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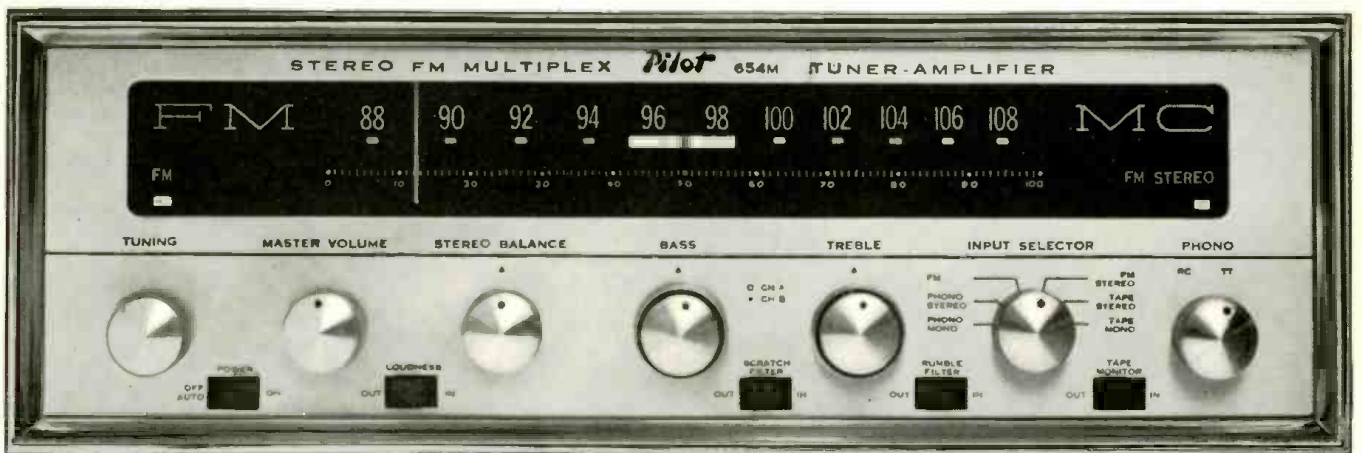
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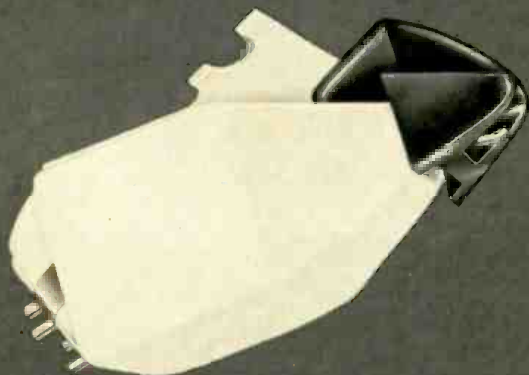
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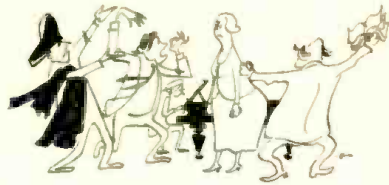


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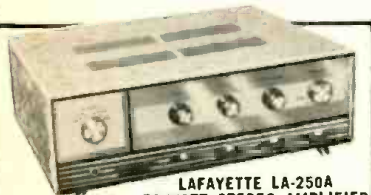
JULY 1962 • VOLUME 12 NUMBER 7

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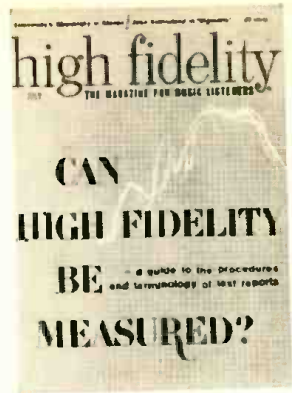
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Great Barrington, Mass. Telephone 1300

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1564 Broadway, New York 36
Telephone: Plaza 7-2800
Seymour Resnick, Andrew Spanberger

Chicago
The Billboard Publishing Co.
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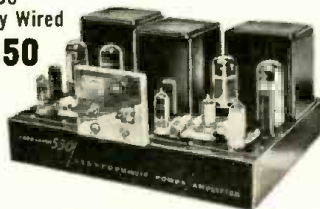
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177	183	184	186
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187	191	193	195
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AUTHORitatively Speaking

The appearance of "Can High Fidelity Be Measured?," on p. 28 of this issue, marks the debut of its author, **Richard A. Koch**, not only in this magazine but in any publication. Mr. Koch does not describe himself as a writer (aspiring or otherwise) but, proudly, as an engineer; in the opinion of the editors he has, however, produced one of the most lucidly written and informative explanations of the procedures and terminology involved in the testing of audio equipment that we have ever read. This is perhaps not surprising, since Mr. Koch is a member of the testing service that prepares HIGH FIDELITY's own equipment reports. His interest in sound reproduction, as might also be expected, is, of course, a concomitant of a long-time dedication to music listening. We hope to persuade Mr. Koch to furnish us with other contributions, but we have to confess that we must compete for his free time with photography, sailing, and sports cars.

Marcello Cortis, whose engaging article "Zoo of the Golden Throats" is presented on p. 36, is one opera singer who clearly refuses to take himself and his profession with high seriousness. Mr. Cortis is a baritone (Austrian by nationality but residing mainly in Italy) and also a producer for the lyric theatre. We doubt that the story he recounts for us this month derives from personal experience, but it surely reflects a close intimacy with the unique tradition of the *stagioni*. **Elly Miltner**, who has done the drawings that accompany Mr. Cortis' tale, is an habitu  of the same world, being a designer of stage sets and costumes.

The name of **Everett Helm** is undoubtedly known to many HIGH FIDELITY readers as that of a musicologist, composer, and journalist. Of the last few months they perhaps may have recognized it too as that of the Editor in Chief of *Musical America*. After acquiring his Ph. D. from Harvard, Dr. Helm taught for some time, spent two years in Latin America, enjoyed a New York interlude, and then went to Germany as Theatre and Music Officer for the United States Military Government. That tour of duty evolved into a thirteen-year sojourn on the Continent. His article on Heitor Villa Lobos, p. 39, results from his close acquaintance with that composer during an extended stay in Brazil.

High Fidelity, July, 1962, Vol. 12, No. 7. Published monthly by The Billboard Publishing Co., publishers of Billboard Music Week, Vend, and Amusement Business. Telephone: Great Barrington 1300. Member Audit Bureau of Circulations.

Editorial Correspondence should be addressed to The Editor, High Fidelity, Great Barrington, Mass. Editorial contributions will be welcomed. Payment for articles accepted will be arranged prior to publication. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage.

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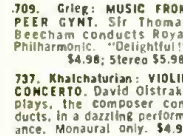
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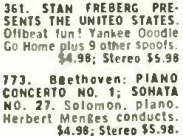
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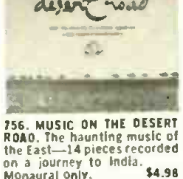
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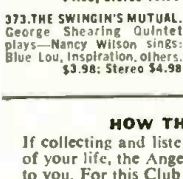
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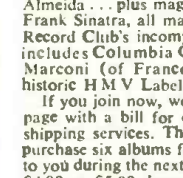
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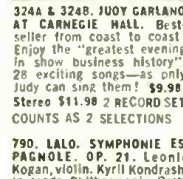


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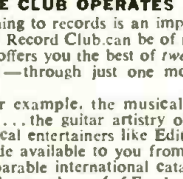
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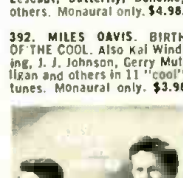
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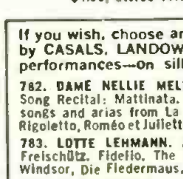
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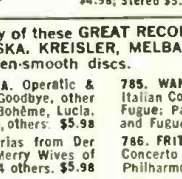
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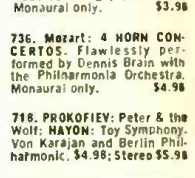
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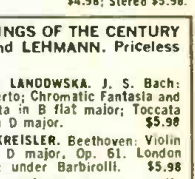
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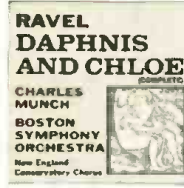
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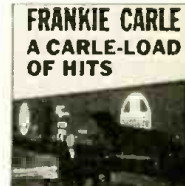
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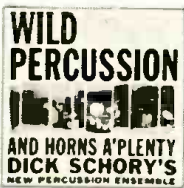
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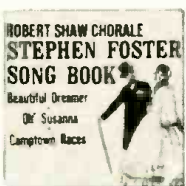
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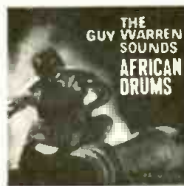
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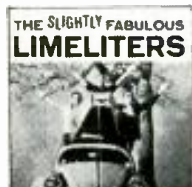
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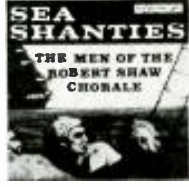
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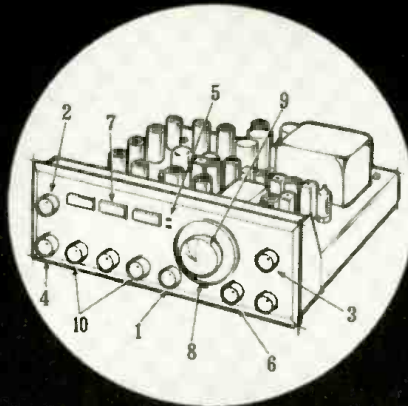
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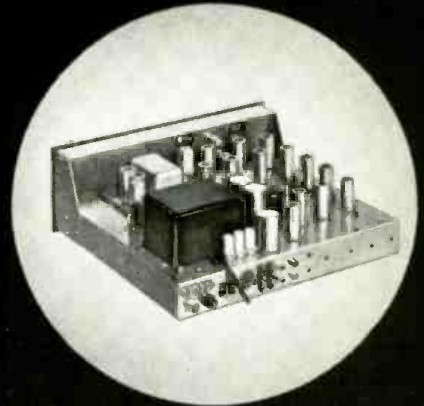
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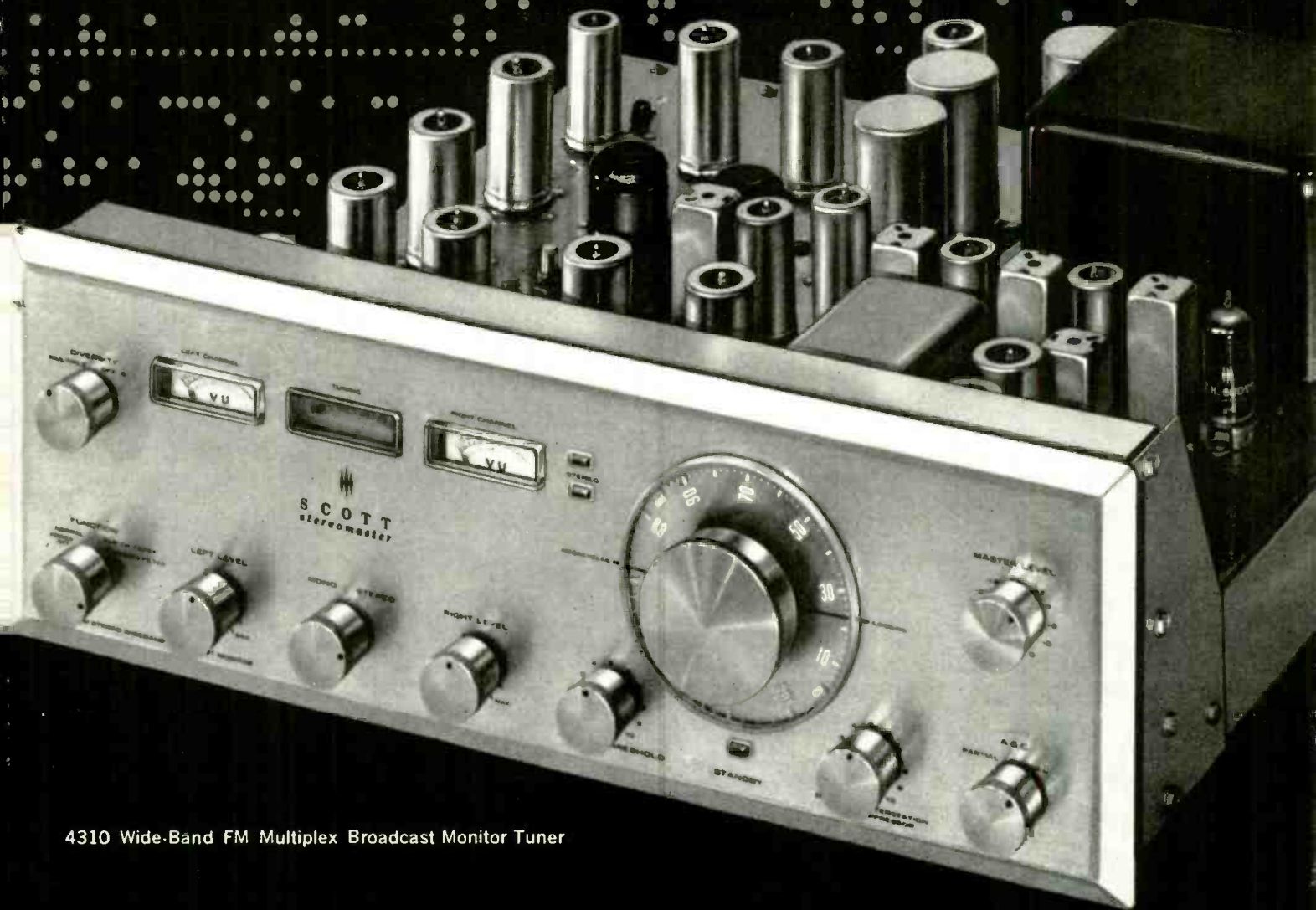
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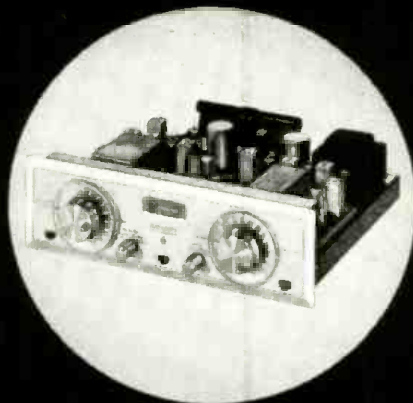
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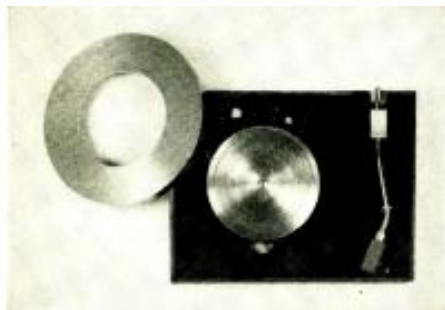


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"I WORK HARD, I really do!"—thus André Previn, with the half-humorous exasperation of a man who has grown accustomed to being regarded with suspicion because his accomplishments seem to come almost too easily. At thirty-three, this quiet, articulate, and self-possessed musician has made a case for himself as one of the most versatile artists at work today. Jazz pianist, composer of film scores (original music for *Bad Day at Black Rock* and *Elmer Gantry*; Oscar-winning arrangements for *Porgy and Bess* and *Gigi*), classical composer (he studied with Castelnuovo-Tedesco and has written at least one symphony), classical pianist and conductor—Previn sails with total serenity into all these ports and makes an undeniably impressive show in each of them. Yet on both sides of the musical fence—the jazz-popular as well as the serious—conservatives are inclined to look upon him with a touch of distrust. Jazzmen sometimes accuse him of too much celebration and too much emphasis on facile keyboard technique, while his critics on the classical front seem to find it hard to forgive his success in Hollywood and on the jazz circuits. "I wouldn't be honest if I said it didn't annoy me," says Previn, "but it annoys me less and less because I am doing more all the time and they will eventually get used to it."

Previn's affinity for diverse musical genres has, upon occasion, also furnished orthodox concertgoers with something to get used to. Two years ago, for instance, he gave a series of concerts in which solo piano works of Hindemith, Prokofiev, Ravel, and Copland were followed, after intermission, by wide-open jazz sessions with bass player Red Mitchell and drummer Frank Capp. Previn confesses that this all began by accident. One evening he arrived to take part in a jazz concert at Stanford University and found, just at performance time, that his colleagues had missed their plane and would be an hour late. "The auditorium was full, so I went on stage and talked a little, and then played some Hindemith and Britten. When Mitchell and Capp finally got there, we went ahead with the jazz. The students loved it, and we decided to try the same thing in other places. About half the audience would come specifically to hear one half of the program, and then find themselves enjoying the whole thing."

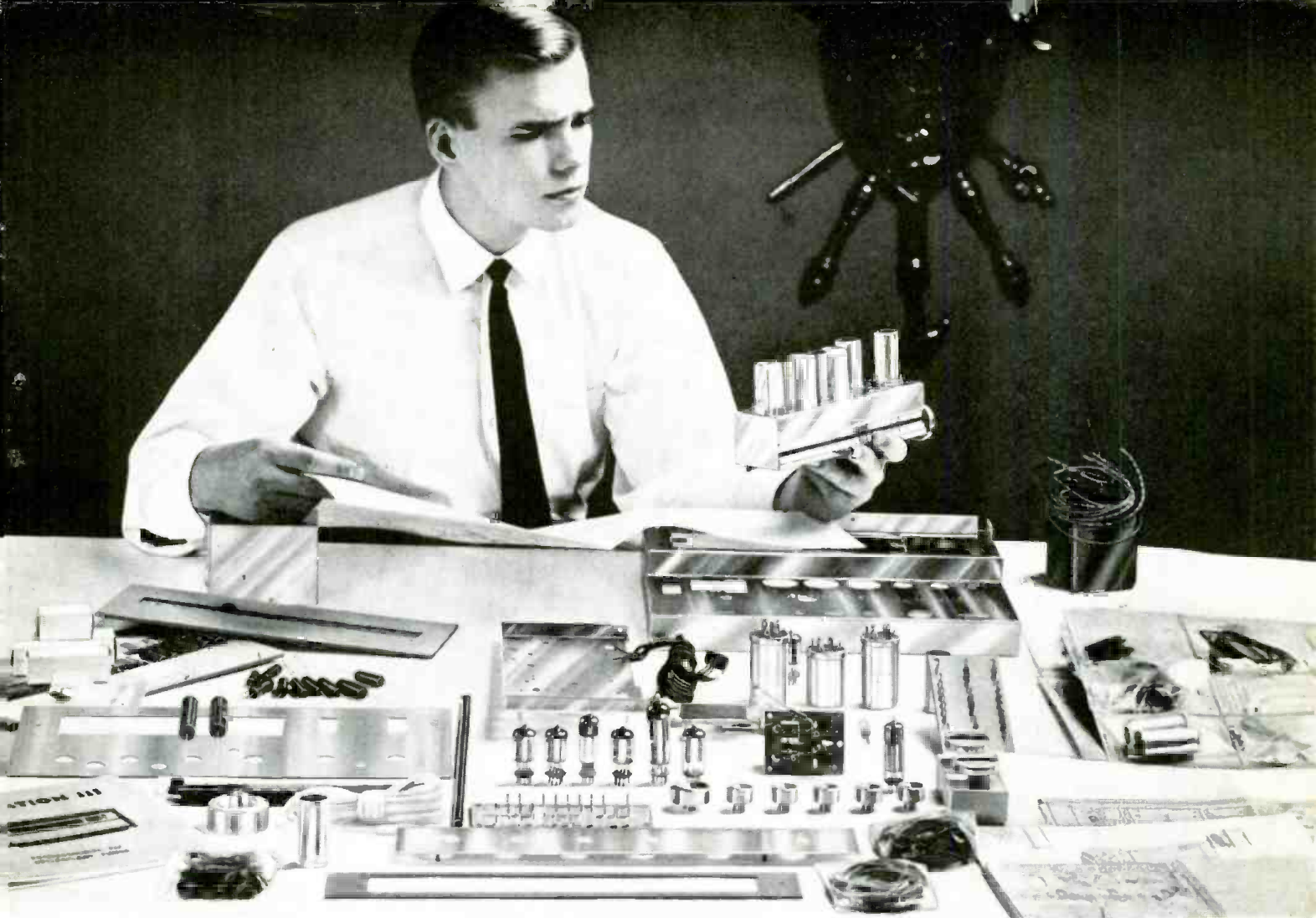
Although for the time being Previn

has given up this two-sided concert format, the duality of his talent is still much in evidence. One of his recent records for Columbia is a jazz version with trombonist J. J. Johnson of *West Side Story*; not long after its release he recorded an album of piano music by Poulenc and Roussel (out this month), and followed it up with a taping of Shostakovich's Piano Concerto No. 1, which he had played at Carnegie Hall with Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic ("a pretty bouncy performance"). Did this herald a swing away from jazz to concentrate on classical music?

"No, I don't expect to move away from jazz," Previn answered. "In the first place I think jazz is important, though perhaps it sounds pompous to say so. In the second place, I enjoy it tremendously, especially the improvising. It was wonderful working with J. J. Johnson on the *West Side Story* record, and Lennie's been kind enough to say that he loves what we did with his music. He wondered how I'd ever arrived at some of the tempos we picked for certain of his songs, and I think the answer is that I worked out the jazz version from the score, before I'd ever seen the show. Come to think of it, I doubt if I'd be able to play a jazz version of my own show—I will be too close to the music." His own musical? "Yes, my wife and I are writing one based on Ben Lucien Burman's novel, *Street of the Laughing Camel*. Doric is doing the lyrics. We've just begun to work on it, but we hope to finish it for next season."

Although as a conductor Previn frequently performs standard classical repertoire (he recently led the Los Angeles Philharmonic in the Brahms Second), he usually chooses contemporary music for his piano recitals and recordings. "There are two reasons for that," he said. "First, since I am not established as a classical pianist, I have a better chance of being heard without prejudice in Hindemith or Poulenc than in something that's already been recorded over and over. That's the crass reason. The other is that I feel a real kinship with contemporary music." But future recording plans include—in addition to a Britten *Sinfonia da Requiem* with the St. Louis Symphony—trios by Fauré and Mendelssohn. Which proves once again what has been proved long since: André Previn is not a musician to be pigeonholed.

SHIRLEY FLEMING



Can You Afford 15 Hours to Build The World's Best FM/Multiplex Tuner?

Fifteen hours. That's all it takes to build the world's best FM/Multiplex tuner.

Citation has the "specs" to back the claim but numbers alone can't tell the story. On its real measure, *the way it sounds*, Citation III is unsurpassed. And with good reason.

After years of intensive listening tests, Stew Hegeman, director of engineering of the Citation Kit Division, discovered that the performance of any instrument in the audible range is strongly influenced by its response in the non-audible range. Consistent with this basic design philosophy—the Citation III has a *frequency response three octaves above and below the normal range of hearing*. The result: unmeasurable distortion and the incomparable "Citation Sound."

The qualities that make Citation III the world's best FM tuner also make it the world's best FM/Multiplex tuner. The multiplex section has been engineered to provide wideband response, exceptional sensitivity and absolute oscillator stability. It mounts right on the chassis and the front panel accommodates the adapter controls.

What makes Citation III even *more* remarkable is that it can be built in 15 hours without reliance upon external equipment.

To meet the special requirements of Citation III, a new FM cartridge was developed which embodies every critical tuner element in one compact unit. It is completely assembled at the factory, totally shielded and perfectly aligned. With the cartridge as a standard and the two D'Arsonval tuning meters, the

problem of IF alignment and oscillator adjustment are eliminated.

Citation III is the *only* kit to employ military-type construction. Rigid terminal boards are provided for mounting components. Once mounted, components are suspended tightly between turret lugs. Lead length is sharply defined. Overall stability of the instrument is thus assured. Other special aids include packaging of small hardware in separate plastic envelopes and mounting of resistors and condensers on special component cards.

For complete information on all Citation kits, including reprints of independent laboratory test reports, write Dept. HF-7 Citation Kit Division, Harman-Kardon, Inc., Plainview, N. Y.

The Citation III FM tuner—kit, \$149.95; wired, \$229.95. The Citation III MA multiplex adapter—factory wired only, \$79.95. The Citation III X integrated multiplex tuner—kit, \$219.95; factory wired, \$299.95. All prices slightly higher in the West.

The
Citation
III



Build the Very Best

CITATION KITS by

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CIRCLE 40 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



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Turn Free Sound Waves into a Complete Music Library

Have you an AM or FM radio, or a TV set? If so, you can tape music and variety programs being broadcast every day—or, for that matter, borrow your friend's records and put them on tape. You'll pay for your tape recorder with the money you save on records—one inexpensive 1200 foot reel of high fidelity Tarzian Tape holds a full hour of music recorded at 7½ i.p.s.



Make a Priceless Family Heirloom—The Easy Tarzian Way

Next time the family gets together for a special occasion... and everytime a high point comes along in the lives of the children and grandchildren...be sure to record the events on long-lasting Mylar*-base Tarzian Tape. The tape will last indefinitely—and so will your pleasure—with a priceless heritage of voices and events unique to your family. Such moments can seldom be repeated, but thanks to Tarzian Tape they can always be remembered.

Buy, Borrow or Beg

Buy, borrow, or beg a reel of Tarzian Tape—either Mylar or acetate base, on a 3, 5, or 7-inch reel, and compare its sound reproduction to that of *any other tape* on the market. Your own ears will tell you why Tarzian is the best buy for modern tape recording. While you're at it, send for our free 32-page booklet, "The Care and Feeding of Tape Recorders".



*DuPont trademark for polyester film



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 CIRCLE 66 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

VERSATILE



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FM-1 kit—\$79.95; semi-kit—\$99.95 FM-1/A factory wired—\$119.95

A MATCHLESS STEREO TUNER

FMX-3 stereomatic multiplex integrator kit—\$29.95; semi-kit—\$39.95.
FM-3/A factory wired stereomatic multiplex tuner—\$169.95

A QUALITY FM RECEIVER

FM-2 insert amplifier kit—\$29.95. FM-2/A factory wired receiver—\$169.95

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To the four Dyna attributes

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SIMPLICITY
ECONOMY

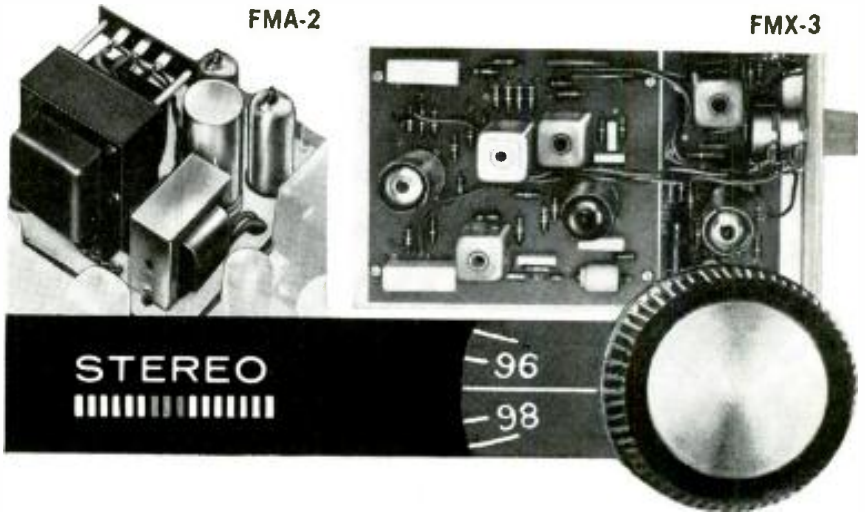
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It is the Dyna policy always to provide extras — finer performance, more conservative operation, higher quality components, easier construction, simpler operation, and greater economy. Dyna owners have come to expect these qualities in every Dynakit. They know that Dyna specifications are down-to-earth, conservative ratings, easily attained by the kit builder. They know that each new Dyna product evidences a quality of thoroughness in design and execution (we call it "distillation") not found in the most expensive and elaborate component systems.

The Dynatuner is an excellent example of the versatility of a *completely* engineered design.

Initially designed as a superior quality mono FM tuner, our designers included certain basic performance capabilities which were invaluable bases on which to build a completely automatic, self-contained multiplex integrator of matchless performance. Every Dynatuner owner can now convert his mono tuner into a STEREO MATIC multiplex Dynatuner whenever he chooses. No extra space is required, there are no new knobs to confuse you, and the cost is under \$30.



The FMX-3 — equipped STEREO MATIC tuner requires no more effort than tuning a station. Silent, electronic switching provides either stereo or mono reception automatically, with more than 30 db stereo separation. The presence of a stereo broadcast lights the exclusive STEREOCATOR above the tuning eye. There are no problems with off-the-air recordings, mono broadcasts come through both low-impedance outputs at the same level as stereo; the volume control adjusts both channels; construction and alignment are as simple and positive as in the Dynatuner—fully equal to laboratory alignment methods: and the superior Dynatuner performance is retained in stereo.

If you don't need a stereo tuner, the extra space on the Dynatuner chassis has another \$30 option: a 10 watt insert amplifier of outstanding performance. With only a speaker you have an ideal FM companion for the bedroom, kitchen, back yard, swimming pool, Doctor's office, or for a starter components system for the college student. You've never heard 10 watts sound so good before, and this lightweight, compact, rugged unit is a natural for portable use, yet so versatile you can always use it as an independent tuner.

Don't let the modest cost and deceptively simple appearance fool you; this is professional-grade equipment in every sense, and we encourage direct comparison on any basis without reservation. In addition to easy-to-build kits, all of this equipment is also available in factory wired and tested form, and the tuner and multiplex integrator may also be obtained as time-saving semi-kits with factory-assembled etched circuit boards. In semi-kit form, only a couple of hours are needed for completion—still with significant savings.

Write for more complete information on these and other Dynakits.

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NOTES FROM ABROAD



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You will experience the thrill and satisfaction of watching a beautiful musical instrument take shape under your hands. The new Schober Electronic Spinet sounds just like a big concert-size organ — with two keyboards, thirteen pedals and magnificent pipe organ tone. Yet it's small enough (only 38 inches wide) to fit into the most limited living space.

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CIRCLE 68 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LONDON

There is a story going the rounds hereabouts that a teen-ager, taken to London's Royal Festival Hall for her first orchestral concert, remarked: "It was wonderful! Almost like stereo!" After listening to demonstrations at the recent London audio show—properly called the International Audio Festival and Fair—some visitors might have remarked: "Wonderful! Almost like the real thing!"

Certainly, with the best equipment and under good acoustic conditions, the gap between "live" and recorded music seems to be narrowing. As Americans well know from their own exhibitions, conditions at audio shows often are not conducive to quiet critical listening, but this year, at the Hotel Russell, the noise level over-all appeared to be lower than in the past and there was much less recourse to sensational "gimmicked" records for the purpose of showing off equipment. The main emphasis, of course, was on stereo. While sales of stereo records have so far not been as great as British manufacturers hoped, knowledgeable audiophiles realize that high fidelity must embrace stereo, and it is believed that in the long run the two-channel medium will revolutionize the audio market in the United Kingdom as it has in the United States.

Automatic Tape Machine. The outstanding features of this year's audio jamboree can be summarized as follows: more high quality stereo cartridges and arms; further applications of plastics (particularly expanded polystyrene foam) in loudspeaker designs; and a greatly increased interest in tape recording. In fact, a tape recorder—claimed to be the world's first fully automatic machine—provided a last-minute surprise: even before being given its official debut (at the Hanover Trade Fair), the latest Telefunken Magnetophon Automatic model was flown to London for demonstration to the technical Press.

This Telefunken recorder is a single-speed 3.75-ips machine, in which all operations have been simplified and several controls eliminated. For example, to start recording, one need only press the record button; no warm-up time is needed and no adjustment of signal level. This is made possible by permanent connection to the AC power line, which keeps the tube filaments constantly glowing. Additionally, the unit employs a

"contrast compression" circuit that permits a wide range of input levels without audible overloading or under-recording. The only control—other than press buttons for rewind, etc.—is a volume control that works on playback only. We tried out this machine and can testify that within its domestic specification for a standard half-track 2½-watt output machine it performed very well. One completely new tape deck was demonstrated—the Planet U.1 design, employing a single Papst motor, without belts, giving three speeds at low wow and flutter percentages. No pressure pads are used, and the idler and pinchwheel surfaces are of a new material. Push-button controls include safety lock and pause. Taking 7-in. reels, it is fitted with a four-digit indicator and measures 14 by 12¼ by 4¾ inches. Quarter-track, half-track stereo, and full-track heads can be supplied.

Arms and Cartridges. For stereo cartridges and carrying-arms, this turns out to be a vintage year. At one time the Decca "FFSS" stereo pickup was unchallenged here, but now the Danish Ortofon, the American Audio Dynamics and Shure cartridges, the Danish B & O, and the integrated EMI stereo pickup and arm have all been made available. Each has its fervent supporters. Decca has also brought out a Mark II version of its cartridge and a professional arm. The new arm has an unusual method of achieving correct balance, with fine and coarse adjustments, and a sliding weight that can be moved along the arm. Every feature is designed to give freedom of movement, with connecting leads brought out over the top of the pivot assembly to minimize torsional effects and a lowering device built into the main pillar. The Mark II cartridge incorporates certain refinements intended to reduce crosstalk. Advances in stereo cartridge design are, of course, nullified if the cartridge is mounted in a poorly designed arm. Until recently the British audiophile was badly off for good arms, but today several fine ones are on the market. Still the Rolls-Royce of British arms is the SME (available in both 9- and 12-inch versions). The SME Series 2 incorporates several improvements, including reduced mass and extended range of balance to cope with ultrahigh compliance cartridges, such as the Shure M33 and the ADC-1. The specification covers every conceivable requirement, from compen-

Continued on page 22

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

**Now you
can top the
man who says:**

**“I own a
Fisher tuner.”**

(It's as easy as turning this page.)

Simply say:

"I built my own Fisher tuner"

(Who can top that?)

It's no small feat to be "one up" on the owner of a Fisher tuner. Fisher supremacy in FM tuners is hardly even a subject of discussion among sophisticated audiophiles these days—it is a foregone conclusion. And when it comes to advanced Multiplex circuitry for noise-free and distortionless FM Stereo reception, Fisher tuners are conceded without argument to be in a class by themselves.

But building your own Fisher tuner, an authentic Fisher tuner that performs like a factory-wired unit...that's a breakthrough that will be talked about in high fidelity circles for some time to come!

The secret, of course, is in the new StrataKit method of kit construction. This unique Fisher development has made kit performance totally independent of the skill of the constructor. A highly trained electronic technician and a completely unskilled and inexperienced kit builder will achieve precisely the same end result with a Fisher StrataKit.

You assemble your StrataKit by easy, error-proof stages (strata), each stage corresponding to a particular page in the Instruction Manual and to a separate transparent packet of parts. Major components come already mounted on the heavy-gauge chassis, and wires are pre-cut for every stage—which means every page! You can check your work stage-by-stage and page-by-page, before you proceed to the next stage. There can be no last-minute 'surprises' — success is automatic.

In the KM-60 StrataKit, the front-end and Multiplex circuits

*Walnut or Mahogany cabinet, \$24.95. Metal cabinet \$15.95. Prices slightly higher in the Far West. Export: Fisher Radio International, Inc., Long Island City 1, N.Y. Canada: Tri-Tel Associates, Ltd., Willowdale, Ontario.



The Fisher KM-60 StrataKit
Wide-Band FM Stereo Multiplex Tuner

come pre-aligned. The other circuits are aligned by you after assembly. This is accomplished by means of the tuner's laboratory-type d'Arsonval signal-strength meter, which can be switched into each circuit without soldering.

The KM-60 is the world's most sensitive FM tuner kit, requiring only 0.6 microvolts for 20 db quieting! (IHFM-standard sensitivity is 1.8 microvolts.) Capture ratio is an unprecedented 2.5 db; signal-to-noise ratio 70 db. The famous Fisher 'Golden Cascode' RF stage, plus four IF stages and two limiters, take most of the credit for this spectacular performance and for the superb rejection of all spurious signals. Distortion in the audio circuits of the tuner

is low enough to be virtually non-measurable.

An outstanding feature of the Multiplex section is the exclusive Stereo Beam, the Fisher invention that shows instantly whether or not an FM station is broadcasting in stereo. It is in operation at all times and is completely independent of the tuning meter. Stereo reception can be improved under unfavorable conditions by means of the special, switchable sub-carrier noise filter, which does not affect the audible frequency range.

Everything considered, the Fisher KM-60 StrataKit is very close to the finest FM stereo tuner that money can buy and by far the finest you can build. Price \$169.50.* The Fisher KM-61, the identical unit factory-wired and ready for use, \$219.50.*

The ideal companion unit is the Fisher KX-200 80-watt stereo control amplifier StrataKit, \$169.50.*

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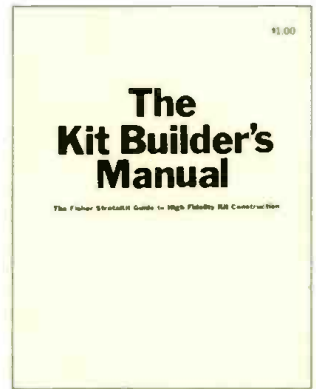
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The Kit Builder's Manual, a new
guide to high-fidelity kit construction.



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Apples taste better when you're six years old. What's more they *sound* better. Those crunching noises reverberating through your head are exciting. You keep wondering if they can be heard on the "outside." Remember?

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You'll find that the wonderful quality of this tape provides more clarity, more range, eliminates noise and distortion

problems. And you'll find this quality is consistent from reef to reel and within every reel of Audiotape.

Whether you're taping a small apple-cruncher or a great symphony orchestra, there's an Audiotape exactly suited to your needs. From Audio Devices, for 25 years a leader in the manufacture of sound recording media—Audiodiscs*, Audiofilm* and...

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CIRCLE 8 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

If you were not among the 10,123 kit-builders who received this first issue



...you're
missing
something

The first issue of the quarterly R·A·E Journal has now been received by more than 10,000 members of the R·A·E Society — the national organization devoted to the interests of radio, audio, and electronic kit-builders. From initial reports, the Journal is a resounding success. Comments from Society members say: "Bravo" — "Something we have really needed" — "It's a must for kit-builders" — "Filled with wonderful, original ideas."

The R·A·E Journal is available *only* to members of the Society. You can't buy a copy anywhere. However, more copies are being mailed out daily. You can have one, too. So read on.

WHY THE FIRST ISSUE OF THE JOURNAL SCORED A BULL'S EYE

Under the direction of Milton B. Sleeper, one of the radio-audio pioneers and a recognized authority on kit design, the R·A·E Journal is devoted exclusively to the interests of kit-builders (no record reviews or articles on music).

The new issue contains ten articles and departments on kit designs, kit construction, system planning, Society activities, and related subjects. The Journal serves beginners as well as advanced enthusiasts with how-to articles, reports, and comments written in a clear, concise manner, profusely illustrated with drawings and photographs handsomely printed on fine paper.

It is filled with original ideas, plans, and information on interesting things you can do with simple tools and a kitchen table for a workshop.

When the Journal gets into controversial subjects, no holds are barred. Parts of the "Notes and Comments" and "Members' Roundtable" might be labeled "Too Hot to Handle!" Altogether, you will find the R·A·E Society's Journal unique, stimulating, authoritative.

Most valuable of all are the articles on new kits — kits unlike any you have ever seen because they incorporate developments and practices borrowed from precision instruments and military equipment, but in practical form, suited to home construction.

THE FIRST R·A·E KITS

The first R·A·E kits will be available in August. The overall design, assembly and wiring methods, appearance of the finished instruments, and even the instructions and diagrams are totally unlike any now available. *They are not instruments in kit form that*

were originally designed for factory production-line assembly. R·A·E kits are designed by kit-builders, specifically for kit-builders.

R·A·E SOCIETY MEMBERS SERVE ON THE ADVANCE-TEST PANELS

Before a new R·A·E kit is released, it will be pre-checked by Society members in this way: Ten prototypes will be given to 10 members, some of whom are beginners, some advanced enthusiasts and professionals. Each will assemble his kit and report on his experiences. In return, he will keep the finished kit, without charge. A new panel will be chosen for each new kit; no member may serve twice. Any Society member may apply to serve on an Advance-Test Panel. No purchase of equipment is necessary.

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE R·A·E SOCIETY

Whether you are a beginner or an experienced kit-builder, you are invited to join the R·A·E Society. Details of the Society's activities are published in the Journal. Annual dues of \$1.00 entitle you to all privileges of membership, to receive four issues of the quarterly Journal, and to qualify for service on an Advance-Test Panel.

Use the coupon below or your own stationery. Read the UNCONDITIONAL GUARANTEE in the coupon.

TO GET THE FIRST ISSUE OF THE JOURNAL, RUSH YOUR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION TODAY!



R·A·E SOCIETY
(sponsored by R·A·E
Equipment, Inc.)
Housatonic Station 3
Great Barrington, Mass.

Yes, I want to participate in the R·A·E Society's activities. I enclose \$1 as my membership dues for one year. I understand that I will receive a Membership Card, the quarterly Journal issues for one year, and may qualify to serve on the Advance-Test Panel.

Name
Street
City & Zone State

I understand that I am not required to purchase any R·A·E kits to enjoy membership privileges. I am a Beginner Experienced kit-builder Professional

UNCONDITIONAL MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE
If I am not completely satisfied after I receive and examine my first issue of the Quarterly Journal, my money will be refunded promptly on request. No extra charge outside the USA.

NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 18

sation for side pressure caused by forward drag and the offset angle to flexible cartridge housing and a built-in hydraulic control for raising and lowering the arm.

Speakers for Stereo. While most people feel that, as in the fight world, a "good big 'un can always beat a good little 'un," loudspeaker designers are trying hard to upgrade the performance of smaller thinner loudspeakers intended for use in the average small living room. The problem of size becomes serious when stereo is contemplated, and such manufacturers as Lowther (with a new corner version of the "Acousta"), Goodman, and Mordaunt all have speakers to meet it. The fine Leak "Sandwich" and Celestion "Colaudio" units, with diaphragms of expanded polystyrene foam, have been available for some time [see "High Fidelity Newsfronts," p. 107, January 1962], but another name to watch is K.E.F. Electronics. Managing Director of this new firm is Raymond Cooke, formerly with Wharfedale Wireless. He has produced several unusual designs, employing expanded plastics for the diaphragms and with a bass unit having a rectangular diaphragm with an area twice as great as a conventional 12-in.-cone type. The normal speaker chassis is abandoned, the diaphragm surround being attached directly to the front panel and the magnet supported on a separate cast frame. An elliptical mid-frequency unit also uses expanded plastic, but is coated on each side with a layer of aluminum. The highest frequencies are handled by a 1½-in.-diameter spherical plastic dome unit. One of the great attractions at the Festival was the K.E.F. "Celeste" bookshelf speaker, fitted with a small rectangular bass unit and flat three-layer diaphragm, plus a domed tweeter, all mounted in a cabinet 18 by 11 by 7 inches and weighing 24 pounds. Another name looming up fast on the audio horizon is Arthur Radford, of Bristol, known for many years as a fastidious designer of audio transformers. His company, Radford Electronics, has introduced stereo control units and power amplifiers with astonishing performance figures. His MA 15 Mk II power amplifier incorporates a new low-phase shift circuit developed in conjunction with a new output transformer so stable that its output can be connected to a moving-coil or electrostatic speaker without affecting the shape of a 10-ke square wave signal.

Incidentally, the British Audio Industry has just inaugurated a scheme to protect customers from exaggerated advertising claims. Manufacturers whose equipment meets certain rigid standards when tested independently can now mark their amplifiers with a "certification label."

The report above was prepared for HIGH FIDELITY by the staff of this journal's counterpart in Britain, The Gramophone.

Ed.

