which conforms precisely to the current NARTB standard, thus eliminating the loss of output below 100 cycles.

Here are the Features That Make the H. H. Scott 310-B the

BEST FM TUNER



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H. H. Scott Engineering Department

STATEMENT OF GUARANTEE

All the statements regarding the performance of the 310-B tuner are backed up by laboratory measurements available for inspection at the H. H. Scott engineering department. The 310-B will outperform any tuner. It will work in the most difficult locations, where other tuners fail.

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part 9

A Hi-Fi Primer

by John H. Newitt

Horns are most frequently used for tweeter service, but they are often used for woofers as well. Although capable of high efficiency, a woofer horn must be extremely bulky if it is to yield response in the lower audio range. An arbitrary reduction of horn size will impair performance, but there are some unconventional design methods whereby performance can be preserved while horn bulk is substantially reduced. These methods are neither simple nor inexpensive.

THE TWEETER HORN was described briefly in a previous article of this series. Since there is rarely any need to alter or adjust a tweeter horn, a detailed discussion of the horn structure was not undertaken at that time. In essence, the recommendation was made that if a tweeter horn is to be used at all, it should be one of the better ones.

It may be recalled that a horn enclosure has a loudspeaker-like mechanism that operates into the *throat* end of the horn structure, while radiation into the room takes place from the *mouth* of the horn. The loudspeaker mechanism is referred to as a driver; it acoustically "drives" the horn structure, to produce movement of a constantly expanding volume of air. At the mouth, quite a large quantity of air is being disturbed; and acoustically this is the equivalent of a large diaphragm. The horn structure, therefore, enables a physically small mechanism to produce the effect of one that is large.

Movement of a large quantity of air is essential for good acoustic output. But remember that a large, stiff diaphragm and voice-coil structure is inevitably massive, and refuses to move well at high frequencies. For tweeter service, a small diaphragm and voice-coil structure is needed, since it can be made both light and stiff enough to respond well to the higher frequencies. By itself, however, it cannot disturb much air because it has so little surface area. A horn is the easiest answer to this dilemma.

Technically, the small driver produces high-pressure low-velocity energy at the throat; the horn transforms this to low-pressure high-velocity energy at the mouth. The latter is a better match to the characteristics of the room air, and so the energy of the driver is utilized more efficiently. Many of our musical instruments take advantage of horn action to bolster an otherwise inefficient sound source. The reed of a clarinet, like human vocal cords, produces very little air disturbance in its own right. The acoustic volume depends greatly on the hornlike structure that follows. A megaphone acts simply as a continuation of the expansion that starts at the vocal cords and normally terminates at the mouth.

As we lower the frequency of operation, the wave length of the sound in a horn increases until, at some very low frequency, a wave of sound becomes longer than the horn itself. In such a case, there would be little horn action, since not much pressure difference exists over a very small part of a wave length. This rather crude concept implies that there is a certain low frequency at which the horn ceases to function properly. This is referred to as the *cutoff frequency* of the horn (the frequency below which the horn response progressively declines).

The shape of the horn expansion has much to do with what happens around the cutoff point. Fig. 1 illustrates this characteristic. Note that the straight-sided conical horn has a very gradually falling response below the horn cutoff frequency, while the other two shapes hold the output of the horn quite steady right down to a more sharply defined cutoff point. For a woofer, the sides of the horn do not have to be continuously and smoothly flared, as they must for a tweeter, but may be made to approximate the desired flare in small straight-sided steps.

Other requirements must be met also to assure that a horn will function as it is supposed to. One important horn parameter is the *flare constant*. This is simply a technical term which expresses the rate at which horn expansion takes place. The flare constant determines whether a horn flares rapidly from a small throat to a large mouth in a very short distance, or whether it flares out only gradually over a very long linear distance. The more rapidly a horn flares out in a given length, the higher will be its cutoff frequency. This is unfortunate, because if it is desired to have a low cutoff frequency it is necessary to make the horn quite long in order to preserve desirable mouth and throat proportions.

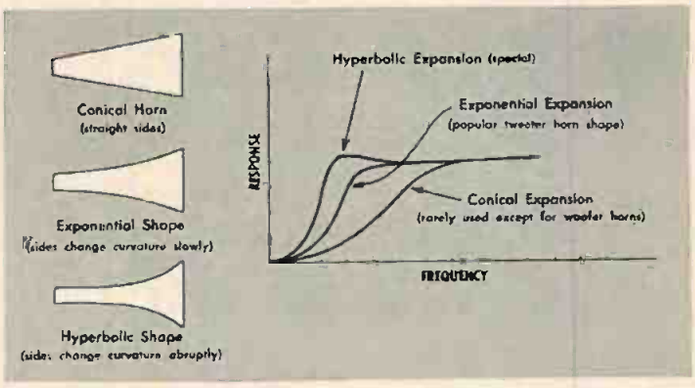


Fig. 1. How the type of expansion affects the low-frequency performance of a horn in the region of its cutoff frequency.

We cannot make the throat or mouth any convenient size just to be able to shorten the horn. In Fig. 1 all the horns shown have the same flare constant, even though they differ in shape. If the flare constants were changed by shortening the horn lengths, retaining the same amounts of expansion, the cutoff points shown would simply move higher in frequency. The converse is, of course, also true.

Fig. 2 shows a group of horns of widely varying physical shape. First a short horn with a gradual flare rate is shown. Here we have used a gradual flare rate in order to preserve low-frequency response, but note that the mouth cannot be much larger than the throat if the horn is to remain short. Since the efficiency of a horn depends upon the ratio of the mouth to throat areas, such a horn is very little, if any, better than a direct-radiator system. Short horns, in fact, resemble direct radiators in performance more than they do long horns.

The second horn (Fig. 2B) has a gradual flare also but the flare has been continued longer. Again, low-frequency response has been preserved; but better acoustic efficiency has been obtained by the use of a small throat and a large mouth. However, we have accomplished this only by resorting to a longer horn length.

Consider what happens if we make the horn very short, with a large mouth and a small throat, as shown in Fig. 2C. Such a structure would have excellent acoustic efficiency because of the large mouth-to-throat area ratio, but the low-frequency response would be impaired by its rapid flare rate.

The designer must make his choice among these various compromising factors. While he must consider practical enclosure sizes for home woofer service, he cannot simply make a structure arbitrarily small and expect it to perform well. Neither can he use the huge dimensions he might like to in order to assure excellent performance. His choice, if he is to call his device a horn, must not entail a substantial sacrifice in either performance or efficiency. How much of each he is willing to sacrifice determines how small he can make the horn.

The over-all problem is not even that simple, really; it is complicated by further restrictions. For example, the determination of a minimum mouth area comes about as the result of low-frequency considerations. Unless the mouth cross-section dimension is an appreciable part of one wave length (or more), a serious disruption of normal horn action will take place. In tweeter horns, sound wave lengths are so short that the mouth may be several wave lengths across without becoming a bulky structure. At a frequency of 30 cps, however, the wave length of sound is some 36.6 feet, and it would hardly do to make the dimensions of the horn mouth several

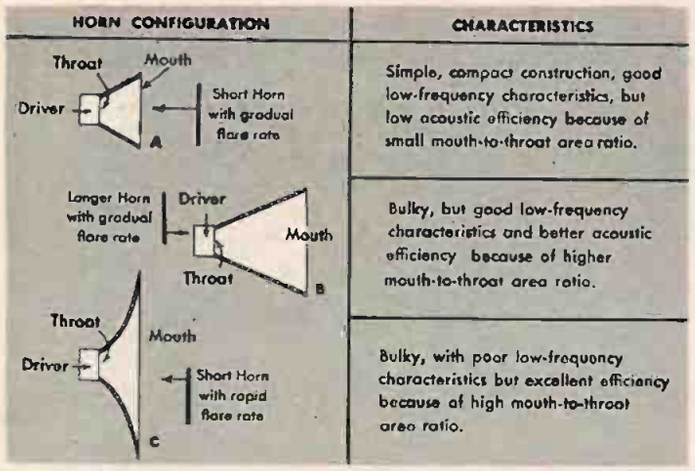


Fig. 2. Comparison of horn performance characteristics with changes in length, flare rate, and mouth-to-throat area ratio.

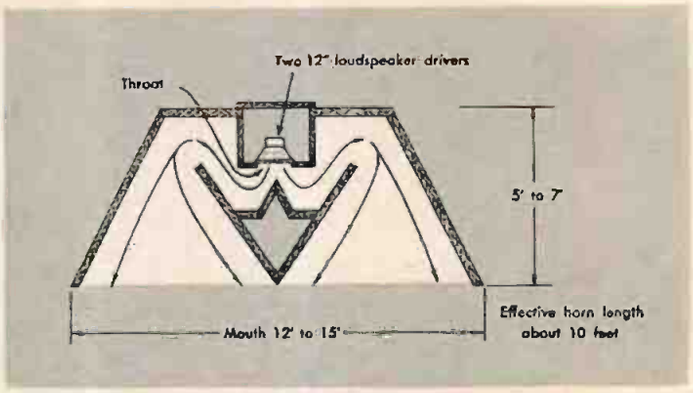


Fig. 3. Simple type of folded horn for reproduction down to 30 cycles has huge dimensions. Much too large for use in most homes, this unit was designed for theaters and auditoriums.

wave lengths under such conditions! A horn mouth must be from ¼ to ½ wave length across, as a very minimum dimension, in order to retain horn action. This still makes for a rather large horn mouth—and it also makes for a rather long horn, when the desired flare constant is considered. With a fixed mouth dimension (for 30 cps response) and the need for a gradual flare rate, the throat dimension would become huge if we were arbitrarily to shorten the horn length. We would then have to supply a very large driver, and the efficiency would also suffer. And if we simply used a small throat and a short horn, while preserving the desired mouth dimension, we would have such a rapid flare rate that low-frequency response would suffer.

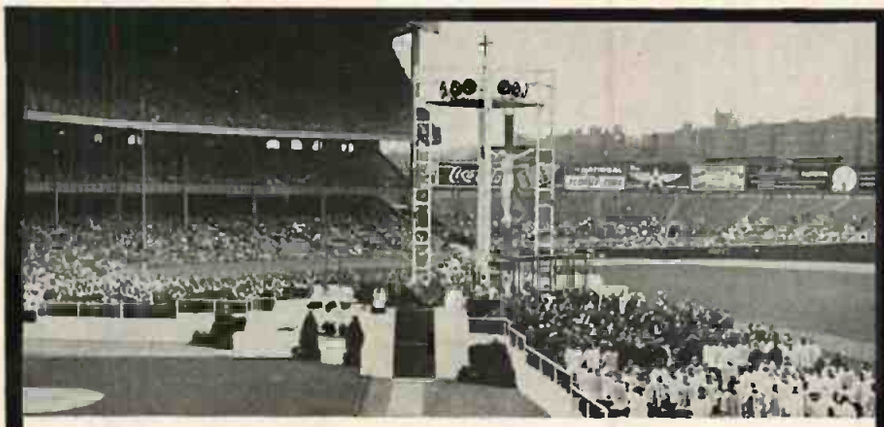
The horn designer is pretty well boxed in so far as woofers are concerned, since he must start with a mouth dimension of at least 9 feet if he wants response down to 30 cps. Even that is not the most desirable dimension; it is simply the minimum with which decent performance can be obtained.

Woofer drivers are usually standard dynamic types of loudspeaker, sometimes slightly modified. The throat of a horn may be the full speaker diameter if desired, to make the horn as short as possible. In the case of a 30-cps woofer, this still results in quite a long horn. If we take the recommended ¼ wave length as a horn mouth dimension (12 feet across) and plan to use a 12-inch dynamic loudspeaker as a horn driver, the horn length for gradual expansion (by formula) that will preserve low-frequency response turns out to be about 18 feet. With such a large mouth-to-throat area ratio, this horn should have very high efficiency.

After determining the conditions for a good woofer horn, the next problem is getting such a structure or its equivalent into the living room. Since the horn is quite long, it could be folded in a series of expanding convolutions to reduce over-all cabinet depth. This is depicted in Fig. 3. The horn length has been shortened to about 10 feet by using two woofers; this procedure serves to increase the throat dimension; but it reduces the efficiency, because the mouth-to-throat ratio is decreased. A slight sacrifice of efficiency may be worth a large-order length reduction in many cases. By adding even more woofer drivers we could shorten the horn even more, since the throat dimension could be increased each time we did so. Efficiency would continue to fall with each increase in throat size. We would gradually approach a direct-radiator system as we carried this to extremes, and the cabinet would still be very large because of the huge horn mouth.

There are disadvantages in both too small and too large a throat dimension. A throat dimension that is too small can cause buildup of excessive air pressure, which may produce severe distortion. We would rarely be concerned with too small a throat *Continued on page 114*

When EXPERTS need quality high fidelity ...they CHOOSE *University* SPEAKERS



FOR UNUSUAL STADIUM FUNCTION The vast expanses of Yankee Stadium were converted to an open-air cathedral for the mass offered by Francis Cardinal Spellman, R.C. Archbishop of New York, to mark his 25th Anniversary as Bishop.