*new
proof*

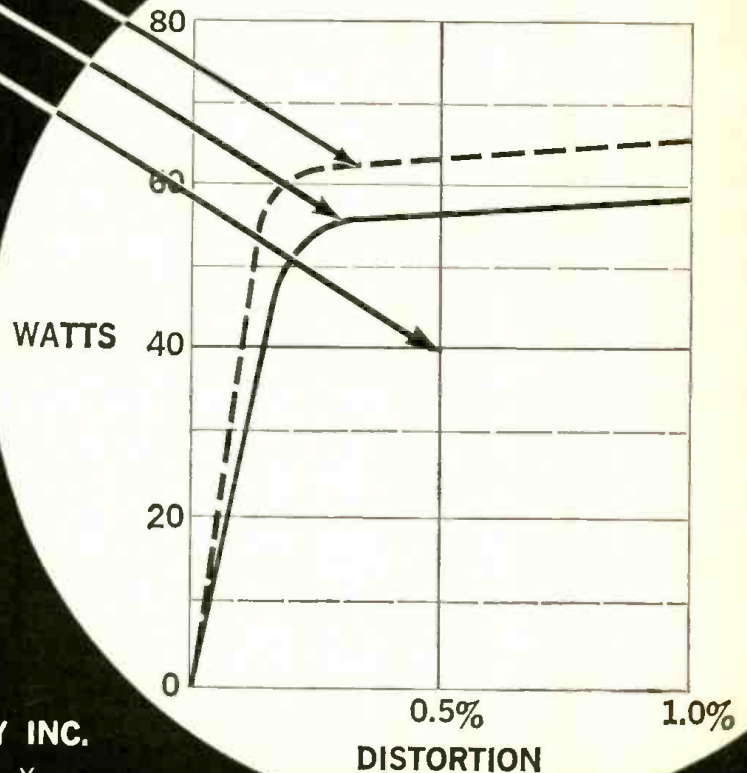
McIntosh is *the* best!

Only McIntosh of all amplifiers made and advertised today has such low distortion with such reserve power. You can see the combination of low distortion and great reserve of the MC-240 in this graph and remember both channels are operating, both channels of the MC-240 are operating at full power, both channels are operating at full power at the same time.

40 watts GUARANTEED POWER 20 cycles thru 20KC.

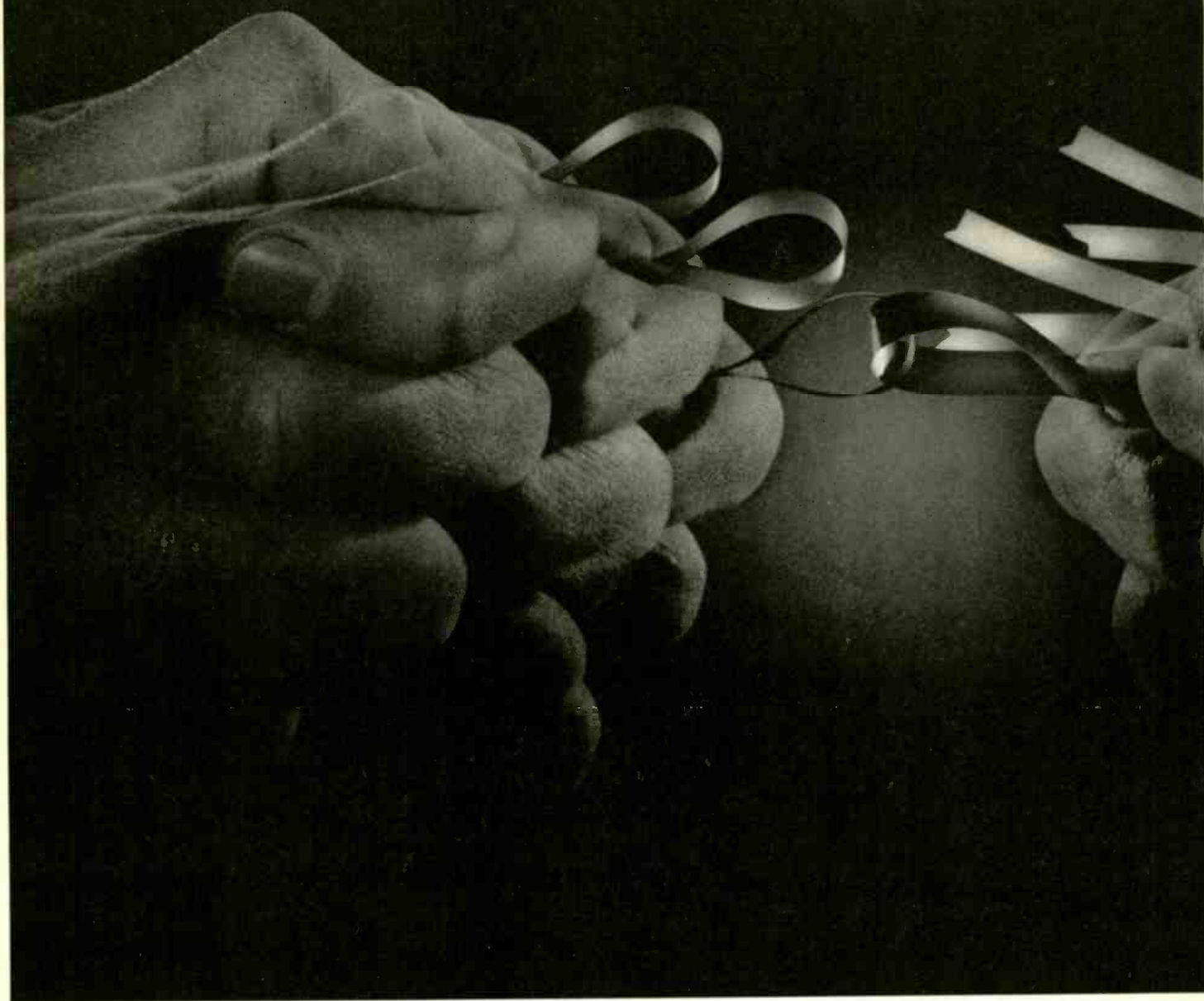
50 watts TYPICAL PERFORMANCE

60 watts IHFM MUSIC POWER



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***Tapes of
MYLAR® are
stronger...***

Make this simple test yourself. Loop together a tape of Mylar* polyester film and a tape of ordinary plastic. One quick pull . . . the plastic will snap while the tape of "Mylar" holds firm. "Mylar" is seven times stronger than ordinary plastic tapes of the same thickness—protects against tape breakage in the middle of a valuable recording.

With tapes of "Mylar" you get more than just added strength. The performances you record keep

CIRCLE 27 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

YOU BUY?



their original fidelity for years...on tapes that never dry out or become brittle with age. In storage, they are not affected by heat or high humidity.

You get extra playing time, too—fifty per cent or more with strong tapes of "Mylar". There's plenty of tape on the reel for the complete performance.

Next time you are buying a reel of tape, remember these extra advantages. Just ask your dealer for your favorite brand of tape made with "Mylar".

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REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

Better Things for Better Living...through Chemistry



"Mylar" is Du Pont's registered trademark for its brand of polyester film. Du Pont manufactures "Mylar", not finished magnetic recording tape.

THE AT6 AUTOMATIC TURNTABLE DOES NOT COME TO YOU AS SHOWN... IN THE FORM OF ITS SEPARATE PARTS... BUT THE TONEARM IS PRE-MOUNTED, FULLY INTEGRATED AT THE FACTORY TO INSURE CORRECT PERFORMANCE



Garrard's New AT6 Automatic Turntable How good can it be for only \$54.50?

THE ANSWER: So good it will excite you!

You may be wondering, for example, whether the AT6's dynamically balanced tonearm will not only accept and track "professional" cartridges, but also bring out the best in them. Definitely yes! This is a counterweight balanced arm — the pressure being set in two steps. First — you move the counterweight until the arm floats at zero pressure. Then you merely move the indicator to the correct pressure shown on the built-in gauge, set on the side of the arm for easy reading. Once balanced, the AT6 arm will track each side of the stereo groove precisely and perfectly at the lowest pressure specified by the cartridge manufacturer. Those who know tonearms will appreciate that this type of arm was once available only as a separate component. Now it is not only yours in the AT6 but integrated — scientifically mounted

to insure precision performance. But that isn't all... The turntable of the AT6 is oversized, heavy, balanced. Here, too, are the features you would expect to find in separately sold turntable units — high torque, no noise, no rumble. The motor was designed specifically to match the AT6 turntable, and built by the Garrard Laboratories to deliver perfect, constant speed, silently. It is double-shielded against magnetic hum — an important feature.



Add to this such AT6 advantages as: —(1) the convenience of automatic play, when desired (automatic and single play spindles furnished), plus the luxury of being able to intermix any size, any sequence of records. (2) Design so compact that the AT6 will fit easily into any record player cabinet. Yes, if you have been wondering just how much you can expect from the AT6 Automatic Turntable at its price of \$54.50, just consider these features. Better still, try one. You will be startled, and gratified, by this superb, completely up-to-date record-playing component made possible only by the unexcelled facilities and unique experience of the Garrard Laboratories.

For literature, write Dept. GG-22,
Garrard Sales Corporation
Port Washington, New York

GARRARD'S AT6

AUTOMATIC TURNTABLE

Canadian Inquiries to Chas. W. Pinton, Ltd., 66 Racine Road, Rexdale, Ontario — Territories other than U.S.A. and Canada to Garrard Engineering & Mfg. Co., Ltd., Swindon, Wilts., England

CIRCLE 16 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

What We Really Know

A HARDY PERENNIAL among letters to the editor received here is the one that demands enlightenment as to which component is "best," which we "personally recommend," and so on. Occasionally, we are even offered a fee for divulging What We Really Know But Dare Not Print.

The simple fact is that "what we really know" is indeed what is printed in the equipment reports we publish every month. But perhaps herein lies the rub—to one reader, the phrase "minus 40 db rumble" may have a precise meaning; to another, it may represent a foreign language. Beyond that, it helps to know just how significant certain measurements are: what, for example, does "minus 40 db rumble" really mean in terms of a high fidelity product? Finally, how does "minus 40 db rumble" sound—and as heard through different speakers?

Admittedly, answering all this carries us into areas not yet completely charted. For while there are professional or industry standards for certain performance criteria, there are less defined codes of "professional practice" for others. What's more, mathematical terms and engineering concepts have a way of defying exact translation into everyday language. And finally, the attempt to correlate the finite measurements provided by testing instruments with the infinite nature of the personal listening experience often is frustrated by the subtleties of psychoacoustics. It is not unknown, for instance, for two amplifiers measuring virtually the same in terms of the "standard" test parameters to sound slightly different on actual program material. Again, a particular speaker that may sound boomy or harsh in one type of room may sound clean and pleasant in another of different proportions and acoustics.

Appreciating then, fully and in advance, the pitfalls of an all-out, all-inclusive attempt at "translation" and "definition," we have nevertheless decided to make the try. The result is the long article by

Richard A. Koch, which starts on the next page. This article is at once a statement of the procedures adopted in testing audio equipment, an explanation of the terminology used in the subsequent reports, and an account of what is meaningful (and not so meaningful) in audio measurements. Above all, it is a step towards providing a practical guide to the intelligent selection of high fidelity components. Some readers, no doubt, will find Mr. Koch's excursion into the realm of square waves, decibels, and centimeters-per-second fairly familiar; others will find it an adventure fraught with discoveries. Still others, we expect, will disagree with some of its points. But we have a strong feeling that few readers will put the article aside once they get into it.

Beyond this "translation problem," there is a tidy complex of variables that logically enter into anyone's final choice of equipment. These variables, which are not subject to resolution for individuals on the basis of numbers alone, include factors relating to the equipment (will a certain amplifier deliver enough power to drive my loudspeaker?), factors relating to the listening room (given the particular acoustic conditions of my listening area, which type of speaker system should I consider?), and factors relating to the listener himself (what sounds "natural" to me, how much can I spend, and do I contemplate future expansion or upgrading of whatever system I acquire now?). Many readers doubtless can add more such qualifications, but these few serve to illustrate the point.


To the extent that equipment reports—based on independently derived data and presented in readable fashion—can help resolve some of these variables, or at least add some objective support to subjective views, such reports serve a paramount need. It is the aim of the succeeding article to make certain that those reports are clearly understood.

NORMAN EISENBERG

AS **high fidelity** SEES IT



BY RICHARD A. KOCH



Editor's Note: The performance criteria and test methods described in the following article are those employed by the author and his associates at United States Testing Company, Inc., for the preparation of the equipment reports published in this journal. As detailed below, these procedures observe professional standards — such as those set by the Institute of High Fidelity Manufacturers, the National Association of Broadcasters, and others — as well as generally accepted engineering practices.

Can High Fidelity Be Measured?

—being The Intelligent Layman's Guide to the procedures and terminology of test reports

WHEN YOU TUNE an FM receiver to a station, and do so by listening to the sound (notwithstanding the fact that the set may be furnished with a tuning indicator), you actually are using your ear as a distortion analyzer. And when you adjust your stereo system for proper balance between the left and right channels, you are in effect using your ears as vacuum tube voltmeters. What distinguishes your judgments of the results from those made in the laboratory is the fact that the former are conclusive only in terms of your own hearing; the ear, however “golden,” plainly is not calibrated. Thus, while the ear can indeed tell you that a given sound has a different

quality from another sound, it cannot tell you *how much* of a difference. For such information, we must rely on meters and mathematics and then, for a complete evaluation, gauge the extent to which the measurements so derived are, or can be, substantiated by listening tests.

Most electronic measurements are made in the laboratory by introducing a signal of known quantity or quality into the component under test and then determining the corresponding quantity or quality of the signal that emerges. Depending on the component, the source of the input signal can be a radio frequency (RF) signal generator, an audio frequency

(AF) oscillator, a tape or record (either of the normal kind or a special test recording). The measurements of the signal produced by the equipment under test may be made with a vacuum tube voltmeter (VTVM), an oscilloscope (which presents a pictorial view of the sound), or a specialized analyzer (such as a distortion analyzer).

The most widely used method of presenting the resulting data is with a "curve"—actually, a simple line graph on which a given performance criterion is plotted against a set of variable operating conditions, as frequency response against signal level, or power output versus distortion. Curves invariably are expressed in terms either of percentage or of decibels (db). The two expressions are related inasmuch as both describe ratios between two numbers. Percentage, the simpler of the two, is widely used

for distortion measurements which are based on a predetermined signal level, such as the rated or full output of an amplifier. The decibel—used for expressing other types of ratios—is actually a shorthand method of conveying complex data. (A detailed explanation of this term, as well as of others widely used in test reports, accompanies this article.)

The frequency scale markings so common to audio graphs are graded by octaves of tones, or frequencies. Each octave occupies the same linear space on a graph. Thus, if one inch represents the tones from, say, 50 cycles per second (cps) to 100 cps, then one inch on the graph also represents the frequency range from 100 cps to 200 cps, or from 5,000 cps to 10,000 cps—each of these divisions being a musical octave. The basic reason for this usage is that the human ear responds to changes

The Language of Measurements

THE EFFECTIVENESS of any shorthand system depends on its understanding by the reader. Herewith, an explanation of the "mathematical shorthand" widely used in test reports.

Centimeters per dyne (cm/dyne). Used to express the degree of compliance of a phono cartridge, this term refers to the distance of movement (in centimeters) of a stylus when it is propelled by one dyne of force. Although manufacturers have various ways of measuring compliance, there is as yet no professional or industry standard for doing so.

Centimeters per second (cm/sec). This expression, which measures a rate of speed (just as miles per hour), is used for designating the movement of a cutting stylus and, in test measurements, of the playback stylus as well. It enters into test reports as a measurement of response characteristics; for instance, the output signal level of a cartridge is measured by playing a 1,000-cps signal tone, recorded at a velocity of 5 cm/sec. The reason for using an expression of velocity in the first place has to do with the fact that the output signal of a magnetic cartridge is proportional to the velocity of the stylus.

Decibel (db). This term serves as a unit for measuring the relative loudness of sounds, as well as the ratio between two electrical quantities such as voltage or power.

When referring to sound, "one db" is generally accepted as the smallest difference to the ear between two sounds. For many listeners, however, the least perceptible difference may be 2 or 3 db. If any sound that is barely audible be assigned a value of "zero db," then ordinary speech, by comparison, might be on the order of 60 db. The total range of perceptible differences has been given as 130 to 140 db, which roughly corresponds to the maximum intensity of a symphony orchestra or a thunderstorm.

When expressing differences in electrical quantities (e.g., "response is down 2 db at 10,000 cps"), the decibel represents a change from a predetermined level chosen to represent "zero db" for a particular measurement.

Because it is derived from logarithms, the decibel serves as a shorthand method of expressing complex

relationships and, at the same time, generally conforms to the nature of hearing which itself follows a logarithmic pattern rather than a simple arithmetical one. For instance, one electrical watt of music fed into a loudspeaker produces a certain apparent loudness. Yet if the signal to the loudspeaker is doubled to two watts, the music will not sound twice as loud. It will only sound slightly louder—or, in terms of decibels, will be "up by 3 db," since the actual decibel change for a power multiplication of 2 is 3 db.

Since power is the product of voltage and current, and since an increase of voltage through a given load necessarily produces an increase in current, a voltage multiplication of 2 results in a power multiplication of 4, or—in decibel terms—6 db.

Because variations in musical pitch also follow a logarithmic pattern, a logarithmic system is used for marking divisions on frequency scales.

Peak. A peak in response (of a speaker, amplifier, etc.) refers to an individual rise in response above the over-all level. (A drop in response is known as a "dip" or "valley.") The theoretically ideal "flat" response would have no dips or peaks, i.e., "plus or minus zero db." In practice, tolerances of plus or minus 1 db for electronic components, and plus or minus 2 db for transducers are excellent engineering objectives.

Root mean square (rms). The rms value of an electrical signal, or waveform, is that value which will produce the same power in a given load as a DC signal. The rms value can never be greater than the signal's peak value; in a square wave, or in DC, the rms equals the peak value. In all other waveforms, however, the rms is less than the peak. In a pure sine wave, it is 0.707 of the peak. For complex waves, such as signals with distortion or complex musical passages, the rms must be gauged by special meters or, alternately, by mathematical computation.

Volume Unit (VU). The VU is a measure of the variations of intensity in musical signals. It is based on the decibel, but has been standardized in terms of a specific type of meter which is used for this purpose. The level indicators on tape recorders, for instance, often are calibrated in VUs, which, for practical purposes, can be regarded as approximate decibel markings.

in frequency of a certain fraction of an octave rather than to changes of a constant number of cycles per second. For instance, while the ear can easily detect a one-cycle shift from 100 cps, it is very hard to detect a one-cycle shift from 1,000 cps.

TURNTABLES

An illustration of this phenomenon of hearing appears when one analyzes the effects of turntable wow and flutter (slow and rapid variations, respectively, of speed). On a typically good turntable, for example, the total per cent of wow and flutter will be, say, less than 0.1% rms. This figure corresponds to a frequency shift of one cycle in 1,000 cps, and is inaudible. The threshold of audibility of wow is in the neighborhood of 0.3% and most often can be heard in piano passages, since the particular overtone structure of piano notes is fairly susceptible to inaccuracies of pitch. Even more readily detected in piano passages is flutter: values as low as 0.1% can be objectionable. In truth, however, flutter generally is no longer much of a problem in turntables, especially those having heavy platters. Wow does remain a problem more often encountered. In view of its low threshold of audibility, the critical listener would be best advised, in my opinion, to use a turntable with wow of less than 0.3% rms, as measured in the lab.

Rumble is an even more prevalent problem with turntables. Heard through the loudspeakers as a very low frequency background noise, generally at about 30 cps, it is caused by vibrations set up in the motor and turntable bearings. The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) has set as a minimum tolerable figure for rumble the value of "minus 35 db," referred to an output level of a cartridge when playing a 100-cps test tone recorded at a velocity of 1.4 centimeters per second (cm/sec). Actually, "minus 35 db" is a minimum figure, and rumble at that level may be audible with a good speaker system. Ironically, of course, the better the speaker system, the more distracting the rumble can be. A more desirable rumble figure, if the turntable is to be used in a system which also boasts a very wide-range speaker, would be 45 db below the standard reference level. A final word on rumble: extraordinarily low rumble figures—such as -55 db or -60 db—which are listed without any reference level being given, should be viewed skeptically. Often these impressive figures are derived by using a reference level different from the NAB standard. If in doubt as to the real meaning of a stated rumble figure, refer to some reliable independent source, such as the United States Testing Company reports in this journal.

Accuracy of speed in turntables, while always important, probably will be of major concern to persons

with a very keen sense of pitch, or to musicians who play along with their records. For their needs, I would suggest a turntable with a variable speed control and a built-in strobe indicator (or a separate strobe disc) to help in setting the speed accurately. Contrary to popular belief, turntables having hysteresis-synchronous motors are not necessarily characterized by absolute accuracy of speed. (The main advantage of a hysteresis-synchronous motor is its relative independence of changes in the supply voltage available from power lines, but there are also excellent turntables that employ the more common four-pole induction motor.) For most listeners a turntable whose speed is accurate to within 0.5% will be entirely satisfactory, with a figure of 1% as the outside limit. The NAB standard for speed, incidentally, is 0.3%.

CARTRIDGES

Laboratory measurements can provide a reasonable idea of what to expect from a cartridge, and can separate the generally good from the generally poor. But measurements alone cannot always predict what a cartridge will *sound like* or whether a given listener will find its sound pleasing. A cartridge is, after all, a transducer (i.e., it changes one form of energy—mechanical—to another—electrical), and to the extent that such change imparts a certain degree of "coloration" to the sound, the end result often eludes exact measurements. As with speakers, cartridges really must be heard to be fully evaluated. Laboratory measurements are useful, however—at least to the extent that they can indicate whether or not a cartridge is even worth considering for a particular sound system—if one knows how to interpret them.

For instance, Figures 1 and 2 show the characteristics of two stereo phono cartridges. Both are, by general agreement, high fidelity products, yet there is considerable difference between the sets of curves for each. The two curves at the top of each figure show the frequency response of the left and right channels of the cartridge. The scale at the left of each figure shows the output level of the cartridge in decibels, with zero db corresponding to the output of the left channel at 1,000 cps on the test record. Although this reference could be taken at any point, it is customarily taken at 1,000 cps because that frequency is the general dividing point between the low frequency and high frequency compensation used in cutting records. Ideally, the two frequency response curves for both channels of the same cartridge should be identical, and should appear as one curve, straight across the graph. However, no cartridge—or for that matter, no test record—is perfect. In Figure 1, both curves are very similar in shape, although one curve remains slightly above



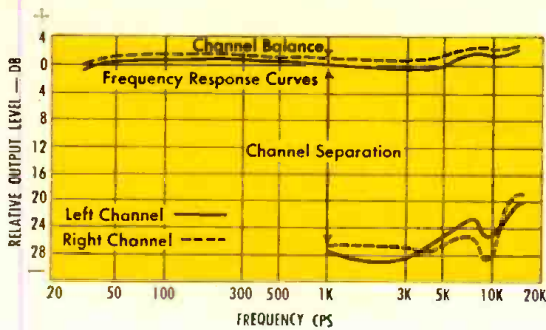


Figure 1

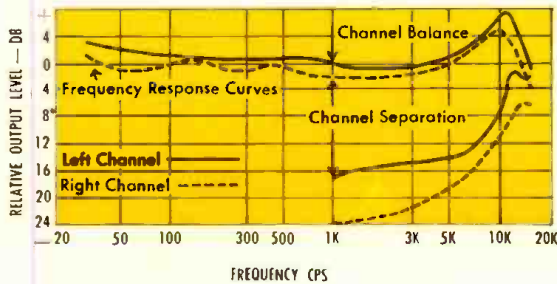


Figure 2

the other for all the frequencies tested. The difference is very small, being only about 0.8 db, and inaudible. More important, the curves are very smooth, with no sharp peaks or valleys. Despite the gradual rise in output at the higher frequencies, these curves indicate that the cartridge has a very clean, uniform response, with outstanding channel balance (uniformity between channels).

The response curves shown for the cartridge in Figure 2 indicate neither smooth response nor a reasonable uniformity between the two channels. The curves show a sharp high frequency peak, or resonance condition. The curve for the right channel, in addition, indicates a random sort of unequal response—what technicians call a “look of wandering all over the place.”

In listening tests, these cartridges sounded pretty much as the curves on the graphs suggested they would. Thus, the cartridge represented in Figure 2 sounded rough and raspy, especially on string instruments; the cartridge represented in Figure 1 sounded sweet, clean, and smooth.

Below the response curves are shown channel separation curves from 1,000 cps to 15,000 cps. The lower on the graph these curves appear, the better the separation. Good separation is, of course, necessary for good stereophonic effect, and it is especially important in the mid and high frequency ranges, where the ear is most sensitive to direction. (Ideally, the separation curves for each channel should be almost identical, although similarity of separation curves is not as critical a factor as is similarity of frequency response curves. If nothing else, similarity of separation curves indicates good design and workmanship in general.) Experts disagree on just how much separation is needed for stereo; often this factor

depends on the particular music and the frequencies being reproduced. A reasonable criterion would be to expect that a cartridge should maintain 20 db of channel separation (left-to-right and right-to-left) up to 10 kc, and 15-db separation from there to 15 kc.

A final test of a cartridge is its output signal level, measured from a test record cut at a velocity of 5 cm/sec at 1,000 cps. Signal level relates to the gain required through the phono input of the preamplifier, or combination amplifier, as the case may be. Either type should be fed with enough of a signal to permit it to develop its full rated output. Most preamplifiers have a magnetic phono input sensitivity on the order of 2.5 millivolts, at 1,000 cps, which figure—for best results—should be the *minimum* output of a cartridge. Less output would mean less usable signal developed in the preamplifier and, concomitantly, a poorer signal-to-noise ratio. On the other hand, too much output can overload a preamplifier and cause distortion. Thus, a practical upper limit would be on the order of 20 millivolts. Modern magnetic cartridges, for the most part, furnish signal levels which fall somewhere between these two limits. A piezoelectric cartridge (crystal or ceramic), which furnishes much higher signal levels, may be connected to an amplifier in either of two ways. It may feed into a high-level input such as “tuner” or “auxiliary.” Alternately, some preamplifiers have built-in networks that convert the output from a piezo-type cartridge so that it resembles that of a magnetic pickup as regards voltage level and frequency characteristic. In either case, this sensitivity question does not involve them. Recently, of course, some piezo-type cartridges have been supplied with tiny plug-in networks which do the same as the networks just described. Such cartridges, feeding through these networks, are intended for connection to a magnetic phono input, and the remarks on signal level and amplifier sensitivity would apply to them as well.

TONE ARMS

Tone arms are, or should be, completely passive. Their sole function is to hold the cartridge in a position where it can track the record. Ideally, the bearings on which a tone arm pivots should have no friction, and the arm's resonance should be at zero cps so that it does not transmit any spurious vibrations. Further, the arm should not be influenced by external movements, such as a jarring of the turntable. The arm should hold the cartridge so that its axis is parallel to the record groove while the stylus remains perpendicular to the record surface. An important characteristic of a tone arm, of course, is its tracking error, which should be very low. Tracking error is the difference, in degrees, between the actual arc described by an arm as it swings over a record, and a true radius across the record. It is held to a minimum by the length of the arm as well as by offsetting the head, or curving the body of an arm. All other things being equal, a



16-inch arm should have lower tracking error than a 12-inch arm, but often the latter types have features that may outweigh this point. A highly regarded criterion in an arm is, for instance, its dynamic balance, by which the arm becomes immune to the jarring of the turntable and thereby has a negligible effect on the tracking ability of a cartridge. True dynamic balancing, however, is very difficult to attain, and while many commercial arms achieve a *measure* of dynamic balance, virtually none really can be said to be completely so balanced.

The perfect tone arm has yet to be made, but many fine designs are currently available. While there is no accepted or conclusive set of tests for this component, the extent to which an arm approaches the ideal can be gauged, to a degree, in the laboratory. Resonance, for one thing, is measured with a cartridge of known response characteristics installed in the arm and tracking a sweep tone on a test record. Other criteria—such as bearing friction, or balance—are evaluated by mechanical tests as well as by a good deal of “feel”—in much the same manner, for instance, that a car’s “handling” can be evaluated by an experienced driver.

AMPLIFIERS

Amplifiers are often called the heart of a high fidelity music system, since they deliver the power that energizes a loudspeaker to produce sound. Loudspeakers, of course, are notoriously inefficient in that they require relatively large amounts of amplifier power to produce given levels of sound. A “high efficiency” speaker might convert all of 20 per cent of the amplifier’s output to sound; the remaining energy is dissipated as heat. Many speakers operate at efficiencies of 5 per cent or less. Although only a few watts of power fed to a medium-efficiency loudspeaker will produce an amply loud sound in a large living room, accurate reproduction of musical transients often will require that an amplifier deliver to a speaker from 20 to 50 watts, depending on the speaker’s efficiency, the size and acoustic character of the room, and the listening level desired. When an amplifier cannot deliver the required power, transients in the music will sound severely distorted, and whatever degree of realism has been captured up to that point in the reproducing chain will be missing.

There are two generally accepted ways of rating an amplifier’s power-handling capability. The “music power” rating assumes that the power supply voltages of the amplifier are maintained at their no-load values under all conditions of loading, and measurements of the amplifier are made using external regulated power supplies to furnish the necessary plate voltage to the amplifier. The validity of this method is based on the fact that musical crescendos

are short-term signals; “music power” is an indication of an amplifier’s ability to handle such signals. The second method of measuring an amplifier is the “continuous power” rating, which treats the amplifier as an integral unit, power supply and all. This method thus makes no allowances for limitations in the amplifier’s own power supply, but rather includes those limitations, such as they may be, and thus gives a truer picture of the amplifier’s capability. It should be emphasized, however, that, as a rule, the better the amplifier, the closer will be the values of music power and continuous power. Amplifiers sometimes have been rated in a third way—in terms of “peak power.” However, since peak power figures can be derived in a number of ways, and their use can be confusing or even misleading as to an amplifier’s true capability, they no longer are generally used in the high fidelity field.

The frequency response characteristic of an amplifier at low output levels also is very important. A good amplifier will always have a response characteristic at the one-watt level that extends far above and below the generally accepted normal range of hearing (20 to 20,000 cps). One naturally asks why this is so, if we cannot hear those “fringe” tones. A complete answer to this question is beyond the scope of this article; my own position—admittedly open to debate—is that if two amplifiers are identical in all respects except frequency response, the unit with the wider response should be expected to sound better.

An important criterion of an amplifier is its harmonic distortion, or the degree to which it may deform any single tone. Good performance requires 1% or less harmonic distortion at an amplifier’s rated output level and—by implication—lower distortion than that at normal listening levels. Excessive harmonic distortion causes the sound to take on an “overbright” or “hard” quality.

Yet another form of nonlinearity in response is intermodulation distortion (IM), caused by a beating of two dissimilar tones which produces new tones that have no musical relation to the original two. IM can be more irritating to the listener than harmonic distortion, since it introduces discordant effects in the program material. In a good amplifier, IM distortion will be kept below 1% at full power, although 2% could be considered “passable.”

Figures 3, 4, and 5 show the performance characteristics of three amplifiers, all claimed to be very high quality units, and all high-priced.

A glance at the curves will reveal distinct differences in these amplifiers. The amplifier shown in Figure 3 is indeed a top-quality unit. Its power bandwidth (power output vs. frequency for approximately 1% total harmonic distortion) is very wide and flat; its distortion at rated power output is negligible, even down to 20 cps; and its 1-watt

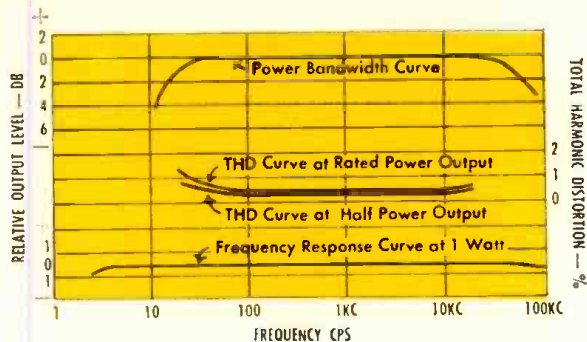


Figure 3

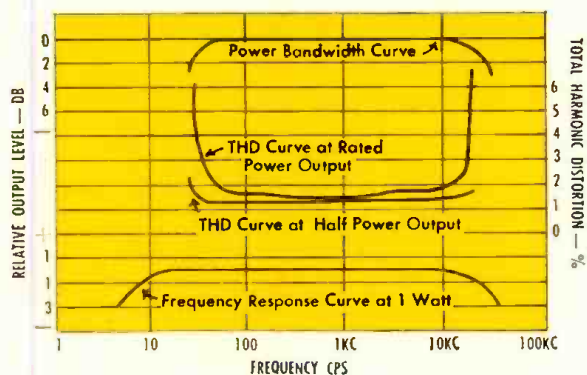


Figure 4

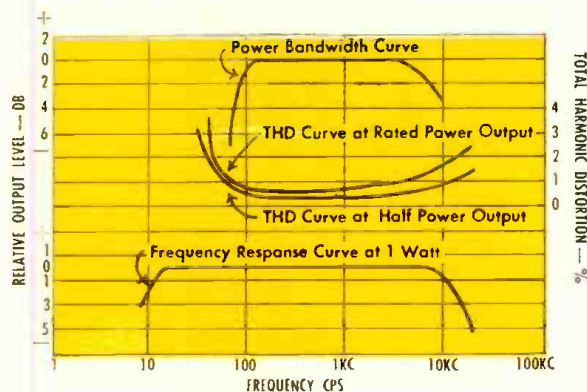


Figure 5

frequency response is flat from below 5 cps to above 100 kc.

A less meritorious, but still reasonably good, amplifier is shown in Figure 4. Here, the power bandwidth extends from 25 cps to 39 kc. Harmonic distortion at full power begins to be serious below 30 cps and above 17 kc. The 1-watt-level frequency response is not nearly as good as the response shown in Figure 3, although it can be considered flat from about 8 cps to 20 kc. When one listens to these amplifiers, side-by-side, reproducing the same high quality program material, the amplifier of Figure 3 will sound noticeably better than the amplifier of Figure 4.

The performance of the amplifier represented in Figure 5 is distinctly poorer than that of either of the others. The power bandwidth extends only

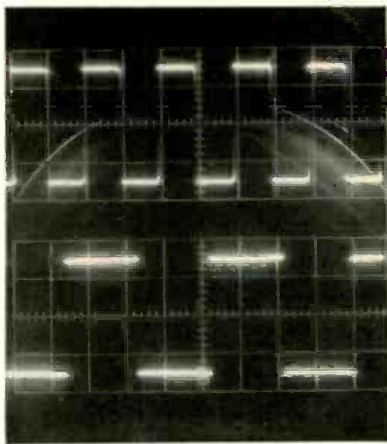
from 80 cps to about 9 kc, and distortion is quite severe below 40 cps. Even the 1-watt-level frequency response is poor, being 1 db down at 12 cps and 10.5 kc. In my view, this amplifier, at best, is a marginal or minimal sort of high fidelity product; some would not even grant that it merits the description "high fidelity."

An indication of an amplifier's ability to respond to the sudden changes in signal levels imposed by music can be found from square wave measurements. For an amplifier to reproduce a square wave correctly, it must be capable of flat response to signals substantially below and above the nominal frequency of that square wave. For high frequency analysis (made usually with a 10-kc square wave) the rising slope is of prime importance—the more nearly vertical, the better. "Overshoot" is the degree to which the vertical line rises above the average level of the signal. When the vertical rise varies above and below that average level, it is said to be "ringing." Both overshoot and ringing relate to the amplifier's high frequency transient response, its ultimate definition of sound, as well as its stability under load. Thus, an overshoot that is calculated to be no more than 10% of the total height of the vertical rise (from negative to positive cycles of the square wave)—or a ringing effect that does not exceed 2 cycles—is considered quite satisfactory and would be very difficult to evaluate from a listening standpoint. Severe ringing, on the other hand, indicates possible high frequency instability which could cause the amplifier to oscillate when driving certain loudspeakers. (Which speakers, specifically, it is impossible to predict.)

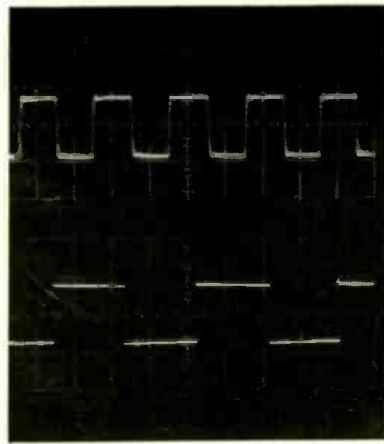
For low frequency analysis (usually done with a 50-cps square wave), the degree of tilt in the response and the smoothness of the horizontal line are the important factors—the less tilt, and the smoother the line, the better. A low frequency square wave that did not tilt by more than 20% would indicate good low frequency response. Excessive tilt indicates excessive phase shift, which could reduce the clarity of the deepest bass tones. Figure 6 shows the square wave response of the amplifiers represented by Figures 3, 4, and 5 respectively. In each case, the top waveform shows the response of the amplifier to a 10-kc square wave, while the lower waveform shows the response to a 50-cps square wave. Both the waveforms of "amplifier A" in Figure 6 are almost perfect, which again testifies to that amplifier's quality.

The high frequency waveform of "amplifier B" in Figure 6 shows the effect of a decrease in the high frequency transient response plus a small amount of ringing. The low frequency waveform shows the effect of a very slight variation in low frequency gain combined with a small lagging phase shift, neither of which is very serious in the proportions shown.

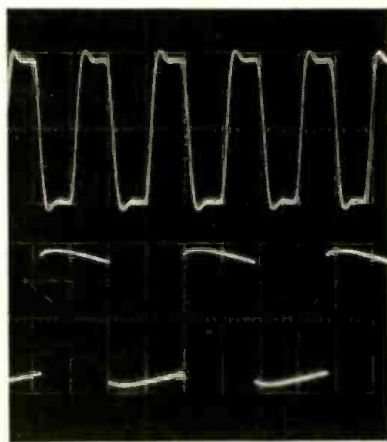
The 10-kc waveform of "amplifier C" in Figure 6 shows the effect of a severe high frequency rolloff. A very distinct lagging phase shift is evident in the



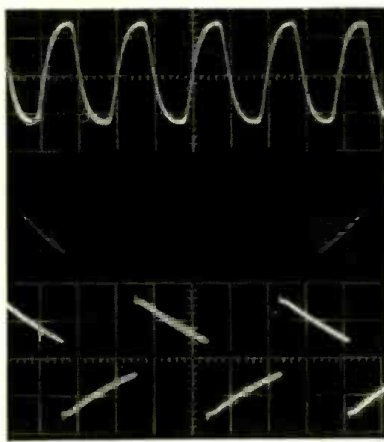
Perfect square waves



Amplifier A



Amplifier B



Amplifier C

Figure 6

50-cps waveform. Both of these characteristics are undesirable.

The equalization characteristics of an amplifier, or rather of the preamplifier, should be flat (with respect to the appropriate NAB or RIAA standard) within plus or minus 1 db from 50 cps to 10 kc, and within plus or minus 3 db from 20 cps to 20 kc. Sudden deviations from the standard characteristics are rare, except on a poorer unit whose equalization curve may depart from the standard by a considerable degree.

By generally accepted professional standards, the signal-to-noise ratio of an amplifier (that is to say, an integrated amplifier, or a separate preamp-power-amp combination) should be 60 db when measured from its low-level, high-gain inputs, such as the magnetic phono input. Good commercial practice sets that figure to be at least 50 db. The signal-to-noise ratio on high-level, low-gain inputs (past the preamp stages), as well as the input on a basic or power amplifier, should be on the order of 80 db. The actual figures encountered vary with specific models. Thus, on the best amplifiers, the signal-to-

noise ratio may be better than these figures; on poorer units, it may be as much as 15 to 20 db less.

Other features which help determine the quality of an amplifier include the nature of its scratch and rumble filter curves, the loudness and tone control contours, and, of course, its mechanical construction. These factors, while of lesser importance than the criteria discussed earlier, also are evaluated in a complete test report to the extent that they may significantly affect the amplifier's performance.

TUNERS

A major criterion, though by no means the only one, in rating an FM tuner is its "usable sensitivity" as set forth in a standard of the Institute of High Fidelity Manufacturers (IHFM). "Sensitivity" in general is a measure of the tuner's ability to receive signals from relatively weak stations. The word "usable" here implies that the quality of the audio signal from the tuner will be at least adequate when the tuner is supplied with a fairly weak input signal. Thus, the rated sensitivity figure is the signal level,

in microvolts, that must be fed to the tuner to yield an audio output whose total hum, noise, and distortion is 30 db below the level of a 400-cps test tone. In a typically high quality tuner, the IHFM sensitivity curve will cross the minus-30-db point somewhere between 1.5 and 8 microvolts (uv), and the curve then will continue to drop smoothly to below the minus-40-db point before leveling off.

Figure 7 shows two sensitivity curves. Curve A is quite smooth, and descends sharply from minus 14.5 db at one microvolt, leveling off fairly quickly at the minus-48-db level, which—in this example—corresponds to a distortion of only 0.4% (minus 40 db corresponds to 1% distortion). It crosses the minus-30-db line at 1.9 uv, which is its rated sensitivity. This extremely low figure, as well as the continued drop of the curve and its smooth leveling off, are hallmarks of a highly sensitive instrument.

Curve B of Figure 7 shows a poorer sensitivity rating. It is, to begin with, somewhat irregular in shape. What's more, it does not descend as far as curve A. Both of these differences are caused by distortion in the tuner's audio signal. And, of course, the usable sensitivity of the tuner represented by curve B is comparatively poorer, being an indicated 12 uv.

In a good tuner, harmonic distortion at high signal levels, corresponding to the flat portion of the sensitivity curve, should be less than 1%. On very good tuners distortion may be as low as 0.3% (which equals the minus-50-db point on the chart). The IM distortion of a good tuner generally is kept below 0.5%, when measured in accordance with IHFM standards. These low values of distortion assure that the audio output of the tuner will be very clean when receiving clean broadcast signals. While the best tuners will feature both high sensitivity and low distortion, it must be emphasized that from an engineering standpoint, high sensitivity in itself is no guarantee of top audio quality. Specifically, a tuner can be designed to have very high sensitivity, but without producing the cleanest sound. For this reason, in locations where highest sensitivity is not a prime requisite (due to the presence of many strong local stations), a tuner with comparatively lower sensitivity, but also with low distortion, may prove entirely adequate.

Other factors also influence a tuner's performance. The signal-to-noise ratio, for one, should exceed 50 db in a good set. Also fairly important is a tuner's "capture ratio," which measures the tuner's ability to distinguish between two signals (one local, the other distant) of the same carrier frequency. A tuner with good "capture" will reject the distant station which, of course, might otherwise become a source of interference and noise. A typical capture ratio for a good tuner is about 5 db (the smaller the number here, the better). A figure as high as 20 db could be considered a relatively poor capture ratio.

Another measure of a tuner's ability to reject unwanted signals is its selectivity, a characteristic by which a tuner picks out a single station from others

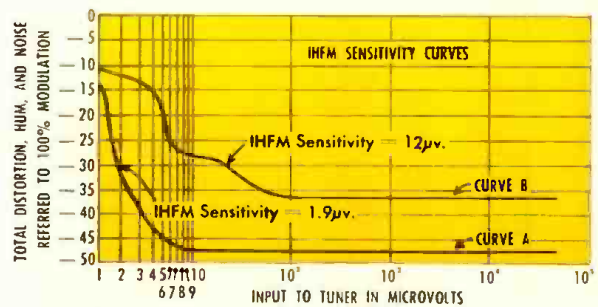


Figure 7

close on the tuning dial. Although selectivity can be measured in different ways, perhaps the most meaningful figure is the "alternate channel selectivity," which measures the tuner's ability to reject a signal two FM channels (400 kc) away, which at present is the minimum distance allowed by the FCC for the separation of stations in a given FM broadcast area. A good figure for alternate-channel selectivity would be greater than 50 db; an undesirable figure might be below 40 db.

The concept of what is "good" frequency response in a tuner has changed in recent years. At one time, a tuner would be checked from 20 cps to 15 or 20 kc, with no regard to what happened above 20 kc. Today's tuner not only should be as flat as possible over this band, but ought to respond fairly "flat" right up to 53 kc as well. The reason for this widened band requirement, of course, is FM stereo; the frequency of 53 kc is the upper limit of transmissions on FM stereo. A fairly rigorous specification for a tuner would now be, perhaps, plus or minus 1 db from just below 20 cps to 20 kc, and beyond—with no more than a 2- or 3-db drop at 53 kc as taken at the multiplex output jack.