"The Yankee Stadium is well-known for its acoustic difficulties. The specific problem for this special event was to cover hundreds of thousands of square feet with true high fidelity reproduction of voice, organ and choir without reverberation and echo effects. With a single group of University speakers mounted over the altar, we were able to 'saturate' the stadium with highest quality sound that the N.Y. Times called 'cathedral-like' in its front page story. What's more, the high efficiency and distortion-free characteristics of the speakers enabled us to use remarkably low amplifier power."

Edward P. Casey, *President*
Edward P. Casey Sound Systems, Inc., New York

FOR PROFESSIONAL RECORDING STUDIO The Crew Cuts, well-known recording artists, are shown monitoring playback of the master tape to check over-all quality and fidelity of a new recording made at Universal Recording Corporation (the world's largest independent recording studio for all the leading artists and labels).

"For many years, we have used various speaker systems in our control rooms and studios. Recently, we installed the University 'Classic.' According to Mr. Mason Coppinger, our chief engineer, the 'Classic' has not only met the rigid power requirements of studio monitoring, but gives us a realistic picture in terms of the final reproduced balance. The favorable reaction from our clients, artists and our engineers especially, is unanimous!"

M. T. Putnam, *President*
Universal Recording Corporation, Chicago

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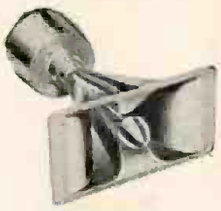
WOOFERS

TWEETERS



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dimension in a woofer horn, because we would normally be using a large throat in order to hold down the horn length. The disadvantage of a large throat (in addition to reduced efficiency) is that destructive cancellation of the shorter wave lengths (higher frequencies) can occur. This was shown in an earlier article to be the reason for inserting acoustic plugs in tweeter horns. Acoustic plugs serve to equalize the distance to the throat of the horn from the various parts of the driver diaphragm.

When acoustic cancellation occurs in the throat area at upper frequencies, it does so at certain discrete frequencies rather than uniformly over the whole range. This shows up as high output at certain points in lower-grade tweeters, with very little or nothing in the way of response between these points. In the better grade of tweeters, the response is still a bit uneven but, on the whole, is reasonably uniform from an over-all standpoint.

A horn woofer should not be operated above the frequency at which destructive cancellation first begins to occur. Crossover networks which divide the electrical energy according to frequency can be used to insure that little energy is fed to the horn at or above this critical frequency.

It is apparent that horns are quite complex, and that their construction provides many pitfalls into which the uninitiated can fall. While it is well to know a bit about horn characteristics for evaluation purposes, horn-designing is *not* recommended as a do-it-yourself undertaking. It is also understandable that some manufacturers have resorted to small horn structures. While foreshortened horns may technically be referred to as horns, it should be realized that they do not perform like true horns at low frequencies.

The Klipschorn (invented by Paul Klipsch, and licensed to several other manufacturers) is a valid although unconventional approach to the horn problem for home use. This type of horn must be operated in a room corner. The listener is actually sitting in the mouth of a gigantic horn, since the walls of the room are used as a virtual extension of the horn structure. Many tricks are used to accomplish this result, but it should be emphasized that they are acoustically valid tricks.

A diagram of the Klipsch enclosure is shown in Fig. 4. It will be seen that the sound from a rear-enclosed loudspeaker driver is directed through a series of expanding channels and emerges on both sides of the corner cabinet along the walls of the room. The loudspeaker driver works through an acoustical low-pass filter which is, actually, a box with a slot-type opening. This filter acts as an acoustical cutoff device for the upper frequencies and helps suppress upper range harmonic energy (including distortion) that might be generated by the woofer mechanism. Even more important, it serves to reduce the throat dimension. With a small throat and the room forming the remainder of the horn, a long horn can be accommodated —and very high acoustic efficiency is realized.

It will be seen that the Klipsch horn expands upward and downward from the slot in front of the driver diaphragm, around the top and bottom of the speaker cavity, and finally around the sides into the room. It is very complex from a woodworking standpoint. The speaker-driver chamber must be tightly sealed, and must contain sufficient sound absorbing material to prevent reflection. Also, the proper type of driver must be used to suit the horn. Since it is characteristic of horn loading (when properly carried out) to cancel the resonant effect of the driver, the small rear air chamber, which raises the resonant frequency of the driver mechanism, does not have an adverse effect. It *is* necessary to balance the front and rear air loads on the diaphragm in such a case. That is accomplished to the required degree, within the horn, by observing certain minimum interior dimensions.

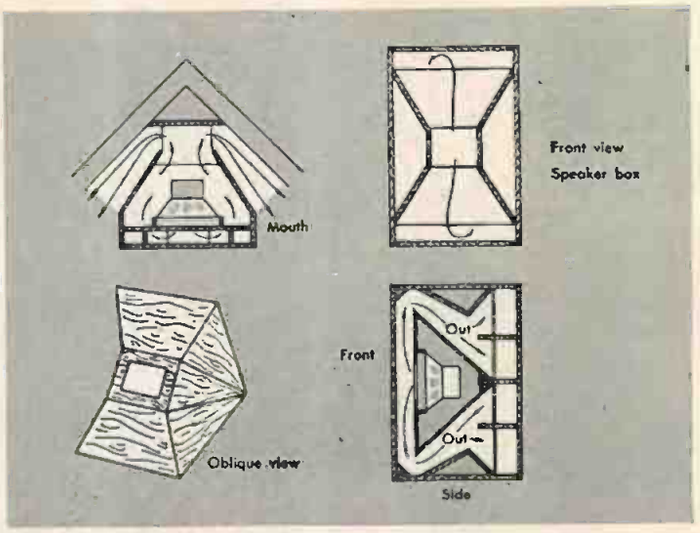

Fig. 4. Corner horn developed by Klipsch is complex in construction, but gives true horn performance in a small space.

Unusual design methods such as this were combined to make the Klipschorn's performance equal to that of a much larger standard horn system. The cabinet must operate tightly against the corner walls of a room; pulling the structure away from the wall only slightly will result in a severe loss of low-frequency response. So far as size reduction is concerned, the cabinet is about 25% of the size required for an equivalent conventional horn. It is about the size of an average radio console. The Klipschorn woofer operates from about 40 to 400 cps, and middle-range and tweeter horns are used for the rest of the range. Other Klipsch-licensed speaker systems use up to four reproducing ranges.

Another approach to the true corner-horn problem is shown in Fig. 5. This construction is far simpler than the Klipschorn although, even so, it involves a considerable amount of woodwork. Expansion into the room takes place around all sides of the corner cabinet, which acts to form a gradually expanding area between the adjacent walls and floor of the room. The rear surface of a loudspeaker operates into this expanding space, while the front wave of the speaker is absorbed by acoustical treatment of the cabinet's interior. Because the action at the front and the rear of a speaker is identical at low frequencies it does not matter, basically, which one is used for sound radiation. In this case it is obviously desirable to use the rear-cone radiation. The rear magnet enclosure of the speaker acts as an acoustical plug to some extent; reasonably good response up to a 600-cps crossover point can be obtained when proper horn expansion conditions are met.

Although it is not as popular as it might be, this is a system that the home experimenter might build without great difficulty once the *Continued on page 122*

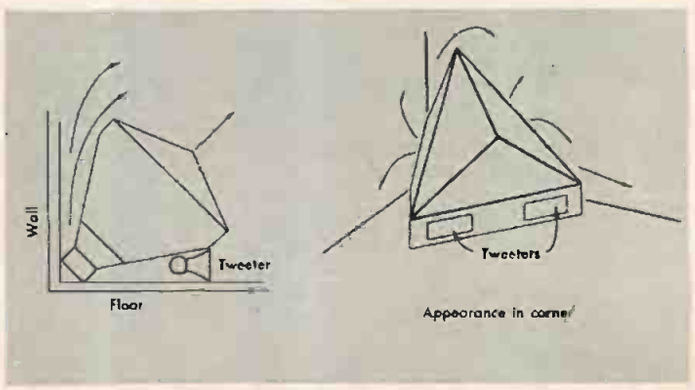

Fig. 5. A symmetrical corner horn. As in Klipschorn, the room corner is used to continue horn's flare. See the text above.

Stereo Music Via FM Broadcasting

Stereophonic music is definitely here!

There is nothing new about stereo on pre-recorded tapes. They've been available for several years. In fact, practically all commercial record companies have been making stereophonic masters, as well as monaural, in all recording sessions for the past year.

At the Los Angeles High Fidelity Show all the excitement was created by the public unveiling of the Westrex stereo disc — all the excitement, that is, except for one other stereo music source — stereo via FM broadcasting! This, too, was unveiled in demonstrations at Los Angeles.

We at Sherwood foresee FM as an extremely important stereo source. Stereo tapes are costly and stereo records with their associated pick-up cartridge present technical limitations to fidelity.

How is FM stereo achieved? Through a new system of FM broadcasting called MULTIPLEXING. Multiplexing is a system whereby a second channel of information (or sub-channel) is superimposed on the main channel (or primary channel). With your present FM receiver you cannot hear the sub-channel — only the primary one. But by adding an adapter to your receiver, you *can* hear the sub-channel. It becomes apparent then that in FM stereo music broadcasting the main channel will carry the "right-hand" side and the sub-channel the "left-hand" side of stereo sound. From this point on the problem is no different than with tapes or records.

What is the progress of multiplexing to date?

Actually, multiplexing can be done with two or even three channels. It is presently being used in such commercial applications as background music and storecasting. Eventually, most FM stations will be multiplexing some form of programming. At present only a few stations are using the multiplex system for the purpose of offering stereo music programs for home reception. More will undoubtedly follow.

Now, at Sherwood, we are readying both multiplex adapters for existing sets and FM receivers containing multiplex channel converters. We urge you to watch this space for our announcement of these new products. Meanwhile, call or write your favorite FM station to learn the future of FM multiplexed stereo in your area.

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AUDIO FORUM

GE VR-II Installation

SIR:

I recently replaced my old faithful General Electric pickup with one of the new GE VR-II cartridges, and while I am very pleased with the pickup's freedom from hum and its great over-all clarity, I notice that its bass is (by comparison with the old cartridge) quite a bit drier and thinner.

I have not changed any of my other components, and I have not changed any of the original control settings. Can you suggest why this cartridge should have such unimpressive bass response? Should I be using it with a different input load, or what?

Henry R. Dowland
Roanoke, Va.

Optimum operating conditions for the GE VR-II pickup are identical to those for the RPX-series cartridges with the exception of the stylus force, which should be lower for the VR-II.

The difference that you notice in the new pickup's bass response is probably the result of the new cartridge's higher compliance, which would tend to lower the frequency of the bass resonance between the arm and cartridge. Lowering the frequency of this resonance would at first give the impression of less full or less sumptuous bass, but sustained listening should show the bass to be improved in definition and range.

Crossover Network Slopes

SIR:

I have purchased a set of so-called universal crossover networks for use with my two-way horn-loaded speaker system, but find myself unable to fathom one aspect of the instructions for the crossover networks.

These instructions say that in order to obtain a 6 db/octave slope I should use such-and-so connections, whereas a 12 db/octave slope calls for different connections. This is quite clear to me, except for two things: what is db/octave slope, and then what db/octave slope should I use?

I would welcome words of wisdom.

John McAlpin
Los Angeles, Cal.

A crossover network does not simply pass a certain band of frequencies and then chop off sharply beyond the nominal crossover frequency. Instead, it passes its full range and then, at the crossover frequency, the output from that channel of the network begins to fall off at a constant rate, diminishing progressively as the frequency gets farther away from the crossover. The rate at which the output falls off beyond the nominal crossover frequency is referred to as the slope of the crossover, and is measured in terms of decibels loss per octave of change in frequency. For instance, a 500-cycle 6 db/octave crossover will deliver half as much voltage to the tweeter at 250 cycles (one octave below 500 cycles) as it will at 500, whereas a 500-cycle 12 db/octave crossover will deliver half as much voltage at 350 cycles.

Generally speaking, direct-radiator speakers will blend better if used with a slow crossover of 6 db/octave, whereas horn-loaded speakers must be used with a sharper crossover, such as 12 db/octave, in order to avoid overloading or damaging the tweeter.

Since your system is a horn-loaded type, you should use the 12 db/octave crossover slope for both the woofer and tweeter.

Ground Loops

SIR:

In poring through some of the current literature about hum problems, I came across a term which puzzles me, and I was wondering if you could define and/or explain it to me.

The term is "ground loop," and it was used in reference to a certain (apparently improper) way of grounding components to one another.

Orin Baker
Pittsburgh, Pa.