The frequency response at the audio output jacks of a tuner and multiplex adapter combination (either separate units or an integrated unit) should be flat within plus or minus 1 db from below 20 cps to 20 kc. This assures that the normally transmitted FM audio range of 50 cps to 15 kc is not degraded by the tuner. For FM stereo, of course, there also should be good separation between the two audio outputs. Since FCC regulations specify that the broadcast stations transmit their stereo signals with a minimum of 30-db channel separation, it seems reasonable to expect that the best of the multiplex receiving systems should provide that much separation. It still is too early in the game to generalize on this point, but it is apparent that while some adapters and stereo tuners will provide this kind of performance, others barely offer 15-db separation. Of course, even these offer a "measure" of stereo, but presumably all equipment will be improved and upgraded as this new branch of the audio art develops.

Generally, the channel separation of multiplex circuits will be greatest in the 400- to 1,000-cps region, and will gradually taper off at both ends of the audio-frequency spectrum. For adequate performance, however, the separation should remain above 20 db from 50 cps to

Continued on page 95

BY MARCELLO CORTIS

Zoo of the Golden Throats



Drawings by Elly Miltner

**If you think Art has
been too much invaded by Efficiency,
read on. Italy's provincial opera houses
would seem to suggest otherwise ...**

ONCE UPON A TIME everyone in Italy followed the fortunes (and misfortunes) of opera with devoted interest. Those days are long past, but even now there is scarcely anyone in the country who has not seen at least one performance of "grand opera"—and of course all the world knows the fame of Milan's La Scala. The institution of Italian opera depends not only on the structure of La Scala and its sister theatres in other great Italian cities, however. Grand opera in Italy rose and will fall with the numerous "*stagioni*"—the short seasons, as they are called, when almost every little town has its days or weeks of visiting opera. Sometimes these performances are given in a delightfully ancient theatre (which often serves for movies the rest of the year), sometimes in the local *Palazzo del Cinema* or any other large building that's available.

La Scala is the apex: shimmering mirage of all those who aspire to sing opera. Ah, to see one's name on the Scala posters, if only as "Third Lackey." But to reach that exalted estate one travels a long and stony road—a road that often begins around the corner from La Scala, under the huge glass-roofed ugliness of La Galleria.

Situated between La Scala and the Cathedral, Milan's famous "gallery" is a bustling nineteenth-century vaulted arcade, sheltering coffeehouses, shops, and gesticulating crowds. Politics, love affairs, black market—the Gallery has seen them all. Until recently it also played host to the improvised offices of every self-respecting theatre manager in Italy. Singers, orchestral musicians, stagehands, ballet girls (the glance brightens hopefully) were all bought and sold—in more ways than one, too—in The

Gallery's murky atmosphere. There, the principal troupes for the *stagioni* were put (or as wits say, slept) together, and over a cup of espresso many a hopeful young student has made her first provincial contract and signed away her virginity in the process, a "package deal" which shocks none of the habitués of The Gallery.

The central figure in all these provincial engagements was, of course, the Impresario, whose nimble-mindedness and ever-ready tongue kept the singers' fees low and the Impresario's percentage high. Every trick known to man (and some known only to Italian impresarios) has been used to keep down the steadily rising costs of artistic endeavor. (They have been rising, apparently, since 1750. . . .) A clever manager understood, for instance, how to move a whole troupe of sixty-two persons on the Italian State Railroads with tickets for only twenty-seven (he kept the poor singers moving from car to car, thus hopelessly confusing the conductor).

The Impresario's life was in many ways unmitigated misery. His waking hours were spent with hysterical people, of whom he himself was generally the most hysterical. One day, in a small Italian town which shall be nameless, an Impresario (never forget the capital "I," please) was producing his *stagione* with the usual screaming, fainting, cheating, and some good singing in between, when the prima donna received a telegram saying that her mother was gravely ill. (Translated, this message means: "Have got week end off, meet me at Hotel Rosso, Padua, love, Antonio.") She packed her bags and left the same day. The Impresario screeched with rage, tore his hair—and thereupon rang up Milan to find a substitute who would take over at once the roles of Tosca and Mimi. Cackling with joy, the Impresario's middleman in Milan was, at long last, able to launch his Cinderella, a soprano of noticeable avoirdupois and the wife of a prominent Italian politician, from whom said middleman expected to get all sorts of favors (and a fat percentage from the lady's fee too).

She arrived at noon of the day the troupe was to give its first local performance of *Tosca* and went straight to the theatre to have her first—and only—piano rehearsal with the Maestro and other



principals. The assembled company expected that, aside from the usual disagreements on tempos and other musical and theatrical matters, they would run through the opera quickly. The Maestro struck the first chords. Silence.

"What's that?" asked the new arrival. More silence, the kind known as "pregnant." The Maestro half got off the piano stool.

"Signora, do you not know *Tosca*?"

"But no, I came to sing *Bohème*."

There was a moment of perfect stillness prior to the explosion. After everyone had talked at once for three minutes, the Maestro rushed off to the Impresario to get that night's program changed from *Tosca* to *Bohème* (which had been scheduled for the following day). The Impresario said it couldn't be done; his subscribers had paid to see *Tosca*, and *Tosca* was damned well what they were going to hear. Both rushed back to the soprano.

"Listen, don't you know *any* of *Tosca*?" they asked her. It turned out that she had sung the aria, the duet with the tenor, and a little bit of the ensembles. They decided to try it. All the members of the cast spent the rest of the day drilling the part into her. It seemed that, with a little improvisation, she might pull it off.

Of course the critical point she had to prepare for was the end of the second act, where *Tosca*, having murdered Scarpia, has to act silently—silently, that is, except for Puccini's bloodcurdling music. She must light several candles in a slow and, one might say, "ritualistic" way, place them to the left and right of the corpse, and then take the heavy crucifix and lay it on Scarpia's chest—all this very slowly and ceremoniously. Then she must wipe the blood from her hands, take her cape, and softly steal from the scene as the last chords die away and the audience (one hopes) roars its approval. It can be one of the most exciting moments in opera, and it is the dream of every soprano to play the role.

Here is what happened.

Our prima donna had brought with her "such a pretty costume" for Mimi. It proved quite an effort to force her portly dimensions into her predecessor's *Tosca* costume, but with much stuffing and pulling, her colleagues got her ready for the stage.





She got through the first scene without mishap, but at her next entry a severe attack of nerves had set in. As her elephantine form swept onto the stage, she promptly knocked over the basin of holy water together with the pedestal on which it stood. The situation was saved by Scarpia's quick thinking: he grabbed the basin. Only then did he realize that he was stuck with it, that he might have to hold it for the rest of the act. His glance fell on a stage assistant who was standing in the wings, watching with considerable interest the new *regia* on the stage. This assistant was also a man of action: he turned round to one of the monks who was waiting to enter in the Te Deum procession, grabbed his cape and cowl, crept across the stage to the sweating Scarpia, and after kneeling and crossing himself, took the bowl away from Scarpia, crossed himself again, and waited for the next *fortissimo*. The drums roared from the orchestra, the assistant turned his back to the audience, whisked out hammer and nails, and whammed the contraption to the floor; he then genuflected gravely, crossed himself, and slithered out into the wings.

Somehow the first act managed to conclude without further catastrophes, and the audience applauded politely.

The real trouble began with the second act, when Tosca appears on the stage splendidly attired and glittering with jewels. Scarpia, poised and courtly, invites her to sit down and begins his courteous "*ed or fra noi parliam da buoni amici, via quell'aria sgomentata.*" But Puccini's great dialogue had rapidly to be turned into a monologue, because Tosca, whose make-up was beginning to run away in rivulets of cold sweat, could not remember a single note. Scarpia thereupon sang not only his part but also Tosca's, by changing her lines to sound (an octave lower) as if he were asking questions rhetorically and answering them himself ("*Sgomento alcun non HA?*"). Tosca sat, speech- (or rather song-) less on

her sofa, absolutely petrified. In the course of this interrogation, Scarpia asks her if Mario Cavaradossi was really all alone in the villa, and Tosca is supposed to scream "*solo, si!*" Obviously, Scarpia couldn't very well sing *that* too, but by now the whole cast were crouching behind the wings, leaning on Scarpia's every note, as it were. At the crucial moment, Spoletta came to his assistance, and the "*solo, si!*" rang out victoriously. The audience still accepted all these antics in good humor, partly because a good part of them didn't know what was quite happening.

The evening's equilibrium was slightly restored when the prima donna managed to sing the "*Vissi d'arte*" quite decently. Then came the great scene of Scarpia's murder. It turned out that our Tosca had a kind heart and could hardly bring herself to take the fatal step; moreover, her indecision was the greater because the unhappy woman wasn't really sure at exactly which point the dagger ought to be thrust home.

After many clandestine invitations on Scarpia's part to do so, she finally took the plunge, and Scarpia died with all the agonizing grace of which his theatrical talents and experience allowed. At this point, Tosca was near hysterics, and forgetting all that she had been lovingly and patiently taught in the rehearsal, she threw the crucifix at Scarpia's prostrate form, grabbed her mantle, and scuttled for the protective wings. What followed is no doubt unique in the annals of Puccini: the poor baritone helplessly waiting for the merciful curtain to fall.

Tosca's one idea at this juncture was to take the next train out of town. The Impresario, the conductor, and her colleagues—who were by now anxious to save the evening and their fees—begged, cajoled, threatened, and finally forced Tosca back on the stage for the third act.

Meanwhile everyone else was getting nervous too, especially the Cavaradossi, whose dying spasms were so realistic that he rolled right up to the footlights and almost put the prompter's eye out with a twitching foot. The prompter whispered angrily to roll the hell back or the curtain would come down *behind* him; and so the dutiful tenor continued his death agony towards the safety of the center stage just as Tosca was singing, "*Mario, non ti muovere*" ("Mario, don't move").

Out of regard for the prima donna's ample girth and her husband's important position, the number of mattresses behind the battlements of the Castel Sant' Angelo had been doubled so that her dramatic suicidal plunge would not end in a broken bone. Tosca cries "*Scarpia, avanti a Dio*" and launches herself over the tower. But either the stagehands had piled the mattresses too high or the prima donna's rear extremities were too opulent; in any case, the horrified spectators on and off stage were presented a generous view of the lady's posterior, which continued to grace the scene as the sun rose over the antique Roman walls. On this romantic sight the curtain slowly fell.



Auerbach

The Many-Sided Villa

Latin America's most celebrated composer was a man of enormous zest — for conversation, cafèzinhos, and “turning out the copy.”

BY EVERETT HELM

HEITOR Villa Lobos, who died in 1959 at an indeterminate and indeterminable age of around eighty, is one of the most important composers yet to be produced by the New World and certainly the greatest Latin-American composer to date. In his music, as in “real life,” he represents a mass of contradictions which nevertheless in their sum total add up to an integrated whole. He was at some times a self-appointed clown and at all times that which is best described by the French expression “*un numéro*”—a “character,” a “card.”

My own first meeting with Villa Lobos turned out to be typical of many subsequent meetings and of Villa's *modus operandi* in general. (I must add here that friends and acquaintances refer to him simply as Villa, without the Lobos; this first part of his double name is pronounced in Portuguese exactly as it is in English, with no Spanish “ll” sound.) In 1944 Villa had only recently moved into the new quarters of his Conservatorio Nacional de Canto Orfônico, which he had singlehandedly con-

ceived, organized, and (with government funds) put into operation two years earlier. As the doorman led me down the long corridors for my first audience, I could hear very few of the usual conservatory sounds. The huge place seemed almost dead except for loud voices coming from an open door at the back of the building. This proved to be the Throne Room, and I was ushered into The Presence. At the far end of the room the master was seated—readily identifiable by the big cigar and surrounded by a roaring, gesticulating group of six or seven.

Seeing me, Villa slapped the table with his palm, and a deep silence immediately ensued. He greeted me with warm eyes—his eyes were remarkable at all times—asked me to sit beside him, bade me welcome to Brazil, and said some nice things about the United States, to which he was about to pay his first visit. In the middle of this rather ordinary conversation he suddenly emitted a *fortissimo* cry, which proved to be the name of the attendant who had escorted me. The man hurried back like a

frightened rabbit and received orders to bring *cafézinhos* for the assembled company. Villa then resumed his speech of welcome precisely where he had left off, finished it neatly, smiled at me in the most enchanting way, and thrust a score into my hands. What did I think of the orchestration in a particular passage of his new piano concerto? Would it cover the solo instrument?

Before I had a chance even to look at the score, the "discussion" broke out again—everyone talking at the same time, gesticulating, shouting. Nobody, it seemed, had the least intention of allowing me to talk quietly with Villa, as I had hoped. I was a little taken aback by this but learned later that it was Villa's standard operating procedure. He loved to have people around him—lots of people, any time. He could concentrate under any and all conditions. On this particular occasion Villa went right on with his scoring—that was the project in hand—carrying on several conversations at once, alternately serious and joking, and calling periodically for more *cafézinhos*. Until his dying day he was a child of nature, completely free of inhibitions, possessed of enormous, almost fierce vitality.

IT IS DIFFICULT to ascertain even the bare facts about Villa Lobos' early life. He was a great fantastic: he made up stories almost faster than he could tell them. This does not mean that he was intentionally dishonest. He simply had an incredibly active imagination, which he applied to conversation as well as to musical creation. Some of his stories varied considerably in their successive tellings; some stood in direct contradiction to his previous or subsequent accounts. Others had in the course of repeated telling assumed a definitive form and varied scarcely at all—such, for instance, as the one about his capture by man-eating Indians, which he himself ended by believing. He could be as elusive in conversation as he could be garrulous. If he didn't want to answer a particular question, no power on earth could pin him down. But his good spirits, his wit, his charm, made it impossible to be annoyed with Villa for more than a few minutes.

For various conflicting reports of Villa's origins, education, early exploits, and wandering, the reader is referred to the standard works of reference. To summarize these: he was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1881 (Burle Marx), 1887 (*Grove's Dictionary* and Slonimsky), 1890 or 1892 (other sources). His father was a writer, a cellist, or a "man of the people," as the case may be. At an early age Villa learned to play the viola, the cello, or the guitar (and/or any number of wind instruments). When he was still young his father died. How young? It all depends on what birthday one assumes.

One fact seems well established: Villa was a rebellious youth who took not at all to formal education. He apparently did run away (or was expelled) from school, and his studies at the Instituto Nacional de Musica began and ended almost simultaneously. He really studied with nobody on a master-and-pupil



Musical America

From his pen there flowed more than 3,000 pieces.

basis but learned everything he knew (which was considerable) from intelligent listening and score reading. Typical of his attitude in this regard is the often quoted remark he made upon arriving in France in 1922—his first trip abroad: "I didn't come here to study. I came to show what I have done." (Incidentally, this visit was arranged by Artur Schnabel, who "discovered" Villa in 1919.)

There can be no doubt that Villa's early life brought him into close contact with the popular and folk music of Brazil. According to his own stories, he wandered over the entire face of this huge country, from Pernambuco to Rio Grande do Sul. Probably he did accompany a scientific expedition to Amazonas in 1912. Somewhere he must have come into close contact with Indian music (certainly not in Rio). Probably he also wandered through the north of Brazil, so rich in African, Afro-Indian, and Afro-Indian-Portuguese influences. Doubtless he played in popular music ensembles from an early age, both for pleasure and for money. Milhaud states in his *Notes Without Music* that Villa "in those days was compelled to play the cello in a cinema, to keep body and soul together." That was in 1917. At all events, Villa absorbed and inwardly digested the music of his own land to such an extent that it became an integrated part of, and the dominant factor in, his own music.

He claimed never to have used Brazilian folk music as such in his own work. In an interview with Olin Downes he remarked: "I compose in the folk style. I utilize thematic idioms in my own way. An artist . . . must select and transmit the material given him by his people. To make a potpourri of

folk melody and think that in this way music has been created, is hopeless." In point of fact, however, Villa did use authentic folk music when it served his purpose—as for example in the *Guia Prático*, a remarkable collection designed for school music teachers but far surpassing the scope of a purely pedagogical work.

I HAVE MENTIONED Milhaud's reference to Villa Lobos. It seems to me that the importance of Milhaud's presence in Brazil (as secretary to French Ambassador Paul Claudel during World War I) has never been adequately appraised in relation to Villa's artistic development. Here was this energetic, self-confident, somewhat arrogant, enormously gifted composer who had just begun to make a name for himself (the first concert of his music was in Rio in 1915). Milhaud was the first "great" composer Villa had ever laid eyes upon. Seeing Milhaud in action and meeting him must have given Villa a whole new perspective. No less important for Villa's development were the concerts of new music Milhaud arranged in Rio. Through them Villa's already strong inclination toward French style (as expressed, for example, in the impressionistic *Suite floral* of 1917) was strengthened and its stylistic scope extended. For the first time he heard the then revolutionary music of Erik Satie, which opened to him new worlds of expression. There is certainly a connection, for instance, between Villa's *Epigramas irônicos e sentimentais* of 1921 and works with similar titles by Satie.

The influence of modern French music made itself further felt during Villa's extended residence in Paris from 1922 to 1926. It comes out, for example, in the vigorous, angular, irregular rhythms of *Chôros* No. 7 (1924); the dissonant harmonic style of the *Nonet* (1923), often recalling the practices of Milhaud; and in the "cultivated banalities" of the fourth *Chôros* (1926), corresponding in spirit to the vogue for cheap café music that produced Milhaud's *Le Boeuf sur le toit*.

Only occasionally, however—and then chiefly in early compositions—does French influence emerge as direct imitation. While a Villa Lobos style, as such, can scarcely be said to exist, there is nevertheless a personal quality, or "inflection," in his best music that is unmistakably his own. In some instances it is the Brazilian flavor he imparts through direct quotation of typically Brazilian melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic traits; in others it is more a question of atmosphere and feeling—a kind of "Brazilian accent," with which he speaks the language of music.

The fifth *Chôros*, for instance, is to me the most "Brazilian" music conceivable, much more so than many works more obviously related to folk music. Its subtitle *Alma Brasileira* expresses exactly what it is—a portrayal of the "Brazilian soul." It is probably no matter of chance that this moving piece was written when Villa was far from his own country (in Paris, 1925). It is the ultimate

expression of that feeling which haunts Brazil and Brazilians, which is translatable as "nostalgia," but which can only be fully described by the Portuguese word "*saudades*," implying a combination of longing, tenderness, and profound *tristesse*. All this is contained in the melody (right hand) of this masterpiece. The accompaniment (left hand) is as restless as the Brazilian soul itself. The middle section of the piece makes an attempt at a kind of fierce gaiety but soon sinks back into the inexorable sadness of the first section, thus completing the typical Brazilian emotional curve.

Even Villa Lobos' liveliest pieces are tinged with hints of melancholy, while his vigorous works have something savage about them. The eighth of the *Bachianas Brasileiras* comes to mind immediately. The *Preludio*, which begins calmly, soon becomes agitated and menacing. The *Aria (modinha, or little song of a popular nature)* is filled with almost abysmal *saudades*; the intensity of emotion becomes almost unbearable, then seems to collapse into sheer hopeless exhaustion. In the *Toccata* and especially in the closing *Fugue* the musical quality degenerates at times into primitive energy without the support of strong ideas and inventions, making for a piece of somewhat uneven quality.

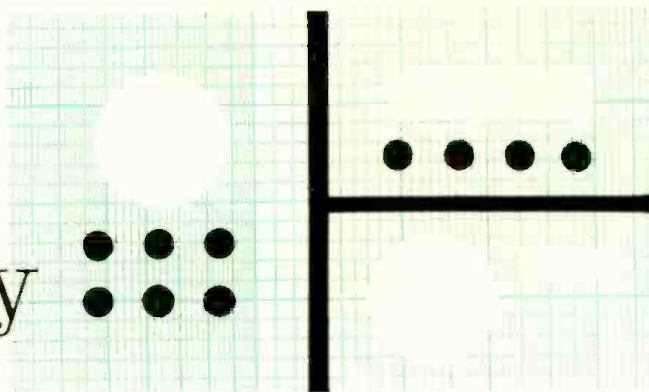
Unevenness of quality, indeed, marks the work of Villa Lobos as a whole. His enormous output, consisting of well over 3,000 separate pieces, represents the outpouring of a gifted musician who worked chiefly by intuition. He possessed a remarkable technique that allowed him to "turn out the copy" at a frightening rate of speed. All too often this facility was not matched by powers of self-criticism. I recall being present one day in his modest flat in Rio (he never went in for luxuries or even for very many modern conveniences), when he was searching through huge stacks of music to find a suitable piece to send for performance in Europe. Finally he decided on an early orchestral work—I think it was the *First Symphony* (which bore three dates, two of which had been scratched out in favor of 1916)—and asked me what I thought. I read through the work, which seemed to me uninspired, and suggested that he might do well to send something more recent. He looked at me with astonishment, made a series of excruciatingly funny gestures of a man being hanged (he was a fabulous mimic and actor), and burst into roars of laughter. In the end he decided on another piece that represented little if any improvement over the first choice he had made.

AFTER HIS RETURN to Brazil from his European sojourn, Villa Lobos conducted with increasing frequency throughout South America—concerts that included or consisted exclusively of his own compositions. In the 1930s, with the support of the Vargas government, he was active in public school music, holding the position of Superintendent of Musical Education. It was during this period that he organized his

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*The consumer's guide
to new and important
high-fidelity equipment*

high fidelity



EQUIPMENT REPORTS



Citation III-MA FM Stereo (Multiplex) Adapter; Citation III-X Tuner

AT A GLANCE: Harman-Kardon's Citation III-MA is a multiplex adapter designed for use with an existing Citation III FM tuner to permit it to receive the new FM stereo (as well as monophonic FM) broadcasts. The adapter, which comes completely wired and assembled, is installed on a space provided for it on the tuner chassis (following some wiring changes made under the chassis). With the adapter, the buyer also receives a new front escutcheon to accommodate and identify the new controls for stereo reception.

Tests were made of the adapter added to a kit-built

Citation III tuner. The results were excellent, and in the view of United States Testing Co., Inc., the Citation III-MA adapter has been designed and built to near perfection. Price of the adapter alone is \$79.95.

The adapter converts the tuner to a Citation III-X, which model number now designates the new stereo version of this highly regarded tuner (the mono version was reported on here in October 1961). As a kit, the complete Citation III-X is priced at \$219.95; factory-wired, \$299.95. Manufacturer: Harman-Kardon, Inc., Plainview, L. I., N. Y.

REPORT POLICY

Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and listening tests. Data for the reports, on equipment other than loudspeakers, is obtained by the United States Testing Company, Inc., of Hoboken, New Jersey, a completely independent organization which, since 1880, has been a leader in product evaluation. Speaker reports are based on controlled listening tests. Occasionally, a supplementary agency may be invited to contribute to the testing program. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with the editors of HIGH FIDELITY. No report, or portion thereof, may be reproduced for any purpose or in any form without written permission of the publisher.



Adapter sits on rear of chassis.

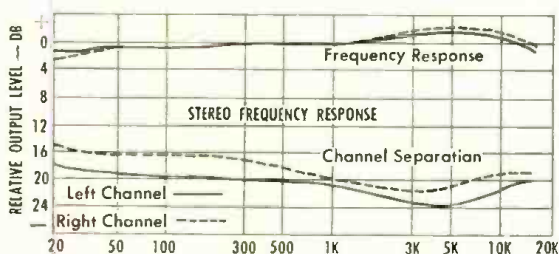
IN DETAIL: To those who know of the performance and quality of the Citation III (monophonic) tuner, it is enough to say that the stereo version carries through the same basic design philosophy and outstanding acoustic results. Those who own a Citation III will find that the new stereo adapter is a fitting adjunct to it, producing an instrument capable of realizing the full potential of FM stereo. The multiplex adapter comes completely wired and was found to be aligned for optimum performance. It fits neatly and out of the way on the rear of the chassis of the Citation III tuner. The adapter's filament and B-plus voltages are obtained from the tuner's power supply, with connections being made through an octal socket on the tuner's chassis. The adapter's left and right audio output signals are also fed through the octal socket to the volume control on the tuner's front panel and thence to the tuner's output jacks. The adapter's multiplex input contains a short coaxial lead terminated in a phono plug which plugs into the multiplex output jack at the rear of the tuner.

When set (by a front panel control) for monophonic operation, the Citation III-X tuner functions as a Citation III tuner, and the multiplex section is not used. When set for stereophonic operation, the Citation III's two-stage audio amplifier section is not used, and the multiplex adapter takes over.

The over-all design of the adapter is basically identical to the adapter used in Harman-Kardon's "Award" series of tuners and tuner-amplifier combinations, and was described in last month's report on the Award TA-5000X. However, the Citation III-MA adapter also incorporates one audio amplification stage per channel ($\frac{1}{2}$ - 12AT7), the output of which is fed back into the tuner's chassis to the volume control, which contains three separate sections.

Measurements were made at USTC of the Citation III-X on FM stereo operation. The figures pretty much verify Citation's claims of extra wide-band audio response. Thus, the frequency response of its left channel was uniform within plus or minus 1 db from 20 cps to 15 kc, and dropped off to -3 db at 8 cps on the low end. The right channel showed a 2-db rise between 4 and 7 kc, and rolled off to -3 db at 10 cps.

The channel separation of the multiplex adapter was very good, and also rather unusual in that it was maintained at a relatively constant level throughout the audio spectrum. Separation figures from either right-

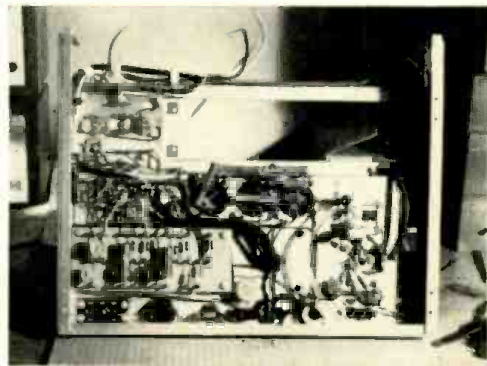


to-left, or left-to-right, remained better than 15 db from 20 cps to 15 kc, and better than 19 db from 800 cps to 15 kc.

The THD of the right channel output signal was very low for FM stereo, being 0.7% at 40 cps; 0.4% at 400 cps; and 0.66% at 1,000 cps. On the left channel, the THD was somewhat higher, but still within the acceptable limits for FM stereo (1.7% at 40 cps; 1.2% at 400 cps; and 0.57% at 1,000 cps).

Each channel of the tuner provided a maximum output level of 2.2 volts, with the level of the 19-kc pilot and 38-kc subcarrier signals down 38.5 and 42.2 db respectively from this level. This provides complete assurance against developing "birdies" in off-the-air tape recording.

As might be expected from the results of the measurements performed on the Citation III-X tuner, its sound is superb. Its channel separation on FM stereo, and its wide-band audio response, give the sound a wide-open spaciousness with excellent depth and clarity. Tuned to a good FM stereo station, there is no audible distortion, even when using a folded-dipole antenna. On weaker or distant stations, the tuner—aided by a stronger antenna—grabs and holds incoming signals with an impressive amount of quieting action. It is, in fact, one of the few top tuners in this regard as well as in its clean sound. The Citation III-MA, in sum, is as high quality a multiplex adapter as the Citation III is a tuner. The two mate, as the Citation III-X, to comprise an FM receiving unit of unimpeachable performance.



How It Went Together

Building a Citation tuner is time-consuming, but potentially rewarding so long as you submit completely to the instruction manual which handily gets you through all the wiring intricacies and tight places under the chassis. The final alignment procedure, performed as per the manual and without professional instruments, but simply by using the tuner's two front panel meters as guides, really worked. In fact, when the tuner was put on the test bench for its "check-out," one technician commented that it was a "real hot job"—hot, meaning here, of course, highly sensitive and accurate. The work of adding the adapter section (if the kit builder has started with a Citation III) consists of making some wiring changes under the chassis, installing a new volume control, function selector switch, and front escutcheon, and then fitting the adapter sub-chassis in place on the main tuner chassis. Working on the final phases under the chassis, there are moments when you may be convinced there can't be room for one more wire—but there is. This discovery, however, is surpassed by the discovery of the final results when all is finished and the set is turned on.



Lafayette KT-236A Stereo Integrated Amplifier Kit

AT A GLANCE: Lafayette's Model KT-236A is a low-cost, compact twin-channel preamplifier-power amplifier combination, capable of furnishing about 15 watts per channel. In testing a model that had been built from a kit, United States Testing Company, Inc., found that while it lacked many of the features found on costlier units, its performance in many respects was outstanding. Price is \$59.50. Manufacturer: Lafayette Radio Corp., 111 Jericho Turnpike, Syosset, L.I., N.Y.

IN DETAIL: Front panel operating controls on the 236A include a three-position input selector switch (auxiliary, tuner, and RIAA phono); dual-concentric bass, treble, and volume controls for each channel; a blend control (unusual for a unit in this price class) combined with a power-line on-off switch; and three slide switches controlling phase reversal, channel reversal, and single-channel operation.

On the rear of the amplifier's chassis, input jacks are provided for either magnetic or ceramic phono, tuner, and auxiliary, plus a pair of tape-output jacks for tape recording. Speaker output taps are provided for either 8- or 16-ohm speakers. One AC convenience outlet is also furnished.

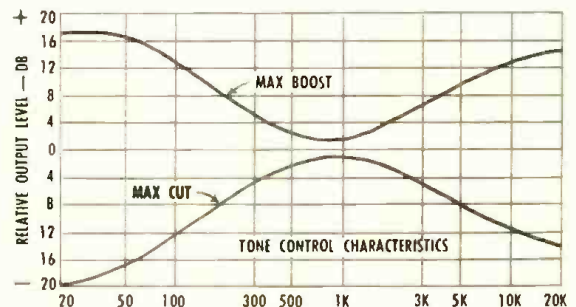
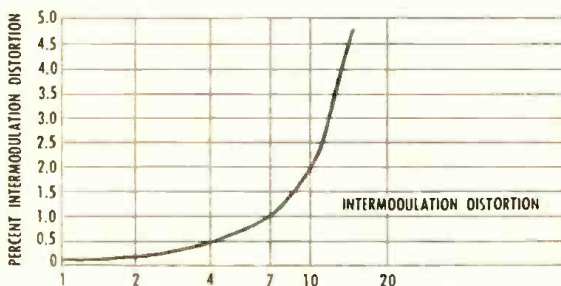
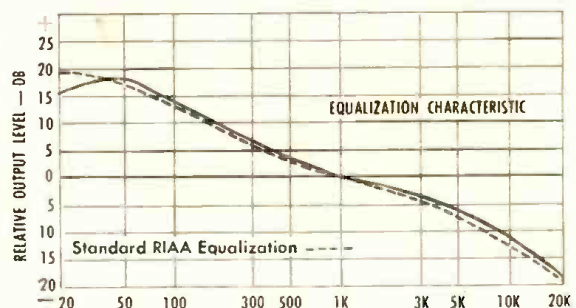
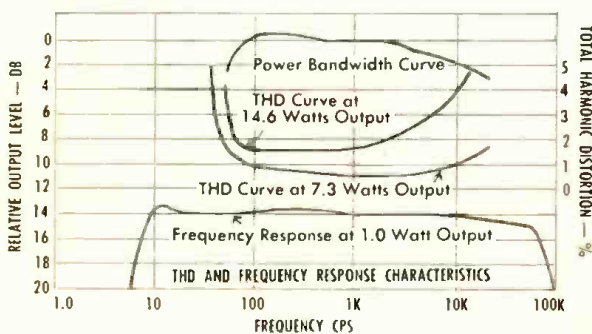
The ceramic phono input is connected to the magnetic phono input through a 120-uuf capacitor to convert the constant-amplitude characteristics of a

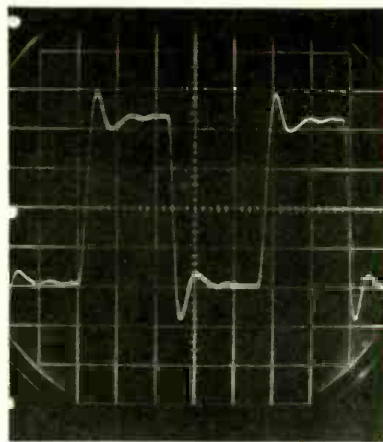
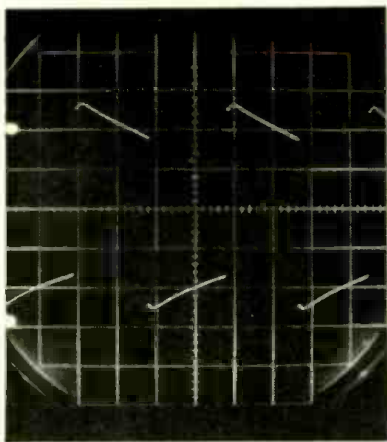
ceramic or crystal cartridge to the constant-velocity characteristics of a magnetic cartridge. The magnetic input, loaded with a 47k-ohm resistor, is fed through two stages of preamplification (12AX7) with RIAA equalization to the input selector switch.

In each channel, the high level signal from the selector switch feeds a Baxandall-type tone control circuit and a 12AX7 amplification stage. This is followed by the volume control, a 7199 driver and phase inverter, and a pair of EL84 output tubes. Feedback is used from the secondary of the output transformer back to the cathode of the 7199 driver stage. The power supply uses two silicon diode rectifiers for the B-plus voltages, and hum-balancing potentiometers are included in the filament circuits.

At 1,000 cps, the amplifier provided 14.6 watts rms on the left channel and 15.2 watts rms on the right channel before clipping occurred. The distortion on the left channel at 14.6 watts was 1.7%. When both channels are driven simultaneously, the power output dropped from 14.6 watts to 13.8 watts for the same amount of harmonic distortion. This relatively small decrease in output power indicates that the amplifier has a fairly well-regulated power supply.

The amplifier's power bandwidth extended from 50 cps to 20 kc. Below 50 cps, the amplifier's power-handling capacity dropped sharply, and at 20 cps the





Square wave response to 50 cps, left, and to 10 kc.

amplifier could supply less than 1 watt of audio power for 2% THD.

At rated power output (14.6 watts), the THD was 2% at 60 cps and 2,000 cps, and rose to 4% at 10 kc. Half-power distortion at 1 kc was 0.6% and remained under 1% from 85 cps to 9 kc. The IM distortion of the amplifier was 0.1% at 1 watt; 1% at 7 watts; and 4.75% at full power.

The amplifier's frequency response at the one-watt level was flat within plus or minus 0.6 db from 8.8 cps to 45 kc. The lower and upper minus 3 db points on the frequency response characteristic were at 7 cps and 76 kc respectively. This response is outstanding, especially for a control amplifier selling for under \$60.

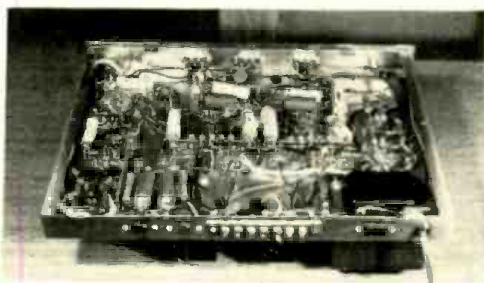
The amplifier's square wave response was also generally very good for a moderately rated control amplifier. The 50-cps response was quite good, and showed a not-too-severe phase shift. The 10-kc square wave was also good, but showed some overshoot and ringing. The damping factor of the amplifier was 4.6.

The RIAA equalization characteristic was maintained within plus or minus 1.5 db from 30 cps to 20 kc,

and the tone control characteristics were very desirable from a musical standpoint.

The sensitivity of the amplifier (for 14.6 watts output) was 2.8 millivolts at the magnetic phono input, 75 millivolts at the ceramic phono input, and 0.45 volts at the high level inputs. Signal-to-noise ratio was 70 db on the high level inputs and 50 db on the magnetic phono input, both of which are satisfactory. Signal-to-noise ratio on ceramic phono was only 32 db however, which is very poor.

To buyers planning a low-powered, compact system the Lafayette KT-236A presents a very good buy. It either meets or nearly meets all of its ratings with the exception of harmonic distortion. It is not, of course, a high-powered unit, and should not be used with low-efficiency speaker systems. It also lacks many of the features and conveniences of costlier amplifiers such as a balance control, a tape head input, scratch and rumble filters, loudness contour, 4-ohm output taps, a center-channel output, and tape monitoring provisions. However, within the limitations of an extremely low-priced unit, the 236A will prove more than satisfactory.



How It Went Together

The Lafayette KT-236A amplifier kit was a pleasure to assemble. The instruction manual, with its clear, life-size drawings of the various components as well as portions of the chassis, makes selection and installing of the parts easy. Mounting the components in their correct places is further simplified by the printed legends found on the chassis which give their exact locations.

As in many kits, the lengths of the wires called for in the instructions seemed to be overly long in some instances. However, we found it best to cut the wire to the recommended length and then, to make the finished wiring neater, solder or hook one end in its proper place, dress as shown in the pictorial, and snip off any extra length before connecting the other end.

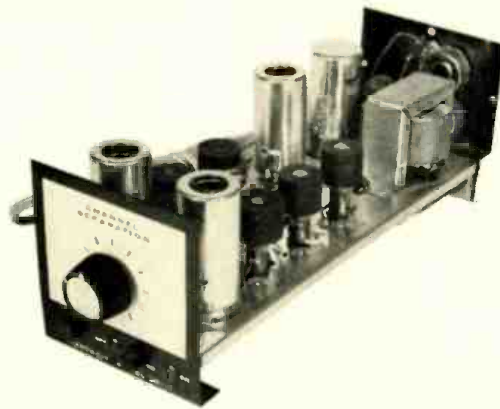
Care must be taken to position the various components as shown in the pictorials, particularly with respect to the double ground lugs on both four-phonograph strips—the only part of the amplifier, by the way, where soldering may be a trifle difficult.

Most of the component parts must be mounted, and a good portion of the wiring done, before the power transformer is mounted and wired. This makes the chassis easier to handle during the first part of construction.

We recommend that the builder carefully study the selector switch (Part 14-25) before wiring it, since the numbering of the lugs on this part may be confusing. Directions for installing the ceramic printed circuits, which are wired to the tone controls, also should be studied carefully to make this part of the job easier. Use of ceramic printed circuits, by the way, actually simplifies an otherwise complex wiring procedure.

The only error, and that a very minor one, found in the kit was that ground lug G-1 on capacitor C-40 had no hole in it. However, a wire wrapped tightly and crimped around the solid lug and then soldered will make a good ground. (Any other ground lug on the same capacitor could be used, too.)

Hum was so negligible that it was necessary to turn the volume control almost fully clockwise to adjust hum balance; it was practically nonexistent at normal listening levels.



**Heathkit Model ACW-11
Multiplex Adapter**

AT A GLANCE: Heathkit's Model ACW-11 multiplex adapter is an economical unit designed to operate with any good quality, wide-band FM tuner. It is comparatively lightweight and compact, weighing only 2½ lbs. Price in kit form (Model AC-11) is \$32.50; factory-wired (Model ACW-11), \$56.25. Manufacturer: Heath Company, Benton Harbor, Mich.

IN DETAIL: The ACW-11 has two front panel operating controls: an "on-off" switch and a separation control. There also are individual level controls for each channel located on the rear panel of the adapter.

The composite stereo signal from the FM tuner is fed into the adapter through a wide-band amplifier stage. Part of this signal is applied to a cathode follower stage which feeds a 15-kc low pass filter to obtain the L + R (left plus right channel) signals only. These signals are then passed through a potentiometer (separation control) to the matrixing network.

The remaining portion of the amplified composite signal is fed to a second wide-band amplifier stage where it again divides along two paths. The 19-kc pilot signal is filtered out and is used to synchronize a 38-kc oscillator. This 38-kc signal is fed into a balanced demodulator containing two crystal diodes as detectors. A 23- to 53-kc band pass filter selects the amplified L - R signal from the composite signal, mixes it with the 38-kc signal, and feeds the sum to the balanced demodulator. The demodulator produces an L - R output and a -L + R output for the matrixing network, which adds the L - R to the L + R to develop the left channel audio output and the -L + R to develop the right channel audio output. Cathode follower outputs are provided for each channel. The tubes used in the ACW-11 are all 12AU7s. The ACW-11 has a self-contained power supply, employing two silicon diode rectifiers.

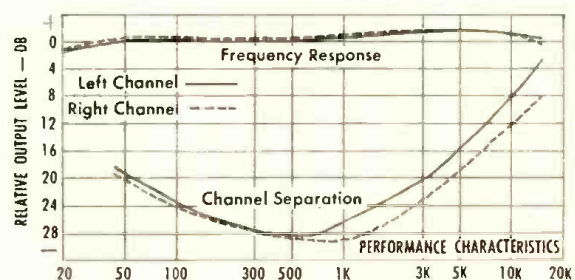
Performance measurements on the ACW-11 were made directly from the Scott multiplex generator, which supplies a "perfect" multiplex composite signal to drive an adapter. Under these ideal conditions, the ACW-11 functioned fairly well. Its frequency response was flat within plus or minus 1.6 db from 20 cps to 15 kc, with excellent channel balance. Channel separation was 28 db at 400 cps, and was maintained greater

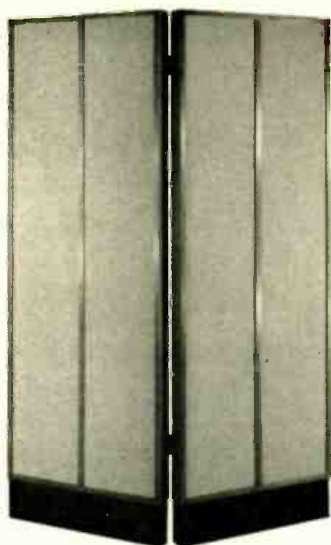
than 15 db up to 5,200 cps. The minimum channel separation at 10 kc was 8 db, dropping at 15 kc to a low of 2.6 db.

The harmonic distortion of the ACW-11 was relatively low. On the left channel United States Testing Company, Inc., measured 2.4% at 40 cps; 1.1% at 400 cps; and 1.2% at 1,000 cps. On the right channel, the THD was 1.2% at 40 cps; 1.4% at 400 cps; and 1.2% at 1,000 cps.

The Heath multiplex adapter requires approximately 0.5 volts rms from the output jack of the FM tuner in order to synchronize properly its 38-kc oscillator with the 19-kc pilot signal transmitted by the broadcast station.

In sum, while the Heathkit adapter's measurements are reasonably good for its price class, it should be pointed out that they were obtained under ideal laboratory conditions in which an excellent composite signal—from the multiplex generator—was used to drive the unit. Whether such a signal can be equaled or approximated in normal use, with different FM tuners, is impossible to predict. In evaluating the ACW-11 when used with a number of different tuners receiving broadcast stereo signals, some listeners felt that its channel separation was not of the highest order and that distortion increased slightly in the stereo mode. In any case, USTC feels that the ACW-11 will provide generally satisfactory, but not spectacular, performance when used with a good, wide-band tuner whose own response has low distortion and extends, within plus or minus 3 db, to 53 kc.





KLH-9 Electrostatic Speaker System

AT A GLANCE: The Model 9 by KLH is the first, and so far only, speaker system made in this country that uses the electrostatic principle to cover the full audio range. It is sold as a matched pair of reproducers, actually two large vertical panels which resemble decorator-type standing screens. The two panels may be arranged and connected to serve as a stereo pair, or—if desired—as one very large single-channel reproducer. Since the Model 9 radiates sound from its nominal front as well as rear, it implies being used somewhat away from a wall. In most rooms, the most effective stereo probably will require that the two sections be spaced at some distance from each other, as well as from nearby walls.

The panels are framed in oiled walnut, with a neutral-tint cloth covering the sound-producing elements. Each one—71½ inches tall, 22¼ inches wide, and 2⅞ inches thick—rests on an integral pedestal. An AC power supply—which furnishes the polarizing voltage needed to operate the system—fits directly into the pedestal and actually helps support the speaker as it stands, at a slightly rear-tilted angle, on the floor.

Its unusual appearance, operational principle, and installation demands aside, the KLH-9 produces some of the cleanest, most transparent sound yet heard from a commercial loudspeaker. Its over-all smoothness of response, acoustic balance, and wide range (including the deep bass, which hitherto has been considered something of a problem with electrostatics) surpasses many, and can be compared favorably to the best conventional speaker systems designed for home use. It should be used with high quality, high-powered amplifiers, and while it will deliver full symphonic levels in normal-size rooms, it should not be called on to “fill a hall” with sound. Price is \$1,140. Manufacturer: KLH Research & Development Corp., 30 Cross St., Cambridge 39, Mass.