A ground loop is a condition whereby one component is grounded to another component by way of two separate grounding paths.

A typical case of this is a metal pickup arm in which the shield of the interconnecting cable (connected to the arm at one end and the preamp at the other end) provides one ground path, and a second wire from the base of the arm to the preamp chassis (this lead added by the overly-cautious user) provides the second ground path. Another common

Continued on next page

AUDIO FORUM

Continued from preceding page

form of ground loop is that in which a power amplifier and preamplifier chassis are connected together by the B— supply lead in the power supply cable to the preamp, as well as by the shield of the interconnecting cable between the preamp and power amplifier.

The remedy for any ground loop is simply to disconnect one of the grounding paths.

Fuzzy Bass

SIR:

I am encountering a very annoying form of distortion from heavy bass notes on records, and am wondering if you might have any idea what is causing it.

The noise sounds like a fuzzy rasp, and is most pronounced on certain loudly-recorded organ pedal notes and some double-bass passages on orchestral recordings. I have had my amplifier and preamp checked, and they are okay. I have also examined my pickup stylus under a microscope, and although some wear is evident, it does not appear to be sufficiently severe to cause this much distortion.

Could the pickup be the offender, or am I overlooking something?

Howard G. Donaldson
Utica, N. Y.

The fuzziness that you observe in reproduction of heavy bass passages on records is usually the result of using a pickup cartridge that is lacking in lateral compliance, or of attempting to track a pickup at too low a stylus force.

Check to see whether your tracking force is within the range recommended by the pickup manufacturer, and try increasing the force to the recommended upper limit. Also, check to make sure that your turntable assembly is level and that the pickup arm bearings are not binding.

If stylus wear is visually "evident," your stylus is chewing up records, and is very possibly responsible for just the distortion that you are bothered by.

Also, if you observe this bass distortion from other program sources (such as when listening to a tuner) there is a good chance that your woofer's voice coil is rubbing against the magnet pole pieces. If you can get hold of an audio oscillator and pump some 20-cycle tones through the system, an off-center voice coil can be immediately detected by means of the roughness that it adds to the sound.

NOVAES

Continued from page 38

mounting astronomically. This is of no concern to her; a perfect take is. Despite the vast number of takes, her recordings are not composites. Once in a while a section from another take may be spliced in, but for the most part she will approve an entire movement exactly as she played it. But before she approves she calls in friends and colleagues for their opinions. "What do you think? What do *you* think?" On one great occasion—her disc of the Schumann *Symphonic Etudes*—she approved the results after one take; and Eric Schuller, who produced the disc, is still talking about it. Sometimes she will spend months trying (she says) to make up her mind. But, think some co-workers, her mind really has been made up from the very beginning; her hesitation is only reluctance to give the final word. She is the same when trying out pianos for a recital. She will walk into the Steinway basement, play on all the concert grands there, plaintively wander from one to the other, and spend the entire afternoon in seeming indecision, asking everybody in sight: "What do you think? What do *you* think?"

Working with her can sometimes be something less than a joy. In her sweet manner she is accustomed to having everything her own way. "She is a self-centered oasis," a former manager has said of her. "She has always been successful, her husband always insulated her, and so she has grown up expecting everything to be handed to her." But her present manager is content. "She came to me with a reputation of being difficult," says Barrett. "I must say that in two years with me, she has been absolutely first-rate. She has cancelled only one concert in that period, and that was in Philadelphia a few months ago when she was running a temperature of 103. She may worry before and after a recital, and she may change her mind about this and that; but she is reliable and she always meets her dates. There's kind of a kittenish quality about her. She inspires gallantry."

Her current Vox output consists of nineteen discs. Of Chopin there are all the études, waltzes, nocturnes, and preludes (the preludes, made in 1949, was her first LP), the two popular sonatas, a disc of mazurkas, the F minor Concerto, and a disc of miscellaneous pieces. Beethoven is represented with the G major Concerto and three sonatas—the *Moonlight*, *Les Adieux*, and the D minor; Debussy with the first book of preludes; Mozart with the E flat (K. 271) and D minor Concertos, the Sonatas Nos. 5, 11, and 15, and the Rondo in A minor. One disc couples the Grieg A minor Concerto with Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*. On her three discs devoted to Schumann are the Concerto and *Kinderszenen*, *Carnaval* and *Papillons*, *Symphonic Etudes* and *Fantasiestücke*.

One other disc is named "Novaes Encores." It is the only one about which Vox reports inferior sales, and it is one of her very finest. On it are some of her standard recital pieces, including the well-known Sgambati and Saint-Saëns arrangements of tunes from Gluck operas. Nobody plays the *Caprice on Ballet Music* from *Alceste* with equivalent charm, delicacy, and unerring finger work. An entire pianistic lexicon is contained in this one short piece. In a way it is the essence of Novaes—elegant, spontaneous-sounding, tonally scintillating, and instinctively just right.

Some of her other discs are on an equivalent level of accomplishment. There is, for instance, the *Papillons*, in my opinion the greatest performance of the early Schumann work ever put on records. Novaes is one of the few who can be imaginative without sounding mannered. She has her little idiosyncrasies, as have all great artists, but at all times she maintains the most natural-sounding, flowing musical line. Above all she has line; and when she shapes a melody with that indescribably singing tone, it is with the authority of a Rembrandt putting his pencil to a sheet of paper.

She is a very accurate technician. Once, during a concert, she made a finger slip in the opening piece and then went on to play with her usual magic. "The good Lord made me make the mistake so I shouldn't be conceited," she is reported as saying. She prays before each concert and she attends Mass regularly. She is not worried about the future of mankind. "Now we must be interested in atomics and the nuclear science," she says. "I read the papers every day. The world will not blow itself up. I have deep faith that the Divine power will never let the bad spirit triumph. When we think everything so bad, then comes the hand of God. Don't *you* think so?"

GOLDEN EARS

Continued from page 43

save dollars (a few) and wear and tear on a fellow human's disposition (much) at the same time.

An allied species is, of course, the Bitten Price Hunter. He has bought from an out-of-town source to save a few chips, and, one of the components having proven defective, he brings the matter to *us* for adjustment: "But you are Bazoo-Verce dealers, aren't you? Then it seems to me you ought to back up their products." This always strikes me as good, clean American humor at its redolent best, and I often chuckle genially as I observe that it is generally considered cricket that them as gets the profit should be saddled with the grief. Answering chuckles, if any, arise from such bystanders as are Railway Express Company stockholders.

More than enough attention has been accorded the next species, the Hi-Fi Neurotic; but even from the relatively restricted viewpoint of the hi-fi salesman he could occupy an entire essay, for his personality is a many-splintered thing. Suffice it to say here that he looms largest in *my* nightmares as the fellow who is so worried for fear that what he bought wasn't actually the best choice, that he hardly hears the music for listening for distortion or noise. The worst day the Hi-Fi Neurotic ever had was the day he heard about manufacturers' tolerances. He is now possessed by a terrible certitude that the components *he* got, far from being the best ever produced, emerged from the factory just as bad as they could be without failing to pass inspection. Since his components were teetering on the brink when new, obviously they are ready at any second to drop over into INTOLERABLE DISTORTION (which, as *everyone* knows, comes on very suddenly just beyond the manufacturer's tolerance limit); and the Hi-Fi Neurotic therefore is poised to utter at any moment the triumphant "*Voilà*" which signifies that he has been swindled again. This specimen is likely to be a bigger spender than he need be, but I can't be cynical enough to take his money without decidedly mixed feelings.

While the Hi-Fi Neurotic agonizes about the decisions he has made, another species, the Toe-Dipper, agonizes about decisions he has *not* made. This character never gets up the nerve to plunge in. He makes uncounted visits to hi-fi emporia; he consumes innumerable hours of the hi-fi salesman's time; but somehow he just cannot make a decision. I sometimes suspect that he doesn't really want hi-fi, but just something to talk about. I know that several of him have been talking to me, in a fine display of sustained garrulity, for upwards of three years. I usually groan a bit when I see him coming, but I cheerfully admit that if he *must* have something just to talk about, his choice of topic is praiseworthy.

A species less easy to regard indulgently is the Captious Kit-Builder. This lad feels that he should get kit prices without risking kit troubles. If he builds an amplifier, he thinks that we are obliged to make it work for him at no charge (as a matter of fact, I usually do minor trouble-shooting free: as a veteran roll-your-own addict, I am sympathetically aware of that tremor at the pit of the stomach which eventuates when one's eager labor seems to have been for nothing). However, when he builds a speaker-enclosure kit, and somehow fails to produce a piece of furniture rivaling the factory-finished product in beauty, he expects us also to do something about that. We don't.

These days I am visited increasingly often by a special kind of the Prescription Hunter species: The U-Turner. This variety wants in on custom hi-fi simply because it is fashionable—nay, more, it is U. In our country, lacking a really stable upper class, we are in the fortunate position of being able (more or less) to become—or at least to seem—U by the judicious expenditure of money. As Earl Wilson once remarked on another subject, "What God hath not wrought can now be bought." Two distinct upper classes are recognized in this country (though not necessarily by each other): the aristocracy of wealth, which one gets into by obvious means,* and the aristocracy of culture and intellect, which one ostensibly gets into merely by having a fitting and proper respect for ideas and/or for one or more of the fine arts. It is pretty hard to delude oneself that one is U in the first sense: either one has a large pile of doubloons or one hasn't. On the other hand, one can achieve the warm feeling of belonging with the U's of culture and intellect simply by having the right tokens (I might even say talismans) around the house. Today it is U to have a hi-fi rig, and so the "If I were U" crowd comes prowling for pat prescriptions. (I might add that custom hi-fi has become to some extent a token for those who wish visible reassurance that they really belong to the aristocracy of wealth: *vide* the many photographs of lavish installations in such magazines as *House Distingué*

* Yes, Virginia, the pun is deliberate; or, to put it another way, Yes, Virginia, there is sanity in that clause.

and, on an aspiring upper-middle-class level, *House Scrumptious.*)

The U-Turner is usually more amusing than wearing; the Big Wheeler-Dealer species redresses the balance in spiritual abrasion. I cite only two of his manifestations. He will bustle in, for instance, on a big political mission: he is going to use his business connection with us to get hi-fi "wholesale" for a friend—and he is chagrined and somewhat indignant to learn that everyone buys hi-fi at net. Or else he has a business proposition for us: he has a show-place home, see? And a lot of wealthy and musical friends, see? And therefore it would be a good move for us to sell him a first-rate hi-fi rig at our cost because of the number of well-heeled customers he'd send us. Since we maintain a sound room merely for laughs, of course this proposition appeals. The degree to which "appeals" shades into "appalls" depends upon how sharp his chisel is.

Thus far I have asked only your understanding; now, as I introduce the Truculent Termagant species, I suggest that you might appropriately pity the hi-fi salesman as you picture him beset by a belligerent beldame, attended by a cringing husband. Her sole motive in coming in is to prove to herself that there is nothing to this hi-fi nonsense. In the interest of excluding the jarring note of pathos from this essay (*Rudi*, hi-fi salesman, *sul tuo amore infranto . . .*), I omit details of the ensuing scene. Enough to say that when the Truculent Termagant departs, still firmly determined to have it all in one cabinet, it generally means defeat for her husband's long-nourished and shyly broached desire for a custom rig.

Space limitations sanction only the bare mention of such birds as the Paranoiac, the victim of a cosmic conspiracy. If a defective component gets sold, he is the one who always gets it, and I am added to his lengthy list of persecutors. Or the Swindle-Sniffer, convinced that we are trying to do him down at every point, yet furiously resentful of any move on our part which could be construed as indicating that we do not have a childlike trust in him—e.g., routine credit procedures. Or the Bully Boy, who figures that because he has bought something from me, he has also bought *me*, and that if I'm not his slave henceforward, I am the foulest of ingrates.

I understand, dear reader, that you are none of these, and may your tribe increase. But the customer before you could have been any one of them. Reflect on this. And lay that pistol down.

HI-FI PRIMER

Continued from page 114

cabinet design for an exponentially expanding cross section is worked out.* None of the true horn-woofer configurations can be called simple. The do-it-yourself woodcrafter trying to save money will, in most cases, be throwing it away by trying to make a horn system from raw wood. Unless one enjoys experimenting for the sake of experimenting, it is far more fruitful to confine the do-it-yourself drive to direct-radiator systems.

*W. E. Gilson and J. J. Andrea, "A Symmetrical Corner Speaker"; *Audio Engineering*, March 1950.

BODILESS VIRTUOSO

Continued from page 35

the local record shop. But was it? Curiously enough, the *Tales of Hoffmann*, although it was then twenty-two years old, had not yet been performed in England in 1903! Conceivably, the *Barcarolle* had crossed the Channel in advance of the rest of the opera, but recordings of it surely must have been rare outside of its home country in an era of limited foreign trade in records.