IN DETAIL: In contrast to a conventional speaker, which is essentially an electromagnetic motor causing a diaphragm to vibrate, an electrostatic speaker may be described as a huge capacitor (“condenser”) which produces sound when one of its plates vibrates. One might question the need for such an approach when there are so many fine examples of the magnetic speaker idea. To partisans of the conventional speaker in its many variants, there may indeed be no answer to this question. To others, however, the fact that something can be done in a different way represents a challenge to do

it better by mastering the new technique. One advantage of the electrostatic, in particular, often called to attention, is the fact that its moving member vibrates as a solid unit, without the problem of “break-up” (some parts of a diaphragm moving out of step with others, or with the speaker voice-coil) that can cause distortion in a conventional speaker. In the past, few—including the strongest advocates of magnetic speakers—have denied that the electrostatic idea could be used to develop some very clean-sounding tweeters.

Generally, there are two types of electrostatic speaker. The “single-ended” type employs two electrodes, or plates—one fixed and the other movable. A bias voltage (usually obtained by tapping into the amplifier’s power supply) is applied across the electrodes to set up an electrostatic field. Audio signals from the amplifier, changing this field, cause one plate to vibrate. The result is sound.

Although the single-ended electrostatic idea has been used to produce some tweeters (occasionally available as separate parts for audio experimenters, and actually used in some package sets—particularly of European manufacture—which also employ conventional woofers), this simplest form of electrostatic speaker has limited applications in high fidelity service because of certain mechanical and electrical problems. A fairly serious one, for instance, is its susceptibility to being driven into distortion due simply to the laws of physics. Because of the relationship of distance (between the two plates) and the force required to move one of them, that force may not always be proportional to the audio signal, particularly at high levels. To overcome this and other problems, serious designers of electrostatics (here and in England) turned to the “push-pull” type. In this more sophisticated version, three plates, instead of two, are used to form a “sandwich”—with the outer plates serving as the fixed, immovable electrodes, and the inner plate acting as a moving diaphragm. A transformer is used to supply the polarizing voltage (obtained from the power line), as well as to couple the audio signal from the amplifier.

The audio signal, in effect, modulates the polarizing voltage so that the inner diaphragm is both “pushed” and “pulled” between the two outer electrodes. In generating sound in this manner, the push-pull electrostatic speaker achieves a high order of linearity of response since the force applied to the moving plate can remain more constantly proportional to the applied audio signal. Such a system is not inherently frequency-discriminating,

and the chief factor in extending its response downward to reproduce bass is mainly a matter of the size of the plates—the larger the plates, the deeper the response. The first production-scale model to demonstrate that the bass range could be handled nicely by electrostatics was, of course, the British-made Quad (reported on here in November 1960). The new KLH-9 demonstrates this even more forcibly.

In the Model 9, a very large radiating surface is used, approximately 7 square feet for each of the two sections. Since the system radiates from both sides, the total sound radiation area becomes approximately 28 square feet. Frequencies up to about 1,500 cps are handled by very thin (0.0005-inch) inner diaphragms vibrating in response to the audio signals which are applied to the outer electrodes. Above 1,500 cps, response is handled by a JansZen radiator (produced by Neshaminy). Crossover between the larger woofer sections and the smaller tweeter section is accomplished by a network of transformers and resistors, without the need for any capacitors. A selenium-stack voltage multiplier and line-voltage set-up transformer supply the required polarizing voltage of approximately 6,000 volts.

The benefits of the large sound-radiating surfaces, and the dipole effect of sound emanating from both front and rear of those surfaces, are best realized from a listening area somewhat away from the speakers. Thus, the Model 9 tends toward some directivity of high frequencies when one listens very near it; as you step back, however, the system takes on a broader, more natural sound spread. Its characteristic sound on white noise is generally soft and smooth, again bespeaking good high-frequency dispersion. On signal generator scanning, the KLH-9 produced some of the purest "whistles" we have yet heard. Its upper frequency reaches are clean and well defined and extend beyond audibility. Its bass limits, apparently, relate somewhat to the amplifier power fed into it, with clean and solid response holding strong down to 30 cycles. Between these extremes, that is to say, throughout its range generally, the Model 9 provides very smooth response, with no significant peaks, dips, or distortion. Only the slightest irregularities were observed in the 200- to 400-cycle region; these are, in sum, no more than normally observed with any speaker system and, in fact, a good deal less than encountered in most.

On program material, the most apparent quality that can be attributed to the KLH-9 is its high order of definition and clarity. Orchestral music sounded full and well balanced; the solo piano seemed nicely "framed" if somewhat "big"; organ tones came through quite clearly with a sense of full power; the male voice sounded very natural. Many listeners were highly enthused by the Model 9's performance on percussives and transients (such as plucked guitar strings) which sounded most realistic. Beyond general agreement on those points, the sound of the Model 9 was described by

different listeners in different terms—viz., "utterly transparent," "neutral," or "cold and austere." Or, to repeat a dialogue that occurred in one listening session: "This is a real cool speaker." "Yes, but I prefer a warmer one." At that, even those who felt a "psychoacoustic chill" did allow that over-all the sound of the KLH-9 was much better than average.

Beyond listening judgments which (to repeat advice often given) should be made by the prospective buyer himself, certain other points should be considered with the Model 9. For best performance, it is designed not to be placed in, or against, a wall but rather to stand freely away from the wall so that the full effect of its dipole operation can be appreciated. With the pair separated for stereo, there is the obvious question of where they will go in a normal size room and how they will look when installed. Again, this question must be answered on an individual, personal basis—but it is a valid consideration. For that matter, the question has been raised of the prospect of having a 6,000-volt power pack sitting on the floor where it, or indeed the tall speaker it is helping to maintain upright, may be accidentally knocked over. From all indications and examination, this setup is perfectly safe and thoroughly protected—possibly more so than many TV sets which also employ rather high voltages—but no doubt some will balk at it. Finally, and perhaps most germane from the standpoint of pure performance, is the question of what amplifier to use with the Model 9.

Since it is a low-efficiency system, the Model 9 requires large amounts of clean amplifier power for best results. An amplifier which otherwise (i.e. when driving a conventional speaker) might not be called on to deliver maximum power reserves may be expected to do so when driving the Model 9. Under certain conditions of program material or relatively slight degrees of amplifier instability, an amplifier thus can "exert" itself to the point of clipping or distortion. On the other hand, there is a limit to the extent to which the Model 9 itself can be driven; while it will deliver full symphonic levels in fairly large rooms, it should not be expected to serve the same acoustic ends that a "theatre-type" speaker can negotiate. In any case, for consistently satisfactory performance in normal size rooms, the KLH-9 is best used with high quality, fairly stable amplifiers capable of delivering at least 35 clean watts (per channel)—and the higher-powered, the better. Interestingly enough, it has been pointed out that an all-triode amplifier (of the type that enjoyed a vogue in the early days of high fidelity) would be well suited to the Model 9. We have not had an opportunity to try our sample with such an amplifier, but we have had some experience with others of recent vintage and high repute. These too seem well suited; that is to say, if one can live without turning the volume control to full maximum, the KLH-9—fed by any of today's top-quality amplifiers—comprises one of the finest reproducing systems presently available.

REPORTS IN PROGRESS

Ampex 1260 Tape Recorder

Garrard AT-6 Record Changer

Fisher 100-B; 200-B FM Stereo Tuners

EMI Compact Speaker System

“Brings
out sound
from records
that more
expensive
cartridges
do not”

Preston McGraw

United Press
International Hi-Fi
equipment reviewer

the incomparable new

SHURE SERIES M33

Stereo Dynetic®

HIGH FIDELITY PHONOGRAPH CARTRIDGES

NOT HOW MUCH? BUT HOW GOOD?

According to United Press' Preston McGraw, the Shure series M33 cartridges are "so good that a hard-shelled listener might suspect Shure engineers of not knowing what they had when they hung a price tag on them."

We knew, all right, Mr. McGraw. It's just that we don't believe the best sounding cartridge need be the most expensive. The new Series M33, after all, was developed by the same team of engineers who developed the redoubtable Shure M3D series . . . the world's first truly high fidelity stereo cartridge. Numerically, Shure has made more highest-quality stereo cartridges than any other manufacturer—and they're used by more critics and independent hi-fi authorities than any other. Chronologically, Shure had a two year head start on the others. In short, Shure has learned how to make these critical components in the kind of quantities that result in lower prices.

THE SOUND OF SPECIFICATIONS

Again quoting Mr. McGraw: "Professional engineers are largely impressed by specifications, and the specifications of the M33 (except for compliance) are not unprecedented. But the way it sounds is something else again. The M33 puts flesh and bones on specifications. It brings out sound from records that more expensive cartridges do not."

He's right. To begin with, Shure specifications (as published) are not theoretical laboratory figures, or mere claims . . . they are actual production standards. 20 to 20,000 cps. response may appear average. But what the bare specifications don't show is that the M33 series goes right through the audible spectrum without a hint of the break-up prevalent in most other cartridges. Also, it is remarkably free from disconcerting peaking at this frequency or that. Result: absolutely smooth, transparent, natural sound re-creation. (Incidentally, where would you find a record that goes from 20 to 20,000 cps. with genuine music on it?)

Separation is over 22.5 db. at 1000 cps. Much more than necessary, really. Again, the separation figure doesn't show that the M33's separation is excellent throughout the audible spectrum. No cross-talk between channels. Even when an oboe plays.

And the matter of compliance: 22×10^{-6} cm. per dyne for the M33-5. Now there's a specification! According to Mr. McGraw, the Shure stylus feels like a "loose tooth." And so it should. The incredible compliance of the M33-5 gives it the ability to respond instantly to the manifold and hyper-complex undulations of the record groove.

Superior sound is one outcome of the superb compliance. Another is the ability to track the record at low force. The M33-5 will track at forces as low as any other cartridge on the market today.

SPECIFICATIONS

	M33-5	M33-7
Channel Separation (at 1000 cps)	Over 22.5 db	Over 22.5 db
Frequency Response	20 to 20,000 cps	20 to 20,000 cps
Output Voltage (per channel, at 1000 cps)	6 mv	6 mv
Recommended Load Impedance (per channel)	47,000 ohms	47,000 ohms
Compliance; Vertical & Lateral	22.0×10^{-6} cent. per dyne	20.0×10^{-6} cent. per dyne
Tracking Force	$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1.5 grams	1.5 to 3 grams
Inductance	600 millihenrys	600 millihenrys
D.C. Resistance	750 ohms	750 ohms
Stylus:	.0005" diamond	.0007" diamond
Terminals	4 terminal. (Furnished with adapters for 3-terminal stereo or monaural use.)	
Mounting Centers		Fits Standard $\frac{1}{2}$ "

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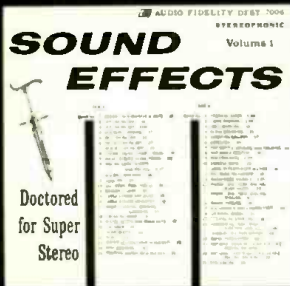
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Records in Review



by Alfred Frankenstein



After eight decades, still an "electrifying aliveness."

Stravinsky—With the Composer's Imprimatur

IN COMMEMORATION of Igor Stravinsky's eightieth birthday, Columbia has recently issued seven records containing works by that composer. In a little note on the back of each jacket, Goddard Lieberson [president of Columbia Records] points out that his firm has produced discs of more than forty compositions by Stravinsky under Stravinsky's own direction or supervision. This is a most remarkable fact. No other composer in history is even remotely so well represented on records in performances embodying his own interpretative ideas.

Included in the new releases is one brand-new work—a kind of Mystery play entitled *The Flood*. This is coupled with a marvelous new performance of Stravinsky's Mass, which reveals the true reach and stature of that masterpiece for the first time so far as records are concerned. Also among the new discs is one of the neglected early opera, *Le Rossignol*. Other works in the series are the Violin Concerto, the Piano Concerto, the *Sym-*

phony in Three Movements, the suite from *Pulcinella*, *Pétrouchka*, and *The Firebird*. There is also one record devoted to music by Stravinsky for two pianos and for one piano, four hands.

The Flood might be roughly characterized as the modern answer to *The Play of Daniel*. Designed for television performance, it runs about twenty-three minutes (leaving seven minutes for congratulations, commercials, and similar ceremonies), and in that short time manages to compress a highly satisfactory account of the creation of the world and of man, the fall of Lucifer, the temptation of Adam and Eve, the calling of Noah, the building and stocking of the Ark, the Flood, and the Covenant of the Rainbow. Rarely does so much transpire in twenty-three minutes, yet no essential is slighted. Stravinsky's mastery of form and timing has seldom been so brilliantly displayed.

The work begins and ends with a choral Te Deum written in a vigorous,

intense, highly rhythmical style like that of *Les Noces*. The Te Deum is the only section calling for a chorus and among the solo parts the only sung roles are those of God and Lucifer-Satan (God being done by two voices throughout). There is an important part for a narrator, and the roles of Noah, his wife, and his children are all spoken. The text is derived from the Book of Genesis and from the York and Chester Mysteries and other medieval sources.

The passages dealing with the construction of the Ark and the inundations of the Flood are for orchestra alone and are among the most impressive expressions of Stravinsky's newest style—atomistic, full of sparks and spangles of sound, employing a large orchestra in a soloistic chamberlike style but drawing on it for big sonorities when necessary. The whole is energized with that electrifying aliveness peculiar to Stravinsky. These orchestral passages—involving ballet on television—have an unmis-

takable descriptive quality. The work begins with a fine tonal picture of primeval chaos, and the snake tempts Eve to the most serpentine measures since Bach. All this is most unusual for the Stravinsky of recent years, a point to which I shall return.

The singing parts of *The Flood* are, in general, in the severe style of Stravinsky's recent cantatas. Satan, however, is clearly related to his numerous predecessors in this composer's work, notably to Nick Shadow of *The Rake's Progress*, and the speaking "caller" who enumerates the animals entering the Ark is first cousin to the auctioneer in the same opera.

In sum, *The Flood* is one of the most entertaining works Stravinsky has produced in recent years, and its recording here, under the composer's baton, is perfection itself.

The Mass, on the same disc with *The Flood*, should be heard in the stereophonic version. Stereo has an especially important function in the recording of choruses; it gives the sound a much-needed spread in space, and, even more significantly, it keeps the lines of polyphony distinct. This is especially necessary in a work like Stravinsky's Mass, the polyphony of which has been known to clot into muddy lumps. On this record the Mass comes at last into its own. Clarity and strength characterize its performance, by the Columbia chorus and wind orchestra under the composer's direction. There is also brought out in the brief vocal solos a white, unwavering, medieval quality which is almost pictorial in its effect; it is as if one and then another of the open-mouthed singers framing the portal of some Romanesque cathedral were momentarily to be heard alone before sinking back into the anonymity of the group.

The new recording of *Le Rossignol* supersedes the French-sung version directed by André Cluytens which has been available (first on Angel, now on the imported Pathé label) for some years. Here it is done in Russian by the enterprising young Opera Society of Washington, with the composer conducting. A delightful opera, *Le Rossignol* (*Solovei*, in Russian; *The Nightingale*, in English) takes its plot from the familiar Hans Christian Andersen story about the emperor of China's nightingale who flies away from his master when the latter receives a mechanical nightingale from the emperor of Japan; many years later, the emperor of China lies at the point of death, whereupon the live bird returns, charms death with its song, and saves the emperor's life.

Although the work is in three well-developed acts, it is no longer than a single act of most nineteenth-century operas and shorter than any single scene in Wagner. The score embodies a curious stylistic break. The first act was completed in 1909 and is in a rather pale, Debussyan idiom not altogether unlike that of the French composer's familiar *Nuages*. The second and third acts were written in 1914, and in the five intervening years Stravinsky had become a totally different person. He had composed



The composer in the mid-Thirties.

Pétrouchka and the *Sacre* during that period, and in the process he had matured faster and gone further than any composer in history within a comparable period, Beethoven alone excepted.

Writing *Pétrouchka* and the *Sacre* had unleashed the Stravinskian rhythm through which the composer was led into all manner of new tonal realms; and the Stravinsky of 1914 could not resume the stylistic outlook of 1907. He did not try to do so. But, as Robert Craft shrewdly observes in his notes on the new recording, his method of vocal writing had changed scarcely at all while the rest of his art was undergoing complete transformation; and this made it possible for him to complete *The Nightingale*, while providing the opera with a certain stylistic unity.

If anything, Stravinsky brings out the contrast between Act I and the rest of the work even more strikingly than Cluytens. To draw again upon a parallel with the visual arts, I might suggest that Act I is like a Sung Dynasty bowl with its quiet, deep, unfigured celadon glaze, while Acts II and III are like the art of the Ming—sparkling and glittering with countless dots and dabs of color, full of pyrotechnical color contrasts, and riotous with the movement of lashing shapes.

Reri Grist does wonderfully well by the coloratura role of the Nightingale. Loren Driscoll is excellent as the Fisherman who is the Nightingale's friend, and Donald Gramm is the last word in Russian-speaking Chinese emperors. That the interpretation as a whole has the typical Stravinskian authority goes without saying, and the recording is excellent.

Outstanding among the other new Stravinsky records is the disc containing the music for piano, four hands, and for two pianos, all of it played by the immensely expert team of Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale. The four-hand music is a set of *Eight Easy Pieces*—waltzes, marches, polkas, schottisches, and the like—all of them in highly satiric and amusing style. These tuneful little burlesques are better known in their orchestrated versions of Suite No. 1 and Suite No. 2, both of which were at one time widely performed and much recorded. Gold and Fizdale also provide the only extant recording of Stravinsky's pleasant if slight Sonata for Two Pianos, a work in the composer's crisp, clear, "neoclassical" vein, as well as an ex-

tremely fine rendering of the prodigious Concerto for Two Solo Pianos. This is one of the most magnificent of Stravinsky's symphonic creations. Its symphonic sonorities are achieved, of course, without the aid of an orchestra, and their just attainment is a most exacting test for the virtuosity of a two-piano team. Gold and Fizdale pass the test of the work superbly, and so do Columbia's engineers.

The performance of the Piano Concerto, by Seymour Lipkin and the winds of the New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein conducting, is first-class. Lipkin strikes a nice balance between the romantic approach, with its long lines and rich tone, and the terse, clipped, motoric style Stravinsky emphasized at the time the work was written. Unfortunately, this excellent interpretation of the piano concerto is backed with a *Pulcinella* Suite, also by Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic, that can be described only as a romanticized caricature. It is full of exaggerated tremolos, violent contrasts of tempo and dynamics, and other schmaltzy devices which totally misrepresent the music. One wonders whether Stravinsky could possibly have approved this performance.

The reading of *Pétrouchka*, presented here complete in the revised orchestration of 1947, is as much a work of genius as the colossal score itself, and the recording does full justice to both. This is the same *Pétrouchka* as that issued along with Stravinsky's latest *Sacre* in a set called "Stravinsky Conducts, 1960," but its separate release must be welcomed: there's nothing wrong with that *Sacre*, but this *Pétrouchka* deserves a little monument all its own.

Stravinsky is forever decrying *The Firebird* and the taste of those who want to hear it, but commercial demand has led him, as he says in his notes, to conduct it more than a thousand times, and he has recorded it often too. The new disc contains the complete score, which sounds like an oddly redundant version of the familiar suite. The performance is not especially good and the recording is weak. This is the least impressive record in the series.

The light, frosty, and totally delectable Violin Concerto—as fine an example of the neobaroque as the art of music affords—is radiantly recorded, but I am not sure that its principal performer, Isaac Stern, achieves the success in blending romantic sweetness and Stravinskian salt that Lipkin attains in his presentation of the Piano Concerto.

I have reserved to the end of this discussion comment on the new *Symphony in Three Movements* because it troubles me a little. The recording is big and full-bodied, but the orchestral sound captured is somewhat thin and harsh. The studio orchestra here employed is not the equal of the New York Philharmonic, with which Stravinsky recorded the symphony some years ago. The differences between the two recorded versions, however, go far beyond the question of sound. The more

Continued on page 68



Cornell MacNeil



Joan Sutherland

Rigoletto—the Third Time Round in Stereo

by Conrad L. Osborne

IN *Rigoletto* we have one of those few operas that are not only done often, but deserve to be. It isn't impossible to ruin it in performance, but it is difficult—you must have a real dunce of a baritone and an awful clod of a conductor. True, you need no more: you may have Melba as Gilda, Caruso as the Duke, Journet as Sparafucile, and Chaliapin as Monterone; but if your baritone is Dunce and Clod is the conductor, the performance will still be a flop.

Just as *Rigoletto* is among the most popular operas with impresarios and opera house audiences, so it is with record companies and record collectors. Since the start of the LP era, we have averaged about three *Rigolettos* every four years (nine, by my count, not including re-pressings of two 78-rpm versions). Eight, counting the new London recording, are currently in the catalogue, three of them in stereo. Inasmuch as both of the previous stereo versions (on Columbia and Mercury) proved interesting only in spots, I would like to be able to report that London had settled matters with a satisfactory new effort. That is, alas, far from the case, despite what would seem to be an extremely strong cast.

One is favorably impressed from the outset about the care taken with this production. This is the first really complete *Rigoletto* on records, including some bars dropped by even the Mercury ("official" Ricordi) version. This means that not only the Duke's cabaletta, "*Possente amor*," but its repeat and all the choral interpolations, are present. It also means that short passages in both the Gilda/*Rigoletto* and the Duke/Gilda scenes of Act II (or Act I, Scene 2, depending on the division used) are restored. Cuts sometimes made in *Rigoletto*'s "*Ah veglia, o donna*," and in the final duet are also sung (they are present on most other recordings, too). The restoration of all these passages is most welcome, although it seems to me that to include the repeat of the "*Possente amor*" is overdoing things a bit. This number is really not on a level with the rest of the score, and while it can be exhilarating enough if sung with a real flourish, its effect is dissipated by the repeat.

The score as performed here differs

somewhat from both the standard performance tradition and the most recent Ricordi edition, but does not seem entirely consistent in its approach. Renato Cioni, for example, at least attempts to sing a genuine staccato where it is indicated in "*Questa o quella*"; on the other hand, the existence of the many *acciaccature* marked in the score is hardly acknowledged—some are dropped altogether, while others are treated as appoggiature. The many traditional, unwritten high notes are all included—the baritone's extra high Gs in "*Pari siamo*" and "*Cortigiani*," his high A flats at the end of the *Vendetta* duet and the final duet, the tenor's high B flat in "*Parmi veder*," etc.—and so are some that are not so traditional, such as a rather unearthly and completely inappropriate high D from Miss Sutherland as she concludes the trio and goes through Sparafucile's door in the last act. None of these notes is given, even as an option, in the current Ricordi edition.

Another interesting question is raised by the treatment of the recitatives, which are sung in a very deliberate manner. Again, one would assume that a policy of adherence to the score is in force, except that it is not consistently pursued. The recitative at the opening of the last act is a case in point. The dialogue runs like this: *Rigoletto*: "*E l'amì?*" *Gilda*: "*Sempre*." *Rigoletto*: "*Pure tempo a guarirne t'ho lasciato*." *Gilda*: "*Io l'amò*." ("And you love him?—Forever.—I've given you time to forget him.—I love him.") It happens that every sung note to this point in the act is an eighth note. All these eighth notes are, in theory, sung at the same tempo. And so they are—until Miss Sutherland lingers over "*Io l'amò*" at roughly half the speed of the preceding lines. On the other hand, the recitative beginning with "*M'odi! Ritorna a casa* . . ." is so painstakingly etched out that it sounds almost unnatural.

It may be that differences in editions are responsible for the many such little paradoxes that crop up in this performance; in any event, I think it is obvious that certain of these decisions come down to the matter of which traditional usages happen to strike one particular person (presumably the conductor) as admis-

sible, and which do not. Sanzogno's tempo, which are just a shade slower than those most commonly taken, strike me as very just, though I would in certain cases wish that he did not allow Miss Sutherland to do whatever she pleases with recitative, while holding Mr. MacNeil to the letter of the metronomic law.

All these considerations are interesting, but they are of secondary importance to the quality of the performance itself. This is where I, at least, came in for a disappointing couple of hours. Cornell MacNeil is a fine singer—potentially a great one, I feel—with the same sort of fat tone and enviable upper-register ease that distinguished the work of the late Leonard Warren. At present, his singing is also marked by the same kind of interpretative blandness that was one of Warren's characteristics in the early years of his career. It is seldom that one will hear the role sung with such consistent beauty of tone and such sure legato touch; but there is much more to the role—particularly to its vengeful, misanthropic side—than is indicated by MacNeil. It is entirely possible that in seven or eight years his will be a great performance; right now, it is beautiful, intelligent singing—which is, perhaps, reward enough.

At risk of putting a crimp in all the common-goals progress made by Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Macmillan, I'll have to say that I don't think Miss Sutherland's Gilda is much good at all. To be dull in a bathetic way is absolutely no improvement over being dull in a glinty way. True, Miss Sutherland has a lovely voice, and true, she can trill impeccably, as she does in the "*Caro nome*." What she cannot do, apparently, is to sing simply, straightforwardly, and affectingly. Gilda's opening line is an example. "*Mio padre!*," she sings, as she comes out of the house. A simple enough line, it would seem, and a simple enough sentiment—she is happy to see her father. But Miss Sutherland not only colors the tone a slate gray—she is behind-times in saying the line. It is not so much that she is really lagging behind the beat—though her rhythmic sense is in need of sharpening—as that there is not really any tone for the first split-second of the note's duration. Thus, the "a" in "*padre*" does

not sound quite on time. I counted ten or eleven instances of this sort of gap in the first few pages of the scene, then stopped keeping track. The fact is that during this act, and at a number of points later on, she time and again fails to enter right on the button. This, combined with the almost total absence of any bright vowel coloration and with attempts to find great pools of melancholy feeling where there just aren't any, makes for a stillborn effect. Is Gilda terribly sleepy? Does she feel queasy? Or is she a hopeless, strange sort of neurotic?

I will admit that I am becoming pretty impatient with the insistence on investing these roles with "dramatic meaning," or whatever. It is really surprising what a wealth of meaning will emerge if one will sing on the beat, at a set tempo, and with the spirit of the music—listen to such relatively unsophisticated Gildas as Capisir or Pagliughi, or to such infinitely sophisticated but less pretentious ones as Berger, Gueden, or D'Angelo. Of course, there is Callas. But her achievement is simply this—she is an honest-to-God vocal actress; she truly characterizes, in a specific way, through music. She indulges in holds, ornaments, colorations because they are emotionally right, not because they are stylistically permissible. (Of course, they are always stylistically permissible; but that is not the reason that they are effective.) One might also note that there is no singer before the public more rhythmically precise or sharper in attack than Callas—when a note is indicated, bang, she is there. It is a long way from this sort of involvement in the role, this sort of absolute respect for the music, to the generalized kind of melancholia in Miss Sutherland's Gilda.

Miss Sutherland is simply lifting certain colorings and inflections—certain "effects," and really only one basic coloring, at that—and smearing them all over the assigned role. A more artificial, mannered, emotionally empty approach could not be imagined. The afore-mentioned "lo l'amo" is one of many, many typical instances contained in this recording. The whole point of the line (and could it be, do you suppose, that this is why Verdi wrote all those eighth notes?) lies in its matter-of-factness. There is no argument from Gilda; only acceptance. She knows all about her father's feelings, about dishonor, and all the rest, but—"lo l'amo." That's all. Two eighth notes. But Miss Sutherland, of course, is not having any of that, not with an opportunity to invest this simple line with hitherto unglimped worlds of significance! Silent movie stuff, and from a singer who could sing this role with one vocal chord tied behind her back. Well, she still has all the makings of a truly great artist, and I have no doubt she'll get herself untracked in time. One must also not underestimate the effects of her illness, which, I gather, was already bothering her at the time of these sessions; such an affliction can take the spontaneity out of almost anyone. Still, what's here is here.

The rest of the cast offers no grounds for rejoicing. Cioni, who was so fine on the *Lucia*, sounds tight and colorless

here. There are nice touches in his work, but the tone is rather steely and thin, the pitch sometimes a few vibrations below the necessary. There are good moments, too, in Siepi's Sparafucile—the wonderful ease of "Sparafucil mi nomino," for instance—but there is also a fair amount of spread tone, in which the basic pitch is half obscured by all sorts of extraneous vibration. Malagù is a competent, somewhat lightweight Maddalena, and Corena a superb Monterone—but these are hardly key roles.

Then there is London's determinedly 3-D sound. This is something that sounds correct in theory, but doesn't seem to be working out in practice. The stage band in the opening scene is off in the next county, largely inaudible behind the screen of "party noises" furnished by the chorus. In the theatre, this would not be terribly objectionable (though, as a matter of fact, the stage band is always perfectly audible in the theatre). But in the theatre, we have all the sights to take in—our first look at the set, whatever business the director has cooked up, and so on. By the time we are fully aware of the stage picture, it is time for "Questa o quella." During the Perigordino, we can watch the dancing. On a recording, there is no such pleasant occupation at hand, and the effect of stationing the band so far off is to leave some holes in the score.

And there is the matter of placement of the voices, which I found troublesome on the London *Ballo*. In the opera house, MacNeil's voice never sounds as unimpressive as it does in the first scene here. One hates to suggest that the bad old practice of overbalancing the orchestra with the singer had its merits—but I think it is preferable to losing the singer through an effort to place him in some sort of aural context. The Mercury recording, especially in the stereo version, offers an interesting comparison to the new one with regard to the entrance of Monterone. London, quite logically, has placed Monterone off stage for his opening line—that is where he is supposed to be until he forces his entrance after his second line. The effect, unfortunately, is simply a letdown. After the chorus has concluded at full volume, we are asked to readjust too quickly to an off-stage solo line, which happens to be of great importance. Again, matters are different in the opera house—we have the courtiers turning toward the doorway, and the expectation of Monterone's appearance. Mercury solved this problem by bringing Monterone in very close, and cutting without any break directly from the chorus' final line into Monterone's "Ch'io gli parli." This is, if you will, "impossible"—but it works. It makes very forcefully the salient point of Monterone's sudden, dominating presence—"la voce mia qual tuono." It has the same psychological "rightness" of the correctly used film close-up—it tells us that it is time now to consider this important aspect of the situation. (It is subject to the same abuses too, in that it leaves the audience with no choice.) After all, this isn't life—it's opera.

With all the recordings of *Rigoletto* to choose from, it's still difficult to recom-

mend one wholeheartedly. The magnificent old Columbia set, re-released in the Entré series, is unfortunately unobtainable. The most extensively cut of all recorded *Rigolettos*, it nevertheless had, in Mercedes Capisir, Dino Borgioli, and Riccardo Stracciari, a set of principals that still mark the standard for succeeding casts. It also boasted a top-flight conductor—Cav. Lorenzo Molajoli. Of the sets currently in the catalogue, I think I would almost go for the oldest (not counting the German-language version with Berger, Roswänge, and Schlusnus, available as an import). This is the Victor set with Berger, Peerce, Warren, and Tajo. There is nothing inspired about the conducting (Cellini's), and Warren's characterization certainly deepened over the next decade. But all the singers are in excellent voice, and there are no annoying eccentricities of any kind—this is a very easy performance to live with and does well by the score's essentials. The Angel performance is also a good one, with a splendid characterization from Gobbi, who, however, has difficulty meeting the cantabile demands of the middle two acts. Di Stefano sounds ready to explode at several points, but the rest of the cast, including Callas and Zaccaria, offers some fine work. The Cetra edition (Pagliughi, Tagliavini, Taddei, Neri) is alive and workmanlike, and bears repeated playing easily.

The other albums, including all the stereo versions, have serious individual faults, to wit: Victor (second version): uninteresting, innocuous characterizations by Merrill and Peters. London (first version): weak Rigoletto by Protti, ludicrously miscast Duke (Del Monaco). Columbia (stereo): soggy conducting, weird engineering, a Rigoletto (Capecchi) who rewards listening for a brilliant character study but whose voice is not plush. Mercury (stereo): a hard, unattractive Gilda from Scotto, a bullish, uneven Rigoletto from Bastianini. On the other hand, the following individual performances are of unusual interest: Gueden's Gilda and Simonato's Maddalena (London); Bjoerling's Duke, though not in top form (Victor, second version); Kraus's Duke, Gavazzeni's conducting, smart engineering (Mercury); D'Angelo's Gilda (Columbia). Richard Tucker's admirers can also hear his Duke on the Columbia set.

But as for the new entry, though Sanzogno is no Clod and MacNeil no Duce, there are many things in *Rigoletto* undreamt of here.

VERDI: *Rigoletto*

Joan Sutherland (s), Gilda; Maria Fiori (s). A Page; Stefania Malagù (ms), Maddalena; Anna di Stasio (ms), Giovanna; Luisa Valle (ms), Countess Ceprano; Renato Cioni (t), Duke; Angelo Mercuriali (t), Borsa; Cornell MacNeil (b), Rigoletto; Giuseppe Morresi (b), Marullo; Cesare Siepi (bs), Sparafucile; Fernando Corena (bs), Monterone; Giulio Corti (bs), Count Ceprano. Chorus and Orchestra of l'Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome), Nino Sanzogno, cond.
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- ARCHIVE ARC 3174. LP. \$5.98.
- • ARCHIVE ARC 73174. SD. \$6.98.

In the long title with which Bach prefaced these pieces he gave as one of their aims the imparting of a "cantabile manner of playing." This, together with the general layout of the Inventions, is a clear indication that the instrument he had in mind was the clavichord. They certainly sound completely at home on that modest instrument, especially as played by Kirkpatrick here. He performs little miracles of subtlety in phrasing and articulation, keeping the whole texture alive in each piece without perceptibly altering the tempo during the course of it. In the three-part Inventions each line lives its own life while at the same time adjusting itself to its brothers for the good of the family. The ornaments ripple off easily and naturally—an effect attainable only after long study. If the two-part Invention in B flat is taken more deliberately than usual, the slower pace enables Kirkpatrick to present the thirty-second-note figure as an integral part of the line, not as an embellishment. The graver numbers are played without any trace of sentimentality; the lighter ones are set forth with charm and perfect clarity. The only flyspeck on this very fine disc is the absence of visible bands between pieces. N.B.

BACH: *Johannes-Passion, S. 245*

Phyllis Curtin, soprano; Eunice Alberts, contralto; Waldemar Kmentt, tenor; John van Kesteren, tenor; David Smith, baritone; Frederic Guthrie, bass; Otto Wiener, bass; Vienna Academy Chorus; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond.

- WESTMINSTER XWN 3319. Three LP. \$14.94.
- • WESTMINSTER WST 319. Three SD. \$17.94.

Scherchen can always be relied on to take a fresh look at any masterpiece he chooses to record. In the present performance the results are sometimes effective (or at least interesting), sometimes puzzling, and sometimes unconvincing. An example of the first category is the opening chorus: it is taken a little faster than usual, but the result justifies the relatively spirited pace. Another instance of this sort is the choral sections numbered 23 and 25 ("*Wäre dieser nicht ein Ubelthäter*" and "*Wir dürfen niemand töten*"), which are performed with unusual lightness—an interesting approach. Still another is the omission of the instruments in the final chorale, which gives it added purity and elevation. The dramatic choral sections are sung with intensity, and the malevolence of the crowd is well brought out. On the other hand, it is hard to understand why No. 17 ("*Bist du nicht seiner Jünger einer?*") and No. 54 ("*Lasset uns den nicht zer-teilen*") are done so delicately; the latter number, which represents the soldiers quarreling over the garments of Jesus,

is downright playful here. Finally, there are procedures for which one can see no justification at all, such as the frequent contrasts in dynamics and tempo in "*Ruhet wohl*," which break up the rhythmic flow of this sublimest and saddest of lullabies; or the slowing down at the ends of chorales and some arias, which becomes an annoying mannerism.

The set is blessed with a first-class Evangelist in John van Kesteren: he sings with intelligence and feeling, and his voice is attractive and unforced even on high notes. The same cannot be said of Kmentt. His "*Ach, mein Sinn*" is a little ejaculatory, and his "*Erwäge*" rather rough-hewn, though not inexpressive. Miss Curtin does both of her arias beautifully, even though she snips off the long phrases in the first, and introduces a retard at the end of the other. Miss Alberts' voice is warm and steady and she can spin long phrases in one breath. Otto Wiener, as Jesus, sounds a bit constricted, and Frederic Guthrie shaky in his first two arias, but steadied down in the third. David Smith, in the brief role of Pilate, is excellent.

On the first side of the record the sound of the chorus is not as clear as it might be, but it improves after that. In some of the vocal solos, particularly in the first part of the work, the voice seems rather distant. Otherwise the sound is good in both versions.

Despite some very fine numbers, this performance does not match those in the Archive and Victor sets. N.B.

BACH: *Suites for Orchestra: No. 2, in B minor, S. 1067; No. 3, in D, S. 1068*

Munich Bach Orchestra, Karl Richter, cond.

- ARCHIVE ARC 3180. LP. \$5.98.
- • ARCHIVE ARC 73180. SD. \$6.98.

Richter begins the Overture of the B minor Suite in a rather jerky and rigid fashion, but from the Allegro on, there is smooth and satisfactory sailing on both sides of this fine recording. The flutist in No. 2, Aurèle Nicolet, has no problems, and Richter achieves a distribution of weight among the various voices that never leaves one in doubt about the principal line and at the same time never obscures anything of importance in the other parts. In the D major Suite the famous Air is beautifully sung. The trumpets in this work are accurate, and make their presence felt without overwhelming the rest of the band. Add to these qualities convincing tempos and excellent sound (which is especially transparent in the stereo version), and you have as meritorious a recording of these Suites as any in the catalogue. N.B.



The late Clara Haskil.

BARTOK: *Rhapsody for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1*—See Bloch: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in A minor.*

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata for Piano, No. 7, in D, Op. 10, No. 3*

†Rachmaninoff: *Preludes: Op. 23: Nos. 1, 2, and 8; Op. 32: Nos. 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, and 12*

Sviatoslav Richter, piano.

- COLUMBIA ML 5725. LP. \$4.98.

The third volume in the "Sviatoslav Richter at Carnegie Hall" series presents the Soviet pianist's recital of October 28, 1960, excluding three Schumann *Novelletten* and ten encores. The Schumann pieces had also been played (in better performances) in Richter's October 25 program, and have already been released as part of Columbia's disc commemorating that occasion. A disc including the encores is promised for a future date.

It is the Rachmaninoff Preludes that really "make" this record. Richter plays these pieces with tender sentiment, astonishing contrast, and hair-raising bravura. Despite the sensuousness of his rubato, not once does the pianist lapse from good taste. Indeed, he frequently elevates the music itself to higher levels of excellence.

The Beethoven performance is a bit headlong in its first two movements. It then goes slack for the Minuetto, which Richter plays rather floridly, but regains its former shape in the finale. Richter's interpretation of the appoggiaturas in the first movement's second subject is questionable. The pianist disregards their melodic significance, and plays them in a short, clipped, decorative fashion. In totality, his performance of the Sonata is more effortlessly executed, but not as deeply probing as that of Schnabel on the now deleted RCA Victor reissue.

The piano tone on this disc offers an improvement over the previous Richter recital records. Everything comes through very clearly, and a few juicy coughs and splutters do not seriously impinge on the musical proceedings. H.G.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata for Piano, No. 13, in E flat, Op. 27, No. 1*—See Mozart: *Sonata for Piano, No. 10, in C, K. 330.*

BEETHOVEN: *Sonatas for Piano: No. 17, in D minor, Op. 31, No. 2 ("Tempest"); No. 18, in E flat, Op. 31, No. 3*

Clara Haskil, piano.

- EPIC LC 3831. LP. \$4.98.
- • EPIC BC 1158. SD. \$5.98.

Both these sonatas are characteristic of the music the late Clara Haskil preferred to play, music which demanded the utmost in artistry and virtuosity, yet was never empty in its show of technique. As such, they are a perfect memorial to this remarkable woman. Few Americans had personal contact with her playing, but her records alone should give her a lasting reputation in this country.

When Beethoven told the aspirant performers of his D minor Sonata to "read Shakespeare's *Tempest*" he was not so much giving a program for the work as

the key to its mood, one in which we view the world as "such stuff as dreams are made on," knowing that neither fantasy nor reality makes up the whole of our experience. Mme. Haskil plays the work in this way, treating the difficult Largo/Allegro juxtapositions in the opening bars with particular insight.

The Op. 31, No. 3 sonata is less well known, but it is an unconventional work containing both a Scherzo and a Minuet, the latter being the slow movement. Tovey remarks of the Scherzo that, at least, it's all equally formidable "with no deceitfully easy places." If you examine his catalogue of cautions, you will find that the Haskil recording could serve as a paradigm of how the work ought to be played. The brilliance of the music is all here, along with the sentiment, the lyricism, and the verve, and not a bit of it is overdone.

Although the disc is well engineered, the stereo is hardly enough better to merit its extra cost. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: Sonatas for Violin and Piano

No. 1, in D, Op. 12, No. 1; No. 2, in A, Op. 12, No. 2; No. 3, in E flat, Op. 12, No. 3; No. 4, in A minor, Op. 23; No. 5, in F, Op. 24 ("Spring"); No. 6, in A, Op. 30, No. 1.

Aaron Rosand, violin; Eileen Flissler, piano.
 • Vox VBX 517. Three LP. \$8.95.
 • • Vox SVBX 517. Three SD. \$8.95.

BEETHOVEN: Music for Violin and Piano

Sonatas: No. 7, in C minor, Op. 30, No. 2; No. 8, in G, Op. 30, No. 3; No. 9, in A, Op. 47 ("Kreutzer"); No. 10, in G, Op. 96. Twelve Variations, in F, on Mozart's "Se vuol ballare," G. 156. Allemandes (6), G. 171. Rondo in G, G. 155.

Aaron Rosand, violin; Eileen Flissler, piano.
 • Vox VBX 518. Three LP. \$8.95.
 • • Vox SVBX 518. Three SD. \$8.95.

BEETHOVEN: Sonatas for Violin and Piano

No. 5, in F, Op. 24 ("Spring"); No. 7, in C minor, Op. 30, No. 2.

Erica Morini, violin; Rudolf Firkusny, piano.
 • DECCA DL 10045. LP. \$4.98.
 • • DECCA DL 710045. SD. \$5.98.

My only encounter with Aaron Rosand in the flesh was some time ago at an outdoor concert, which put everyone at a disadvantage. Even so, the quality of Rosand's playing in this series indicates that he has gained substantially in maturity and depth of musical thought. The set is thoroughly homogeneous. Rosand brings a finished performance to each work, and invariably it is a performance based on a completely musical appraisal of the content. Rosand's partner in this enterprise is not always able to meet his standard, however. Miss Flissler has a good technique, but in her playing here there is a distressing tendency to rattle off the notes in a manner that conveys little beyond fluency. Since Beethoven wrote these works as true joint sonatas for two instruments, a good deal depends upon both artists approaching them with the same degree of sensitivity.

If we compare these performances with the Schneiderhan-Seemann edition, it becomes apparent that the latter sets are considerably more refined and blessed with many a happy thought that has no counterpart in the Vox boxes. With this, however, goes a much higher price tag. The Schneiderhan-Seemann records come to \$27.92. The present ones cost a good \$10 less; the Variations, Dances, and Rondo come as a bonus, and the Vox coupling (on six records rather than four) is much more convenient than one in which sonatas begin in the inner bands. So far as engineering goes, the sound of the Vox is vivid and bright with (if anything) more presence than the older set. One must become accustomed, however, to the violin's being predominantly left and the piano solidly right. There are momentary wanderings, one of which has Rosand moving rapidly across the room while playing a particularly difficult passage. You may find that a bit odd. (Schneiderhan does no gambling of this sort, and Seemann never has to contend with a moving piano.)

Morini and Firkusny are a nicely balanced duo for this literature. They seem to be agreed on matters of style and approach, and their performances have a very pleasing lightness and vivacity. I feel sure they are bested in the Spring Sonata, where Schneiderhan produces an unfolding lyric line with far more sweep than Morini can manage, but she matches him in the Op. 30, No. 2 and consistently makes points that qualify her as a rival of consequence. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 4, in B flat, Op. 60; Overture: Leonore No. 2, Op. 72a

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Eugen Jochum, cond.
 • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18694. LP. \$5.98.
 • • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138694. SD. \$6.98.

Jochum's broad rhetorical periods make some point in the Overture, which is built up, one great phrase after another, into a powerful dramatic sum. I find the same approach out of place in the Symphony, which becomes deliberate to the point of stagnation. Going from this recording to any other that has a strong sense of pulse (the Ansermet, for

example) produces the effect of liberating the music from bonds of Teutonic stolidity. Unfortunately, this sense of weight is only increased by the bass-heavy recorded sound and the lack of brilliance in the violins and winds. R.C.M.

BERLIOZ: Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14

Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux, Igor Markevitch, cond.
 • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18712. LP. \$5.98.
 • • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138712. SD. \$6.98.

Orchestre National, André Vandernoot, cond.
 • COMMAND CC 3311009. LP. \$4.98.
 • • COMMAND CC 11009. SD. \$5.98.

These are two of the mildest-sounding *Fantastiques* in the catalogue. Markevitch's approach to this opium-inspired dream is all sweetness and light, with little tension or incisiveness and practically no dramatic impact. The most terrifying movement of all, *A Dream of a Witches' Sabbath*, is played so flabbily and at such a leisurely pace that it sounds more like a Sunday-school picnic. The orchestral execution is of a high order throughout, as is the naturalistic, unforced stereo recording, but this is insufficient to save what amounts to a colorless reading that misses the composer's point.

As for Command's latest excursion into the field of serious music, Vandernoot's interpretation is just as lacking in excitement as Markevitch's. In the slow sections, such as the introduction to the first movement and the whole of the *Scene in the Fields*, he makes the music sound angular and plodding; in the faster portions of the score there is a lack of rhythmic propulsion. And the Orchestre National (the French radio orchestra) is far from being the most polished ensemble in the world. The benefits of recording on 35-mm magnetic film are again evident in the range of tone and volume, in instrumental presence and definition, and in the clear separation of stereo channels, but it is quite obvious that the performance has been picked up at close range with a whole battery of microphones, each beamed at a different section of the orchestra. The result, in stereo, is an almost too wide separation and pinpointing of sections or solo instruments; and in both mono and stereo, woodwinds and brasses tend to overbalance the strings.

Among the better versions of this colorful work currently available are Wallenstein's (Audio Fidelity, stereo only), Munch's (RCA Victor, mono only), and Paray's (Mercury, mono and stereo). P.A.

BLOCH: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in A minor
 †Bartók: *Rhapsody for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1*

Roman Totenberg, violin; Vienna State Orchestra, Vladimir Golschmann, cond.
 • VANGUARD VRS 1083. LP. \$4.98.
 • • VANGUARD VSD 2110. SD. \$5.95.

The supreme test for any recorded interpretation is its ability to compete with the interpretation established in one's mind by previous recordings. As one hears a record over and over again, the interpretation it embodies sets a sub-



Roman Totenberg: consummate Bloch.

conscious standard whereby other interpretations are judged. This is a most unfair standard, and responsible, professional criticism has always to be on guard against its insidious workings. Once in a long while, however, a recording comes along that sweeps out one's accumulated memories of previous performances and establishes itself at once as *the* interpretation. So it is with this reading of the Bloch concerto, one of that master's most pungent, dramatic, and epical works. The recording is as great as the performance, and the whole constitutes the finest of the several tributes to Bloch's memory for which Vanguard has recently been responsible. The short Bartók piece that fills out the second side is also beautifully done. A.F.

BRAHMS: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 2, in A, Op. 100; Sonata for Violin and Piano ("F-A-E"); Scherzo*
 †**Frank:** *Sonata for Violin and Piano, in A*

Wolfgang Schneiderhan, violin; Carl Seemann, piano.

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18633. LP. \$5.98.
 • • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138633. SD. \$6.98.

Schneiderhan and Seemann are already well established as a fine sonata team, a fact which they demonstrate very well on the present disc. In this warm, romantic music, however, I find their interpretations too reserved, too discreet, though everything is done in the best of taste. The odd Scherzo, by the way, is the single movement which Brahms contributed to the joint sonata that Robert Schumann, Albert Dietrich, and he wrote for their friend Joseph Joachim. The notes F-A-E refer to Joachim's personal motto "Frei aber einsam" ("Free but alone"). In the stereo recording, the violin is to the left, the piano in the center.

It is a pleasure to report that Deutsche Grammophon's new releases are arriving in exceptionally sturdy board jackets, with the record factory-sealed in the inner plastic-lined envelope—a welcome improvement over previous DGG practice. P.A.

BRITTEN: *Sonata for Cello and Piano, in C, Op. 65*

†**Debussy:** *Sonata for Cello and Piano, No. 1, in D minor*

†**Schumann:** *Fünf Stücke im Volkston, Op. 102*

Mstislav Rostropovich, cello; Benjamin Britten, piano.

• LONDON CM 9306. LP. \$4.98.
 • • LONDON CS 6237. SD. \$5.98.

From any point of view, this is an outstanding release. Britten's new cello sonata is a terse, emotionally demanding work which makes great demands on both the players' techniques and their intellects. It is written in a probing, almost gruffly caustic idiom that occasionally brings to mind Martinů and Shostakovich, but ultimately leaves one with heightened esteem for Britten's originality. This is real music, with a fine slow movement and a compelling finale. It should prove to be an important addition to the cello's limited repertory. The performance here is presumably definitive.

Britten and Rostropovich also bring a



Britten: for the cello, a caustic idiom.

rare perception to the Schumann and Debussy compositions. The latter work has impressive recorded competition from the versions by Piatigorsky and Lukas Foss (Victor), Starker and Leon Pommer (Period), and Janigro-Ginette Doyen (Westminster, recently withdrawn), but the present team bring to bear on the music such exquisite refinement, nuance, and intensity that their version must be awarded first place. Indeed, Rostropovich, by utilizing a most subtle and unusual vibrato on pizzicato notes in the second section, gives the passage a haunting atmosphere which virtually exceeds anything I have ever heard done in the concert hall.

London's sound is shimmering, transparent, and altogether splendid. H.G.

CAMPRA: Requiem

Soloists: Philippe Caillard and Stephane Caillat
 Chorales: Jean-François Paillard Orchestra, Louis Frémont, cond.

• WESTMINSTER XWN 19007. LP. \$4.98.
 • • WESTMINSTER WST 17007. SD. \$5.98.

André Campra (1660-1744) was for a time music director at Notre Dame in Paris and later wrote many operas. The Requiem makes it easy to understand the high regard in which he was held by his contemporaries. This is beautiful music, as Italian as it is French. The melodies are lovely, the harmonies rich and expressive. Counterpoint is subordinated, yet when Campra wants to feature it, as in the "Cum sanctis" of the Communion, he handles it with skill. Textures and colors are constantly varied, solos and solo combinations being set off against the full chorus or various sections of it. All in all, this is an impressive and rewarding work, particularly in its first half, at the opposite pole from what France was to produce a century and a half later in the perfumed and sugary sacred music of a Gounod. The soloists are all able singers, and the sound in both versions is entirely acceptable. N.B.

CHOPIN: Nocturnes for Piano (19)

Moura Lympany, piano.

• ANGEL 3602 B. Two LP. \$9.98.
 • • ANGEL S 3602 B. Two SD. \$11.98.

Miss Lympany's playing on these discs is tastefully innocuous, relatively (but not

completely) straightforward, and, as a whole, uninspiring. Her interpretations all are rather swiftly paced, and all tend to sound alike although the music itself is very varied in character. The pianist is a capable enough executant, but she is not a supreme virtuoso. Her tone tends to sound white, and often her left-hand work lacks incisiveness. This last-mentioned defect prevents the climax of the great C sharp minor Nocturne from sounding forth with the clarion definition it needs. Miss Lympany's phrasing becomes fussy in the B major, Op. 9, No. 3; and she breaks up the line too much in the G major, Op. 37, No. 2. Some of the more dramatic pieces lack breadth, and I would like to hear more delicacy in ethereal nocturnes like the famous D flat, Op. 27, No. 2. On the credit side, I note with approval that Miss Lympany ends the No. 9, in B major, Op. 32, No. 1, in B minor which, of course, is correct but frequently not observed.

Unhappily, none of the available complete recordings can be accepted without reservation—Rubinstein's is probably the best, but his playing is too brittle and nervous-sounding. Novaes is rather ponderous in some of the works, but perhaps her edition in the economical Vox Box series is satisfactory as a bargain issue. Lympany gets the most modern recording, and her editions score in that area.

If you should decide on Miss Lympany's performances in the stereo version, make sure that Side 3 really does contain the four nocturnes from Op. 37 and 48. My copy was labeled correctly, but surprised me with excellent accounts of "Caro nome," "Sempre libera," and other Verdi arias! H.G.

COPLAND: Billy the Kid: Suite, Appalachian Spring

London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond.

• MERCURY 50246. LP. \$4.98.
 • • MERCURY 90246. SD. \$5.98.

The seventh *Billy* and the fifth *Appalachian Spring* to enter the current catalogues, this recording is, from the purely sonic point of view, probably the best of them all. There is nothing the matter with Dorati's masterly interpretation either. A.F.

COWELL: Thesis (Symphony No. 15)

†Halffter, Rodolfo: *La Madrugada del panadero: Suite*

Louisville Orchestra, Robert Whitney, cond.

• LOUISVILLE 622. LP. \$7.92. (Available on special order only, from 830 S. Fourth St., Louisville 3, Ky.)

Cowell's terse description of *Thesis* in his own notes can scarcely be improved upon: "The form is unusual: five tiny movements—a choralelike introduction, an impassioned melody, a scherzo, a longer quiet melody, an irregular-rhythm dance which leads into a recapitulation of these elements in one movement, and at the end a sonata-form movement based on an extension of the primary motive (a descending whole followed by a half step) which is the mainstay of all movements. As the last movement is in sonata form, I decided to call it my 15th symphony."

To this one might add that the "impassioned melody" is accompanied by a high-pitched, indeterminate sky dome of

sound produced either by electronic means or by some trick of violin playing; in his early piano pieces, produced forty years ago. Cowell predicted the electronic sound world, and it is thus only just that he claim it again in this symphony. The work as a whole is one of the strongest, most eloquent, and powerful in Cowell's huge list, and is a crushing reply to those who would write him off as one of the conservative elder statesmen of modern American music.

The suite from Rodolfo Halffter's ballet *La Madrugada del panadero* is a tuneful, brilliant, and highly entertaining affair, reminiscent in about equal parts of the Falla of the *Tricornes* and the Stravinsky of *Pulcinella*. It is witty, sophisticated, totally without pretense, and altogether delightful. The title seems to mean "The Baker's Rude Awakening"; and if you remember the famous French movie *The Baker's Wife*, you will have a rough idea of what the ballet is all about. Performances and recordings are among Louisville's best. A.F.

**CUSHING: *Cereus*
†Imbrie: *Legend***

San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, Enrique Jordá, cond.
• COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 152. LP. \$5.95.

Here are two works commissioned by the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra with funds provided under a Ford Foundation-sponsored experimental program for the commissioning of American music, and each is a valuable contribution to the recorded repertoire.

Charles Cushing, the older of these two composers (both are professors at the University of California in Berkeley, incidentally), studied in Paris, wears the red ribbon of the Légion d'Honneur, and prefaces the score of *Cereus* with a quotation from Baudelaire about the "festival of the inward spirit" evoked by nightfall. And such a festival is beautifully celebrated in Cushing's music, with some touches of Debussyan sensitivity and pensiveness, but with great brilliance, charm, and vivacity as well; for all its emotional richness and variety, the music is unified by an impeccable clarity of design.

Andrew Imbrie, pupil of Roger Sessions, is a much more severe artistic personality than Cushing. "Charm" is not a word one would ever use in connection with his music; "eloquence," "power," and "breadth" are right for him, however, even when, as here, he is doing something which for him is most extraordinary. The *Legend* is composed largely of short strands and fragments, almost impressionistic in the "kaleidoscopic and evanescent colors" of which the composer himself speaks; but the general mood is on the somber side, and at length all the discursive materials of the piece are drawn together into a single heroic statement of remarkable grandeur and point.

Performances are thoroughly authoritative. A.F.

DEBUSSY: *Sonata for Cello and Piano, No. 1, in D minor*—See Britten: *Sonata for Cello and Piano, in C, Op. 65*.

DVORAK: *Czech Suite in D, Op. 39; Suite in A, Op. 98b*

Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Alois Klima, cond. (in the *Czech Suite*), Karel Sejna, cond. (in the *Suite in A*).
• SUPRAPHON LPV 341. LP. \$5.98.

These two suites are definitely minor Dvořák, yet they are highly melodic, and are diverting enough for an occasional hearing. The *Czech Suite*, composed in 1879, was to have been another serenade, but it became a bit too vigorous to be put in that category, being marked by Bohemian dance rhythms. (In any case, it would pale beside Dvořák's two masterly serenades.) The opening of the *Suite in A*, written in New York in 1894, sounds like "*Vissi d'arte*." This work is less folklike in character than the *Czech Suite*, although it retains the latter's melodic simplicity. Somehow, the composer doesn't seem to have become very excited about what he was writing in either of these works; and though they are well enough played on this disc, they don't excite me very much, either. P.A.

DVORAK: *Quartet for Strings, No. 6, in F, Op. 96 ("American"); Terzetto for Two Violins and Viola, in C, Op. 74*

Smetana Quartet (in the *Quartet*); Members of the Vlach Quartet (in the *Terzetto*).
• SUPRAPHON SUA 100-48. LP. \$5.98.

If anyone should be able to play Dvořák, it is the Czechs; and on this record, they fully live up to what's expected of them. The familiar *American Quartet*—far more Bohemian than American in its

musical content—receives a reading notable for its crispness, freshness, and transparency. This is true ensemble playing. The *Terzetto*—written six years earlier, in 1887, for two amateur-violinist friends of the composer, whom he joined as violist—is a slighter work, and, for Dvořák, conservative. Nevertheless, it is ingenuous, pleasing music for a rare combination of instruments, and its presentation here is warmhearted and graceful. P.A.

FALLA: *El Sombrero de tres picos*

Jean Madeira, contralto; Vienna Symphony, Edouard van Remoortel, cond.
• Vox PL 11920. LP. \$4.98.
• • Vox STPL 511920. SD. \$4.98.

Although this disc deserves citation as one of the best recordings Van Remoortel has made, it is not at all competitive with the new Ansermet version on London. One conspicuous difference is worth noting. Berganza, in the Ansermet set, sings the vocal passages "off stage"—as the composer intended—and she sings them very well. Mme. Madeira not only sings them with far less feeling for the style and the text, but she belts them at you from a stance on the prompter's box. Tut! Incidentally, despite all the confusion in the headings and notes over whether she is a contralto or a mezzosoprano, her voice is plainly of the former category. R.C.M.

FAURE: *Piano Works*

Barcarolles: No. 2, in G, Op. 41; No. 5, in F sharp minor, Op. 66; No. 8, in D flat, Op. 96. Mazurka, Op. 32. Nocturnes: No. 2, in B, Op. 33, No. 2; No. 7, in C sharp minor, Op. 74; No. 11, in F sharp minor, Op. 104; No. 13, in B minor, Op. 119. Thème et Variations, in C sharp minor, Op. 73. Valse-Caprices: No. 3, in G flat, Op. 59; No. 4, in A flat, Op. 62.

Grant Johannesen, piano.
• GOLDEN CREST CR 4046. Two LP. \$9.96.

The second volume in Golden Crest's projected complete Fauré Piano Music is up to the very high standards set by the first. Here too Johannesen plays these very rewarding pieces with robust expression, compelling rhythmic inflection, and virtuoso technique. The combination of directness and architectural cohesiveness is especially rewarding in an extended opus, such as the fine *Thème et Variations*. Mr. Johannesen makes very clear the link between this piece and Schumann's *Symphonic Etudes*, and he delivers a rousing and dynamic interpretation. He is also hugely successful with the brooding, mournful eleventh *Nocturne* (written in memory of Fauré's young friend Noémi Lalo) and the two *Valse-Caprices*, with their rhetorical underpinnings.

As in the first volume, Golden Crest has given Mr. Johannesen a warmly resonant, full-toned recording. Highly recommended. H.G.

FRANCK: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, in A*—See Brahms: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 2, in A, Op. 100; Sonata for Violin and Piano ("F-A-E"): Scherzo*.

Continued on page 60

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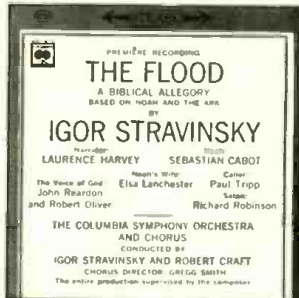
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GABRIELI, ANDREA: *Aria della battaglia*—See Gabrieli, Giovanni: *Sonatas and Canzoni*.

GABRIELI, GIOVANNI: *Sonatas and Canzoni*

†Gabrieli, Andrea: *Aria della battaglia*

Eastman Wind Ensemble, Frederick Fennell, cond.

- MERCURY MG 50245. LP. \$4.98.
- • MERCURY SR 90245. SD. \$5.98.

There are few sounds more stirring than that of a good brass choir, and Dr. Fennell's beautifully trained players, heard in reasonable doses, will undoubtedly send shivers up and down any sensitive spine. The tone has a warm glow, the intonation is almost faultless. Whether this sound has much relation to the kind that was produced in Venice around 1600 is another matter. The group employed here consists of trumpets and trombones. When the original edition (1597) specifies instruments at all, they are cornetts or violins for the top parts and trombones for the others. Cornetts were considered in those days to sound almost like voices, and trombones were regarded as rather gentle instruments—they often doubled the voices in choral music. Dr. Fennell disarms criticism by mentioning the problem in a note on the sleeve; and he throws the problem into sharp relief when he approaches Gabrieli's instrumentation for the *Sonata pian e forte*. Here he substitutes a trumpet for the cornett in the one choir but retains a viola for the string part in the other. With modern trombones forcefully played, the string part is drowned out in *forte* sections. But the sound is glorious, and in this recording, made on magnetic film, it has been caught with a wide range of dynamics and no distortion. The stereo version is of course extremely effective in this music, most of which was written for divided choirs. N.B.

HALFFTER, RODOLFO: *La Madrugada del panadero: Suite*—See Cowell: *Thesis*.

HAYDN: *Sonata for Piano, No. 23, in F*—See Mozart: *Sonata for Piano, No. 10, in C, K. 330*.

HAYDN: *Symphony No. 27, in G*—See Mozart: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 22 in E flat, K. 482*.

HAYDN: *Symphony No. 88, in G*
†Mozart: *Symphony No. 39, in E flat, K. 543*

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond.

- DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 19825. LP. \$5.98.

The Mozart is new to us. Recorded during a wartime broadcast in 1943, it reflects the tragedy of those years. Nothing of the composer's goes more directly to the heart, and Furtwängler's performance speaks not for anything personal or national but for the universal suffering of man. The Haydn is a reissue of a studio recording of 1952 which was first available here in a Decca transfer. I said of it at the time that it was one



Collection Roger Hauert, Paris

Furtwängler: his speech was universal.

of the finest recordings left to us by a very great musician. This statement applies equally to both the performances here. Despite the difference in years, both sound very much the same: thoroughly bright, spacious, and agreeable. I do not think there is a better version of either of these symphonies in the catalogue. R.C.M.

HAYDN: *Symphony No. 92, in G* ("Oxford")

†Schubert: *Symphony No. 8, in B minor* ("Unfinished")

Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond.

- Epic IC 3828. LP. \$4.98.
- • Epic BC 1156. SD. \$5.98.

Szell's earlier versions of these works were among the best we've had, and these freshly recorded performances represent the same high standard. Actually, this is the stereo debut for the *Oxford*, which is surprising to me since it is one of the most thoroughly charming of all the 106 Haydn symphonic scores. The two great recorded performances up to now have been the Bruno Walter version on 78s and the original Szell on microgroove. Both can be relegated to the archives, giving this new edition the preëminence it deserves.

In the *Unfinished*, Szell reverts to the manuscript and twice corrects a passage which Johann Herbeck (conductor of the first performance) prettified and then perpetuated in print. This alone makes the Szell recording one of special interest, but the excellence of his approach, with its dramatic strength and classical reserve, is the more obvious ground for recommendation.

In the opening violin passage of the first movement one can hear someone hit a music stand with a bow, a slip that should have been corrected. It's irritating to have to put up with blemishes of this sort, but in this case the music and the over-all merits of the engineering justify tolerance. R.C.M.

IMBRIE: *Legend*—See Cushing: *Cereus*.

KREISLER: *Violin Works*

Caprice viennois, Op. 2; Chanson Louis XIII and Pavane; La Chasse; La Gitana;

Liebesfreud; Liebesleid; Praeludium and Allegro; Recitative and Scherzo-Caprice, Op. 6; The Old Refrain; Schön Rosmarin; Rondino on a Theme of Beethoven; Sicilienne and Rigaudon; Tambourin chinois, Op. 3; Variations on a Theme of Corelli.

Ruggiero Ricci, violin.

- DECCA DL 10052. LP. \$4.98.
- • DECCA DL 710052. SD. \$5.98.

This is one of the most comprehensive collections on record of the late Fritz Kreisler's music and also one of the best, for Ricci plays with fervor and sparkling buoyancy throughout. His approach, while not neglecting sentiment, is more spare and high-powered than that of the composer himself and his tone is somewhat leaner. This player is able to convey the essence of these *morceaux* in a manner which takes into account present-day taste while not disdaining the material at hand. Occasionally, Ricci's tone thins out in some of the more difficult positions (the more demanding portions of the *Scherzo-Caprice*, for example, sound a bit strained and tight), but these lapses are very infrequent and do not seriously detract from the very real merit of this record. The material is wisely arranged so that one side of the disc contains the Kreisler-Kreisler pieces while the overside groups some of the better-known ones which the violinist composed under various *noms de plume*. Decca's sound is pure and gleaming, but I was hard put to discern any difference between LP and SD copies. H.G.

MIASKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 17, in G sharp minor, Op. 41*

U.S.S.R. Radio Symphony Orchestra, Alexander Gauk, cond.

- ARTIA-MK 1575. LP. \$5.98.

When Nikolai Miaskovsky died, in 1950, he had to his credit twenty-seven symphonies, making him surely the most prolific symphonist of this century. But since on this side of the Atlantic very little of his work is played, it is impossible to appraise his general stature as a composer. His *Symphony No. 21*, recorded some years ago by Eugene Ormandy, proved to be a most felicitous work, and consequently I welcomed the appearance on discs of *No. 17*. Unhappily, it turns out to be long and lugubrious, to the point of sounding dismal. Its melodic inspiration is not great, though it tries to follow in the songful romantic Russian symphonic tradition; and its development is slow and halting, with a number of awkward pauses, particularly in the first movement. Nor does the present performance help matters. The orchestra plays with indifference; and either because of the reproduction or the actual style of playing, both the horns and bassoons sound like uninspired saxophones. P.A.

MOZART: *Concertos for Horn and Orchestra: No. 1, in D, K. 412; No. 2, in E flat, K. 417; No. 3, in E flat, K. 447; No. 4, in E flat, K. 495*

Alan Civil, horn; Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond.

- ANGEL 35689. LP. \$4.98.
- • ANGEL S 35689. SD. \$5.98.

Alan Civil, who is not further identified

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in the liner notes, seems to be a first-rate artist. He produces a lovely tone, he is nimble as a bassoon in the finales, lyrical in the slow movements, and combines both qualities in the opening Alle-gros. His intonation is dead-center, except in some of the trills—always a nightmare for hornists. In K. 417 he has an occasional tendency to attack each tone in a sustained passage softly and build it up, but this tendency disappears in the other three works. Klem-perer furnishes sensitive support, and the sound is excellent in both versions. My own favorite recording of these delightful concertos remains the older Angel disc with the late Dennis Brain, but this new version by Mr. Civil is not far behind. N.B.

MOZART: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 22, in E flat, K. 482
 †Haydn: *Symphony No. 27, in G*

Hélène Boschi, piano; Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Alois Klima, cond. (in the Mozart); Prague Symphony Orchestra, Constantin Silvestri, cond. (in the Haydn).
 • SUPRAPHON ALPV 205. LP. \$5.98.

Miss Boschi turns in a respectable performance of the Mozart, but she is not helped much by either the orchestra or the recording. The band lacks refinement, Mozart's dynamic indications are often ignored, woodwinds are occasionally buried when they should be heard, and the basses are muddy. The sound is distorted on the outside too, but one is willing to put up with much for the pleasure of hearing the Andante of this early Haydn symphony. Here is a pure Italian serenade, sung by muted violins over a pizzicato accompaniment—a captivating canzonetta straight out of *opera buffa*. The sleeve notes are peppered with musical doubletalk. Sample: "The main theme appears in the first variation and is not fully developed until the second." N.B.

MOZART: Divertimentos: No. 8, in F, K. 213; No. 14, in B flat, K. 270
 †Reicha: *Quintet in E flat, Op. 88, No. 2*

Philadelphia Woodwind Quintet.
 • COLUMBIA ML 5715. LP. \$4.98.
 • COLUMBIA MS 6315. SD. \$5.98.

One sympathizes with a woodwind quintet's desire to extend its repertory, but surely the paucity of that repertory is not enough of an excuse to tamper with Mozart. These divertimentos were written for pairs of oboes, horns, and bassoons, not for the reason given in the notes (that such a group "constitutes the wind complement of the rococo symphony orchestra") but because there weren't any good flutists in Salzburg and there were no clarinetists at all. Here the works are transcribed for a quintet of flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and horn, and whoever made the arrangements permitted himself some hanky-panky with Mozart's melodic material and textures in K. 270. This is not, to be sure, a case for the FBI: the two works are not among Mozart's masterpieces, but it is too bad that the only recording of K. 213 now available should be a doctored version.

The Reicha is another matter. It is a most attractive work, with a charming minuet and an unusually varied Andante,



Eugen Jochum: his Mozart's a joy.

and cannily written to exploit the idiosyncrasies of precisely the instruments that play it here. The crack players are all now, or were at one time, members of the Philadelphia Orchestra—the great William Kincaid plays in the Reicha—and neither their performance nor that of the Columbia engineers can be faulted in any respect. N.B.

MOZART: Sonata for Piano, No. 10, in C, K. 330
 †Beethoven: *Sonata for Piano, No. 13, in E flat, Op. 27, No. 1*
 †Haydn: *Sonata for Piano, No. 23, in F*

Leonard Pennario, piano.
 • CAPITOL P 8584. LP. \$4.98.
 • CAPITOL SP 8584. SD. \$5.98.

These are honest, but not particularly compelling performances. Pennario faithfully follows the explicit markings that the composers set down, but he frequently fails to supply the implicit phrase outlines and dynamic schemes. The lack of incisive rhythm and crisp texture is least apparent in the Mozart, given with attractively singing tone and admirable simplicity, but it shows up rather severely in the Beethoven, which is, even for the most finished artist, one of the hardest of this master's sonatas to hold together convincingly. Pennario rushes the last movement of this work, and fails to make enough contrast between *forte* and *piano*, *staccato* and *legato*. Nor am I at all happy with Pennario's evident inability to see groups of small fragments as one long phraseological unit. A case in point is the *adagio con espressione* movement of the Beethoven in the present reading: instead of its sounding *expressive*, Mr. Pennario's playing here makes it sound faltering and a bit tortured.

For the Mozart, Fleisher's Epic version remains my choice, and for the Beethoven, Schnabel's deleted Victor disc. Gieseking and Kempff also do well by the Beethoven. The Haydn passes muster here, due to the lack of any really outstanding edition. Capitol's sound is full and a bit overresonant, although my copies of both monophonic and stereo versions were severely warped. H.G.

MOZART: Symphonies: No. 36, in C, K. 425 ("Linz"); No. 38, in D, K. 504 ("Prague")

Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eugen Jochum, cond.
 • PHILIPS PHM 500003. LP. \$4.98.
 • PHILIPS PHS 900003. SD. \$5.98.

Jochum has now been a regular conductor of the Concertgebouw for more than a year, and that excellent orchestra plays for him as well as it ever has on records. Among the fine features of these performances are the lovely, singing tone in cantabile passages, the masculine vigor of the tutti, the extreme care in the choice of bowings in order to obtain the best articulation. There is some roughness in loud passages in the first and last movements of K. 425, but otherwise this is an entirely praiseworthy reading, only a cut below the magnificent one by Bruno Walter on Columbia. As a performance, K. 504 has no recorded superior, it seems to me. The roughness noticed in K. 425 is gone, and what remains is first-class in every respect. Even in the last movement, which is taken very fast, the tricky problems of precise meshing among the woodwinds and of smooth linking of the winds with the strings are successfully solved. There is one peculiarity: Jochum repeats the development-and-recapitulation, as well as the exposition, of this movement. His performance of this symphony appears to me to be on a par with Klemperer's on Angel.

From the standpoint of sound, both works enjoy perfect balances and, especially in stereo, a wonderful clarity. In this respect the present disc is almost the equal of the splendid engineering job London did for Peter Maag's version of K. 504. N.B.

MOZART: Symphony No. 39, in E flat, K. 543—See Haydn: Symphony No. 88, in G.

ORFF: Antigone

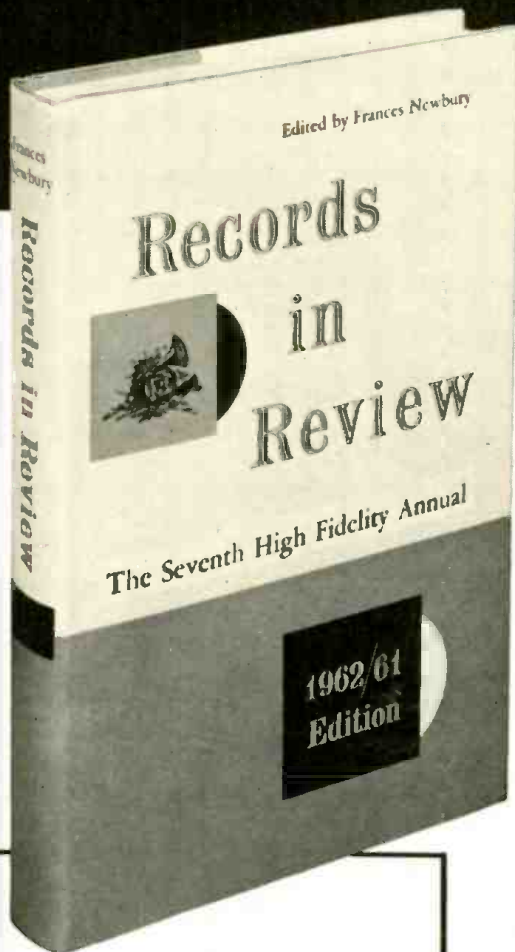
Inge Borkh (s), Antigone; Claudia Hellman (ms), Ismene; Hetty Plumacher (ms), Eurydice; Gerhard Stolze (t), A Guard; Fritz Uhl (t), Haemon; Ernst Häfliger (t), Tiresias; Carlos Alexander (b), Creon; Kieth Engen (bs), Chorus Leader; Kim Borg (bs), A Messenger. Chorus and Members of the Orchestra of the Bayrischen Rundfunk, Ferdinand Leitner, cond.
 • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18717/19. Three LP. \$17.94.
 • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138717/19. Three SD. \$20.94.

If one sets aside the intellectual justifications that can, with equal strength, be summoned in favor of or against Carl Orff's *Antigone*, one is left with just one nagging objection to the work, at least in its recorded form: it is unlistenable. Many composers have attempted to reconstruct the Greek performance idiom in dealing with classical subjects. Unfortunately, Orff is armed with all the resources of modern scholarship and the modern orchestra, and he uses them in his attempt to "interpret" the Hölderlin version of Sophocles' play. I guess he has achieved his stated purpose, and it is really quite a prodigious intellectual feat,

Continued on page 64

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Inge Borkh: Carl Orff's *Antigone*.

a feat of control and calculation. Every little melisma, every choice of rhythm and tempo, every variation of pitch in the horizontal chant that constitutes the vocal line, every pause before a key word, every stroke, thud, or srum from the awesome percussion battery—everything in the score, in sum, serves to underline or set into relief the moments of emphasis as they are seen by the composer. There are times, especially in the choruses, when one feels that Orff has indeed expressed the "force of an inescapable compulsion." Some of the sounds too are in themselves remarkable. The most striking of them are unearthly and inhuman, which seems to me quite explicitly anti-Sophoclean; but they are striking, all the same.

But there is more variety in one well-trained actor's voice than in this assemblage of all the percussion devices known to man. In fact, Orff's ingenuity demonstrates, once and for all, not the richness of the orchestra's resources, but their poverty; the most hair-raising combinations of sound make absolutely no effect after the first hour of *Antigone*. I don't know what effect the piece might make in the theatre—some European critics are very taken with it—though I think it a safe bet that any reasonably good performance of the play, unfettered by the liturgical monotony of indicated pitches, would make a deeper impression than Orff's attempted musical re-creation. To me, the unending chant, punctuated by assorted smashings and janglings, is unbearably boring; and I strongly suspect that my two-times-through-the-whole-thing-or-die (for the sake of the reviewer's conscience) completes my adventure with this piece, at least until opportunity for live inspection presents itself.

The performance is exemplary. There is no use in dealing with the singers as if they were interpreting operatic roles; in fact, the work of such admirable artists as Inge Borkh and Kim Borg suffers from the audible evidence of cultivated tone and operatic singing technique. The most successful here is Gerhard Stolze, who is a wonderfully craven Guard, and Carlos Alexander, whose constricted, raspy voice is used to utmost effect in the arduous role of Creon. He is clearly an outstanding interpretative artist, if not an attractive vocalist. Leitner seems

to throw all the proper cues at all the proper times in the direction of his heavy artillery. Every nuance is caught in the startlingly clear, spacious DGG sound, abetted by impeccable surfaces. The choruses have a particularly rich, burnished sound. C.L.O.

PINKHAM: *Partita for Harpsichord*
—See Selby: *Two Anthems*.

RACHMANINOFF: *Preludes: Op. 23: Nos. 1, 2, and 8; Op. 32: Nos. 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, and 12*—See Beethoven: *Sonata for Piano, No. 7, in D, Op. 10, No. 3*.

REICHA: *Quintet in E flat, Op. 88, No. 2*—See Mozart: *Divertimentos: No. 8, in F, K. 213; No. 14, in B flat, K. 270*.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *The Snow Maiden*

Vera Firsova (s), Snegurochka; Galina Vishnevskaya (s), Kupava; Larissa Avdeyeva (ms), Lel; Veronica Borisenko (ms), Fairy Spring; Ivan Kozlovsky (t), Tsar Berendey; Khosson (t), Bobil; Sokolov (t), Wood-Sprite; Galkin (b), Mizgir; Alexei Krivchenya (bs), Grandfather Frost; Skazin (bs), Carnival Spirit, Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre, Eugen Svetlanov, cond.

• ARTIA-MK 217 E. Five LP. \$29.90.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *The Snow Maiden*

Zara Dolukhanova (ms); Alexander Orfenov (t). U.S.S.R. Radio Symphony Chorus and Orchestra, Alexander Gauk, cond.

• ARTIA-MK 213 B. Two LP. \$11.96.

The Russian dramatist Ostrovsky is known to opera lovers chiefly as the man who wrote *The Storm*, the play on which Janáček's *Katya Kabanova* is based. However, he was also author of a very different sort of work—a setting of a fairy tale about the Snow Maiden—which inspired music by two of Russia's foremost composers: Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov. Tchaikovsky's work, in the form of incidental music for performance of the play, came first; but with the disappearance of the play itself from the active repertory, Tchaikovsky's score sank into near oblivion. Eight years later, Rimsky came forth with his opera on the same subject, which is recognized as a major effort, and is still in the repertory of Russian opera houses. Both composers seem to have been caught up in the subject to an unusual extent, and both worked at high speed on their settings of the tale.

The story concerns the Snow Maiden, Snegurochka, daughter of King Frost and Fairy Spring, who leaves the safe forest of ice to venture into the world of man. Her beauty inspires the love of Mizgir, a rich merchant, who leaves the wealthy and lovely Kupava to court Snegurochka, but she has eyes only for the young bard, Lel. (She does not love him, for her icy heart cannot know love; but she feels a strange jealousy at Lel's attentions to Kupava and other village girls.) At length, fleeing the advances of Mizgir, which she cannot understand, she seeks consultation with her mother, Fairy

Spring, in the valley of Yarilo, the Sun God. Fairy Spring agrees to let Snegurochka know the meaning of love, but cautions her to leave the valley at once, before Yarilo discovers her and melts her. Unfortunately, Mizgir arrives. He is overjoyed when Snegurochka suddenly responds to his pleas, and the happy couple inform Tsar Berendey that they wish to marry. But they have waited too long. When the sun comes over the mountain (as Kate Smith would have put it), Snegurochka begins to decompose. "I melt," she observes—and sure enough, there is soon only a drop or two of moisture where there had been a full-size soprano only a minute before. Mizgir drowns himself in a lake. The Tsar announces that Snegurochka's death is a sacrifice necessary for the appeasement of Yarilo, who will now bring a long-awaited summer to the realm. Everybody sings a concluding hymn to Yarilo.

There is a great deal more to the plot than that, of course, and here lies the kernel of the problem. There is really only one happening of any psychological consequence: the "melting" of the Snow Maiden's heart. It is really rather discouraging to sit through a long scene filled with all sorts of dialogue, choruses, and songs, and to realize at the conclusion of it that there has been no germane emotional event—only a series of surface happenings, every one of which is commented upon at tremendous length by the characters. This is troublesome especially in the Rimsky-Korsakov work, which is simply too long by at least fifty per cent for the material. There is no real reason for the existence of Kupava, unless the composer is going to build her into a character of emotional significance, or at least a catalyst to the plot. (As it is, she is merely the girl whom Mizgir jills, and who is later selected by Lel, after going to the Tsar to snitch on Snegurochka and Mizgir. She's got plenty to sing, though.) Rimsky's score is uneven. The Prologue and first act, covering Snegurochka's departure from the forest, her arrival among men, and her first meeting with Lel, are, except for isolated moments, quite awful. Things pick up in the second act, set at the Tsar's court, but sink again towards the end of the third, especially in a hopeless scene during which Mizgir tries to follow Snegurochka but cannot, owing to the sudden appearance of a forest. The fourth act is quite fine, particularly in the scene between Snegurochka and Fairy Spring. In general, however, Rimsky has failed to create living characters in his music, or to evoke more than occasionally the folk/fairy magic he was aiming for. Certainly the score cannot compare with the later masterpieces—*Sadko*, *Coq d'or*, *Invisible City of Kitezh*, *Tsar Saltan*.

The Artia-MK performance is excellent. Vera Firsova has a trace of typical Slavic sharpness in declamatory passages, but when her voice gets hold of a true singing line, the quality is very lovely, and her shaping of the music is most affecting. Vishnevskaya does well within the rather limited scope of her music, and Galkin brings a round, mellow baritone to the role of Mizgir. Ivan Kozlovsky uses his very light, thin tenor to excellent effect as the Tsar; this series of recordings has made it clear that he is a most intelligent, capable artist. The others sustain a good level, and Borisenko has some fine moments as Fairy Spring. The orchestral playing and choral singing seem to me on the soggy side—

and became the first Unitarian church in America in 1787. The disc contains works of a curiously assorted trio who have made music at King's Chapel at one time or another—William Selby, an Englishman who served the church in the last quarter of the eighteenth century; Virgil Thomson, who played the King's Chapel organ during his undergraduate days at Harvard in the 1920s, and Daniel Pinkham, the incumbent organist.

Selby's two anthems are desperately dull imitations of Handel, but they are interesting as demonstrating the music of Anglican orthodoxy as compared to the Congregationalist music which Billings, Read, and other really vital composers were turning out in New England

at the same time. Perhaps if texts had been provided with the record, the Selby pieces might have seemed a little less dull.

Thomson's short Mass is a very early work, composed in 1934. It moves with Thomson's characteristic melodic clarity, often tinged with church chant, and its combination of voices with solo percussion instruments affords a primitive severity of effect which is very much in order.

The great piece on this disc, however, is the Pinkham, which occupies all of the second side. This is an amazing work, one that uses some old forms—toccata, canon, fugue—but in no anti-quarian spirit. The harmonic texture is entirely modern, and so is the composer's

exploration of instrumental color; the grand, sweeping dynamism of the piece is of the baroque, or the romantic age, or the modern, as you will. The main thing is that this is a tremendous work, one of the finest keyboard sonatas yet written by an American, and it is magnificently performed by the composer himself. The performance of the Thomson is very good, too; the Selby is only moderately well sung. Recordings are excellent throughout. A.F.

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Symphony No. 5, in D, Op. 47*

Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, cond.
 • MERCURY MG 50060. LP. \$4.98.
 • • MERCURY SR 90060. SD. \$5.98.

A colorful recording of a somewhat pedantic performance. A.F.

STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Don Juan, Op. 20; Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24*

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
 • COLUMBIA ML 5724. LP. \$4.98.
 • • COLUMBIA MS 6324. SD. \$5.98.

Inasmuch as Ormandy has been playing this music with success for about thirty years, it ought to be no surprise to find his newest recordings of these scores to be thoroughly competitive with the best in Schwann. Whether or not you choose these versions depends, really, on just one question: "how do you feel about the Philadelphia sound?"

A French conductor of some reputation once remarked that "the Philadelphia Orchestra has been very carefully trained to play very badly." The characteristic richness of tone one hears in Philadelphia may offend some Gallic ears, but it is as much the signature of the ensemble as the quite different, but equally distinctive, sonorities of the Vienna Philharmonic. The comparison is relevant, since both Karajan and Reiner have recorded *Death and Transfiguration* in Vienna and the Karajan-Vienna *Don Juan* has, up to now, been the most notable of the newer versions of that score. If you play these editions against the Ormandy you will hear greater transparency and a little more bite than he provides, and these are both qualities I admire. Yet there is no doubt that, for sheer gorgeousness, the Philadelphians have no peers.

Criticism, after all, should not pretend to be free of subjective elements. My own inclination, when I want to hear either of these works, is to reach for the Toscanini versions, neither of which has been matched musically since his death. If you want stereo, you really are best advised to do some auditioning; but if you have to buy a record without an opportunity of hearing it first, the present Ormandy disc should please. R.C.M.

STRAVINSKY: "Eightieth Birthday Commemorative Series"

For a feature review of recordings of twelve Stravinsky works issued, on seven discs, by Columbia Records in honor of the composer's eightieth birthday, see page 51.



(S)P-8580

The Gorgeous Sound of Wagner and Strauss

Here is the first modern coupling of these two magnificent meditations on love and death. Erich Leinsdorf creates poetry in sound with Wagner and Richard Strauss in their most passionate music. This exciting album is a worthy companion to Leinsdorf's best-selling "The Sound of Wagner" (S)P-8411... and "The Sound of Richard Strauss" (S)P-8548. Of the latter, *HI FI/STEREO REVIEW* said, "The Leinsdorf disk is distinguished by superb orchestral playing and really dazzling reproduction."



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(S)P-8580

The Sparkling Sound of Bach and Scarlatti

The wit, grace, and melody of Bach are happily transcribed by Sir William Walton into one of the most delightful ballets in the modern repertoire... "The Wise Virgins." The collaboration of Tommasini and Scarlatti in "The Good-Humored Ladies" is just as glittering, just as polished and stylized. The conductor: Robert Irving, "...the best conductor of ballet music in the world" —*THE ATLANTIC*. This new album, premiering both works in superb Stereo, bears out that opinion.

Other superb Robert Irving ballet albums on Capitol: *The Miraculous Mandarin* (Bartok) / *The Age of Gold* (Shostakovich) (S)P-8576 / *The Seasons* (Glazounov) (S)P-8551.

surely a conductor of, say, Markevitch's attainments would make much more of the score? But maybe not; with unfamiliar music, this is always difficult to judge. The sound is acceptable, but there is some surface noise on each of these ten sides.

The absence of a libretto is a big handicap here. The notes and paraphrases are well enough done, but there are still long stretches of music during which one must just guess at what is going on. In fairness to Rimsky, it must be said that the opportunity of following the libretto, line for line, might make things a good deal more interesting. Alas, scores of *Snegurochka* are hard to come by, and I cannot even suggest a source for the libretto. No doubt the difficulties of providing translations are considerable, and one does not care quite so much with a work like *Boris* or *Eugen Onegin*, where one may at least turn elsewhere for the text. But the releases of Russian, Czech, and Hungarian operas and song recitals would be greatly enhanced by inclusion of even rather poor translations.

The translation problem is not so acute with Tchaikovsky's incidental score, for all the vocal selections are paraphrased in the notes, which also relate the outline of the story. Here, though, we have a score of little interest. A great deal of it is pleasant and appropriate (I prefer Tchaikovsky's settings of Lel's songs to Rimsky's, in fact), and it probably would not overwhelm the play. I find, though, that having heard it through once, I really have no wish at all to hear it again; the experience was not unhappy, but it was rather meaningless. This, despite a noteworthy performance. The orchestral playing has snap: Dolukhanova is her accustomed controlled self; and Orfenov reveals a clean, resonant tenor of some metal. Tchaikovsky's work has the advantage of being less than half as long as Rimsky's opera, but that is at best a negative virtue.