But even if Holmes had somehow managed to purchase a recording of the *Barcarolle* in 1903, where would he get a recording of it *for unaccompanied violin*? This is what he played for Count Negretto Sylvius and Sam Merton, for even the merest hint of a piano accompaniment would have killed the illusion that Holmes himself was "trying over" the *Barcarolle* in his bedroom.

And yet it is a stark and simple fact that no record catalogue anywhere at any time ever has listed a recording of the *Barcarolle* from *The Tales of Hoffmann* played on an unaccompanied violin. How then did Holmes come to have such a record? Surely the answer is obvious: *he made it himself.*

Strictly from the musical standpoint, playing the *Barcarolle* on the violin would be child's play to a fiddler accustomed to tossing off Mendelssohn's *Songs Without Words*. Holmes probably could have done it with the violin thrown carelessly across his knee. And even if he had never heard the *Barcarolle* in England, he had had opportunities to make its acquaintance in his Continental travels. In 1891, for instance, he had been engaged by the French Government "upon a matter of supreme importance"[10] and during his stopover in Paris he might well have dropped in on a performance of Offenbach's masterpiece at the Opéra-Comique.

But to a detective in quest of the kind of musical deception by which Holmes hoodwinked Count Sylvius, the Hoffmann *Barcarolle* offers one serious shortcoming—its brevity. The tune is heard in the opera three times: at the commencement of Act II, where it is sung as a duet; at the end of the same act, where it appears both instrumentally and as a chorus; and, finally, as an orchestral intermezzo between Act III and the Epilogue.

In none of these instances does the *Barcarolle* proper—that is, the famous tune itself—consume more than two minutes forty-one seconds. In fact, the Intermezzo following Act III, which was the most suitable for adaptation by Holmes since it is purely orchestral, in character, takes only two minutes six seconds.[11]

Now Holmes was undoubtedly aware of this difficulty; indeed, he probably selected the *Barcarolle* because its sinuous and winding contours permitted it to be repeated almost ad infinitum without the listener's becoming aware of the repetition and, consequently, of the passage of time.

When Holmes leaves Count Sylvius and Sam Merton to talk over their predicament he tells them that "in five minutes I shall return for your final answer." How much time does he actually give them? You can find out quite easily by reading aloud for yourself the conversation between them while Holmes is out of the room presumably playing his violin. It occupies three pages in *The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone*. If you make the test, you will discover that Holmes, as always, is a man of his word, for not quite five minutes elapse from his departure to the moment he seizes the gem. And all this time, the *Barcarolle* has been continuing! It continues even after Holmes reveals himself, for he distinctly says to Merton: "Let it play! These modern gramophones are a remarkable invention." There is nothing to prove that the machine ever shuts itself off, but we can reasonably assume either that it possesses what modern science calls a "siesta switch" or (more likely) that it is stopped by Watson two or three minutes after the police have led away Count Sylvius and his befuddled partner. In that case, the total playing time of the record would have

[10] *The Final Problem.*

[11] Playing times were established by the author in tests carried out with Columbia SL 106, a complete recording of *The Tales of Hoffmann* with soloists, chorus, and orchestra of the Opéra-Comique, Paris, conducted by André Cluytens.

been some seven or eight minutes—perhaps more—and the *Barcarolle* has been played through at least three times. We may note, in passing, that it even seemed unduly long to Count Sylvius; at the three-minute mark he interrupts his conversation with Sam to remark testily: "Confound that whining music; it gets on my nerves."

Actually, Count Sylvius had every right to be surprised by the length of the selection. In 1903, and for forty-five years thereafter, the maximum duration of a standard record was around four minutes. How did Holmes manage to lay hands on a disc that lasted at least seven min-

utes? One might conjecture that he manufactured the actual record himself, just as he recorded the actual music. After all, his knowledge of chemistry was "profound,"[12] and he had once written a monograph upon the tracing of footsteps, which included "some remarks upon the use of plaster of Paris as a preserver of impresses,"[13] certainly suggesting some basic understanding of the engraving process. Then, too, it is curious that *The Adventure of the Mazurin Stone* should open with Dr. Watson's taking especial notice of such Baker Street fittings as "the scientific charts upon the wall, the acid-charred bench of chemicals, the violin-case leaning in the corner"—all of which blend into a highly provocative picture.

And yet we need not assume that Holmes actually produced his long-playing record in his own rooms at Baker Street. For it so happens that in 1903 a manufacturer called the Neophone Company, with headquarters on Finsbury Square in London, was already preparing to put an LP record on the market. The discs, twenty inches in diameter and playing from eight to ten minutes, actually were offered for sale in 1904.[14] Alas, the world was not prepared for the LP just then, any more than for the story of the giant rat of Sumatra. The Neophone LP had to be withdrawn from the market in 1906, and two years later the company went bankrupt.[15] But can any one doubt that Sherlock Holmes knew all about

[12] *A Study in Scarlet.*
[13] *The Sign of Four.*
[14] Roland Gelatt, *The Fabulous Phonograph* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1954), p. 169.
[15] Gelatt, *loc. cit.*

Continued on next page

BODILESS VIRTUOSO

Continued from preceding page

the Neophone? And is it not reasonable to suppose that he may even have suggested the whole idea to them? One can easily picture him walking into their offices on Finsbury Square, a scant two miles from Baker Street (and a few blocks from St. Bartholomew's Hospital, where he first met Watson) to outline his needs for a record of extra duration, suggesting the use of an outsize disc and, finally, standing before the recording horn pouring out the *Barcarolle* upon the Stradivarius he had picked up at such a bargain in Tottenham Court Road.

At this point, some one may say with Dr. James Mortimer in *The Hound of the Baskervilles:* "We are now rather into the region of guesswork." To which we may reply, with Holmes: "Say rather into the region

where we balance probabilities and choose the most likely. It is the scientific use of the imagination, but we have always some material basis on which to start our speculations."

And, if we may put our imaginations to one final scientific use, can we not, with the help of records, solve one of the most puzzling of Holmes-Watson mysteries? There is associated with these two great men one strange phrase which, though it is repeated endlessly in legend, never once appears in the text of their adventures. Some attribute it to Holmes's short-lived habit of taking a seven per cent solution of cocaine from time to time; others have merely made a joke of it.

Yet we, balancing one probability with another, can proffer still another explanation. For we know for a fact how those old records scratched and those old styli stuck. And so we can see the two old friends, contentedly sitting in their rooms at Baker Street, listening raptly and serenely to Sherlock Holmes's favorite record—the Hoffmann *Barcarolle*—playing on, and on, and on, and on, and on—until that well-remembered voice breaks in, sharply but kindly: "Quick, Watson, the needle!"