In view of the high quality of the performance and the absence of competition (London's old recording of the Rimsky work is out of the catalogue; I never heard it, but by all accounts, it is better gone), I wish I could recommend one or both of these albums. But I'm afraid they're for the indefatigable only. C.L.O.

SAINT-SAENS: *Suite algérienne, Op. 60*

†Tcherepnin: *Georgiana: Suite for Orchestra, Op. 92*

Frankenland State Symphony Orchestra, George Barati, cond.
• LYRICHORD LL 103. LP. \$4.98.

The situation in Algeria must have been a lot quieter in 1879, when Saint-Saëns wrote his suite of orchestral impressions, than it is now. Although this work has occasional exotic overtones, one seems to hear in the music more of the French than the African countryside. The whole thing smacks of light salon music, though there is no denying the catchy quality of the popular *Marche militaire française*, with which the suite concludes.

There is much more national feeling in the *Georgiana* Suite by the contemporary Russian-American composer Alexander Tcherepnin. This is not to be found in its richly melodic slow movements, which come straight out of the romantic nineteenth century; but its two dance sections preserve the true flavor of the

Caucasus. Here, indeed, is to be heard a strong nationalistic relationship to the dances Khachaturian wrote for his ballet *Gayne*.

The interpretations by George Barati, conductor of the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra, are not long on imagination, but they are serviceable. The over-all sound is only fair, giving the impression that the orchestra was playing in a rather small studio. P.A.

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 8, in B minor ("Unfinished")*—See Haydn: *Symphony No. 92, in G ("Oxford")*.

SCHUETZ: *The Christmas Story*

Adele Solte, soprano; Hans Ulrich Mielsch, tenor; August Messthaler, bass; Schwäbischen Singkreis and Orchestra, Hans Grischkat, cond.

• Vox DL 780. LP. \$4.98.

• • Vox STDL 500780. SD. \$4.98.

Few oratorios combine simplicity and vitality so effectively as this one. The simplicity is of the type that is achieved by a great master polishing and refining his work until every unnecessary note has been eliminated. Schütz was almost eighty when he wrote this setting of passages from Luke and Matthew; through the sensitive handling of the Evangelist's narrative, through the smooth and transparent polyphony of the choral sections, through the tender and lovely solo and ensemble numbers there gleams that "second childhood" of which Alfred Einstein used to speak. When the Evangelist tells of the massacre of the innocents, a few chromatic notes in a diatonic recitative are enough to present a graphic picture of the ensuing lamenting and weeping.

The chorus sounds rather large, and the recording seems to have been made in a large edifice, to judge by the resonance, of which there is a bit too much in the Angel's first solo. Hans Ulrich Mielsch, the Evangelist, sings with skill, attractive tone, and some nuance. Miss Solte and Mr. Messthaler negotiate their parts ably, if with no special distinction. If the trombones in the fifth Intermedium are not impeccable, the high trumpets in Herod's aria are fairly accurate. The tempos in general seem right, but the choral sections, particularly the final one, would have benefited by some flexibility in the dynamics. Aside from the occasional overresonance, and wiry violin tone in the section for the three kings, the sound is acceptable. No text is supplied. N.B.

SCHUMANN: *Fünf Stücke im Volkston, Op. 102*—See Britten: *Sonata for Cello and Piano, in C, Op. 65*.

SCHUMANN: *Piano Works*

Kreisleriana, Op. 16; Kinderszenen, Op. 15; Arabeske, in C, Op. 18; Romance, in F sharp, Op. 28, No. 2.

Benno Moiseiwitsch, piano.

• DECCA DL 10048. LP. \$4.98.

• • DECCA DL 710048. SD. \$5.98.

This is the sort of Schumann interpretation that charmed Victorian and Edwardian audiences. Today, it sounds a bit mannered and exaggerated, but also rather novel in that it differs from the

standard, objective style favored by most contemporary performers. Moiseiwitsch is one of the finest artists of the old school, and his playing here is, for the most part, highly attractive. Nevertheless, it is the man's gifted musicality which I admire, *not* the quaintly old-fashioned manner in which he expresses it.

Of the pieces in this collection, it is the *Kreisleriana* which comes off the best. This extended suite, inspired by E. T. A. Hoffman's lovably eccentric literary character, has many diverse moods and benefits from Moiseiwitsch's whimsical resourcefulness. This, with the much more scholarly and architectural Kempff reading also for Decca (now withdrawn), comes near to equaling the prewar Cortot shellac set.

Kinderszenen has some fine moments, notably an appropriately pompous "Important Event." As a whole, however, Moiseiwitsch's account, with draggingly slow tempos, blotchy fingerwork, and portentous inner-voice mannerisms, quite fails to suggest the healthy frolics of young people. The *Romance* and *Arabeske* also suffer to some extent from Moiseiwitsch's tendency to accentuate an inner part by playing it a fraction ahead of the other voices.

The sound is realistic in both editions; but, as in the pianist's recently released coupling of *Carnaval* and *Pictures at an Exhibition*, the piano itself seems to lack color and richness. H.G.

SELBY: *Two Anthems*

†Thomson: *Mass for Two-Part Chorus and Percussion*

†Pinkham: *Partita for Harpsichord*

Soloists, choir, and organ of King's Chapel (Boston). Daniel Pinkham, cond. (in the Selby). King's Chapel Choir; Lloyd S. McCausland, percussion; Virgil Thomson, cond. (in the Thomson). Daniel Pinkham, harpsichord (in the Pinkham).

• CAMBRIDGE CRS 412. LP. \$4.98.

This record commemorates the 275th anniversary of King's Chapel, which was founded in 1686 as the first Anglican church in New England, acquired the first organ in New England in 1713,



Pinkham: "a grand dynamism."



THE IMPORTS

THOSE OF US who admire Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli have all too little phonographic evidence to bolster our suspicion that he is one of the best pianists in the world. Now forty-two and in semiretirement, this Italian musician is a true eccentric, playing and recording only when he pleases. And that, alas, is not very often. His much-praised Angel coupling of the Rachmaninoff Fourth and Ravel G major concertos is the only Michelangeli entry in the domestic catalogue. Now available from Italy on a ten-inch Voce del Padrone disc (QB 1044) are Michelangeli's performances of the Bach-Busoni Chaconne and Brahms's *Variations on a Theme by Paganini*. These recordings first appeared on 78s after the war, and it is not surprising that the sound, though good, is less than full. Moreover, not only is the order of the Brahms variations altered, but a few of them are missing altogether. Nevertheless, the clarity and architectural scope of Michelangeli's playing put him in Richter's class. These are easily among the finest interpretations of the works on records. It is only fair to note that a leading New York critic considers Michelangeli a "mechanical and cold" artist. This small Italian offering would seem to indicate otherwise.

A new French Columbia recording (FCX 677) brings us two of Francis Poulenc's sprightly keyboard concertos. The Concerto in D minor for Two Pianos and Orchestra was written in 1932 for performance by the composer and Jacques Février, and they are the performers here with Pierre Dervaux conducting the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra. Poulenc has said: "I can immodestly declare that the first performance was impeccable since I had always played on two pianos with this childhood friend of mine." Thirty years later they remain impeccable and daring pianists, far outshining Whitemore and Lowe, who play the concerto on a Capitol disc. On the reverse of the disc we are given the first recording of Poulenc's piquant *Concert champêtre* for harpsichord and orchestra, a work composed in 1929 for Wanda Landowska (who often expressed a desire to record it but never did). It has been given a strong performance by a Landowska pupil, Aimée van de Wiele. The music ranges in style and sound from eighteenth-century *galant* to early Stravinsky, and the effect is of a gloriously irreverent *divertissement*. The harpsichord is well recorded and balanced with Dervaux's orchestra; in fact, everything about this release is excellent, including the booklet in French by Claude Rostand.

Having indicated something of a bias in reviewing so many Poulenc works recently, I might as well go a step far-

ther in espousing the cause of Carl Nielsen's music. A previous report made note of the Violin Concerto, which is basically a nineteenth-century product. Now the *Sinfonia semplice*, Nielsen's Symphony No. 6 dating from 1925, has been issued on the Tono label (LPX 35004). And here the composer is of the twentieth century, in much the same conservatively adventurous way as Janáček in his *Sinfonietta* (1926) and Bartók in the *Concerto for Orchestra* (1943). The *Sinfonia semplice* resembles Bartók especially in its scoring for groups of individual instruments rather than for the full weight of the orchestra. Throughout the four movements there are light episodes of coloristic instrumental effects—in the short *Humoresque*, for example, in which the single horn's function is described as carrying out a "contemptuous yawning." But this is not "light" music. "Bold and optimistic" would be the more apt description. The performance is by the Danish State Radio Orchestra conducted by Thomas Jensen, and the recorded sound is so clear and fresh that you wouldn't suspect it was first issued in Denmark ten years ago. (The performance was previously available for a short time in this country on a Mercury LP.)

The spate of Liszt recordings issued recently in the United States has drawn adequate attention to Liszt's important roles as keyboard pioneer and orchestral innovator, but his large and consequential output of songs has been strangely neglected. As a vocal composer he is comfortably in the tradition of Schumann, Brahms, and Wolf. The piano writing is rarely flashy; instead it enhances the word-coloring and modulatory development in such a way as to suggest—particularly in the later songs—the vagueness of the early Impressionists. Not a single collection of Liszt songs can be found in the domestic catalogue, but a French company has issued a representative sampling of them sung by Gerard Souzay (Ducretet-Thomson 255 C 091). Here we have Souzay at his best, imparting a welcome intimacy to music which from another artist might seem cold. Dalton Baldwin is his usual sympathetic accompanist. Eight of the songs are in German; one is in French, the melodious *Oh! quand je dors*; and there is the Italian *Angiolin dal biondo crin*. Unaccountably, the printed texts are all in French. For those who have always thought of Liszt in terms of a less-than-subtle thunderer, this release will come as something of a revelation.

THE LATEST arrival in the Schwann Verlag "Musica Sacra" series is a first recording of Dvořák's *Te Deum*, Op. 103, for soprano and baritone solos, chorus, and orchestra (AMS 5007). This is the last and most original of Dvořák's choral

works, written for a Columbus Day celebration during the composer's trip to America. What a thrill it must have been for the New York audience to hear the jubilant opening, with drums beating and cymbals clashing—and then the shout of the chorus! Indeed, the sound effects in this piece are such as to arouse the most jaded audiophile. But there is a good deal more to the music than mere sonic brilliance. The work is built, like a symphony, in four sections, with thematic material from the first movement repeated in the last, and a slow movement and a scherzo in the center. The soprano solos are lovely, and the pastoral use of the oboe and flute foreshadows Dvořák's treatment of the woodwinds in the *New World* Symphony. The soloists are Drahomira Tikalova, a leading Czechoslovakian soprano, and the baritone Theodor Srubar; the Chorus and Philharmonic Orchestra of Prague are conducted by Václav Neumann.

Seven little Bach harpsichord concertos have now become eight. Gustav Leonhardt—harpsichordist and musicologist—has reconstructed a complete three-movement work, and with such skill and respect for his sources that only a pedant would balk at the title "Concerto No. 8, D minor, by Bach." Bach himself worked out the first nine measures (S. 1050), which in turn seem to be an arrangement of the opening of the Cantata No. 35. Leonhardt has used both the fragment and material from the cantata in shaping the first and third movements. For the short second movement he has composed two cadenza chords, to be improvised (as Bach did in the *Brandenburg* Concerto No. 3). A performance of the resultant Concerto No. 8, with Leonhardt as harpsichord soloist, and also of the Triple Concerto in A minor (S. 1044) make up a new Telefunken release (AWT 8404). Three versions of the Concerto for Flute, Violin, and Harpsichord exist in the domestic catalogue, but this one by Johan Feltkamp, Lars Frydén, and Leonhardt takes precedence over them by virtue of the superior recording and the use of instruments constructed on baroque dimensions, which give a sonorous yet perfectly clear reproduction of the playing. The record itself is not part of the Telefunken series issued in the United States by London Records and may be obtained only from dealers who import directly from Germany.

GENE BRUCK

Imported labels are now being stocked by an increasing number of dealers in this country. A list giving the names and addresses of the principal U. S. importers will be sent on request. Please address Dept. RD, HIGH FIDELITY Magazine, Publishing House, Great Barrington, Mass.

STRAVINSKY

Continued from page 52

recent performance is faster, more tense, nervous, and punchy than the old, so much so that the two sound as if they had been done by different conductors. What, then, happens to Stravinsky's repeatedly asserted claim that he records his works primarily in order to establish the one and only correct interpretation thereof?

Most astonishing of all, perhaps, is Stravinsky's jacket note on the symphony. Here this composer, who has always grown livid with fury at literary "interpretations" of his works, who has always insisted that his compositions "express" nothing and that music is incapable of "expressing" anything at all, gives us what amounts almost to a detailed psychological "program" for the *Symphony in Three Movements*, stating that "each episode in the symphony is linked in my imagination with a specific cinematographic impression of the war" (World War II), and describing some of these. Stravinsky's recognition of the fact that this is a war symphony may have something to do with the way he plays it nowadays, and his recognition of the fact that music can possess connotations beyond its immediate substance may have something to do with the descriptiveness of certain passages in *The Flood*.

Stravinsky has been doing a vast amount of reminiscing in print recently,

and his recollections form some altogether fascinating literature. The jackets of several of the new records are full of autobiographical notes, many of them new, previously unpublished, and therefore of special importance. (The notes to *Firebird* first appeared in these pages as "Firebird's First Flight"—HIGH FIDELITY, June 1960—though there is no recognition of this on the jacket.) Since I have often taken Columbia to task for failing to provide the texts of vocal works, I am happy to report that *Le Rossignol* comes with its libretto, in Romanized Russian and in English.

STRAVINSKY: *The Flood; Mass*

Laurence Harvey, Elsa Lanchester, Sebastian Cabot, Paul Tripp, speakers. Richard Robinson, tenor; Robert Oliver, bass; John Reardon, bass; Columbia Chorus and Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, conds. (in *The Flood*). Columbia Chorus and Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Igor Stravinsky, cond. (in the *Mass*).

• COLUMBIA ML 5757. LP. \$4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6357. SD. \$5.98.

STRAVINSKY: *Le Rossignol*

Reri Grist (s), the Nightingale; Loren Driscoll (t), the Fisherman; Donald Gramm (bs), the Emperor; et al. Chorus and Orchestra of the Opera Society of Washington, Igor Stravinsky, cond.

• COLUMBIA KL 5727. LP. \$5.98.
• • COLUMBIA KS 6327. SD. \$6.98.

STRAVINSKY: *Eight Easy Pieces for Piano, Four Hands; Sonata for Two Pianos; Concerto for Two Solo Pianos*

Arthur Gold, piano; Robert Fizdale, piano.

• COLUMBIA ML 5733. LP. \$4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6333. SD. \$5.98.

STRAVINSKY: *Concerto for Piano and Wind Orchestra; Pulcinella; Suite*

Seymour Lipkin, piano (in the Concerto); New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.

• COLUMBIA ML 5729. LP. \$4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6329. SD. \$5.98.

STRAVINSKY: *Pétriouchka*

Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Igor Stravinsky, cond.

• COLUMBIA ML 5732. LP. \$4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6332. SD. \$5.98.

STRAVINSKY: *The Firebird*

Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Igor Stravinsky, cond.

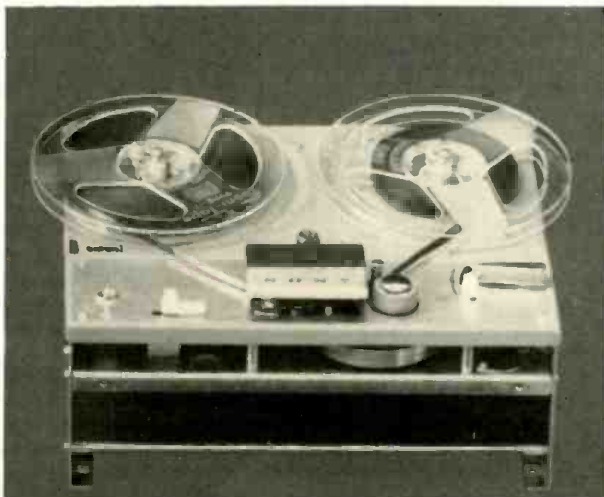
• COLUMBIA ML 5728. LP. \$4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6328. SD. \$5.98.

STRAVINSKY: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra; Symphony in Three Movements*

Isaac Stern, violin (in the Concerto); Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Igor Stravinsky, cond.

• COLUMBIA ML 5731. LP. \$4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6331. SD. \$5.98.

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CIRCLE 81 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

RECORDS IN REVIEW

Continued from page 66

TANENBAUM: *Variations for Orchestra*

†Wuorinen: *Symphony No. 3*

Japan Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Akeo Watanabe, cond.

• COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CR1 149. LP. \$5.95.

This disc provides a tiresome set of 12-tone variations by Elias Tanenbaum coupled with a symphony by Charles Wuorinen whose dramatic gesture is not confirmed by its musical substance. One can say nothing about the quality of the performances, which may be excellent and may be totally libelous, without knowledge of the score, but Watanabe is certainly a man of standing in the conductorial community. Although the review copy was very scratchy at the outset on both sides, the recordings are extraordinarily fine. A.F.

TCHEREPNIN: *Georgiana: Suite for Orchestra, Op. 92*—See Saint-Saëns: *Suite algérienne, Op. 60.*

THOMSON: *Mass for Two-Part Chorus and Percussion*—See Selby: *Two Anthems.*

VERDI: *Rigoletto*

Joan Sutherland (s), Gilda; Maria Fiori (s), A Page; Stefania Malagu (ms), Maddalena; Anna di Stasio (ms), Giovanna; Luisa Valle (ms), Countess Ceprano; Renato Cioni (t), Duke; Angelo Mercuriali (t), Borsa; Cornell MacNeil (b), *Rigoletto*: Giuseppe Morresi (b), *Marullo*: Cesare Siepi (bs), *Sparafucile*: Fernando Corena (bs), *Monterone*: Giulio Corti (bs), *Count Ceprano*. Chorus and Orchestra of Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome), Nino Sanzogno, cond.

• LONDON A 4360. Three LP. \$14.94.
• • LONDON OSA 1332. Three SD. \$17.94.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 53.

WUORINEN: *Symphony No. 3*—See Tanenbaum: *Variations for Orchestra.*

RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

REY DE LA TORRE: *Guitar Recital*

Lauro: *Two Venezuelan Waltzes*. Cervantes: *Two Cuban Dances*. Nin-Culmell: *Six Variations on a Theme by Milan*. Orbón: *Prelude and Toccata*. Tárrega: *Four Preludes*. Torroba: *Sonatina*.

Rey de la Torre, guitar.
• EPIC LC 3815. LP. \$4.98.
• • EPIC BC 1151. SD. \$5.98.

Rey de la Torre, a masterful technician

and persuasive musical personality, plays all of these works with his customary brilliance and projection. It is particularly interesting to compare his performance of the Torroba *Sonatina* with the recent Westminster interpretation by the more youthful, but equally gifted, John Williams. Williams, a pupil of Segovia, gave the charming work a beautiful light and shade, whimsical simplicity, and lyrical proportion. As against this symmetry and lucidity, De la Torre invests the music with a bigger dynamism. While Williams' playing was by no means lacking in temperament, De la Torre's execution might be described as more temperamental. The Cuban guitarist underlines the music, and is more subjectively its "interpreter." (Note the way he teases the melodic line of the *Sonatina's* first movement with lit-

tle *ritenutos* and accelerations, thereby producing in the music a sort of nervous momentum.)

Deep sonority, fervent Latin rhythm, and brilliant technical mastery are also in evidence in the well-constructed Julian Orbón (b. 1925) *Prelude and Toccata*, the excellently diverse *Theme and Variations* by Joaquin Nin-Culmell (son of the late composer Joaquin Nin), and the Tárrega *Preludes*. Rounding out this excellent collection, the artist offers incisively played versions of *Two Venezuelan Waltzes* by Antonio Lauro (b. 1917) and two of Ignacio Cervantes' (1847-1905) *Spanish Dances for Piano* as transcribed by Nin-Culmell. The recording is very close-to, full-throated and opulent. H.G.

Continued on next page

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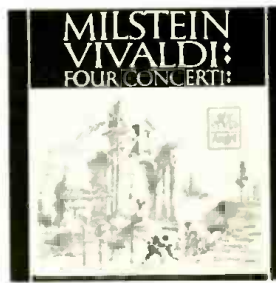
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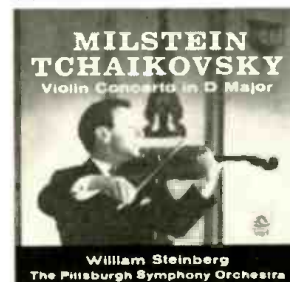
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DELLER CONSORT: "The Silver Swan"

Deller Consort.

• VANGUARD BG 624. LP. \$4.98.

The madrigal by Orlando Gibbons that gives this collection its title is the only well-known one on the disc. There are three others by Gibbons, five by Pilkington, two by Byrd, and three by John Ward. All were published in the first quarter of the seventeenth century. Of the Pilkington pieces, *Have I found her?* struck me as especially attractive, and Ward's *Retire, my troubled soul* has an expressiveness missing in his other two madrigals. The pieces by Byrd are lesser products of that master. The works by Gibbons, however, are impressive for their grave beauty. Except for one or two tentative entrances in Pilkington's *O softly singing lute*, the Deller group performs with its usual precision and command of the style. Good sound.

N.B.

FAMOUS RECORDS OF THE PAST, No. 12

Anna Case, Maria Nemeth, Gabrielle Ritter-Ciampi, sopranos; Paul Franz, Emanuele Salazar, Galliano Masini, Cesar Vezzani, Giuseppe Taccani, tenors; Cesare Formichi, Robert Couzinou, Mario Basiola, baritones; André Balbon, Vanni-Marcoux, basses.

• FRP 12. LP. \$3.98.

FAMOUS RECORDS OF THE PAST, No. 13

Maria de Macchi, Rose Caron, Giannina Russ, Marguerite Merentie, Regina Pacini, Nellie Melba, sopranos; Marie Delna, Marguerite d'Alvarez, contraltos; Lucien Muratore, Hermann Jadowker, Karl Erb, tenors; Mattia Battistini, Antonio Magini-Coletti, Giuseppe de Luca, baritones; Vittorio Arimondi, bass.

• FRP 13. LP. \$3.98.

Each of these discs is a mixed grab bag of vocal recordings, likely to be of much interest only to *aficionados* of the genre. The singers are, with one or two exceptions, interesting ones, though a number (Case, Balbon, Couzinou, Taccani, De Macchi) are hardly in the top class as vocalists, and several others (Delna, Franz, Arimondi) are not heard to good purpose here.

I find FRP 13 to be of more consistent interest, despite pitch problems with a few of the selections. Jadowker's melting, sensitive version of the one popular aria from *Evangelimann* ("*Selig sind*") is a beauty, as is Karl Erb's heady controlled rendition of the Goldmark selection ("*Da plätschert eine Silberquelle*," from *Queen of Sheba*—to judge from the recorded numbers, there is some lovely music in this opera). D'Alvarez offers a particularly sensuous, liberally portamentoed "*Mon coeur*," and De Luca is magnificently resonant and smooth in the big aria from *Cellini*. The Melba distance test is a curiosity, no more. Magini-Coletti's imposing "*Toreador Song*" suffers a bit from wavering pitch, and Battistini is well represented on several other discs—with this cabaletta, too.

FRP 12 offers really great singing from only three of its contributors—Formichi, Ritter-Ciampi, and Vezzani (I would suggest turning to the latter's Odéon recital, though, for a good view of his art). Nemeth, Basiola, and Masini offer high

competence, and Vanni-Marcoux his usual stylistic perfection in a rarely heard aria from Massenet's *Griseldis*. The collector's decision should be based on his interest in these individual artists. C.L.O.

FERNANDO GERMANI: Organ Recital

Liszt: *Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H*. Franck: *Pièce héroïque, in B minor*. Reger: *Chorale Fantasia "Halleluja, Gott zu loben."* Op. 52, No. 3. Widor: *Symphony No. 5, in F minor, Op. 42, No. 1: Toccata*.

Fernando Germani, organ.

• ANGEL 35687. LP. \$4.98.

• • ANGEL S 35687. SD. \$5.98.

The Italian organist Fernando Germani strikes me as being one of the most sensible performers on his instrument before the public today. Both in his previous recordings and the present one, he demonstrates a saneness of approach, an unwillingness merely to revel in the sheer sound of the organ, and a determination to present the music in a clear, balanced fashion that will allow it to speak for itself. At the same time there is never any pedantry in his interpretations.

All of the music on this disc responds perfectly to this treatment. Liszt's *Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H* is full of fascinating but intricate counterpoint, all of which Germani brings out without sacrificing the over-all brilliance of the work. His performance of Franck's *Pièce héroïque* is one of the slowest I have ever encountered, yet it never drags. Instead, it takes on a kind of broad heroic grandeur. Equally commendable is his playing of the *Chorale Fantasia*. In this work, Reger managed to create a unified composition while handling each of the hymn's seven verses in a different way, integrating a massive fugue with the final verse. All this Germani sets forth with power and clarity. The same qualities are displayed in his vivacious presentation of the familiar Widor *Toccata*.

Throughout the recital, played on the fine-sounding romantic Hill organ in Selby, Yorkshire, England, the organist employs simple yet colorful registration that is never fussy. The acoustics of Selby Abbey seem ideal for recording, with just enough reverberation to impart depth and resonance to the tone and not too much to blur any passages. Although stereo adds a certain degree of breadth to the sound, there is also a great deal of sonic spaciousness to be heard in the mono edition. P.A.

SANDOR KONYA: "You Are My Heart's Delight"

Lehár: *Land of Smiles: Dein ist mein ganzes Herz: Immer nur lächeln*. The *Tsarevitch: Wolgalied*. Friederike: *O Mädchen, mein Mädchen*. Kálmán: *The Circus Princess: Zwei Märchenaugen*. Kreuder: *Immer und ewig*. Friml: *Über die Prairie (Indian Love Call)*. Kattnigg: *Love in the Balkans: Leise erklingen die Glocken vom Campanile*. Winkler: *Wenn in Florenz die Rosen blühen*. Tauber: *Du bist die Welt für mich*. Engel: *Stern von Rio*. Kunnecke: *The Cousin from Nowhere: Ich bin nur ein Armer Wander-gesell*.

Renate Holm, soprano; Sándor Kónya, tenor. Orchestra.

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

- DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 19267. LP. \$5.98.
- • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 136267. SD. \$6.98.

Comparisons with Tauber are on the wild-eyed side; for all his skill, Sándor Kónya possesses little of the great tenor's magic. What he does have is a handsome, bronzelike tenor and a propensity for rather superficial emotional expression. These happen to be precisely the assets called for by this program, which includes a number of operetta classics and a certain amount of music that can be classified only as junk.

There is a thinness of quality in the voice's upper reaches, which, considered with his tendency (observed at live performances) to drive his voice sharp on top, makes one wonder whether he will ever bring his instrument up to full potential. But such matters are of little concern here—by and large the tone is smooth and resonant. Listen to "Stern von Rio" and you will hear a quality strikingly reminiscent of the Lanza of ten years ago. DGG has done its customary good engineering job, and the absence of texts here is not of great importance, though a little information on some of the now obscure scores (Kattnigg's "Love in the Balkans," for example) would have been welcome. C.I.O.

KAMIEL LEFEVERE: "The Magic of the Bells"

- Kamiel Lefèvre, carillon.
- MERCURY MG 50189. LP. \$4.98.
- • MERCURY SR 90189. SD. \$5.98.

It's easier to write about this extraordinary record than it is to listen to it. The Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Carillon of the Riverside Church in New York City is claimed to be the largest set of tuned bells in the world: it includes seventy-four bells, of which the largest weighs 40,926 pounds—and no one whose eardrums are assailed at close hand with its tintinnabulations is likely to doubt such statistics.

Its player, the Belgian-born and -trained Kamiel Lefèvre, is probably the best-known contemporary carillonneur, and his weekly recitals have been a notable feature of the New York musical scene since 1930. The present recording of sixteen familiar hymn tunes is outstanding even in these days of technological miracles, both for the sheer physical difficulties overcome by its engineers (who had to hoist their battery of microphones—three for stereo and a fourth for monophony—some four hundred feet up into the Gothic bell tower) and for their spectacular success in coping with the awesome power and steep-fronted waveforms of the bells themselves. Yet no carillon ever was intended to be heard from the inside, as it were, with every jangle (including the strong out-of-tune elements inherent in every bell tone, as well as incidental wind and mechanism noises) only too realistically captured. For home listening the mono edition is preferable, but for the proper performance of this record—in loudspeaker broadcasts from a church tower, or at least with generous air-spacing between speakers and listeners—the stereo version must be much more effective.

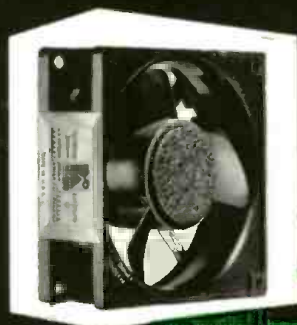
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the company's vaults since May 1958. Yet, despite this disc's obvious unfitness for normal home playback, the manufacturer is justified in making it available, both as an example of spectacular audio engineering and as a notable addition to the sparse existing carillon discography. R.D.D.

JOHN McCORMACK: "Classical Arias and Lieder"

Handel: *Atalanta: Come, My Beloved*. *Semele: Where'er You Walk*. *Il Pastor Fido: Caro amore*. Mozart: *Ridente la calma*; *To Chloë*. Donaudy: *Luoghi sereni e cari*; *O del mio amato ben*. Pergolesi: *Tre giorni son che Nina*. Brahms: *Die Mainacht*; *Im Waldeinsamkeit*. Schubert: *Die Liebe hat gelogen*. Strauss, R.: *Allerseelen*. Wolf: *Beherrigung*; *Ganymed*; *Auch kleine Dinge*; *Herr, was trägt*; *Schlafendes Jesuskind*.

John McCormack, tenor; Edwin Schneider and Gerald Moore, piano; orchestra, Walter Goehr, cond.
• ANGEL COLH 123. LP. \$5.98.

JOHN McCORMACK: "Irish Songs and Ballads"

Quilter: *Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal*. Lady Dufferin: *Terence's Farewell to Kathleen*. Foster: *Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair*; *Sweetly She Sleeps, My Alice*. O'Connor: *The Old House*. E. Purcell: *Passing By*. Vaughan Williams: *Silent Noon*. Moore: *Love Thee, Dearest, Love Thee*. Haynes: *Off to Philadelphia*. Traditional: *The Garden Where the Praties Grow*; *Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms*; *The Star of the County Down*; *The Bard of Armagh*; *The Meeting of the Waters*; *Ye Banks and Brues o' Bonnie Doon*; *She Mov'd through the Fair*; *The Green Bushes*; *The Gentle Maiden*; *Of in the Stilly Night*.

John McCormack, tenor; Edwin Schneider and Gerald Moore, piano.
• ANGEL COLH 124. LP. \$5.98.

John McCormack has been fairly extensively represented on microgroove by selections from his operatic repertory and his recordings of ballads, as well as by a number of his many recordings that can be grouped under the heading "sacred solos." Apart from the fact that Angel has taken its customary care in the re-recording and presentation of these numbers, the chief value of these albums lies in the offering of a number of classical airs and Lieder, and in the fact that many of these versions date from quite late in the singer's career—a mixed blessing.

In fact, nine out of seventeen numbers on COLH 123 date from 1932 or later, and seventeen out of nineteen on COLH 124 are 1934 or later, including eleven from sessions between 1940 and 1942. McCormack was, of course, one of the supreme vocal technicians of our century; he was not, however, a phenomenon in the matter of voice preservation. In 1934, he was fifty. His voice (to judge by recordings) was still fresh and clear. However, some of the amazing facility of handling was gone; the high notes were a trifle dry and tight; and the breath control was not what it had been. There is nothing at all remarkable in this—nearly every singer experiences this sort of decline in the late forties and fifties.

(Gigli, Schipa, Bjoerling, and Melchior, though, to stick to modern tenors, were some whose voices were in better condition relative to their prime form than McCormack's—if we may cheat a year on Bjoerling, who died at forty-nine with nothing but a rather attractive darkening of the tone to show for thirty years of singing.) But the question is whether McCormack should be represented by two albums of recordings, the preponderance of which were made after his fiftieth birthday.

I'm inclined to think not. With some singers it doesn't much matter. Hans Hotter, for instance, can communicate magnificently even now, and in fact seems to reveal new profundities every time he sings—and in any event, sheer vocal virtuosity was never his strong suit. And it's also true that with certain kinds of repertory, it doesn't much matter. McCormack's Irish songs fall into this category. The *Off to Philadelphia* presented here was recorded when the tenor was fifty-seven, and simply couldn't be better. The concluding *Of in the Stilly Night* could, I suppose, be better, but the quiet sincerity of the performance convinces the listener that it doesn't matter.

On the other hand, it is saddening to hear this short-breathed, ill-sustained *Where'er You Walk*, when one knows perfectly well that a decade earlier the McCormack version of it must have been incomparable. As to the Lieder, they are among McCormack's least satisfying offerings. They are never in poor taste or in any way unmusically, and they do offer rewards—listen, for example, as the tenor carries through on one breath the lines "*Überhüllet vom Laub girret ein Taubenpaar/Sein Entzücken mir vor*," in *Die Mainacht*. One can hear this song in fifty recitals without hearing this perfectly logical connection made, simply due to lack of breath. All the same, the song does not make its full effect in McCormack's handling. It is too smooth, too even; the magnificent climax contains none of its wonted anguish. The same criticism, in greater or lesser degree, might be made of all his Lieder renditions, though at least two of these—*Die Liebe hat gelogen* and *Auch kleine Dinge*—are extremely affecting.

I'd certainly recommend COLH 124 without hesitation, for if McCormack were still alive, he'd still be singing these songs better than anyone else. However, if one buys records from motives other than reverence, some care is in order with regard to COLH 123. C.L.O.

I MUSICI: *Music for Strings*

Barber: *Adagio for Strings*. Bartók: *Rumanian Folk Dances*. Respighi: *Antiche Danze ed Arie, Suite No. 3*. Britten: *Simple Symphony, Op. 4*.

I Musici.

- PHILIPS PHM 500001. LP. \$4.98.
- PHILIPS PHS 900001. SD. \$5.98.

This is a pleasant anthology of the light modern pieces with which I Musici contrast the baroque and classical works that make up the bulk of their programs. They are all too familiar to demand discussion: suffice it to say that they are beautifully played here and well recorded. A.F.

PAUL PARAY: *French Overtures*

Hérold: *Zampa: Overture*. Auber: *The*

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

Crown Diamonds: *Overture*. Thomas: *Mignon: Overture*; Raymond: *Overture*. Boieldieu: *La Dame Blanche: Overture*. Adam: *If I Were King: Overture*.

Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Paul Paray, cond.

- MERCURY MG 50247. LP. \$4.98.
- • MERCURY SR 90247. SD. \$5.98.

As concert music goes these days, these French opera overtures sound rather old-fashioned. But if anyone can breathe new life into them, it is Paray. He evidently believes that if they are worth doing, they are worth doing well, and he treats them as if they were the finest music in the world. As usual, he has the Detroit orchestra playing at peak efficiency. It sounds better in stereo, where the wider tonal distribution permits greater clarity in the heavier climaxes, which are sometimes distorted in the monophonic edition. P.A.

REGINA RESNIK: "*On the Wings of Opera*"

Bizet: *Carmen: Habanera; Seguidilla; Chanson bohème; Carreau! Pique*. Tchaikovsky: *Jeanne d'Arc: Adieu forêts*. Saint-Saëns: *Samson et Dalila: Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix*. Wagner: *Die Walküre: So ist es denn aus*. Verdi: *Il Trovatore: Condotta ell'era in ceppi. Don Carlos: O don fatale*.

Regina Resnik, mezzo; Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Edward Downes, cond.

- LONDON 5682. LP. \$4.98.
- • LONDON OS 25316. SD. \$5.98.

Don't let the silliness of the title or the jacket (which presents Miss Resnik as a musical John Foster Dulles) put you off—there is some exciting singing on this record. Miss Resnik did battle with the soprano repertory for some years before turning to her present mezzo status. The results were always uneven; the topmost part of her range was a jungle of ill-focused, rather frantic-sounding tone. As a mezzo, she is still not the smoothest of singers up and down the scale, but the natural timbre of her voice seems more at home in the lower keys. The voice has opulence and a nice spin.

Most importantly, Miss Resnik couples her instrument with a true operatic temperament and an admirable musical intelligence. She could well let the *Carmen* excerpts ride on the size and warmth of her voice alone, but she does not. New Yorkers who were fortunate enough to see Miss Resnik's single New York *Carmen* know that it is one of the most compelling studies around, marked by excellent vocalism and a welcome absence of scenery chewing. Much of this comes through on the present record: the selections are rhythmically precise, subtly colored. Matters are just as right in the great scene from *Jeanne d'Arc*—the one relative rarity in the collection—and in the languors of the *Samson* aria, though here the singer could do a bit more in rounding off the phrases. The *Walküre* excerpt is for some reason less compelling; her voice would seem to be perfectly suited to the role, but it sounds rather gusty, and edges on the old tendency to surround tones, rather than hit them. The *Trovatore* scene—minus Manrico's lines—is well done, though "*Stride la vampa*," familiar as it is, would have made a more meaningful passage. Finally, the "*O don fatale*" is probably the most

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ANTONIO SCOTTI: *Opera and Song Recital*

Mozart: *Don Giovanni: Finch'han dal vino; Deh vieni alla finestra.* Donizetti: *Don Pasquale: Bella siccome un angelo. L'Elisir d'amore: Come paride vezzosa.* Verdi: *Rigoletto: Pari siamo. Aida: Sor-tita d'Amonasro. Otello: Credo. Don Carlo: Per me giunto. Falstaff: L'Onore! Ladri! Quand'ero paggio.* Bellini: *La Sonnambula: Vi ravviso.* Massenet: *Il Re di Lahore: O casto fior.* De Lara: *Messaline: O nuit d'amour. Triste Aprile.* Tosti: *Invano.* Costa: *Luna nova; Scetate.*

Antonio Scotti, baritone; piano; orches-tras.

• Rococo R 35. LP. \$5.95.

A more elegant, consummate artist among Italian baritones than Antonio Scotti can hardly be imagined. Since he sang long past his prime—apparently scaring audiences half to death as Scarpia, with his acting alone—he gained a reputation for being a polished artist with an insignificant voice, but his early records give the lie to such a contention. Nearly any record collector is familiar with the Scotti/Caruso *Forza* duet—probably the most perfect example of duet singing ever put on records. With this Rococo release, the operaphile has a chance to hear on microgroove this beautifully molded "*Bella siccome un angelo*" (it puts even De Luca's in the shade); this magnificently articulated "*Come paride vezzosa*," which somehow emerges as a major aria; and this lovely, flowing, surprisingly basslike "*Vi ravviso*." And for those who doubt the dramatic impact of his voice, there are the *Rigoletto*, *Aida*, and *Otello* excerpts. (True, the high G at the end of "*Pari siamo*" is a trifle shaky—but listen to the rest of it!) And above all, here is a Falstaff as Falstaff should be sung—fully vocalized, fastidiously shaped. It is a lesson to anyone else who may ever want to sing the role: Scotti does not neglect the colors or the inflections, but he sticks to the music and to good singing, and—surprise!—the character comes alive.

We have a tendency to sneer at roman-ticized Mozart nowadays (a mistaken tendency, by every historical evidence), but no one will go wrong with this "Champagne Aria" or Serenade. The Tosti and Costa songs, musically slight, are impeccably sung. The sound is decent, considering the vintage. Very much endorsed. C.L.O.

TEN GREAT SINGERS

Enrico Caruso, tenor—Verdi: *Il Tro-vatore: Di quella pira. Rigoletto: La donna è mobile. Aida: Celeste Aida.* Donizetti: *L'Elisir d'amore: Una furtiva lagrima.* Leoncavallo: *I Pagliacci: Vesti la giubba.* Halévy: *La Juive: Rachel! Quand du Seigneur.* Tosti: *Luna d'estate.* John McCormack, tenor—Mozart: *Don Giovanni: Il mio tesoro.* Bizet: *Pearl Fishers: Mi par d'udir ancora.* Massenet: *Manon: Il sogno.* Méhul: *Joseph: Champs paternels.* Mac-Murrough: *Macushla.* Ball: *When Irish Eyes Are Smiling; Mother Machree.*

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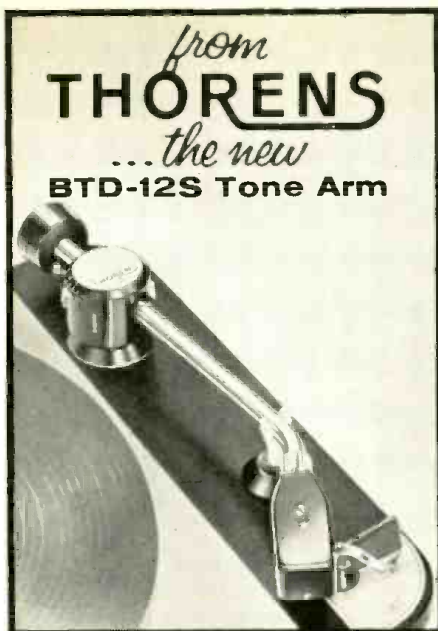
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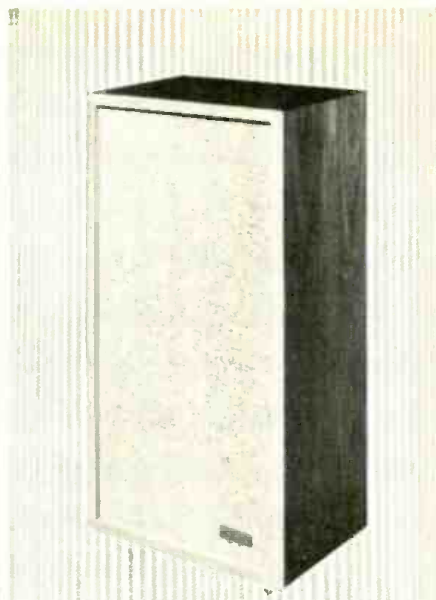
Glover: *The Rose of Tralee*. Rosa Ponselle, soprano—Spontini: *La Vestale: Tu che invoco*. Ponchielli: *La Gioconda: Suicidio!* Verdi: *Aida: O patria mia*. Bellini: *Norma: Casta diva; Mira, O Norma* (with Marion Telva, mezzo). Beniamino Gigli, tenor—Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor: Tombe degl'avi miei*. Verdi: *La Traviata: De miei bollenti spiriti*. Puccini: *Manon Lescaut: Donna non vidi mai*. Tosca: *Recondita armonia*. Denza: *Occhi Turchini*. Albéniz: *Qui Siera Olvidar Tus Ojos*. Sandoval: *Eres tu*. Di Capua: *Maria, Mari*. Amelita Galli-Curci, soprano—Meyerbeer: *Dinorah: Ombra leggiera*. Bellini: *I Puritani: Son vergin vezzosa*. Donizetti: *Don Pasquale: Quel guardo, il Cavaliere*. Verdi: *La Traviata: Ah, fors' è lui; Sempre libera*. Moore: *The Last Rose of Summer*. Bishop: *Lo, Hear the Gentle Lark*. Elisabeth Rethberg, soprano—Gounod: *Faust: Le Roi de Thulé*. Wagner: *Der fliegende Holländer: Senta's Ballad*. Verdi: *Un Ballo in maschera: Morò, ma prima*. Otello: *Salce, salce*. Suppé: *Boccaccio: Hab'ich nur deine Liebe*. J. Strauss: *Die Fledermaus: Czardas*. Lawrence Tibbett, baritone—Verdi: *Un Ballo in maschera: Eri tu*. Otello: *Credo*. Gounod: *Faust: Avant de quitter ces lieux*. Rossini: *Il Barbiere: Largo al factotum*. Bizet: *Carmen: Votre toast*. Gruenberg: *Emperor Jones: Standin' in the Need o' Prayer*. Ezio Pinza, bass—Mozart: *Le Nozze di Figaro: Non più andrai*. Don Giovanni: *Finch'han dal vino*. Magic Flute: *Posente Numi*. Bellini: *Norma: Ah! del Tebro*. Verdi: *Don Carlo: Dormirò sol*. Ernani: *Infelice e tuo credevi*. Halévy: *La Juive: Si la rigueur*. Gounod: *Faust: Le veau d'or*. Lily Pons, soprano—Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor: Mad Scene*. Verdi: *Rigoletto: Caro nome*. Rossini: *Il Barbiere: Dunque io son* (with Giuseppe di Luca, baritone). Delibes: *Lakmé: Bell Song*. Dell'Acqua: *Villanelle*. Kirsten Flagstad, soprano—Beethoven: *Ah Perfido!* *Fidelio: Ah-scheulicher, wo eilst du hin?* Weber: *Oberon: Ozean, du Ungeheuer*.

Various singers (see listing above).

• RCA VICTOR LM 6705. Five LP. \$24.95.

There is very little, if anything, here that has not appeared previously on LP, either on the Victor label or in the low-priced Camden series. The latter group of records, though, which included the Pinza, Tibbett, Galli-Curci, Pons, Flagstad, Rethberg, and some of the McCormack selections, is now off the market; and having a side of each of these artists is better than having nothing at all.

Little comment need be made now about the individual selections. The singers are all legitimate greats, and these are good, prime-year samples of their art. If one does not own a fair share of the originals of their previously released microgroove pressings, and is a vocal collector of solid credentials, one will want to have this collection. The sound is good (for the source), the accompanying booklet informative enough with regard to the singers. C.L.O.



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Beginning a Second Fifty Years

"Cavalcade of the American Band." Goldman Band, Richard Franko Goldman, cond. Capitol W 1688, \$4.98 (LP); SW 1688, \$5.98 (SD).

FRESH from its fiftieth-anniversary celebrations, the Goldman band begins its second half-century on a new label. And while it has made many fine records in the past (led by its founder, Edwin Franko Goldman, for RCA Victor; more recently by his son for Decca), none has ever enjoyed such superbly robust, reverberant, and authentic engineering pre-eminence as that now supplied by Capitol; nor has any previous program better exploited the younger Goldman's impressive combination of historical insights and executant skills. At long last the famous Fennell series for Mercury has a worthy rival—in imaginative program making and virtuoso execution no less than in sheer sonic splendor itself.

Technologically, the present recording is perhaps less sensationally ultrabright than many of Fennell's, but it is in no wise inferior in dramatic impact, and it boasts even greater richness and a more equable spectrum balance. Indeed, I doubt whether I've heard more supremely *natural* band-sound reproduction than in either the exceptionally lucid monophony or the more vivid stereo version.

The program presents a panoramic review of American band music, including some of our most distinctive early achievements in this idiom. The most novel of these is James Hewitt's "grand military sonata" *The Battle of Trenton*, originally composed for piano but heard here in Roger Smith's symphonic

yet nonanachronistic reconstruction of a hypothetical (but likely) band version. First published in 1797, this proves to be a genuinely thrilling example of the long favorite "battle" genre, old-fashioned mainly in its descriptive subtitles: "Acclamation of Ye Americans," "Crossing the Delaware," "Grief of the Americans for the Loss of Their Comrades," "General Rejoice," etc. Even more impressive is Alexander Reinagle's *Federal March of 1788*, which (quite regardless of its claims to be the first specifically "American" composition) established a model of characteristically masculine and affirmative expression of the native spirit which even Sousa himself never surpassed.

Except for a darkly mellifluous transcription, in the original harmonization, of Billings' familiar hymn *Chester*, and a powerful driving performance of the

well-known Gould-Lang *American Salute*, the other pieces are lighter stuff. But they are all done with immense verve (especially the ultrasnappy reading of Meacham's *American Patrol*), and most of them are refreshingly novel to contemporary ears: Holloway's *Wood Up Quickstep* of 1835 (an early example of virtuosity for its own sake, with its flashy E flat and B flat cornet floridities dazzlingly played by Mel Broiles and James Burke) . . . Stephen Foster's only march, the naïve *Santa Ana's Retreat from Buena Vista* . . . two seldom heard marches by Victor Herbert, *McKinley Inauguration* and *22nd Regiment* . . . a now forgotten piece by Sousa, the pompous *Presidential Polonaise* of 1888 . . . and Grafulla's emphatic *Washington Greys*, circa 1870. Far more than a historical cavalcade, this is a bountiful collection of exciting Americana. R.D.D.

What Happens in the Garment Industry

"Pins and Needles." 25th Anniversary Edition. Columbia OL 5810, \$4.98 (LP); OS 2210, \$5.98 (SD).

"I Can Get It for You Wholesale." Original Cast Recording. Columbia KOL 5780, \$5.98 (LP); KOS 2180, \$6.98 (SD).



Mr. Rome and Miss Streisand.

THE American revue—these days encountered only in the chic *boîte* or the flashy night club—has always been something of a hybrid form of entertainment. From the gaudy spectacles that Ziegfeld, White, and Carroll staged for the tired businessman to the intimate revues of André Charlot, Tom Weatherly, and Max Gordon, all more or less relied on the commercially successful formula of girls and gags. None reflected the political and social climate of the times; and if there was a point of view at all, it could best be described as *laissez faire*. Even the Great Depression failed to disturb the status quo, until, in 1937, *Pins and Needles* arrived on the New York scene.

The story of this extraordinary show is one of the most fascinating in the annals of the American theatre. Presented by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, with a cast of amateur performers drawn from the union's membership, it eased into the tiny three-hundred-seat Labor Stage (formerly the Princess, of Kern-Bolton-Wodehouse musical play fame), on November 27, 1937—and proceeded to run for 1,108 performances. For this frankly proletarian revue, the nonunion Harold

Rome had been called in to supply both words and music. How completely successful he was may be heard in this new recording, a wonderful re-creation of a revue still gratefully remembered.

Perhaps the most extraordinary thing about the fifteen songs presented (nine from the first edition, six from the three subsequent editions) is their timelessness, twenty-five years after they were written. *Four Little Angels of Peace*, for instance, is intended as a tirade against the international machinations of Hitler, Mussolini, Eden, and A Japanese; but substitute the name of four currently operating international bandits (the choice is yours), and the song becomes as up-to-date as the latest launching from Cape Canaveral. Replace J. Edgar Hoover's G-Man (*When I Grow Up*) with the gun-toting protagonist of any current television Western, and you have the typical American kid's hero, 1962 style. And *Nobody Makes a Pass at Me*, the tale of a girl who buys every product guaranteed to enhance feminine appeal but still remains unnoticed, is, of course, an ageless lament.

The original version of this last-named number, sung by Millie Weitz, was, until recently, available

on the Decca label, but that rendition is now completely surpassed by a gorgeously funny performance from Barbra Streisand, a genuine comedy find. Here Miss Streisand sounds very much like a young Fannie Brice; again, in *Not Cricket To Picket*, she sounds surprisingly like Beatrice Lillie. *Pins and Needles* was originally presented to the accompaniment of two pianos, and although Columbia has expanded the musical accompaniment to piano, guitar, bass, and drums, the recording perfectly suggests the intimate feeling of the original production.

The year of *Pins and Needles* saw also the publication of Jerome Weidman's novel *I Can Get It for You Wholesale*, which—a quarter-century later—the author has now adapted as a musical. Again Mr. Rome is involved, this time in the story of an unscrupulous operator in the dress business, a heel of such proportions that by comparison Pal Joey seems like Little Lord Fauntleroy. One can be amused by the efforts of J. Pierrepont Finch to climb over the backs of his stuffy superiors in *How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, but all one can hope for Mr. Weidman's unsavory Harry Bogen is that he will end up where he belongs, at the bottom of the heap.

In a rather undistinguished cast, Elliott Gould plays Bogen with frightening realism and Lillian Roth, as Bogen's mother, brings a touch of Jewish warmth to her portrayal, especially in *Eat a Little Something*. A standout performance is contributed by Barbra Streisand, an ungainly, even grotesque-looking girl with expressive arms and hands, who in *Miss Marmelstein* gives an uproariously humorous picture of a harassed secretary striving for efficiency in an organization flooded with incompetents. As Bogen's on-again, off-again girl friend, Marilyn Cooper can do little with a pretty vapid part; and as one of Bogen's temporary friends (with a weakness for jewelry), Sheree North confines herself to wiggling her way through the show. Harold Lang (once a fine Pal Joey) is wasted in the part of one of Bogen's partners.

Rome's music seems to me serviceable, but no more. There are two or three songs—*Momma*, *Momma* and *The Family Way*, in particular—that have the appealing lively beat of Jewish dance music and *The Sound of Money* has an undeniably lilting melody, but the composer's second excursion into the garment industry will hardly be as memorable as the first.

J.F.I.

"All American." Original Cast Recording. Columbia KOL 5760, \$5.98 (LP); KOS 2160, \$6.98 (SD).

For Ray Bolger it has been a long time between shows—to be specific, eleven years. After such a lengthy truancy, he is back on the Broadway scene in *All American*, which unfortunately turns out to be an old-fashioned routine show, behind whose glittering façade there lurks just another college musical. The story line, to be sure, does have one new twist. It highlights the love affair that develops between an immigrant professor of applied engineering and the dean of an Institute of Technology, at the expense of the more customary romance between two enamored students. As the professor, Bolger gives one of his usual ingratiating performances, relying on his now familiar tricks—the delayed take, the facial grimaces, and that bewildered, harassed look one knows so well—to charm his audience. But it is not until well into the second act, in *I'm Fascinating*, that he really hits his stride.

It is indeed fascinating to watch him preen himself and strut his pleasure at discovering how people feel about him; and though one may have seen and heard it all before, nobody does it with quite the same skill. Needless to say, it brings down the house. Eileen Herlie is a gracious and charming actress, who looks much too *soignée* for a dean, but singing is not exactly her forte. She is most successful in the wistful *Once Upon a Time* (with Bolger), less so in *The Real Me*. Ron Hussmann, one of the better young musical-comedy men around today (he can really sing), is utterly wasted in a thankless part, and the cause of young love has to be upheld by Anita Gillette, a pert and amusing comedienne, who is not only a visual delight but—in her one number, *Nightlife*—a vastly entertaining performer.

On the whole, this is a commonplace



Astaire in top form.

score, several notches below the same composer's music for *Bye, Bye Birdie*, though cleverly orchestrated by Robert Ginzler. The recording is first-class.

J.F.I.

"Three Evenings with Fred Astaire."

Original TV sound track recording. David Rose and His Orchestra. Choreo A 1, \$3.98 (LP).

The three evenings with Astaire prove to be as brief as they are tantalizing. They last, respectively, 7.14, 9.51, and 13.17 minutes, and into these all too short periods (less time out for orchestral introductions, brief speeches by the singer, and audience applause) Astaire has crammed no fewer than thirty-two songs, twenty-six of them written expressly for his films or stage shows. As a nostalgic journey through the palmy days of the Astaire career it is a fascinating trip, even though many of the great old songs

are abbreviated to no more than half a chorus. Sounding remarkably spry, and obviously relishing the recognition of each song by an enthusiastic audience, Astaire is really in top form. All the more regrettable that he should have permitted an obvious lack of good taste to intrude into his program. I refer to the cheap, even grotesque (the liner notes call it "hilarious") version of *Miss Otis Regrets*, which is a travesty of Cole Porter's tragic song.

One of the most flavorful items in the singer's medley is Cole Porter's *Thank You So Much Mrs. Lowborough Goodby*, a popular party favorite in the Thirties, but a song almost unknown today even to the composer's most ardent devotees. And if you missed one of the least remembered of all Astaire films, *The Sky's the Limit*, you also missed Astaire introducing Johnny Mercer's great song *One for My Baby*, which is recalled on Side 1. Passable sound, in view of its video origin.

J.F.I.

"Persuasive Percussion," Vol. 4. Command All Stars. Enoch Light, cond. Command RS 830, \$5.98 (SD).

"Provocative Percussion," Vol. 4. Enoch Light and the Light Brigade. Command RS 834, \$5.98 (SD).

"Vibrations." Enoch Light and the Light Brigade. Command RS 833, \$5.98 (SD).

As I write, "Persuasive" Vol. 1 is in its 112th week on *Billboard's* honor roll of fifty best-selling SDs, and probably not a week has gone by since the fall of 1959 when one or more of the "p.-&-p." series has not been featured at or near the top of this list. But by now, I'm afraid, the series is losing its distinctiveness if not its sales momentum. To be sure, the recording here is as ultrabrilliant and channel-separated as ever, but its glassy hardness and often unnatural (however glittering) qualities seem more

than ever lacking in acoustical warmth now that we've learned the benefits of big-hall reverberation in Light's "Sound 35 mm" series.

Moreover, I miss the variety provided by the now departed Terry Snyder: under one conductor and with largely the same personnel, there is little to distinguish "persuasive" from "provocative" entries (or these from those in the new "Vibrations"), and Lew Davies' arrangements seem to grow ever more nervously elaborate—in "Vibrations" reaching new extremes of spasmodic jumping (like Eliza on the ice floes) from one undeveloped subject or timbre to another. According to the notes, this "rhythmic, pulsating use of the entire orchestra" should result in "an intensification of those elements that create and sustain musical exhilaration." For me, I'm afraid, it produces little more than an aural equivalent of itchiness.

All this, however, is not to say that devotees of the series are likely to be disappointed or that there still aren't some extremely diverting and arresting moments. R.D.D.

"Kiss Me Kate." Earl Wrightson, Lois Hunt, Mary Mayo; orchestra. Columbia CL 1768, \$3.98 (LP); CS 8568, \$4.98 (SD).

Columbia's original-cast recording of *Kiss Me Kate* is now a dozen years old, and a few gray streaks are creeping into its sound grooves. Few will want to discard it on that account, for it still remains the definitive version of Cole Porter's marvelous score and inimitable lyrics. But for those who crave a brand-new recording in sumptuous stereo sound of almost the entire score, this new issue is an undeniably attractive collation. The excision of *Too Darn Hot*, one of the composer's cleverest numbers, is regrettable, but I doubt that many will miss the other three numbers dropped from this collection—*Brush Up on Your Shakespeare*, *Bianca*, and *Tom, Dick, or Harry*. The Wrightson-Hunt team are as perfect in their Fred (Petruccio)-Lilli (Katherine) roles as two singers could possibly be, and easily maintain their right to be considered the finest operetta team presently on records. Newcomer Mary Mayo, though she does not quite efface the memory of Lisa Kirk in *Always True to You in My Fashion*, rounds out a trio of distinguished performers. J.F.I.

"Frenchy." Les Compagnons de la Chanson. Capitol T 10311, \$3.98 (LP); ST 10311, \$4.98 (SD).

With customary *joie de vivre*, the Compagnons de la Chanson present a fine collection of songs garnered from all corners of the Continent as well as from the U.S.A.—and as usual these nine young men display good taste and versatility. Highlights here are the Spanish-styled *L'Arlequin de Tolède* and the haunting *Verte campagne*. Brighter sound is to be had in the stereo version. O.B.B.

"No Strings." Ralph Burns and His Orchestra. Epic LN 3840, \$3.98 (LP); BN 630, \$4.98 (SD).

When Richard Rodgers turned over his score for *No Strings* to Ralph Burns to orchestrate for the theatre production, his one stipulation was that Burns should adhere to the title and literally use no strings. Now, freed from that restriction, Burns has rescored the music, not only to include strings, but even to emphasize them. The new arrangements strike me as wonderfully effective, giving Rodgers'



Ralph Burns: strings in *No Strings*.

music an added dimension of warmth and sympathy, which I found missing in its sparser theatrical garb. In fact, my original lukewarm opinion of the score is changing to one of complete admiration. J.F.I.

"The Three Guitars of Sabicas." Sabicas. Columbia EX 5057, \$3.98 (LP); ES 1757, \$4.98 (SD).

A matter of taste. The technique of sound-on-sound tape recording allows Sabicas to play three guitars simultaneously. He does so with consummate artistry, but is it all quite cricket? One suspects that some spontaneity is sacrificed in so calculated an approach to musical performance. Nonetheless, listeners to this interestingly compiled collection of Spanish songs will recognize the dexterity, the breath-taking tempos, and the extraordinary tone that distinguish Sabicas as one of today's finest guitarists. Between the two versions, the stereo offers the more brilliant and sharply defined sound. O.B.B.

"Love Letters." Julie London; orchestra. Liberty LRP 3231, \$3.98 (LP); LST 7231, \$4.98 (SD).

Few singers have gone so far with so little as Julie London, the girl with a whisper of a voice—and with a talent for using it to invest the most innocuous songs with an aura of intimacy and sex. In this, her fifteenth LP record, the results are somewhat variable. The sultrier ballads, such as *Love Letters*, *I Miss You So*, and *The Second Time Around*, suit her smoldering style perfectly, but the basic gaiety of *Never on Sunday* eludes her, and her invitation to *Come on a My House* is one of the least seductive on records. The singer's admirers, however, should not be deterred by these remarks. J.F.I.

"Victor Herbert on Stage." The Roger Wagner Chorale. Capitol T 1707, \$3.98 (LP); ST 1707, \$4.98 (SD).

Considering the wealth of melodious music which Victor Herbert lavished on his forty-odd operetta scores, it is disheartening to find each new recording of his theatre music concentrating on the same twelve or fifteen songs. Thirteen of these hardy perennials are included in this concert by the Roger Wagner Chorale. All of them are well enough sung, in this group's usual professional manner, though I do not find that the vocal and instrumental arrangements have the

atrical panache that so distinguished the Robert Shaw Chorale's recent recording of a program almost identical with this one.

As a change from this steady diet of Herbert favorites, won't someone favor us with some of Herbert's fine light instrumental music, or with some songs from his lesser known musical shows? Exhumations from *The Wizard of the Nile*, *Cyrano de Bergerac* or, most particularly, *The Serenade* would be most welcome. J.F.I.

"Heartsill Benjamin's Virgin Island Steel Band." Philips PHS 600015, \$4.98 (LP).

Steel drums are an American legacy from World War II. Petroleum poured into American posts in the Caribbean in bumper quantity, and native musicians tuned the flat-topped oil drums and used them to evolve a new, hauntingly nuanced percussive ensemble. Heartsill Benjamin's Virgin Island Steel Band started out playing in parades and carnivals. Now famous on the mainland as well as in the islands, the band easily reflects the native urge towards rhythm and bounce. Its lively *When the Saints Go Twistin' In* and poignant *Jamaica Farewell Song* (introduced to the U.S.A. by Harry Belafonte several years ago) are especially memorable. O.B.B.

"The Music of Rodgers and Hammerstein." The Melachrino Strings and Orchestra. RCA Victor LPM 2513, \$3.98 (LP); LSP 2513, \$4.98 (SD).

Over the past two years, the English maestro Melachrino has been recording a treasureable library of American show music. To the three volumes already issued (devoted to Kern, Romberg, and Herbert) he now adds a fourth, a collection of fine Rodgers and Hammerstein songs, presented in tasteful arrangements and impeccably played. Few will quarrel with his choice of songs, which is fairly conservative and predictable. However, it is worth mentioning that he has included at least two songs in danger of insufficient recognition: the lovely waltz tune *Out of My Dreams* from *Oklahoma!* and the haunting lament *Love Look Away* from *Flower Drum Song*. The rich and gleaming sound (on both versions) adds greatly to the pleasure of this most delectable disc. J.F.I.

"Souvenir d'Italie." Living Strings. RCA Camden CAS 696, \$2.98 (SD).

The superb RCA Camden instrumental ensemble known as the Living Strings is heard here in a program of familiar Italian favorites clothed in new arrangements that are as smooth as gliding gondolas—and a far cry from the traditional street singer's versions. Nevertheless, the songs—particularly *Anema e Core*, *"Mama"*, and *"Maria, Mari"*—respond well to conductor Zarzos' near-symphonic touches. O.B.B.

"Preludes to Faith." Kurt Kaiser, piano; Tokyo Symphony Orchestra. Ralph Carmichael, cond. Word W 3157, \$3.98 (LP).

"Whispering Hope." Jo Stafford and Gordon MacRae with Orchestra. Paul Weston, cond. Capitol T 1696, \$3.98 (LP); ST 1696, \$4.98 (SD).

It will be that most readers of HIGH FIDELITY are unaware of the considerable numbers of "Religious, Hymn, and Sacred" releases appearing nowadays (the current Schwann catalogue devotes almost four pages to this category in its

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CIRCLE 62 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Popular section) or of the wide circulation many of them achieve. It is not for reasons of either intolerance or snobbishness that so few of them are reviewed here. A minor difficulty is that they fit properly neither in "Lighter Side" entertainment classification nor in the main review pages. Of course, a separate department could be provided if there were any substantial indications of a readership demand for it, but (and this is the major difficulty) most releases of this nature are addressed to a very special audience which seems to have relatively little, if any, interest in other types of recordings and in critical evaluations.

Nevertheless, I have tried whenever possible to call attention to an occasional exception which strikes me as possessing a more general musical appeal or which boasts outstanding sonic attractions (recent symphonic hymn transcriptions by Chacksfield and Mantovani, for example, and striking unaccompanied choral and band-and-chorus releases under the Supreme label). The present two programs are not as exceptional, but one—"Preludes to Faith"—presents skillful, romantically expressive meditations and elaborations on currently popular evangelical hymns, richly recorded by perhaps the most prolific of all the specialist manufacturers in this field; while the other features two of the most engaging voices and restrained yet fervent interpretative styles I have ever heard in the standard hymn and sacred song repertory. Miss Stafford and Mr. MacRae eschew all "pops" mannerisms here, are simply yet effectively accompanied by strings and celesta (or piano), and are warmly recorded—perhaps even more satisfactorily in monophony than in the softer-focused SD edition. R.D.D.

"French Style." Dean Martin; orchestra, Neal Hefti, cond. Reprise R 6021, \$3.98 (LP).

Dean Martin bumbles his way through a dozen ditties, eight of them of American origin, which are supposed to be associated (by whom?) with Paris. Actually all of them are pretty good songs, though you might not recognize them as such from Martin's dreary performances. The Neal Hefti arrangements are bright and often rather piquant, but they fail to rouse the singer from his trance. J.F.I.

"George Greeley Plays George Gershwin." George Greeley, piano; orchestra. Warner Bros. WS 1451, \$4.98 (SD).

George Greeley's most successful tributes to the genius that was Gershwin are in

seven show tunes, which he plays with resource, strong rhythmic verve, and a fine sense of melodic accentuation. Much less persuasive are his performances of the *Rhapsody in Blue* and *An American in Paris*, both quite heavily cut and stodgily performed. Perhaps Greeley's sluggish performances are due to the indifferent orchestral support provided by the uncredited orchestra; it's poor enough to unnerve any pianist. The pianist has also included Gershwin's Piano Prelude No. 1, for which someone has, quite inadvisably, supplied an orchestral accompaniment. Excellent sound. J.F.I.

"Old Rivers." Walter Brennan, narrator; vocal and instrumental ensemble. Liberty LST 7233, \$4.98 (SD).

Nostalgic folksiness is a tricky art to practice without visual aids, but even those normally allergic to it are not likely to resist the best of Brennan's philosophical poetizing here: notably in Cliff Crofford's title piece and reminiscences of *The Old Kelly Place*. Bob Miller's *Conversations with a Mule*, and Johnny Cash's *Pickin' Time*. Perhaps it's because the narrator's inimitable voice and back-countryman personality are remembered so well from his movie roles; certainly his straightforwardly evocative readings are enhanced immeasurably by the extremely deft musical accompaniments. Of course, even Brennan can't match Carl Sandburg in the *Boll Weevil*, and there are moments of Edgar Guestian sentimentality here which will grate on the cynical ear; but if you have any taste at all for corn, you will find at least some of this of distinctively superior quality. R.D.D.

"Love Embers and Flame." Orchestra, Jackie Gleason, cond. Capitol W 1689, \$5.98 (SD).

Gleason reverts to his original and highly successful formula for mood music albums: romantic ballads in extremely lush arrangements. This time around he has even used two string orchestras, plus piano, celeste, trumpet, and trombone, for the additional hues he considers so necessary. As usual, the over-all effect is pretty soporific, and to stay awake until the last dying chords of *Dark Is the Night* may be considered quite an achievement. Wonderful sound, though, and absolutely stunning execution. J.F.I.

"Sammy Davis Jr. Belts the Best of Broadway." Sammy Davis; Orchestra, Marty Paich, cond. Reprise R 2010, \$4.98 (LP); R9 2010, \$5.98 (SD).

Whoever thought up the title for this album must have done so without listening to the contents, which happen to be some of the most restrained performances ever recorded by the usually furiously energetic Sammy Davis, Jr. Even the real swingers—*Something's Coming*, *There Is Nothing Like a Dame*, and *Too Close for Comfort*—though not lacking in energy, are certainly not belted. Even less aptly described are the quieter numbers, headed by *If I Loved You*, *Lost in the Stars*, and *We Kiss in a Shadow*, which are all sung with warmth, understanding, and considerable power. In fact, Davis is here most persuasive as a ballad singer, and will undoubtedly become a finer one once he stops cultivating a pseudo-Sinatra style. The one blemish on this otherwise excellent disc is the rather tasteless performance of *My Romance*, which I feel fails to do justice either to the song or to the singer. J.F.I.



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"Great Strauss Waltzes." Vienna Concert Orchestra, Kurt Richter, cond. Philips PHM 200007, \$3.98 (LP); PHS 600007, \$4.98 (SD).

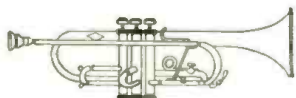
Into the thirty-two minutes of playing time on this record, the Viennese orchestra has crammed no less than twelve of the finest Strauss waltzes. This compression has, of course, entailed extensive cutting of the original versions, and while this practice may have been acceptable years ago, there is little excuse for it today. Those who do not object to the omission of the preludes and postludes of these graceful works will, however, find them played with the right panache, lilt, and charm in the best *Alt Wien* manner. This is the first American Philips stereo disc to reach me, and, although the recording level seems rather low, I find the sound unusually robust. J.F.I.

"This Fling Called Love." Eileen Farrell; Percy Faith and His Orchestra. Columbia CL 1739, \$3.98 (LP); CS 8539, \$4.98 (SD).

Temporarily forsaking Verdi and Puccini for a third excursion into the world of popular songs, Miss Farrell brings her lovely voice and solid sense of musical style to a program of torchy ballads. While the percentage of old favorites is high, she has found a place for several neglected little gems—Arlen's *I Never Has Seen Snow*, Alec Wilder's charming *The April Age*, and a wistful, bluesy number by André Previn, *The Faraway Part of Town*. Miss Farrell, of course, sings everything very beautifully, but I am a little dismayed at the sluggish tempos she has adopted throughout the program. It may not seriously affect some songs, but both *Hello Young Lovers* and *My Romance* lose much of their charm when taken at such a dawdling pace. Perhaps some of the responsibility for the situation rests with the Percy Faith arrangements, which rely very heavily on expressive strings, used mainly in long, flowing musical lines. The stereo sound is especially lifelike. J.F.I.

"The Young Rudy Vallee." RCA Victor LPM 2507, \$3.98 (LP).

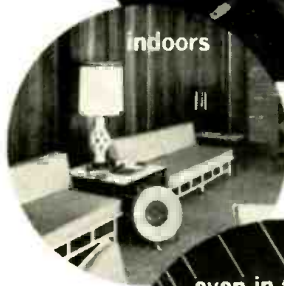
Rudy Vallee's successful return to show business in the Broadway musical *How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* has obviously prompted the re-issue of these twelve songs, recorded for RCA Victor between 1929 and 1942. Those who used to revel in the singer's megaphone-trumpeted song stylings thirty years ago will find this mélange of familiar romantic ballads, college favorites, and a couple of light comedy songs (for which the singer had a decided flair) full of nostalgic memories. Others, less familiar with, or attracted by, the Vallee style, may well wonder how he managed to achieve his phenomenal success. Some part of it can certainly be attributed to the youthful quality of his voice, as apparent here in *My Time Is Your Time* (recorded when the singer was forty-two) as in *Deep Night*, made when he was twenty-eight. All the transfers are successful, but the 1929-1931 issues, with their thumping bass, particularly so. Will some company now reissue an album of the old recordings made by Will Osborne, Vallee's greatest crooning rival? J.F.I.



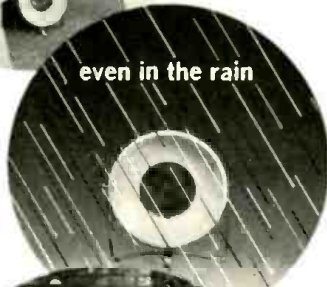
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Ruby Braff-Marshall Brown Sextet.
United Artists 4093, \$3.98 (LP);
5093, \$4.98 (SD).

This curious disc is both provocative and disappointing. Starting with the premise that Braff is one of the major trumpet stylists, one finds that much of his playing meets expectations. In addition, Marshall Brown, hitherto known as an educator and organizer of youth bands at Farmingdale High School and for the Newport Jazz Festival, plays valve trombone. He does very well on a couple of ballads, and on other pieces displays a sly, shy solo style. The sextet, which also includes Tommy Newsum on tenor saxophone and Howard Collins, guitar, has a discreetly tight ensemble style sometimes suggesting an amplification of Jonah Jones's polite jazz. So far so good. However, Braff has expanded his horizons and is now singing, an endeavor to which he brings good intentions but a notable lack of equipment with which to carry them out. And there is an over-all feeling of withdrawal about these performances, so much so that they eventually seem to evaporate and disappear. The group could be very pleasant if it would just stop mumbling in this deferential fashion and speak out.

Dave Brubeck Quartet: "Countdown in Outer Space." Columbia CL 1775, \$3.98 (LP); CS 8575, \$4.98 (SD).

Brubeck continues his investigation of various time signatures. As one burrows through the closely packed liner notes, however, with their detailed discourses on 5/4, 7/4, 9/8, and 11/4 (not to mention such commonplace matters as 4/4 and 3/4), one gets the feeling that Brubeck protests too much. These pieces are generally amiable, a few engage one's interest, and others slip past inoffensively. The fact that they are played in odd and varied meters is more or less beside the point, since they are all short, trivial pieces which either attract the listener on their apparent merits or do not. To try to give them stature by means of pretentious trappings makes the whole project seem ridiculous. This is too bad, for the general performance level is above the Brubeckian norm, and there are several moments—notably Paul Desmond's occasional alto solos and the buoyant rhythm work of Gene Wright and Joe Morello on *Castilian Drums* and *Fast Life*—that are a pleasure simply because they sound attractive.

Charlie Byrd: "Blues Sonata." Offheat 3009, \$4.98 (LP); 93009, \$5.98 (SD). Two sides of guitarist Charlie Byrd are displayed on the two sides of this disc. Side 1 is devoted to his *Blues Sonata*, played with classical guitar technique on unamplified guitar, accompanied by bass and drums. Byrd has great re-

sources, and in the course of this piece (roughly twenty minutes) he displays several facets of his skill. On the second side he adds pianist Barry Harris to the group and shifts to amplified guitar because, as he points out, "the subtleties of the unamplified guitar would be lost against the more dominant characteristics of the piano." Here Byrd utilizes a much more outgoing, aggressive style. His attack is sometimes almost ferocious in intensity, but it is always tellingly directed. He swings joyously all through this side, while Harris contributes complementary solos and exchanges.

Donald Byrd: "The Cat Walk." Blue Note 4075, \$4.98 (LP).

Byrd got off to an unfortunate start on records several years ago when he appeared on disc after disc playing long solos that he was unable to sustain. He has matured amazingly since then, and is now a really commanding trumpeter with a pungently brassy tone and a relaxed approach. He makes valid use of space in a way that he was rarely capable of before. Most of his solos here are thoughtfully conceived and developed, and they are projected with unhurried authority. The second horn is the baritone saxophone of Pepper Adams, who has also relaxed considerably since his frantic early days, although he has not achieved Byrd's assured level. In the course of the disc, Philly Joe Jones demonstrates what a forcefully helpful accompanying drummer he can be, as well as his ability to become a tedious battering-ram.

Tino Contreras: "Percusiones Mexicanas." Capitol 10310, \$3.98 (LP); ST 10310, \$4.98 (SD).

Contreras is a Mexican drummer who, according to the liner notes, is a great favorite in his own country. And he certainly should be. The group he leads—trumpet, alto and baritone saxophones, piano, bass, and drums—covers a wide range of musical territory and brings to everything a great deal of brash zest. Jazz touches turn up everywhere and occasionally take over completely. Contreras gives *What Is This Thing Called Love?* a workout that ought to set Birdland on its ear, for he has a brilliant trumpeter, a pair of driving saxophonists, and a rhythm section that roars with pulsing power. The program mixes jazz with moody stuff (*Ebb Tide*), exuberant mood stuff (*Stella by Starlight*), wild novelty (*Mathilda*), and a variety of rhythmic excitement, all in full-bodied recording.

Dutch Swing College Band: "Dixie Gone Dutch." Philips 200010, \$3.98 (LP); 600010, \$4.98 (SD).

Peter Schilperoort's Dutch Dixielanders have been recorded live here with a

rather heavy and hollow sound. But aside from this (and from the inclusion of a static version of the overdone *South Rampart Street Parade*), this is a strikingly fresh and lively set. The choice of tunes is often adventurous—*Freeze an' Melt*, *Apex Blues*, *King of the Zulus*, *Opus 5*—and even when they are as timeworn as *Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone*, *Weary Blues*, and *Jazz Me Blues*, the Dutch Swing College Band attacks them in a fashion that makes them glisten again. Schilperoort, who usually plays a rugged baritone saxophone, occasionally switches to clarinet and produces, with regular clarinetist Jan Morks, some exciting duo passages on *Weary Blues* and *Apex Blues*. Oscar Klein is a vivid cornetist with a fine open tone and a skillful way with a mute. But the outstanding man in the group is Dick Kaart, a trombonist with a gloriously lusty attack who, on a very fast *Weary Blues*, slips through an astoundingly agile solo.

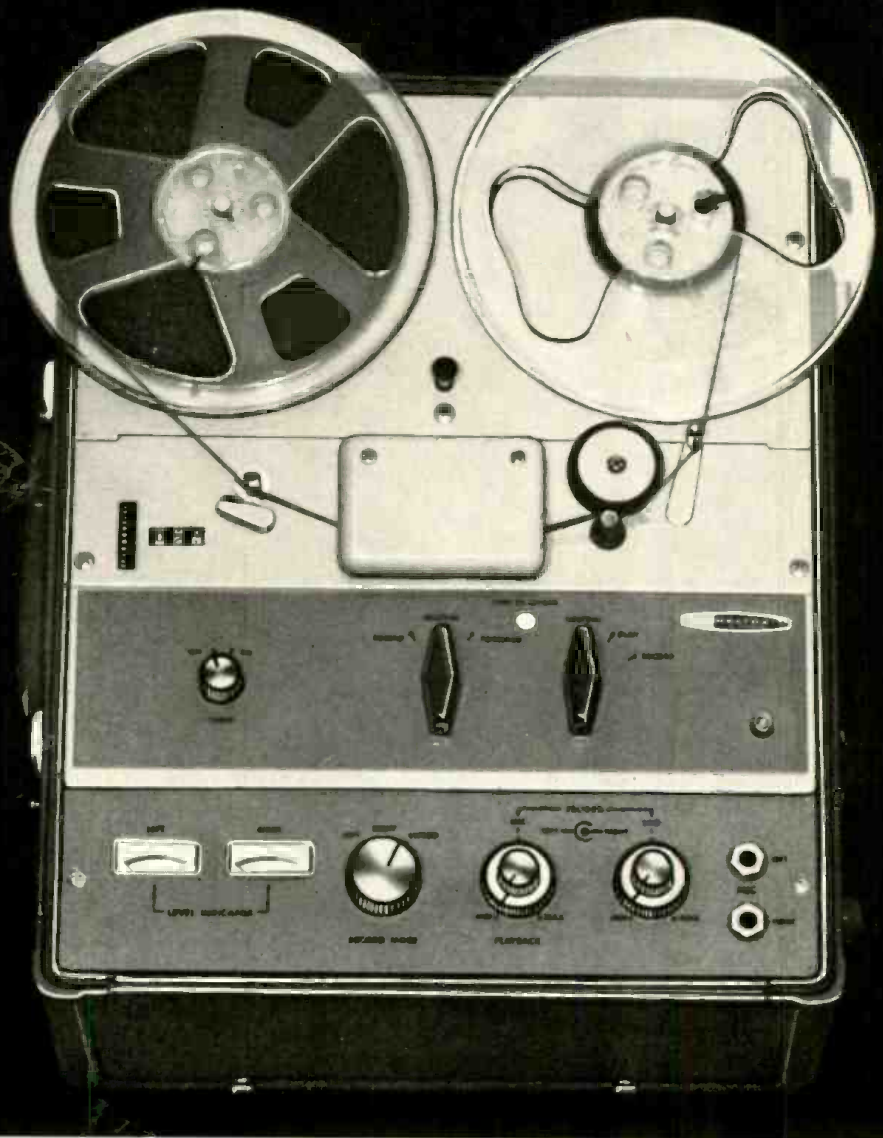
Tubby Hayes Sextet: "Tubby the Tenor." Epic LA 16023, \$3.98 (LP); BA 17023, \$4.98 (SD).

Hayes is one of the most accomplished of the younger musicians in England—a tenor saxophonist with a smoothly ingratiating tone whose phrases flow along with great assurance and a strong rhythmic drive. But he has had the misfortune to be caught here—along with Eddie Costa, vibes, and Horace Parlan, piano—in long solos that soon become monotonous. Clark Terry, playing both trumpet and flugelhorn, turns up on two selections and immediately makes his authoritative presence felt. It is interesting to find that Terry's solos do not pall as the others do, for he does not try to make a marathon of his appearances. One of the reasons that Terry may be considered the most consistently brilliant jazz musician playing today is the judicious manner in which he develops and completes his solos.

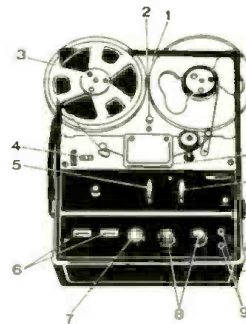
Al Hirt: "At the Mardi Gras." RCA Victor LPM 2497, \$3.98 (LP); LSP 2497, \$4.98 (SD).

Hirt's flashy virtuosity on trumpet is put to good purpose. He plays a brilliant ensemble lead, and that is his primary duty in these very swinging treatments of a mixed bag of tunes ranging from *Basin Street Blues* to *Show Me the Way To Go Home*, and a selection from *How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*—*Brotherhood of Man*. He is a very limited soloist, with a scope that appears to extend only to a few well-tryed phrases played at break-neck speed. But this is compensated for by Richard Nelson, a trombonist with an overwhelming attack who takes over completely every time he is given the opportunity. Nelson has a broad

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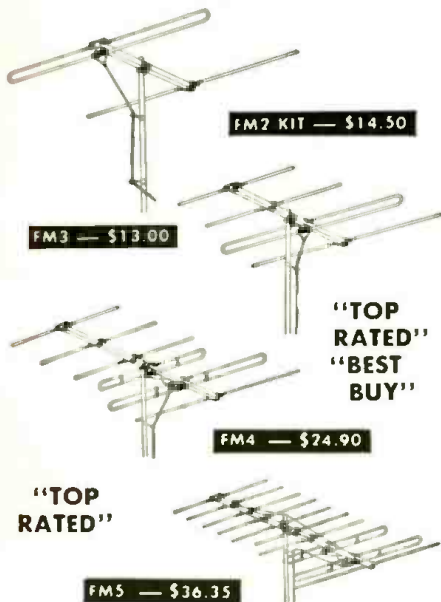
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style much like the delightful bravura playing of Abe Lincoln. There's a solid rhythm section, too, giving all the pieces a smoothly rolling propulsion that is almost entirely Swing Era with scarcely a touch of Dixie.

Johnny Hodges: "With Billy Strayhorn and *The Orchestra*." Verve 8452, \$4.98 (LP); 68452, \$5.98 (SD).

The Orchestra, needless to say, is Duke Ellington's orchestra with Jimmy Jones sitting in at piano for Duke, and Quentin Jackson back in his once accustomed place in the trombone section. The band serves largely as a setting for Johnny Hodges' familiar treatments of *Don't Get Around Much Any More*, *I've Got It Bad and That Ain't Good*, *Jeep's Blues*, *Day Dreams*, and *The Gal from Joe's*. The band is good and Hodges is good, but they've both been through these routines before. There are a few new pieces—a strong rocker called *Juice A-Plenty* on which Lawrence Brown takes a bluesy muted trombone solo, a characteristic Hodges ballad, *Your Love Has Faded*, and a disorderly band piece, *Tailor Made*, climaxed by a screaming Cat Anderson trumpet. Aside from Hodges, who is as placidly letter-perfect as usual, the main interest centers on Lawrence Brown, who plays several pleasantly burry solos in addition to reverting to his suavely slick early style on *Star Dust*.

Billie Holiday: "The Golden Years."

Columbia C3L 21, \$11.98 (Three LP). One of the great series of studio-based jazz recordings were the discs produced between 1935 and 1941 by Teddy Wilson's pickup groups with Billie Holiday as vocalist. This series is the focal point of the present three-record album, which puts back into circulation the discs on which Miss Holiday's reputation is based. It serves as a welcome reminder that she was not, in those rising years, the tragedienne that she later became, but an outgoing rhythmic singer with a marvelously individual manner of phrasing. The set traces her development from her first record (of a 1933 pop tune with a studio group led by Benny Goodman), through the Wilson series and the very similar records designated as by "Billie Holiday and Her Orchestra," to the beginnings of her ballad period in 1939 and 1940. The musicians at these sessions represent a Who's Who of jazz—dom in the late Thirties, starting with Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Bunny Berigan, and Irving Fazola on the earlier records, and drawing on Ellingtonians and Basieites in the later years. For a short while, Miss Holiday was the vocalist with Count Basie's band, although she never recorded with Basie. The inclusion in this set of three air checks on which she sings with the Basie band represents the first time she has been heard in this context on records. One is a stunted treatment of *Swing, Brother, Swing*, but the other two—*They Can't Take That Away from Me* and *I Can't Get Started*—suggest the easy rapport that Miss Holiday had with these musicians.

Miss Holiday was the first great jazz singer (as distinguished from a blues singer, for she rarely sang blues), and her wide influence affects much of both jazz and popular vocalizing. These records chart the performances from which that influence stems, for this was the most vital part of her career—a time when her singing was still unaffected (by the early Forties she was consciously

trying to sound like herself), and when she had the voice to do anything that her adventurous spirit suggested. To be sure, there is a great deal of similarity in many of these performances, for they are all cut from a basic pattern (and with no arrangements). For some listeners, there may be too much of a good thing spread over these six sides, but to many others there could never be enough of the fresh, young voice of Billie Holiday, spiraling up out of ensembles that included Lester Young, Buck Clayton, Johnny Hodges, Hot Lips Page, Edmond Hall, Red Allen, and the whole fantastic array of great jazzmen who recorded with this singer in the Thirties.

Roland Kirk: "We Free Kings." Mercury 20679, \$3.98 (LP); 60679, \$4.98 (SD).

Roland Kirk is an astounding musician who, on the surface, appears intent on perpetuating a gimmick, yet uses this gimmick to very valid musical purpose. Kirk plays three instruments at once—a tenor saxophone, a manzello (a variety of straight alto saxophone), and a stritch (an enormous thing that looks like an oversized blunderbuss and sounds somewhat like a soprano saxophone). Playing them simultaneously, he produces balanced and useful ensemble effects. He also uses them in pairs and as solo instruments and, in addition, plays a fiercely virile flute, and occasionally blows a siren whistle as a means of conducting (like Perez Prado's "Ughh!") or just because he feels like it. He is a tremendously forceful soloist, solidly in the current hard-blowing school but with an extra edge of ferocity that is quite personal. Visually, Kirk is an absorbing spectacle as he shuffles his instruments around. But the real test of his value as a musician is on records, where he must rise or fall on his music alone. And he succeeds admirably, for his playing has that impassioned, bursting emotionality characteristic of most of the great jazzmen.

Jeanne Lee-Ran Blake: "The Newest Sound Around." RCA Victor LPM 2500, \$3.98 (LP); LSP 2500, \$4.98 (SD).