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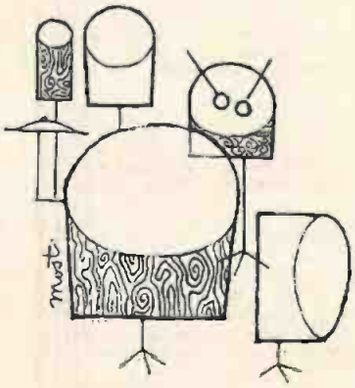
GERMANY'S OPERA

Continued from page 33

into effect. Nuremberg and Wiesbaden have rebuilt their old houses, which were only partially damaged. The Wiesbaden theater is said to be the only example of Kaiser Wilhelm rococo left in Germany, and I hope they preserve it as a national monument. It is alive with plaster angels, caryatids, ormolu, and colored marble. It has a royal box and, except for its ceiling, whose frescoes have been restored in an inconsistent modern style, it is a delight to see.

The new theater of the Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf is the most conservative of those we visited. In place of the loges carefully engineered in terms of sight lines that are to be found everywhere else, it has curving balconies in parts of which sight lines are practically nonexistent. In general its style is light and French, like that of the cafés in this "Paris of Germany." The operas we heard in Düsseldorf included *Elektra*, beautifully performed by Christel Goltz and others, but for me horribly depressing in its antiartistic sensationalism; Johann Strauss's *Nacht in Venedig*, slow-paced and a trifle dull; and Verdi's *Don Carlos*, gorgeously set, gorgeously sung by Hildegard Hillebrecht, Walter Kreppel, Sebastian Feiersinger, Philip Curzon, and others, and gorgeously conducted by Arnold Quennet.

The particular works we heard in Germany seem to be characteristic of the repertoire as a whole, but also frequently presented are operas by Lortzing and Weber which, to our regret, we did not hear. The single dominant conviction left by our travels was that, current German emphases to the contrary, the key man in opera is the conductor. With such men as Ludwig, Zallinger, Wallberg, Kulka, Riede, and Quennet in the pit, opera really conveys a fully satisfying intellectual and emotional experience. Without such, all the virtuoso singing and all the elaborate staging in the world will not save the show.



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MAD SALESMAN

Continued from page 41

If the showroom is smaller than your living room, then satisfy yourself that the loudspeaker will not sound lost at home. A loudspeaker that produces ample volume and sounds quite satisfactory in a small room may sound like a small loudspeaker, or give a hole-in-the-wall effect, when put into a large room.

Conversely, if the showroom happens to be much larger than the living room you intend to use at home, watch out for the reverse effect. A loudspeaker that sounds satisfactory in a large room may give rather confused sound when you get it in a smaller room. This happens particularly in voice or solo instrument reproduction. So be especially critical in listening to solo instruments and singers, if your living room is smaller than the showroom in which you are shopping. Try listening from a position rather closer to the loudspeaker than you normally would, so as to get a better impression of how the sound comes out of the loudspeaker, of whether it is well integrated.

So much for the problem of selecting the loudspeaker. With careful listening and some practice in listening to ordinary everyday sounds, so that your ears become extra critical and you are more readily able to listen in a relaxed but alert state, you will have considerable chance of selecting a good loudspeaker for your living room, even though the showroom acoustics are not identical with those of your own room.

When you get the speaker system home, it must certainly be placed in the kind of location for which it was designed if it is to give the proper response, especially at low frequencies. Even a large corner loudspeaker may be quite inadequate at low frequencies if it is not given a corner to work in. It is also desirable that the corner should be a full, complete corner—not cut into by a doorway—though half a corner is better than none.

If the loudspeaker is made to be

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mounted on a table, then it will probably sound better on a table than it will placed on the floor against the wall. This latter position may even overaccentuate the low frequencies and make the middle frequencies sound deficient.

Generally speaking, as a matter of principle, a corner loudspeaker most satisfactorily avoids room resonances. If you have a corner loudspeaker you are not likely to run into these troubles to any extent, unless the room is very nearly square. If the loudspeaker is of the type that can be placed anywhere along the side of the room, you have some latitude for experiment. Don't be downhearted if at first you get an overpowering room resonance. A little shoving and shifting can make a lot of difference. One expedient is to position the loudspeaker at a slight angle—simply turning it so that it isn't completely flat back against the wall. Of course, some users will not like the effect of a rectangular speaker system mounted at an angle instead of the conventional back-against-the-wall position. In this case, the way to improve performance is to move the speaker along the wall, or to try another wall, until a suitable position is found at which marked resonance or echo effects disappear.

It is helpful in finding such a position to examine the wall surface that will directly face the loudspeaker. Look for a place where a door or bookcase opening breaks up the surface. Don't aim the speaker directly at the opening, but rather in such a way that part of the radiation hits the opening and part gets reflected. Window surfaces and draperies also can break up a sound wave and prevent such definite reflection.

Another thing to bear in mind is the convenience of the listening location. You can't get a good perspective of the total sound put out by a loudspeaker if you sit very close to it. This unfortunate position puts you either directly on the main axis, where the higher frequencies are apt to be overemphasized, or far off the axis, where the lower frequencies come to you directly while the high frequencies bounce all around the room first.

For this reason a position for the loudspeaker should be found such that the nearest convenient listening distance is about the middle of the room, and most of the listeners will be on the far side of the room. A corner position conducing to this relationship is generally ideal. It makes it much easier to enjoy the full merit of the loudspeaker.

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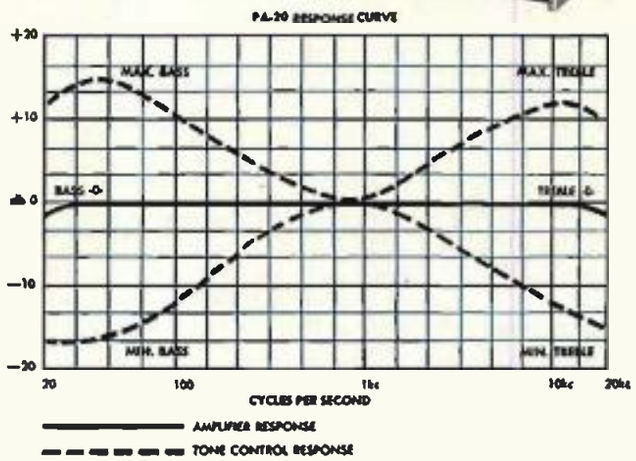

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