Both Miss Lee, a singer, and Blake, a pianist, are new to records. They make a provocative joint debut, but one suggesting that they still have a great deal of work ahead of them. Miss Lee sings in a very withdrawn, almost otherworldly manner that is extremely effective on tunes intended to be "haunting"—*Laura*, *Where Flamingos Fly*, *Blue Monk*. But when she moves into the clever lyric league on *Season in the Sun* and *Love Isn't Everything*, she is completely beyond her depth. Blake uses a sketchy piano style to suggest a variety of backgrounds, tossing out a dab here, a stroke there, with a basic gospel-blues foundation that becomes overt at times, especially in his accompaniment to *Summertime* and in his single solo piece, *Church on Russell Street*. Both he and Miss Lee are working an unusual but very narrow area which, in its limitations, is rather like Jimmy Giuffre's explorations of the low register of the clarinet. One is initially drawn to their performances, but by the end of Side 2 the meagerness of their territory has become apparent. To some degree this is due to a thinning out of material, but that in itself is one of the problems they will have to face. Just how far can you go while dancing

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

on the head of a pin? For the nonce, however, this unusual release is far better than most of the vocal discs offered in the name of jazz.

Les McCann Ltd.: "In New York." Pacific Jazz 45, \$4.98 (LP).

As one who has been less than impressed by Les McCann's stolid, gospel-grounded performances with his trio, I find it a particular pleasure to hear him come into focus on this disc. He does it with the help of two saxophonists, Stanley Turrentine and Frank Haines, and trumpeter Blue Mitchell, who were added to his regular trio for this recording. These horns lend a variety of texture and color that McCann has badly needed, and provide the forceful drive that he has previously tried to hammer out with his piano alone. The saxophonists give this set most of its flavor, but unfortunately their contributions are not identified. Some solos are harder in tone than one expects from Turrentine, and presumably these are by Haines. If so, he is a bright new addition to the saxophone roster, and commands a lean, walloping attack that sweeps everything before it. Turrentine can also play in this impassioned manner but, in addition, he occasionally reveals a more reflective side. McCann, relieved of the burden of carrying the disc by himself, does not seem to strain for effects so much as on his trio records, and all five of these selections are developed to a strong emotional pitch without stumbling over clichés.

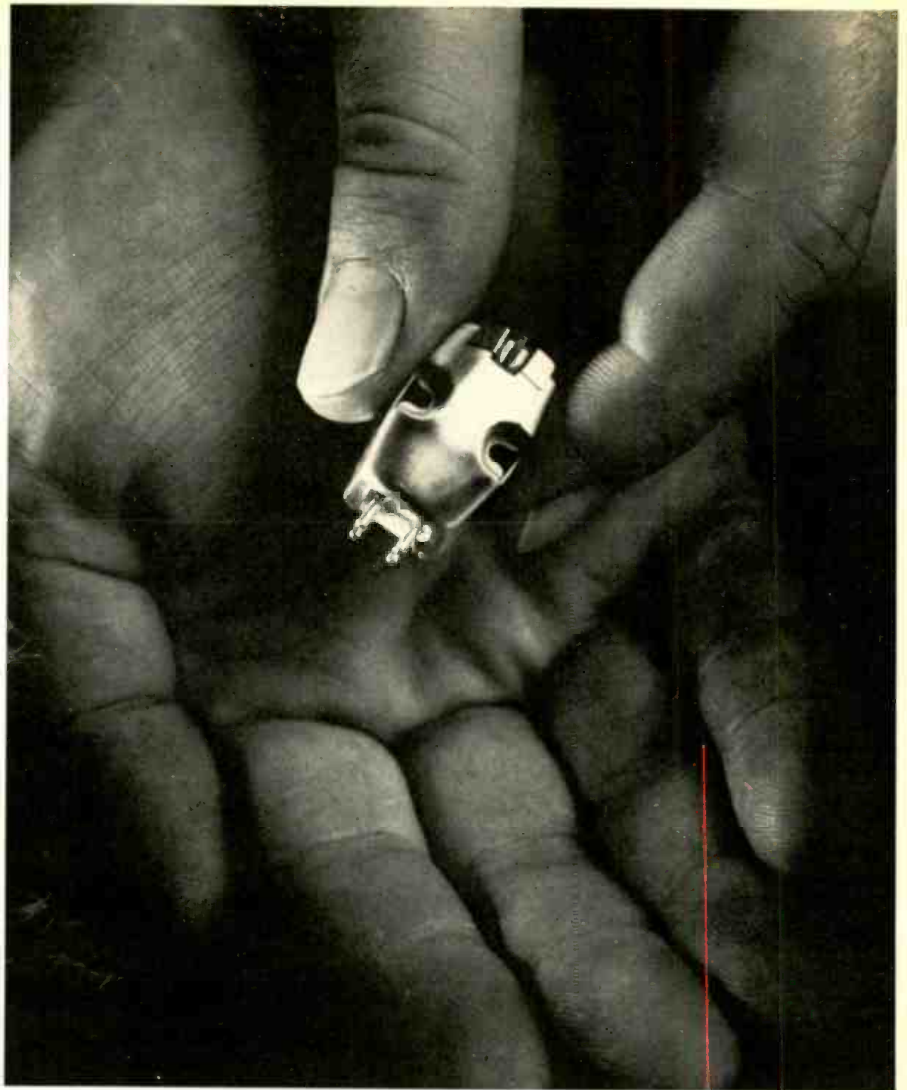
Barry Miles: "Miles of Genius." Charlie Parker 804, \$4.98 (LP).

Barry Miles's major crime is that he is fourteen years old. If he were not, one could appraise this disc simply as the work of a small group led by a drummer. And one would report that this was a highly capable ensemble drummer who kept his little band swinging along in unostentatious fashion, that he had several excellent sidemen including Johnny Glasel on trumpet, Duke Jordan on piano, and a relatively unheralded tenor saxophonist named George Clarke, who should be better known. And one would further have to report that this drummer had no less ham in him than most of his colleagues, for he takes several long solos that do nothing but detract from the over-all interest of the record. Viewed dispassionately, then, this is a much better than average set of straightforward performances. But if you take into account the leader's age and the fact that these seven quite respectable tunes are all credited to him, you may find the disc even more stimulating.

John Wright: "Makin' Out." Prestige 7212, \$4.98 (LP).

It would be a mistake to overlook this disc merely because the two principal performers—John Wright, piano, and Eddie "Cat-Eye" Williams, tenor saxophone—are practically devoid of name value, or because of an assumption that this is just another piano set. This disc is not the banal clutch of soul clichés or endless one-note lines that most piano albums boil down to these days. Both Wright and Williams are swingingly motivated, unpretentious, center-of-the-road jazzmen who rock along in a simple and direct fashion. Their album points in no new directions, breaks no new trails, but it does consolidate some of the richest material jazz has turned up.

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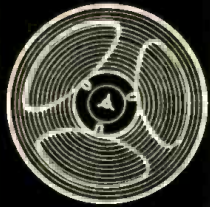
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CIRCLE 63 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



the Tape Deck

Reviewed by R. D. DARRELL

The following reviews are of 4-track 7.5-ips stereo tapes in normal reel form.

BACH: *Organ Works*

Tocatta and Fugue in D minor, S. 565; *Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor*, S. 582; *Tocatta, Adagio, and Fugue in C*, S. 564. *Fugues: G minor*, S. 578 ("Little"); *G*, S. 577 ("à la gigue").

E. Power Biggs, organ.

• • COLUMBIA MQ 435. 44 min. \$7.95.

This recital is a wholly pleasant surprise despite the fact that it is confined to familiar works, among which only S. 564, S. 577, and S. 578 are new to 4-track tape. Biggs himself plays with more enthusiasm than I have heard from him in years, and the present sonics are well-nigh ideal. The Flentrop organ in the Busch-Reisinger Museum of Harvard University is an excellent instrument in its felicitous combination of the best of baroque timbres with modern tonal breadth and weight. It is magnificently recorded here, with miking close enough to secure flawless clarity of detail, yet not so close as to sacrifice the ample reverberation essential to the atmospheric authenticity of these great organ works. The tape is excellently processed too, with extremely quiet surfaces and only minimal preëchoes despite the enormously wide dynamic range of the performances themselves.

DEBUSSY: *Images pour orchestre*

†Ravel: *Pavane pour une infante défunte*

†Stravinsky: *Symphonies for Wind Instruments*

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.

• • LONDON LCL 80085. 48 min. \$7.95.

Since the generally acclaimed "definitive" stereo edition of the complete *Images* by Argenta never was (and now is not likely to be) transferred to tape, and there has been only a single 4-track taping of *Ibéria* alone (by Rosenthal for Westminster), the present reel would be welcome even if it were merely acceptable. Actually it is nearly ideal: I can quibble only about a faint trace of background hum in the very low level passages—and this is apparently a flaw in the recording itself rather than in the extremely quiet-surfaced processing. Otherwise the recording is a superb example of the most magically floating and lucid stereoism—not only lovelier than that in the Argenta version but still better suited, in its slightly more distant miking, to the evocative impressionism of the music itself.

Some listeners may find Ansermet's reading overrestrained, but I am not one of them. His performance is certainly almost feminine in its poetic



Ansermet: both poetic and piquant.

delicacy, yet while Argenta was more overtly dramatic, close comparisons prove that where zest is required (especially in the first and last movements of *Ibéria*) Ansermet provides every bit as much in his piquant Gallic style as the Spaniard did in more pungent Iberian accents. For good measure, the reel also contains the austere wind symphonies Stravinsky dedicated to Debussy's memory, played here more lyrically than in the dramatically forceful Fennell stereo disc version, and—a sweet to compensate for the Stravinskyan acidities—the most hauntingly romantic yet unsentimentalized performance of Ravel's *Pavane* that I've ever heard on records or off.

FRANCK: *Symphony in D minor; Le Chasseur maudit*

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.

• • LONDON LCL 80082. 53 min. \$7.95.

FRANCK: *Symphony in D minor*

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

• • COLUMBIA MQ 430. 40 min. \$7.95.

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Monteux, cond.

• • RCA VICTOR FTC 2092. 39 min. \$8.95.

The current embarrassment of Franck Symphony duplications is less worrisome in the tape than in the disc world. Not only has the earlier repertory been inadequate (a nondescript Hans Wolf 4-track version for Livingston and Munch's 1958 RCA Victor 2-tracker), but the present trio is so diversified interpretatively that each has its own *raison d'être*.

Conservative listeners need not look beyond Ormandy and the Philadelphians. Theirs is the expectedly orthodox, broadly emotional, and organlike reading, with the concomitant expansive orchestral grandiloquence, and the recording is of the most richly spacious stereoism. For myself (permanently biased as

a youngster by Monteux), I have always preferred a less romantic, more Gallic and exuberant approach, and until now have never wavered in my allegiance to the previous Monteux version as unchallengeably definitive of this work. Has my taste changed? Does the conductor himself betray (for the first time on records surely) some slackening of control? Or did he find the Chicagoans less amenable than other orchestras have been? I only know that for the first time I'm aware of some touches of both lethargy and overvehemence in Monteux's Franck, which I can't honestly ascribe to any recording deficiencies—although the stereoism here seems not quite as pure and smoothly spread as I expect nowadays. Perhaps the latter impression results from a slight channel imbalance in my review copy; in any case, it is only fair to note that my disappointment in either performance or recording, or both, is *not* shared by all my colleagues.

But there are good as well as bad surprises. Different as it is from my former Monteux ideal, the smaller-scaled, less driving, more delicately lyrical Ansermet version held me fascinated at first encounter and at every replaying. For me it far outdistances both the Ormandy and Monteux readings. More distantly, yet ultratransparently recorded; played with a lucidity and piquancy that seem even more "Gallic" than in any French performance I have ever heard; poetic with a limpid grace I never suspected in Franck—this approach throws new illumination on the music itself (and also on the more faded *Accursed Huntsman*, which is included as a bonus). The reel—which is well processed, if at a rather low modulation level—may seem lacking in dramatic impact to many listeners. Perhaps I should recommend it only to those dissatisfied or bored with more orthodox versions. But to me it comes as a revelation of wondrously fresh attractions.

GERSHWIN: *Second Rhapsody; Variations on "I Got Rhythm"; Cuban Overture* (arr. McRitchie); *Porgy and Bess: Medley* (arr. McRitchie)

Leonard Pennario, piano; Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra, Alfred Newman, cond.

• • CAPITOL ZP 8581. 43 min. \$7.98.

Pennario's virtuosity has never been more vivacious nor more dazzlingly recorded than in the present Gershwin program. Possibly the extreme highs are not quite so sensorially bright and sharp as in the stereo disc edition, but there is no lack of glitter, and the overall spectrum balance has if anything even greater concert hall authenticity. The processing is admirable, except for

THE TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

the seemingly inevitable preëchoes. Only the "I Got Rhythm" Variations have appeared on tape before (and I still prefer by a slight margin that Wild-Fiedler version, on RCA Victor). While the often neglected Second Rhapsody is a major attraction, I relished even more the McRitchie "concerto" arrangement of the Cuban Overture which, unlike most transcriptions, enhances rather than detracts from the effectiveness of the original conception. The similar treatment of Porgy and Bess tunes is more conventional, but here too the performers' gusto and scintillant tonal qualities are quite irresistible.

MOZART: Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 20, in D minor, K. 466; No. 24, in C minor, K. 491

Clara Haskil, piano; Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux, Igor Markevitch, cond.
• • Epic EC 820. 60 min. \$7.95.

It is bitterly ironic that so celebrated and prolific a recording pianist as Miss Haskil should not have been represented on tape during her lifetime, and that the present recording, made shortly before her tragic death in December 1960, must be considered primarily as a memorial to, rather than a characteristic example of, her fastidious artistry. In any case, the expressive simplicity and beautifully controlled vitalizing of these performances demand for them a place

of honor in every Mozart concerto collection. Markevitch's accompaniments are characterized by steadiness and restrained strength, while the smoothly spread and cleanly differentiated stereoisism enhances a well-balanced recording made appropriately in a small-hall acoustical ambience. The tape itself is quiet-surfaced. Denis Matthews' versions of the same two concertos were also attractively played, but far less effectively accompanied and recorded.

**STRAUSS, JOHANN II: Graduation Ball (arr. Dorati)
†Weber: Le Spectre de la Rose (Invitation to the Dance, Op. 65, orch. Berlioz)**

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Willi Boskovsky, cond.
• • LONDON LCL 80091. 43 min. \$7.95.

Each time I hear the rollicking ballet score assembled by Dorati from Strauss's Accelerations Waltz, Perpetuum Mobile, and several less familiar dance pieces, I find it harder to understand why Graduation Ball on records doesn't enjoy as spectacular a public success as the scarcely more effervescent Offenbach-Rosenthal Gaieté Parisienne. Perhaps Boskovsky's performance will do the trick. It is every bit as piquant and vivacious as the old 2-track Dorati version, but more graceful and warmly colored, more purely and atmospherically recorded, and, moreover, unabridged. The tape is flawlessly processed, and the sonics are just as enchanting in the familiar Weber-Berlioz music used in the ballet. Le Spectre de la Rose, although here some aficionados may find Boskovsky less convincing.

STRAVINSKY: Symphonie de Psaumes; Les Noces

Choeur des Jeunes de Lausanne, Choeur de Radio Lausanne, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande (in the Symphonie); vocal quartet, four pianos. Motet Choir of Geneva (in Les Noces); Ernest Ansermet, cond.
• • LONDON LCL 80084. 46 min. \$7.95.

Two tape "firsts," at least one of which is an essential addition to the reel repertory. The other, Les Noces, is important enough historically and for its influence on other composers (most obviously Carl Orff), but it remains something of a museum piece, at least in this crystalline but curiously remote and pallid Ansermet performance, which is doubly handicapped by a lack of sonic impact and the absence of an accompanying text in either the French version sung here or an English translation.

The brief Latin text of the Symphony of Psalms is included, although it is far less necessary, since here the passionate anguish and exultancy of the music are eloquently intelligible to every listener at first hearing—and they become increasingly poignant with every rehearing. Ansermet's reading may not quite match the austere grandeur and force of the composer's (and there is a new Stravinsky recording on the way), but it is beautifully sung, played, and recorded throughout, and at its best achieves something very close to heavenly radiance. Every time I replay it I am more than ever convinced that the work itself is one of the greatest—perhaps the greatest—achievements in twentieth-cen-

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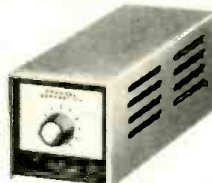
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ture music, a masterpiece that meets Santayana's aesthetic ideal of an "ecstasy without grimace, and submission without tears."

VERDI: *Requiem Mass*

Leontyne Price, soprano; Rosalind Elias, mezzo; Jussi Bjoerling, tenor; Giorgio Tozzi, bass; Chorus of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond.

• • RCA VICTOR FTC 7001. 95 min. \$14.95.

The Reiner Requiem (the only 4-track version) is tremendously striking, if often highly idiosyncratic. Some of the tempos are almost impossibly slow (as that at the very beginning), and many of the later dynamic and tempo contrasts are awesomely extreme. But few dramatic works in recorded form have ever encompassed such ranges from solemnity to fieriness and from ethereal *pianissimos* to overwhelming thunders. (This performance matches much of the sonic and dramatic splendor of the Munch Berlioz Requiem.) The exceptionally fine-voiced soloists sing very well indeed and are beautifully integrated with the orchestra, while the chorus summons up the tongues of both men and angels to meet even the most "impossible" of the conductor's demands. Considering the dynamic extremes, the tape has been miraculously well processed with absolutely minimal background noise, not the slightest whiff of spill-over that I could detect, and only a couple of very faint preëchoes—a feat all the more remarkable in that some of the disc pressings drew considerable criticism for shortcomings in processing.

ERNEST ANSERMET: *Orchestral Music*

Mendelssohn: *Midsummer Night's Dream* (four excerpts). Schubert: *Rosamunde* (four excerpts). Prokofiev: *Classical Symphony*; *The Love for Three Oranges: March and Scherzo*. Borodin: *In the Steppes of Central Asia*. Glinka: *Kamarrinskaya*; *Life for the Tsar: Overture*.

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.

• • LONDON I.C.L. 80086 and 80087. 55 min. and 42 min. \$7.95 each.

The familiar music in both these reels is enhanced by exceptionally pure, transparent stereoism and by exquisitely colored orchestral playing, but it suffers from a lack of any marked interpretative verve. There have been far more vivid readings of the four *Midsummer Night's Dream* and four *Rosamunde* pieces (LCL 80086), and also of Prokofiev's *Classical Symphony* and the *March and Scherzo* from *The Love for Three Oranges*, Borodin's *In the Steppes of Central Asia*, Glinka's *Kamarrinskaya* and *Life for the Tsar Overture* (on 80087). Few recorded versions, however, have been more aurally seductive. The reel of Russian works is passably well processed, the other flawlessly so.

Continued on next page

JULY 1962



WHAT CARTRIDGE SHOULD YOU USE IN YOUR RECORD CHANGER?

THE selection of a cartridge for use with a record changer—mono or stereo—would appear to pose no special problem. Yet, there are certain things to be considered.

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Induced hum is another problem to be considered and anticipated with a magnetic cartridge. The very nature of the magnetic cartridge makes it an efficient hum transducer. In the field of an unshielded AC motor, it is prone to reproduce hum in the loudspeaker system.

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TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

VITTORIO GUI, WALTER GOLDSCHMIDT: "Livingston Masterpieces," Vols. 6 and 7

Florence May Festival Orchestra, Vittorio Gui, cond.; Graz Philharmonic, Walter Goldschmidt, cond.

• • Livingston 1006 and 1007. 100 and 101 min. \$10.95 each.

The first of these cornucopia reels is typical of the whole series: routine but serviceable performances, highly variable recording qualities, and generosity in proffering more—and more varied—music per dollar cost than any tape releases outside the sampler category.

Even the earliest masters here, dating back some eight years, show their age mainly in more marked channel separation than is common nowadays and in some lack of tonal body and weight. The major works here are Schubert's *Unfinished*, and the Schumannesque *Little Symphony*, Op. 44, by Hans Pfitzner; others include *Finlandia*, *Night on Bald Mountain*, and the *Academic Festival*, *William Tell*, *Meistersinger*, and *Egmont Overtures*—all led by Gui except the last, which is played by the Graz Philharmonic under Miltiades Caridis. The latter half of the second side is afflicted with a surface splutter in the left channel, but this well may be a dubbing defect in my copy only, since the rest of the reel is well processed and the companion Volume 7 excellently so. Volume 7 is undoubtedly the most

attractive single release in the whole series to date, for it is devoted to lighter music for which orchestra and conductor are ideally suited, and the recording, if perhaps not of the very latest vintage, is uniformly effective. Goldschmidt plays Nos. 1-8 and No. 15 of the Dvořák *Slavonic Dances* in deftly piquant if sometimes mannered fashion, but he is at his vivacious best in Lehár's *Gypsy Love Czardas*, the *Zarewitsch Ballet Music*, and the long *Rendezvous with Lehár*, as well as Kálmán's *Fortissimo* medleys and the *Countess Maritza* Prelude. Exemplifying a program of the best operetta excerpts, this reel provides an hour and two-thirds of consistently delectable entertainment.

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CIRCLE 3 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

"Clap Hands, Here Comes Charlie!" Ella Fitzgerald with Ensemble. Verve VSTC 265, 50 min., \$7.95.

The reiterative paeans to Miss Fitzgerald can become tiresome only to those who fail to hear for themselves the superb programs she turns out so consistently. This is one (another!) of the very best of them, with the soloist in top form even in the most inane lyrics (which she miraculously makes meaningful) and in the most rhapsodic of scat choruses. And here, as has not always been the case in the past, her accompanists (an inexcusably unidentified rhythm group) perfectly match her own faultless sense of rhythmic animation. The miking is intimately close, but not too much so, with the soloist firmly centered between piano, well left, and the others, well right; the recording is shinningly clean, and the processing immaculately free from preëchoes as well as surface noise.

"Desmond Blue." Paul Desmond, with Strings. Bob Prince, cond. RCA Victor FTP 1113, 37 min., \$7.95.

The blue is pastel-ish. Given a rather classical backing of strings (with woodwinds, harp, and rhythm), the alto sax star of the Brubeck Quartet is so closely miked here that his lyrically expressive tone cannot float as magically as it should. Nevertheless, Desmond is characteristically graceful and inventive, especially in his own title piece and *Late Lament*, a very slow but quite intricately polyphonic *My Funny Valentine*, and a livelier *Like Someone in Love*. And at least one of his sidemen, guitarist Jim Hall, emerges from the generally pallid background to contribute occasional vibrantly warm solo bits.

"Do the Twist." Connie Francis, with vocal and instrumental ensemble. M-G-M STC 4022, 30 min., \$7.95.

Connie Francis, tough-voiced but infectiously enthusiastic, spurs Sammy Lowe's little ensemble into a stimulating batch of slap-happy muscle-stretching *divertissements*. It's all crude stuff musically, but Connie packs real punch into *Hey Ring-a-Ding*, *Ain't That Better Baby*, *Kiss 'n' Twist*, and similar *Meisterwerke*. The kids should love it, and even this chair-bound square felt himself irresistibly spun "round and round."

"Lena on the Blue Side." Lena Horne, with Orchestra. Marty Gold, cond. RCA Victor FTP 1116, 36 min., \$7.95. In her first studio recording in a long time, Miss Horne proves that she has no

need of a live night-club audience to ignite her incomparable powers of personality projection, and that she can exert even more charm in relaxed, sultry-voiced torch singing than in big display pieces. She even bewitches one into accepting a slow tempo for *Someone To Watch Over Me*, and effectively contrasts other romantic ballads (*Darn That Dream, They Didn't Believe Me*) with a livelier *I Hadn't Anyone Till You, I'm Through with Love*, and a particularly individual and surprisingly jaunty *What'll I Do*. Marty Gold contributes appropriately deft accompaniments and the full-blooded recording is fine except for some quite superfluous bits of echo-chambering.

"My Gypsy Love." Frank Chacksfield and His Orchestra. Richmond RPE 45030, 41 min., \$4.95.

As it was on discs, this program is a best buy in every respect: for its kaleidoscopically colored, suavely virtuosic performances of gypsy favorites, for its glowingly rich recording, and—here—for its impeccable tape processing. Monti's *Csardas*, the Niebher-Dumont *Tzigane*, the Borganoff-Foster *Gypsy Moon*, and Eric Rogers' arrangement of *Dark Eyes* are outstanding examples of evocative music making. Throughout the program the sleekly expressive string timbres are contrasted with the most piquant of woodwind solo passages.

"Sophisticated Approach." Stan Kenton and His Orchestra. Capitol ZT 1674, 42 min., \$6.98.

Kenton's big band is less sophisticated than frankly romantic in this program of ballad expansions (*It Might as Well Be Spring, You Stepped Out of a Dream, Time After Time, Easy To Love*, etc.). Except for its darkly sonorous tonal qualities, it is likely to appeal less to jazz aficionados than to devotees of mood music or slow dance tunes. The expressiveness verges on schmaltz at times, but the superbly recorded sonics—especially of the brass choir augmented by mellophoniums—are an aural delight throughout.

"The Weavers' Almanac." The Weavers.

Vanguard VTC 1641, 32 min., \$7.95. Although less exciting than some of their live concert releases, this "Almanac" reel displays the Weavers in engagingly relaxed, well-sung performances of a happily chosen program of Americana, topped by a very odd and interesting *True Religion*, a spirited *Fight On*, a haunting *When the Stars Begin To Fall*, and a striking revival of *Brother Can You Spare a Dime*. Intimately yet not too closely miked, the tape is also notable for its admirably quiet processing.

"West Side Story." Oscar Peterson Trio.

Verve VSTC 268, 35 min., \$7.95. Sharing honors with his gifted sidemen, bassist Ray Brown and drummer Ed Thigpen, Peterson plays with more zest and personality than I have ever heard from him before. In both lyrical eloquence and rhythmic vivacity these intoxicating performances (rhapsodic piano soliloquies on *Maria, Something's Coming, Somewhere*, and other great Bernstein tunes) demonstrate the "lift" of which cocktail hour music is capable when one is served vintage champagne rather than bar gin.



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miles distant. This signal is strong enough—on stereo and mono—to be received with a simple, indoor folded-dipole antenna, at least when used with tuners in the 4-microvolt sensitivity (or better) class. In fact, we have discovered that this simplest of all antennas is better for "local" reception than our 10-element Yagi aimed the wrong way. Of course, for the two New York stations, the Yagi is indispensable. To return to WGFM—both the signal and the amount of serious music seem to be improving. And, after a year (during which we had occasion to remark on it, and were heartily seconded by several readers), this station is beginning to announce its selections. True, the announcements do not always relate to what is played but at least it's a beginning.

The most recent addition to the FM stereo roster in these parts is WBMI, a doughty "small-town" 7-kilowatt based in Meriden, Connecticut, which wafts a potpourri of acoustically sensational, but aesthetically lightweight, programs across 58 miles with the greatest of ease.

Aside from the domestic brand of stereo broadcasting, we also have been sampling the monophonic foreign product with a new National Radio Company, Inc. (37 Washington St., Melrose 76, Mass.) Model NC-105 short-wave receiver. The last of its five reception bands (10 to 30 megacycles) is like an avenue with interesting side-paths down which you stroll with the aid of the "bandspread" tuning control. We thus have received programs from Britain and the Continent with, as might be expected, varying degrees of signal strength and fidelity but always enough of both to recognize the difference, in the announcements, between English, French, Italian, German, and Czech (or was it Hungarian?). In addition to news broadcasts, discussion programs, variety shows, and broadcasts of light and pop music, the major European short-wave services also beam a goodly amount of classical music to this hemisphere. Just the other night, in the weekly "Swiss Concert Hall" broadcast, we heard some lovely excerpts from Richard Strauss's seldom played opera *Dafne*, spectacularly sung by Teresa Stich-Randall with the Suisse Romande Orchestra. The quality of the signal wasn't up to FM standard by any means, but it was strong and clear and the listening was thoroughly enjoyable.

The NC-105 also can tune in Latin America, ship-to-shore and plane-to-ground communications, a host of high-speed code messages, and the chit-chat of radio amateurs. Tuning meters and a variety of controls help the user find his way about the five reception bands, one of which is a powerful standard AM broadcast band. The receiver is fairly sensitive, even with the single-wire antenna that is supplied with it; and while the NC-105 comes equipped with its own built-in speaker, it also may be connected—tuner fashion—into an external amplifier-speaker system. This doesn't eliminate the RF background noise, but it does help clarify what you do want to hear.

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

CAN HIGH FIDELITY BE MEASURED?

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10 kc. with a drop to 15 db at 15 kc permissible.

Many FM stereo adapters have noise filters to remove some of the background noise when receiving stereo signals of marginal strength. These filters may affect one channel or both channels, depending on their design. They will almost always degrade the response of the adapter at the higher audio frequencies, and some filters may also lessen the channel separation. As a rule, an area in which monophonic FM has been generally poor can expect FM stereo reception to be somewhat poorer. In such an area, the signal-to-noise ratio can decrease by as much as 20 db on stereo. If so, the noise filter on an adapter not only may prove ineffective, but may further degrade the signal.

The distortion introduced by a good multiplex adapter will be negligible; at most, it should add only a few tenths of a per cent to the tuner's own distortion.

TAPE RECORDERS

Tape systems are considerably more complex than disc playback systems. For instance, while many inexpensive recorders have only one motor, others may contain two motors, and the best recorders generally use three motors. In any case, to design and build a reliable tape deck at a budget price is no easy task. While the problem of wow is not as serious in tape decks as in turntables, flutter can become quite serious, especially in recorders that use only one motor. As stated above in the discussion of turntables, wow and flutter ideally should be under 0.3% and 0.1% respectively for any machine used for reproducing music with satisfactory results.

The remarks on permissible variations for turntable speed also apply to the speed of a tape recorder, with the outside limit for accurate reproduction being 1% of the nominal speed.

While tape decks rarely exhibit any problems of rumble, the interaction of the magnetic fields generated by the motors and the playback heads can introduce motor noise and hum into the system. Additionally, a tape recorder may reproduce "tape hiss," usually a high frequency residue on the tape itself, and occasionally augmented by a magnetized playback head. Obviously, the level of such noise will depend largely on the design of the equipment as well as on the signal level used in recording. What may not be so apparent is the fact that the recording level also can affect frequency response and distortion. This dependence on recording level is brought about by the characteristics of magnetic materials—the tape as well as the tape heads—which become saturated at high signal levels and high frequencies. For this reason, the frequency response of a recording made at a very high level may

Continued on next page

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CAN HIGH FIDELITY BE MEASURED?

Continued from preceding page

not, as a rule, be as good as that made at a lower level. Recorder manufacturers often make frequency response and distortion measurements at levels as low as minus 25 VU, or 25 db below the maximum average recording level of zero VU. At the same time, the recorder's signal-to-noise ratio will be rated by referring it to a very high signal level, generally greater than zero VU. Although these methods of measurement show a recorder to best advantage, and are not "wrong," they do not tell the whole story. It is more meaningful to rate a tape recorder on how it handles an average-level signal. For this reason, frequency response and distortion measurements—made in the laboratory for the equipment reports published in this journal—are performed at a level of minus 10 VU, referred to the zero level recorded on a standard alignment tape. Signal-to-noise ratio measurements also are referred to this level.

The frequency response of a good recorder should be very smooth within plus or minus 2 db from 20 cps to 15 kc. Many inferior recorders have response peaks of 3 to 6 db or higher at frequencies between 60 and 100 cps, and again between 6 and 10 kc. These peaks help to extend the apparent upper and lower response limits of the recorder, but it should be kept in mind that such

response is inaccurate to the degree of the peaking involved.

In the laboratory, a tape recorder is tested for two distinct types of audio response. One is its "record-playback" characteristic; the other, its "playback-only" characteristic. The reason for the double check is that in many recorders, particularly low-priced models, a known (to the manufacturer) error in the unit's own recording equalization is compensated by an equal error "in the opposite direction" in its playback equalization. Often, this "double negative" does have positive results in that a tape recorded and played on that machine will sound quite good. However, that error in playback equalization may mean an appreciable departure from the NAB standard for magnetic tapes, and to that extent tapes made on other recorders, and particularly commercially recorded tapes, may sound relatively poor—even when the tape recorder is played through an external high fidelity system. For this reason, the data (obtained from a standard equalized test tape) on how closely the NAB curve is followed by a tape recorder becomes quite important. Both this response characteristic, as well as the recorder's own record-playback curve, logically are included in all reports of tape equipment. Thus the reader can determine, on the basis of his own needs and interests, whether a particular model merits his consideration.

The harmonic distortion of a good recorder should be under 2 per cent throughout its usable bandwidth, and the signal-to-noise ratio should be better than 45 db when referred to a signal recorded at minus 10 VU.

Many of the garden variety of tape recorders sold today do not meet the most rigorous standards of performance. This is not to deny, however, that even they serve a need and can provide their unique services to those who own them. Truly high fidelity tape equipment, of course, is available, but the prospective buyer should be prepared to spend something more than a casual amount for it. Furthermore, he should purchase such equipment with a thorough understanding of its use and some knowledge of its maintenance, since of all audio components the high quality tape deck seems to be the most difficult to have adequately serviced. In any case, such equipment—used correctly and performing satisfactorily—offers a measure of superior reproduction rarely or at least not consistently attained by disc reproduction.

LOUDSPEAKERS

The final link in the equipment chain is, of course, the loudspeaker, and although it is beyond the scope of this article to go into this component in detail, I would like to touch finally on speaker evaluation.

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aid the designer in finding defects, and to suggest directions in which he might work to improve performance. Such data, however, is of relatively minor importance in evaluating a finished product for use in a reproducing system. There is—in short—no simple number, or series of numbers, that will predict how a particular speaker will sound, or how two different speakers will sound in relation to each other. For these reasons, HIGH FIDELITY Magazine relies on a subjective analysis of a loudspeaker system which approximates the tests an informed listener would himself conduct when selecting a loudspeaker. Impeccable and varied source material, top quality amplifiers, and a number of comparison speaker systems enable trained listeners to conduct meaningful evaluations.

Of course, listening tests are very important for all high fidelity units—including those which are subjected to precise measurements. Ideally, one's own "listening tests" should be made before buying any equipment. Test reports, correctly interpreted, can make such listening more meaningful and help the prospective purchaser to select equipment for consideration on the basis of probable performance weighed against known or anticipated needs.

THE MANY-SIDED VILLA

Continued from page 41

open-air concerts, one of which involved a chorus of thirty thousand (principally school children) and an orchestra of a thousand players. For these concerts he invented a system whereby he conducted with signal flags from a high tower in the middle of a huge stadium. He also devised a system of hand and finger movements, indicating the degrees of the scale, which was adopted (by decree!) in all Brazilian schools. There were, in short, no limits to Villa's energy, enthusiasm, imagination, and powers of invention.

In 1944 Villa was brought for the first time to the United States through the combined efforts of the Janssen Symphony Orchestra and the State Department. The success of his concerts in Los Angeles, Boston, and New York was such that he returned several times before his death. His latter years were a misery of ailments and illnesses, to which an ordinary human being would have succumbed years earlier. It was Villa's tremendous will power and affirmation of life that kept him going long after the medical profession had declared his case hopeless.

Villa is not a "modern" composer in the usual sense; taken as a whole, his work shows a cavalier disregard for matters of style as such. As it affects his music, this attitude produces both good and bad results. On the one hand it frees him from academic preoccupations; but it also leads him, in his weaker moments, down the primrose path of eclecticism. From start to finish Villa

Continued on page 99



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To give everybody a chance to reach HIGH FIDELITY'S interested readers, we've started publication of a monthly Buy, Sell or Swap Newsletter. Subscriptions are accepted at a nominal charge of \$1.00 per year to cover part of our printing and mailing costs.

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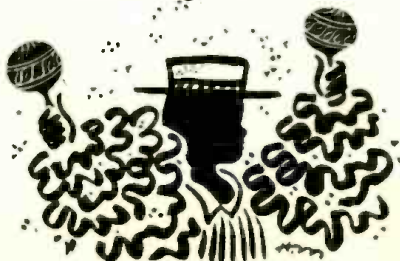
THE MANY-SIDED VILLA

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remains a romanticist, despite such tricks as the use of graphs to determine a melodic line, as in the famous piece based on the contours of the New York skyline. (Even this is a curiously inverted kind of romanticism, comparable in a way to science fiction.) He himself was the first to admit to being a "sentimentalist." He even used to exaggerate this quality, but he also maintained that he never composed by intuition and that everything in his music was calculated and constructed. Such statements, of course, must be taken with a grain of salt and referred to their context—namely, to Villa himself and to his inordinate love of legpulling, practical jokes, and deliberate inconsistency.

Although some recordings of Villa Lobos' music have been withdrawn, those that are available give an adequate view of his many-sided talent. His Amazonian jungle style is represented by the early *Urapiú* (1917) on Everest 6016 or 3016 and the recent *Alvorada na floresta tropical* (1954) on Louisville 545. The *Bachianas Brasileiras*, based on the adaptation in a loose way of Bach's style to typical Brazilian forms and idioms, are amply represented in the Schwann catalogue, whereas the two *Chóros* (Nos. 1 and 7) give only an incomplete insight into Villa Lobos' remarkable achievement in transforming this form of popular music into sophisticated concert music. The piano music, with its brilliant and idiomatic style—the more remarkable in that Villa Lobos himself was a mediocre pianist—has all but disappeared from the catalogue: the chamber music has done so entirely. New recordings of these, and of some of the deliciously attractive songs, would be most welcome.

Rarely does a modern composer achieve best-seller status, but Villa Lobos did that in connection with Bidú Sayão's recording of the *Bachiana Brasileira* No. 5 for soprano and eight cellos. The Aria of this appealing piece is available on Columbia ML 5231 in Sayão's original interpretation. The complete work, with the concluding Dance, is on Angel 35547, sung by Victoria de los Angeles and conducted by the composer. This record also contains *Bachianas Brasileiras* Nos. 2, 6, and 9. The reasons for the popularity of this and other Villa Lobos' pieces are not hard to find. His music is original, yet it has broad appeal—for musicians and laymen alike. At its best it is accessible without being "corny." And even when it is a bit "corny," it reflects the personality of an extraordinary composer and an extraordinary human being.



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JULIAN D. HIRSCH
of Hirsch-Houck
Laboratories

Summing up his report
for HI-FI STEREO
REVIEW, Julian
D. Hirsch wrote:

*"In my opinion,
the UNIVERSITY
CLASSIC MARK II
... is one of a
limited group of
speakers to which I
would give an
unqualified topnotch
rating."*

"Despite the popularity of bookshelf-size speaker systems, the big speaker system is far from extinct. There is still a great deal to be said for the sound quality of a really good large speaker system, one of which is University's new Classic Mark II.

In operation, the Classic Mark II handles low frequencies up to 150 cps through a 15-inch high-compliance woofer that is installed in a ducted-port cabinet. The bulk of musical program content, however, is handled by an 8-inch mid-range speaker, which covers from 150 to 3,000 cps. Above 3,000 cps, a Sphericon super tweeter takes over.

The measured indoor frequency response of the Classic Mark II was remarkably uniform. As a rule, such response curves are so far from flat that I do not attempt to correct them for the slight irregularities of the microphone's response. However, the measurements for the Classic Mark II prompted me to plot the microphone response also. This further emphasizes the uniformity of the system's frequency response. A 5-db increase in the setting of the tweeter-level control would probably have brought the range above 3,000 cps into nearly exact conformity with the microphone-calibration curve.

The low-frequency distortion of the woofer, even at a 10-watt input level, was very low, and it actually decreased at 20 cps, where the output was beginning to rise... Any good amplifier of 10 watts rating or better should be able to drive it satisfactorily.

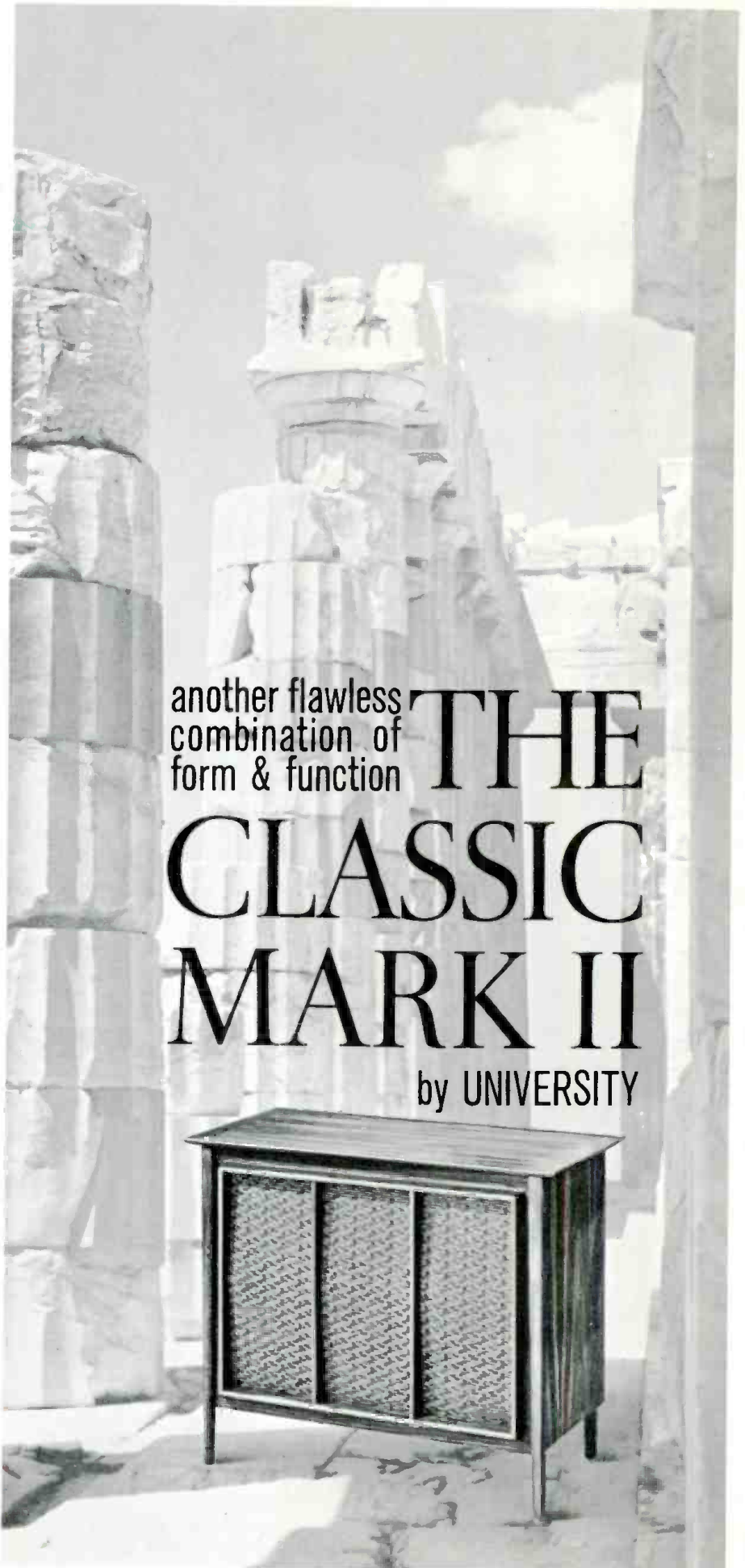
In listening tests, the Classic Mark II sounded very clean... there was an under-current of bass, more often felt than heard, that was completely lacking in some other quite good speaker systems that I compared to the Classic Mark II. The speaker sounded at its best (to my ears) at moderate listening levels. At high levels the bass tended to be overpowering. A different listening room, of course, could easily alter this situation completely. Over-all, the sound was beautifully balanced, with wide dispersion and a feeling of exceptional ease. There was never a hint that three separate speakers were operating; the sound seemed to emanate from a large, unified source.

In my opinion the University Classic Mark II justifies the substantial claims that its manufacturer has made for it. It is one of a limited group of speakers to which I would give an unqualified topnotch rating. Anyone who is in a position to consider a system of its size and price would be well advised to hear it. The price of the system is \$295.00."

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FM Stereo Multiplex Adapters may be used to convert Sherwood and other FM tuners for stereo-cast reception. \$49.50 to \$69.50.

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S-8000 FM/MX 64-watt Stereo Receiver



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S-5500 II 64-watt Stereo Preamp/Amplifier

This typical room setting includes Sherwood's "Superb Stereo Starters,"—one S-8000 Receiver and two SR3 Loudspeakers. Sherwood Electronic Laboratories, Inc., 4300 N. California Ave., Chicago 18, Illinois.

Write for complete technical details.



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